

# Conservation Area Appraisal

## CARDINGTON

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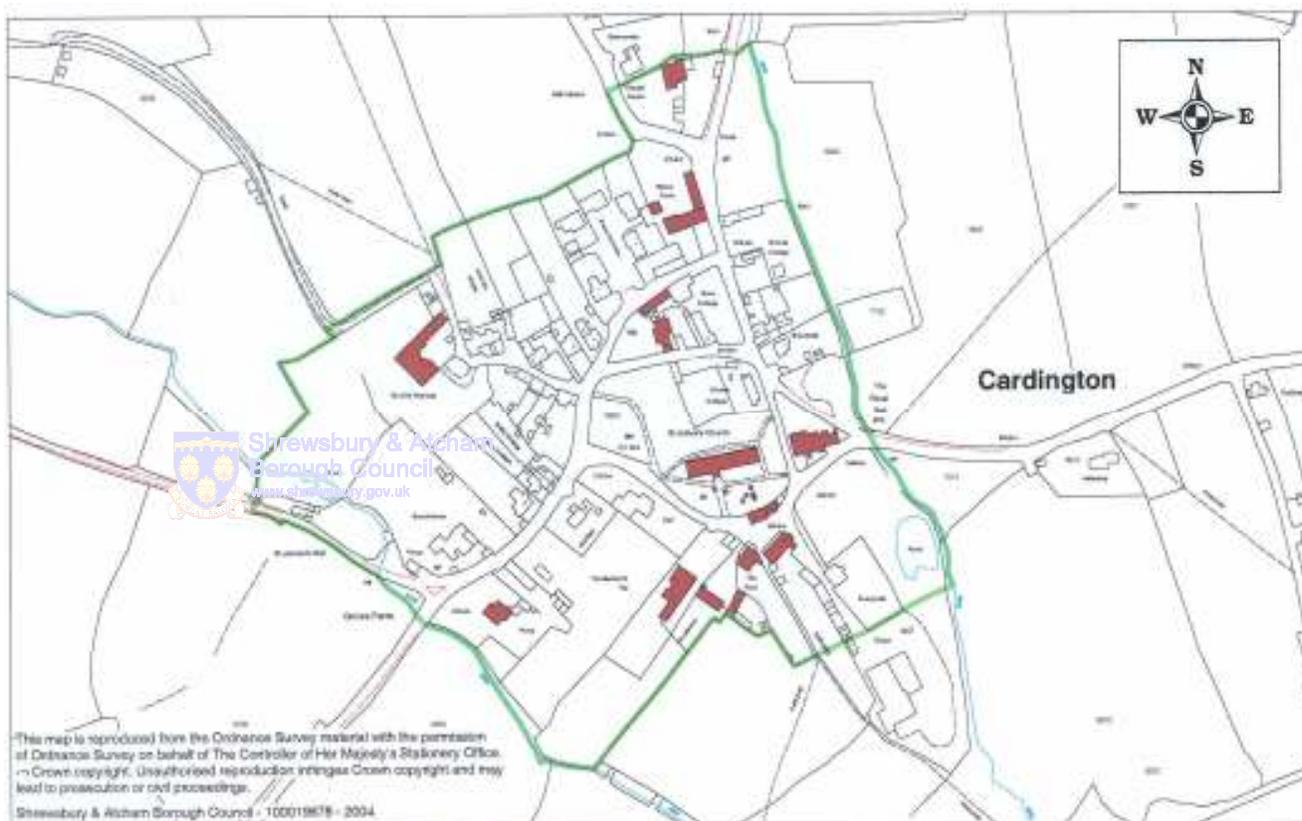
## CARDINGTON

### 1) Introduction

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities to determine which parts of their area are “**areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate those areas as conservation areas**”.

Cardington Conservation Area was designated in 1977 and covers an area of 6.9 hectares (17.13 acres). The Conservation Area is bounded by the solid green line on the designation map below (Map 1) and comprises the majority of dwellings in the village. For the most part the boundaries run along existing fences, walls or other property boundaries.

**MAP 1 – Cardington Conservation Area**



#### KEY

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed Buildings

## 2) Location and Population

Cardington is a small, compact village, very attractively situated in a bowl between the hills of the Caer Caradoc range immediately west and south and the long profile of Wenlock Edge some three miles to the east. Shrewsbury is twelve miles distant to the north.

