CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



AUGUST 2026, VERSION 02

Bafford Conservation Area

Conservation Area Appraisal

CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

PURCELL

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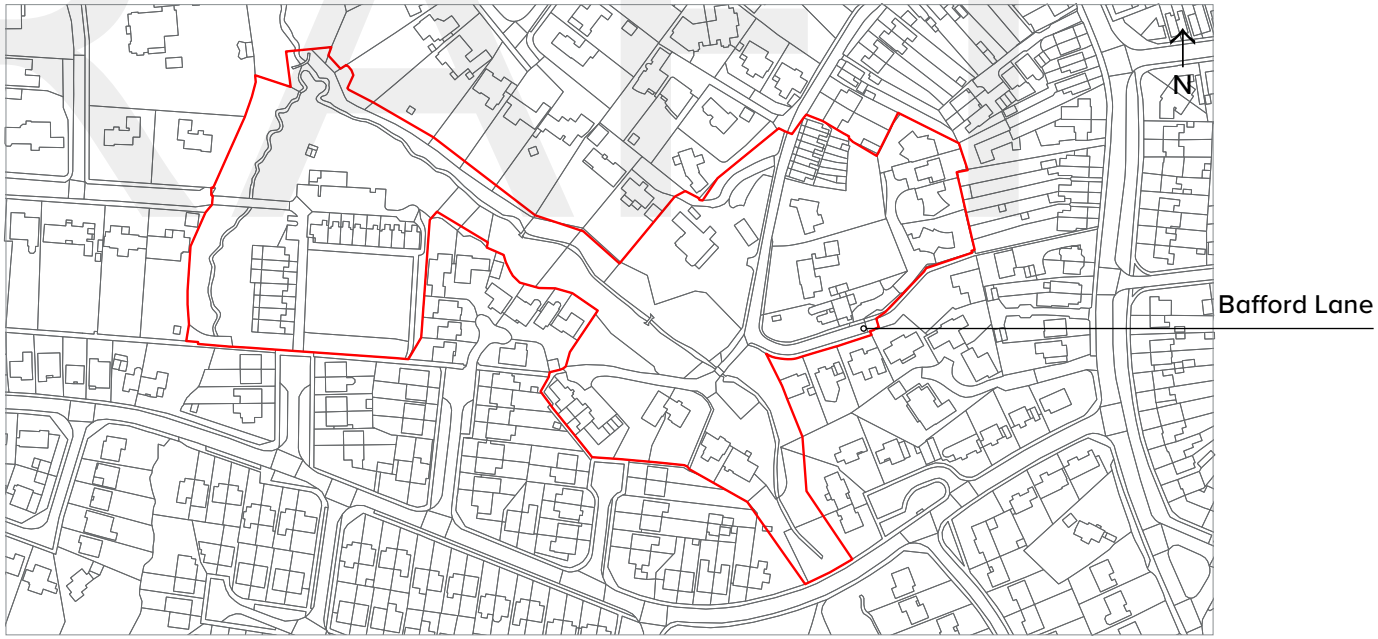
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1.0 Introduction

Bafford is located within the Charlton Kings area of Cheltenham, to the southwest of the town centre.

The Bafford Conservation Area was first designated on the 2nd October 1989, with subsequent reviews in November 2001 and June 2009, for its special historic and architectural interest. This can be summarised as:

- The conservation area has an interesting mix of building styles and ages, with buildings positioned in an informal layout along Bafford Lane.
- Bucklehaven Almshouses provide an important contribution to the built environment and history of the Conservation Area.
- The conservation area has an enclave character; well concealed and self-contained, screened from its setting by trees and the urban grain of the built environment.
- The area has a mixed urban grain with the Bucklehaven Almshouses being planned within formal grounds. In comparison, the houses along Bafford Lane are loosely set out along the curving lane, within substantial plots.
- There are numerous narrow footpaths both within and surrounding the Conservation Area.
- The green environment makes an important contribution to forming the character of the area, with the presence of a large number of green spaces and mature trees.
- Southfield Brook and Lilley Brook determine part of the boundary to the Conservation Area, and have a significant topographical impact within the area. The brooks are set in steep gullies which carve their way through the Conservation Area. The brooks and gullies greatly enhance the overall rural character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The winding layout of Bafford Lane with large buildings set back from the street gives the area a rural character.
- The variety of building style and use of materials which illustrates the organic historic development of the conservation area over several centuries.
- The use of red brick, stone and hedging for boundary treatments that face the street emphasise the rural characteristics of the conservation area.



The Bafford Conservation Area, the boundary marked in red.

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1.1 Boundary review

A review of the Bafford Conservation Area has been taken as a part of this appraisal process. The existing boundary is considered to appropriately reflect the special historic and architectural interest of the area within Bafford, and is not proposed to be amended at this time.

1.2 Definition of a conservation crea

A conservation area is defined as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'[01]

Conservation areas recognise the unique qualities of an area as a whole. This includes the contribution of individual buildings and monuments but also of other features, including topography, materials, spatial relationships, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. All these features contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive sense of place.

The extent to which a building, or group of buildings, positively shape the character of a conservation area derives not just from their street-facing elevations but also from the integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing and materials. Rear and side elevations can also be important.

1.3 Purpose and scope of the Conservation Area Appraisal

It is a requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for all local planning authorities to 'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of conservation areas within their jurisdiction and for these documents to be periodically reviewed.[02]

The Bafford Conservation Area was last reviewed in June of 2009.

It is important for local planning authorities to maintain an up-to-date strategy for the positive management of conservation areas so that they can be carefully adapted and continue to thrive. These public documents define and record the special interest of a conservation area and set out a plan of action for its on-going protection and enhancement.

Over time, conservation areas evolve and the integrity of characteristics which underpin their special interest may depreciate due to gradual alteration. It is therefore important to review and take stock of the character of a conservation area at intervals to ensure designation is still suitable and that the proper tools to manage change are in place.

Reviews often find that conservation area boundaries were previously drawn too tightly or include peripheral areas which do not contribute to an understanding of its character. Consequently, it is important to review the boundary and include/exclude buildings and spaces which do/not meet the requirements for conservation area designation.

This Conservation Area Appraisal seeks to:

- Record and analyse the special interest of the Bafford Conservation Area;
- Recognise the designated and non-designated heritage assets which comprise the conservation area;
- Identify issues relating to condition and detracting features, as well as opportunities for enhancement; and
- Provide guidance for the positive management, preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

Although this document is intended to be comprehensive, the omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that said element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the conservation area. The protocols and guidance provided in Section 6: Management Plan are applicable in every instance.

The assessments which provide the baseline information for this Conservation Area Appraisal have been carried out utilising publicly available resources and through on-site analysis from the public thoroughfares within the conservation area.

01 Section 69 (1), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

02 Section 71 (1), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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1.4 Planning policy

Conservation areas were introduced in the United Kingdom under the Civic Amenities Act 1967. They are now governed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024) sets out the overarching requirement for local planning authorities to identify and protect areas of special interest (paragraph 204).[03]

1.4.1 Local Planning Policy

The Cheltenham Plan

The adopted development plan for Cheltenham has three sources; the Joint Core Strategy 2017, the Cheltenham Plan 2020, and the saved policies of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan 2006.

Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council in December 2017. Of relevance to Cheltenham Central Conservation Area and the heritage assets located within the boundary are Policies SD7: The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and SD8: Historic Environment.

The Cheltenham Plan 2020

The Cheltenham Plan, which was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on 20th July 2020, provides the local-level development strategy for the borough. The policies relevant to the Bafford Conservation Area and the heritage assets within it are Polices D1, HE1, HE2, HE3 and L1.

Cheltenham Tree Strategy, February 2026

Cheltenham Borough Council published their revised strategy for the maintenance of trees across the town in February 2026. This strategy focuses on protecting, managing, and expanding the town's canopy cover to achieve net-zero by 2030, enhancing biodiversity, and mitigating climate change impacts

1.4.2 Emerging Local Policy – The Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic Local Plan

A Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) is under development by Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council. The SLP will provide an overarching planning strategy and cross-boundary strategic policies covering the whole area, and local policies for each authority.

Once adopted, the SLP will replace the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (adopted December 2017), the Cheltenham Plan (adopted July 2020) and the 'saved' retail policies within the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan Second Review (adopted June 2006).

