Set on the margins of the Cotswolds, within the flat and fertile soils of the upper Thames valley, South Cerney is one of the largest villages in Gloucestershire.

Built upon wealth from agriculture, cloth production and, in the twentieth century, mineral extraction, recreation and tourism, the village has maintained a bustling character. In contrast, tranquil meadows surround and penetrate the heart of the village.

The Conservation Area is intended to preserve and enhance the older parts of the village, as well as to maintain the balance between its tranquillity and vibrancy.
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The medieval cross stands at the centre of the village, and acts both as a landmark aiding orientation, and a tangible reminder of South Cerney's long history.

South Cerney Conservation Area was first designated on 4 November 1970, and the boundary was altered on 23 May 1990, 29 July 1993 and 15 June 1999.

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). This Statement provides guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the South Cerney Conservation Area can be achieved.

Local planning authorities are required to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas (Section 71 of the Act). This Statement fulfils this statutory duty.

In making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area (Section 72 of the Act). While this should ensure that harmful change is not allowed, some changes, normally not requiring planning permission (known as permitted development), could still damage the special qualities of the area. Local authorities have special powers to issue directions removing certain permitted development rights from properties if it can be shown that this is necessary. A direction to this effect has been made covering part of the South Cerney Conservation Area.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the most recent versions of the Cotswold District Local Plan, the Gloucestershire County Structure Plan, and national planning policy guidance, especially Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) - ‘Planning and the Historic Environment’.

This Statement has been prepared by Cotswold District Council in close collaboration with South Cerney Parish Council and the South Cerney Trust. A draft was circulated at a public meeting held on 2 February 1999 in South Cerney, and any comments or suggestions were taken into account in the final published version. The Statement was adopted by Cotswold District Council as supplementary planning guidance on 15 June 1999.
THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

HISTORY

The discovery of artefacts, such as stone axes, metal tools and jewellery, in the surrounding countryside suggests that the rich fertile soils of the upper Thames valley have been occupied since prehistoric times. The name South Cerney is thought to predate the Roman period, and is derived from the River Churn - ‘settlement on the Churn’. It is probable that at that time there was a single, large administrative area based on Cirencester, with two settlements distanced equally from the centre, each having the name Cerney.

Roman control would have had a dramatic influence on the area, with the regionally important town of Corinium located only four miles away. There is evidence of a villa or farm just beyond the northern boundary of the parish and of a Roman road running along the eastern boundary.

Even by the fifth century AD, there is no conclusive evidence of a settlement. This is probably because the upper Thames valley, known in the Saxon Chronicles as the ‘debatable lands’, fell within the border region of the two kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex, and was therefore potentially unstable. However, by late Saxon times, evidence of a settlement becomes more substantial. The Charter of 999 provides evidence of occupation and the importance of the parish, referring to it as ‘the fertile lands of Cerney’. The Domesday survey shows that the land was already organised under a manorial system, and was the Archbishop of Canterbury’s most valuable Gloucestershire possession, with farming as the principal activity. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, the parish was divided into three estates, resulting in the establishment within the village of three manors: Chapter Manor, Atkyns Manor, and The Manor, two of which belonged to religious orders. As each estate required its own army of workers, this had a profound effect on the growth of South Cerney’s population.

By 1285 the village had a fulling mill, which helped the production of high quality cloth. Tax returns show that the parish flourished between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, with a growing rural industrial economy in addition to its important agricultural activities. Perhaps reflecting the prosperity of the time, the Church of All Hallows was extensively altered and extended in the fourteenth century.

Archaeological evidence suggests that by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the centre of the village was probably roughly where it is today. At that time there was a wide, open space to the north and the south of the river with houses clustered around. Between there and the west end of the modern village, were fields with a farm complex at Upper Up.

The older houses and cottages in the village generally date from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Their construction followed the dissolution of monasteries and the break up of their estates, thus leading to the establishment of a number of farms and small holdings, and setting the pattern of the village until the twentieth century. This was a period when what we would recognise today as Cotswold architecture emerged, and old one-storey hovels gave way to two-storey houses. The new, ‘grander’ homes, would generally have been built in the same position, replacing what had probably stood there for the previous two hundred years. It was at this time that a hamlet of houses along Station Road was developed, evidence suggesting that this was on meadows previously farmed.

By the end of the seventeenth century the village was large and thriving, with a mixture of grand houses and artisans’ cottages. Created around the farming estates, the village would have been reasonably self-sufficient with many other activities supporting and serving agricultural needs. Tax returns show that cottages at Clark’s Hay accommodated a butcher, cobbler, farrier and a baker, the usual range of trades in most villages.

Much of this changed with the arrival of the canal and, later, railways, so that by the start of the twentieth century imported building materials changed much of the architectural character of the village.

SOUTH CERNEY IN THE LANDSCAPE

South Cerney lies some four miles to the south east of Cirencester, set within the flood plain of the upper Thames valley. The village is bisected by a bend in the River Churn, draining to the Thames from the Cotswold Hills to the north. The Thames and its tributaries have created a generally flat landscape with minor undulations, formed by gravel terraces on underlying clay. These hills, barely higher than 20 metres above the flood plain, provide vantage points across the wide valley landscape. A thin tongue of this higher land runs almost into the village from the north. It ends at, or near, the probable location of the long-destroyed castle before giving way to the flood plain beyond.

Agricultural practices over time have produced a field pattern strongly defined by mature hedgerows. Since the 1970s, Dutch Elm Disease has reduced the number of trees, with a marked effect upon the wide valley landscape. Prior to the development of the sand and gravel industry, the character of the upper Thames area was mainly agricultural. Although this is still the predominant land use, sand and gravel extraction has had a great influence on the local landscape character, particularly in the immediate vicinity of South Cerney. Large scale mineral workings have transformed former meadows into extensive lakes and wetlands, dramatically altering the topography, flora and fauna.

