Hilperton Village Design Statement
1. INTRODUCTION

Any village in this Country today is always likely to be subject to change. It is not only large developments which can alter a village, but it can be equally affected by smaller alterations. Conversions, additions to buildings, homes, gardens, pressure on open spaces, footpaths, hedgerows, even street signs can also affect the look and feel of a village. Change cannot be prevented or undone and there will always be a need to move with the times if the village is to remain a lively and attractive community. However, new developments large and small can be planned and designed in a way that will enhance the existing character of the village and this document provides advice on how to do that.

The aim of the advice is to minimise the impact on Hilperton as a whole, and to ensure that any further development or change will protect and enhance the character of the village and its surrounding area. As Supplementary Planning Guidance, the recommendations will help to guide the decisions of the Planning Authority, and so will have to be taken into account by: statutory bodies, public authorities, planners, developers, builders, architects, designers, engineers, local community groups, commercial enterprises, and by individuals, making planning applications.

The area that was studied for the purpose of this Statement comprises everything contained within the Parish Boundary plus a small area which falls outside the Parish Boundary, altogether covering some 800 hectares. This consists of the old village of Hilperton, Hilperton Marsh, the settlement at Whaddon, and the whole of new development at Paxcroft Mead.

A large part of the old village is designated a Conservation Area. The Planning Authority (West Wiltshire District Council) has also defined a Village Policy Limit enclosing the conservation area, much of the old village outside it and Hilperton Marsh, restricting development outside. Paxcroft Mead is a new housing development adjoining Trowbridge and covered by urban planning guidance.

This document, which has been produced by a Steering Group made up of local people, is based on a considered understanding of Hilperton’s past; describes the village as it is today and makes recommendations for the future. It highlights the qualities valued by its residents, whose views, and opinions were obtained at a series of public exhibitions held in April 2002.

Please pass this document on to any future occupant of your house.
Hilperton is a village in the county of Wiltshire, in the West Wiltshire District Council area. It is a long, ribbon settlement, one mile to the east of Wiltshire’s county town, Trowbridge. The towns of Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Devizes and Westbury are all less than ten miles away, and it is twelve miles to the south east of the historic city of Bath. It is at the top of a gradual incline on a bed of mainly Oxford Clay with Alluvium in parts. The highest point in the Parish, at the Parish Church of St Michael, is sixty-four metres above sea level, and is on a par with the top of the spire of St James Church in Trowbridge. The land drops away to 30 metres on the northern Parish boundary formed by the River Avon and the Kennet and Avon canal. At 40 metres, on the southern boundary is Paxcroft Mead, a housing development commenced in 2000, which has doubled the number of houses in the parish. The population of Hilperton in April 2002 was 4296, based on the Electoral Roll. There were 1796 dwellings of a great variety, types, ages and styles, from the oldest found in the Conservation Area, surrounding St Michael and All Angels Church to the newest at the Paxcroft Mead development. The key roads running through the Parish are the B3105 to Savernott, and through to join the A363 north of Bradford-on-Avon; and the A361, recently diverted to pass through the Paxcroft Mead development. Unfortunately the level of traffic through the village, especially heavy goods vehicles, detracts from its rural character. The proposed expansion and development east of Trowbridge will inevitably increase these levels. There is a regular bus service to Trowbridge and Melksham. Hilperton has a strong sense of community spirit, with many thriving special interest groups. The village hall and playing field in Whaddon Lane, St Mary’s Church which doubles as a village, but a wide variety of small-scale commercial enterprises are spread throughout the Village, such as a private children’s nursery, together with a number of active gift shops, two take-aways, petrol station and car sales., two public houses, two post offices/shops, a supermarket, and a number of houses in the parish. The population of Hilperton in the first official census in 1801, when a working population of 708 was recorded. Only 20 people were employed in agriculture, compared with 68 employed in Trade, Manufacturing and Handicrafts’ industries, probably linked to the existence of the large Woolen Industry in Trowbridge and also that the owners of the Mills lived in Hilperton, someone must have a home that their workers also lived here. Many of the older cottages in the village are thought to have weavers’ homes. There are four visually distinctive residential areas in Hilperton Parish; Hilperton Marsh in the north; the old village in the centre; further south, the new development of Paxcroft Mead; and to the south of Whaddon, in the Northeast corner of the parish.

Hilperton Marsh
The Kennet and Avon Canal, opened in 1810, forms part of the northern boundary of the Parish. A wharf constructed at the time also served the needs of Trowbridge. Today, this is the site of Hilperton Marina, a gateway for visitors, just off Hammond Way and adjacent to an industrial estate. The canal and the wharf are a busy thoroughfare for boat traffic and its towpath is a favourite place for anglers, picnickers, rammers, dog walkers, and cyclists. With the increased popularity of canals and boating, a number of associated businesses are starting to appear along its length in the parish, Holiday Boat Hire, boat building and repairs, permanent moorings, caravan touring campsite, are just a few. These contribute to the life of the village, making it more than just a residential area.

Before any houses were built in this area, the land literally was marsh land, hence the name of Hilperton Marsh. It is centred on a triangle of roads formed by Wyke Road, Marsh Road, and Horse Road. The housing development in the middle of this triangle was built in the 1960s. At one time, there used to be a public house at each corner of the triangle. The Prince of Wales is now a private house. The Ring O’ Bells on Marsh Road near the junction with Horse Road, is now a guest house and on the other corner, closest to the Canal, is the King’s Arms, which remains a pub.

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The Old Village

Hill Street starts as it enters the old part of the village and older stone cottages with stone walled gardens close on either side. Little Ashton was originally known as Slades Farm and was once owned by Donald Mackay, nephew of Major Eric Mackay, the then owner of Hilperton House. Also in the same vicinity is Yew Tree Cottage, the once home of the Baptist minister, John Dymott after whom Dymott Square was named. The old Baptist church schoolroom is still on this property and there is an interesting old Folly or sanctuary in the garden.

