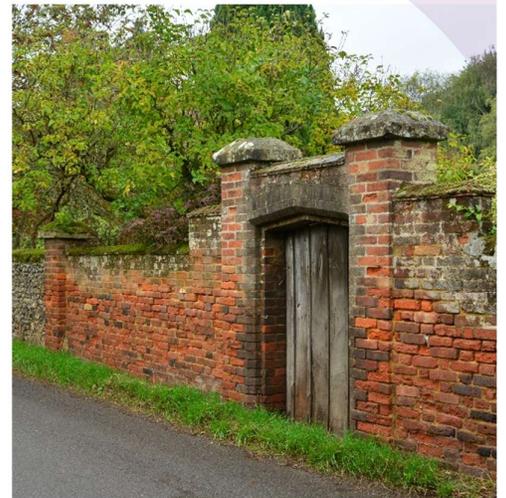


North Hertfordshire District Council

Kimpton Bottom

Conservation Area Character Statement



Report for

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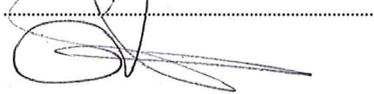
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Document revisions

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1. Background

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area was designated by North Hertfordshire District Council in 1970. The boundary includes the older part of the hamlet of Kimpton Bottom, west of Kimpton village, and the grounds of Kimpton Grange.

1.1.2 This report has been produced for the purpose of appraising the character of Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area. It includes a character assessment highlighting key features, a statement of special interest, a list of designated heritage assets, undesignated heritage assets and key views within the Conservation Area, and opportunities for improvement. It is accompanied by an annotated map of the Conservation Area which can be found in Appendix A. This report does not consider potential boundary changes in the Conservation Area.

1.2 Setting of Conservation Area

1.2.1 The Conservation Area is in a valley west of the village of Kimpton. To its south, the valley side rises, eliminating long views. To the north, the Conservation Area boundary continues some way up the valley side, allowing some long views along Fox Hill Lane in the north-east. West of the Conservation Area, along both Kimpton Bottom and Kimpton Road, views are short and consist of roads disappearing around close corners. To the east of the Kimpton Bottom, towards Kimpton village, the Conservation Area boundary abuts the large amount of post-war and later 20th century housing that marks development south of Kimpton High Street.

1.3 Historical Development

1.3.1 The parish of Kimpton contains a number of historic settlements, including the hamlet of Kimpton Bottom which appears to have developed around the meeting of a number of important routes leading, ultimately, to St Albans, Luton, Hitchin, Harpenden and Welwyn.

1.3.2 The older buildings in the hamlet relate to post-medieval farms, and there are later cottages probably related to agricultural expansion and the provision of housing for labourers.

1.3.3 A large part of the Conservation Area is the grounds of Kimpton Grange, which, despite having the appearance of an historic manorial site, is actually the location of the former vicarage of the Church of St Peter and St Paul at Kimpton village, which has since moved to Kimpton.

