

The Meon Valley



Conservation Areas

Introduction

The villages along the Meon Valley are rich in architectural and historic interest and Conservation Areas have previously been designated in four of them, (East Meon, Droxford, Wickham and Titchfield). Four further villages are also considered to be of special importance, and due to their proximity to one another they have been studied together. The villages are West Meon, Exton, Corhampton and Meonstoke, the last three adjoin one another with West Meon lying three miles upstream.

The undulating walls of the river valley rising to the peak of Old Winchester Hill in the east and Beacon Hill in the west provide a scenic backcloth to the villages lying on the valley floor. The Fareham to Alton road (A.32) follows the valley northwards from Wickham to West Meon, by-passing Meonstoke and Exton, but passing through Corhampton and West Meon with attendant noise and disturbance.

The Local Planning Authority feels that the character and appearance of the four villages should be preserved and enhanced and has therefore designated the areas, illustrated on the accompanying maps, as Conservation Areas under Part 1 of the Civic Amenities Act, 1967.

The following is a short description and background of each village together with a list of the policies to which the Local Planning Authority will have regard when considering proposals for developments in and around the Conservation Areas.

West Meon

The main approaches to West Meon are from the north and south along the A.32 which carries heavy traffic volumes through the main village street. The southern approach is particularly attractive due to the contrasts between the meandering river flanked by open meadowland and the compact nature of the settlement.

The sides of the valley rise sharply to the north and south of the village, while to the east the well-wooded embankment of the disused railway creates a strong physical boundary. Following the Meon Valley, to the east is the road to East Meon which lies three miles away.

The village is mainly clustered around the crossroads which comprises a group of 18th and 19th Century cottages some of which are thatched. An ancient market cross once stood at the centre, but this was replaced at the beginning of this century by another cross.

To the north on the sloping valley side stands the Church of St. John the Evangelist, an outstanding building of dressed flint and stone, mainly re-built in 1846 by Sir Gilbert Scott. The western tower of the church dominates the village while West Meon House (formerly the Rectory House) which was mainly re-built in 1827, is situated in a dominant position on the other side of the village.

The Domesday Survey listed West Meon as a small village with two mills, one of which was probably sited at Mill House where the main road crosses the river. South of the church and to the west of the main road there are several footpaths that give great

charm to this part of the village and enable the pedestrian to experience the peacefulness of pre motor-transport days.

Exton

Exton is a more dispersed settlement than the other villages, lying on the west bank of the River Meon on the undulating floor of the valley. The valley sides rise steeply to the north west to Beacon Hill (659 ft.) and in the east to Old Winchester Hill (696 ft) on the crest of which dark lines of an ancient camp, later a Roman summer camp and now part of a Nature Reserve, are visible.

The first mention of Exton is apparently in 940 A.D. when a grant was made by King Edmund to his "thegn" Ethelgeard of 12 manae at "East Seaxnatune" (Exton) on the River Meon. At the time of the Domesday Survey there were two mills at Exton and the remains of one are still visible.

The two main approaches to the village are from the main road between Alton and Fareham, (A.32). The southern approach crosses water meadows and finally a bridge which leads the visitor into an attractive group including the supplementary listed building "Shoe Cottage". The northern approach follows the course of the river and presents a well defined "edge" to the village in the form of stone farm buildings that were once part of the Manor House.

The grounds of Exton House and Exton Cottage account for much of the area of the village although the buildings themselves are mainly hidden from the road. The Church of St. Peter and Paul has a chancel dating from 1230 and is mainly in the Early English style although much of it was re-built in 1847.

The flint walls that line the village streets in many places make an important contribution to the village scene by linking buildings and creating a continuous road frontage (see Map).

Corhampton & Meonstoke

The part of Corhampton included in this Conservation Area comprises the core of the village straddling the A.32. The Church (dedication unknown) dates back to the 11th Century while a Yew tree in the church-yard is reputed to be over 1,000 years old. The charm of the village in its riverside situation is adversely affected by the heavy volumes of traffic using the main road.

