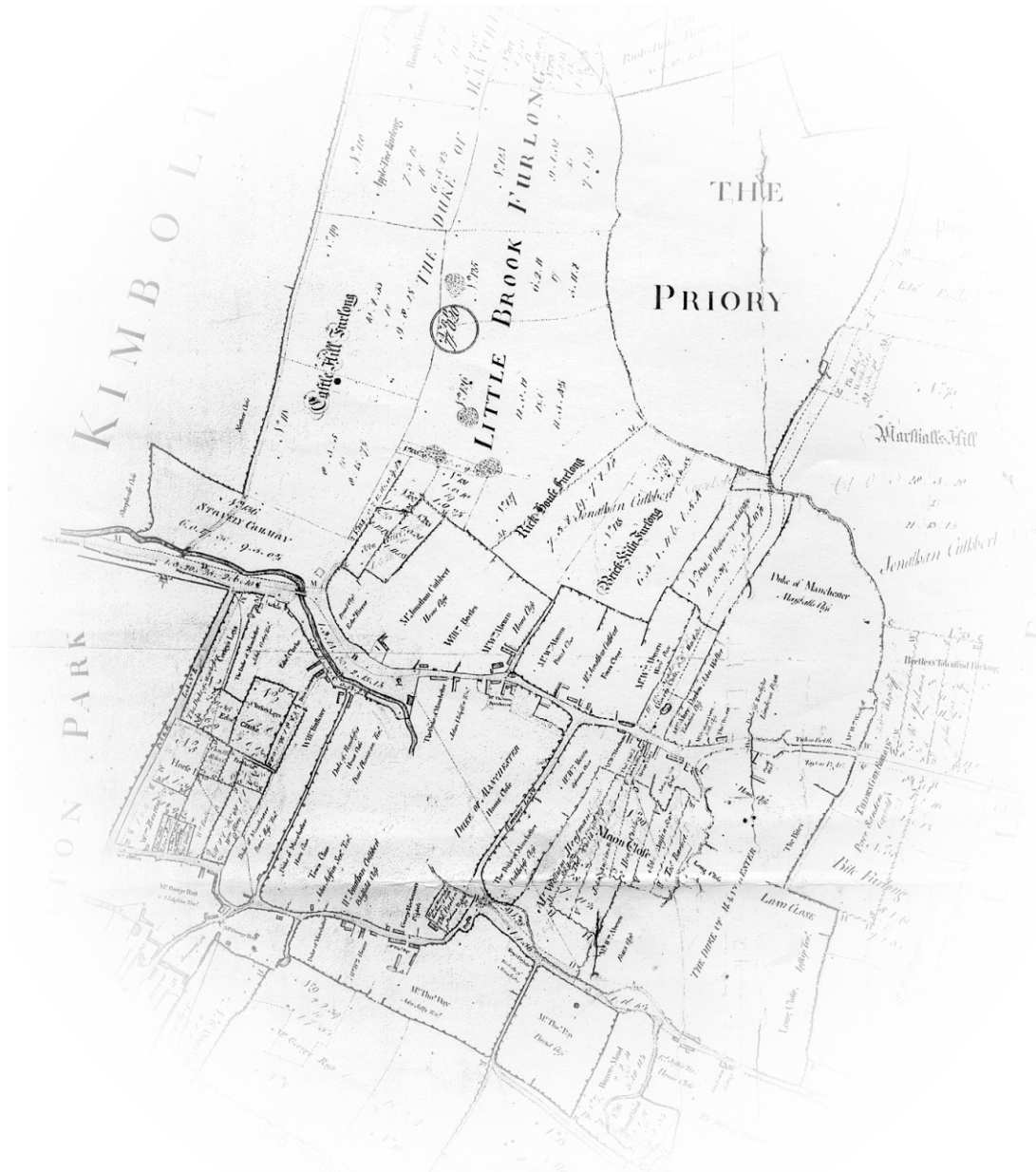


Stonely

Conservation Area Character Statement



Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement



June 2003

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Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

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Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **H**untingdonshire has sixty-three Conservation Areas, designated for their “special architectural or historic interest”. Designation is not an end to itself but the start of a process to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area’s character or appearance, in accordance with the statutory duty of the District Council.