1.5 Guidance

There is a range of available guidance from Cheltenham Borough Council and Historic England regarding the management and maintenance of the historic built environment:

- Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (Second Edition), 2019.
- Cheltenham Borough Council: Local Index Supplementary Planning Document, 2007.
- Cheltenham Borough Council, Regency Design Precepts.
- Historic England, Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading, 2017.

1.6 Consultation and formal adoption

As of April 2026, stakeholder consultation has taken place in regards to the Bafford Conservation Area. Common issues and opportunities were discussed with the stakeholders present, along with a review of the existing conservation area boundary.

03 When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

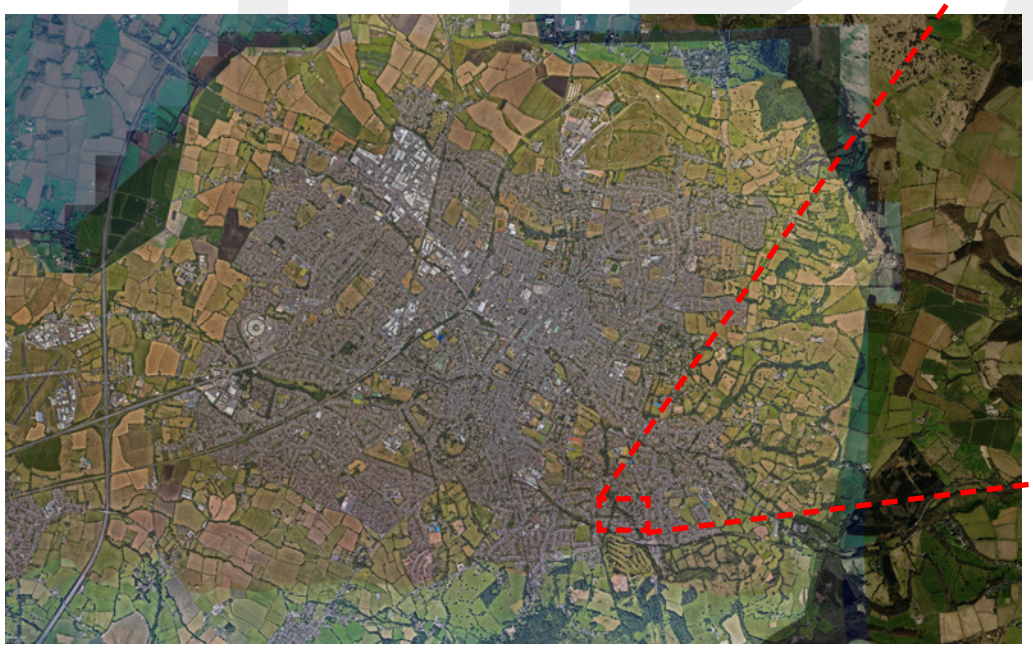
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2.0 Assessment of special interest

2.1 Location and setting

Cheltenham, and the Bafford Conservation Area within it, lies at the foot of the Cotswold Scarp, which forms the western edge of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The steep topography to the east of the town means that a strong sense of the town's setting is retained. The tree cover and placement of the buildings obscure this setting within the Bafford Conservation Area, which is only appreciated through occasional glimpsed views.

The boundary of the conservation area itself is surrounded by modern, suburban development from the 1960s and 1970s, known as Charlton Kings, Charlton Park and Moor End. These developments turn their back on the Bafford Conservation Area, which sits in a discreet, low-lying area that is predominantly characterised by the Lilley Brook and Southfield Brook, the secluded and green nature of which sits in contrast with the suburban surroundings.



Aerial image of Cheltenham.



The Bafford Conservation Area.

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2.2 Summary history of Cheltenham

Cheltenham has a distinctive history, with evidence of Roman activity found through coins and pottery discovered across the town. The first written reference to Cheltenham dates from 803 AD, although archaeological evidence suggests it existed as a farming settlement long before then. By the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Cheltenham had five mills along the River Chelt, and in 1226 it became a market town, with the market playing a central role in its economy for centuries.

For much of the medieval and early modern period, Cheltenham consisted primarily of a single High Street lined with narrow plots, orchards and fields. St Mary's Church, rebuilt in the 12th century on the site of an earlier Anglo-Saxon church, formed an important focal point for the settlement.

Cheltenham's transformation began after the discovery of mineral springs in 1716. The development of the Royal Well by Henry Skillicorne and the visit of King George III in 1788 established the town as one of Britain's leading spa resorts. During the early 19th century, rapid expansion created fashionable estates such as Pittville, Lansdown and Suffolk Square, while the population grew from just over 3,000 in 1801 to around 20,000 by 1826.

The arrival of tramways and railways encouraged further growth, industry and education, including the founding of Cheltenham College and Cheltenham Ladies' College. Throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries, Cheltenham expanded into a prosperous town, while retaining much of its distinctive historic and Regency character despite modern development.

2.3 Summary history of Charlton Kings

Bafford is within the Charlton Kings suburb of Cheltenham, formally its own separate settlement which was absorbed by the town between the 18th and 20th centuries.

Charlton Kings has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon period. Its name derives from ceorls' tun, meaning the enclosed settlement of a ceorl (an independent peasant landowner). The addition of "Kings" reflects its association with the royal manor and Hundred of Cheltenham. The settlement was recorded as Cherlton as early as 1160.

The village expanded significantly during the 16th century as demand for housing increased. New homes were built on former common field strips, while many older properties were rebuilt or upgraded between 1550 and 1650. From the mid-18th century onwards, brick became the dominant building material, supported by local brickyards, with housing gradually spread onto former agricultural land.

Charlton Kings benefited from the growth of nearby Cheltenham as a fashionable spa resort in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Visitors often stayed in lodging houses within the village. During the Victorian period, the area became a popular retirement location for military officers and attracted a prosperous middle-class population.

The 20th century saw rapid population and housing growth. The number of houses increased from 4,376 in 1921 to 4,759 in 1931, while the population rose from over 6,000 by 1946 to more than 10,000 by 1971. Today, Charlton Kings has a population of around 10,875.

By the mid-20th century, Charlton Kings had developed into a well-served community with schools, shops, public houses, charities, sports clubs, and social organisations. In the 21st century, it is an established and affluent suburb of Cheltenham, while its three conservation areas continue to preserve its historic character and distinctive identity.

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2.4 Summary history of the Bafford Conservation Area

The name ‘Bafford’ is understood to refer to a crossing over a ford or brook. This name for the area has been documented as in use since the 14th century but may originate from earlier.

The listed buildings within the Conservation Area range in age, with Bafford Farmhouse constructed in the 16th century adjacent to the brook and was first used as a mill. Later buildings were constructed, Bafford Cottage in the early 17th century and Box Cottage and Bafford Grange (now 34 and 34a Bafford Lane) in the early 18th century, illustrating the gradual development of the area.

A section of the Conservation Area is documented on the Gloucestershire tithe map of the 1840s. It shows the built form of the historic environment along Bafford Lane, with most buildings set within large plots of land. A collection of agricultural buildings is detailed to the west of Bafford Farm; these are assumed to be the existing residential houses in this location as they occupy the same position, but are understood to have been converted into dwellings at a later date.