The Cardington Plateau from the West



The village is a haphazard arrangement of buildings grouped either individually or in small terraces along an intricate network of lanes centred on the Parish Church. Interspersed with the domestic buildings are several interesting barns, some of which are still used for agricultural purposes.

Cardington acts as a focal point for a very scattered rural community and contains several basic facilities essential to life in the village and the surrounding area. The village and the countryside around form part of the designated South Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Willstone Hill (left) & Caer Caradoc (right) to the west of Cardington



The population of Cardington is about 110 (2001 census).

### 3) The origins and development of Cardington

Earthworks, trackways and archaeological finds indicate that people once lived and fought among the hills centred on Caer Caradoc camp during the pre-historic period. It has been said that this might have been the area in which the ancient Briton warrior Caractacus made a stand against the Romans. Some curious mounds at Court House are thought to be of possible Roman origin.



Caer Caradoc from Cardington

The circle-like enclosure of the Parish Church has led to speculation that the Church is sited on an ancient henge monument. Certainly, the village is a logical site for early settlement, being the focal point for the surrounding hills.

The characteristic “ington” ending indicates that it was in Saxon times that the Parish and Manor were founded, although each covered different areas and were not consolidated until after the Norman Conquest.

In the Domesday Book the village is referred to as “**Cardintine under the Fief of Rainwald Vicecomes**” and it is mentioned that there were 11 leagues of woodland. Soon after that date the area had associations with the Fitzalans, ancestors of the Earls of Arundel who gave Cardington and Lydley Hayes (or deer park) to the military order of Knights Templars in about 1120. The order was suppressed in 1308 and the lands involved reverted to the original donors.

Subsequent history is largely based on several important families living within the Parish, some of whom initiated charities for the education of the young or provision of food for the poor. One example is the Old Free School which still stands next to the churchyard and was provided from a bequest in the Will of William Hall in 1740 for the building of a schoolhouse and the maintenance of the schoolmaster.

The principal building of note in the village is the Parish Church of St James, the nave dating from the Norman period and the chancel from about 1300. The fine timber porch is dated 1639.

Amongst the remaining buildings of interest mention should also be made of the following:

The Old Vicarage; Nos 16 and 17 ‘The Barracks’ (so called because the building once housed the garrison attached to Plaish Hall); The Maltsters Tap and The Royal Oak public house which claims to be the oldest in the County.

#### 4) Form and layout of the Village

The village grew up around the 11<sup>th</sup> Century church of St James, which stands within a large and roughly circular churchyard. The present building probably replaced a small Saxon church. It is suggested that the site was an ancient 'henge' monument of the sort that characterised the pagan religion in pre-Roman Britain. Consequently there has probably been a settlement at Cardington since that time.

Five 'metalled' lanes currently converge on the churchyard, however as many as ten track-ways radiate from the village out to the fields and towards the surrounding villages and hamlets. Many of the obsolete lanes can still be traced along footpaths or are still in use as farm tracks. These ancient track-ways established the layout of the village and determined the position and size of the plots along and between the roads. The routes were not engineered but used the relief of the land to establish the most convenient course. This has resulted in a wonderfully random pattern of roads; broad, narrow, straight and winding within the village, giving rise to a rich diversity of vistas. —————→



The village is not large and really only consists of one 'skin' of houses and outbuildings around the churchyard core. The back-gardens of the majority of houses in Cardington border directly onto the surrounding countryside and are usually separated from the fields by traditionally laid hedges. This feature of the village is an essential characteristic.

Open Countryside at the end of Old Vicarage Lane



## 5) Archaeological significance and potential

Of chief archaeological interest in Cardington is the area of the churchyard and the supposed site of an ancient 'henge' monument. There is little potential in the site since it is a consecrated burial ground and has been for over 1,000 years. Prior to the Norman Conquest, the site was likely to have been used by the Saxons as a burial ground also. However, further interpretation of what is known could be applied to the site.

Several of the older houses in Cardington, such as the Malster's Tap and the Barracks, parts of which are 14<sup>th</sup> Century, are also of archaeological interest and warrant further investigation to establish their original extent and function. To the south of the Old Vicarage there is also evidence of medieval field cultivation in the form of crop markings.

