

SPARSHOLT CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

ADOPTED MARCH 2008



Winchester
City Council

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Executive Summary

The Sparsholt Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy identifies the character and qualities of Sparsholt Conservation Area, highlights key issues and puts forward proposals for its management over the next 5 years. The document will provide Winchester City Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practice and policies for the area. A draft document was produced for Winchester City Council by our consultant The Conservation Studio. The survey and desktop research was undertaken in August and September 2006 and the public draft document was subject to extensive public consultation between November 2006 and January 2007, including a public meeting and workshop. In addition there was a public exhibition and the document was made available on the City Council's website and in hard copy. Following public consultation amendments have been made and these have been agreed by Sparsholt Parish Council and this document was been formally adopted by Winchester City Council on 26 March 2008. The document is available on the Council's website at www.winchester.gov.uk/LeisureandCulture/ConservationAreas/ and printed copies will be available on request at priced £7 City Offices Reception.

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PART 1 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 SUMMARY

1.1 Key characteristics

The Sparsholt Conservation Area is notable for the following:

- An historic hilltop settlement located at the meeting point of ancient Downland routes and surrounded by rolling fields and woodland;
- An informal street pattern, made up of gently curving narrow lanes;
- Ancient lanes, such as Home Lane, are sunk into the surrounding countryside, with high banks and hedges;
- Trees and greenery make an important contribution;
- Open spaces and footpaths, particularly between Locks Lane and Home Lane;
- The presence of horses and ponies at Watley Farm reinforces the rural qualities of the conservation area;
- The key building is the Church of St Stephen, dating from the 12th century and sitting on a high grassy mound in the centre of the village;
- Other historic buildings, mainly thatched cottages, many of them set back from the street in pretty gardens; Varied 20th century housing, mostly discreetly located behind high banks of trees and hedges.



Photo 1: View of village from St. Stephens churchyard

1.2 Key Issues

Based on the negative features identified in *Chapter 7 – Review of Positive Negative Features and Opportunities for Enhancement*, a number of issues have been identified and are listed below. These form the basis for the Management Strategy in the second part of this document.

Loss of original architectural details and building materials

Some of the unlisted buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the replacement of original timber windows or doors with UPVC or aluminium, the replacement of natural roof slates or thatch with concrete tiles or the painting of originally exposed brickwork. In many cases, the removal of architectural features such as boundary walls or railings, porches and chimneys has spoiled the external appearance of a building and the local streetscape.

Loss of long straw thatch

Long straw thatch which is traditional to this part of Hampshire has been largely replaced with combed wheat reed or water reed thatch.

Repair and maintenance of historic buildings

It is essential that owners use traditional materials and repair techniques and carry out routine maintenance. There are currently no grants available but such tools have been successfully used in the past to encourage a high standard of repair.

Colour of buildings

The use of colour within the Sparsholt Conservation Area is presently quite muted but there is a potential threat from the use of unsuitable colours including the painting of previously unpainted surfaces.

Quality of new development, alterations and extensions

In a conservation area where the prevailing historical form of development is of modest, one or two storey cottages, and despite the production of a Village Design Statement, some modern developments are out of character with the area, mainly because they are larger in scale than the existing buildings. There is also pressure for the development of backland sites, which conflicts with the established form of frontage development. This document and the revised Village Design Statement 2008 are intended to address this problem and encourage more appropriate development where acceptable in principle.

Unauthorised works

The City Council will monitor unauthorised changes in the conservation area and will use its statutory powers of enforcement where necessary.

Positive buildings

“Positive” buildings within the conservation area, which make a special contribution to the area’s architectural and historic interest, need to be protected from demolition or unsuitable alterations.

Buildings at Risk

Although there are currently no “Buildings at Risk” within the Sparsholt Conservation Area, the City Council maintains a register of listed and unlisted historic buildings which require repairs and will use its statutory powers to ensure that they are returned to a good state of repair whenever necessary.

Protection of trees and hedgerows

Trees make an important contribution to the landscape and enhancing the setting of historic buildings. Some, but by no means all, are covered by Tree Protection Orders and most are in private ownership. Hedgerows also make a major contribution and similarly need to be retained. Measures to ensure that both trees and hedgerows are properly managed and protected are required.

The erosion of earth banks adjacent to lanes

Sunken lanes with earth banks are a key characteristic of the conservation area and in places these have become eroded by vehicles. It is important that trees with overhanging branches and earth banks are properly maintained.

Positive open space

Running through the conservation area are a number of important open spaces which together contribute to the rural character of the village and need to be preserved. The area to the south of the school outside the conservation area also acts as an important green buffer zone which protects the setting of the conservation area.

Poor quality public realm

A number of negative features were noted in Sparsholt, including untidy overhead wires and telegraph poles, and some small areas of public land which are untidy. There is also an opportunity to upgrade the roadside boundary treatment next to the Plough Inn.

Conservation area boundary review

It was noted that the conservation area boundary adequately reflects the area of special interest but that one small extension, to include further trees to the east Sparsholt Manor, would be beneficial. The importance of the open land to the south of the primary school was noted as an important green buffer zone protecting the setting of the conservation area.



Photo 2: The war memorial, Woodman Lane

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Sparsholt Conservation Area

- 2.1.1 Sparsholt is a compact hill-top village, well camouflaged by trees. The conservation area encompasses the most historic part of the village including the less densely built-up area to the north around Locks Lane. St Stephen's Church is the largest and most significant building. Narrow gently curving lanes contain a mixture of listed buildings (mainly residential cottages) with more modern infill, mostly set in spacious plots. The village is very much a living community with church, primary school, shop- post office and village hall all located within the conservation area. The 20th century Woodman Close Estate to the south of the village is outside the conservation area.



Photo 3: The Well House, Woodman Lane (now the village Post Office)

2.2 The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal

- 2.2.1 The conservation area was designated by Winchester City Council in 1990. Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of *Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. A conservation area is defined as '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'.
- 2.2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 2.2.3 In response to these statutory requirements, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. The appraisal conforms to English Heritage guidance as set out in *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (August 2005) and *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (August

2005) (both publications are consultative documents). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15). Government advice on archaeology, which is relevant to the Sparsholt Conservation Area, is set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology* (PPG 16)

2.2.4 This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of Part 1: Character Appraisal);
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the Part 2: Management Strategy);
- Provide Winchester City Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practice and policies for the area.

2.3 The planning policy context

2.3.1 This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the village can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by Winchester City Council (*Winchester City Council Local Plan Review*, adopted July 2006) of which the following are particularly relevant:

2.3.2 Chapter 5 Historic Environment

- Archaeology: Policies HE.1 and HE.2;
- Conservation areas: Policies HE.4, HE.5, HE.6, HE.7, HE.8 and HE.11.
- Historic buildings: Policies HE.13, HE.14, HE.15 and HE.16.

2.3.3 Also relevant are the more general policies which are set out by Hampshire County Council (Hampshire Structure Plan, adopted in February 2000). The most relevant are:

- Archaeology and Historic Parks and Gardens: Policies E14 and E15.
- Built Heritage: Policy E18.

2.3.4 The Sparsholt Village Design Statement was updated in 2007 and together with this document will help guide development within the conservation area.

2.3.5 The Council has published a series of Conservation Guidance Notes which explains the principles behind conserving listed buildings, conservation areas and traditional architectural features such as sash windows.

3 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

3.1 Location

3.1.1 Sparsholt lies on the open chalk downland about four kilometres to the north-west of the city of Winchester. The M3 motorway is some eight kilometres to the east. The conservation area encompasses three roads which create a lozenge shape, with surrounding fields and woodland. The boundary encloses the main historic core of the village, particularly a number of listed buildings, but excluding 20th century development to the south.

3.2 Topography and geology

3.2.1 Sparsholt village sits on a clay cap of varying depth above chalk and is for the most part about 125 metres above sea level reaching its greatest height towards its centre. Gentle changes in level are evident within the village, but on the outskirts are steeper hills and valleys. In the Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment of 2004 the landscape is classified as “Chalk and Clay”. The chalk layers provide the flints which can be seen in many of the walls in the area.

Photo 4: Aerial view of Sparsholt



3.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings

3.3.1 The village maintains a strong link with the landscape, lying on high ground within a strong treed structure. This wooded hilltop character is particularly appreciated when approaching the village from the south along Woodman Lane where its south west flank is seen rising above open arable land.

3.3.2 To the south-west and east of the village the downland slopes away to the valleys of the rivers Test and Itchen. The higher downs of north Hampshire lie to the north. Ham Green to the south east is used as the village common. To the south-west lie the ancient woodlands of Crab Wood and West Wood.

