

# **Hannington**

## **Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan**



- Conservation area designated in 1979, redesignated 1990
- Appraisal and management plan adopted 10th February 2009

**This appraisal, management plan and the accompanying map has been prepared in collaboration with Hannington Parish Council. Swindon Borough Council's Planning Committee approved the document on 10 February 2009.**

At the same time, the Committee authorised the Director of Planning and Transport authorised to use the document for planning and development control purposes.



Environment & Regeneration  
Swindon Borough Council  
Premier House, Station Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SN1 1TZ

This document can be produced in a range of languages and formats (such as large print, Braille or other accessible formats) by contacting Customer Services Department

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Summary of Hannington Conservation Area</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	Introduction	5
1.2	Purpose of the appraisal and management plan	5
<b>2</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Location	7
2.2	Boundaries	7
2.3	Origins and history of the settlement	7
2.4	Landscape setting	10
2.5	Hannington Conservation Area today	10
<b>3</b>	<b>The special interest of the conservation area</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	General character and appearance	11
	Hannington Hall and Parsons Lane	11
	Queens Road	12
	Nell Hill	12
3.2	Architectural and historic character	13
3.3	Buildings of local interest	14
3.4	Trees	14
3.5	Local details and features	15
<b>4</b>	<b>Opportunities for enhancement</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1	Negative features	16
4.2	Scope for improvement	16
<b>5</b>	<b>Public Consultation</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Hannington Conservation Area Management Plan</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1	Introduction	18
	<b>Appendix 1 Photographs</b>	<b>22</b>

## **1 Summary of Hannington Conservation Area**

The special interest that justifies designation of Hannington Conservation Area derives from a number of architectural, historic and environmental factors including:

- Historic layout and predominantly linear street pattern of the village beside a winding, rising and falling thoroughfare;
- The pastoral setting of the village on an escarpment with significant views to surrounding countryside;
- The Church of St John the Baptist (grade II\*), isolated from the main body of the village at the end of an avenue of trees;
- Hannington Hall (grade II\*), built in 1653 by Sir Thomas Freke, a fine example of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Cotswold mansion;
- Architectural and historic interest of the village's buildings and other structures - including twelve listed buildings;
- The setting and grounds of Hannington Hall including Victorian stable block (grade II), well-house (grade II), ice-house (grade II), wall and gate piers (grade II);
- Prevalent use of local building materials, notably local stone and red brick and a single instance of thatch;
- Trees, hedges and other vegetation especially where these bound a road or footpath;
- Local features and details that give the area a local identity, notably a village pump, K6 telephone kiosk and Ambrose Walk;
- Stone boundary walls;
- A tranquil village atmosphere;
- Network of public footpaths including Parsons Lane.

## **1.1 Introduction**

Hannington Conservation Area was designated by Wiltshire County Council in 1979. It was re-designated with a revised boundary by Thamesdown Borough Council on 25th June 1990. Designation reflects the Council's commitment to preserving the character and appearance of this historic rural village whose historical ambience and environmental quality make an important contribution to the Borough's varied types and ages of conservation areas.

This document defines and records the special architectural or historic interest that warrants designation of Hannington Conservation Area and identifies elements that contribute to its special character and appearance. Swindon Borough Council's Planning Committee approved this document on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

## **1.2 Purpose of the appraisal and management plan**

The *conservation area appraisal*, in defining the special interest, character and appearance of the conservation area, provides a sound basis for development control decisions. It will help planning officers, developers, designers and the public at large assess whether a proposed development affecting a conservation area would, or would not, preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that area.

Development proposals which affect the conservation area will be judged for their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in this conservation area appraisal.

The *conservation area management plan* (section 6.0 of this document) identifies how the conservation area could be enhanced or improved with the support of the local authority, residents and other agencies.

## **1.3 Conservation policy**

A conservation area is "an area of special architectural or historic interest the

character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

When considering applications for development which affect a conservation area “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.” (Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with policies contained in the current Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 and with national planning policy guidance, especially Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning.

The information contained in this appraisal was originally collected during the year 2000/2001. The area was revisited and the document revised and updated in November 2008. To be concise and readable, it does not record all features. The omission of any feature from the text or accompanying maps does not, therefore, mean that it must not be of interest or value.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Location**

The village of Hannington lies about six kilometres north of Swindon and two kilometres west of Highworth astride a narrow lane that branches from the B4019 at The Freke Arms between Blunsdon and Highworth. The lane, known as Queens Road as it passes through the village, proceeds through Hannington to Castle Eaton beside the Thames.

