



South Bucks
District Council

Directorate of Planning Services

Boveney

Conservation Area



The Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene

Designated 1996

Introduction

This document focuses on Boveney, a small hamlet in Dorney Parish that was designated as a Conservation Area on 5th June 1996. The text provides a brief introduction to the concept of Conservation Areas and then offers a detailed analysis of the special architectural and historic interest that Boveney possesses. The area appraisal plan on pages 4 and 5 shows the important buildings, tree groups, open spaces and views into and out of the settlement.

Whilst the Local Plan sets out detailed policies against which development proposals will be considered, this document is a "material consideration" and will be taken into account when planning decisions are made.

Conservation Areas

Under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, local planning authorities have a duty to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which they consider should be preserved or enhanced. It is the architectural quality and historic interest of the area rather than of individual buildings, that is the prime consideration when designating a Conservation Area.

Conservation Area designation has the following effects:

- (a) the demolition of a building within a Conservation Area (regardless of whether that building is a Listed Building) will in many cases require the consent of the Local Planning Authority
- (b) there is a lower threshold of "permitted development" rights within a Conservation Area, and therefore development which might not have required planning permission outside a Conservation Area may now require planning permission
- (c) anyone proposing to cut down or carry out work to a tree in a Conservation Area must give the Local Planning Authority 6 weeks notice in writing of his/her intention to do so before actually carrying out the work. Certain trees may be exempt from this requirement.
- (d) once designation has taken place, the Council has a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area from time to time.



Figure 1. View past Boveney Court Farm into the settlement from Dorney Common

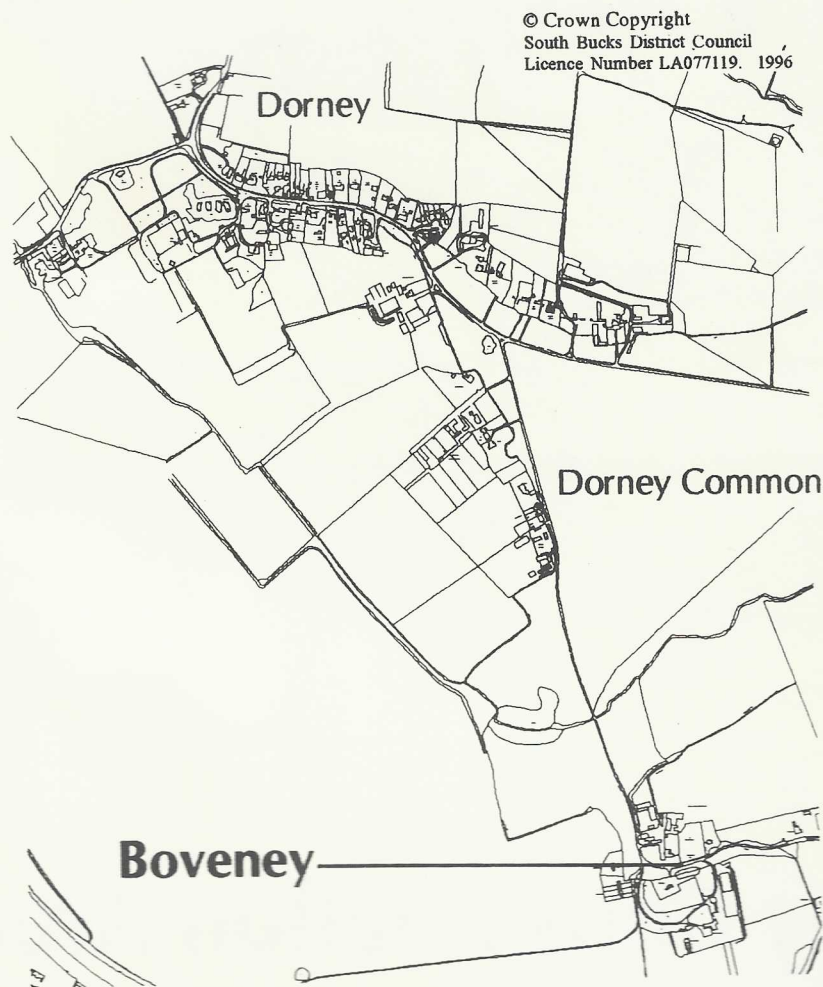
Boveney

Boveney lies to the south of Dorney Common. The settlement is located on the typically flat alluvial flood plain of the River Thames. From specific points in the settlement there are attractive views onto the adjacent pasture land with cattle roaming across Dorney Common unhindered by hedges or fences. Although Boveney contains a church, the settlement can really only be described as a hamlet. The majority of the settlement, apart from the open space along Lock Path, is owned by Eton College.

