

- A. Dryehill Hundred
- B. Totmanslow H.
- C. Cudleston H.
- D. Offelow H.
- E. Seiden H.
- f. Part of Shrop Shire.
- g. Part of Stafford Shire.

CONSERVATION AREA 24

YOXALL

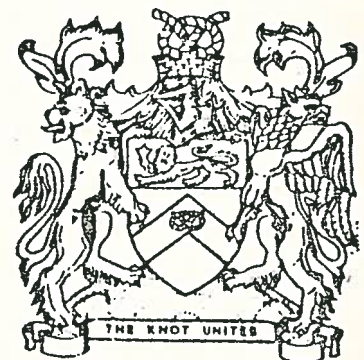


The cover map of Staffordshire was first published by Hermann Moll in 1724. It gives special emphasis to the roads, rivers and parkland. The County boundary differs from the present one, as parts now in Shropshire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire are included.

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING COMMITTEE
CIVIC AMENITIES ACT 1967

CONSERVATION AREA 24

YOXALL



PURPOSE OF DESIGNATION

The rapid changes now taking place in town and village, whilst giving practical benefits, also threaten many beautiful and historic areas with destruction or despoliation. Such areas, often unique in character due to rich variation in types of buildings, trees and open spaces, form an important part of the national heritage.

In the past, individual buildings of architectural or historic interest have been protected by legislation, whereas attractive groups of buildings, often of little individual value, and areas of character, beauty or historic importance have been mainly unprotected.

The Civic Amenities Act, 1967, remedies the deficiency by enabling local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas those "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

Potential conservation areas exist in many towns and villages, varying in size from complete centres to groups of buildings. Although often centred on historic buildings, they may include features of archaeological importance, historic street patterns, village greens or areas of particular character.

Staffordshire has been strongly influenced by the effects of the Industrial Revolution and consequent growth of industry and population. The pressures resulting from this growth cause considerable problems in terms of visual environment, nevertheless many areas and settlements of good traditional character still remain in the towns, villages and country estates. Their preservation cannot be considered in isolation, without taking into account the natural growth and future needs of people, commerce and industry.

Conservation is the means by which existing character can be preserved and enhanced with due regard for other demands. Designation of the Conservation Area followed by detailed design proposals will form the basis for positive action, but ultimate success will depend on active public interest and support.

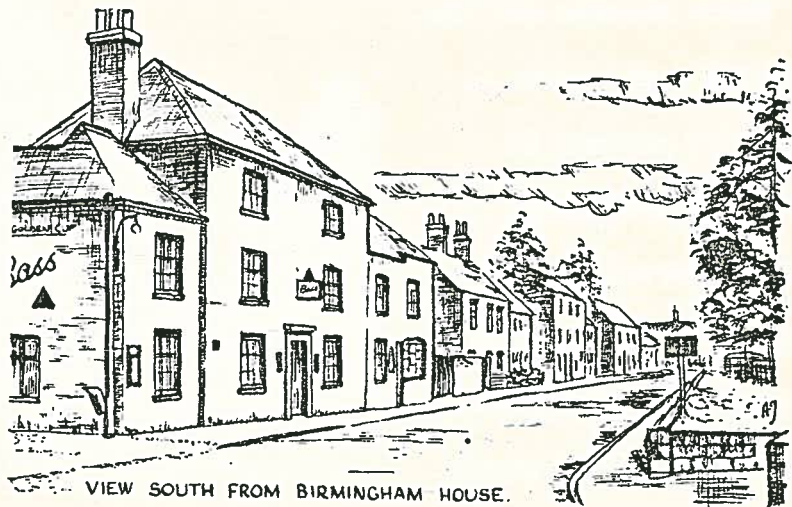
CONSERVATION AREA * YOXALL

Yoxall is a large village about seven miles north of Lichfield, in the subsidiary valley of the River Swarbourn on the north side of the broad Trent plain. It lies near the edge of the higher ground of Needwood Forest, on the main A.515 road from Lichfield to Ashbourne. The River Swarbourn runs parallel to the main road just to the east of the village and the steep, partially wooded slopes on the east bank contain the outward views on this side.