3.3.3 The parish includes two neighbouring hamlets: Dean to the east and the larger Westley, now dominated by Sparsholt College, to the north-west. The area consists predominantly of medium scale arable fields with a fairly enclosed character due to the presence of woodland and hedgerows.



Photo 5: The rural setting

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Historic development

- 4.1.1 Sparsholt's name is of Saxon origin, the suffix *-holt* meaning a woodland settlement and the prefix *spar* either being from the same root as 'spear' (or perhaps the 'spars' used in thatching) or deriving from the Anglo-Saxon word for chalkstone or flint. Sparsholt is thought to have been settled in Saxon times, though the existence of the Roman villa in West Wood and finds of Roman remains in the early to mid 19th century at Moor Court Farm (within the conservation area) suggests that the first settlement could be much earlier. There is also evidence of land use, occupation and agriculture extending back into the pre-historic period (enclosures, field systems and Bronze Age barrows found elsewhere in the parish).
- 4.1.2 The Parish of Sparsholt in Buddlesgate Hundred was part of the Manor of Chilcomb which was granted to the church at Winchester by King Edward the Elder in AD 908. A charter selling part of the land at Sparsholt into private hands was signed by Stigand, Bishop of Winchester, between 1047 and 1052. The charter was witnessed by monks from the Old Minster and also Alfwin, Abbot of New Minster and his monks. Sparsholt was not mentioned by name in the Domesday Book, as it was included in the Manor of Chilcomb, later the Manor of Barton and Buddlesgate.
- 4.1.3 Sparsholt, like many other parishes, included several manors. In the 13th century a dispute arose between two families and the land was split into different holdings. The lands held by the de Caritate family seem to have been separated from Sparsholt by the beginning of the 13th century and to have become a manor known later as the Manor of Lainston.
- 4.1.4 The de Winton family held the Manor of Lainston in 1342, but Richard de Winton was in debt in 1383 and was imprisoned and died shortly after. The manor passed to the Skilling family and remained in their possession until 1613 when it was sold to the Dawley family. Anthony Dawley was High Sheriff of Hampshire in 1707, and sold the manor to Sir Philip Meadows in 1711.
- 4.1.5 The Sparsholt family granted a parcel of land to Stephen Fromond in 1258 and this part of the Manor of Sparsholt was known as Fromond's Court. The land eventually passed to the Skilling family who combined it with their Manor of Lainston. The Manor of Westley was granted to the Coldrey family in the 13th or 14th centuries, and ultimately passed to the Skilling family of Lainston.

4.1.6 The oldest surviving building is the church of St Stephen which dates from the 12th century, although heavily 'restored' in the 19th century. It sits on the probable site of an earlier Saxon church of which nothing obvious remains. The arcade of the south aisle, which was built in 1211 is still intact. The 19th century wood belfry holds six bells in an oak frame on top of the 15th century tower, and stands high in the centre of the village. Its pair of oak doors was hung in 1631. In 1883 the church was in poor condition - earth had risen nearly two metres up the walls, the tower was in a ruinous state, and the bell-chamber at the west end was in use as a coal-cellar. During the ensuing two year reconstruction, a possibly medieval wall-painting was uncovered, which has sadly since faded. At the same time, an upper gallery which had been given 100 years earlier by Mr. Merrill of Lainston was pulled down, and some of its timber was refashioned into a screen for the new organ.



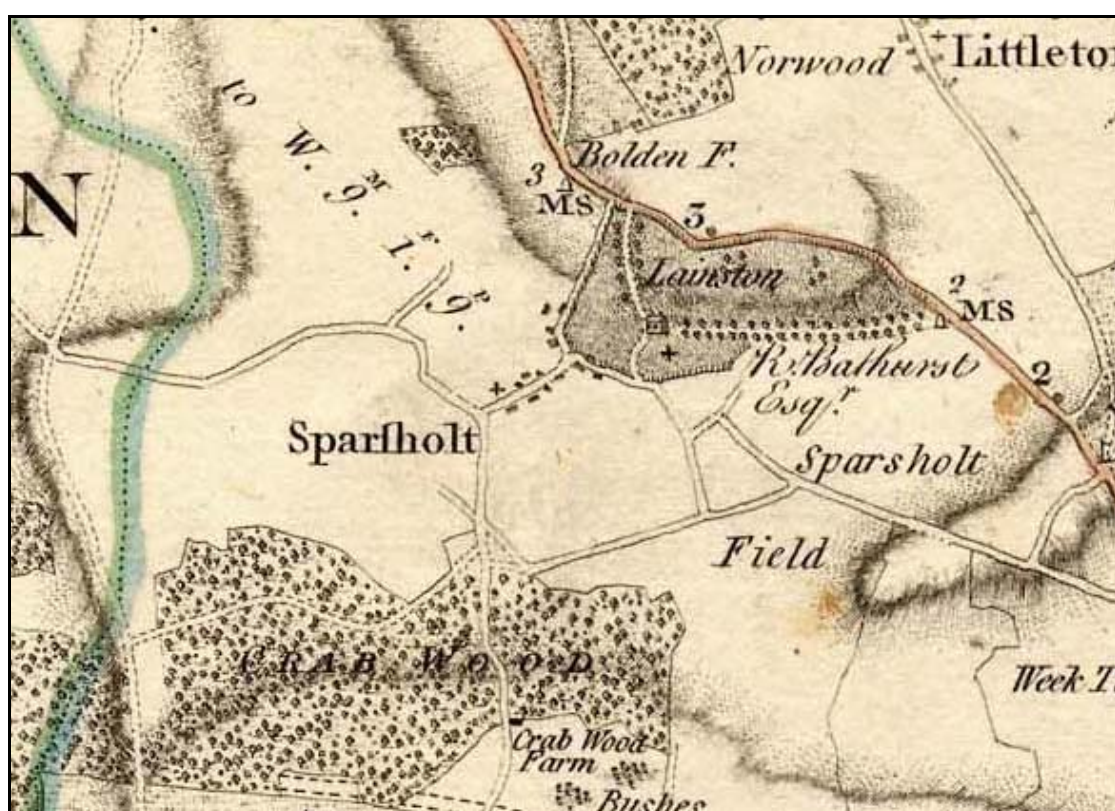
Photo 6: St Stephen's Church

4.1.7 The ruined church of St Peter at near-by Lainston House probably owed its origin to the jealousy between the de Caritate and Sparsholt families. A proud man, Godfrey de Caritate built his own chapel on the site of an earlier Saxon one to avoid attending the church at Sparsholt. This would explain the existence of the second church at Lainston, which would never have been large enough to justify its own church. Lainston House, north-west of the village, stands in the midst of well-wooded country on high ground with an eastward fall. It is a fine H-shaped brick building with stone dressings, which dates largely from the late 17th to early 18th century, but includes part of an Elizabethan house. Stretching away to the west is the famous lime avenue, about one kilometre in length.

4.1.8 The historic maps below help illustrate the development of the settlement between the mid 18th and early 20th centuries, which largely follows an already established pattern of lanes. A recent study of rural settlement in Hampshire indicates that this pattern is typical of piecemeal assarting and a woodland economy, which is also suggested by the place name. Historic properties such as The Woodman on Woodman Lane may have originated as a squatter settlement on the margins of a common field.



