



*Basingstoke
and Deane*

Conservation Area Appraisal

Laverstoke and Freefolk



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Introduction



Manor Farm House and River Test



Laverstoke House and parkland setting

The Laverstoke and Freefolk Conservation Area was designated in 1990 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the area.

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 include:

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

They can also include the less tangible senses and experiences, such as noise or smells, which can nevertheless 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 Laverstoke and Freefolk Conservation Area follows its review in 2003 by the 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 20th February 2003 and complements the policies of the Borough Local Plan (review).

This document was subject to consultation with Councillors, Parish Councils 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 settlements of Laverstoke and Freefolk are situated on the main road between Overton and Whitchurch to the north-west of Basingstoke. They lie on the river valley floor of the River Test, within the rolling chalk landscape.

Historic Development

Settlement Origins

The name Laverstoke derives from the Old English 'lafercestoc', meaning 'lark dependant farm'. The settlement of Laverstoke was owned by Hyde Abbey (Winchester) from an early date, and in the reign of Edward the Confessor was held by Wulfgifu. On her death, according to the entry in the Domesday book, William the Conqueror restored the manor to the abbey for the absolution of his own soul and that of his wife. The manor then remained in the possession of the abbey until its dissolution when it became the property of the Crown.

After that time it had several owners, until Joseph Portal acquired it in 1759. Joseph's father, Henri Portal, son of a refugee Huguenot family, obtained the lease of Bere Mill near Whitchurch in 1712, and began making paper. In 1718, he acquired the lease of the neighbouring mill at Laverstoke (previously a corn mill) and in 1724 he secured the contract for the manufacture of Bank of England notes. Joseph Portal continued the paper making industry and, in 1759, purchased the Laverstoke estate. He became the High Sheriff of the county in 1763. Laverstoke House was rebuilt in 1798 for the Portals and stands in a park of 275 acres on the bank of the River Test. The design of the building was inspired by draft plans produced by Joseph Bonomi.

The name Freefolk derives from the Old English 'freefolc', meaning 'freefolk'. At the time of the Domesday survey, the Manor of Freefolk was held by Ralf, son of Seifrid, who held the Manor of Whitchurch. Early in the 12th century, the manor was held by Robert de Sifrewast and, in 1269, Henry Husee acquired Freefolk. The manor subsequently passed through the female line until 1366, when Freefolk was granted to Sir Thomas Ludlow. The Manor of Freefolk then passed through many hands until Joseph Portal purchased it in 1769. In 1872, Freefolk was untied for ecclesiastical purposes with Laverstoke but, prior to this, it was a chapelry dependent upon Whitchurch.



Freefolk from the south



Bere Mill from the north

Settlement Development

Laverstoke



Laverstoke Mill House



Portal Estate Cottages, Laverstoke Lane



St Nicholas and St Mary's, Freefolk

The modern area of settlement lies on the south bank of the River Test and Laverstoke Lane to the south, along which the majority of houses lie in an irregular linear pattern. This present focus of the settlement is near the mill and probably represents workers' housing of the post medieval period. The remains of the Church of St Mary are on the north side of the river in the grounds of Laverstoke House. A chapel, which was dependent upon Whitchurch, was recorded in 1187.

The historic development of both Laverstoke and Freefolk is inherently related to their situation along the course of the River Test, with the presence of two mill buildings known from the time of the Domesday survey. However, of particular influence in shaping the character and appearance of the Conservation Area was the long spanning presence of the paper making industry and the associated wealth of the local Portal family.

Bere Mill is still separated from the two settlements by extensive water meadows. However, the principal mill complex, now dating primarily from 1881, dominates the settlement of Freefolk. Most buildings in Freefolk were constructed to house the mill workers and date from 1785. The line of architecturally distinctive Portal estate cottages further to the south, along Laverstoke Lane, can also be found in several other local villages, like Southington and Quidhampton.

Of similar important historic and architectural interest are several buildings commissioned by the Portal family. Designed by architects of considerable repute, including G E Street, E T Mort and indirectly Joseph Bonomi, they are indicative of the wealth and influence of the Portal family in the development of the settlement, as is the large area of landscaped parkland, which dominates the northern part of the Conservation Area.

In addition to the mills, farming was, and still is, a significant influence on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Although now in residential use, Priory Farm was situated within the core of the east-west settlement of buildings at Freefolk, whilst two other farm complexes, Home Farm and Northington Farm, are located to the north.