Long views across flooded gravel pits predominate, with few elevated features or substantial belts of trees. Where tree belts do occur, for example along the disused railway line and
canal, their landscape value is considerable. Elsewhere, occasional trees remain in hedgerows or on boundary strips between lakes, helping to break-up views across open water. In places, however, the appearance is that of a flooded landscape.

**THE CHARACTER OF SOUTH CERNEY**

South Cerney is one of the most populous villages in the Cotswolds, with almost 3,000 residents. It has shops and a substantial employment area. Clark’s Hay, with a few shops and services, is the main hub of the village. The employment area, at Broadway Lane to the south of the village, is one of the largest industrial estates in the Cotswolds.

The village has grown considerably since 1970. Some of the housing has been of an undistinguished design, on standardised estate road patterns. This has interfered with the traditional linear form of the village, with cottages built up to the road and meadows behind. However, the village broadly retains a cruciform pattern along two roads - one east-west, the other north-south. Older buildings still contribute greatly to the village character, providing scenes of interest along the main streets, principally involving terraced stone cottages and a subtly changing mix of individual dwellings. A few larger houses, including The Manors, stand away from the core of the village in a more loosely-knit arrangement. Two farm groups still survive, giving evidence of the former predominance of agriculture.

Much of the village is fairly built-up, with few open spaces. The most important is that around Boxbush Farm, including the wide verge along Station Road and the area by the River Churn. The small ‘greens’ around the cross, and around the war memorial on High Street, contribute to the character of the village. These are significant focal points in the street scene.

There are very few trees in the village, unusual in such a sheltered location, and maybe because of the thin layer of subsoil, although another factor is felling for modern development. However, there are some significant trees, particularly the Cedars in High Street and Clark’s Hay.

The working nature of the village contributes to its character. Whilst some of its traditional character has been lost to new development, this can be reasserted through sensitive design and appropriate materials. The new development at Station Road on the eastern approach to the village shows what can be achieved.

*The green verges, trees, shrubs and staddle stones of this part of School Lane form a contrast with the more built-up eastern section of the lane.*
A CLOSER LOOK AT THE VILLAGE

There are five distinct character areas in South Cerney Conservation Area. These are:

1: From Berry Farm on Silver Street to the Post Office on Clark’s Hay including Church Lane and the area around the church

2: Bow Wow, and the land alongside the River Churn, to the east of Clark’s Hay

3: School Lane, and the River Churn to the west of Silver Street

4: Upper Up, and the western end of High Street

5: From Boxbush Cottage on Station Road to Pike Cottage on High Street

1: From Berry Farm on Silver Street to the Post Office on Clark’s Hay including Church Lane and the area around the church.

Silver Street

Upon entering the village from the north along its principal approach road from Cirencester, the imposing Berry Farm defines the northern limit of the Conservation Area. Although now surrounded by residential development, these sizeable agricultural buildings, immediately adjacent to the eastern side of the road, are a feature of profound importance to the character of this part of the village, bringing an active agricultural atmosphere right into the village, and giving an indication of the farming past of South Cerney.

Spaces between the hay store, cart shed and stone barn permit views through to the other farm buildings and beyond, over an open agricultural landscape. Typical of many such groupings, a diverse range of structures and building materials have been utilised, including barrel-vaulted, steel-framed structures covered with corrugated iron, and substantial Cotswold stone buildings with many chimneys and gables of varying heights. Most notable of these are the late sixteenth century farmhouse itself and the principal barn which stand prominently, parallel with the road.

Further views south towards the centre of the village are restricted at this point by the bend in the road and the visual bottleneck created by the gable-ends of Berry Farmhouse and Lime Tree Cottage on the opposite side of the road. The only hint at what lies beyond is the view over the farm buildings to the impressive chimneys of Edwards College, a row of almshouses.

Once beyond Berry Farm the road veers away to the right, and eventually disappears between another bottleneck created by two prominent buildings: Liddell House and Gable Cottage.

At the northern end of the village, Berry Farm comprises traditional and more lightweight modern farm buildings which hug the roadside. Gaps between the buildings allow glimpses through to a flat agricultural landscape.
This sharp narrowing and widening of Silver Street creates a richness of spaces on either side of this section, the architecture also being very varied in character. Just before the bottleneck, and set well back from the road, is Century House, a large Victorian stuccoed villa in generous grounds with many mature trees easily seen over its close-boarded boundary fence, this contrasting with the more traditional buildings standing alongside the verge.

Set back on the opposite side of the road is the more prominent Edwards College. Founded in 1838 as a row of twelve almshouses, it is an unusually tall and impressive Gothic style building standing at right angles to the road. Its long front elevation, seen on a glancing view, has tall gables and distinctive chimneys. It has a splendid prospect from the broad terrace, south to a swath of fields allowing an undisturbed view of the church, Chapter Manor and rows of mature trees beyond, south, towards the centre of the village. This is an important open space. In contrast, the end part of Edwards College, facing the street, has an intimate, well-planted garden. This adjoins a point where a number of lanes and tracks converge at a single wide opening on the eastern side of the road, each having stone gate piers, some of which are ornate.

Continuing along Silver Street, views become more restricted by the high dry-stone walls, which also emphasise the curve of the road at this point. After passing Liddell House and Gable Cottage, the verges widen and a view opens up to the bridge over the River Churn and the centre of the village. The scene is enlivened by many chimneys, roofs, gables and gardens of the buildings which line Silver Street, creating a strongly domestic scene. On the opposite side of the street, this character is taken up by other cottages with small front gardens behind hedges and low dry stone walls. The cottages are traditional in their detailing and architectural form, some having hipped dormers interrupting the deep projecting eaves line. One, Orchis, is distinguished by a two-storey wing which originally garaged the village charabanc. It adds much to the character of the street, especially as some of its exterior joinery retains the original traditional colour scheme of blue-grey frames and white details.

