

# Sutton Cheney

## Conservation Area Appraisal

Sutton Cheney is a quiet Leicestershire village to the west of the main Ashby to Hinckley Road. It was here that King Richard III camped and attended his last service in the tiny church of St James, before the Battle of Bosworth Field. This took place on Reedmore Plain on the 22nd August 1485. The village is an ensemble of small cottages built of mellow reddish brick straddling Main Street. Brick walls, trees, country views and farmyards define the character of the village. The village, as an architectural group, is of value in its entirety having retained many interesting vernacular details. These include coach yard archways, Flemish Garden Wall bonded brickwork (three stretchers and one header), double brick string courses, clay roof tiles with over sailing eaves and dentil coursing. Important buildings in the village include St James church, the six sandstone Alms Houses built in 1612 by Sir William Roberts, the Hall, a Jacobean mansion dated 1601 and two coaching inns, the Hercules, named after a race horse owned by the Dixie family and the Royal Arms, formerly known as the Greyhound.



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Development Services and Policy

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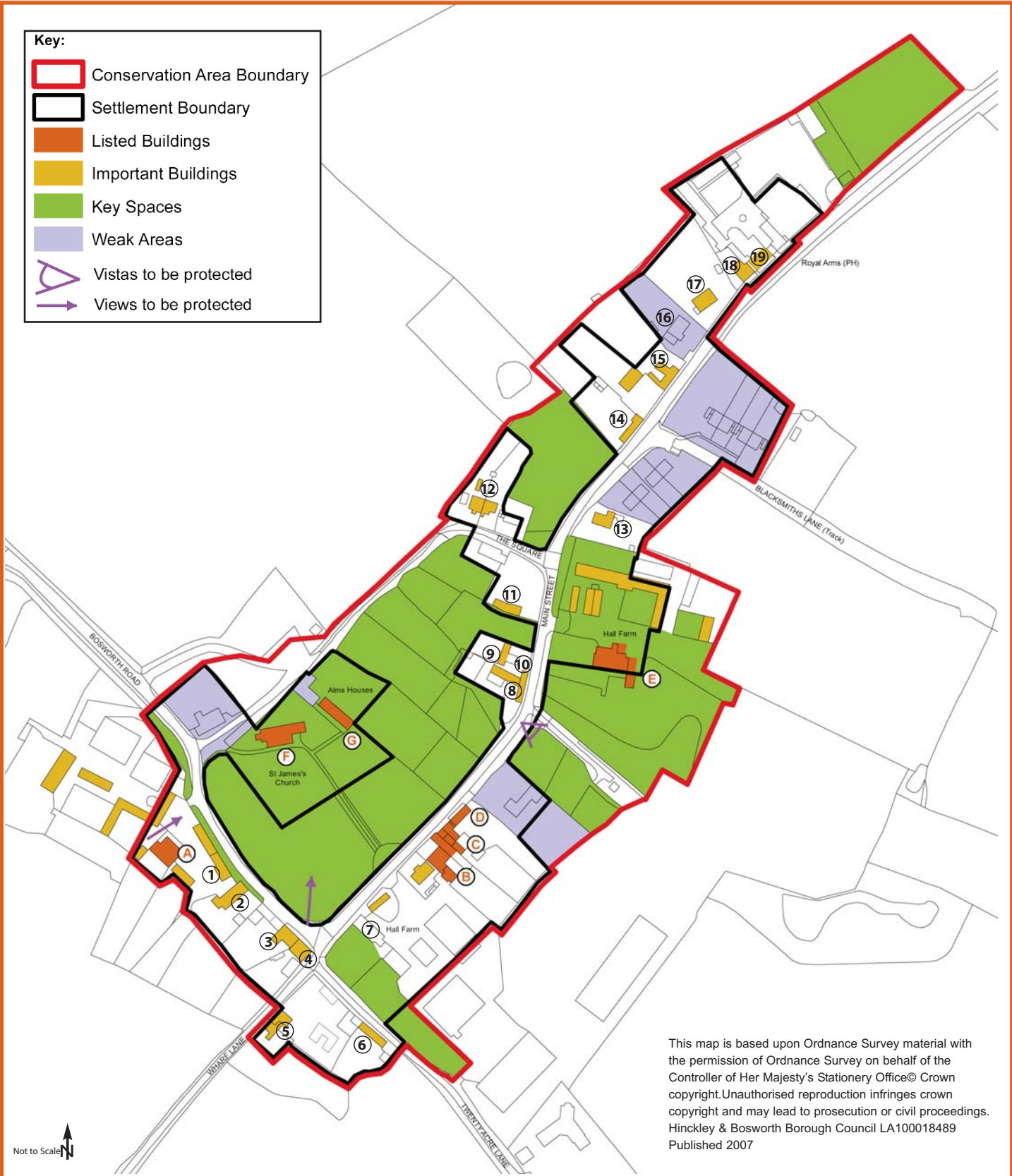


