

Wilstone Conservation Area



Draft Character Appraisal



Acknowledgements

This document was produced by the Conservation and Design Team, Dacorum Borough Council. Emma Lauze researched and wrote the document and took the photographs. Bethan Davies oversaw the production of the document, while Glyn Kuhn designed the document. Dr James Moir and Helen Cal Fernandez provided useful guidance and advice.

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Photographs:

Front Cover (Main picture) - *War Memorial with Paddock Cottage behind*

Images left to right – *17 & 19 New Road, Former Baptist Chapel, Manor Farm, 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane brick detail, Verge next to Brookside.*

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Wilstone Conservation Area

Appraisal

1 Introduction

Map 1: Wilstone



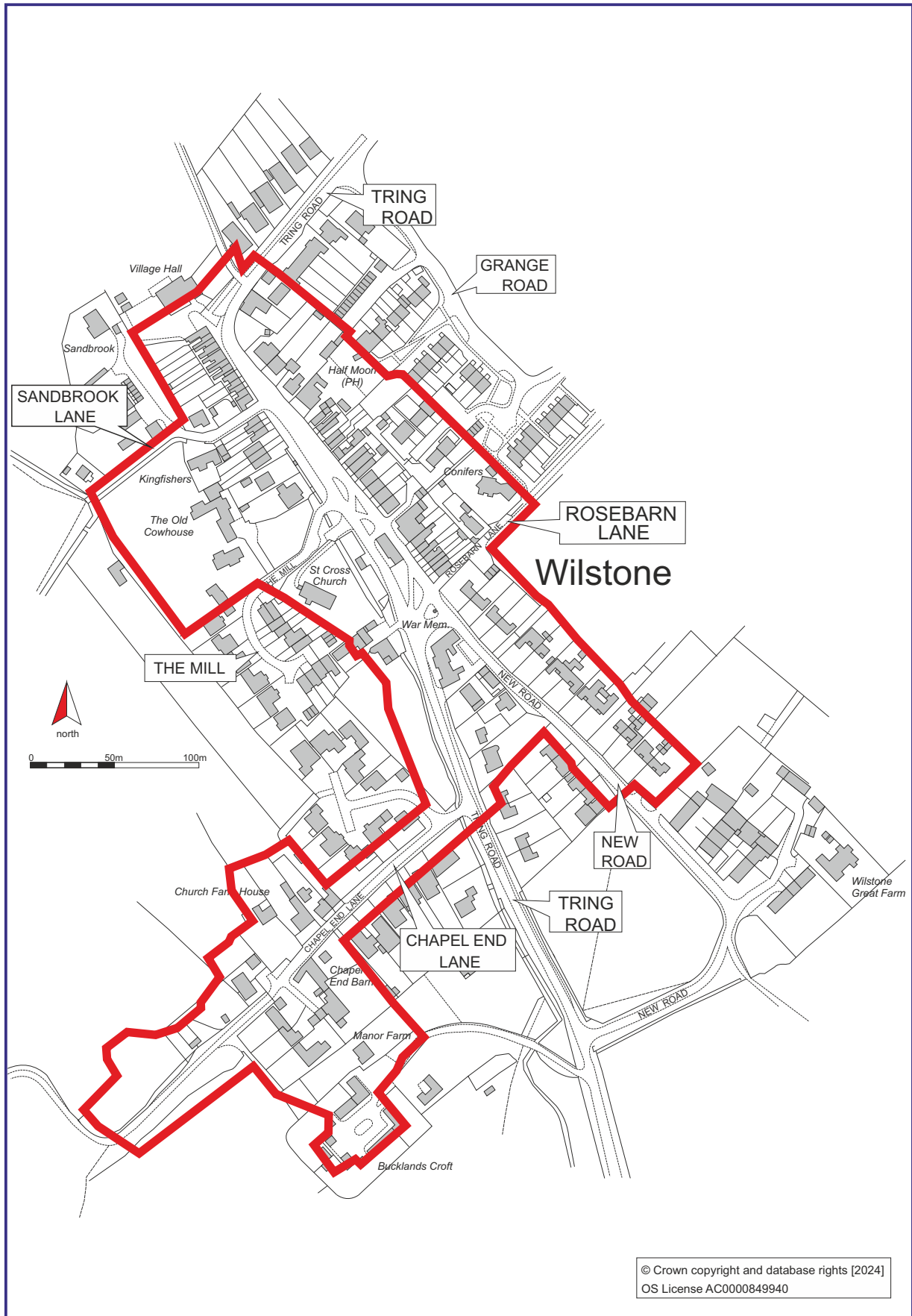
Wilstone is a small village with a triangular plan, located on gently undulating land which stretches into the Aylesbury Plain at the foot of the Chiltern Escarpment. Although Wilstone's origins long predate their creation, it is now contained by the Grand Union Canal to the north and the Wilstone Reservoir to the south. Elsewhere it is surrounded by a gentle pastoral landscape of fields and hedgerows with few trees or woodland. It retains much of architectural and historic interest despite a high degree of change over time.

It is a relatively small conservation area for Dacorum. Although attractive, the village is not the most picturesque of the Dacorum conservation areas but its 19th century character is well preserved, regrettably very little of its early development in the medieval period survives.

Key features include the remnants of a once larger village green, the numerous farmsteads and old barns at the end of Chapel End Lane, small plots for cottages, some early and timber framed, others more modest Victorian terraced examples and Rothschild Estate influence on semi-detached housing on New Road. Key buildings are the only surviving public house, the Half Moon Public House, the unfinished Church of St Cross, Brookside and Paddock Cottages, 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane, Manor, Church and Chapel End farmhouses and barns.

The conservation area is in good condition and is well cared for but is coming under increasing pressure from development. Recently new housing has been built to the east of the Tring Road next to the Grand Union Canal and more development around the village is anticipated.

Map 2: Wilstone Conservation Area



The Wilstone Conservation Area was first designated on 7th October 1968.

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is “an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Proposals should be publicised and incorporate public comment. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF 2023 provides an overarching planning framework to which local planning policy must relate. The Framework notes that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. The Framework also places certain responsibilities upon Local Planning Authorities in that they should have a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Framework states: The Framework also places certain responsibilities upon Local Planning Authorities in that they should have a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Framework states:

When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas

that lack special interest. (Paragraph 197). Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas ...and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. (Paragraph 212)

New development and change will always therefore take place in conservation areas, and the main purpose of designation is to ensure that any proposals will not have an adverse effect upon the overall character and appearance of an area. This Appraisal highlights the special qualities and features that underpin the character of Wilstone and justify its designation.

This Appraisal is supported by Dacorum Borough Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan.¹

The Dacorum Core Strategy was adopted 2013 and should be read alongside the saved policies from the Local Plan 2004 for a complete picture of current planning policy.

Historic Environment policy CS27 notes that all development will favour the conservation of heritage assets and that the integrity, setting and distinctiveness of designated and undesignated heritage assets will be protected, conserved and if appropriate enhanced. In specifically referring to conservation areas, it notes that development will positively conserve and enhance the appearance and character of conservation areas. Negative features and problems identified in conservation area appraisals will be ameliorated or removed.

Dacorum Borough's Local Plan was adopted on the 16th April 2004, and certain policies relate specifically to conservation areas and remain saved and current. In particular:

Policy 120.1: Designation as a conservation area provides the opportunity to preserve or enhance an area of architectural or historic interest by controlling building demolition and the design, scale and proportions of extensions and new development, as well as the type and colour of the materials used.

¹ The New Single Local Plan (to 2036) is in preparation at the time of publication

Policy 121.1: There is a need to control inappropriate types of permitted development which would be detrimental to a conservation area.²

The Council has also produced relevant guidance, including Development in Conservation Areas or affecting Listed Buildings.³

The purpose of this appraisal is therefore, in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England⁴ to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Wilstone Conservation Area.

A detailed review of the existing boundaries of the Conservation Area has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation. (see Map 3)

This appraisal is intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. However, omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape feature, space, feature or aspect located in or adjacent to the Wilstone Conservation Area should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset.⁵

² See also Policies 118 and 119

³ See Environmental Guidelines SPG Section 7: Development in Conservation Areas or affecting listed Buildings. Further advice is contained on the Council's website www.dacorum.gov.uk.

⁴ Historic England Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1 (2019)

⁵ Conservation areas are defined as Designated Heritage Assets within the Framework.

2 Location and Setting



and Tring Road merge at the village green. There is one major spur to the west taking in Chapel End Lane with Manor Farm to the south.

In the south the conservation area commences at Number 27 New Road on the east side and runs along the rear gardens up until Rosebarn Lane where the boundary heads east then north again taking in Conifers and the land that runs behind the houses in the heart of the village until it meets the Tring Road in the north.

2.1 Location

The village of Wilstone is situated in the Borough of Dacorum, Hertfordshire, approximately 32 miles north-west of London and two miles north-west of Tring, on generally flat land at the base of the Chiltern Hills.

Wilstone had a population of 341 people at the last 2021 census. The Conservation Area does not extend to the whole village but is instead focused on the historic core leaving out more recent developments to the north.

