

HERTFORDSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST
BEAMS Built Environment Advisory and Management Service

THE GREEN, SARRATT

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
AND TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT**



MARCH 1994

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is the duty of the Local Authorities under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Act imposes a duty on the local authority to review from time to time the situation and decide whether any further parts should be designated or parts de-designated. There is also a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas.

Three Rivers District Council have requested BEAMS to undertake a character appraisal and townscape analysis of Sarratt Conservation Area. This report will therefore address the relevant background to the conservation area, advise on the character of the area, provide a townscape analysis and conclude with recommendations for further consideration by the Council.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Designation

The Green at Sarratt was one of the earlier conservation areas to be designated in the County, in October 1969. Its special nature was described in the Committee report as being a:-

"Linear village bordering a long green"¹

2.2 Setting

Sarratt is located in the south west of the County near the boundary with Buckinghamshire. It is a couple of miles outside Rickmansworth which is the main town of the area. The village is located within the Chilterns which is an Area of Outstanding Beauty.

Sarratt is set within a rural context with other villages near by and is on the main route between Rickmansworth and Chipperfield. It is located about three quarters of a mile from Church End which served as a religious centre for the surrounding villages and hamlets.

2.3 Policies

Sarratt is located in the Green Belt of Hertfordshire and as such is protected by policies relating to this.

¹ County Planning Committee Minutes 10th June 1968

3.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Figure 1 illustrates the boundary of the Conservation Area.

3.1 The Historical Landscape and Townscape

Although Sarratt is located in an area that possesses considerable evidence of prehistoric occupation and a combination of documentary and topographic evidence indicates that the settlement has its origins in the early medieval period, few archaeological remains are known from this village.

The earliest evidence relating to Sarratt Green is medieval in date. At this period the parish comprised several manors and the population was dispersed, living in several small hamlets (CF Penman's Green, Mickelfield Green, Church End) and sharing the parish church located 3/4 mile from Sarratt Green, at Church End. Sarratt Green lay within the manor of Sarratt and the settlement is an ancient ribbon development alongside a well preserved medieval village green, an area of land that was grazed in common. This layout may date from the Anglo-Saxon period, since the manor was then already in existence and was granted to the Abbey of St Albans by King Offa. Domesday does not record its owner but the Abbey's ancient title to the manor was confirmed by King John in 1199 and (like Goldingtons/Church End) it remained in Abbey hands until the Dissolution.

It has been suggested that the medieval manor-house of Sarratt was located a short distance north of the Green but there is no archaeological evidence to confirm this siting. Sarratt Hall between the Green and Great Sarratt Hall is called 'Newhall in Sarratt' in 1536. Green End Farm, a late 17th century farmhouse situated at the foot of the Green has a self-explanatory name and the site is probably ancient. Finally, a recent search of 19th century maps has produced evidence that a substantial earthwork, dating to the medieval or an earlier period, stood on the triangle of land at the junction of Church Lane and The Green, at the southern end of the Green. This mound, possibly a motte, is shown on the 1840 Tithe Map (figure 2) but appears to have been levelled by the time of the 1st Edition O.S. Map 1870-1 (figure 3), which merely shows the triangle as the site of a guide post. However, a vertical aerial photograph taken in the 1970's shows that the remnants of this mound may still survive and the site will be visited in the near future to ascertain its present state and possible function.

Sarratt Green has changed very little in its plan since the medieval period and even now has not been extensively developed. The Area of Archaeological Significance possesses high archaeological potential since substantial archaeological remains may survive undisturbed.

3.2 Important Characteristics and Architectural Elements of the Area

Sarratt Green has retained its identity as a village. Sheet 3.2 in the Appendix helps to illustrate its main characteristics which are described below:-

- Linear development
- Low key vernacular architecture on a domestic scale

- Mixture of building styles and dates from early 16th century to 20th century
- Warm brick nestles next to flint and timber framing.
- The rich textures of brick and brick and flint boundary walls
- Presence of boundary walls, railings or hedges provide interest to the street scene.
- The Green and associated ponds.

3.3 Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area boundary is very tightly drawn around the Green and its associated development. Its linear nature is important, as its tightness helps to emphasise this vital characteristic.

4.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

The townscape value of the Conservation Area is dealt with in sections which outline the various important elements that contribute to the overall character and as such special nature of the area. These are highlighted and drawn together in the following chapter. The final sections of this analysis, highlight issues which need to be addressed to maintain the special nature of the area. Sheets in the Appendix help to illustrate points made in the text.

4.1 Important Streets and Spaces

The Green is the most important street and space all in one. However, different characteristics appear in different lengths of the High Street. Three sections can be identified : Green End, the Green and Sarratt Hall.

Green End

Characterised by development round the possible Motte. The entry from Rickmansworth is greeted by the Green and the buildings nestling around it. Entrance from Church End along Church Lane is important. Low key modern development blends into the area. The barn to Green End Farm, provides an important feature. To the left the Victorian village school and school house is an attractive flint building with yellow stock brick dressings to the windows, doors and quoins. Its boundary wall, again in yellow stock brick and flint provides, an important line, wrapping round the school and along the Green, adding continuity between the two areas. The Village Hall is undistinguished whilst the mid 19th century 1,2,3,4 Dell Cottages are an important group of low key yellow stock brick and flint buildings at a right angle to the Green. The Cricketers, a range of three buildings dating between 1700 and the 19th century completes this group and is an attractive public house. The pond completes this pleasant village scene. The new modern village school is well hidden from the road, nestling into a dip in the landscape.