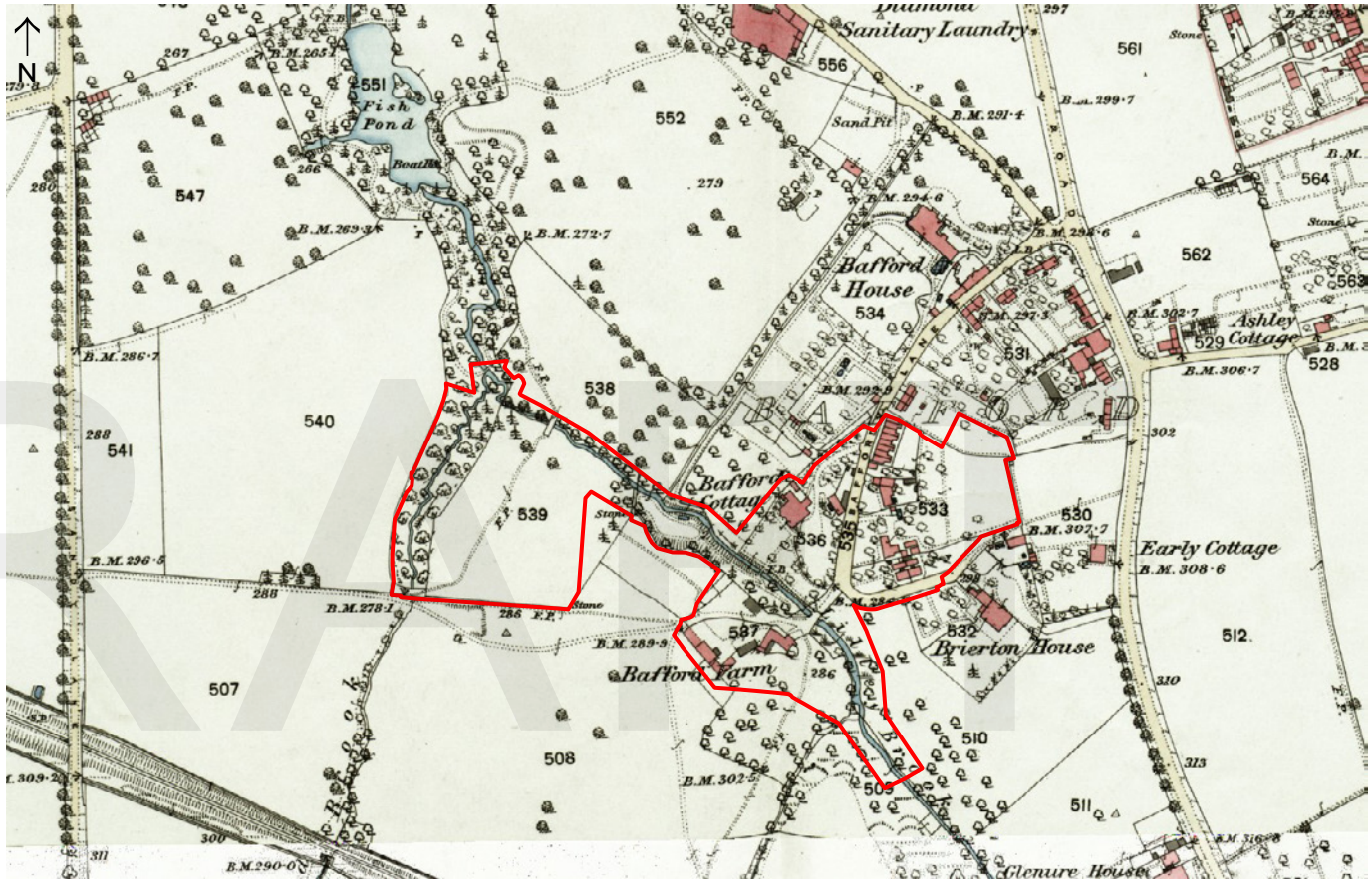
Bafford Lane within the conservation area boundary, as depicted in the 1840s Gloucestershire tithe map, with the approximate location of the conservation area boundary marked in red. *Know Your Place*.

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By the mid-19th century, building development within the Conservation Area was concentrated along Bafford Lane and was surrounded by open land. Although the surrounding land was undeveloped at this time, it had been divided up into large plots, with the Lilley Brook depicted on a roughly south-east/north-west axis.

By the time of the earliest Ordnance Survey was published in the second half of the 19th century, there had been minor infill developments along Bafford Lane, namely the row of red brick terraced cottages on the east side and a pair of semi-detached cottages to the south. These contrasted with the established building pattern and architectural style of the existing houses which were all detached and within large plots.

At the turn of the 20th century, further small developments of terraces and semi-detached housing had taken place on the east side of Bafford Lane. Similar developments had also taken place along Cirencester Road outside of the boundary but still within the context of the Conservation Area.

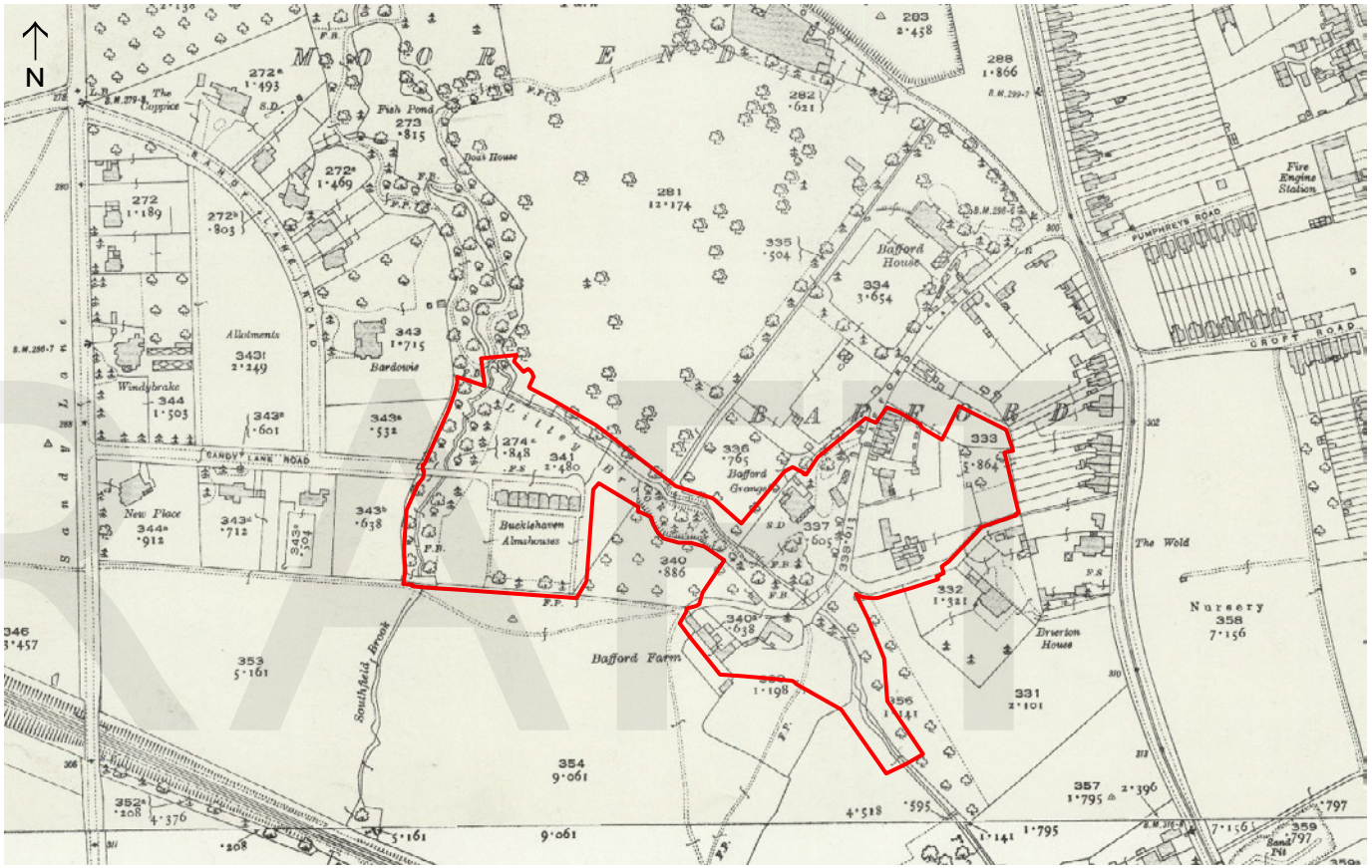


The Bafford Conservation Area as shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey (1844-1888), the approximate location of the conservation area boundary marked in red. *Know Your Place*.

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Further housing development took place in the early 20th century to the east of the Conservation Area, including the construction of the Bucklehaven almshouses in 1911.

The almshouses were designed by J. Pizey and built for 'impoverished gentlewomen' as a gift of Charles Buckle of Bristol. They were built on previously open land, bounded on the west side by Southfield Brook and on the north side by Lilley Brook. The site was enclosed by a footpath to the south. Vehicular access to the site was originally via a bridge over Southfield Brook from Sandy Lane Road, which has now been removed. A formal entrance was positioned at the eastern end of Sandy Lane Road, which comprised iron gates and stone pillars. This remained the entrance to the almshouses until the development of Stockton Close to the south in the 1960s.



