

# Frenchay Conservation Area

Supplementary Planning Document

March 2007

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides an appraisal of the Frenchay Conservation Area. It sets out the main features contributing to the distinctive character and appearance of the Conservation Area along with a strategy for its preservation and enhancement. The SPD will supplement the policies of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan and will be used when assessing the merits of development proposals.



## Introduction

Frenchay was designated as a Conservation Area in 1975 in recognition of its unique architectural and historic character and appearance, with its historic buildings, its attractive setting, Commons, open spaces and adjoining wooded river valley. The Conservation Area boundary is shown on the attached plan.

In designating a Conservation Area the local planning authority has a duty to ensure that any proposed development will preserve or enhance the special qualities of the area.

### Purpose of the leaflet

This guidance seeks to identify the main elements that contribute to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area along with a strategy for its preservation and enhancement. It is hoped that by providing an appraisal of the buildings, features and spaces, which characterise the Conservation Area this will help ensure future proposals, respect rather than harm the local character. This adopted leaflet will supplement the policies in the South Gloucestershire Local Plan giving additional guidance against which development proposals will be assessed.

### South Gloucestershire Local Plan

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the local plan, which includes planning policies relating to the protection of the historic environment and landscape character. In particular, Conservation Area policy L12 requires development proposals to take full account of the special architectural or visual qualities of the Conservation Area. Applicants should provide an assessment of the character to demonstrate how their proposals will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Proposals having a harmful impact will be refused.

The emphasis is on preserving and enhancing those buildings, spaces and features, which give each Conservation Area its special character.

## What Is A Conservation Area ?

A Conservation Area is an area of **‘Special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’**

Designation is recognition of the group value of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect, not just the individual buildings, but the distinctive character of the area as a whole. The special character usually derives from a combination of many features - such as the relationship between groups of buildings, the degree of enclosure, landform, open spaces, trees, hedgerows, boundaries and walls, as well as the size, scale and detailing of buildings. Each area is unique.

#### **Please note:**

*This Conservation Area appraisal sets out the main elements contributing to the character of the Conservation Area which it is felt any development should take account of. It is not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.*

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## ***Frenchay Character Assessment***

**Frenchay** has been described as -

*'a green oasis on the outskirts of Bristol, with an attractive group of fine Georgian houses built on the edge of a common. The village proper consists of a charming unplanned huddle of stone cottages on a steep slope facing south to the river Frome and served by narrow stepped and paved paths. Great care should be taken in its development.'*<sup>1</sup>



*One of the best views taking in the wooded river valley, the village on the hillside and across the fields to some of the Georgian grandeur by the Common.*

## ***The Landscape Setting***

Situated in a dramatic setting overlooking the River Frome, Frenchay Conservation Area remains a largely unspoilt secluded backwater, despite the extensive areas of surrounding suburban development. This feeling of isolation is due to the influence of the river valley and the surrounding landform, trees and woodlands. These features make an important contribution to the setting and character providing areas of contrast between the open common with its grand houses, set on a plateau overlooking the valley with its views and the more intimate and enclosed character within the village and alongside the river. To the north and south, the river valley becomes more confined as it narrows to a gorge with the river flowing between steep valley sides.

Views of the steeply wooded slopes to the east of the river are a vital part of the Frenchay landscape providing a dramatic back-cloth to much of the village. The trees on the skyline screen the suburban development in Downend and create a pleasant illusion of rural isolation. It is essential that the trees on the skyline are retained and modern development is not allowed to encroach into views.

<sup>1</sup> D.Verrey - part of the N. Pevsner series - Buildings of England: Gloucestershire: The Vale and Forest of Dean 1976



*Cleeve Mill - converted for use as a tea garden. Now a private dwelling.*



*Gate Lodge to Frenchay Park.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

*Visit the Frenchay Village Museum. Open Wed, Sat, and Sun afternoons.*

*See also [www.Frenchay.org/museum.html](http://www.Frenchay.org/museum.html) or phone 0117 9570942*



*Newlands - now demolished. Its garden walls & outbuildings remain.*

## **The Historic Context**

The unique character of Frenchay has been shaped by its history. This was influenced by its position adjoining the River Frome and its close relationship with Bristol and the surrounding region. Its main stages of development are summarised below

The early settlement of Frenchay comprised of small cottages mainly in the village. The adjoining River Frome was an important source of power with a series of water-mills and weirs along its length providing trade and employment for local people. Of the three mills Frenchay Mill, Frenchay Flock Mill and Cleeve Mill which operated here only Cleeve Mill now remains.

The stone quarries along the river were also an important factor in the development of Frenchay. The distinctive reddish pennant stone provided local building materials both within Frenchay and later, with transport improvements, was used elsewhere. The scars of the quarry faces and stone outcrops are still visible today. The stone was very close to the surface of the Common, resulting in poor quality agricultural land -hence its use as common land for grazing.

The Bristol area was important nationally as a centre for Non-Conformists such as the Quakers, Unitarians and Methodists. In Frenchay, the original Friend's Meeting House was built in 1673 (rebuilt in 1809). It attracted Quakers from far and wide including, William Penn, who in 1696 married local girl, Hannah Callowhill from Frenchay Lodge. Charles II granted Penn land in America in settlement for monies owed to his father. Thus Pennsylvania was founded, by Penn, as a "Holy Experiment" to run on Quaker principles.

During the 18th Century most of the attractive large houses around Frenchay Common, were built by rich merchants and businessmen. Many were Quakers attracted by the existing community. This migration from the increasingly polluted city was facilitated by road improvements through nearby Stapleton to Hambrook with its Turnpiking in 1727.

