



Hempnall

Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines

December 2017



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Introduction

Hempnall has a modest village centre shaped by a range of historic buildings and walls dissected by the three primary roads. The Church of St Margaret's is the primary building with its impact enhanced by its elevated position.

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local Planning Authority is required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance and to designate them as conservation Areas. The 1990 Act also requires local authorities to prepare policy statements for Conservation Areas.



Hempnall Conservation Area was designated in October 1994, and an appraisal was prepared in the late 1990s. This document should be read in conjunction with the adopted Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Key Characteristics

- Buildings and walls set close to the footpath which define the streets
- Farm and commercial buildings integrated into the streetscape
- Key open spaces and trees
- Major contribution of St Margaret's Church as a landmark
- Infilling with a number of modern dwellings, which tend to be set back from the road

Historical Development (also see historic map in Appendix 4 page 18)

There was almost certainly a settlement here in pre-Roman times, with Roman remains discovered in 1854. With the parish close to the Roman Road, Pye Street (A140) and only 5 miles from Caistor St Edmund (Venta Icenorum) such finds would be expected. The Domesday Book suggests Hempnall was a large “vill” with one major manor held by Ralph Baynard and a small holding held by Roger Bigot. The Manor included two churches and two mills, the second church may have been to the west of Hempnall Green. Edward I granted an annual fair on St Margaret’s Day and Richard III granted a Friday market, and an additional fair, on St Andrew’s Day. The latter confirm the presence of St Andrew’s Chapel founded in 1066, and gives backing to the street names of Fairstead Lane and Old Market Way. The parish passed to Earl of Sussex and thence to Sir Richard Henenheale, a prominent family who held the title until the 17th century.

The parish flourished until the 17th century by which time the river was no longer navigable. The fortunes of such communities tended to fluctuate with those of the agricultural industry which still dominates much of South Norfolk. This is reflected in the population figures which rose by 30-50% between 1801 - 1851 but fell by 33% from 1851 - 1951.

Although the parish was subjected to the pressures of the Enclosure System in the 18th and 19th centuries, it remained comparatively unaltered. Hempnall village retained its “mother” status but the outlying hamlets within the parish, around Silver Green, Lundy Green and Hempnall Green survive. However, the evidence of “lordship rule” is largely absent. The original manor has disappeared, and while some remains survive of Boyland Hall, the Elizabethan Manor House was demolished some time ago. Hempnall has no large country houses unlike many of its neighbours.

In the 19th century, the village boasted a high degree of independence as witnessed by the number of trades and cottage industries. Methodism and Non-Conformity were popular although it was almost 100 years after the visit of the Reverend John Wesley, before the chapel was built in Mill Lane in 1851. A corn mill was constructed in 1892 and its tower survives as part of a complex for the care of the elderly.

The population of the village has risen dramatically since 1961 from 768 to 1310 in 2001 although it fell to 1292 in 2011. Hempnall is a popular place to live, retaining a number of local industries and businesses but many of the residents now rely on Norwich for their livelihood.

Character Assessment

(also see Streetscape and Natural Character Map, Appendix 5 and 6, page 19 and 20)

Hempnall and its Setting

Hempnall is the largest of a series of small hamlets and villages located in a farming landscape approximately 9 miles to the south of Norwich, and about 2 miles east of the A140. The regular field system aligned on Pye Street is a notable feature in the landscape. It is located on a tributary of the river Tas where several roads join. There is also a system of footpaths which give access to the surrounding hamlets and villages. The presence of isolated settlements associated with commons is very characteristic of this part of Norfolk.

The core of the settlement appears to be the junction of Mill Road, Bungay Road and The Street with an open space at the meeting point, the stream crossing and the church. There are suggestions that this may have been the market site and possibly the site of a mill. The roads, especially The Street, appear characterised by scattered late medieval and post medieval farms, with infilling occurring through the 19th and 20th centuries to produce a linear settlement.

The village has developed a more nucleated settlement form mainly as a result of post-war estate development to the east of Broaden Lane and east of Field Lane. The village has also experienced significant infill development. Elsewhere in the parish, development has occurred in the form of isolated clusters of housing along Field Lane (south of the village), Lundy Green, Road Green, Silver Green and isolated ribbon development at Hempnall Green. The remainder of the parish displays a dispersed settlement pattern comprising individual dwellings and farmsteads.