### **2.2 Boundaries**

The boundary of Hannington Conservation Area has been drawn to include all the buildings of the village of Hannington<sup>1</sup> including St John the Baptist Church which, curiously, stands apart from the core of village at the end of a lane leading to Bydemill Farm. Because of the village's fine rural setting and elevated position, the boundary has been widely drawn to include a buffer of land surrounding the village thereby giving some protection to the fragile area of transition between village and open countryside. The whole of the conservation area is within the Mid-Vale Ridge Landscape Character Area<sup>2</sup>.

The character and appearance of this quiet conservation area are particularly vulnerable to damage from unsuitable development because of the area's attractiveness and historic ambience. Because of the village's hilltop location with important inward and outward views, this tiny village is one of the Borough's larger conservation areas.

### **2.3 Origins and history of the settlement**

Aerial photographs of the north of the village show settlement features, possibly early field systems. Hannington is first recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Hanindone'. A more recognisable form, Hannyngton, appears in 1576. The name is formed from a Saxon personal name and the word 'dun' meaning a rounded hill<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup>The buildings of Manor Farm and the cottages opposite were added to the conservation area in 1990.

<sup>2</sup>As defined in the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011

<sup>3</sup>See 'Wiltshire Place-Names' by Martyn Whittock; Countryside Books 1997

Hannington Hall, the most prestigious building in the village and the locality, dates from the mid 17th century and there are several houses from the 18th century. For centuries Hannington was a small agricultural community<sup>4</sup> typical of the locality. In common with many English villages, Hannington has seen a decline in agricultural and communal activity and although at one time Hannington had a school, three pubs<sup>5</sup>, a post office and store, a smithy and a cycle shop<sup>6</sup>, it is now predominantly a residential 'dormitory' village whose residents work and shop elsewhere.

In 1883 a branch railway from Swindon to Highworth was opened (closed in 1953) but as Hannington's station was located a mile to the south of the village close to The Freke Arms, the railway's impact on the village was insignificant<sup>7</sup>.

Overall, the village changed little in appearance until the second half of the 20th century during which a cul-de-sac development of Council houses (Skinners Close) was constructed on former open space and a number of dwellings were built in the vicinity of what was Pound Farm, just below the brow of Nell Hill. Limited one and two-storey infill have been added in Queens Road - e.g. The Hidden Well, Greystones and Number 45. Ambrose walk, a new recreational area, was created in 2003. Two recent developments (four houses in Home Farm Lane and one house at School House Farm) have been built on the site of disused agricultural buildings.

---

<sup>4</sup>Pound Farm, Hill Farm and Manor Farm are identified on an O.S. map of 1900.

<sup>5</sup>The Jolly Tar, The Cat (or Catt) and The Dog - see 'Home Brewed' by D Backhouse (1992)

<sup>6</sup>At The Jolly Tar ('Home Brewed' by D Backhouse (1992))

<sup>7</sup>Compare with the effect of a branch railway on Chiseldon to the south of Swindon.





Andrews & Drury Map, 1773



Ordnance Survey Map, 1886

## **2.4 Landscape setting**

The village of Hannington has a beautiful setting, surrounded by open countryside. It is located on the north eastern slope of a spur of a Corallian outcrop which overlooks the south side of the Thames valley. The north side of the village affords splendid views across the Thames valley. Although these are mostly gained from the private back gardens of properties on the north side of Queens Road, there is a good northward view from Queens Road just beyond Yorke House.

There are also significant views of surrounding landscape northward from the top of Nell Hill, westward from the western end of Queens Road and eastward from the lane leading to the church. These and other views out of the conservation area to local landmarks (e.g. the tower of St Michael's, Highworth) and the wider landscape reinforce the conservation area's distinct rural identity.

As well as attractive views out of the conservation area, there are good views inwards especially from the north and westwards along the approach road from the Freke Arms.

## **2.5 Hannington Conservation Area today**

Despite the decline of agriculture Hannington still retains a rural village character with a notable historic appearance that derives from the many buildings that are over 100 years old. Hannington today is a quiet residential village with a pub, a country church and a saddlery showroom. There is a 30 mph speed limit through the village. There are few road markings and no street lighting. The village has a tranquil and peaceful atmosphere.