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The Old Village

Hilperton House, the old school, and Michael's and All Angels Church, Church Street. In the Knap are St Whaddon Lane branches off to the left here and there is a driveway to the old and new Recitory. There is a record of the existence of the old Recitory in 1672. It was sold when a new rectory was built in 1891 next to it in 1980 and is now a private house. The stables belonging to the old Recitory have been converted into another house. About 100m down Whaddon Lane are Hilperton Village Hall and Playing Fields. The Hall, originally a converted nissen hut, was rebuilt and opened in 1974, with a further extension in 1981. Although by no means an architectural gem, the Hall and its playing field is the social centre of the community, and both are used by many organisations.

At the top of Church Street is the former Wesleyan Methodist chapel and schoolroom. Built in 1891 to replace an earlier chapel of 1819; it has been converted into two homes. Adjoining this is the Old Crown, built in about 1800 and a public house until 1966, when it was converted into a home. A terrace of weavers' cottages, originally a mid-17th century coaching inn repeatedly frequented by Cromwell and his soldiers, is now known as Cherry Tree Cottages, after the trees planted in the 1930s by the Major Mackay of Hilperton House. In Spring of each year these trees in full bloom are a familiar village scene. The cottages are Grade II listed, but the last cottage, 231, was not actually built until the 1920s. Cherry Gardens was built on allotments at the rear of the cottages in the 1960s, which involved demolishing an old cottage to gain access. The Knap, from ‘cnaepp’ – a hill in old English, is a cul-de-sac, joining Church Street. In the Knap are St Michael’s and All Angels between 1847 and 1852 in the fourteenth century style. However, the tower, south porch, and nave floor date back to Norman times and were retained during the rebuilding. It has a three-stage tower, topped with an octagonal “broomch” spire. There is also a clock with faces to the south and east. There is a pair of six bells, which is unusual in so small a tower. The oldest bell was cast in 1663 and bears the name of John Slade, who was the church warden at the time. He lived in 209 Church Street, as did his family for over 200 years. The original church of St Michael and All Angels was valued at £5 in 1291. By 1335, this had risen to £161. Hilperton House, once visited by Queen Mary, could be considered as the most important house in the village and is favourite village feature with many residents. Its previous market in Trowbridge, leads from the Knap. Even today, this is still a very well used route to Trowbridge, and is a popular starting point for walkers using the other footpaths leading from the Knap. Due to a lack of other parking spaces in the village, the Knap has become a parking place for cars belonging to residents, and for those using the church. T H Wyatt rebuilt the original twelfth century church of St Michael and All Angels between 1847 and 1852 in the fourteenth century style. However, the tower, south porch, and nave floor date back to Norman times and were retained during the rebuilding. It has a three-stage tower, topped with an octagonal “broomch” spire. There is also a clock with faces to the south and east. There is a pair of six bells, which is unusual in so small a tower. The oldest bell was cast in 1663 and bears the name of John Slade, who was the church warden at the time. He lived in 209 Church Street, as did his family for over 200 years. The original church of St Michael and All Angels was valued at £5 in 1291. By 1335, this had risen to £161. Hilperton House, once visited by Queen Mary, could be considered as the most important house in the village and is favourite village feature with many residents. Its previous

Old Village School

owners, who were mostly engaged in the Woollen trade, included, in the 1920s, Major Eric Mackay of Palmer and Mackay, whose prominent woollen mills occupied a large area of Trowbridge. The current owners have carried out extensive restoration works. Behind its wall is a large, spring fed pond at one time thought to be the origin of the village name – ‘hilspruntit’ or hill with springs. At one time, there were over 60 wells in the village and many still remain in private gardens.

The village school was located in the Knap from 1832 until 1970 when new premises were opened in Newleaze. The old school building has now been converted into a private residence with an added storey and dormer windows, but still has the school bell in its place on the roof. The schoolmaster’s house also remains as a private dwelling. Opposite the Knap is the War Memorial, which commemorates those lost in the two World Wars. Alongside this is the village lock-up or Blind House, so named because it has no windows. Thought to have been in existence before 1600, it was used to ‘house’ miscreants. It is scheduled as an ancient monument by English Heritage and is in the ownership of the Parish Council. At the end of Church Street is the Lion and Fiddle Public House, which is a thriving business with a good restaurant trade. A building adjoining the Pub was thought to have been where Wilts United Dairies commenced business. This enterprise went on to become a nation-wide business and its head office once occupied large premises in Trowbridge. It later merged with Cow and Gate and became Unigate.

Eastwards is Devizes Road, where traffic calming measures and a 20mph speed limit have been introduced. At the junction is one of two turnpike houses in Church Street (the other being at the corner of The Knap), reminders of the days when the main route to Trowbridge lay along Church Street and along Middle Lane. Road rolls ceased in 1868, and the gates across the road were removed. The Turnpike house’s roof was raised in 1926, making it a two-storey house. Next to the Turnpike House, built in the early 1800s, is a house once a shop, tea-rooms and bakery. Nearby is The Grange, a large Victorian house built in 1859. Standing in large grounds, it rivals Hilperton House for size and grandeur.

Paxcroft Mead

The Paxcroft Mead development in the very south of the Parish covers approximately 100 hectares of previously agricultural land, which was designated for residential development by the local Planning Authority. The roads on the development were largely named after the names of the original fields except Hackett place, which was named in memory of Linda Hackett a Parish Clerk who died just before Paxcroft Mead was completed.