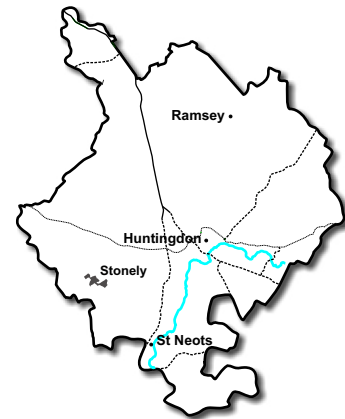
1.2 The character of a Conservation Area is defined not only by the buildings within it, but also by the pattern of the streets, open spaces and trees that separate them. In addition to normal Planning and Listed Building controls, Conservation Area designation restricts certain minor developments which would normally be permitted to a property owner.

1.3 This Conservation Area Character Statement forms one of a series of statements that is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. The Local Plan contains policies relating to Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, archaeological remains,

trees and open spaces. The Character Statements provide a basis for development plan policies and development control decisions within the Conservation Area.

1.4 The Stonely Conservation Area

Stonely is situated in the west of Huntingdonshire, close to the boundary with Bedfordshire. It is set in the valley of the River Kym amongst the rolling landscape which characterises the western edge of the district. The Conservation Area was designated on the 20th May 1991.



Aerial photograph showing the extent of the Stonely Conservation Area Boundary today.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

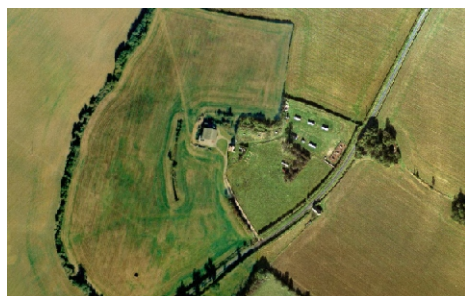
2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Stonely is believed to have been one of five mediaeval hamlets situated within the parish of Kimbolton. The other hamlets included Newtown, Overstow, Werkwell and Wornditch, although it is only Wornditch which remains. The hamlet of Werkwell has been lost since the 14th century, and Newtown and Overstow have become integrated with the neighbouring settlements of Kimbolton and Stow Longa, respectively.



Map showing Kimbolton parish and the locations of the mediaeval hamlets

2.2 The earliest documentary reference to a settlement at Stonely is in the Hundred Roll of 1274 which noted “a small monastery [in the area] at a time when the de Bohun family owned the manor of Kimbolton”. The monastery or “Stonely Priory” as it was known, was a small House of Austin Canons thought to have been established at the turn of the 13th century, by William, Earl of Essex.



Scattered earth works and crop marks are all that remain to highlight the location where the priory once stood. The site of the priory is shown on Map A.

2.3 Stonely Priory maintained a strong role within Kimbolton parish life throughout the mediaeval period. In 1378 the patronage of the Parish Church of St Andrew in Kimbolton was passed to Stonely Priory. Up until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the mid-16th century the parish church was served by canons from the priory.

2.4 The priory lands were leased to Oliver Leder of Great Staughton in 1538, and the priory buildings converted to domestic use. In 1552 the estate was sold to Thomas Maria Wingfield a son of Sir Richard Wingfield, of the Kimbolton estate. The estate remained in the Wingfield family until 1614. The Montagu family, later titled Earls then Dukes of Manchester, acquired Stonely Priory Estate around 1614, subsequently acquiring the Kimbolton estate in 1615.

2.5 Situated on the route between St Neots and Kimbolton the highway through Stonely was a well used trading route. Under the Highway Act of 1555 responsibility for road repairs was burdened upon the parish. In 1755, however, the Stonely Turnpike Act was passed and the road became a turnpike road. Under this system the upkeep of the road was paid for through tolls levied on travellers using the route. The system of tolling continued up until the 1930's.

2.6 In line with national land reforms of the 18th century the Stonely Enclosure Act was passed in 1769. This scheme of land reform sought to rationalise the mediaeval system of communal farming and create enclosed fields under single ownership. In many parts of the county this system saw an abrupt end to the smallholder. In Stonely the impact of this act was reduced as smallholders had been selling up the land they farmed to larger land owners.

2.7 Stonely was largely home to farm owners and labourers. In the 19th century, however, the wealthy Welstead family sought to build in Stonely where they owned land. The family had originally settled in Kimbolton in the 17th century as agents to the Kimbolton Estate and then subsequently built up private land ownership in and around the area. 'The Cottage' is a notable Welstead property as is Stonely Hall on Hatchet Lane and Stonely Grange on Easton Road.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

3. THE CHARACTER OF STONELY

- (i) The character of Stonely is one of loose knit sporadic groups of dwellings set within the landscape. The integration between landscape and settlement is important to the character of Stonely.



Map of 1763 showing clusters of dwellings situated along the Kimbolton to Great Staughton Road.