Little about the village history has been published but it is known that besides being the home of Izaak Walton's wife, Yoxall produced two writers, both clerics, the Revs. Thomas Gisborne and John Riland, who were actively concerned in the first half of the nineteenth century with the problem of slavery.

The old village development is essentially linear, extending on a north/south axis

along the main road for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Bond End at the southern entrance, then (with a brief break) lining Hadley Street for a further



VIEW SOUTH FROM BIRMINGHAM HOUSE.

$\frac{1}{4}$ mile to Weaverslake at the north-western extremity. Near the north end, Victoria Street branches off opposite the church where the main road bends sharply north-west, and is closely built up for some 200 yards, almost to the crossing of the River Swarbourn at Slair Bridge. There are a few scattered buildings also along Town Hill, the Class II road to Barton-under-Needwood, which leaves the main street halfway along its length, crosses the river and climbs eastwards onto the higher ground, and along Savey Lane running westwards from the main street,

Evenly distributed about the village are Yoxall's fifteen buildings listed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government as being of

architectural or historic interest. The Conservation Area has been defined to include all of the development flanking the main road, Victoria Street and Hadley Street, together with the river and enclosing high ground to the east, but not the outlying development at Weaverslake.

A feature of Yoxall is the change in character along the length of the village street. The sharply winding introduction at Bond End leads to an open straight stretch where relatively few larger buildings on the west side of the road face across open meadowland and the River Swarbourn to rising land beyond.

Northwards, King Street closes in narrowly with continuous building frontages or high containing walls. The village scene then opens out dramatically where the main road curves away north-west round the churchyard and Church of St. Peter and closes in again in a serpentine tight curve that contains the northern end of the village.

Minor streets off the main road each create a subsidiary picture of individual character, Victoria Street narrow, cottage-lined and unspoilt, Hadley Street terminating in a small village green,

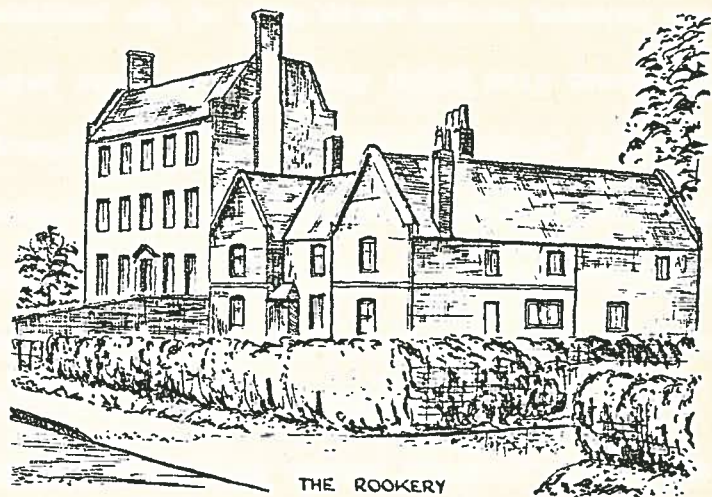


and Town Hill tree-clad and steeply winding upwards from the river bridge.

Near the curving southern entrance to the village at Bond End is a fine group of buildings most of which are agricultural, comprising Bondend Villa, probably of the early nineteenth century and which has a doorway with two Doric columns supporting an entablature. Nearby are the remains of a brick malt house belonging to Bondend Farm, which with another building on the opposite side of the road provides temporary enclosure before the road bends northwards towards The Rookery. This bend is flanked by three listed buildings: to the north Bondend House, which like the Villa has a Doric doorway, and to the south a seventeenth-

