



*Basingstoke  
and Deane*

Conservation Area Appraisal

# Hurstbourne Priors



...making a difference



*St Andrew's Church viewed from the south-west*

## Introduction

The Hurstbourne Priors Conservation Area was designated in 1990 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the village.

Having designated the Conservation Area, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that those elements that form its particular character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced, especially when considering planning applications.

It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities or elements that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area and to assess how they combine to justify its designation as a Conservation Area. Such factors can include:

- its historic development;
- the contribution of individual or groups of buildings to the streetscene and the spaces that surround them; and
- the relationship of the built environment with the landscape.

They can also include the less tangible senses and experiences such as noise or smells, which can play a key part in forming the distinctive character of an area.

The Appraisal takes the form of written text and an Appraisal plan. In both respects every effort has been made to include or analyse those elements key to the special character of the area. Where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value to the Conservation Area. The document is intended to be an overall framework and guide within which decisions can be made on a site-specific basis.

This Appraisal of the Hurstbourne Priors Conservation Area follows its review in 2003 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and explains what its designation means for those who live and work in the area.

This document was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane on 17 July 2003 and complements the policies of the Borough Local Plan (review).

It has been subject to consultation with Councillors, the Parish Council and local amenity groups. A full list of consultees, copies of their responses, and details of the Council's consideration of the issues raised during the consultation period are available for inspection, by appointment, at the Civic Offices during normal office hours.

## Location and Population

The village of Hurstbourne Priors is situated in the valley of the River Bourne, a tributary of the River Test. The settlement lies two miles west of Whitchurch, and two miles south-east of St Mary Bourne. The B3048 runs north and south through the Conservation Area, which is about a mile long. It encompasses much of the lower flood plain of the River Bourne, with the village of Hurstbourne Priors to the south and the railway to the north. The River Bourne takes a south-easterly course through the village, eventually joining the River Test, which marks the south-east boundary of the village.

The population of the Hurstbourne Priors Conservation Area in 1998 was approximately 165 (projection based on the Hampshire County Council Planning Department Small Area Population Forecasts 1995).

## Historic Development

### Settlement Origins

The first record of Hurstbourne Priors was in a Saxon grant of 790. King Boetric of Wessex confirmed it as a gift to Prince Hemele, in exchange for land on the River Meon. The Prince then granted the Manor to the Monks of Abingdon. The Abingdon Chronicle states that Prince Hamele 'personally' laid the King's Charter on the altar of the Abbey. King Egbert later acquired the manor, which passed to his son, King Ethelwulf, and in turn, to his son, King Alfred the Great. The manor then reverted to the Monks of Winchester for the support of a refectory. About AD 971, the monastery received an additional dedication in honour of St Swithun. In this way the Prior of St Swithuns came into the possession of the Manor of Hurstbourne Priors, and this is how 'Priors' was added to the old name of the village.

At the time of the Domesday Survey, the manor of Hurstbourne Priors belonged to the Monks of Winchester. In 1205, Pope Innocent III confirmed the prior and monks in possession of the manor. They continued to own it until the Dissolution in 1535. The manor came into the ownership of King Henry VIII, who granted the Estate to Edward, Duke of Somerset in 1547. He held it until his execution on Tower Hill in 1552. The following year it was granted to Sir John Gate, the King's Vice Chamberlain and Captain of the Guard. Later the same year he was executed for attempting to put Lady Jane Grey on the throne. In 1558, Sir Robert Oxenbridge purchased the manor from the Crown and it remained in his family until 1636. It was then sold to Sir Henry Wallop of Farleigh Wallop, and remained in this family for three hundred years. The Wallops were created Earls of Portsmouth in 1743.



*The Long House*



*Mistletoe Cottage*



*Tree-lined approach to St Andrew's Church*



*The Village Hall*

## Settlement Development

The main B3048 north/south road lies in the valley of the River Bourne, running the length of the Conservation Area. The settlement is concentrated along this road on the western side of the river, at the southern end of the Conservation Area. There are a few scattered buildings following the road to the north towards the crossroads, near the railway viaduct and Chapmansford Farm. The only development on the eastern side of the river was The Grange and The Lodge, neither of which survive. The main settlement is located on the rising ground to the south of the flood plain of the River Bourne. St Andrew's Church is situated within the flood plain, with evidence of an earlier settlement in this area provided by the existence of earthworks.

