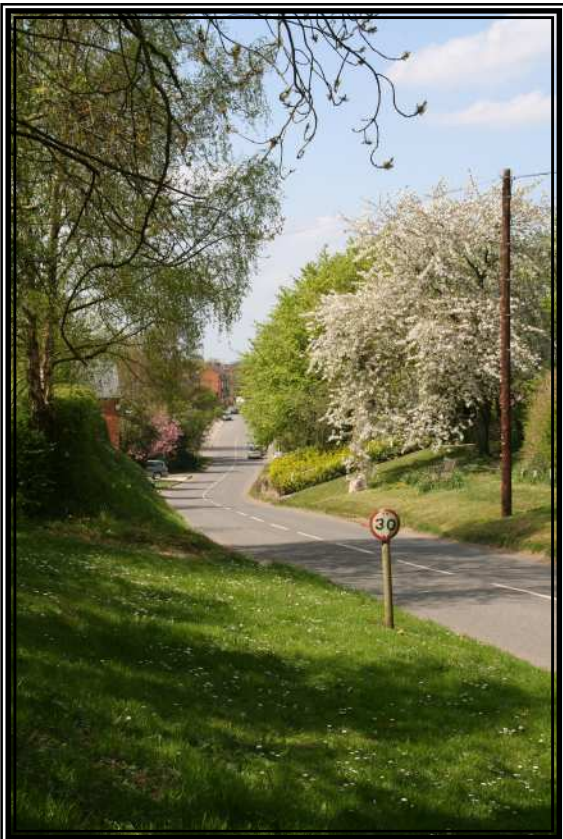
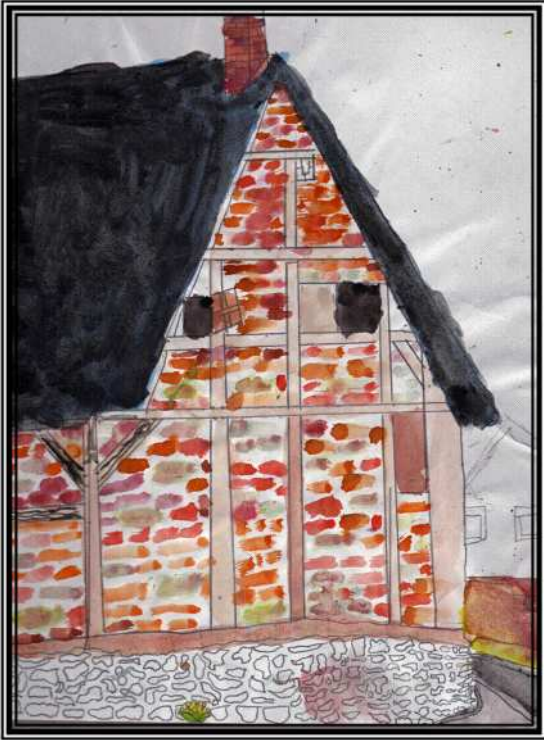


Yelvertoft Village Design Statement



Acknowledgements

This document has been developed and produced by the Yelvertoft Village Design Statement Steering Group in consultation with a wide variety of people including the Parish Council and village members.

We are grateful to the late John Wale, Yelvertoft Local History Group, who provided the historical context drawing on the Historical Notes written by E W Timmins and published in the Parish News between 1975 and 1986.

We would like to say a special thank you to the children and staff of Yelvertoft Primary School for the wonderful collection of paintings provided for the consultation meeting in March 2008. It was extremely difficult to select prize winners from the super paintings of the children's favourite places in the village. After long and hard deliberation, prizes were awarded to:

Year 1/2

1st prize	Aiden Craig age 7
Highly commended	Samuel Kendall age 6

Year 3/4

1st prize	Charlie MacSwan age 9
Highly commended	Robyn Turney age 8

Year 5/6

1st prize	Alexis Speed age 11
Highly commended	Catherine May age 11

The picture on the front cover was painted by Alexis Speed winner of the Year 5/6 competition. It's not difficult to identify his favourite building!

The photographs included in the Village Design Statement were taken by:

John Kemsley
Grant Haywood
Alan Hesketh

Cover photographs (clockwise from the top):

Cottage on Elkington Road - painting by Alexis Speed
Timber framed cottage, Elkington Road
Yelvertoft High Street
View into the village down Church Hill

Last but by no means least, thank you to everyone who has contributed ideas, views and comments about the Village Design Statement at the consultation meetings and/or via survey questionnaires.

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Introduction

Many people feel that they have no say over what development takes place in their community but a Village Design Statement offers a constructive solution to this dilemma.

Development that is not based on a good understanding of local physical, economic and social context is often unsympathetic and poorly designed, and can lead to the exclusion of particular communities. The people of Yelvertoft have a unique appreciation and understanding of their own village and the surrounding countryside and this Village Design Statement is based on this knowledge. It describes the qualities that the residents of Yelvertoft value in their village and the surrounding countryside which constitutes the unusually large civil parish.

The Village Design Statement sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in and around the village. It is based on the village character which is identified at three levels:

The village environment

The shape and nature of the village

The nature of the buildings themselves

The Village Design Statement is an advisory document produced by the village community, not by the planning authority. It will not stop change from happening but can help effect how any new buildings, extensions or renovations fit in to the village. This document is intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment.

Guidelines to influence future planning and development are included at the end of each section. They represent the conclusions agreed through consultation to guide future development of the village. The guidelines lay down a set of principles to be observed in future planning decisions. They apply to a wide range of audiences including Daventry District Council, Yelvertoft Parish Council, developers, builders, landowners and local residents.

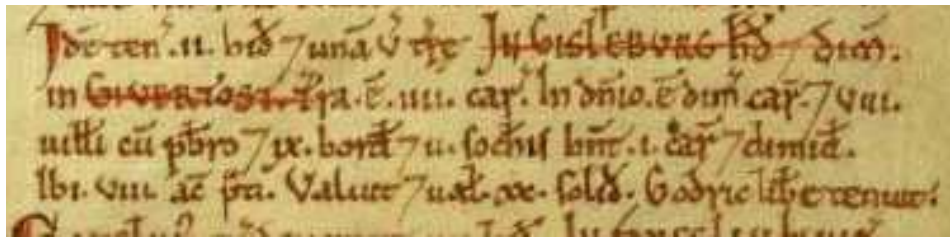
Once agreed, this document will be adopted by both Yelvertoft Parish Council and Daventry District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document.



▲ *Yelvertoft High Street and War Memorial showing the trees and hedges which are characteristic features of our village*

Yelvertoft village

▼ *Extract from Domesday Book 1086*



In Guilsborough hundred and a half. The same man holds 2 hides and 1 virgate of land in Yelvertoft. There is land for 4 ploughs. In demesne is half a plough; and 8 villans, with a priest and 9 bordars and 2 soke men, have 1½ ploughs. There are 8 acres of meadow. It was and is worth 20s. Godric held it freely.

Historical context

The ancient history of the area is lost in the mists of antiquity but there is known to have been a lot of local activity in the stone/iron ages and Roman times. The view becomes clearer in medieval times onwards and for this we are lucky to have a thorough account by E W Timmins, a local resident and well know authority on the history of Rugby and surrounding villages.

Yelvertoft occupies a pleasant position surrounded by the villages of Winwick, Elkington, Lilbourne and Crick. All of these villages, including Yelvertoft, appear in the Domesday Book (1086) so their antiquity is not in doubt. Archaeological digs near Lilbourne suggest the area was occupied during Roman and Saxon periods and possibly earlier.