The impact of the village from the north and west is subdued by the undulating landscape, the meandering roads and the presence of trees and hedges. From the south, the village is seen nestling in the water meadows, with roofs of the taller buildings breaking through the greenery. From the west, the approach is more open and level and the tower of St Margaret's Church is a prominent feature in the landscape. The village retains some local services and businesses within the centre, with a flourishing school and village hall, although two of the surviving public houses have been converted to dwellings.

Conservation Area Boundary

The parish of Hempnall contains 58 listed buildings of which 22 are currently within the Conservation Area (see Appendix 2).

The current Conservation Area boundary is irregular in form. It contains the Street in its entirety, part of Mill Road and Bungay Road to the south and east. It also encloses part of the water meadows to the south of The Street and the playing field to the north, together with a section of Fairstead Lane and Broaden Lane which lie to the east of the village.



Busseys Loke

It is suggested that the boundary be reviewed by adding part of the farm buildings on Bussey's Loke and the field and extension to the churchyard opposite.

Street Patterns and Historic Grain

The historic core of the village focusses on The Street and is characterised by one plot depth development which is particularly noticeable on the south side with the water meadows behind. On the north side the line is broken by the playing field and Bussey's Loke. The Street has good tree and hedge planting, especially along the road frontage which contributes to the rural character of the area. There are also subtle curves to the road which gently slopes from west to east thus creating interesting views and vistas, the eastern-most one eventually being terminated by St Margaret's Church. To the west The Street divides into Fairstead Lane, and Broaden Lane with the War Memorial marking the junction.

To the south, the buildings more tightly define Mill Road until it eases to the left at the approach to the main junction. Further east the character varies with earlier buildings close to the road while later ones lose the definition of the street by being set back.

The special character of the Conservation Area is derived from the setting of a variety of historic buildings in an attractive and varied street pattern set in a river valley landscape. Glimpses of the wider landscape can be seen through the gaps between buildings and beyond the major open spaces within the village. This contact with landscape coupled with the many mature trees and strong hedge lines, contributes to the character and appearance of the area.

In addition, there are numerous attractive screen walls, particularly around the churchyard and parsonage, which all add considerably to the townscape quality. The locations of buildings in relation to The Street is extremely varied and generates an interesting matrix of irregular and varied spaces.

The whole area is also criss-crossed by a network of footpaths and lanes which provide a degree of pedestrian "permeability" through the village and more modern pedestrian paths have been added to connect the new housing developments to the north of Broaden Lane and to the south of Field Lane.

Perambulation

Fairstead Lane

The 17th century Krons Manor marks the entrance to the area at the western end which is an attractive route lined with hedges and trees and the brick boundary wall to the house. The converted barns add a touch of "order" and leads the view to the Parish War memorial at the junction. The cottage to the east, Lower Croft beyond and the later houses across the road, contribute to the setting of the Memorial and the trees and hedges softens the effect. The impressive Thatched House and garage on the south side make a positive contribution.



Fairstead Lane

The Street

The route down the Street is dominated by mature trees on the south side which serve modern houses set further back. The fine brick wall and the former single storey barber's shop are of significant townscape value. Beyond the modern dwellings which line both sides of the road is The Hollies and various outbuildings which lie hard against the back of the path. The distinct gable end, prominent chimneys and dark tiled roof with the trees behind make a special contribution to the street. The boundary railings and hedge lead to the Ivy House, which is painted with impressive boundary walls along the side of the path to the meadows. The water meadows run behind The Street on the south side and its trees provide a welcome back drop. It is accessible to the public with some areas owned by the parish and while in secure hands it was felt important to retain it within the conservation area.

Following on the right hand side of the street is an attractive collection of historic buildings which strengthen the traditional values of the conservation area with a variety of materials, shapes and layout. Pevesney House with its steep tiled roof, is set back, flanked to the front by single storey buildings which creates a nice forecourt. The Limes continues the hard line to the path while the thatched Lime Tree Cottage beyond resumes the back line.

The new entrance to the school opposite still looks “raw” and could be improved by additional tree planting to soften its impact while at the same time framing the longer view over the meadow and playing fields.

The character then opens up with buildings set back from the street until Vine cottage which restores the tighter layout, which continues to the Church. These buildings, although some have been modernised, make a positive contribution to the area, and with boundary walls create a comfortable village atmosphere. This is enhanced by the presence of the Victorian school, which can be glimpsed through a gap in the building line set down in the hollow. Again, the boundary wall and trees continue this character around the corner to Bussey's Loke.

The Loke is shaped by the attractive Manor farmhouse, its outbuildings and walls, and the farm buildings opposite. It offers views down the hollow on the north side and beyond to the countryside to the east. Looking west the view is framed by Forge Cottage and its outbuildings.