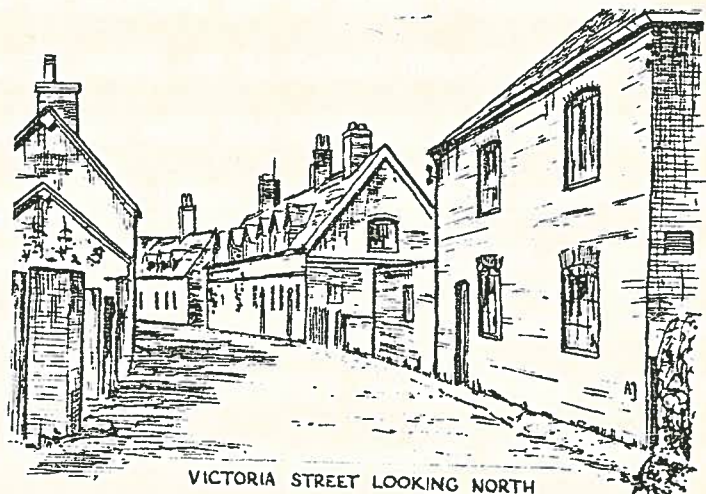
century brick and timber-framed building with a three-storey eighteenth-century brick farmhouse adjacent.

Northwards, and dominating this part of the village street is The Rookery, facing the River Swarbourn across open ground. This is perhaps the finest single domestic building in the village,



consisting of two adjoining blocks, one with a three-storey, five window front of the later eighteenth century, the other probably seventeenth-century with but two storeys, and this juxtaposition produces an interesting variation of scale. The main block has an elaborate Baroque doorcase with a finely moulded architrave and a projecting keystone. Yew Tree House continues the eighteenth-century brick tradition. Still further north is a timber-framed and brick house with a pedimented doorway.

North of the junction with Town Hill, which comes in opposite the Crown Inn, a modest but large light-coloured building, Main Street narrows, curving past a pleasant group of roughcast and whitewashed shops on the east side. Unfortunately, the demolition of the Old Hall, which until recently stood opposite, has left an unwelcome gap in the street