Freefolk

There have been two manors here – Freefolk Manor on the south side of the river, in what was Freefolk Parish in the 19th century and Freefolk Priors on the north side that was in Whitchurch Parish at the time of the Tithe Apportionment.

Freefolk Manor comprises of Manor Farm, a church, a rectory and a cottage. It is likely that the same complex existed in the 17th century, as the Hearth Tax records only three houses. However, earthworks suggest the settlement may have been slightly larger.

Freefolk Priors follows an east-west pattern along the road, although the arrangement of the buildings on the east side of the settlement suggests there may have been a change in the course of the road, probably at the time it became a turnpike. A brick and flint turnpike revetment flanks the B3400 on the descent into Laverstoke from the east. This wall runs the length of Laverstoke Park, which borders this road, and dates from the mid 1790's when Joseph Portal supported the diversion of the old east/west road through the parkland, in favour of a more direct toll road.



Priory cottages, Freefolk



Portal Estate Cottages, Laverstoke Lane



Freefolk riverside setting

An Appraisal of the Conservation Area

An Overview

The Appraisal plan identifies those buildings, views and key features that are considered as essential to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition to the 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 settlement 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 cannot be underestimated, and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.



Batts Cottage



Priory Farmhouse, Laverstoke



Laverstoke House and parkland from south

Laverstoke

The special interest of Laverstoke is essentially based on the longstanding pre-eminence of the paper making industry and the associated influence on the area by a single family of philanthropic character. Its appearance is one of a simple, ordered settlement mainly characterised by the distinctive workers houses radiating in a linear pattern away from the historic mill complex. Separated from this grouping by landscaped parkland is Laverstoke House which oversees the whole. The historic and architectural development of these elements creates a unique area of significant value.

Freefolk

The special qualities and appearance of Freefolk are derived primarily from the distinctive character of the local topography. The steeply rising slopes either side of a gently curving river and its floodplain create intimate short range views of groups of buildings in often verdant settings. By contrast there are also key long range vistas which combine the landscape with distant landmark buildings.

Although the settlement is irregular in plan form, it has a strong visual cohesion. This is created by a predominant vernacular building tradition and, in particular, the use of flint as a walling material, with red brick dressings and details. The character is essentially that of a small residential community. However, the close relationship with the countryside and the River Test provides a strong open and pastoral quality to the settlement. This is reinforced by the well-spaced and open

arrangement of the buildings, which forms a fundamental element of the distinctive appearance of the Conservation Area.

Built Form

The majority of the listed buildings date from the late 18th and 19th centuries and are characterised by their use of flint with red brickwork dressings to openings, quoins and bands. Most retain their original form and materials, such as Bere Mill and Freefolk Priory. Freefolk is particularly notable for the number of listed buildings designed by renowned architects.

There are twenty buildings within the Laverstoke and Freefolk Conservation Area included in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The Church of St Nicholas is listed as being of outstanding national importance (Grade I); Laverstoke House is listed as being of national importance (Grade II*); and the others as being of local or regional importance (Grade II).

There are also a number of unlisted buildings that contribute positively to the special character of the Conservation Area. These buildings, dating mainly from the 19th and early 20th century, are a key element of the historic interest of the settlements as, for example, the contribution made by the distinctive Portal estate workers houses in Laverstoke.



Park Lodge



Gardeners Cottage and walled garden, Laverstoke Park

Key Individual Buildings

Although both Laverstoke and Freefolk contain buildings of intrinsic individual value, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area is also significant as part of the wider streetscene. There are, however, two buildings and associated structures of special merit that are separate from the main focus of the settlements.

Laverstoke House (Grade II*) is situated on the south facing slope of the river valley in the north-east of the Conservation Area. Mature landscaped parkland and lakes separate it from the main settlement. Its principal south elevation is nevertheless prominent in views northwards from the B3400. Three lodges on the main road, and a fourth to the north, denote its status in relation to the adjoining settlements.

The house, constructed in 1798 and extended in the mid 19th century, is a substantial and imposing building of yellow brick walling with stone dressings. Its Palladian design was based on plans drafted by Joseph Bonomi. There is a low parapet and cornice that passes around the building to form part of the entablature of the Ionic portico. The



Laverstoke Mill complex



Former Bank Officer's residence

pediment to the portico has a sculptured coat of arms of the Portal family.