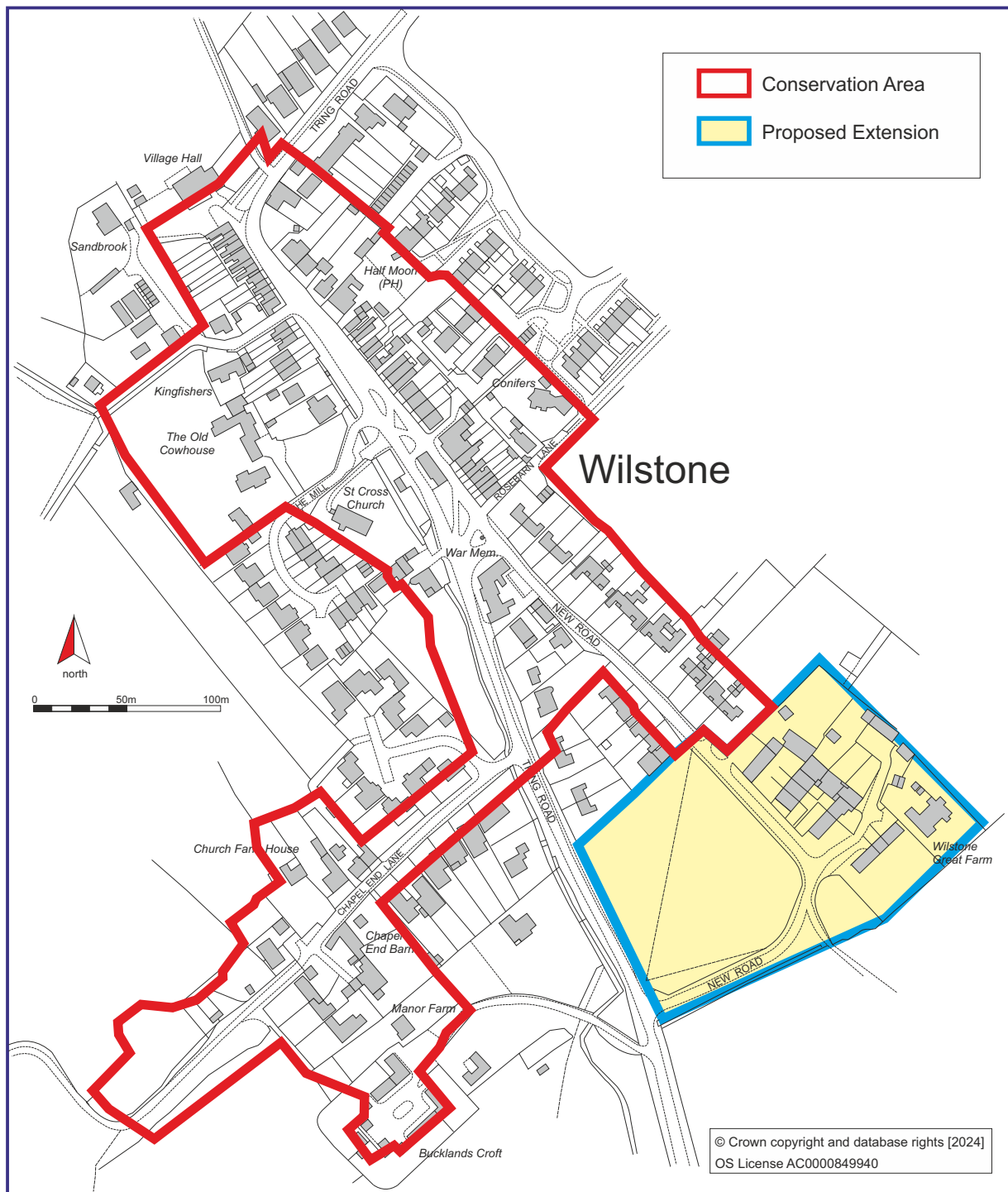
2.2 Boundaries

The conservation area boundary encompasses the historic core of the village, where New Road

The conservation area boundary then heads west in front of the recreation ground and omitting the Village Hall, then turns south along the back gardens of Long Row, then west again along the north side of Sandbrook Lane. It then turns south and incorporates the land to the rear of Kingfishers, then crosses The Mill (omitting the modern development of the same name) and runs behind the church and continues parallel to Tring Road.

The boundary then turns dramatically west at Chapel Fields and runs along the rear of the plots on the north side of Chapel End Lane, up to where it turns north to include 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane and Church Farmhouse and its garden. The boundary then runs in a somewhat haphazard fashion parallel to Chapel End Lane where it turns into a track, crosses over to the south side and heads back towards Chapel End

Map 3: Proposed Boundary Changes



Farm. It then sweeps south to include Manor Farm and its barns, it resumes along the lane at Chapel End Farmhouse. It does not include the bungalows at the east end on the south side but instead runs in front of them along the verges.

The boundary crosses Tring Road at number 10 and continues eastwards to New Road, when it reaches New Road, it turns south taking in the front drives of 6-12 New Road, at the end of the

road it finally turns west across the gate to Great Farm to finish at Number 27.

A potential extension would be to incorporate the buildings at Great Farm that is a key part of the history and development of the village and the field in front to prevent development that would be detrimental to the setting of the conservation area and the historic farmstead.

2.3 Topography & Landscape Setting

Wilstone is located at the bottom of the Chiltern escarpment on low level gently undulating land which reaches out into the Aylesbury Plain rising to a height of 350 ft. The Chiltern hills run north east to south west of the village and the Chiltern AONB boundary lies just to the south of the village. The settlement lies between the Aylesbury arm of the Grand Union Canal to the north and the Wilstone Reservoir to the south. This is one of four reservoirs in the area that were built to serve the canal. The reservoirs are fed by calcerous springs from the underlying Tottenhoe Stone. Linked to the reservoir is a small stream, Gudgeon Stream which circles the village on the west side while a small brook runs through the centre of the village and down Sandbrook Lane to meet Gudgeon Stream in the west. The village itself is essentially flat with only very marginal differences in height.

The Landscape Character Assessment of Dacorum (2004) identifies the village as part of Tring Springs (Area 113). The surrounding area is arable land with pasture closer to the village boarded by hedgerows and trees. There is no significant woodland in the area.



View looking north, towards Manor Farm



Wilstone Reservoir, looking south west



The village brook

2.4 Geology

The geology of the village is Gault Clay with Pleistocene superficial outwash gravels and alluvium over which supports permeable calcareous loamy soils. Nearer the reservoir there is a mixture of Lower Chalk Marl supporting well drained calcareous silty soils. The lower chalk is particularly impervious allowing for multiple springs which is likely to be one of the original attractions to the area.

2.5 Archaeology

Within the conservation area there is no archaeological evidence pre dating the medieval period (1066AD to 1500AD) that has been discovered to date. The earliest archaeological evidence within the surrounding area is from the Bronze Age. Flints from this period were found to the south of the village at The Moorings on the east side of the Reservoir (HER 31414) although they are not conclusive evidence of a Bronze Age settlement.

Evidence for an Iron Age settlement is much stronger. In the same area, close to Wilstone Little Farm, Iron Age pottery was discovered during ploughing in the 1970s (HER 13459). Further afield to the east of the village cropmarks provide evidence of a network of tracks that are thought to date from the Iron Age (HER 7968 & 7967).

To the west a large Pre-Roman site was discovered in 1993 when excavating for a pipeline, a hoard of domestic pottery dating to the

1st century BC – 1st century AD was found alongside high status fabrics and fine wares decorated with a comb pattern (HER 10806) The flint gritted pottery found is thought to be Bronze Age to early Iron Age. The finds appear to provide clear evidence of the western limits of an Iron Age settlement in the area. This is reinforced by aerial photography showing crop marks, trackways, ditches, pitches and enclosures from an Iron Ages settlement to the east of the village.

There is less archaeological evidence from the Roman period but there is sufficient to conclude that the Iron Age settlement continued. In 1940 Roman pottery, possibly a roof or floor tile was found at low tide on the edge of the Wilstone Reservoir (HER 1524) in 1940. While in the 1960s a bronze sestertius of Nerva, AD 96-98 (HER 31415) was found in a back garden in Wilstone.

There is no archaeological evidence from the intervening period from the Romans to the medieval period although it is assumed that the settlement continued during this period.

Wilstone is within an Area of Archaeological Significance (No. 13) and is therefore deemed to be of moderate or high significance. To the east is Wilstone Cropmarks Area of Archaeological Significance (No. 5). Developers should refer to Policy 118 of the Decorum Local Plan 1991-2011.

A list of Historic Environment Records in or adjacent to the Conservation Area is given at Appendix 3.

3 The Historical Development of the Village



Tring Road, looking south, ca. 1900, from Tringruralhistory.co.uk

The Medieval Period

It is likely that the origins of the village lie in the Anglo Saxon period, as evidenced by the layout of the village around a green, although there is no archaeological evidence for this to date. Wilstone is not mentioned by name in the Domesday Book of 1086. However, it is possibly indirectly referenced under the manor of Tring where it is identified as Berewick with 8 villaines and 2 Ploughs. The Victoria County History states that the manor was first held of the manor of Tring in socage and a map of 1719 shows a field in the centre of the Wilstone entitled "Berrywicke", both supporting this theory.

The first unequivocal mention of the village is in 1220 when it is described as "Wilvestone". The meaning is thought to be Wile's thorn tree. Wile is both an Anglo Saxon first name and the word for beetle, adding further support to the theory that there was a settlement during the Anglo Saxon period.

As noted above, Wilstone was initially held of the Manor of Tring. The Manor of Wilvestone in its own right, is first mentioned in 1277, when it was inherited by Joan de Endgayne from her father Gilbert de Grenville, who had bought land at Wilstone in 1232/22 from Stephen de Wilvestone. The manor passed to Joan's daughter and then granddaughter who had married Richard Basset. It stayed with the Basset family for four generations when it passed to Sir John Aylesbury, then by marriage to the Chaworth Family by the end of the 17th century.

Confusingly, from the 15th century a second Manor of Wilsthorpe is also mentioned and was owned by John Harvey, hence its alternative name of Harvey Manor, it passed from the Lake Family to Sir William Gore in the 18th century who owned the Manor of Tring with which it was joined. Both manors derive from the land bought by Gilbert de Grenville in 1232/22, the exact locations are not certain but it is thought that Wilsthorpe was the land in and adjacent to the

village, while Wilvestone is likely to have been to the west and closer to Drayton Beauchamp.

In the 12th century, in response to the needs of a rising population many chapels of ease were founded in Hertfordshire. Sometime during the 12th century such a chapel was founded in Wilstone most likely on Chapel Field close to Church farmhouse. It was attached to the parish of Tring who retained the rights to birth, marriages and burial. The chapel is thought to have been demolished in the mid-17th century, so its appearance is unknown but they were often as large as parish churches. A moulded beam was found in a nearby cottage during demolition that possibly came from the chapel. The adjacent Chapel End Farmhouse is likely to have been for the use of the priests and later was used by the Vicars at Marsworth.

There is little written evidence for the history of the medieval settlement but modern aerial photography has proved an important source. It has provided evidence of ridge and furrow medieval field patterns around the village as well as earthworks. Near Chapel End Farmhouse earthworks for a pond and possibly a moat suggest that a manor house may have stood in this area at the end of Chapel End Lane.

The early medieval settlement is likely to have been small (tax records of 1296 show only six taxpayers) and focused along Chapel End Lane between the village green at one end and the Manor and Chapel at the other end. Only Brookside Cottage survives from the late medieval period in its original form.

16th century

By the 16th century the village had developed around the village green. In addition to the farmsteads along Chapel End Lane, there were now farmsteads at Brookside, Great Farm and Little Farm. The village appeared to be prospering at this date. Although the number of tax payers had only gone up to seven, the amount of tax paid was higher than surrounding villages.

17th century

A number of surviving buildings date from the 17th century, the Half Moon pub (later front), the thatched cottages in Chapel End, Paddock Cottage and the north barn at Little Farm (not conservation area). Wilstone was pro-parliament during the Civil War and villagers donated to the parliamentary cause in 1642 & 1644. After the Civil War during Cromwell's reign, ca. 1655 the Chapel of Ease was demolished and it is recorded that the villagers used the materials to repair their houses.