From the 17th century onwards, the development and historic patronage of Hurstbourne Priors was greatly influenced by the Portsmouth family. Agriculture and forestry on the manorial estate was the principal occupation for the men of the village until the Second World War. Following the departure of the Portsmouths, and the break-up of the estate, several ancient dwellings were demolished and replaced by modern houses. Farming still continued on traditional lines, most of the land having been purchased by Lord Camrose. In 1994, Manor Farm was sold and the land used as a stud and equitation centre. This change led to a new use for the old farm buildings, and additional building for stabling and storage. However, in spite of these changes and the new post-war houses, the settlement remains of special historic character and appearance. The northern side of the village is enhanced by the setting of the cricket ground, with St Andrew's Church in the background.

The manorial church, dedicated to St Andrew, was consecrated in AD802. A Charter of Denewulf, Saxon Bishop of Winchester, refers to this event. The present church was rebuilt by the Normans in the 12th century and by Lord Portsmouth in 1870. It is generally accepted that this stands on the site of the original Saxon building.

Hurstbourne Priors was patronised by two famous authors in the past. Angler, Plunket Greene lived in the Long House. He wrote the famous fishing book 'Where the Bright Waters Meet', describing the meeting of the Bourne and the River Test. William Cobbett also wrote of the village, as he passed through on his famous horseback journey.

## An Appraisal of the Conservation Area

### An Overview

The Appraisal plan identifies those buildings, views, and key features considered as essential to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition to listed buildings it also includes unlisted buildings of particular individual or group value, which are indicated on the Appraisal plan as notable. This is not to undermine the value of other unmarked buildings or structures that reflect the historic development of the village without detracting from its special qualities.

Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area should not be underestimated and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.

The special appearance of the area is derived from the linear arrangement of well-spaced historic buildings along the gently curving north/south road. This has a small cluster of the oldest structures around the junction with the B3400 and B3048.

Although of varied date, the buildings have a uniformity of appearance. This is derived from the prominent vernacular form, scale and materials particular to this part of Hampshire, especially timber-frame, thatch, flint and mellow red brick.

The buildings are mostly residential. However, the overriding character of the Conservation Area is strongly rural, derived from the open countryside setting, that dominates views from the area in all directions. This is reinforced by the limited development to the east of the road, and the local topography of the area, allowing long range views into, through, and beyond the village. These views and the relationship of the settlement to St Andrew's Church result in a distinctive feature of Hurstbourne Priors. They also define the special visual and historic interest of the area.

### Built Form

Nine buildings in the Hurstbourne Priors Conservation Area are included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. St Andrew's Church and The Bee House are listed as being of national importance (Grade II\*). The others are listed as being of local or regional interest (Grade II). They represent a mix of building types, reflecting the social history and development of the village.

There are also a number of unlisted buildings, contributing positively to the special character of the Conservation Area. These date mainly from the 19th and 20th centuries, are scattered around the settlements, and represent the expansion of the village. They are predominantly



*Long view of the village from the south*



*St Andrew's Church from the north-west*



*The Bee House*



*Island Mill from the south*

constructed of vernacular materials and reinforce the local road pattern. Some possess features of particular interest. But, in general, it is their group value, in association with adjacent listed buildings, that significantly contributes to the overall special interest of the Conservation Area.

Historic buildings of particular individual or group value are indicated as notable on the Appraisal plan. This is not to undermine the value of other unmarked buildings or structures that reflect the historic development of the village, without detracting from its special qualities.

## Key Individual Buildings

St Andrew's Church was consecrated in AD 802 and rebuilt by the Normans in the 12th century. It is believed this construction was on the site of the original Saxon building. There were later alterations in the 13th, 16th and 18th centuries. In 1870, the church was extensively restored and rebuilt by the architects Clark and Holland, and the present nave and west tower are of this date. The 13th century chancel was heavily restored in 1870, but retains some medieval details. These include the chancel arch, and the outline of the blocked priest's door, which is visible on the south wall. The church is constructed of a number of different building materials. The tower is of grey brick with stone dressings, and the original Norman west door has been re-used for the entrance. The nave has a red clay tile roof, and flint walling with stone dressings. The south chapel is in red brickwork, the chancel and Elizabethan north chapel are both rendered. The tomb of Robert Oxenbridge from 1574 survives in the church.