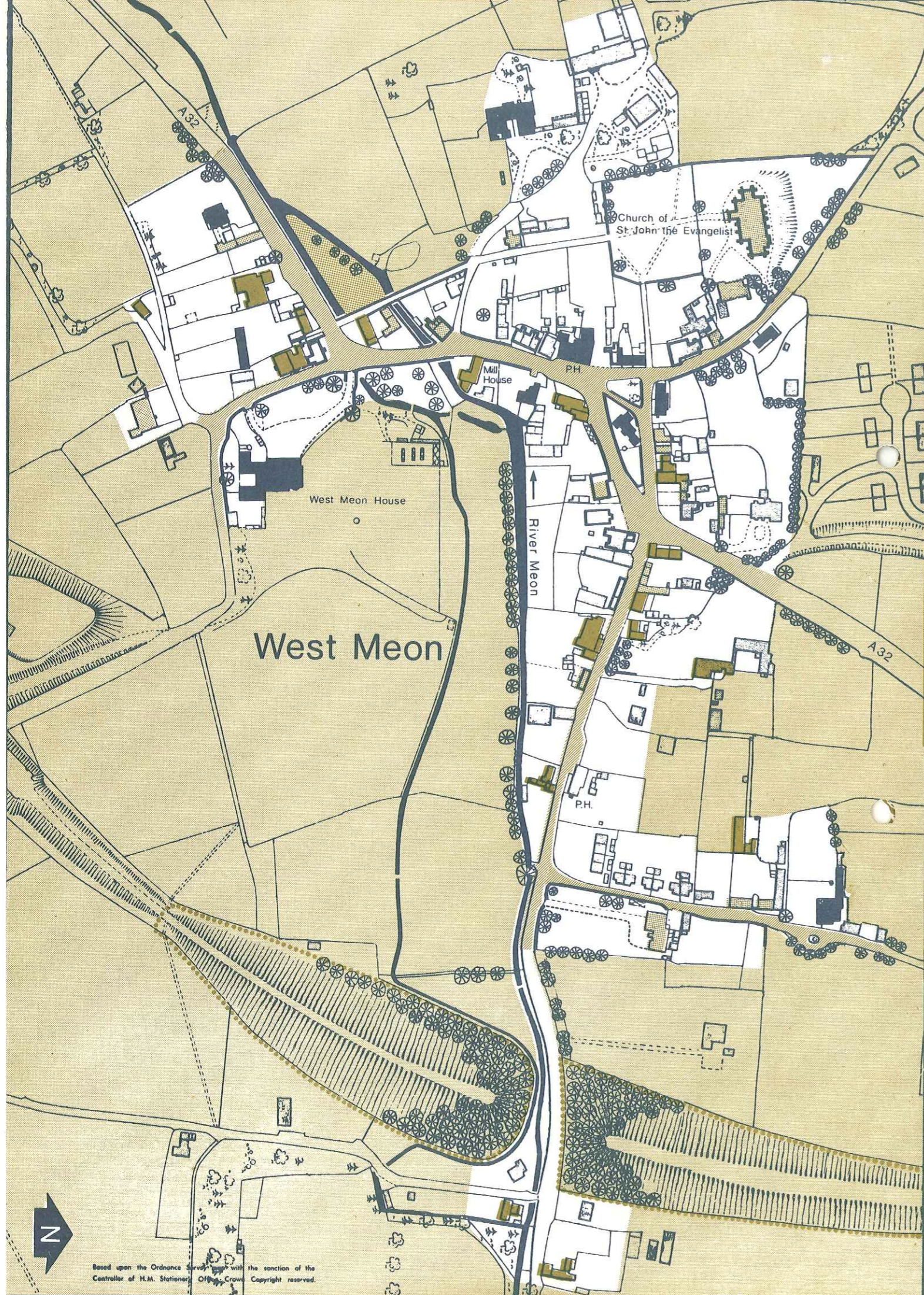
On the east bank of the river in what was the Parish of Meonstoke (Corhampton and Meonstoke are now combined), lies the Church of St. Andrew which has 13th Century origins but was extensively restored in 1903.