This development has had a huge impact on the parish as it has more than doubled the number of houses in Hilperton. It has stimulated much thinking about our built environment. The houses have been built by a number of well-known national house builders. The design of the houses follows the companies’ corporate national style too, which are not, in the main, indicative of the style of the original cottages and houses. There are open play areas, a community centre, a small parade of shops including a supermarket, a primary school and a privately run nursery. Many public rights of way were diverted. Paxcroft Brook on the southermest boundary of the Parish was considerably altered to control flooding and landscaped with traffic free areas. There is a new footpath and cycle lane. New footbridges were built over the brook at various points together with a road bridge to southern areas of the development. A cyclepath and footway running under the A361 allows people living north of the road to gain access to the school and shops.

Whaddon

The hamlet of Whaddon is one mile to the northeast of the old village and is reached via Whaddon Lane, a single track road. It is situated beyond the Kennet and Avon canal, and overlooks the River Avon. The houses are strung out along the lane, with clusters beyond the canal, around the Church, and surrounding Whaddon Grove Farm. Many have been renovated or rebuilt on sites of older properties.

Whaddon is an ancient site, which has been occupied since prehistoric times and there is evidence of Roman habitation. Humps and hollows in the field around the Church mark the site
Part 1 General Information

of a medieval village. This is a
protected due to its archeological
importance. At the time of the
Domesday Book, it was a small
village with a manor house and a
mill. It was larger and more
important than Hilperton, but in the
14th century Whaddon suffered a
significant depopulation because of
the plague, the Black Death. In the
16th century, it was simply a cloth-
making site with a mill on the
Semington brook.

The Long family, who were wealthy
clothiers, once owned Whaddon,
together with Hilperton and other
estates in Wilts. In 1660, Walter
Long built a large addition to the
manor house. Whaddon House,
which was surrounded by parkland,
was destroyed by fire in the 19th
century. Whaddon Grove Farm
now stands on the site of the House. There
remains a 17th century back door in
a moulded frame. There are two
stone former dairies. A pair of semi-
detached stone cottages, to the south
of Whaddon Farm, was the Poor
House in the 1830s. Eight houses
were noted in 1783, and appear again
on the tithe map of 1838. Four of
these houses have gone but three new
houses were built in the 20th century
and one outbuilding opposite
Whaddon Farm at the centre of the
hamlet. This was originally the stable
of the vicarage house and has been
converted to a single storey residence.
Agricultural buildings belonging to
both farms now make up much of the
hamlet. These range from modern
galvanised metal barns, to old stone
barns. The agricultural use is mainly
dairy with some cattle and a pig-
rearing unit. Some business
diversification has taken place.

St Mary’s the Virgin, or
the ‘church in the field’ is a
small, simple Norman
church, with a nave,
chancel and north chapel.
It stands high above the
River Avon, and was
probably built in the
twelth century but it has
undergone extensive
alterations with a major
restoration in 1878/79. It
still features windows and
doors from the 14th and
15th centuries. Of interest
is a tombstone on the church floor
opposite the south door dedicated to the
Rev. Edward Cooper, an uncle of
Jane Austen. There was a close
relationship between the Austen
family and their Cooper cousins.
Outside, the brick wall enclosing the
churchyard is an unusual feature in
this part of Wilts, and dates from the
18th century.

Part 2 Planning Guidance

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Development Plan

Development in West Wilts is
planned at regional, country and local
levels. Local development documents
are prepared in accordance with
national planning policies and
guidance.

The Structure Plan

The Structure Plan is prepared by
Wilts. County Council and sets out
the broad strategic planning policy for
the whole county. The Wilts
Structure Plan 2011 covers the period
to 2011 and was approved in January
2001. A new structure plan is
expected to be approved in Spring
2005 to cover the period to 2016.

The District Local Plan

The District local plan is prepared by
the District Council and elaborates on
the structure plan policy framework by
providing detailed development
policies and proposals for the towns,
villages and rural areas. The Council’s
current District Plan 1st Alteration
was adopted in June 2004 and covers
the period to 2011. Future local
developments and documents will
progressively replace the Local Plan.

Village Policy Limits

The District wide local plan identifies
village policy limits for over 30 villages
in West Wilts including Hilperton.
Within these policy limits limited
housing development to support local
services will be permitted provided
that a number of detailed criteria are
met.

Hilperton Conservation Area

The Hilperton Conservation Area was
designated in 1991 to preserve and
enhance the special architectural or
historic interest of this area of the
village. Within or adjacent to this area,
the preservation of the special
character or appearance is the primary
consideration when assessing
proposals for development. Stricter
planning controls exist in conservation
areas over minor alterations to existing
land uses and buildings and over
proposals for demolitions or tree
works.

Planning in Conservation Areas

The following policies contained within
the adopted West Wilts District Plan
1st Alteration:

C17-C23 Conservation Areas; C26-
C29 Listed Buildings; C31a Design;
C40 Trees and Tree Planting; R2
Protection of Recreation Areas; H16
Flat Conversions; H17 Village Policy
Limits; H18 Areas of Minimum
Change; H21 Residential Conversions
in the Countryside; H24 New Housing
Design; E6 Rural Employment; E7
Farm Diversification; E8 Employment
Conversions in the Countryside; E10
Horse Related Development; T03
Hotels, Guest Houses and Self
Catering Accommodation; T04
Camping, Caravans, Holiday Homes;
C18 Rural and Village Facilities.
Part 2 Planning Guidance

4. HILPERTON SET IN ITS SURROUNDINGS:

The vast majority of land in the Parish is open countryside, amounting to approximately 600 hectares. All the land, apart from public areas such as playing fields, is farmed; approximately half is arable and half pasture. The earliest record of the field boundaries largely as they appear today can be found in the Enclosure Map of 1816 and again in the Tithe Map of 1837. All the fields shown on the Tithe Map have individual names. The field and hedgerow pattern created then, with its typical patchwork form, can still be appreciated today even with modern farming practices. Where arable farming is practised, some hedgerows have been grubbed out. In the south, a large area of open farmland has been lost to the new housing development at Paxcroft Mead, as have smaller areas within the village due to infilling. Those areas that remain support a varied range of wildlife and species of birds, and can be accessed by a network of public footpaths and rights of way.