The most ancient building in the village is All Saints Church. The church contains the tomb of the Reverend John Dyeson (rector 1445 — 1479). The history of the Congregational Church can be traced back almost four hundred years.

Industry is almost non-existent in Yelvertoft reflecting the legacy of previous generations when the principal income came from sheep farming and cottage industries.

Agriculture is a defining feature of the parish landscape. The village is surrounded by a network of rectangular fields enclosed by hedges with frequent hedgerow trees. Some of the fields contain ridge and furrow which is a result of medieval ploughing and is an important part of our agricultural and social history (see photo page 7).

Several mills and the development of the canal with its associated lime kilns ensured the village kept its independence. Although the mills and functional lime kilns are long gone the canal still provides a valuable amenity.

Housing developments have brought increased population to the village. However the open spaces and mature trees along the High Street together with the linear layout of the varied buildings on the south side play a significant part in ensuring the village retains its rural ambiance.

The village name derivation is in two parts. The personal name is Saxon in origin (as with many field-names around) and was probably 'Ceolfrith' evolving to Gelver and later to Yelver. The name-ending 'toft' is Danish for small settlement.

▼ *High Street circa 1900*

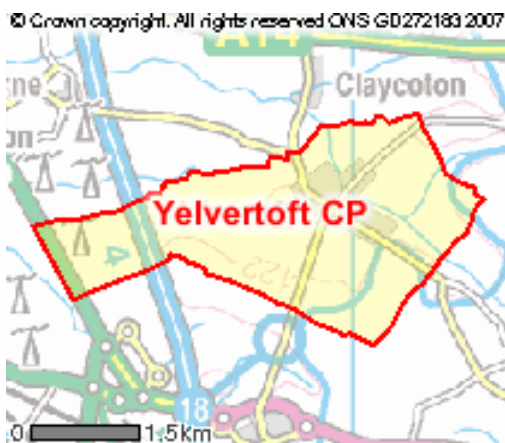




Yelvertoft today

The present-day rural village of Yelvertoft is at the heart of a large civil parish. It is a sociable, busy and thriving community.

▼ Yelvertoft Civil Parish



The population of around 764 is served by two village shops (Post Office/stores and butcher/delicatessen), a pub 'The Knightley Arms', primary school, pre school, youth club, three churches (Anglican, Congregational and Roman Catholic), doorstep milk deliveries, travelling library, mobile fishmonger and visiting fish and chips van. In addition there are a wide range of local business people who work in or from the village.

Many people find employment outside the village in nearby villages or large conurbations like Rugby, Northampton or London. The proportion of retired people living in the village is increasing.

Around a quarter of the villagers have family members living in separate

▲ *High Street 2008 - the Reading Room and pump are on the right opposite one of the village greens*

accommodation within the village and there are indications that the provision of more low cost/affordable housing would increase the number of extended families as well as attracting more young people and families to the village (guideline 21).

There are many well supported organisations, groups, clubs and societies in the village catering for sporting, intellectual, artistic, religious and social aspirations and needs. The churches, school, Reading Room and village hall are focal points for sociable fund raising events supported by many villagers.

Events and other matters of interest are communicated via the village's web-site www.yelvertoft.org.uk, the several notice boards and in the monthly Parish News.

Recently proposals for developments within the parish have led to local debate and active participation in consultations. In

▼ VDS open day March 2008





▲ *Elkington Road showing two listed buildings between terraced cottages.*

particular there is significant concern within the village about Yelvertoft Wind Farm. Over 60% of respondents to the consultation on the draft Village Design Statement in November 2008 were opposed to the proposed wind farm and 72% of residents actively supported a local protest group against this development.

Panning permission was refused in November 2008 but granted on appeal in July 2010. More recently residents are aware of the potential impact on views from the village of the growing number of approved and proposed wind turbines in the surrounding area.

What we value

- We value our historic heritage in terms of the parish landscape and natural environment, the way our village is set out, the rich diversity of architecture and the individuality of many of our buildings.
- We value our rural setting, open landscape, natural surroundings, the agriculture and other features and characteristics which make villages different from towns.
- We value the intimate scale of our village which we believe is best served by small scale, sympathetic development.
- We value the diverse social mix and community spirit in the village which we believe is best sustained by a rate of development slow enough to allow newcomers to integrate.
- We value change in a way that mixes the best of the past with the best of the present to create a sustainable future for our village.
- We value development which integrates old with new, concerns itself with identified village needs, and avoids one-way, developer-led change.

The village environment

The geographical context

Yelvertoft is situated in the north east of the Northamptonshire Uplands, an area of:

- rounded, undulating hills with long, low ridgelines
- abundant and prominent ridge and furrow
- mixed farming - open arable contrasts with pasture enclosed by hedges with frequent hedgerow trees
- wide views from the edges and across the ridge tops
- straight, wide enclosure roads, often following ridges
- little woodland but prominent coverts on higher ground

Northamptonshire Uplands, Natural England, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/50007752023769088>

The watershed is westwards to the River Avon. The drainage of the heavy-clay soil is by an extensive system of natural brooks. However the brook system also presents a flood risk.

Yelvertoft and its neighbour Crick lie just inside the north-west boundary of Northamptonshire where it adjoins Warwickshire along Watling Street (A5). The line of this ancient road once defined the border between the Kingdoms of Danelaw (Guthrum) and Wessex (Alfred the Great) during the formative years of the villages (circa 880 AD).

Since then Crick, lying closer to the natural north-south communication routes (M1 and A5), has expanded at the centre of a major trading network. In contrast Yelvertoft, more remote from major roads, has preserved its rural character.



The parish landscape as seen from Cracks Hill. The low ridgeline and strong enclosure pattern with high, wide hedgerows bounding the largely rectilinear fields with frequent mature ash and oak trees are characteristic of the Northamptonshire Uplands.

Higher land in Yelvertoft forms a shallow 'horseshoe' with an open end of lower and level land to the west. The village is subject to late frosts because of this low lying land.

The bridges on the Clay Coton, Elkington and West Haddon roads create restrictions to any major development of roads through the village. The $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long High Street forms the backbone of the village. Outside this lies the civil parish which stretches miles beyond the village boundary.

The natural environment

The natural environment can be overlooked. However, once this has been destroyed it is virtually impossible to regain its original diversity. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that the diversity of wildlife (flora and fauna) that exists today remains for future generations.

Yelvertoft has a rural setting and therefore benefits from its diversity of wildlife. Together with the surrounding farmlands, Yelvertoft provides a number of wildlife habitats:

- trees, woodland and hedgerows
- semi-improved grassland and arable
- ponds, ditches, streams and the canal
- farm buildings, old dwellings and churches
- open spaces within the village, e.g. wide road verges and residential gardens

Trees, woodland and hedgerows

Yelvertoft has a wealth of mature trees including copper beech, horse chestnut, limes, yew and holly. Although some have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs - see map pages 11-12), this does not imply that others are valued less as they provide a link to the wider countryside and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

Many of the trees are important because of why they were planted. The limes (known as the Jubilee Limes) around the village were planted for Queen Victoria's Jubilee; the majestic Wellingtonia along the High Street is associated with Molly Heath from a Yelvertoft farming family; and the copper beech along Hillmorton Lane were planted by the Women's Institute. A number of trees at the Pocket Park have been planted in memory of a relative or friend. Others have been planted by children in the village.



