CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION
2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT
3 THE APPROACH TO OUNDLE
4 INFRASTRUCTURE IN OUNDLE
5 THE TOWN - OVERVIEW
6 THE TOWN – DESIGN PRINCIPLES
7 THE CONSERVATION AREA – ZONE 1
8 ZONE 2
9 ZONE 3
10 ZONE 4
11 ZONE 5
12 ZONE 6
13 ZONE 7
14 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
15 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Front Cover: Market Square
Top Left: Mill Road
Above: Cloisters
Below: Celebrations in the town
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Town Design Statement is to manage change both in landscape, environment and buildings, whether large or small, in a way which reflects and harmonises with the local character of the town’s buildings, spaces and landscape setting.

It is intended that the Oundle Town Design Statement will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted by East Northamptonshire Council and will become a material consideration when assessing planning applications within the parish boundary of Oundle.

The Oundle Town Design Statement has the following main aims:

- Expand on the policies within any current Local Planning Policies.
- Influence the forthcoming Local Development Framework
- Promote a sense of place and acknowledge local distinctiveness
- Encourage high quality environmentally aware development which will make a positive contribution to Oundle
- Improve the potential acceptability of new developments by providing guidance to landowners, developers and architects before they prepare proposals

Other positive benefits that may accrue from the Oundle Town Design Statement include:

- Raising community awareness of local design and distinctiveness
- Provide additional guidance that may help to streamline the development process

This document will provide guidance to householders and local businesses, planners, builders and architects and any other organisation wishing to undertake development within Oundle so that it contributes to and maintains the local character and distinctiveness of the town and its setting.
The production of this Design Statement was as a result of the work of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party, a subsidiary group of Oundle Town Council, predominantly comprising members of the local residential and business community. The group work under the banner of Oundle 2020 and was created to develop a plan to safeguard the future of the town and to assist in the delivery of the following vision:

‘Oundle Town Council’s vision for Oundle is that it remains a beautiful thriving market town renowned for being a fantastic place to live, work and a joy to visit’.

The vision will be realised through the following key objectives:

- Championing the delivery of quality services within the town, constantly reviewing, improving and developing the service and facilities offered;
- Maintaining a well managed and controlled financial position;
- Ensuring communication with all stakeholders and transparency in our actions;
- To campaign for controlled development within the town and an infrastructure to accommodate growth in housing and population, whilst protecting and preserving the heritage and sustainability of the town;
- Striving for increased recreational use of the countryside and riverside amenities and encouraging an expanded tourist economy built on the rich and diverse cultural identity that the town and surrounding area offers.

“Keeping Oundle special is such an important task…it’s rich heritage must be protected.”

Quote from resident within local survey response.

The work within this Town Design Statement builds upon various surveys undertaken.

The process to develop the Town Design Statement has been inclusive and transparent, with ongoing communication with the town, Town Council and District Council. Each member of the Town Design Statement group was assigned an area of responsibility and worked to produce the detail for that section. This was then reviewed by the whole group and agreed before it was incorporated within the document. The content of the document has been open to scrutiny throughout and subject to public consultation.

The structure of the Design Statement is very simple. Oundle has been divided into zones as shown on page 6. Each of these zones has specific information relating to it and a supporting appendix. The appendices provide some examples for each zone to guide and illustrate the points made in the main body of the document. They are indicative examples and are in no way intended to be an exhaustive list of areas/buildings/open spaces etc. that are covered by the TDS.

As well as the detailed zone sections, there are some general sections on areas such as infrastructure, which raise issues that affect the whole area and it is therefore important that these are taken into consideration when considering any development or changes within the town. There are also Design Principles documented on pages 11 to 16 that apply to all zones and it is vital that these are read in conjunction with the specific area being considered for development.

Developers should seek pre-application advice at the earliest opportunity in order to gain a full understanding of what is realistically possible in each area within the town.
Oundle town: map - zones.
Oundle is situated at the northern extent of Northamptonshire. It stands on high ground in a bow of the River Nene which surrounds it to the south and east. It is not really known how the town came by its name. Oundle was referred to as Undalum in Bede’s *provincial quae vocatur Undalum*. (The province of Oundle) was completed in c.731.

There is evidence of very early occupation of this area; there are a number of pre Roman sites on Stoke Road and Glapthorn Road. An Iron Age farmstead was cited on the site of the present middle school. At the roundabout on the A605 there is the site of a large Roman Town.

Archbishop Wulfstan was buried at Oundle in 956 and this shows the continuing importance of the town. Christianity came to this area very early during the Roman occupation.

Oundle is in the Polebrook hundred. The areas of land dedicated as Hundreds were formed in the early 900s. This shows the importance of Polebrook at that time. The Polebrook Hundred reaches as far as Weldon.

Oundle still shows its Saxon heritage. North Street has plots of land reaching East Road and towards New Street. West Street shows its Saxon foundation most clearly. The properties have or had plots of land reaching down to South Road (The south back way) and up to Milton Road (The north back way).

The Roman town was regionally very important for its industrial output- mainly metalworking, and it also had a very large late Roman cemetery.

Oundle’s Saxon history is contemporary with that of Polebrook both being early Saxon Towns. Polebrook was possibly a Royal settlement supplying the money/funding for Oundle. Saint Wilfrid founded a Monastery in Oundle in C 680 where he died on October 12th 709. His body was carried to his Monastery in Ripon for burial.

St Peter’s Churchyard

Artefacts from Oundle Museum
Oundle is a market town like many in close proximity such as Thrapston, Peterborough, Uppingham, Stamford and Corby. These are all within approximately a 12 mile radius, each of them bringing trade and business to their market centres from the surrounding area.

John Clifton’s diaries give a very good insight to the daily life in Oundle during the period 1763 to 1784.

The Austell Survey of Oundle in 1565 also proves most interesting in its detail of the town at that time, this survey gives reference to the ‘chapel on the bridge’ this would have been the bridge leading to the modern A605 where there was a chapel part way along the bridge – similar to the ones that survived at places such as St.Ives and Bradford on Avon.

There is also a reference that mentions St.Osythe’s chapel in open fields towards Polebrook.

This way of life continued after the river was made navigable so that barges could bring coal and other heavy commodities to the town. The coming of the Railway in the 1840s not only increased the movement of goods but the movement of people.

In the last hundred years Oundle has grown and changed at an ever increasing speed.
Oundle is an historic market town and one of the main centres within East Northamptonshire; it acts as a rural service centre for a number of smaller villages in the surrounding area which have limited services and rely on the town for shopping and education in particular. There are a number of larger centres nearby; Peterborough is 20km to the northeast and Corby is 15km to the west, while Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough are all between 25 and 30km to the southwest. Thrapston, one of the other main centres within East Northamptonshire, is 10km to the south.

Oundle town centre is compact and provides a good range of services suitable to serve the typical day-to-day needs of its residential community. In terms of healthcare, there is a medical centre on Glapthorn Road and two dentists are located on West Street. The nearest hospitals are at Corby, Peterborough and Kettering, although only Peterborough and Kettering offer A&E services. So far as shopping is concerned, the town has Co-op and Waitrose supermarkets, a number of public houses, cafes, restaurants and banks, together with a range of smaller retailers including a Tesco Express, Boots, optician, travel agent, bookshop, hairdressers, bakers and butchers, clothing and shoe shops as well as an independent wine merchant. The town hosts a market every Thursday in the town centre and there is a farmers’ market on the second Saturday of each month. Further retail units are located at Oundle Wharf.

