

WROXHAM CONSERVATION AREA



CHARACTER STATEMENT BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

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WROXHAM CONSERVATION AREA

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WROXHAM CONSERVATION AREA

INTRODUCTION

A Conservation Area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The conservation of the environment can enhance the quality of life of those who live or work in the area. Under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, Local Authorities are required to review existing Conservation Areas and, where appropriate, consider the designation of new ones.

Factors which contribute to the special quality of a Conservation Area may include:

- the architectural quality of the buildings themselves
- the materials of which they are made
- their relationship with one another and their setting in the landscape
- the character of the spaces between buildings, including walls, hedges, trees, grass verges and ground surface materials
- views both within the area and from outside
- the way in which buildings, spaces and landscape reflect the historical development of the area

Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority are committed to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment of Broadland.

This statement identifies and reaffirms the special architectural and historic character of the area and makes recommendations for its enhancement.

LOCATION AND SETTING

Wroxham is situated on the A1151 road, 12 km north-east of Norwich, 33 km from Cromer and 29 km from Great Yarmouth. It lies within an area of east Norfolk known as The Broads. The underlying geology is chalk overlain by Norwich Crag formed by shelly sands and gravels. In the river valleys there is marine alluvium fingering inland to deep peat. There is a population of 1532 living in the parish

The village is set within a flat marshland landscape containing broads, large areas of open water formed by medieval peat digging. The Pre-Conquest settlement of *Vrocsham* grew from its medieval core in Church Lane and St Mary's Close where stands St Mary's Parish Church and The Manor House. In the 18th-century the manorial centre moved east to Wroxham House, where in the early 20th-century, residential development proceeded rapidly as a consequence of the construction of the railway from Norwich and the growth of leisure sailing on the river and the Broads. An area between The Avenue and the River Bure was first developed with holiday homes, mostly of bungalow form, set in large gardens with river frontage moorings and boathouses. In the later 20th-century, Wroxham House was demolished and its park was redeveloped, producing a substantial open plan estate set in a fine landscape enhanced by the trees of the former park and containing 'chalet bungalows' of similar character and materials.

The landscape was formed by six meandering rivers, the Waveney, the Thurne, the Bure, the Yare, the Chet and the Ant. It is predominately a flat landscape, with long views enhanced by the sails of yachts and wherries and the towers of ruined drainage mills.

There are extensive areas of grazing marsh, reed bed, woodland carr and open water forming an interconnected network of waterways that reach the sea in Great Yarmouth.

The upper reaches of the rivers and their broads are generally enclosed by willow and elder. There are linear spaces, with attractive serial views along the meandering river. Small intimate spaces are formed by the riverside lagoons and mooring basins, contrasted with the large open spaces formed by the open water of the broads.

The settlement is on both banks of the River Bure; Hoveton (In North Norfolk District) lies on the north bank and Wroxham (in Broadland District) on the south bank; linked by the ancient river bridge.

The river and its immediate environs are within the Broads Authority (a special statutory authority and member of the national parks family) executive area.

Wroxham lies in an elevated position, within a loop of the river, flanked by Belaugh Broad to west and Wroxham Broad to east. To the south, there is a gentle undulating landscape with arable fields with boundaries formed by thorn hedge and hedgerow oaks. Keys Hill House is visible in the trees in views across farmland from the south. The church tower is prominent in views from Belaugh to the west, from the river and in glimpses between buildings in Norwich Road.

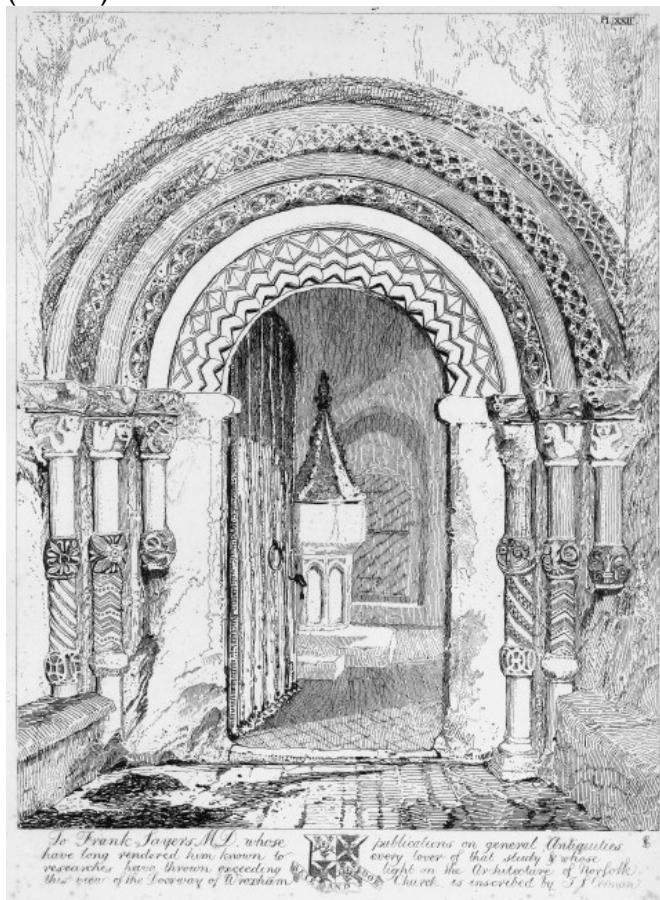
HISTORY

There is evidence of human occupation in the area, in the Neolithic period 4,500 years ago. Crop marks indicate ring ditches and barrows from the Bronze Age, whose builders would have been attracted by the natural advantage of the wooded bluff above the River Bure; the ample source of food from fishing and wildfowling in the fen; and from agricultural practice on the dry land east of the river. Despite legends of ghostly Roman soldiers seen near Wroxham Broad, and local rumours of Roman finds – and even a fort - on Caen Meadow, very little evidence for Roman occupation has been found in the area.

In addition to the historic buildings mentioned below, the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) recorded finds of Palaeolithic and Neolithic axe heads; Bronze Age barrows and crop marks; a medieval moated enclosure at Old Hall Farm; post medieval brick kilns, a 17th-century pottery kiln and three World War II pill boxes, one surviving within the conservation area east of the football ground; and Wroxham Bridge recorded as a brick and stone bridge. *“Built 1576 to replace an earlier, probably wooden bridge, rebuilt 1619 and later altered and reconstructed.”* The bridge is not within the conservation area, but is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Medieval

Wroxham is derived from Old English and means the homestead or enclosure of the buzzard or alternatively, the homestead of a man called 'Wrocc'. In the Domesday Book (1086) it is recorded as Vrocsham and as having 2 free men, 60 acres of land, 2 borders and 2 ploughs. The entry also mentions two churches, which were described in the 'Close Rolls' of Henry VI in 1264 as the churches of St John (now vanished) and St Mary. The magnificent Norman south door of St Mary's has survived from the 12th-century church (*below*).



An important Industry in the 12th-century was peat cutting, which supplied the hearths of Norwich and Yarmouth until the end of the 14th-century. Wroxham Broad, Bridge Broad and Belaugh Broad were formed when the excavations flooded.

The early economy of the area was based on farming, and carried out by men who were bound to the Lord of the Manor to work his land and their own in large open fields. The medieval open fields of Wroxham Manor appear to have been enclosed before the enactment of the Parliamentary Acts of enclosure and there is no record of where they were. Medieval field boundaries have been tentatively identified either side of the Norwich Road, south of the built up area and are depicted on the 1839 tithe map.

After the Norman Conquest, the Manor of Wroxham was taken by King William from Stigand, the Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury and given to Ralf de Beaufou. One hundred and fifty years later the manor and the advowson (the right to appoint the parish priest) of Wroxham are recorded as being obtained by Margaret de Cheyne, Prioress of Carrow Priory in Norwich. After the dissolution of the priory in the 16th-century, the manor and the advowson were granted by Henry VIII to Thomas Duke of Norfolk.

Post Medieval

The historic core of the manor was along Church Lane from St Mary's Church to Castle Street, grouped in two clusters, the one, south of the parish church and the other along Castle Street from the river to the Norwich Road. The Manor House, a brick and pantiled house of the early 17th-century is 100 metres south of the Parish Church on the east side of Church Lane.

The rivers were essential for communications and commerce, with the use of wherries for transporting goods between inland wharfs and coastal ports. The Bure Navigation and the Aylsham Navigation joined Aylsham with Great Yarmouth in the late 18th-century. Wroxham Bridge was built in 1619 where the Norwich Road crosses the river, and joined Wroxham with Hoveton. There was a mill north of the bridge and a staithe, a maltings and maltsters house (*below*) at the end of a dyke, south of the bridge.