2. Character and Special Interest

2.1 Character

- 2.1.1 Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area is formed of three principal areas. The road called Kimpton Bottom runs along the southern part of the Conservation Area and contains the majority of its houses. Running north from this is Luton Road, which joins Kimpton Road and Fox Hill Road, and is less developed. Finally, the larger part of the Conservation Area is taken up by the grounds of Kimpton Lodge, which is largely obscured by trees from all potential vantage points, with the exception of its north and south gates. Thus, a significant proportion of the Conservation Area is inaccessible and out of sight and the grounds of Kimpton Lodge are not considered to be significant green space for this reason.
- 2.1.2 The dominant feature of the Conservation Area is the wooded boundary of Kimpton Lodge, which sits as a backdrop to the buildings along Kimpton Bottom. This has the effect of isolating the road called Kimpton Bottom from the remainder of the Conservation Area, though this serves to highlight its nature as a linear routeway along the valley bottom. On the south side of the road, the valley side rises, obscuring any long views and further creating the sense of relative enclosure that is experienced along this main road.
- 2.1.3 The predominant building material in Kimpton Bottom is red brick, which can be seen in the terraced cottages on Kimpton Bottom as well as at the Grade II listed Bottom Cottage (NHLE 1347273) and Stoneheaps (NHLE 1174113), where a red brick front has been added at least at ground floor level to an otherwise timber-framed building. In the north-east of the Conservation Area, The Commons (NHLE 1102757) is a timber-framed building in-filled with red brick and the cottages on Kimpton Road are in the same material. Kimpton Lodge is also in red brick, although could not be closely observed. There are a number of timber buildings in the Conservation Area, although only at The Commons can the frame itself be seen. Stoneheaps, Stoneheaps Cottage (NHLE 1102793) and the barn at Stoneheaps (NHLE 1102751) are substantially timber-framed, but the latter two are weatherboarded, with the upper storey of Stoneheaps Cottage rendered, as at Stoneheaps, where the ground floor has been faced in brick.
- 2.1.4 The roofs of older buildings in the Conservation Area are in red ceramic tile, while the roofs of later buildings, and the refurbished barn at Stoneheaps, are in slate. Windows are generally multi-light casements, although sash windows can be seen at The Old Cottage and 16-18 Kimpton Bottom.
- 2.1.5 There is a pavement with concrete kerbstones along much of Kimpton Bottom, behind which buildings generally have front gardens with garden walls to the pavement. These walls are in a variety of styles. In front of the terraced cottages is a low wall of rubble and cement, while at the adjacent 16-18 Kimpton Bottom, the front wall is in red brick. At Bottom Cottage, where the pavement ends, the wall is in flint capped with brick, while at Stoneheaps, a much older wall runs across the full length of the property and is in red brick in front of the house, then continues in flint with occasional red brick piers. Most of the south side of Kimpton Bottom is a grass verge in front of either wire fencing or hedging, and fields beyond. Other more modern properties have fences to the road, and boundaries between properties tend to be in the form of either timber fencing or hedges, with the exception of Kimpton Lodge.
- 2.1.6 Along Luton Road and Fox Hill Road there are no pavements, with the roads edged with steep verges, Luton Road itself appearing to be a hollow way.
- 2.1.7 There are a large number of trees in the Conservation Area, although these are generally part of the boundary of Kimpton Lodge, where they form an imposing backdrop to the houses on Kimpton

Bottom and obscure views of the house and grounds from almost all potential vantage points. The gateways themselves are imposing, and clearly make the point that Kimpton Lodge is a private space, but they are modern constructions of no architectural significance (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

- 2.1.8 Street furniture is limited to the small green spaces at the junction of Kimpton Bottom and Plummers Lane, and consists of modern signage, a Kimpton village sign, and concrete bollards.

2.2 Statement of Special Interest

- 2.2.1 Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area is principally of interest for its preservation of the character of the historic hamlet of Kimpton Bottom, which exists as a linear settlement adjacent to a crossroads with roads leading to a number of nearby towns. The character of the main residential part of the Conservation Area is rural-agricultural, with the majority of buildings relating to farms or farm labour. A large part of the Conservation Area is within the property of Kimpton Lodge, which is private land and largely obscured from view.
- 2.2.2 Luton Road, running south within the conservation area has the character of a hollow way with its narrow, undulating line, soft hedged boundaries and tree planting at the top of the banks which define the margins of the road. The character of this road emphasises the rural nature of the land around the settlement.

3. Key Assets and Views

3.1 Designated Heritage Assets

Listed Buildings

List Entry	Name	Grade	NGR
1174113	Stoneheaps	II	TL 16518 17960
1347273	Bottom Cottage	II	TL 16952 17985
1102751	Barn and Adjoining Outbuildings at Stoneheaps	II	TL 16540 17956
1102757	The Commons	II	TL 16699 18343
1102793	Stoneheaps Cottage	II	TL 16477 17975

3.2 Non-designated Heritage Assets

Buildings of Local Interest

3.2.1 Recommendations for buildings to be included on North Hertfordshire's Register of Buildings of Local Interest will be included in the Summary Report at the conclusion of the project.