Former Village School

Hercules Public House

**Key:**

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Settlement Boundary
- Listed Buildings
- Important Buildings
- Key Spaces
- Weak Areas
- A Vistas to be protected
- I Views to be protected



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**Listed Buildings -** (A) Townsend Farmhouse (B) Hercules Inn (C) Church View (D) Mount Pleasant (E) Hall Farmhouse  
 (F) Church of St James (G) The Alms House

**Unlisted Buildings of Local Historic or Architectural Importance -**

- |                               |                   |  |                                |                  |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------|------------------|
| ① Townsend Farm(outbuildings) | ⑤ Holly Cottage   | ⑨  | ⑬ Ambion Cottage               | ⑰ Laurel Cottage |
| ② Moores Cottage              | ⑥ Keepers Cottage | ⑩ The Old Bakery                           | ⑭ Outbuilding of Forge Cottage | ⑱ White Cottage  |
| ③ Oak Tree cottage            | ⑦ Ivy Lodge Farm  | ⑪ ChatsmothCottage                         | ⑮ Forge Cottage                | ⑲ The Royal Arms |
| ④ Corner Cottage              | ⑧ Old Post Office | ⑫ Sunnyside Cottage/<br>Apple Wine Cottage | ⑯ Orchard Cottage              |                  |

# FACTORS CONTRIBUTING POSITIVELY TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

## Setting

The village is located at the intersection of Wharf Lane, Bosworth Road and Main Street. The surrounding countryside is comparatively flat, generally under pasture with limited tree cover but many hedges particularly along the roads. The parish church of St James's is the focal point of the village. Village roads are rural in character often bounded by low hedges or low brick walls which are a major characteristic of the Conservation Area.

## Gateways

There are three principle entrances into the village. From the east this is defined by the group of buildings centred on the distinctive Royal Arms public house. This three-storey 19C building has been extended to include a coaching arch and the rear with a single storey with prominent dormers. From the west Bosworth Road links the settlement through open countryside to the Bosworth Battlefield Centre. The entrance into the village is defined by a major bend in the road in contrast to Wharf Lane, the other access from the west, which links the settlement to the Ashby Canal in the valley. On this route, Fields View, a two-storey cottage marks the entrance. On foot the settlement can also be reached by Twenty Acre Lane, Blacksmiths Lane and a public footpath from the north through The Square.

## Character Statement

Sutton Cheney is a small former farming village set in attractive open countryside. It has close links with the Battle of Bosworth, which is believed to have taken place close by. The Conservation Area is centred on the large open area of raised ground in the middle of the village, which also forms an important part of the setting of St James's church. The village has a strong agricultural character, which is reinforced by the working farms and substantial open areas within the settlement. Buildings are generally in small clusters dispersed along the principle roads and separated by farmland, which provides views of the countryside. The street pattern with its subtle curves and sharp bends has added a further layer to the local distinctiveness of the Conservation Area.

## Appearance

A single family has owned the village for over 400 years. The village has developed to meet the needs of a single family which owned a large tract of farmland around it. Their family home, the Hall, is an imposing building of several periods set behind high brick and stone walls in large grounds. The focus of the settlement, however, is St James's church, a stone structure with a brick tower, whose rural character is emphasised by its setting in a paddock of land at the junction of Main Street and Bosworth Road. Most other properties are tenant farms, farm workers cottages, converted farm buildings or modern constructions.

Small linked cottages on or close to the back edge of pavement and narrow sweeping roads characterise much of the Conservation Area. These buildings have developed around the village farmsteads of which there were around four at the turn of the 19th century but now only Hall Farm, and Townshead Farm remain.