## 6) Architectural and historic qualities of the Village

### **Contribution made by listed buildings**

Cardington is a superb example of a small rural village whose form, layout and overall size was by the 14<sup>th</sup> Century already well established and which remains largely unchanged. There are several buildings that date from before 1600 including 'The Barracks', the Malster's Tap (of c.1580) and its associated *Longhouse*. Several other buildings belong to the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century including Manor Farm, Grove Farm, the Royal Oak and also the timber framed barns that are common throughout the village. The old Free School is an early example of a brick building in this part of rural Shropshire. The remaining listed buildings and most of the unlisted cottages date from between the early 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, the most ambitious of which is the old Vicarage on the western fringe of the village. The latter was built c.1814-15 and is an accomplished piece of domestic design from the Regency period.

The Malster's Tap



The Royal Oak Public House





Former Free School (late C17) and Schoolmaster's House (early C19)



The Old Vicarage

Cardington also contains one anomaly in Brook House and also one bit of bad luck in 'Old Nick'. The former is an improvised rebuild of a 16<sup>th</sup> Century building that includes several timber framed elements (e.g. decorated porch dated 1574), but which is mostly constructed in local stone. It is an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century 'import' to the village, whose successful assimilation is reinforced by the fact that the building was thought to be of special local interest and therefore temporarily listed on account of its assumed regional provenance.

### **The Church of St James**

The most important building in the village is the Church of St James (grade I). In plan it is typical of the simplest of churches from the Norman period, consisting of a short rectangular nave with a squat west tower. A chancel was added in c.1300 in the form of a simple continuation of the nave. The linear character of the building is carried into the strong west tower, which rises in three stages and is crowned by an embattled parapet. The top or belfry stage was added in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. The dedication to St James the Apostle, elder brother of St John the Evangelist, is probably derived from Cardington's connection with the Knights Templar military order who held the parish from about 1120 up to their suppression in 1308. The Knights were closely associated with the 12<sup>th</sup> Century crusades and their patron was St James the Great. The Apostle's relics accompanied the crusaders on horseback from Santiago de Compostela in North Western Spain to the Holy Land and returned to Santiago where they remain.



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The church stands in a large walled enclosure, ensuring that it has plenty of space in which to dominate the village. The tower in particular forms a prominent feature from nearly all parts of the Conservation Area and the handsome trees that enhance its setting help to make it Cardington's visual centrepiece.

Cardington from the East



### Prevailing materials and local details

In villages throughout Shropshire the predominant method of construction, and consequently the main architectural features, have been determined by locally available materials. Apart from the general use of oak in Cardington this meant the use of the yellow-grey, Hoar Edge gritstone, quarried from the nearby Sharpstones or carted from Hoar Edge itself. A poorer and less widely used stone is taken from nearer Enchmarsh, but this is darker, sometimes mauve, with a tendency to shale. Although the local quarry is no longer worked there is a supply of stone available from dismantled or derelict buildings and walls.

Plinth of the former Free School showing Enchmarsh stone below the more commonly used Hoar Edge grit-stone.



In Cardington there is little evidence of coursed or dressed masonry to be found. The Old Free School is an example, but as this is principally of brick construction, it is not typical of the village. The most frequent use of stone is as a random, roughly shaped wall, sometimes brought to courses, with small window openings

using timber lintels, or brick on edge segmented arches. Reveals and corners are undressed, roughly cut blocks.

The occasional half-timbered elevation merges with the stonework with great effect and is a good foil to the masonry. There are several fine timber-frame barns in the village, whose loss would create unsightly gaps and whose compact outlines would be difficult to replace in a modern building. Certain individual buildings have been limewashed or rendered and whilst this adds visual relief, the practice if increased, might detract from the coherence given to the village by the widespread use of stone.

No 20 (Shoreham)



Reconstructed Barn to north of Manor Farm



Other architectural features of note are the large gable end chimney stacks such as are found on “Shoreham”, the series of hand water pumps around the village, and the almost completely unspoilt fenestration. The latter is largely in the true rural tradition of simple white painted casements and mullions set in compact window openings. Acting as the unifying elements of all the varying build forms are the red tiled roofs and heavy stone boundary walls, which mark property boundaries and meet the highway without a pavement.

Typical window detail



Stone wall with 'cock and hen' copings



Pump and Trough



Apart from the metalling of the lanes there is little to suggest the passing of a horse-drawn age. Houses front directly onto the roadway and buildings are sited often on the very corner of a lane so as to close a vista effectively and, on passing, reveal a completely new aspect of the village. Additional interest is provided by significant changes in level, particularly along the two watercourses between which the village is contained.

The complete absence of pavements, extraneous road markings and traffic signs as well as the variation of width and alignment of carriageways all contribute to a sense of repose and a slower pace of life. The approaches to the village are all similar in that the lanes are low set, almost sunken, hemmed in by steep banks and traditionally laid deciduous hedges that are tightly cropped.