### **3 The special interest of the conservation area**

#### **3.1 General character and appearance**

The conservation area is characterised by a collection of buildings scattered beside a winding thoroughfare. The through road falls and rises creating an interesting series of attractive views as one travels through the village. There is a mixture of old buildings, from the 17th century onwards<sup>8</sup>; limited 20th-century infill; open space, and some very fine groups of trees.

Existing development is very low density. At the centre of the village the settlement spreads from a hollow, in which stands The Jolly Tar, to gentle slopes either side. Buildings, walls and trees are integrated into this terrain, responding to the tight curves of Queens Road. The settlement's haphazard layout results in a high proportion of open space and there are generally wide spaces between buildings and, unusually, roadside open space such as the front garden of Number 16 Queens Road, Ambrose Walk and beside The Jolly Tar.

The area has a tranquil atmosphere and a high environmental quality. There is an atmosphere of stillness.

Hannington has a linear street pattern based on the village's main thoroughfare, Queens Road, but there are instances of 'backland' development reached via a lane beside the former Reading Room. Nell Hill is a quiet lane that branches from the western end of Queens Road proceeding downhill to Hannington Wick; Skinners Close is a modern cul-de-sac form of development uncharacteristic of this type of historic village.

#### Hannington Hall and Parsons Lane

Approaching from the east, Hannington Hall (listed grade II\*) provides an impressive entrance to the village but a high stone wall (listed grade II) prevents a full view of the building's facade. Immediately in front of the 19th century stone

---

<sup>8</sup> As in nearby Highworth, Victorian development is more notable by its absence.

gate piers<sup>9</sup> to the grounds of the Hall is a junction from where a narrow tree lined lane leads to the Church of St John the Baptist (listed grade II\*). Looking back, there are fine views of Hannington Hall. The church stands in a well stocked graveyard that also contains some good yews and a row of mature lime trees. Parson's Lane is one of a number of local public footpaths from where there are good views back to the village.

### Queens Road

Proceeding into the village from the south, evergreen trees on either side of the road and roadside buildings set close to the road provide an enclosed and shady gateway. Local stone is prevalent and Glebe House (grade II), a former rectory, is one of the many stone tiled buildings in the area. Opposite this is the entrance to Skinners Close, an unremarkable modern development.

Proceeding westwards from Glebe House the historic appearance and character of the village is clear. Mature trees, a dozen historic buildings and old roadside stone walls predominate until the junction with Nell Hill.

Beyond the junction, Queens Road has the atmosphere of a country lane; on the north side two pairs of agricultural workers' dwellings provide a spacious progression between village and open countryside, on the south an old farmhouse (Manor Farm) and a complex of farm buildings of mixed age - some in the traditional vernacular (stone, brick, clay pantile, stone tiles), others new steel-framed sheds.

### Nell Hill

An open field west of the junction suggests that this is the end of the village but development, old and new, continues on either side of Nell Hill, a minor road that descends the escarpment towards a bridge over the Thames.

---

<sup>9</sup> Circa 1863. The stables and well house west of Hannington Hall date from the same period.

The village's only thatched building stands at the brow of the hill beside Hill Farm, a stone farmhouse with 17th century origins. These two listed buildings, together with other nearby old buildings and walls<sup>10</sup> comprise a fine collection of building types (farmhouse, barn, Victorian school, dwelling, former pub and post office) and building materials (stone tile, thatch, slate, stone, brick, timber) that typify the village and make a significant contribution to the village's overall historic character.

Beyond Hill Farm, as the road descends the hill, the historic character of the village becomes less apparent. There are a number of late 20th century houses built on the site of Pound Farm.

### **3.2 Architectural and historic character**

The conservation area contains buildings of a variety of ages. The church has 12th century origins but was largely rebuilt in c.1870 reusing many old parts. Hannington Hall dates from 1653 with 19th century alteration and additions. There are five listed 18th century houses.

Rubble stone houses with either stone-tile or Welsh slate roofs are typical<sup>11</sup>. Clay pantiles are also common on the area's agricultural buildings<sup>12</sup> and an 18th century barn at Hill Farm retains a thatched roof.

The traditional form is two, or two-and-a-half, storey. The local building stone and typical walling material is Coral Rag sometimes used with locally produced red brick around windows and doors - for example, Number 8/10 Queens Road and Step Cottage. This particular mix of stone and red brick, along with the use of Cotswold stone roof tiles and natural Welsh slate establishes the special character of the vernacular architecture of the village. Red brick and/or stone chimneys are

---

<sup>10</sup>Century House (1856), the old school.