Recorded in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record are two brick kilns and a brickfield in the grounds of 'Bureside' and the remains of a 17th-century pottery kiln found south of Broad House

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The Manor of Wroxham was connected with Wroxham Hall, to the south west of the village and outside the conservation area. Latterly a large eighteenth century house, it was in the possession of the Trafford family from the early years of the nineteenth century and they retain ownership of the estate, although the Hall itself was largely demolished c.1960. Other significant Victorian landowners included the Chamberlain family at Broad House, and the Humfreys at Wroxham House.



Wroxham House (*above*) was a Georgian mansion, built at the centre of a small landscaped park which, with the service buildings, walled garden and east avenue can be seen on the 1839 tithe map for Wroxham. Wroxham House eventually suffered the same fate as many country houses that had declined during the years of the Second World War. It was demolished in 1954 and its park and gardens laid out for houses in The Avenue and Charles Close. Now only the walled garden and part of the retaining wall of the terrace on which the house stood remain.

The East Norfolk Railway was built in a deep cutting between Norwich Road and Church Street between 1874 and 1876. The railway was instrumental in a change in the use of river transport from commerce to recreation. Local people had been sailing for pleasure for many years and the railways opened up the Broads for visitors from further afield. John Loynes opened a yacht hire business in Norwich in 1878 and relocated to Wroxham. His success attracted other businesses to Wroxham which became the boating centre of The Broads. Up until this time, the riverside below the bridge was little more than flat marshland intersected by dykes, with a couple of windpumps to assist the drainage.



20th Century

H Blake & Co was founded in 1908 to handle bookings on an agency basis and with the expansion of the boat hire business came the growth of the boatyards, with their characteristic waterside workshops and moorings above and below Wroxham Bridge and on both banks of the river.



The popularity of sailing and the attraction of the special natural environment of The Broads in the early 20th-century encouraged the development of second homes for recreation and retirement. By 1906 part of the Wroxham House estate had been parcelled off and several houses built with large gardens sloping down to the river where boathouses were built in the dykes and lagoons. Keys Hill House had also been built on land sold off from the southern part of the Wroxham House estate. At the same time terraced housing for artisans was under construction on the east side of Norwich Road.

By 1938 there were tree belts around the perimeter of Wroxham House gardens, providing a screen between the gardens and the houses west of Norwich Road and north of the Avenue. Both sides of Norwich Road were built up, and picturesque holiday homes were built on both sides of the river.

After 1945, the Wroxham House estate was developed, and piecemeal infill took place in Church Lane and Skinners Lane and the gardens of the Edwardian houses between the Avenue and the River.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

General Character

Wroxham's character is derived from its relationship with the river; as the site of a medieval settlement; as a site for commerce and in the 20th-century as a centre of a river based leisure industry. The settlement developed on high ground above the river in a linear form, along parallel routes formed by Church Lane, Norwich Road and the Norwich to Cromer rail line.

Church Lane contains the historic core of the village while Norwich Road was developed during the early 20th-century, at the same time as the development of large riverside bungalows in extensive grounds between the estate roads north of The Avenue and the River Bure, associated with the growth of sailing as a leisure activity for which Wroxham had become a centre.

Later expansion took along both sides of The Avenue and on both sides of Charles Close, in a circular layout concentric with the curve of the Avenue, in the space left by the demolition of the mansion and its gardens.



The Avenue and Charles Close were developed at a very low density with 1½ and 2 storey houses, preserving many of the fine parkland trees of the former mansion in expansive gardens, many without boundary hedges or trees with an open character in a quintessentially suburban setting.

The urban character of Church Lane and Skinners Lane is softened by the garden trees and meadows to west on the east bank of the river. The urban character of Norwich Road is softened by clumps of mature trees occurring at intervals along its length in the front gardens of its larger detached houses.

Staitheway Road, Hartwell Road and Beech Road are visually dominated by the trees, shrubberies and hedges in their generous gardens.

The conservation area can be enjoyed on foot and by boat. There is great spatial variation, ranging from the confined linear spaces of the footpaths between Norwich Road and Staitheway Road and Park Road and Beech Road, to the open space of river, broad and countryside. Rural lanes and suburban roads, varying widely in character, generate the majority of spaces; linear in plan and enclosed by walls, fences and hedges.

Church Lane, and Skinners Lane, on the edge of the settlement, are rural in scale and character. There are views of St Mary's Church and churchyard; of the open spaces of the river and river bank meadows, and of countryside, visible between buildings, and from Skinners Lane.

Norwich Road has an urban scale, being wide and with long serial views, in marked contrast to neighbouring streets. The road is enclosed by stretches of terraced housing, set back from the carriageway, or by the front garden walls of detached and semi-detached houses. The road descends to north towards the river, and here the enclosing houses are above the road. There has been a significant amount of 'back land' development on the east side, where Park Road forms a pleasant cul-de-sac. The war memorial and parish rooms are located at The Avenue cross roads.

The River Bure and its trees form a wide meandering linear space best enjoyed from a boat, but also accessible from Caen Meadow.

East of Norwich Road the environment is shady and verdant with narrow roads leading north off The Avenue and down to the river. They are enclosed by hedges, shrubberies and mature garden trees and contain substantial houses of the Edwardian period and others of modern mid-20th-century character.

South of the Avenue is Charles Close, laid out with a large and irregular square plan. The road is wide and the houses are set back behind large front gardens. The eastern two thirds are remarkable for the fine sweeping open spaces and open views across the front garden lawns, laid out without boundary hedges, fences or walls.

Important Green Spaces

The generous gardens between the well spaced houses of the conservation area and specifically those of Charles Close, make a significant contribution to the special character of the area with attractive vistas of well tended lawns, garden trees and shrubs.

Between the River Bure and the gardens of the Edwardian houses in Hartwell Road and Beech Road, and along the river bank to Wroxham Broad, while altered and in-filled, significant elements of the original historic setting of the houses survive, in large and generous gardens or along the river bank and the edge of Wroxham Broad.

The space formed by the River Bure and the gardens and meadows between Nobel Crescent to Skinners Lane is almost wholly rural in character, with pasture and mature trees contributing to the setting of Wroxham and the setting of St Mary's Church and churchyard seen from the west.

There is also a small wood north of Keys Drive which separates the back gardens of 40-46 Charles Close from Keys Drive and can be enjoyed from the footpath between The Avenue and Park Road.

Key Views and Vistas

St Mary's Parish Church stands in an elevated position and though enclosed by trees to west and south, is an important landmark. Specifically there are views of the church from Noble Close; from Norwich Road; from the River Bure west of the village; and in distant views from Belaugh.



The parish is surrounded by countryside to south, east and west and there are good views of the surrounding river and countryside from locations on peripheral roads, including views from Church Lane across Caen Meadow; views from Skinners Lane across the River to west; and views from Keys Hill footpath across open countryside to south and east.

There are fewer opportunities to see Wroxham from the countryside though there is a good view of Keys Hill House from the Salhouse Road; and good views from the north bank of the river in Hoveton.

Within the conservation area there are good serial views along its roads, including The Avenue where it is lined both sides with fine mature trees. There are several good views around and across Charles Close; and views of the back of the Manor House from Norwich Road. There are also good serial views on the River Bure.

The 4 distinct character areas within the conservation area are described below:

Old Manor, Church Lane, Skinners Lane & Nobel Crescent

Summary

Church Lane contains the core of the medieval village, situated along an ancient road on high ground above the River Bure. Skinners Lane extends Church Lane to south and Nobel Crescent extends the lane to the north. The space between the older buildings has been in-filled with late 20th-century residential development though it is still of low density and in an attractive environment dominated by natural landscape features in a fine rural setting.

Boundaries

In the west the boundary of the conservation area follows the District Boundary on the centreline of the River Bure. Turning east at its southern end to include Fairfield, its gardens and the football ground on the edge of the settlement. The boundary is drawn to exclude the railway cutting and to include the Victorian buildings on the south side of Castle Street.

To north the boundary runs east from the Bure to include the cemetery and excludes the railway cutting.

Former activities & uses

The 1839 tithe map shows the historic settlement in Church Lane, with clusters of dwellings at the Castle Street crossroads on Norwich Road (where the Castle Inn was located) and around the Manor House, south-east of the Church. While most of the historic buildings in Church Lane have survived, all the cottages and farm buildings in Castle Street shown on the 1839 tithe map have gone, except for Hill Farm House and Hill Barn.

Character

Church Lane runs parallel with the railway and Norwich Road, continuing south as Skinners Lane from it's crossing with Castle Street, and to north as Nobel Crescent from it's crossing with The Avenue and becoming country tracks at each end. Church Lane branches west into St Mary's Close where it makes a loop at the churchyard gate.

Church Lane and Skinners Lane run along the crest of the river valley edge, well above the water and a substantial area of marshy woodland and grass to the west.

Both sides of Church Lane and the east side of Skinners Lane were developed in the late 20th-century with detached two storey houses, built parallel with the street and set well back from the lane behind walls, fences and hedges within generous gardens. The lane has a low density rural character, dominated by trees in the churchyard and in gardens. The lane is open in places to the west where there are fine views of the tree lined river banks and the lush fields and hedgerows of farmland across the river in Belaugh Parish. On the east side of the lane are the trees and bushes on the railway embankment.