The church is situated to the east of the main settlement, on slightly lower ground along the valley floor. It is surrounded by a belt of open land to the north and south, and framed against a backdrop of woodland to the east. Given the intrinsic architectural value of the building, and the setting afforded by its location, the building forms a prominent and imposing landmark dominating views throughout the settlement. The formal tree-lined approach to the west end and tower contrasts with the otherwise informal rural qualities and the churchyard and its immediate countryside setting. This emphasises the status of the church in relation to the settlement.

The Bee House is a three-storey rectangular building, at the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, on the northern side of the B3400 road to Whitchurch. Dating from the early 18th century, with some late 19th and 20th century alterations, it was originally a gazebo or garden pavilion to Hurstbourne Park. It was possibly designed by the 18th century architect Thomas Archer. The building is constructed of red brick in Flemish bond with blue headers. The middle-storey is the tallest, with a narrower basement below and a deep parapet above. Below the parapet is a moulded brick cornice. There are central circular panels of recessed brickwork in the west, north and east elevations and

three rectangular recessed panels in the southern elevation. Situated on a slight rise at the foot of the north/south slope of the valley sides, this building forms a prominent and picturesque focus for views eastward from the settlement.

Island Mill, dating from 1753, is one of a few sporadic buildings following the road between Hurstbourne Priors and St Mary Bourne. This substantial building is constructed of red brick in Flemish bond with blue headers, and has a half-hipped tile roof. The central chimneystack has a stone panel inscribed 'TW1753', referring to the then owner of the estate, Thomas Wallop. The building is located on a slight bend in the road, its front and rear elevations punctuating the otherwise verdant and undeveloped character of this part of the Conservation Area.



*Hurstbourne Priors House and brick boundary wall*

## Significant Groups of Buildings

Chapmansford Farm is in the north of the Conservation Area. This contemporary complex comprises the farmhouse, agricultural buildings and a large walled garden to the south and west of the farmhouse. This complex forms a strong grouping that reinforces the historic farming traditions and rural character of the area.

The historic core of the settlement is formed by a small cluster of buildings, of varied character, around a staggered road junction. Manor Farm, to the west of the junction, is a substantial brick building, dating from the late 18th century. Although set back behind a tall boundary wall and mature planting, the extensive clay tile roof and massive chimneystacks are particularly prominent in views of the settlement from the south. Associated with the farmhouse are two separate courtyard complexes of farm buildings and stables. The buildings to the south are of brick and flint construction characteristic of their 19th century date. They reinforce the traditional rural character and origins of the village. Those to the west of the main farmhouse are also of brick and flint construction. They contribute both to the setting of the building, and to the definition of the western entrance to the village.

Opposite Manor Farm is Hurstbourne Priors House and its associated buildings. The house is a substantial 18th century building. Its position on the roadside is emphasised by two gables, surmounted by corbelled chimneystacks. The tall brick boundary walls obscure the main east façade, however, the extensive clay tile roof is a prominent feature and adds significantly to the visual interest of the area. The two buildings relate closely to each other in terms of their intended status and construction.

To the east of the house is Fellowes Cottage and adjoining converted stables. Set back from the main road, behind an informal triangular green, are Mistletoe Cottage and The Old School House. The view



*Grouping of flint and brick buildings viewed from the churchyard*



*Bourne Cottage and open farmland setting*

south-west from here is particularly notable because of the irregular juxtaposition of varied roof slopes and chimneystacks. The projecting brick gable of Fellowes Cottage, with its dentilated brick eaves detail and ornate cast iron casements, adds to the visual interest and historic character of this area.

There are several buildings of visual interest in the irregular linear development on the western side of the B3048, to the north of the crossroads. Many are constructed of flint with red brick dressings, a particularly distinctive and uniform characteristic of this part of the Conservation Area.