The character of The Street is now tightly defined by the buildings and walls that lead to the church. The buildings vary from the tall hipped roof of Connaught House to modest cottages. The curves of the road enhances the contribution these buildings make and the perception of this part of the area until the west end of the church comes into view. This is partly obscured by the trees on the north side which effectively hide the Parsonage, one of the most significant buildings in the village, from view.



The Street



The Street



The Street

As the corner is negotiated, the full splendour of the church can be enjoyed and its role as part of the central space in the village better appreciated. On the west side the wall of The Smithy leads the eye to the tower, while the prominent gable of The Smithy partly closes the view in the other direction. The rendered Long House comes into view contrasting with the red brick of the former PH. Once the final bend is passed, the view back is impressive. The church tower emerges above the strong gable end of Long House, while The Nelson angles back in deference to the importance of the church. The open forecourt could be improved to enhance this view, perhaps with some tree planting.

Looking south, Bridge Terrace makes a positive contribution as do the buildings beyond on Bungay Road which close the view. The appearance of the garage and forecourt is unfortunate and while the scope for improvement may be limited, discussions should be had to explore any options. Work as been carried out to the area around the village sign but further work at this key junction could be considered.

Bungay Road

Thackary House is a key 17th century listed building that is a prominent part of this junction and together with the butcher's shop and Poplars act as a promontory "pushing" the road round to the north. To the west, the road serves various groups of older cottages that still contribute to the character, albeit with some modern alterations. The farm house, boundary wall and buildings at The Willows are important in retaining the historic character of the area in contrast to the open treatment opposite. The open meadow to the west offers a wide view to the village hall and garage beyond, but could be improved with tree and hedge planting.

The garage makes use of the former village hall with its Arts and Crafts style which is of interest. Towards the ford, the line closes with hedges and walls narrowing the aspect before the road curves around Home Farm and its outbuildings with the attractive Tye Cottage set back opposite.

Mill Lane

The outlook from the Poplars has been enhanced by the new brick boundary wall which complements the one to The Chequers opposite. The decorative brick gable end to The Chequers can be enjoyed at close quarters while its original outbuildings lie behind. Trees here are a significant part of the appeal at this end of the lane. The Deals set back is an interesting building retaining much of its original character.



Bungay Road



Mill Road

The former Queens Head PH is now a dwelling with two new houses in the grounds which are prominent in the street. Beyond the lane offers a mixture of traditional cottages with later infill houses set in detached gardens. The low walls and hedges help retain the traditional appearance of the street. The conversion of the Methodist Chapel has worked well with Cotteston cottages retaining its historic attraction set behind.

Traditional Materials and Architectural Details

A range of traditional building materials and details typical of the South Norfolk area are found in the built fabric of Hempnall.

Roofs are mostly of red or black clay pantiles, but there are notable examples of thatch, slate while plain tiles remain on the old village hall and lead on the Church.

Walls are mostly brick, some colourwashed, with render, covering timber frame or clay lump. The Church is in flint. The number of fine brick and flint walls is a particular feature of the area, with iron railings and gates adding to the interest.

Older sash or casement windows survive on the listed buildings but elsewhere many have been replaced with modern equivalents which lack the same interest and character.

Ground surface materials are generally tarmacadam.

In terms of street furniture the area around the village sign includes a traditional telephone kiosk and road sign but other cabinets and elements have been added in a random way.

The listed war memorial furniture lies on a green at the junction of The Street, Fairstead Lane and Broaden Lane.



Walls define many site boundaries



Traditional farm buildings

Natural Character and Open Spaces

There are a number of open spaces, and trees which make an important contribution to the landscape quality of the Conservation Area, and these are indicated on map Townscape and Natural Character Map.

The important “green” open spaces can be listed as the school playing field to the north of The Street, St Margaret’s Churchyard, the grazing land to the north of the village hall and the triangle of space containing the War Memorial lying to the west. The water meadows play a less obvious role, but the trees are valuable as a backcloth to the buildings on the south side of the street.

The potentially important open space at the junction of The Street with Mill/Bungay Roads is dominated by car dealership garage adjacent to the bridge.

The presence of mature trees, hedges and areas of grass all add greatly to the rural character of the area. There are particularly fine mature trees at the eastern end of The Street and at the start of Fairstead Lane, within the churchyard and the large gardens of the listed farmhouses such as the Parsonage, Manor Farmhouse, the Hollies and Willows. There are also important hedges which form a green barrier to the roads especially at the eastern end of The Street but also along the Bungay Road. Most of the new infill development has been planned to enable most of the existing trees to survive and in many cases additional planting has been carried out. But there is considerable scope for additional planting to replace trees lost over time.