18th century

In 1710 William Gore bought Wilstone from the Lake family and soon after in 1719 commissioned an estate map by Joseph Colbeck (this survives in copy form only) which includes the layout of the buildings around the large village green and the outlines and names of the surrounding fields. To the east and west of the village were large fields with medieval strip farming. William Gore most likely owned Great and Little Farm and farmed the land to the south while in the centre of the village, the cottages and small plots would have been owned by the villagers.

A number of farmhouses were built or adapted along Chapel End Lane in the 18th century. Chapel End Farmhouse and Church Farmhouse fall into this group while the thatched cottage adjacent was refaced in brick as was the Half Moon Public House. Towards the end of the 18th century Manor Farmhouse was built.

In 1751 an old woman named Ruth Osbourne was accused of being a witch. A mob undertook trial by water against her and her husband in a pond near Wilstone. She died but her husband survived. An inquest was held at The Half Moon pub on April 25th 1851 and later at a trial in Hertford, a man named Thomas Colley was found guilty of her murder and hanged at Gubblecote. This was the last witch trial in the country.

The Dury and Andrews map of 1766 shows the layout much as it is today and that Wilstone at this date appears to be the largest settlement in the area of Tring Rural, with only Long Marston being a similar size. In 1786, the Gore family sold what was then known as Wilstone in the Manor of Tring to Sir Drummond Smith. In 1793 a Baptist Chapel was licensed in a barn. This was the first religious space in the village following the demise of the chapel of ease in the 17th century after which villagers had to walk across the fields to Long Marston to worship.

Map 4: Dury & Andrews, 1766 (HALS)



With the arrival of the Grand Union Canal and the Wendover Arm in the area and work commencing on the creation of a series of reservoirs to the south of Wilstone to feed the canal and its arms, the topography of the area changed forever.

Map 5: Tring Enclosure map 1804 (HALS)



The Act of Parliament for the enclosure of Tring, of which Wilstone was a part dates, from 1797. The award followed in 1799 and the map in 1804. 42 properties were listed of which 9 were farmsteads, 8 houses and 25 cottages, with an estimated population of around 200.

19th century

The initial phase of work on the Wilstone Reservoir was completed in 1802. It was built over the site of natural springs to the south of the village. Local paths and roads were also affected by the canal network and reservoirs, some disappeared, others were straightened or rerouted. From 1811 further works were undertaken to raise the height of the reservoir and extend it, it was completed in 1839. In 1815 the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union canal curved round from the east to the north of the village, where a wharf was built.

A landscape that had barely changed since medieval times was not only affected by the arrival of the canal system but also the enclosure awards. The common land that had been farmed in strips since medieval times passed into the hands of a few landlords. Drummond Smith, lord

of the manor and owner of Great and Little Farm was the main beneficiary, while the local community began to work directly for the new owner and lost some of their autonomy.

In 1823 William Kay bought Wilstone in the manor of Tring for £90,000 from the trustees of Sir Drummond Smith. A couple of years later in 1825, the other Manor of Wylvesthorne was sold by the Manners family and descended to the Jenney Family by the later 19th century. Bryant's map of this time shows a surprising number of buildings along what was to become New Road.

The Grange family who lived at Collins Farm had founded the Baptist community in one of their barns in 1793. Later in 1810 they had started a

Sunday school. Finally in 1837 a purpose built Baptist Chapel was erected at the south end of the village green adjacent to the school which was opened in 1848. The school was built on land donated by William Kay for 100 children from the village and wider area following the 1842 Act of Parliament. It was a Church of England grant aided school with children attending from the age of two until the age of eleven or twelve.

In 1888 the Grout Family donated land in the centre of the village for a new village church. The vicar of Long Marston and curate of Wilstone, the Rev. Caldwell Master was in charge of the project.

Originally it was planned to cost £3189 and would include a chancel, vestry and porch, however, the funds ran out and it was built without the chancel and porch. The commemoration stone and first service were held in 1877.

The population of Wilstone effectively doubled from 49 households and a population of 200 in 1800 to 99 households and 468 people in the 1851 census. The population began to decline in the late 19th century most likely due to the agricultural recession following a run of poor harvests and falling prices which forced labourers off the land to seek employment elsewhere. Until this time, agriculture was the main employer in the village, with household incomes supplemented with straw plating. Other employment was focused on servicing the village such as blacksmith, butcher, baker or shopkeepers. By 1900 the population had fallen and was nearer that of 1800 with 261 people and 80 households.

On the death of William Kay's son, Wilstone in



Wilstone Primary School, pre 1911 from Tringruralhistory.co.uk



Tring Road, north end, Long Row on left, now demolished cottages on right, ca. 1900, from Tringruralhistory.co.uk



Tring Road, looking north, ca. 1900, Paddock Cottage on left, from Wilstonesticks.com

the manor of Tring was sold to Baron Lionel de Rothschild for £230,000 in 1872. For the next 70 years, the Rothschild family contributed to the life of the village.

In 1875 a key community building was built in the form of the Parish Rooms to the south of the Half Moon Public House. This was The British Workmen's Temperance Room and later Working Man's Club.

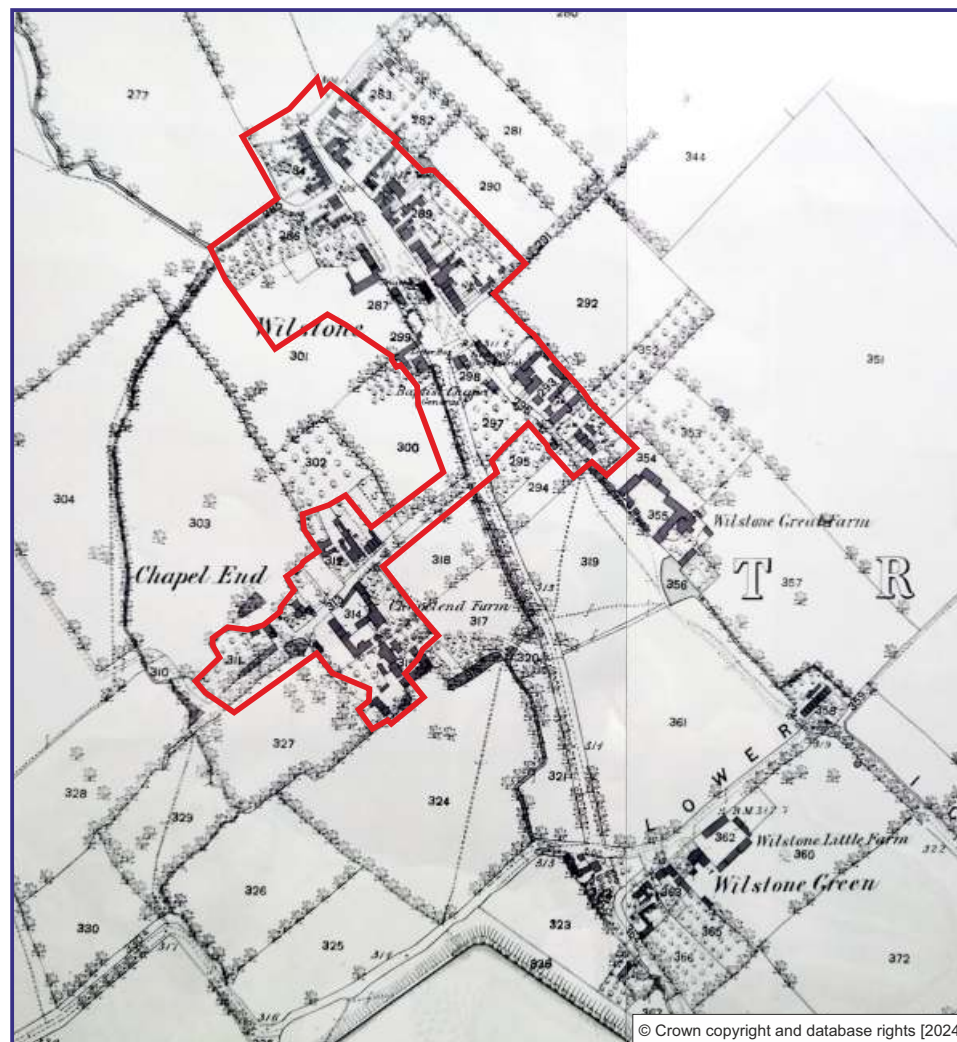
During the 19th century the farmsteads that had been a feature of the centre of the village were demolished and replaced with new housing. The land was consolidated into two farms, Great and Little Farm which were tenant farmed. Under the Rothschilds the two farms were united and they rebuilt Great Farmhouse and worked on the barns. The other major farm by the 19th century was Chapel End Farm which farmed the land to the west.

The centre of the village evolved with many older buildings making way for new small terraces and cottages. In 1851 Long Row a suite of terraces was built at the top of Tring Road on the west side with a further three cottages on the other side of Sandbrook Lane. On the east side of the street there was infilling and replacement.

Map 6. Bryant's Map of Hertfordshire, 1820 (HALS)



Map 7: Ordnance Survey map, 1877 25 inch (HALS)



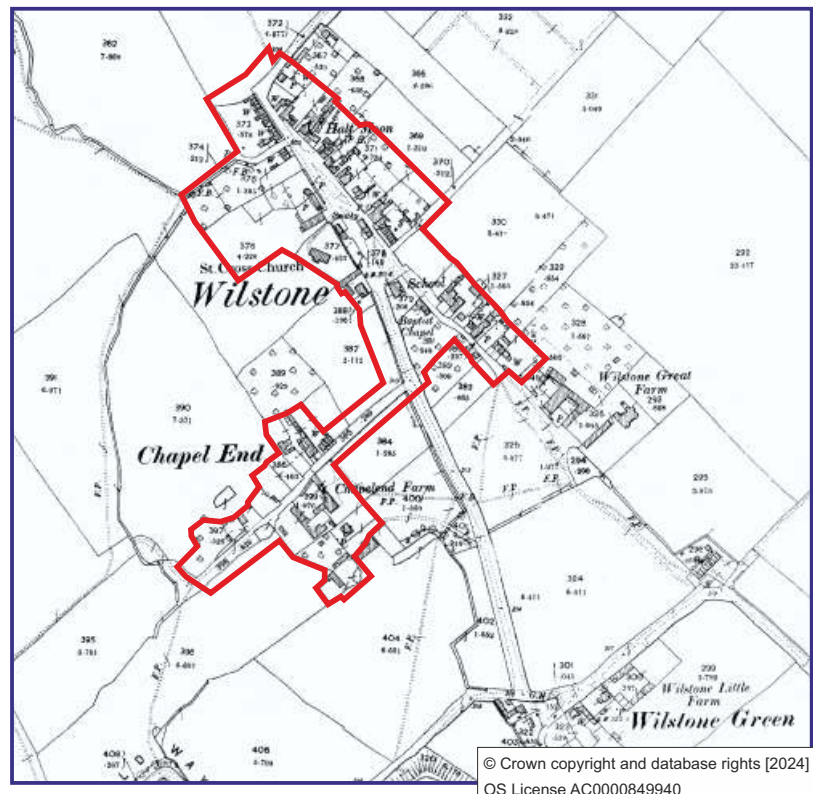
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20th century

In 1908 Page described Wilstone in the Victoria County History as follows:

Little of the open green remains, as a smithy and school have been erected on it, and the rest is converted into gardens. This village like others near is decreasing in population. The cottage property is poor, and belongs chiefly to small holders and of late years many of the older houses have been bought up and the sites added to the larger estates. One small house with overhanging upper story stands on the west of the road, and the old Paddock Cottage near to it, once an inn, and before that a brewery, suggests a more thriving state of this now somewhat desolate hamlet.