On the same side of the street, Timbrell’s Close is a modern infill development, which has been designed to harmonise with surrounding cottages. Cotswold Cottage, one of the most interesting buildings here, is a hybrid of the traditional cottage vernacular and more polished architectural detailing. A gap between Cotswold Cottage and The Cottage affords a glimpse of a builder’s yard and workshop buildings to the rear, revealing the working activity taking place behind the street frontage. From this point, southwards to the bridge, there are a series of well-preserved traditional cottages of modest scale, standing back from the road behind the wide verge.

Contrasting with these, and richer in architectural detail, is the early nineteenth century Silver Street House on the eastern side of the street. Adjoining Brook Cottage, a small privet hedge, sitting atop a low dry-stone wall, provides a degree of privacy, and a wrought iron gate permits views into the gardens of both properties, containing several mature trees. At this point, Silver Street widens dramatically, where it is joined by Church Lane and School Lane, giving the juction of the three roads the character of a square. There is clearly a marked contrast between the status of houses on the eastern side of the street, and the modest vernacular buildings on the western side. Of the more imposing buildings, the seventeenth century Atkyns Manor is the most important, set back from the street behind a wide gravelled area, delicately detailed wrought iron railings (including tall ashlar gate-piers) screening a lawn. Here, there are several other large houses...
standing in their own grounds, some on the street frontage and others beyond nearer to the Church.

Church Lane

Entering Church Lane, there is a distinct contrast between the grander character of the large houses on the northern side, and the modesty of Little Atkyns and Glebe Cottage on the southern side, a diversity in architectural character that continues along the length of the lane. Initially, there is a strongly built-up feel, Atkyns Manor and Little Atkyns having lofty gables and high stone boundary walls, the latter having a garden full of fanciful structures. Walls are a very important feature here, some are low dry-stone walls, others are well over head-height and of dressed stone with flattened copings. Initially, the church and houses beyond are out of sight. The walled scene is punctuated by other elements, such as the arched opening into the grounds of Atkyns Manor, and the look-out sitting atop Little Atkyns with its fox-decorated weather vane. A small square-headed opening in the wall at this point affords an oblique view of the front elevation of Atkyns Manor and a glimpse into its garden, adding interest to the lane.

Architectural contrasts continue on the southern side of the lane between the Old Vicarage, an early eighteenth century two-storey house with distinctive ornate stone gate piers, capped by ball finials, and Glebe Cottage, with a vernacular appearance. Directly ahead, at the end of the lane, the scene opens out dramatically to take in the church and churchyard,
and the allotment gardens to the east, viewed over a simple five bar gate. A narrow footpath skirts around the northern edge of the allotments alongside the churchyard wall, eventually connecting this part of the village with the River Churn. The allotment gardens are relatively well kept and alive with flowers, vegetable patches and the paraphernalia of gardening, providing a setting for the Church when viewed over the River Churn.

All Hallows Church is architecturally and symbolically the most significant building in the village. Viewed from Church Lane, its square stone tower, dressed stone walls and red tiled roof, stand amongst numerous mature yew trees and some important churchyard monuments, historically significant in village history.

Just west of the church, The Manor House has an understated classicism of the Georgian period, its principal feature being the central stone porticoed doorway. It stands within its own extensive grounds, set back some distance slightly beyond the line of the church, its gardens being similarly planted with several mature yew and laurel trees, and a large well-trimmed yew hedge. It is entered through substantial ornate stone gate piers, and a heavy black-painted wrought iron gate.

The Bridge and Clark’s Hay

There are numerous varied views from the bridge, the vista southwards extending all the way to the medieval cross standing at the junction of Station Road, Clark’s Hay and the High Street, further south. To the east, the tree-lined walk of Bow Wow can be seen extending for some distance along the course of the river; whereas to the west the riverside view is curtailed by a bend in the river as it passes between the Eliot Arms and the trees on either side of the bank. The river, which forms a wide pool to the west of the bridge before splitting into two branches, is enhanced by several willow trees which drape their leaves directly into the water. It is a noisy river when in full spate.
Standing on the humped-back bridge, there is clearly a change in the ambience and character of the Conservation Area. The relative peace of Silver Street gives way to the more bustling activity of the shops and services on Clark’s Hay. Several important buildings situated on street corners here, do much to define the character and appearance of this area. A key building is Bridge House to the north east, set back from the street behind a lawn - a large traditionally-detailed stone building, which is known to incorporate a medieval house.

The entry into Clark’s Hay is spacious, echoing that on the northern side of the bridge. Here, the Eliot Arms and the Old George Inn are set back from the road on opposite sides, both buildings standing alongside the river. The buildings contrast with one another, the Old George Inn being traditional with lime-washed rubble faced walls, whereas the Eliot Arms is loftier and more imposing.

Approaching the southern limit of this part of the Conservation Area, the street soon narrows and buildings reduce in scale. The South Cerney United Reformed Church stands at an angle to the street and is fronted by a single but very significant mature blue cedar tree, planted in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of George V. There is a group of modest traditional buildings adjoining this and, together with the garage and surgery, contribute to the busier character of this part of the Conservation Area. The scene is further animated by the mixture of building and roofing materials.

2: Bow Wow, and the land alongside the River Churn, to the east of Clark’s Hay.

The character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area are quite different from that of the others. Essentially, Bow Wow is a narrow lane, bounded on one side by the River Churn and on the other by the mill stream, passing between trees and meadows on either side, and some secluded houses. Bow Wow is entered, at the west end, directly off the stone
bridge at the centre of the village, and immediately provides a contrast with the quite different scene of busy village life.

The idyllic character continues where the river passes Little Atkyns, and both river and lane veer slightly after passing from the initial straight stretch of Bow Wow. The rear garden of Little Atkyns is surrounded by a more formal dry-stone wall and hedge. The garden of the Old Rectory is quite a theatrical event along Bow Wow. A semi-circular set of steps ascend directly from the river bank through a gate on an axis with the entrance porch of the house. Set back beyond the northern bank of the river, it is animated by a series of garden follies: a gazebo, miniature towers, cupolas and a dove hut which can be glimpsed over its boundary wall.

