



GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Conservation Area Appraisal - publication

The Goring-on-Thames Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) was approved by SODC in December 2025 and published in January 2026. It is downloadable from

www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/sites/2/2026/01/Goring-WIP-adopted.pdf

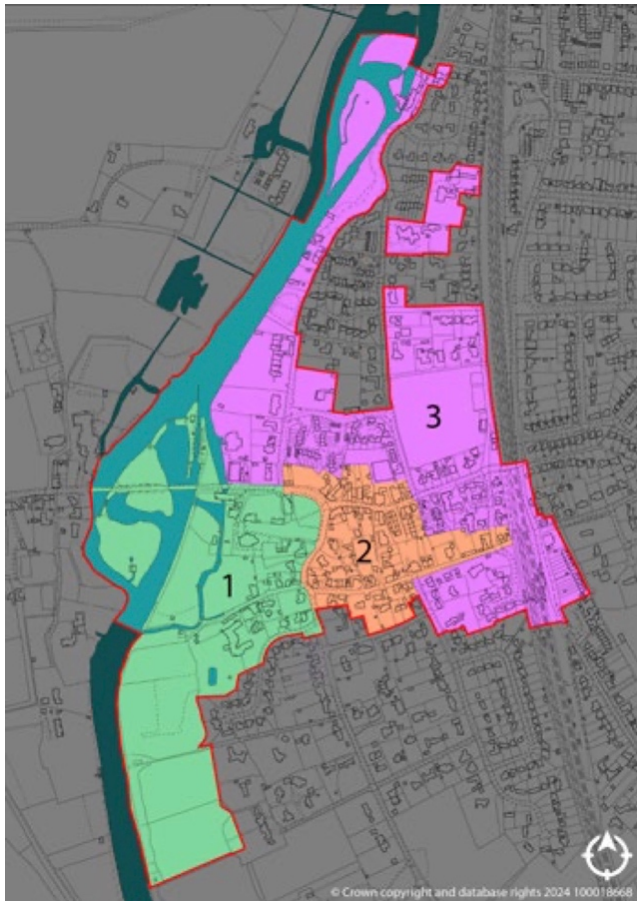
Councillors should all read the CAA which is now an important Goring-specific statutory document along with the Neighbourhood Plan. - www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/neighbourhood-plans/emerging-neighbourhood-plans/goring-neighbourhood-plan/

The CAA contains a Management Plan (section 8) for the Conservation Area which is reproduced below and which relevant Council decisions will need to take note of.

8.0 Management Plan

In general, Goring conservation area has attractive areas of public open space, streets and paths which create a charming setting for the historic buildings. However, areas for improvement can be identified.

The Council can initiate improvements and control development in the conservation area but the success of conservation area designation and its future management will depend upon the co-operation and enthusiasm of stakeholders including residents, statutory undertakers and business owners to work with the council in achieving common aims and objectives. Actions are listed below.



The 3 character areas

8.1 Specific character area issues

Character area 1

1. Views of the street scenes and the National Landscape within and from this area are particularly sensitive and require protection to retain local distinctiveness and historic character.
2. Historic water meadows in the south of the conservation area are threatened by informal enclosure for garden extensions and paddocks and intrusion by equestrian structures, sheds etc. These should be resisted where they affect views from public rights of way.
3. If historic hedges need to be cleared in the water meadows, replacements using appropriate native species should always be required. Close boarded fences should be resisted.

