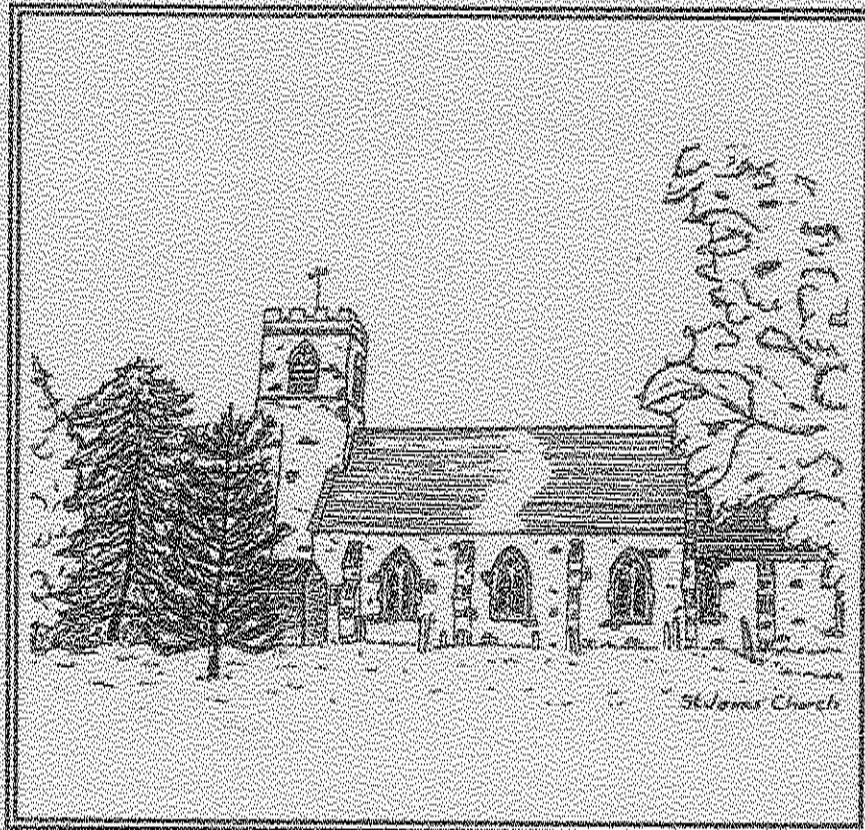


PULLOXHILL

CONSERVATION



AREA

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Purpose of this Document

1.1.1 This document describes the Pulloxhill Conservation Area as designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It:

- explains what a conservation area is;
- defines the boundaries of the Pulloxhill Conservation Area;
- outlines its historic and architectural interest;
- describes its character and appearance;
- sets out the planning controls which operate within it;
- gives detailed policies and advice;
- provides information on grants and local action; and
- tells you who to contact for further assistance.

1.1.2 This information is intended for people living locally, people seeking planning permission or other consents, and anyone concerned with conserving the historic character of Bedfordshire's settlements.

1.1.3 An annotated map of the Conservation Area is included at the back of this document.

1.2 What is a Conservation Area?

1.2.1 Local Planning Authorities are required by law to identify places within their own areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. These 'conservation areas' may be urban or rural in nature. Their special character is derived from a combination of many elements, such as listed and other important buildings, open spaces, views and vistas, trees, an historic street pattern, a village green, historical associations or interesting archaeological sites. Smaller details such as walls, fences, gates, steps, railings, lampposts, shop fronts, paths, streams and hedges also contribute.

1.2.2 One of the best ways of protecting and improving the character and appearance of such places is by taking care of these detailed elements. This is done through the use of planning controls over development and by means of everyday care on the part of property owners and residents.

2.0 THE PULLOXHILL CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 Pulloxhill stands on high ground, between the two valleys of the Rivers Flit and Ivel, approximately 3 miles to the south-east of Ampthill.

2.2 The conservation area contains several buildings listed for their architectural and historic interest, including the church of St James, parts of which are medieval, The Grange, which dates from about 1700, Rectory Farm and Pond Farm, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries respectively and The Chequers and Cross Keys public houses. The latter two buildings date from the late 18th and 17th centuries respectively.