▲ *Trees along High Street including the majestic Wellingtonia. The memorial green is on the right.*

Yelvertoft Fieldside Covert is situated to the north east of the village. It is now owned and managed by the Woodland Trust. The covert contains many mature trees which include oak, ash, sycamore, elm, sweet chestnut, wild plum, hawthorn, elder, blackthorn and honeysuckle.

Many village gardens have trees planted within them and these in turn add to the character of the village. Small trees within Yelvertoft include rowan, cherry, holly, apple and silver birch.



▲ *View north over open countryside with Yelvertoft Fieldside Covert on higher ground to the north east.*

Hedgerows are a main feature of the parish landscape and provide a valuable corridor for wildlife in and around the village. There are a variety of low and high hedges in different states. Some are managed traditionally and mechanically and others are in need of restoration. All have their wildlife value as long as this mix is balanced and maintained or added to (guideline 7).

The hedgerows are mixed species hedges which include hawthorn, midland hawthorn, hazel, field rose, dog rose, field maple, crab apple, cherry, blackthorn and elder (guideline 8). A number of hedgerows also contain mature trees; mainly ash and oak. These are an important feature of our landscape and provide high perches for raptors and owls, and roosts and feeding areas for bats and woodpeckers (guideline 10).

Garden hedges in the village are a welcome feature as they provide cover and food source for wildlife (see photos on pages 1, 6 and 10). They also add to the green character of the village. Garden hedge species include beech, holly, yew, berberis, conifer and privet.



▲ *ridge and furrow*

Grassland and arable

The surrounding farmland includes grassland and arable. The wider countryside habitats are important as they provide predominantly undisturbed habitats which wildlife can thrive in.

The grassland areas tend to be situated close to the village and are enjoyed by the local community. Some of the grassland contains ridge and furrow which is an historic landscape feature and should be preserved (guideline 4).

There are fields containing anthills made by yellow meadow ants. These provide an important food source for green woodpeckers. They also indicate that these grasslands are unimproved. Traditionally managed, unimproved grassland supports a greater diversity of wildlife.

Arable fields also have wildlife benefits. Many of the surrounding fields contain skylarks, barn owls and kestrels; buzzards hunt across the fields for small mammals; and brown hares are also present. A pair of lapwings are also regular visitors to one of the local fields.

Ponds, ditches, streams and the canal

In and around the village there are numerous ponds ranging from smaller garden ponds to larger ones found on farmland and in the local Pocket Park. These are rich in wildlife and, together with ditches and other bodies of water, are important for sustaining varieties of plant life (guidelines 12 and 15).

Local ponds attract crested newts, frogs, and grass snakes and support many insects such as dragonflies and mayflies. They also support marginal and bankside plants such as yellow flag iris, water plantain and free-floating plants such as frogbit and watercress. Ponds, ditches and bodies of water are important feeding areas for both bats and birds such as swallows and martins.

There are two streams that flow into the village from the south and run into the brook which itself flows west through the village before eventually feeding into the River Avon. The water in these watercourses is generally of a quality to support the many wildlife species associated with bankside habitats. It is essential that they are protected from runoff from roads and adjacent agricultural activity as they are highly sensitive to pollution.



▲ *The stream at Tarrys End*

The Grand Union Canal is an important part of Yelvertoft's social heritage. Because of its special architectural and historic interest it is a designated Conservation Area. The canal provides a variety of wildlife habitats such as towpath verges, canal banks, the canal water itself, feeder streams and structures such as bridges (guideline 12).

Over 350 insects are associated with the canal habitats and they in turn support birds, bats, grass snakes and slow worms. Water voles once populated the banks of the canal but due to the presence of mink they have disappeared. It is hoped that with good bankside management and mink control water voles could make a come back. Canals are also in many cases the last stronghold for native white-clawed crayfish.

Yelvertoft Marina opened in 2010. Only time will tell how such development will impact on canal habitats and, indeed, the village itself.

Habitats within structures and buildings

Yelvertoft and the adjacent farms have many older structures that wildlife species have adopted as their habitat. Old houses, stone and brick walls, farm buildings and barns, and the churches, all offer attractive



▲ *All Saints churchyard*

habitats for mammals, birds, insects and plants. All Saints churchyard is managed as a conservation area and won the Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust Nature Conservation Churchyard of the Year Award in 2012.

Many modern buildings are less attractive to wildlife because current building methods offer fewer suitable habitats. Redevelopment and maintenance can also be detrimental because of modern building methods and harmful chemicals (guideline 11). Many of the wildlife species that use buildings and built structures cause no structural damage and can coexist without harm to human residents.



▲ *Grand Union Canal at bridge 18 (listed building) - Yelvertoft Marina is on the left*

Guidelines

The landscape

- 1 All applications for development should be accompanied by tree and landscape surveys and detailed landscape proposals.
- 2 Landscape character assessments and guidelines should be used in preparing and assessing planning applications.
- 3 Development must not adversely impact on the visual links to the countryside from within the village. All development proposals should include landscape and visual assessments demonstrating adherence to this principle.
- 4 Any application for development should be accompanied by an archaeological assessment which considers the presence and significance of features such as ridge and furrow. All features of archaeological or historic interest should be preserved.

The natural environment

- 5 All new development should seek to meet the aims and targets of Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 6 The Parish Council should identify and publish local objectives and targets for habitat and wildlife management to assist and complement the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan and these should be used to inform planning applications and decisions.
- 7 Landowners and farmers are encouraged to preserve existing hedgerows and to restore them where necessary.
- 8 Developers, farmers and landowners should look at how they can add to the existing hedgerow network and where possible include appropriate tree planting in their landscaping. Tree and hedgerow species planted should reflect native species found within the wider countryside (see page 6 for details).
- 9 Farm diversification projects should be in keeping with the local area. They should be well researched and full wildlife surveys carried out to establish habitats of value and include new habitat creation.
- 10 Where relevant, all plans for development should include mitigation plans to maintain and improve habitats for barn owls, bats, swallows, swifts and house martins which are all protected by law.
- 11 Developers, residents and builders should look to increase wildlife interest. This can be achieved in a variety of ways such as adding nest and roost boxes, using traditional materials and not using damaging chemicals.
- 12 Developers, landowners, farmers and the Canal & River Trust should not underestimate the value of wildlife habitats adjacent to natural waterways and the canal. Care must be taken to enhance these habitats and not adversely impact on the landscape.
- 13 Landowners and farmers of riparian grasslands are encouraged to manage the grasslands as wet grassland/flood meadow which will help reduce flood risk to the village.
- 14 Increasing wet grassland habitat is a biodiversity target in Northamptonshire and grant aid may be available for such projects. The creation of reed beds, wet grass lands, scrapes and oxbows which will add to the wildlife value of the riparian habitat should be encouraged. Advice is available from the Environment Agency.
- 15 Ponds should be protected and none should be filled in. New pond creation is to be encouraged but care must be taken to ensure these do not hinder drainage and increase the risk of flooding.

The shape and nature of the village



▲ *Yelvertoft High Street showing one of the mature garden hedgerows on the left and the red brick boundary walls that are a characteristic of the village.*

Development of Yelvertoft settlement pattern

In the Middle Ages the village of Yelvertoft was a rural community where a number of farmers and farm workers lived clustered together. During the Industrial Revolution access to and through the village was easier and gradually farmers moved away from the centre and workers on the canals and railways and with businesses associated with them moved to the area. In the mid twentieth century the motor car enabled people to live in the country and work in the surrounding towns.

