

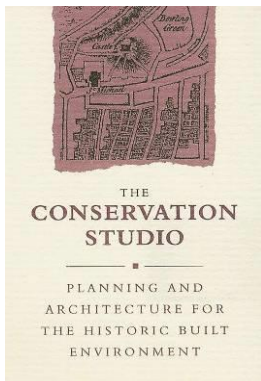


East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Brigstock Conservation Area



Character Appraisal



1 Querns Lane  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 1RL

t. 01285 642428  
f. 01285 642488  
e. [info@theconservationstudio.co.uk](mailto:info@theconservationstudio.co.uk)

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## 1.0 STATEMENT OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE BRIGSTOCK CONSERVATION AREA

The key characteristics of the Brigstock Conservation Area, which make it worthy of its status as a conservation area are:

- Early settlement with Saxon origins on the edge of Buckingham Forest;
- Location either side of Harper's Brook, with undulating countryside providing an attractive rural location;
- The many mature trees, Harper's Brook and the large field to the north of Park Walk provide a variety of green, natural spaces within the conservation area;
- Hall Hill with its listed Market Cross, trees and War Memorial, provides a small, informal village 'square' in the middle of the village;
- St Andrew's Church with its late 10th century staircase tower, listed grade I;
- 12th century Manor House in the centre of the village, listed grade II\*;
- Fine collection of historic buildings dating from the 16th to the 19th century, mainly built using local limestone, either in coursed blocks or rubble stone;
- Simple vernacular forms, often relating to agricultural uses such as farmhouses, barns, and stables, all within the core of the village;
- Use of a very wide variety of roof materials including Collyweston stone slabs, zigzag clay pantiles, natural slate and thatch;
- Despite some modern infill, the village is remarkably cohesive with mostly listed or 'positive' unlisted buildings creating the streetscape;
- Reminders remain of Brigstock's industrial past, namely the watermill in Latham Road, now a house, and the former Wallis's Mill in Back Lane, now used as offices.



Wallis's Mill, Back Lane



Hall Hill



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

This Conservation Area Appraisal has been written by The Conservation Studio on behalf of East Northamptonshire Council. It was prepared in September 2008, along with the Management Proposals, and both were subject to a process of full public consultation after which any necessary amendments were made and the final documents produced.

This Appraisal, with the accompanying Management Proposals, will be used to guide future development and improvements in the village in conjunction with existing and forthcoming planning policies adopted by East Northamptonshire Council.

The present conservation area boundary encompasses the historic core of the village very tightly, excluding back lanes and landscape features which together make an important contribution to the special interest of Brigstock. A substantial extension to include Park Walk and Bridge Street, and other smaller changes to the boundary, are detailed in the Management Proposals. This Appraisal covers the whole of the conservation area, as proposed in the Management Proposals.

### 2.2 Planning policy context

Conservation Areas are defined as '*areas of architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* (The Act). Local Planning Authorities are required by the Act to identify the parts of their area that should be designated as conservation areas and to formulate and publish proposals to preserve or enhance them. Local authorities must submit proposals for the protection and enhancement of conservation areas for consideration at a public meeting within the relevant area. They must also have regard to any views expressed by people attending the meeting.

Broadly, the effects of designation are:

- Conservation Area Consent must be obtained from the local planning authority or Secretary of State prior to the substantial or total demolition of any building or structure within a conservation area, with some exceptions;
- The local planning authority must consider the desirability of *preserving* or *enhancing* the character or appearance of the conservation area when assessing applications for change in conservation areas;
- Permitted development rights are slightly different in conservation areas;
- Permission is required from the planning authority to fell or lop a tree over a certain size.

### 2.3 Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework

Current planning policies for Oundle, including those governing development and the management of change in conservation areas, are laid out in the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS), adopted in June 2008. In particular, CSS Policy 13 (Sustainable Development Principles) sets out criteria for raising standards of design and the protection of existing historic and landscape assets. CSS policies need to be considered in conjunction with the East Midlands Regional Plan (adopted March 2009), in particular Policy 27 (Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment).

The conservation area character appraisal and management proposals documents will sit alongside the conservation policies contained within the CSS and Regional Plan and be complementary to its aims of preserving and enhancing East Northamptonshire's conservation areas.

The current relevant planning documents are:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- Central government guidance, principally as set out in “*Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*” and “*Planning Policy Guidance 16: Planning and Archaeology*”.
- East Midlands Regional Plan (adopted March 2009).
- The Joint Core Spatial Strategy for North Northamptonshire (adopted June 2008).
- East Northamptonshire Council’s emerging site allocations development plan documents.

## 2.4 Purpose of the appraisal

This appraisal defines the special architectural and historic interest for which the Brigstock Conservation Area merits designation. It identifies the positive features that should be protected and highlights the negative factors that detract from its character and appearance. It will be used by the Council in considering proposals for demolition or alteration of buildings, as well as for new developments. It will also help property owners and developers to take account of the importance of buildings, features, spaces and landscape within and adjacent to the Conservation Area.