- (ii) Stonely is now dependent on the amenities of neighbouring Kimbolton. Historically, however, the village had its own bakery, sub-post office and pub.
- (iii) Today the settlement of Stonely has expanded to around 100 dwellings. Hatchet Lane, which is outside the Conservation Area, has become a main focus for the construction of new housing. Substantial modern development has also been undertaken around the Easton Road junction.

3.1 Stonely Conservation Area

- (i) The Stonely Conservation Area is focussed along a stretch of the B645, from the junction with Park Lane to just beyond its junction with Easton Road. The boundary also includes the land around Stonely Grange to the east of Stonely and land west of Old Ford Lane to the boundary of the River Kym. Excluded from the Conservation Area is the site of the priory, which was located to the west side of Easton Road, beyond the main settlement.

3.2 Listed Buildings

- (i) There are 17 structures in the Conservation Area, which have been listed by the Secretary of State as being worthy of protection because of their special architectural or historic interest. All buildings have Grade II listed status and their locations are illustrated on Map A.



Grade II listed milestone sited outside Milestone Cottage on the B645

3.3 Protected Trees

- (i) No individual Tree Preservation Orders are in force within Stonely Conservation Area. However, by virtue of Conservation Area legislation all trees are protected within the designated boundary.

MAP A - Constraints

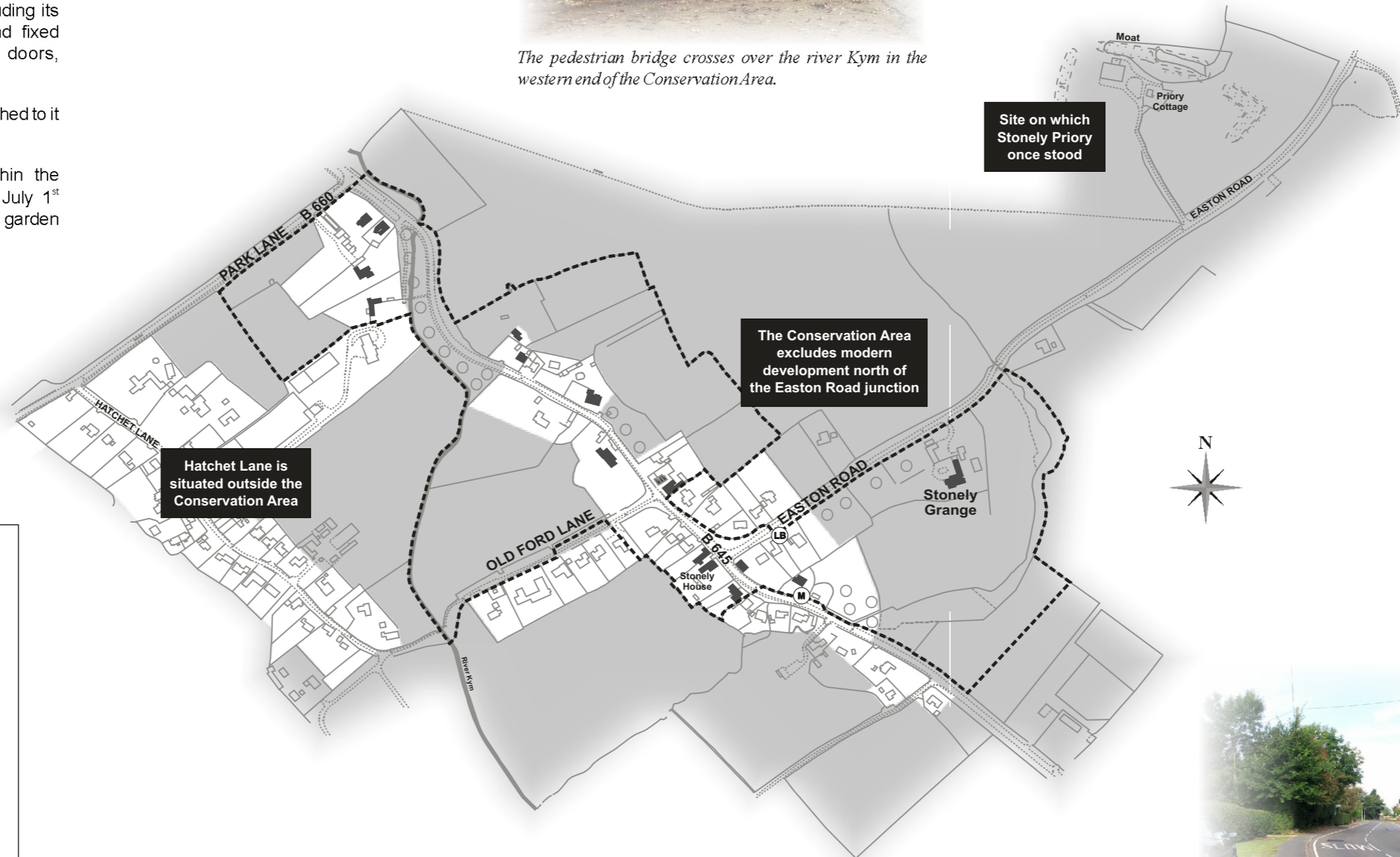
Listed Buildings

The following elements of a Listed Building are protected, whatever its grade:-

- The whole building is protected, including its interior, external walls and roof, and fixed features such as windows and doors, staircases, plasterwork and fireplaces;
- Any object or structure physically attached to it such as a garden wall;
- Any free-standing building built within the curtilage which was erected before July 1st 1948, such as outbuildings, barns, garden structures and boundary walls.



The pedestrian bridge crosses over the river Kym in the western end of the Conservation Area.



Legend

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Listed Building
- Ⓜ Listed Milestone
- ⓁⓅ Listed Telephone Box
- 🌳 Area of Best Landscape
- Protected Open Space



Hedging and trees dominate the scene as you enter the village of Stonely.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

4. STREET ANALYSIS

4.1 B645

- (i) The B645 is a gently curving road running through Stonely. The majority of listed buildings are sited along this stretch of road. The character and setting changes along the length of the road. The concentration of housing at the eastern end of the Conservation Area contrasts with the open views of the countryside westwards towards Kimbolton.
- (ii) Trees and hedges are the dominant boundary treatment along the B645 and serve to reinforce the rural character of the area. It is unfortunate that modern housing has, however, incorporated features such as low walling and railings, in a style more characteristic of suburban form than rural Cambridgeshire.