2.3 The boundaries of the conservation area include the northern part of Church Road, the High Street and Orchard Road.

3.0 THE HISTORIC & ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST OF PULLOXHILL

3.1 A Brief History

3.1.1 The Old English name Polochessele may literally mean 'Pullock's Hill' and is first recorded in 1086. A church has stood here since at least 1219 and the earthworks of a fine moated manorial site, probably of 12th century origins, survive at Upbury, about one kilometre ENE of the modern village.

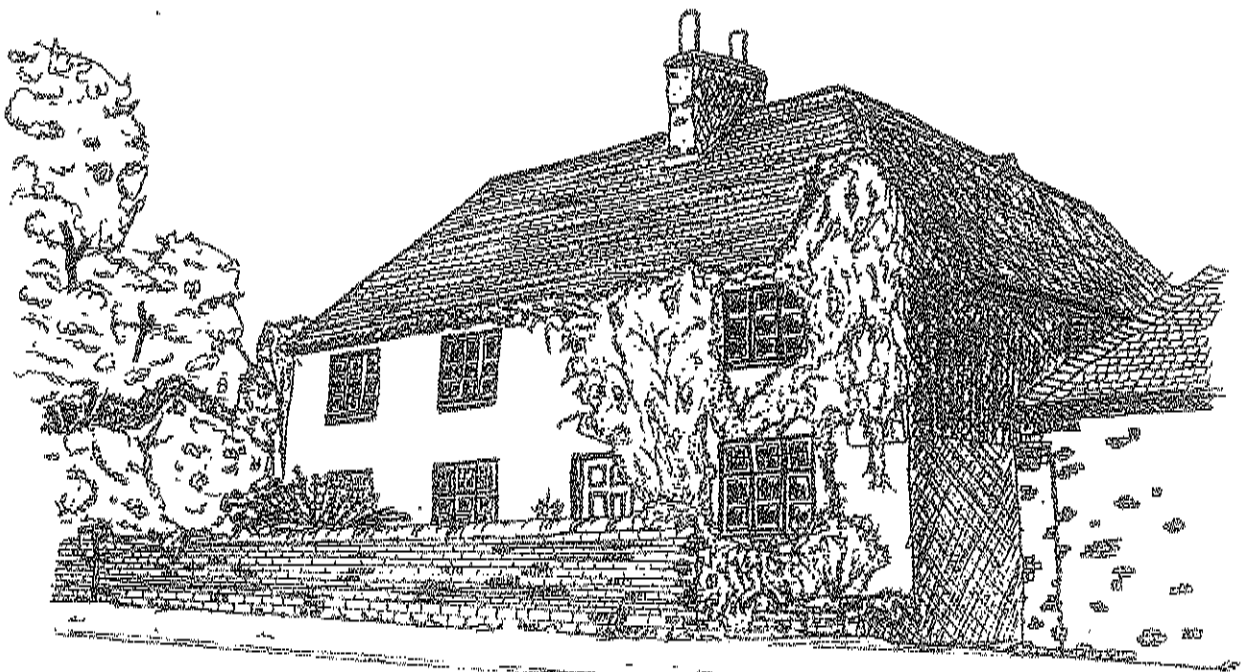
3.1.2 During the medieval period it is probable that there were several 'Ends' or isolated settlements, including Worth End, Kitchen End, Higham Bury and Faldo. Some of these survived into the eighteenth century, but they are now deserted or have shrunk to single farmsteads. 'Kitchen End', for example, may derive from the Old English personal name *Cuca*, but now has no buildings earlier than the seventeenth century.

3.1.3 Woburn Abbey, Dunstable Priory, and the Knights Hospitallers were major landholders in Pulloxhill until the sixteenth century. Woburn Abbey is recorded as owning 120 sheep and 40 lambs here in 1297 and the monks also held a watermill on the River Flit at Greenfield.

3.1.4 At the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s their lands were taken by the crown and leased out to gentry who were probably not resident in the parish. These estates were consolidated by the Duke of Kent, who was the chief landowner in Pulloxhill in 1736, and descended from him to the de Grey family, who held them into the present century.