Nobel Crescent, Church Lane and Skinners Lane form a long linear space with good serial views along the roads that open out at road junctions. North of the former school playground is Caen Meadow, a pleasant green public open space that slopes down from Church Lane to the riverside and where there are fine views of the river and the countryside beyond.

Skidders Lane is a continuation of Church Lane, descending to south to river level. Its east side was built up in the second half of the 20th -century with a low density development of bungalows and two storey houses, along a line set well back to provide generous front gardens. Most of the west side of the lane remains undeveloped so houses have the advantage of fine views of the fields east of the river, the river itself and the countryside beyond.

The architectural character of the houses is quintessentially that of the work of the builder's draftsman, with shallow pitched roofs, interlocking concrete tiles, sand-faced Flettons and picture windows.

St Mary's Church is on the west side of St Mary's Close, where the lane loops to the north and east making an informal open space with a fine view of the Church across the wrought iron gates and railings of the churchyard. The church is in the centre of a large flat and roughly square churchyard, enclosed by a flint wall and by trees to south, west and north. The churchyard falls into three spaces; the first north of the church, contains the large and imposing grade II listed, Early Gothic Style Trafford Mausoleum within an enclosure formed by wrought iron spear topped railings.



The third part, to south, is a 20th-century extension of the churchyard, set at a slightly lower level and enclosed by low hedges. The second space wraps around the church to west, south and east. It contains fine mature oak trees and an attractive scatter of 18th-century and 19th-century limestone grave stones.

Beyond the south boundary of the churchyard is a lush pasture enclosed by hedgerow, essential for the setting of the church and churchyard and the green banks of the river west of Church Lane.

East of the churchyard, St Mary's Close and Nobel Crescent contain a mixture of nice but ordinary mid-20th-century red brick, single and two storey, semi-detached local authority housing with hipped concrete tiled roofs; the houses set parallel to the road, behind front gardens enclosed by picket fence or hedge. Their low density layout is appropriate to their 'edge of village' location and provides ample opportunity for making attractive gardens that improve visual amenity.

The football ground is at the south end of Skidders Lane, where it becomes a track.

Buildings of interest

St Mary's Church is listed grade I; built of flint with limestone dressings and sheet lead roofs. Its tall west tower is a local landmark, visible from the River Bure, across fields to the north, Belaugh to west and from the Norwich Road to east. It was much restored and stylistically improved by the Victorians. In the late 20th-century a, visually awkward, flat roofed, single storey, WC extension was built against the north face of the tower. The church has a prodigious Norman south door within the south porch.

Looking over the churchyard wall is the grade II listed Church Cottage, a pretty and eclectic cottage which forms an attractive eye catcher when looking east from the Trafford Mausoleum. Also when seen from the north end of Nobel Crescent, it contributes in scale and massing to the setting of St Mary's Church. Built in ca 1820, it has two storeys and has been extended in well mannered fashion to north. It is built of local red brick with a shallow hipped slate roof and deep eaves. Its two light gothick style casement windows and rustic verandah give it its picturesque character.

The Parish Church, its churchyard wall, the churchyard monuments, the Trafford Mausoleum and Church Cottage form a significant group.

On the east side of Nobel Crescent, and of more than passing architectural and historic interest, are eight, semi-detached (Boulton & Paul of Norwich) system built timber-frame houses (*right*). Built ca 1960, they are single storey with narrow vertical timber-boarded walls and steep pitched gabled, black pantiled roofs. They are set parallel to the road with small front gardens, bounded by hedges or fences. Visually hedges are preferred here. Nos 1, 2 and 8 have been re-roofed with concrete interlocking pantiles and Nos 4 - 7 have been re-clad. All have replacement PVC windows and doors.

On the south side of the junction of Nobel Crescent with Church Lane, No 1 is at a focal point in the lane. Probably of 19th-century origins, the building has been altered and extended to front and to rear and the west gable wall boarded, so that its' original cottage identity has been lost. Opposite are four semi-detached houses, Nos 12-18 Church Terrace, built in red brick on two storeys, with hipped black glazed pantiled roofs. While they now resemble the adjoining 20th-century local authority houses, they originate in the Victorian era when they began as semi-detached farm workers cottages. The new brick work on each end of the building indicates the extent of the Victorian fabric and the 20th-century extension. A low flint rubble wall flanks the front garden and a high red brick wall provides privacy from the Lane for the rear gardens.

Box topiary and Laurel bushes, behind a brick and flint wall, provide a dense screen between the grade II listed Crowsteps and the Lane.



Crowsteps, built in 1607, was a laundry before 1906 when it was 'L' shaped in plan and without a south-east gable. However the two east gables are coeval and crow stepped gables are a feature of C16th and C17th East Anglian vernacular brick buildings, revived by 19th-century enthusiasm for historical styles. The principle range is visible from the River Bure and has axial end chimney stacks and a range of first floor cross casement windows.

Holly Cottage, formerly a forge associated with Crowsteps, is hidden from The Street behind a high dense hedge and low brick wall and is approached through a gateway with an attractive wrought iron gate. Its first phase has two storeys, gabled concrete pantiled roof, end stacks, red brick walls and small pane casements that are worth preserving. The cottage was extended to east and south in the later 20th-century.



The grade II listed 17th-century Manor House is located at the end of a long path lit by a converted gas lamp, within an attractive garden enclosed by a vertically boarded fence to west with pretty timber gate piers and a wrought iron gate. The garden contains several mature garden trees and two fine mature beech trees close to the road. The house has 17th century stepped gables and end stacks, red brick walls with a diamond pattern of glazed headers (diapering) and a smut coloured pantiled roof.

It has 19th-century timber, 3 light casements with leaded lights and 19th-century louvered timber shutters. The east elevation can only be glimpsed from Norwich Road between the houses there. There are two wings in the elevation with crow stepped gables and three light ovolo moulded brick mullioned windows under moulded brick pediments.

The garden of the house is separated from the farm yard of the former Dairy Farm by a 1m high flint and brick wall. The barns are ranged along the western boundary. There is a simple 3 stead grain barn at the north end of the range. It has a slate roof and red brick walls laid in English Bond. To south and behind a red brick boundary wall, raised in height by a timber 'hit & miss' boarded fence, is a long low shelter shed or stock house with a shallow pitched metal roof.

The former village school is on the west side of Castle Lane within a playground enclosed by iron railings, cast iron gate piers and wrought iron gates. It is a substantial building of red brick with a red clay plain tile roof, crow stepped gables, red brick walls and casement windows with brick hood moulds, with accommodation for a school master and school rooms. (Under conversion at the time of survey)

Hill Farm occupied the site in the south-west corner of Skinners Lane and the westward continuation of Castle Lane. The farmhouse, now No 2 Hill House, is a substantial building with a double pile plan, red brick walls, pantiled roofs, brick parapet gables with end stacks. Its 3 light casement windows look modern. The former farm buildings are disposed around a yard, the barn to west and the implement and shelter sheds to south. To east is a black weather-boarded timber-framed barn built off a brick plinth and with a pantile roof. The barns have been converted to residential use.

Almost opposite, River View (7 Skinners Lane), built before 1938, is a quirky flat-roofed and castellated concrete-block house, now extended and with replacement windows.

Fairfields, Bureside and The Lodge form an important group. They were built at the end of the 19th-century to take advantage of the riverside environment. Fairfields and Bureside have beautiful gardens between the houses and the river, and have boat houses or moorings. Fairfields appears to have been built first, possibly before 1880 in a High Victorian Gothic style. It has two storeys, slate roofs and red brick walls and many gables. The windows have timber casements in openings with flat two centred arches. The river elevation has first floor French Casements onto a balcony over a glazed loggia. By the river is a pretty thatched Gothic style summer house.



Bureside and The Lodge were built after 1880 and before 1906. Bureside is substantially larger than Fairfield and The Lodge and one of the grandest late Victorian houses in the village. It has two storeys and attics, plain tile roofs with many gables, walls of red brick, with much use of timber-frame and pebbledash above first floor level. It has timber mullioned and transom casement windows. The riverside elevation has a corner panoramic window on first floor level and a first floor balcony across two bays under the eaves. The Lodge is single storey, and like its neighbour has plain tile roofs, hipped dormers and brick and timber-frame and pebbledash walls.

Materials

The prevalent materials used for the construction of vernacular buildings in this part of the conservation area are, for roofs, red, black glazed and smut coloured pantiles, corrugated and half Roman clay tiles and clay plain tiles and slate. Mellow red brick in Flemish bond, flint rubble and combinations of the two materials were used for walls, and half timbering and pebble dash for upper storeys and gables.

Norwich Road, Keys Hill, Park Road

Summary

Norwich Road is a busy 'A Class Road, developed with terraced and detached two storey houses in the first half of the 20th-century. Large mature garden trees make an important contribution to the landscape. Park Road is an attractive and quiet informal cul-de-sac and Keys Hill House is an important late Victorian villa.