Dimmocks Lane wraps round and into the Conservation Area. The expanse of garden surrounding Green End Farmhouse is an important space and the curve of the land enhances the entrance of the area. The 16th century Green End Cottage, now used as a garage is listed and is an important building in the landscape. It is surrounded by

mediocre late Fifties development. Green End Farm House, an attractive listed building, completes this group of buildings as the title suggests, which terminates the Green.

To the north east, lies a group of late Twenties houses, these are attractive in their own right in a vernacular arts and crafts style. With a separate drive to these houses a wall of soft landscaping, ensures that the rural feel is retained, helping to enclose the Green to the east side.

The Green

The main core of the Conservation Area is the linear Green, which extends for about half a mile. The main road lies to the east of the Green and enables the community along the west side to enjoy peace and comparative silence away from the traffic. Although very few of the buildings are listed along this section, they represent an important period of Victorian development and of the expansion of the village. Their group value is important and all should be retained. This side of the Green is heavily built up. Further development would detract from the village feel. The Victorian expansion of the village is small scale, advancing off into Dawes Lane where attractive terraces help to shape the entrance to the Conservation Area. However, modern additions to these houses detract from the unity of the street scene. Development has continued into this century with the top of the Green contributing a suburban rather than village green character.

The Green itself appears to be never ending. The evidence of ponds and trees helps to break up the area. The village pump, a grade II listed building sits proudly on the upper green.

The eastern side of the Green is dominated by larger houses, all attractively placed within the landscape with large gardens and land. The majority are listed or appear on the local list of buildings, thus emphasising their importance to the Conservation Area. The plots of property coincide with earlier plots of land which are illustrated by the Tithe Map and the 1st and 2nd Edition O.S. Maps (figures 2,3,4). To infill along here would be disastrous. At present all the houses are tucked behind walls, railings or hedges which helps to emphasise the rural feel of the area.

The main Green area is terminated by a group of attractive buildings surrounding what was the Old Wheatsheaf public house. To the other side, Virginia and the Old Cottages help to enclose the Green.

Sarratt Hall

The final section of this linear Conservation Area has a different character to the busy Green. It consists of large scale houses in spacious grounds. The quality of these buildings is emphasised by the majority of them being listed. The rural feel to the area is retained by the soft landscaping to the edges of the road.

Little Sarratt Hall retains its agricultural buildings albeit that they are now in residential use. Great Sarratt Hall is a working farmyard and is a weighty end to the Conservation Area.

4.2 Characteristic Features of Building Design and Dominant Styles and Influential Periods of Development.

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are low key vernacular buildings, mainly housing and agricultural buildings dating between the 16th and 18th century. Timber framed houses exist, many with later brick additions. The earliest remaining houses date from the 16th century - Green End Farm House, Red Lion Cottage and The Old Cottage. The 17th and 18th centuries saw the village expanding with more houses appearing. The wealth of the area is demonstrated by such fine large 18th century houses as Sarratt Hall and Great Sarratt Hall.

The Victorian era introduced more workers housing along the West side of the Green and into Dawes Lane, as well as other facilities with a fine school and two Methodist Chapels.

The 20th century is represented by additional housing such as the development at the bottom of the Green on the East side, consisting of five 1920s houses and other later houses, with Sarratt expanding in pockets outside of the designated area.

4.3 Relationship between Existing Structures and Open Spaces

The relationship between built structures and open spaces is one of the most important features of the Conservation Area. The successful balance between retention of a large open space and the demands of a settlement is achieved with the long built up linear village to the west bordering the Green being balanced by larger scale plots to the east. These houses, the majority of which are listed or of local importance stand within their own plots, helping to retain the rural element.

The use of soft landscaping protecting and screening later development, especially along the eastern side, maintains the rural feel of the village and allows the expanse of Green to appear as if it stretches on forever.

4.4 Form and Structure of Village Plan

The village has no distinct centre as such but development has taken place along the Green which maps show being slowly built up as a settlement. There is very little expansion to the back plots apart from a small housing estate off Alexandra Road and other small scale housing to the east, leaving it more or less unspoilt with. The majority of development is at the southern end of the village and is excluded from the Conservation Area. (This should remain as the status quo). Any further development would unbalance the village character.

4.5 Trees of Strategic and Local Importance

Trees form an important element in the Conservation Area. Views in and out of the Green at Sarratt are greatly improved by the presence of trees. To Church End, large trees provide a focal point to the vista. By contrast, Dimmocks Lane lacks greenery and as such has more of a suburban feel. The hedgerow to Green End Farm therefore is

important as the beginning of the Conservation Area and encloses the view of the Green at this point.

The willow trees by the Cricketers and the pond reinforce the village scene. The pond itself would lose all its charm if the wall of overhanging trees is not maintained. Not only does this greenery frame the pond but also screens the school behind. To the east the late Twenties development is well screened by a heavy hedgerow which again encloses the view to the Green.

The east side has large plots of land and larger houses, the landscaping between is vital to the appearance of this side. Big trees emphasise the larger plots and should be maintained to continue this role. The sense of English gardens prevails along the eastern side again an important feature of the area.

The Green's character is very open, the buildings and landscaping to the sides helping to frame it. Trees and ponds dot the expanse and help to break up the view but it is essential that the Green retains its openness.