3.1.5 Mention of *Townys End* in 1506 suggests that the form of the village we see today had been developing near the church during the late medieval period. The main thoroughfare occupies a prominent ridge of land in the centre of the parish, and contains several sixteenth and seventeenth century domestic buildings, many of which stand on the western side of the High Street.

- 3.1.6 By 1700 there appear to have been at least four farms here, now represented by Pond Farmhouse, Town Farmhouse, College Farmhouse and Rectory Farmhouse. Sporadic infilling and encroachment, for example, The Old Smithy on the east side of High Street, has continued ever since.
- 3.1.7 In 1809 parliamentary enclosure swept away Pulloxhill's surviving medieval open fields, the largest of which were West Field, North Field and Pulloxhill Field, and replaced them with an improved system of mixed farming.
- 3.1.8 As the nineteenth century proceeded, the parish boundaries became established in their modern form, after long disputes with Higham Gobion and Flitton, the latter containing most of the hamlet of Greenfield.
- 3.1.9. One of the greatest changes in the village at this time must have been the demolition of most of the old church of St James, which had been ruinous for a considerable period, and its virtual reconstruction in 1845-6 by JT Wing.
- 3.1.10 In 1911 the population of Pulloxhill had fallen to 419, having reached 625 in 1871. It has now risen again to 740, as twentieth century development has gradually infilled the remaining gaps between the older houses in this pleasant village.



Pond Farm

3.2 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

The Parish Church

- 3.2.1 Perhaps the most historic building remaining within the Pulloxhill Conservation Area is the church of St James. Consecrated in 1219 it was substantially rebuilt in 1845-6 by J.T. Wing and is of coursed ironstone rubble with ashlar dressings under a clay tile roof and with stone coping to the gables.

Farms

- 3.2.2 Situated on the north-western side of the village green, Pond Farmhouse is probably a late 18th century reworking of a 17th century building. It is built of red brick with some cement render over a timber framed structure to the north and rear elevations and has a hipped clay tile roof. It is separated by a narrow access from its outbuildings to the north-east which are situated around a yard. Although originally of similar materials to the farmhouse itself with the addition of weatherboarding, they have recently undergone alteration and conversion to residential use. The village pond, from which the farm takes its name, was filled in 1970 because it was being used to dump rubbish.
- 3.2.3 Rectory Farmhouse, adjoining the church, is a timber framed structure, mainly encased in colour washed rough cast render, dating from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. It has been reworked and extended during the present century and is now a domestic residence only.
- 3.2.4 Forming a group at the north eastern end of the High Street are the buildings of Town Farm and College Farm.
- 3.2.5 Town Farmhouse is 17th and 18th century and of timber framed construction with the ground floor cased in a colourwashed brickskin and the first floor with pebbledash render. The roofs are of clay tiles.
- 3.2.6 College Farmhouse is possibly 16th century with 17th and 19th century extensions and alterations and is also timber framed. Its adjoining farm buildings to the north have recently been converted to residential use.

Houses

- 3.2.7 The earliest surviving houses in the conservation area date from the 17th and 18th centuries. No. 5 High Street (north-west side) is a 17th century timber framed house with roughcast render over and a thatched roof. Nos. 20 (The Old Smithy) and 22 (Chestnut Cottage), High Street are of similar but later construction, dating from about 1700 and are both colour washed.

- 3.2.8 The Grange on Church Road is contemporary with these two cottages but is on a grander scale altogether. It is a well proportioned house of red brick construction with chequer work patterning in purple headers on the north-eastern elevation and a hipped clay tile roof.

