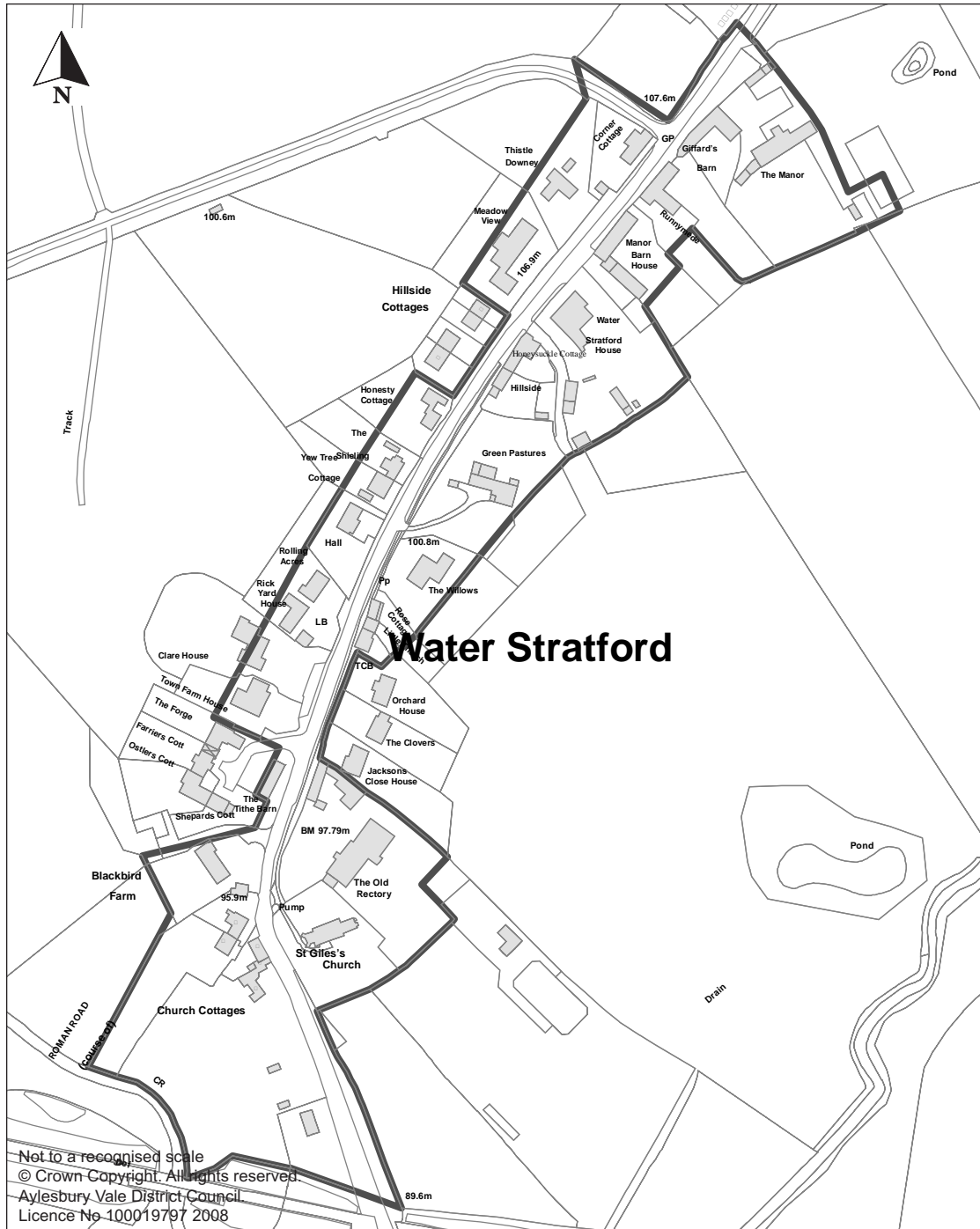


WATER STRATFORD CONSERVATION AREA

Designated 18th July 1990

The tiny village of Water Stratford is situated approximately two and a half miles west of Buckingham and one mile north of Tingewick, midway between the A.421 and A.422 trunk roads between Buckingham and Bicester and Buckingham and Brackley.



The village straggles either side of a narrow lane, just north of the River Great Ouse and a dismantled railway line which ran between Bletchley and Brackley. The road formally formed part of a Roman road connecting Akeman Street at Bicester to Watling Street at Towcester.

A characteristic feature of the village is an almost claustrophobically tight enclosure afforded along either side of the road by hedgerows, walls and trees. At the northern end of the village, fronting the Grade II listed Manor House and extending south past Cliffords Barn, Water Stratford House and the listed Honeysuckle and Hillside Cottages, the enclosure is provided by way of rubble stone walling.

South from Hillside Cottage the enclosure is provided almost continually by dense hedgerows and mature trees. The most notable gaps in this hedgerow occur just north of Town Farm where the three terraced cottages Rose Cottage, Little Thatch and the Post Office abut onto the highway and also at Church Cottages, at the southern end of the village where the road turns sharply south-east. Immediately to the north of Rose Cottage is a fine Village Water Pump.

Opposite Church Cottages, on an elevated and tree lined plot is the Grade I Listed Church of St Giles. Originally Norman, it is unlike any other Church in the area. Although largely rebuilt in the early nineteenth century, it retains its Norman south doorway with carved tympanum and chevron ornamented arch and a squat fourteenth century west tower with pyramid shaped roof. The setting of the Church is enhanced by the numerous mature trees within the churchyard.

South from the Church, the road falls quite steeply between ever higher embankment before passing under the old railway line and opening out onto a large open grassed area, formed by a meander in the River Great Ouse. Fine landscape views are afforded both into and across this area. Other landscape views are available eastward, just south of Giffards Barn and north of the Manor and also westward, from the small lane adjacent to Corner Cottage, at the northern end of the village.

February 2008