To the west, between the village and Trowbridge, is the area of land, known colloquially as the Hilperton Gap. This is an important area of open countryside, as it provides a barrier between the village and the eastern outskirts of Trowbridge. There are attractive rural views across the Gap from the old village and to the church from Hilperton Marsh which contribute greatly to the village atmosphere and character of Hilperton. Middle Lane, a public bridleway, lined with hedgerows, trees and a deep ditch, reminiscent of the old drove roads, crosses the Gap from the village to Victoria Road in Trowbridge. Every day many people use it to gain access to the fields in the Gap. These are principally used by dog walkers (including walkers from Trowbridge). Path numbers are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 33, and 54. The fields beside the B3105 were known as Courtleaze and those nearest Horse Road were known as Cowleaze. Path 33 is a pleasant walk to and from Trowbridge, featuring hedge, ditches, raised path, and a useful wide bridleway. It cuts across the middle of the “gap” and gives expansive views across to Bradford and Holt. There are pockets of ecological interest with hedgerows, old ponds and hay meadows. Although the hedgerows are not the best in the Parish, they are still inhabited with a good range of wildlife and many species of birds. The narrow brook at its lowest point always has water in it even in the driest of weather.

The Kennet and Avon Canal crosses the Parish from east to west and is an important landscape and wildlife feature. It is of crucial worth for its amenity value, for boating, fishing, walking and cycling. This and the River Avon form the northern boundary of the Parish. The river valley in particular incorporates a rich area of marshland. These two waterways are designated as County Wildlife Sites and are managed by the Environment Agency and British Waterways. They provide an excellent and interesting nature corridor conveniently reached via Whaddon Lane and through Marsch Farm. The canal is a favourite area for informal recreation and has the most popular paths for local and long distance visitors. Path 31, the towpath, is part of the Sustrans national network of cycleways which attracts long distance cyclists. British Waterways estimates in 1995 between Bradford on Avon bridge and Martinslade bridge (near Seend) suggested there were 332,000 informal visitors along this 14 kilometre length, plus 7000 anglers and 62,000 cyclists, with 1000 boats.

Path 17, used by local horse riders, runs on the opposite side of the canal. It joins up in Semington with path 22 which is the only safe rideable circuit not ending at a busy road.

Semington Brook joins the Avon at Whaddon alongside pasture and is an important area of scrub and copse. Several streams occur in the Parish that also create diverse habitats for wildlife. Running through Paxcroft Mead is Paxcroft Brook, which has been widened to control flooding and this in turn has created open areas and habitats for many creatures.

Farm ponds can be found in the open countryside but many of these have been neglected and are generally overgrown or used as a dumping ground. Some have been filled in completely. Two ponds have been created in recent years at Marsh Farm and Paxcroft Farm, adjacent to Paxcroft Brook. Both these take run off water during flooding but are managed sympathetically. The area known as Hilperton Marsh has largely been drained and built on.

The open countryside setting is an essential part of Hilperton’s rural character.

Some fields in the Parish, display evidence of the ancient ridge and furrow method of farming. Four areas displaying this are in the Gap, including Church Field, adjoining the Cemetery, others can be found at Whaddon, and between Paxcroft and Marsh Farms adjacent to the Canal. Further surveys may discover more examples.

There are no areas of woodland in the Parish but trees add interest to the landscape, sited in the open countryside, either standing alone or in small groups. A copse is situated west of Whaddon Lane with ash and maple but with many dead elms. Another one is sited at Paxcroft Mead. Farmers have planted trees and shrubs in the Parish including oak, cherry, ash, and broad-leaved lime among other species either in clumps, or in hedgerows or alongside farm tracks. The orchards that were once commonplace around the village have all but disappeared, although remnants remain in back gardens, notably along Church Street. The Parish Council undertook a survey of trees in the residential areas in 2002 and are in the process of obtaining Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate. There are still several areas where trees add interest to the landscape, are of importance to the village environs and form essential wildlife habitats. Examples are: the row of beech and cluster of pine and lime in fields on the approach to Hilperton from Trowbridge; two separate oaks at Marsh Farm and Paxcroft Farm; the two copies of ash and maple off Whaddon Lane and at Paxcroft. It is worth noting that trees with trunks of over 75mm (3ins) in diameter growing in the Conservation Area cannot be lopped or felled without consent of the local Planning Authority. This includes trees in private gardens.

The Parish Boundary plays a crucial role in the protection of our landscape and wildlife resources. Approximately three-quarters of the boundary is in open countryside and usually consists of a sometimes double hedgerow, ditch, and bank. This is generally unmanaged and uncultivated, and contains many native hedgerow species such as blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, elder and dog rose. Ash, oak and field maple trees are present along with the occasional crab apple, and willow and alder if near water. These trees are all more likely to grow to maturity if situated in a boundary hedge. Boundary hedges between farms in different ownership also provide areas richer in wildlife and shape important wildlife corridors. These in turn provide links to the River Avon and to the Kennet and Avon Canal. Many dead elms are often left unchecked in the corridors and hedgerows. If they were extracted and destroyed it would prevent the further spread of Dutch elm disease. Elms can, and do thrive in hedgerows if either traditional layering or cutting checks their growth.