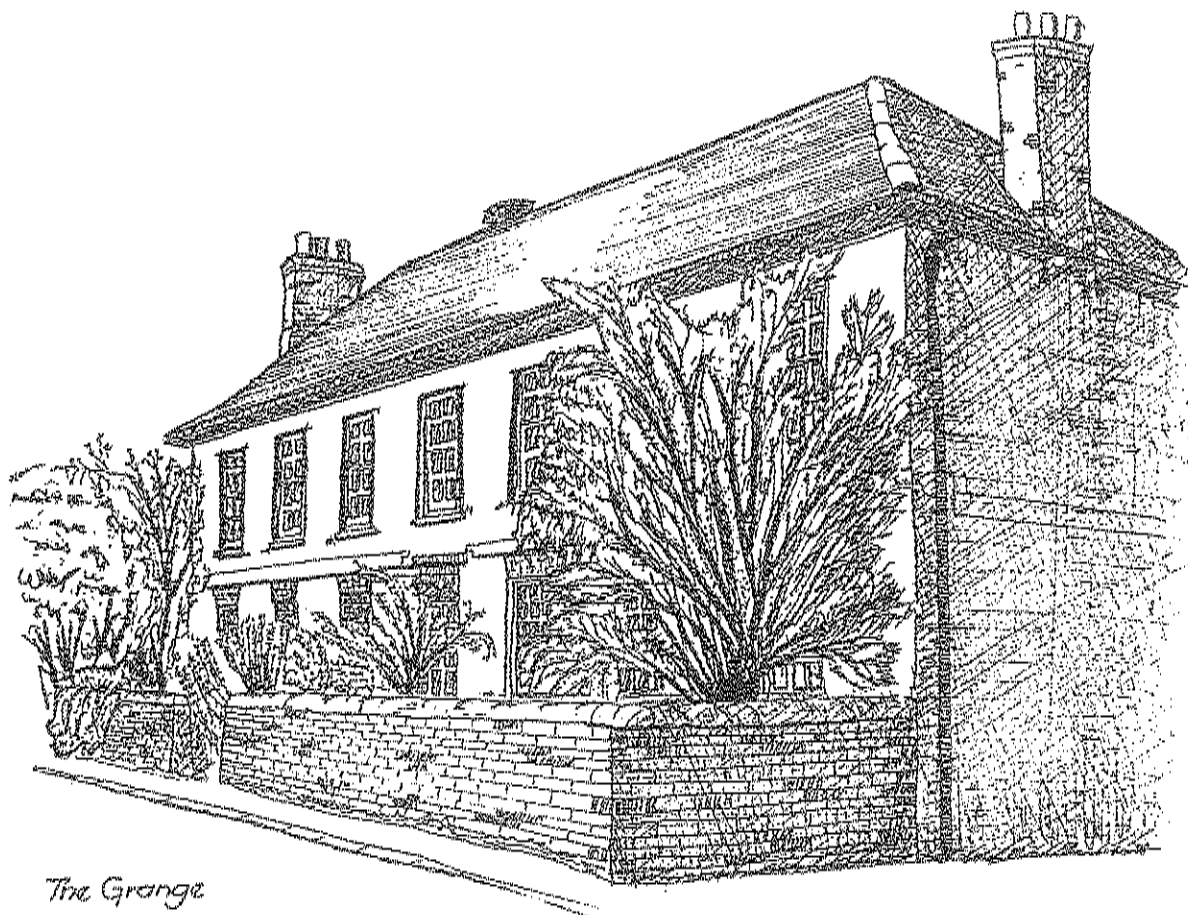
3.2.9 Other Building Types

Of the two public houses within the Pulloxhill Conservation Area, the Cross Keys is the earlier building dating from the 17th century, being a timber framed structure with colour washed plaster render under a tile roof. The building is of one storey with attics and is set back from the road with a low-walled forecourt. The Chequers, which is of colour washed brick with a clay tile roof, is later 18th century and of two storeys. It is positioned adjoining the road edge.

4. THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE PULLOXHILL CONSERVATION AREA

4.1 A Walk Through the Conservation Area

- 4.1.1. Walking through the Pulloxhill Conservation Area from south-west to north-east, the first buildings of note are a group of white painted attached houses on the south-western side of Church Road, nos. 34-38. The middle of the three, no. 36, is set at right angles adjoining the road edge and no. 38 is set back from the road behind a scrolled metal fence.
- 4.1.2 Church Road itself is a no-through road, which leads further south for a short distance beyond the conservation area boundary with mainly modern houses on either side and giving access to a number of farms farther on.
- 4.1.3 Diagonally opposite nos. 34-38 Church Road, and partially screened by a brick wall, is the timber framed Rectory Farm, and adjoining it to the north-east is the church of St James. A public footpath runs south-easterly through the churchyard giving panoramic views across open countryside beyond the conservation area.
- 4.1.4 Opposite the churchyard, on the corner with Tyburn Lane is The Grange. Listed Grade II and dating from about 1700, it is arguably the grandest residence within the conservation area.