The meadows have a particularly special landscape quality of mature trees and hedgerows following the line of the drainage ditches all in a setting of lush meadow grass. The sewage pumping station has been surrounded by evergreen planting which is at odds with the rest of the area.



Importance of open spaces ...



and trees.

Conservation Management Guidelines

Highways

The B1135 passes through the village, which is popular for vehicles on this west to east route across the district. The curves in the road coupled with the position of some buildings on the edge of the footpath, can cause concerns with the safety of pedestrians.

The Street is also busy, the route needs to be travelled with care especially negotiating the bends near the church, and at school times when parked cars and numerous children make the passage more of a challenge to all concerned.

There is coloured tarmac outside the school which helps as a safer crossing, but discussions with highways and the Parish Council may produce some improvements.

Discussions should be held with the Highway's Authority, the Parish Council and owners to see if some sensitive traffic improvements could be promoted. This could include the practicalities of providing a footpath over the stream south of the bus shelter and planting trees at the vehicular access to the school.

Enhancement prospects

There is scope to explore improving the appearance of the forecourts of the two garages and that of the former Lord Nelson Public House.

New boundary treatments, resurfacing or tree planting can make a significant difference. Additional tree planting is almost always welcomed. There may be scope to use the area north of the village hall to add interest to the street scene, and in other places to restore the natural character where significant trees have been lost in the past. The backdrop to the War Memorial and the vehicular entrance to the school could be considered.

There may be scope to review the layout and surface materials of the site of the village sign.



There may be scope to improve the forecourt of this key site



The Street and B1135 junction

Repair of Buildings

There are a number of high quality historic buildings in the town and it is important that their maintenance and repair is carried out with great care using traditional materials and techniques. Advice can be obtained from various sources, including South Norfolk Council, which would help avoid alterations which, however well- intended, can cause permanent harm to the special character of these buildings.

There are a few buildings that appear to be in need of attention and whose future could be secured with new uses.



Repair as part of a new use?

Unsympathetic Alterations

A few buildings, have been altered in the past in ways which have adversely affected their special character, and cumulatively, that of the wider area. Examples include replacing traditional windows and doors with ones of an inappropriate design or materials.

Every effort should be taken to retain original historic features, or to reinstate them where possible.

There are pressures to replace historic windows to improve thermal performance and security, but there are ways of upgrading the existing features without replacement or in ways which retain the special interest of the building.



Coordinating colours would be a significant improvement.

Appendix 1 (i)

Listed Buildings in Hempnall Conservation Area

(All Grade II except as noted)

Fairstead Lane	Krons Manor The Thatched House The War Memorial
The Street (south side)	The Hollies Limetree Cottage Connaught House and Shop Forge Cottage and Smithy Priory Cottage/Smithy Cottage The Nelson Public House Manor Farm Cottages
The Street (north side)	The Parsonage (formerly Manor Parsonage) The Stables to the Parsonage Manor Farmhouse Manor Farm Cottage St. Margaret's Church (Grade II*) The Long House
Bungay Road	The Willows Willow House Tye Cottage
Mill Lane (south side)	Thackary House The Poplars
Mill Lane (north side)	The Chequers Cotteston Cottages

Appendix 1 (ii)

Unlisted Buildings in Hempnall Conservation Area which are of townscape significance

Fairstead Lane	Swallow Farm, Krons Barn, The Stables, Cottage east of Stone Cottage
Broaden Lane	Lower Croft Cottage and outbuildings, Lyndhurst, War Memorial
The Street	Grove House, Rivendell, Car Port to Grove House, Barbers Shop, and screen walls to west. (Ivy House, Meadow View, Rosewood House, Cottages north of playing field, Cottage east of Pevesney House, Vine Cottage, School Cottage, Smith and outbuildings, Hempnall First School, Building east of Connaught House, Cottage to Delf's Garage, Conway House, Cottages south of Long House.
Bungay Road	Bay Cottages, Rose Cottages, Bridge Cottage, Cottages east of Willow House, Corner Cottage, Ford End Cottage, Old village Hall, Beckford House, Beckett Cottage, Home Farm and outbuildings.

Appendix 2

Policy

Policy background

In recent years, the approach to conservation area designation has changed considerably. It is now recognised that development plan policies, development control decisions, and proposals for the preservation or enhancement and the management of conservation areas, can best be achieved when there is a sound understanding of the special interest of the conservation area.