The 19th Century saw changes to the Common with the building of the Parish Church in 1834 and use of the Common for cricket and games. Frenchay became popular as a beauty spot for visitors with local people providing tea gardens and boating on the river. Some of the large houses such as Cleevewood House provided attractions such as a 'lover's walk' through the woods.

During the 20th Century many of the larger houses were converted to new uses such as nursing homes and residential flats and others had new development within their grounds. Frenchay Park House became a sanatorium and is now part of Frenchay Hospital with many buildings in its former grounds and parkland. A number of grand houses such as Newlands, Cliff Court and Malmains were demolished to make way for modern housing estates.



Circa 1880 First Edition Ordnance Survey Plan of Frenchay



## ***Character Areas***

The combination of the landform and historic development of the settlement has resulted in a number of distinct character areas. These are described on pages 8 -19 and shown on plan 1. They include:-

- 1) The village with its jumble of small cottages cascading down the valley side.
- 2) The Grand houses and Churches by the Common and along Beckspool Road.
- 3) Frenchay Park / hospital site with remnants of the former parkland.
- 4) The Common, open-spaces and valley.
- 5) The River valley, woodlands and Cleevewood Road approach.
- 6) Other areas of modern development on the settlement edge.



*Frenchay Hill*



## The Special Features

Frenchay derives its special character from a combination of elements - the form and detailing of buildings and their boundaries; the treatment of roads and the spaces between buildings; the open spaces, trees and woodlands.

**The historic buildings and structures** - Frenchay has a distinctive architectural character with its attractive mix of humble vernacular cottages contrasting with the fine Georgian Houses - many listed of 'special architectural or historic interest'. The form, proportions, original materials, architectural details - windows, doors, roof materials etc are all essential elements of the period character of these traditional buildings whether a small cottage or grand Georgian House.

**Building materials** - in the village locally quarried rubble pennant stone predominates (some of it rendered), whereas the fashionable Bath limestone was used for many of the larger Georgian houses, though some have stucco and rendered pennant rubble walling to give the appearance of stone. Brick was seldom used - except as surrounds to windows or doors on Victorian cottages. Roofs traditionally are of natural clay pantiles or double roman tiles and Welsh blue / grey slates.

**Windows** - traditionally of painted timber either of Georgian small paned sashes or casements with openings flush with the frame. The appearance of some traditional buildings has been harmed due to unsympathetic replacement windows using the wrong details, proportions, materials or finishes. Owners will be encouraged to reinstate these with windows sensitive to the traditional character.

**Boundaries** - typically consist of pennant rubble stone walls with cock and hen coping. However, Bath stone or pennant blocks and iron railings are used for some of the grander houses. The walls are essential to the character providing an attractive feature and enclosure along roads. The removal of sections of stone walls has harmed the character and any further loss will be resisted. Owners will be encouraged to reinstate stone boundary walls and ensure any boundary treatment is sensitive to the historic and landscape character.

**Streetscape and surrounding spaces** - much of the special character derives from its interesting streetscape with its contrasts and lack of uniformity - the variation in road width, the bends and sense of surprise as a new scene unfolds, the informality and enclosure by grass verges, walls, buildings, trees and valley sides. Any highway or other works to the Common should be sensitive to the character and use appropriate materials. The introduction of signs, road markings or street furniture -seats, bins etc can have an adverse visual impact so should be avoided.



*Originally quarried locally the characteristic pennant stone kerbs & setts to foot-ways should be retained. The use of concrete kerbs or edging is considered harmful.*

*There are 35 'listed' buildings and structures including 2 bridges, tollpost marker, some boundary walls and tombstones.*

*Pennant stone walls with their distinctive reddish colour.*

## ***Keeping And Enhancing The Character***

When considering changes - great care is needed. The cumulative impact of often quite small changes by property owners such as using the wrong details or materials, unsympathetic extensions, erosion of walls and loss of trees can harm the unique character and downgrade the area. Similarly, insensitive changes to the commons, verges, open space and roads can also detract from the pleasant informal character and sense of place. Collectively, residents, landowners, local and parish councils can help to protect this unique area by ensuring any works they do are sensitive to the character. A strategy for the preservation and enhancement of the area - including both general and more specific guidance is set out below and on the accompanying plan 2.



*You should seek to protect the character in all work - even if consent from the council is not required. If you are unsure about the impact of your proposals - please ask a Conservation Officer for advice.*

### **Preservation and Enhancement Strategy**

The overall aim is to preserve and enhance the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area, its historic buildings, features and their setting as follows:-

#### **1) Preserve and reinforce the historic character**

Ensure repairs are carried out sensitively and that any works to both the listed and unlisted buildings, features and surroundings are considered in relation to the historic context and use appropriate materials, scale and detailing.

#### **2) Ensure that any new development (or alteration) respects the historic context**

New development or alteration needs to be in scale and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is important that it does not adversely harm the setting of the existing historic features, views or archaeology.

#### **3) Minimise the impact of existing modern development**

By ensuring adjoining modern development does not impinge on the historic character and setting. Enhancement proposals should seek to reduce this impact by protecting important views or gaps and using planting and natural stone walls to help soften the impact of obtrusive features and create a sense of enclosure and place.

#### **4) Preserve and reinforce the historic landscape**

By encouraging the retention or replacement of trees, hedges, stone walls, field patterns and other landscape features. Ensure planting is appropriate to the character.