Character area 2

1. This area is characterised by small scale, two-storey village houses with complex, clay-tiled rooflines and brick chimneys. New development should respect and complement the fine-grained character of the area and the traditional building materials that predominate. The two-storey precedent for development should be respected.
2. Over 6000 vehicles per day cross the river bridge and the narrow High Street suffers from serious congestion and pollution. HGVs are a particular problem despite a 7.7 tonne weight limit and 'Access Only' restrictions through the village. Conditions for pedestrians in this area are poor, with narrow and discontinuous pavements. Support from Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department could help to improve the situation, for example, by examining the potential for a one way system for through traffic.
3. Redevelopment of Thames Court (above, *Fig 89*), allocated for housing in the Goring Neighbourhood Plan, and a proposal for regeneration of the village centre (The Arcade/Wheel Orchard area) for mixed uses, both have potential to contribute significantly to long term enhancement and sustainability of the conservation area. Replacement of unsightly, poor quality 1960s buildings which are unsustainable and a poor fit with their historic surroundings would be beneficial. In the short term, redevelopment of both sites has been delayed but they remain desirable long-term prospects when committed stakeholders come forward.
4. Station Road is an important route for pedestrians and wheelchair users, avoiding heavy traffic and narrow, discontinuous pavements in the High Street. It has no pavement but recent highways improvements enable pedestrians to share the road with vehicles in a more pedestrian friendly manner (right, *Fig 90*).

This is the best preserved of Goring's historic streets, lined by seven listed buildings and 12 buildings of local historic or architectural interest (NDHA) which contribute to important street views. It is important that surface water drainage improvements are well maintained to protect several listed and locally important historic buildings. In line with Oxfordshire County Council's Street Design Guide 2021, the improvement of Station Road has been an opportunity to respect the local context and complement the scale, height, density, grain, massing, type and details of the street and its historic buildings by use of sympathetic materials, textures and colours.

Character area 3

1. Saunders' Boathouse (1894), is of great visual and historic significance. Its style, architecture, size and position on the river at the heart of the conservation area and its connection with local boatbuilder Samuel Saunders, commemorated by a blue plaque, make it one of the most important buildings of local interest in the conservation area. It is largely wooden and in need of maintenance to prevent further deterioration of the fabric and to restore its appearance. Poorly conceived steps and a loading bay mar the frontage and do not have planning permission. Its loss or further alteration would be damaging to the conservation area.
2. The busy High Street pavement frontages to Saunders' Boathouse and Halsbury House (Pierreponts Café and a shop) suffer from unsightly and uneven forecourt surfaces, subsidence and poor drainage. Resurfacing can improve the setting and the appearance of this group of historic buildings, the red telephone box and the approach to the bridge.
3. Cleeve Road lacks any surface water drainage between Clevemedes and the High Street (525m). Rainfall causes the eastern side of the road to flood, detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area and resulting in poor conditions for pedestrians (see also below) and cyclists. Addressing the drainage problem can also improve the experience of the conservation area for pedestrians and cyclists.
4. The pavement on the east side of Cleeve Road between junctions with Glebe Ride and Clevemedes has an intermittent grass verge. Over time, maintenance has ceased and the grass has worn away to a muddy strip as the paved area is too narrow for pedestrians to walk on or pass easily, reducing accessibility. This is due in part but not entirely, to the fact that in

places hedges have not been cut back to property boundaries. Were this done adequately, the pavement would still be too narrow to accommodate pushchairs, wheelchairs and pedestrians. Removal of the redundant verge and resurfacing the whole pavement with a porous/permeable hard surface can provide a useful pavement width of 1.70m - 2.00m and make a substantial enhancement to the appearance and accessibility of the conservation area.

8.2 General Aims

The Council should:

1. Promote awareness of the special value of the conservation area by:
 - communicating and informing the public of its special value, character and appearance;
 - supporting preservation or enhancement of historic assets and their environs; and
 - interpretation and communication of the story of Goring told through its conservation area, for example, by encouraging the creation and communication of a Goring heritage trail for residents and visitors.

