

HANHAM ABBOTS CONSERVATION AREA



WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

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."

Designation is a recognition of the group value of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect, not just the individual buildings, but the character of the area as a whole. The special character usually derives from a combination of many features, such as - trees, hedgerows, walls, open spaces, groups of buildings, the degree of enclosure, the massing and detailing of buildings. Each area is unique.

WHAT CONTROLS APPLY?

Within the Borough's six Conservation Areas, a number of special controls apply. Planning policies seek to ensure that any development accords with the areas' special architectural or visual qualities. These are set out in Policies KLP.48-51 in the Kingswood Local Plan and further details are given in CONSERVATION AREA ADVICE NOTE NO.7. - available from the Council.

The emphasis is on preserving those buildings, spaces and features which gives each Conservation Area its special character. Where changes can be justified, great care must be exercised to ensure that there will be no adverse impact on this character.

PURPOSE OF THE LEAFLET

This leaflet sets out:-

- (1) the boundary of the Conservation Area,
- (2) an assessment and analysis of the special character, so as to protect the essential qualities, and provide guidance for development proposals,
- (3) measures for enhancing the area.

Hanham Abbots was designated as a Conservation Area on the 23rd October 1989.



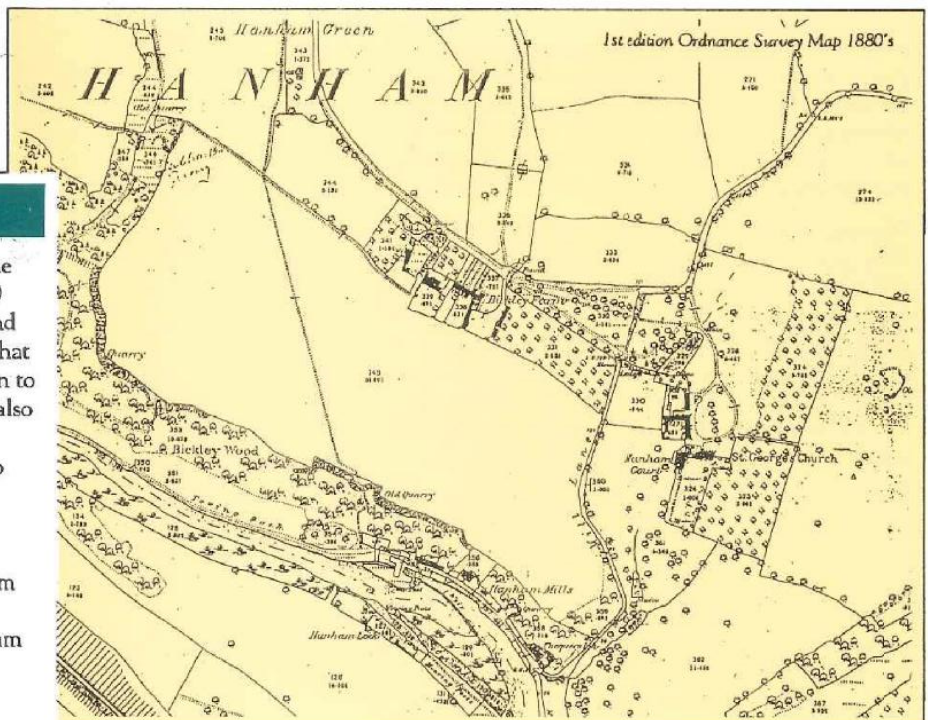
Hanham Abbots Conservation Area comprises four building groups and adjoining open land located in an attractive rural setting at the foot of the Hanham Hills and stretching down to the northern bank of the River Avon at Hanham Mills.

Designation seeks to protect the character and rural setting of St George's Church and the fine group of listed buildings at Hanham Court, the building groups at Bickley Farm, Court Farm and along the river front at Hanham Mills.