The road heading west out of Cardington towards Willstone



### Contribution made by key unlisted buildings

The contribution made by key unlisted buildings is significant in that they help to establish homogeneity within the village through the use of local building materials, i.e. Hoar-Edge grit stone and hand made clay tiles. The number of

unlisted buildings that contribute positively to the character of the conservation area is also significant, particularly on the western side of the village. The vicinity of the Old Vicarage and the lane that leads to it is especially characteristic and epitomises the best vernacular features of Cardington.



The lane leading to the Old Vicarage (above and right)

The houses are small in scale, terraced cottages to the south side of the lane, with small window openings and timber casements with glazing bars. Dormer windows, a stepped roofline and irregular eaves level all help to give this part of the village its distinctive feel.



The doorcases too are of a type that is found throughout the village and consist of plain timber surrounds with a shallow gable or open pediment set on moulded brackets. The Schoolmaster's house next to the former Free School was perhaps the model for this.



Doorcase to cottage in Vicarage Lane



Doorcase to the former schoolmaster's house

Larger cottages, such as New Inn House and Nos. 5-8 are set back behind low front walls with splendid little gateways of wrought iron between piers with moulded pyramidal caps.



Holly & Stone Cottages is an interesting semi-detached house of 1857 in snecked grit-stone. It has round arch doorways with raised keystones. The building also has typical stone lintels; tapering with incised keystones (*cf.* the former Free School).



Other quintessential buildings in Cardington include Brookside (left), Nos. 11-14, Rose Cottage, Brook Cottage and Church Cottage, though mention should also be made of the many curtilage structures or outbuildings that are found throughout the village.



No. 6 Cardington



New Inn House



Barn to Grove Farm

The range of stables and barn to Grove Farm is typical, presenting a stone gable with timbered hatch to the road in combination with weather-boarded side elevations.

Former coach house to the Malster's Tap

Other outbuildings are integral to the roadside wall and were erected in the form of small stables or lean-to cartsheds (such as those to Brook House). Such buildings provide much of the definition to the streetscape in Cardington and inform the course of the road along well-established lines. The former coach house to the Malster's Tap is another excellent example of this building type.



Brook House



Brook House, as noted, was formerly listed, but this was rescinded when it came to light that the building is in fact a contrived 'old house' erected during the 1920s. Nonetheless the conceit is highly effective and demonstrates how local materials can be used to introduce new buildings into an established setting with sensitivity. Brook House forms a picturesque group on the corner of the Willstone road turning. The complex includes a

dovecote, stable, cartshed and outhouses all built in Hoar-Edge grit stone, apart from the recycled timber framing, and roofed in Harnage slate. The latter is unusual in Cardington, however the material is certainly local and very successful as an aesthetic device.

## 7) Character of setting & topography

Cardington is situated in a picturesque hollow between several imposing hills that provide a most attractive outline to the horizon. To the west is Caer Caradoc (1,506 ft) and to the south runs a chain of lesser hills that includes Cardington Hill, Willstone Hill and Hope Bowdler Hill. The latter reaches almost 1,400 ft. To the north are the long streaky ridges of Yell Bank, Hoar Edge and The Lawley while to the east the land gently sweeps down to Ape Dale as far as the great Wenlock Edge escarpment. Cardington itself is well above the 650 ft contour and its plateau setting has served as a natural centre of human habitation for more than two millennia. The area around Cardington is part of the South Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Cardington from the south-west

### **Contribution made by green spaces to the setting of Cardington**

In spite of being a small and compact settlement the Cardington Conservation Area includes many valuable green spaces that help to define the character of the village. These include the large churchyard, the belt of open land on the east side where the ground falls away to a watercourse, the grazing paddocks to the south and west of the Malster's Tap and also the land to the south west of the old vicarage. All four areas are integral to the character of the