Associated with the house are several other buildings and structures of architectural and historic merit. The three gate lodges are later in date than the house and are small consciously designed structures using vernacular materials in decorative forms. Freefolk Lodge (now Park Lodge) is an L-shaped single storey building dating from the mid 19th century. It is timber-framed on a brick and tile plinth and its walls are infilled with knapped flints. It has ornate timber barge boards and plain clay tile roof slopes. The lodge is the most easterly of the northern group of buildings and is particularly prominent when approaching the village from the east. It forms a picturesque and important grouping, with the adjoining Manor Cottages, church and primary school, which rise behind it to the north-west.

Church Lodge (Grade II) dates from 1848 and is a one storey L-shaped building of timber frame construction with decorative brick infilling. The overhanging gables on the south and east elevations are particularly dominant features, as are the steep tiled roof slopes and massive chimney stack with its three diagonal flues.

Further to the east along the B3400 is an unlisted lodge of 19th century date and design. It is constructed of brick and flint with some decorative herringbone brickwork in the gable. A line of brick piers denotes the approach to the lodge. Separated from the main areas of settlement, and with the landscaped backdrop of Laverstoke Park, both this and Church Lodge punctuate views along the main road and contribute significantly to the appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

To the north-west of Laverstoke House is a large walled garden, integral with which is an ornate gothic style gardener's house. Designed for Melville Portal by the architect Philip Charles Hardwicke, it dates from 1855. Both the walled garden and the house are visible from the track leading to the sports ground and are of visual and historic interest in the Conservation Area.

To the east of the walled garden is a range of 19th century flint and brick agricultural structures known as Home Farm. Of similar date and style, the barns, stables and cart sheds form a cohesive group that is prominent in views across the open countryside from the south-west. Adjoining this complex is a two storey flint and brick house, which although not of the same design as the lodges, denotes the north-western entrance to the main house.

In the south-west of the Conservation Area, isolated from the main settlements by extensive water meadows, is Bere Mill. It is a long, dominant building in two distinct sections. The house is of painted brickwork – the mill has horizontal boarded walling. The whole building is visually linked by a substantial hipped clay tile roof that gives it a strong horizontal emphasis, particularly when viewed from the north and west. The long vistas to this group of buildings across the open water meadow and river setting are an essential component in defining the special character of this part of the Conservation Area.



Portal Estate Cottages

Significant Groups of Buildings

Laverstoke

The settlement of Laverstoke is mainly focused on the buildings on the northern side of London Road and the former Portal paper making site. Most of the buildings date from 1851 onwards. The large-scale industrial buildings are situated behind a lower group of buildings which partly enclose a small formal garden area. This area provides a special setting for the Mill House (Grade II), which dates from the 18th and 19th centuries. A polite building of some status, the symmetrical front (west) elevation is emphasised by a central pediment to the slightly projecting centre bay.



No.9 London Road

Adjoining the house is a narrow rectangular block of four mill cottages of mid 19th century Jacobean style (Grade II). Their main walls are flint, with red brick dressings, and they have shallow hipped slate roofs. Behind these cottages is a taller range of mid 19th century buildings (Grade II) of similar flint and red brick appearance. Two plaques on the wall are inscribed with references to the date of the buildings and the Portal family.

Other later and larger industrial buildings lie behind these buildings and date from the early 20th century. A slender turret, with a slate covered, pyramidal roof on one of the buildings punctuates the varied arrangement of roofslopes and gables, adding further visual interest. A three storey, red brick gatehouse with monopitch wing to the west elevation and central block is perhaps the most prominent structure in views along the main road and terminates the view northwards along Laverstoke Lane. This group is of intrinsic architectural and historic interest and is an integral element of the streetscape and dominates the character of this part of the Conservation Area.



Priory Cottages, Freefolk



View south from Priory Lane

The historical influence of the mill is also apparent in a progression of buildings running southwards along Laverstoke Lane. The older, more irregular buildings form a small linear group at the northerly end of the road. Closely aligned to the road on the curve are No's 6 and 7 (listed Grade II), buildings of late 18th and early 19th century date, which deflect views northwards and imply further interest beyond. There is an inscription above the doorway to No.6 – "The Little White Tenement next to the Mill".