Beyond the Green into Sarratt Hall area, the road again becomes a country lane, with hedgerows screening modern development. The hedge to Sarratt Lodge, although is more appropriate to a suburban location. The wall to Little Sarratt Hall of brick and flint with an ivy coping encloses the views to Great Sarratt Hall. The open parkland to the south of Great Sarratt Hall is attractive with the iron fencing emphasising the parkland nature, however the box hedge to the Hall is a disappointing climax to the scene. Great Sarratt Hall provides a gateway into the area from the north, with the country lane petering out into the distance.

4.6 Listed Buildings

The Green at Sarratt has 25 listed buildings which are all Grade II.

Dimmocks Lane	Rose Cottage, Green End Cottage
The Green	Old Red Lion Farm House, Red Lion Cottage, Silfield House Pump on the Green, Sarratt House and Front garden railings, The White Cottage, Stables to rear of the White Cottage The Boot, Barn at Wheelers Farm, Green End Farm House Holly Tree Farm House and Holly Tree Cottage The Nook and Wayside Cottage, The Old Cottage, K6 Telephone Kiosk, Sarratt Hall, Sarratt Hall Cottage, Great Sarratt Hall, The Old Forge, Little Sarratt Hall and Cottage Barn and Stables, Barn and Granary at Little Sarratt Hall

4.7 Locally Listed Buildings

A local list of buildings was drawn up for the Green in 1973. These are buildings of local importance which were not special enough to be considered for listing but still make a vital contribution to the Conservation Area.

Since 1973, many of the buildings contained on the list have become statutory listed, however, the following buildings remain and retain their original number.

4	1, 2 Wheatsheaf Cottages	38	1,3,5,7,9,11,13,15,17,19,21 Dawes Lane
5	The Old Wheatsheaf		
6	3,4 Wheatsheaf Cottages	39	Jasmine Cottage and The Green
7	5 Wheatsheaf Cottages	40	Victoria House
8	Red Lion Barn	41	Ramillies
16	Peartree Cottage	42	Haircutter's Cottage
20	Great Sarratt Hall Farm Buildings	43	Chaloners and Wiloucot Cottages
24	Boundary Wall to Little Sarratt Hall	44	The Old Village Sweet Shop
27	Virginia Cottages	45	Green Close,Middle Cottage,Green Side
30	Mortons Cottage	46	Byways and Highways
33	Greenview Cottage, Rose Cottage and The Woodyard	47	Simmond House
34	Vine Cottage	48	The Old Butchers Shop
35	The Laurels	49	1,2,3,4,5,6, Myrtle Cottages
36	Atlantis, Rose Leigh, and Flint Cottage, St Amant, Cottage facing Green	50	The Cricketers
37	6,12,14,16,18,20,22,24,26,28 Dawes Lane	51	1,2,3,4 Dell Cottages
		52	Old Sarratt School
		53	Outbuilding to Green End Farm House
		54	Sarratt Baptist Church

4.8 Street Furniture, Signage, Lighting and Overhead Wires

The street furniture respects its location within a village. Simple litter bins and seats are provided. The pleasant green painted seats used at Green End and near the Wheatsheaf could be used to provide a pattern for future seating. There is ample provision of seating around the Green.

Street signage is again low key with green and white signs which are very attractive and judiciously attached to walls wherever possible. The use of directional signage is limited and does not clutter up the area overtly.

Street lighting is limited to side streets around Alexander Road and Dawes Lane. Hopefully this will remain as such, leaving the Green unlit at night, save for a few house lights.

Overhead wires proliferate throughout the Conservation Area and break up the skyline. Their removal should be investigated.

4.9 Floorscape

Tarmac is an overall road treatment for the Conservation Area and its understated appearance is ideal. Gravel appears in driveways which can soften the effect of too much tarmac. The Green has been partly treated with stone setts which help to protect the grass area. Their success in this respect is limited as parts of the Green have been ruined by car wheel marks.

4.10 Traffic Management

The nature of development around the Green has evolved a village road servicing the east side of the Green and a main road. Traffic signage is already kept at a minimum. It would be a great shame if any traffic calming scheme was introduced which detracted from the rural character of the village. If such a scheme were proved necessary then prior consultation with appropriate specialist would help to ensure that it was designed to be a sensitive scheme in keeping with the character of the Green. Any traffic calming element has to have as low an impact on the appearance of the area as possible.

4.11 Areas in Need of Attention

The rate of attrition within the Conservation Area is noticeable in the steady stream of DIY improvements. The loss of original windows and doors is regrettable. Not only does it destroy the flow and rhythm of the street, especially when replaced with PVC-U which have neither the aesthetic or ecological qualities of timber. Loss of boundary walls or hedges again detract from the unity of the street scene. Protection could be afforded by listing of some properties, or the implementation of Article 4 Directions which would have the effect of keeping development under control.

There are very few shops in Sarratt, the majority of which have low key shopfronts. However, Londis the local small scale supermarket, advertises on an inappropriate scale in such a sensitive area.

On street parking occurs throughout the village especially as there are very few garages. Where damage to the Green has taken place, some measures are needed. Care of the Green must be ensured to safeguard this major feature.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Overall the Green at Sarratt has retained its importance as a Conservation Area. Its character remains that of a linear village settlement based around a Green common land. There is a mixture of domestic and agricultural buildings and although some modern development has taken place it has not detracted from the special nature of the area. The boundary is still appropriate, its tightly drawn nature emphasises this linear characteristic.

