IVINGHOE CONSERVATION AREA

Designated 1st January 1971

Ivinghoe is a small compact village nestling at the foot of a dramatic section of the Chilterns scarp slope, which is here formed by the outliers of Pitstone and Ivinghoe Hills, culminating in Beacon Hill where there was a settlement established as early as the C6 B.C.

Not to a recognised scale
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The central focus of the village, and of the conservation area as defined, is the junction between High Street, Church Road and Station Road, enclosed on the northern and eastern sides by buildings included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Each of the roads curves slightly as it leaves the junction, limiting the views in each direction and giving a feeling of enclosure and intrigue. To the west lies the recreation ground across which there are extensive views to the agricultural land outside the village, and Cheddington Hill beyond. This open area is defined by a wide variety of fine trees along its roadside edges which, together with the trees in the churchyard seen over the high brick wall, help to set the village scene.

The buildings lining the southern side of the narrow High Street form the most continuous façade in the conservation area. There are a variety of styles but most of the buildings are C.17 or C.18 cottages, some all brick, some timber framed with brick infilling. The continuity is broken by the single storey commercial premises which detract from the street scene, and in the event of the site being redeveloped it will be necessary to ensure that any new buildings are more in keeping with the character of the area. At its western end the High Street abruptly changes direction with Yew Tree Cottage forming an important terminal building.

In Station Road buildings are restricted to one side and in some cases are set well back from the footpath and wide grass verge. The recreation ground opposite tends to accentuate the open character of this part of the area.

In direct contrast is the enclosed nature of Vicarage Road whose southern side is lined with trees which are visible over the boundary wall of the vicarage, whilst the buildings on the north have small walled front gardens which abut directly onto the road without a pavement in between.

The area defined for conservation contains many attractive properties of which six are included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, and fourteen on the Supplementary List. The predominant building materials are red and heather brick mixtures with red brown plain clay tiles, but in some cases colour washed walls and slate roofs are to be found.

Other visual features of the conservation area are the impressive cruciform shaped church which forms the focal point of the village, the ancient fire-hook and mantrap on the churchyard wall, the old pump in the High Street, the intricate character and continuously unfolding vistas given to the whole area by the curving streets; the climbing foliage on many of the buildings, and the occasional glimpses of the well preserved windmill to the south of the area and the mass of the hills in the background. Good views across to Ivinghoe can be obtained from the windmill and from Pitstone Hill.

October 2008