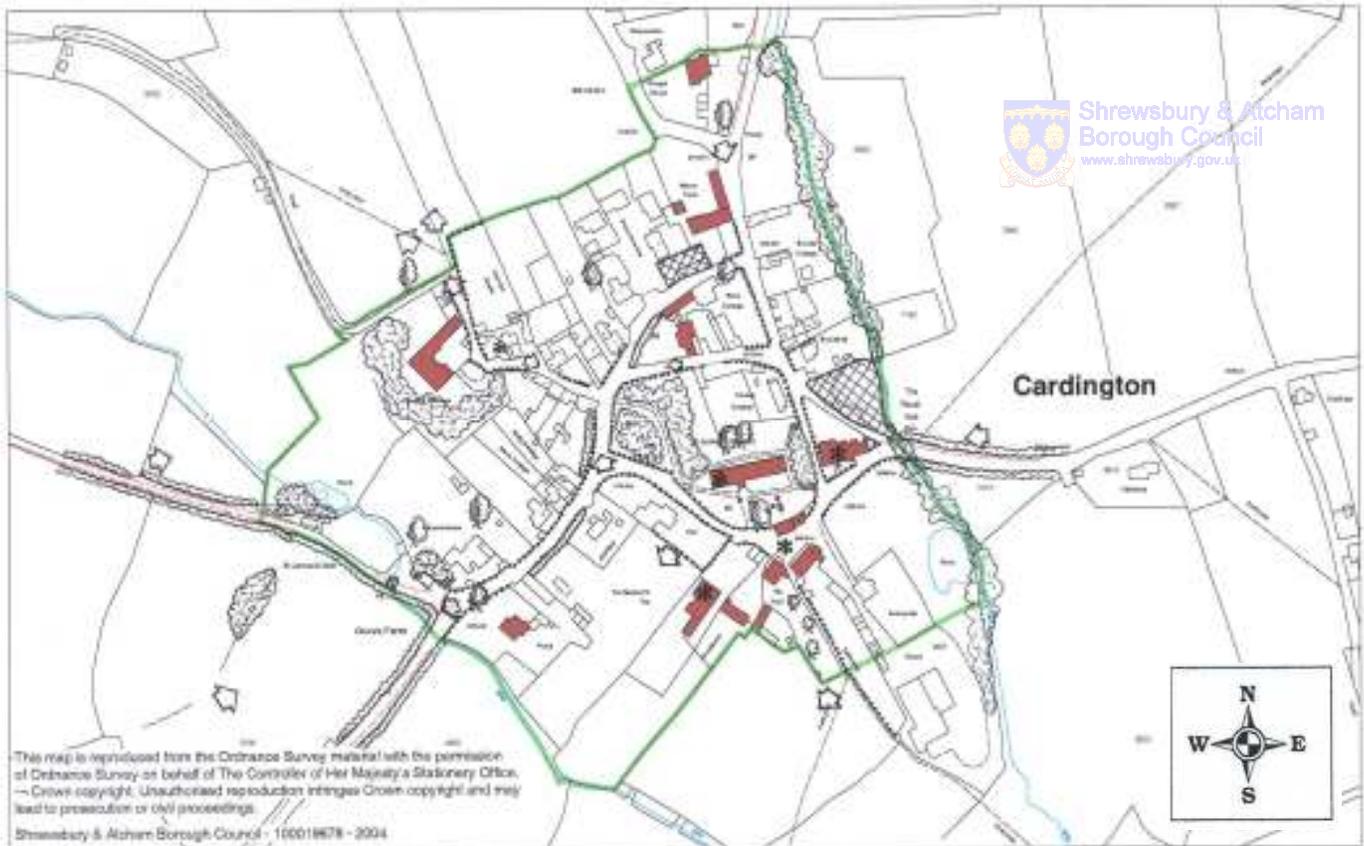


Open ground to the south west of the Old Vicarage

conservation area because they help to maintain the soft boundary that exists between village and countryside. These areas of undeveloped land permit excellent views both in and out of the conservation area because they allow the countryside to penetrate and break up the pattern of the settlement. The chief views are indicated on the notation map below.

As outlined in local policy HE8, the Council will seek to preserve important views and areas of open space that are significant in relation to the setting of the Conservation Area (see section 9).

## MAP 2 – Showing the principal features of interest within Cardington



KEY	
	Conservation Area Boundary
	Focal Point
	Significant Tree Groups
	Significant Trees
	Listed Buildings
	Views
	Significant Hedges
	Opportunities for Enhancement
	Prominent Walls or Railings
	Footpaths

## Significance of Spaces

Within the Conservation Area the chief public spaces are the churchyard, the village hall car park and the car park adjacent east of the Royal Oak public house. The most important of these is undoubtedly the churchyard, but the car parks provide useful amenity facilities for visitors to the village and the surrounding area. The churchyard is crucial to the setting of both church and village and is particularly well timbered with many good quality specimen trees. The impact of the trees is discussed in more detail below.