Above - Taylors map of 1759



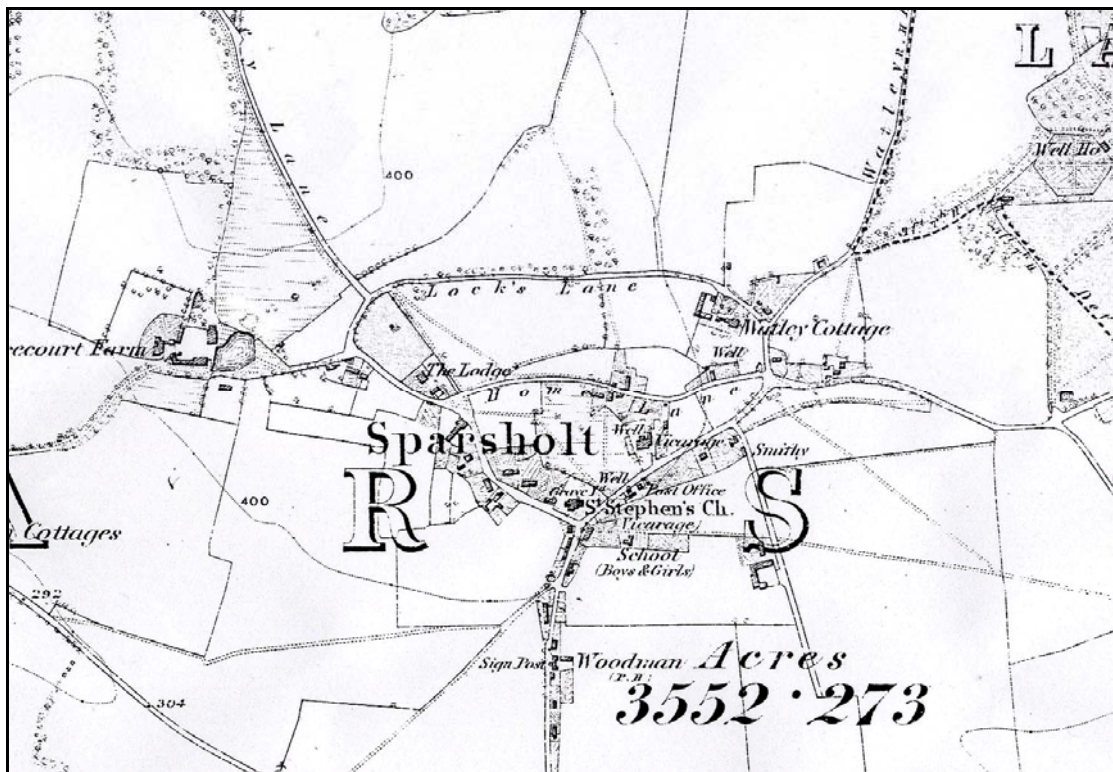
Above: Milne's map of 1791



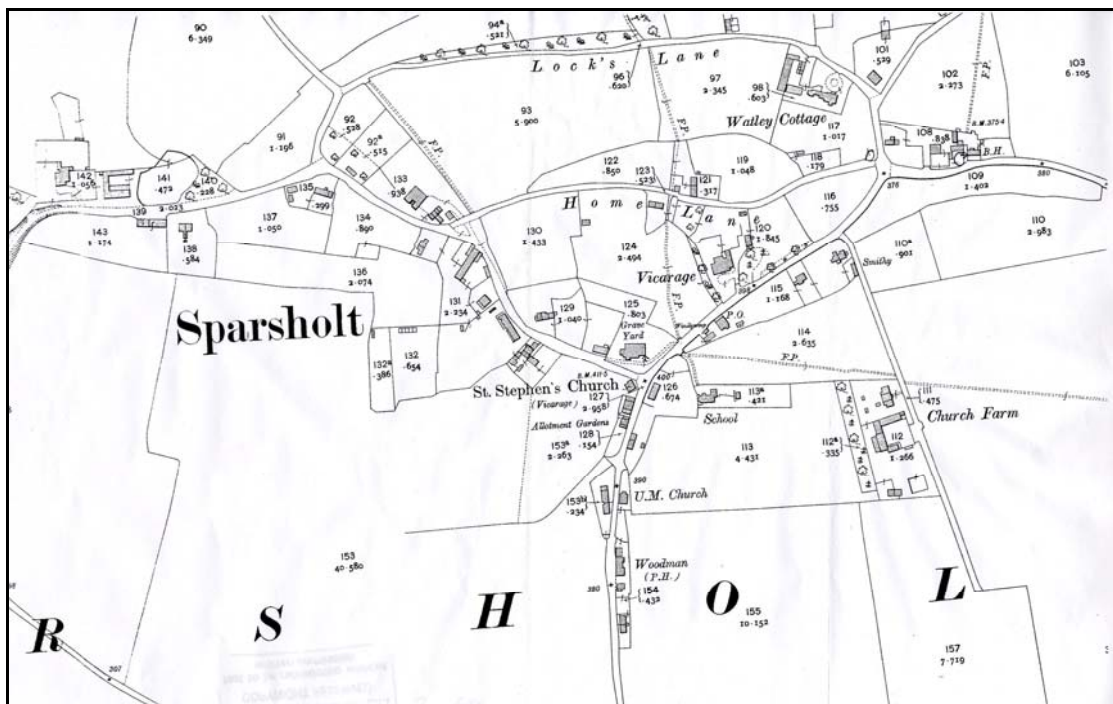
Above Greenwood's map of 1826



Above: 1840 Tithe Map (tracing)



Above: 1871 First Edition OS



Above: 1910 Third Edition OS

4.1.9 There appear to have been two inns in Sparsholt, the first being The Woodman in Woodman Lane, described in a deed of 1786 as 'an ancient cottage'. It was first called a beer shop in 1886 but was de-licensed in 1973, when it became a private house. The Plough Inn was built in the early 19th century and is now the only public house in Sparsholt.



Photo 7: The Plough Inn, Woodman Lane

4.1.10 In the late 19th century The White House on Church Lane was a farmhouse, and was occupied by John Lewington, who was coach driver to the judge at the Quarter Sessions at Winchester Assizes. He stabled the horses and the coach in the adjoining 16th century thatched barn, which stood on the west boundary of the garden and has now been demolished.

4.1.11 Another early farmhouse is Moor Court Farm, which lies on the western edge of the village. The present house is mid 19th century and almost certainly occupies the site of the original manor house of Moorcourt (or Morecourt). A very ancient great barn originally stood near the house and was used for services while the church was being restored in 1883. Sadly, the barn was burnt down in October 1957. The adjacent large pond, on which the village people used to skate in winter, had been allowed to silt up so there was no ready water to extinguish the flames.

4.1.12 During the 19th century a number of important buildings were added to the village which still only comprised the church and a surrounding scattering of cottages. In 1850 a village school was built for the parish off Woodman Lane, being paid for by Sir Frederick Harvey Bathurst. The original 'Parish House' was also built during this period in lower Woodland Lane to house vagrants or people passing through to their own village. In 1897 a new Well-house was built in front of the school to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee. Paid for by public subscription, a small windmill powered the extraction system, which until then had relied upon a bucket being drawn to the surface by two men on a treadmill.



Photo 8: The Well House – Built 1897

4.1.13 During the 20th century the character of the village incrementally changed as agriculture ceased to be the primary employer and more commuters arrived who worked in Winchester or further afield. In 1926 Sir George Buckston Browne purchased Vaine Cottages, next to the church, and in memory of his wife Elizabeth Vaine presented the two cottages to The National Trust and Sparsholt parish for occupation by local parishioners. The cottages date from the 17th century and are of brick, tile hung, and thatched. Close by, and

shown on the 1910 map, was a cottage in what is now the western section of the churchyard. It faced directly onto the roadside and whilst there are historic photographs showing the building, the site of the cottage has been absorbed into the churchyard.

Lambourne Close was built in 1926 for Council tenants, and Sparsholt Manor was added in the 1930s on the eastern edge of the village in a Hampshire neo-vernacular arts and crafts style and is the largest house in the conservation area. The slightly earlier and more modest Little Mead on Home Lane is also built in this style but unfortunately has lost some of its original features.



Photo 9: Vaine Cottages, Church Lane

4.1.14 Today, St Stephen's Church remains the focal point of the village, along with the village school, which has recently been sympathetically extended. The Well-House is now used as the Post Office and village store, the original Post Office dated 1864 lying next door. The former vagrants' lodging in Woodman Lane became the village Club Room and is now a private house. The greatest

changes have been the provision of new housing including the Woodman Close estate on the southern edge of the village (outside the conservation area), and more recently the construction of four new detached houses on the northern side of Church Lane. The Memorial Hall, built in 1983 and located next to the school, fulfills an important community function.



Above: Historic photograph of St Stephen's Church and adjacent cottage

4.2 Archaeology

4.2.1 There are 3 scheduled ancient monuments in the parish of Sparsholt although none of these fall within the conservation area boundary. These are:

- The Roman villa in Cow Down Copse: A courtyard type villa excavated in 1965-72. A mosaic found in one room is now in Winchester City Museum;
- Ruins of St Peter's Church, Lainston House: Flint walls of the 13th or 14th century church remain, plus parts of 18th century windows in what was the east wall;
- The Bowl Barrow one kilometre east of Farley Mount.

4.2.2 The Winchester Historic Environment Record (HER) for Sparsholt details the listed buildings and a number of unlisted buildings, all standing structures.

4.2.3 The historic landscape of Sparsholt and its surrounding area dates back into the prehistoric period (see paragraph 4.1.1), whilst within the Conservation Area itself Roman remains were found at Mere Court Farm (Moor Court Farm) in the early-mid 19th century, comprising of a quantity of tessellated pavement and other remains. More recent archaeological investigations undertaken at the former allotments site in the 1990s prior to the construction of new dwellings, found buried remains of late Saxon and medieval date as well as several late prehistoric and Roman artefacts.