The town is characterised by a significant school student population, with several schools located within Oundle. There are state primary and secondary schools, as well as the private Laxton Junior School and Oundle School. The last provides for boarding and day pupils over the age of 11 with a number of sites spread across the town, giving Oundle the character of an historic university town.

The largest residential areas in Oundle are to the north of the town centre; the 2011 Census recorded a population of approximately 6,000 people in the Oundle Ward and today the population is estimated to be closer to 6,500. The primary bus services are provided by Stagecoach, with routes to Peterborough and Milton Keynes via Corby, Kettering and Northampton. There are also other private providers.

The town hosts a number of festival activities throughout the year, including an international arts festival, which has spawned its own fringe, and a food festival; the world conker championships are also held nearby. These, together with the town’s historic nature and pleasant environment, attract a significant number of tourists as well as visitors related to the boarding school.

Oundle has a number of community and sports facilities, including a recently refurbished and extended Pocket Park. There are also thriving bowls, cricket, tennis, rugby and soccer clubs in the town. The local residents do rely on the ability to share some facilities, such as the swimming pool, with Oundle School.

**The Approaches to Oundle: By Road**

From which ever direction one approaches Oundle, the distant view is dominated by the spire of St Peter’s Church, which is situated in the town centre just off the market place. It’s also worth
noting that all the roads into the town lead to the ancient Market Place giving rise to significant traffic congestion at peak periods; most of these are minor roads leading from the outlying villages and, when it’s not busy, travelling along them is an ideal scene-setter for the later entry into the town.

However, the main arterial road close to Oundle, is the A605 which runs northeast to southwest from the A1 to the A14, bypassing the town to the east. Heading into town from the A605, a poor first impression is created by the heavy and apparently ceaseless traffic flow on the main road and by the disused Riverside pub/hotel on the left before the bridge over the Nene. The views and the ambience improve on crossing the river and the associated water meadows and travelling through the cramped North Street into the town centre.

The other approach from the north is via Wansford or Nassington and Fotheringhay or Cotterstock, via a minor road and eventually along the Glapthorn Road. Closer to the town the road is narrow and can become congested because this is the route from the main areas of housing on the outskirts into the town.

The route from the west is the A427 and, once one has left Corby, again it passes through a rural landscape; the river is less evident and the approach to the town is initially adjacent to the golf course and through a mixture of older and more recent housing developments.

Approaching from the southwest, the road meanders through villages until reaching the low lying meadows skirting the Nene; this approach provides arguably the best view of the town from any aspect, largely because of the absence of overt new housing estates and the early, distant, sighting of the older areas of the town.

An alternative approach from the south enables an earlier exit from the A605 near Barnwell village and a pleasant approach between the Country Park and the Marina across the other bridge over the Nene.

The Approaches to Oundle: By River

Oundle has been built to accommodate the meanderings of the River Nene, which flows from south to north around the town. As the river approaches Oundle, passing the ponds and lakes of Barnwell Park and the nearby Marina, it is heading for the centre and veers off to the east only a few hundred metres from houses on the southern edge of town, looping around and away to the north.

The Approaches to Oundle: On Foot

A number of footpaths lead to and from Oundle. Not surprisingly, those from the north (Cotterstock) and south (Barnwell), generally follow the route of the River Nene and provide extensive views of the town from the adjacent low-lying meadows. Two paths approach from the east, via Ashton; one of these ends at the A605 roundabout and the final approach to Oundle is over the river bridge on Station Road, while the more southerly path passes across the Nene, over the A605 and through the Nene Valley Business Park, formerly a quarry, then on to the old Ashton Road. There is one footpath from the east, via Park Wood, which is between Biggin Hall and Biggin Grange; this leads into the Rockingham Hills housing estate, on to the Glapthorn Road and then towards the south into the town.
As previously said, Oundle is an historic market town that dates back many centuries. The development of the town principally around Market Place, North Street, West Street, New Street and St. Osyth's Lane was developed originally on the higher dry ground above the River Nene which runs to the south and east.

The land around the River Nene naturally flooded. Development therefore has effectively been conducted to the north and west of the town centre which is the natural progression of the town.

Looking back in history the town centre is the oldest part of the town. The town has then developed in a northerly direction which has involved the development of Glatthorn Road and New Road in addition to Rock Road and Gordon Road. These areas were developed around the turn of the last century (circa 1900) broadly speaking.

Further significant development took place in the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s which has created Springfield Road, St. Peters Road, Bellamy Road and effectively filled in the spaces in Glatthorn Road running down to the flood plain and then in 1980 the estate of Rockingham Hills was developed and associated areas.

Oundle as a market town has the following principal roads, Main Road/Barnwell Road, Stoke Doyle Road, Benefield Road and the Peterborough Road. Development has been conducted along these roads which is a natural progression of the town and various ages of property can be located on these roads generally speaking with the older properties in the town centre and newer properties on the periphery.

Commercial development has been within the town centre. In the 1970s East Road was a popular commercial development area and then with the development of the bypass in the 1980s came the industrial estates which now accommodate Fairline Boats and PGR to name but two. The settlement pattern in this area was determined by vehicular access to the A605.

Oundle development pattern has therefore been determined by the River Nene and as a result development from the town centre has spread mainly in a west to north direction as time has passed. What has resulted is an historic and attractive market town and town centre. The development of Oundle School has characterised the area just north of the town centre principally and some of the larger buildings within the town centre with residential development being to the north and west.

Oundle’s development pattern therefore has been determined not only by the river but also the need for vehicular and pedestrian access and suitability of the ground to be built upon.
The following Design Principles apply throughout this document and should be taken into consideration for any development within the town.

**Design Principle 1: Views and Open Spaces**

Within the context of this Town Design Statement open spaces and important views are defined as below:

**Open spaces** are all public and private open spaces that impact on the town’s visual appeal. Private open spaces include residential open space (Patios, terraces, gardens, balconies, driveways and courtyards). Public open space includes any road, path, alleyway that the public has access to.

**Important views** are all long and short distance views both originating from within the town and the countryside beyond.

The town requires the protection of the following features:
- Important views within the town;
- Important long distance views in and out of the town;
- Small green open spaces/wide grass verges;
- Open spaces to which residents have access to for sports/recreation/community use.

**Open spaces** must be considered carefully when new developments/alterations are proposed because they:
- Act as ‘green lungs’ to reduce impact of pollution of increased traffic;
- Add variety to the street scene;
- Minimize the visual impact of hard landscaping;
- Add to the ‘beauty’ of the town;
- Link the town to countryside by allowing panoramic views of the countryside beyond;
- Provide a green ‘oasis’ in the urban environment;
- Provide sites for sports/recreation/community use;
- Enable wildlife habitat.

**Open spaces** used for sports and/recreational use of the town are important and should not be lost as they:
- Contribute to well-being and quality of life for residents;
- Focal point for community activities;
- Provide opportunities for people to promote healthy social interaction.