This position is reinforced as follows:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in section 66(1) makes it a duty of local authorities when considering applications to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Under section 72 of the same Act, it is a duty with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Department for Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

Paragraphs 126 to 141 cover “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”.

Joint Core Strategy- Policy 2 : Promoting Good design

South Norfolk Local Plan

The South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document was adopted in 2015 and policy 4.10 covers Heritage Assets. Public Consultation

Public Consultation

An informal 'walkabout' of the area was organised with local residents and councillors on 24 November 2016. This informed the proposed boundary changes and conservation management guidelines within the draft appraisal. The public consultation on the draft appraisal took place from 1st July 2017 to 14th August 2017 (having been extended by two weeks.)

This included:

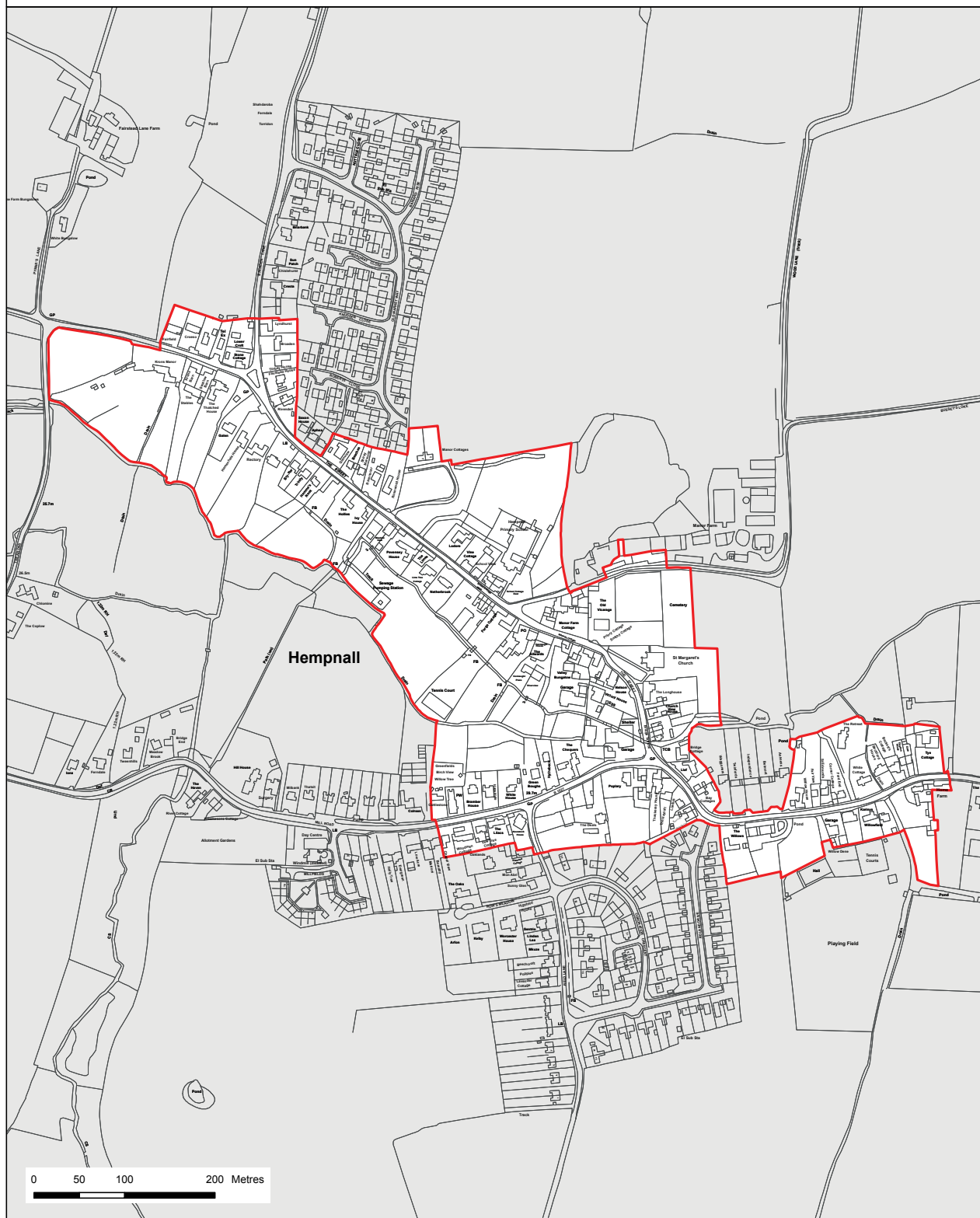
- The appraisal was presented to the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 18 July 2017.
- A public exhibition held at the Mill Centre on Friday 11 August 2017, with an officer in attendance to answer any queries.
- Advert in village notice board and local publicity by the parish council
- The draft appraisal being available to view on the council's website and at the reception desk.
- Emailing Ward Councillors, County Councillors, the Parish Council, Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service and Historic England.
- Contacting residents directly affected by the proposed boundary changes by letter informing them of the consequences of being included within the conservation area.