The area is approached by twisting narrow lanes bounded by pennant stone walls and hedgerows and despite being located close to the built up area at Longwell Green, it has an essentially unspoilt rural character.

LOCAL HISTORY

The Name 'Hanham Abbots' is derived from the Abbots of Keynsham Abbey who between 1330 and 1539 owned the original Hanham Court and much of the surrounding land. Rumour has it that there are tunnels running under the River Avon to connect the two sites. The original Court was also mentioned in the Domesday records and was visited by King James II in 1686, the last heir to Kingswood Forest. The present building is considered to be one of the finest mansions in Kingswood and dates from the 16th and 17th century. The tithe barn to the north of Hanham Court dates back to the 15th century, when it would have been used by the monks of Keynsham Abbey to store the "tithes" collected from the occupiers of the land.

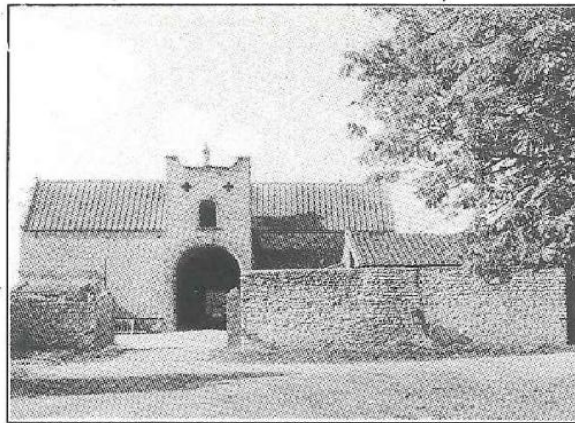


CHARACTER ASSESSEMENT:

There is considerable contrast within the Conservation Area. To the north and centre, the area is characterised by the rolling Hanham hills and open fields around Hanham Court, whilst to the south, along the river front, the area is contained by a backdrop of the steeply wooded slopes of the Avon Valley. The narrow enclosed Ferry Road which links the two areas has a special transitional importance.

BUILDING GROUPS AND THE OPEN FIELDS TO THE NORTH OF THE AVON VALLEY

The impressive Sally on the Barn at Court Farm is an important focal point at the northern 'entrance' to the conservation area. The building has an interesting two storey porch with a stone statue on top called 'Sally', said to represent Ceres, the Greek Goddess of Harvest. After rounding the bend on the road towards Hanham Abbots, the character changes as the suburban development and the urbanisation of street lighting and kerbs are left behind. The road narrows to become a winding country lane bounded by low stone walls, hedgerows and rolling fields.



