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# Conservation Area Character Survey

# Southend

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## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

Conservation areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest which are considered worthy of preservation or enhancement. They are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Within conservation areas there are special controls on some alterations to buildings and their demolition or partial demolition, and on works to trees. The Council's Heritage Guidance Note on conservation areas gives further details of the specific controls that apply.

Designation of a conservation area does not preclude the possibility of new development, but such development must be designed positively to enhance the special character of the area.

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY

This conservation area character survey describes the main features of special architectural and historic interest which justifies the designation of Southend Common as a conservation area.

The survey is intended to complement the approved policies for conservation areas in the Council's Wycombe District Local Plan. These policies are the primary means of safeguarding the special character of our conservation areas. The survey is also intended to be used as an aid in development control decision making. Proposals for schemes positively to enhance the character and appearance of Southend Common conservation area will be produced in the future in consultation with councillors, local residents and other interested parties.



## HISTORY

The hamlet of Southend lies within the parish of Turville. It is so called as it is located at the southernmost edge of the parish.

Until 1815 Southend Common was part of a single heathland which included Summer Heath, Turville Heath and Northend Common. It is suggested that the name 'Thyrefeld' (now modernised to Turville) meaning dry field originally applied to this chain of commons.

Southend is a very small community which is now almost entirely residential. The habitation of the area is probably due to the existence of water at this point in the once extensive and generally dry heathland. There were a number of ponds and wells within and in the vicinity of Southend and its common land. The sites of the old ponds are still evident but many are now dry. One of the larger ponds in the woodland area is the home of the Great Crested Newt, a rare species.

Nos. 41 and 42, Southend are the only listed buildings in the conservation area and were listed in 1976. The building is a lodge to Stonor, a large country house bearing the family name which lies over the County boundary in Oxfordshire. A house has existed here since Medieval times. The lodge is on the rear drive to the Stonor Estate. To the north of the lodge is Drovers, once a public house which was converted to a dwelling in 1987. It is thought that it may once have also been a farm. The building and the pub before it were so named as it lies on or near the site of the old drovers' ale house, a halting place for men who moved the sheep. The ale house was on the drovers' route as they herded their sheep from the Midlands and the North for sale in London. The animals may have rested here, grazing on the commonland and drinking from the many ponds that once existed on the common. Much of the Stonor family wealth was founded on the sheep and wool trade.

In front of Kiln Cottage are the remains of old clay pits and there was a brickworks here in the 19th century. The brickworks and brick kiln were located to the south of Kiln Cottage, beyond the boundary of the conservation area. There is little evidence of the brick works themselves. The brick kilns beyond the boundary of the

conservation area appear as a depression in the ground which is now treed over. There is no visible evidence of the brick works buildings, the only tangible reminder is the undulating and clearly worked landscape in the vicinity of Kiln Cottage.

It is documented in the parish records of 1847 that there was a victualler's and grocer's in the village. This was most likely The Drover's Public House.

The conservation area was first designated in 1989.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or any sites of archaeological interest identified within the conservation area. However, the hamlet is clearly of an historic nature, and, in the event of archaeological deposits being found, the Council may require archaeological conditions attaching to planning permissions where appropriate, including watching briefs, excavation or similar recording procedures.

## ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Southend Common has similar characteristics to its near neighbour, Northend Common, although Southend is rather smaller. Both have almost triangular-shaped commons which are edged by historic properties. Both also have a feeling of elevation and views down towards the Turville valley. The two places are connected historically, as has already been referred to in the history section, via the physical connection of Turville Heath and Summer Heath.

Although a small conservation area, Southend Common can almost be divided into two character areas. To the north the distinctive features are the traditional historic buildings which surround and face on to the grassy commonland. There is a great feeling of openness, which is contributed to by the long-range countryside views to the north and east. The use of traditional building materials is also particularly important here.

In the southern part of the conservation area there is a greater feeling of enclosure, which is

engendered by the presence of the woodland and more enclosed views. There is no grouping of dwellings as there is to the north. Stonor Lodge occurs to the west, and the only other building, Kiln Cottage, is situated to the east. Both are disassociated from one another in history as well as physically, the lodge naturally being linked with Stonor Park and Kiln Cottage with its history of brick making.

The ponds are important features of the conservation area in terms of its history and the wildlife they support. Pond clearance by local environmental groups is a valued activity here.

## ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF BUILDINGS

Southend Common conservation area contains a grade II listed pair of houses which serve as a lodge to Stonor Park. They are of the mid-19th century, and well decorated with knapped flint and red brick dressings which appear as raised quoins, bonded pilasters, diaper patterning, plinth and dentil eaves. The scalloped wooden bargeboards have pierced quatrefoils, and at the gable ends there are gabled porches with arched entries. The casement windows to the front are of cast iron.

North from the elaborate listed lodge is the former Drovers Public House, now a dwelling called Drovers. Approaching Drovers from the south, the fine flint elevations of the late 18th century house can be admired. The south-facing elevation was once the frontage of the house. It is formally balanced with a central door. The east elevation shows the twin hipped roofs with a large central stack between. From the east view, it can be seen that the left section is the older, the right section was probably built in the early 19th century. The house has been altered and modernised since 1987, and further modifications are still underway. A large extension to the house has been built as a rear wing. The outbuilding to the north of the house has been reconstructed following storm damage. The modern flint work at the road-side elevation is of a very good quality.

East of Drovers is a terrace of three cottages, nos. 38, 39 and 40. This small terrace of estate workers' cottages was built around the mid 19th

century. The frontage of the cottages, which face the common, has been altered a little with the insertion of new windows and the addition of a porch. However, the terrace still presents an attractive view at the edge of the common. The frontage of the terrace has an almost classical feel. It is symmetrically balanced with a large central gable and brick piers either side. The frontage of the whole is in chequer brick-work, with a dentil course at the eaves. Larger extensions to the terrace have judiciously been kept to the rear.

Facing the opposite side of the common from Drovers is a ribbon of pretty flint cottages. Dating from the mid 19th century, these small farm workers' cottages have been altered over the years. The first, Harvest Cottage (no. 4), originally had a narrow frontage like its neighbour, no 5. Both cottages were very small, and had just a single room on each of the two floors. The entrance to each cottage was from the side by the external chimney stacks. Both dwellings were in a dilapidated condition until restored in the mid-1970s by the present occupant of Harvest Cottage. The dwellings were linked at some stage in the past, as a doorframe still exists. Harvest Cottage has been extended by a further bay beyond the once external chimney stack, and again in the late 1980s by a single storey extension with an external chimney. Both extensions are in flint with brick dressings to match the original. The modern flint work is of a good quality. The rear elevation retains part of the original cottage wall, which includes blue vitrified bricks and an original wooden window frame. There is also a splendid catslide roof in old clay tiles as part of the new extension. Within the garden, the old outside wooden privy has been retained, and to the frontage is a flint and brick garage.