Discussions were held with a local landowner about a suggested amendment to the boundary in Busseys Loke. This resulted in the boundary being slightly adjusted to accommodate the workings of the farm and later alterations. Some minor alterations were made to the text.

Appendix 3

Boundary Map

Hempnall Conservation Area



South Norfolk Council
Cygnets Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

Tel: (01508) 533633
Fax: (01508) 533695

Key

Conservation area boundary



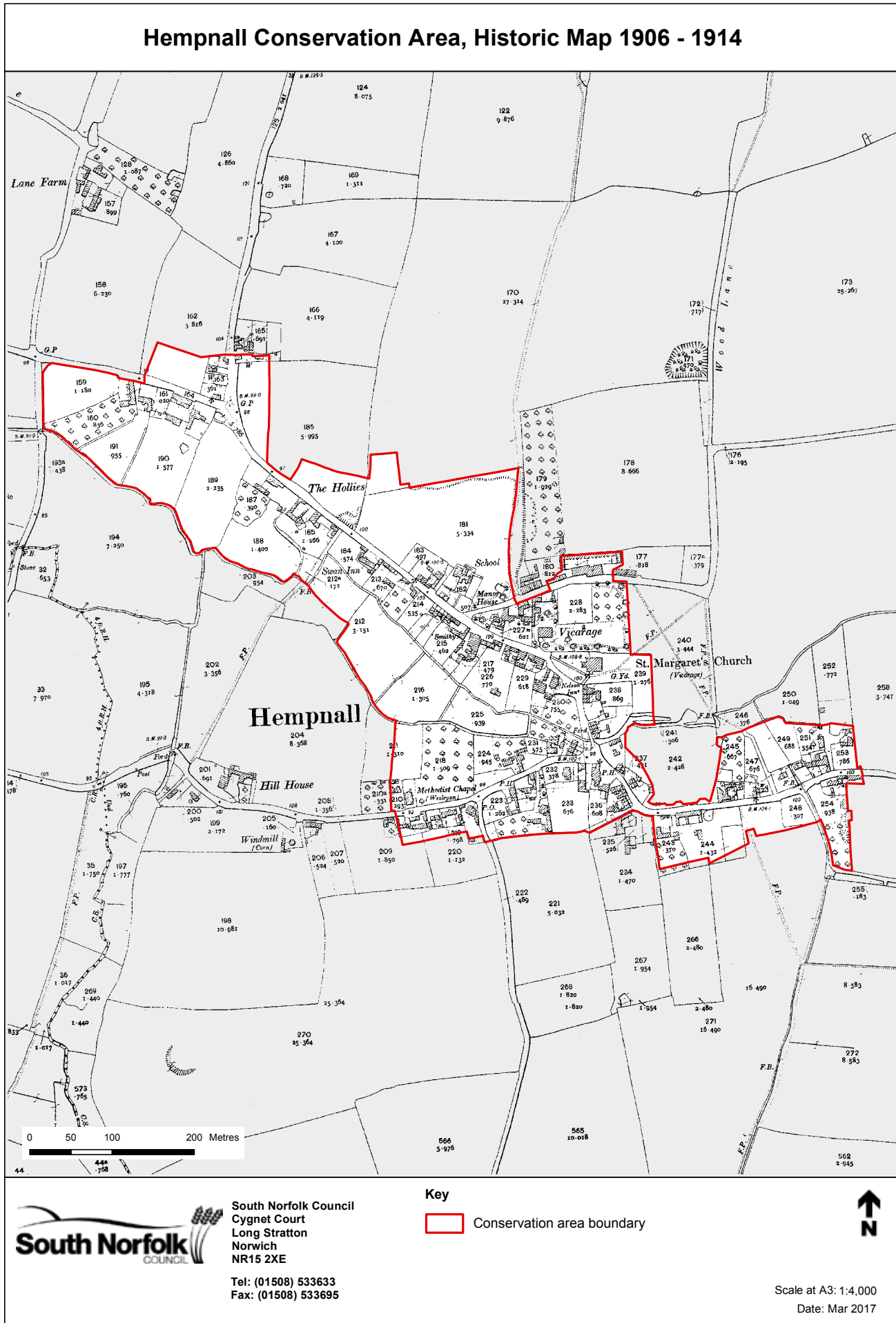
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Appendix 4