Special care should be taken to ensure that this special nature is not lost by unsympathetic development.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Changes to windows and doors and other features of historic buildings have occurred. Until permitted development rights are re-assessed this will continue unless the District Council implement an Article 4 Direction. Two areas cause concern: The group of buildings making up the Old Wheatsheaf and neighbouring houses, unless these can be listed and the west side of the green including Dawes Lane.

Grant Aid may act as an incentive to help with the change of materials particularly in relation to those properties which are listed.

2. A strict policy for the use of natural materials in Conservation Areas should be drawn up.

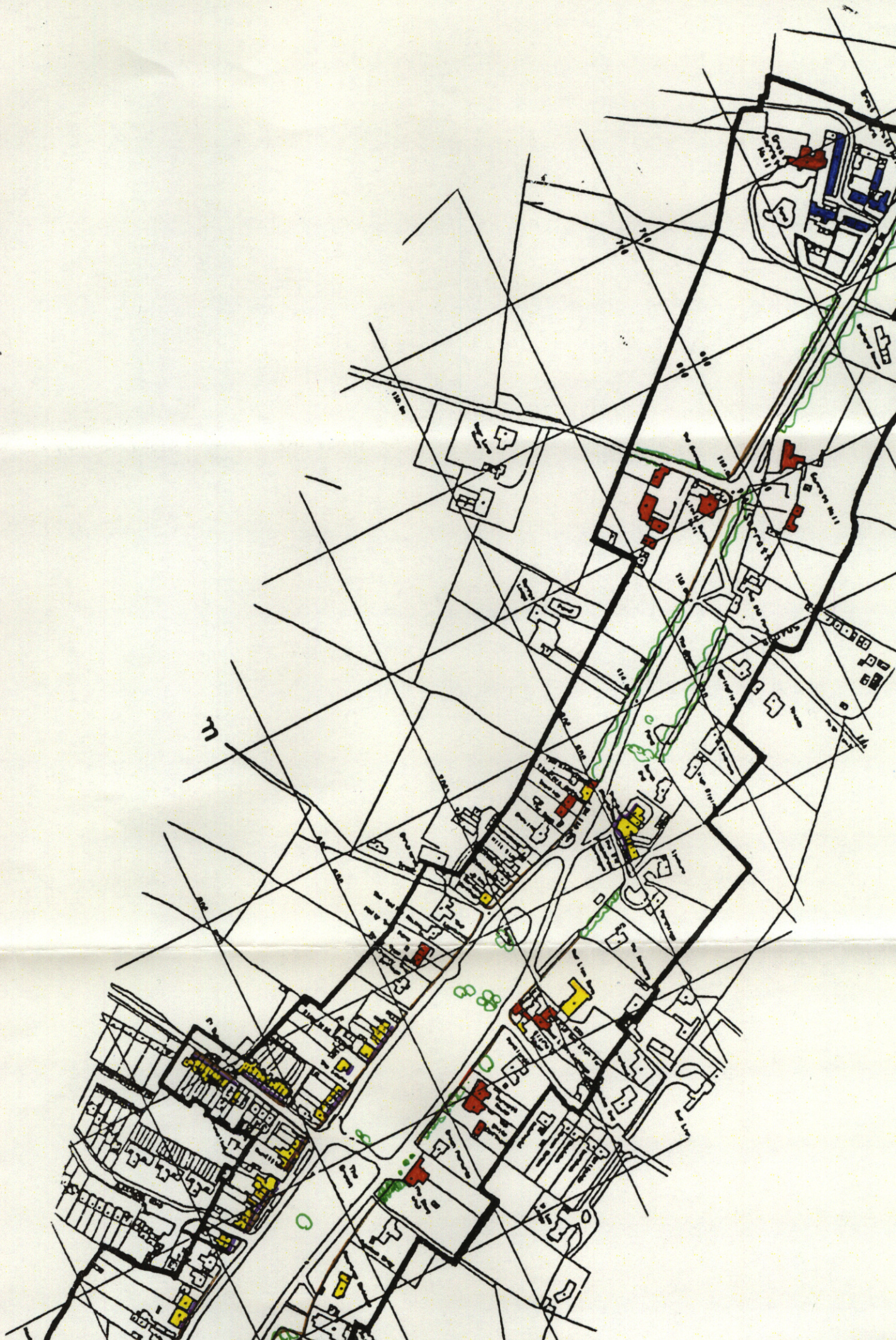
3. Attention to street furniture is important. A simple scheme would enhance the area, based upon the green seats which already exist and replacing litter bins with more appropriate designs.

