

Conservation Area Appraisal

Ropsley



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Ropsley Conservation Area and Management Plan
Designated 1981
Review November 2024
Draft for consultation

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1. Character Appraisal

1.1. Background

The conservation area at Ropsley was designated in 1981. 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 2024 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.

1.2. Location and Context

Ropsley is a large village located approximately five miles east of Grantham and two miles to the south of the A52. The village stands on a small hillside within the Kesteven Uplands which is characterised by a gently undulating landform of arable limestone heath to the northwest of the village with woodland and pasture to the south west.

The East Glen River rises to the east of Kirton Wood and meanders through the village as a shallow stream. The village has a primary school, and maintains one of its main public houses, The Green Man; The Ropsley Fox is no longer in use, and has been converted into a dwelling. There are some small-scale businesses, although Ropsley has become primarily a commuter village to the neighbouring towns. Ropsley is well maintained with a number of greenspaces dispersed throughout the settlement.

2. 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 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), last updated in December 2023. 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 '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)'.

A 'designated heritage asset' is defined as:

'A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.'

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 (195 and 205).

In developing this strategy, the following needs to be taken into account (203):

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- 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. South Kesteven District Council Local Plan

The South Kesteven District Council Local Plan was adopted in January 2020 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 EN6: The Historic Environment. Development that is likely to cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset or its setting will only be granted permission where the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the potential harm. Proposals which would conserve or enhance the significance of the asset shall be considered favourably.

3. Summary of Special Interest

- Linear plan form centred on High Street and Peck Hill with minor lanes radiating mainly westwards from this central spine
- Low density of development comprising groups of traditional cottages or former farm buildings which typically stand to the rear of the narrow footways creating an enclosed character.

- St. Peters Church, stands on a rise dominates the village and can be seen from various vantage points.
- The character of the conservation area is derived from the group value of the traditional buildings rather than individual buildings of merit
- Traditional craftsmanship embodied in original building materials and architectural features.
- Visual harmony resulting from the use of a limited palette of natural building materials.
- Visual continuity created by boundary walls delineating boundaries and linking buildings.

4. Historical development

4.1. History Summary

The name Ropsley is derived from the Old English incorporating a personal name with the second element 'leah' meaning open place. It was recorded as Ropeslai in the 1086 Domesday Book and had a population of 2 villagers, 29 freemen with 570 acres of woodland and a church.

The medieval grange of Vaudey Abbey stood on Ropsley Heath from 1189 to 1550. Excavations of the main building revealed massive stone walls, a hearth and remains dating from the 13th-16th centuries.

To the south-east of the village lies the remains of a medieval fishpond known as Ring Dam, which was Scheduled in 2001. Fishponds were common features of the medieval landscape, generally constructed by monasteries or the wealthy as a source of fresh food. The pond originally took the form of a rectangular moat with a central island; three arms of the moat remain but the northern arm was infilled prior to the mid-19th century. It has been little altered since the medieval period and is a scheduled ancient monument.

The Duke of Rutland was the landowner for many years during the 19th century. Whilst the majority of the rest of the land belonged to Lord Willoughby de Eresby, J.A. Houblon, Esq.J.L. and Wm. Ostler, Esqs.

The village evolved as a prosperous agricultural community which supported a number of associated trades such as corn millers and blacksmiths. A Public Elementary School was constructed in 1874 to replace the school established in 1717 by James Thompson.

Crown Hill Farm is the principal farm in the village; it is a fairly large farm with a number of outbuildings occupying Crown Hill. The area surrounding the village is almost all arable farmland growing crops from barley to oilseed rape. There are also a number of disused quarries nearby.