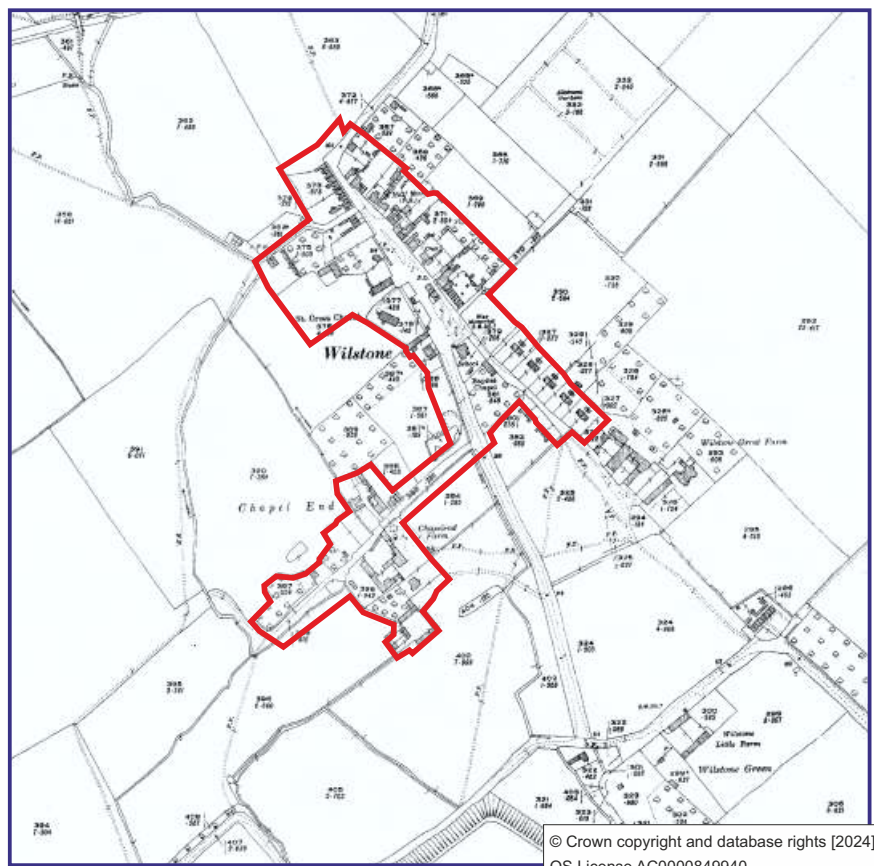
Map 8: Ordnance Survey map, 1898, 25 inch



The census returns show that many houses were uninhabited, no doubt due to the shrinking population but perhaps also due to their poor state. It is likely that in response to this, that the benevolent Rothschilds built Rothschild Villas on New Road, five pairs of exemplary estate cottages. Nevertheless, from the 1920s the Rothschilds began selling land in Wilstone and sold their last piece of land in 1938, ending almost 70s years of influence in the village.

After the First World War, the War Memorial was unveiled on the village green in 1921 and further attempts to improve the building stock were made

Map 9: Ordnance Survey map, 1926, 6 inch



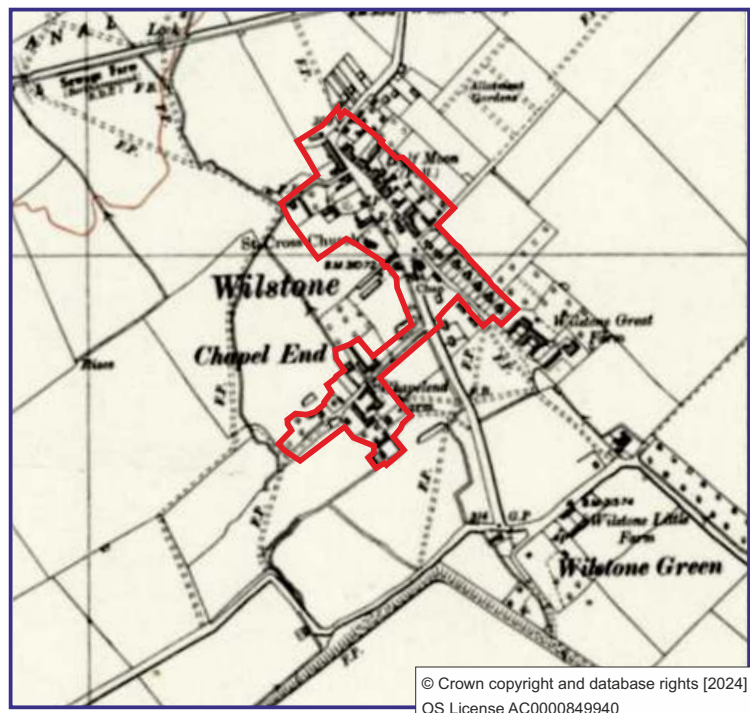
with new council houses on New Road and two new semi-detached houses at the top of Tring Road in 1933 (numbers 64 & 66). Further modernisation arrived in the form of the arrival of electricity in the village in 1931. After the Second World War new bungalows were built at the top of Ring Road, additional council houses on New Road and a group of bungalows on the south side of Chapel End Lane.

Glassers Mill began production of animal feed in 1964 and remained a key employer within the village until its closure in 1999. The parish rooms closed in 1965 and the money went towards the creation of the village hall at the top of Tring Road which opened in 1971. This was also the year that the school closed and was replaced by a block of flats. By 1979 the Baptist Chapel to the rear of the school had closed and was eventually converted to residential use while at the same date Wilstone became a parish in its own right.

By the 1970s the amount of housing had almost doubled from 1900. This was no doubt assisted by the laying out of Grange Road to the east of Tring Road with 41 new houses.

Wilstone became a conservation area on 7th October 1969

Map 10: Ordnance Survey map, 1952, 6 inch



21st century

In 2008 the Post Office closed, the shop that it was housed in remains, but is now run by the community. A new wooden canal bridge opened in 2010. There are new developments at the canal wharf and along Tring Road to the north of the historic village. New housing estates have been built at Chapel Field and The Mill on the west side of the village. The core historic layout and village remains but is increasingly surrounded by areas of new development, particularly to the north of the centre.

4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

4.1 Summary of Historical Features

- Triangular shaped road plan with historic buildings on both sides
- Different ages of the buildings throughout the area, most buildings postdate 1800
- Rothschild Estate influence, including estate cottages known as Rothschild Villas by William Huckvale
- Historic farmsteads on the edge of the village close to Chapel End Lane, some with converted barns, Manor Farm, Chapel End Lane Farm, Church Farm
- Modest Victorian terracing
- Pair of religious buildings, the Church of St Cross and former Baptist Chapel
- Group of timber framed cottages from 15th to 17th century, Paddock Cottage, Brookside and 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane
- Repurposed buildings, Baptist Chapel, 25 Long Row, historic barns
- Lost buildings, the village school (1971) Chapel of Ease (ca.1655), Manor House (ca.1800), Parish Rooms (ca.1970)
- Village Green and War Memorial

- Key buildings are:

- Church of St Cross
- Manor Farm and barns
- Church Farm
- Chapel End Farm
- 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane
- Brookside
- Paddock Cottage
- Half Moon Public House



Manor Farm



Marianne Cottages



Church of St Cross and War Memorial



Paddock Cottage and 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane



Rothschild Villas, New Road

4.2 Street Pattern and Building Plots

Tring Road is the main road through the village, leading off the B489 from Tring on a south west to north east trajectory in a relatively straight fashion. It commences in open countryside with hedge lined fields to either side and when it enters the village from the south it passes mainly 20th century housing set well back in generous plots. As it enters the remaining area of village green the grain changes to large irregular plots and building line up until Sandbrook Lane where there are smaller narrower plots with many houses built up close to the road and pavement. The road on the east side of the green is also known as Tring Road and here the grain is consistently long narrow plots with houses on or close to the pavement. It merges into one single road level with Brookside Cottage. At the top of the green the road bends sharply eastwards and leads out of the village and over the canal.

At the southern end of the green the Tring Road meets New Road in a pincer pattern around the war memorial which gives Wilstone its distinctive triangular layout. New Road has a clear northwest/southeast trajectory and runs from the gate at Great Farm up to the War Memorial on the Green. The road continues as a private road to the south and loops back to the west to join Tring Road. From the farm gate heading north the grain of the houses consists of large regular wide plots with semi-detached houses on the east side. On the west side the grain is more

irregular with the houses where they exist set a closer to New Road. In the middle section the houses disappear and the narrow gardens on Tring Road run up to New Road until the Baptist Chapel and apartments both of which are either on or close to the road on irregularly shaped plots.

On the west side, south of the village green is Chapel End Lane, a narrow ancient no through single lane running east/west. At the east end on the north side is a modern cul de sac, Chapel Fields, with the houses backing onto Chapel End Lane on irregular plots. On the west side of the lane, modern regular sized plots (just outside the conservation area) are followed by irregular plots and buildings lines at the historic end of the lane.

Sandbrook Lane is another narrow dead end single lane that meanders westwards into the fields. The road commences with the plots on Tring Road running parallel followed by several irregular plots with houses set slightly back until the fields open out to either side. The Mill, is the entrance to a modern cul de sac development which curves westwards just north of the church

The only metalled road on the east side is Rosemary Lane, a short dead end lane that fades into a footpath. It commences with the flanks of the plots on Tring Lane which leads to a couple of houses on the west side and fields to the east.

5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

5.1 Analysis

Wilstone is a very small village located on gently undulating but essentially flat land at the foot of the Chiltern escarpment. In this respect it is similar and forms a group with other nearby villages such as Long Marston, Gubblecote, Astrope, Cheddington and Puttenham located on a finger of land in north west Hertfordshire that stretches out into the Aylesbury Plain.

