



# Cold Ashton Conservation Area

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# Introduction

A conservation area is an area of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Once designated, the local planning authority has a statutory duty to ensure that any proposed development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting.

South Gloucestershire has 30 conservation areas. Cold Ashton was designated a conservation area on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 1983 and an appraisal leaflet was published following the designation. This document is not a review of the Cold Ashton Conservation Area, but sets out the information as produced in an accessible format supported by current policy context, pictures and mapping.

## Policy Context

Local authorities have had the ability to designate areas of 'special architectural or historic interest' as conservation areas since 1967 when introduced as part of the Civic Amenities Act. Section 69 (2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation) Act 1990 legislates that authorities are to carry out reviews of existing conservation areas from 'time to time'. Section 72 also states that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'. Guidance on conservation area appraisals and the management of conservation areas is produced by Historic England.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national planning policy and must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF defines conservation areas as 'designated heritage assets' and sets out in paragraph 202 that local authorities should 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. Paragraph 204 states that when designating conservation areas local planning authorities should ensure the area justifies this status because of its special architectural or historic interest. South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006-2027 sets

out in CS9 that the 'natural and historic environment is a finite and irreplaceable resource', and expects that new development will conserve, respect and enhance heritage assets.

South Gloucestershire Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) Plan, policy PSP17 states that

'Development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be expected to:

- preserve or, where appropriate, enhance those elements which contribute to their special character or appearance; and
- pay particular attention to opportunities to enhance negative parts of conservation areas and to draw on local character and distinctiveness.



# Setting

Cold Ashton is a small village approximately 3 miles north of Bath, off the Kingswood to Chippenham road, the A420. The village is a small but visually attractive settlement set upon an exposed position on the edge of the Cotswold escarpment (see figure 1). The village street commands magnificent views over the Wiltshire Downs to the east (see figure 2) and the steep St Catherine's Valley to the South (see figure 3).



Figure 1. Top, views looking north from Slough Lane towards the village.

Figure 2. Middle, views looking east from Hyde's Lane opposite The Thatched House.

Figure 3. Bottom, views looking south from Slough Lane

# History

Cold Ashton is ancient in origin and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Indeed, Cold Ashton is the site of two round barrows known as Robin Hood's butts.

The Cold Ashton estate was originally the property of Bath Abbey until the dissolution and in 1564 came into the hands of William Pepwall, Mayor of Bristol. There are a number of listed buildings within the village one of which is the splendid Elizabethan Manor House (see figure 4). It has been suggested that this house may date from Pepwall's time but it is more likely to have been begun c1629 when John Gunning, another Mayor of Bristol, bought the estate.

The forecourt wall has an impressive ornamental gateway bearing the coat of arms of Sir Robert Gunning of 1678 (see figure 4). The archway is a fine example of the renaissance style, with square Roman Doric columns, rosette frieze, surmounted by two floricated urns (see figure 4).

Semi-circular steps leading onto the road complete the design and there is a mounting block to one side (see figure 4). Inside the Manor the most notable feature is the splendid hall screen, one of few in the country to survive intact.



Figure 4. Top left. Elizabethan Manor House.

Adjacent to the Manor lies the Old Rectory (see figure 5) which dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was largely rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has an interesting history, being the place where Sir Bevil Grenville, Royalist Leader in the Civil War died, after being mortally wounded in the Battle of Lansdown in 1643.





Figure 5. The Old Rectory

The Holy Trinity Church originally came under the Priory of St Peter in Bath and was largely rebuilt between 1508 and 1540 by the rector, Thomas Key. His rebus, a 'T' entwined in a key can be found embellishing the church and other interesting features (see figures 6 and 7) include the remains of a rood loft and a curious pulpit set in a niche in the north wall.



Figure 6. Thomas Key rebus embellishing the church

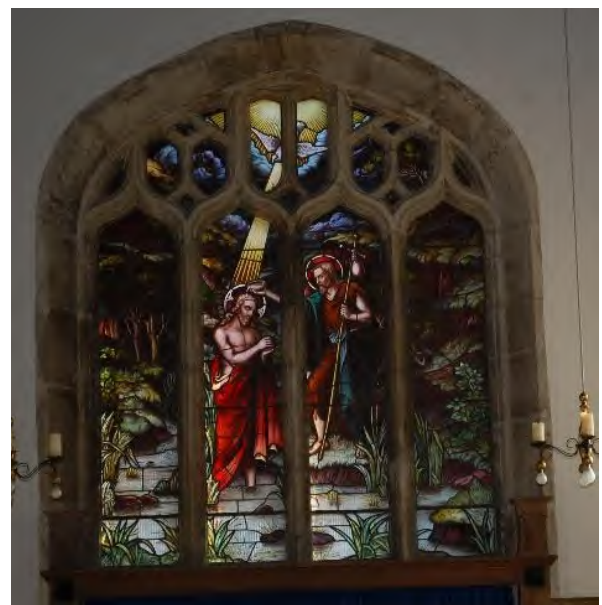


Figure 7. Stain glass window on the west wall of the church



Circa 1880 Ordnance Survey map Cold Ashton  
Source: <http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/>



# Character

Cold Ashton is a small village which, due to its setting, exhibits an air of tranquillity and pleasant isolation. The stone walled main street together with the close alignment of the Manor House, the Old Rectory and the Court House give the village an intimate character (see figures 8 and 9). The Holy Trinity Church, set away from the road, is almost entirely hidden by trees and provides an interesting feature within the village (see figure 10). Many of the village's older non-listed buildings are also of architectural merit and contribute to the special character of Cold Ashton.