5 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Activities

- 5.1.1 The village is primarily residential although there are a few buildings housing village amenities such as the Post Office, village hall, The Plough Inn, the church and the village school. The village also contains several open spaces which provide a range of facilities: a school playing field, a cricket ground, paddocks, open fields and a war memorial. Outside the conservation area there is a playground at Woodman Close and a common at Ham Green.

Historic Map OS Hampshire 1810

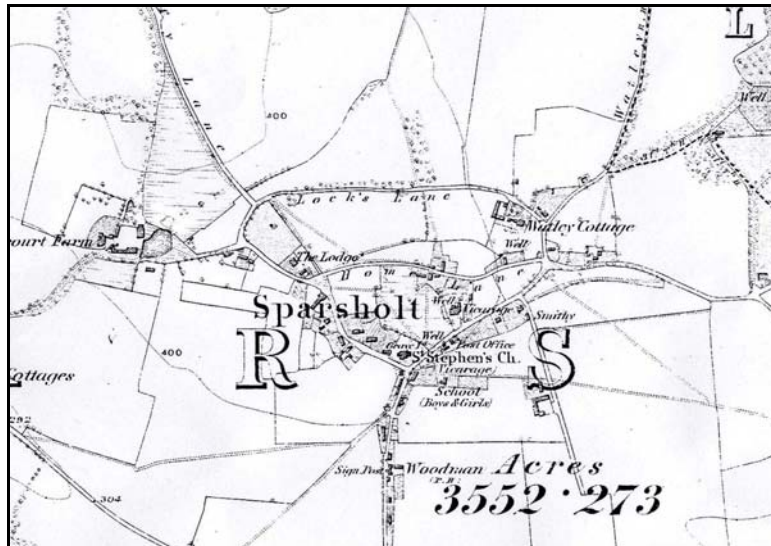


5.2 Plan form and layout

5.2.1 The village is a complex layout of narrow lanes which is loosely centred around St Stephen's Church and its churchyard. This stands above a fork in the road system where Woodman Lane and Church Lane separate. After about 200 meters these lanes are reconnected by the east/west route of Home Lane, creating a lozenge-shape. Locks Lane runs approximately parallel to Home Lane to the north of the village, and is in places little more than a grassy track, reinforcing the rural qualities of the conservation area. In between are buildings, fields and spacious gardens, all well concealed by high hedges, walls and mature trees.

5.2.2 Historic maps show us how the village grew up around St Stephen's Church, with lanes radiating along Woodman Lane towards Lainston to the north-east, and along Church Lane towards Moor Court Farm. The tithe map of 1840 and the Ordnance Survey map of 1871 confirm that over the 19th century the road pattern changed very little. The 1871 map also shows that the pattern of building was historically one house deep, with some buildings actually built off the edge of the road. Lambourne Close, comprising four houses built in 1926 as council properties, is the only example of a cul-de-sac type of development. There has been a certain amount of modern backland

development, such as West Wood House and Jollers, west of Woodman Lane. However the prevailing character is of informally arranged buildings, the earlier examples either facing the street or at right angles to it.



Historic Map 2: OS 1st Edition 1871

5.2.3 Whilst the area in the immediate vicinity of St Stephen's Church (mainly Woodman Lane) is more built up than in the back lanes of Home Lane and Lock's Lane, the prevailing rural character is maintained around the church by the detached properties and well treed gardens which are typical of the whole conservation area. The subdivision of the conservation area into separate "Character Areas" is therefore not appropriate in this particular location.

5.3 Landmarks, focal points and views

5.3.1 The conservation area's primary landmark building is St Stephen's Church in the centre of the village. The church sits on an elevated bank above the roads and surrounding buildings, allowing good views from the churchyard over the village to the surrounding area.

5.3.2 The roads in the village are narrow lanes most often bordered by high banks and hedges and this is a key characteristic of the conservation area. This creates an enclosed feeling and restricts views within the village other than those of the church, which is notable in many views across rooftops and trees. In the more open areas of the village, especially at the outskirts, more views are possible over the surrounding farmland. The commanding views to the south and south west from Moor Court Lane allow the hilltop setting of the village to be fully appreciated. A few large open spaces, such as the fields between Home Lane and Lock's Lane, also relieve the sense of enclosure and allow additional views across the village. Important views are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map.



Photo 11: The narrow, sunken lanes (Home Lane)

5.4.2 The open spaces in the village, such as the fields between Home Lane and Locks Lane, do however serve to relieve the sense of enclosure resulting from the sunken lanes and high banks and hedges on many of the routes through the village. These green spaces also allow the different parts of the village to be linked visually through views which are not otherwise possible. The village is also traversed by many footpaths, some of which pass through these fields, and it is almost possible to travel the length of the village from north to south and east - west avoiding made-up roads and using only the footpaths.

5.4 Open spaces, trees and landscape

5.4.1 Sparsholt has a large amount of open space although little of this is public apart from St Stephen's Churchyard, which is the most important open space in the village. Gravestones, surrounding trees, and an abundance of wild flowers provide a very attractive environment. Notably, it is also a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (*Landscape Character Assessment, Winchester District, Volume 2 Appendices March 2004*). Close by, the area around the War Memorial is another informal public space.



Photo 12: One of the many footpaths through the village

5.4.3 There is an area of open space outside the conservation area to the south of the primary school which provides an important green buffer zone between the historic settlement and the post war housing in Woodman Close and Bostock Close.

5.4.4 The conservation area is particularly notable for its many mature trees of varied species, although yews are a particular characteristic of the village. Yew trees are common on the chalk downs and often planted in churchyards where they are known for their longevity, so it is not surprising that they can be seen around the edges of St Stephen's Churchyard, or that a 16th century cottage on Woodman Lane used to be called 'Yew Tree Cottage', although it was sadly demolished in 1968. Within the conservation area there are also some good examples of mature redwood and blue cedar trees. However, there are generally fewer ornamental trees (as would be expected in a rural area) and most of the species are native to the locality.

5.4.5 The high number of trees also performs an important role in camouflaging the density of housing and screening more modern or bulky developments from view. In the summer months this helps to retain the character of the village, although obviously this effect will be lessened in winter when the trees are bare. Many of the trees within the

conservation area are already protected by specific Tree Preservation Orders, usually made as a response to development proposals.

5.4.6 The villagers appear to have a significant level of foresight in planting trees which will then become landmarks such as the tree in front of the village school. The City Council's appreciation of the important role played by trees in the conservation area is demonstrated in the redevelopment of the Sparsholt Lodge site in 1997, when the City Council served Tree Preservation Orders on most of the trees around the site. Other notable trees include the redwood adjacent to Halston, and the oak further north on the east side of Church Lane.

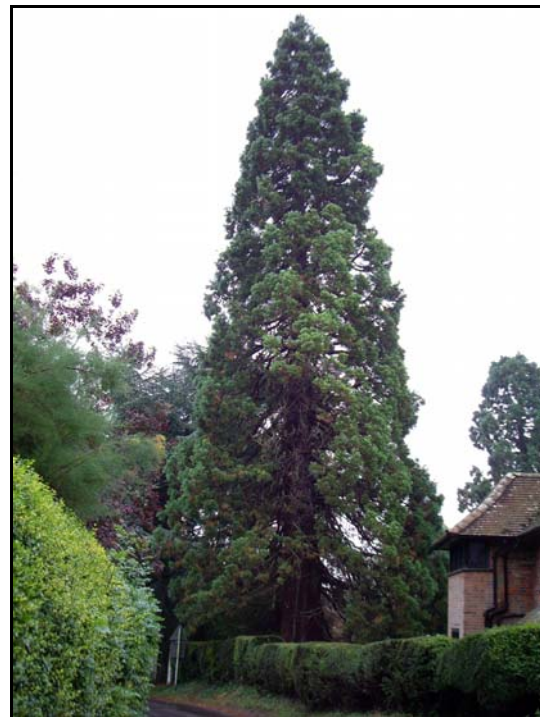


Photo 13: The large redwood outside Halston, Church Lane

- 5.4.7 The conservation area encloses most of the large tree groups in the village. Its original boundary has been extended in 2008 to the east of Sparsholt Manor up to its former eastern entrance to include mature trees. Although outside the historic settlement and conservation area boundary, there is a treed edge running west of West Wood House and then north towards Wheathill, which demarcates the village from the arable land to the south and south west. Significant trees or tree groups are marked on the Conservation Area Tree Map. Lack of a specific reference does not imply that a tree or group of trees is not of value.
- 5.4.8 Informal, thick hedgerows are another characteristic of Sparsholt with a variety of species such as beech, hawthorn, laurel, holly, and yew. With the abundance of garden space and trees, the environment is suitable for a wide variety of wildlife including birds and small animals such as mice or hedgehogs. In the spring a wide variety of wild flowers can be found, especially in the wooded areas to the north of Moor Court Lane. These varied animals and plants reinforce the feeling of connection to the surrounding countryside and the large woods, home to deer and other larger mammals, which lie to the south of the conservation area.
- 5.4.9 Sparsholt Manor is included in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The house and the garden were designed by Harry Inigo Triggs in the 1920s. The garden layout is characteristic of Triggs' vernacular interpretation of Italian Renaissance and Moorish Spanish villa gardens that he visited in the 1890s. A full description is included in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 5.5 Public Realm**
- 5.5.1 The rural character of the village is enhanced by the narrow lanes, the lack of any pavements and by the absence of street lighting. The absence of pavements could possibly lead to the erosion of the verges and banks and increased danger for pedestrians from the increasing volume of traffic in the village. However, this is not a major problem at the moment and given that the character of the country lanes would be adversely affected by the creation of "formal" pavements, it is considered that the existing situation is acceptable provided the highways are properly maintained.