**Tree-lined roads** must be preserved because they:
- Provide an ever changing visual aspect and character to the town;
- Provide a sense of arrival and a natural gateway;
- Add variety and colour to the street scene;
- Soften the visual impact of hard surfacing;
- Absorb pollution;
- Add to the beauty of the town;
- Provide a link from the town into countryside;
- Enable wildlife habitat.
Street scenes and views must be preserved because:
- The buildings and soft landscape combine to make a very appealing street scene and make the character of the town;
- The views provide a feeling of well-being and enhance quality of life;
- They provide a sense of space and quiet;
- Extend the focus from near to far;

Alleyways and Pathways must be preserved and encouraged as they:
- Provide links and ease of access from one place to another;
- Provide flow and form to the town.

Grass verges should be preserved and encouraged in developments as they:
- Make walking more appealing and pleasurable and safer as the pavement is separated from the road;
- Encourage people to walk to town rather than driving, promoting well being and health;
- Help minimise the visual impact of hard landscaping and development;
- If appropriately maintained, allow good visibility for traffic and pedestrians, separating pedestrians from vehicles and roads;
- Give a sense of space;
- Can provide wildlife habitat.

A `sense of space' should be created by setting footpaths behind grassed verges. The use of grassed verges and limestone walls is intrinsic to the Oundle residential street scene and new developments must embrace this.

Boundary treatments and screening should:
- Take into consideration the context of Oundle and enable visibility of important views;
- All low fencing/walls/hedging currently allowing the public views of green spaces should not be altered in height as to remove or obscure these views;
- Improve views by the use of appropriate screening of industrial/unsightly/run down buildings.
- Where allotments are sited, encourage visibility by the public.

Proposed developments will recognise the importance of the proper treatment of their boundaries so as to maintain and/or create visual harmony within and around the town.

Due to the landscape sloping south towards the river Nene the town enjoys views of the countryside beyond. This is considered an important advantage of the town and these important long distance views must be preserved because they provide:
- A rural town feel;
- An awareness of the countryside beyond;
- A welcome contrast with the tight urban form and hard surfaces within the town;
- Provides greater separation from the road;
- A feeling of well-being and a sense of space.

Where there is an important view of St. Peter’s Church or prominent important buildings, long distance or within the town, no development should obscure it.
Public views and access to views of river frontage should be preserved.
Where feasible, public and private space should be oriented to the natural features of the town such as the sloping landscape, meadows and the River Nene.
**Design Principle 2: Architecture and Design**

Oundle is a relatively compact town in a rural setting, and any development should reflect this fact and retain the existing characteristics.

All developments must be designed to have architectural quality which identifies with Oundle. Developments should not be architecturally generic and should not be excused from an architectural design quality that sits comfortably within the local context.

Any extensions and developments to the existing architecture should be of a commensurate design quality and consciously maintain the landscape setting.

Individual dwellings within important visual plots will be supported when the architectural design is exceptional and innovative whilst comfortable in its environment.

Development should safeguard and improve the quality of the environment within and adjacent to it, sitting comfortably with its neighbourhood and enhancing the location by taking into account:

- The lie of the land, blending unobtrusively into the landscape and townscape;
- The scale, shapes and proportions of older & important architectural and historical buildings in the local neighbourhood;
- The height, roof pitch, span and eaves depth of surrounding buildings;
- Design so as not to harm those features which give the area its character;
- Ensure a similar proportion of garden space to the neighbouring environment.
- **Home Quality Mark** standard for new homes (2015) - minimum 4 Star rating

Visual interest should be created by sensitive detailing of design and incorporation of features such good detailing of the principal elevations, well proportioned and well spaced windows, the roof lines and chimneys, carefully designed and detailed rainwater goods, ironmongery and other furniture.

Architecture giving a typical strong visual presence to the street scene should be encouraged.

**Design Principle 3: Building Materials**

The use of natural quality materials common to Oundle help to bind new architecture with the existing. The town is not campaigning for a `pastiche' but identity of materials and craftsmanship is important and enhance the town.

Materials should harmonise with the materials, colours and appearance of surrounding buildings and retain the distinctive fabric and architectural features on listed and locally listed buildings.

Recurring design features adding interest to the townscape include the use of Ashlar Stone, random coursed limestone, decorative brickwork on property walls, chimneys and distinctive coursed limestone boundary walls and these should be incorporated within designs.

Bricks must reflect the predominant texture, colour and lines of the earlier local brickwork.

Harshly coloured, smooth concrete or clay roof tiles, or pantiles, particularly when large and interlocking, do not sit comfortably with irregular roofs and handmade tiles of Oundle's historic buildings. Natural stone slates being the preferred option.
Artificial stone type roof slates suitable for some developments should be considered due to lack of “Collyweston” stone resources.

The use of UPVC (plastic) framed windows, conservatories etc. should be carefully considered in context with the nearby boundary of a conservation area.

All development should maintain and repair existing stone walls and copings using traditional methods and materials.

**Design Principle 4: Sustainability**

**Overall aim:**
To reduce our dependence on fossil fuels (which are finite and increasingly expensive) and develop a low carbon, healthy and sustainable community.

As an encompassing approach to sustainability it will be essential to assess the life cycle environmental, social and economic impacts of all new build homes. For each development it is required that developers pay regard to the **Home Quality Mark** standard for new homes (2015). In all cases a minimum **4 Star rating** should be achieved for each of the indicator bands to ensure that the Towns criteria is met. (please also see elsewhere for other general targets).

Oundle will continue to evolve through the decade to 2020 and beyond. The people of the town are conscious that the use of natural resources in general and fossil fuels in particular must be managed in a sustainable way. Developments in the town must not only meet immediate needs but also support the future prosperity and well-being of the whole community in a low carbon world. As new ideas emerge and are fostered, the town will judge their suitability in the following context:

**Buildings, both commercial and domestic**
- We will ensure that all new structures are designed and built to incorporate the highest national standards for sustainable building and incorporate the use of renewable energy sources. Oundle will always strive to be an early adopter of improved sustainable codes and standards.
- We will encourage and support the upgrading of existing buildings to make them energy efficient. We will develop renewable energy sources wherever possible.

**Transport**
- We will reduce the use of cars within the town by developing infrastructure to support cycling, walking and the use of small scale electric vehicles (particularly for the elderly).
- We will reduce commuting to work by encouraging the development of efficient, affordable and frequent public transport between local towns and villages.
We will encourage the development of local employment and the development of infrastructure to facilitate working from home or from dedicated facilities within the town.

**Local food, goods and services**
- We will encourage local food production and its sale through local markets, farmers’ markets and other outlets.
We will encourage the development of local shops and services, including repairing and recycling.

**Life-style and community**
- We will develop community open spaces, local shopping and markets where people meet informally.
- We will encourage community events and sport of all kinds.
We will encourage individuals and the community as a whole to adopt new beliefs and behaviours consistent with building a sustainable low-carbon society.
**Design Principle 5: Change of Use**

If a poor quality building or one that has fallen into disrepair is to be considered for demolition and replacement, careful consideration should be given to the usage and purpose of any new replacement development. The social importance to the community as a whole must be considered before altering use.

Historic, architectural & socially important buildings that are not listed or within the conservation area should be rigorously scrutinised before alterations or removal of them is permitted.

**Design Principle 6: Employment**

Whenever possible local employment opportunities need to be retained and maximised, ensuring the reduction and prevention of increased journeys from the town.

The predominance of shops in the town centre should be preserved to avoid undermining the shopping patterns and to preserve the historic use and importance of this part of the town.