## 1) The Village

This is the oldest part of Frenchay, alongside the river Frome with its various mills and quarries. This industrial activity and Common have influenced the layout of the village with its irregular plot patterns, narrow roads and jumble of cottages. The steep hillsides have been quarried over many centuries with the spoil from new quarry holes used to fill in the exhausted ones. Cottages were then built on or around these small bits of land and enclosed by stone walls. Despite more recent alterations to cottages and development within the village the original layout and form of the settlement essentially remains. The visual legacy of this activity is an amazing array of sturdy cottages, many ingeniously shaped to fit into an irregular plot and built on a variety of levels, with winding lanes, alley ways and high stone retaining walls. This creates a sense of enclosure and intimacy, further accentuated by the closeness of the buildings to the roadside and the highly attractive backdrop of mature trees.



*The walls and buildings along the road contribute to the sense of enclosure. The removal of walls would harm the character*

The traditional cottages are in the vernacular style dating mainly from the 18th and 19th Century (though some hide earlier buildings). The stone cottages (some with render) are small scale, typically with narrow gables and generally of 1½ to 2 storeys though some are taller taking advantage of the steep changes in levels. They have simple proportions and detailing with timber painted side hung casement or sash windows. The roofs, of clay tiles or slate, are generally steeply pitched and with their chimneys are important features in views. Some cottages have small traditional stone outbuildings used in connection with the dwelling and commercial activities that occurred. These should be retained as they add to the distinctive historic character of the settlement and sensitive reuse encouraged

*The jumble of roofs provides interesting views of the 'higgledy piggledy' nature of the vilage. Extensions and alterations to roofs will be resisted where harmful to the character.*



Due to the sloping topography, many buildings along with trees and planting in gardens are visible from various viewpoints both within the village and from the wider landscape. Development proposals that would harm the character of the property, impinge on important views or result in the loss of trees or significant vegetation or open spaces that contribute to the character of the settlement will be resisted. Other elements that contribute to the distinctive informal character of the village include the verges, grassed areas and woodland. Care is needed to ensure that the verges and grassed areas maintain their informal character.



*Properties within the village typically comprise small humble cottages contrasting with the grand houses by the common. Large -scale extensions are unlikely to be appropriate.*

Within the village traditional cottages are interspersed with modern properties - some of which are unsympathetic to the historic character. Many of the small cottages have been altered with modern replacement windows and overlarge extensions harming the traditional character. This demonstrates how fragile the historic character can be if not enough care is exercised over new development, alterations and the removal of boundary walls.

### **Preservation & Enhancement Strategy**

- ▶ *Proposals should respect the small cottage character. Poorly designed and large scale extensions will be refused consent.*
- ▶ *Seek the retention and reinstatement of traditional details, windows, doors, chimneys and stone boundary walls etc in a sympathetic manner.*
- ▶ *Maintain enclosure to the road by resisting the formation of new or widened accesses where this would harm the enclosed character or result in the loss of historic stone walls.*
- ▶ *Protect important views and resist the loss of trees, green or open space and informal verges which contribute to the character of the settlement*
- ▶ *Resist the removal of traditional outbuildings and encourage their sensitive re-use. Ensure any alterations are appropriate and sympathetic to character.*
- ▶ *Ensure highway works are sympathetic to the character. Avoid signs, road markings and use appropriate materials.*



*Grass verges give a rural feel and need to be retained.*



*Cottages set on top and within former quarry. Alterations should not detract from views.*

## 2) *The Georgian Houses and Churches* by The Common and along Beckspool Road

Overlooking the Common and along Beckspool Road are a number of fine Georgian houses. Most are listed for their architectural and historic interest and are a reminder of Frenchay's wealthy past where many of the former occupiers had important social and cultural connections in the Bristol community. Residents included J.S Fry of chocolate fame and the Tuckett family who also played a role in shaping the history and development of Frenchay and its surrounding landscape. The buildings are set within their own landscaped gardens amidst mature trees and include Frenchay Park, The Old House, Clarendon House, Frenchay House, Cedar Hall, Frenchay Lodge and Penn House, Manor House, Riverwood House, Lake House and Fromeshawe House.



*The grand houses overlooking the Common and valley - frame and enclose views.*

Built by rich merchants in the 18th Century some replaced or incorporated earlier buildings (eg Lake House and The Old House where earlier gabled elevations still remain to the rear). The buildings, mainly in the Classical / Palladian style, are of substantial size usually 2 or 3 storey with bays. Each building is unique but typical fine details include Georgian sash windows, fanlights above doors, modillion cornices, balustraded parapets, pediments, rusticated stonework and architraves, chamfered or rusticated quoins, Corinthian pilasters, Ionic and Tuscan columns. To the front the grounds are enclosed by imposing stone boundary walls - some have attractive rusticated gate piers with iron spear-head railings with urn newels. These buildings add a unique charm to the area with their magnitude and style giving an air of grandness to the setting

*Frenchay Manor House built in 1736 by Joseph Beck a wealthy Quaker businessman. The Bath stone was easily carved and cut so ideal for the Classical/Palladian style of architecture.*



*Georgian window and door with fan-light.*

*Detail of stonework.*

Alongside the Georgian Houses are the small Nonconformist Chapels of the Unitarian Church with its unusual square tower and Halley's Comet weathervane; and the Quaker Meeting House which add to the unique character. However, dominating the Common is the Parish Church of St John the Baptist built in 1834 in an early gothic revival style. It has a fine slender spire that is visible from many viewpoints. The nearby Georgian rectory and trees are other notable features and important in helping to enclose and frame views of this part of the main common. The adjoining modern 1960s Rectory in brick detracts from the traditional character and would benefit from planting to the front and side to screen it from view.