## Building Style, Scale, and Detail

Excluding the Hall, the Church and the Alms Houses, the most important buildings in the village are the farms. These are either large 3 storey farmhouses such as Townshead farm or are smallholdings. All are characterised by their farmyard settings which include traditional brick built barns, milking parlours, cartsheds, rearing pens, dutch barns and more recently, large steel framed metal sheeted structures. The small agricultural buildings play an important role in the Conservation Area, particularly those which back directly onto the road. They are typically single storey with clay tiles or corrugated sheet roofs. The street elevations have blank facades but regular raised ridge tiles and wall ventilation pipes dating from the last war. Openings are restricted to the farmyard and include narrow hopper lights, slotted ventilation openings and split ledged and braced panel stable doors. Within the yards, traditional surfaces of cobbles and blue diamond patterned paviers have been partially covered with concrete.

Typically cottages are rectangular in plan, two storeys in height with clay tiled gabled roofs and ridge top chimneys set above plain elevations. Occasionally a modern porch has been added over a traditional planked entrance door. Windows are typically three light casements beneath segmental brick arches with projecting brick sills. Orchard cottage, the Hall and the Hercules public house do not follow the vernacular but have polite elevations with regular



rectangular openings for former sash windows and panelled doors.

Natural materials are common. The widespread use of mellow red bricks, diaper work, plain clay tiles, welsh slates, timber windows and doors has given a continuity of appearance which reinforces the traditional image of the settlement throughout the conservation area. Only occasionally a modern renovation has broken this rule and introduced render, concrete roof tiles, plastic windows and doors, large roof lights and flat roofed dormers.

## Boundary Treatments

Within the settlement, front gardens and farmyards have low red brick walls with saddleback or triangular copings and wooden gates on the street frontage. Post and rail fencing have closed off occasional gaps. Elsewhere low hedges divide farmland from the street. The recent introduction of concrete block walls, grey brickwork and concrete copings, however, detracts from the character of the Conservation Area.

## Contribution of Spaces and Natural Elements

The dispersed nature of the village has given the spaces between groups of buildings particular significance within the Conservation Area. In addition to giving direct views of the countryside, they also permit occasional access to the surrounding fields along tracks such as Blacksmiths Lane, Twenty Acre Lane, The Square and the pumping station track.

## FACTORS HAVING A NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

### Buildings of Poor Visual Quality

Within the area there has been new development during the post war period. Buildings, which have been erected, have, for the most part, not strengthened the traditional qualities of the area. Single storey buildings, particularly, but also two storey houses with hipped roofs where not sited behind traditional brick walls, or not having a close relationship to the street, by reason of their design scale and layout, appear discordant with the traditional streetscape.

### Enhancement

The enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area can be defined as the reinforcement of the qualities providing the special interest, which warranted designation. It may be through the sympathetic development of sites identified in the detailed analysis of the area as opportunity or neutral sites; it may involve physical

proposals or the application of sensitive, detailed development control over extensions and alterations. Areas which warrant special attention for enhancement are marked on the Conservation Area plan.

## GENERAL CONSERVATION AREA GUIDANCE, PLANNING CONTROLS AND POLICIES

To maintain the distinctive character and appearance of the Twycross Conservation Area it will be necessary to:

- Retain listed buildings and buildings of local interest.
- Ensure new development contributes positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area regarding siting, scale, design and materials used.
- Ensure house extensions satisfy the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Resist development proposals in the key areas, which have been identified.
- Ensure the consistent application of positive, sensitive and detailed development control decisions over proposals to alter former farm buildings, yards and jittys.
- Ensure important views of the church and out into the open countryside, are protected.

**Special attention should be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of a Conservation Area. Planning applications in Conservation Areas are separately advertised. The principal effects of the designation of a Conservation Area are summarised as follows:**

- Consent is required for the total (or substantial) demolition of any building (exceeding 115 cubic metres).
- Applications for outline planning permission are not normally acceptable. Full planning applications are likely to be required.
- Planning permission is required for
  - 1) the external cladding of any building with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
  - 2) alteration of the roof which results in its enlargement.
  - 3) a satellite dish on chimney, wall or roof fronting a highway.
- Anyone proposing works to a tree in a Conservation Area must give six weeks written notice to the local planning authority.

These requirements do not cover all aspects of control in Conservation Areas and you are advised to contact the Local Planning Authority.

For further advice contact:

The Conservation Officer

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