

**Skillington Conservation Area Appraisal  
and Management Plan**  
**Designated 1990**  
**Review June 2016**  
**Draft for Consultation**

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## **1.0 Character Appraisal**

### **1.2 Background**

The conservation area at Skillington was designated in 1990. The purpose of this document is to define the special interest of the conservation area and assess the action needed to protect and enhance the special qualities of the conservation area. The conservation area appraisal and management plan is split into three sections:

- **Section 1:** Conservation area appraisal, which details any proposed changes or extensions as part of the 2016 review.
- **Section 2:** Management plan, which puts forward proposals for preservation and enhancement.
- **Section 3:** Action plan to address those issues drawn out in the appraisal and management plan.

The appraisal and management plan should be read alongside the accompanying map in the appendix.

### **1.3 Location and Context**

Skillington is a small village approximately 4 miles from Great Ponton and 8 miles from Grantham, to the east of the Viking Way. It is located within the Kesteven Uplands landscape character area which extends southwards towards Stamford and eastwards towards Bourne. The undulating landscape is characterised by a high proportion of historic woodland and fields enclosed by hedgerows. Villages are built of predominantly limestone, with pantile roofs in the north part of the uplands and Collywestern roofs to the south. Cringle (meaning winding) Brook passes through the village, and can be seen running underneath the Bridge at Colsterworth Road.

## **2.0 Planning Policy Context**

### **2.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. It is the duty of local authorities to designate such areas in order to ensure that their unique character is preserved and enhanced. Designation grants control over demolition of unlisted buildings, strengthens controls over minor development and also gives special protection to trees. It is the quality and interest of an area as a whole, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a conservation area.

Section 69(2) of the Act imposes a duty on Local Authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time, Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts

of their area that are designated as conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

## **2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

Government policy on the conservation of the historic environment is contained within National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is the guiding principal of the document and the protection and enhancement of the historic environment is embedded within this approach. Sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future (5) and the introduction of the NPPF breaks down this definition into three dimensions; economic, social and environmental. Within the environmental dimension sustainable development needs to contribute to 'protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment' (7). According to the NPPF, a conservation area is a 'designated heritage asset' and has been defined in Annex 2 as

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)'. Great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and any harm or loss requires clear and convincing justification (132).

In developing this strategy, the following needs to be taken into account (131):

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local distinctiveness
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place

## **2.3 Local Development Framework, Core Strategy**

The South Kesteven District Council Core strategy was adopted in July 2010 and is one of the most important parts of the Local Development Framework. It sets out the key principles for development management and the conservation of the historic environment is detailed within policy EN1: The protection and enhancement of the character of the district. Development must be appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape. The development must also contribute to its conservation, enhancement and restoration.

### 3.0 Summary of Special Interest

- The village has long standing associations with a number of large landowners including The Buckminster Estate (The Earl of Dysart and later the Tollemache family), the Easton Estate (The Chomonley family) and the Turners of Stoke Rochford.
- Strong rural and agricultural character with a number of working farms.
- Village Greens, areas of open space and the Paddock to the south of Church Lane contributing towards a rural and open character.
- Grouping of St. James's Church (Grade I), The Abbey with its moat to the rear, outbuildings and pigeoncote (Grade II) making a strong contribution.
- Development radiating from 'The Square', which forms the focal point of the conservation area. However, the early settlement of the village is located to the west of the conservation area, surrounding the Parish Church and the Abbey.
- Visual harmony across the conservation area contributed by a material palette of coursed or rubble limestone walling and pantile roofs, although the buildings do not necessarily display a uniform 'estate style' that is typical of many other villages within the district.
- Traditional craftsmanship embodied in original building materials and architectural features.

### 4.0 Historical development

The village of Skillington has early origins and can be traced back to the Domesday book. It is believed that the name Skillington is derived from Sceilas village, Sciella being a Viking name. *Tun* (later spelt *ton*) was a common ending meaning an enclosed piece of land. *Ing* and *Inga* means belonging to.

It is quite possible that Skillington had earlier Roman origins as at nearby Stoke Rochford Hall are the remains of a Roman bathhouse and villa. In the field to the north of Back Lane, now the site of Fish Well Close are earthworks dating to the medieval period. The site was investigated during a watching brief in the 1990's which revealed a stone and brick well, believed to be 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier, a medieval stone wall and a mix of pottery dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Church of St. James has 'long and short' stone quoining typical of the Anglo Saxon period.