5.5.2 The traffic island where Church Lane and Home Lane meets is untidy and detracts from an otherwise well cared for and respected public realm of the conservation area. It would benefit from a modest planting scheme similar to the traffic island on Woodman Lane.

5.5.3 Much of the housing in Sparsholt is fed by overhead electricity cables. In some areas this has led to an unsightly conglomeration of posts and cables, although around Hunter's Lodge the effect of these wires and posts has been minimised by the abundant tree cover.



Photo 14: An untidy traffic island

5.5.4 Although there is no street lighting in most of the village there is one cast iron lamppost outside the village shop. In the same area there is also a red telephone box and an attractive brick bus shelter with mosaic. These features contribute positively to the character of the conservation area and visually enhance the entry into the village along Woodman Lane.

5.5.5 Most of the boundaries in the village are formed by hedges although there are a few instances of walling. In particular the brick and flint wall around St Stephen's Church makes an interesting visual impact. The wall is listed grade II although it has been recently rebuilt or substantially repaired with the plaques set into the wall bearing recent dates. Good examples of flint walling are also seen to the west and north of Pie's Cottage and the entrance to Sparsholt Lodge and opposite the Church has a low rubble stone wall.

5.5.6 The close boarded timber fence to the front of the Plough Inn appears rather suburban in character and the low block garden wall provides a visually weak boundary to the road. The situation could be improved by removing the fence and wall and replacing with suitable indigenous hedging or a low traditional flint wall

6 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

6.1 Building types

- 6.1.1 The most prevalent building type in the conservation area is the house or cottage, either detached or semi-detached. The earliest buildings in the village are mostly thatched cottages such as The Woodman and The Thatched Cottage. Church Cottage is reputed to be the oldest dwelling in the village and was once thatched but was re-roofed in the early 20th century. It is believed to have been the home of the first vicar at St Stephen's Church.



Photo 15: Church Cottage, Church Lane

- 6.1.2 These older buildings are scattered around the conservation area and later buildings have filled in the space around them. Many date to the 18th or 19th centuries but modern development is not uncommon. The area once occupied by Sparsholt Lodge, which was said to be Victorian and was certainly on the 1871 map, was redeveloped in 1997 with four large modern houses.

- 6.1.3 There is an interesting mix of cottages and larger historic detached houses such as Halston and Sparsholt Manor, although the village is beginning to become dominated by large executive-style detached homes such as those on Lambourne Close and the western end of Home Lane. Such houses are more typical of suburban development found in parts of Winchester and do not reinforce the rural character of Sparsholt.
- 6.1.4 There are, in addition to housing, an active place of worship (St Stephen's Church), a branch Post Office, a village hall, a village school and a public house. The semi-detached cottages on Lambourne Close were built as council properties in 1926 and this area contains several of the more modern houses such as those on the lodge site as well as on Lambourne Close itself.

6.2 Listed buildings

6.2.1 A listed building is one that is included on the government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Winchester City Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Further information can be found in the City Council's publication *Guidance Note 1: Listed Buildings*.

6.2.2 The Sparsholt Conservation Area contains ten listed buildings, located in two principal groups. The first includes St Stephen's Church, churchyard wall and 5 tombs, Taylors Mead (the former vicarage), Vaines Cottages, and slightly to the north, The Cottage. All are listed grade II apart from St Stephen's Church which is listed grade II*, signifying its outstanding architectural or historic interest (only about 6% of listed buildings are grade I or II*). The 13th century church has been added to and remodelled by successive generations, the most extensive work being carried out in 1883 by Butterfield. Nevertheless some of the earlier work has been retained, including a 13th century arcade to the south aisle, a similarly dated chancel arch, the tower arch of the 14th or 15th centuries, and the south doorway of 1631. The boundary wall around St Stephen's is grade II listed, but with brick piers at each end

with a 19th century wrought iron lamp overthrow between them. There are 5 stone tomb chests in the churchyard which are grade II listed and date from the 18th century.



Photo 16: Brick and flint wall at St Stephen's Church

6.2.3 Taylors Mead, located between Woodman Lane and Home Lane, was the vicarage for St Stephen's Church and is now a private house. The building is early 19th century and is stuccoed brick with a slate roof. The house has two storeys and three bays with an added slightly set-back bay to the right. There is a wide 19th century six-panelled door under a flat roofed porch with Doric columns. The house was largely rebuilt in 1843 when it was very dilapidated.

6.2.4 The 17th century Vaine Cottages were originally one house. They have been altered in the 18th and 20th centuries. The building has a timber-frame core encased in brick and part tile-hung, with a thatch and tile roof. Sympathetic two storey extensions were added to both ends in the 20th century.

6.2.5 The Cottage in Home Lane dates from the 17th century and was extended in the 18th century and again in the 1950s. The building is timber framed with brick infill and extensions. The original thatch was replaced with shingle roofing and there are eyebrow dormers in the upper storey. Originally two cottages, it was converted to one dwelling in the 1920s.

6.2.6 Another group lies on the north-eastern boundary of the conservation area, and is created by Watley House, Hunters Lodge and Corner Cottage. Watley House, off Lock's Lane, was originally the farm house to Watley Farm, now located further along the lane. It is mid-18th century, possibly with an earlier core and with a late 18th century service range. The house is built from colour-washed brick with an old plain tile roof which is carried down in a catslide roof to the ground floor ceiling level at the back. The three bay main part of the house has two storeys with an attic and a basement, and there is a two storey, two bay addition to the right. The central

doorway has three Portland stone steps in front and an 18th century six-pane door in a doorcase of pilasters topped by consoles supporting an open pediment.



Photo 17: Watley House, Lock's Lane

6.2.7 Hunter's Cottage, opposite Watley House, was previously known as Watley Cottage. It is late 18th century with flint and brick bands and brick dressings. The roof is thatched with long straw thatch with eyebrow dormers and a ridge piece. The cottage is one and a half storeys, with two bays and an outshot to the rear. The central doorway has been replaced by a 20th century window put in the original segmental-headed opening.

6.2.8 Corner Cottage, located in Watley Lane on the junction of four lanes, was built in the 18th century and extended in the 20th century. The cottage has chequered brickwork, some timber scantling in the gables and a thatched roof. It has one and a half storeys and two bays with an out-shot bay to the right and an out-shot along the rear. There is a central planked front door with a three light casement on each side all under a long tiled hood. The roof sweeps down to the right and has eyebrow dormers.

6.2.9 In the western part of the conservation area and separated from other listed buildings by more modern development, The Thatched Cottage dates to the 17th century but has been altered in the 18th and 19th centuries. The building is timber-framed with brick infilling. There is a 19th century four-panelled door in the thatch-roofed porch, and two stable doors at the right end. The first floor has timber-studs and some pebble dashing. The thatched roof is covered in long straw thatch and hipped with a large stack just to the left of the front door. A secondary chimney stacks set behind the ridge at either end of the original building.

6.3 Positive buildings

6.3.1 In addition to listed buildings, the conservation area contains a large number of *unlisted* buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. These are identified on the townscape appraisal map as 'positive buildings'. This follows advice provided in English Heritage guidance on conservation area character appraisals, and within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15), both of which stress the importance of identifying and protecting such buildings.

6.3.2 The criteria used for selection of positive buildings are those set out in Appendix 2 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (2005). Where a building has been adversely affected by modern changes and restoration is either impractical or indeed, not possible, they are excluded.

6.3.3 Whilst positive buildings are mostly examples of houses built from the 18th to 19th centuries, of special note is Pie's Cottage, Home Lane. Pie's is one of the oldest houses in the village and legend has it that the cottage stands on Saxon foundations. The building retains some 15th century brick and timber framed construction and has a thatched roof. Originally two small cottages, it is not listed because at some stage it was

rebuilt and extended, as can be seen by the changes in brickwork where the walls can be seen to have been heightened. Its large garden is enclosed to the west and north by a traditional flint wall.