The essentially low lying character means that there are few opportunities for eye catching views within the conservation area, although there are views out to the countryside at the end of the roads and from footpaths in the surrounding fields looking back towards the village. The exception are the wonderful views from the Wilstone Reservoir which is substantially built up above ground level.

The village is encircled with a gentle pastoral landscape of mostly small ancient fields and hedgerows which is verdant and bucolic during the summer months, further out the fields become larger and are turned over to arable farming. The Wilstone Reservoir and Grand Union Canal contribute both historically and aesthetically to the character of the setting of the village and conservation area. A brook commences next to the reservoir and runs through the village along Tring Road and then turns west down Sandbrook Lane to reconnect with Gudgeon Stream to the west. The brook is an important part of the character of these roads.

Wilstone still retains the character of an isolated rural settlement with medieval origins despite more recent developments. The village developed east of its original manorial/chapel complex around a large village green, which regrettably now only survives in small islets of green down the centre of the village. Where once there were several farmsteads and barns in the heart of the village these have been swept away and replaced with more modest 19th century workman's cottages which is now the dominant characteristic of the heart of the village.

Where the workman's cottages dominate in the heart of the village, the plots are narrow and small and the building line close to the road. Where earlier buildings have been replaced with twentieth century semi-detached housing the plots are generous and the houses set well back. The historic plots are more varied but tend towards more spacious arrangements set back from the road.

The architecture ranges from the late medieval Brookside Cottage up to more recent buildings such as the 20th century avant garde design for The Conifers, encompassing traditional materials such as stone, flint, brick, thatch, clay tile and weatherboarding to more recent materials such as aluminium, steel and blockwork.

Key architectural features are the group of early timber framed cottages and houses, including The Half Moon Public House, several ancient farmsteads, large numbers of Victorian workers cottages, the William Huckvale estate cottages and a pair of religious buildings. While pre 1800 buildings do exist, the character of the village transformed in the 19th century, so that this is the architectural character that prevails in the heart of the village. The historic end of Chapel End Lane preserves the greatest architectural interest while Sandbrook Lane preserves a deep connection with the surrounding countryside. It remains a well preserved village whose character was only completed in the early 20th century with very little infill thereafter.

Tring Road (south)

Tring Road is the main road through the village. When it enters the village from the south it is surrounded by pastoral fields and hedgerows which transitions to housing on the east side close to the junction with Chapel End Lane, the conservation area boundary commences after the junction.

On the west side is the garden of Paddock Cottage running parallel to the road with high

hedges and the brook and verge close to the road. This verdant approach allows for a gentle evolution into the more built up parts of the village. The cottage itself is one of the few surviving medieval buildings although now much altered. It is a striking timber framed house of two storeys (although it was once three storeys) facing east. The frame is infilled with plaster and its jetty underbuilt, its

character is charming and striking in the context of the later development of the village.



Tring Road (south)

On the east side of the road are three 20th century houses on irregular plots, set well back in their gardens accessible via bridges across the brook and with contrasting architectural character. The first is gable end to the road constructed of brick and extended, dating from the 1960s/70s. The middle house has greater architectural interest, being early 20th century, with a red brick ground floor and pebble dash first floor and handsome central porch under a slate hipped roof. The third house is a modern one and a half storey house with dormers and large central stack breaking through the roof slope, its boundary is taller than the others and so it has less street presence.

The Old School flats stand where Tring Road merges with New Road and where the Victorian school stood until ca. 1970. Built in the early 1970s, the layout and design is awkward and jarring. They are the only two and a half storey buildings in the conservation area and have a driveway to the rear and parking on New Road. The roofs are a combination of pitched (with and without dormers) and flat roofs and the different elements create an inharmonious whole that does not contribute positively to the conservation area. The materials are varied (brick, render and weatherboard) and the windows have been replaced piecemeal so there is no single unifying design.

Tring Road (central)

Where Tring Road enters the heart of the village by Old School flats, the road opens out around the war memorial and what is left of the village green, which is now a series of islets traversed by roads down the centre of the street with The Forge occupying the centre of the green. The character is a little disappointing, where once the green would have covered the area, now metal road and cars dominate.

The war memorial commemorating the fallen of Wilstone sits on the most southern islet, which is triangular in form with a low post and chain surround.

The green verdant character in the south continues up to 23 Tring Road with tall hedges, mature trees opening out to the churchyard and a small paddock with estate fencing between the church and Brookside Cottage, where once ancient barns stood.

The church itself is a landmark building despite it now being rather recessive within the streetscape. It goes largely unnoticed when approaching from the south, particularly with the new building screening it, but from the north it is still readily visible particularly in the winter months and is the largest building in the

conservation area. Its character is Victorian gothic dating from 1877 and designed by Carpenter & Ingelow as the first church in Wilstone for centuries.

A lane leads to a modern development Mill Close which lies outside the conservation area but now forms part of its setting closing the formerly open view to fields beyond. Brookside Cottage is very similar in character to Paddock Cottage and is a surviving timber framed medieval cottage with more recent extensions. Along with no. 15 & 17 these houses are accessed via bridges across the village brook. In front of Brookside is an historic pump. 15 & 17 are recent modern infill houses.

No 19, 21 & 23 commences a run of modest 19th century workers cottages on the west side of the road but which is the overriding character of this section of Tring Road as a whole. They are set further forward than the other houses but still retain a small garden behind a picket fence. They are stock brick with red brick dressings and modern monopitch porches. On the other side of Sandbrook Lane is Long Row. The south elevation facing Sandbrook Lane is symmetrical and was formerly a grocers shop. The terrace faces east thereafter. It was originally well detailed constructed of red brick with yellow brick dressings including pilasters and dog tooth brick

cornice. Regrettably much of the brickwork has been painted, new monopitch porches added and windows replaced so that the original quality of the terrace has been eroded. There are views out to the north where Tring Road turns eastwards by the village hall which partially closes the view to the recreation ground and lines of poplar and other tall trees along the canal.

The east side of Tring Road commences at Rose Barn Lane and extends up to the 68 Tring Road on the eastward bend of the road. The first cottages are a charming group named Marian Cottages with small cottage gardens in front and a low wall, these are some of the earliest workers cottages around the former green. The adjacent No. 28 has a mix of brickwork from old red brick with grey headers to modern red and brown bricks but now presents as largely modern with a cement tile roof and plastic windows. No. 30 forms the eastern part of the village store building, it has recently been converted to a single house and lost its traditional shop front. The shop itself was formerly the Post Office and a bakery from ca. 1900.

The adjacent plots are now a small flat fronted modern neo-Georgian terrace of four houses. This was built ca.1970 and replaced the parish rooms which can be seen in early photographs of



Tring Road (central)

this part of the village and was a Victorian gothic style building. No. 39 and 40 resemble the pairing in the old photos with a double fronted property and a small adjacent house. Both had striking bay windows. The brickwork of no. 40 looks more recent but the remaining brick cornice resembles the historic photos so that it is assumed that the 19th century building remains behind the modern rendered façade and modern windows.

From No. 42 up to the Half Moon public house is a varied group of small detached or semi-detached flat fronted cottages all fronting onto the road with only thin slithers of garden in front. They were originally brick with slate roofs but are now much altered. No. 42 seems to have had a central door originally and sash windows. All the windows have been changed including at No. 54 which now has a UPVC bow window replacing the original door and window. The stack at No. 46 & 48 has been reduced while No. 50 & 52 is now rendered.

The Half Moon Public House is set back behind a small lawn with picnic tables. Its historic character is evident in its brickwork, timber framing and old clay tile roof. It can be considered a landmark within the central area of the village and is one of the few early historic buildings surviving in the village. Adjacent is a handsome plum and red brick symmetrical Victorian house. Thereafter there is a change of character with a pair of wider symmetrical twentieth century semi-detached houses set back and in a wide plot. These replaced some earlier terraced housing and ancient thatched cottages and have a fairly mundane character with brick ground floor and rendered elevations.

The last house on Tring Road within the conservation area east side is around the corner and is a small symmetrical Victorian cottage with a garden extending to the corner. It is now rendered with UPVC windows so that early character has been diluted.

In the centre of Tring Road at the southern end is The Forge on a slither of land. Old Maps mark this as a smithy and its origins are likely to be 18th century. Having a building on this part of the green makes the character more enclosed in this area in contrast to the north and south where it is more open.



Rosebarn Lane

Rosebarn Lane

This is a very narrow metalled road that eventually turns into a footpath running behind the houses or a track which continues out into the countryside. It commences with the flank of Marian Cottages and then takes on an ancillary character with the garages for Nos 1 to 7 to the south and garden fences and sheds for the cottages on Tring Road to the north. One new house has been built recently in a Victorian style which is followed by a modern house, Conifers, that is unique within the conservation area due to its avant garden pyramid design.

Sandbrook Lane

This is what feels like a small country lane for most of its length. It begins with the flanks of the terraced housing on either side of the lane on Tring Road followed by their gardens and rear views. The road then kinks northwards with a modern house on either side. On the south side is a Kingfishers, a large house and garden. This is brick and tile hung with a flat front, the effect is

rather suburban and unusual within the conservation area. Opposite is a single storey red brick modern bungalow also without comparison within the designated area. Thereafter the lane straightens out with views to open countryside at the end. These views are framed by hedgerows and tall trees on either side of the lane. The brook runs down the south side with a bridge crossing to the garden beyond. The effect is sleepy and bucolic.



Sandbrook Lane

Chapel End Lane

The east end of Chapel End Lane is modern in contrast to its ancient origins which lie at the west end. The modern buildings, a cul de sac development of two storey houses known as Chapel Fields on the north side and six bungalows on the south side, form the setting of the conservation area with the boundary taking in the end of the gardens at Chapel Fields and the road and verges.

The hedgerow and small trees on the north side create a more enclosed feel which then opens out when the road reaches 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane, a 17th century thatched cottage which is a reminder of the ancestry of the settlement at the end of Chapel End Lane. The name of the road

and Manor Farm are a reminder that this was the site of the original manor/chapel complex and earliest site of settlement in Wilstone.

Church Farmhouse sits behind a low wall and fence and presents an unusually "polite" and genteel street presence for Wilstone. Manor Farmhouse has a not dissimilar symmetrical later Georgian character with classical references but is not readily visible from the public sphere as it is located behind Chapel End Farmhouse. From Church Farmhouse, open fields can be seen beyond as well as framed by the gated track that leads westwards into the fields with barns bookending the track on either side.



Chapel End Lane



On the west side of the lane opposite Church Farmhouse are a series of residential barns, some converted from early barns at Chapel End Farmhouse, others are entirely new. They are nestled around a yard with the listed farmhouse to the rear, its roof and first floor fleetingly visible from the lane while from its driveway it is screened by hedgerows and a garage.