Boundaries

The boundary has been drawn to include the Victorian garage buildings on the south side of Castle Street, crossing Norwich Road and including the gardens of No 227 and the Fire Station land for the trees they contain. The boundary continues east to include the gardens of Keys Hill Park and the new houses within its former curtilage. The houses of Preston Close, a post war local authority housing estate are pleasant enough and have an affinity with those in Nobel Crescent, Church Lane and Castle Street, though not considered to be of special interest as a group. Similarly the houses in Trafford Walk are ca 1970 and set in attractive gardens and trees. However there is little of special architectural or historic interest here and so the boundary has been drawn only to include the setting of Keys Hill House.

The boundary continues on the south side of woodland associated with the former Wroxham Estate, and then on the south side of the footpath along the backs of the gardens of Nos 48 -64 Charles Close. To north, the boundary follows the north boundary of No 80 Norwich Road and the south side of the footpath between Norwich Road and Staitheway Road.

Former Activities and Uses

Norwich Road was deeply rural until the early 20th-century, there being only a staithe and maltings complex south of Wroxham Bridge and a group of cottages round the Castle Street Crossroads. To east was Wroxham House and its estate, with Key's Hill, a substantial country house of circa 1890 in a woodland setting and, approached from the south-west by a drive through woodland, from gates where Salhouse Road joined Norwich Road.

By 1906, agricultural land had been sold for development on the east side of Norwich Road and the terraced houses, Nos 99-137 and 183-209 had been built. Also land to the east of these terraces had been made accessible by the construction of 'New Road' (to become Park Road) and a mix of small detached houses and semi-detached houses had been built.

By 1938 both sides of Norwich Road had been developed with detached houses; a third terrace, (Nos 152-196) and the parish hall, the war memorial, and the Methodist Church (175 and 175A) had all been built.

Character

Norwich Road runs parallel with the railway, following a slightly serpentine course, sufficient to close all but the shortest of vistas along its length. It is a busy highway, particularly at peak periods when views are dominated by cars and lorries. Its' buildings are set back from the footway within gardens frequently adapted for parking. Other houses have low walls or hedges so that buildings enclose the spaces and hard landscape features dominate. North of the Avenue there are driveways to houses on former back gardens.

Trees are most notable on entry into the conservation area looking south and between the former reading room and the war memorial and at the entry to The Avenue on the east side of the road. Other significant groups of trees are on the south side of Park Road; in the garden of No 146; and on the east side of the road from 'Petals' to The Avenue. These groups of trees determine the landscape character in their vicinity and, positively contribute to the area's character. There are good serial views along Norwich Road and significant views of the tower of the parish church seen between Nos 126 & 128 and of the Manor House looking between Nos 132-128.

Park Road is in two parts, the southern section leading to the fire station with footways and dwelling on each side and the eastern section, a quiet, small scale cul-de-sac, informally laid out, and shared by cars and pedestrians. The houses are set back a short distance from the road edge with gardens or gravelled parking areas

Buildings of Interest **Norwich Road, East side**

There is a simple coherence of scale, period, rhythm and proportion and an emphasis on a pale red brick. The least altered of the early 20th-century terraces are Nos 99 – 131; a mix of two storey terraced and semi-detached houses set on the top of a bank. They were built with red brick and gabled half Roman red clay tile roofs with crested ridges and ridge stacks. There is a corbelled eaves course and for some a corbelled first floor band and single storey or two storey brick bays some with plain tile roofs and others with flat roofs. Some original 4 panel doors with fanlights survive, together with large pane timber sash windows.

The first terrace in Norwich Road was No 199-209 which was built by 1906, though Nos 199 and 209 are clearly later additions. The two storey terrace has red brick walls with gault brick dressings and single gault brick lacing courses. There are half-hipped, half Roman pantile roofs with axial brick stacks.

The terrace originally had three light timber casement windows (now PVC) within segmental brick arched openings. Soft landscaping in front gardens has given way to untidy hard landscape of cars and parking areas.

The east side of Norwich Road from the north end of Park Road to No 133 was developed in two rows, the back row to the east being reached by alleys between the row of buildings to the west. There are substantial houses here, Nos. 139, 141, 149 and 163, of some architectural merit.



There is an attractive group of houses with a long flint brick boundary wall. at the south end of the conservation area, on the corner with Park Road. (An 1809 road order shows this site occupied by 'Wroxham School'). No 227 Norwich Road is set well back from the road and is seen end on. It has a reed thatched roof with a sedge ridge. It is one and a half storeys with a single storey outshut to north in 18th-century vernacular style. No 223 is single storied and 'L' shaped in plan. It too has a reed thatched roof with a sedge ridge. The walls are rendered, and the north range has a central axial stack. Facing the garden gate set in a pretty picket fence, is a hipped thatched timber porch.

Norwich Road, West side

No 96, and its coach house is one of the finest houses in the road. Shown on the 1839 tithe map, it appeared to be a small farm house with extensive outbuildings. Cut off from its farmland by the railway in 1874, the Farmstead was demolished leaving the house as an elegant dwelling. It is set back from the road with a small gravelled court between the house and a tall boundary hedge. In appearance the house is late 18th-century and built with red brick walls and gabled black pantile roof with internal end stacks. It has two storeys and a double pile plan. It has a symmetrical front, with three windows at first floor level and a timber gabled port with outsized consoles. The sash windows are very fine, within openings with fine gauged brick flat arches. Each sash is without horns, and has six panes with fine glazing bars. To north is the coach house.

The War memorial (*right*) stands within a triangular enclosure formed by a 1.5m high flint and honeycomb brick boundary wall with gabled gate piers and wrought iron gate. It is built of stone and has a base and plinth surmounted by a Celtic Cross. Behind the War Memorial and wrought iron railings is Wroxham Church Hall; mid-20th-century in date, extended in brick to north and built with 'painted' slop-dash on brick with a red clay plain-tile roof. It has a symmetrical facade, with a Dutch gable and a central entrance with a cement stucco surround. The surround is surmounted by an attic window with a stucco shouldered architrave and key block. The door is flanked by windows with semi-circular arched heads and rusticated arches.

The Masonic Hall is immediately to north behind attractive and delicate wrought iron gates. In contrast, the heavy massing of the Hall buildings and their flat roofs and dark brick are unsympathetic with the visual context of the area.



No 152 to 192 is a dominant terrace in the street scene because of its length and proximity to the road edge. The narrow frontages set up a strong visual rhythm in the east facing facade, reflected by the ridge chimney stacks above alternate party walls. The entrance door and adjacent single storey bay window are under a continuous lean-to, pantile roof. First floor windows had three lights and a transom. Ground floor windows had four lights and a transom. There were large pane casements below the transom and small pane casements above. Soft landscaping in front gardens has given way to a hard landscape of cars and parking areas. There is enough evidence to reconstruct the detailed design of the front of the terrace should repair or reconstruction be contemplated.

Seen from the outside, the hipped roofs, canted bay windows and brick bonding of 210 Norwich Road suggest that the building is the last of a number of 'Castle Inns' on this site that their name to 'Castle Street'.

No 2 and 4 Park Road were probably extant in 1939 and appear to have been substantially altered. They form part of the interesting architectural group around the Castle Street cross roads. Set behind a picket fence and an over grown hedge, the building is comprised of two elements. To west a 1 ½ storey red brick wing with a black pantiled roof, and stepped gable and to east a two storey range, built with painted brick walls, casement windows with segmental brick arches and a black glazed pantile roof.

The original houses in the road (and still well preserved) are No 15, 19, 27-33, 36 and 40-46. All but Nos 40-46 possess a distinct character, comprised of the red brick walls, pantiled roofs, and large pane sash windows.

Key's Hill (*right*) is a large villa, designed in circa 1890 in a florid Jacobean style by Edward Boardman who was an important Norwich architect. Access may still be gained via the original entrance from the south-west, through Preston Close, a quiet mid-20th-century local authority housing estate from which the west entrance front can be seen. The house was built on a low ridge, with gardens sloping down to south with views of countryside beyond. The house has 2½ storeys, steep plain tiled roofs, ridge chimney stacks with clustered shafts in moulded terracotta (Made by Costessey Brickworks) and Dutch parapet gables. The walls are of red brick and the windows have moulded brick mullions and transoms and the parapets have moulded terracotta friezes. The west front is dominated by a two storey porch incorporating ground floor polygonal buttresses and a first floor canted bay window. The porch is flanked by single storey, canted bays and the garden front has three segmental plan, single storey bay windows. There is a two storey lodge to north-east, built of red brick with steep pitched plain tile roof, chimneys with clustered moulded terracotta shafts and stepped gables. The house has been divided into flats and several red brick 2 ½ storey houses built in the early 21st-century within its curtilage.