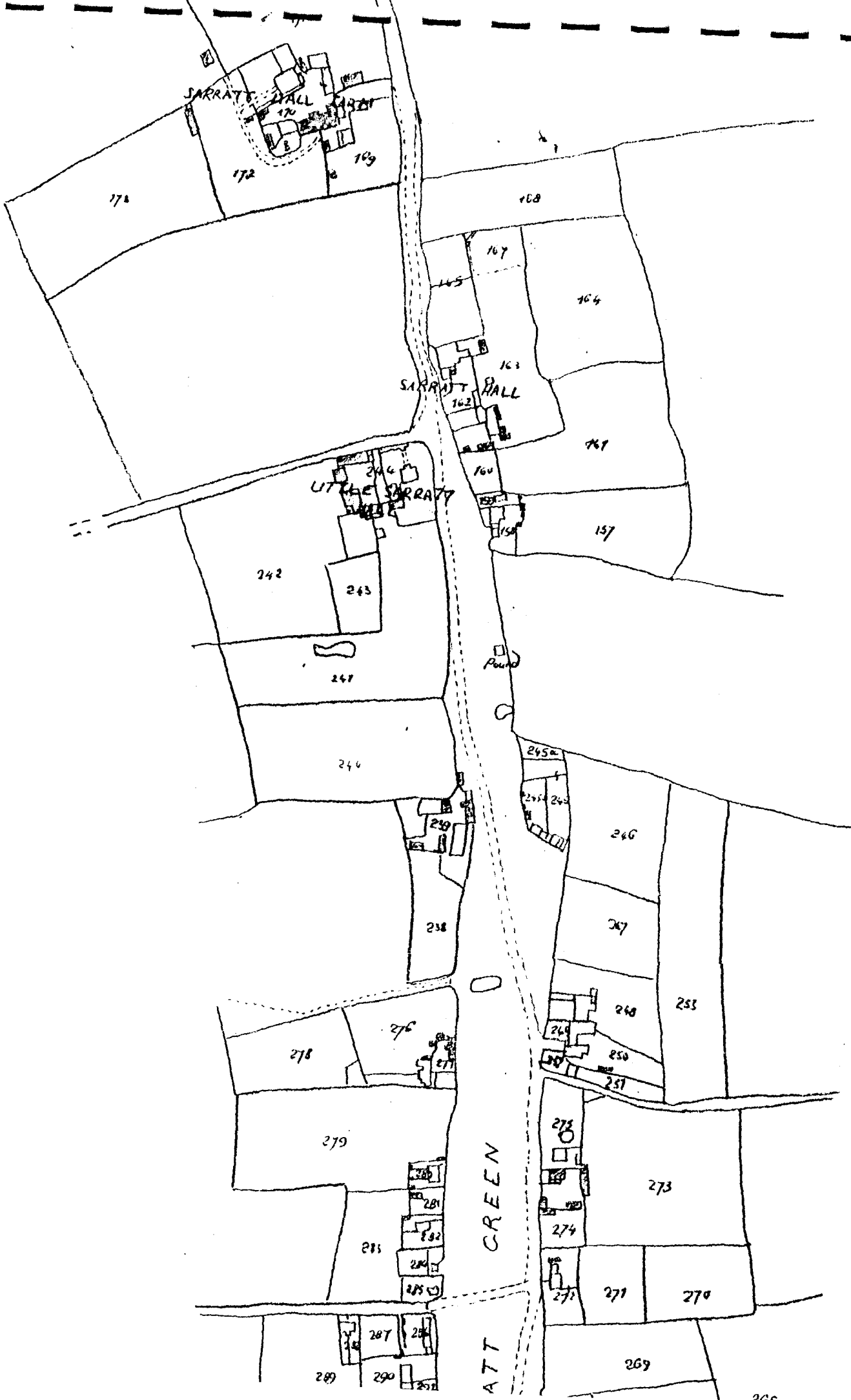
4. Additional hard paving should be avoided unless stringent quality control measures are instigated in order to maintain the verdant nature of the Green and its surroundings.

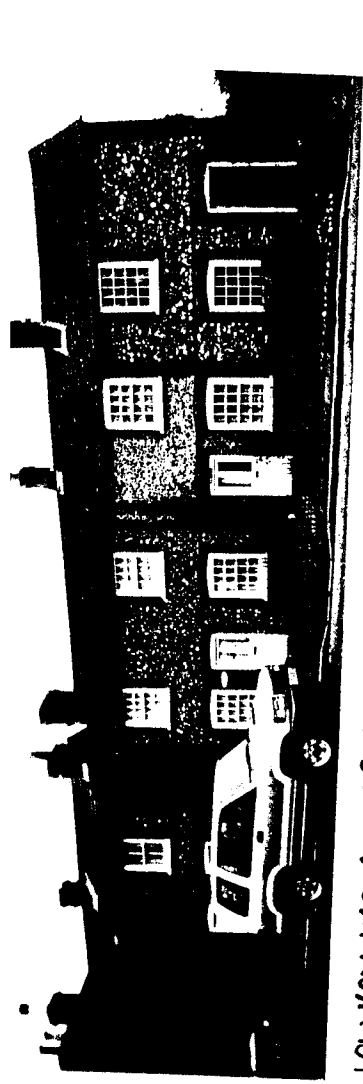
5. Tight controls on development need to be maintained in order to ensure the present balance between buildings and open spaces is preserved implemented.