<sup>11</sup>Welsh slate would not have become common until the 19th century when canal and rail transport made it more available.

<sup>12</sup>Notably at Manor Farm but also the outbuildings of The Jolly Tar and the former Reading Room.

common - some are surprisingly tall (e.g. Gardener's Cottage/Number 39) and the village has a distinctive and lively roofscape which, due to the topography of the area, is highly visible.

### **3.3 Buildings of local interest<sup>13</sup>**

English Heritage advice<sup>14</sup> is that, "most of the buildings in a conservation area will help to shape its character in one way or another" and in addition to twelve listed buildings there are a number of other buildings<sup>15</sup> which make a strong contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the area - these are identified on the accompanying map.

### **3.4 Trees**

The area is well tree'd especially in the area around Hannington Hall. Trees add significantly to the interest of the area and there are several specimen trees in fields, gardens and hedgerows which act as a backdrop to the village or as a setting to the area's buildings.

Ash, lime, beech, oak, cedar, sycamore and horse chestnuts are present. Trees are an essential element in the overall visual character, still largely intact in spite of the loss of mature elms<sup>16</sup> through the effects of Dutch Elm disease in the 1970's.

Trees within conservation areas are covered by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Anyone proposing to carry out works to a tree that is in a conservation area must almost always give written notice of at least six weeks to the local planning authority.

---

<sup>13</sup>See Swindon Borough Local Plan SPG: 'Buildings, Structures and Facades of Local Importance'.

<sup>14</sup>Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage, March 1997

<sup>15</sup>See Swindon Borough Local Plan SPG: 'Buildings, Structures and Facades of Local Importance'.

<sup>16</sup>There was an avenue of elms leading to the church.

### **3.5 Local details and features**

There are a number of local details which form part of the special interest of the area. It is highly desirable that these features, which add to the area's distinct identity, are retained:

*Boundary walls and railings:* Natural stone boundary walls, including the ha-ha at Hannington Hall, are a distinctive feature of the conservation area and are essential to its predominantly stone appearance.

*Roadside kerbs of sarsen stone,* a local stone noted for its durability, are present on the kerb opposite The Jolly Tar and outside at the Nell Hill junction. These have a texture and colour not found in pre-cast concrete kerb stones and contribute subtly to the village's rural character. Similarly, grass verges (for example on the west side of Nell Hill) give the area a rural atmosphere.

*Gardens and hedges:* A major element in the character and appearance of the area is the well-tended gardens, often stocked with traditional English 'cottage garden' plants. Roadside hedges and garden boundary hedges, for example the high privet hedge around The Knoll House, are also a local feature.

*Street furniture:* The village has a red 'K6' telephone kiosk, an ER II letterbox and an old cast iron water pump.

*Ambrose Walk:* The design of the site of Ambrose Walk, a recreation area in Queen's Road, is based on the village itself, with paths representing roads and seats for notable buildings. The project was funded by a local charity and opened in 2003.

## **4 Opportunities for enhancement**

### **4.1 Negative features**

Overhead wires detract from the historic appearance of the area;

Recent new developments in Home Farm Lane (advertised as “four large and individual barn style houses”) and at School House Farm appear too high and out of scale and character with their surroundings.

### **4.2 Scope for improvement**

Some of the buildings are suffering from an incremental loss of architectural detail through the replacement of traditional building materials with inappropriate modern materials.

Long term tree management and planting need careful consideration.



## **5 Public Consultation**

Residents of the Hannington Conservation Area were consulted by letter and questionnaire on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008 and asked to express their views by email, letter or phone. A drop-in surgery was held in Castle Eaton on 4th November 2008. The draft was available for viewing or download on the Council's website and at Premier House and Highworth Library. Hannington Parish Council and local ward member were consulted twice during the consultation period.

## **6 Hannington Conservation Area Management Plan**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The following management plan lists how the conservation area could be enhanced or improved with the support of the local authority, residents and other agencies. It should be seen as a working document that:

- Encourages future planning applications to respect and promote what is special about the conservation area;
- Seeks to ameliorate or, if possible, remove negative elements;
- Encourage a degree of 'ownership' of the area by residents (and where applicable Parish Councils);
- Promote closer cooperation between all relevant parties including utilities, local authority departments, Parish Council and the local community.