Materials

The prevalent materials used for the construction of the buildings in this part of the conservation area are as follows: for roofs, red, black glazed and smut coloured pantiles, corrugated and half Roman clay tiles. brown coloured concrete interlocking tiles, brown concrete plain tiles, red clay plain tiles, slate and reed thatch. For walls: mellow red bricks, gault clay pale yellow bricks, sand faced clay bricks; flint rubble and red brick and combinations of the two for walls. Half timbering and pebble dash for upper storeys and gables.

The Avenue, and Charles Close.

Summary

20th-century low density, 1½ storey housing, laid out in a concentric ring within an arc made by the Avenue, with open plan gardens, and mature parkland trees, surviving from Wroxham House and its park which once stood here.

Boundary

The boundary is drawn to include the land of the Wroxham House Estate developed in the 20th-century, to include the whole of Staitheway Road up to the District boundary on the centreline of the River Bure. In the south the line follows the southern edge of the avenue of trees planted between Wroxham House and the boathouse on Wroxham Broad. From there it runs along the edge of the marshes in an easterly direction to include Still Waters, Mallards and Shearwater

Former Activities and Uses

Wroxham House was a substantial late Georgian mansion set in a well wooded landscaped park in the area currently bounded by Beech Road, The Avenue and Charles Close. The Avenue was then called Beech Avenue and was the access drive to the mansion. Beech Road was a track that meandered from the Avenue to the south bank of the river and was previously called was called Riverside Road

Wroxham House faced south, with a service court to north, and was located where Nos 74 – 80 Charles Close now stand. Beyond the service court on the other side of The Avenue is a large hexagonal walled kitchen garden, built in a dark red brick before 1839 and now occupied by No 29 The Avenue. Wroxham House was demolished in 1954 and the high walls of the kitchen garden, part of the terrace on which the house stood, and the abundant trees of the landscaped park and avenues are all that remain.

The park was developed for housing with large plots, retaining many of the park trees producing an attractive low density development (approximately 4 houses per hectare) in which trees, shrubs and manicured lawns dominate. The houses are all detached, with single or double garages and all but two in Charles Close are 1½ storeys or less. The spaces between the detached houses and their comparative low height result in a comfortable 'human scale' and combine to create an impression of spaciousness in which the trees and garden planting dominate. This impression is strengthened where there is an absence of boundary walls, fences or hedges, notably within the higher house numbers in the eastern half of Charles Close.



The location appears to have been popular, having been developed over a short period by home owners and speculators, resulting in a uniformity of design and materials. Many of the houses appear to have been designed by the builders draftsmen, showing none of the neo-vernacular character employed by architects that was promoted in the Essex Design Guide of the early 1970s and subsequently in local design guides. The result is a visually attractive area of suburban landscape with a distinctive quality and character, perhaps not uncommon in suburban America, though very unusual in rural Norfolk.

Buildings of Interest

While most of the houses are different in their detailed appearance they are similar in scale, in floor heights, window size, in height and massing. Many houses are designed in the 'chalet bungalow' formula of 1½ storeys in height and a single room width above a two room plan. Also there is a uniformity of proportion, windows generally being large and horizontal. The 'eye brow dormer' is a striking feature as are the tapering bay windows.

Notable groups of houses are round the central cul-de-sac (31-39 Charles Close) and south-eastern corner, (58-64 and 49, 51, 76-70 Charles Close.) There are attractive views west along Charles Close, South, along Charles Close, East, and serial views on Charles Close inner east (49-63). Also along The Avenue from one end to the other, where the garden trees and the ancient sweet chestnuts and oaks of the former 'Beech Avenue' play a significant role in enclosing the road with a forest like tunnel and framing continually changing vistas. At its southern end are long views of the open countryside and a footpath running north to south, following the southern boundary of gardens of Charles Close, and providing further fine views of the country side, and of a woodland environment in the vicinity of Keys Hill, where it emerges into Park Road.

From the Avenue, there is a visually pleasing view of No 29, set in manicured grounds within the former kitchen garden of Wroxham House.



Materials

Roofs are pitched at about 35 degrees and are either gabled or hipped; usually with timber fascias and bargeboards. They are mostly covered with, brown concrete plain tiles and less commonly interlocking brown concrete tiles. Walls were built with sand-faced Fletton bricks laid in stretcher bond. Painted render was also used for walls, and narrow painted vertical boarding used for gable spandrels. Doors and windows were obtained from the catalogues of standard timber window manufacturers such as Boulton and Paul and have double rebate timber casements, side hung or top hung, generally with large panes or 'picture' windows facing front or back.



Riverside Residences Beech Road to the River Bure

Summary

The location for substantial bungalows set in fine riverside gardens with moorings and boathouses built during the first phase of the development of the grounds of Wroxham House in the early 20th-century. Some gardens have been subject to annexation and infill though others with generous lawns and lagoons remain within a landscape dominated by mature trees, with quiet roads and gardens enclosed by high boundary hedges.

Boundary

Discussed above in The Avenue and Charles Close.

Former Activities and Uses

In response to the Edwardian enthusiasm for leisure sailing in the early 1900s, generous plots of land, north of Wroxham House gardens, between Hartwell Road, Beech Road and the River Bure, were sold and on which 'select' holiday homes were built within gardens sloping down to the river, where dykes and lagoons on the edge of the River Bure accommodated moorings and boathouses.

Avenue House, Nos 9 & 11, and Barton House in Hartwell Road and Campbell Cottage, Prior Thatch, Corbally, Riverdale, Sheriff House, Longwood and Heronby were developed between 1886 and 1906. The subdivision of some of the largest gardens had begun by the 1930s, for example the sites of Yeoman House, Broads House and Bryn House. In the late 20th-century, Muirshade was replaced by Burewood, a building of a substantially greater mass and proportion in comparison to Heronby and its 'select' pre-war neighbours.

The Thatched House, Thatched Cottage, Bryn Cottage and Ridge cottage and Under-Ridge on the south side of Beech Road were built before 1938.

The Edwardian bungalows in Beech Road were relatively modest in scale, the bungalow (in the Edwardian meaning of the term) being the appropriate form of house for leisure use that preserved the visual pre-eminence of the landscape. Burewood and Oakwood, large new houses in Beech Road, have 2 ½ storeys and appear unsympathetic and out of scale in the the context of the original developments in Beech Road.

Rivercoft Cottage predates all the Edwardian houses in Beech Road, of 17th century origins and having a roof tie iron bearing the date 1670. Map evidence indicates that The Sheriff House was built within its garden.

Between 1906 and 1938, boat houses and picturesque thatched cottages were built on both banks of the river. In Wroxham, they were built along the south bank, to east of the river frontage of Heronby, the most easterly of the 'select' homes in Beech Road. The earliest survivors of these small cottages on the Wroxham side, identified from pre-war postcards, are 'Willow Bend', 'Closeburn', 'The Glade' (*below*, c.1910) and its immediate neighbour to west.



Prior to 1938 Staitheway Road was a quiet country track that connected The Avenue (Then Beech Lane) to the riverside, where there were extensive boathouses and the Grange Maltings. Development appears to have come later.

Character

Beech Road is straight and narrow in between sharp turns making a series of pleasing linear spaces, changing in character progressively from sub-urban road to country track. There are good serial views within Beech Road and views through gateways of the houses and their gardens.

On the north side of the road, between Campbell Cottage and The Sheriff House, the houses are set well back behind dense shrub and trees, which enclose the road with greenery from each side and overhead where in the summer months they impart an attractive leafy character. The road runs gently down hill to the 'chicane' around Burewood from where the north side of the road to Tawny Lodge is more open.

On the north side the houses are set within fine well kept gardens sloping down to the river. The character of the gardens is derived from the extensive lawns, mature garden trees, shrubberies and the river bank where there are lagoons, moorings and boathouses. The gardens are key visual and functional elements of the historic setting of the 'select' Edwardian bungalows and important in the riverbank scene.

The houses and gardens on the south side of Beech Road, between Woodacre and Beechwood House, are more traditional in size and their gardens contain fewer trees, though the visual enclosure of the road is generally maintained by fencing and hedges. Here also the gardens appear appropriate for the size of house in relation to its occupancy and setting.

From Under-Ridge to Woodford Lodge are substantial two storey buildings, set back behind high gates, hedges, fences or brick walls, attractively enclosing the road and the view. The houses are set in large landscaped gardens, appropriate in size, containing mature garden trees making a positive contribution to the rural setting of the area where it abuts the arable fields and marshes of the countryside.

Staitheaway Road is an Informal lane, sloping down to the river, lined by 19th and 20th-houses, set back from the road. Hartwell Road is a cul-de-sac, constructed in the late C19th-century to provide access for new houses between the road and the river. There are houses, in a low density layout, set back from the road edge with spacious front gardens with mature garden trees and hedges which dominate the landscape and enclose the roads in a pleasing arrangement. There are attractive views of houses through gateways; attractive serial views looking each way in the roads and a view of the river, looking north past the boat shed along Staitheaway Road. There is a good view of Campbell Cottage from the east end of Hartwell Road.