The buildings are most notable when viewed as a group from the churchyard. The Long House and Bourne Cottage are Grade II listed.

The Long House dates from the 18th and 19th centuries. It has a central symmetrical façade of two-storeys and five windows, and later wings to the north and south. The building is constructed of vertical panels in blue headers, wider panels in red Flemish bond brickwork, and has a red clay tile roof. Bourne Cottage is slightly further north along the B3048 and dates from the 17th century. The building was originally a terrace of cottages, but is now one dwelling. Constructed of flint with red brick dressings, it has a red clay tile roof, with five gabled dormers on the southern elevation.

Many of the elevations fronting the B3048 are characterised by full gables or gabled dormers. Bourne Cottage is set apart from the main grouping by an area of open farmland. This, and the orientation of the building at right angles to the road, make it particularly prominent in views north along the road.

South of the crossroads, on the western side of the B3048 are five houses of differing styles. Southernmost is a terrace of cottages constructed of red brick with a red tile roof, set at right angles to the road. To the north is a small but prominent grouping of three thatched cottages. A red brick house is located on the bend in the road, terminating views south along the road. The former Post Office (No 30) on the opposite side of the road, dates from the 17th century, with 19th century additions. The exterior walls have been rendered, concealing a timber-frame construction and the hipped roof is thatched. Close by is Longthatch, also dating from the 17th century, with later alterations. This was formerly a row of four cottages, but is now one dwelling with a half-hipped thatched roof. The exterior is similarly rendered, concealing a timber-framed interior, only visible on the northern gable.

## The Character and Importance of Public and Private Spaces, Trees, Hedges and other Natural or Cultivated Features

The open spaces in this Conservation Area are particularly important. They define the open, rural character and long views characteristic of Hurstbourne Priors. The northern half of the Conservation Area encompasses much of the flood plain of the River Bourne, which is less vegetated than the southern part of the area. Although the road has a verdant character, there are extensive views both within the Conservation Area, and across the surrounding countryside. Very little settlement has taken place in this half of the Conservation Area. Chapmansford Farm with its associated buildings, and Island Mill are isolated within this open landscape.

Beyond the River Bourne, there are extensive vistas north and south along the valley bottom, which is bordered by copse and woodland on both sides. This area is an extension of the nearby Hurstbourne Park, landscaped by Capability Brown. Following the road south around a sharp bend, views towards the village of Hurstbourne Priors and to St Andrew's Church are revealed. These important vistas across the surrounding landscape, to the east of the road, continue throughout the length of the settlement.

The small triangular green by the crossroads, is informal in appearance, but contributes to the area as the focus of development, associated with the Old School and Village Hall buildings. However smaller cultivated areas, such as gardens, make a significant contribution to the open rural character of the area and the setting of individual buildings. Many of these are set back from the main road. The verges to the roads are generally hedge-lined and an extensive programme to replace lost hedges has begun to the north of the village. Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area should not be underestimated and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.

Mature trees are scattered throughout the Conservation Area, both singly, and in copses and woodlands. These provide the traditional river valley setting. By the Bourne rivulet, willows abound, and some alder are also present. Northwards, is a pair of spreading London planes in the middle of a field. Near Chapmansford Farm, are several cricket bat willows and one or two individual hybrid black poplars. In the main the tree cover is broad-leaved in character, with a few conifers.

In the village, limes predominate, and an important avenue of mature lime trees line the road to St Andrew's Church, running east from the B3048. This focuses the eye on the west tower at the far end. Other species in the Conservation Area include several notable walnuts, a copper beech and an occasional oak.



*View southwards through the village*



*North and south Tugbury*



*Hurstbourne Park*



*The Viaduct*

Two trees in the Conservation Area are worthy of special note. The first is an ancient female yew in the grounds of St Andrew's Church. The second is a magnificent horse chestnut to the rear of the church.

## Other Features of Archaeological or Historical Interest

Of particular streetscape importance are the tall roadside boundary walls that abut the highway to the west of the crossroads. Sweeping down the hill, they focus views into the village from the preceding countryside.