Shops, offices and other places of employment should be designed to encourage the vitality of the town centre with ease of access made available without the need to drive through the town.

Car parking facilities should be designed to be close to the town centre to enable easy access but the design should not necessitate driving through the town centre.

Increased and unique independent retail outlets should be encouraged within the town, enabling the unique, historic design of the town centre to be retained.

Historic shop fronts must be protected and properly maintained.

Any development associated with employment needs to be designed to fit well with the existing local environment.

**Design Principle 7: Planting Guidelines**

Considerate planting is very important for creating a pleasant town environment. The town would like to use planting to impact on the environment in the following positive ways:

- Trees on verges and pavements.
- Statement trees at entrances to important places. For example Scots Pines.
- The use of native trees and shrubs, especially for hedging, so that we support our wildlife as much as we can by the provision of suitable habitat as well as linking the town with the countryside. If there are no indigenous plants that meet the requirements then non-native plants may be used.

- Plant combinations that provide interest for as many seasons as possible within one area. For example:
  - Tree and shrub blossom for as many seasons as possible. For example, Wild Cherry, Bird Cherry, Wayfaring Tree etc.
  - Reds and yellows of deciduous trees in autumn. For example, Hornbeam, Maple, Wayfaring tree, Guelder Rose, Hawthorn, Copper Beech, Beech etc.
  - Evergreen colour and Red Berries in winter. For example, Scots Pine, Yew, Holly, Wayfaring tree etc.
  - Tree leaf colour and shape interest all year round.
  - Interesting tree trunk colour and texture. For example, Scots Pine, Dogwood, Oak etc.
• The characteristics of the plant should match the requirements of the site in terms of:
  ♦ Height when fully grown.
  ♦ Lifespan.
  ♦ Shape.
  ♦ Colour
  ♦ Seasonal characteristics.
  ♦ Wildlife habitats
  ♦ Maintenance requirements.
  ♦ Existing soil and drainage conditions (Each parcel should be evaluated for soil fertility and drainage quality and that the program of soil preparation, drainage and plant selection be adapted to these.)

• Trees and shrubs should be used to conceal/attract the eye from unsightly/industrial buildings as far as possible.
History

The Conservation Area covers mainly the old part of the town, the whole of West Street and North Street. The earliest buildings now to be found within this area date from circa 1300.

Just to the east of Oundle across the River Nene in the parish of Ashton there is the site of a large Roman township covering up to eighty acres and in the north of Oundle parish there is a Romano British farmstead. The end of Roman rule in Britain is usually taken as AD410.

Saint Wilfred built his monastery in c680 it is thought where the Parish Church dedicated to Saint Peter now stands. At that time only Saint Wilfrid’s monastery stood there alone, a village/town slowly grew up around it. There is a piece of Saxon carved stone in Saint Peter’s church and to the south of Black Pot Lane was found a Saxon defensive ditch.

The whole area from beyond Polebrook to Weldon was under the jurisdiction of the royal Saxon settlement situated to the west of Polebrook and was therefore in the Polebrook Hundred.

Oundle or Undalum as it was called according to Bede writing in c731 must have quickly grown in importance. Archbishop Wulfstan was buried in Undalum (Oundle) in 956. The layout of the town shows its Saxon/Medieval beginnings. This is shown by the properties along North Street and West Street having long burbage plots the width of each property reaching to a back lane, as can be seen between West Street to Milton Road (the north back way) South Road (the south back way) and from North Street to East Road (the east back way).
Kelly’s Directory of Northamptonshire of 1890 shows the population of Oundle was 3073 in 1881. The number of businesses in Oundle in 1890 including accountants, doctors, publicans and bankers was in the order of 200, there are nowhere as many now in 2018.

**Open Spaces/Important Views**

This area is crucial in terms of creating an identity for the town. The ‘cascading’ of scale and building form from tightly built up town centre towards the green open spaces around its edges is noticeable and creates a pleasing contrast. You are never more than five minutes from a stunning view of the countryside.

The attractive, vibrant town centre has a very pleasant open space created by the market place and the widened section of New Street. This is the heart of the community.

The gentle curves of North Street, West Street, New Street and St Osyth’s Lane give the feeling of enclosure. Frequent carriage entrances, backyards and hidden gardens add interest, spaciousness and mystery to the enclosed townscape. Narrow alleys lead off the main streets providing views across back gardens with their long lines of parallel stone boundary walls and even glimpses of the water meadows beyond.

The Churchyard of St Peter’s is an oasis within the hard urban townscape. It is tranquil and notable for its mature trees and pleasant pathways. There is some spaciousness in the very northern end of New Street where high stone walls and mature trees focus the eye on the school buildings beyond. Oundle School’s grand architectural buildings and well maintained green spaces add a great deal to the character of the town. For example, Chapel Lawns and Holme Close, in particular, provide striking contrast with the tight urban form of the town centre and pleasant views of the countryside beyond.

The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

**Buildings**

In 2010 the existing conservation area was extended by ENDC to encompass a wider area of historic & architecturally important buildings & structures.

A detailed appraisal of the Conservation Areas character is contained within ‘East Northamptonshire Council – Oundle Conservation Area Character Appraisal’ published in 2009. This document should be read in conjunction with this Town Design statement.

The boundaries of the conservation area are shown on the plan. The character of the conservation area is particularly important as it encapsulates Oundle’s history. The limestone walls & Collyweston slated roofs form strong street and built form, notably through the towns centre.

Most of the buildings in the centre of the town are from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Individually many of them are of special architectural quality and as such are listed. Collectively, they have a distinctive and attractive character which should be protected from dilapidation by neglect or insensitive development.

When changes are made they must be to a high standard of design so as to enhance the existing characteristics.
Employment

The central Conservation Area (designated on 26 June 1970) is home to a wide variety of places of employment, including shops and offices as well as public houses, an hotel, numerous Oundle School buildings plus the local primary school and a number of Churches. The central area of the town is dominated by St Peter’s Church (the medieval parish Church), Oundle School buildings and the Market Place. The majority of the School buildings are listed, some were purpose-built for the school and in many cases were architect-designed, while others are earlier buildings adapted for school use. There has been a market here for over 1,000 years and, given its significant importance, it’s fortunate that, following the remodelling of the market place by the Town Improvement Act of 1825, the area has remained largely intact. Most of the building is in limestone with Collyweston slate roofing and it adds vastly to the market town aura of Oundle.

The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area had distinctive trading and commercial roles throughout the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries and this is reflected in the remaining buildings, now protected because of their special architectural and historic interest (over 200 are listed). There are a number of more recent purpose-built commercial buildings. In particular: the Town Hall, which was erected in 1826 by the lord of the manor, is still standing and is now used by a number of small businesses; the Post Office in New Street (dated 1903) is still in use; and there are two early bank frontages which are currently occupied by Barclays and NatWest. Also, there are a relatively large number of shop frontages dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries; these are concentrated in West Street and the Market Place and the vast majority are inserted into earlier buildings which are listed and therefore have a good level of protection.

