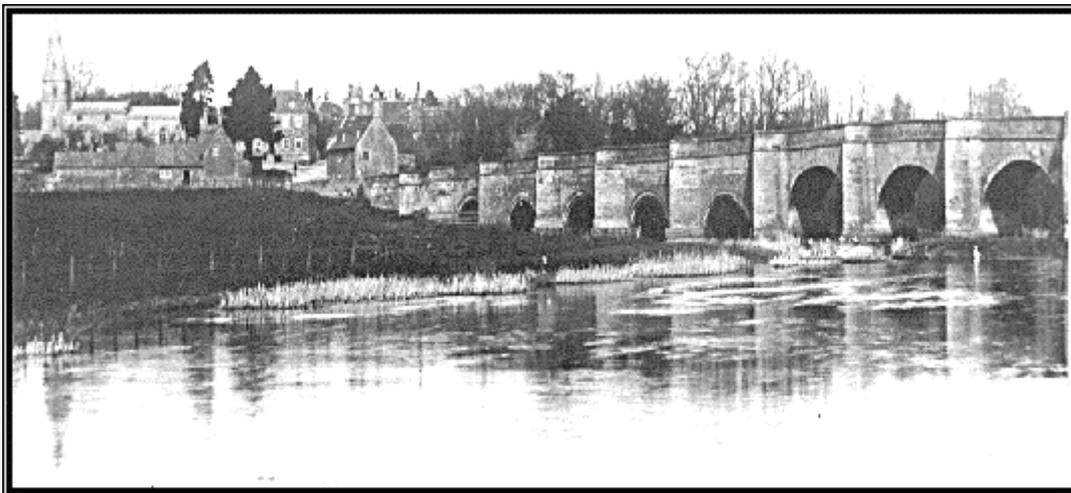


WANSFORD

Village Design Statement

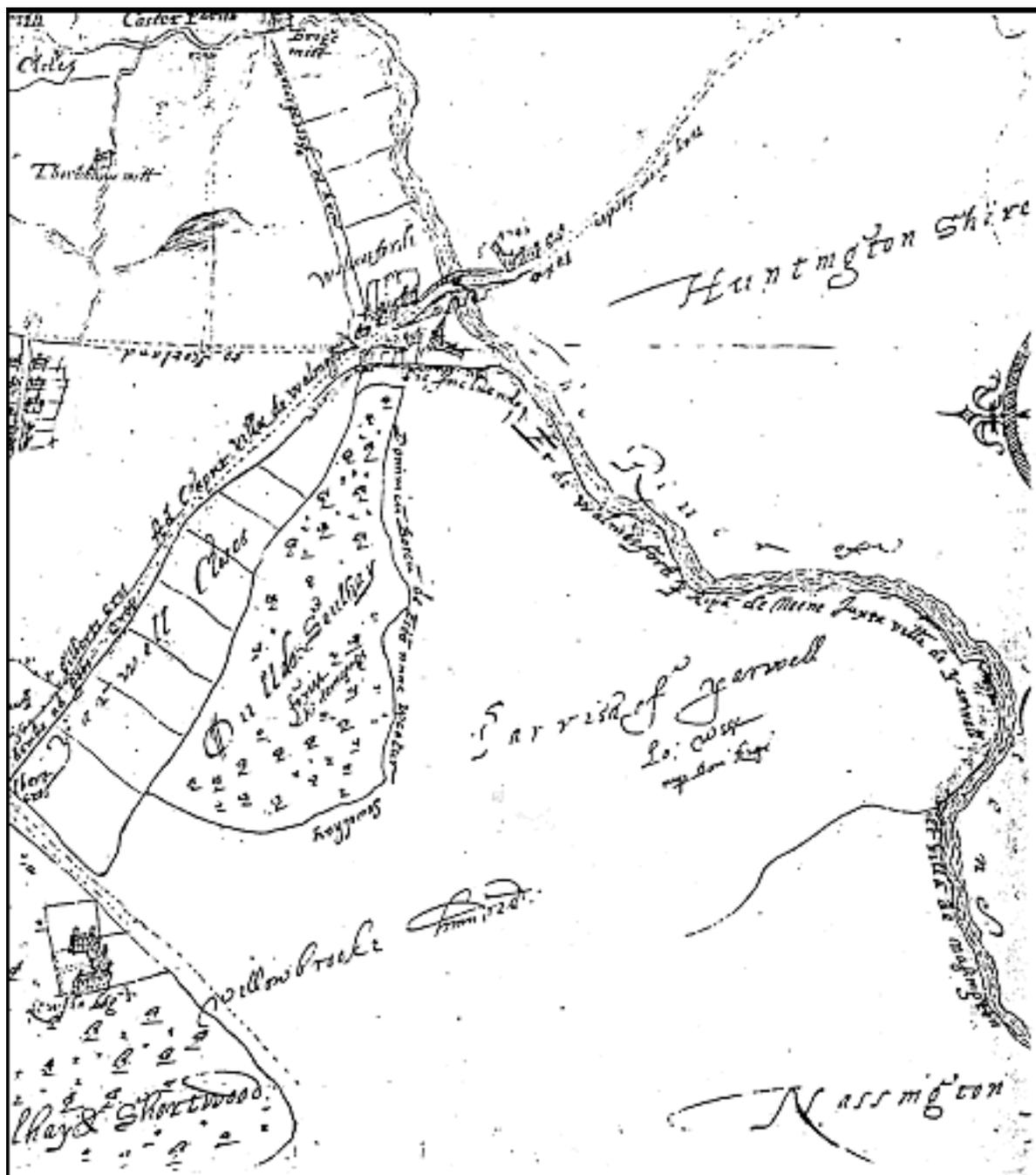
2003

**Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted by
Peterborough City Council on 22nd August 2003**



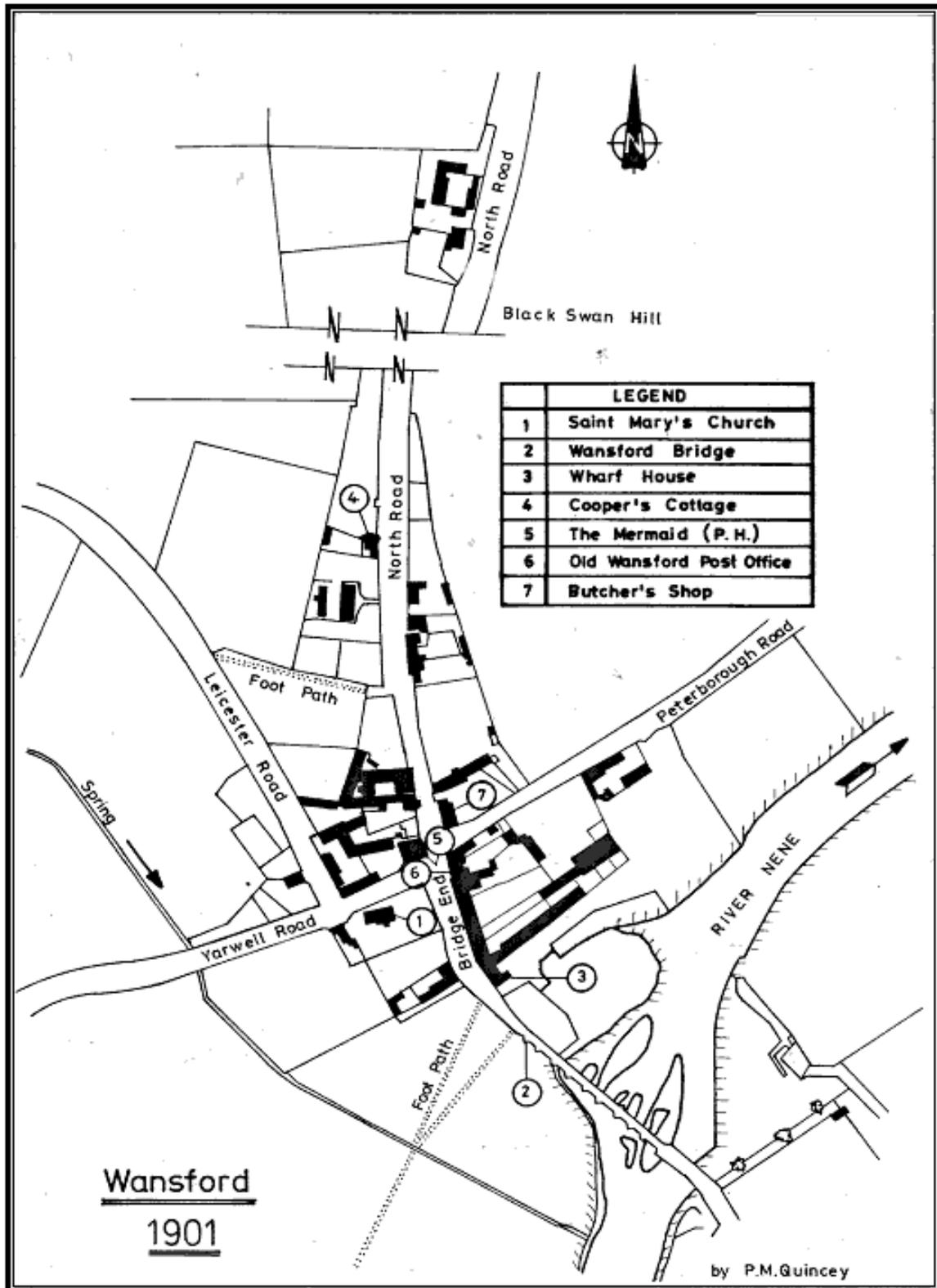
Prospect of Wansford Bridge, St. Mary's Church and Bridge End, c.1902