The early developments spread along the High Street or down short farm lanes off it; probably quite sparsely with large areas of open land. Gradually these green areas were built on as the village grew.

The biggest impact on the settlement pattern took place in the latter part of the twentieth century, with more infilling, the creation of several cul-de-sacs, houses built alongside the farm lanes and an area devoted to council housing.

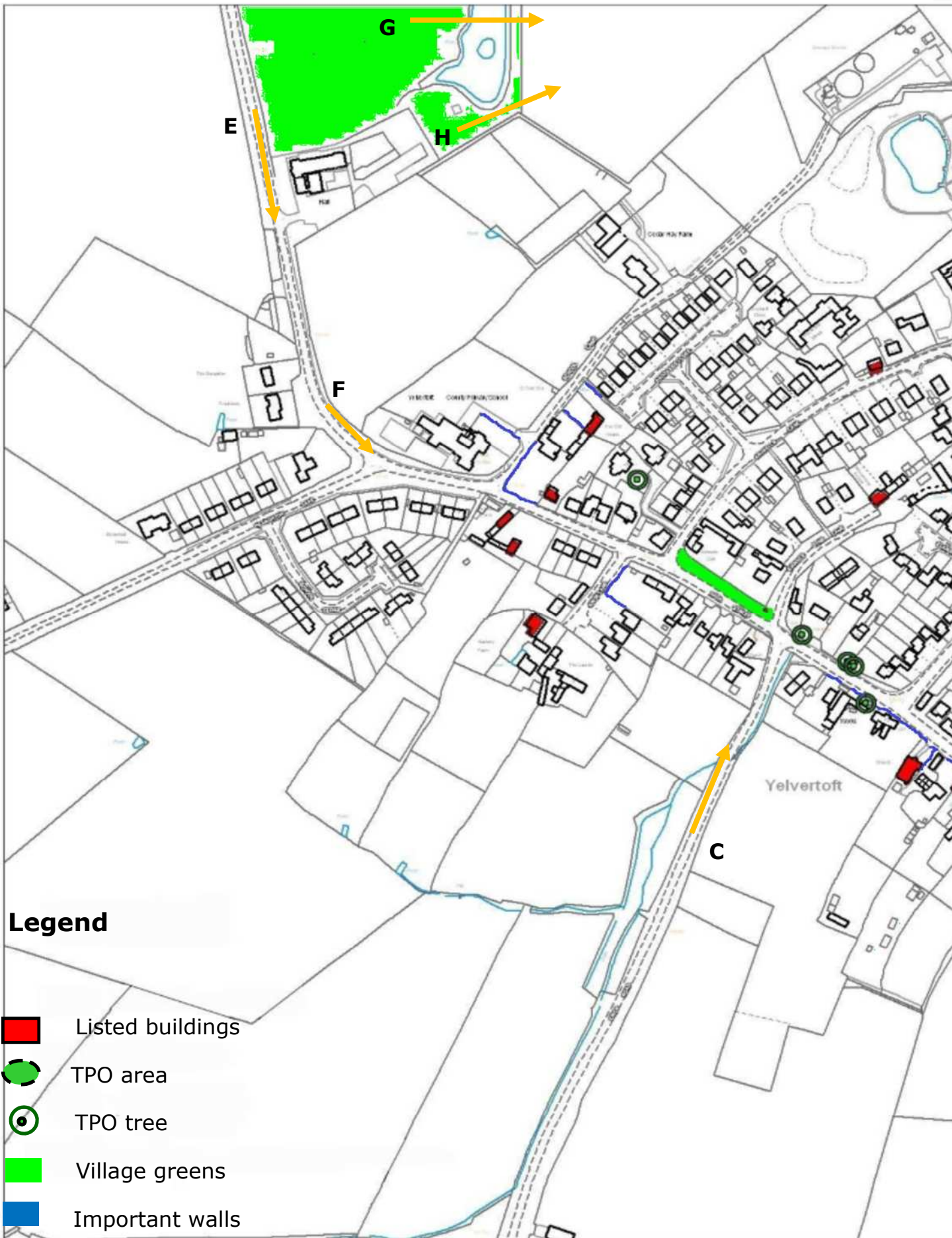
In the main Yelvertoft has a linear settlement pattern stretching east to west from the church to the village hall. In

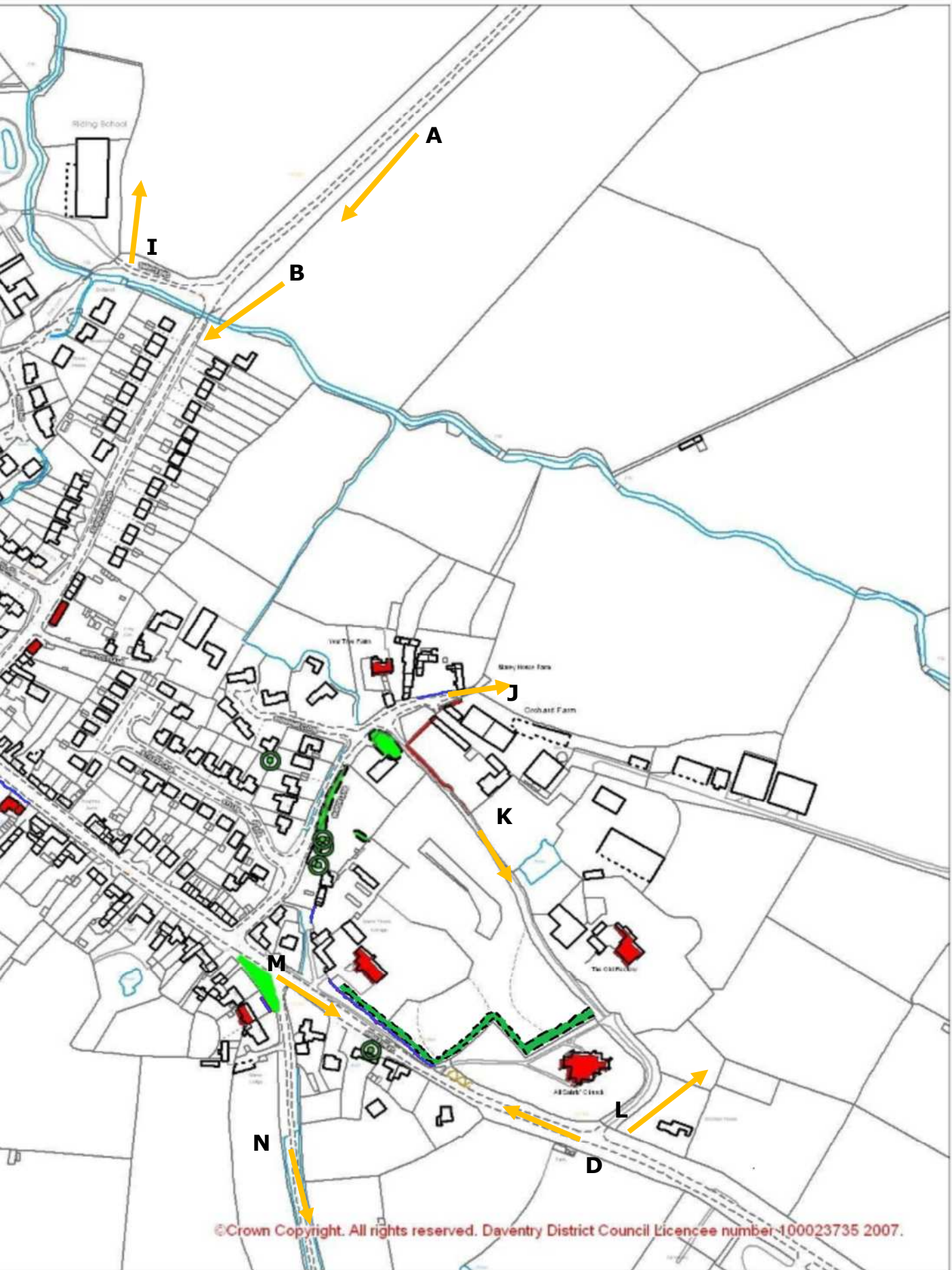
addition there are typical village 'back lanes' running north to south, many of which are now preserved as public footpaths (see Rights of way page 14).