*The Unitarian Chapel, Old House and trees provide an attractive setting to the Common.*

The Georgian Houses, lodges and coachhouses have been converted into residential homes or flats. Re-use of these buildings has generally been sensitive with extensions and new development to facilitate the new uses being tucked away out of general view. The exception is Cedar Hall, where only the frontage has been retained with a new development of flats behind and alongside. The scope for further development involving extensions or new building within the grounds is considered limited if the character and appearance of these individual grand houses set within their own landscaped grounds is to be maintained. It will be important that any alterations or repairs use correct architectural detailing to safeguard the special architectural and historic character and the attractive landscaped setting is retained and not dominated by areas of car parking.

### **Preservation & Enhancement Strategy**

- ▶ *Secure sensitive repairs and reinstatement of traditional details and removal of unsympathetic elements*
- ▶ *Ensure any new development or alterations do not harm the historic or architectural character or appearance of the buildings or their setting.*
- ▶ *Seek to retain existing trees and secure a replacement planting strategy. New planting should recognise the historic context by using appropriate species, layout and scale.*
- ▶ *Seek to protect and enhance important historic garden features and layouts and restrict development or changes in land-uses where this would harm the historic and green character of gardens and parkland.*
- ▶ *Resist alterations or creation of new openings resulting in the loss of historic boundary walls or railings.*

*The simple proportions of the Friend's Meeting House is a typical example of a Quaker building. The graveyard contains the remains of local notables.*



*Stone wall and railings.*



*Gate Lodge overlooking the Common.*

### ***3) Frenchay Park - Frenchay Hospital Site***

Set back from Beckspool Road and visible in views from the Common is the grand Frenchay Park House with its stables and outbuildings. Approached by an imposing tree lined avenue the house was built in the classical style in 1780 and enlarged in 1804. It was situated in extensive grounds and parkland enclosed by a stone boundary wall with gate lodges at its two main entrances. In 1921 the house was converted to a sanatorium and during World War 2 was occupied as a hospital by American Servicemen. Many of the buildings constructed at that time still remain. Today the former house is the administrative centre whilst its grounds contain numerous hospital buildings of varying ages and styles which have very little visual integration.



*The imposing Frenchay Park House - as seen from the Common. Overspill parking from the hospital is having an adverse impact.*

The house, with its adjoining open space and specimen trees (remnants of the former Parkland) and Lime tree avenue are important elements within the Conservation Area providing an attractive setting to the listed buildings and historic character. The lawns and parkland trees both original and new planting, contribute significantly to the setting of the house and adjoining Common land. The trees and shrubs of the site provide an important role in screening the modern hospital development in views from the Common. Recent encroachments by parking and building, particularly of the Lime tree avenue have adversely affected the character of the Conservation Area. Parking on the Common (due to restrictions within the hospital) is damaging the verges and causing harm to the appearance of the Common as well as physical damage.



*Trees and open space of the former Parkland provide an attractive setting.*

### **Preservation and Enhancement Strategy / Development Guidelines**

Development proposals, whether in connection with the hospital or other uses, should recognise the high quality sensitive historic and landscape character and setting of the site. It should comply with Local Plan Policies - particularly those relating to the Historic Environment, Landscape Character and Design policies. For any large-scale redevelopment proposals, a detailed conservation area assessment and design concept statement are essential. The following principles will apply to any new buildings, alterations or redevelopment on the site

- ▶ *Protect important views and setting of the listed buildings and conservation area. Ensure the location, height, scale and massing of development does not impinge on views or project above the trees giving a more built up feel or competing with nearby historic buildings.*
- ▶ *Ensure alterations to listed buildings are sympathetic and maintain stone boundary walls*
- ▶ *Maintain the open green area, trees and former parkland adjoining Frenchay Park. The erection of structures or other alterations, which harm the green character, views or setting of nearby listed buildings will be resisted.*
- ▶ *Retain and enhance the integrity of Lime Tree Avenue, which helps to screen the modern buildings beyond. No new buildings, structures or parking should encroach into this area. The loss of trees or harm to the avenue character will be resisted. Any proposed redevelopment of existing buildings should be set back from the avenue and enhance the setting.*
- ▶ *Ensure planting is appropriate to the character in terms of location, species and scale whilst protecting important views.*
- ▶ *Improve the provision and management of parking to minimise the adverse impact of cars both within and surrounding the site. A parking strategy and access statement should be submitted with any development proposals to address and prevent parking problems.*
- ▶ *Any redevelopment of (or adjoining) Frenchay Park House should aim to remove parking from in front of the house and restore the garden around the building.*
- ▶ *The tennis courts and associated fencing detract from the setting and harm views of Frenchay Park House. Any redevelopment proposals should seek their relocation to a less harmful position.*



*Part of the Lime Tree Avenue.*

## 4) *The Commons, Open Spaces And Valley.*

Frenchay has been described as a 'green oasis' which indicates the number and importance of the various types of green spaces within the Conservation Area. The more formal spaces of gardens and the Common contrast with the more natural and informal woodlands of the valley slopes and floor, the remnant fields and grass verges and colonising tree groups of the old quarries. This matrix of green space provides an attractive setting for the buildings, and is important for wildlife and provides for informal recreation, particularly along the Frome valley. This distribution of green-space relates strongly to the landform of the area.