Staitheaway

33-37 Staitheaway are architecturally significant buildings. They are three, terraced, two storey, cottages, ca 1880, built of red brick with gault brick dressings and pantiled, gabled roofs with end stacks and paired central axial stacks with corbelled brick cap and chimney pots. They have modern three light casements under segmental brick arches and are visible from the river and looking east from Staitheaway Road, where they form a visual group with the quay side development, an attractive modern development of detached houses, arranged in a small crescent facing the river.

Staitheaway House, is a large 2½ storey red brick house, built ca 1880. It has gabled slate roofs, and brick corbel courses at attic and 1st floor levels and large pane sash windows. Overbury House is also a large 2 ½ storey house with plain tile roof with gabled dormers; Built prior to 1938, there is a modern single story lean-to on its north side. It has large pane sash windows with outer sashes with small panes, according to early-20th century fashion. The double entrance door is covered by a large balcony porch carried on Tuscan columns.

Hartwell Road

Nos. 7 was built before 1906 to take advantage of the riverside location. It was altered prior to 1938. It is a 2½ storey rendered and painted house, with a hipped plain tile roof with crested ridge tiles, side stacks and rendered and painted walls with large pane sash windows.

Also of architectural significance is: No 9, a 2 storey house with a gabled roof of ½ Roman clay tiles and axial stacks. The right hand side of the facade is red brick with large pane sash windows with segmental brick arches.

No 11, is a rambling 2 storey house with a gabled pantiled roof with axial stacks with 1st floor Gothic windows; and at the end of the road, No 17, was built with 2 storeys, red brick walls, gabled plain tiled roof and casement windows

No 19, Barton House is a two and a half storey house, built in a slightly eccentric style with gabled plain tile roofs and side stacks. The walls are rendered and half timbered. The left hand gable wall has a pediment over the attic window and the right hand wing has a hipped roof and gabled 1st floor prospect window. To west there is a flat-roofed painted and rendered 2 storey extension. Between the house and the road is a single storey, gabled, pantile and weather boarded range, set between the house and the road.

Avenue House, built in 1892, stands on the corner of Staitheway Road and Hartwell Road, behind high garden trees and a low brick and wrought iron fence. A house of subtle variations, it is built with 2 storeys and attics, in red brick with stone dressings and gabled slate roofs in a free Jacobean vernacular style. The entrance front faces east, with asymmetrically placed canted bays with parapets with a swept profile and stone mullioned and transomed windows with leaded upper lights. It seems likely that the designer is associated with Staitheway House in Staitheway Road.

Beech Road, south side, Woodacre to The Croft

The north/west side contains The Hollies, Ringwood, and The Croft, which form a loose group of similar buildings. They are large 1½ storey bungalows, built ca 1970 of red brick or painted and rendered block work. They have long, shallow pitched concrete slate roofs, expressed in the gable ends which face the road, with a simple modernist aesthetic expressed in their delta shape.

The south side contains the rusticated brick, Baroque style, gate piers and wrought iron gates of Woodacre, a substantial plain tile and red brick house. At the time of survey an out of scale and out of context, 2½ storey red brick house, was under construction within its garden.

Beech Road, north side, Campbell Cottage to Sheriff House

Campbell Cottage belongs to the first phase of the development of Beech Road and is of historic interest as one of the 'select' houses in the road. The house was designed in the English Country House Style with arguably the finest garden settling in Wroxham. The house has gabled, clay plain-tile roofs with half timbered walls above 1st floor level and red brick walls below. At the time of survey a new dwelling was under construction and to accommodate it, the garden had been subdivided along the line of the access drive, so that the setting of the new house looks cramped in comparison.

Prior Thatch is set back at the end of a drive behind a thick shrubbery and set within an extensive garden between the house and the river, with lawns and river lagoons. The 1 ½ storey house, built prior to 1938 and as its name suggests, may originally have been thatched and now has a hipped concrete pantiled roof. The windows have horizontally proportioned panes and the painted cement rendered walls look right for a house constructed in the-inter-war years.

Corbally is set back behind a gravelled forecourt at the end of a drive through a dense shrubbery. It is set within an extensive garden between the house and the river, with grass lawns and river lagoons. The house may also belong to the first phase of development in Beech Road and be of historic interest as one of the 'select' houses in the road. It has 1½ storeys, hipped plain-tile roof and pebble dashed walls with red brick dressings. The sash windows are within brick faced openings with segmental brick arches.

Brynwood is a 1½ storey house, set back at the end of a long drive between Bryn House and Riverdale and built within extensive gardens with pretty segmental arched bridges with wrought iron balustrades. The house was probably built in the mid-20th-century with a concrete plain tile hipped roofs, with painted, rendered walls built off a brick plinth. The south gable is half-timbered.

Riverdale may have began as a small house in the early 20th-century and appears to be the product of several phases of construction, most notably the single storey west wing. It occupies a prominent location seen from within Beech Road. Here the ground falls so that the house appears to be set upon a high spur when seen from the east. Its appearance is visually pleasing, with 1½ hipped reed thatched roofs and half timbered first floor walls, corbelled out from the red brick ground floor storey and containing projecting bay windows. The garden to south and east is covered in dense shrubs behind a low brick and concrete block boundary wall. Two attractive 'gas lamp' type street lighting standards are situated within the front garden.

The Sheriff House is set back to north behind a gravelled forecourt within an extensive garden between the house and the river, with grass lawns and river lagoons. The house may contain fabric dating from the early 20th-century and be of historic interest as one of the 'select' houses built in the early 20th-century associated with the development of Wroxham for sailing.

Built in 1½ storeys, the house has a plain-tiled gabled roof with axial chimney stacks with moulded terracotta clustered shafts (probably Costessey Bricks.) The walls are half timbered and rendered and the windows are set in bays. The windows have small pane casements above the transoms in a typically early 20th-century format.

Rivercroft Cottage is immediately to east, concealed behind hedges and a shrubbery. It is listed grade II, and dated 1670 and externally appears to have been built with a 17th-century lobby entrance plan, reed-thatched roof, off centre axial stack and brick and flint rubble parapet gable to west. There are two single storey wings, to south with black glazed pantiles and to north with red pantiles. The Sheriff House, Riverdale Cottage and Rivercroft Cottage form a group of buildings of architectural and historic interest at the end of the second part of Beech Road.

Beech Road, north side, Burewood to Tawny Lodge

Beech Road runs south from Oakwood House, and then east around the boundary of Burewood. The latter is, a modern 2½ storey, 17th-century cottage style, red brick house with smut coloured pantile roofs with parapet gables, gabled casement dormers and re-used Costessey brick chimney shafts. It has 4 light casement windows with hood moulds and a large gabled single storey porch facing south.

Longwood is a well preserved 'select' riverside property in a fine garden with trees, shrubs, dykes, and lagoons. It has a rambling single storey plan, probably with a loft conversion and a detached double garage with hipped roof. Facing the road is a casement window in a fine eyebrow dormer formed in the hipped plain-tile roof. The walls are rendered with red brick dressings and segmental plan bay windows with small pane mullioned and transom casement windows.

Heronby, (*below*) built in 1907, belonged after 1945 to the entertainer and film star George Formby. It is well set back from the road in a mown grass garden with mature garden trees dominated by a mooring basin off the river.. It is one of the least altered of the 'select' houses in Beech Road and Hartwell Road. It has a single storey 'L' shaped plan, with a reed thatched half hipped roof and gabled dormers and rendered and painted boarded walls. There is a good selection of Costessey Brick clustered chimney shafts with moulded bases, shafts and caps. The fenestration is scattered with casement windows.



Both Heronby and Burewood lost garden land to Swans Harbour; a house built ca 1970 looking like a barn conversion that also appears to be out of scale with its neighbours

Beech Road, south side, Woodacre to Beechwood House.

Set back behind hedges and a five bar gate in a gravelled forecourt, The Thatched House is pretty and unusual. It has a gabled, reed thatched roof and rendered walls on a brick plinth and brick gable ends in a 17th-century Norfolk style. The house has 2 stories with a single story extension to east with rendered walls and red brick dressings and casement windows. The first floor bay windows have cross casements and are supported on brackets. The ground floor cross casements have small hipped painted plaster roofs with moulded soffits.

The Thatched Cottage also has rendered walls and a gabled reed thatched roof with internal end stacks and eyebrow dormers. It has two storeys and striking, vertically proportioned; two light, two pane casement windows and a loggia under a pitched tile roof across the road side elevation.

Bryn Cottage and Ridge Cottage are a pair of estate cottages, with hipped pantiled roofs, ridge and end stacks. The two houses have symmetrical elevations, each with a central six panel door under a fanlight and cornice porch. On each side are flush sash windows with glazing bars.

Under-Ridge is a substantial two storey house, with hipped and gabled plain tile roofs. The walls are part rendered and part brick, with half timbering in the gables. At the north-east end is a two storey, flat-roofed, polygonal prospect window, and a similar single storey window to south-east provided to take advantage of the view.

