



# West Littleton Conservation Area

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# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Policy Context .....	3
Setting .....	5
History.....	7
Character.....	10
Summary map.....	12
Contacts .....	13

# 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 Council has 30 conservation areas. West Littleton was designated a conservation area on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 1992 and an appraisal leaflet was published following the designation. This document is not a review of West Littleton 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’. Historic England produces guidance on conservation area appraisals and the management of conservation areas.

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

West Littleton is a small village located to the North West of Marshfield on rising ground. It has many typical characteristics of Cotswold Villages with many buildings and walls built of Cotswold stone (see figures 1 to 3), and stone tiles roofs (see figures 4 and 5). The buildings are arranged around the common in a dispersed pattern giving a sense of openness and space within the centre (see figures 6 and 7). The southern more recent part of the village however takes on a more linear closed character with buildings located on or near the roadside (see figure 8).



Figures 1 to 3. Examples of stone walls and buildings in West Littleton



Figures 4 and 5. Examples of stone roofs in West Littleton





Figure 6. Left, looking west over the common to Church Farm

Figure 7. Right, looking south over the common from Old School House



Figure 8. Buildings to the north of West Littleton set close to the roadside.

# History

There are a number of interesting buildings in the village, all of which contribute to the individual character of West Littleton. The most striking of these buildings is that of the Old Manor House. It is set back from the road, 'U' plan in design with 3 small gables. It is thought to have been built by John Baldwin around 1500 and is of limestone rubble with stone tiles roof (see figure 9). In places the walls are two feet thick. Other buildings of interest include Manor Farm (see figure 10), Home Farm (see figure 11), Church Farm (see figure 12), and associated farm buildings. The farm houses date from around the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and are all of limestone rubble with stone tiled roofs. An interesting feature of the stables to the rear of Home Farm is the key hole shaped loading door under the eaves.



Figure 9. Old Manor House



Figure 10. Left, Manor Farm  
Figure 11. Right, Home Farm

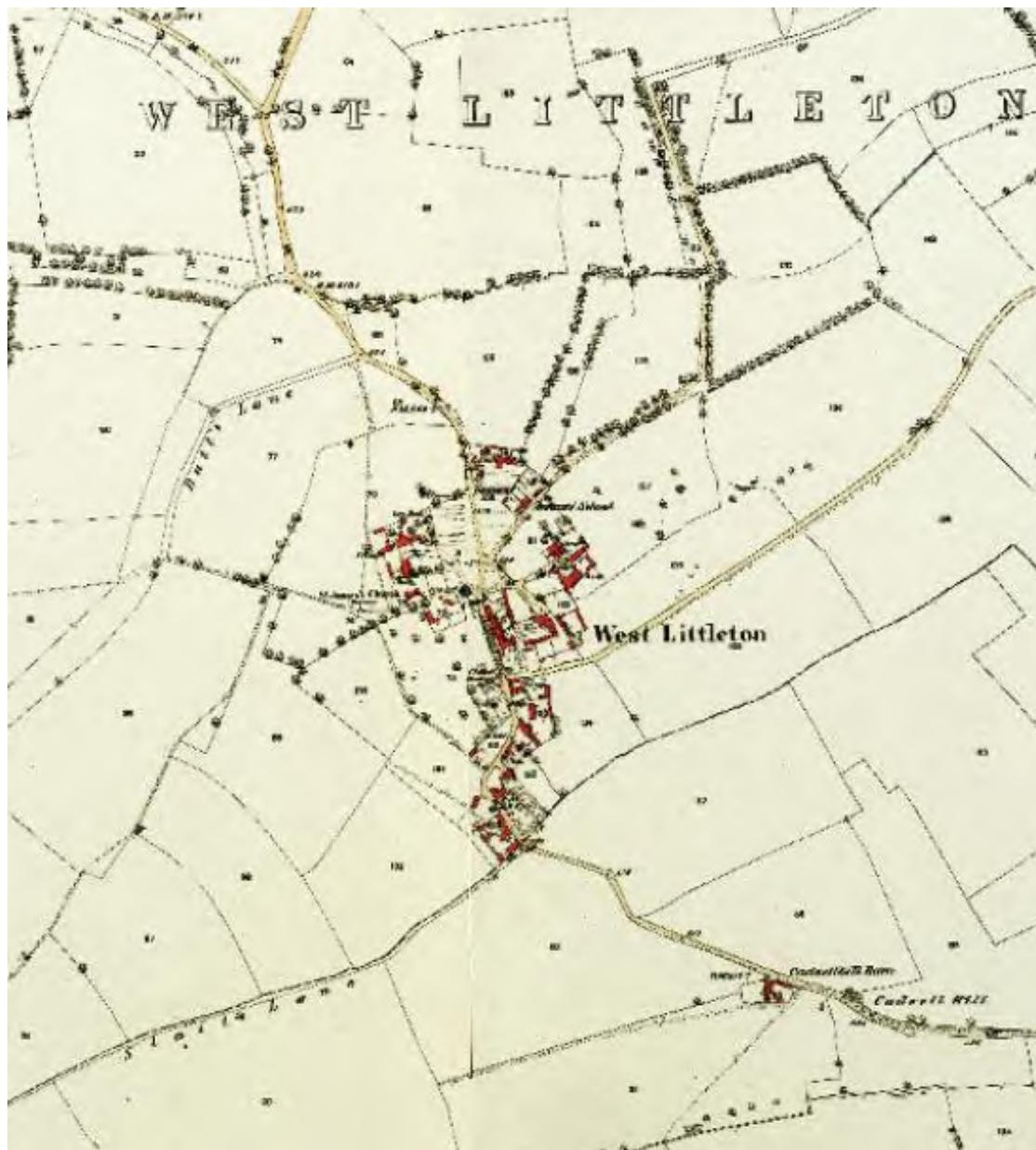


Figure 12. Church Farm

The Church of St. James is small in scale and originated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was rebuilt in 1855 by T.H.Wyatt and has a striking bell tower (see figures 13).