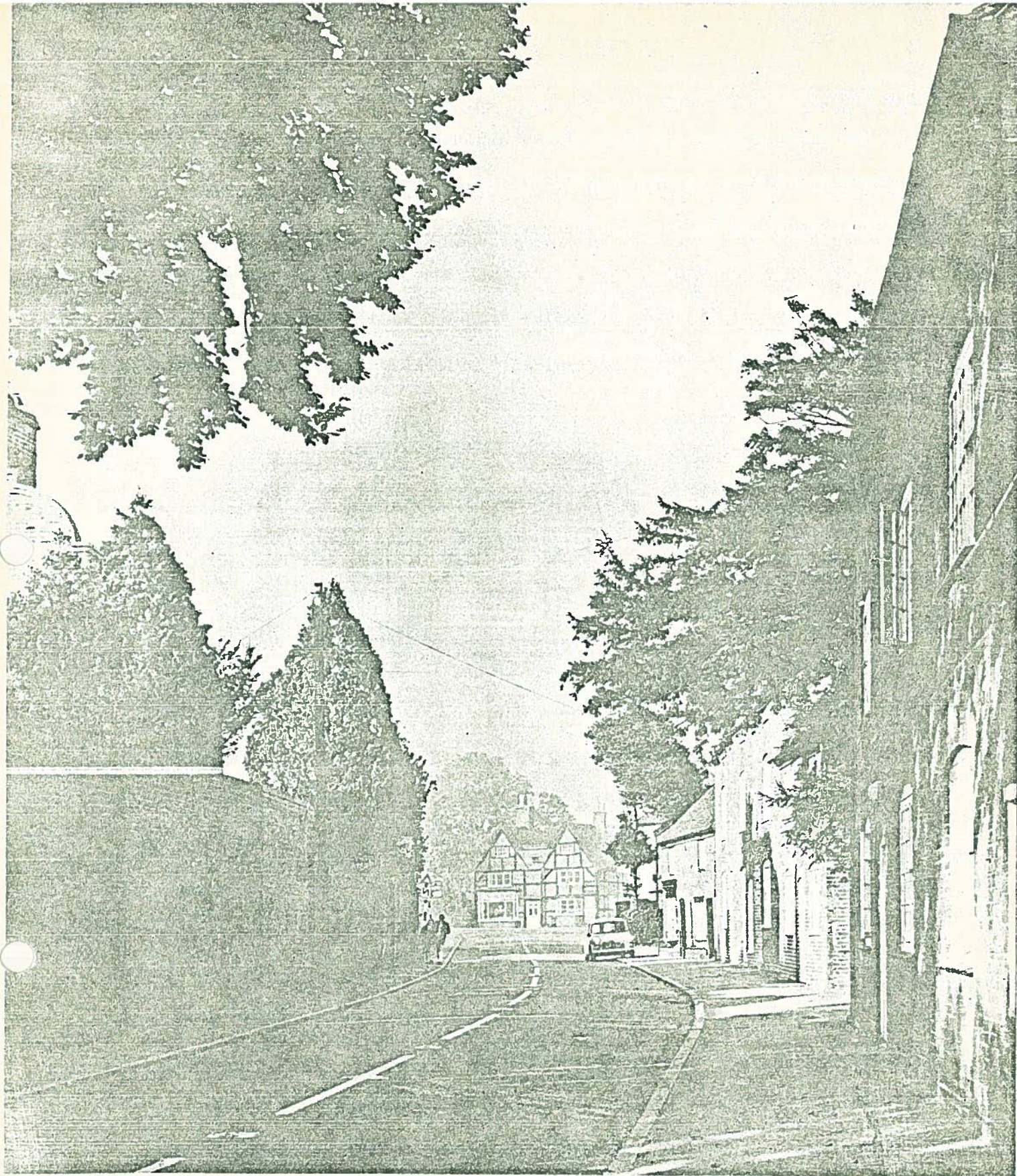


picture. This open land forms part of an area of new housing development, and great care will be needed in the scale and detailing of the new houses alongside the main road to ensure that these make a positive contribution to the village character.

To the north The Grange, the former rectory, has a core dating from at least the seventeenth century, and parts of the timber-framing are exposed on the north side of the building. The main front is brick and stone with Dutch gables and a large two-storey porch. The grounds are well wooded, linking with the churchyard, and the high brick roadside wall greatly helps the sense of enclosure. Opposite is a fine range of brick cottages, part of which has recently been sensitively restored, and the eighteenth-century colourwashed brick Golden Cup Inn.

Closing the northern vista along King Street and forming an introduction to Victoria Street is Birmingham House, an early-seventeenth-century brick and timber-framed building. Almost continuous enclosure is created along Victoria Street by the narrowness of the road and the frontage line on the roadside. There are several brick dwellings and farm buildings of significance here, the most architecturally impressive of which is a range of four eighteenth-century cottages which, judging by an exposed gable to the north, are timber-framed. The facades, however, are entirely of brick with segmental-headed doors and window openings and with tiled roofs. The view northwards from Victoria Street is closed by a pleasant nineteenth-century dwelling near Slair Bridge and by the riverside trees.

Strategically sited at the junction of King Street with Victoria Street is the Parish Church of St. Peter of which the earliest surviving portions date from the 12th and 14th centuries. The church was re-opened by the Bishop of Lichfield in April 1868, after being extensively restored by Henry Woodyer in 1866-68 and contains a good alabaster table tomb to Humphrey and Mary Welles (1865) and a canopied tomb with an effigy to Henry Meynell (1865). The churchyard contains some fine trees and a number of elaborately-inscribed headstones. Some of these are of slate and many of the finest date from the second half of the eighteenth century. There is a good view from the churchyard to the east up the steeply sloping hillside called "The Rough", which forms a backcloth to