The Bafford Conservation Area as shown on the third edition Ordnance Survey (1898-1939). This map shows the developments beginning to be constructed within the surrounding context of the conservation area at this time. *Know Your Place*.

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Significant developments were constructed in the open fields surrounding the Bafford Conservation Area in the 1960s and 1970s. This was predominantly residential housing which has obscured the historic rural settlement of Bafford and the waterways of the Lilley Brook and Southfield Brook.

Small-scale development took place within the Conservation Area in the 1980s, including the demolition of historic agricultural buildings and the construction of modern semi-detached housing.

In 1996, Bucklehaven Charitable Trust built 14 new flats on the site of the Bucklehaven almshouses. These flats were constructed to the west of the early 20th-century almshouses and provided further sheltered housing for the elderly.



Current satellite image of the Bafford Conservation Area illustrating the 1960s and 1970s residential suburban developments surrounding the Conservation Area boundary.


N
Historic development plan
Conservation area boundary
16th century
Early 17th century
Early 18th century
c.19th century
by 1888
1911
1980s
1996
This plan is not to scale

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2.5 Built form and architecture

The buildings within the Bafford Conservation Area have a mix of architectural styles, materials, sizes, scales, footprints and ages which presents a diversity across the street scene and contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Historically, Bafford was a farmstead-type settlement with an agricultural setting; the rural character has been maintained, with large private dwellings in large plots. There has been limited residential infill development between the established historic buildings, which have largely been sympathetic to the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Houses take a variety of forms, including vernacular cottages, terraced houses and larger detached dwellings. Some of the farm buildings, which were originally part of Bafford Farm, have been demolished and modern residential dwellings have been constructed in their place. The common theme across the Conservation Area is residential housing within large plots, set back from the road.

The Bucklehaven almshouses break the established pattern of the Conservation Area, both in form and use. Set apart from Bafford Lane and accessed via the 1960s housing estate to the south, the almshouses are orientated around a square lawn in long terraces and feel separate from the core of the conservation area.

Bafford Farm retains sections of 16th-century timber framing in the 'black and white' style which is characteristic of the vernacular architecture, with the same aesthetic applied to later historic extensions. Later buildings, such as 34 and 34a Bafford Lane, have ornate architectural detailing, such as banded rustication, decorative ironwork, scrolled brackets, moulded architraves and scalloped eaves bands. Other architectural detailing includes yellow brick chequer work detailing to Box Cottage and an 18th-century pediment doorcase on Bafford Cottage. This classical detailing to Bafford Cottage is atypical within the conservation area, which has a vernacular character.

Windows are a mixture of timber sash windows and casement windows, with some modern replacement. Stone mullion windows are present on the Bucklehaven almshouses and Bafford Cottage. Tripartite sash windows are evident on Nos.34 and 34a Bafford Lane. The diversity of window types across the conservation area illustrated the organic historic development of Bafford, with buildings of differing ages evidencing the technology of the period of their construction, ranging from the historic to the modern.



The brick section of Bafford Farm, externally painted in a 'black and white' vernacular style to match the 16th-century timber-framed sections of the building.



No.34 and 34a Bafford Lane in its distinctive 18th-century style with ornate architectural detailing.



The 1911 phase of Bucklehaven almhouses, constructed in Cotswold stone with highly stylised moulded stone to the door and window openings.

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2.6 Materials

There is a wide variety of building materials across the Bafford Conservation Area, which contributes to the distinct character of the area.

Red brick, which denotes the 19th century development within the conservation area, is utilised in a number of structures, including terraced houses, semi-detached cottages, larger single dwellings, surviving agricultural structures and boundary walls.

No.34 and 34a Bafford Lane, a highly stylised building, is rendered and externally painted. Bafford Farm, as the oldest building within the Conservation Area, is timber framed with painted brick infill panels. The 1911 Bucklehaven almshouses are constructed in Cotswold stone, and the 1990s block in a corresponding yellow brick which replicates the character of the lighter stone in the 1911 phase of building.

Roof materials vary and include Cotswold stone slates, blue Welsh slate and clay tiles.



Red brick semi-detached cottages on the southeast end of Bafford Lane.



Bafford Farm, a 'black and white' timber framed vernacular building.



The modern 1994 block at Bucklehaven almshouses, constructed in yellow brick.

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2.7 Urban grain, configuration, direction of movement

The Bafford Conservation Area maintains its rural character despite being surrounded by its suburban built context due to the winding configuration of Bafford Lane that funnels movement south towards the Lilley Brook at Bafford Farm.

Houses are generally large in scale and set back from the street behind substantial boundary walls or hedging within large plots. There are notable exceptions to this rule which all originate from the mid-19th century, including the red brick terrace on the east side of Bafford Lane.

The Lilley Brook is situated on a northwest to southeast axis and subdivides the Conservation Area. It joins the Southfield Brook in the northwest corner of the Conservation Area, to the north of the Bucklehaven almshouses. The two brooks appear on historic mapping and the built environment of the area has been constructed around their respective courses. Bafford Lane travels south to Bafford Farm, which historically was a mill on the Lilley Brook.

The almshouse development sits separately from the core of the conservation area and is accessed via Stockton Close, which is a part of the 1960s and 1970s housing development. These buildings sit around a square lawn, the 1911 block to the north and the 1990s block to the east. The almshouses break the established urban grain of the conservation area, however they conform to the general configuration by being located within the green setting of the Lilley and Southfield brooks.



Bafford Lane, looking south, illustrating the rural urban grain configuration through the heart of the Bafford Conservation Area.

2.8 Key views

There are several types of views which contribute to and enhance the special interest of the Bafford Conservation Area. An indicative selection of these key views is provided to illustrate the views analysis. The omission of any view from this selection does not imply that said view is not important.



Views Plan

- Character area boundary
- Streetscape view
- Views of local landmarks
- Views into the surrounding landscape

This plan is not to scale

2.8.1 Streetscape views

The key streetscape views within the Conservation Area are limited to Bafford Lane and emphasise the meandering character of the street when travelling south towards the Lilley Brook.

Views along the road are dynamic and the selection included here is not representative of all the significant views within the Conservation Area. Other views along the direction of travel on Bafford Lane, both moving north and south, are also acknowledged as important in establishing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



View 04: Bafford Lane north of the Conservation Area boundary, looking south. This view illustrates the approach into the Conservation Area and the winding nature of the road which obscures long-range views.



View 05: Bafford Lane at the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, looking south. This view illustrates the entrance into the Conservation Area and the variety of built structures with trees and greenery.



View 06: Bafford Lane, looking north with the coach house and stable to 34 and 34a Bafford Lane to the left and Box Cottage to the right. This view illustrates the narrow, winding character of the street and the large dwellings sat within large plots creating a sense of space within the Conservation Area.

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2.8.2 Views of key landmarks

There are a limited number of landmarks within the Conservation Area, but key views are afforded of the key features which positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



View 02: View of the Bucklehaven almshouses, looking northwest at the north end of Stockton Close. The almshouses are listed as locally important buildings on the Cheltenham Borough Council Local Index of non-designated heritage assets.



View 07: View of Bafford Farm from above the bridge crossing the Lilley Brook, looking south. Bafford Farm, with its distinctive black and white timber framed style, positively contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and emphasises the diversity of the ages and architectural style of the buildings within Bafford.



View 08: The Lilley Brook, as seen from the bridge to Bafford Farm, looking west. The Brook is a key green space within the Conservation Area and the bridge crossing to Bafford Farm is a key view which emphasises the rural character of the area.

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2.8.3 Views into the surrounding landscape

Due to the low-lying nature of the Bafford Conservation Area and the proliferation of mature trees, long-range views into the surrounding landscape are limited and glimpsed.

These views maintain the visual link with the surviving rural landscape beyond the conservation area boundary. Both the below views are from the boundary of the Conservation Area, both looking south.



View 01: View of the Cotswold scarp from the north end of Stockton Close on the Bafford Conservation Area boundary to the south of the Bucklehaven almshouses. This is the view when leaving the Conservation Area and entering the surrounding 1960s and 1970s housing development.



View 03: Glimpsed view of the Cotswold scarp to the north of the Conservation Area boundary on Bafford Lane.

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2.9 Boundary treatments

Boundary treatments vary throughout the conservation area and respond to plot size, age of building and the topography of the area.