- (iii) Towards the eastern end of the Conservation Area there is a concentration of around 30 dwellings. A number of historic buildings are sited here although modern development has had a significant adverse impact upon the character of the area.



The listed building known as The Malt House fronts the B645.

- (iv) There are opportunities for enhancement at the eastern end of the B645. The former pub which has now been converted to residential use sits back from the road. Improvements could be made to the landscaping in front of this building to enhance its setting and that of adjacent listed buildings.



Opportunity for enhancement- Stonely House has been vacant since 1970s and would benefit from repair.

- (v) As the B645 passes Old Ford Lane and heads west the character of the scene changes. Buildings become dispersed and trees and foliage dominate the scene. There is a mix of properties along this section of road from modern bungalows to listed 18th-century cottages.
- (vi) At the village green the character of the B645 changes again. The green is a grassed open space situated south of the B645 and bounded by the River Kym. A number of trees are sited here and views across fields towards Hatchet Lane complement the setting. Open landscape dominates the scene north of the B645. Low hawthorn hedges offer wide views across the rising undulating landscape.
- (vii) Only a handful of dwellings are located towards the western end of the Conservation Area and they are all listed and represent some of the earliest surviving dwellings within Stonely. The dwellings here are accessed from a small track south of the Kym, amongst mature tree cover.



The river Kym appears as a gentle stream, in summer, as it passes under the pedestrian bridge situated at Stonely Green.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

4.2 Meadow Land

- (i) The Conservation Area incorporates meadow land adjacent to Old Ford Lane. This meadow land, which slopes gently down from the B645 towards the River Kym, was historically known as Home Close.



A dominating line of Horse Chestnut trees forms the boundary between the meadow and Old Ford Lane.

- (ii) The property known as 'The Cottage', looks out on to the meadow from the main road. Built for Captain Welstead, a captain in Nelson's fleet, the house is designed in the Cottage Ornee style. The purpose of this architectural style was to build elegant houses that epitomised the perfect country dwelling, with rustic charm and traditional materials.



Part of the rustic style of The Cottage is the thatched roof, over-hanging eaves and rendered brickwork.

- (iii) There is a strong relationship between the meadow and "The Cottage". While the meadow may not have been landscaped, it provides a picturesque setting to complement the

architectural style of the building. The views from the building are important to its character and setting.