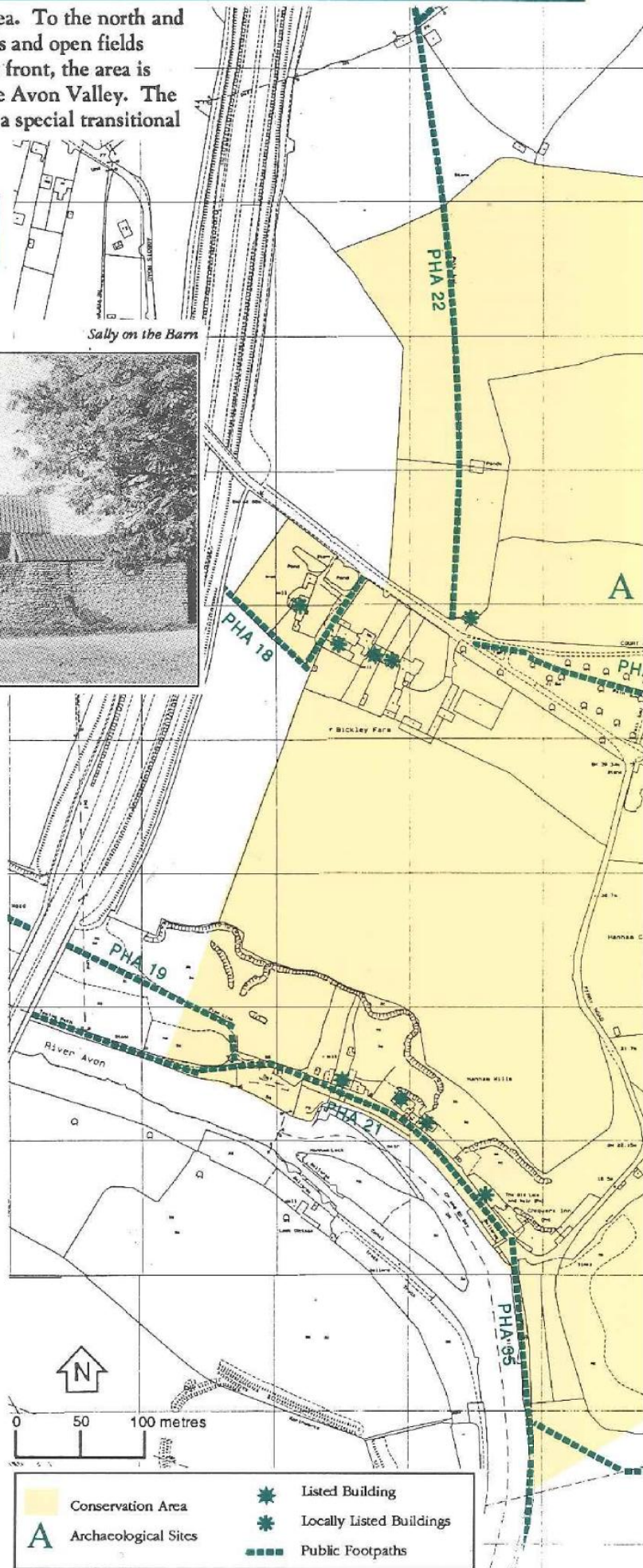
Sally on the Barn

Clustered beneath the Hanham Hills and partially hidden by trees, is the complex of listed stone manorial buildings around Hanham Court which include the tithe barn and small 14th century St George's Church with its 15th century tower. The church, which was restored in 1854 and 1909, is actually attached to the Court but there is now no internal connecting door between the two buildings. There is, however, an attractive gate set into the wall adjoining the church which leads to the grounds of the manor. Nearby a public footpath (PHA 33) leads from the church via an attractive wicket gate and up a steep wooded slope to a traditional kissing gate, and on across open fields. The path offers good views of the surrounding area and particularly of the complex gabled and turreted roofs of the Court with its distinctive octagonal tower.