Beech Road, south side, Under-Ridge to The Anchorage

The older buildings are Gold Finch, a mid-20th-century, single storey, bungalow, with a hipped roof covered in concrete pantiles, red brick walls and timber casements. It is hidden away behind a brick wall, a timber fence and a thick shrub screen. And The Anchorage, which occupies a secluded position at the end of the lane. It also was built in the mid-20th-century, with 1½ storeys and a gabled red clay corrugated pantiled roof. It has painted roughcast walls and PVC windows.

Beech Road: Rivercroft to Willow Bend

Beech Road branches north and round the back of Riverside Cottage and proceeds as a track, through marshy woodland to Willow Bend on the rivers edge. From here to Wroxham Broad is an important group of riverside houses.

The first phase houses are typically in a rustic cottage style, single storey, small scale, with hipped and gabled reed thatch roofs with sedge ridges, with rustic posts and rendered walls. The boat houses have pitched roofs, originally reed thatched, and feather edge, tarred, stained or painted timber-frame walls. The thatch in some instances was replaced by corrugated metal sheeting. The houses are situated along the rivers edge in a watery riverside landscape, of dykes, moorings, and lagoons. The houses are set parallel with the river bank or at right angles along the sides of dykes that run back from the river edge.

Willow Bend is the first of this group. It is set on the river edge and externally appears to be little altered. It has a single storey cross shaped plan with gabled, reed thatched roofs, rendered and painted walls with rustic corner posts and timber casement windows.

Its immediate neighbour to south is Southbank which looks new. It has a hipped reed thatch roof, with a prominent hipped dormer. The walls are rendered with a black tarred plinth. It has two and three light timber casement windows

South of Southbank are two modern boat houses built on the edge of a dyke. The first is a modern design and built with boarded timber-frame walls and steep pitched coated steel roof which may weather well. The other looks like a large replacement for the adjoining collapsing timber hut and has cream painted timber boarded walls and half hipped reed thatch roof and hipped pantiled roof.

Beech Road: Tawny Lodge to Still Waters

North of Tawny Lodge, the road passes through shady carr woodland. Hangover is a single storey, 'L' shaped' bungalow with a hipped slate roof, black painted weather boarded walls set on the edge a dyke and large mooring basin.

Southover looks across the river and across a short inlet. It is single storey, raised by over 1m above river level. It has hipped and gabled, reed thatched roof and painted rendered walls. It retains some early 20th-century sash windows with small pane outer sashes. It has a substantial timber boathouse immediately to east.

From Southover the road, turns east in an informal natural setting along the back of the gardens of the river side houses and bungalows, where the sound of river traffic can be heard and where there are distant glimpses of water between the river bank buildings.

San Remo, at 2 ½ storeys is rather out of scale with its riverside neighbours, while the combination of gabled red clay pantile roof, black weatherboard and red brick ground floor brickwork is also out of character.

Closeburn is one of the better preserved, first phase buildings. It has gabled and hipped reed thatched roofs and rendered and painted walls. It has a verandah with rustic posts and balustrade to south and north where there is a half hexagonal wing with a pyramidal thatched roof.

Waterside is striking for its relationship with the river lapping at its front, for the willows within its curtilage and for its rambling single pile, single storey plan, with hipped reed thatched roofs over bow fronted wings to front, back and sides. The walls are covered in painted render and the fenestration is modern.

Cobwebs boathouse is an example of the traditional Norfolk Broads boathouse. It is a large thatched, timber-frame and weather-boarded building, with a thatched roof, set at the end of a dyke.

Landings is a late 20th-century timber and glass holiday house, with a simple rectangular plan, steep pitched gabled slate roof and storey height glazing in a timber frame. Ground floor and verandah level is well above river level which makes the building out of scale with its neighbours, though the timber frame construction, painted weather board and extensive glazing are in context in a design that appears to be in the hand of a professional designer.

Immediately to the East of Landings is a small thatched house with gabled reed thatched roof, gabled porch and painted weather-boarded walls. It has PVC casement windows and door. The ground floor is raised a half metre above river level. The deck at the raised level faces the river.

The Glade appears in old postcards showing the building with an elaborate roof and ornate, rustic-style internal verandah which has since been filled in. Now the house has a single storey, single pile, 'L' shaped plan. It has reed thatched gabled and hipped roofs, rustic posts, rendered and painted walls and modern fenestration.

Towards Wroxham Broad and tucked away at the end of dykes are Drakes Dyke with half-hipped reed thatch and dormers and painted and rendered walls and Staithcote, also with half hipped reed thatch roof, thatched dormers and rendered and painted walls. The house is on top of the boathouse and has a deck at first floor level with steps and balustrade.

Sheerwater in the north-western corner of Wroxham Broad is made up from three ranges, to east, with hipped thatched roof and to south and west with gabled roofs. Each is timber framed with extensive areas of glass windows and grey/brown stained weatherboard below.



Local Materials

A wide range of materials were used for the construction of the buildings in this part of the conservation area. The pre-war and post-war select houses had reed thatch roofs, red clay plain tiles, brown concrete plain tiles and less commonly interlocking brown concrete tiles and red or black glazed pantiles. Walls were built with red brick quoins and gable walls with rendered walls, with mellow red or dark red bricks for walls or plinths and half timbering with rendered and painted backing for walls and gable spandrels.

On the river bank the traditional chalets have hipped and gabled reed thatch roofs with sedge ridges. Walls appear to be timber-framed, made with rustic poles and rendered and painted panels. Painted tongued and grooved timber, planed and painted timber weatherboard and, tarred brickwork. Across the river there is 'Leisure Hour, a good example with hipped reed thatch, rendered and white painted walls and pale blue woodwork.

DETRACTORS

The special character of the conservation area has been eroded in many locations by minor alterations such as PVC replacement doors and windows. In a few instances, the traditional appearance of a cottage of vernacular character has been damaged by inappropriate additions and materials.

The loss of front gardens, their trees and shrubs and the removal of, walls or other traditional boundary features, to provide hard landscaping for car parking, damage the appearance of the conservation area.

The character of buildings and traditional local brickwork in the conservation area has been damaged by the application of hard cement renders and or paint.

The loss of gardens for the construction of new houses has eroded the character of the conservation area where low development densities and extensive gardens are essential elements in the special character of the conservation area.

Buildings within the conservation area do not normally exceed 2 storeys and their height is predominately of 1½ storeys. Large new houses above 2 storeys appear out of scale, height, form and massing with the other buildings within the conservation area that contribute to it's architectural or historic character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

Sea Scout Hut, Nobel Crescent is within the conservation area boundary, drawn to include the north edge of the settlement. However the character and appearance of the hut does not contribute positively to the character of the conservation area.

Football Ground, Skinners Lane. While not making any special contribution to the character of the conservation area, the football ground is in a sensitive location which is important in long views of the conservation area from the south and for the setting of Bureside, and Fairfields.

Masonic Hall, Norwich Road
The heavy massing of the buildings, their flat roofs and dark brickwork, set in a featureless car park with out mitigating landscaping, are alien to with the visual context of the area.

Fire Station, Park Road, is within the conservation area boundary as drawn to include the access drive of Keys Hill House, though the scale, character and road surfaces of the buildings and their curtilage do not contribute positively to the character of the conservation area.

Plattens Court, Castle Street is a modern courtyard development which is generally in harmony with the character of the conservation area though it does not positively contribute to the architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.

Buildings at Risk
There are no buildings at risk, and with the possible exception of one building in Norwich Road, the condition of the buildings appear sound.

PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES

Wroxham is a desirable place to live, work and retire providing opportunities for enjoying the leisure activities available in the area in the countryside and in the special environment of the Broads. This brings with it pressure for new residential development, some in the attractive quiet, green suburbs in Wroxham which were laid out in a low density, to take advantage of the riverside in the early-twentieth century or the re-development of the Wroxham House Estate in the latter half of the twentieth century. There has been pressure to build large new dwellings in the gardens between the Avenue and the River Bure and along the riverside, leading to harm to the special character of the area. Similarly, demolition and redevelopment at higher densities in Charles Close and The Avenue would damage the pleasant landscape-dominated environment of the area.

Pressure for residential development in the area will also bring with it proposals for the extension of buildings. It will be important in considering such applications to ensure that the extensions do not change the architectural character of dwellings with additional floors or garages and that the architectural unity of the housing estate is preserved both by controlling external decoration and materials. Extensions and new dwellings should be in harmony with the adjoining houses in scale, height, form, massing, horizontal or vertical emphasis and detailed design.

The lack of an off road parking space has lead to the loss of front gardens and boundary walls and railings, which with the parked cars introduce visual clutter into the street scene.