4.2. Bishop Richard Foxe (1448- 1528)

The conservation area also has a significant historic association with an important Bishop; Richard Foxe who was born in the village at Pullock Manor which is now the site of Peakcock Farm. Richard attended Magdalen



Plate 1: Birthplace of Richard Foxe

College in Oxford and The University of Paris. During this time, he became acquainted with Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond and was later appointed Secretary of State to Kings Henry VII and Henry VIII, and Bishop of Exeter, Wells, Durham and Winchester. He founded Grantham Grammar School, today's Kings School and Corpus Christ College at Oxford University. A local lasting memory to his birthplace is the building of the south porch to St Peter's church which was built 1483.

5. Character and Appearance

5.1. Spatial Character and Townscape Quality

Ropsley is a fairly large village with a spacious character built around the Church of St. Peter. The historic core has a relatively linear plan form centred on High Street and Peck Hill with minor lanes radiating mainly westwards from this central spine. It is characterised by a low density of development comprising of groups of traditional cottages or former farm buildings which typically stand to the rear of the narrow footways creating an enclosed character.



Plate 2: View down High Street

The linear plan form has been partially eroded by the post war expansion of the village to the north of Church Lane and the south side of Grantham Road. Buildings are more set back towards the west of Grantham Road.

The two small greens located at the junction with High Street and Chapel Hill provide an attractive setting for the streetscene and the traditional buildings which front onto them. Interestingly, the village pond known as 'Mop Hole' used to be located adjacent to the two greens however they were later filled in by cottages. The large village green on the west side of High Street provides a pleasant contrast with the enclosed character of the conservation area and forms part of the wider setting of St Peter's Church. It connects to a small area of woodland leading from the village green to Chapel Hill via a public footpath.



Plate 3: Ropsley War memorial on the green at north end of High Street

The character of the conservation area is derived from the group value of the traditional buildings rather than individual buildings of merit. This is exemplified in there being only four listed buildings within the conservation area. High Street and Chapel Hill have a defined building line as the traditional buildings typically front onto the highways, or stand

gable end, to the rear of the narrow footways. Some have retained their large rear gardens which are an important part of the historic plan form of the village.



Plate 4: No.15 High Street, made of brick which is fairly unique to the conservation area, but it is unfortunate that the 1st floor windows have been replaced with uPVC.

The post war houses on the east side of High Street are at variance with the established linear plan form as they are set back from the highway and enclosed by boundary walls or hedges which contribute to the continuity of the building line and partially screens some of the buildings from view. The grouping of the

Green Man public house together with 20 High Street is important and contributes towards views along the High Street. The Green Man has been brought back into use

after a period of laying vacant, and presents a well-maintained front elevation. They are addressed further in the management plan.

In contrast, the buildings along Crown Hill and Church Lane are typically set back from the highway with modest front gardens enclosed by boundary walls or hedges which obscure some of the buildings along Crown Hill from view.



Plate 5: Church Street, northern side, with set back properties.

St Peter's Church stands in the centre of the village in an elevated position, which reinforces its important social and spiritual role within the community. Professor Baldwin Brown, in a letter to the Grantham Journal in 1928 was quoted as saying the Church of St. Peter dominated its rustic surroundings 'like a cathedral'. Since that time there has been some post war development to the north-west and south of the church, nonetheless its elevated position still makes the church visually dominant within the conservation area.

The attractive cluster of traditional cottages and former farm buildings with relatively unaltered elevations to the west and east of the churchyard contribute to the setting of the church. The churchyard and cemetery are elevated above the highway and enclosed by boundary walls which provide enclosure along the street. The cemetery

extends across Church Lane towards an area with a small pond. A Public Right of Way runs along this section of the cemetery, and terminates on Somerby Road.

Ropsley benefits from a high number of Public Rights of Ways, running the course of historic footpaths, although some of the open fieldscape has been lost due to developments in the last century.

5.2. Architecture and Building Materials

The conservation area has a harmonious character derived from a broad similarity of scale, vernacular architectural style and common material palette. The traditional buildings are constructed of coursed limestone rubble with ashlar dressings and clay pantile roof coverings although some have unfortunately been re-roofed with unsympathetic concrete tiles.