*The Ha Ha by the Church and Wellingtonia tree alongside.*



*The wide open expanses of the main Common where W.G. Grace played cricket in the 1870's.*

### **The Commons**

The main Common with its wide expanses of grass and occasional mature specimen trees provides a stunning setting to St John's Church and also to the adjoining Georgian houses. Its open character allows good views of the surrounding buildings and down and across the valley. This open character is reinforced by the use of a Ha Ha, a ditch with sunken wall, which separates the church and school from the Common. The Ha Ha, a popular landscape device of the early 18th century, to keep out livestock without interrupting an open vista is also used to good effect adjoining Tuckett field where Francis Tuckett replaced the hedge to open up the magnificent vista to the other side of the valley.

The Small Common comprises a small circular green, dotted with a few trees. This was once a deep quarry and became a local rubbish tip but was finally grassed over in the early 20th Century. Surrounded, on three sides, by 18th and 19th Century cottages it is one of a number of small intimate areas that make up Frenchay.

Care is needed to protect commons and verges by resisting the clutter of signs, street furniture - seats, bins etc and use of kerbing. These can harm the pleasant informal character by giving an urban or municipal feel. Similarly, the creation of accesses or paths leading to the fragmentation of the grassed areas should be resisted. Parking and damage by vehicles should also be controlled and eroded areas reinstated.

### **The private landscaped gardens and spaces**

The private landscaped gardens surrounding the big Georgian houses with their many specimen trees and ornamental planting makes an attractive contribution to the setting of the buildings and to the Conservation Area. A number of trees, such as the Cedars at the appropriately named Cedar Hall, are visible in long distance views. The gardens at Fromeshaw and Lake House, The Old House, Manor House and Cleevewood House, with their interesting layout, planting, trees and water features, are included as local historic gardens on the South Gloucestershire Council Historic Environment Record.



*The Small Common - it is important to protect this green space.*



*Trees and planting within the gardens add to the green and leafy character.*

The gardens, open spaces and trees associated with the smaller houses and within the village also create a distinctive mosaic of vegetation and open-space which is an important characteristic of the village. Many of the spaces allow important views between buildings. New development within gardens with the loss of trees and open land can close up important spaces and views harming the feel and character of buildings set in the landscape.



*The ornamental pond.*

**The Valley** (including Tucketts field and Frenchay Moor)

The open space and fields stretching from the Common down the valley to the river has a more natural and rural appearance with its length of hedgerows and groups of trees and water meadows. The copse, with its many Turkey or Moss Cupped Oaks, Holm Oaks and Silver Birch is an important landscape feature from many viewpoints. The influence of the Tuckett family has also left a mark on this landscape with the creation of the ornamental pond surrounded by Holm Oak. Another distinctive feature is the large stone marking the grave of the family pet pony encircled by a group of 5 Scots pines planted to signify the Tuckett children who lived at the Manor House.



*The natural appearance of the valley - fields , hedgerows and trees needs to be retained.*

Appropriate use and management of this landscape, including the repair of stone walls and replanting of hedgerows, is essential to retaining its attractive rural character. Alongside the river by the former Methodist Chapel the use of land for the keeping of horses with the erection of stables and fencing has resulted in the degradation of part of the landscape. Modern development adjoining the open fields would also benefit from better boundary treatment and planting to help screen and soften its impact so it does not detract from views or the undeveloped appearance of the valley. .



*The Ha Ha in the foreground allows uninterrupted views down the valley.*



*Avoid use of fencing etc which detract from the natural appearance.*

## Trees

There are a number of important and unusual trees in the area and this reflects the great interest in the 18th and 19th Century of landscape gardening and the discovery of new plants from abroad. Francis Tuckett was responsible for introducing many of the trees that we see today such as the Wellingtonia tree by the Rectory, introduced to England in the 1850's and the Holm Oak trees around the ornamental pond. Other notable trees include the Cedars of Lebanon at Cedar Hall and the Larches and Pines by Grange Park. The Tulip tree at Frenchay Lodge is said to be a present from William Penn and the Quakers of Pennsylvania. A tree survey, care and replacement planting strategy would help to protect these important features of the landscape. Any new or re-development proposals should allow for the retention and ultimate replacement of important tree groups.



*5 Scots Pines  
planted by Tuckett.*



*The trees by Grange Park are a notable feature enhancing the setting of the conservation area.*

## Preservation and enhancement strategy

- ▶ *Seek to preserve and enhance the Commons, open spaces, verges, gardens, trees, areas of fields, woodlands and other important landscape features that contribute to the overall landscape character and protect from harmful development and uses.*
- ▶ *Encourage the preparation of a Landscape Management Strategy for the Commons and Frome Valley giving guidance on the sensitive treatment of these distinctive areas of open space.*
- ▶ *Ensure development and alterations do not harm the balance of open-space and vegetation, views, important landscape features or impact on bio-diversity*
- ▶ *Seek to secure the management and replanting of trees, hedgerows and repair of stone walls.*
- ▶ *Seek planting and boundary improvements to soften the impact of harmful modern development such as adjoining the valley and by the modern Rectory*
- ▶ *Resist the formation of parking areas, use of kerbing, signs, street furniture and creation or widening of accesses where it harms the informal landscape character.*
- ▶ *Resist the sub-division of fields and erection of fences or other structures, which would harm the open character.*

## 5) *The River Valley, Woodlands and Cleevewood Road Approach.*

Once a hive of activity with its mills, quarries and use of the river for transport, today the Frome valley has a tranquil and secluded feel. Contrasting with the open fields to the west, the river has a dramatic setting with its mainly enclosed character confined by the steep wooded valley sides with pennant stone outcrops and evidence of former quarries. The extensive areas of natural woodland provide an attractive and important green backdrop to the settlement. It is essential the woodlands are properly managed and protected whilst ensuring adjoining modern development does not detract from the wooded character or appear on the skyline in views from within or across the valley.