MAP B - Conservation Area Context



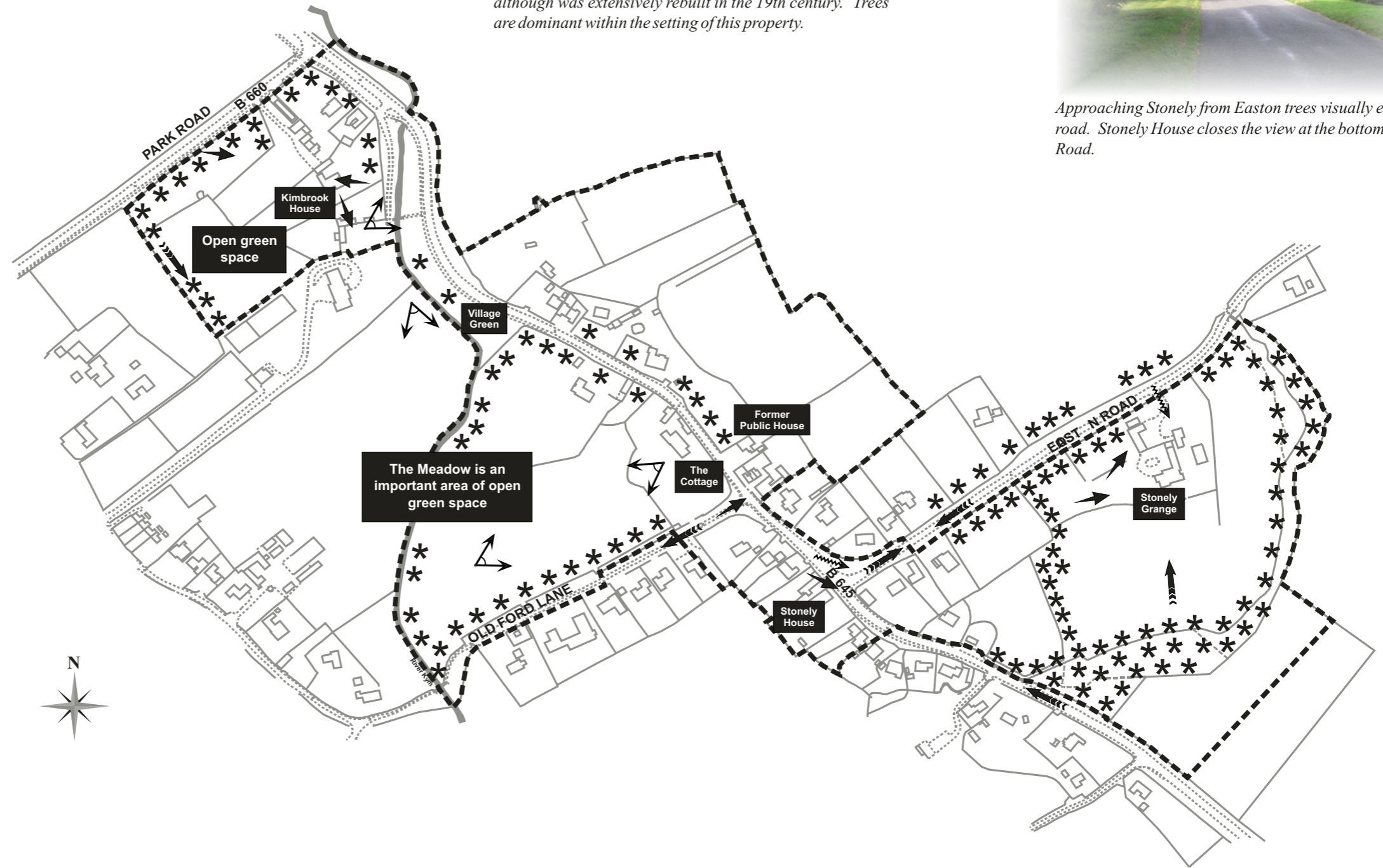
The Conservation Area extends back along the B660, to include land once associated with the planned gardens of Kimbolton Castle.



Kimbrook House dates back to the late 18th century although was extensively rebuilt in the 19th century. Trees are dominant within the setting of this property.



Approaching Stonely from Easton trees visually enclose the road. Stonely House closes the view at the bottom of Easton Road.



Legend

- Long Range View
- Short Range View
- Important Wide View
- Poor View
- Important Trees and Foliage

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

4.3 Easton Road

- (i) Easton Road is the northern route into and out of Stonely. A variety of modern dwellings have been constructed along the road and vary greatly in character. Construction here has not taken into account local building materials and again there is little unity with Stonely's historic buildings.
- (ii) Whilst the building style is more in keeping with a suburban street scene it is the setting of this road that conveys a rural character. Building plots are set back from the road behind wide grass verges. The lack of hard surfaced footpaths or concrete kerbs abutting the road softens the scene.
- (iii) Beyond the housing on Easton Road an established boundary of mature trees sits along a line at the back of the wide grass verge. These trees frame the road and contribute greatly to the pleasant views in and out of the village.