APPENDIX A

THE EFFECT OF DESIGNATION

DESIGNATION

Section 69, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to identify Conservation Areas and to designate them after consultation with the Parish Councils concerned, statutory undertakers and with other interested bodies.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Any application for permission to carry out development which affects the character or appearance of the Conservation Area must be publicly advertised on site and in the local press not less than 21 days before it is determined by the Local Planning Authority. This may in some cases apply to developments on the fringe or margins of the Conservation Area where it is considered the development may affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

New Development

The local planning authority, as a general rule, will require that all planning applications for building works are accompanied by detailed plans and drawings. These drawings should illustrate elevations in relation to existing and adjoining buildings or their immediate surroundings.

The local planning authority must pay particular regard to the character of the Conservation Area and the possible effect any development may have. Factors taken into consideration will be layout of buildings, scale, shape and form. A high standard of design and materials will also be expected. Peripheral elements such as design of walls, fences, planting and the visual effects of providing for vehicular traffic, e.g. access, parking areas, vision splays will similarly be considered.

It is desirable, therefore, that details of proposals should be discussed with

Development Management Officers or Conservation Officers at an early stage, preferably before submission of formal planning applications.

Alterations and Extensions / Permitted Development

The form of control relating to alterations and extensions differs between Listed and unlisted buildings within Conservation Areas. The Town & Country (General Permitted Development) Order permits, within certain limits, alterations or extensions to any building* without the need to obtain specific planning consent. However, any proposal to alter or extend a Listed Building, within the limits of permitted development, requires Listed Building Consent if, in the opinion of the local planning authority, this would affect its character. Beyond the limits laid down in the General Permitted Development Order both planning permission and Listed Building Consent will be required. Owners of unlisted buildings can extend or alter their properties within the limits of permitted development without the need to obtain consent. In some situations such alterations or extensions can have a detrimental effect upon the visual amenity of the street scene and character of the Conservation Area. The local authority would therefore encourage owners who wish to alter or extend their houses, to do so in a sympathetic manner. The authority's Conservation Officers will be pleased to give advice on matters of design and use of materials. If the local authority is satisfied that in the interests of conservation it is necessary and expedient to bring under control any particular class or classes of 'permitted development', application may be made to the Department for Communities and Local Government for a Direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, for that purpose.

*building means in this case, a dwelling house Town and Country (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

Satellite dishes

The siting of a satellite dish on the chimney stack or on the roof slope or any elevation fronting the road, on a dwelling house within a

conservation area, requires consent from the council.

Demolition

With minor exceptions, no building within a Conservation Area may be demolished without the consent of the local planning authority. Additionally, demolition of a 'Listed Building' requires Listed Building Consent and the approval of the Secretary of State. Where a building which is of particular importance in maintaining the character of a Conservation Area has been allowed to decay, the Secretary of State may direct a local authority to ensure that repairs necessary to make the building weatherproof are carried out.

Tree Preservation

It is an offence to fell, lop, top, cause wilful damage, destroy or remove a tree in a Conservation Area without first giving the local planning authority at least 6 weeks notice in writing. In that period, the authority may either seek to preserve the tree by serving a Tree Preservation Order in which case express consent then be obtained for any remedial work. If no such Order is served then work can proceed. For trees which are already the subject of Tree Preservation Orders express consent of the local planning authority must be obtained before any remedial work is undertaken.

DESIGN GUIDANCE / HEDGEROW LEGISLATION

Window Replacements

Window replacements are often the most serious threat to the appearance of our conservation areas and may even affect the value of properties. The replacement of timber windows with PVCu is likely to result in several problems:

- The material cannot reproduce profiles and detailing of traditional joinery
- The variety can destroy the visual harmony of the streetscene
- The material is not as easy and economic to repair as timber
- It does not have the biodegradable qualities of timber when redundant, creating an environmental land fill hazard

NB: All complete window replacements are now required to achieve minimum insulation values – please consult the Building Control Section at Broadland District Council.

In the interests of conservation, local authorities are also empowered to relax the requirements under Building Control Regulations when considering proposals for the restoration or conversion of historic buildings.

Other repairs that can have a detrimental impact include:

- Alterations to roofing materials
- Inappropriate repointing techniques
- Inappropriate repointing materials
- Painting, rendering or cladding brickwork
- Removal of decorative architectural features such as stone or window surrounds
- Installing modern plastic rainwater gutters and downpipes

Careful repairs are as important as major alterations and extensions.

Important Hedgerows

Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (S1 No.1160):

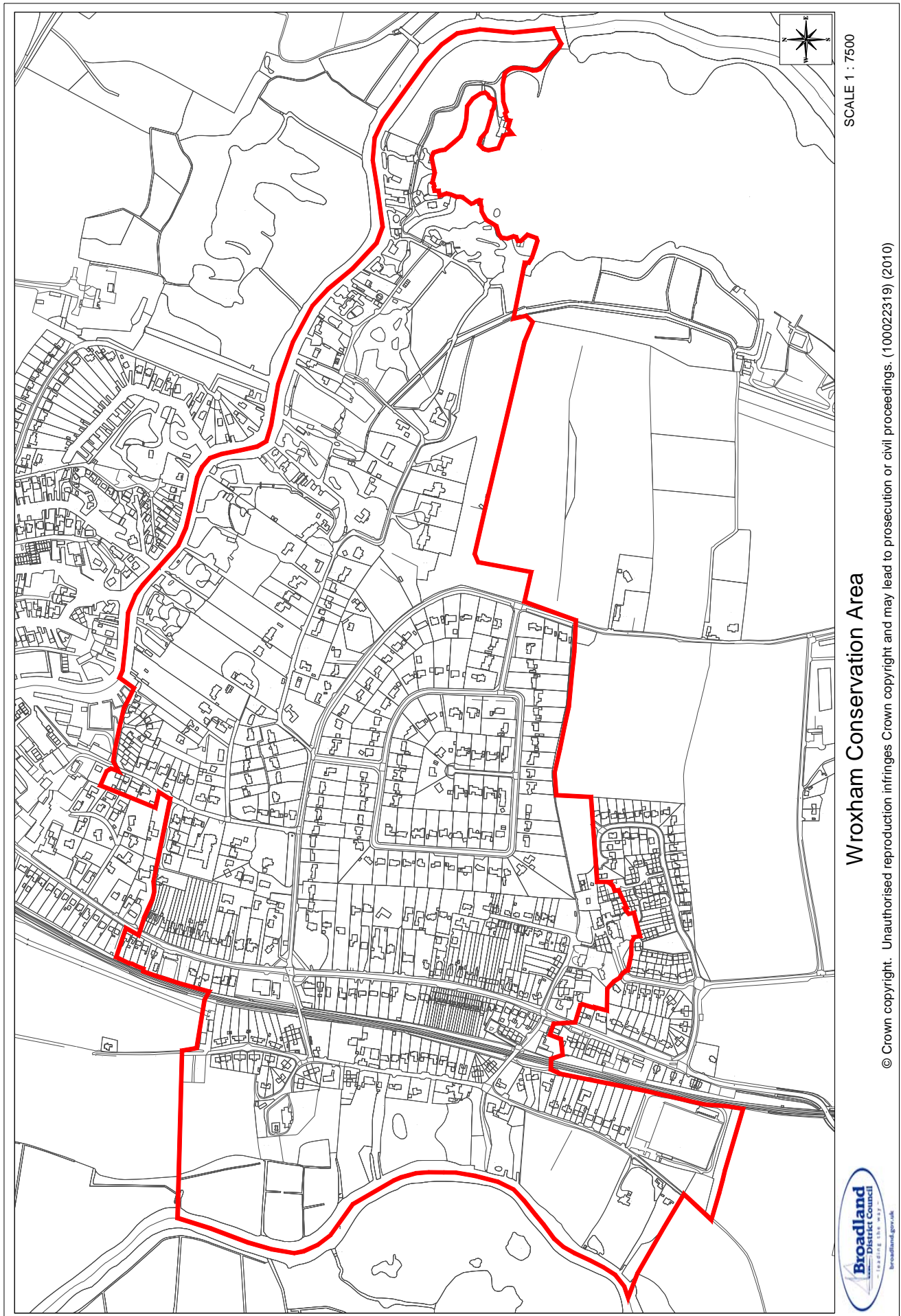
- It is against the law to remove most countryside hedgerows without permission.
- To get permission to remove a hedgerow you must notify your local planning authority.
- If the authority decide to prohibit removal of an important hedgerow, it must let you know within 6 weeks.
- If you remove a hedgerow without permission (whether it is important or not) you may face an unlimited fine, you may also have to replace the hedgerow.
- For further information regarding the hedgerow legislation see D.O.E. leaflet 'The Hedgerow Regulations – Your Questions Answered'.

GRANTS

Grant assistance may be available for both listed and unlisted buildings or structures which are of amenity value to the conservation area, both for repair and enhancement. Grants may also be available for tree work / planting. Contact the Conservation Section at Broadland District Council.

APPENDIX B

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY



APPENDIX C

CONSERVATION BOUNDARY showing Broads Authority Area