The Grange

- 4.1.5 Beyond the junction with Tyburn Lane, The Chequers public house comes into view on the north-eastern side of the road. The building itself adjoins the road edge which is banked in this part of the village. The adjoining garden area to the north-east of the building is also banked and enclosed by a thick hedge.

- 4.1.6 A little farther along the High Street are several traditional houses and cottages grouped near the junction with Greenfield Road. Of these, no. 5 High Street, set with its gable wall adjoining the pavement edge, is listed.

- 4.1.7 Beyond this point, the village street scene widens taking in the village green, a grassy triangle which slopes away to the south-east.

- 4.1.8 Standing on the north-western side of the green is the listed Pond Farmhouse and its outbuildings, which continue along the pavement edge to the north-east.

- 4.1.9 A footpath runs along the south-eastern side of the green, past the listed Old Smithy Cottage and linking with Orchard Road.

- 4.1.10 Orchard Road is effectively a back road which curves round as far as Yew Tree Cottage. At this point a footpath leads north-west through an alley back to the junction of the High Street and Greenfield Road. The road itself takes a dog leg turn to join back up with Church Road adjoining The Chequers public house.
- 4.1.11 Beyond the Green and Chestnut Cottage on the southern side of the road is the Cross Keys public house diagonally opposite, and adjoining it to the north east is another listed house, Vine Cottage. Built of red brick with a tiled roof, the facade of the dwelling is heavily vegetated. A footpath between the two properties runs north-westerly across the village cricket ground. The next building of note on this side of the High Street is No. 19, which although not listed is an interesting red brick dwelling with a plain tile roof. At the north eastern end of the conservation area beyond two small terraces of modern houses, is a pleasant group of listed buildings comprising Town Farmhouse and College Farmhouse and its converted outbuildings.



4.2 What Gives the Conservation Area Its Distinctive Character and Appearance

- 4.2.1 The 'character' and 'appearance' of a place derive from a number of different elements, some more noticeable than others. 'Appearance' obviously refers to 'how a place looks', but 'character' results from such things as the kinds of activities carried out in a place and the mix of residential, farming and other uses. Certain aspects of Pulloxhill's character and appearance have been referred to in section 4.1 above. Other factors which contribute to this are discussed in more detail below:

Historic and Traditional Buildings

- 4.2.2 Most of the historic buildings in Pulloxhill are modest in size of 1½ or 2 storeys, based on rectangular plans with simple forms. Their detailing is in the type of construction and materials used, and is generally quite simple.
- 4.2.3 The range of materials found on the older buildings within the conservation area has been described in 3.2 above and reflects the different periods of building and alteration.
- 4.2.4 The predominant materials used are combinations of red brick and clay tile and also roughcast render, usually painted white or cream, and thatch. There is also some painted brickwork and slate roofing.

The Siting and Spacing of Buildings

- 4.2.5 Buildings within the conservation area are generally situated at fairly regular intervals with few open spaces between, although one or two have large gardens adjoining to the side. Many of them are also set close to the road, and are generally also positioned parallel to it. A couple, however, are set at right angles.

Enclosure

- 4.2.6 Within the conservation area there is an overall sense of enclosure, which is accentuated by the combination of buildings positioned close to the road, the absence of sections of footpath on one or other side of the road and the limited width of the road itself. This is reinforced by walls, hedges and trees.

Farming

- 4.2.7 The only working farm remaining in this now mainly residential village is Town Farm. Situated at the north eastern end of the conservation area together with College Farm on the opposite corner of Barton Road, these buildings form an important group.

4.3 The Pulloxhill Conservation Area Map

- 4.3.1 The most notable features which contribute to the character and appearance of the Pulloxhill Conservation Area, including its buildings, walls, hedges, open spaces and views, as discussed above, are identified on the Pulloxhill Conservation Area Map at the back of this document.