*Frenchay Bridge.*



*Formerly part of the Cave estate of Cleevewood House – the woods along the east side of the valley screen suburban development in Downend.*

Reinforcing the unique valley character is Frenchay Bridge to the south and Cleevewood Bridge located high above the river. Built of the local Pennant stone they enable good views along the river valley. Cleevewood Road with its steep, narrow bends confined by high stone retaining and boundary walls, trees, rock outcrops and steep valley sides provides a strong sense of enclosure and a dramatic approach to the settlement. Traffic management works need to be sensitive to the special character and strong sense of enclosure. The removal of boundary walls or planting will harm the character and will be resisted

The river and natural woodland landscape dominates this area. The few buildings - Cleeve Mill (now a dwelling), Riverside Cottage, Old Mill House and the former lodge to Cleevewood House precariously perched alongside the bridge are located in an attractive wooded setting. The scope for further development is restricted by the need to retain the natural undeveloped appearance to the wooded river valley, which is also an important haven for wildlife



*Toll post on Cleevewood Bridge.*



*Sense of enclosure on Cleevewood Road.*



*Overlooking the river the former lodge to Cleevewood House with its distinctive hipped slate roof. Care is needed over alterations.*

### **Preservation and Enhancement Strategy**

- ▶ *Ensure appropriate management and protection of the River Frome valley, woodlands and footpath network.*
- ▶ *Resist development within or adjoining the river valley which, detracts from the natural appearance. It is important to safeguard views and skyline from encroaching development.*
- ▶ *Ensure any traffic management measures are sensitive to the historic character.*
- ▶ *Maintain enclosure along roads by resisting the lowering, removal or set back of walls and planting.*
- ▶ *Encourage better screening and boundary treatment to adjoining modern development.*

## **6) Modern Development (On The Settlement Edge)**

Modern suburban housing has replaced (or been built alongside) several large historic houses such as Newlands and Cliff Court. Although contrary to the traditional architectural character, its location on the edge of the settlement combined with planting and stone walls reduces its visual impact. The legacy of the former uses are visible in the remnants of garden and boundary walls, outbuildings, other structures and garden features eg ponds, grottos and significant trees and planting. Development or alterations should not harm these features or important views and setting of the Conservation Area. Where current development detracts from the character future development proposals should include enhancement measures to mitigate this adverse impact.

### **Preservation and Enhancement Strategy**

- ▶ *Proposals should not harm views or the setting of the Conservation Area.*
- ▶ *Proposals should demonstrate how they will secure the repair and maintenance of historic garden features, walls and other structures.*
- ▶ *Protect existing trees and vegetation that contribute to the character.*
- ▶ *Secure enhancements by boundary or landscaping improvement or other mitigating measures to minimise the adverse impact of existing unsympathetic development.*



*Trees and walls of former gardens to Cliff Court and Newlands help to screen the modern development beyond from view providing a green character.*



*The woods by the river.*



*Preserve local details and features which make an important contribution to the character.*

## **What Happens Now?**

This leaflet was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on the 19th March 2007. It will be taken into account when assessing the merits of planning applications and other proposals in the area. Applicants will need to provide an assessment of the character to demonstrate how their proposals will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Those proposals, failing to give due weight to the guidance in this SPD, which have a harmful impact will be refused

In preparing the leaflet the views of local residents and other interested parties were sought. Consultation on the draft leaflet and enhancement strategy took place in May and June 2006 by way of an advertisement, public meetings and circulation of the leaflet within the conservation area. Comments and proposed amendments to the leaflet were subsequently reported to the Executive Councillor prior to adoption. (For details see Statement on Consultation Report - available from the Council).

The Council is keen to work with the local community to help preserve and enhance this special area. The strategy sets out ways we can help to achieve this. If you wish to help or have further suggestions - please let us know.

### **How to contact us**

*If you have any queries or suggestions*

**Conservation Area Officer  
Planning and  
Environment Section  
South Gloucestershire  
Council  
Civic Centre  
High Street  
Kingswood  
South Gloucestershire  
BS15 9TR**

Telephone:  
**01454 863579**

Email:  
**ConservationAreas  
@southglos.gov.uk**

**www.southglos.gov.uk/  
conservationareas**



**www.southglos.gov.uk**

**This information can be made available in other languages,  
in large print, Braille or on audio tape.  
Please phone 01454 868686 if you need any of these or  
any other help to access Council services.**

# Plan 1 Frenchay Conservation Area

Designated as a Conservation Area in 1975. Part to the north/west of the River Frome was designated by the former Northavon District Council 30th July 1975. The remainder to the south/east of the river designated 13th August 1975 by the former Kingswood District Council. The area is now wholly within South Gloucestershire.