Part 2 Planning Guidance

View to Roundway Hill from byway 22

To the east the village adjoins open countryside that spreads out along both sides of the ridge bordering Gypsy Lane (byway no.22 to Semington) and affords widespread rural views to Whaddon and beyond and to Salisbury Plain. To the southeast open countryside lies between the B3105, the Kennet and Avon Canal and the River Avon. These areas are easily accessible through the fields except when recently ploughed.

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Part 2 Planning Guidance

There is evidence in some hedgerows of the traditional layering method, which was carried out long ago. This method of hedgerow layering should be encouraged, as it provides the best habitats for wildlife. Also, it is stock proof, and once established needs much less annual upkeep. A layered hedgerow can last up to twenty years without any further work. Those hedgerows found on Lower Paxcroft Farm, on the south side of the A361, are distinctly different to elsewhere in the parish, being very broad and thick, and very good for wildlife.

Most pastureland in the Parish is semi-improved or improved and is either grazed by stock or used to produce winter fodder. Grasslands that have not been managed in this way for early silage production and have not been intensely fertilised or treated with herbicides have the most interesting flora. Two of these fields are located in the Gap area. Another one, adjacent to the Canal, was designated as being of interest, an ‘Amber Site’, by British Waterways. Unfortunately, despite this, spoil from the canal was dumped on the field.

The Countryside Stewardship Scheme actively encourages low intensity farming. Under this scheme, Whaddon Farm is currently recreating wildflower meadows, regenerating hedgerows, and positively managing farm ponds and marshland for wildlife. Other farms have installed nest boxes for barn owls, created ponds and replanted trees and shrubs to enhance the landscape. Grants to provide incentives for improving open spaces, hedgerows and farmland for wildlife are available through the local authorities and Community First with advice from the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.

From Trowbridge along Hilperton Road, there is a very attractive tree lined approach flanked by large Victorian villas set well back from the road. The mature trees are the most attractive feature. From Fieldways roundabout the road makes a straight approach to Turnpike House. There is a hedgerow on the left bounding the Hilperton Gap and an attractive row of beech and lime trees on the right, giving characteristic open rural views from the village. The pavement is on one side only but both sides of the road have grassy verges giving a distinctly rural look. St Michael’s church is a very attractive view across the Gap from here.

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5. THE OLD VILLAGE

This area includes the Conservation Area; which covers the whole of Church Street and parts of Hill Street, Whaddon Lane, Trowbridge Road and Ashton Road. It contains much of the historic part of Hilperton and any changes are required to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Buildings within the conservation area should be used for future house building and design.

At this end of Hill Street the road starts to rise and on both sides are detached cottages with small front gardens set behind old stone boundary walls giving a more confined look than in Hilperton Marsh. The pavement is on the side only for much of the length of Hill Street but green verges on the corners of Greenhill Gardens and Dymott Square soften the scene. Dymott Square, a cul-de-sac leading from Hill Street, has terraced cottages re-constructed in Bath stone and modern red brick detached houses, built in 1984. The design and layout used a sympathetic approach to the site and its former buildings, which was the farmyard of Manor Farm and derelict weavers’ cottages.

Other fine larger houses in Hill Street are Oriel House and Manor Farm and derelict weavers’ cottages. Between this and Whaddon Lane there is an abrupt juxtaposition of Paxcroft Mead with the older village, having no similarity in house design or layout. This is masked by high hedgerows, which screen the view from each side.

The old drove road from Trowbridge (Middle or Back Lane) enters the old village at The Knap, and from this point there are sweeping views across the Hilperton Gap towards Bradford on Avon.

Recommendations:

- The natural beauty of the landscape including flora, fauna features should be respected and where appropriate enhanced and protected.
- New development in open countryside should be avoided.
- New developments on the edge of the village should give high priority to landscape design.
- Green verges, hedgerows and spaces are characteristic of the entry to Hilperton and should be included in new development.
- All public rights of way should be respected and maintained through liaison with landowners and farmers.
- Existing hedgerows should be retained and enhanced to maintain the character of the village.
- Advice and grants for improving open spaces are available from The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Local Authorities, Community First and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.

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From the top of the hill, Church Street runs from the junction with Whaddon Lane round a sharp corner at The Knap until meeting Devises and Trowbridge Roads. The part beyond The Knap was at one time called High Street and contains some of the oldest buildings in the village. The ages of the properties range from the seventeenth century to the 1960s. Between Hill Street and The Knap the mainly terraced houses are close up to the street, looking out on to it either directly or over small front gardens. A feature of the Street is that all the houses are constructed in stone, either dressed Bath Stone or undressed or rubble; some are painted render or pebbledash under brown clay or slate roofs, but there is no red brick visible from the road, although there is some use of it to the rear of some cottages. The house at the corner of The Knap, number 100, was a toll house when Middle Lane – now a bridleway – was a route to Trowbridge. Its bowed southern wall certainly allows views in both directions. Extension work in the 1980s was not entirely sympathetic.

The Knap is the old village centre of the village, flanked by Hilperton House, the church, the old school and schoolhouse. There are good views across the open fields of the Hilperton Gap here, to Hilperton Marsh, Staverton and Holt to the North and Trowbridge to the West. Granite setts are still in place along the length of The Knap adjacent to Hilperton House. The original fifteenth century church of St Michael and All Angels was rebuilt between 1847 and 1852 by T H Wyatt in the fourteenth century style. However the tower, south porch and nave floor date back to Norman times and were retained during the rebuilding. It has a three-stage tower with clock faces to the South and East, topped with an octagonal “broom” spire. Five of the monuments in the churchyard have been listed. Hilperton House is a fine example of an early eighteenth century house with its ashlar Georgian façade with a late eighteenth century extension and a large conservatory. Set in a large garden, it has a high stone boundary wall running along a large part of Church Street and The Knap. On the road side of the wall, set into a niche, is an old water pump and plaque referring to Hilperton’s entry in the Doomsday Book.