A typical Cardington wall of Hoar-Edge grit stone with a continuous coping of 'cocks and hens' encloses the churchyard. There are several entrances to the area and all have simple timber gates. The stepped entrance on the east side (shown below right) is particularly characteristic; recessed within a tight convex reveal to provide access from the sunken lane running between the Royal Oak and the Church. There are also many fine chest tombs in the churchyard (below, left), six of which are listed, as well as some good quality railed enclosures to the north of the church.



## Contribution made by trees

The contribution made by trees within the Conservation Area is most significant, not least because the surrounding upland is relatively devoid of trees. Large individual specimens and handsome groups can be found throughout the village, though several groups are especially noteworthy.



A dense cluster of ancient Yew trees dominates the western third of the churchyard, providing a yearlong backdrop of dark green, almost black foliage. To the east of the church are several sycamores and there is another

large sycamore adjacent to the south entrance to the churchyard. The main path to the south porch proceeds along a short avenue of Prunus whose diminutive scale complements the setting very well. The churchyard also contains three large beech trees, a monkey puzzle tree, a superb horse chestnut and several lawson cypresses.



Main entrance to the churchyard



Cardington churchyard from the north

There is another important group of beeches, yews and oaks in the grounds of the Old Vicarage. These trees are now full sized and help to give this part of the Cardington its shady aspect and well-heeled quality. Other notable groups include a cluster of conifers north of no. 25 on Willstone Lane as well as the long belt of willows and poplars on the banks of the brook that marks the eastern boundary of the conservation area.

The importance of trees, hedges and shrubs within the conservation area should not be overlooked. Whether for their aesthetic value such as foliage, fruit or shape or for practical reasons (for example providing shade, shelter, screening, enclosure or privacy) the use of flora helps to enhance and thus create a pleasant neighbourhood. Trees, hedges and shrubs that contribute to the character of the area are identified on Map 2 (above).

### The extent of loss, intrusion or damage

Intrusion in the form of new development within the conservation area has been confined to the area west of Manor Farm. This development has taken the form of new housing which is quite sympathetic to the character of the village. The buildings incorporate local building materials as well as token



A UPVC window unit in Old Vicarage Lane

elements of the vernacular style thereby averting any noticeable loss in terms of the special character of the conservation area. Some physical loss or damage to historic fabric has arisen since designation in 1977 in the form of UPVC windows replacing original timber casements (shown below). **NB** – the collapsed barn to the north of Manor Farm was successfully rebuilt in 2002-03, incorporating much of the original fabric and all of the timber trusses.

## 8) Neutral areas & Opportunities for enhancement

### **Landscape proposals**

The setting and character of Cardington may be improved through the execution of environmental works to various features within the conservation area. These include the ford on the Willstone road (shown below) where tarmac has been smeared over the granite sets, which in turn have been depleted.



The small footbridge adjacent to the ford and also the road bridge on the Gretton Road could also be significantly improved by introducing more suitable handrails and posts. The present concrete post and steel tube railing (shown below) is quite out of synch with the rest of the Conservation Area.



The car park to the Royal Oak (also visible in the picture, left) may be improved by an alternative and much clearer boundary on the road side. This could be in the form of a hedge or grit-stone wall. The present post and rail fence is insufficient and does little to define the road edge.

### **Redundant Buildings**

Various redundant agricultural / subsistence buildings may be found adjacent to the public highway in Cardington and currently look unsightly, e.g. the old barn to the south of Manor Farm (pictured right). Steps taken to repair these structures would also help to enhance the appearance of the conservation area. Brookside House (pictured above in section 6) is presently vacant and the attractive front railings to the property are in poor condition.



## 9) Policy for Cardington Conservation Area

The broad objective of the Borough Planning Authority for the Conservation Area will be to safeguard and where possible, add to and enhance the basic character and visual appearance of Cardington. In particular they will:-