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal leads to Management Proposals, setting out policies and actions to conserve and enhance the conservation area’s special architectural and historic interest and to mitigate the effects of negative features. The Management Proposals will be included within a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Framework and, as such, will be adopted as local planning policy.

Preparation of the appraisal involved an extensive survey of the conservation area undertaken in August 2008. The omission of any particular feature does not imply that it is of no significance.

## 2.5 Community involvement

The survey of the Conservation Area has included a process of public consultation to identify the following:

- The special characteristics of the Brigstock Conservation Area;
- The key negative features and issues;
- A range of possible actions that would mitigate or offset these detractors.

The consultation began with a meeting and walkabout with Town and District Councillors on 11th September 2008. It was followed by a period of full public consultation.

## 3.0 THE BRIGSTOCK CONSERVATION AREA

### 3.1 Designation

The Brigstock Conservation Area was first designated on 22 January 1971.

### 3.2 Activities and uses

Brigstock is primarily a residential village with many of the residents working in nearby Corby or Thrapston. In the centre of the village are a small number of shops including a small supermarket, two public houses (one of which is currently closed and being refurbished) and a number of other facilities including a beauty salon. A combined Newsagents and Post Office can also be found in the High Street although the future of the Post Office is not certain.

Originally, the village would have relied upon its rural hinterland to provide jobs in agriculture and other country-related activities. Many of the historic buildings in the conservation area provide links to this past, with a number of former mills, farmhouses, barns, stables, and piggeries, all located centrally in the village. Today, many of these have been converted into residential uses.

The conservation area contains the Parish Church of St Andrew's, the Brigstock United Reformed Church, and Harper's Court, a modern building on the bank on Harper's Brook providing sheltered housing for the elderly. A modern Village Hall and adjoining Doctors' Surgery can be found in Bridge Street. The Brigstock and Lathams C of E Primary School is located between Bridge Street and Church Street, encompassing both historic and modern buildings.



Headmaster's House, Brigstock and Lathams C of E Primary School, Latham Street



Brigstock Post Office, High Street



The Three Cocks Public House, High Street



## 4.0 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

### 4.1 Geographic location

Brigstock is a small village on the northern edges of East Northamptonshire, close to Corby in Leicestershire. It lies between the villages of Sudborough and Stanion, just off the A6116, a largely late 20th century road which bypasses the village and connects the A14 to Corby.

### 4.2 Topography and geology

Brigstock lies in undulating countryside either side Harper's Brook, a modest stream which flows in a north west to south east direction, eventually connecting into the river Nene near Thrapston. Some of the village is therefore located on a relatively flat part of land, immediately adjacent to the brook, and this can best be seen in Bridge Street where an ancient causeway rises above the former mill leat to connect the properties in Park Walk and Bridge Street with the High Street. Otherwise the principal historic buildings are to the north east of the stream, located slightly up the hill to avoid any occasional flooding. Surprisingly the Manor House is actually very close to Harper's Brook but may in the past have been protected by a moat, part of which remains.

These changes in levels can be clearly seen at a number of locations on entering the village – firstly along Sudborough Road, where the land rises gently up Church Street to Hall Hill; secondly along Stable Hill, which also drops down from Hall Hill; thirdly, along Bridge Street, which drops down from the High Street towards Park Walk; and fourthly, to the south west of Stanion Road on the north western edge of the village, where there are good views over the brook.

Northamptonshire lies next to the coal measures of Leicestershire and the availability of local iron ore and Jurassic limestone for use as a flux led to the development of the Corby ironworks in the 18th and 19th centuries, which later became a vast steelworks.

At Brigstock the buildings are largely built from limestone, which was quarried locally – former quarries are shown on modern maps at Weldon and Lower Benefield. This is either used as a rubble stone or the better quality deposits can be dressed and used as the more prestigious ashlar blocks. Collyweston stone 'slate' can be seen on many roofs in Brigstock, brought over from limestone quarries closer to Stamford. Further south, around Higham Ferrars, the limestone gives way to Upper Jurassic Oxford Clay, which provides the raw material for roof tiles and brick. Sand pits around Brigstock can also be seen on historic maps.



Listed cottage in Church Street



Listed cottage in Bridge Street

### 4.3 Landscape setting

Brigstock sits in rolling countryside which was under the control of several large country estates. Fermyn Woods Hall, an early 17th century building which is listed grade II\*, is located only two miles to the north of Brigstock along Benefield Lane, although the A6116 has now cut the house off from the village it historically once largely controlled.

To the north and east of Brigstock are remnants (Laundimer Wood, Mounterley Wood and Fermyn Woods) of the vast Rockingham Forest which once covered the land between Stamford and Northampton. A popular Country Park in Fermyn Woods can be accessed by car from the A6116 and by pedestrians via a footbridge from the end of Lyveden Road.