Historic boundaries are marked by masonry walls. These vary from tall red brick walls with piers marking entrances and some stone and concrete copings, to low Cotswold stone walls.

There is some loss of historic boundaries, particularly to the front elevation of the red brick terrace on Bafford Lane which has replacement modern stone walls.

Hedging is also prevalent within the conservation area, with some examples of mature hedging situated behind historic low masonry walls. The use of hedging emphasises the rural character of the conservation area by introducing greenery and softening the residential built environment.



Bafford Lane, looking north, with a variety of boundary treatments.



Historic red brick walls on the boundary of 34 and 34a Bafford Lane, adjacent to the Lilley Brook.



Historic red brick walls on the boundary of 34 and 34a Bafford Lane.



The red brick terraced houses on Bafford Lane, with modern stone replacement front boundary walls.



Low stone walls with mature hedging.

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The crossing of the Lilley Brook is marked with modern agricultural style 3-bar fencing.

Modern developments to the south of Bafford Lane conform to the established style and character of the area with modern red brick walls. The houses to the west of Bafford Farm are bounded by modern close-board fencing.



The crossing of the Lilley Brook, looking south towards Bafford Farm.



Modern red brick boundary walls to later developments on the southeast end of Bafford Lane.

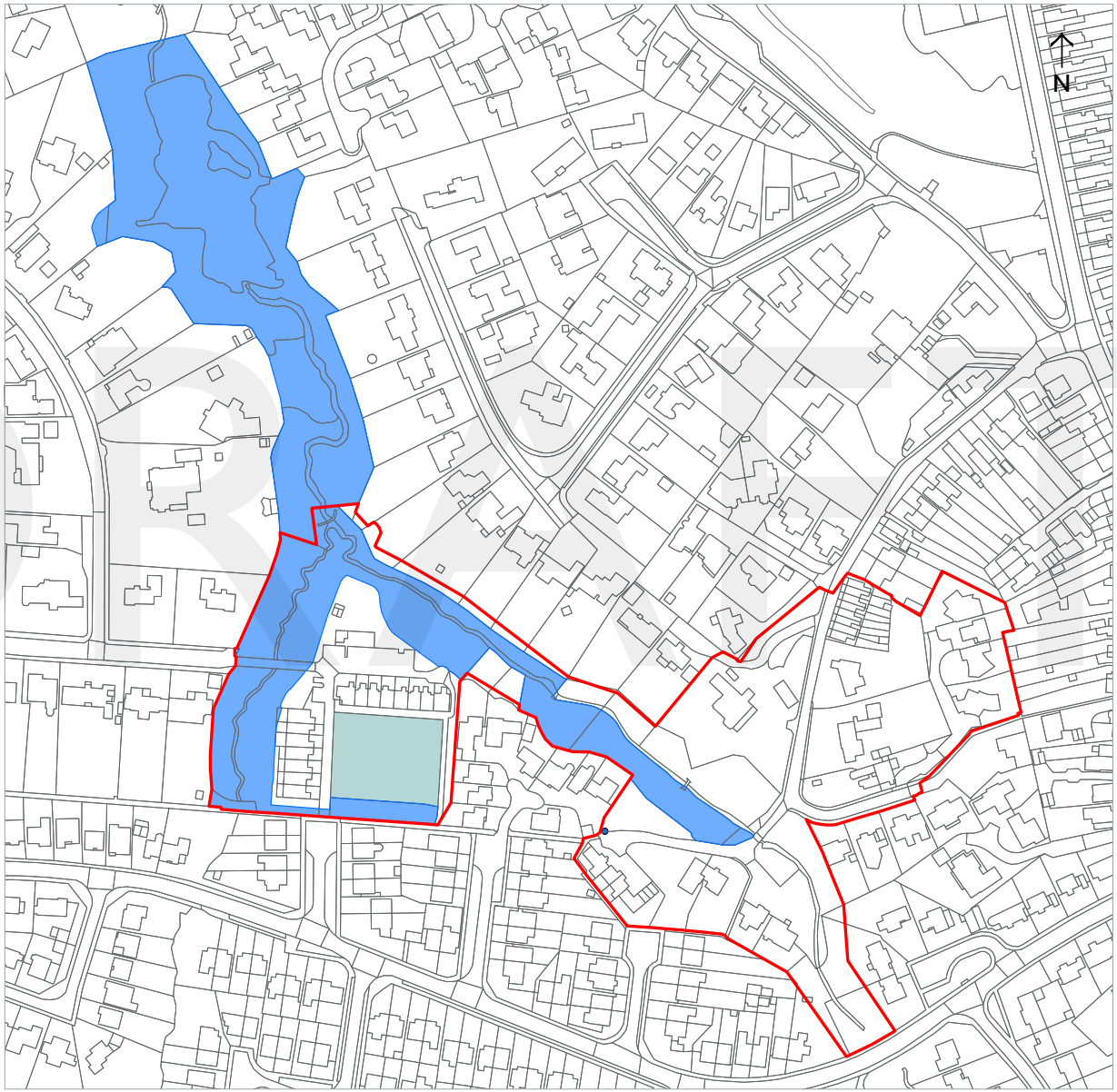


Close-board fencing to the boundaries of the modern houses to the west of Bafford Farm.

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2.10 Trees and open green spaces

The trees and open green spaces are a key feature which contribute to the rural character of the Bafford Conservation Area.



- Conservation area boundary
- Tree preservation order (point)
- Tree preservation order (area)
- Open green space

This plan is not to scale

The information provided in this map may not accurately reflect the existing data set. Up-to-date records can be found in the relevant interactive mapping resources, which are accessible via the Council's website.

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The principal green space is the area around the Lilley Brook and Southfield Brook, which flow through the centre and the western edge of the Conservation Area.

The areas around the brooks are densely wooded and well enclosed, screened by the canopies of mature trees. This area is characterised by its wilderness, with large, mature trees growing on either side of the meandering brook. The trees grow informally and contribute to establishing a rural character within the conservation area.

There is a strong sense of enclosure along the bridge over the Lilley Brook which connects Bafford Farm with Bafford Lane. Dense tree canopies around the bridge enclose the immediate areas tightly on either side and partially screen the buildings in the distance.



The Lilley Brook from the bridge between Bafford Farm and Bafford Lane, looking east.



The Lilley Brook from the bridge between Bafford Farm and Bafford Lane, looking west.



The section of the Southfield Brook within the conservation area, as seen from the public footpath to the west of the Bucklehaven almshouses.



Looking west on Bafford Lane towards the Lilley Brook, where the trees and hedging create a sense of enclosure and seclusion around the crossing over the Brook to Bafford Farm.

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Bafford Lane is more developed in character than the spaces around the Lilley Brook, but the large plots used as private gardens around the individual houses still make a significant contribution to enhancing the character and sense of space within the conservation area. The front gardens of these dwellings are often enclosed by traditional and historic boundary treatments, such as brick and stone walls. Trees and hedging help to create privacy by screening properties from public spaces, but still contribute to the outward-facing greenery throughout the conservation area.

The expanse of lawn outside Bucklehaven almshouses provides both the early 20th-century almshouses and the modern development of sheltered housing with an attractive setting. Well maintained planting outside these buildings also enhances the overall visual appearance of the grounds.



Bucklehaven almhouses, which has an open lawn setting to the south of the 1911 building.