Some examples, drawn from the Conservation Area Character Appraisal, are as follows:

- 8 West Street (Seven Wells Family Butchers) – an early 20th century tiled shopfront with decorative panels.
- 14 West Street (The Beauty Room) – a double fronted shopfront with matching shallow bow windows complete with glazing bars, entablature fascia and fine dentilled cornice;
- 51 West Street (S G Dysons) – a perfectly preserved mid 19th century shopfront with attractive sign writing.
- 4 Market Place (Boots) has a good 19th century shopfront with central double doors and large half-round windows with glazing bars; next door.
- 6 Market Place (Tesco’s) has interesting cast iron columns supporting a probably late 19th or early 20th century shopfront.
- 36 Market Place (Stu-Pots) – an early 19th century shopfront with a modest moulded fascia supported on giant corbels.
- 10 New Street (Colemans) – a modest early 19th century shopfront made notable because of its 3 reeded Tuscan columns.
- 2 New Street (Barclays Bank) – not strictly speaking a shopfront, but an entire purpose-built composition of fine quality stone work with half round windows divided by columns of ashlar with foliated capitals.

Public houses and inns were also prolific in the central area in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, with between 13 and 17 public houses listed in the town during the period; the remaining four are the Talbot Inn, the Rose and Crown, the Angel and the Ship. Of these, the Talbot Inn, originally called the Tabret Inn, is the oldest public house in the town (established in 1552 and rebuilt in 1626) and is a Grade 1 Listed Building, reputed to have been built using stone from Fotheringhay Castle.
There were a large number of charitable endowments in Oundle in the post-medieval and industrial periods and some of the associated buildings have survived. Laxton's almshouses, in New Street, and Latham's Hospital, on North Street, were major institutions but Paine's almshouses on West Street also ensured that the poor of Oundle were well catered for.

A small number of unlisted buildings within the conservation area have been identified as being of townscape merit or ‘positive’ buildings. Further ‘positive’ buildings have been identified on the edges of the town centre but still within the conservation area.

There is one working farm in this Zone, located on the edge of the town on the south side of Stoke Hill/Stoke Doyle Road and situated in stone buildings dating from around the early 1800s. The farm’s activities are mainly arable and cattle based.
ZONE 2

History

Zone 2 is at the western extent of the parish. The earliest sign of human occupation in this area was found when land was being prepared prior to the Warren Bridge estate being built.

During a watching brief evidence came to light of an Anglo-Saxon timber building the so called *grubenhauste* or sunken hut. In the town cemetery to the west of this estate a cremation urn of an earlier period possibly Bronze Age was found when a grave was being dug.

The main part of this area lays in what was one time the open field system of Pexley Field which was located to the south side of Benefield Road (and possibly to the North of the Benefield Road) in the area of the land on the town side of what is now the Oundle Golf Club; and that which has not been developed is still sued as agricultural land to this day.

The Prince William estate is on the site of a stone quarry. The quarry workers cottages and the overgrown quarry were lost when the estate was built.

There were at one time three Public Houses in Benefield Road. Two of these, The Three Horse Shoes number 73 and The Admiral Keppel number 27 are now private houses. The Black Horse number 52 which was possibly built in 1810 at the time of the enclosure of Oundle and Ashton was demolished in about 1998 and a small estate of houses built which continues the name of Black Horse Mews.

The Turn Pike gate and associated house was at the lower end of Benefield Road between number 9 on the north side and number 22 on the south side of the road. The Turn Pike Road went from Oundle to Market Harborough.

There was up until the late 1940s a small general store/sweet shop at number 24 Benefield Road owned by Mrs Carter.

The two estates to the south of Benefield Road, Pexley Court and Clifton drive were in the main part market gardens worked by Mr David Marlow and his son Bert. The crops grown there were sold at a green grocers shop in 9 West Street, situated just to the West of the Queen Victoria Hall.

Open Spaces/Important Views

Due to the Southward sloping landscape in this zone, long distance views south over the fields, meadows and hills towards the River Nene are visible from several points.

Privately owned fields and public green spaces that nestle within this zone add a great deal to the sense of spaciousness, soften the landscape and allow further long distance views South.
Glimpses of Oundle School’s sports fields in the north of the zone are visible form the end of Benefield Road and offer contrast to the rugged countryside that surround them.

The bridge on Mill Road allows stunning views along the river bank, populated by wild native trees and shrubs and full of wildlife. Wakerley Close has a good example of green open space for public recreational use with its trees, substantial size and position allowing further long distance views across the fields and hills beyond.

Benefield Road has a good example of street grass verges behind which run pathways and which are populated with native trees. Verges at junctions are wide and spacious and could be improved with further native planting as detailed in the Design Statement Principles. Also along Benefield Road, the oversubscribed allotments offer interest and variety to the street scene and access to views of these would be greatly encouraged.

The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

**Employment**

There are no significant employment related buildings in Zone 2.
ZONE 3

History

The land in this zone was up to the late 1800’s used mainly for agriculture/grazing and was owned by either The Feoffes of the Town Estates, Glebe land owned by various ecclesiastical authorities or in private ownership.

The earliest evidence of human occupation in zone 3 came to light after Smith’s Brewery (the Half Moon public house) along with the cottage on the South side of Blackpot Lane were demolished to construct the houses of Half Moon Mews. Excavations at this time showed a very wide and deep defensive ditch of the Saxon Period. Black Pot Lane was previously known as Dwell Wong Lane further supporting this Saxon Heritage. The Half Moon Public House was originally The Black Pot after the stained leather tankards used to drink beer from.

The estates covering Kings Road, Vine Close and Victoria Road (all named after closed public houses in the town) were built on land owned by Smith’s brewery and rented by their employees as allotments. Prior to this it was farm land.

The houses situated to the South West of the zone, namely Orchard House, Bramley House and number 36 were built in a very old orchard and St Ann’s Court was until the late 1900’s a market garden.

Spurlings, which is now a small estate of privately owned houses, was a stone built house and private garden. Bungalows in Inkerman Way were built after the Victorian terraced group of houses in Inkerman Yard were demolished along with the stone built thatched houses bordering West Street which were of a much earlier period.
Open Spaces/Important Views

The area is characterised by large, green open spaces, avenues of trees, old stone walls and wide grass verges, often containing native trees.

The open spaces visible from public open spaces are predominantly Oundle School properties. These spaces are beautiful and well kept adding a great deal to the visual appeal of this area.

84% of residents said “Oundle School maximises the value of it’s surrounding open space by improving access to the meadows along the river bank to the Eastern and Southern fringes of the town”.

Due to the landscape sloping South towards the River Nene, the countryside is often visible and is a much valued feature of the area. This zone includes part of the ‘meadows’.

71% of residents have expressed the desire for more green space to be made available for public sports recreation and community use.

The open spaces in this zone are used for sports and recreation, as allotments/open fields and as verges to improve the appeal of the area. Any development in this zone would need to be sympathetic to this to ensure the character of the area is retained.

Residents appreciate the value of housing that is close to green space and would favour developments that include and/or create green spaces. These features anchor the town into the countryside and vice versa and are a key aspect of the visual appeal and identity of the town.

The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

Buildings

This area of Oundle mainly shares a mix of residential, Social, Community and Oundle School buildings. The design of the majority are in local limestone or clay brick and date from 18th Century to the present.

Zone three is quite distinct in its character and setting as it has a high proportion of large high quality buildings set in spacious grounds, such as Laxton & Crosby School buildings and Fletton House. There is a strong design emphasis on community buildings sitting alongside each other purveying a strong presence and providing a loci for the Town. Social housing located close by reinforces this philosophy.
These are fundamental to the town of Oundle and should be maintained and when required altered with a sympathetic hand.