The village has long standing associations with a number of landowners including The Buckminster Estate (The Earl of Dysart and later the Tollemache family), The Easton Estate (The Chomonley family) and the Turners of Stoke Rochford. The Dysart and Chomonley family were duel lords of the Manor and many of the estates assets and belongings were termed 'blue', which is also an indication of the political allegiance of the Dysart family at the time. Their association within the village can still be seen today, with 'Blue Town' consisting of housing built for their workers and the local pub which is called 'The Blue Horse Inn', located on Lords Lane.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was notable growth in the village, probably due to the need to provide services and community buildings for the large number of agricultural workers. In 1842 the school was built (enlarged in 1894) and not long after, the Methodist Chapel was built in 1847. Additionally, a new vicarage was built on Park Lane by Christopher Turner of Stoke Rochford Hall, known as Skillington House.

There is a strong history of farming in the village. From the 1901 census returns, out of 354 inhabitants, 55 were listed as farm labourers or ploughboys, 19 were Waggoner's or grooms and 4 were shepherds. Every single person had employment in the farming industry or in village support occupations.

The nearby Saltby airfield is located to the north west of the village. This was used during the Second World War by the Royal Air Force and the United States Army Air Force as well as being occupied by bomber command. The airfield is now in use by the local gliding club.

The village has a strong and vibrant community and is mostly occupied by residents who commute to the nearby towns of Grantham, Bourne and Stamford.

## **5.0 Character and Appearance**

### **5.1 Spatial Character and Townscape Quality**

The character of the conservation area is defined by curvilinear development that radiates from a central square opposite the Methodist Chapel. Within the village core, there is a high density of development with terraces and cottages lining the narrow winding streets and built close to the footway. Buildings are mainly built of limestone, probably quarried locally in pits such as at Great Ponton. However, as you exit the village core along the lanes of Sproxton Road, Grantham Road and Church Street the character becomes more rural, with a lower density of development with detached houses, cottages and farms located in medium sized plots being the defining character.

#### *Grantham Road*

At Grantham Road there is a cohesive and enclosed character with The Manor House, Tyler's Farm and Duffins Farm making a significant contribution, and the two gable ends of Tyler's Farm and Far House creating a pinch point in the road. These are constructed of coursed limestone and rubble, with clay pantile roofs and have a good retention of historic features such as windows and doors. To the north of the road, the character becomes more open as the edge of the conservation area is approached with views out towards the surrounding countryside and the Stoke Rochford Estate.

#### *Church Lane*

At the eastern end of Church Lane there is a cohesive character with development being fairly tightly packed comprising limestone cottages and terraces on its northern side and the long range of Shepherds Barn on its southern side. At its western end, the

character becomes more verdant with The paddock to the south of Church Lane together with the mature trees that line the road (some of which have TPO status)making a contribution. There are also attractive views across the paddock which is an important area of open space.

### *The Green*

As the green is approached from Church Street there is an open character with a low density of development. The small cluster of buildings surrounding the green, the Church of St. James and village cross form the focus of views in a north westerly direction. The village cross dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and is Grade II listed. It is situated on a modern concrete foundation, but there are the remains of two stone steps that date to the 13th century. The village cross was formerly located in the village square. From the Green, which is one of the highest points in the village, are attractive views towards the surrounding Countryside and distant tree belts of Buckminster Park to the south. To the north of Park Lane the open character prevails with medium to large sized houses such as The Elms and Skillington House making a strong contribution. As you continue along Park Lane the road becomes unmetalled, with open fields either side or attractive views in many directions.



*Fig.1 The Paddock, located to the south of Church Lane, an important area of open space within the village centre.*

### *Back Lane*

Back lane has a fragmented character and comprises a mix of a modern housing developments at Fish Well Close, in fill detached housing and barn conversions. The development at Fish Well Close dates to the 1990s and prior to this the site was occupied by paddocks and allotments. On the south side of the road, there is an open character with views towards the surrounding countryside and little development other than a small stable and paddock. Within the fields to the south are visible remains of ridge and furrow that are an important historic landscape feature that contributes towards the setting of the conservation area. At the junction with Buckminster Lane, Rock House provides a visual full stop and marks the southern boundary of the conservation area.

### *Buckminster Lane*

As the historic core is approached at Buckminster Lane there is a cohesive character with a mix of farm buildings, stone cottages and terraces. There is also the farm business, Claxton Sprayer which has recently gained planning permission for conversion to residential. On the west side of the road, is the former Smithy, which was sympathetically converted in 2001.