To the south is a pair of cottages set back from the road, the gardens of which afford views of the long front elevation of No's 11 and 12 Laverstoke Lane. This pair was formerly a short terrace dating from the 18th and 19th century and their vernacular appearance and irregular form contribute to the character of the streetscene. Set forward of the main building line, the tall chimney stacks and four gables of the rear elevation punctuate views northwards.

Further south along Laverstoke Lane is a distinctive row of buildings, varying in detail and arrangement but all sharing a similar style. Designed and constructed by the Portals at the turn of the 20th century for workers at the paper mill, their quality of construction and well-spaced and open arrangement reflects the philanthropic ideals of the time. The buildings are constructed of red brick with blue brick detailing, steeply pitched, red clay tile or slate roofs and large wooden porches on brick bases. Particularly notable in the streetscene are the tall ornate chimney stacks and flues. The overall effect of which is reinforced by the staggered progression of the buildings along Southington Lane. These buildings contribute to the historic interest of the Conservation Area, and are prominent in long range views across the surrounding countryside.

On the southern edges of the main settlement are several more individual buildings, which add to the grain and character of the area. There is a group of four unusual structures, known as The Bungalows. They are single storey with horizontal timber clad walls and central chimney stack. It is possible that these buildings also reflect a further phase in workers housing. Certainly, from 1942 Lord Portal was Minister of Works and Buildings during which time he introduced pre-fabricated houses that became known as 'Portal Houses'.

Freefolk

Within the settlement there are two physically and historically separate groups to the north and south of the River Test. The first is the east-west collection of buildings that form the main focus of the settlement. The second is a smaller cluster centred on the old church of St. Nicholas.

Situated on the western edge of the northern cluster, No 9 is a 17th and early 19th century Grade II listed building of one storey and attic. This cottage has exposed timber-frame construction to the east wall and the upper part of the front with painted brick infill. The west gable is tile hung. This is a significant building that contributes to the visual interest of the Conservation Area. It punctuates the curve in the main road but, more importantly, the timber-frame of the eastern wall forms a picturesque focal point in views westwards across the river course from the crossing by Manor Farm.

To the east is a range of buildings at right angles to the road. No's 15 and 16 Priory Cottages are 18th century and were originally an irregular terrace but now comprise two dwellings, of one storey and attic, with lower extensions at each end. The progression of red tiled roof slopes forms an interesting focal point in views along the main road from the east and west. Set below road level, the eastern elevation is punctuated by five gabled dormers and six boarded doors. The adjoining Canterbury Cottage is of flint and brick construction creating an open space of intimate character (in contrast to the generally open qualities of the streetscene) with views out to river valley beyond.

Immediately to the north is a small cluster of houses along Priory Lane. Priory Farmhouse (Grade II) dates from the late 18th and early 19th centuries and has a broad, regular façade facing onto the main road. A substantial house of flint and brick walling with red brick dressings, it is situated on the curve in the road. Adjoining the farmhouse is No.11, a small symmetrically fronted house of early 19th century date (Grade II). With its flint walling and red brick quoins and bands, the building creates a strong visual relationship with its neighbour in emphasising the beginning of Priory Lane. These buildings also contribute to the quality of the streetscape when viewed along the lane from the north. Here the long vistas out to the open countryside beyond are focussed between the sweeping catslide roof of Priory Farmhouse and the gable end and catslide of No 11.

The other noteworthy buildings along the southern end of Priory Lane include a pair of one and a half storey thatched cottages and, at right angles to the cottages and the road, is the Watership Down Inn.



Manor Cottages



Park Lodge with St Mary's Landmark spire in the background



Church of St Nicholas



The Old Rectory designed by G E Street

Freefolk Priory lies to the east of Priory Farmhouse and is set apart from the other buildings in the settlement by an extensive area of walled garden that rises up behind the house. It dates from the late 18th century with 20th century extensions and has a regular façade of two storeys fronting the main road. The rendered elevation and ordered pairs of sash windows give the Priory a distinctive and polite appearance that contrasts with the more vernacular character of the other buildings. Its setting reinforces this contrast. The eastern gable elevations of the house and the extensive flint and brick garden walls are also features of particular streetscape interest with views south-west from the lane, as are the longer range views across the garden to the valley and hillside beyond.