Conceived, researched, collated, written and published as a Community
Project



Walmesford(e), now Wansford, in 1635

Note the nave and chancel of the Church are misaligned to the west of the tower. Seulhay (Sulehay) Lodge is prominent (bottom left) and the Sulehay junction with the King's Cliffe Road, Gilbert's Cross, is cited by John L. Gilbert as the location of 'a medieval holy cross near a Romano-British burial ground'. Virtually the only building shown south of Wansford Bridge is (today) The Haycock Hotel.



The former route of the Great North Road through Wansford and its junction with the main Leicester to Peterborough Road. The right fork of the bifurcated footpath crossing the water-meadow (above) once led to some ancient, stone steps accessing the bridge.

WANSFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

What is the Wansford Village Design Statement?

Our Village Design Statement (VDS) has been researched and written by members of the local community and describes Wansford as it is today; underscoring the many qualities and characteristics of the village most valued by its residents. All households in Wansford were invited, indeed encouraged, to participate so that essential local knowledge, views and ideas would form the very essence of this VDS.

The objective of the VDS is to ensure that future changes and development in the village are viewed in the light of this carefully considered understanding of Wansford's past history and the present day situation, formed by a consensus of those best qualified to form such an opinion – Wansford residents.

It therefore offers a significant and positive contribution towards the future evolution of the village to enhance and protect Wansford's distinct character and heritage within a clearly defined, 21st century, context.

For whose benefit has it been researched and published?

Over the years, changes to our village have not just come about through new housing developments, but often through less obvious, gradual adjustments and modifications to individual homes, gardens, paths, walls, trees, hedges and verges. Some changes, undoubtedly, have been beneficial to both the residents concerned and the surrounding community at large. With other changes, unfortunately, the same may not always have been the case. The long-term danger is that the present balance and amenity value of our village could gradually erode to the point that the entire look and feel of the village is irredeemably impacted in a negative manner. The VDS - in providing considered, expert local information - is designed to assist in all appropriate decision making processes and is geared towards achieving continuous environmental integrity to the common benefit of all Wansford residents.