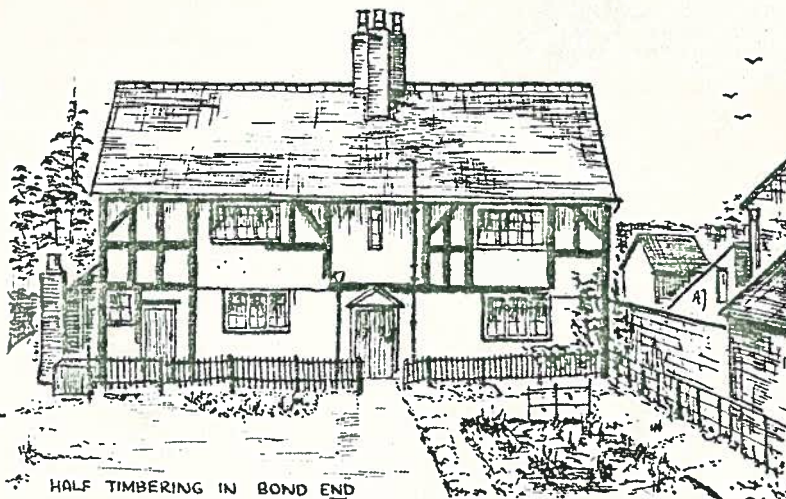


YOXALL * KING STREET

this part of the village.

The northern part of King Street and Hadley Street continues the vernacular building tradition of the village. The Poplars, an early nineteenth-century brick three-storey house with elegant proportions emphasised by a low hipped roof, lies near the junction of these two streets, whilst at the head of Hadley Street a small village green, formerly with a pump, and enclosed by two picturesque cottages, forms a charming picture.

A unifying element throughout the village is the use, for the great majority of buildings, of warm orange-red facing brick-work for the external



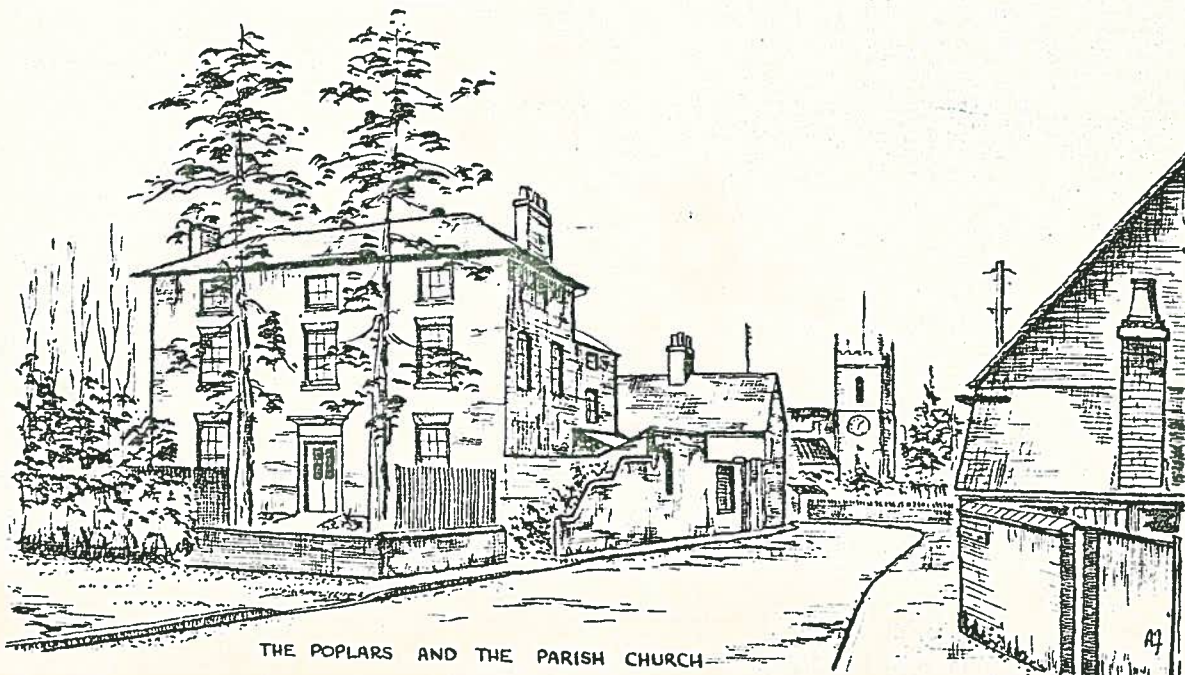
walling (and for boundary/retaining walls), with dark blue/black plain tiles on steeply pitched roofs. Throughout the village, trees and hedges are scarcely less important to the overall effect than the use of traditional building forms and materials. Nowhere in the old village does one feel remote from the countryside because of the frequent views of either the River Swarbourn or the hillside to the east dominated by "The Rough" - even more than in most villages this intermingling with the open countryside is part of the essence of Yoxall. It is therefore essential that the open views eastwards in the southern part of the village should not be destroyed by further development and that, at the north end also, the close visual relationship between village street and river should not be prejudiced by unsympathetic new building.