After the gardens of Downings, the next house, over the northern bank of the river, the church tower comes into view, set within the mature yew trees of the churchyard. Here, the informal strips of tended ground, running alongside Bow Wow, run out, and a more rural character begins to emerge. The river is fast moving in wet winters, but has been known to dry to a trickle in exceptionally dry summers. The northern bank is dense with trees and shrubs, and the water is remarkably clear and close to the level of the lane, enhancing the sense of enclosure at this point. More distant views open up southwards, over fields to the rear of farm buildings on Station Road, significantly of those which form the Boxbush Farm grouping. The quality of the riverside setting to Bow Wow, and its importance as a rural tongue of land in the heart of the village, can be appreciated. The visual link with Station Road is important as it lends great coherence to the historic pattern of the village which would largely be lost if this area was developed. Crucially it retains the agricultural character of the village.

Bow Wow narrows just before Lower Mill is approached, where the river is crossed by a modern timber bridge taking a branch of the public footpath southwards into a modern housing estate. Continuing north, this footpath skirts around the western formal entrance of Chapter Manor before connecting with the allotment gardens near the Church. From this path, despite the air of privacy, there are views of the spacious parkland which lies west of the manor, and of the fields beyond.

Continuing eastwards, on the southern side, walls define the boundary of Lower Mill, and are soon succeeded by rubble stone outbuildings and a large boarded gate. Lower Mill, now converted to residential use, is a former mill and mill house. It stands facing Bow Wow and terminates the vista east from the village. Of great significance is the mill stream which passes under the southern portion of the building through the original opening. Although its wheel is missing, Lower Mill adds much character to the Conservation Area, and is tangible evidence of an ancient mill mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Past the mill, a tall evergreen hedge backed by the high boundary wall of Chapter Manor’s grounds, prevents any
view north, and attention is therefore focussed onto the vista along Bow Wow. The river, surrounded by trees and shrubs, animates and enhances the whole scene, particularly the garden setting of the south and west faces of Lower Churn, as this house is reached. On the northern side, the water is almost motionless, while on the south it is fast flowing until it can be seen joining the mill stream at a noisy confluence a short distance to the south.

After crossing the river by a small humped-back bridge, an irregular open space is entered, contained by the north-facing frontage of Lower Churn, and the high boundary walls of Chapter Manor, resulting in an intimate courtyard-like atmosphere. It is enhanced by numerous trees, grass verges, and the splay of another entrance into Chapter Manor and the open front garden of Lower Churn. Chapter Manor plays a significant role in the Conservation Area at this point, as it exudes the grandeur of a large house, but it is also discreet behind its walls and screen of trees. There is a dovecote built into the gable end of the stable block, and, at times, many white doves can be seen roosting or in flight. Other details such as the distinctive weather vane, numerous chimneys of varying styles and materials, and a delicate metal-framed greenhouse also enrich the scene. Beyond the manor is a range of stone-built stables, small outbuildings and large barns, with a mixture of roofing materials, and a range of boundary treatments: dry-stone walling, timber fences and gates.

As the embankment leading up to the railway bridge is climbed, distant views over flat fields open up to the north, criss-crossed by timber fences. To the south, there are views back into the rear garden of Lower Churn through the dense copse which bounds three sides of a small field. The climb to the bridge passes through an avenue of tall thin poplar trees which permit views either side over the embankment.

The disused railway bridge is a substantial brick structure standing at the eastern fringe of the Conservation Area, crossing the line of the former Midland and South Western Junction Railway, built in 1891. From its apex there are good views back to the village, and northwards over a flat agricultural landscape. To the south, views are quite a contrast, being limited by a dense copse. Looking down off the bridge is a scruffy area of bushes, pools and muddy paths, which let down the quality of the bridge itself. This bridge is a striking symbol of the Railway Age, each of its ten arches being articulated by piers having two segmental transverse arches. The whole effect is surprisingly delicate and unexpected, and typical of the engineering aesthetic of the age.
3: School Lane and the River Churn to the west of Silver Street.

The entrance into School Lane at its northern corner with Silver Street is defined by the first of a terrace of well-preserved eighteenth century cottages. A dense evergreen hedge on the opposite side of the road screens modern development and thereby focuses the view onto the series of traditional cottages which line the northern edge. The modest, but beautifully planted and well tended, gardens of No 2, Highnam Cottages, Berkeley House and Vine Cottage, do much to enhance the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. A noticeable and distinctive feature here is the use of large Cotswold stone tiles set vertically into the ground to form the boundaries of these gardens. Looking back are views of the well preserved rear elevations of Highnam Cottages, particularly the distinctive treatment of their painted window and door joinery.

Proceeding further into School Lane, the former Old School, occupying a prominent position on the northern side, is a large, but simple, stone building in nineteenth century Gothic style.

The lane narrows where Clover Cottage and The Forge stand on opposite sides, before the building lines open again, revealing the space ahead centred on the River Churn and the small green which fronts the Village Hall. This space has a very special and distinctive character quite unlike any other part of the village. Looking back eastwards from the Village Hall, Silver Street cannot be seen, due to the view being blocked by cottages on either side. This creates an impression of being in an entirely separate settlement. The contrast between the more built-up eastern section of School Lane and the openness of this space, with its green verges, trees, shrubs and flowering plants, interspersed by staddle-stones, is important.