Part of the boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by the massive brick viaduct. This was constructed in the 19th century to take the railway through this part of the Bourne Valley, and remains in use. An imposing structure, it is a well-known landmark contributing to the distinctiveness of the Conservation Area.

Several older walls constructed of brick or cob survive within the Conservation Area. Examples include the walled garden at Chapmansford Farm, the wall to the south of Longhatch and the dwarf wall leading to the church, which surrounds much of the graveyard.

## Building Materials

The prevalent traditional building materials are flint with red brick dressings, timber-frame, mellow red-brick, and red clay tile or thatched roofs. Both casement and sash windows are prevalent, and many buildings have large chimneystacks. The Old School House is an exception in the village, as it is constructed of flint with yellow brick dressings and has a slate roof.

Flint is used extensively for all building types. It is found either in random walling construction or more ordered, coursed work, characteristic of the 19th century.

Given the domestic scale and simple vernacular architecture of the buildings in the Conservation Area, historic joinery (such as sash or casement windows, doors and door hoods) are often the features that define the appearance of properties. Although some buildings have been modernised, the use and overall effect of inappropriate replacement windows and doors is limited.

## The Setting of the Conservation Area

The village of Hurstbourne Priors lies in the River Bourne valley in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The River Bourne, a tributary of the River Test, rises in the north from a spring at the base of the North Wessex chalk downs. The valley is characterised by steep open sides with woodlands and copses running alongside the river.

The Hurstbourne Park Countryside Heritage Site runs along the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. This is an area of ancient pasture woodland that was originally emparked in the 14th century as a deer park. The area was partially landscaped in the 18th century by Capability Brown. It contains a significant number of ancient trees, which support a rich fauna of unusual insects and other invertebrates. The park is Grade II listed in the English Heritage 'Register of Historic Gardens' because of these important habitats, and archaeological and historic features. The Bee House and adjacent woodland in the Conservation Area are included in this site. The house is situated on higher ground to the north of the area, and is a distant landmark in views across the park from the church.



*View northwards towards Bourne Cottage*

## Areas of Archaeological Significance

Every settlement contains within it archaeological evidence of its origins and development, for the economy and industry of the community and for the lives and lifestyles of past inhabitants.

It is in the Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) that it is most likely that such archaeological remains will be encountered.

Where a development is proposed, the impact that it might have on these remains is a material consideration within the planning process. This may occasionally result in the need for archaeological recording in the case of some developments.

An AHAP is centred on the church, which is surrounded by earthworks. The site of the Grange lies to the east across the River Bourne near the Cascades where the Episcopal manor houses once stood. The Grange was first mentioned in 1255 and known as Hurstbourne Priory until the Dissolution. It was occupied by the Lords of the Manor until 1785, when the building was demolished and replaced by the country house in Hurstbourne Park. This also includes the line of settlement on the west side of the B3048, through the village to the crossroads in the south.

An Area of Archaeological Potential lies to the south of the crossroads, and covers both sides of this part of the B3048 road, including Manor Farm. The gaps between plots could indicate earlier abandonment, or a reduction in the density of the settlement.

Archaeological discoveries have provided evidence for the occupation of this area over the centuries, including various articles from the Prehistoric Iron Age. There have also been many finds from the time of the Belgae invasion and the Roman occupation.

## Conservation Area Planning Controls

The following controls apply within the Conservation Area in addition to normal planning controls:

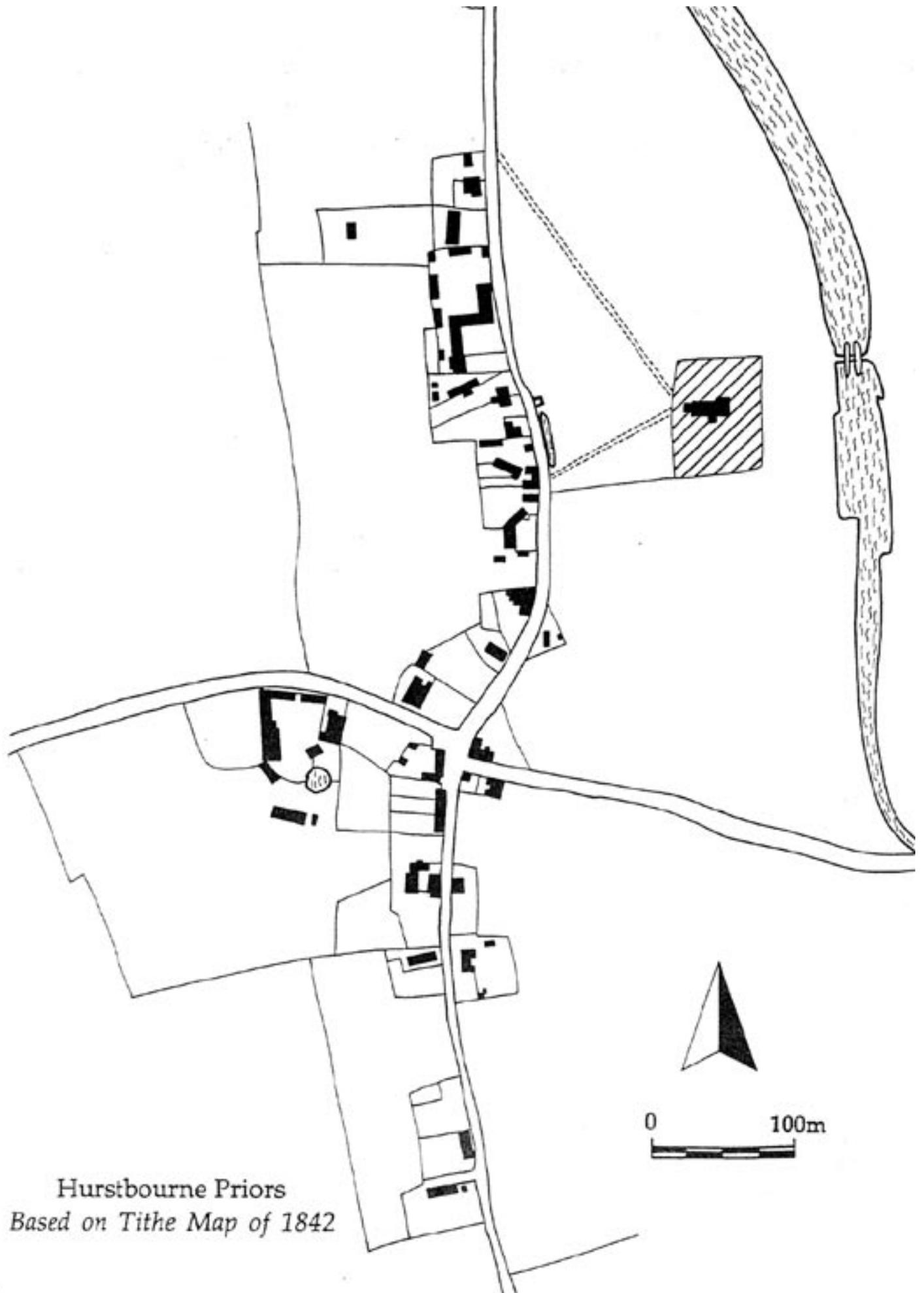
- Conservation Area Consent is normally required for the demolition of buildings or structures over a certain size within a Conservation Area.
- The Council must be given six weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to, cut down or uproot any trees over a certain size in the Conservation Area.
- Planning applications which, in the opinion of the Borough Council, would affect the special character of the Conservation Area must be advertised and the opportunity given for public comment. This may include proposals outside the Conservation Area which nevertheless affect its setting.