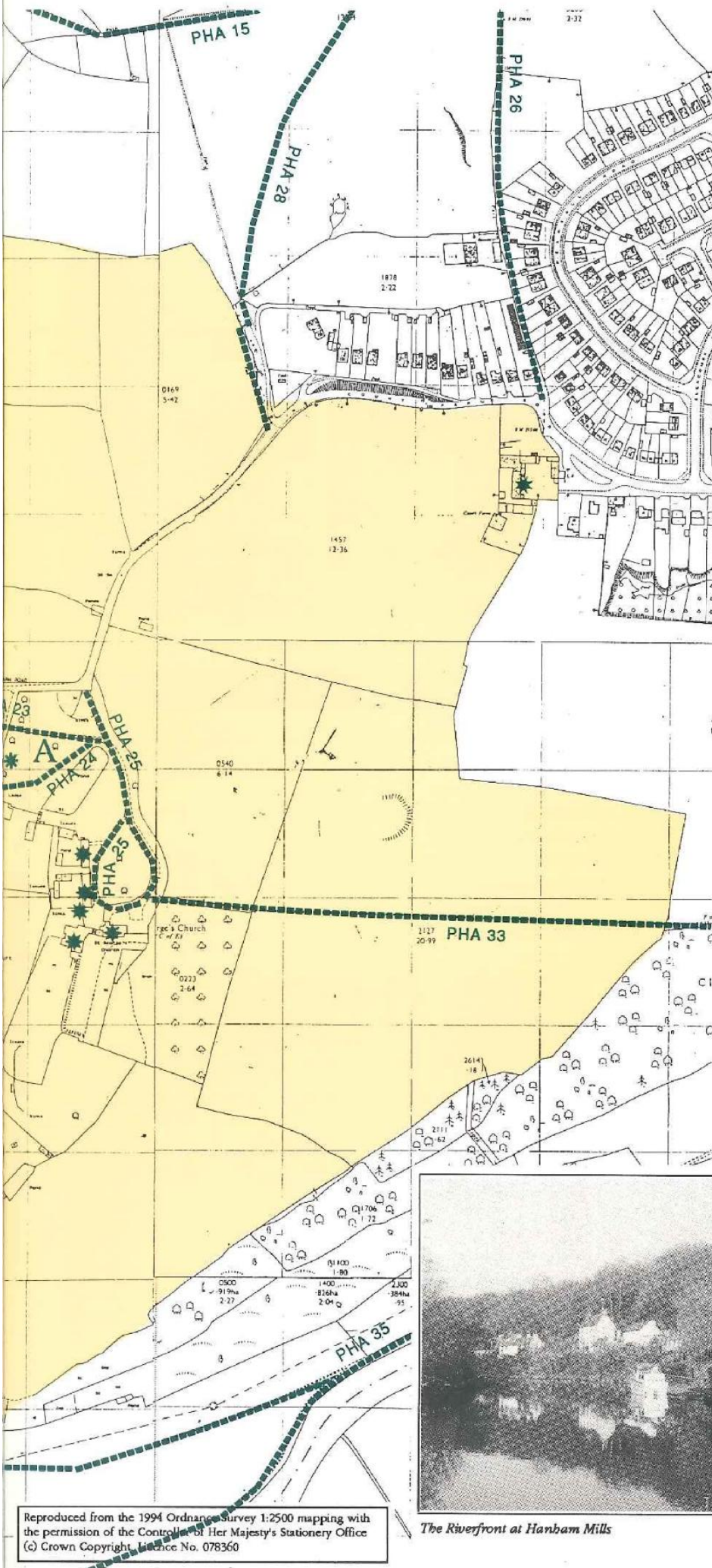
Alongside the entrance driveway to the Church and Court, partially surrounded by trees, is a traditional pond and an open grassed area which provides an informal and attractive setting for the nearby buildings. A stone wall separates this area from the adjoining Stephens Green. There is an attractive archway in the wall and a traditional kissing gate which enables walkers to pass through along the public footpath.

Stephens Green is a triangular shaped grassed area which is dominated by mature lime trees, some of which are being replaced gradually so as to maintain the character. It has a distinctive and more open and informal character like that of a traditional village green. This contrasts with the appearance of the surrounding agricultural fields bounded by low stone boundary walls and hedges. Stephens Green formed part of the original entrance to the Hanham Court Estate, via the lodge, and the old gate piers still remain nearby on either side of the road outside the entrance to Bickley Farm and adjoining the remains of the former animal pound. The pound or pinfold provided for the containment of straying cattle, sheep or horses until the owner paid for their release.

The hamlet by Bickley Farm consists of an attractive group of five traditional stone dwellings set back from the road and softened by mature landscape. There is a traditional village pond which adds to the charm.



	Conservation Area		Listed Building
	Archaeological Sites		Locally Listed Buildings
			Public Footpaths



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TRANSITION

Running alongside the Gate Lodge is Ferry Road, which leads down to the River Avon at Hanham Mills. At first the road is bounded by raised grass verges, stone walls and hedgerows and offers good views across the fields towards Hanham Court and across the open plateau above the Avon Valley. It then narrows and the character changes with views restricted by a high stone wall and dense tree planting where the road slopes steeply down the valley towards the river. The strong sense of enclosure is a key part of the dramatic transition between the two areas and is essential in emphasising the contrast in character.