Meonstoke is reputed to be the site of a Jutish settlement made by the tribe of the Meonwaras in about 475 A.D. The village lies to the south and east of its church on the lower slopes of the valley and has been developed mainly along two streets which meet at right angles, one running eastwards from Corhampton and the other following the course of the river southwards towards Soberton.

At the beginning of the 18th Century most of the village was destroyed by fire and much of the re-building, which still remains, was in the form of rows of houses fronting on the street and entered by flights of steps. At the southern end of the village the street turns sharply to the east and is lined by development that is out of character with the remainder of Meonstoke.

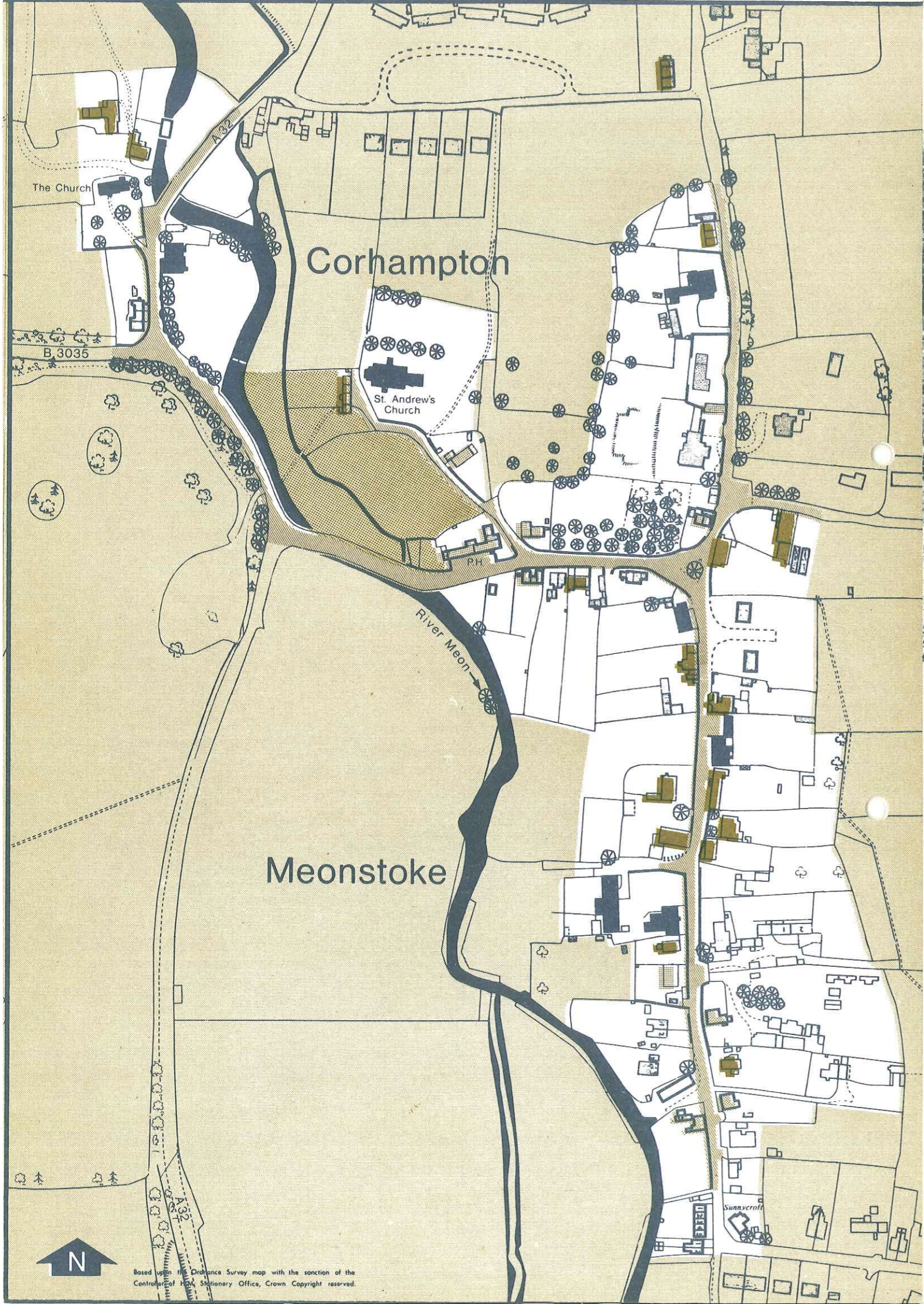
Policy

1. The attention of owners, occupiers and potential developers of buildings listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest is drawn to Part V of the Town & Country Planning Act, 1968, which introduced a new code of procedure designed to protect such buildings when either alteration, demolition or extensions are proposed.
2. Uses within the Conservation Areas which generate unreasonable noise, or other nuisance, or would result in untidy sites, or considerable traffic generation will not normally be permitted and any existing uses of this nature will not usually be allowed to expand.
3. The scale and relationship of buildings is very important in these villages and may be destroyed if street widening occurs, if building lines are not maintained, or if certain trees and walls are removed. Where it is necessary to replace a building the position, scale and massing of the original should, in most cases, be reproduced. It is therefore proposed to retain the existing frontage where indicated on the Maps, although in the interests of road safety some minor road improvements may be necessary.
4. The replacement of buildings will be permitted when it can be shown that the existing building is of an inappropriate character or wholly beyond repair. New buildings or additions to existing buildings will be permitted only where they will make a positive and appropriate contribution to the design of the area or will be entirely unobtrusive.