Landscape separating Freefolk and Laverstoke

Further east along the lane is a row of late 19th century terraced workers cottages and outbuildings. Simple in design, their unaltered character is derived mainly from their matching porches and chimneystacks. These buildings add to the grain and overall character of Freefolk. Their roofslopes and chimneys punctuate the ridgeline in views eastwards from the main road.

The other major group of buildings on the northern side of the main road and River Test is formed by Manor Cottages, the Church of St Mary the Virgin, the Primary School (now Christmas Cottage) and Freefolk (now Park) Lodge. These buildings are all architect-designed, and are of considerable streetscape merit.

Although set back from the main road, Manor Cottages dominate the immediate surroundings. The terrace of eighteen estate workers cottages was designed in 1939 for Lord Portal by E T Mort in a picturesque Domestic Revival style. The buildings are constructed of vernacular materials with the extensive length of thatched roof particularly notable. The strong horizontal emphasis is interrupted by four wide, half-hipped and timber-framed gables at the two projecting ends, and at the ends of the long, seven-bay front sections. In addition, the roof slope is punctuated by regularly spaced axial stacks in red brick. The buildings front onto semi-formal gardens containing three wells with thatched roofs.

Situated immediately to the north of Manor Cottages are the church and Christmas Cottage. The church was designed by J L Pearson in 1896 and is constructed of flint with stone dressings, a red clay tile roof and a shingled broach spire. It was built to replace the small church within Laverstoke Park when Freefolk and Laverstoke were joined for ecclesiastical purposes. It is situated behind the rest of the settlement and makes a limited contribution to immediate views within the streetscape. However, the tall spire is a landmark feature that punctuates the skyline in vistas along the B3400 as it rises above the roofs of Manor Cottages

and Park Lodge. But it is only in long range views from the rising valley sides to the south that the full building can be appreciated.

Closely associated with the church is Christmas Cottage, designed in 1855 by G E Street. It is an L-shaped building with a one and a half storey house attached on the eastern side. The walling is of flint with red brick dressings. The most notable features are the prominent porch (which has a heavy timber frame on a base wall) and the sweeping roof slope over the building, which is prominent in views from the main road. The inscribed, monogrammed plaques on the western gables are also of historic interest.

To the south of the river is a small cluster of buildings, the central focus of which is the Church of St Nicholas. This is a late medieval, single cell church, restored in 1703. Of simple form and character, it has lime-washed flint and rubble walls with simple light perpendicular windows on the north and south sides. The church, and its belfry in particular, is a prominent landmark in views from the main road and northwards from the parkland to the south.

Immediately to the east of the church is the 16th century Batts Cottage (Grade II), a substantial house of two storeys and attic. The symmetrical façade has red brickwork with flint panels and segmental arches to the ground floor windows. The steeply pitched and hipped red tile roof and large central chimney stack are dominant features.

West of the church is Manor Farm, a late 19th century building with a long east-west elevation and westerly crossing. This house and its associated outbuildings dominate the approach to the church and contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Also notable is the view from the Victorian river bridge of the northern elevation in its verdant setting.

To the east of this group, but set slightly apart, is The Old Rectory. Designed in 1858 by G E Street, it is a Gothic, L-shaped house of one storey and attic. It is an imposing building with a complex arrangement of roofslopes, elevational treatments and detailing. Of particular note is the view south-westwards from the main entrance off the B3400, which embraces a complex of gables, a catslide roof and a distinctive conical roof above a round corner staircase tower. This elevation, and the tower, form a focal point in views westwards across the parkland from Laverstoke Lane.

To the south of the Church of St Nicholas, and on higher ground, is a small row of flint and brick cottages, again separate from the main cluster. The buildings and their countryside setting are very prominent in long views across the valley from Priory Lane and reinforce the rural qualities of this part of the Conservation Area.



View from Manor Farm



View West over River Test to Freefolk



War Memorial, Freefolk

Public and Private Spaces, Trees and Hedges



Walled garden to Freefolk Priory

The open spaces within this Conservation Area are extremely important as they help to define the development of the two settlements of Laverstoke and Freefolk. Moreover, they are essential in providing the open setting to buildings and affording the long views that are such a distinctive and special characteristic of the area.

The area of land between the groupings of buildings around the Church of St. Nicholas and the linear development along Laverstoke Lane is extremely important. It not only separates the two very different areas, but also provides long important vistas across the Conservation Area.