Photo 18: Pies Cottage, Home Lane

6.3.4 Moor Court at the western end of Moor Court Lane appears mid 19th century but probably replaced an earlier farm house on this site. It is a large 2 storey brick house with a plain tile roof. Prominent gables, high chimneys and hood mouldings to large 1st floor gable windows all emphasise its status. The farm buildings located to its east seem to date from late 19th century.

6.3.5 Numbers 1 and 2 Moorcourt Lane are large solid semi-detached brick built cottages dating from the late 19th century with traditional 16-pane sashes, central chimney stack and half hipped gables to slate roof. The entrances are on the side which mark a departure from the traditional layout one might expect.

6.3.6 Church Farm Cottages in the trackway off Woodman Lane is a row of three two-storey brick cottages with blue brick banding and a slate roof. The mid-19th century cottages have dormer windows on the upper floor and all windows have segmental headed openings with a band of blue brick. The left hand cottage has a brick front porch with a steeply pitched slate roof. The adjoining section of historic barn is also included as a 'positive' building, although somewhat subsumed within modern agricultural buildings of no merit.

6.3.7 The Post House in Woodman Lane was rebuilt in 1864 after a fire which destroyed several adjacent cottages. The building was previously the Post Office and village stores but it is now a private house. The ground floor windows on the front are contained within canted bays and the door is set in a round headed arch in the central bay. On the first floor the windows are sashes while on the ground floor there are casements. The slate roof is hipped.

6.3.8 The Well House and adjacent K6 telephone box are also considered positive buildings. The telephone box is the 1935 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott design which was introduced throughout the country to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V.

6.3.9 Sparsholt Manor dates from 1928 and was designed by Inigo Triggs, a notable 'arts and crafts' style architect who also designed the garden as well. Other buildings by the architect are listed, so at time of writing the City Council is waiting to hear from the Department for Culture Media and Sport whether Sparsholt Manor is listable.

6.3.10 The Plough Inn, on the eastern edge of the conservation area, is early 19th century although it has been much extended since then. The roof is hipped and tiled and there is also a tiled porch above the door. The original building is stuccoed and has two storeys. There is also a two storey extension to the east and a more recent one storey flat roofed extension to the rear (north). The pub has an excellent hand painted sign on a post at its entrance depicting a traditional plough

6.3.11 Wheatlands in lower Woodman Lane is a semi-detached two-storey brick cottage dating from the 16th or 17th centuries. The brick walls are whitewashed and roof is thatched with eyebrow dormers. All the windows are modern casements and there

is a porch over the door. Rudgewick is joined to Wheatlands but unfortunately has been much altered, its thatched roof having been replaced with concrete tiles in 1925.



Photo 19: Wheatlands, Woodman Lane

6.3.12 At the junction in front of the church stands 'Opposite the Church', a 16th century brick and timber structure which was originally the house of the parish clerk and was known in 1895 as 'The Old Clerk's Cottage'. It has been much altered and its original thatch roof was replaced with tiles. It has a cellar and a well, and a yew tree approximately 400 years old.

6.4 Neutral and negative buildings

6.4.1 As part of the appraisal process, all buildings were assessed for their contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. No buildings were found which made a noticeably 'negative' contribution (i.e. which clearly detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area) although several, such as the historic farm buildings at Church Farm Cottages off Woodman Lane, are clearly in poor condition. However, a number of 'neutral' buildings were noted. These neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area, and include for example, historic buildings that have been severely altered or less obtrusive post-war infill development. They are left unmarked on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

6.5 Building materials and local details

6.5.1 In Sparsholt the most important materials are thatch, flint, brick and tile. Traditionally, roofs are pitched in a simple up and down configuration. These roofs can have hipped ends although some gables and half hips do exist. The roof pitches are generally steep with prominent chimneys, and although the historic material was undoubtedly long straw thatch, most have now been covered in combed wheat reed or water

reed, both of which appear different in terms of texture, thickness, eaves and ridge detailing. Handmade clay plain tiles or natural slate have replaced thatched roofs in some instances.

6.5.2 For walls, a local red brick is popular, sometimes used with flint work. Lime mortars and renders are also used, providing a flexible finish which expands and contracts with changes in temperature and humidity. Traditional limewash is now rare, having been largely replaced by modern paints, but is ideal as it allows the wall below to “breathe”, rather than sealing-in any moisture. Generally, applied colours within the conservation area are muted pastels or white, which suits the rural character of the area.

6.5.3 A popular decorative feature associated with some of the brick built houses is clay tile hanging, and this is perhaps the closest the village comes to a local architectural idiom which has been adopted by some of the new developments in order to be sympathetic to their surroundings.

6.5.4 Apart from the roofs and walls, the historic buildings in the conservation area are enlivened by the use of timber windows and doors, the design of which varies according to the status of the house. For the more modest cottages, the windows are almost always two or three light side-opening casements, sometimes with a central horizontal glazing bar. These are mainly 19th or 20th century alterations to the earlier 17th or 18th century windows which would have had wrought iron frames with leaded lights. Some of these windows are in dormer

eyebrow dormers, set into the deep thatch, is very much a local characteristic of Sparsholt. Doors tend to be made up of boards, with little ornamentation. By contrast, the higher status houses such as Watley House have expensive details of the Georgian or Victorian period, including tall sash windows and panelled front doors.



Photo 20: The Thatched Cottage, Church Lane

6.5.5 Apart from Watley House and Sparsholt Manor, both substantial houses built by wealthy owners, the majority of the historic buildings within the conservation area are relatively modest houses or cottages, usually only one or two storeys high and only one room deep. A typical cottage consists of two or three bays in a linear form, each bay being between three to five metres long, reflecting the maximum length of the timber logs from which the buildings were originally constructed. Substantial brick stacks were built to provide heat to each room and often a small newel (circular) staircase to the first floor was squeezed in behind the stack. Where these early

windows within the roof, and staircases remain they should be preserved. The height of these cottages is also quite low, some buildings being barely one and a half storeys high, so the upper rooms are very much in the roof space. Any extensions to such buildings need to be carefully designed to reflect this modest scale and must remain subservient in terms of scale and siting to the original building.

6.5.6 The footprint and massing of the houses are generally in keeping with the size of the plot although there are a few examples where new developments or extended older buildings now appear rather over dominant. For example between The Bungalow and Burntwood Cottage on Lambourne Close is a recent house whose footprint covers most of its plot. This is out of character with the area where houses of this size usually have larger gardens.

6.5.7 There are a few agricultural buildings in or on the edge of the conservation area: some modern barns at Moor Court Lane; some flint barns, with some modern buildings, off Woodman Lane next to Church Farm Cottages; and a brick and flint stable at Watley Farm, forming a group with other modern buildings.

6.5.8 Boundaries are usually marked by trees, hedges or open fencing. Examples of flint walls are found around the churchyard and also enclosing the large garden of Pie's Cottage on Home Lane.

7 REVIEW OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

7.1 Identification of positive and negative features

7.1.1 As part of the appraisal process, the conservation area was carefully surveyed and positive and negative features photographed and noted. Sparsholt is a desirable village in which to live and property prices reflect this, so it is perhaps not surprising that generally the conservation area is well maintained and the buildings have been well cared for. However, like any settlement, there are some negative features which do detract from the conservation area's special architectural and historic interest. The most important negative issues are noted in 7.1.3 below and form the basis of the Management Strategy in Part 2 of this document.

7.1.2 Principal positive features:

- An historic hilltop settlement located at the meeting point of ancient Downland routes and surrounded by rolling fields and woodland;
- An informal street pattern, made up of gently curving narrow lanes;
- Ancient lanes, such as Home Lane, are sunk into the surrounding countryside, with high banks and hedges;
- Trees and greenery make an important contribution; Open spaces and footpaths, particularly between Locks Lane and Home Lane;

- The presence of horses and ponies at Watley Farm reinforces the rural qualities of the conservation area;
- The key building is the Church of St Stephen, dating from the 12th century and sitting on a high grassy mound in the centre of the village;
- Other historic buildings, mainly thatched cottages, many of them set back from the street in pretty gardens;
- Varied 20th century housing, mostly discreetly located behind high banks of trees and hedges.

7.1.3 Principal negative features:

- The character of new development, with a danger that new development is out of scale with the existing historical form of the settlement;
- Some examples of extensions to existing properties which are over dominant;
- The loss of original architectural details on existing buildings;
- The occasional use of non-traditional building materials;
- Poorly sited satellite dishes or other accretions;
- Some examples of suburban boundary treatments replacing ones of a more rural character; modern brick walls, lapboard fencing or non-rural choice of hedges.