A large proportion of the buildings are listed as being of architectural importance. Boveney has a tranquil rural character, and seems to be almost untouched by the development that has spoilt other similar settlements. The District Council would therefore not want to see further development or any intensity in the use of the settlement by visitors.

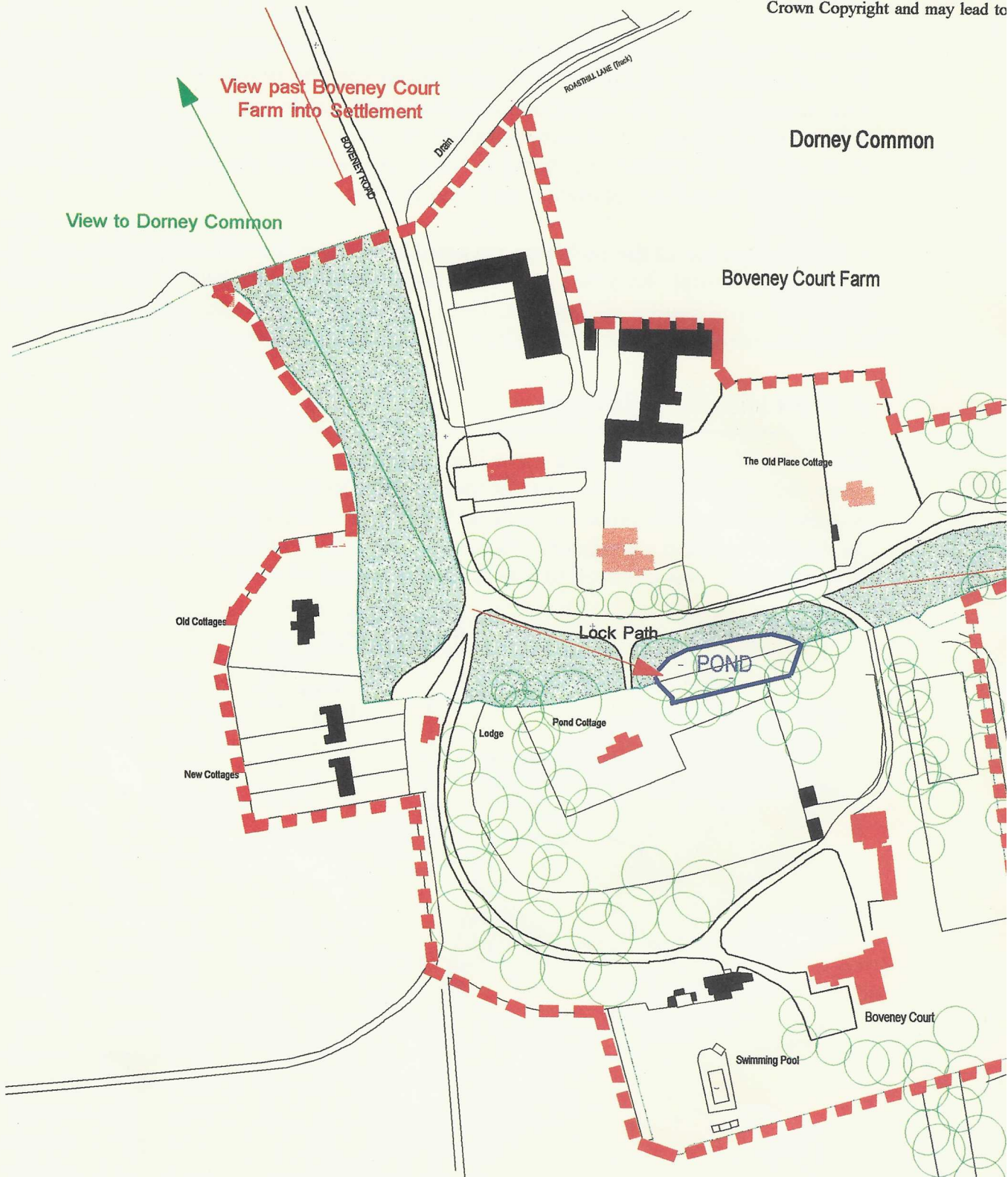
A Short History of Boveney

Recent evidence suggests that there has been a settlement at Boveney since Anglo-Saxon times. References to Boveney are to be found in the Domesday book of 1086 and the settlement is understood to have grown up around the chapel (which served local bargemen, working on the Thames) and subsequently Boveney Court. The chapel of St. Mary Magdalene dates from 1266 and was annexed to Burnham as a chapel of ease.