View west from Laverstoke Lane

The River Test, running through the bottom of the valley, provides an extensive open area through the Conservation Area, it is important for both the picturesque views provided around the river valley and historically for the development of the paper making industry. Adjacent water meadows in the area surrounding Bere House and mill are also extremely important, not only as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), but also for providing the necessary setting for this building.

The most extensive open space within the area is the registered Grade II parkland surrounding Laverstoke House and descending to the River Test.



Mount Pleasant, Freefolk

There are several smaller spaces that make a significant contribution to the defining character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These include private gardens such as those of Manor Cottages, Freefolk Priory, those between No's 15 and 16 and Canterbury Cottage, and at each end of the Portal Estate cottages along Laverstoke Lane. These spaces often afford important views and create the overall grain of the area, which is an essential and distinctive feature.

Hedges positively enhance the verdant character of the village, especially along the lanes where they form high barriers along the verges. Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area cannot be underestimated and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.

There are mature trees located around the open spaces in the Conservation Area, particularly on its southern boundary and within Laverstoke Park. The lightly wooded areas and individual mature trees provide a particularly picturesque and distinctive setting around Manor House and The Old Rectory in the context of the riverside location. Past forestry management has seen the planting of Poplars to the west of the village adjacent to the River Test, as well as the planting of Conifers within and adjacent to Laverstoke Park.

The River Test dominates the length of the Conservation Area and the picturesque riverbank setting of the two villages is enhanced further by native flora and fauna found especially in the Site of Special Interest (SSSI) around Bere Mill. This SSSI comprises damp, unimproved herb-rich neutral grassland, with a good variety of locally distributed wet meadow herbs.

Other Features of Architectural or Historic Interest

Within Freefolk are two unusual structures, which enhance the special character of the Conservation Area. Adjacent to the River Test, on the south bank, can be found a small pump house, which has a thatched roof. On both sides of the B3400, in the same area, can also be found two small thatched bus shelters. All these small structures complement Manor Cottages and the thatched well heads in the garden.

Opposite Manor Cottages is the Freefolk War Memorial, on the southern side of which is a drinking fountain installed in 1870 by Melville Portal for the use of the villagers. There is also a prominent K6 telephone kiosk of 1930's design adjoining Manor Cottages.

Walls of traditional flint and brick construction often define historic boundaries, which add to the grain of the area. Notable walls include those around the garden at Freefolk Priory, the boundary wall at Christmas Cottage and the front garden walls along Laverstoke Lane. The most historically and visually significant is the virtually continuous length of rivetment wall that follows the road between Laverstoke and Freefolk and beyond.

Building Materials

The prevalent traditional building materials are red brick and flint with red clay tile and some slate roofing. There is some use of timber-frame with brick infill (characteristic of the older buildings) and the estate cottages along Laverstoke Lane are distinctive for the use of red brick with blue brick decoration. Decorative bargeboards, cast iron lattice windows and decorative tile hanging are all important features of the Victorian buildings within the Conservation Area.

Given the domestic scale and simple vernacular architecture of many buildings in the Conservation Area, historic joinery (such as sash or casement windows, doors and doorhoods) 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.



Portal estate housing - The Bunglows

The Setting of the Conservation Area

The two settlements have developed within the distinctive valley of the River Test, surrounded by undulating chalk landscape containing ancient woodlands. The inter-relationship of the landscape with the historic settlements is a vital component of the character and appearance of the area.

Extensive views are possible over the area from along the valley sides. The large parkland of the Laverstoke Estate, with views across to the palladian house, dominates the eastern approach to Laverstoke. The western approach to Freefolk is characterised by the road from Whitchurch descending and turning to run alongside the River Test, allowing views across the valley. The River Test dominates the Conservation Area and allows extensive riverbank and landscape views as it winds through the bottom of the valley.

Areas of Archaeological Significance

Every settlement contains within it archaeological evidence of its origins and development, of the economy and industry of the community and of the lives and lifestyles of past inhabitants. It is in the Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) that such archaeological are most likely to be found.

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

Within Laverstoke Park, there is a possible deserted medieval village around the site of the ruined church of Old St Mary. This area is considered to have high archaeological potential as it could contain evidence for the original village of Laverstoke. The site of the mill in Laverstoke is of archaeological importance and it is possible that a medieval structure once stood at this location.