Most of the land on both sides of the High Street is now built on. On the south side this is mainly single house depth apart from the council estate which stretches back some dozen houses. On the north side of the High Street a large number of houses were built in the 1960s on small estates or infillings. The estates tended to be quite uniform allowing the builder to provide pleasant houses economically but in retrospect more variety could have made a more pleasing aspect.

In the 2011 census there were 352 dwellings in the village of which 14 were unoccupied. Almost 60% of houses are detached; 33% semi-detached; 9% terraced; and there are just two flats. The majority of houses (80%) are owner-occupied and there are 52 rented houses.

Yelvertoft village settlement pattern





Recent development has become very limited as directed by the Local Plan which designates Yelvertoft as a Restricted Infill Village. The few houses built since 1990 have almost exclusively been large detached dwellings. During this time many of the smaller terraced cottages and bungalows have been extended and improved. Most are now out of the reach of first time buyers and/or young families without which the village is at risk of becoming an increasingly exclusive community of the retired and wealthy.

Future development in the village must take account of the more than average increase in rural house prices and the lower than average earnings of rural workers. Including more low cost/affordable homes and houses for rent is important to maintaining the social mix of the village and may be crucial to the sustainability of the community, its shops and services, pub and school (guideline 21).

Street parking is also a problem in many parts of the village and should be addressed in all future development (guideline 22).

Open spaces

Yelvertoft is blessed with many open spaces that give the village its sense of space and tranquillity and are valued highly by residents and visitors to the village. However as a Restricted Infill Village there are increasing pressures on open spaces within the village itself. It is important that open spaces within the village that allow a vista of the countryside beyond are kept open (guideline 3).

There are many open spaces such as the village hall sports field, King George V field, the allotment and football field, and the Pocket Park - all of which are to be found at the outer edges of the village. Roads into the village - Crick Road, Elkington Road and Yelvertoft Road - have wide grass verges (guidelines 24–26).

Within the village there is a small pocket park at the end of Ashwells Lane/Bridge End, an open memorial green, a small green opposite the Reading Room and many of the residential roads have small areas of grass. All of these add to the green character of the village and need to be protected.

The village is surrounded by footpaths, bridleways (see Rights of Way on page 14) and open fields which all play a part of living in the country. These spaces are used

daily by residents and visitors for leisure, educational and health purposes.



▲ *Open air theatre and pond at the Village Hall*

The open spaces around the village hall provide a valuable multi-purpose amenity area. This community space includes cricket and football pitches, a Pocket Park, skate park, children's play area and an open air theatre. There are splendid views over the open fields and footpaths. These village facilities provide free, open access to the countryside for all, at all times.

▼ *Bridleway to Crick*

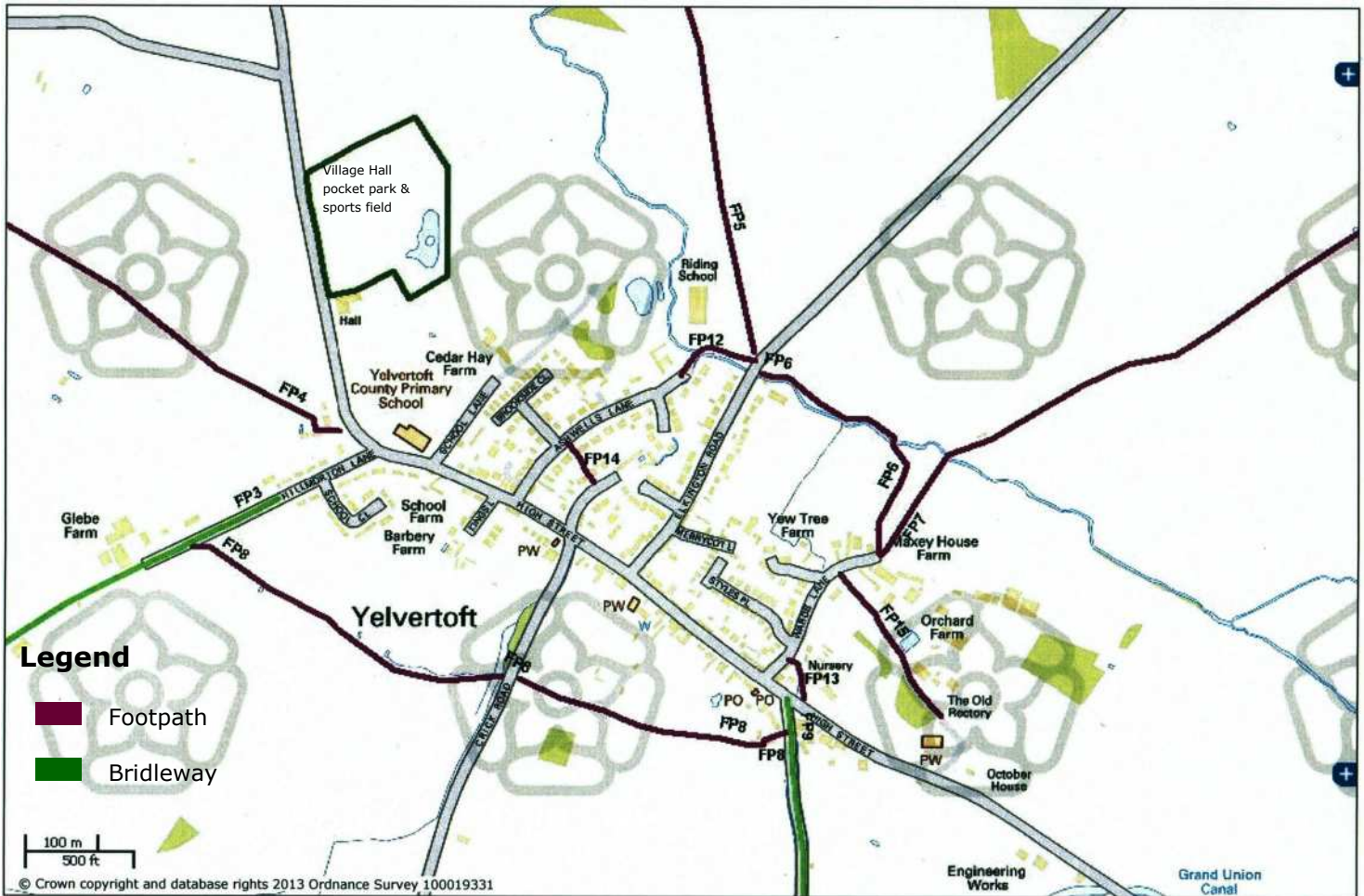


Down the bridleway to Crick is a glorious walk used regularly by dog walkers, hikers, horse riders and fishermen. The bridleway passes the old cricket field, allotment field, pastures and canal. All give a sense of calmness and openness but also belonging.