The Tudor buildings that remain were once part of a larger settlement. During the 16th and 17th Centuries, the hamlet was under the control of the nuns of Burnham Abbey. There are no archaeologically significant sites within the settlement, although there are significant archaeological features surrounding the settlement. It is the archeological remains to the west that point to theory that Boveney was larger than it is today. These remains, only distinguishable from aerial photographs, are thought to be the foundations of the original buildings.

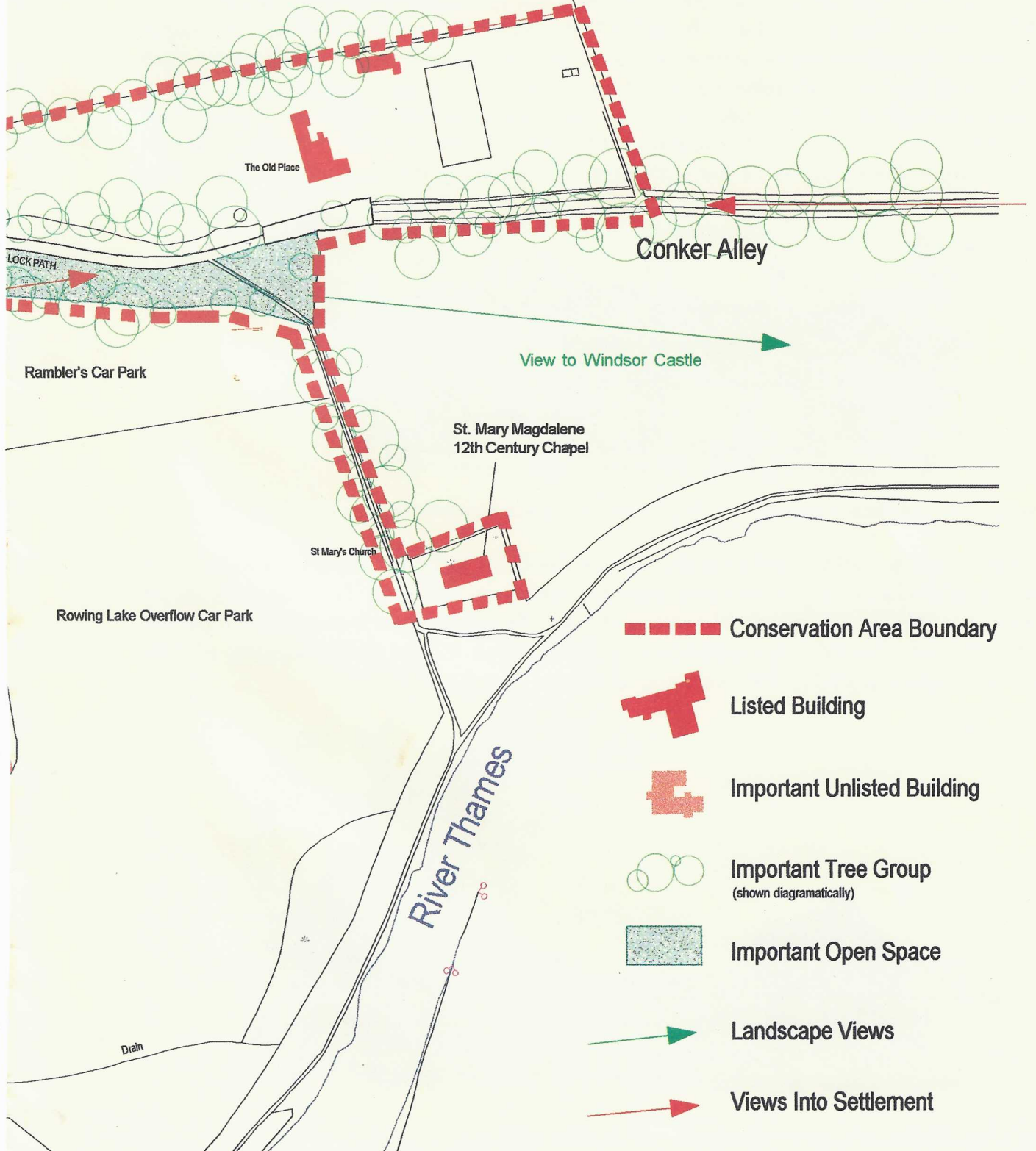
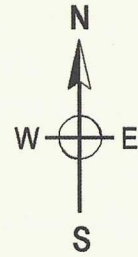
Figure 2. Boveney - Location Plan