Opportunity for enhancement - The listed Telephone Box on Easton Road is need of maintenance.

4.4 Stonely Grange

- (i) Stonely Grange lies to the northeast of Stonely and is approached from Easton Road. Constructed on higher ground, the property benefits from views out across the surrounding countryside. Following its use as a private school the property has now been converted into flats.



Stonely Grange along with associated stable block dates to 1864-65 and is built in the Vernacular Revival Style. The architect was John Devey, who was nationally acclaimed in his day.

- (ii) Undulating, rough-grassed fields surround the house to the north and east and are included within the Conservation Area boundary. Trees and hedges enclosing these fields are a key feature within the landscape. To the south of the house there are remains of a small planned garden.



Opportunity for enhancement - the approach to Stonely Grange detracts from the setting of the house. Improvements to the parking area and to the way parking bays are defined would enhance this area.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

5. THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN STONELY

- (i) Stonely evolved largely from a sporadic settlement of dwellings mainly for agricultural workers who worked the surrounding land. The homes of many of these agricultural labourers would have been one or two roomed hovels which have not survived. The historic buildings we see today would have largely been home to the wealthier families of Stonely.
- (ii) The differing styles of architecture present in Stonely are characteristic of the changing period trends of rural architecture seen across England. Early dwellings are small in scale, however, by the 19th century larger properties were commonplace.
- (iii) With the exception of 20th century development, there is a consistency in the use of building materials used in the construction of properties. Materials are predominantly locally sourced although slate is seen on some buildings which is a material imported to the area.

5.1 16th & 17 Century Development

- (i) The surviving cottages dating back to this period share common characteristics. These dwellings are all small in scale and of no more than one and a half storeys. Original timber-frame construction has been concealed externally by later brickwork and is either painted or rendered. Roofing material covering the steeply pitched roofs is either local Cambridgeshire mix peg tile or thatch. Early horizontal multi-paned sash windows can still be found although modern multi-pane casements have replaced these in some cases.



No. 3 Stonely, a grade II listed building dating back to the 17th century.



April Cottage dates to the 17th century and is a one and a half storey dwelling with dormer windows.

5.2 18th & 19th Century Development

- (i) From the 18th century onwards the construction of dwellings in Stonely was being undertaken in brick using locally sourced gault or red brick. The brickwork to many properties from this period is left exposed although some have been painted or rendered. Plain tile remains the predominant roofing material of this period although slate can be seen on a few buildings. Unfortunately modern concrete tiles have replaced slate in some cases.



No. 10 Stonely is constructed with a mansard roof.

- (ii) A variety of architectural styles is expressed in the buildings of the 18th and 19th centuries. No.10 Stonely, for example, has a mansard roof. This is a method of roof construction common in Kimbolton and surrounding parishes during the 18th century. The roof design allowed for improvements to attic space.

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

- (iii) The architectural fashions of the Georgian period can be seen to influence the style of Fox Close, No. 35 Stonely and No. 37 Stonely. These large houses are of two storeys with well proportioned frontages. Additional accommodation is provided within the attic and this is where servants or unmarried labourers who worked for the family of the house would have lived.



The windows seen here in the roof gables are known as garret windows. These are characteristic of large houses where roof accommodation was provided for workers. These provided the only light and ventilation into this living space.

- (iv) There are a variety of buildings in Stonely which date to the 19th century and meet the needs of differing classes of occupier. 36,38 and 40 Stonely are examples of two storey workers' cottages. In contrast, 52 Stonely is a two storey property with attic accommodation and would have had a wealthier class of owner.



No. 52 Stonely is a mid-Victorian house. The pattern of glazing bars within the windows adds to the building's character.

- (iv) A number of architectural styles were in fashion during the 19th century, of which two are expressed in buildings in Stonely. 'The Cottage' is built in the Cottage Ornee style which was popular in the early to mid-19th century while 'The Grange' is in the Vernacular Revival style which was popular in the late 19th century.

5.3 Modern Development

- (i) There is substantial modern development within Stonely, especially towards the eastern end of the Conservation Area around the Easton Road junction. Mass produced building materials, at odds with vernacular material, have been used in the construction of modern buildings.



Modern buildings located along Easton Road within the Conservation Area.

5.4 Outbuildings

- (i) In Stonely examples of historic outbuildings can still be found within the curtilage of some historic dwellings. The distinct characteristic of many historic outbuildings around the district is that they are roofed in pantile, a roofing material not usually seen on the roofs of the main dwelling. There are a few pantiled outbuildings in Stonely although some have plain tile roofs.