6. Overhead wires should be removed.

APPENDIX



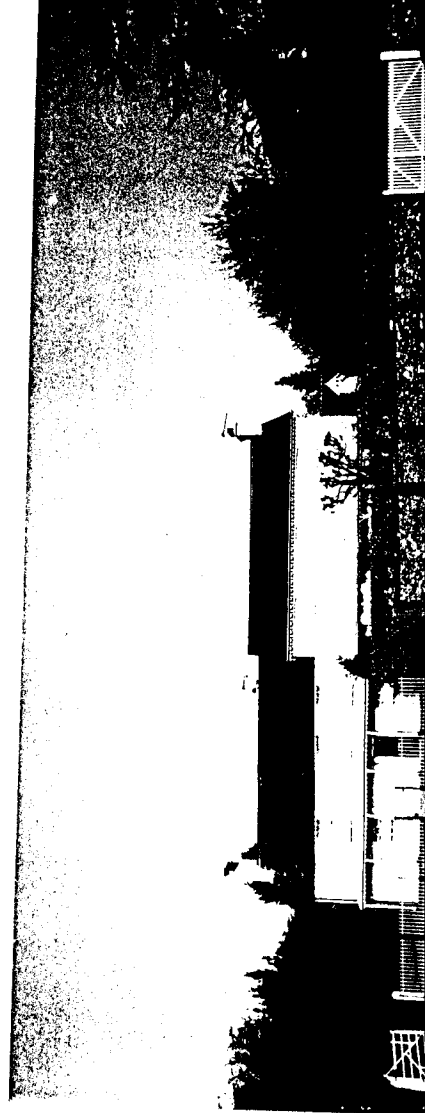




LOW KEY USUALLY ARCHITECTURE, PROVIDING A MIXTURE OF MATERIALS. BRICK, PLUMB, TIMBER BEAMING AND PEG TILES.



A MID 19TH CENTURY COTTAGE SITS IN BETWEEN TWO TIMBER FRAMED 17TH CENTURY HOUSES.



EMPHASIS ON THE BOUNDARY OF THE CONSERVATION AREA



THE EXP BY HOUS



THE VILLAGE AMP- RETENING OF SUCH DETAILS



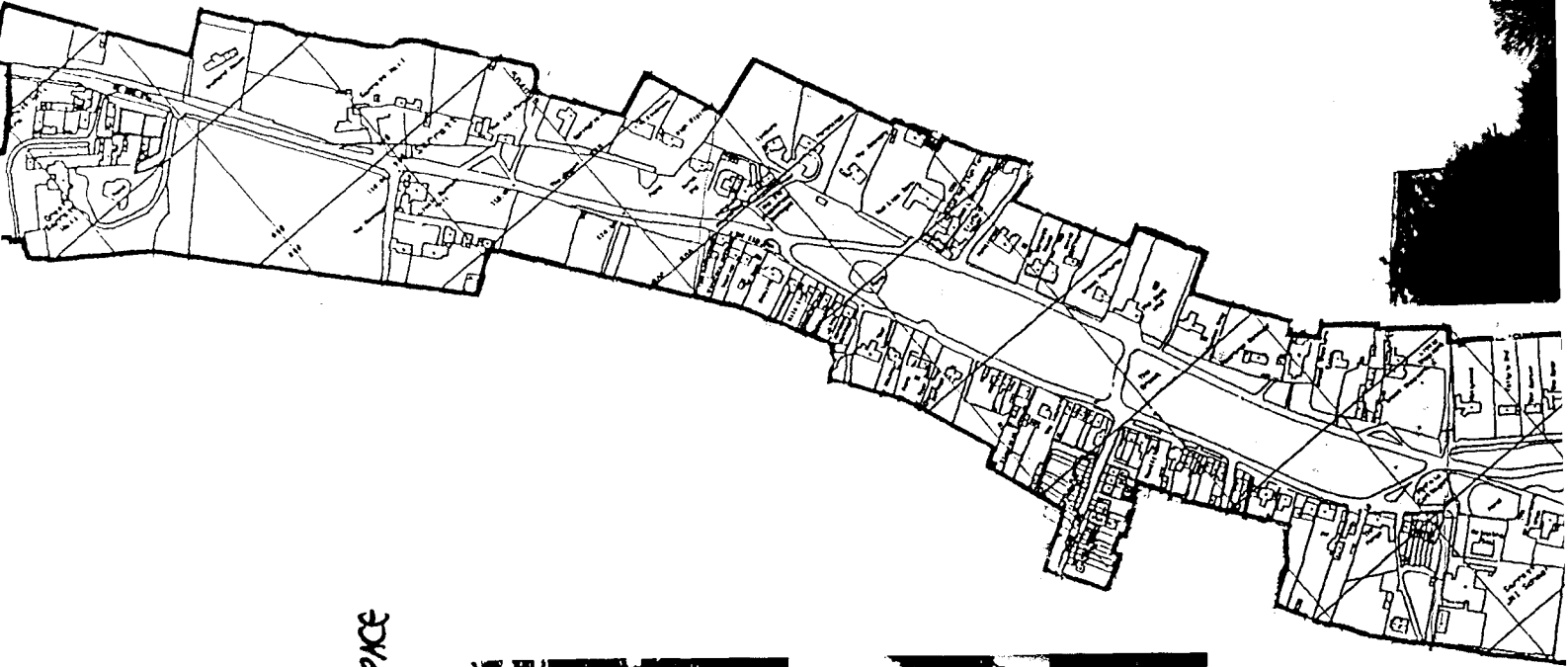
THE EAST SECTION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA. LANDSCAPING HIDES MODERN DEVELOPMENT WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD DETRACT FROM THIS SPACE



HALF-WAY ALONG - TREES AND WATER BREAK UP THE SPACE REGULATION BRAN AND HOUSE ENCLOSE THE VILLAGE TO THE EAST



THE LOWER END OF THE GREEN-VICTORIAN DEVELOPMENT SPREADS FROM THE WESTERN SIDE.