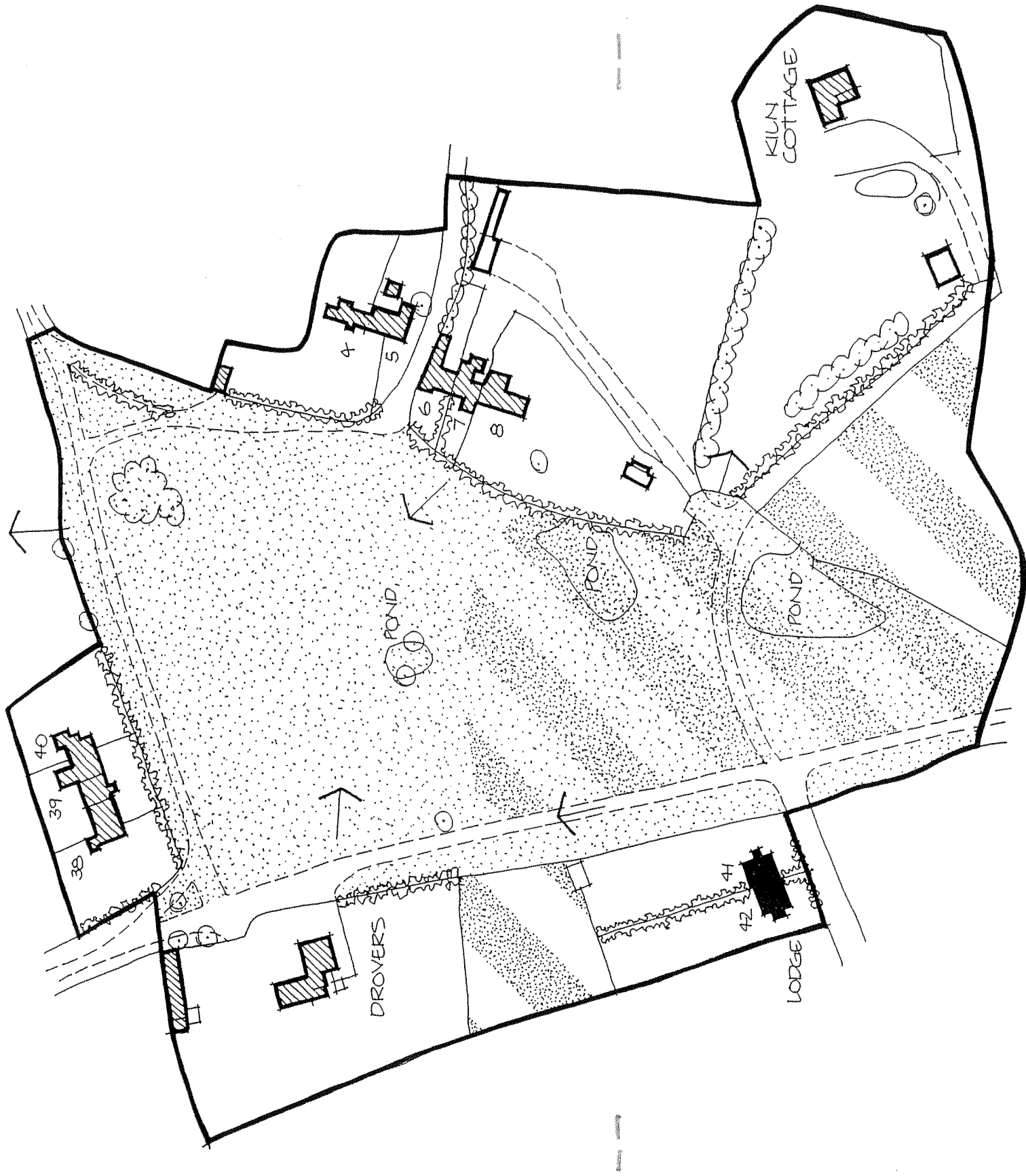
No 5 next door also had a flint and brick frontage, although little remains. At some stage, the first floor of the cottage had been given a mock Tudor decoration of render, with mock beams attached. This has since been removed, and further alterations made to include a bay window to the ground floor, the roof of which covers most of the first floor elevation, so little of the original flint work is left exposed. The cottage has also been extended to the rear and a porch added to the side. In the rear garden is an engaging weatherboarded outbuilding with an attractive old tiled roof and decorative barge boards. Part of the building also

# Southend Conservation Area Character Survey Map








## LISTED BUILDINGS

Grade II - Buildings of special interest

**Lodge to Stonor Park** - Mid 19th century, well decorated with knapped flint and red brick dressings which appear as raised quoins, bonded pilasters, diaper patterning, plinth and dentil eaves. Scalloped wooden bargeboards with pierced quatrefoils, gable ends have gabled porches with arched entries. Casement windows to the front are of cast iron.



## SOUTHEND COMMON, TURVILLE.

-  Listed Building
-  Other Significant Buildings
-  Important Hedges
-  Important Trees & Tree Groups
-  Important Views
-  Registered Common Land & Important Open Space
-  Important Woodland

served as an outdoor privy at one time. The property once had a well, now filled in.

On the other side of the lane, the ribbon of flint cottages (early to mid 19th century) continues firstly with Lea Cottage (no.6). This was once a tiny cottage, the frontage width including only the narrow door and small casement window. This building was possibly the oldest the group. The dormer window is an addition and has an unusual flint gable, probably an early 20th century alteration. The modern extensions to this property occur to the left, and are from the early 1970s. The main part of the extension is a large two-storey block which although it has been kept to the rear of the original cottage, is rather out of scale with the dwellings surrounding it and this is most evident from the side view. The two-storey extension unavoidably heightens the roof line of the terrace of cottages. However, more attention has been paid to the frontage view of the addition, such as the flint in the gable end, so the overall effect is far less harsh than the side view.