At this point in its course, the river is narrow, fast-moving but silent, due to the gentle undulating nature of the riverbed. Emerging from behind The Forge, its arcing course bisects the space before it splits into two branches, creating an island linked to School Lane by a distinctive narrow hump-backed bridge. There are several sets of stone steps descending into the river on its southern bank, which may have been used for washing clothes by the occupants of the nearby cottages in the past. Its principal branch veers to the north and quickly disappears from view beyond the high dry-stone boundary wall of Brook House, whilst the southern branch narrows to a point where it enters a culvert under the lane near Upper Mill House, and also passes from view. The cottages here are well preserved and traditional in character, some in short terraces, and others detached. A striking feature of these cottages is their scale. Their low roofs, tiny hipped and gabled dormers, and diminutive windows and doors, and even the gardens, shrubs and plants appear as if in miniature.

Several larger buildings situated on the northern side of School Lane are of a range of architectural styles and materials, also playing an important role in shaping the

A disused railway bridge carries the lane out of the village at the eastern extremity of the Conservation Area. On top it provides a rare elevated platform for viewing the expanse of meadowland to the north. From below its magnificent structure of brick arches sets a quite contrasting intimate scene.
School Lane begins with a very distinctive boundary treatment formed from large stone slates. The rear elevation of Highnam Cottages reveal themselves to be very well preserved examples of traditional cottage architecture.

character of the space. The Village Hall, the front part of which was formerly a barn, is a rubble stone building of some significance within the village, particularly because of its distinctive thatched roof. Brook House is large, ashlar-faced and three storey, in the restrained classical style of the Georgian period. Together with Upper Mill House, it stands square on to School Lane enclosing this edge of the space.

The remainder of this part of the Conservation Area comprises the island formed by the two branches of the river and the two lanes and paths which extend westward along the outer banks of the river. The island, on which stand several houses, is connected to the surrounding area by small bridges, where views of the river and the sound which it creates are ever present. To the south, a footpath skirts along the riverbank lending an almost moat-like nature to the island. A group of modern houses arranged about an open space at Millside, echoes the intimacy and the established riverside setting of the grouping of buildings by the Village Hall. Once beyond Brook House, the northern lane follows the course of the river, bordered by high dry-stone walls, but softened by thin grass verges, until the scene opens out into a rural landscape, where allotment gardens, and then fields, extend into the distance.

4: Upper Up and the western end of High Street.

Upper Up is a distinct part of South Cerney towards the south-western fringe of the village, and forms a separate part of the Conservation Area. Where the High Street enters Upper Up, the start of the Conservation Area is marked by The Royal Oak and Royal Oak Cottage, set back on the southern side of the street. Their setting is enhanced by the forecourt created by the ‘L’ shaped plan, and the enclosing effect of the neighbouring building. The long honey-coloured elevation facing the High Street, is enriched by porches, gabled dormers, brick chimney stacks, and changes in roof materials. The Royal Oak retains a domestic appearance, like that of a large farmhouse, which complements the more rural character of Upper Up.

The Stables, standing directly on the street, was converted to residential use in 1984, and crucially still retains much of its original character. Adjacent to it is, in contrast, a large Victorian house set back from the street within generous grounds.

Further down School Lane the narrowness of the river causes it to be faster flowing than elsewhere in the village. This combined with the diminutively scaled bridges and cottages on the southern bank, lends this part of the village an altogether different character.
grounds. It is only partially visible due to the high boundary wall and mature cedar tree situated within its front garden. Its distinctive dormer windows, tall chimneys and Welsh slate roof are typical of the Gothic style.

On the opposite side of High Street, the green verge which extends for almost the whole length of the village, approaches its westerly limit at the junction with Jubilee Gardens, a modern housing estate. At this point there is a slope in the verge, down towards the low boundary walls of the properties which line the High Street, affording a view into their well planted gardens. Looking north along The Langet, the view is channelled by the low stone wall of Radnor and the high stone wall of Langet End, before the path bends where it reaches Meadow View, a building distinguished by its gabled dormers. Even in this confined vista there is a range of roofing materials which vary the scene, including Welsh slate and simple red clay tiles in addition to local stone tiles.

Radnor is a small detached cottage standing on the corner of The Langet. It has a modern two storey extension to the rear that looks a little out of place, but its frontage, viewed directly from the opposite side of the street, reveals nothing of this. Together with its front garden, Radnor has the appearance of a gardener’s cottage. Orchard House stands within its own grounds occupying almost a third of this part of the Conservation Area, yet it hardly features in public views. Its dense screen of hedges and lofty pine and cypress trees are here, as elsewhere in Upper Up, important features. In winter, occasional glimpses are possible through the trees, to the spacious lawn and the house in the background.

To the south of the road, there is a distinctive area comprising several traditional cottages and houses, loosely distributed in plots of roughly equal size. Interestingly, it is known that these buildings, and the whole site, were formerly used in connection with a small local brewery. Trees, shrubs and hedges are also important here, framing views through to the buildings, creating a sense of intimacy which is heightened in spring when the canopy grows to further restrict views. Looking west, the pinkish appearance of Well Cottage enlivens the scene, and Rose Cottage standing almost square

Several sets of stone steps can be found on the southern bank of the river. These may have served a practical purpose in the past.
to the line of the road where it veers to the north, closes the view. A gravel drive bordered by high dry-stone walls leads down to The Pontings, surrounded by its former agricultural outbuildings. Its gardens to the rear comprise three former paddocks extending west from the house to form the whole of the southern boundary of this part of the Conservation Area. Of much interest, as a survival of a traditional farm grouping, are two stone outbuildings to the rear of The Pontings, a low open-fronted range and a cart shed, which face each other across a small cobbled-covered yard.

Beyond the gardens of The Maltings, Barracks Cottage is of a quite different character to that which prevails in this part of Upper Up. Formerly an accommodation block for brewery workers and for barley storage, it is a prominent building crowded in by a group of more modestly scaled buildings. Further west, Walnut Tree Farmhouse is a relatively large building on the western edge of this part of the Conservation Area. Along with several other cottages in the vicinity, it is reached by a private drive branching south from the road.