Buildings or Features that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area

3.2.2 The following non-designated buildings are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area. These buildings have been selected for the contribution they make to the townscape of the conservation area.

- Old Cottage, Kimpton Bottom
- Brick wall outside Stoneheaps
- 16-18 Kimpton Bottom
- 8-14 Kimpton Bottom
- 2-6 Kimpton Bottom
- 148-150 High Street
- The Grange Cottages, Kimpton Road
- Kimpton Grange
- Cottages adjacent Kimpton Grange

3.3 Key Views

3.3.1 A number of Key Views have been identified within Kimpton Bottom, as follows:

- KV1: From near the west boundary of the Conservation Area on Kimpton Bottom, looking west out of the Conservation Area
- KV2: From Kimpton Bottom, south of Bottom Cottage, looking east towards Plummers Lane
- KV3: From the eastern limit of Kimpton Bottom, looking north-west towards houses and the trees bounding the south side of Kimpton Grange
- KV4: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking north along Fox Hill Road and out of the Conservation Area
- KV5: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking along Public Bridleway 33 towards Kimpton Village
- KV6: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking south along Kimpton Road

4. Opportunities for Improvement

4.1.1 Opportunities for improvement within Kimpton Bottom Conservation Area have been identified as follows:

- Cars parking along Kimpton Bottom is currently an issue and could be addressed with the management of cars in the hamlet.
- The loss of boundary walls, planting in gardens and definition to properties fronting onto Kimpton Bottom is a change which should be managed to try to preserve planting and the definition of properties to the greatest extent possible whilst managing parking.
- Management of the trees around Kimpton Lodge could be undertaken to provide long views of the roof and chimneys of the Lodge itself, which would help this large part of the Conservation Area make a more meaningful contribution to its character
- Residents should be encouraged to store bins within their property boundaries, screened from view rather than in locations immediately adjacent to the public realm.