Figures 8 and 9. Examples of stone walls on the main street.



Figure 10. Holy Trinity Church

Cold Ashton's location on the edge of the Cotswolds provides marvellous views of the surrounding countryside from the village (see figures 11 to 13). The Cotswold Way passes through Cold Ashton providing an opportunity for walkers to explore this historic settlement.



Figure 11. Left, Views south from Hyde's Lane.



Figure 12. Right, Views west towards the village



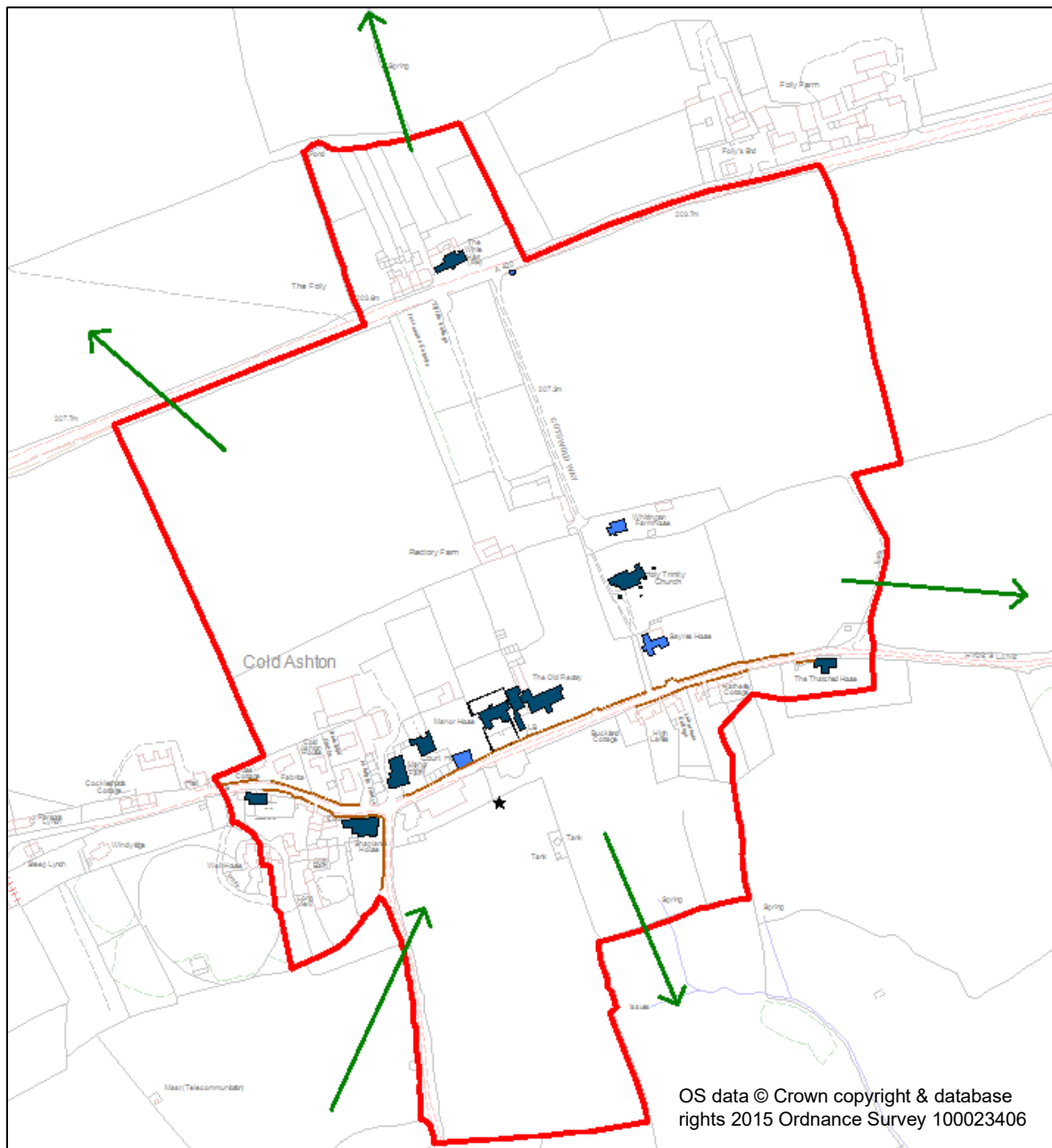




Figures 20 to 25.  
Various building  
styles in Cold  
Ashton



# Summary map



## KEY



Key views



Prominent boundary walls that contribute towards a sense of enclosure



Locally Listed Building



Listed building



Conservation area boundary

# Contacts

The council is keen to work with the local community and other parties to help preserve and enhance this special area. If you wish to assist in any manner or have any further suggestions, please let us know.

For further information or advice please contact:

**Conservation Officer**  
**Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice Team**  
**South Gloucestershire Council**  
**PO Box 1954**  
**Bristol**  
**BS37 0DD**

**Telephone: 01454 863578**

**Email: [conservation@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@southglos.gov.uk)**