Our allotment field is set on a large plot of land which was bequeathed to the village for its current purpose (guideline 26). Many villagers enjoy growing their own fruit and vegetables in this tranquil setting.

Even the smallest of spaces are valued. We have many passageways, open and closed, linking the community together. From the small foliaged passageway from High Street to Wards Lane to the open footpath at the back of the houses on the High Street with kissing gates that restrict vehicular access - all are important to us.

Rights of way



Serious consideration should be given to any proposals for development that could detract from Yelvertoft's status as a small rural community set in the countryside (guidelines 16 and 27).

Just because a piece of land has no buildings on it does not mean that development should be allowed to fill the space.



▲ Village allotments with Yelvertoft Wind Farm in the background

Flood risk

Yelvertoft's ancient settlers no doubt came here to live off the land, helped by the ease of obtaining water. The high water table made extraction by well very simple and the clay sub soil allowed ponds to be dug for animals.

Over the years man has tried to use and manage water in and around the village. The canal originally for transport, the ditches draining farmland, and the culverts for the brook to pass through, are all well over a hundred years old. Most recently during the 1990s a flood defence system was constructed on the Crick Road by Daventry District Council to hold back water during storms. This was reinforced by the Environment Agency in 2008.

However the increased built environment has led to a speedier run off and brooks and culverts not being able to cope. Yelvertoft is situated just to the west of the watershed and in times of heavy rainfall is an early victim of flooding.

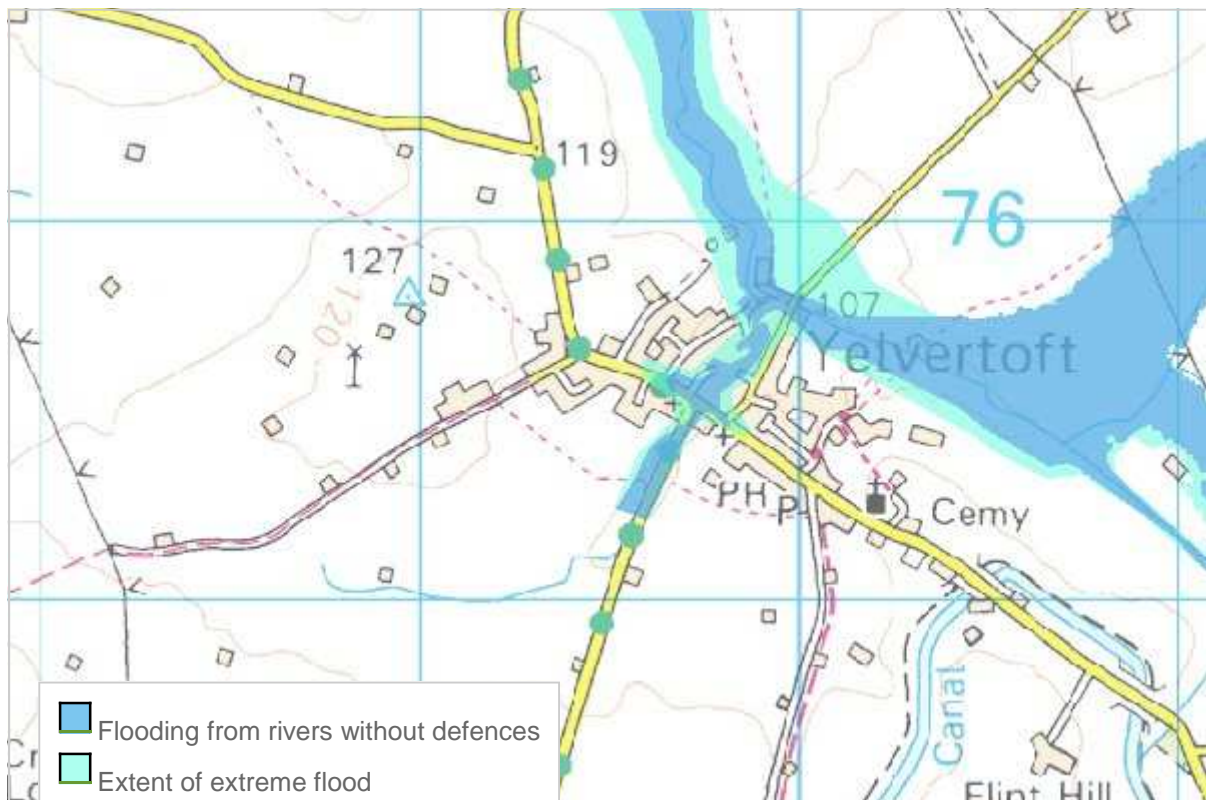


▲ *Flooding in the High Street 1998*

Maundy Thursday 1998 was a day of heavy rain previously calculated at one in a hundred year event. Approximately 30 properties, including two listed buildings, were flooded causing considerable trauma and damage. With the impact of climate change these conditions are likely to become more frequent.

The Environment Agency continues to improve the flood defences but it is vital that future development within the parish does not exacerbate the risk of flooding in the village (guidelines 28–33).

Flood risk map from the Environment Agency



Guidelines

The settlement pattern

- 16 The scale and style of new development should take account of the impact on the established village.
- 17 To maintain the character and spatial setting of the village, development should not be allowed to obstruct views of listed and other character buildings within the village or views into and out of the village.
- 18 All new development should respond positively to the local context in terms of the size, scale and proportion of existing buildings.
- 19 All development should make good use of existing landscape features such as mature trees, walls and hedgerows to provide a sense of identity and relationship with the surroundings.
- 20 Any infill development should be in character with spacing between buildings in the surrounding area.
- 21 Future planning and development should take account of the present housing profile and efforts made to establish a better mix of housing types, sizes and tenure to encourage diversity within the community.
- 22 To reduce the visual dominance of cars parked on streets all new housing should have off-street parking sufficient for the size of the dwelling. Garages should be appropriately sized and situated so as not to impact on the streetscape - prominent buildings in front of houses are not appropriate.
- 23 Hard surfacing, including new pavements, should be of an appropriate type to blend into the existing streetscape.

Open spaces

- 24 Developers, landowners and builders should note the importance of the open spaces in the village and should not make changes which would adversely affect the spatial characteristics of Yelvertoft.
- 25 The playing fields, sports fields and play areas should not be built upon as they are all valuable amenities as well as important open spaces.
- 26 The village allotment field off the bridle path is a valuable amenity for villagers and must be preserved in line with the original deed of gift.
- 27 Yelvertoft is surrounded by and enjoys views to open spaces and, to protect the character of the village, these should not be built on.

Flood defences

- 28 Flood risk assessment must be a key consideration in all planning decisions.
- 29 All development and renovation should ensure that the already overloaded surface water drainage system is not placed under further pressure eg through the use of permeable materials for drives, paths and patios.
- 30 Further development in the village should allow for water storage and methods of slowing run off to be incorporated into the design.
- 31 Trees, hedgerows, ponds and ditches provide an important draining function for the village and landowners and farmers should, by appropriate field management, restore and/or maintain them.
- 32 Brooks, culverts and storm drains should be inspected and maintained regularly to maintain water flow and minimise the risk of flooding.
- 33 Streams and ditches outside the built environment should be kept free-flowing and allowed to flood when necessary.