Opposite The Knap is the War Memorial and Blind House or village lock-up. The latter, constructed in limestone ashlar forming an octagonal shape with a domed roof topped with a ball finial, is a typical example of the many found throughout the region. Beyond The Knap, Church Street looks very confined by high boundary stone walls, has narrow pavements and its appearance is marred by prominent overhead wires and poles. Some walls are crumbling away due to constant erosion, pollution or neglect. There is an obvious conflict between appearance and the need for car parking as some garden walls have been demolished to make room for off road parking.

Other significant architectural features include dormer windows; stone carved porches; stone mullions to the cottages and old stone front walls, including the high walls to Hilperton House. The only visible red brick is two old front walls. Over the years, the Street has seen many changes, with houses being pulled down and rebuilt with similar buildings; or renovations to existing buildings. A number of access roads have been built off Church Street to provide access to more modern housing at the rear. These houses are generally in styles typical of their period, rather than typical of the village, but some effort has been made to use matching materials, such as Bath stone, and because of their position they have little overall impact on the appearance of the village. The result of all this building and rebuilding is a wide difference in the ages, sizes, construction, and style of the houses and cottages. But its very lack of uniformity, with variations of coloured renderings and textures, contributes to its appeal.

The property next to the Blind House is Church Farm, a foursquare building with stone mullions and “eyebrows” to the windows. This was in agricultural use until the 1980s and the farm yard area still contains interesting old buildings that are not visible from the road. Set in the wall of the farm is an old spring water supply, hidden beneath a seemingly insignificant metal cover. Near this is Iris Cottage, number 226, built by Mr Matthews, a local builder, in the Victorian Gothic style popular from 1860 to 1890. It was at first a house for the butler to Fieldways House, now an hotel, just outside the parish boundary. A row of old cottages between this and the Post Office were demolished and rebuilt in 1939. The post office was originally built in approximately 1768. At least three stages of the building are evident and about 100 years ago it was divided into two properties. Further along was a bakery that was open until 1990 and was converted to a private dwelling in 1996 Opposite the post office is Nursery Close, an access road to a cottage and houses built in 1980s. On its corner no.109, formerly a garden nursery and a nursing home, was built in the Victorian Gothic style. It is unusual in that it was built back to front! The side facing the road is really the back with the front entrance at the rear. One of the oldest houses in the parish is number 11, which dates back to the late fifteenth century and was thought to be the manor house of the area at the time. Church Street terminates in a T-junction with Devises Road and Trowbridge Road by the Lion and Fiddle public house. Here the street scene is dominated by a mini-roundabout with raised concrete kerbs and pedestrian barriers producing a visual effect quite out of keeping with its village location. However outside the old Toll House opposite the Lion and Fiddle public house granite setts remain in place from an earlier time.

The houses at this end of Devises Road are a mixture of old cottages, Georgian houses, and substantial 20th century houses, all with contrasting architectural styles but finished in matching stone. Unfortunately a traffic calming scheme on Devises road has used speed tables with a brick finish, which is out of keeping with this end of Devises road, although satisfactory at the eastern end where the surrounding houses are themselves brick. Some fine restoration work has been done on 123 Devises Road, which is about 360 years old. It was originally two houses and was part of The Grange estate. Foundations for two other cottages were found in the back garden. An adjoining garage had many previous commercial uses including parking a lorry and storing coffins. When it collapsed in 1998, it was rebuilt and converted into a separate dwelling using much of the old materials from the site. Honeysuckle Cottage, 126 Devises Road, is one of a terrace of three houses built in the mid to late 1700s of rubble stone and covered with plain rendering with stone quoins and Bath stone surrounds and doorframes to the windows. It was part of the estate of The Grange but was sold at public auction along with 127 and 128 Devises Road in 1956. Along the north side of Devises Road leading out of the village there is a ribbon development of large post war detached houses in a variety of styles, mainly in red brick.
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Near the Lion and Fiddle is Ashton Road, which leads to Steeple Ashton but is now closed to motor traffic where it enters Paxcroft Road. Modern 20th century housing, with a cul-de-sac of stone bungalows, are built along its length. In 2001, a new build of three houses was built of stone to a high specification, in keeping with older village properties, with porches, gable windows, and stone millon windows. Westerly from the Lion and Fiddle, is Trowbridge Road. There are modern and older houses of different styles built of stone except for one modern dwelling, which is of red brick. Willow Cottage, 117, and its neighbour were built in 1600 of stone rubble and with small stone mullion windows. It was thought to have been an inn and a smithy before being converted to two houses. Many of the original features inside the house remain.

There are some recent examples of good development practices in this area:

- Three new cottages in Ashton Road including natural development practices in this area: a cul-de-sac of stone bungalows, are built along its length. Steeple Ashton but is now closed to motor traffic where it

- Conversion of the old Methodist Chapel into two houses, retaining original material and restoring the original boundary walls and railings.

- The old bakery was converted from commercial use to housing whilst retaining its original external appearance.

- There are some recent examples of good development practices in this area:

Recommendations/Reason for recommendations

- New development should be finished in a manner which complements the visual character of the locality, where stone is the predominant material. To maintain the visual character of the area.

- New development should be of a style and scale which is sympathetic to surrounding buildings. To maintain the visual character of the area.

- Rendered finishes should only be applied to buildings where rendering is already present to repair or maintain continuity with an existing finish. To maintain the visual character of the area.