Plate 6: Cedar House, High Street with an Edwardian shop front. This used to be the village store known as 'Rowell's.'

There are some examples of brick buildings, but this is less common, especially in the core of the village. Brick

buildings are more common the further out of the village one travels, indicating the Victorian and early 20th century expansions of the settlement. Chimneys are prominent features which add to the visual interest of the conservation area. There is a mixture of eaves facing and gable end facing dwellings, with the eaves facing beings somewhat more prevalent. Terraces are present, but of short length, at most of four to five dwellings. Detached or semi-detached houses are the most common.

Throughout the recent decades, barn conversions have slightly changed the streetscape, however this resulted in the retention of a number of historic buildings, which is a positive benefit of the conversions.

The use of unsympathetic uPVC to standardised designs for windows and doors detract from the appearance of individual buildings and from the overall character of the conservation area. The post war buildings do not reflect the vernacular character or material palette of the conservation area. Whilst they are largely excluded from the boundary they do have an impact upon the setting of the conservation area, particularly along the east side of High Street.

Boundary walls are an important feature of the conservation area which link buildings and maintain the continuity of the building line along the street. They are predominantly constructed of stone although some brick is also used. On occasion, hedgerows have been used as part of these boundaries.



Plate 7: 35 High Street, remnants of the original lower roofline visible on gable end.

An interesting feature of the conservation area that is common on the stone buildings is the addition of an extra storey to a traditional one and a half storey. This is visible on the gable end of the properties where there is visual evidence in the stonework of a much earlier building quite often with a very steep pitch indicating that the original roof covering

was thatch. Cedar House (Nos 12-16 High Street) has a historic shop front that dates to the Edwardian period, this used

to be the village store known as 'Rowell's'. The shop front is an important historic feature that should be retained.

There are a number of ancillary buildings within the conservation area which are located at the rear or to the side of dwellings that are former outhouses, WCs or coal stores. Many of these are contemporary with the main dwelling and constructed in the local vernacular and also contribute towards the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.3. Key Views

The landscape is an important part of the setting of the conservation area and forms an attractive backdrop to views within and outside the boundary, particularly southwards along High Street and eastwards from Chapel Hill.

Views within the conservation area constantly unfold due to the undulating topography and gentle curved alignment of the roads.



Plate 8: View across the green towards the church from High Street.

The church is a prominent landmark which is visible from several vantage points within the boundary, particularly westwards from High Street across the green and along Church Lane and Hall Close.

Given the linear character of development in the conservation area, other views are generally constrained along the streets. For example, from Chapel Hill there are attractive views in both directions whereby the groups of stone houses on either side of the road make a positive contribution.

From the east end of High Street there are views towards the open sloping fields behind Peacock Farm.



Plate 9: View of St. Peters Church from Church Street.

There are some views looking into the conservation area from outside the boundary at Somerby Road adjacent to Willow Farm. Other than this there are few views looking into the conservation area from outside the conservation area boundary.

5.4. Contribution of Trees, Hedgerows and Open Space

Trees and hedgerows are a significant feature of the conservation area which frame key views and contribute to its rural setting. They are mainly located within private gardens and areas of public open space but also include the distant tree belts which form the backdrop to views outside of and within the conservation area.



Plate 10: Small green space with trees at School Lane

Grass verges are important features of the conservation area providing a sense of spaciousness. There are examples at Church Lane, Hall Close, School Lane, as well as along High Street.

One of the unique characteristics of the conservation area is the large proportion of open space within its centre. This provides an attractive spacious setting for the parish church,

as well as contributing towards key views. This includes the green to the east of High Street, St Peters Churchyard and St Peters cemetery.