5.0 PRESERVATION, ENHANCEMENT AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Preservation

- 5.1.1. Preservation involves maintaining and taking care of the features referred to above and supporting the uses which give the conservation area its distinctive character and appearance.

5.2 Enhancement

5.2.1 New development should not only preserve, but also enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Areas where improvements could be made are as follows:

(i) Junction of Church Road/Greenfield Road/High Street

The cottage on the western corner of this junction (no. 1 Greenfield Road) appears to be derelict and the garden is overgrown. General renovation of the property would improve the appearance of the conservation area in this location.

(ii) Post Office Stores/Garage, High Street

Some landscaping along the frontage would improve the general appearance of these properties and this part of the conservation area overall.

(iii) No. 19 High Street

The repair and reinstatement of the brick boundary wall would improve the appearance of the property and this part of the conservation area.

(iv) Garage Premises, Orchard Road

This is a non-conforming use within a predominantly residential area. The site may have potential, therefore for limited redevelopment by a sensitively designed scheme.

5.3 New Development

The Challenge of Good Design

5.3.1 Much of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area derives from its vernacular buildings. These are of local materials, the qualities and limitations of which have helped to produce building traditions and craftsmanship. For example, the length of timbers available and the use of thatch (usually long wheat straw) results in narrow plans and steeply pitched roofs. Window and roof details in the eaves are also influenced by the materials and types of construction used.

5.3.2 Improvements in transport and mass production methods mean that there is a huge variety of building products now available. If Pulloxhill is to retain its distinct identity therefore, new development (including alterations and extensions) must be strongly influenced by the historic buildings found there.

- 5.3.3 This does not mean that all buildings should look the same; set within a unifying framework a limited amount of variation adds interest. New development within the proposed conservation area should reflect the degree of variation found in the existing historic buildings.
- 5.3.4 Modern schemes can nevertheless be acceptable, if they are sensitively designed and respond to the architectural qualities of the area. In most cases, though a traditional design will be the most appropriate.
- 5.3.5 The siting of buildings and their relationship to other buildings within the historic settlement pattern is also important, as is the treatment of areas around and between buildings.

Overall a high standard of design in keeping with its surroundings is required.

- 5.3.6 This document seeks to describe the special architectural and historic interest of the Pulloxhill Conservation Area, "the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". New development should reflect the architectural, historic and villagescape qualities of the area, taking into account also the types of uses and activities found there.
- 5.3.7 Summarised below are the main factors which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and which provide the context for new development:

(i) Historic and Traditional Buildings

In historic and traditional buildings the following factors are important:

- the size and scale of the building, its form and proportions;
- the shape, size, spacing and arrangement of window and door openings;
- the materials used in construction, detailing and craftsmanship;
- finishes, colour and texture;
- the level of variety, and the degree of simplicity and/or decoration;
- historic interest, and local associations.

(ii) The Siting of Buildings and other Factors

The siting of buildings as well as the historic settlement pattern and other villagescape qualities, are also important contributing features within the conservation area, including the following:

- groups of buildings and the relationship between buildings;
- the setting of buildings, and hard and soft landscaping around them;

- the form and structure of the historic settlement pattern; including: the layout of streets and other routes; the orientation of plots; the density and spacing of buildings; and the types and variety of spaces in between;
- walls, fences and other boundary treatments, trees and other planting.
- important spaces, and significant views;
- focal points, including prominent buildings;
- enclosure and the boundaries of the settlement;
- different types of areas within the conservation area; and the setting of the conservation area.

(iii) Uses and activities within the Conservation Area

The types of uses and activities found within the conservation area and the relative importance of these is also a significant contributing factor.

Sites for New Development

- 5.3.8 Potential sites for new building within the conservation area are limited as the regular spacing of existing buildings, with some spaces in between, has left few if any infill sites which could be developed sympathetically. The existing open spaces provide variety and rare views out of the village and should be retained. In-depth development between Tyburn Lane and Greenfield Road has weakened the original linear historic settlement pattern of the village. The grassland areas to the north and south of the village should further be kept free of new building.