5. Permission in outline form will not normally be given for building development in the Conservation Areas; detailed plans including elevations showing the new building with details of adjoining properties and particulars of colours, materials, existing trees and proposed landscape treatment will usually be required. Particular care will be exercised to ensure that inappropriate materials or colours are not used and that advertisement signs, if found necessary, are carefully designed for their purpose and position. Informal consultations will however be encouraged with the Local Planning Authority to assist applicants at the stage when outline permission would normally be sought.
6. The County and Rural District Councils may make grants or loans in appropriate cases towards the repair or restoration of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act, 1962. Buildings on the Statutory or Supplementary List are indicated on the Conservation Area Maps. The list will be reviewed and if necessary a revised list will be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment.
7. The Conservation Area proposals are not intended to supersede the general policies of the Local Planning Authority as set out in the Country Conservation Policy*, but to highlight and safeguard the special features which are important to the character of the four villages. The Conservation Areas include open areas in private ownership which are significant in relationship with village building groups and masses. These areas are shown on the Maps.
8. The Maps show the approximate position of mature trees and tree groups which make a contribution to the character of the villages. If necessary the Local Authority will consider making Tree Preservation Orders and will encourage the planting of new trees and hedges.



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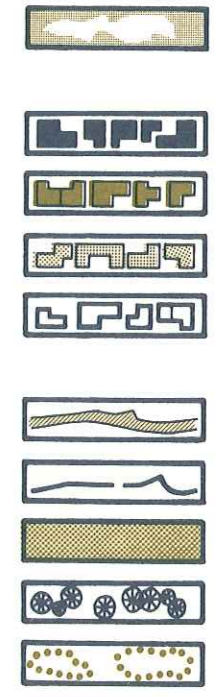


1881

The River Meon where it passes St. Andrew's Church, Meonstoke.