- The removal of gardens at the front of houses in order to provide off street car parking should be discouraged: off street parking should be behind houses and not obvious from the road. To maintain the visual character of the area.

- New roads and pavements should retain existing historic features and use traditional materials such as stone. To retain and enhance the historic appearance of the village.

- Developments should be bounded by natural stone walls. To retain and enhance the historic appearance of the village.

- Cables should be buried in new developments and existing ones buried when the opportunity to do so arises. The appearance of Church Street is marred by overhead cables and posts.

6. HILPERTON MARSH

Although there are individual buildings from many eras, going as far back as the 17th century, most of the buildings and side roads in Hilperton Marsh date from the post war period. The buildings have a decidedly suburban look but the area is given a rural feel by extensive views over the surrounding open fields, particularly from first floor windows, by the spacious layout of roads and gardens, and by the numerous examples of mature trees in gardens and public spaces throughout the area. Views are enhanced by the complete absence of tall buildings. Houses are predominantly two storey semi-detached or bungalows. Even the non-residential buildings are low buildings set in spacious grounds, such as St Mary Magdalene’s church, which has no tower. The roof line invariably comprises pitched roofs, mostly with gable ends. The two-storey houses have roofs unbroken by dormer windows, but at a lesser height quite a few bungalows have dormer extensions.

Construction materials for houses are in general either stone/cement block or brick, with rendering mostly limited to older houses dating back before the 20th century. The various materials are used in distinct areas, corresponding with the dates of construction. Along Horse Road buildings are predominately of Bath stone or reconstituted stone blocks with clay tiled roofs in brown or red shades. To the south of Horse Road, Marshmead, Newlease and Hill Street as far as the bottom of the hill echo this pattern in reconstituted stone or cement block with similar roofs.

Approaching the bottom of the hill, red brick houses, still with brown tiled roofs, appear in Hill Street and continue towards the old village until the point where the road starts to rise, where there is a sharp transition to a more hemmed-in appearance with materials characteristic of the old village. To the north of Horse Road the post-war estate is comprised of brick built houses, again with brown or red clay tiled roofs. Yellow shades of brick predominate near to Horse Road but giving way to red brick towards the Marsh Road end. To the north end of Wyke Road, houses are again stone or reconstituted stone block, but the new estates to the west of Wyke Road are of yellow and red brick in the post 1970s style.

Although developed to its current extent in the 20th Century, some of the buildings along the roads in this area are of an earlier date, notably four listed houses in Horse Road. These are Weavers Croft, built of Flemish bond brick with stone dressings and stone slate roof probably in the mid 18th century, which was extended in the 20th century. Pound Farmhouse, built in the 17th century, altered mid 19th century, of painted rubble stone, with a Bridgewater tiled roof and brick stacks. 3 Horse Road is a detached cottage built in the late 17th century of render and a Bridgewater tiled roof with brick stacks. The 16th century Thatched Cottage sited in a lane off Horse Road is the only thatched building in Hilperton. Formerly two cottages, it is now one, with a part timber frame with brick noggin, part limestone rubble. These older homes have features in common with those in Hilperton Village, including stone and rubble construction with clay tiles, some stone mullion windows, porches, and occasionally dormer windows. Also located in Horse Road is the church of St. Mary Magdalene, built in 1889 by local people. The chancel was completed in flint but there was a shortage of money to finish it, so a ‘flat pack’ nave made of corrugated iron was purchased from Harrods of Knightsbridge. The church is affectionately known locally as the ‘tin church’. As well as for worship, it is used by many other community organisations.

Notable landmarks include:

- St Mary Magdalene’s Church – locally known as the “tin church” for its largely pre-fabricated corrugated iron construction.

- The Poplars on Wyke Road, a large three storey house in ashlar stone with a stable block and workshop, dates back 200 years and can be glimpsed through two imposing stone gateposts.

- The Poplars on Wyke Road, a large three storey house in ashlar stone with a stable block and workshop, dates back 200 years and can be glimpsed through two imposing stone gateposts.
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- New development should be constructed of complementary materials and in a scale appropriate to the surrounding buildings. To maintain the visual character of the locality.
- Rendered finishes to buildings should not be used except to maintain continuity when rendered buildings are repaired or improved. To maintain the visual character of the area as a whole.
- New buildings or extensions should not be higher than existing buildings or two storeys where it would adversely impact on views of the open countryside. To preserve views of the landscape setting and character of the village.
- New buildings or extensions should have pitched roofs with gabled ends. To protect the characteristic roof line of the area.
- The addition of dormer windows to two storey houses (as part of loft conversions, for instance) should be discouraged. To protect the characteristic roof line and views of open fields over rooftops.
- The design of industrial buildings should incorporate the traditional rural characteristics of the area, especially concerning height and materials. The renovation of existing structures is preferred. Where uncharacteristic design features are unavoidable they should be masked by tree or hedgerow planting with native species. To provide a visually acceptable solution where a functionally designed building is required for local business to thrive.
- New buildings should conform with existing building lines and be fronted by low walled or open gardens. Off-street parking at the front of houses is accepted, where there is also provision of a front garden, as part of the character of the area. To maintain the open and spacious appearance characteristic of the area.
- Roads should have pavements and, where space allows, grass verges. To maintain the open and spacious appearance characteristic of the area.
- Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. To maintain rural character.

Recommendations/Reason for recommendation:

- A quiet spot, Whaddon
  - Kylie Parfit

The Green and willow, Marshmead

Interesting buildings and views in Hilperton Marsh

The southern side of Horse Road is something of an exception to this tidy layout, with several unsurfaced lanes serving a jumbled array of houses from earlier eras; however the spacious arrangement and views are maintained.