Buildings and landmarks

The village of Yelvertoft is endowed with individual buildings exhibiting some fine styles of architecture amid a number of prominent landmarks. As would be expected of a village of this age, there are some listed buildings and a variety of other distinctive buildings (mainly of the Georgian, Regency, and Victorian periods). Following some relatively minor development in the early nineteenth hundreds the balance of buildings comprises new housing developments and infill constructed in the latter portion of the 20th century.

Red brick construction features prominently throughout the village although there is some stone in evidence including fine examples of stone mullioned windows, parapet gables with kneelers and lintels with label moulds (guideline 34).

Key buildings constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are mainly of brick under tiled roofs. Other distinctive features include steeply pitched roofs, imposing chimneys of varying shapes and sizes, and a variety of gables and window styles. Along the High Street, in particular, there are a number of three storey houses all built of brick under slate roofs.



▲ *The Gables, High Street*

Listed buildings

There are 21 listed buildings in Yelvertoft most of which are located on or near the High Street. Together with 14 houses, the listed buildings include All Saints Church, the Congregational Chapel, the War Memorial, two chequered brick and cob walls off Ward's Lane, a 19th century milestone on the canal and bridge 18 over the canal.

▼ *The Old Gable, High Street*

Timber framed with brickwork infill and replacement thatch



There are a small number of timber framed listed buildings dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries most of which have steeply pitched roofs. They all stand on or close to the High Street which was the only main street in that period. Originally thatched, they all subsequently had corrugated metal roofs. All but two of these roofs have now been replaced by thatch. The two remaining corrugated metal roofs can be found in Elkington Road (see photo page 4). Some of the timber framework has been infilled with brickwork whilst others have rendered panels probably of cob.

▼ *Cob wall off Wards Lane*

Cob is a material made from compressed earth, clay or chalk reinforced with straw.



Landmarks

All Saints Church

One of the more prominent buildings in Yelvertoft is All Saints Church situated on the hill on the road leading to West Haddon. It is a Grade II listed building and was built progressively between the early 12th and the 15th centuries and extensively repaired in the early 20th century. It is believed that a Saxon church once stood on this site since a church is mentioned in the Domesday Book, although no visible traces remain.



The plan of the church is that of a typical small parish church with a west tower, aisled nave, rectangular chancel and south porch. The original chancel and nave were built of local cobbles, the tower is of limestone and the roof was originally leaded.

The Congregational Chapel

The Congregational Chapel was first established in Yelvertoft in 1662. The present chapel on the High Street was built in 1792 and a new frontage built on in 1832.



In the Chapel yard is the grave of Thomas Plimsoll, (father of Samuel - of Plimsoll line fame), who died in 1844.

Constructed of brick under a slate roof, the building's main feature is the semi-circular arched heads to all of the windows on all elevations, including one bull's eye or circular window above the main entrance.

Reading Room

The Reading Room is located on the High Street near to All Saints Church. It was originally the school room of a Charity School first built and endowed by Richard Ashby, a Yelvertoft man. It was opened in 1711 with 10 poor children enrolled. Richard Ashby died in 1719 and is buried in All Saints Church. The school was enlarged in 1792 to take 20 pupils and the school master's house subsequently rebuilt. Although refurbished in 1878 by private subscription, the school was closed in 1881.

The building itself is of brick construction under a slate roof which is not as steeply pitched as others of that period. The windows all have natural stone mullioned surrounds.



The Village Pump has stood outside the Reading Room since around 1900. It was restored in 2006.

Village school

The current school located on the High Street at the western end of the village, was opened in 1876. It was enlarged and modernised in 1966 and again in 1972.

The original building is typically Victorian being built of red brick with steeply pitched roofs covered with plain tiles. There are stone surrounds to the original windows including a rare semi-circular label mould over the circular window on the



▲ *Village school*

front elevation. The building also exhibits some fine examples of brickwork detail typical of the Victorian period including the gables and chimney.

Village Hall

Yelvertoft Village Hall occupies an extensive site on the western edge of the village.

Over recent years a major rebuilding project has been ongoing to develop a brand new village hall facility together with children's play area, skate-board park, sports pitches, open air theatre and pocket park.

The new village hall is a good example of a modern building in harmony with its surroundings. It is a single storey, red brick building which nestles in the rural landscape at the edge of the village.

▼ *Village Hall*



Walls and fences

Walls and fences are important to the continuation of the established street landscape. They provide a sense of enclosure to individual plots of land, linkage between buildings and spaces, and define street lines.

There are a number of distinctive walls and fences such as the two Grade II listed walls off Wards Lane. Both were built around the mid 18th century of cob on limestone plinths although one has some chequered patterned brickwork incorporated.

Around the village there are a number of old red brick walls still in existence; some from as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Copings vary but blue and red brick gabled copings are clearly visible on or near the High Street (guideline 42)



▲ Red brick walls on the High Street (left) and Wards Lane (right)

Metal and wooden gates and fences also feature in the village; the most notable being the metal railings surrounding the village school.

Street furniture and utilities

Whilst modern amenities and utilities are essential, street furniture in Yelvertoft is often out of sympathy with our village character.

Throughout the village electricity is supplied to individual properties via overhead cables supported by an inordinate number of timber poles. In addition telephone services are supplied via overhead cables supported from telegraph poles. Neither of these two service providers appears to have been under any form of requirement to connect to buildings underground thereby avoiding the clutter that is street furniture in Yelvertoft today. The myriad of poles and cables adorning the skyline throughout the village are unsightly and unnecessary (see photo page 3 and guideline 43).

Street lighting generally is fixed to the electricity poles especially in the more established areas of the village. Developments carried out in the post Second World War era all have purpose made lighting columns (guideline 44).

A modern style telephone box on the High Street is less well suited to the village environment than the old red box that it replaced.

Notice boards are prominent in the village and might well achieve their objective adequately (but not stylishly) if only they were used. Competition to post flyers on every available post, fence and pole has increased significantly in recent years and

does little to enhance the visual appearance of the village.

Street name plates, warning and directional signs are important but have tendencies to urbanise. Appropriate design and location can add rather than detract from the rural character of the village (guideline 45).



▲ Signpost on the green opposite the Reading Room

Guidelines

Building materials

- 34 Developers and builders should consider the importance of red brick in new developments as it reflects Yelvertoft's building heritage. Other heritage materials include blue brick, natural stone and traditional render.
- 35 Development and restoration should wherever possible reuse existing building materials to maintain continuity with the past and promote local distinctiveness. The village landscape and character should be protected and enhanced through the use of traditional repair and maintenance using appropriate materials and techniques.
- 36 Developers and builders should use traditional roofing materials to reflect existing usage. In most of the village this would be thatch, slate or plain tiles. Pantiles and roman tiles are generally only found on houses built in the 1960s and 1970s.

Architecture and style

- 37 Those responsible for new commercial or residential buildings, alterations and renovations should take into account the importance of the stylistic features of Yelvertoft buildings which includes:
 - steep pitching of roofs
 - imposing chimneys in different shapes and sizes
 - variety in gable ends and windows
 - red brick walls with varying types of coping
 - existing brick patternwork
- 38 Architecture should reasonably reflect the shapes, sizes, patterns, layouts and colours of adjoining buildings and take account of the need to redress the imbalance of large and smaller houses within the village.
- 39 Villagers should be amenable to innovative building design and practice where this is sympathetic to existing buildings and is responsible and eco-friendly in the use of building materials, energy usage and maintenance.