2.11 Topography

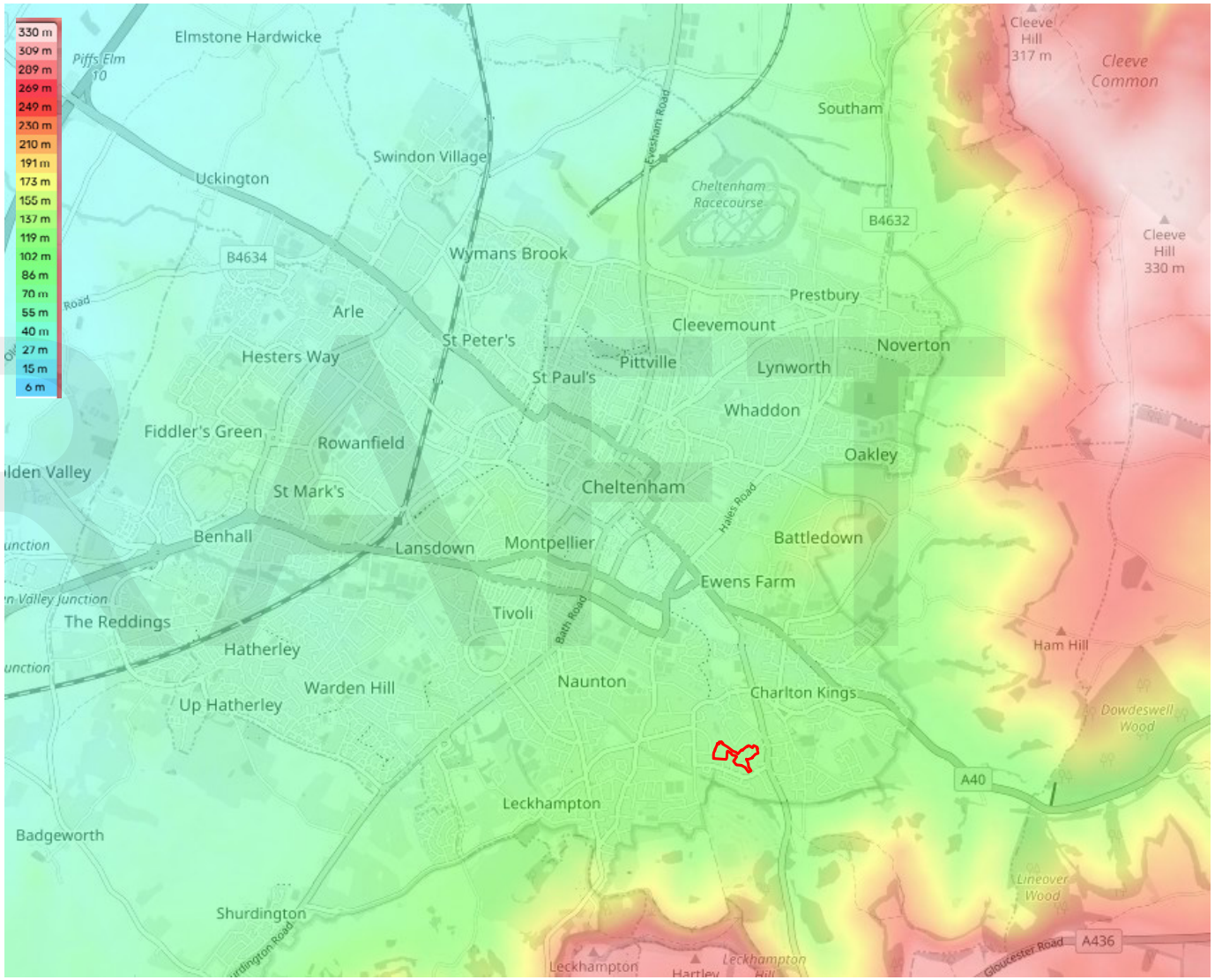
Bafford Lane has a winding form which gently falls away when moving south through the conservation area towards the Lilley Brook, rising steeply again as the road turns sharply to the east. The varying gradient of the land adds interest and character to the street scene.

The low-lying Lilley Brook creates a sense of seclusion within Bafford with limited long-range views beyond the boundaries of the Conservation Area.

2.12 Archaeology

Archaeological remains have been recorded in the wider Charlton Kings area which date to the Roman and medieval periods respectively. No remains have been discovered specifically within the Bafford Conservation Area boundary, although the presence of watercourses may be a potential source for future archaeological finds.

Further information on the archaeological potential of the conservation area can be accessed via the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (HER), which is maintained by Gloucestershire County Council. Portions of the HER database can be searched online via the website Heritage Gateway.[01]



Map showing relative topography in and around the Bafford Conservation Area. The coloured key represents the relative elevation of the terrain both within the Conservation Area boundary and in its wider setting. Source: OpenStreetMap (ODbL)

01 https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/

3.0 Heritage assets

The Bafford Conservation Area is a heritage asset in its own right and contains numerous individual heritage assets. These include both listed and unlisted buildings and structures. A detailed assessment of heritage significance, specific to a building or site within the conservation area, should always be carried out prior to proposing any change.

The accompanying map shows the distribution of heritage assets at the time of writing. However, the National Heritage List for England via https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search/ and consult Cheltenham Borough Council's Index of Buildings of Local Interest should always be consulted for the most up to date records.

3.1 Listed buildings

Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are designated for their architectural or historic interest. All listed buildings in England are designated at the recommendation of Historic England and details are recorded on the National Heritage List for England. Listings are ranked from Grade I (the highest level), Grade II* (in the middle) and Grade II (the lowest and most common level).

Statutory listing does not equate to a preservation order intended to prevent change. However, alterations to listed buildings will require listed building consent, which allows the local authority to make decisions that have been informed by an understanding of the building or site's heritage significance. Importantly, national and local planning policies also recognise that changes to un-listed buildings or sites in the setting of a designated heritage asset can affect its special interest.

3.2 Locally indexed buildings

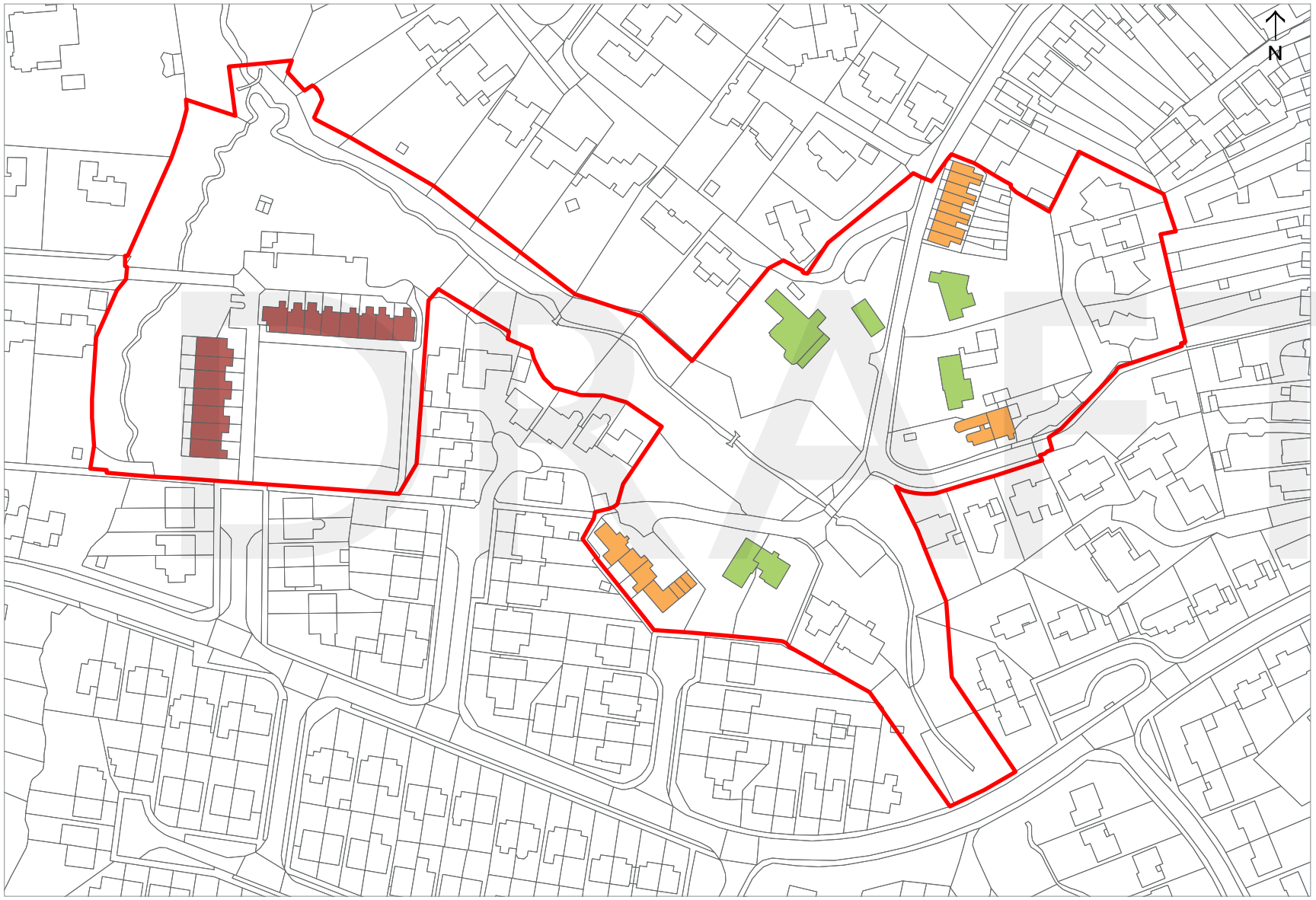
Cheltenham Borough Council maintains an index of buildings of local interest. These are defined as buildings which do not beet the strict criteria for listing, but still make a special contribution to the history, appearance, character and cultural value of Cheltenham. Inclusion on the index does not affect any planning rights at the properties identified.