5.5. Floorscape, Street Furniture and other features

There are no notable floorscape or street furniture features of interest within the conservation area. There are some dispersed award plaques for 'Best Kept Village' which add to the streetscape. There are however, some fine examples of railings and gate piers, such as those fronting No.4 High Street and Ropsley House on the High Street (formerly the entrance to The Old Rectory). There used to be a



Plate 11: Gate piers to Ropsley House (formerly The Old Rectory) are a fine feature of the street-scene along High Street.

historic ER11 post box in the conservation area at Chapel Hill and a GR in the gable end wall of Cedar House on High Street. The one on Chapel Hill appears to have been removed in recent years, and replaced with a modern post box on the nearby green.

6. 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), that affects its character or appearance can be carried out. List descriptions are available online via the National Heritage List at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>.



Plate 12: No 1 Chapel Hill, also referred to as Manor House.

There are four listed buildings within the boundary of the conservation area. **St Peter's Church** (Grade I) dates from the 11th century (NHLE 1261821), it has an Anglo Saxon nave with an Early English tower and 14th century broach spire. **No. 1 Chapel Hill** (NHLE 1253288) which dates from 1700 with minor 19th century alterations; **Crown Hill Farm**, an 18th century farmhouse with early 19th century additions and alterations (NHLE 1253351);

and the **Slate Headstone** of John Pickwell which dates from 1730 (NHLE 1253289), are all Grade II listed.

6.2. Positive unlisted buildings

In addition to listed buildings, the conservation area contains a high 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.



Plate 13: Ropsley Primary School

The criteria used for selection of positive buildings are those set out within the 'positive contributors' section of Historic England's guidance document 'Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management' (2019). Where a building has been adversely affected by modern changes and restoration is either impractical or impossible, they are excluded. Some efforts have been made in the last few years with the use of more appropriate window styles, such as flush timber effect uPVC.

Examples of the recent improvements include the former Methodist Chapel on Chapel Hill which was built in 1837 to accommodate 90 people. It has 1837 inscribed above the doorway and an attractive pantile hipped roof. The windows had been replaced with bulky uPVC historically, but recent refurbishment of the building saw the installation of more appropriate sash windows with marginal glazing bars.

No. 3 High Street and No.4 Chapel Hill are also interesting unlisted buildings, with both displaying similar architectural characteristics which suggest that they were built by the same owner or architect. No. 3 High Street is an important historic building that currently marks the entrance to the conservation area from the east. It presents an interesting Georgian façade, with large stone lintels and projecting key stones. A large datestone is set above the doorway.

Albeit not in the Conservation Area, the former Ropsley Fox building are worth noting as building of special character and architecture, which add to the streetscape of Grantham Road, which forms the north-western approach to the conservation area. The buildings were recently redeveloped from public house into a series of dwellings, thus sadly losing their historic purpose. The car park was separated off and redeveloped for three detached dwellings in red brick.

Ropsey Primary School, which is proposed to be included in the Conservation Area, is not just of historical significance, but also of architectural value: the 19th century school buildings comprise two one and a half storey buildings of coursed limestone, under a pitched gabled roof of slate. The earlier building, likely dating from around 1846, has a small bell tower with bell and apparatus in situ. The building also retains a small gabled porch and small decorative barge boards. The other east to west aligned building to the north, was likely constructed between 1888 and 1904.

The village war memorial is of local importance; it provides a focal point to Chapel Hill as well as being a site for remembrance to those who have been lost in the First and Second World War. It was erected in 1920 by public subscription.



Fig. 12 From left to right No.3 High Street and No.4 Chapel Hill. Both buildings display similar characteristics and likely to have been built by the same architect in the early 19th century

7. 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 there are 13 records within Ropsley Conservation Area (see Appendix 2). The majority of these relate to listed building records however there are some interesting records relating to archaeology such as at Crown Hill. During field walking in 1979 archaeologists unearthed a number of finds including late Saxon artefacts, together with remains of a former stone building.

There also are a number of records relating to ridge and furrow, which surround the village. The field to the south of Ropsley at Holly Cottage shows traces of ridge and furrow. Post-medieval finds were made during a series of archaeological interventions near Hall Close.