We believe this is an intrinsic benefit for all and should be preserved and where appropriate enriched to move with changing community needs.

Bespoke design details and well carried out features are much-admired throughout this Zone and will be encouraged.

Highways & Street Furniture

Glapthorn Road is the main arterial route into Oundle from outlying villages to the North, East and West and the heavily developed North of the town. It is generally a wide single carriageway road with footpaths on both sides. In this zone both footpaths are set back from the road edge with a grass verge into which is planted mature trees together with benches, waste receptacles and street lights. Either metal railings or mature hedges bound the footpath and housing or gardens/playing fields affording good views and visibility at junctions. The junctions to property or developments in this zone are generally well designed and adequate. There is no discrete provision for cycle ways on this road. Parking is allowed unrestricted along the road in this zone causing congestion at peak times of school drop-off and collection.

Milton Road is a link road between Benefield Road and Glapthorn Road and is heavily trafficked particularly at school drop-off and collection times. It is the only alternative route across the Town avoiding the Town centre from the West with its connection via Blackpot Lane to North Street enabling vehicles to miss the traffic lights on the narrow section of North Street on their route out of town towards the A605. As such there is often congestion due to parked cars. It is a hazardous road and is often used as a convenient alternative to the long term car parks by visitors to School.

Over 90% of people questioned were "bothered what buildings look like outside the Conservation Area"

Residential developments are strewn throughout this zone but in most cases are somewhat lost in design to the School & Community Architecture except for those dwellings that line the principle highways, Benefield Road & The Glapthorn Road. Both roads littered with strong architecturally detailed houses dating from early to mid 20th Century all enriched by 'green open' space, limestone walls & established trees. This settlement pattern is 'generous' but complements the immediate area and where possible should remain so.

Late 20th Century housing developments have been constructed to varying qualities however those built with their precedent and setting sensitive to their adjoining neighbours have been far more successful. This must be a prerequisite to any future developments.

The Oundle School has a number of high status Buildings sitting within their well manicured grounds often shielding the more functional buildings from the highways.

Extensions and alterations to windows, entrances and chimneys on properties of all ages are evident and sometimes detract from the unity of the historic terraces and streets.
services and matches. There is a single footpath to the south side of the road separated from the road by wooden bollards. Parking restrictions now apply along this road, forcing vehicles to park in Glapthorn Road.

The corner opposite Oundle School sports halls and Swimming Pool is bounded immediately on the road edge by a high wall causing traffic travelling West from Glapthorn Road to veer to the opposite carriageway to avoid the wall. It contributes to an effective blind corner for traffic travelling East from Benefield Road. Junctions to Inkerman Way and The Spurlings are well designed and provide good visibility to vehicles and pedestrians. There is no provision for discrete cycleways on this road.

Blackpot Lane is in this zone a one-way road enabling traffic to connect from Milton Road and Glapthorn Road to North Street and the main exit route from the town to the A605. It is a narrow road and with minimal parking restrictions is often reduced to a car width due to parked cars generally on the North side. There is a narrow footpath to the South side whilst to the North side of the lane there is a narrow footpath immediately adjacent the road with a further footpath the other side of a wide grass and tree planted verge implemented during the Kings Road development. The staggered junction across North Street to East Road is often congested due to the traffic lights controlling vehicle access to the narrow section of North Street.

**Services and Amenities**

Most of the towns Public Services are to be found in Zone 3, in and around the Glapthorn Road and Fletton Way. Fletton Way is the hub of the community safety and emergency services of Oundle and it is therefore important that future development of the site around Fletton Way should take this into consideration.

The following are all to be found in Zone 3:

**Emergency Services**
- Fire Station: Glapthorn Rd
- Police Station: Glapthorn Road

**Health Services**
- Oundle Surgery: Glapthorn Road

**Community Services**
- Library: Glapthorn Road
- Community Pre School: Fletton House
- New Abbott House: [Shaw Healthcare] residential care for elderly Fletton Way
- Stronglands Court: Housing with support. [Built 1983] Fletton Way
- Mental Health Care Centre Gateway & Phab Charity Fletton Way

**Churches**
- Methodist Church: [opened 1985] plus notice board Drumming Well Lane

**Allotments**
- Homegrown: [Allotments]
Sports & Recreation
Oundle Town Cricket Club: [open to seniors and juniors] Milton Road
Oundle Town Football Club: [established 1883, Junior FC and PDFL League Table] North Street
War Memorial Playing Ground: New Road

Employment
Within this zone, the buildings associated with employment are those of the Public School and others housing the community related activities in and around Fletton Way.

As with most Oundle School buildings, they are scattered throughout the area and are interspersed with large open spaces, predominantly playing fields. Oundle School is a major employer within the town providing employment for over 700 staff.

The Fletton Way buildings house the Library, Doctors, Police, Fire Service and other community services making this another key employment area. The location of these facilities, close to the major areas of domestic accommodation, is in tune with the wishes of local people to have business/commercial areas close to the town centre but accessed without the need to drive through it.

The setting of Mason House and Fletton House and the other adjacent social facilities provide a community location for the Town which is important and must be retained.

Map
Please see a map of this area for more information.
History

There has been recent evidence of early human occupation in this area. Ahead of further development an archaeological excavation was carried out on land to the north of Creed road. This excavation shows evidence of Roman occupation.

The part of the town designated as Zone 4 is situated to the northwest of the parish and to the west of Glapthorn Road. The land to the north of Milton Road and Block Pot Lane was before the enclosure of Oundle parish known as Hound Hill Field. As with the other two open fields of Pexley and St. Sythes before enclosure, land was allocated in strips within each field and strict control over the crops to be grown in any field in a particular year was enforced. William Pitt writing about agriculture in Northamptonshire in 1803/6 says that wheat, barley and henbane were growing in Oundle Field, the location of which is unknown. Henbane is a very poisonous plant and must have been grown for medicinal purposes. Henbane can still be found growing wild in a garden in Oundle.

All of this area apart from the George Public House situated at the junction of Glapthorn Road and Cotterstock Road was agricultural land for the most part and used for grazing cattle. This is now predominantly housing. The Victorian brick yard just to the north of the Public House was demolished in 1950 to make way for the development of Tilley Hill Close.

In 1890 the George Inn as it was then known was licensed to William Hunt. The Public House dates from about 1810 which was the time of the enclosure of Oundle and Ashton.
A small play area for small children is provided on Creed Road, although more dynamic play equipment, seating for adults and some landscaping for natural play, would improve the appeal of the area. Part of the Hillfield Road estate enjoys pleasant views of Oundle School’s sports fields.

Rockingham Hills is lovely and spacious with its wide pathways and road ways. Wide grass verges planted with trees act as a foil for hard landscaping and add to the spacious feel.

Glapthorn Road street view in this zone is mainly higgledy piggledy house frontage and occasional trees and grass verges. Both Tilley Hill Close and Rockingham Hills enjoy large green grass verges at their entrances, planted with native trees, allowing good visibility for pedestrians, bikes and cars. The verge at the entrance to Tilley Hill Close is planted with Scots Pines which is particularly striking and also provides good visibility for vehicles and pedestrians.