However, the Council will give careful consideration to the local importance of the property and its setting when considering any applications for planning or other consents. The Council may consider action to protect the building if it is considered to be under threat of demolition or damage. The index is reviewed regularly and the public are consulted on proposed inclusions. The index is reviewed and updated from time to time.

3.3 Positive contributors

Buildings identified as positive contributors are unlisted buildings that are not on Cheltenham Borough Council's index of buildings of local interest but are recognised for their contribution to the special historic and architectural interest of the Bafford Conservation Area.

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The information provided in this map may not accurately reflect the existing data set. Up-to-date records can be found in the relevant interactive mapping resources, which are accessible via the Council's website.

4.0 Challenges

4.1 Detracting features and loss of historic detail

The road markings on Bafford Lane are very prominent and negatively impact the historic character and appearance of the conservation area. They also visually detract from the nearby historic buildings.

There have been instances of the loss of or alteration to traditional architectural features such as original timber sash windows and doors in prominent locations. Similarly, this applies to the loss of historic rainwater goods, particularly on unlisted historic buildings within the conservation area.

The replacement of traditional windows and rainwater goods with first-generation/standard design uPVC windows, guttering and downpipes all negatively impact the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.2 Modern development

Generally, modern development has conformed to the established urban grain and settlement pattern along Bafford Lane. The variety of the architectural style follows the established mix of historic design throughout the conservation area.

Some poor-quality boundary treatments have been introduced in the conservation area - mainly wooden fences and concrete block walls. These are not traditional forms of boundary treatment and do not complement or enhance the setting of historic buildings.

Modern tarmacked roads and pavements, with concrete kerbs, have been laid throughout the conservation area. These, along with modern materials used for driveways and paths to front door, have incrementally impacted the overall historic rural character of the conservation area.

Many of the buildings and boundary treatments within the conservation area utilise historic masonry and brickwork which add to the variety and interest of the area. Some of these unlisted historic atructures which make a positive contribution to the conservation area are at risk of potentially being repointed in inappropriate materials, such as impermeable cement mortars, which will damage the historic fabric and be visually obtrusive. Similarly, external modern renders should be resisted on red brick masonry, such as the 19th century terrace and semi-detached houses on Bafford Lane, as the modern materials will have the same negative impact upon the historic fabric and visual appearance of these buildings.

4.3 Pressures on trees and green spaces

Trees and open spaces face a range of pressures within urban environments. Development proposals, including extensions, infill development, changes to access arrangements, and the installation of new infrastructure and services, can result in tree loss, root damage, or reductions in available growing space. Street trees may be particularly vulnerable where highway or utility works require excavation below pavements, while trees in private gardens can be affected by increased hard surfacing, subdivision of plots, and incremental development.

Climate change is likely to increase these challenges. More frequent periods of drought, higher temperatures, intense rainfall events, and storms may affect tree health, longevity, and resilience. The careful management and retention of mature trees, together with opportunities for new planting, will be important in maintaining the character, environmental quality, and landscape setting of the conservation area.

The Cheltenham Tree Strategy, published February 2026, provides further information and guidance around maintaining existing trees and planting new ones.
The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) have also published resources on best practice to support the role of urban trees through the planning, design, construction and management of urban environments.[01]

01 https://www.tdag.org.uk/

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5.0 Opportunities for enhancement

The key opportunity for the Bafford Conservation Area is to ensure the continued preservation of the established historic character and appearance, particularly the rural aesthetic, greenery, and sense of space in the undeveloped large gardens and areas around the Lilley and Southfield Brooks.

There is scope within the Bafford Conservation Area to include buildings identified as positive contributors to the Cheltenham Borough Council index of buildings of local interest. These are identified on the heritage asset map in section 4 as the pair of semi-detached red brick houses on the southeast end of Bafford Lane, and the row of red brick terraced houses at the north boundary of the conservation area.

There is scope to enhance the conservation area through addressing the minor but altogether detracting elements such as external accretions and the management of rainwater goods where appropriate. Incrementally addressing these issues will have a positive impact and enhance the conservation area by preserving its historic character and appearance.

Although many of the uPVC windows and doors which have already been installed are unlikely to require replacement in the near future, there is scope for any further replacement windows and doors to be carried out using styles, materials and methods that are better suited to enhancing the special interest of the conservation area. It would be especially beneficial for first-generation uPVC double-glazing, which is generally coming to the end of its life cycle, to be replaced with more suitable alternatives, rather than the more visually intrusive standard option.

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6.0 Management plan

6.1 Control measures

In order to protect and enhance the conservation area, any changes that take place must conserve its character and special interest. Statutory control measures are intended to prevent development that may have an individually or cumulatively negative effect. Control measures within include:

- Planning permission will usually be required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structure (including walls, gate piers and chimneys). This will also need a heritage statement (sometimes called a heritage impact assessment) as part of the application.
- The extent to which permitted development (i.e. changes that are allowed without requiring consent from the local authority) may be restricted. For example, replacement windows, different elevational finishes or the installation of satellite dishes may require planning permission.
- Trees with a trunk diameter of 75mm or greater, measured as 1.5m above the soil level are protected. Any work proposed to these trees require permission from the local authority by means of a planning application. This allows the authority to determine whether a tree preservation order (TPO) is necessary.

6.2 Conservation aims and best practice

There is no generally accepted detailed definition of 'best practice' in conservation: it is a term used to describe the management of change (including repair) so that the integrity and character of a historic site is not eroded or compromised. It is not the intention of conservation best practice to prevent change from happening: alterations can still be carried out but should be subject to additional scrutiny to ensure that the special interest of the conservation area is protected.

It is the purpose of this document to provide guidance that will help achieve these aims. Overall, any change in the Bafford Conservation Area should seek to:

- preserve its historical features;
- enhance, where possible, its special interest;
- positively contribute to its established character; and
- be of appropriate detailing and traditional materiality.

6.3 'Like-for-like'

A term that is frequently used in conservation is 'like-for-like' replacement or repair. This is frequently – and mistakenly – taken to mean that a modern alternative that generally echoes the style of the element removed is acceptable. However, this is not accurate or acceptable. Like-for-like should always be interpreted as an alternative that matches the historic element removed in terms of its material, dimensions, method of construction, finish, means of installation and any other feature specific to the original element, such that the modern replacement is hardly discernible from the original (accepting that its condition will be greatly improved where the original has failed beyond repair).

For example, modern uPVC windows in imitation of Georgian or Victorian-style sash windows but with false glazing bars and a top-hung casement opening mechanism do not constitute a like-for-like replacement for traditional timber-framed Victorian sliding sash windows, although they may appear stylistically similar.