## 5.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 Archaeological interest

The earliest traces of human habitation in Brigstock area have been provided by a human skeleton which was found in a local sand pit and has been dated to c.1500 BC (the early Bronze Age). An Iron Age roundhouse has also been identified within the medieval deerpark to the north of Brigstock. There are also considerable remains from the Roman period, and a Roman road, called Gartree Road, is known to have passed through the parish. This connected Leicester to Godmanchester, and although its exact location has not been verified, it has been traced as far as the other side of Stanion and it also appears again near Titchmarsh. In 1981 two Roman shrines were excavated near Luscombe's Lodge to the north east of the village, and this produced several bronze statuettes and over 270 coins.

There are no Scheduled Monuments in the Brigstock Conservation Area.

### 5.2 Historical development

The name 'Brigstock' perhaps denotes *the stockade by the birch trees or the shrine by the bridge*. The present village was established during the Anglo Saxon period, and endowed with a church from at least the ninth century. This early building was destroyed by Danish raiders, but parts of the present parish church of St. Andrew – for example the nave, and, most notably, the west tower – can be traced back to a substantial building of the late 10th or early 11th century. The church was a foundation of some significance – in addition to serving as a soke centre, Brigstock appears to have held some responsibility for the chapels of neighbouring villages. By the time of Domesday Book in 1087, the settlement of *Bricstoc* was recorded to have both a watermill and a resident priest.



The bridge in Grafton Road

Brigstock's once moated Manor House is located close to the church and the earliest parts of the building, the great hall, can be dated to c1150. The Manor House was founded as a royal hunting lodge, and King John, visiting a number of times at the turn of the 13th century, is known to have held court there in the February of 1207. In subsequent years the residence was to be converted to the status of a private house, entering the ownership of the Montagu family, ancestors of the Dukes of Buccleuch, around the turn of the 14th century.



Hall Hill, the site of the medieval market place

By the 15th century, Brigstock had come to comprise the largest settlement within Rockingham Forest, and was granted the right to hold a weekly market and two annual fairs by Edward IV in 1466. By 1500 the population had risen to over 1,000 inhabitants. It was during this period that a number of changes were gradually carried out to the parish church, with the more elaborate rebuilding of the north chapel, the addition of a sacristy, and creation of a south chancel chapel and a southern porch. The Manor House was also remodelled and enlarged in c.1550, and, on a more modest scale, new buildings were added or existing ones rebuilt in the village centre. The houses begun during this period - such as no. 2 High Street, and Roke House, Lyveden Road – form the earliest survivals of their type in Brigstock.

In 1620 the Reverend Nicholas Latham founded a charity school to serve the rural population which originally occupied a site on Hall Hill, moving much later to Latham Street. This was one of the first such institutions in the county. Agriculture continued to be of great importance to the settlement during this period. The production of wool, in particular, had long been integral to the county's economy and Brigstock's Old Dry Lane, still provided with 18th century outbuildings, formerly served as a Drove Road. Dye works are known to have been in operation within the village before 1725. By the turn of the 19th century Northampton had around 640,000 sheep, making it the second largest producer of long wool within the country.

Apart from farming and the associated wool trade, the 18th century saw the establishment of local brick kilns, although the material was to be little used (apart from chimneys and the like) within the predominantly stone-built village until the 1900s. The closing years of the 18th century were further marked by the founding of Brigstock's first non-conformist church, the Congregational Church of 1798. Situated behind Mill Lane, this was followed in the following century by a further chapel built between High Street and Back Lane.

Both of these survive albeit altered. Although no longer a place of worship, the brick built Primitive Methodist Chapel of 1843 still stand in Park Walk, and today is home to the Women's Institute.