Other records, outside the conservation area boundary but nonetheless important in terms of the history and development of the village include crop mark enclosures to the south of Humby which have yielded finds from multiple periods including Neolithic and Bronze Age flints and a large concentration of Iron Age pottery.

Remains from the Roman period include a large scatter of building stone and pottery dating from 3rd-4th centuries found at Ropsley Rise Woods.

To the south-west of the conservation area is Ring Damn, which is a scheduled ancient monument. It is a medieval fishpond which survives as a series of earthworks and buried deposits which have been little altered since medieval times indicating that archaeological remains are likely to survive intact.

8. Changes since Designation

There have been relatively few changes to the conservation area since original designation. Any development has mainly been small scale extensions and conversions and there are no significant development threats. The largest area of modern development within proximity to the Conservation Area is the redevelopment of the former Ropsley Fox car park for three detached dwellings.

9. Boundary Review

Historic England Advice Note 1: (2019, Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management) states that current boundaries should be reviewed as part of the appraisal process, particularly if there is evidence to suggest that early conservation areas were drawn too tightly that excluded historic rear plots with archaeological interest, later phases of development (such as 20th century housing), or parks, cemeteries and historic green spaces, now considered to be of special interest. Historic England guidance also states that if the original interest has been eroded by piecemeal changes or by inappropriate development the boundary should be revised.

The conservation area comprises of two separate areas. The northern area encompasses the traditional buildings at the eastern end of Chapel Hill and the buildings which front onto the green, including No. 1 Peck Hill. The second area is centred on High Street, Church Lane and Crown Hill but excludes the post war buildings on the east side of High Street and south side of Church Lane.

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.

As part of the 2024 review the following amendments are proposed:

9.1. To extend the conservation area:

- **Boundary to include 26 and 30 Chapel Hill,**
- **Holly Cottage and adjacent barn, Humby Road,**
- **Ropsley Rectory and garden,**
- **Ropsley Primary School, School Lane, and 2 and 4 School Lane**
- **Any properties formerly only partially included.**

No 26 and 30 Chapel Hill are attractive stone cottages and former farm buildings, which reflect the vernacular character and material palette of the conservation area.

Holly Cottage similarly is an attractive small farmstead at the southern approach of Ropsley, which retained many historic features. The field to the west of Holly Cottage is an important area of open space and contributes towards the setting of the cottage which looks out onto it. It also maintains some remnants of ridge and furrow.

Ropsley Rectory has been a noticeable feature in the village since at least the 19th century, with an expansive garden towards High Street. Ropsley House was built on the western extent of this garden in the second half of the 20th century.

Ropsley Primary School has already been noted as a heritage asset of local significance with its inclusion in the Historic Environment Record. The building provides a focal point of the community, and maintains historic features not often retained, such as the small belltower. The adjacent No 2 and 4 School Lane clearly also reflect the local vernacular character and material palette as observed throughout the Conservation Area.

It is considered that these buildings would make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and are considered to be of sufficient interest to justify inclusion within the boundary.

Additionally, the current boundary has some anomalies where it bisects plots of land. It is proposed that this should be rationalised to follow existing boundary lines, as highlighted on the accompanying map.

9.2. To exclude from the Conservation Area

Nos. 2-4 Peck Hill and 16-18 Chapel Hill from the conservation area boundary

These buildings have a fragmented character as they are of mixed quality in terms of design and materials. Nos. 2-4 Peck Hill comprise of a post war bungalow and a much-altered traditional building which does not enhance the appearance or character of the conservation area.

Nos 16-18 Chapel Hill, while maintaining some attractive stone building features, has been altered significantly and with its large rear extension has lost the focus on the street-frontage, such as observed with the surrounding properties, which while sitting on large plots of land have the bulk of the development set fronting the road. The set back character of No 18 Chapel Hill is therefore at odds with this appearance and distracts from the Conservation Area.