MAP C - Materials



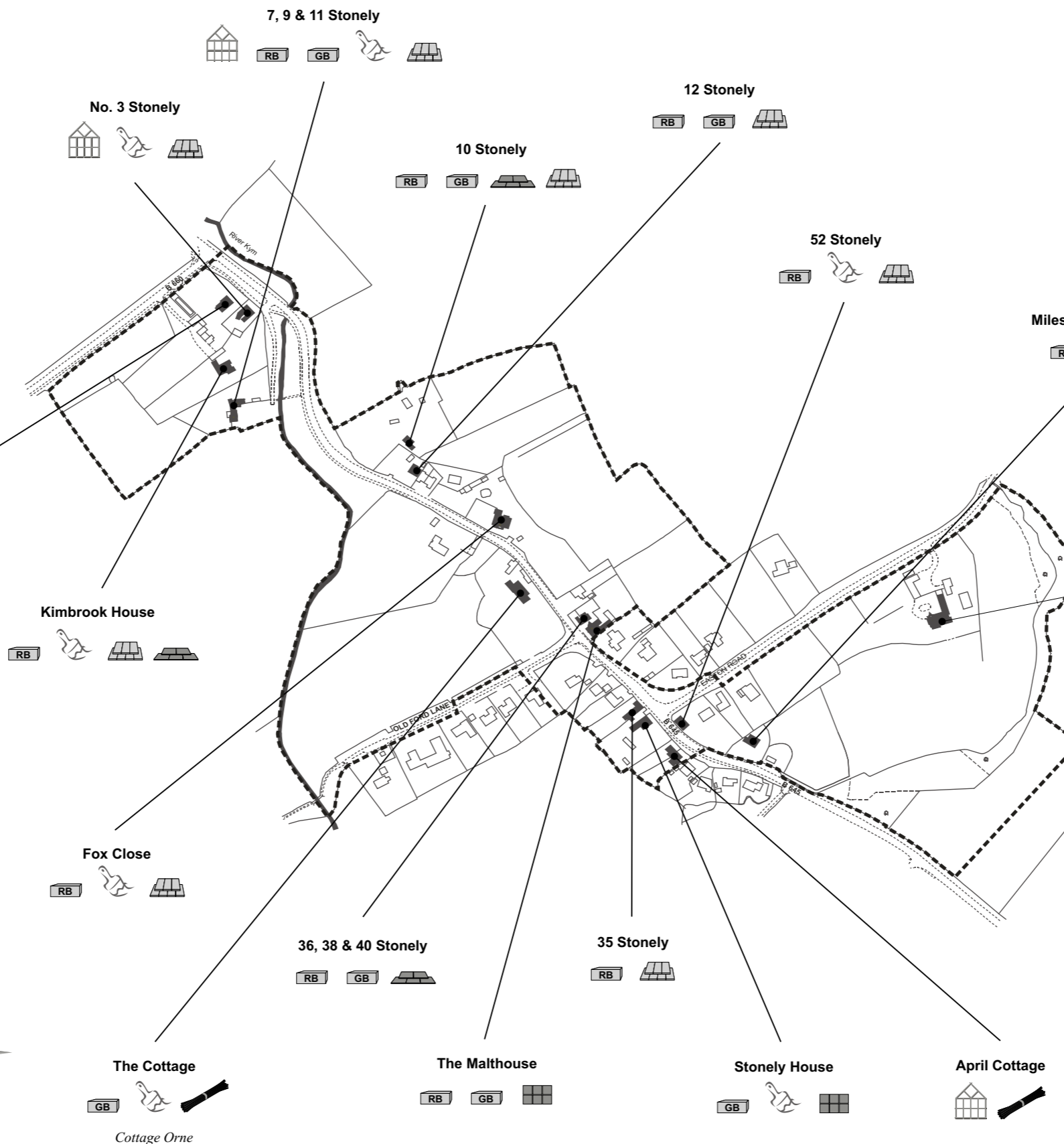
These early 17th-century cottages share common characteristics such as rendered frontages and local plain tile roofs.



36, 38 and 40 on the B645 are constructed in local brick and slate.



Although sited outside the Conservation Area these modern bungalows have a significant detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area.



Legend

- Timber Frame with Brick
- Red Brick
- Gault Brick
- Rended or Painted
- Plain Tile
- Modern Tile
- Thatch
- Slate



Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

6. SUMMARY

6.1 The relationship between the landscape and the pattern of historic development is an important characteristic of the settlement. When considering any proposals for development within the Conservation Area consideration should be given to the impact this will have on this characteristic.