The Primitive Methodist Chapel of 1843

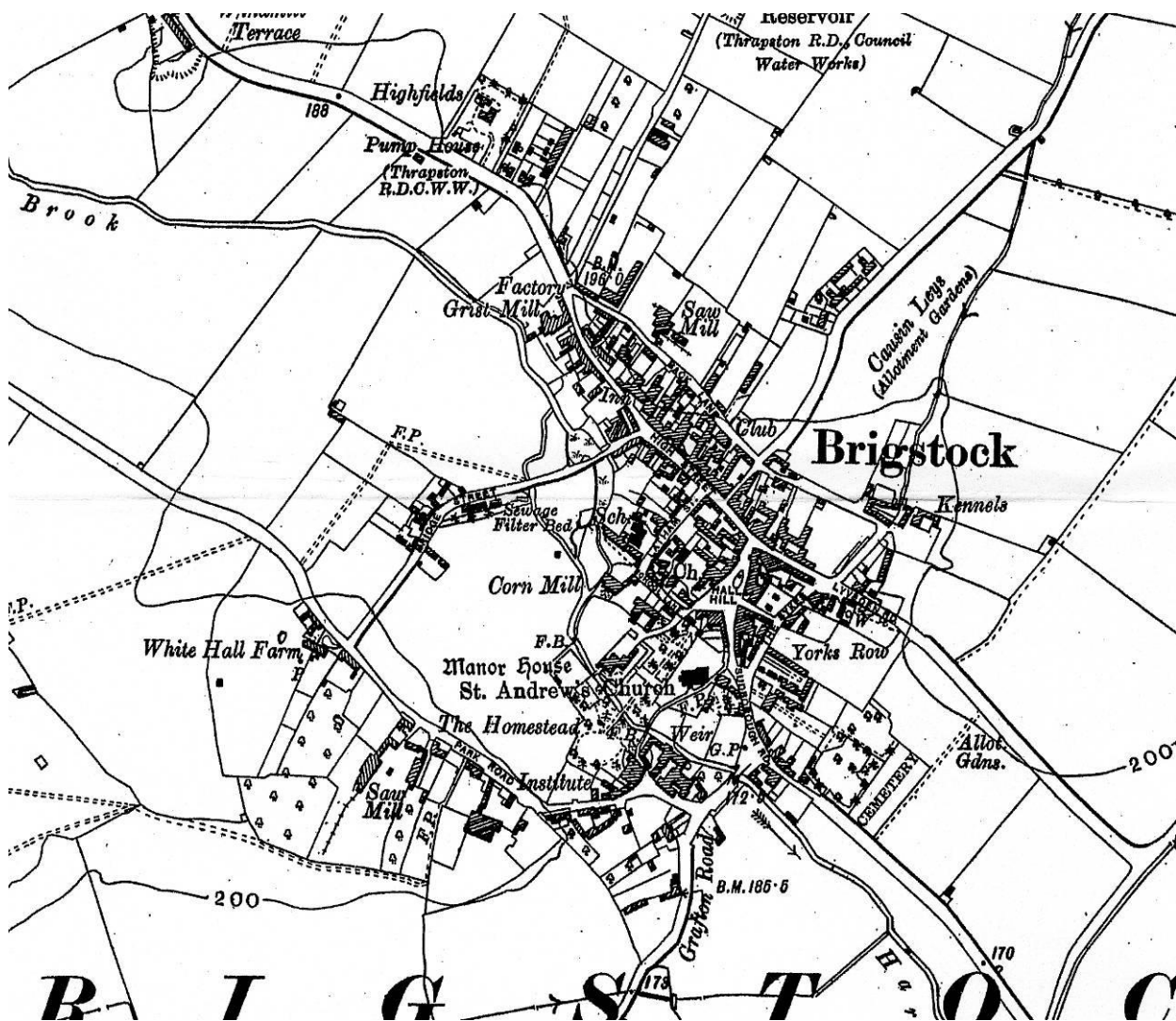
Further changes carried out to the fabric of the village during the latter half of the 19th century included the rebuilding of Latham's School, and the creation of a school master's house, on a new site in Latham Street. Carried out in 1873 under the patronage of the Duke of Buccleugh, the design was the work of the acclaimed architect and historian Arthur Blomfield. In 1874 Wallis's Clothing Factory was built in Back Lane to provide local employment during a period of agricultural hardship, when labourers across the county were leaving to find employment within the towns. The industry proceeded to operate until the late 20th century when the building was converted into offices.



During the 20th century, the history of Brigstock was to become involved with that of the neighbouring town of Corby. A camp was founded on Stanion Road to accommodate the Scottish workers drawn to Corby's steelworks, and between the 1920s and 1960s the parish saw the opening of sand quarries to provide building materials for the rapidly expanding town. By 1986, however, the area had been converted to a country park. The 1927 map records two saw mills in Brigstock, no doubt utilising the timber from the adjoining woodland. Today, Brigstock remains a popular village with around 43 listed buildings, surrounded by attractive countryside and now thankfully bypassed by the busy A6116.



Latham's School, Latham Street



Historic Map of 1927





## 6.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### 6.1 Layout and spaces

Brigstock retains its mainly medieval street layout with a variety of smaller, quite intimate village 'squares' at various road junctions which provide interest and vitality. Despite some modern development to the north west and south east, the historic character of the village has remained relatively unaltered and today provides a number of narrow, winding streets, lined with mainly historic buildings.

Historical maps confirm that Brigstock developed on the Stanion to Sudborough road which follows the line of Harper's Brook in a north west to south east direction. The Sudborough road enters the village from the south east very close to the bridge over the stream which carries on into Grafton Road, which leads in a southerly direction out of the village. Park Walk leads from Grafton Road, originally servicing a variety of farmsteads and, from the 19th onwards, a small collection of cottages around a very informal open space where a narrow alleyway leads back over the brook to St Andrew's Church.

From the junction with Grafton Road, where there is another small open space, Church Street leads up a gradual incline to Hall Hill, the focal point of the village. This pleasant village 'square' is actually triangular in shape and views are focused on the medieval Market Cross, some street trees, and the War Memorial, with its planting.

At the top end of Hall Hill, the road turns sharply left and becomes the High Street, or, to the right, descends down the hill (StableHill) to a back lane (The Syke) which leads towards Kennel Hill and Lyveden Road.