Formulating Proposals - Information Required with Planning Applications

- 5.3.9 Before formulating development proposals, applicants should consult with the District Council. The Council may provide a development brief for a site setting out the design expectations. Planning applications should include appropriate drawings (and other types of illustration where useful or necessary), showing the proposals in context. The District Council may also ask for a short written statement setting out the design principle of the proposals.
- 5.3.10 The particular qualities and constraints of individual sites where development is proposed should also be given careful consideration.

6.0 PLANNING CONTROLS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

6.1 Conservation Area Consent

6.1.1 Conservation Area Consent is generally required from the District Council for the following:

- the demolition of any building with a volume of over 115 cubic metres within the conservation area;
- the demolition of all walls, fences and gates 2 metres high or over, or 1 metre high or over when adjoining a highway or public right of way, within the conservation area.

6.2 Trees within the Conservation Area

6.2.1 Six weeks prior written notice must also be given to the District Council of any intended topping, lopping or felling of trees within the conservation area.

6.3 Repairs Notices

6.3.1 The basic necessary repair of unoccupied buildings within a conservation area can further be secured by powers available to the District and County Councils.

6.4 Planning Permission

6.4.1 Development undertaken within a conservation area is more likely to require planning permission. For example, there are tighter controls on satellite antennae and the extension and alteration of dwellings. Permission is also required for the cladding of houses and for the erection or alteration of most buildings within the grounds of dwellings.

6.4.2 Planning applications for development which the District Council consider likely to affect the character and appearance of a conservation area are required to be advertised and made available for public inspection. All comments received are taken into account in determining applications and it is a statutory requirement that any decisions made must have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

6.4.3 The District Council can also take up powers to bring minor alterations under planning control, but only following public consultation and with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Environment.

6.5 Listed Buildings

- 6.5.1 There are several listed buildings within the Pulloxhill Conservation Area. Listed buildings are exempt from Conservation Area Consent, but require Listed Building Consent for any works (alteration, extension or demolition) which will affect the character or appearance of the building, internally or externally, or any structure within its grounds erected before 1948, including boundary walls. Planning controls also cover small works and new development within the grounds of listed buildings. Special care requires to be taken to preserve their setting.

The Listed Buildings within the proposed Pulloxhill Conservation Area are:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Grade</u>
College Farmhouse, Barton Road	II
Rectory Farmhouse, Church Road	II
St James' Church, Church Road	II*
The Grange, Church Road	II
The Chequers Public House, Church Road	II
The Old Smithy, 20 High Street	II
Chestnut Cottage, 22 High Street	II
5 High Street	II
Pond Farmhouse, 7 High Street	II
The Cross Keys Public House, 13 High Street	II
Vine Cottage, 17 High Street	II
Town Farmhouse, High Street	II

6.6 The Local Planning Authority

The sections above give an introduction to the relevant Planning, Conservation Area and Listed Building controls. This however is not a comprehensive account and further advice on what requires permission or consent should be sought from the District Council.

7.0 POLICIES AND ADVICE FOR PULLOXHILL CONSERVATION AREA

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Changes within a Conservation Area may enhance or detract from its character or appearance. Proposals for development are therefore assessed on their individual merits, but also against a framework of policies which aim to protect and enhance the qualities and identity of a particular place. Within the Pulloxhill Conservation Area the following policies will apply in cases where planning controls exist. Advice is also offered for situations beyond their scope.

7.2

Policies

7.2.1

The policies set out below elaborate on those contained within the Structure Plan and Local Plan which refer to Conservation Areas and other related matters, such as the protection of the open countryside and infill development.

1. The District Council will resist the demolition of listed and other important buildings, walls and fences within the Conservation Area and will actively encourage their maintenance. It will not be accepted that a building or other structure is wholly beyond economic repair without evidence that reasonable efforts have been made to continue its existing use or find a suitable alternative, including offering it for sale.
2. Where acceptable, consent for demolition will only be given when there is an approved scheme for the redevelopment of the site.
3. Outline applications will not normally be acceptable - see paragraph 5.3.9 above.
4. New development should respect the historic settlement pattern of the Conservation Area and should reflect the layout of existing streets and other routes, and the positioning and spacing of buildings.
5. The visual qualities of the street scene and other areas, and the sense of enclosure or openness should be respected.
6. Whilst some variety is important, new development should retain the particular identity of the proposed Conservation Area.
7. New development should reflect the qualities of existing local historic buildings, their size, scale, form of simplicity or detailing, materials and colour.
8. New development (including boundary features such as walls) and landscaping, should be of a high standard of design.
9. The external walls of buildings should nearly always be left as existing. Cladding in stonework or mock timber framing, for example, is unacceptable.
10. Important trees, hedges and other planting should be retained, wherever possible. Tree Preservation Orders will be made where considered necessary.