The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

**Buildings**

This area of Oundle is entirely populated with residential dwellings dating from 19 Century through to date. The design follows domestic architecture trends of the periods with most constructed in a traditional style ‘brick and tile’.

The Glapthorn Road is predominantly lined with early 20th Century detached & Semi detached houses with pebbledash rendered bay fronts and gable facades typical of the period. Each sit back from the road with hedged or boundary in front designating attractive small ‘front gardens’. From the Glapthorn Road you enter Hillfield Road which leads through to a large 1980’s/90s Estate development. There are an abundance of styles throughout the ‘estate’ defining their immediate zones but taking little or no identity precedent from Oundle or its immediate neighbours. This is somewhat disappointing considering the quality of domestic Architecture locally. It should be encouraged that future speculative developments become far more ‘local’ in character and design identifying them with the Town.

The setting of the houses differs greatly throughout the developments which is to be expected, reflecting social & economic changes. The public open spaces, footways and landscaping etc. are for the most adequate but make no provision for cycleways or foot traffic links to other road arteries in the town which would create a far better integrated community atmosphere.

The general quality of construction is varied as one would expect with speculative developers targeting certain demographics and cost parameters however future developments should be viewed with a keener eye to quality of design, setting, sustainability and the wider community. Where future small & large developments are considered a following the ‘Code for sustainable Homes’ approach would be preferable and consulting with the aspirations of the Town with regards to infrastructure & transport.
Services and Amenities

Hillfield Road has a good wide pathway/cycleway from Glapthorn Road which then stops with no destination. It would be of benefit for the cycleway to link with other developments and possibly the services of Fletton Way.

The children’s play area from Hillfield Road to Creed Road provides a good amenity for families with small children.

Public footpath (Park wood, Biggin Lodge) access at the top of Culme Close. This has a dog waste bin on stile.

The nearest public telephone box is on Glapthorne Road opposite Tilly Hill Close. This is a card only facility.

The nearest post box is on the fork of Glapthorn Road and Cotterstock Road.

The George public house has a large car park and garden area.

Employment

The only employment related buildings in Zone 4 are the George Inn, which utilises traditional stone buildings located on Glapthorn Road close to the junction with Cotterstock Road, and a small farm based in a variety of buildings just off the Glapthorn Road on the northern edge of the town.
History

The great majority of this area of land was used for agricultural purposes until the 1950’s when Gordon Road and Rock Road were extended, the first in to the Gordon Road loop and the latter in to the Spring Field estate connecting with St. Peter’s Road and other roads.

The houses along the west side of the area on Glapthorn Road are mainly Edwardian some might be a little earlier and some very recent. The houses on Cotterstock Road were built between 1900 and 2000.

The stone cottage at the junction of Glapthorn Road and Cotterstock Road was at one time two cottages and is much the same age as the George Public House.

Lime Avenue is named after the two Lime Kilns which stood there until 1957. They were called bottle kilns owing to their shape. They supplied lime for the building industry and for agriculture to be spread on arable fields. In their latter years they were used as pig sties by Mr. George Osborne.

The Church of England Primary School stands on the site of a Roman British farmstead. The site was excavated by local archaeologists prior to the school being built. No other signs of any earlier human occupation have been found in zone 5.

The Millfield estate off New Road was developed in the late 1960s. Prior to the houses being built the area was an orchard with a large red brick house in the centre of the orchard known as The Red House.
The Pocket Park is a large, mainly grassed open space with several skate ramps, a basketball hoop with hard standing area, football pitch, wooded area and a range of dynamic children’s play equipment. The park is much valued by the children of the town and very well used.

Occupation Road lies at the bottom of the hill on the edge of the flood plain and allows views of the rugby pitches, tennis courts and allotments.

There are three public footpaths in this zone. The UF2 allows access from St Peter’s Road through the Rugby Club grounds to UF1 which, in turn, allows access to Snipe Meadow Nature Reserve and public footpath M29 that runs parallel to the River towards Cotterstock.

The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

Building

This area of Oundle is almost wholly occupied with residential dwellings dating from 19 Century through to date. The exceptions to this are a small number of community based recreational clubs and a Primary School.

The infrastructure to the East side of Zone 5 primarily follows a series of sweeping roads & avenues off which sprout short cul-de-sacs. This street pattern is spacious and typical of this late 1960s early 70’s fashion. This area is well landscaped with mature trees, shrubs with ample open space around dwellings, the area benefits from its natural topographical setting rising toward the Glapthorn Road. The majority of the dwellings in this zone are constructed in a traditional style 'brick of varying colours and types as are the roof tiles. This period is not particularly noteworthy of quality speculative housing however the liberal setting of the dwellings provides an agreeable ambience and should be commended.

To the South of New Road sits a small area of 'Council Homes' from the 1950-60's which like other Oundle social housing of this period form an important statement of post war architectural design. The building materials are robust and practical whilst the houses setting are rather regimented purveying a certain merit.

New Road is a primary artery through Oundle linking Station Road to the Glapthorn Road. It is lined with dwellings from early 20th Century through to 21st Century in various architectural styles. Noteworthy properties are those built in a ‘Cambridge Yellow’ style brick with red brick detailing adding a quality to what are simple style terrace & detached homes.

Occupation Road is the home for the various sports clubs, Rugby, Bowls & Tennis and skirts important open space to its East to the South of this is The Oundle Town War memorial Playing Field and Playground facing East toward countryside and the river.

Rock Road has a wonderful example of a 'compact' terrace street dating from the turn of the 20th Century. Typical of 'working' terraces from industrial cities this road is visually framed with houses set directly off the pavement constructed in brick with slated shallow pitched roofs.

There are a wealth of styles throughout this zone most take no identity from Oundle or its neighbouring villages however those properties built pre 1970’s identify with a socio-economic
necessity and have stamped their own worth to the Town. This in return has likely imposed a new local aesthetic through necessity which should be commended and set precedent for future speculative developments.

Post 1970's the housing architecture is somewhat disappointing, again we would encourage future speculative developments to identify with 'local' character and design and take onboard the needs to produce a sustainable approach for this Town.

**Employment**

The only significant employment related buildings in Zone 5 are those of the Primary School, situated adjacent to playing fields on the edge of town off the Cotterstock Road; these are purpose-built, dating from the late 1970s, refurbished in 2016. There is also a take-away restaurant in a Victorian end-of-terrace house on New Road at the junction with Gordon Road.
History

This is another area on the outskirts of Oundle that was used for agriculture until recent times. At the northwest part of this area was the Oundle Gas Light & Coke Company. The Gas Works there were producing gas for the town up until the introduction of North Sea Gas. The Sales Office was also there, where gas fridges and gas lights could be purchased and accounts paid for the gas used by businesses and householders in Oundle.

Heading south along East Road there were a pair of small semi-detached houses and next to them a number of fields. Where Laxton Junior School is situated there were grass tennis courts at the bottom of the field. These tennis courts were put down by Mr C H Curtis in the early 1900s.

Next is a small brick house which in recent years was the office and stores for R.G. & M.F. Sadler Electrical Contractors. Next to this property is a modern bungalow and then the Headquarters of MIND. This building and the one below it, were during the Second World War the Decontamination Centre for Oundle. After the war, it became the Northamptonshire County Council Highways Depot. The building is now known as The Joan Strong Centre which is the HQ of the Scouts and Guides in Oundle.