- A risk to the special character of the conservation area by the incremental introduction of unsympathetic paint colours;
- The loss of long straw thatch, and its replacement with combed wheat reed or water reed thatch, both of which fail to replicate the informal, rougher look of the traditional material;
- A large number of mature trees, which are important to the special character of the conservation area, and which require special protection are currently unprotected.
- Unsightly overhead wires;
- Busy traffic at times, in narrow country lanes without pavements;
- Erosion of earth banks on lanes caused by vehicles.



Photo 21: New development on Lambourne Close

7.2 Opportunities for enhancement

- The triangle of land at the western end of Home Lane is currently in an untidy condition. A modest planting scheme similar to that on the traffic island to the east of Woodman Lane is recommended.
- The roadside boundary treatment to the Plough Inn could be improved by removing the suburban style fence and low concrete block wall and replacing with low traditional flint wall or a hedge such as hawthorn, beech, holly, blackthorn or other locally indigenous species.

PART 2 - MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

8 INTRODUCTION

8.1 Format of the Management Strategy

- 8.1.1 Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Sparsholt Conservation Area which make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Strategy*, builds upon the positive features and addresses the negative features which have already been identified, to provide a series of Issues and Recommendations for improvement and change, most of which are the responsibility of the City Council.
- 8.1.2 The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2006). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a five yearly basis, as set out in Chapter 10.

9 KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Loss of original architectural details and building materials

9.1.1 Throughout the Sparsholt Conservation Area are a number of buildings where the original detailing has been lost, and modern details, such as uPVC or modern timber windows, inserted. Examples include Rudgewick in Woodman Lane and 3 Moor Court Cottages in Moor Court Lane. In some cases, the removal of front boundary treatments has spoilt the external appearance of a building and the local streetscape.

character of the residential properties, particularly where they have been identified as making a *positive* contribution.



Photo 22: uPVC windows on The Woodman, Woodman Lane

9.1.2 Most of the above, where unlisted houses are concerned, can normally be carried out without planning permission from the City Council. Development of this kind is called “*Permitted Development*” and falls into various classes which are listed in the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995*.

9.1.3 Powers exist for the City Council, known as Article 4 Directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. This might be considered in Sparsholt to prevent the further erosion of the historic

9.1.4 Recommendation:

- *The City Council should consider serving an Article 4(2) Direction to control changes to unlisted family dwellings marked as positive on the Townscape Appraisal map as follows:*
 - (i) *All extensions of whatever size including porches on the front* of the building;*
 - (ii) *Changing roof materials and the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslope;*
 - (iii) *The replacement of doors, windows or other architectural features facing the front*;*
 - (iv) *The painting of buildings, including painting unpainted surfaces and change of colour of walls, doors, windows and*

- (v) *The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house;*
- (vi) *The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*;*
- (vii) *The demolition of a wall, fence or gate facing the front*.*

* "Front" means facing a public highway, water course, footpaths or other public open space.

9.1.5 The City Council's Conservation Guidance Notes provide policy guidance on traditional details and materials.

9.2 Loss of long straw thatch

9.2.1 Long straw thatch would once have been the predominant roofing material on cottages in Sparsholt, as is confirmed by the many steeply pitched historic roofs. After the Second World War combed wheat reed began to be introduced into Hampshire but this is a West Country tradition, with different detailing. Additionally, water reed, which is found more in East Anglia, began to be used. However these materials (particularly the water reed) do not replicate the appearance of long straw and both English Heritage and Hampshire County Council have produced very helpful booklets which fully explain the differences between the three thatching materials and why it is

rainwater goods;

note is the thicker roofline, the use of simple flush (not raised and cut) ridges, and the coarser texture of the long straw thatch. If the building is listed, Listed Building Consent is required to change the type of thatch and it is the City Council's policy to refuse applications which would result in the loss of traditional long straw thatch.

9.2.2 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will continue to resist applications for change from long straw thatch to alternative thatching materials, or change from combed wheat reed to water reed and will encourage owners to use long straw thatch when re-thatching their properties.*

9.3 Repair and maintenance of historic buildings

9.3.1 It is important that historic buildings are adequately maintained and repaired using traditional materials and techniques. Such repairs can be costly due to the additional expense of materials and employing skilled craftsmen. In the past the Council has given small grants to owners to ensure that eligible works are undertaken to a high standard but unfortunately no grants are currently available. The Historic Environment Section can provide advice on traditional repairs, produces published Conservation Guidance Notes and also keep a Craft Skills Register.

important to encourage the use of long straw thatch. Of

9.3.2 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will encourage owners of historic buildings to use traditional materials and repair techniques through advice, publications and if resources allow at some stage in the future, grant-aid for eligible repairs.*

9.4 The colour of buildings

9.4.1 In Sparsholt most walls are barefaced brick or flint-work and these should remain unpainted as this provides a richness and texture. However there are some examples of painted brickwork, stucco and render which are currently painted white or pale earth colours.

9.4.2 Traditional buildings were lime washed, a cheap material used to protect as well as enhance the building. The earliest colours were derived from nature: ox blood, soot, charcoal, ochre and umber, while later classical buildings were often painted a colour to replicate stone. All these colours represent the mellowness of the English countryside. Stronger brighter colours are more suited to Mediterranean latitudes, as when these are viewed in a duller climate they appear too bright.

9.4.3 A townscape should be seen as a whole and not as individual units. This does not preclude the use of different colours, but it does mean that colours have to work together within a street scene and not as individual units which can damage the overall picture. The correct colours are those which tone and relate well to each other. With the advent of modern, strong pigments, greater care is required in the choice and placement of colour in order to retain and enhance existing character.

9.4.4 If repainting is necessary the following points should be considered:

- The relationship of the building to the adjoining building materials e.g. brick, render, timber or flint;
- The roof materials;
- The style and location of the building e.g. terraced or detached;
- The relationship of the proposed colour to colours on adjoining buildings;

9.4.5 Should any proposed change of paint colour materially affect the appearance of a dwelling house, then consent will be required from Winchester City Council if it decides to serve an Article 4 (2) Direction, as set out in 9.1 *Loss of original architectural details and building materials*. For all listed buildings, it is likely that Listed Building Consent will be required for any change of paint colour. It is therefore always advisable to discuss It is therefore always advisable to discuss any colour change with the City Council's Historic Environment Section.

9.4.6 **Recommendation:**

- *Winchester City Council will continue to carefully monitor changes of paint colour on all buildings within the Sparsholt Conservation Area, and will encourage the use of traditional paint colours which fit in with the rural character of the conservation area.*

9.5 **Quality of new developments, building alterations and extensions**

9.5.1 Sparsholt is an attractive residential village desirably located close to Winchester but quietly situated in rolling countryside. Property prices are inevitably high and there is pressure for sub-division of existing plots, the development of backland sites, and for the demolition of existing smaller properties and their

few years ago demonstrates how the demand for new, prestigious houses has resulted in the construction of large, executive-style houses which are not in character with the smaller, vernacular cottages and modestly sized houses which are the prevailing form of historic development in the village. These four new houses are fortunately surrounded by thick hedging and mature trees (which the developer was instrumental in keeping) which provide some screening from Church Lane, although in the winter months this will of course be less effective. More recently, applications for the demolition of modern houses, and their replacement with much bigger "mansions" have been received, which if approved could have an adverse effect on the overall character of the conservation area, which is notable for its many smaller, more vernacular cottages.

9.5.2 New development if sensitively handled can be characterful and contribute positively to the character of the conservation area, eg. the replacement dwelling at Wood Cottage, Church Lane.

9.5.3 In 2008 the Sparsholt Parish Council updated its Village Design Statement for Sparsholt and together with the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy it will help guide

replacement with much larger dwellings. The redevelopment of the Sparsholt Lodge site a

development within the village.

9.5.4 Recommendation:

- *In assessing planning applications within the Sparsholt Conservation Area, the City Council shall pay particular attention to the following:*
 - *New development should follow existing plot ratios, with modestly sized properties in spacious plots; New development should be in accord with the prevailing form of historic development, including the relationship of buildings to the street;*
 - *New development should be sympathetic in scale to neighbouring buildings, and extensions should be subordinate to existing building;*
 - *New development should not impinge on the setting of existing buildings;*
 - *New development should use materials which are traditional to the conservation area and of high quality (the use of UPVC, aluminium, concrete tiles or other non traditional materials is not considered appropriate);*
 - *New development should protect important trees, hedges and other established boundaries*
 - *New boundary treatment should use traditional materials and be of appropriate design to suit locality or in the case of hedgerows, use locally indigenous species ;*
 - *New development should not obscure or detract from*

9.6 Unauthorised Works

- 9.6.1 The City Council has statutory powers to enforce against unauthorised works, such as fixing a satellite dish to the front of a building within the conservation area. Where necessary, the City Council will use its powers to ensure that the conservation area is protected from unsuitable changes which individually or cumulatively will adversely affect its special architectural and historic interest.