It may be appropriate to amend the boundary to exclude these buildings.

10. 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.

10.2. 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:

- Planning Permission 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.

10.3. 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.

10.4. 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.

10.5. 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 national Heritage at Risk Register covers Grade I and II* buildings at risk and is available through Historic England available at

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/>. There are no buildings on the 'at risk' register within Ropsley Conservation Area. However, there are some buildings that are in a poor state of maintenance and in need of attention that are having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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:

10.5.1. 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.

10.5.2. 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.

10.5.3. 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.

10.5.4. 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.

11. 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 unauthorised work and this may lead to enforcement action being instigated.

12. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

12.1. Strengths

- Harmonious use of materials across the conservation area.
- Good proportion of open space within the centre of the conservation area and reoccurring smaller areas of open green space throughout.
- Church and spire dominating the village and contributing towards key views.
- Historic association of the conservation area with Richard Foxe.
- Large areas of open space contributing towards a spacious quality.
- High number of positive unlisted buildings.
- Overall, the condition of the conservation area is good.



Plate 14: The Green Man Public House, is currently the only public house, recently reopened.

12.2. Weaknesses

- Overhead cables detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Erosion of character through loss of fabric and original architectural details.
- The post and timber fence to No. 37 High Street and the concrete block walling to the cemetery on Church Lane are at variance with the traditional use of stone or brick boundary walls. If the opportunity arose the appearance of the conservation area could be enhanced by the reinstatement of more appropriate boundary treatments.
- Disrepair of boundary walls.
- Use of unsuitable UPVC windows and doors.
- Deterioration of pavements and roads distracting from the positive street-scene.
- On-street parking in narrow roads, impacting the overall streetscape and safety.
- Use of unsuitable rendering on buildings.

12.3. Opportunities

There are many buildings in the conservation area; some of which are recognised as being 'positive unlisted buildings' and have a level of significance that also

contributes towards local distinctiveness and identity. In the absence of a local list many of these buildings are unrecognised for the special contribution they make to the conservation area. There is the opportunity for the parish council to develop a 'local heritage list' of buildings and monuments that are valued as distinctive elements of the historic environment of Ropsley.

The repair of boundary walls with lime mortar to preserve the enclosure along the street.

12.4. Threats

- Further erosion of character through loss of fabric and original architectural details.
- Incremental erosion through loss of boundary features including walls and hedgerows.
- Erosion of special character of the area though loss of important trees or open space.
- Overhead cables detract from the setting and character of the village. If the opportunity arose the possibility of undergrounding the cables should be encouraged.
- Erosion of character of the buildings through substantial extensions, that distract from the building, and general streetscape.



Plate 15: Church wall recently repaired. Some areas still need cleaning of vegetation.

13. Action Plan

| Proposed Measure | Issue Addressed | Action Required |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1- To develop a list of buildings and monuments that have significant local heritage interest for Ropsley.</p> | <p>Undesignated heritage assets that make a positive contribution towards local distinctiveness are not afforded recognition and protection that is proportionate to their significance.</p> | <p>The Council to work together with the parish council, local residents, Heritage 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 Ropsley.</p> |
| <p>2- Items of historic street furniture and floorscape to be retained and maintained.</p> | <p>Historic street furniture and Floorscape contributes towards the local distinctiveness of Ropsley.</p> | <p>Ensure that development proposals and maintenance works take into account the contribution that historic street furniture and floorscape make towards the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Where appropriate, work with local community groups to monitor the condition of street furniture and assist with any grant funding opportunities which may be available for their repair.</p> <p>Guidance to be sought from Lincolnshire County Council's 'Streetscape Design manual'.</p> |
| <p>3- Ensure that any highway works respect the Conservation Area.</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>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'.</p> |