8.3 Public realm

The Council should encourage statutory undertakers and other stakeholders to:

1. Retain, maintain and reinstate historic street surfaces, verges and banks in a manner in keeping with the character of the conservation area. For example by:
 - selection of appropriate high quality, textured and coloured surface materials and use of granite kerb setts to complement the local vernacular;
 - regular street sweeping and cleansing to keep gutters and drains clear of leaves and to reduce deterioration of the public realm.
2. Prioritise improvements to pavements to improve accessibility and public safety. For example by:
 - improvement of drainage and pavement surface in Cleeve Road to improve access and safety in areas heavily used by pedestrians;
 - Improvement of conditions for pedestrians in the High Street.
3. Work to improve the appearance of the public realm by encouraging reduction of street clutter including wirescape and signage. For example by:
 - removal of redundant signage and discouragement of inappropriate advertising.
4. Rationalise use of street furniture. For example by:
 - adoption of a recommended style guide for street furniture such as benches, bins, bollards, and railings;
 - maintenance of its condition to keep it clean and in good repair.
5. Adopt minimum signage and lighting commensurate with safety. For example by:
 - discouragement of over-lighting on streets and buildings to enhance Goring's special village character and to reduce light pollution.
 - on-going replacement of sodium lights by LEDs.
6. Support sustainability and address climate change. For example by:
 - use of permeable/porous street surfaces to promote natural drainage;
 - use of careful design to reduce light pollution.
7. Protect and enhance the natural environment to sustain the character of the conservation area and to create a green legacy for future generations. For example by:
 - resisting the removal of hedges and walls within the conservation area;
 - requiring replacement of mature trees coming to the end of their natural lives;
 - encouraging regular tree/hedge management with re-planting where appropriate.

8.4 Design

The Council should:

1. Encourage high quality, energy efficient design which aims to fit in with the established 'grain' of the conservation area and be sympathetic to it. Heritage Appraisals and Impact Assessments along with Design and Access Statements will assist this process;
2. encourage use of SODC's Design Guide, the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and the Goring Design Statement to steer high quality design in the conservation area;

3. encourage the regular maintenance and repair of buildings walls, railings and means of enclosure in the conservation area with appropriate traditional materials and finishes including the removal of inappropriate and harmful cement renders and plasters;
4. seek to reinforce the special quality of historic buildings through the use of traditional materials and construction techniques, including the use of lime mortars, plasters and renders and painted timber windows and doors;
5. ensure that proposals for development should enhance or better reveal the significance of the conservation area, including responding to views both in, out and around the conservation area and in its wider setting.

Stakeholders should jointly aim to:

6. ensure that historic boundary walls enclosing streets, paths, pavements and car parks are appropriately maintained and conserved to preserve their historic value and protect public safety;
7. preserve those features of historic detail, pattern and character that contribute positively to local distinctiveness, for example casement windows, modest door hoods and low pitched, red clay tiled roofs with dormer windows;
8. locate new or replace existing external equipment such as satellite dishes, electricity and telephone wires or meter boxes discreetly away from the principal street frontage elevations, especially on pairs and terraces;
9. carefully consider the addition of roof lights. Where they are used, they should be located on rear roof slopes in order to preserve the special uncluttered appearance of front roof slopes;
10. ensure appropriate shop frontage replacement or reinstatement complies with SODC's traditional shopfront design guide and:
 - is in keeping with the character of the building and context;
 - reflects the scale and proportion of the building.
11. remove inappropriate, insensitive and/or non-compliant advertising and signage, illumination, replacement doors, uPVC windows and other intrusions;
12. consider opportunities for new development within the conservation area such as appropriate infill or the re-purposing of historic buildings, to ensure that the character of the area, its special interest and appearance is preserved, enhanced or otherwise better revealed in line with current national and local policy, informed by this document and the policies of the Goring Neighbourhood Plan. Scale, mass and visibility in such cases should be managed sensitively to ensure that new development enhances rather than damages the fine-grained detail of the conservation area and over-development should be resisted;
13. Consider how to better manage heavy traffic (about 6000 vehicles/day, including many HGVs) uses the High Street to access the bridge. This creates a polluted, unpleasant environment in the village centre and detracts from peoples' experience of the heart of the conservation area.