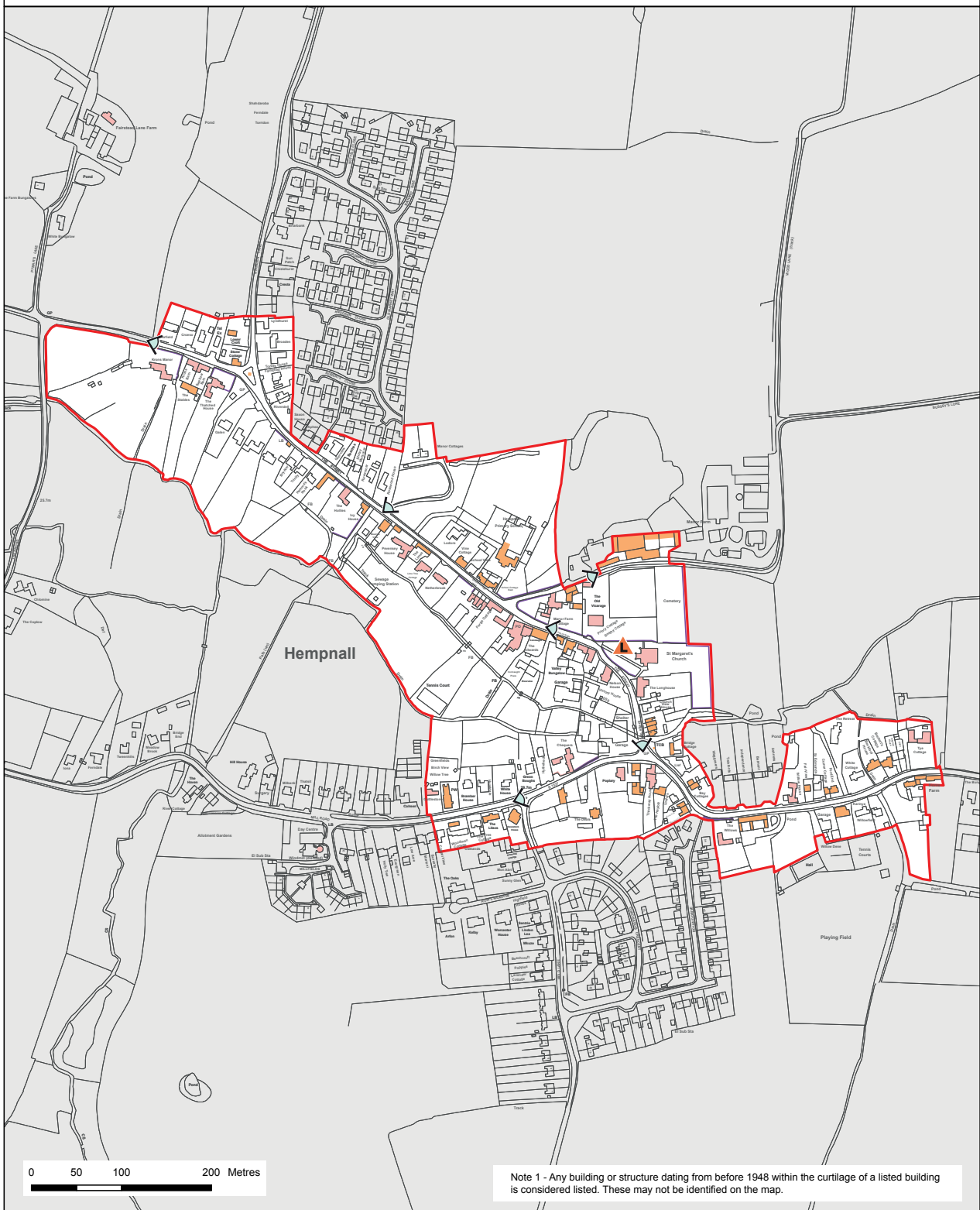
Historic Map



Appendix 5

Streetscape

Hempnall Conservation Area - Streetscape



South Norfolk Council
Cygnets Court
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