In line with advice<sup>17</sup> it is proposed that this management strategy together with the conservation area appraisal be reviewed and updated regularly (five years is recommended).

---

<sup>17</sup> Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas - English Heritage and PAS (2006)

<b>HANNINGTON CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>			
<b>MANAGEMENT ISSUE</b>		<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>
<b>Design of new development</b>	Some modern development has an adverse impact on the conservation area especially with regard to height and massing.	Seek to ensure that future development proposals preserve or enhance the historic character and appearance of the conservation area, as described in this appraisal.	Swindon Borough Council.
<b>Inappropriate alterations and additions to buildings</b>	Incremental changes to buildings e.g. external alterations, conversions and refurbishment of properties have sometimes resulted in loss of architectural interest.	Where planning permission is required, ensure future development proposals are strictly controlled in terms of design and materials.  Consider the preparation of an information leaflet on good practice for minor alterations including works that do not require planning permission.	Swindon Borough Council/Residents.
<b>Buildings of local importance</b>	There are a number of unlisted buildings that have been judged as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.	Ensure that development is in accord with Swindon Borough Local Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance: 'Buildings, Structures and Facades of Local Importance'.	Swindon Borough Council.

HANNINGTON CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN			
MANAGEMENT ISSUE		STRATEGY	PARTNERS
<b>Buildings at risk</b>	Buildings in the area are generally in good condition.	Monitor the condition of historic buildings within the area.  Use statutory powers to secure the repair of particular buildings noted to be at risk of decay.	Swindon Borough Council.
<b>Signage, street furniture and overhead wires</b>	Small items of street furniture (e.g. telephone kiosk, pump, stone kerbs) make a positive contribution to local identity.  Unsightly overhead wires spoil the appearance of the area.	Ensure that all existing signage and street furniture is maintained in good order and that new street furniture is in line with principles set out in English Heritage 'Streets for All' publication.  Support any proposal to put cables underground subject to archaeological and other considerations.	Swindon Borough Council/Hannington Parish Council/Public utilities.
<b>Potential decline and loss of trees</b>	Trees make a vital contribution to the rural ambience of the conservation area and the setting of its listed buildings.	Trees within a conservation area are afforded protection. In most cases anyone wishing to undertake works or remove a tree must give the Council six weeks notice.	Swindon Borough Council

## 7.0 Useful publications

- *Victoria County History of Wiltshire*
- *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.*
- *Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011.*
- *Buildings of Significant Local Interest – Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Good Design: House Extensions - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Conservation Areas - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Listed Buildings - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Backland and Infill Development - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2007)*
- *Archaeology - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Planning Policy Guidance 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment.*
- *Planning Policy Guidance 16 - Planning and Archaeology*
- *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage, 2005.*
- *Guidance on the management of conservation areas, English Heritage, 2005*

## Appendix 1 Photographs

*Fig 1: Characteristic features of Hannington Conservation Area*



Avenue leading to Church of St John the Baptist



Hannington Hall, a grade II\* listed building.



Detail of Hannington Hall's stable block.



No. 45 Queens Road holds an important position overlooking a road junction.



The old school, now a village hall.



Overhead wires spoil the streetscene.



*Fig 2: Characteristic features of Hannington Conservation Area*



Typical use of local stone with red brick dressings, dated 1858.



The village's only thatched building, Nell Hill.



Hill House, grade II.



Ambrose Walk, a newly created recreation area.



No. 37 Queens Road, a building of local interest.



Mature trees and stone boundary walls add to the area's rural ambience.

*Fig 3: Characteristic features of Hannington Conservation Area*



Old village pump.



Typical stone boundary wall.



Nos. 8 and 10 Queens Road have 17<sup>th</sup> century origins (grade II).



The Jolly Tar is the last survivor of four village pubs (grade II).



Cotswold stone tile roof typical of the locality.



Glebe House is a former vicarage circa 1720, grade II.



*Fig 4: Characteristic features of Hannington Conservation Area*



Church of St John the Baptist, grade II\* listed building.



Victorian stable block at Hannington Hall.



The red K6 telephone kiosk in Queens Road is a distinctive local feature.



The Jolly Tar is the last survivor of four village pubs (grade II).



Yorke House, Queens Road, c. 1710 but site considerably older (grade II).



View up Nell Hill from its junction with Queens Road.

28.11.08