- (a) Endeavour to safeguard those buildings and structures statutorily listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. (HE4, HE5)
- (b) In the control of new development, have special regard to the external appearance, scale and siting of the new building so as to ensure a continuity of local building vernacular. Proposals likely to have a material effect on the character of the area will be published and representations made to the Borough Planning Authority will be considered when determining the application. (HE7, HE8)
- (c) Preserve important views and vistas within, into and out of the Conservation Area including vistas and views outside the boundary of the Conservation Area or adjacent to and affecting the setting of Cardington. (HE8)
- (d) Encourage the renovation, retention and reuse of any dilapidated or empty buildings or damaged walls that make a contribution to the maintenance of the visual unity, sense of enclosure and basic character of Cardington. Wherever practical the re-use of sympathetic second-hand building materials will be encouraged.
- (e) Seek the retention of and endeavour to safeguard those special features of the village such as stone boundary walls, the absence of pavements or road markings, decorative railings, fenestration, porches and other features of interest. The close juxtaposition of buildings to highways, small access courtyards and entrance roads are also prevalent and help to provide an informal, small-scale layout amongst the buildings.
- (f) Seek the retention of and endeavour to safeguard important hedgerows, trees and open spaces within the Conservation Area. (HE8)
- (g) Promote the maintenance of the existing fine stock of trees and shrubs by the making of a Tree Preservation Order where appropriate and encourage the planting of new specimens where losses occur.
- (h) As and where possible and in co-operation with the statutory bodies concerned, endeavour to secure the removal of unsightly overhead wires and supporting structures.

The Borough Planning Authority when considering any proposals within the area will actively encourage:-

1. The correct use of Hoar Edge gritstone for external walls.
2. The use of pitched roofs covered with clay tiles

3. Careful study and analysis of existing buildings; their form, materials, scale and treatment of openings and detailing of fenestration so that new building work can be designed to match and complement its surroundings.
4. The careful siting and positioning of new buildings of the correct scale and grouping so as to prevent new development seeming obtrusive or suburban in character.

In addition to the foregoing, the Borough Planning Authority will, when they think it necessary, seek approval of the Secretary of State for the Environment to bring under control particular classes of development otherwise permitted by the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1995. See section on Article 4 directions below.

The Borough Planning Authority will not grant planning permission in respect of an outline application unless satisfied that the development proposed will be of the requisite standard. The powers available under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1984 will be used as necessary to prevent the display of inappropriate advertisements.

The Borough Planning Authority will welcome the co-operation of the local residents, Local Associations and other members of the public in implementing the foregoing policies.

The character and appearance of the village of Cardington could be affected detrimentally by development taking place in the surrounding countryside immediately next to the edge of the village. This area of related open space is essential to the setting of the village. The way in which this land flows simply to the outer buildings provides an important contrast and should be safeguarded. Accordingly the Borough Planning Authority will endeavour to ensure that the existing relationship between the village and landscape setting is maintained.

### **Maintenance**

Much can be achieved if everyone is aware of the advantages of Conservation Area status. Positive protection of Cardington's attractive features and improvements in the physical and visual amenities of the area is a priority for the Borough Council. Ensuring that the process of incremental repair, decoration and maintenance continues will contribute to the quality of the environment in this area.

### **Article 4 Directions**

The character of Cardington Conservation Area is little changed since its initial designation in 1977; its historic buildings and spaces continue to prevail and there has been little to no obtrusive development. The following measures have been proposed in order to help preserve and enhance its special character.

Article 4 directions are a means of regulating changes made to the frontages of unlisted buildings facing a public highway. This may include front walls, railings and hard landscaping as well as the façade itself. The mechanism of the Article 4 involves the removal of certain permitted development rights, such as the right to replace doors, windows or apply cement render to brickwork without planning permission.