## Key Local Plan Policies

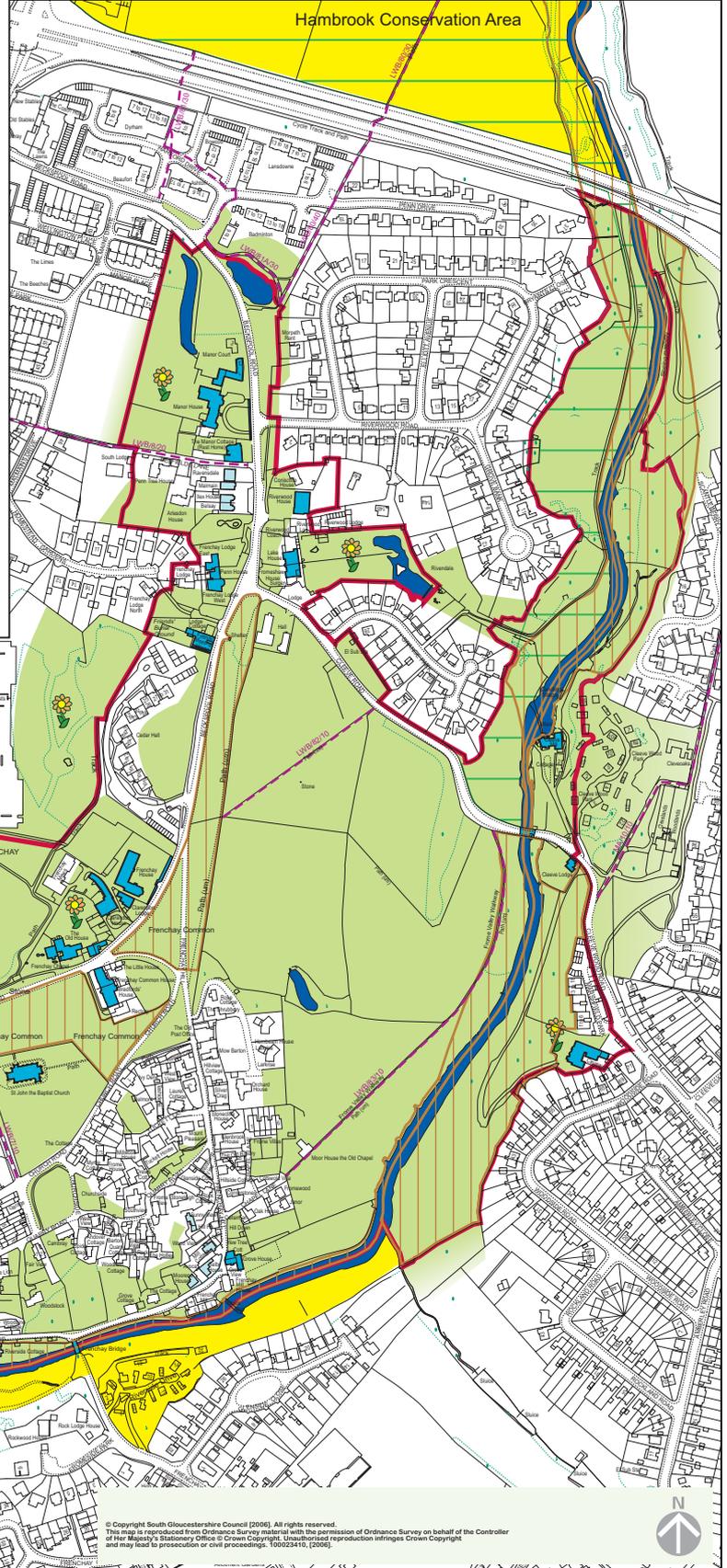
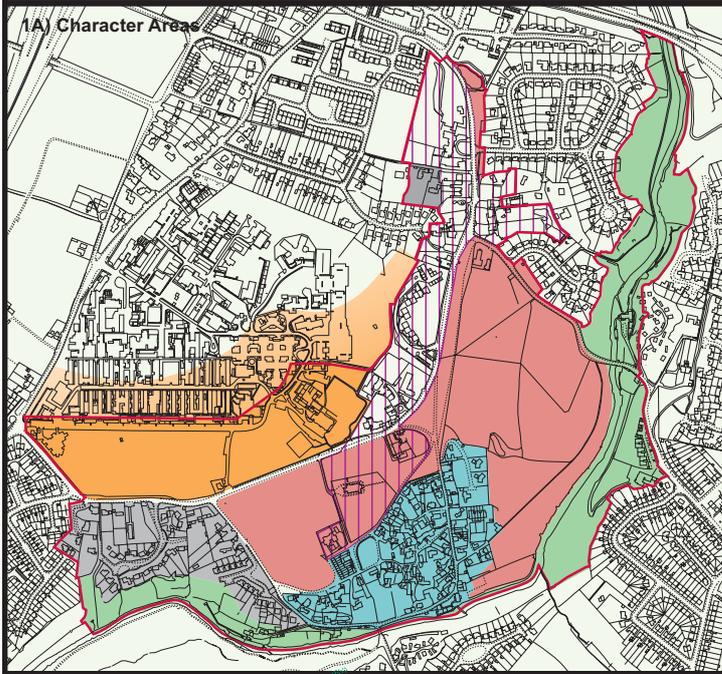
The Conservation Area is located within the urban area- except for a small part to the north within the Green Belt. These and other policies in the Local Plan seek to encourage good design; the protection of local distinctiveness and landscape character, trees, river valley and bio-diversity. For full details of relevant policies refer to the South Gloucestershire Local Plan. Also available on line at [www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)

### 1A) Character Areas (inset plan)

Within the Conservation Area there are a number of distinctive character areas as defined on the plan. (See pages 5 and 8 -19 for more details)

-  (1) The Village
  -  (2) Georgian houses and Churches by the Common and Beckspool Road
  -  (3) Frenchay Park / hospital
  -  (4) Commons, open-spaces and valley
  -  (5) River valley, woodlands & Cleewood Road
  -  (6) Area of modern development
- Some elements and characteristics eg (4) open spaces will also overlap with other character areas