Conservation Area Planning Controls

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

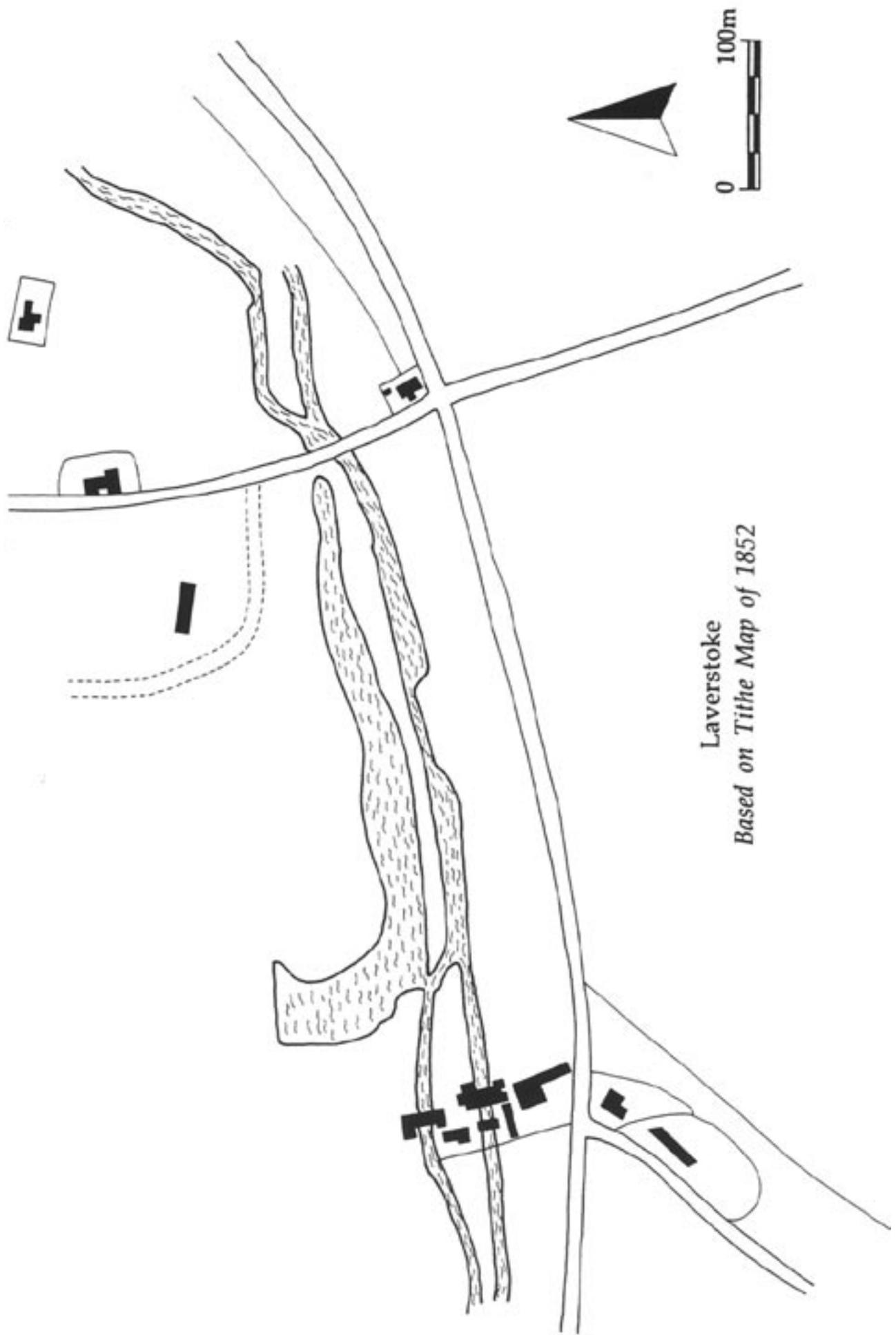
- Conservation Area Consent is normally required for the demolition of buildings or structures over a certain size within a Conservation Area.
- The Council must be given six weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to, cut down or uproot any trees in the Conservation Area.
- Planning applications 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 for the preservation of historic buildings or their setting, and to promote the enhancement of areas designated as of special interest. These policies seek to ensure that particular regard 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 a 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. Please contact the Council for further information on any grant.





Conservation Area Appraisal

Laverstoke and Freefolk

An excellent Borough - together we can be even better!

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

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