Although the backland to the west of Bond End has recently been extensively developed for new housing, this does not seriously encroach on the main village street. Whilst there are accesses to the new development just south of The Rookery and next to Yew Tree House,

fortunately new frontage development is very limited. Reference has already been made to the further development proposed on the site of the Old Hall and great care will be needed to ensure that this, together with any other new development abutting the village streets, is carried out in form and materials compatible with the existing character. In any necessary redevelopment, the unusual low density layout of the southern part of the old village should be safeguarded, and the large grounds to houses retained. The tightly-knit enclosure of the northern part of King Street and Victoria Street should be similarly perpetuated as forming an enlivening contrast and essential part of the village picture.

A further difficulty at Yoxall arises from its linear form along a main road, carrying an increasing volume of heavy traffic. A village by-pass is proposed, but this is not included in any current construction programme. If increased flows should lead to pressures for road widening in the narrow central section of the village, this could irreparably damage its appearance and the position will need to be kept under review.

The Conservation Area at Yoxall is designated to identify and draw attention to the special qualities of this fine village, and to the need for future planning policies and control to ensure that this character is protected and enhanced.















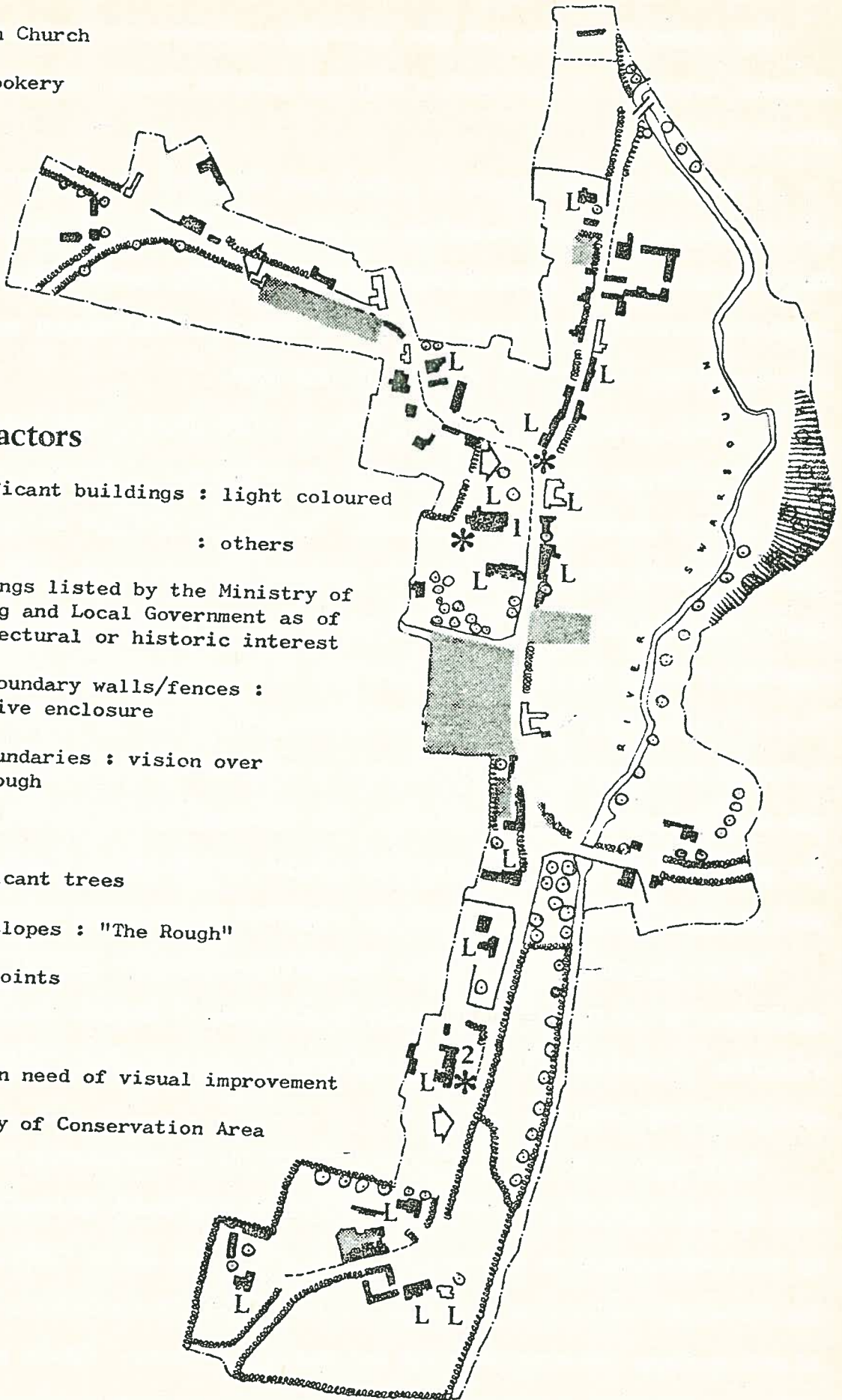


Key Locations

- 1 Parish Church
- 2 The Rookery

Visual Factors

-  Significant buildings : light coloured
-  : others
-  Buildings listed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government as of architectural or historic interest
-  High boundary walls/fences : effective enclosure
-  Low boundaries : vision over or through
-  Hedges
-  Significant trees
-  Steep slopes : "The Rough"
-  Focal points
-  Views
-  Areas in need of visual improvement