Roads in this area present a wide and open aspect with buildings set back, leaving room for off-street car parking at the front. Street lighting is universal. Pavements are on both sides of the roads and in the Marshmead/Newleaze area neat grassed verges are incorporated. However, the east side of Marsh Road and Hill Street has no pavement for most of its length, but a rough grass verge enhances the visual transition to open fields and

The “Ring o’ Bells” on Marsh Road, once one of three public houses in Hilperton Marsh, but now a guest house, is well known in the locality.

The large willow tree on the green in Marshmead.

Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. To maintain rural character.
7. STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION

Hilperton Parish Council organised a public meeting on 17 May 2000 to introduce the idea of a Village Design Statement and at a second public meeting on 19 September 2000, attended by 20 people, the Hilperton Village Design Statement group was formed, volunteers to take on the work came forward and the area to be covered was agreed. Over subsequent months the members of the Hilperton Village Design Statement group carried out a survey of the area and its history in order to identify the key features and recommendations.

Their findings were brought together at a series of three public exhibitions, which packed St Marys Church Hall, Hilperton Village Hall and Pascroft Meadow Community Centre on 20, 21 and 28 April 2002 respectively. Visitors were asked to complete a questionnaire to ascertain their views and 105 were returned. Advice was also sought from rural organisations such as the Countryside Agency. This feedback was incorporated into the information and recommendations of the Village Design Statement. Advice was also obtained from Planning Officers of the West Wiltshire District Council. The Parish Council were very supportive but did not wish to influence the contents of the Village Design Statement.

Draft copies of the Village Design Statement were displayed during June 2004 at the post offices, community centres, pubs and schools in Hilperton, in Trowbridge public library and at the Village Fete on 12 June 2004. A letter to the Wiltshire Times and an article in the parish magazine ensured that this last opportunity to comment was widely publicised and 23 comments were received, nearly all in agreement with the content. Copies were also submitted to the Parish Council and District Planning Officers for comment and advice. After consideration of these final comments the village design statement was submitted to West Wiltshire District Council at the end of 2004 for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

8. WHO TO CONTACT ABOUT VILLAGE ISSUES

The following information is correct at time of writing.

Hilperton Parish Council
Mrs M Timms (Clerk)
Maplewood, 15a Church Street.
Steeple Ashton
Trowbridge
Wilts, BA14 6EY
Tel: 01225 852518

Local Councillors
Mr E Clark (01225 769940)
West Wiltshire District Council and Chairman of Hilperton Parish Council
director.clark@westwiltshire.gov.uk

Mr T Carbin (01225 762032)
West Wiltshire District Council and Wilts County Council

Council offices and departments
West Wiltshire District Council (01225 776655)
Bradley Road, Trowbridge.

Local Plan
www.west-wiltshire-dc.gov.uk/planning/districtplan.htm

Wilts County Council (01225 713000)
Bytheas Road, Trowbridge.

Structure plan, highway and school issues:
www.westafric.doe.gov.uk/planning/clarence
Clarence (0800 232323)

Highways freephone
Trowbridge library and records office (01225 761171)

Large multimedia stock including books, leaflets, maps on where to walk, local points of interest. 1838 tithe map
www.westafric.doe.gov.uk

Hilperton Village Design Statement

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Hilperton Village Design Statement could not have come into being without the work of all those in the Design Statement Group, the financial support of Hilperton Parish Council, technical advice from professionals in various organisations, particularly the officers of West Wiltshire District Council and the information and views so willingly provided by many residents of the parish. Our thanks to all those individuals who have contributed their time and expertise to this statement.

Other organisations
The Countryside Agency – essential information including:
“New rights new responsibilities”.
“Out in the country. Where you can go and what you can do”.
“Quiet roads: taming country lanes”.
“Horses in the countryside”.
“Waymarking”.
www.countryside.gov.uk

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
The government department concerned with local planning issues. The web site contains a good deal of general information about how the planning system works.
www.odpm.gov.uk

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (01380 725670)
Elm Tree Court, Long Street, Devizes, Wilts

English Nature (01380 726344)
Prince Maurice Court, Hambledon Ave, Devizes, Wilts

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (01225 777839)
Long Acre House, Frome Road, Trowbridge, Wilts

The Wiltshire Times
Duke Street, Trowbridge, www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk

Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers


Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
West Wilts Group (01225 768705)

Surveys
WCC survey October 2000 to ascertain vehicle movements through Hilperton particularly heavy goods vehicles.
“Gap” road referendum results published by Mr. Trevor Carbin (district and county councillor for Hilperton and Staverton),
Hilperton VDS questionnaire results.

Maps
AA motorists’ atlas of Britain.
Explorer maps.
Definitive map from rights of way dept WCC.
Statement to accompany the definitive map as depicted on O.S. sheets ST86 NW, ST85NE, ST8658-8758.

Developers
J.J. Gallagher Ltd (0121 7666789)

10. GLOSSARY

Ashlar: smooth stone masonry with straight joints.
Brick Nogging: bricks used to infill the panels in a timber frame.
Bridgewater tiled roof: a particular style of tiled roof.
Dormer Window: small window projecting from a sloping roof to let light into attic bedrooms.
Dressed Stone: well worked stone.
Façade: the front face of a building.
Flemish Bond Brick: a particular design of brickwork.
Finiel: an ornament that is the final feature of a structure. i.e. on the top of the roof.
Gable: the triangular end of the roof.
Granite Sette: granite curbstones.
Mullion Windows: vertical uprights in a window.
Pebble dash: pebbles set into cement render.
Quoins: well dressed stone or bricks at the corners of buildings.
Render: plaster covering of external walls.
Rubble: type of masonry sometimes appearing rough and random but can be well dressed.

We will remember them William Gredington
The park Vera Carbin

Broombridge on the Kennet and Avon Canal