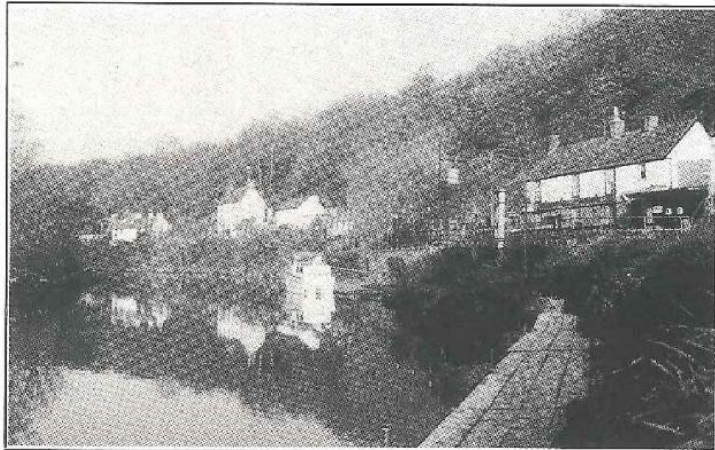
RIVER FRONTAGE

Down by the River Avon, Hanham Mill existed prior to 1670 and the original lock opened in 1727, with the river downstream remaining tidal until 1809. The improvements to the river were critical to the development of industry in the Avon Valley - with stone from Bickley Wood quarries being loaded onto barges just below the weir. Today however the area has a secluded riverside charm.

In addition to the Chequers and Lock & Weir public house, there are a group of about 6 dwellings perched overlooking the river and weir. These cottages are set against an attractive backdrop of the mature wooded valley, with stone outcrops, which rises steeply to the rear.

Especially prominent in views from along the river front is Picnic House, a three storey white rendered house with timber sash windows dating from 1726. The other properties located alongside the towpath are smaller scale domestic cottages, and are generally proportioned and detailed in the simple cottage vernacular of the period. The predominant architectural features of the properties are clay pantile roofs, white limewash rendered walls and timber window frames and doors. It is considered that the use of white render in this riverside setting contributes, along with the boats moored nearby, to the nautical atmosphere which contrasts sharply with the character of the rest of the Conservation Area.

The appearance of the river front area at Hanham Mills, is spoilt by the large expanse of the car park to the public house which is too open, and lacks landscaping and enclosure. Other elements which