Where East Road turns into Ashton Road the land that was under cultivation until the 1990s and is now an industrial site with access from the bypass. At the southern extent of this area there is now an office complex covering most of the site and a small spinney at the extreme end of it. The area of the office complex and spinney was the Oundle Urban District rubbish dump until the early 1960s.
Buildings

This area of Oundle has been purposefully created to encompass the commercial, semi industrial, social and educational properties located to the Eastern Boundary of Oundle. A handful of dwellings are located within the zone, sitting uncomfortably, they do add some relief against the backdrop of commercial development whilst providing sense and scale to the historic buildings opposite.

Zone Six is distinct in that it became established following the A605 bypass’s creation in the 1980’s principally as a result of improved access from a major highway. Although the Northernmost end of Zone 6 is only accessible from North Street and East Road which is rather awkward.

Recent developments have seen Laxton Junior School regenerate its site creating a distinctive shaped school building which breaks up the monotony of the functional architecture. This regeneration is welcomed but should not be viewed in isolation without due consideration to the highways infrastructure.

The Zone skirts part of the Conservation area along East Road to the Junction of North Street. The architecture is typical commercial and social with metal clad, and low-cost brick buildings in abundance. The infrastructure is restricted by half of the area only reachable from the narrow East Road and would benefit from improved access. Historic & new stone walls help to maintain this areas identity within Oundle and should be extended to future developments.

Employment

A large proportion of the people who work in Oundle do so within the Nene Valley Business Park (NVBP); this is situated to the east of the town with vehicular access only from the A605 and pedestrian access to the town centre via the Ashton Road and East Road. The NVBP is one of the largest consolidated areas of buildings devoted to employment within the town, with a dozen separate employers on the site; some of the larger employers are Fairline Boats and PGR Construction. The buildings here date from the time of the development of the A605 bypass in the 1980s, although others at the southern end of the Zone were added later when the former quarry was filled.

The Eastwood Road Commercial Estate (ERCE) is also in Zone 6 and is home to another 10 or so small businesses; most of the buildings in this area date from the 1970s. Next to the ERCE is a the purpose built Waitrose supermarket which was opened in 2013.

Laxton School, the Junior School element of Oundle School, is sandwiched between the 2 existing Business Parks; Laxton occupies purpose-built accommodation completed in 2002, with car parks to the front and large areas of playing fields to the rear. Finally, there are 2 small pockets of employment in the north of Zone 6; the Nene Valley Brewery occupies modernized buildings on the old wharf site on the western side of the Nene and this site also includes retail units and a bar/restaurant, on the other side of the road also adjacent to the River are the offices of an independent fostering agency. The main benefit of the position of these businesses is that, while close to the town centre, because access by road is from the A605 the vast majority of traffic using the site does not have to travel through the town. The remainder of the places of employment in Zone 6 are also clear of the town centre but the road which gives access to the ERCE and the School is narrow and becomes congested at peak times.
History

This area is situated to the south eastern edge of Oundle and was used for agriculture until the building of the Prince William School.

The council houses on the corner of East Road and Ashton Road were built in early 1900. The small estate of modern houses known as Taney Court on East Road replaced a row of stone cottages where Miss Taney lived for most of her very long life.

Almost half way along Ashton Road on the south side there is a long drive up to a large stone property now converted into apartments. This property was Miss Webb’s school, a private school for junior boys and girls. Further along Ashton Road on the same side was Rowell’s Farm with a small bungalow near to it.

The new estate carries on the name of Miss Webb’s School and Mr Syd Rowell’s Farm in the name of its roads. The other road is called Sutton Road, this was named after Mr Reg Sutton who did so much work to get the Prince William School built while he was a County Councillor.

The eastern side of this area borders open fields. The entry to the Prince William School is off Herne Road where the whole of the school complex was agricultural land until the building of the school. The houses along both sides of Herne Road vary greatly in date of construction, from late Victorian to modern. The bungalows along the north side of Herne Road are on the site of Oundle Town Bowling Club and the Towns Recreation Ground. The Bowls Club moved to Occupation Road and the Recreation Ground to New Road.
The Appendix provides some indicative examples of open spaces/views.

**Buildings**

Zone 7 consists of two separate small areas primarily residential. The Conservation area abuts Herne Road and South Road two of the three main distributor routes within this zone. The other, Ashton Road bounds the northern extent of Zone 7.

Herne Road emanates from the Towns centre toward the Prince William Secondary school. Generally as the properties stretch out to the South East they become more spacious in land size and form. The older and historic terraces and villas have made way for C20 detached bungalows, chalets and the larger detached houses affording magnificent views across meadow to the River Nene. Herne Road is a “no through road” terminating at the school. There is a bridleway and footpath through to the A605 at the terminus of Herne Road. Along the length of Herne Road there are established trees which provide an extremely leafy feel to the whole environment.

On the corner of Ashton Road and East Road there are a series former council properties with brick and rendered facades and plain tiled roofs set back from the road behind picket fencing. The northern boundary is extensively planted with screen planting of various types, shrubbery and trees screening from the commercial area behind.

Mason close is a small cul-de-sac with a number of `sheltered housing' style single storey dwellings constructed of brick with concrete tiles built circa. 1970/80’s. The aesthetics are fairly benign in their visual appearance and face onto the rear of the Ashton Road terraced properties.

Further along Ashton Road toward Sutton Road is a plethora of architectural styles from the 1980/90’s forming a tight yet visually attractive homely estate. A lack of identity in its architectural design and palette of materials could be criticised as being incongruous, becoming a generic development with no identity to Oundle.

To the Western end of South Road are a number of C20 houses and chalet bungalows constructed from brick and concrete tiles all with extensive gardens maximising panoramas southward to the river.

Danford Close is a 1970’s style development built around a cul-de-sac with properties built from a buff coloured facing brick.

**Employment**

The only premises related to employment in Zone 7 are the Prince William School and Sixth Form College which was opened in 1972 and has over 1100 pupils. The design of the school’s buildings reflects the style of the late sixties although there are a number of later additions. The school is sited on the edge of Oundle off a cul-de-sac and is visible to only a very few of the towns inhabit-

**Map**

Please see map of this area for further detail.
The Oundle Town Design Statement has been produced by a working group of Oundle Residents under the banner of Oundle 2020 and facilitated by Oundle Town Council.

Oundle 2020 was first initiated in June 2010 by Oundle Town Council. The council realised that it was important to have a vision for the future of the town against a backdrop of housing expansion. Critically, it felt that working out what infrastructure would be required was a priority task.

A series of meetings from July 2010 to September 2010 resulted in two public Focus Group Meetings, both in September and December. Also a survey of the whole parish and visitors to the parish was completed by December 2010, along with a Youth Questionnaire (12-18 years old) being completed online by the Kings Cliffe School and Prince William School both situated in Oundle. A focus group also took place for parents of children aged under 12 years to talk about their opinions, thoughts and possible improvements for the Recreational Ground on ROAD.

This document: Oundle Town Design Statement, was originally prepared in 2011 and has been updated in 2018 to reflect changes to the town in the intervening period.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town Design Statement Team:

Mark Benns (Chair of Town Design Statement Group)

Roger Sturman (Chair of Neighbourhood Planning Working Party)

Rachel Hatt

David Wills

Jo Elwood

Neil Fraser

Debra Raper