## *The Square*

The square has an open character, with a central green, studded with trees which are enclosed by houses, mostly of which are unlisted but as a group make a strong contribution to the village core. These include the former post office, built in approximately 1850, The Blue Horse Inn, The Methodist Chapel and Nos. 1-4 The Square. The square acts as a focal point

within the conservation area and there is a visual cohesiveness contributed by a limited material palette and the arrangement of buildings side by side directly addressing the green. It is unfortunate that many of the windows within the properties on The Square have been replaced with unsympathetic PVCu, which has compromised its historic character.



*Fig.2 The Blue Horse Inn. One of a number of important buildings of local significance that enclose The Square and contribute towards a cohesive character.*



*Fig.3 Timber panel doors at Blue Town*

## *Lords Lane*

The narrow and winding 'Lords Lane' has an enclosed character. Blue Town terrace makes a notable contribution and it is pleasing to see some of the properties with original doors and windows in place; however many of them have been replaced with unsympathetic PVCu. The traditional character of this peaceful back lane has been compromised somewhat through the addition of modern garages, outbuildings and inappropriate boundary treatments; however

the limestone boundary walls that enclose the street make a positive contribution. As the Lane meets the junction at Colsterworth Road, the curving arrangement of No.6 Lords Lane that follows the natural contours up the hill makes an important contribution.

## *Colsterworth Road*

Colsterworth Road has a linear character. The relatively plain and lengthy elevations of the Barn at Tyler Farm, together with the narrow arrangement of the road help to create this character and Manor Farm features prominently. On the north side, buildings comprise farms, outbuildings and detached properties located on a slight rise, and on the south side buildings comprise terraces and detached properties with a higher density of development. At the eastern end of the road a more rural character prevails with the natural water course of Cringle Brook and open fields contributing towards this character. The water pump located adjacent to the Old School is an important item of street furniture that is a reminder of the earlier history of the village.

## 5.2 Architecture and Building Materials



*Fig.4 Skillington House – one of the few houses in the village that displays finer, more classical detailing. The building was built in 1850/51 by patron C.Turnor Esq, aided by £200 from Queen Anne's Bounty.*

sash windows. It is unfortunate that sliding sashes have been replaced with modern PVCu.

There are limited examples of higher status housing, reflective of the presiding agricultural character of the village, with the only exceptions



*Fig.6 View from outside the conservation area at Grantham Road with the Church Spire and tree groups featuring strongly.*

character as well as providing visual continuity.

The traditional buildings mainly date from the 17th-19th centuries and are generally domestic in scale, consisting of two storeys, and are usually built of coursed limestone rubble in a vernacular style with pantile roofs, although blue slate is also fairly common. Within 'Blue Town', there is a defined rhythm in the estate terraces, with cambered brick arches and 19<sup>th</sup> century timber panel doors. The Methodist Church is very severe in its execution and has a more recent porch with castellations. Other common details reflective of vernacular styles include timber lintels, stone mullioned windows and sliding



*Fig.5 'Stone House' and 'Green View', Church Street which are typical of Skillington, with coursed limestone walling, pantile roof and traditional timber sash windows (Grade II).*

being The Abbey and Skillington House. The appearance of some buildings has been affected by the installation of inappropriate uPVC windows and doors. This is most

prominent on the terraced cottages.

Boundary walls are a significant feature of the conservation area and make an important contribution to its enclosed



### 5.3 Key Views

From outside the boundary are a number of key views, particularly from further afield on the approach into the conservation area from Grantham Road, where the Parish Church spire features prominently.

Views on the approach from Sproxton Road are also important with the grouping of historic buildings around the church including the Grade II listed pigeoncote making an attractive contribution.

Views on the approach into the conservation area across the open fields to the south of Cringle Brook are also important. From Back Lane, there are attractive views in a south westerly direction across the open countryside with some areas of visible ridge and furrow.



*Fig.7 View across the field towards The Abbey and its outbuildings, The Pigeoncote and The Church of St. James from Sproxton Road.*

The distant tree belts of the Stoke Rochford Estate such as Cringle and Houghton's plantation contribute towards the setting of the conservation area and provide attractive views towards the wider landscape visible from vantage points along Back and Middle Lane.