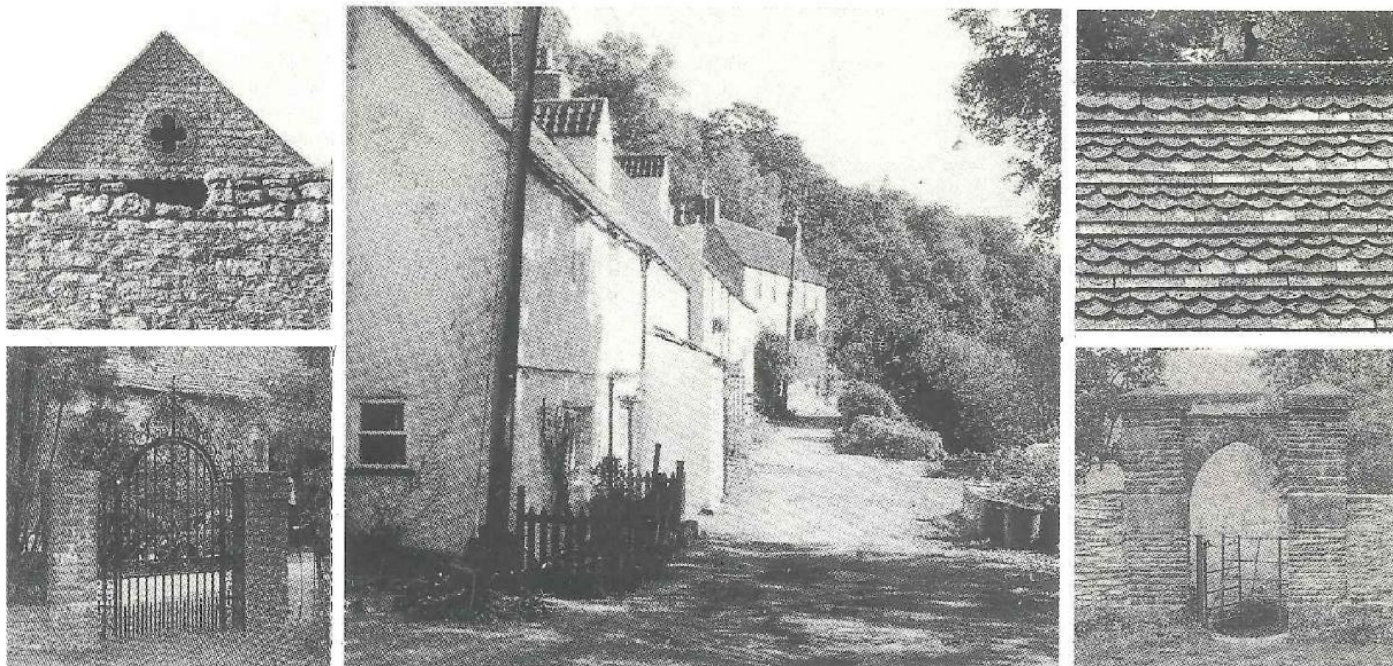
The Riverfront at Hanham Mills

further detract from the appearance are the gas tank and rickety scaffold moorings along the riverfront. Attention to these details would improve the amenities for the many walkers, pub goers and visitors. Care should also be taken to ensure that extensions, outbuildings, fences and other alterations to properties do not

detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

INTERESTING FEATURES IN HANHAM ABBOTS

Other interesting features which make a valuable contribution to the unique character.



It is important that these interesting features are carefully looked after.

ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES

The Council wishes to encourage schemes which will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and a number of enhancement ideas have been subject to public consultation. The key objective is to encourage the repair and retention of features of interest and to reinforce the special character of the area.

Financial Grants (up to 50%) and other forms of assistance may be available to individuals and local organisations towards enhancement schemes. The Council is particularly keen to encourage the following enhancements:-

- repairs to footpaths/ stiles/ gates
- repairs and maintenance to traditional buildings, stone walls, gates and gate posts.
- tree and hedgerow planting and management
- removal of poles and overhead wires
- landscape improvements to screen electricity sub-stations or other intrusive structures and buildings
- a reduction in street clutter caused by excessive signage
- enhancements to Stephens Green
- repairs to the pound or pinfold
- improvements / landscaping to Ferry Road Stables and Chequers car park
- enhancements to the waterfront area
- maintenance to ponds to ensure their long term survival

This is one of a series of leaflets aimed at encouraging good practice in the design and layout of new development. The advice supplements the policies of the Kingswood Local Plan and the Council will bear the guidelines in mind when assessing the merits of planning applications. This leaflet takes into account the Good Practice Guide from English Heritage. Ref. CPO/D.7F Nov 1994

..... HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

As most of the land is privately owned, we will need your support to achieve many of these enhancements . You can also help by:-

- telling us what needs to be done and notifying us when problems occur;
- ensuring that any proposed alterations to your property and land respect the special character of the area, eg by using the correct materials and details.

For further information please contact:

Conservation Officer
South Gloucestershire Council
Natural & Built Environment Team
PO Box 2081, South Gloucestershire
BS35 9BP
Telephone: 01454 863578
Email: conservation@southglos.gov.uk
Further information from www.southglos.gov.uk/ConservationAreas

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the CONSERVATION AREA ADVICE NOTE NO.7 which gives general advice & details of special controls and policies which apply in Conservation Areas.



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