The Wansford VDS is therefore addressed to:

- Public authorities and statutory bodies.
- Planners, architects, developers, builders, designers and engineers.
- Local community interests and groups
- Local professional and commercial interests.
- And not least...local householders.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

As Supplementary Planning Guidance, Wansford VDS recommendations will be taken into account by Wansford Parish Council and Peterborough City Council when planning applications are being assessed. It also provides a handy and readily accessible information resource for all local residents. The statement has been written to take into account the Peterborough Local Plan (adopted 1996) and relates to the following policies:

- BE2 Design of new development.
- BE3 Building material in new development.
- BE6 Design of extensions and alterations.
- BE14 Development affecting nearby residential properties.
- BE15 Residential development which would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.
- BE22 Character and appearance of development in conservation areas.
- BE25 Protected sites and frontages in villages.
- BE34 Retention of historic fabric in repairs to historic buildings.
- BE38 Extensions to historic buildings and other important buildings.
- E22 Re-use or adaptation of rural buildings for employment use in villages.
- T17 Traffic and parking implications for new development.
- L7 Layout and design of development in or adjoining the countryside.
- L19 Landscape schemes for new development.

A review of the Plan is currently underway and, therefore, relevant policies from the replacement Local Plan will also be taken into account.

Wansford's Southern Boundary

The whole of Wansford Old Bridge is under the care of Peterborough City Council and Wansford Parish Council.

The community on the south bank of the Nene, also generically known as Wansford, comes under the aegis of the Huntingdon District Authority and is served by the Sibson cum Stibbington Parish Council and is therefore outside the remit of this VDS.



Mile Post on the former Great North Road, now Old North Road, Wansford

THE COMMUNITY

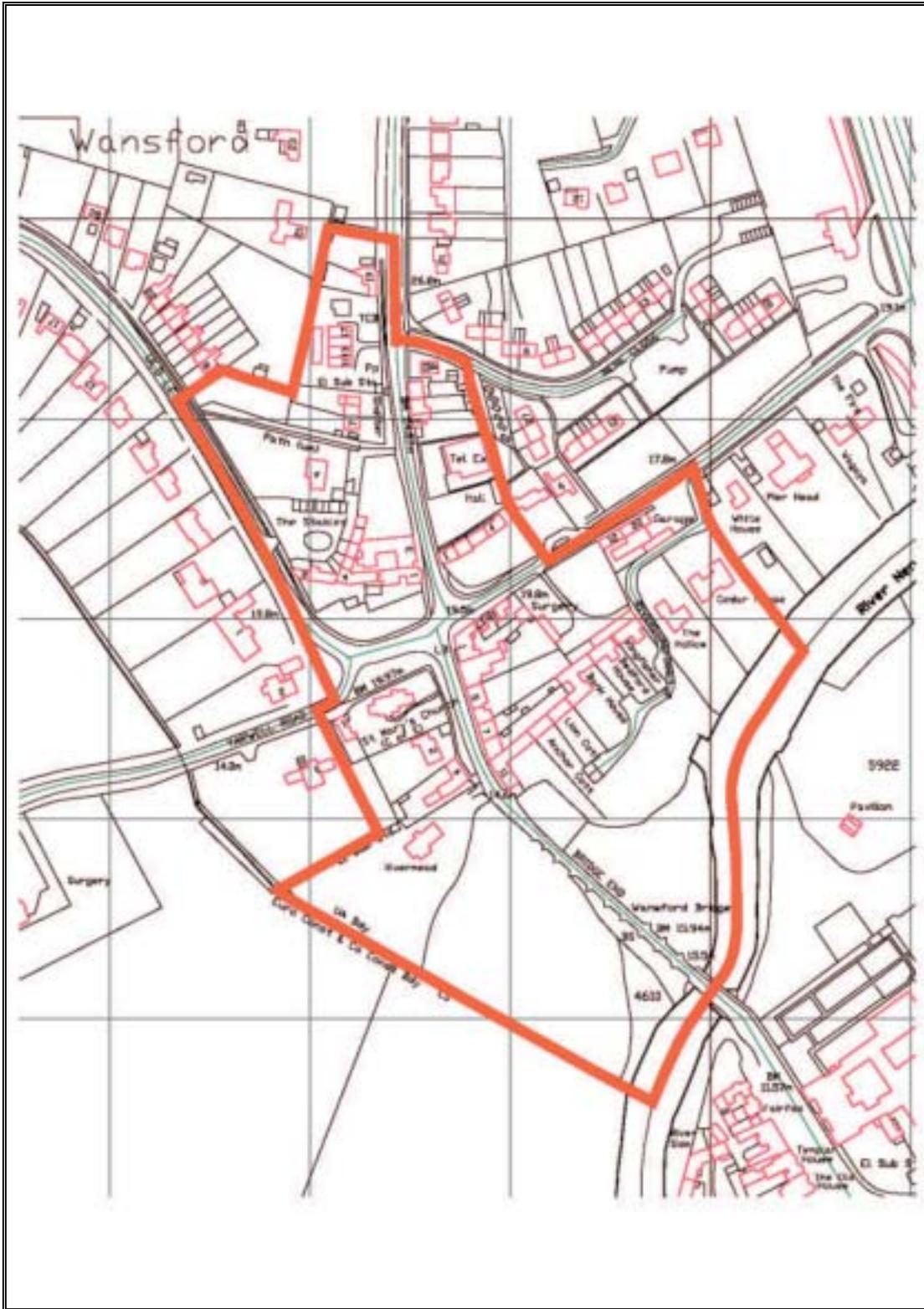
There is evidence of agricultural activity in the Wansford district going back over 4,000 years. The original village of Wansford evolved around an early riverside settlement on the convenient incline of the northern bank of the River Nene, adjacent to an important fording place on a main route between the south east of England and Scotland. St. Mary's Church, built at the top of the incline, can be dated to the Saxon period. Earlier, Wansford was a most southerly outpost of Danelaw. A wooden bridge had complemented the ancient ford crossing by 1221. A stone bridge replaced this in 1577. The ford remained viable until the 1930s, when it was dredged away to allow the passage of larger, commercial river craft.