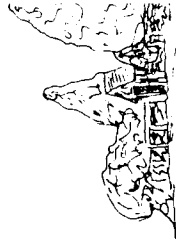
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THE GREEN END COTTAGE TO THE



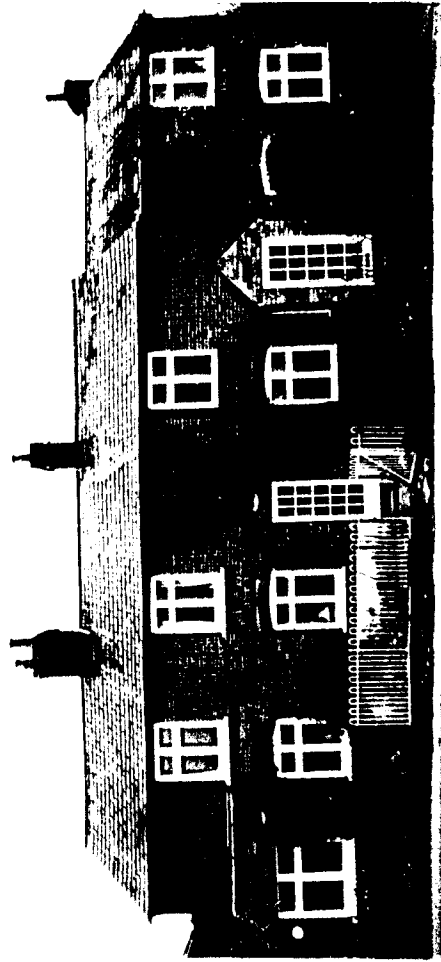
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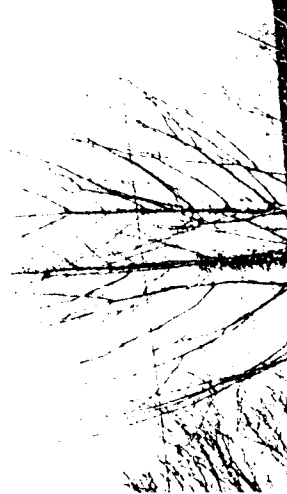
RED LION COTT
 BENCH, HUNT,
 DOMESTIC USE
 THE COURSE



LITTLE SAREATH HALL FARM - BARN, STABLES AND A GRAMARY,
 ALTHOUGH SOME HAVE BEEN CONVERTED TO RESIDENTIAL USE - THE
 FARMYARD LAYOUT HAS REMAINED