Tel: (01508) 533633
Fax: (01508) 533695

Key

- Conservation area boundary
- Listed Buildings (see Note 1 above)
- Unlisted buildings of townscape significance

- Significant walls
- ▲ Landmark building
- ▶ Key Views



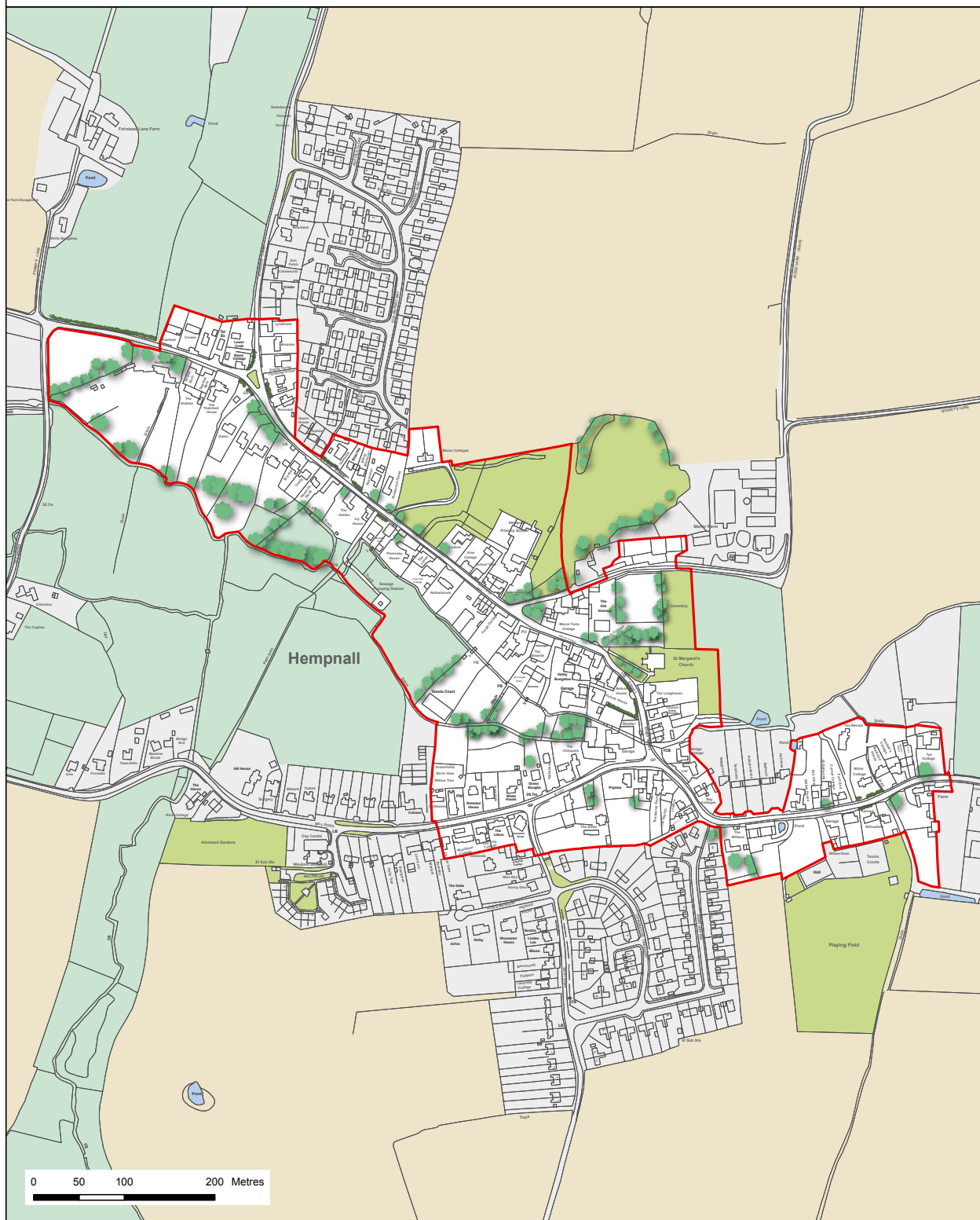
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Appendix 6

Natural Character

Hempnall Conservation Area - Natural Character



South Norfolk Council
 Cygnet Court
 Long Stratton
 Norwich
 NR15 2XE
 Tel: (01508) 533633
 Fax: (01508) 533695

Key

- Conservation area boundary
- Open Space
- Agricultural

- Trees
- Hedges
- Meadow



Scale at A3: 1:4,000
 Date: Mar 2017

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