Modifications to the extensions occurred in the 1990s, and have resulted in the improvement of the front elevation with an attractive sloping roof over the single storey extension, which adds to the character of the group and further softens the frontage impact of the earlier extensions. The front porch was added in the mid 1970s.

Next to Lea Cottage is Barn Cottage (no. 7), another pleasing flint cottage. Originally slightly larger than its neighbour, Barn Cottage has a frontage with two windows in the first floor. It possibly had a third first floor window, which is now part of the neighbouring Flint Cottage, as the ridge line is broken and higher beyond the third first floor window. At the ground floor is a modern porch which is well constructed, simple and without excessive detailing, in flint with brick dressings to match the original. The modern flint work is of a good quality and the porch, built in 1990, replaced an unsightly addition.

Next is Flint Cottage, aptly named as the cottage has admirable knapped and course flint work, and minimal use of brick. Flint Cottage was once two cottages, nos 8 and 9. The end of terrace, no. 9 has an external chimney stack. There is a modern porch to the frontage. The flint panel is in the spirit of the cottage, but here the original dwelling includes both knapped and unknapped flint, whereas the porch includes entirely knapped flint.

Beyond the cottages and to the south-east of the conservation area is the early 18th century Kiln Cottage. This attractive cottage stands apart from those clustered around the central common in a more open setting. It can only be glimpsed in the distance from a nearby footpath which gives it a secretive, mysterious aura. The frontage elevation is of flint with brick dressings, and the south facing gable elevation has chalk block to the ground floor. Like most dwellings in Southend, the property has been considerably extended with the addition of a rear and side wing in brick.

## MATERIALS

Flint work within the conservation area is an essential part of its character, and its use is widespread in the conservation area either with elaborate brick dressings such as at nos. 41 and 42 or more commonly with scant use of brick such as at the original parts of Drovers, Kiln Cottage, and the ribbon of cottages to the east of the common. Flint has been used in modern extensions with varying degrees of success, the success hinging upon the quality of the workmanship when compared with the original flint work. In some cases, use of an appropriate brick without incorporating flint work would be preferable to poor quality flinting or token panels.

Red brick is the next most commonly-used material in the conservation area. Traditionally it is used with blue, glazed bricks such as the chequer pattern at nos. 38 to 40 and at the rear elevation of Harvest Cottage (no. 4). Some modern extensions have used a good choice of brick, such as at no. 5 and Drovers.

Plain clay tiles are found throughout as the roofing material for the buildings, with the exception of the lodge which has a slate roof. Clay tiles are a particularly attractive feature of Southend.

Walling is not historically a feature of the conservation area, evergreen hedging finding preference in this rural conservation area. However, a brick and flint wall is presently under construction at Drovers, which is beginning to mellow in to its rural surroundings.

For domestic driveways and the like, there is a predominant use of gravel and shingle which is

the surfacing most suited to a rural conservation area of this type. Surfacing such as concrete and tarmac are out of place in this rural setting. Regular paving, pavements and setts in large areas can also appear discordant. The concreting of the track in front of nos. 38 to 40 appears as a rather urban intrusion in the conservation area. A positive feature of the conservation area is that vehicle parking for nos. 5 to 8 is removed to the rear of the dwellings, leaving the front gardens leading directly on to the common with no clutter of cars or driveways. The lack of frontage parking and the removal of cars from main views is a beneficial feature of the Southend Common conservation area.

Fenestration throughout the conservation area is of the casement type, mostly in traditional, painted wooden frames which are appropriate to the area. Doors, too, are simple in appearance, befitting the nature of the conservation area. Painted board doors are most appropriate in the traditional cottages, such as at nos. 4 and 5. Nos. 41 and 42 have replacement doors, which appear out of character with the listed lodge. Replacement windows and doors in synthetic materials tend to jar with the traditional materials of these pretty Chiltern cottages. Whilst Drovers has replacement windows with traditional wooden frames, the staining of the timber is not traditional, and would be more appropriate and fitting to the conservation area if painted white.

## TREES AND VEGETATION

Trees make a significant contribution to the character of Southend Common conservation area. The wooded area is contained to the south, and individual trees are more notable to the north, where the common is predominately grassland. In the 19th century, however, all of the common would have been heathland and rough grazing.

Hedgerows also make a considerable contribution to the character of the conservation area. To the frontage of all the cottages surrounding the common (save Drovers) is a low clipped hedge which appears to frame the common. Hedges are mostly of Hawthorn with Holly, Yew and Box.