-  Boundary of Conservation Area



VISUAL ANALYSIS

FUTURE ACTION

The Conservation Area has been carefully considered by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the District Council and local amenity bodies.

A specific responsibility is placed upon the Local Planning Authority and the Minister to take account of the character of the Conservation Area when exercising their planning duties and grant-giving powers. Development proposals affecting such areas may also be advertised and account taken of representations received in determining each case.

The Civic Amenities Act, 1967, makes it clear however that designation of a conservation area is only a prelude to action for preserving and enhancing its character and appearance. The present document is concerned with the reasons for designation. It analyses and defines the basic qualities of the particular features and groups of buildings which it is considered make a significant contribution to the character of the Area. Further reports will set out detailed policies and plans for the Area including recommendations to developers on types of development, on design and on materials considered suitable. The policies may include requirements for detailed information on particular classes of applications, advertisement of applications and proposals for retention of important buildings.

It may be necessary to prepare detailed proposals for improving the appearance of the Area by action such as reduction of traffic congestion, screening of particular features and provision of alternative outlets for undesirable development.

It is hoped that improvement and enhancement of conservation areas will not be completely dependent upon long-term proposals, or restricted by the uncertainties of individual development. Much can be achieved in the immediate future by collective action in street re-decoration, removal of untidy signs and advertisements and planting of trees. Public participation is essential to attract local interest and to support voluntary action by amenity bodies in restoring and improving the beautiful parts of environment.