Conservation

- 40 Farmers should preserve and creatively reuse old farm buildings and ensure good design and careful siting of any new agricultural buildings.
- 41 Existing buildings, especially those which serve the community, should be maintained in positive and appropriate use. Unoccupied buildings should be appropriately maintained and brought back into use as quickly as possible.
- 42 Developers, householders and builders should aim to preserve our distinctive brick walls with their traditional coping such as the ones in the High Street.

Street furniture

- 43 Supplies of electricity and telephone services should in future be provided, where possible, by way of underground cables thereby avoiding the need for more unsightly poles and overhead cabling. Utility companies should liaise with the Parish Council and local community to achieve improvements in the street landscape.
- 44 All new and replaced street lighting provided by the Local Authority should be designed to avoid glare and faces downwards. Careful attention to detail at the planning and approval conditions stage will help to prevent inappropriate specification of urban style lighting in any new development.
- 45 Street furniture, including benches, signposts, notice boards and street name signs should be of a design, size, location and number that blends in into the surrounding streetscape and do not adversely affect the setting of buildings or areas of character and interest on the approaches to or within the village.

Listed buildings

23 Ashwells Lane

10 Elkington Road

12 Elkington Road

10 High Street

12 High Street

The Manor House, High Street

The Old Gable, High Street

The Stone House, High Street

Tudor Cottage, High Street

Congregational Church, High Street

Barberry Farmhouse, Kings Lane

The Old House, School Lane

Blyth House, Swinnertons Lane

War Memorial, junction of Swinnertons Lane and High Street

Yew Tree Farmhouse, Wards Lane

Walls approx. 30m NW of 12 Wards Lane

Wall approx. 60m N of 12 Wards Lane

All Saints Church, West Haddon Road

The Old Rectory, West Haddon Road

Bridge 18, Grand Union Canal - Leicester Line

Milepost between bridges 16 and 17, Grand Union Canal - Leicester Line

See pictures of 10 & 12 Elkington Road on page 4; The Old Gable on page 17; Congregational Church on page 18; one of the cob walls on page 17; War Memorial on page 1; All Saints Church on pages 8 and 18; and Bridge 18, Grand Union Canal on page 8.

Views into Yelvertoft

(See map on page 11 and 12 for the reference, location and direction.)

- A Approaching Yelvertoft from Elkington. The wide grass verges are characteristic of almost every approach to the village.



- B Coming into the village on Elkington Road. Tarrys End is on the right in the foreground.



- C Approaching Yelvertoft from Crick — again with wide grass verges.



- D Coming into Yelvertoft from West Haddon. All Saints Church is just out of the picture on the right.



- E Approaching Yelvertoft from Clay Coton. The driveway to the left is the entrance to the Village Hall.



- F Coming into Yelvertoft from Clay Coton passed the impressive hedge at the corner of Hillmorton Lane just passed the school on the left.



Views from Yelvertoft

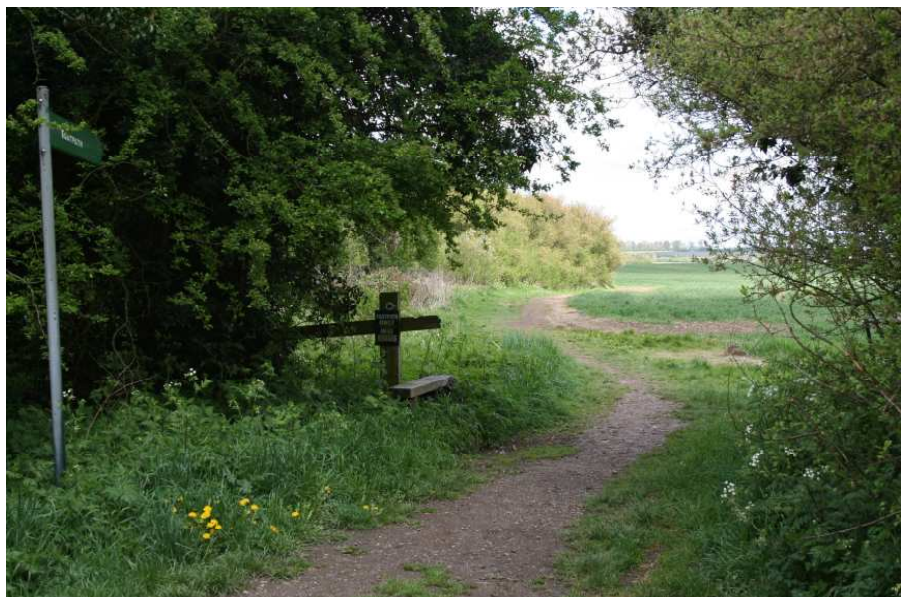
- G View from the Pocket Park at the Village Hall - overlooking Honey Hill.



- H View from the skateboard park at the Village Hall.



- I View along the foot path across the fields from Tarrys End.



- J View north east from the end of Wards Lane. There are the remains of a section of cob wall to the right.



- K A scenic route out of the village. This footpath goes up behind All Saints Church.



- L View north east from near to All Saints Church. The higher ground on the horizon is Yelvertoft Field-side Covert.



- M View out of the village up Church Hill. The trees on the left are all covered by a Tree Preservation Order.



- N Another scenic route out of the village for those who travel by foot, bike or horse. This bridle path goes past the King George V field and the allotments to Cracks Hill and on to Crick.



- O The Grand Union Canal is a significant landscape feature in Yelvertoft and provides spectacular views for those who travel by water or by foot. *(Unfortunately not shown on the map.)*



Further information

VDS Steering Group

Chairman: Alan Chantler

Deputy Chairman: Larry Lodge

Treasurer: Samantha Haywood

Parish Council Coordinator: Alan Hesketh

Editor & Secretary: Lyn Kemsley

Co-writers & committee members:

Shena Cooper

Jo Gamble

Grant Haywood

Andy Martin

Samara Turney

Source material

Achieving Building for Life, 2008, Housing Corporation

Census 2011, Office for National Statistics, <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

Daventry District Local Plan - Adopted June 1997, www.daventrydc.gov.uk

Historical notes, E W Timmins, a series of articles published in the Parish News between 1975 and 1986

Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing, July 2008, Department for Communities and Local Government

Northamptonshire Uplands, Natural England, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/50007752023769088>

Northamptonshire Biodiversity Plan, 2008, www.northamptonshirebiodiversity.org

Village Design: Making Local Character Count in New Development Parts 1 and 2, Countryside Commission, 1996 (now The Countryside Agency – www.countryside.gov.uk)

Consultation with the community

May 2007: Survey of all households identified strong support for developing a Village Design Statement.

July 2007: Open meeting held with an officer from Daventry District Council explaining to residents the purpose of a VDS and the development process. VDS Steering Group formed.

September 2007: First Steering Group meeting.

February 2008: Steering Group members held an open consultation meeting at The Knightley Arms.

March 2008: Open day held at the Congregational Church to get feedback on draft materials developed. A questionnaire was used to gather suggestions for further development of the draft VDS.

November 2008: Survey of all households to collect feedback on the draft VDS.

December 2008: Amended draft submitted to Daventry District Council.

May 2013: Revised draft submitted to Daventry District Council for approval as the basis for formal public consultation.

November 2014: Further revised draft submitted to Daventry District Council for approval as the basis for formal public consultation.