There is a low group of converted barns that were formerly associated with Manor Farm but are now converted. They have weather boarded elevations and clay tile roofs and sit snugly into the landscape when viewed from the footpath in the adjacent field or from the heights of the reservoir to the south.

The character of the west end of Chapel End Lane is historic, clearly referencing the agricultural origins of the settlement albeit the barns are now almost entirely converted and the farmhouses separated from their land holdings. As the lane progresses it becomes successively more rustic (and muddy in winter) as it approaches the open countryside.

New Road

This is effectively a cul de sac which terminates with a gate to the historic farmstead of Great Farm with its listed barns and granary. While it appears that the road ends at the gate it does in fact continue on around the field adjacent to Great Farm and reconnects to Tring Road in the south. Views of the field and countryside beyond contribute positively to the character of the road.'

The most striking characteristic of this road are the five pairs of semi-detached houses known as Rothschild Villas on the east side of the road, designed by William Huckvale for the Rothschild estate. They are typical estate cottages with prominent gables, red brick and tile hung elevations, sweeping cat slide roofs and small paned casement windows. They are set well back from the road behind gardens with distinctive picket fences. The effect is planned and formal and Edwardian in character albeit now altered and extended.

The format of large plots, set back semi-detached houses continues with the two pairs of red brick hipped roof semis with flat fronts and

porch hoods dating from the 1920s and which extend up to Rosebarn Lane and the war memorial.

The west side of the road is more random and informal. At the south end are a further pair of modest semi-detached houses which form part of the setting of the conservation area, only their deep front gardens and driveways fall within it. The houses are rendered with hipped tiles roofs and of little architectural interest. The middle section of the west side is taken up by the rear gardens of 10 & 12 Tring Road which stretch across and front onto New Road. The views into the gardens are rather ancillary with sheds, a green house and parking. The character is therefore more open in this area but the west side of the road lacks definition in terms of the street scene.

Beyond is a recently built house and the Baptist Chapel dating from 1837 but now converted and the only really positive building along this stretch of the road. Its long flank is positioned directly on the road with entrance and three arched windows. The roof is hipped slate. Beyond is the parking for the Old School Flats which is backed by hedging to soften it but again the street scape is weak and it does not contribute positively.



New Road

5.2 Summary of Villagescape Features

The village has medieval origins along Chapel End Lane with its manorial/chapel complex but the focus has now moved eastwards to the stretch of Tring Road between the War Memorial at the south end and Long Row at the north end, essentially where the large village green once stood but which is now greatly reduced in size. The settlement is triangular shaped with buildings on both sides of the roads.

Key features are:

- Medieval origins
- Open pastoral setting
- Church is a pivotal building with mainly low two storey houses or cottages (one thatched)
- Farmsteads on the edge of the village with surviving, now converted barns.
- Small scale terraced housing
- Mix of timber framed and brick buildings with clay tile or slate roofs
- Houses positioned close to the road around the village green with exception of area south of Brookside, elsewhere generous plots with houses set back behind gardens
- Views along roads and out to countryside at ends of lanes
- Boundaries- mainly low brick walls with a few picket fences where boundaries exist in the centre of the village, hedgerows of varying heights to the south of the church and a preponderance of picket fences along New Road.
- Street furniture –clustered around the bus stop and village pump in centre of village
- Village green – much reduced in size, this is now a group of islets in the middle of Tring Road
- Estate influences

5.3 Current Activities and Uses

During the 20th century the village changed from being a predominantly agricultural village to a commuter village with residents seeking work outside the village. In the latter half of the 20th century Glassers Mill was a large employer but this closed in 1999. Most of the barns have now been converted to residential use as has the Baptist Chapel.

The village sees many local walkers using the necklace of footpaths that are found around the reservoir and the west side of the village (Footpaths 18,19, 20, 21, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35,36). Cyclists pass through the village often using the Tring cycle route.

The village has a strong community feel reinforced by its villager run community shop. The village hall is surrounded by playing fields and a playground and hosts film notes and other clubs. There is no post office any more.

The Half Moon is the ancient public house in the centre of the village. The Tring Rural parish council is active in the village.

5.4 Focal points, Views and Vistas

Due to the flat topography in which Wilstone is sited the views within the conservation area are mainly limited to views along the roads.

The village green is the focal point of the settlement with long open views in either direction from the area level with the church up to the village hall bounded by low tightly grouped structures. The church itself while large is set back behind trees and lacks a tower so that it does not present as the landmark that it might have been planned as, nonetheless it remains a focal point. The war memorial further south provides an additional focal point. Other prominent groups of buildings such as the farmsteads are hidden away.

From the heart of the village, there are more open views to the west to the area around the church and The Mill development as well as out to the recreation ground behind the village hall which falls outside the conservation area boundary.

Moving south, the views along New Road and Tring Road are more restricted. Tring Road has a verdant setting to either side while New Road has the Rothschild Villas on the east side with charming views to countryside beyond between the pairs as well as sweeping views at the end of the road to Great Farm and the fields in front.

The views along the lanes, Chapel End Lane, Sandbrook Lane and Rosebarn Lane are more

restricted and enclosed by virtue of their width. However each one ends with views out to the pastoral landscape beyond. To the west these are framed by gates and trees but to the east the lane fades into the landscape.

While the views within the conservation area are fairly restricted, with few landmark buildings there are numerous views back to the conservation area from the surrounding network of footpaths and other features.

Some are screened by intervening hedgerows so the views towards Chapel Farm are fleeting. The views from the fields to the south and west of Chapel End Farm and Manor Farm are particularly attractive. From the top of the Wilstone Reservoir are sweeping views towards the conservation area, the houses and farms peeking out above the trees.

5.5 Open Spaces, Landscape and Trees

Wilstone's character is defined by the open space at its heart, its historic village green which is surrounded by small cottages on both sides. Although once much larger, it has been reduced in size, bisected by roads and built upon but it remains a core open space with small areas of remaining village green in a linear pattern at the



Tring Road, looking south

heart of the village planted with small trees. The war memorial sits on one of these surviving sections at the southern end.

Despite the loss of large areas of village green, the character remains verdant due to the deep verges on the western side, the graveyard with its mature trees and adjacent open space between the church and Brookside. On the eastern side, the small cottage gardens also contribute to the verdant character.

The gardens of the conservation area have many fine trees and the hedgerow boundaries are notable from the section between the church and Chapel End Lane. The western end of Sandbrook Lane is also notably tree lined with hedgerows as it blends into the countryside beyond.



View from Wilstone Reservoir, looking north

The key public open spaces within the envelope of the village are the recreation ground which forms a back drop to the conservation area at the northern end and the allotments to the east of Grange Road. The village is encircled with a soft pastoral landscape with a network of public footpaths while the canal side to the north and Wilstone Reservoir also provide key open spaces for recreation.



View of Recreation Ground, looking north



Village Green



Pasture to south of Manor Farm

5.6 Public Realm: Floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

The village green area of Tring Road is the focus for most street furniture. There is an historic pump next to the brook on the west side that has a bench and planters. On the village green itself is a bus shelter, post box and bin. There is minimal signage in the village, limited to a few discreet road signs, the signage for the church and public house.

The roads are metalled, there is a notable lack of pavements within the conservation area, these are confined to a single side of New Road and Tring Road to the south and are modern asphalt with concrete kerbstones. There is no street lighting which means the conservation area preserves its rural character at night. There are however a string of prominent telephone poles and wiring which at times can be visually distracting.



Bus stop



War Memorial area



Historic pump and other street furniture

6 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

6.1 Architectural styles and detailing

The houses of the conservation area are overwhelmingly small in scale with only the farmhouses and their barns being on a larger scale. The only exception is Conifers which stands tall at three storeys. If the houses have attics they are not expressed externally. The roof slopes remain largely unbroken with rooflights or dormers. There are a variety of architectural styles from timber framed late medieval buildings to elegant polite farmhouses and Rothschild estate cottages but the overwhelming architectural character is that of simple 19th century vernacular workers cottages.

The character of much of the conservation area stems from the use of local materials. The palette is less typical of the Chilterns red brick and clay, as many of the brick houses have been painted and the roofs are often slate. The early buildings and barns are timber framed using oak or elm while the exterior of the farm buildings are dark weatherboard.

Over time, brick was increasingly used including for infill panels replacing earlier wattle and daub and eventually the whole building. The early handmade local bricks can be seen at 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane where grey headers are also used to create a chequered pattern. The Edwardian Rothschild Villas use red brick as well as tile on their elevations. The later buildings use a greater range of bricks from yellow through to

brown and purple. Some of the twentieth century buildings dispense with brick and use pebble dash render instead. Flint is not widely used in the north Chilterns and is only found on the church elevations in Wilstone.

The roofs are mainly pitched with the exceptions being the hipped roofed council housing. They remain uncluttered with rooflights or dormers. Earlier buildings are clay tile but the 19th century workers cottages have slate roofs which predominate in the heart of the village were most likely transported via canal. There is one remaining example of thatch, 8 & 9 Chapel End Lane while old photographs show that there were once many more. The Rothschild Villas with gables to the front have good examples of restrained barge boards. Where original windows survive they are often sash of varying patterns. There are many different types of porch but most are not original.

Medieval to 1700

Although the origins of the village are ancient only one authentically medieval building is thought to survive, Brookside Cottage. It shares many similarities with the later Paddock Cottage. Both are small timber framed buildings with curved braces at the corners. The framing is heavier at Brookside but both have similar width studwork. The jettied front elevation survives at Brookside but is underbuilt at Paddock Cottage. Upper levels have plaster infill with brick at



Brookside Cottage & Paddock Cottage

ground floor level, Paddock Cottage also has roughcast and tile hung side elevations. Windows are a mixture of Yorkshire sliding sashes, timber and lattice casements. Roofs are clay tiled although it's possible they were once thatched. The brick chimneys are both external (with tiled offsets at Brookside) and internal to the side

Elsewhere in the village timber framing with later brick infill survives at Chapel End Farmhouse, its west wing still expresses its frame externally and The Half Moon Public House where the box framing can be seen on its north elevation. The public house is also notable as a baffle entry plan house although the entrance door has now been moved northwards.

8 & 9 Chapel Lane is the only example of a thatched cottage and has framing on its west gable end. At the west end the thatch sweeps down low with eyebrow dormers, the east end is broken by old clay tiled dormers.

Several barns date from this period, one at Chapel End Farmhouse and two at Great Farm which lies just outside the conservation area.

1700-1800

As was so common in this period many older timber framed buildings were refaced in brick. This occurred both at The Half Moon Public House and at 8 & 9 Chapel Lane. The front elevation of the public house is small 18th century red brick while at 8 & 9 the front elevation is chequered red brick with black headers. The north wing at Chapel End Farmhouse was also encased at this date.