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6.4 Repairs and replacement

Repairs and replacement are inevitable with any building or site, regardless of age; however, within a conservation area, it is especially important that this is carried out sensitively to protect the historic fabric of its buildings and respect the character of the wider area. Key points to remember when looking to carry out repair work or install replacement features are:

- A method of repair that was suitable for one building may not be suitable for another. Repair and replacement should always be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Repairs using appropriate materials and techniques are always preferable over wholescale replacement.
- Where a historic feature has degraded beyond repair, replacement should be carried out on a like-for-like basis.
- Where seeking to improve failing modern features, a traditionally-designed alternative using appropriate materials is preferable. For example, the replacement of uPVC gutters and downpipes with lead, cast iron or coated aluminium alternatives that better reflect the traditional character of the conservation area.
- Cement-based mortars and/or ribbon pointing are harmful to historic brickwork and masonry. Repairs to any pointing should be carried out in a lime mortar after any cementitious mortar has been raked out. This will ensure the longevity of the historic built fabric.
- Due consideration should be given to the sustainability of the repair or replacement, i.e. what is its lifespan? What maintenance will be required to prolong this?
- Reversibility is an important consideration as better alternatives may become available in the future.
- Historic external detailing should be retained or, where damaged beyond repair, replaced on a like-for-like basis. This includes (but is not limited to): the texture and colour of render; size and colour of bricks used, and the bond in which they are laid; stone dressings; and chimneystacks.
- The reinstatement of historic features that have been lost is favourable. For example, re-exposing brickwork that has been rendered or painted over.
- The repair and replacement of windows can have a notable effect on the character and special interest of the conservation area, both positively and negatively. The aim should always be to retain historic windows wherever they survive, carrying out refurbishment work where needed to make sure they remain usable. Timber frames are preferable over uPVC for a number of reasons, mainly their comparative slimness and breathable quality which has a positive knock-on effect on the overall condition of the historic building. However, it is recognised that modern double-glazing is becoming increasingly well-designed to suit historic contexts and may be permitted, subject to their appropriateness.

6.5 Maintenance

Maintenance differs from repair in that it is a pre-planned, regular activity intended to reduce instances where remedial or unforeseen work is needed. The higher the levels of maintenance, the less need to carry out repairs. Regular maintenance activity should include annual gutter clearing, seasonal vegetation control and repainting external joinery with an oil-based paint. This is not an exhaustive list and each historic building will have its own specific needs.

Larger historic buildings and those which are listed may benefit from occasional condition surveys (usually around every five years) to highlight their individual maintenance and repair needs.

The maintenance requirement of a building will depend on its age, materials and susceptibility to wear. Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and other heritage bodies publish specialist guidance on the suitable maintenance and repair methods for different historic buildings.

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6.6 Trees

Trees are afforded protection within the conservation area and there are hundreds of tree preservation orders in place around Cheltenham (both within and outside conservation areas). Any tree surgery work should be carried out only once the relevant permission has been sought.

Good arboricultural management can help to maintain the safety of trees and reduce potential conflict with the built environment around them. Such works should be undertaken in line with industry best practice in order to protect their physiological and structural health, as well as their amenity.

The Cheltenham Tree Strategy, published February 2026, provides further information and guidance around maintaining existing trees and planting new ones. The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) have also published resources on best practice to support the role of urban trees through the planning, design, construction and management of urban environments.[01]

Contact details for the trees team at Cheltenham Borough Council are provided in Appendix A.

6.7 Modern and new development

It is not the intention of conservation area designation to prevent new development or entirely exclude existing modern development where this is woven into a surrounding historic space. Instead, it puts in place a process whereby any proposals are more thoroughly studied to ensure that the special interest of the conservation area is protected and opportunities to improve its character are identified.

New development can range from entire new buildings to the introduction of new features, however small, on existing buildings.

New development within the setting of the conservation area should also be carefully managed as it has the potential to detract from its character and special interest. Any proposals will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and take account of:

- The significance of any existing building affected.
- The impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, key buildings of individual heritage interest and/or positive contributors.
- How local features and materials can be incorporated into the new design.
- Whether or not any historical plot boundaries survive or could be recoverable.
- The impact of the overall scale, massing and design on the wider streetscape.
- The loss of any important rear/side elevations or views of these.
- Characteristic boundary treatments and planting.
- The potential for below-ground or built archaeology.
- Any other heritage or conservation constraints identified.
- The addition of new features on existing buildings can be detrimental to the individual buildings as well as the overall character of their wider setting if unmanaged. Specifically:
    - Television aerials and satellite dishes should not be fixed to principal or highly visible elevations, or chimneystacks.
    - Features such as external lighting and security cameras should be as discreet as possible.
    - Solar panels should be restricted to rear or secondary elevations, especially where a building forms one of a group.
    - Internal alterations can have an external impact; for example, staircases cutting across windows or the removal of chimneybreasts necessitating the removal of the associated chimneystack.

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01 https://www.tdag.org.uk/

6.8 Sustainability

Maintenance and continued use of historic buildings is inherently sustainable. However, there are growing pressures to improve the energy efficiency of the country's historic building stock in order to reduce carbon emissions, particularly from heating which uses fossil fuel sources. Pressures to increase sustainability performance can be accommodated within the conservation area but will require a bespoke approach to ensure that the measures needed can be viably implemented without harm to its special interest.

Straight-forward measures to improve building performance include:

- Refurbishing historic windows and doors to prevent drafts.
- Re-pointing external walls to prevent damp and air leaks.
- Maintaining rainwater goods.
- Improving and/or expanding green spaces.
- Inserting breathable insulation in loft spaces and suspended floor voids.
- Installing thick curtains or internal shutters.

Double-glazing is now available in slimline, timber frame units which are considerably more sympathetic within historic contexts than earlier versions. It will be necessary to obtain the relevant permissions to install double-glazing. Best practice will always be to retain historic windows wherever possible, with the installation of secondary units being an alternative to full replacement.

The installation of solar panels and other infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging points and heat pumps in a conservation area is generally acceptable, however they should not be installed in a location that is visible from any public highway, and their physical and aesthetic impact will need to be carefully considered and mitigated.

Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Royal Institute of British Architects and other bodies publish extensive guidance on the sensitive adaptation of buildings in response to climate change and sustainability challenges.

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Appendix A: Useful contacts

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Appendix B: Glossary

Terminology	Definition
Baroque	A highly decorative and theatrical style of architecture popular in England during the 17th century. It experienced a revival in the early 20th century.
Classical	Architecture inspired by the buildings of ancient Greece and Rome - characterised by the use of columns and pediments.
Corbel	Stone, wood or metal bracket, often structural but sometimes decorative.
Cornice	A horizontal decorative moulding.
Fanlight	A small semicircular or rectangular light above a doorway.
Fascia	A horizontal band beneath the eaves of a building or over a shopfront.
Fenestration	Architectural terminology for windows and doors.
Finial	Vertical decorative element found on roofs, towers, spires and gables.
Gothic	Architecture inspired by the style of medieval churches - featuring pointed arches and tracery.
Key stone	A wedge-shaped stone found at the apex of a masonry arch.

Terminology	Definition
Massing	Refers to the shape, form and size of a building.
Mullion	A vertical glazing bar on a window or window opening.
Patina	Visible signs of historic use.
Polite building	A building designed with regard for architectural fashion, often by an architect.
Portico	A projecting porch supported by columns.
Quoins	Masonry blocks to the corner of a wall - can be structural or aesthetic.
Rubble stone	Unfinished stone.
Stallriser	A platform below a shop window.
Tracery	Division of openings with stone bars or moulded ribs.
Transom	A horizontal glazing bar on a window or window opening.
Urban grain	The pattern of building plots in an urban environment.
Vernacular building	A building constructed using local materials with limited or no regard for architectural fashion.

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Appendix C: Frequently asked questions

Frequently asked questions

Do I need planning permission for demolition and new development with a Conservation Area?

Planning permission will usually be required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structures within a conservation area (including walls, gate piers and chimneys). Applications for demolition will also need a heritage statement (sometimes called a heritage impact assessment) as part of the application.

Consult with Cheltenham Borough Council to confirm whether planning permission will be required ahead of any new development.

Are there any additional restrictions on permitted development rights?

The extent to which permitted development (i.e. changes that are allowed without requiring consent from the local authority) may be restricted. For example, replacement windows, different elevational finishes or the installation of satellite dishes. Always confirm any restrictions with Cheltenham Borough Council before carrying out any works to the exterior of a building within the conservation area.

What are the implications of Conservation Area designation for tree works?

Trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater measured at 1.5m above the soil level are protected. Any work proposed to these trees require permission from the local authority by means of a planning application. This allows the local authority to determine whether a tree preservation order (TPO) is necessary.

Are there restrictions on advertising and commercial signage?

Advertisements and other commercial signage may be subject to additional controls and/or require planning permission. Contact planning@cheltenham.gov.uk before installing any advertising infrastructure or commercial signage.

How do I seek pre-application advice?

For pre-application advice on major developments, contact planning@cheltenham.gov.uk. A pre-planning application will provide guidance on what permission is required.

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