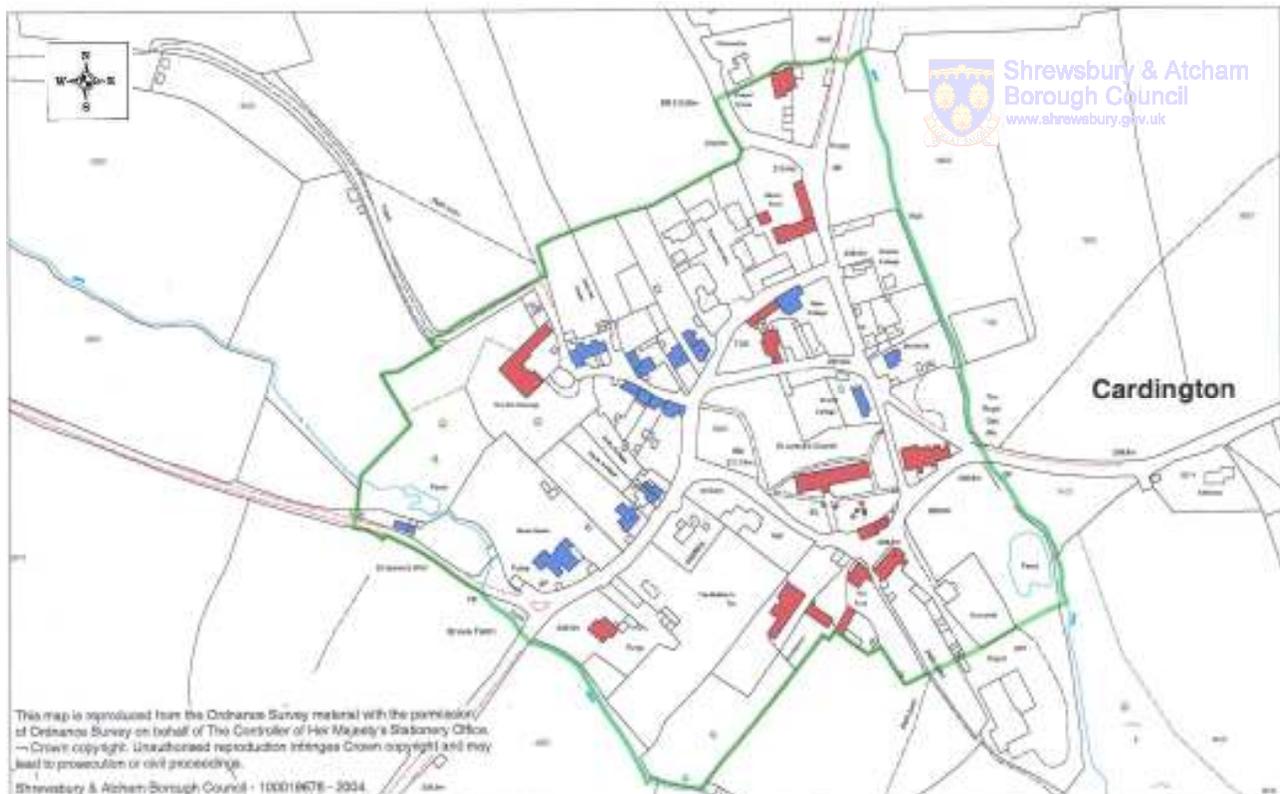
The aim of making an Article 4 direction is to assist in the retention or reinstatement of original features like external joinery and to promote the sympathetic replacement of damaged components. It is details such as these that are fundamental to the special character of a street or built up area. A Conservation Enhancement Grant scheme is operated by the Council to support the kind of works that concur with this objective.\*

Many of the properties in Cardington are already listed on account of their special architectural interest (shown in red on the Map below), however it would seem appropriate to extend some level of protection to the remaining unlisted buildings of special architectural interest. The following houses have been identified as buildings that contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area:

**Nos. 1-4 inclusive, 5a, 5-7 inclusive, 24, 25, Rose Cottage, Brookside, Church Cottage, Holly Cottage, Stone Cottage and Brook House**

In order to preserve and enhance the special character of Cardington, it is proposed that an Article 4(2) Direction be made in respect to the above, as indicated by the blue shading on the Map below.

### MAP 3 - Proposed Article 4 directions (shaded blue)



Most of the houses shaded in blue retain a high proportion of their original external joinery, rainwater goods and incidental structures, all of which lend authenticity to the architectural and historic interest of the area.

\*For a grant application form or for more information regarding conservation enhancement grants please contact the Grants Officer on 01743 281319.

### **Trees in Conservation Areas**

Under Section 210 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, it is necessary to give the Council six weeks notice, in writing of any works proposed to trees within the Conservation Area.

Until this period has expired the trees have the same protection afforded by a Tree Preservation Order and it is an offence to carry out works to them.

The same provisions do not apply to dead or dangerous trees, saplings or young trees with a trunk diameter less than 75mm when measured at 1.5m above ground level. If there is any doubt, the Tree Officer will advise you.

The notice should give the location and species of the tree and state exactly what works are proposed. The tree will be inspected and an alternative approach may be suggested. If the tree has high amenity value the Council may decide to protect it with a Tree Preservation Order, but if no order is made by the time the six week period expires, work may commence. A new notice is required if the work is not carried out within two years.

The Council keeps a register of all notices received. These can be inspected at The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury.

#### 10) Design Advice

For any guidance in respect to proposals for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings within Cardington Conservation Area, please contact Mr I Kilby, Head of Conservation and Design on 01743 281317.

#### 11) Acknowledgements

Much of the historical information contained in this document has been derived from the Victoria County History for Shropshire, Volume VIII.