The Langet is a narrow lane through the central part of Upper Up, around the grounds of Orchard House. It provides an alternative route from High Street to the north-western part of the village and is also the only access for several cottages en-route. There are three distinct sections to The Langet, and along each the view is curtailed by high walls or gables. Its character is dictated by the confinement brought about by stone walls, fences and screens of trees and shrubs, and the occasional gate or view into a garden, or down a footpath. The northernmost section is very narrow and lined on the south by a number of small stone cottages.

The Conservation Area extends a short way north along the road heading westwards out of the village, alongside a group of traditional stone cottages, including Sideways and Spring Cottages, before these give way to a modern housing development. The Conservation Area boundary runs along the opposite, western, side of the road and is defined by a grass verge, which is a significant feature of the whole length of Station Road and the High Street. At this point the grass verge narrows somewhat before becoming wider again towards the village centre. Formerly the route of a tributary of the River Churn which followed the line of Station Road, the verge contains several deep ditches linked by culverted sections passing beneath grassed areas. The ditches, which today are generally dry, and only occasionally flooded, would, prior to the development of the nearby gravel pits, have flooded far more frequently.

The presence of two working farms and open fields at the heart of the village are instrumental to its character. This is best understood along Station Road where one can view another strand of the village, and the Church tower, through the outbuildings and across the fields behind Boxbush Farm.

significant grouping of agricultural and traditional buildings on the same side as the verge. They play an important role in defining the character of this part of the village. Both the farmhouse and cottage retain their original traditional detailing, particularly noticeable in the door and window joinery. Looking north from Station Road, distant views are possible through gaps between farm buildings, and over fences, gates and stone walls to open fields, and the church and tree-lined Bow Wow beyond. The survival of such a substantial farm and swathe of agricultural land a short distance from the village centre is important. The crucial value of this area, between Station Road, Clark’s Hay and Bow Wow, has been described above.

The farm grouping is separated from the road by the wide grass verge, which is a significant feature of the whole length of Station Road and the High Street. At this point the grass verge narrows somewhat before becoming wider again towards the village centre. Formerly the route of a tributary of the River Churn which followed the line of Station Road, the verge contains several deep ditches linked by culverted sections passing beneath grassed areas. The ditches, which today are generally dry, and only occasionally flooded, would, prior to the development of the nearby gravel pits, have flooded far more frequently.
On the opposite side of the road is a very long row of cottages, many dating from the sixteenth century, and therefore among the earliest domestic buildings in the village. Despite the loss of three central cottages, and their replacement with Georgian detached houses, the row is a remarkable survival. Its strong architectural presence is the result of its length, and the series of gabled dormer windows. It totally encloses the southern side of the street and, together with the Boxbush Farm grouping, creates a spatial quality which is further enhanced by the grass verge, several hawthorn trees and the ditches.

Towards the centre of the village, the streetscape becomes wider where Englefield, a large double-fronted nineteenth century house, is set back within its own grounds on the southern side. Immediately beyond is the site of the former CAMAS building materials factory, which occupies a large portion of the southern side of this part of the road adjoining the Conservation Area. This site has recently been redeveloped with new housing echoing the architectural qualities of the Conservation Area and greatly improving its setting. Critically, the development has retained the row of mature deciduous trees at the front of the site and introduced a low stone wall and generous grass verge to the roadside. In this way, by employing features seen elsewhere on Station Road, it has successfully integrated the new with the old. Also adjoining the former factory site, Ham House, a substantial Georgian building, stands well back from the southern side of Station Road. It is an important landmark building which has an impressive front elevation. Running down to it is the intimate Ham Lane, continuing south to reveal a series of charming agricultural outbuildings.

A medieval cross stands on a stepped plinth within a triangular island of grass, formed by the road at the junction of Station Road, High Street and Clark’s Hay. The space around this junction is enclosed by a loose arrangement of traditional buildings, set back from the pavement within their own gardens. Prominent among these is South Cerney Farmhouse and its surviving outbuildings, no longer in use as a farm, but another reminder of the village’s agricultural heritage.

The Old Post Office, Thrift Cottage and Manor Cottage are further west, on the northern side of High Street. At this point the grass verge gives way to the forecourt of a former garage, which has a loose gathering of outbuildings of a domestic scale, built of a mixture of materials. These evoke the past activities which would have taken place at this part of the village. The agricultural outbuildings and land to the rear, which can be seen from Meadow Way and Churn Close, are again a reminder of the former prevalence of farming within the village.

This part of the Conservation Area reaches its western limit at the junction of High Street and Broadway Lane, where the War Memorial stands on a small grass island in the road. The grass verge is still prominent here, although from this point on it narrows and loses its impact. A delightful feature of the long ditch which runs through a green swathe for almost the whole length of Station Road is one of the most remarkable features in the village. Here it passes in front of the well preserved farmhouse grouping of Boxbush Farm on the northern side of Station Road.
northern side of High Street are the raised gardens of The Cottage and Ivy Cottage, which may have been kitchen gardens in the days when self-sufficiency existed throughout the village. These gardens, against a backdrop of traditional stone cottages, provide much greenery and depth and lend an idyllic village atmosphere to the setting of the High Street. The Conservation Area ends at Pike House and Corner Cottage on the southern side of the road, before the streetscape gives way on either side to more recent development.

**ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING MATERIALS**

Throughout South Cerney, cottages, houses, and farm buildings are built from the local Cotswold limestone, which is a warm light grey colour, and is a crucial aspect of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There are a few examples, mainly the most important houses, of finely-dressed ashlar. The majority of walling is squared or dressed rubble, often with very thin-bedded stone. Occasional buildings, such as the Old George Inn on Clark’s Hay, have painted walls, reflecting the tradition of lime-washing most rubble walls, and which is still evident on some buildings in the form of a bloom left on the face of the stone.