*Fig.8 The Green – an important area of open space that contributes to the setting of those buildings that enclose it.*

From within the conservation area, there are views across the paddock to the south of Church Lane, views towards the Church of St. James from the The Green with the village cross and views in both directions along the streets of Colsterworth Road and Church Lane. As The Square is approached from Colsterworth Road there are views across the various central village Greens towards the Methodist Chapel. Hopwells planting forms the focus of views in an easterly direction along Back Lane. AT

## 5.4 Contribution of Trees, Hedgerows and Open Space

There are a group of trees comprising of beech, sycamore, horse chestnut and lime at the junction of Back Lane and Middle Street, known locally as Hopwells planting that make a significant contribution to the conservation area. The group of trees are marked on the 1905 OS map of the village and it is likely that they may be at least 100 years of age. The trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The distant tree belts of the



*Fig.9 Hopwells Planting, all the trees have a TPO status.*

Buckminster Estate make a contribution to the setting of the conservation area as do those at the rear of the Abbey. The greens at 'The Square' and the front of St. James's Church are important areas of open space and contribute towards the setting of those buildings that look out onto them. The paddock to the south of Church Street, the field to the south of Colsterworth Road, beside Cringle Brook and the field between Summer Croft and Stone Lodge, Church Street are all important areas of open space and contribute towards the rural and agricultural character of the conservation area. The open fields to the south of back Lane are not within the boundary of the conservation area but contribute towards its wider setting and are of archaeological importance as within these fields are visible ridge and furrow earthworks. Within the conservation area are a number of informal greens located at the junction of roads, which confer an

open character.

## 5.5 Floorscape, Street Furniture and other features

There are limited examples of floorscape and street furniture within the conservation area, and these mainly occur within 'The Square' and include the cast iron signpost outside the Cross Swords Inn and the K6 telephone box and pillared post-box outside the post office. However, the water pump at The Old School is also an attractive historic feature, which is a reminder of the early history of the village. Many of the roads are unmettled which contributes towards a rural character.

## 6.0 Key Historic Buildings

### 6.1 Listed Buildings

A listed building is one that is included on the government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from South Kesteven District Council before any works of alteration (to the interior or exterior), extension or demolition can be carried out. List descriptions are available online via the Heritage Gateway website

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>. There are 13 listed buildings within

Skillington conservation area. All of which are Grade II listed apart from the Grade I listed Church of St. James. The buildings of most interest include The Abbey (formerly Skillington Manor House), located to the west of The Parish Church, which dates to 1637, constructed of limestone with mullion windows. To the south of the house are stables and a pigeoncote; surrounding the site to the west is a moat. Together with the Church they form an attractive grouping and views of which can be obtained upon entrance to the conservation area at Sproxton Road. St. James's Church has Anglo Saxon origins (evident in the long and short quoining) and the arcade, chancel and south porch are 13<sup>th</sup> century. To the south east of the church is a 13<sup>th</sup> century village cross which was originally sited opposite the Methodist Church. All the remaining listed buildings are farms, terraces or cottages. Manor Farmhouse is an attractive example; it was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was originally part of the Easton Estate. The Old Rectory, displays more polite architectural detailing. It was built in circa 1850 with an ashlar front and has an attractive doorway flanked by Doric pilasters with frieze above.

## 6.2 Positive Unlisted Buildings

In addition to listed buildings, the conservation area contains a number of unlisted buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

These are identified on the townscape appraisal map as 'positive unlisted buildings' and follows advice provided by Historic England and NPPF, both of which stress the importance of identifying and protecting such buildings. Examples include, The Old Post Office, The Square, constructed of buff brick with red brick banding, Church Farm, Church Street which has an inset shield on its front which is the Buckminster estate shield, the Methodist Chapel, The Square and Jackson's House and Barn which has an excellent retention of historic features despite not being listed.



*Fig 10 and 11. The Old Post Office, The Square, to the left is a historic photograph, date unknown (source: Palmer, T A history of Skillington) and to the right an up to date photograph, taken in 2016. It is unfortunate that the sliding sash windows with margins are no longer in existence however the majority of the building remains intact. The post office ceased trading in 1994.*



Far House is a very attractive example and together with the other farm and outbuildings at Grantham makes a significant contribution to the traditional agricultural character of the conservation area. Other examples include Rock House, located at the junction of Buckminster Lane and Back Lane, The Old School House, Colsterworth Road that was built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and closed in the 1970s and The Two Pubs in the village, The Blue Horse Inn and The Cross Swords Inn.