11. Important open spaces will be safeguarded by resisting their development and respect for the variety of spaces within the Conservation Area and the interest which these create will be encouraged.
12. Important views within, into and out of the Conservation Area will be safeguarded by resisting development where appropriate.
13. New footpaths, pavements and driveways should be of appropriate forms and materials. Kerbing should normally be in granite setts.
14. Advertisements will be carefully controlled.
15. The positioning of street signs, street furniture and overhead wires will be controlled, where possible.
16. Important archaeological sites and historic landscape features will be protected, however, where consent is granted, conditions will be applied requiring the provision of access for the purpose of recording in advance of and during development.
17. Opportunities to achieve improvements in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be actively sought.



7.3

Advice

1. Existing details and features on traditional buildings should be maintained, and their repair or replacement where necessary, should match the original as closely as possible, with opportunities taken to rectify unsympathetic alterations.

2. The retention of existing traditional materials such as natural slate and hand made clay tiles will be encouraged. Roofing materials should be in keeping with the character of the area. Modern sympathetic substitutes should not be used.
3. The shape, size, materials and glazing patterns of traditional windows and doors should be retained. Many of the so-called 'period' components marketed today are inappropriate in both new and period properties. This is especially so of 'bulls-eye' glass, 'Regency' canopies and pseudo-Georgian front doors. In period (and traditionally designed new) buildings, windows should be painted timber, usually white, rather than stained or of aluminium or uPVC.
4. Brickwork and stonework should rarely be painted, for visual and practical reasons, and existing pointing should be left as it is, unless showing marked signs of deterioration or damage. New pointing should be carried out using mortar of a mix and finish to match the original.

8.0 GRANT AID AND LOCAL ACTION

8.1 Grants

- 8.1.1 The District Council operates an Historic Buildings Grant Aid Scheme through which it can give discretionary grants towards the cost of repairs carried out to historic buildings and other important features within the conservation area. Housing Renovation Grants may also be available from the District Council's Environmental Health Section to assist with making a building habitable.
- 8.1.2 English Heritage also give grants for repairs carried out to outstanding historic buildings (usually Grade I and II*) and to 'Buildings at Risk' within conservation areas.

8.2 Local Action

- 8.2.1 Everyone living or working within a conservation area should be aware of the need to preserve or enhance its character, and opportunities available for doing so. Buildings, walls and other structures should be well maintained. The care of many of the important details within the conservation area is in the control of local residents and property owners, individually and collectively. The Parish Council, can also raise money for use on maintaining parish facilities, including land with public access and open spaces.

9.0 FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

- 9.1 Planning legislation and Government advice on Conservation Areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 (PPG 15), which for the most part supercedes DOE Circular 8/87.

- 9.2 The approved Bedfordshire County Structure Plan (1992) and the adopted Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (1993) together form the development plan relevant to Pulloxhill. These documents set out the strategic and local planning policies for the area respectively.
- 9.3 Applications for planning permission and Conservation Area Consent or Listed Building Consent are dealt with by the District Council. For advice on what requires permission or consent and how to make an application, contact the Department of Environmental Services (Planning Division) at Mid Beds District Council, 23 London Road, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 8ER, Tel: 01767 313137.
- 9.4 Specialist advice on historic building conservation is also available from the Heritage Group of the County Planning Department. The County Council has produced a series of leaflets giving advice on building conservation. These include:

Historic Buildings and the Law

Doors and Windows in Traditional Buildings

Traditional Farm Buildings Today

Contact the Planning Department at Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK41 9AP, Tel: (01234 363222).

The Pulloxhill Conservation Area Map follows.