Drovers has some new hedge-laying to the south fronting the road, which will be an attractive addition to the conservation area.

## OPEN SPACE

The commonland is the central feature of the conservation area, and essential to its character. As such, it is identified as important open space.

Originally the common would have been treeless, a wide expanse of rough grazing. However, the trees to the south of the common have become a feature of the area, and link across from Stonor Park to the west and Binfield Bottom wood to the east. To the north the common should remain open.



## VIEWS

There are a number of important views in the conservation area, some of which have been identified on the survey map. There is a splendid view from the northern edge of the conservation area across the open countryside, with the Turville Valley spreading away to the right, and the brick neo-Georgian replacement Turville Court in the centre of the vista. From Drovers looking eastward, there is a pleasant view of the historic flint cottages, with the backdrop of Binfield Bottom woods, containing a notable Rookery. Distant views from the northeast of the common incorporate glimpses of Turville Windmill which stands above the valley.

Further south, and looking north, is a view of the original part of Drovers and its flint elevations. On the opposite side of the common is a view of Kiln Cottage within its setting. From the terraced cottages to the east of the conservation area there is an attractive view west to nos. 38 to 40.



## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ADVICE

The policies and proposals of the Wycombe District Local Plan are the primary source of reference for development control advice. In addition, the Council's approved Heritage Strategy is seen as a supporting document to the plan.

This character survey is also intended to provide broad guidance of an informal nature in considering new development in the conservation area. Below is a brief check-list taking account of the above text.

To safeguard, preserve and enhance the appearance and special character of Southend Common conservation area:-

- In the conservation area, higher standards of design are required, as it is the function of the planning authority to consider all applications as to whether they preserve or enhance the special character as identified in this appraisal.
- Any new building works, such as extensions, must be designed not as a separate entity, but should be sympathetic in form and scale with the existing buildings and the conservation area as a whole.
- Listed and other significant buildings are identified on the survey map, and their specific qualities are described in the text above. Any new development must not harm their integrity or visual quality, and it should be recognised that new development may always not be acceptable.
- Materials for any new building works must be sympathetic to the rural character of the area. Flint is a material characteristic of this conservation area, but care should be taken to ensure that the quality of any new flint work is of a high standard to match the original. Plain clay roofing tiles are also characteristic of the area and will generally be requested for new development around the central common. Re-used clay tiles will be most appropriate and may be specified.
- Applications for development adjoining but beyond the conservation area boundary will be assessed for their effect upon it, and may be refused permission if this is considered adverse.
- Surfacing within domestic curtilages for driveways and the like should be in keeping with the rural nature of the hamlet, and of an informal type such as the shingle predominately used. Large areas of tarmac and concrete are out of place in this rural setting. Regular paving, pavements and setts may also look discordant, and may not always be appropriate.
- Inappropriate replacement windows and doors can damage the character of the conservation area. Traditional natural materials should be used in order to safeguard the special character of the conservation area. Painted timber casement window frames with small panes and painted simple board doors are most appropriate, and are to be preferred over staining. Modern substitute materials such as UPVC and aluminium are not appropriate.
- Areas of open space and gaps between buildings will be carefully considered for protection from development or enclosure in order to protect the character of the Southend Common Conservation Area, the setting of historic buildings, and any important views.
- All trees in conservation areas are protected, but special consideration should be given to those trees indicated on the conservation area to ensure that they are not harmed. New development should recognise this and not present a risk to their continued future growth and habit.
- Although hedges cannot be specially protected through legislation, those hedgerows indicated on the character survey map should be retained and, where possible, enhanced.
- Special care must be taken to ensure that views looking into and out from the conservation area are not spoilt. Those of particular importance are marked on the survey map.

### FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Wycombe District Council's Planning, Transport and Development Service has a number of publications which offer further guidance. Ask the Conservation Officer for information on which Heritage Guidance Notes are currently available and appropriate.

The **Conservation Officer** is always pleased to give advice on all heritage matters and can be contacted on 01494 421578 or seen by appointment in the Council Offices or on site.

Development Control matters within the Southend Common Conservation Area are the responsibility of the **West Team** who can be contacted on 01494 421531.

Planning Policy matters are the responsibility of the **Policy Unit** who can be contacted on 01494 421545.