*Fig.12 Far Farm, constructed of coursed rubble stone, pantile roof, dormer windows and an attractive boundary*



*Fig.13 Church Farm, located opposite The Green, Church Street. It has the coat of arms of the Easton Estate above the door on the central gable.*

### 6.3 Locally Listed Buildings

Currently there are no locally listed buildings in the Skillington conservation area. Buildings identified on the conservation area map as 'positive unlisted buildings' are recommended for consideration for inclusion on any future Local List of buildings of architectural or historic interest.

### 7.0 Archaeology

Lincolnshire County Council holds the historic environment record (HER) for the County that contains records on historic buildings, sites, structures and below and above ground archaeology. Currently, in 2016, there are 15 records on the HER within the boundary of Skillington Conservation Area. However, there are a small number of additional records just outside the boundary that are of interest. The majority of the records relate to listed buildings, however there are some records relating to earthwork features such as ridge and furrow in the fields to the north of The Abbey and ridge and furrow to the west of Back Lane. Although these records are not within the boundary of the conservation area, they are an important historic landscape features which form part of the wider setting of the conservation area. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the boundary of the conservation area. There are no other archaeological features of significance within the HER.

## **8.0 Changes since Designation**

Since designation in 1990 there have been some small scale changes to the conservation area. The most significant being the development of housing at Fish Well Close to the north side of Back Lane. Although these are not in keeping with the presiding historic layout of the street they are sympathetic to the conservation area in terms of materials and design and have also incorporated the retention and conversion of existing historic barns as part of the scheme. Any other changes to the conservation area have mainly related to the conversion of existing buildings, and small scale rear and side extensions.

## **9.0 Boundary Review**

As part of the review process local authorities Historic England guidance states that local authorities should assess the boundary of the conservation area. As part of the 2016 review no changes to the conservation area boundary have been proposed.

**Please note that no appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.**

## **10.0 Management Plan**

### **10.1 Introduction**

In addition to a definition of special interest, local authorities have a duty to formulate and publish proposals on the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas as specified in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act:71).

The aim of the management plan is to put in place management measures to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and enhanced.

As part of the management proposals, the conservation area appraisal and management plan will need to be reviewed periodically and updated or modified where appropriate.

### **11.0 Effects of Designation**

The national legislative framework for guiding development in conservation areas is provided by the Planning (listed building and conservation areas Act) 1990. The main effects of conservation area designation are:

- Conservation area consent is required to demolish a building in a conservation area. It is a criminal offence to demolish a building without first obtaining consent.
- Six weeks written notice is required prior to any work being carried out to uproot, fell, lop or top (the removal of the crown and natural structure) trees in a conservation area, not already protected by Tree Preservation Orders. Small trees which are less than 75mm in diameter, fruit trees and bushes are exempt.
- Applicants will need to demonstrate that any development proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a conservation area. Extra publicity is given on planning applications affecting the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- The general permitted development order 2015 (GPDO 2015) requires planning applications for certain types of development that do not require planning applications elsewhere and are 'permitted development'.
- Local planning authorities can further restrict permitted development rights on dwellings where the development fronts a public area through Article 4 (2) Direction.
- Permitted Development Rights of non residential properties can be restricted using Article 4 (1) Directions.

### **12.0 Article 4 Directions**

Article 4 (1) and (2) directions can be introduced by a local authority to protect important features of a heritage asset that are at threat from incremental erosion. These directions withdraw permitted development rights of the GPDO 2015.



Article 4(1) directions can be used to withdraw permitted development rights on any type of building or land, whether or not fronting onto highway, waterways or open space. Article 4 (2) directions relate to dwelling houses, buildings and structures that front onto a highway, waterway or open space.

The Article 4 directions are confirmed once it is advertised locally (except for certain types that can be made immediately), site notices are displayed and notice is served to residents.

Whereas before April 2010 the Secretary of State confirmed article 4 directions, it is now for local planning authorities to confirm all article 4 directions (except those made by the Secretary of State) in the light of local consultation.

The Secretary of State will only exercise their powers in relation to article 4 directions if there are very clear reasons why intervention at this level is necessary.

### **13.0 Protection for Trees**

Many trees are protected by 'Tree Preservation Orders' (TPO) and consent is required to prune or fell them. In conservation areas, if not already protected by a TPO, 6 weeks written notice is required for any works involving lopping or felling a tree greater than 75mm in diameter and 1 m above ground level.