-  Conservation Area Boundary (Policy L12)
-  Listed Buildings (Policy L13, L14)
-  Locally Listed Buildings - excluding curtilage (Policy L15)
-  Public Footpaths (Policy LC12)
-  Green Belt (Policy GB1)
-  Historic Parks & Gardens (Policy L10)
-  Nature Conservation (Policy L8)
-  Open Space to be protected (Policy L5) - only main areas shown (All areas will be assessed under L5 when considering proposals)
-  River / ponds
-  Adjoining Conservation Areas

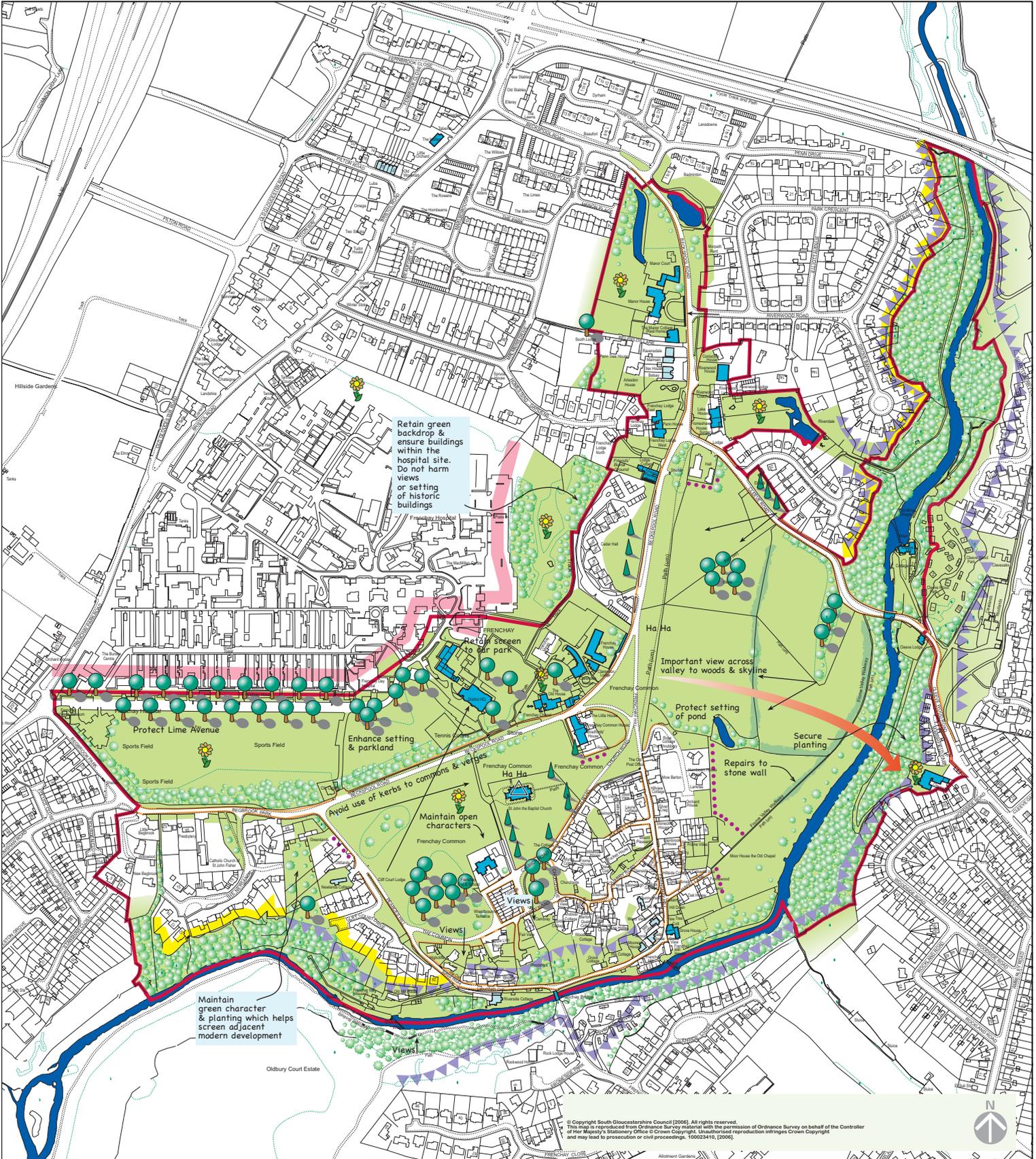


# Plan 2 Preservation & Enhancement Strategy

To encourage appropriate management, protection and enhancement of the following features / elements and their settings

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Maintain existing enclosure to roads and encourage reinstatement of sections of stone walls that have been removed.
- ▲ Protect views to skyline/valley and quarry top. Ensure adjoining development does not encroach/ detract from views.
- Protect setting of adjacent open space/woodlands. Ensure boundary treatment or erection of structures does not encroach or detract from its natural character or harm views.
- Protect setting of Frenchay Park, listed buildings and parkland.
- Secure enhancements and improvements where necessary to boundary treatment/structures and planting to soften the impact of development.
- Main areas of open space, commons, verges and gardens, which contribute to landscape character.(only larger spaces shown - other areas also contribute to character)
- Hedgerows

- Historic Buildings and structures.
- Local Listed buildings
- 🌻 Historic gardens.
- ▲ Landmark / prominent buildings.
- 🌳 Specimen & important groups of trees.
- 🌳 Woodlands & trees
- 🌊 River & Ponds
- ↔ Views



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