Brick is another walling material which can be seen in South Cerney, albeit on a far lesser scale. Its use was generally confined to smaller outbuildings, but it was frequently used on chimneys, being a cheaper replacement material than stone. The use of brick in the village found its finest architectural expression in the structures which survive from the Railway Age, most notably in the supporting piers of the railway bridges located to the east of the Conservation Area.

Historically, most roofs in South Cerney must have had natural stone slates, most probably replacing thatch of which there are no surviving examples. These stone roofs are a particular feature of roofs of cottages on Silver Street, School Lane and Upper Up. Although expensive to maintain, they need to be kept to retain the mixture of materials which is a particular characteristic of South Cerney. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, first Welsh slates, brought in by the railway, and later other materials, such as plain clay tiles, were used both on new buildings and as replacements for old stone roofs. A notable example is the Welsh slate roof of Tanners on the High Street. An exception to this development in the use of roofing materials is the later thatched roof of the Village Hall itself, which originates from the Victorian period. Over time however, considered as a whole, this mixture of materials has blended harmoniously throughout the Conservation Area.
The earlier cottages, such as the row on Station Road, dating originally from the sixteenth century, have stone mullioned windows, as does Atkyns Manor. However, by the middle of the eighteenth century, painted timber doors and casement windows predominate in the more modest cottages.

Generally speaking, the majority of cottages in South Cerney are modest, simply-detailed buildings, and characteristic of the local vernacular tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There are, however, a significant number of larger houses in the Georgian classical style, these including The Manor on Church Lane, and Ham House and Brook House on School Lane. Windows on these buildings are typically multiple-paned sliding sashes.

Edwards College to the north of the village, is a magnificent example of nineteenth century Gothic architecture. Other architectural styles of a more domestic scale are represented in the Tanners on the High Street and the Elliot Arms on Clark’s Hay, which belong to the Victorian revival tradition.

There is much evidence throughout South Cerney of its agricultural heritage. Built in a variety of walling and roofing materials, and of mostly humble modes of construction, these buildings and structures are a valuable physical reminder of the diverse architectural legacy of the village.

On a more detailed level, the village is enriched by numerous examples of distinctive architectural ornament. These include the formal, such as the wrought iron railings and ornate gate piers of Atkyns Manor, and also the informal, such as the dovecotes and gazebos of Little Atkyns. Original domestic details including the distinctive rainwater gutters of Cotswold Cottage on Silver Street, and the carefully painted window joinery of Highnam Cottages, are a less obvious, but equally important, aspect of the village.

Remnants of the paving materials traditionally used throughout the village up until the early twentieth century do survive, but only sporadically. Most noticeable are the pennant kerbstones along Silver Street, which have become rounded with time. In other less accessible parts, for example in Upper Up, original cobbled surfaces between agricultural outbuildings survive as an important reminder of the village’s heritage.

THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

PRESERVATION

It is the aim of the District and Parish Councils that the existing character and appearance of the South Cerney Conservation Area should be preserved or enhanced.

Preservation will be achieved by refusing permission for the demolition of any building or structure if its loss would damage the character or appearance of the area. Extensions and alterations will be expected to follow the design guidance set out below.

Neglected buildings, where these spoil the character or appearance of South Cerney, will be investigated. In critical cases action will be taken to ensure that repairs are carried out. As part of a survey of all listed buildings in the District, those in the South Cerney Conservation Area have been surveyed by the District Council, the work having been done during March 1996. No listed buildings in South Cerney Conservation Area were found to be in such poor condition that they were considered at risk from neglect.

Some open spaces and trees have been identified as being crucial to the character of the place and should be preserved. These are indicated on the map accompanying this Statement.

Although in need of some attention, the main barn door at Berry Farm is one of many fine examples of traditional agricultural features to be seen in the farm buildings of the village.
DESIGN GUIDANCE

The designation of the Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change, especially that which would enhance the character of the area and ensure the continuation of South Cerney’s economic vitality. The general design guidance for any work requiring planning permission in the Conservation Area is that the character and appearance of the area should be preserved or enhanced. In particular:

- New buildings or extensions should reflect the general pattern of building in South Cerney especially in scale and proportion, although there is scope for some architectural innovation provided that this echoes South Cerney’s architecture.
- Materials should be in accordance with those traditionally used in the particular part of the Conservation Area, and should maintain a similar mix. Extensions to buildings should be in materials that are sympathetic to the existing building.
- Any new building or extension should be located on its site in a similar way to the general pattern of building in that part of the area.
- Boundary walls and railings should be incorporated in the development in a similar way to those already in existence in that part of the area, and these should use similar materials and detailing.

LISTED BUILDINGS

Some historic buildings are ‘listed’ by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport because of their special architectural or historic interest. Listed building consent is required from the District Council for any work that would affect the special interest of a listed building, whether inside or outside. More information about listed buildings is available from the District Council.

There are 56 buildings in the South Cerney Conservation Area that are listed and merit the tightest control over any changes to them. While the aim of the listed building legislation is to preserve these buildings for their own sake, any changes affecting them should also be considered in terms of the effect on the Conservation Area and the design guidance above.

THE PROTECTION OF OTHER BUILDINGS

There are buildings and features within the Conservation Area which are not listed but which contribute to its character and appearance. While these are subject to some increased planning controls brought by the designation of the Conservation Area, potentially harmful development could be carried out which requires neither Planning Permission or Conservation Area Consent.

In South Cerney there are many unlisted buildings retaining much of their historic character through the survival of original, or appropriate installation of replacement, window and door designs. Stone walling remains unspoilt by modern renders or cladding, and other changes that could damage the conservation area have not taken place. This is a credit to the owners of these properties. Normally, on dwellings, many such changes could be made without the need for planning permission.