### **14.0 Monitoring Condition**

A survey is carried out from time to time at both a national and local level to assess the condition of significant heritage assets. This survey includes the identification of buildings that have fallen into disuse, dereliction or disrepair, commonly known as 'Buildings at Risk'. This survey provides a useful means of monitoring many significant historic buildings within conservation areas and elsewhere and indicates when the action may be required to halt or reverse deterioration.

The local survey covers only Grade II and significant local interest buildings at risk. The Council's At Risk Register is not yet available on-line but it is intended that it will be following the next survey. The national Heritage at Risk Register covers Grade I and II\* buildings at risk and is available through Historic England available at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/> .

The Church of St. James is on the national heritage at risk register, and its condition is particularly bad as there are problems with rising damp and the below-ground drainage system needs to be investigated. It is possible that part of the nave requires re-roofing, and the north aisle and south transept/chapel and porch roof coverings require repair.

The condition of buildings will be monitored and appropriate action instigated where necessary. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 gives the local authority powers to protect significant buildings through the following measures:

### *14.1 Urgent Works Notice*

If the condition of a historic building is at imminent risk, the Act enables the Local Planning Authority to carry out urgent works for the preservation of listed buildings following notice to the owner. These powers can be used in respect of unoccupied parts of listed or unlisted buildings in conservation areas. In the case of the latter, this can only be employed by agreement of the Secretary of State, advised by Historic England. The powers are used to address emergency repairs to ensure the building is weather tight and safe from collapse.

### *14.2 Repairs Notice*

If the Local planning Authority considers that a listed building is not being properly preserved it may serve a repairs notice on the owner. The notice specifies the works, which the authority considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building and can only be served on statutory listed buildings.

### *14.3 Section 215 Notice*

Local authorities have the power to serve a section 215 notice on the owner (or occupier) of any land or building whose condition is adversely affecting the amenity of the area. The notice requires the person responsible to clean up the site or building, or the authority may carry out works and reclaim the costs. This can be particularly affective at addresses amenity issues within conservation areas.

### *14.4 Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)*

This affords local authorities with the power to compulsory purchase land or buildings that are required to secure development and are normally used as part of a wider regeneration scheme.

## **15.0 Enforcement**

Unauthorised works and breaches of planning control can cumulatively harm the quality of both the built environment and surrounding spaces within a conservation area. An obvious example of this is unauthorised works to a listed building. A listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest and is enshrined in law under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listed Building Consent is required for any works of alteration to a listed building and it is criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works. The removal of traditional timber windows and doors, for example, and their replacement with UPVC or poor modern imitations, can be detrimental to the buildings intrinsic special interest. It is not only alterations to listed buildings that can damage the character and appearance of conservation areas. The unauthorised demolition of buildings or detrimental alterations to unlisted buildings can all erode the special character of conservation area. The use of non-approved

materials, for example, can be particularly harmful (e.g. modern cement rendering). It is important, therefore, that the Council investigates breaches of planning law within conservation areas, as this can help preserve the quality of the historic environment. Anyone can report suspected planning breach by contacting the Council's Enforcement Team. The District Council will follow up reports of unauthorized work and this may lead to enforcement action being instigated.

## **16.0 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

### **16.1 Strengths**

- Good proportion of open space including formal and informal village greens.
- General condition of the conservation area is good.
- Strong agricultural and rural character contributed by a number of working farms within the village.
- Previous landowners throughout the history of the village including The Buckminster Estate (The Earl of Dysart and later the Tollemache family), The Easton estate (The Chomonley family) and the Turners of Stoke Rochford.
- Surrounding rural landscape of the Kesteven Uplands contributing towards the setting of the conservation area and key views.
- Cohesive character contributed by use of common material palette and traditional building techniques.
- The conservation area has a strong focal point of the village square.

### **16.2 Weaknesses**

- Unauthorised satellite dishes on front elevations detract from the overall character of the conservation area.
- Overhead cables detract from the setting and character of the village.
- The standard design lighting columns detract from the rural context of the conservation area.
- Loss of character arising from inappropriate alterations (windows, doors, rendering and boundary treatments). This is particularly noticeable within 'The Square'



*Fig.14 Plethora of overhead cables at Lords Lane detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

### 16.3 Opportunities

- There are many buildings in the conservation area; some of which are recognized as being 'positive unlisted buildings' that have level of significance that also contributes towards local distinctiveness and identity. In the absence of a local list many of these buildings are unrecognized for the special contribution they make not only to the conservation area but to the community and locality as a whole.
- Maintenance schemes in the public realm including:
  - The removal of modern lighting columns and replacement with traditional street lighting.
  - Removal of overhead cables and replacement of underground cables
- Improved access to design guidance, and advice on maintenance and repair for home owners, developers, property owners and agents.
- To consider using article 4 directions to restrict permitted development rights and address the loss of character arising from inappropriate alterations.
- Work in partnership with South Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire District Council such as highways to ensure that maintenance works are undertaken in a way that does not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.