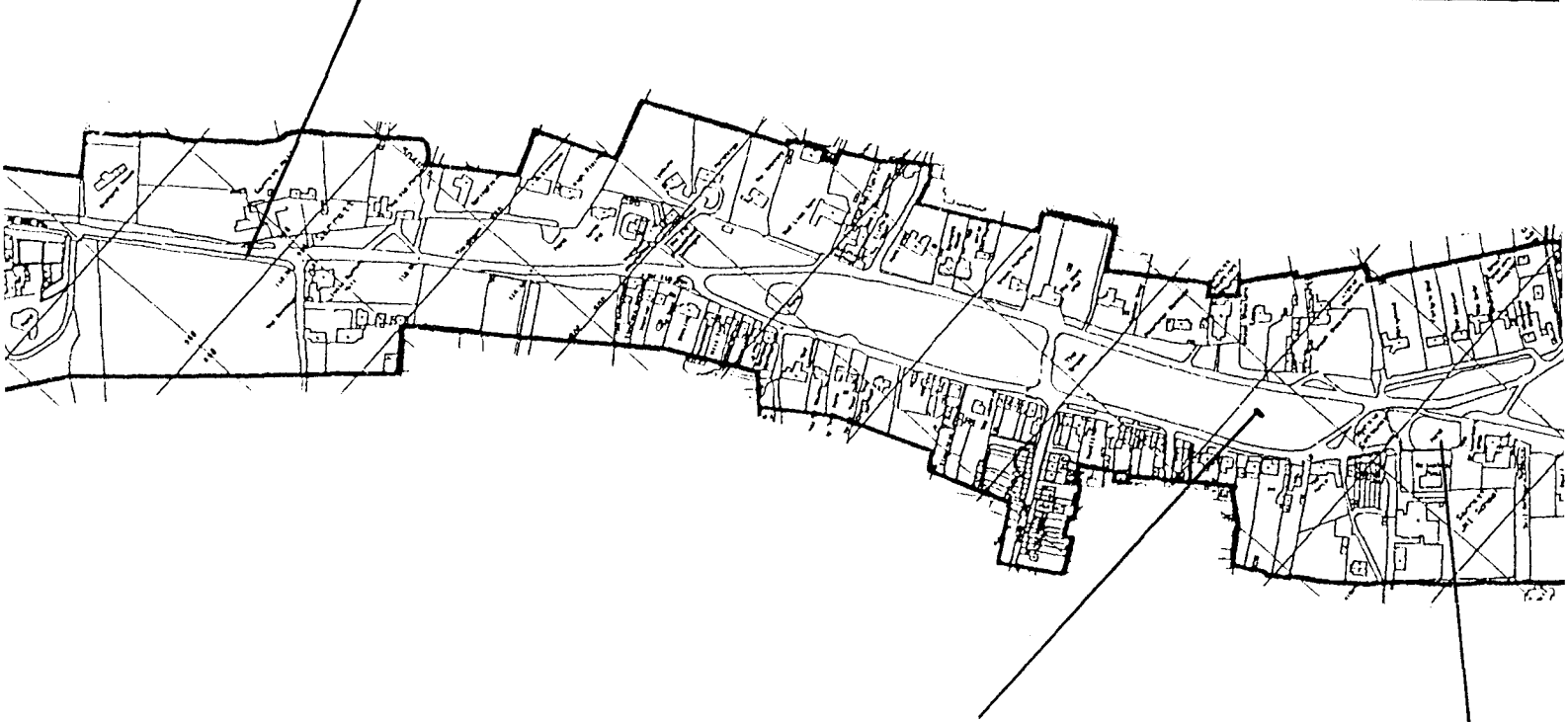


LOCALY LISTED
 VICTORIAN TERRACES
 STRETCH ACROSS THE
 WEST SIDE OF THE GREEN





A PARK
ATTRACT
PHOTOGRAPH



FROM GREAT SERRATI FARM. THE RURAL QUALITY OF THE AREA IS
EMPHASISED BY THE GLOSSY HEDGEROWS



THE GREEN-TRAINED BY BUILDINGS TO EITHER SIDE STRETCHES PAST
THE HORIZON





STREET NAMES ARE ATTRACTIVE
WOULD BE MAINTAINED



TRAFFIC SIGNAGE IS KEPT
TO A MINIMUM EXCEPT
MAYBE AT GREEN END!



GRASS DRENCHWAYS COMPLEMENT THE BUILDINGS
AND REDUCES THE USE OF TARMAC



SARRATT - THE GREEN
HAS RETAINED ITS
CHARACTER - A FEW
MINOR IMPROVEMENTS
WOULD ENSURE THAT IT
STAYS UNSPOILT



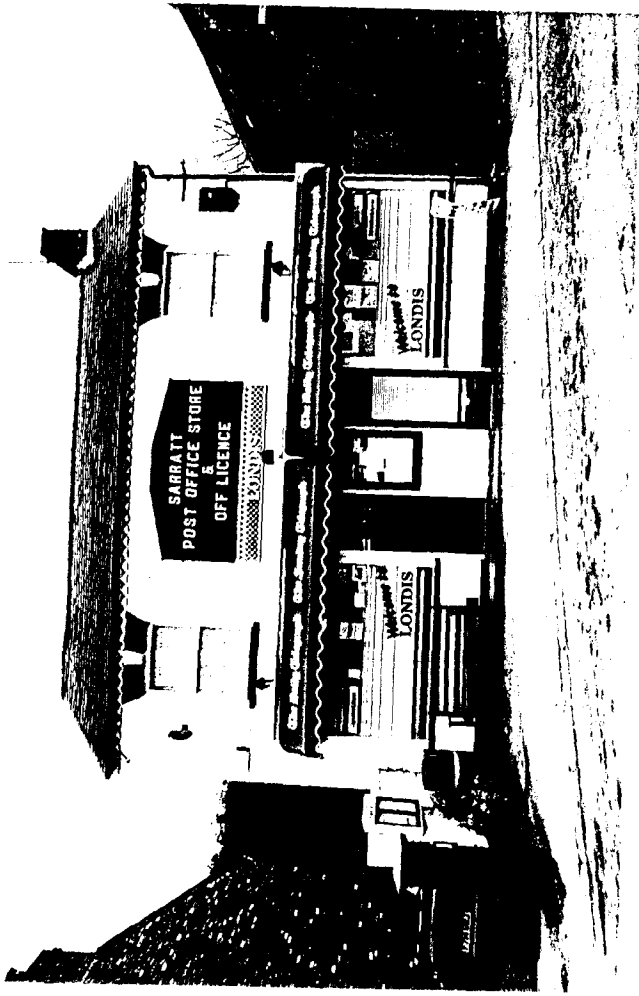
AN ABUNDANCE OF TARMAC. ON THE WHOLE IT
BLEND INTO THE BACKGROUND. IT MUST BE
TO MAINTAIN ITS CHARACTER

PHASIONE. UNFORTUNATELY THE ORIGINAL
SITES SURVIVE, AS DO THE CHIMNEYS
UNFORTUNATELY, PORCHES HAVE BEEN
ADDED, WINDOWS AND DOORS REPLACED,
IN PLACES ATTRACTIVE BRICKWORK HAS
BEEN REPLACED OVER AND IMPORTANT
BOUNDARY WALLS AND FENCES HAVE
BEEN REMOVED.

THE IMPORTANT UNITY OF THE
STREET SCENE WAS VITAL AND RESULTED
IN THE INCLUSION OF THE UME INTO THE
CONSERVATION AREA, IT IS A PITY THAT
SO MANY CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED.

THE GREENWESTSIDE. UNLISTED YET
ATTRACTIVE. UNFORTUNATELY PLASTIC
WINDOWS, A MODERN DOOR AND
CONCRETE TILES HARM THE AESTHETIC
QUALITY OF THE BUILDING.

THE WIKATSHAF PUBLIC HOUSE AND
COTTAGES WERE AN ATTRACTIVE
GROUP OF 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY
HOUSES, STABLE NOS 3 AND 4
WAS THE MAIN BUILDING. A PLASTIC



THE VILLAGE STORE - A VITAL USE BUT THE SHOPPING IS
VERY UNSYMPATHETIC CONSIDERING ITS POSITION IN THE
CONSERVATION AREA.

LOOKING DOWN THE GREEN FROM MAWES UME
THE WHITE PAINT SUFFICIENTLY ALLOWS THE SHOP
TO STAND OUT. NEXT TO THE MORE SECRETE STOCK
BRICK HOUSES. PLASTIC WINDOWS AND WINDOWS
DISPLAYS ARE INAPPROPRIATE