Figure 13. The Church of St. James and Bell tower



Circa 1880 Ordnance Survey map West Littleton

Source: <http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/>

# Character

All the buildings within the village add to the character of the area. The houses on the northern boundary of the town, although not listed are all individual in design and add visual interest to the village. Furthermore, buildings such as the Old School House (see figure 14) add variety being of an unusual design and single storey. The rising hills northwards provide a pastoral backdrop to the village scene (see figures 15 and 16).



Figure 14. Old School House



Figure 15 and 16. Backdrop of hills looking north of West Littleton



As one enters the village from the north via Dunsdown Lane the initial impression of the village is one of openness and dispersal, with no buildings providing a visual centre to the village. The Common land provides a nucleus to the village with the buildings arranged around the outer edges of the common (see figures 17 and 18).



Figure 17 and 18. Buildings arranged around the outer edges of the common

The openness is further enhanced by the varying ground level which changes abruptly as one travels through the village southwards. As the land rises, building lines come right up to the roadside giving a sense of enclosure further accentuated by the stone walls, mature trees and hedges that line the road (see figure 19).

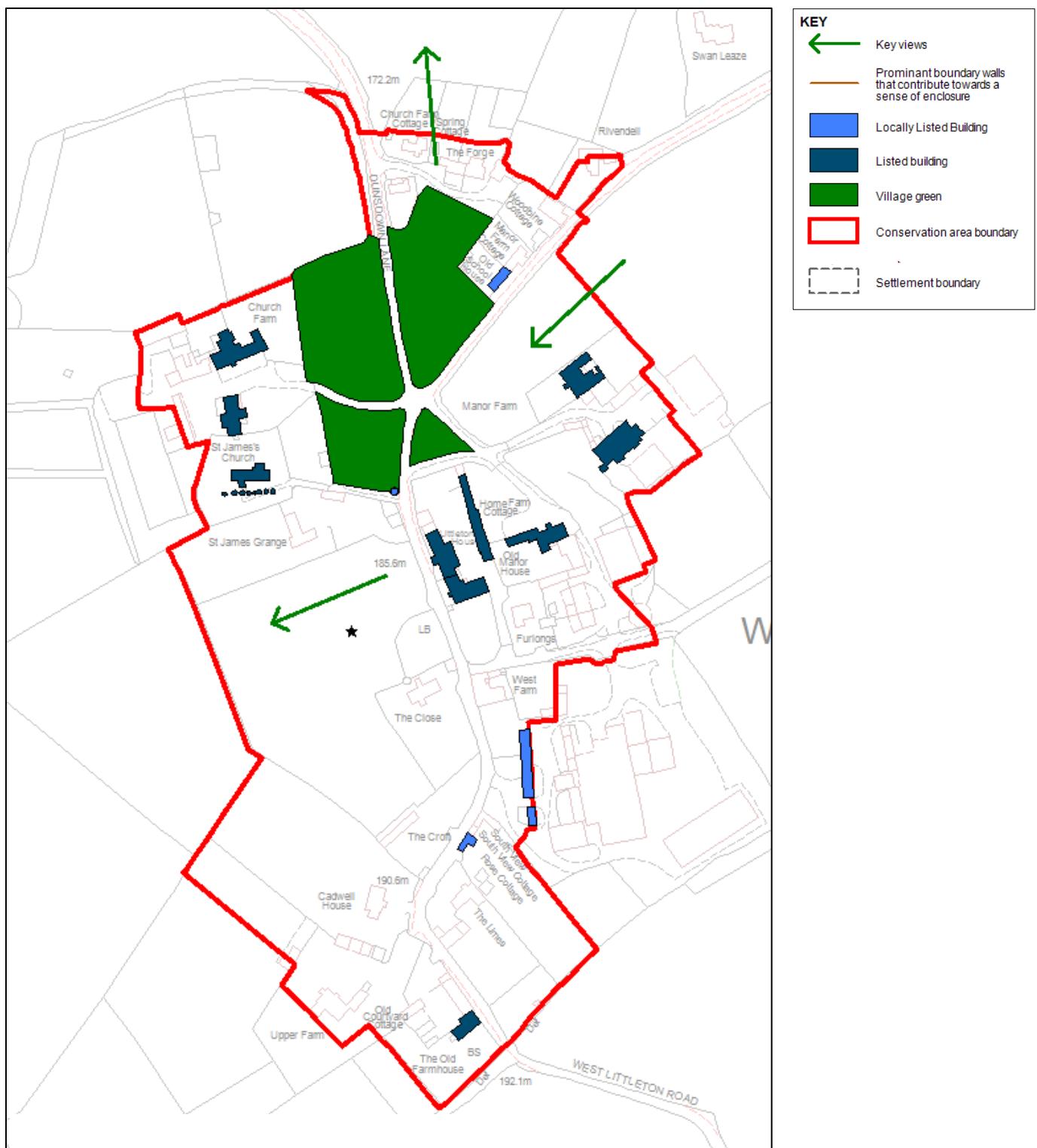
The barn of Home Farm clearly illustrates this effect. The road curved gently upwards and provides interesting glimpses as one travels further on, adding to the visual interest of the village (see figure 20). The building line is softened by small expanses of grass verge that line the entire length of the roadside.



Looking southwards on Dunsdown Lane

Figure 19. Left, Stone walls and building lines close to the roadside  
Figure 20. Right, Barn of Home Farm following topography of ground level.

## Summary map



# 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**

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