5. Bibliography

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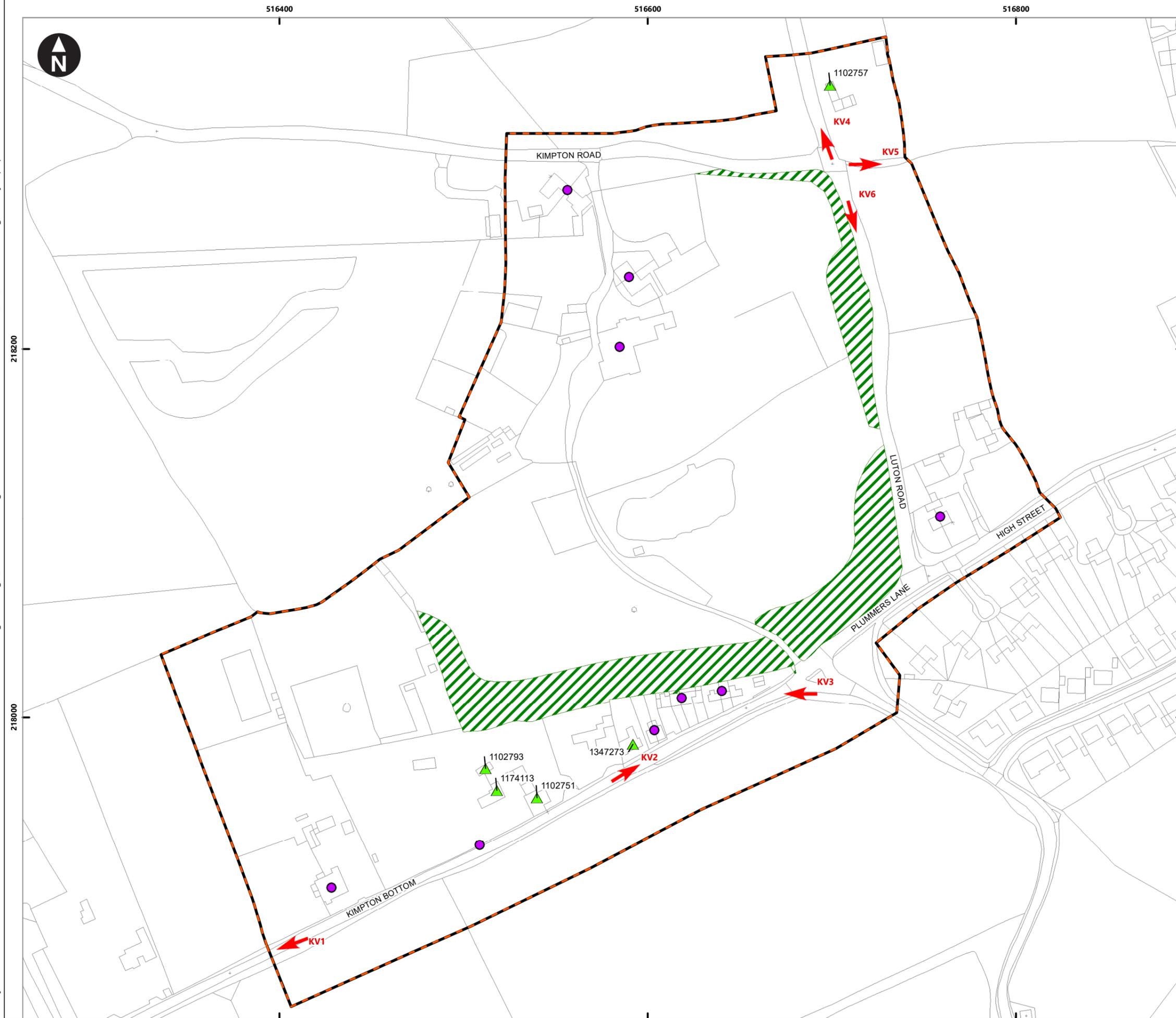
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Appendix A

Conservation Area Map





Key

- Conservation area
- Listed Buildings**
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- Scheduled ancient monument
- Historic parks and gardens
- Heritage at risk
- Significant key view
- Building or feature that contributes to the character of the Conservation area
- Significant areas of trees
- Significant tree
- Significant green space
- Significant blue space

Note:
The Historic England GIS data contained in this material was obtained on 26/06/2019. The most publicly available up to date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from <http://www.historicengland.org.uk>

0 50 100 m
Scale at A3: 1:2,000
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Client
NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

North Hertfordshire District Council
Conservation Area Character Statement

Kimpton Bottom

December 2019

Appendix B Photographs

B.1 Character Photographs



Figure 2.1: South gate to Kimpton Lodge from Plummers Lane.



Figure 2.2: North gate of Kimpton Lodge from Kimpton Road.

B.2 Key Views



KV1: From near the west boundary of the Conservation Area on Kimpton Bottom, looking west out of the Conservation Area showing Kimpton Bottom out of view to the west and emphasising the very rural character of the Conservation Area here (as compared with High Street in Kimpton Village for instance).



KV2: From Kimpton Bottom, outside Bottom Cottage, looking east towards Plummers Lane, showing the central part of the historic hamlet with the valley side sloping up to the south.



KV3: From the junction of Kimpton Bottom and Cooper's Hill, looking north-west towards houses and the trees bounding the south side of Kimpton Grange, demonstrating how the boundary trees of Kimpton Grange provide a backdrop for much of the rest of the Conservation Area, notably along Kimpton Bottom.



KV4: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking north along Fox Hill Road and out of the Conservation Area.



KV5: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking east along Public Bridleway 33 towards Kimpton Village.



KV6: From the junction of Luton Road and Kimpton Road looking south along Kimpton Road showing the former hollow-way that marks the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area.

wood.