6.2 Tree and hedges are a vital element of the landscape in and around Stonely and contribute to a number of picturesque views around the village. Their preservation is important in maintaining Stonely's green and rural character.

6.3 There is a consistency in the building materials which have been used for the construction of historic buildings. Common building materials include:



Timber-frame



Brick



Plain tile



Thatch



Slate



Render or Painted Brickwork



Pantile to Outbuildings

6.4 It has been established that modern development has had a large impact on the character of Stonely, particularly on the Easton Road focus of the village. Modern development had paid little regard to preserving the rural character of the village and this has been detrimental.

6.5 A number of issues have been addressed within the character statement with regard to opportunities for enhancement. In Stonely there are a number of improvements which would improve the setting and character of the Conservation Area.

6.6 The protection of the special character of Stonely will be of benefit to the whole community. For more details, information and advice please contact the

Planning Services Department at
Huntingdonshire District Council:

Tel: 01480 388424.

Fax: 01480 388472

E mail: planningpolicy@huntsdc.gov.uk

Stonely Conservation Area Character Statement

ANNEX 1

Archaeological Statement: Stonely

- 1.1 This archaeological record looks towards the presence of archaeology and historic understanding of the area of Kimbolton and Stonely. The underlying geology is clay with the exception of the valley floor where a band of gravel exists.

The Archaeological Record

Prehistoric

- 1.2 There is little firm evidence of prehistoric settlement in the area although stray finds such as flint flakes (probably aster from a manufacturing process) have been found around the site of the priory. Along with later finds in the early to mid-Saxon period this suggests a settlement existed on the south facing slopes of the Kym Valley.

Roman

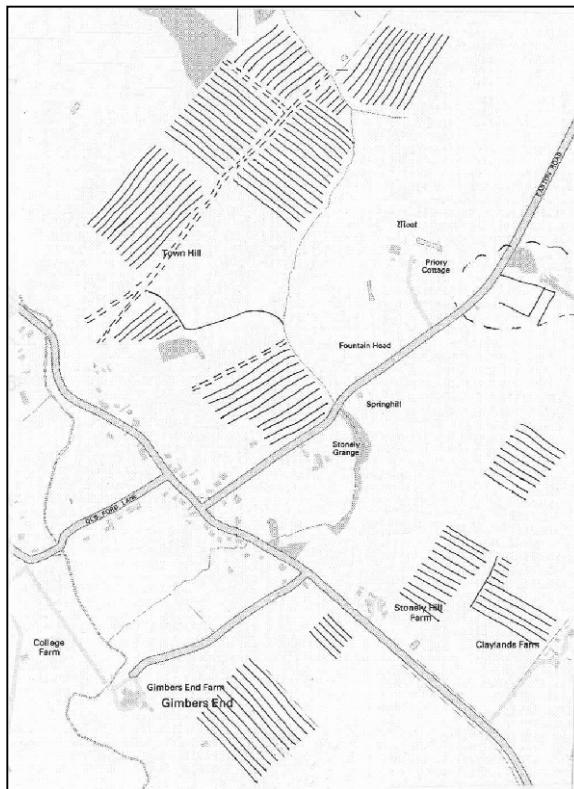
- 1.3 It is likely the valley of the river Kym formed an agricultural landscape that was comprised of hamlets and fields. Abraded shards of pottery have been found around the eastern edge of Kimbolton Park.

Anglo-Saxon

- 1.4 A scattering of early to mid-Saxon pottery (6th to 8th century) has been recorded in the area of the priory, further evidence that a settlement may have existed on the south facing slopes of the Kym Valley. It is a surprise that the location of the late Saxon village of neighbouring Kimbolton remains unknown.

Mediaeval

- 1.5 There are extensive remains of mediaeval agriculture in the area, and the preserved areas of ridge and furrow are amongst the finest in the county. Among the fields can also be seen ponds and hollows ways. Demonstrating the intricacy of agriculture at this time. Ridge and furrow is rare in Cambridgeshire, and remains of this quality are of significance.



Map showing surviving mediaeval ridge and furrow around Stonely.

- 1.6 Stonely Priory was located north of the river Kym although only a house, dating to the 17th century, marks the site today. The remains of a triangular moat are still evident around the listed house.
- 1.7 Founded as an order of Austin Canons the first documentary evidence of the priory dates to 1274. It is known in 1279 the priory was a tenant of the manor, and the advowson was held by the lords of Kimbolton.

For further information please contact the County Sites and Monuments Record at Cambridgeshire County Council:

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