Hall Hill from Church Street

Hall Hill is the part of the village with the highest concentration of listed buildings, being close to the parish church and the medieval Manor House, which is accessed from the corner of Hall Hill. From this point a narrow lane (Mill Lane) leads around towards the mill and then turns sharply to the north where it provides access to the village school, before rejoining High Street.

The High Street is narrow in places and again lined with many historic buildings, some of them former farmhouses. On the north side of the street, Back Lane provides access to the plots which stretch between the two streets. The regular layout of these plots suggests that they may have been laid as part of a planned development, perhaps as medieval burgage plots.

At the junction with Back Lane, High Street widens as it leads out of the village towards Stanion. Development is all on the northern side, with fields to the south, dropping down a slight incline to Harper's Brook.



St Andrew's Churchyard

The only green open space in the village core is the churchyard around St Andrew's Church, where mature trees add to the special character of the area. These trees link with the many trees in the adjoining Manor House garden, and also along Harper's Brook. Outside the centre, and within the proposed conservation area extension, a very large field is located between Harper's Brook and Park

Walk/Bridge Street. This is used for grazing sheep and adds to the more rural character of this part of Brigstock.

## 6.2 Relationship of buildings to spaces

Although Brigstock sits in rolling countryside, the tightness of the built form within the village centre is noticeable, particularly as the streets are relatively narrow. In the principal streets, namely Hall Hill and High Street, the buildings generally sit on the back of the pavement, and are arranged in short groups of maybe three or four houses, then a gap, then more buildings. Some buildings are detached, with their gardens hidden behind high stone walls. There is great variety in the building form, but usually the buildings face the street apart from on the north side of High Street where barns and other agricultural buildings stretch back at right angles to the street. Sometimes smaller barns and other agricultural buildings define the edge of the street, as in Stable Hill and on part of the south side of the High Street. Yorks Row in The Syke is an interesting terrace at right angles to the street, and a similar cottage group lies on the north side of Back Lane, though much shorter. A number of stables and other storage buildings between Church Street and The Syke adds to the informal nature of the village centre, particularly due to their reducing size and varied building materials.

Around Hall Hill, the principal open space in the village, the buildings are densely placed apart from the west side, where Mill Lane leads down to the Manor House and the buildings associated with the mill. Here there are a number of former agricultural buildings which are now converted into residential uses and surrounded by private gardens. The many mature trees provide a more rural character.

Buildings facing the field to the south of Harper's Brook along Park Walk and Bridge Street, are mainly is totally rural in character, and many have spacious gardens which are visible from the road.



View over Harper's Brook from Bridge Street

## 6.3 Landmarks and focal points

The most conspicuous landmark in the village is the spire of St Andrew's Church which is best appreciated from Park Walk or Bridge Street, looking across the field to the row of mature trees which mark the line of Harper's Brook and also conceal the Manor House. The other building which stands out is the former Wallis's Factory at the end of Back Lane, which is also visible from Park Walk.

Hall Hill is the principal focal point in the village, where the former public house and the beauty salon add some commercial activities. The space is used for car parking but there is also a small area of grass with trees in the middle between the Market Cross and the War Memorial which has some public seating.

## 6.4 Views and vistas

Within the village core, views are constrained by the enclosed streets, the narrowness of the roads, and the closeness of the buildings. Few of the gardens are visible. However, more generous views are notable on the edges of the village. The most important views are as follows:

- Across the field from Park Walk towards Wallis's Factory;
- Across the field towards St Andrew's Church Spire;
- From the causeway bridge in Bridge Street looking in either direction over the former mill leat;
- Along Harper's Brook from the bridge at the bottom of Grafton Road, in either direction, although these are constrained by trees;
- Along Harper's Brook, next to Harper's Court;
- Up Church Street towards Hall Hill;
- From Kennel Hill towards the countryside;
- From Stanion Road over Harper's Brook.



View from Park Walk to church spire

## 6.5 Trees

There are no street trees in the village centre apart from the small group in the middle of Hall Hill. However, there are many other trees on the edges of the village, and surrounding St Andrew's Church and the Manor House, which are of particular note. The trees around the church and manor link visually with the trees which line Harper's Brook, and together they form an outstanding belt of greenery which permeates the village centre.

There are further mature trees in Park Walk and Bridge Street, which with the trees along Harper's Brook almost surround the central field.

Significant trees or tree groups are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. Lack of a specific reference does not imply that a tree or tree group is not of value.



Trees around the Manor House from Park Walk



## 7.0 STREETScape

### 7.1 Public Realm

The 'public realm' covers a variety of features of the spaces between the buildings in the conservation area such as the pavements, pavements, street lighting, street furniture, and signage. Generally in Brigstock these are low key and unobtrusive, as can be expected in a rural conservation area.

These features are as follows:

#### Pavements

In many places there are no pavements or only limited provision due to the narrowness of the historic streets. Pavements, where they exist, are usually covered in black tarmac with a brick-on-edge kerb (Hall Hill) or a narrow (300 x 100 mm) stone or concrete kerb. Very occasionally these are wider – for example, in the High Street. Around the Market Cross in Hall Hill, there is an area of sandstone paving, made from varied sizes of limestone set out in a rough pattern. This appears to be the only area of traditional stone paving in the village, though there was probably more in the past. Outside Yorks Row, the access alley is paved in large bricks, which would appear to date to the late 19th or early 20th century.