In 1929 the Great North Road (A1) moved from its centuries old route - along London Road and past The Haycock, across the old bridge and up Bridge End and the (Old) North Road - to a new by-pass bridging the Nene to the east of Wansford. Ever increasing levels of traffic necessitated a second by-pass in 1975, in parallel and adjacent to the first. This second by-pass became the southbound carriageway of the A1 with the earlier, 1929 by-pass now only carrying northbound traffic. Whilst the removal of arterial traffic was clearly beneficial to the fabric of Wansford, not least its narrow bridge, its effect on local trade and commercial activity was less so. The Peterborough Road became purely a local feeder onto the northbound carriageway of the A1 and local traffic to Peterborough was diverted to the A47. A new A47 by-pass bridging the A1 was completed by 1965 and effectively isolated the most northerly section of the Old North Road and - later - Thacker's Close from the main body of the village. The eastern section of Peterborough Road, on the far side of the A1 dual carriageway, became a *cul de sac* entered from a turning on the A47 opposite Sacrewell Farm. This redundant section of road now functions as a lorry drivers' rest stop and lay-by, with adequate parking, a public convenience, intermittent mobile fast food sales and a riverside picnic site.

Originally, Wansford developed as a minor trading centre based on the needs of passing travellers and herdsmen travelling with their livestock to widespread markets across a broad north south and east west axis. A small wharf, originally dating back to Roman times, was used by shallow-draught river traffic to the head of Nene navigation, just a few miles downstream at Alwalton. During the 18th century, the clearance of sluggish river channels and the construction of a number of locks by the Duke of Bedford opened up navigation from the North Sea as far upstream as Northampton. Until the coming of the railways, river traffic at Wansford Wharf prospered in conjunction with Stibbington Wharf on the opposite river bank. The Swan Inn on the south bank, now The Haycock Hotel, became a notable staging post on the London Road with a number of other inns and hostelries competing on both sides of the river.

The main change from a rural, trading and essentially service industry oriented community to that of an almost exclusively residential, largely commuter, community occurred entirely during the 20th century; much if not most of it during the last quarter. The bridge, the church and Bridge End alone, although the latter much converted and elevated from more humble origins, essentially remain the only elements of the village that would offer a familiar outward aspect to a returning nineteenth century visitor. All commercial activity is now situated south of the river, with the exceptions of the Little Chef abutting the A1 northbound carriageway and the Paws and Claws Cattery on the Old Leicester Road.

Wansford has a Community Hall, off Peterborough Road, which was acquired in 1976 and formerly housed the telephone exchange. It is used by the Parish Council for its bi-monthly meetings and for Parish Meetings and is available, for hire, for small functions and gatherings.



Conservation Area. Visual aid for general overview purposes only.