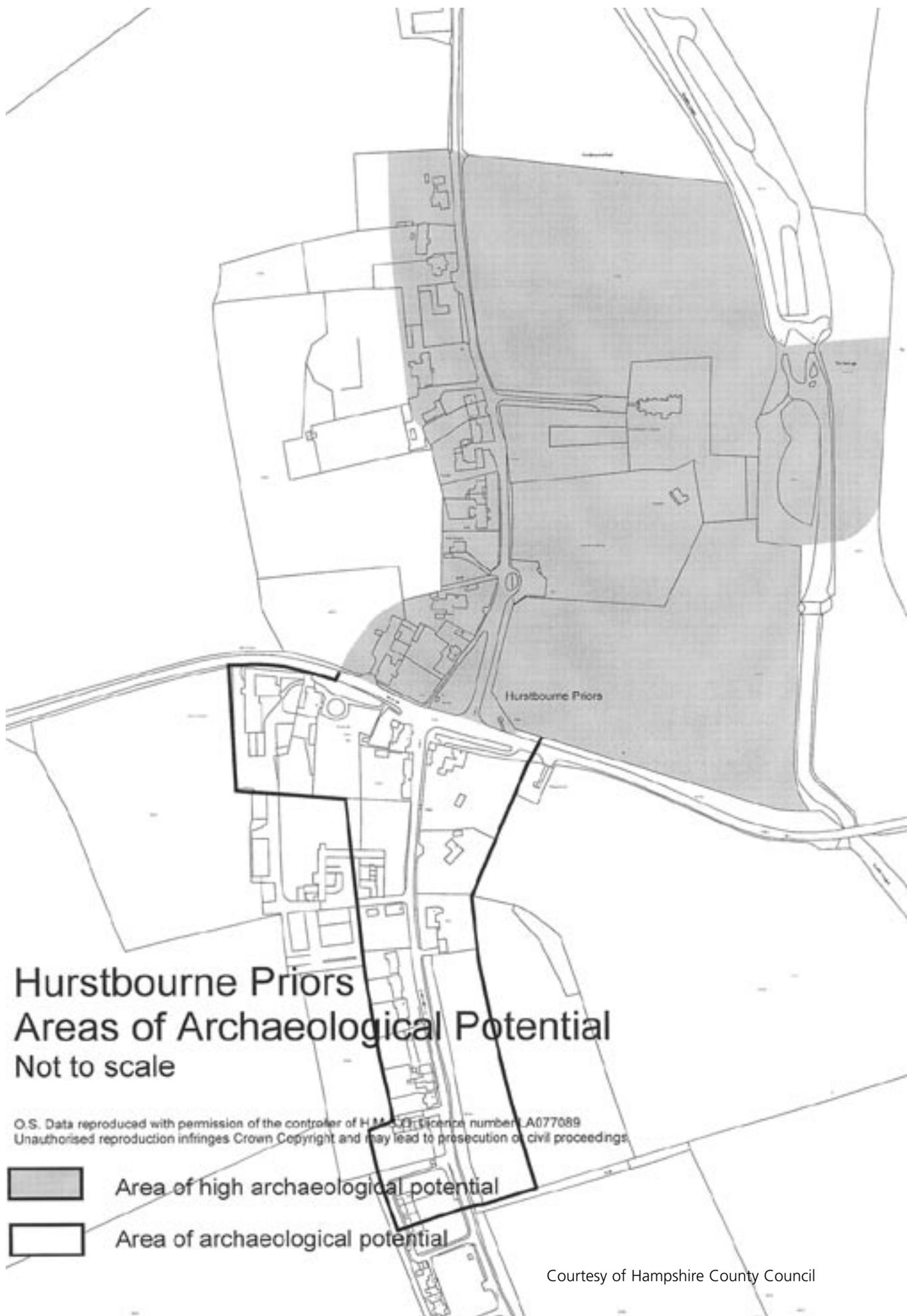
Statutory policies relating to Conservation Areas and listed buildings are set out in the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan. These policies reflect the statutory duty on the Local Planning Authority to have regard to the preservation of historic buildings or their setting, and to the enhancement of areas designated as being of special interest. These policies seek to ensure that particular attention will be paid to the scale, height, form, materials and detailing of proposals including boundary treatments and other features of note. In order to consider the implications of development and given the detail required, the Borough Council will normally require proposals within the Conservation Area to be submitted in the form of a full, and not outline application. The Borough Council's conservation officers are available for advice and information on all matters relating to development proposals in the Conservation Area.

## Grants

The Borough Council provides grants for various types of work. These include Historic Buildings Grants, Environment and Regeneration Grants and Village and Community Hall Grants. Leaflets are available explaining the purpose and criteria for each grant and an approach to the Council is recommended for further information on any grant.







# Conservation Area Appraisal

# Hurstbourne Priors

...making a difference

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