9.6.2 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will use its statutory powers where appropriate to control planning contraventions and will monitor change in the conservation area to ensure that the area is both preserved and enhanced.*

9.7 Positive buildings

- 9.7.1 As part of the appraisal process, and as recommended by English Heritage and in PPG 15, "Positive" buildings have been identified and are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map. Generally, these are individual or groups of buildings that retain all, or a high proportion, of their original architectural detailing and that add interest and vitality to the appearance of the conservation area. Most of them date to the 19th century, but some are early 20th century. Where they have

important views either within or from outside the conservation area.

been too heavily altered, and restoration is not easily achievable, they are excluded.

9.7.2 As with listed buildings, there is a general presumption in favour of retaining historic buildings in conservation areas. Any application for the demolition of a building in a conservation area will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why it cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the building, or to find a suitable new use, before an application can be determined. Further information can be found in the Winchester City Local Plan *Chapter 5 Historic Environment* paras. 5.26-29 and Policy HE.7 and PPG.15.

9.7.3 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will resist applications to demolish buildings identified as Positive on the Townscape Appraisal map, and will ensure that any alterations or extensions to existing positive buildings are very carefully designed and detailed.*

9.8 Buildings at Risk

9.8.1 Winchester City Council already maintains a list of buildings which are at risk from deterioration due to neglect or vandalism. This is updated as necessary and the City Council has powers to protect all listed buildings and also unlisted buildings in any conservation area, where they make a positive contribution to the area's special character.

9.8.2 Recommendation:

- *Where the condition of an historic building deteriorates to a point where it is considered vulnerable then the City Council will consider taking necessary steps to ensure it is returned to a reasonable state of repair.*

9.9 The protection of trees and hedgerows

9.9.1 Trees make a dramatic and important contribution to the special character and appearance of the Sparsholt Conservation Area. Most of them are in private ownership so are not under the direct control of the City Council. However, legislation exists to prevent the loss or harm of significant trees as follows.

- Anyone intending lopping or felling a tree greater than 75 mm. diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give

the City Council six weeks written notice before starting the work;

- This provides the City Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served. This protects the tree from felling or inappropriate lopping;
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) have been served on several groups of trees within the Sparsholt Conservation Area, most notably around the Sparsholt Lodge site, served in anticipation of major development in 1997;

9.9.2 Some of the more mature trees in Sparsholt are now reaching the end of their life and will need to be replaced in due course. The preparation of a Tree Management Programme, involving the identification of all mature trees within the conservation area (privately as well as publicly owned), would ensure that priorities are agreed and funding set aside for the costs involved. This could be carried out by the local Tree Warden under the guidance of the City Council's Tree Officer.

9.9.3 Hedges of hawthorn, beech, holly and other locally indigenous species also make a very positive contribution to the conservation area and the

9.9.4 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will seek to protect trees and where possible important hedges in the Sparsholt Conservation Area and will consider carrying out a Tree Management Programme, which could be carried out with the help of the local community*



Photo 23: A large oak on Church Lane

9.10 The erosion of earth banks adjacent to lanes

9.10.1 Sunken lanes with earth banks are a key characteristic of the conservation area and in places these have become eroded by vehicles, often high sided lorries trying to avoid overhanging branches. This is evident on Home Lane

City Council will encourage owners to maintain them and to replace in native species as and when necessary.

9.10.2 Recommendation

- *The City Council will encourage landowners to maintain trees where low overhanging branches are causing high sided vehicles to erode banks and encourage Hampshire County Council to maintain banks on public adopted highways.*

9.11 Positive Open Space

9.11.1 Running through the conservation area from north to south are a number of important open spaces which together contribute to the rural character of the village and help relieve the density of housing. The area to the south of the school outside the conservation area is also included as it acts as an important green buffer zone which protects the setting of the conservation area.

9.11.2 Recommendation:

- *The City Council will seek to conserve the existing character of the positive open spaces shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map and the green buffer zone to the south of the conservation area.*

9.12 Public realm improvements

9.12.1 The most notable area where improvements are needed is

9.12.2 Recommendation:

The Parish Council, in association with Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council should agree a scheme for improvement and the long term maintenance of the triangle of land at the western end of Home Lane.

9.12.3 Works by Hampshire County Council Highways Department, or by any of the statutory undertakers, can have a profound effect on a conservation area. The City Council will endeavour to ensure that all such works are carried out to reflect the sensitive historic environment, particularly relating to issues such as signage, materials, lighting, public utility boxes, etc.

9.12.4 Recommendation:

- *Hampshire County Council Highways Department and other statutory undertakers should ensure that all types of work they undertake in the Sparsholt Conservation Area are of the highest quality, reflecting the sensitive historic environment.*

9.12.5 As identified in 5.5.6 above there is potential to improve the boundary treatment to the Plough Inn which is a prominent positive building

on the triangle of land at the junction of Church Lane and Home Lane. This is roughly grassed and untidy. The whole area should be re-landscaped, but in an informal way to suit the rural location.

next to the road at the eastern entrance to the conservation area. The road is also prone to potholing and flooding outside the Plough and needs to be properly maintained by HCC Highways Department.

9.12.6 Recommendation:

- *The City Council should approach the owner of the Plough Inn and encourage them to replace the close boarded timber fence and low block garden wall with appropriate locally indigenous hedging or a low traditional flint wall.*

9.13.3 Recommendation

The City Council will extend the conservation area boundary east to the former eastern entrance to Sparsholt Manor to protect a number of mature trees which mark the entrance to the village.

9.13 Sparsholt Conservation Area Boundary Review

9.13.1 The existing boundaries to the conservation area were carefully assessed during the survey work for this appraisal. It is considered that the existing boundary reflects the area of special character adequately apart from an area in the grounds to the east of Sparsholt Manor, where a small increase in size is recommended to encompass a stand of mature trees which mark the entrance to the village.

9.13.2 The importance of the open land to the south of the primary school is noted as an important green buffer zone protecting the setting of the conservation area (see para.5.4.3 and recommendation 9.11.2) but is not felt necessary to include within the boundary.

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.

10.2 It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the City Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

APPENDIX 1 - LISTED BUILDINGS

All grade II apart from St Stephen's Church

NAME	ADDRESS
St Stephen's Church grade II*	Church Lane
L-shaped Churchyard Wall	
5 Tombchests in St Stephen's Churchyard	
Vaine Cottages	Church Lane
Watley House	Lock's Lane
Hunter's Lodge	Lock's Lane
Corner Cottage	Watley Lane
Taylor's Mead	Woodman Lane
The Cottage	Home Lane
The Thatched Cottage	Church Lane

APPENDIX 2 - POSITIVE BUILDINGS

Unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

NAME	ADDRESS
The Plough Inn	Woodman Lane
Sparsholt Manor	Woodman Lane
Nos.1 & 2 Manor Cottages	Woodman Lane
Former Forge, 2 Manor Cottages	Woodman Lane (Church Farm Lane)
The Post House	Woodman Lane
The Well House	Woodman Lane
K6 Telephone Kiosk	Woodman Lane
Sparsholt CoE Primary School	Woodman Lane
Opposite the Church	Woodman Lane
Church Cottage	Woodman Lane
Long Cottage	Woodman Lane
Rose Cottage	Woodman Lane
Wheatlands	Woodman Lane
The Woodman	Woodman Lane
Nos.1-3 Church Farm Cottages	Church Farm Lane
Historic Farm Buildings, Church Farm	Church Farm Lane
Clareholme	Church Lane
Halston	Church Lane
The White House	Church Lane
Upcott Cottage	Church Lane
Pies Cottage	Home Lane
Home Lane Cottage	Home Lane
Nos.1 & 2 Moor Court Lane	Moor Court Lane
Moor Court Cottages (The Bungalow)	Moor Court Lane
Moor Court	Moor Court Lane

APPENDIX 3 - ENTRY FOR SPARSHOLT ON THE HAMPSHIRE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Sparsholt Manor

Early 20th century country house and gardens designed by Harry Inigo Triggs. House designed in the arts and crafts style and gardens influenced by the architect's interpretation of Italian Renaissance and Moorish Spanish villa gardens.

APPENDIX 4 - BIBLIOGRAPHY

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