The 18th century saw the creation of new replacement "polite" farmhouses. Church Farmhouse is an elegant, red brick with black headers, clay tiled, symmetric building while Manor Farm dates from the late 18th century and

has stucco elevations and a slate roof. The stucco front elevation also has classical flourishes with a fluted columned porch and pilasters across the façade. The windows are now sash windows. Those at Church Farmhouse



Chapel End Farmhouse



8 & 9 Chapel End Lane



The Half Moon Public House



Church Farmhouse & Manor Farmhouse (Beams Ltd archive, 1974)

are particularly large triple sashes. The doors are centrally positioned with panels and a door hood or porch. Both have rear service wings.

The Forge sits on the green in the centre of the village and its origins are thought to lie in the 18th century. A small building can be seen in this location on the 1804 Enclosure Map. It is a two storey red brick cottage (the front is rendered) extended on its south end. Attached is a deep single storey slate roofed side extension, where the forge was located.



The Forge

1800-1900

The village transformed architecturally in the 19th century. The old farmsteads in the centre of the village were demolished as were many of the old cottages and were replaced by Victorian terraced housing of modest scale. No really grand houses were built in this period, although No. 62 is an elegant small Victorian house.

One of the earliest terraces is Marian Cottages, a series of five simple flat fronted stock brick houses, the only decorations are the red brick segmented arches over the now modern windows. They are set back behind a low brick wall with charming cottage gardens. Elsewhere there are several semi-detached cottages (Nos. 44 & 46, 48 & 50) and a charming small terrace of 3 houses (19-23).

Long Row was constructed in 1851 as a small scale terrace of twelve houses with a thirteenth house facing south onto Sandbrook Lane which was originally a shop. Their original design was considered and thoughtful with red brick with yellow brick dressing a dog tooth brick cornice and brick pilaster subdividing each house with very low brick walls and picket fences to delineate from the street. Modern porches, painted brick and new garden walls have diluted the original concept.

A number of prominent and large buildings date from this period, most significantly the church but also the Baptist Chapel and the now demolished school. There had been no permanent place of worship in the village since the 17th century until the Baptist Chapel was built in 1837. Its original

design is still appreciable as a non-conformist place of worship with its simple barn like form but it is now converted into two houses. It is a red brick building under a slate hipped roof with an arched entrance directly onto New Road flanked by three similarly tall windows under segmental arches.

The Church of St Cross was built in 1877. Designed by Carpenter & Ingelow, originally it had been intended to have a chancel, vestry and porch but insufficient funds were raised so it has temporary brick elevations at both ends of the five bay nave with flint and stone dressings.

This period sees a greater range of brick palette with examples of yellow, brown, purple as well red bricks. Slates for roofs are introduced. Few original windows survive on the front elevations, where they do they are sashes of varying layouts.



68 Tring Road



Long Row



No 25 Long Row



19 -23 Tring Road



62 Tring Road



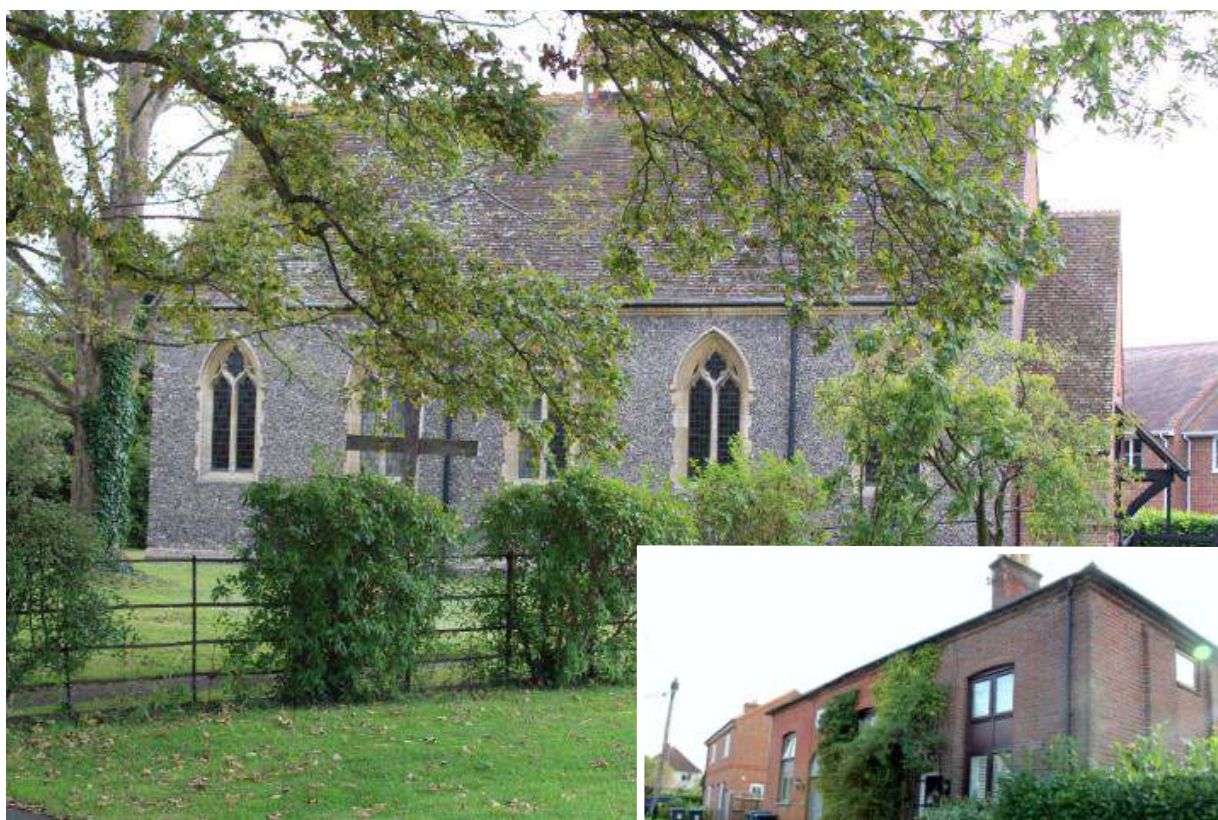
54-34 Tring Road



Marian Cottages



Village shop, 34 & 34a Tring Road



Church of St Cross

Former Baptist Chapel



40, Buckingham House & 38a-36 Tring Road



42, 46 & 48 Tring Road

1900 – to present

The southern part of the conservation area, the east side of New Road and the land between New Road and Tring Road all date from the 20th century. Elsewhere there are infill buildings. Outside the conservation area there have been a number of developments that have expanded the village during this period.

Many semi-detached houses were built, set well back from the road in spacious plots. The most significant are the six pairs of Rothschild Villas by Huckvale which are typical of Rothschild estate architecture with prominent gables, red brick and tile hung elevations, sweeping cat slide roofs and small paned casement windows.

Good examples of detached housing can be found at No. 12 Tring Road which has early 20th century character with a brick ground floor & rendered first floor, decorative porch, segmental arch window openings, the elevations are not dissimilar to 64 & 66 Tring Road. Conifers is an avant garde example of 20th century architecture with a dramatic triangular form where the pitched roof extends to the ground. Elsewhere there are safer examples of later 20th century housing at 64 & 66 Tring Road and Kingfishers on Sandbrook Lane.



Rothschild Villas, New Road



12 Tring Road



64 & 66 Tring Road



Conifers

6.2 Boundaries

In the centre of the village around the village green many houses are built close to the road and have no boundary treatment. Where they exist the boundaries are predominantly low brick walls with a few picket fences. To the south on New Road picket fences are a key characteristic of the Rothschild Villas on the east side of the road, some are painted others left unpainted. The west side of New Road is low hedging with occasional low fencing.



Picket fences in front of Rothschild Villas

Hedging dominates the boundary treatment on Tring Road to the south of the church. These are of varying heights. The box hedging in front of Paddock Cottage changes to a mid height native hedgerow running the length of its garden up to Chapel End Lane.



Painted brick wall, Buckingham Lodge

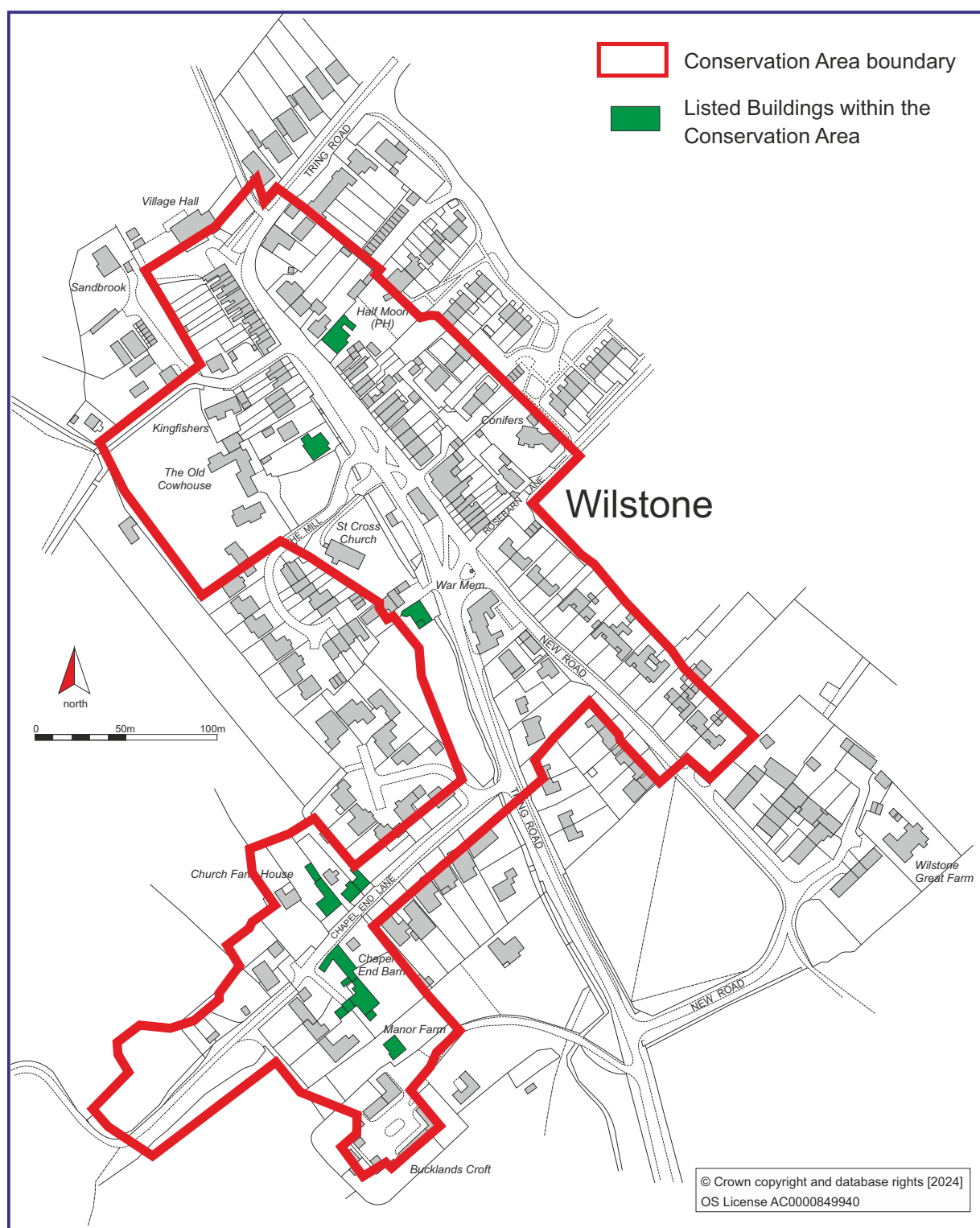
Chapel End Lane has hedgerow boundaries where they exist to the bungalows on the south side with taller fencing along the Chapel End Close gardens softened by trees and shrubs. Church Farm has an impressive tall boundary wall with brick coping and more modern railings and low brick wall in front of the house.