*Fig. 15 UPVC windows at Back Row have undermined the historic character of the terrace.*

- space.
- Loss of character through the use of insensitive highways schemes including street clutter, poor quality paving and obtrusive road markings.
- Declining condition of St. James's Church. Currently the Church is on the Historic England 'at risk' register and is the most significant building in the conservation area.

### 16.4 Threats

- Further erosion of character through loss of fabric and original architectural details.
- Further erosion of character and setting through inappropriate new developments, particularly on the fringes of the conservation area boundary.
- Incremental erosion of boundary features including walls, hedgerows and railings.
- Erosion of special character of the area through loss of important trees or open

## 17.0 Action Plan

Proposed Measure	Issue Addressed	Action Required
1- To develop a list of buildings and monuments that have a significant local heritage interest for Skillington	Undesignated heritage assets that make a positive contribution towards local distinctiveness are not afforded the recognition and protection that is proportionate to their significance.	The Council to work together with the parish council, local residents, The Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire and the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record to nominate and develop a 'local heritage list' of buildings and monuments that are valued as distinctive elements of the historic environment of Skillington.
2- Ensure that any highway works respect the conservation area.	The use of inappropriate materials, design and location of street signage and street lighting can have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area.	Liaise with highway authority prior to the installation of street signage and modern lighting to ensure that works are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation area. Guidance to be sought from Lincolnshire County Council's 'Streetscape Design manual'.
3- Removal of overhead cables and replacement of underground cables.	The uses of intrusive overhead cables have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.	The Council will encourage the appropriate agencies to undertake schemes to ensure that overhead cables are replaced with underground cables.
4- Ensure that heritage assets within the conservation area are maintained to a high standard.	Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and make a valued contribution to Skillington and need to be conserved and enhanced for now and future generations.	The Council expects that owners and occupiers of heritage assets will respect and care for them and will, therefore, encourage appropriate repairs or restoration.

Proposed Measure	Issue Addressed	Action Required
<p>5- Any proposed changes must have regard to the historic context in terms of scale, alignment, height, form, style, design and materials.</p> <p>The impact of change upon other important elements including the existing street pattern, trees, views and open spaces is also an important material consideration.</p> <p>Proposals should seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.</p> <p>Alterations or extensions to existing buildings should be carried out in natural materials appropriate to the location, should be subordinate to the main building and reflect its character in terms of scale, appearance and detailing.</p>	<p>The negative effect on the character of the conservation area through the use of inappropriate materials and design.</p> <p>Development within a designated conservation area should be of a high standard of design and should preserve or enhance the traditional character of the area.</p>	<p>The Council will strive to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area through the development control process and enforcement powers in accordance with its statutory obligations.</p>

Proposed Measure	Issue Addressed	Action Required
6- To ensure that alterations to the conservation area (windows, doors, chimneys, rendering and boundary treatments) seek to preserve and enhance its character.	Unsympathetic features contribute to incremental erosion of character within the conservation area.	Improved access to design guidance (e.g. street furniture) and advice on maintenance and repair for home owners, developers, property owners and agents. Consider the introduction of article (4) directions to restrict permitted development rights. Article 4 directions will result in planning permission being required for changes to roofs, vent pipes, boundary walls, gate piers, doors and windows.
7- Ensure that new development seeks to retain and enhance original plot and historic field boundaries.	Subdivision of plots for residential infill development.	Consideration will be given to the contribution that plots and historic field boundaries make to the character and appearance of the conservation area when dealing with development proposals.
8- Any proposals for development will have consideration to the above and below archaeological potential of the conservation area.	Inclusion of a site on the HER means it is a material consideration in the planning system.	Guidance/consultation should be sought from Lincolnshire Heritage Trust for any proposals that affect the site or setting of a record on the HER. This may also incur a requirement prior to a decision for a field evaluation or historic building survey where there is substantial demolition or alteration to a heritage asset.
9- All historic floorscape features to be retained.	Historic street furniture and floorscape contribute towards the local distinctiveness of and are at risk from inappropriate development and maintenance works.	Ensure that development proposals and maintenance works take into account the contribution that historic street furniture and floorscape make towards the conservation area. If the opportunity arose, to investigate, better reveal and enhance any historic floorscape that has been identified in the appraisal.