Detail of stone paving in Hall Hill

#### Street name signs

These are modern, and made from cast aluminium painted white with traditional lettering. They are usually fixed to plain timber boards which are in turn fixed to buildings, walls, or supporting posts painted black.

#### Litter bins

Litter bins tend to be modern and made from black plastic, decorated with two gold rings.

#### Public seating

A reproduction 'heritage' wooden bench seat with cast iron ends can be seen close to Grafton Road bridge. Similar seating is in Hall Hill.

#### Street lighting

Traditional 'heritage' cast iron lamps, painted black, can be seen in the churchyard.

Elsewhere, they are mainly modern 'hockey stick' steel columns, painted grey.

Sometimes, as in the High Street, the lamps are attached to the telegraph poles.

#### Wirescape

Overhead wires in many locations are somewhat obtrusive. They are supported on timber telegraph poles, which sometimes also support the street lights.

#### Other features

In Mill Lane there is an attractive cast iron drain cover with the notation 'Crapper and Co Ltd Sanitary Engineers'. The Brigstock Village Map, located next to St Andrew's Church, provides visitors with information about the village and suggests a route for a walkabout.



Brigstock Village Map

## 8.0 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

### 8.1 Building types

The buildings in the conservation area are typical of a small rural village and include the parish church of St Andrew's, the Manor House, a non-conformist chapel, and a school and schoolmaster's house, all purpose built. The two public houses, whilst they have been in commercial uses for many years, retain a domestic scale. Even the village store (the Coop) is located in what was once clearly a house. Otherwise the buildings were built either as houses or for agricultural uses, although nearly all of these (including the town mill) have since been converted to residential uses. Of interest are the high number of smaller barns and stores which can be seen throughout the conservation area, sometimes too small for residential conversion and therefore left for alternative uses such as workshops or offices. Of the historic houses, there are examples dating to the 16th century onwards, although from the street the varied buildings appear to date to the 18th or 19th centuries. The exception is the very early Manor House, though this cannot be seen from any public viewpoint except from a distance.



St Andrew's Church from Church Street

The town also has one medieval Market Cross, located in the middle of Hall Hill, and one former industrial building (Wallis's Factory), located prominently in Back Lane and now offices.

### 8.2 Building form

Buildings in the conservation area generally retain a domestic scale of two or maybe three storeys. Because they were built incrementally, each building is different and although they sometimes form short groups of maybe three or four buildings, they are varied in terms of their roofs, scale, use of materials and details. They are however linked by the use of limestone for the walls although there is some use of brick. Roofs tend to be very steeply pitched (about 65 degrees) to accommodate thatch or Collyweston stone late, although many of the buildings have since been reroofed in slate.

Of note is the variety of gables or flat fronts which face the street, because some of the buildings sit at right angles to the street. This gives the streetscape a pleasing rhythm which is improved by the indenting of some of the frontages with small front or larger side gardens. There are no 'polite' terraces or set pieces of architecture, the overall character being of vernacular forms, developed slowly over a long period of time. The survival of several farm groups, with long, low barns, in the village centre, is another notable feature of Brigstock.



Former barns in Stable Hill

Facing Park Walk and Bridge Street, the buildings tend to be detached and have spacious gardens which can be seen from the road.



### 8.3 Listed buildings

There are about 42 listed buildings in Brigstock Conservation Area. Many date from the 18th or early 19th century, but a number are much earlier although concealed behind later refrontings. The majority are listed grade II but two buildings are listed at higher grades signifying their outstanding architectural or historic interest, as follows:

- St Andrews Church (grade I);
- The Manor House (grade II\*).

#### St Andrew's Church

St Andrew's Church retains a late 10th century staircase tower and features of the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. It is built from coursed limestone rubble with dressings made from limestone ashlar blocks. The mainly 14th century spire is faced in similar limestone blocks with coursed limestone and has three bell chamber openings on each of the four faces. It is roofed in lead.



The late 10<sup>th</sup> century staircase, St Andrew's Church

#### The Manor House

The Manor House has probably 12th century origins, with subsequent alterations of the late 15th and mid 16th centuries, as well as the 18th and 19th centuries. In c1887 it was restored by Gotch and Saunders. It is built from squared coursed limestone and ironstone with ashlar dressings and Colleyweston and clay tiled roofs. The interior retains a 17th century staircase and some rooms with 18th century style joinery and other details. A hall remains which was probably built by Thomas Montague in the late 15th century.

Other listed buildings of note:

#### Roke House, Lyveden Road (grade II)

Roke House has 16th century origins although it was probably altered in the mid-18th century. The two storey building is thatched and faced in squared limestone blocks.