Boveney Conservation Area

Appraisal Plan





Character Analysis

This section offers a detailed analysis of the special historic and architectural character that Boveney possesses. The analysis focuses upon the features of the settlement which merit protection because of the contribution they make to the special architectural or historic interest. The areas and features considered important are highlighted along with negative features.

Architectural Character and Coherence of Buildings

Ten of the buildings, around two thirds of the total, are listed. The vast majority of the buildings are in Tudor style dating from the 16th and 17th Century. However, the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene on the eastern fringe of the settlement which dates from the 12th Century, was built of chalk rubble and flint and is listed as a grade 1 building. The uses of the buildings have also had an influence upon the character of Boveney over the years. Uses have predominantly remained residential. However, Boveney Court Farm has had an influence upon the character of the settlement by reinforcing the rural nature of the area.



Figure 3. The Old Place dates from the 16th Century and was converted from 5 or 6 cottages.

There is a clearly defined period within which the listed buildings were constructed and therefore a similarity in construction type and building materials. This provides visual coherence within the settlement. The strong material theme that runs throughout the hamlet is the 16th and 17th Century construction type; of timber framed, brick nogging, old tile roof with projecting gables and overhanging eaves.



Figure 4. The 17th Century timber framed barns of Boveney Court Farm

Hierarchy of Space

There are important open spaces lining either side of Lock Path. These spaces and the associated trees, hedges and landscaping create a linear space through the heart of the settlement linking The Old Place at the eastern end and Boveney Court Farm in the west as well as the properties either side of the road. Because of Boveney's rural nature and the relatively small number of widely dispersed buildings, the settlement has a low density. Consequently, there is little in the way of townscape views, nevertheless, this rural, low density character is a quality that the District Council regards as being worthy of preservation.



Figure 5. Open Space along Lock Path with Pond Cottage in the background

Trees, Hedges and Landscaping

The elements that provide linkage between the buildings are the mature trees (mostly native species, including Ash, Willow and Oak) that line either side of the road. These also assist in creating a form of enclosure. Without the trees, the buildings would not be brought together to form a collective entity. Conservation Area designation provides extra protection for these important tree groups.



Figure 6. The Pond on the southern side of Lock Path provides a spatial focal point for the settlement

Much of the incidental soft and hard landscaping along Lock Path is of an informal nature (i.e. no pavements, kerbing or street furniture etc.). This is particularly true of the grass verges and the pond which seem to have remained unchanged since their creation. These elements are an important part of the character of the settlement. The pond on the southern side of Lock Path is a key element, and provides the settlement with a spatial focal point.

Relationship between the Built Environment and Landscape

A number of key landscape views onto Dorney Common and across to Windsor Castle exist from within the settlement. Another key view can be seen when one moves west along Lock Path past Pond Cottage where the road becomes Boveney Road. At this point, there is a *surprise* view out onto Dorney Common; the enclosure contained in the settlement, opens out into the expanse of the Common.

When one enters Boveney from the east of the settlement, there are important views through the tree lined avenue (locally known as conker alley) to the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene and 'The Old Place'. Large buildings including 'Boveney Court' and 'The Old Place' can be seen from the Thames footpath and Dorney Common respectively.



Figure 6. 'Conker Alley' is an important link between the settlement and the surrounding landscape

Negative Features and Other Factors

One negative feature of the settlement is the group of four semi-detached houses which are sited on the western fringe of the hamlet. The buildings are post 1940's and are out of character with the remainder of the settlement. They do however have the positive effect of providing a certain amount of enclosure and form a back drop to the western end of the settlement.



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