| Proposed Measure | Issue Addressed | Action Required |
|--|---|--|
| <p>4- Removal of overhead cables and replacement of underground cables.</p> | <p>The uses of intrusive overhead cables have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.</p> | <p>The Council will encourage the appropriate agencies to undertake schemes to ensure that overhead cables are replaced with underground cables.</p> |
| <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</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 |
|---|--|---|
| <p>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>6- Ensure that heritage assets within the Conservation Area are maintained to a high standard.</p> | <p>Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and make a valued contribution to Ropsley and need to be conserved and enhanced for now and future generations.</p> | <p>The Council expects that owners and occupiers of heritage assets will respect and care for them and will, therefore, encourage appropriate repairs or restoration.</p> <p>Monitor the condition of the buildings in the conservation area which are in poor condition and liaise with owners/occupiers where necessary. The Council to use enforcement measures where necessary, particularly in relation to listed buildings.</p> |
| <p>7- To ensure that alterations to the Conservation Area (windows, doors, chimneys, rendering and boundary treatments) seek to preserve and enhance its character.</p> | <p>Unsympathetic features contribute to incremental erosion of character within the Conservation Area</p> | <p>Improved access to design guidance (e.g. street furniture) and advice on maintenance and repair for homeowners, developers, property owners and agents.</p> <p>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.</p> |

| Proposed Measure | Issue Addressed | Action Required |
|--|---|---|
| 8- Remove unauthorised satellite/ TV antenna/ broadband receiver | Satellite/TV antenna/ broadband receivers are visually intrusive and create a cluttered appearance within the streetscene | Develop an enforcement strategy to address unauthorised works. |
| 9- 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. |
| 10-All historic floorscape features to be retained | Historic street furniture and floorscape contribute towards the local distinctiveness of Ropsley, 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. |
| 11-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. | 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. |
| 12-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. |
| 13-Grass verges and | Development proposals that may have a | Ensure that development proposals take into |

| Proposed Measure | Issue Addressed | Action Required |
|--|--|--|
| important areas of open space to be retained. | negative impact on important areas of open space including grass verges. | account the contribution that important area of open space and grass verges make towards the Conservation Area. |
| 14- Preserve and enhance existing hedgerows and boundary walls, railings and gate piers. | Removal of hedgerows and important boundary features. | <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> <p>Consideration will be given to the contribution that individual trees and tree groups make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area when dealing with development proposals</p> |

14. References

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Pevsner, 1964 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*, Penguin
National Planning Policy Framework, 2023
National Planning Practice Guidance, 2023
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
South Kesteven District Council. 2020. *The South Kesteven Local Plan Lane. T.W. 1995 The archaeology and developing landscape of Ropsley and Humby, Lincolnshire.*
Ropsley, memories at the Millenium, Alwayn and Malcom Sentance, Published 1999, Firs Publishing.

15. Useful Contacts

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

planning@southkesteven.gov.uk

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

Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record
Lancaster House
36 Orchard Street
Lincoln
LN1 1XX
Telephone: 01522 782070
Email: lincssmr@lincolnshire.gov.uk

For any enquiries relating to Archaeology please contact **Heritage**

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The Old School
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Phone: 01529 461499
Email: htladmin@heritagelincshshire.org

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Phone: 0121 625 6888
Email: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

The Georgian Group

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Email: office@georgiangroup.org.uk

The Victorian Society,

1 Priory Gardens,
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Email: casework@jcnas.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

37 Spital Square
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Historic Buildings and Places

The Courtyard
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Telephone: 020 7236 3934