#### Brigstock House no 8 Hall Hill (grade II)

Brigstock House is a symmetrically arranged three bay house on two storeys, said to have 16th century origins. It has a Collyweston stone slate roof over coursed limestone rubble façade. The sash windows have high quality gauged stone lintols above the window openings.

#### No. 2 High Street (grade II)

No. 2 is a limestone house set at right angles to the High Street with date stones of 1588 and 1730. It is built from squared coursed limestone with an ashlar gable end and Collyweston stone slate roof.



No.2 High Street

### Wallis's Factory, Back Lane

This was built by Messrs. Wallis and Linnell in c1873-4 as a clothing factory using coursed limestone with a slate roof. It is four storeys high with large windows made in cast iron, to provide maximum natural light.

### 8.4 Locally listed buildings

East Northamptonshire Council does not yet have a list of locally significant buildings (usually called the 'Local List'), although a consultant is currently preparing a list for parts of the Borough. 'Locally Listed' buildings are valued for their contribution to the local scene, or for their local historic associations, but are not considered to be of national importance, so they are usually not eligible for statutory listing. Policies to control them can be included in the Local Plan or in a Supplementary Planning Document.

### 8.5 Positive buildings

A large number of unlisted buildings have been identified as being buildings of townscape merit or positive buildings. Buildings identified as having 'townscape merit' will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, they are excluded.

Government guidance in PPG15 'Planning and the historic environment' advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area (paragraph 4.27). The guidance states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings.

### 8.6 Building Materials

The most prevalent building material is the local Jurassic limestone, once quarried nearby. The overall character of the conservation area is therefore defined by its warm yellow/brown colour which darkens with age. This stone can be seen on almost all of the buildings apart from the odd brick-built structure. The limestone is used either as rubblestone, with ashlar blocks for dressings such as lintols and quoins, or in coursed ashlar blocks. There are no obvious examples of the use of decorative ironstone banding, found elsewhere in East Northamptonshire, apart from part of the Manor House. This may reflect the relatively low status of the buildings in Brigstock, many of which were built as farm houses, barns, stores or labourers' cottages.



Raised wall in brick at rear of No.2 Hall Hill

One example of the use of brick is the raised stone wall facing the south side of the High Street, at the rear of no. 2 Hall Hill. No. 51 Back Lane is a former barn facing Back Lane, which retains a limestone gable facing the street but has been rebuilt in bright orange brick. Another example, which uses red brick mixed up with blue, is no. 17 Bridge Street. Brick is also used for many chimney stacks, because of its fire proof properties.



No.17 Bridge Street

In contrast to the almost universal use of limestone for walls, the roofs of Brigstock provide a great variety of materials, principally Collyweston stone slates, thatch, clay pantiles of varying colours and profiles, and natural slate. Collyweston stone slates are made by splitting limestone – a process which historically was achieved using natural frost action. The use of this material started in the 17th century if not earlier – it is known that by 1633 there were both open pits and mines in the fields around the village of Collyweston near Stamford. However the ready availability of mass produced roofing materials and the import of slate from Wales via the new railways of the mid 19th century, meant that many of the Collyweston slate roofs have been replaced in the much flatter natural slate which does not provide the undulating, richly textured finish of the stone slate. The Collyweston Stone Slaters' Trust ([www.collywestonstoneslaterstrust.org.uk](http://www.collywestonstoneslaterstrust.org.uk)) aims to keep the traditions of stone slating alive and can provide details of craftsmen who are able to carry out this very specialised work. Examples include no. 2 High Street; no. 16 High Street; and no. 35 High Street.

For the more modest houses and cottages, long straw thatch is the traditional material and there are several examples in the village, most notably Roke House in Lyveden Road, no. 12 Hall Hill, and no. 2 Mill Lane. These roofs have a thick, somewhat 'shaggy' appearance with simple ridges, not raised or cut in the West Country tradition which uses

the more refined combed wheat reed. An example of this type of ridge treatment can be seen on Park Cottage in Bridge Street. There are also a number of buildings with clay tiles of varying colours and designs. These include:

- Black glazed clay pantiles on the back addition to The Old Three Cocks Public House;
- Zigzag clay pantiles on nos. 22/24 Bridge Street and no. 18 High Street;
- Orange Roman clay pantiles on the single storey barn opposite no. 66 High Street (many more examples, particularly on barns and storage buildings).



Nos.22 – 24 Bridge Street

Unfortunately, the original roof coverings of many of the historic buildings in Brigstock have been replaced with concrete tiles or machine-made clay tiles which lack the texture and colours of the original materials.



In some cases some of the concrete pantiles have now weathered to a dark brown and from a distance are not too obtrusive. The use of natural slate, which is very common, is more problematic as it is very thin and flat and lacks any of the texture of the traditional stone slate or thatch.

Orange Roman clay pantiles are also used in several locations to provide a weather-proof coping to thick stone walls. There are examples around the Manor House, facing St Andrew's Churchyard; in the back garden of no. 2 Hall Hill, where they top the brick garden wall; and in several locations in Back Lane. Highly decorative cast iron railings to St Andrew's Churchyard are of special note. Less visible, but entirely appropriate to their setting, are the simple wrought iron spiked railings to allotments next to Harper's Brook.