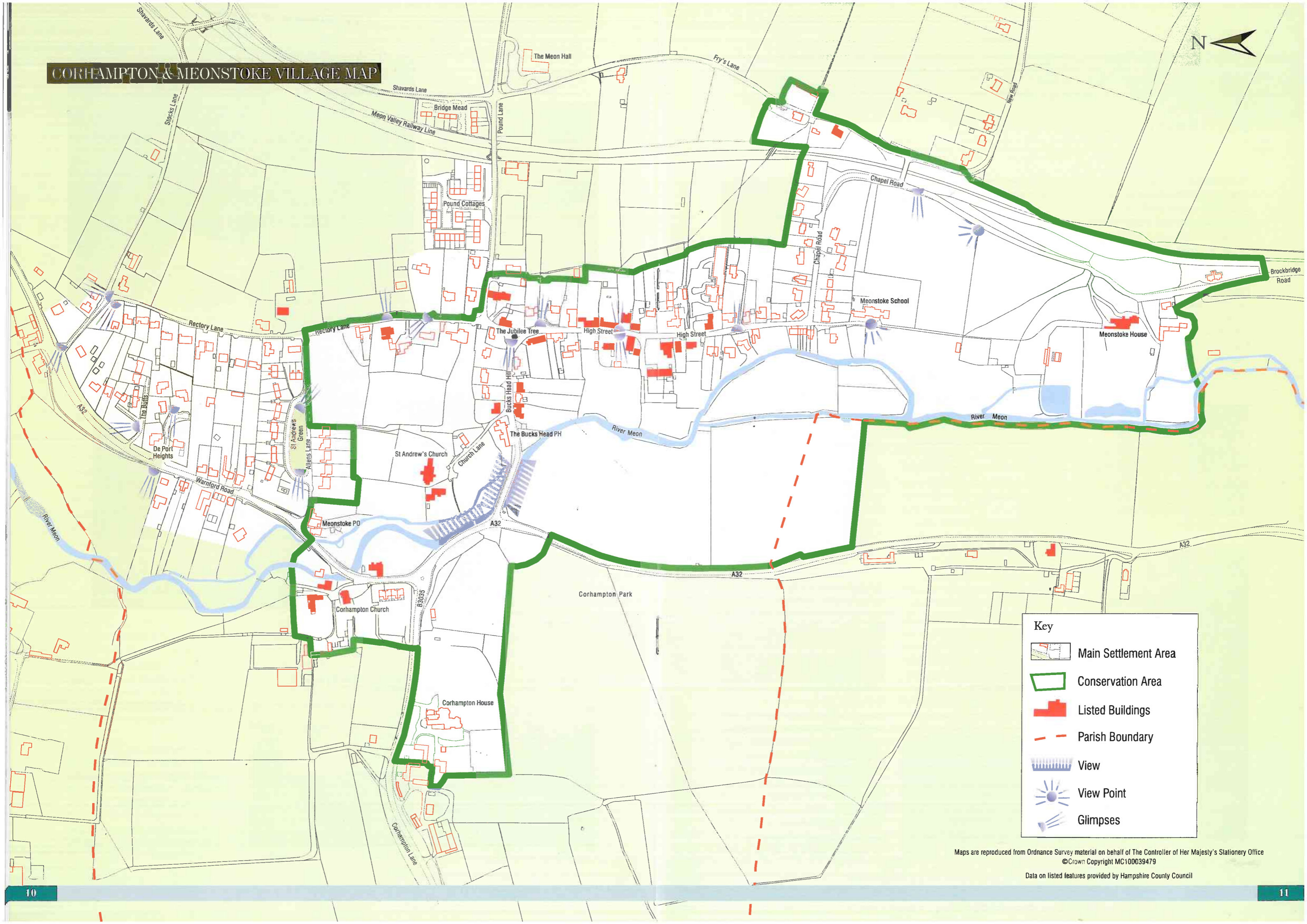
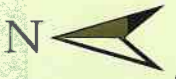
Notation

- boundary of Conservation Areas
 - buildings of architectural or historic interest on the statutory list
 - buildings on the supplementary list
 - other buildings of visual merit
 - buildings on prominent sites
 - existing building frontage and road line should be retained
 - important wall or hedge
 - important open space
 - trees or tree groups of visual importance
 - areas covered by Tree Preservation Order 16
- scale of accompanying maps 1:2500








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CORHAMPTON & MEONSTOKE VILLAGE MAP



Key

-  Main Settlement Area
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Buildings
-  Parish Boundary
-  View
-  View Point
-  Glimpses

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