With the support of the local community, a Direction has been issued removing permitted development rights from certain buildings, allowing control over changes to front elevations, boundaries, and any part of the building facing a public open space. A list of these properties is attached to this statement. On these properties, planning permission will be required for:

- Any extension or enlargement facing the highway.
- Formation of any new window or door openings.
- Removal or replacement of existing windows and doors.
- The replacement of painted finishes with stains on any woodwork or joinery.
- The addition or removal of render or claddings.
- Painting previously unpainted stonework.
- Installation of satellite dish antennae.
- Addition of porches, car ports and sheds.
- Changes of roofing materials (front roof slope only).
- Installation of rooflights (front roof slope only).
- Demolition of, or alteration to, front boundary walls or railings.

ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

Inevitably, there are a number of areas or features in the South Cerney Conservation Area which do not conform to the character of the area, and whose replacement or improvement would be beneficial.

This Statement lists the scope for improvement as a series of proposals for enhancement, although no timescale is set on when they will be achieved. As most involve utilities or local authorities, the District Council will take the lead in encouraging their implementation.

1 - Raising the standard of street furniture which occurs throughout the Conservation Area.

Items such as benches, bins, signs and lamp standards may be harmonised, when the opportunity occurs, by replacement with a co-ordinated range of well thought-out aesthetically and functionally suitable alternatives.

2 - Disguise the unsightly surface water outfall within the ditch opposite Huxley Court.

This picturesque, and historically important drainage channel, is spoilt by the present outflow pipe.
3 - Improve boundary treatments within the Conservation Area, where they are at present inappropriate.

The area midway along Bow Wow, ahead of Lower Churn, which provides the immediate setting for the dramatic meeting of the River Churn and the mill stream, is unfortunately marred by a wire fence boundary treatment. Measures should therefore be considered to enhance the setting at this point by replacing this boundary treatment with a more appropriate alternative. Several properties on Silver Street have modern timber fences and other structures along their boundary with the street which, whilst they are well maintained, do jar with the prevailing character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The replacement of these with more appropriate boundary treatments would certainly enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Other instances, such as the mesh fencing at the former Church of England Primary School, could be replaced with a more appropriate alternative.

4 - Consider a scheme of sensitive repair for bridges and other important structures within the Conservation Area.

This could include a repair scheme and enhancement for the Railway Bridge and its setting, which would include its parapets supporting piers and arches. Other schemes could include repairs to the small bridge near the Village Hall, where vehicles may have damaged the west parapet wall, and sensitive repairs to the bridge along Clark’s Hay.

5 - Reduce signage clutter and remove redundant telegraph poles.

There are numerous examples, throughout the village, of signs having their own post, or redundant telegraph poles which have been left standing. The result is a proliferation of posts and signs which blight the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Ideally an effort should be made to rationalise and reduce the number of signposts, and remove unnecessary telegraph poles, whilst possibly replacing others with a system of underground cables.

6 - Consider the introduction of appropriately designed traffic-calming and/or other measures.

Motor vehicles exert an increasingly negative effect on both safety and the character and appearance of traditional village centres. If sensitively thought-out measures to restrict their influence can be found, which do not have the effect of reducing the vitality of village life, these should be considered. An example of this problem occurs along Station Road and High Street, particularly on either side of the bend in the road at Upper Up.

7 - Retain, through sensitive repair, where appropriate, the distinctive boundary and edge treatments peculiar to numerous gardens and fields, which add character to the Conservation Area.

Examples of suitable projects include the reinstatement of lost, or inappropriately replaced, traditional stone kerbs throughout the Conservation Area; a grant scheme for the repair of traditional stone walls; or measures to overcome the damage caused by vehicular overrun to grass verges which line roads and lanes. A specific project might be a sensitive enhancement of the setting of the war memorial on the High Street.
**PROPERTIES COVERED BY THE ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTION, REMOVING CERTAIN PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

**BOW WOW (South EAST SIDE)**
- Lower Churn

**CHURCH LANE (SOUTH SIDE)**
- Little Atkyns

**CLARK’S HAY (EAST SIDE)**
- The Ferns

**HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE)**
- Manor Cottage
- Old Post Office
- Cross Cottage
- Box Cottage
- Orchard House

**HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE)**
- The Stables
- Tanners
- Well Cottage
- The Maltings

**SILVER STREET (EAST SIDE)**
- Bridge House
- Gable Cottage

**SILVER STREET (WEST SIDE)**
- Lime Tree Cottage
- Ambermead
- Orchis
- The Homestead
- Cotswold Cottage
- The Cottage
- Wyken Cottage
- Chirlings

**SCHOOL LANE (NORTH SIDE)**
- Berkeley House
- Vine Cottage
- Clover Cottage
- No. 1 (Old Tiles)
- No. 20 (Water’s Edge)
- No. 21 (Little End Cottage)
- No. 1 Barclay Horn
- No. 2 Barclay Horn

**STATION ROAD (NORTH SIDE)**
- Boxbush Farm
- No. 1 Boxbush Cottage
- No. 2 Boxbush Cottage

**STATION ROAD (SOUTH SIDE)**
- Englefield
- No. 9 Station Road
- Plough Cottage (Nos. 10 & 11)
- Bickley Cottage (No. 12)
- No. 14 Station Road

**UPPER UP**
- Rose Cottage
- Providence Cottage
- Meadow View
- Rotary House
- Japlou
- Pear Tree Cottage
- The Cottage
- Spring Cottage
- Sideways Cottage
- Dirty Pig Cottage

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**FURTHER READING**

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<th>Gloucestershire County Structure Plan, copies available from Environment Department, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hill, Westgate Street, Gloucester. GL1 2TH</th>
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<td>Government guidance</td>
<td>Cotswold District Local Plan, copies available from Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX</td>
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<td>Guidance on procedures</td>
<td>PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment, copies available from branches of HMSO.</td>
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<td>Design guidance</td>
<td>Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, copies available FREE OF CHARGE from Cotswold District Council.</td>
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<td>Protected Trees, published by the Department of the Environment, copies available FREE OF CHARGE from Cotswold District Council.</td>
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<td>Further guidance leaflets are to be published by the District Council.</td>
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