Cast iron railings to St Andrew's Churchyard

Because the conservation area contains a range of buildings from many different periods, there is also variety in windows and window details, mainly vernacular in form, so simple side opening casements are the most common. Brigstock House in Hall Hill retains the best sash windows in the conservation area, arranged on each of the two floors with tripartite sashes to either side of a single sash. Roof dormers can also be seen, sometimes following the East Anglian tradition with the dormer roof springing almost from the top of the principal roof. An example can be seen on nos. 10 and 12 Latham Street.

## 9.0 NEGATIVE FACTORS

### 9.1 Definition of negative factors

English Heritage's 'Guidance on conservation area appraisals' (2005) states, "The appraisal should identify elements which detract from the special character of the area, and which offer potential for beneficial change". The following is a list of such negative factors in the Brigstock Conservation Area:

- Conservation Area boundary review required;
- Unlisted 'positive' houses have been altered using inappropriate materials;
- Protection of unlisted 'positive' buildings from demolition;
- Unauthorised alterations to a number of listed buildings;
- A number of sites require requiring enhancement:
  - The vandalised telephone kiosk in Stanion Road;
  - Car park to The Three Cocks Public House;
  - Back elevation of The Three Cocks Public House;
  - Eastern end of Park Walk;
  - Coop car park;
  - Village Hall/Doctors' Surgery car park;
  - Stone paving around the Market Cross.
- Public realm – improvements needed to street lighting, paving and wirescape;
- Additions needed to new Local List;
- Fast moving traffic at village entrances;
- Visible satellite dishes
- The protection of views;
- The protection of trees and open spaces;
- The control of new development.



## 10.0 ISSUES

The following 'Issues' have been identified at a local workshop and walkabout and by the consultants who prepared this document following extensive survey work. They all derive from the negative factors noted in chapter 9. These issues provide the basis for the recommendations in the accompanying Management Proposals. They will be subject to regular review by the Council and new ones may be added in the future.

### 10.1 Conservation Area boundary review

- The present boundary encompasses the historic core of the village very tightly, excluding back lanes and landscape features which together make an important contribution to the special interest of Brigstock. A substantial extension to include Park Walk and Bridge Street, and other smaller changes to the boundary, are detailed in the Management Proposals.

### 10.2 Control of unlisted 'positive' houses

- It was noted that many of the unlisted historic houses, which have been assessed as making a 'positive' contribution to the special interest of the conservation area, have been adversely affected by the use of modern materials and details. Most commonly, these include the insertion of uPVC windows; the replacement of clay or stone slates with concrete or machine made clay tiles; and the replacement of traditional front doors with off-the-shelf modern doors;
- There is a general assumption that all 'positive' unlisted buildings will be retained and not demolished.

### 10.3 Alterations to listed buildings

- A number of listed buildings have plastic windows and inappropriate modern roof materials, presumably unauthorised.

### 10.4 Sites requiring enhancement

- The vandalised telephone kiosk in Stanion Road;
- Car park to The Three Cocks Public House;
- Back elevation of The Three Cocks Public House, particularly the stainless steel kitchen vent;
- Park Walk – improvements needed to the pavement and public open space where the road widens at its eastern end;
- Coop car park – the car park is also to store unsightly storage bins and other containers relating to the retail use;
- Village Hall/Doctors' Surgery – the car park is currently surfaced in tarmac and minimal improvements would be welcome;
- The stone paving around the Market Cross needs weeding.

### 10.5 Public realm

- Street Lighting: The street lighting throughout the conservation area is modern, poor quality and overall quite varied, apart from the traditional lamps in the churchyard.
- Paving: The pavements are black tarmac, in places with very patched repairs.
- Wirescape; Throughout the conservation area, trailing wires and dominant timber telegraph poles, are detrimental to the character of the area.

### 10.6 Local List

- Some of the buildings in Brigstock may be eligible for Local List and a number are suggested in the Management Proposals.

## **10.7 Traffic management**

- The narrow streets and sharp bends in the centre of the village act as a natural 'traffic calmer'. However, the main entrances into the village, where the roads are wider, can be affected by fast moving traffic. Measures to reduce traffic speeds, so long as they are in keeping with the rural environment, would be welcome.

## **10.8 Satellite dishes**

- A number of visible satellite dishes, within the existing and proposed conservation area, were noted during the survey work for this document.

## **10.9 Protection of views**

- The protection of the views within the village and across the field next to Park Walk are important.

## **10.10 Protection of trees and open spaces**

- The existing open green spaces, and the many trees, in the conservation area, need to be protected for future generations.

## **10.11 Control of new development**

- There are very few opportunities for new development in Brigstock, due to the tight urban form in the centre of the village. However, some gardens may be vulnerable to change and some buildings may at some stage be threatened with redevelopment.

# APPENDIX 1: TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL MAP



## APPENDIX 2: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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