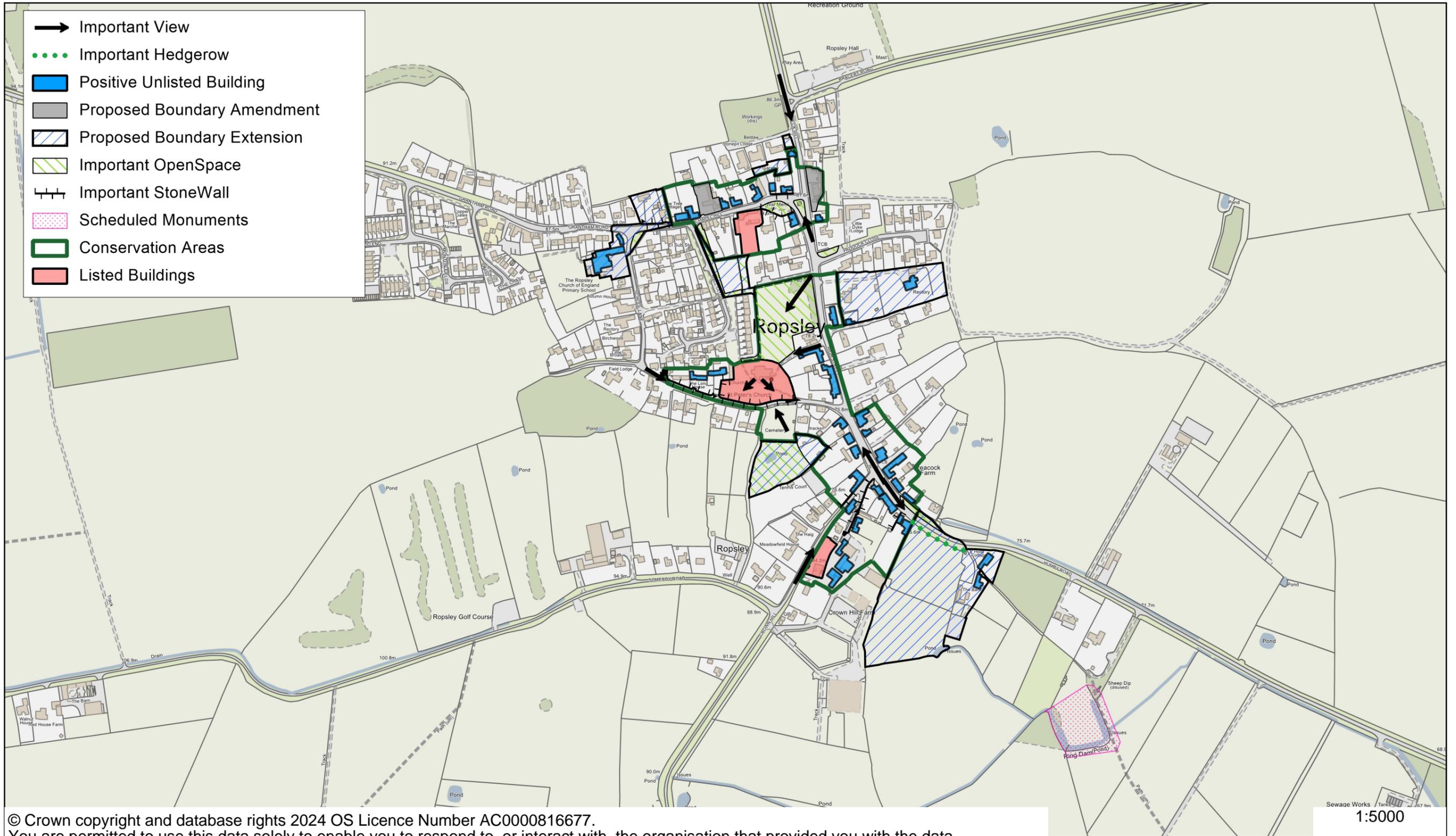
The Twentieth Century Society

70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
Telephone: 020 7250 3857
Email: casework@jcnas.org.uk
caseworker@c20society.org.uk

The War Memorials Trust

14 Buckingham Palace Road,
London
SW1W 0QP
Email: conservation@warmemorials.org

Appendix 1: Ropsley Conservation Area Map



Appendix 2: Ropsley Historic Environment Record Map

Contact details

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

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