Most driveways are open access, when enclosed they have timber five bar gates with some more functional metal examples. Garden gates are mainly metal.



Brick wall and metal gate, Marian Cottages

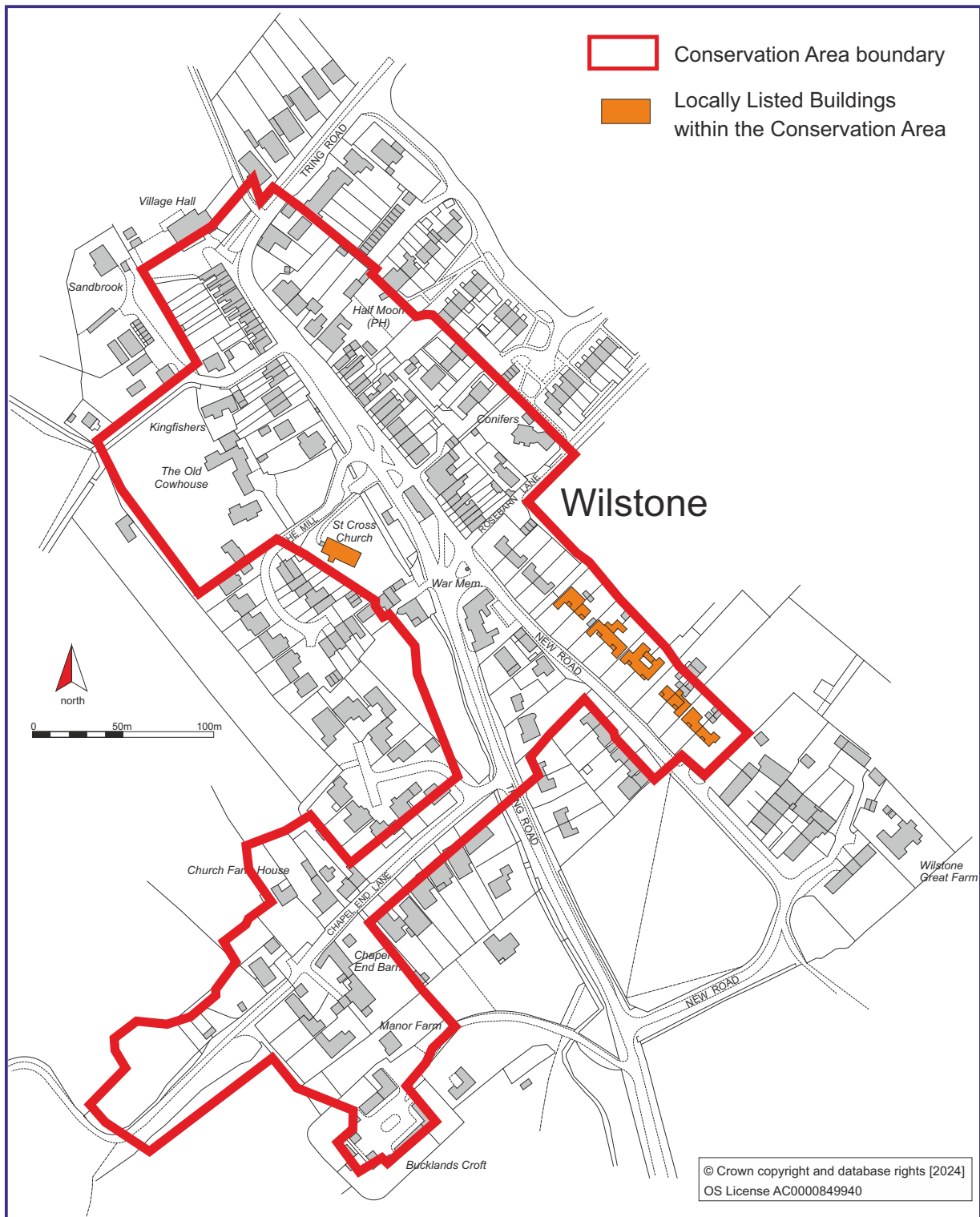
Map 11: Listed Buildings



6.3 Listed Buildings

A listed building is one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Dacorum Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on this map. (See Appendix 1)

Map 12: Locally Listed Buildings



6.4 Locally Listed Buildings

These are buildings which have been identified as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list. They make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

The locally listed buildings are marked on this map. (See Appendix 2)

7 Negative Features and Issues

Loss of Permeability

The special qualities of the Conservation Area are not limited to the buildings but also the spaces between them. Views can be easily interrupted by clumsy or inappropriate side extensions. At the moment this is not a particular issue but the closing of gaps between houses should be guarded against in future development particularly along New Road.

only exception is Old School Apartments which is disjointed and inharmonious within the context of the conservation area, due to its varied materials and roof types as well as its layout, massing and height. Future development needs to be carefully managed to ensure that no negative buildings are permitted either within the conservation area or its setting.

Inappropriate Alterations and Extensions

Housing within the conservation area are subject to pressures to modernise and extend and as a consequence architectural detailing is being lost. Traditional materials and details are being eroded by the use of inappropriate materials (plastic for windows, doors, fascias and rainwater goods; concrete and cement for blockwork, roofing materials, renders, repointing etc.). Roofscapes are sprouting aerials, satellite dishes and rooflights. Walls are being obscured by meter boxes, electrical wiring, extract flues and satellite dishes. Accretions of such seemingly minor additions can seriously erode the character of the conservation area. Long Row has been particularly detrimentally impacted as a whole by UPVc windows of different forms and doors, and numerous modern monopitch porches.



Long Row – window replacements and modern porches, also parked cars directly in front.

Intrusive traffic/parking

Wilstone is fortunately blessed with a low volume of traffic passing through so that it is not currently a particular concern and the heart of the village remains relatively sleepy and quiet. However, with increasing development on its edges this may increase as an issue.

The centre of the village along Tring Road and around the green is tightly packed with houses on the west side as well as being the position of the only public house and therefore often congested



Old School Apartments

Negative Buildings

In general, recent development within the conservation area has been designed to sit quietly within its context and is considered to have a neutral impact. The

with parked cars which detract from views of the buildings and general attractiveness of the area. The roads that cross the green are particularly detrimental as they not only reduce the amount of green but also allow for parking and further visual intrusion. There is no easy remedy to this situation as there will always be a demand for resident and visitor parking in the centre of the village but removing the roads that cross the green and reunifying the green would certainly mitigate the impact of the parked cars overall.

Inappropriate Landscaping & Boundary Treatment

Boundary treatments and front gardens have been generally well preserved or sympathetically introduced.

The one area of concern is the parking for Old School Apartments which introduces an area of hardstanding directly onto the street. The arrangement would be improved by having a soft boundary on the street and parking behind if possible. There is the odd example of suburban block paving or inappropriately extensive hard standing.

Signage

There is little signage in Wilstone with the exception of the area around the shop and bus stop. The signage should be kept to a minimum and be well maintained to avoid it becoming cluttered and cumulatively detrimental.



Tring Road, parking on west side



Old School Apartments – hardstanding for parking on New Road



Block paving

Further Reading and sources of Information

Doggett, N. (1995): The medieval chapels of the Chilterns: the evidence from south west Hertfordshire, in Holgate, R. (ed) *Chiltern Archaeology: Recent work*, 113-18. The Book Castle. Dunstable

A R Gomme (n.d.) *A Short History of Wilstone* available at <https://wilstonesticks.com/wilstone---a-short-history.html>

John Painter (2017) *The Story of Wilstone. An Illustrated History of the Village from Early Times*, Tring and District Local History and Museum Society,

The Landscape Partnership (2004), *Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum Supplementary Planning Guidance* - chapter on Tring Reservoirs, p113

'Parishes: Tring with Long Marston', in *A History of the County of Hertford: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1908), British History Online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/herts/vol2/pp281-294> [accessed 31 October 2024].

Maps and archival material (HALS)

Dury and Andrews Map of Hertfordshire, 1766

DP/111/26/2 Tring Enclosure plan, 1804

Bryant's Map of Hertfordshire, 1822

Websites

<https://www.tringruralhistory.co.uk/>

Appendix 1 :

Statutory Listed Buildings within the Wilstone Conservation Area

Listed buildings within the Conservation Area

The Half Moon Public House II
Brookside II
Wilstone War Memorial II
Paddock Cottage II
8 and 9 Chapel End Lane II
House at Chapel End Farm next to No, 8 II
Barn adjoining on north Chapel Farmhouse II*
Farmhouse at Manor Farm II

Appendix 2 :

Locally Listed Buildings in Wilstone Conservation Area

Locally Listed buildings within the Conservation Area

Church of St Cross
Former Baptist Chapel
Rothschild Villas, Nos 9-27 New Road

Appendix 3 :

Historic Environment Record (In or adjacent to Conservation Area)

HER NO	DESCRIPTION
MHT 18720	Chapel End Farm, 7 Chapel End Lane
MHT 9433	Manor Farm
MHT 4435	Chapel End and Village of Wilstone
MHT 18719	Baptist Chapel, New Road
MHT 31343	Paddock Cottage, 5 Tring Road
MHT 31171	Wilstone War Memorial, New Road
MHT 18718	Smithy, 32 Tring Road
MHT 18717	Site of post-medieval Cottage, Tring Road
MHT 15962	13 Tring Road
MHT 11424	St Cross Church
MHT 13394	Half Moon Public House