Proposed Measure	Issue Addressed	Action Required
10-To monitor the condition of heritage assets in the conservation area.	Heritage assets that are at threat from deterioration in their structural condition or low occupancy levels.	<p>Heritage assets that are unoccupied or not in active use may be deemed 'at risk' and consideration must be given to their inclusion on the local authority 'at risk' register, or Historic England's 'at risk' register, where appropriate.</p> <p>The Church of St. James (Grade I) is on the Heritage at Risk register. It's condition is to be monitored and the conservation team to offer advice and support to the diocese where appropriate.</p>
11-Chimneys are an important feature which should be retained.	Removal of chimneys that make a positive contribution harms the significance of the conservation area.	The local planning authority to continue to use its enforcement powers in accordance with its statutory obligations to address unauthorised works to chimneys.
12-Remove unauthorised satellite/TV antenna.	Satellite/TV antennas are visually intrusive and create a cluttered appearance within the streetscene.	Develop an enforcement strategy to address unauthorised works.
13-Preserve and enhance important areas of open space.	Loss of open space through infill development.	Consideration will be given to the contribution that important areas of open space make to the character and appearance of the conservation area when dealing with development proposals.



Proposed Measure	Issue Addressed	Action Required
<p>14-Preserve and enhance important trees and tree groups including distant tree belts.</p>	<p>Loss of trees that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to the contribution that individual trees and tree groups make to the character and appearance of the conservation area (including setting) when dealing with development proposals.</p> <p>Encourage replanting of trees and positive tree management where appropriate, eg, pollarding.</p>
<p>15-Preserve and enhance existing hedgerows and boundary walls.</p>	<p>Removal of hedgerows and important boundary features.</p>	<p>Consideration will be given to the contribution that hedgerows and boundary walls make to the character and appearance of the conservation area when dealing with development proposals.</p> <p>Encourage regular maintenance and repair of existing boundary features through the production design guidance. Encourage replanting of new hedgerows.</p> <p>The Council will strive to ensure existing hedgerows and boundary walls are retained by using its enforcement powers in accordance with its statutory obligations, where there have been any planning breaches.</p>

## 18.0 References

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Palmer, T. A History of Skillington, 2003. Available at <http://www.skillingtonlife.co.uk/>

Village File, Skillington

Cryer, L.R. A History of Skillington

## 19.0 Useful Contacts

For enquiries regarding listed buildings and conservation areas please ask to speak to the Council's **Conservation Officer**:

**Telephone 01476 406080**

For enquiries relating to development proposals and planning applications please contact the Council's **Duty Planning Officer**:

**Telephone 01476 406080**

For enquiries related to the Historic Environment Record for Lincolnshire please contact the Lincolnshire **Historic Environment Record**:

Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record  
Lincolnshire County Council

Witham Park House  
Waterside South  
Lincoln LN5 7JN  
Telephone: 01522 782070  
Email: Dev\_PlanningEnquiries@lincolnshire.gov.uk

For any enquiries relating to Archaeology please contact **Heritage Trust  
Lincolnshire:**

Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
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Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9RW  
Telephone: 01529 461 499  
Email: info@lincsheritage.org

Historic England  
2nd floor  
Windsor House  
Cliftonville  
Northampton  
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01604 735460  
Email: eastmidlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

The Georgian Group  
6 Fitzroy Square  
London  
W1T 5DX  
Telephone: 020 7529 8920  
Email: office@georgiangroup.org.uk

The Victorian Society,  
1 Priory Gardens,  
London  
W4 1TT  
Telephone 020 8994 1019  
Email: admin@victoriansociety.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
37 Spital Square  
London  
E1 6DY  
Telephone 020 7377 1644  
Email: info@spab.org.uk

Ancient Monuments Society  
St Ann's Vestry Hall  
2 Church Entry  
London  
EC4V 5HB  
Telephone: 020 7236 3934  
Email: [office@ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk](mailto:office@ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk)

The Twentieth Century Society  
70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6EJ  
Telephone: 020 7250 3857  
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The War Memorials Trust  
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**Appendix:** Skillington Conservation Area Map