

# Blakeney

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

July 2018

DRAFT



**NORTH  
NORFOLK**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

PURCELL 

## How to Use This Document

For ease of use this document has been produced to be read on-screen as a PDF. It contains a series of features that make it easier to use and navigate between the sections.

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#### 3.1 EARLY HISTORY

Artefacts, such as flint axe heads and pottery, from as early as the Mesolithic period (10000-4001 BC) have been found around Blakeney. Bronze Age (c2350-701 BC) and early Saxon (410-1065 AD) barrows (burial mounds) are located on the Blakeney Downs, and there was probably a small settlement in the parish in the Roman period (43-409 AD).<sup>05</sup>

### Navigation

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You can also use the buttons in the top right hand corner to jump to the contents, appendices, or back to the page you were previously on.



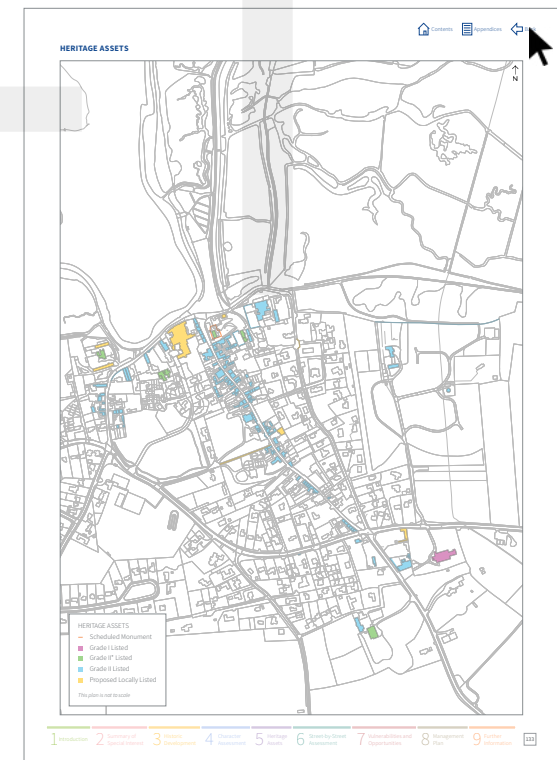
- Advertisements and other commercial signage may be subject to additional controls and/or require planning permission.
- Changing the use of a building (e.g. from residential to commercial) will require planning permission.

### Plans



When you see this icon, click to see a full-sized version of the plan (located in Appendix D).

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# Section 1

## Introduction

This section gives an overview of the Blakeney Conservation Area, provides information about what conservation area designation means and its implications for development, as well as outlines the consultation process that has been undertaken to prepare this Appraisal and Management Plan.



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## 1.1 BLAKENEY CONSERVATION AREA

The Blakeney Conservation Area was originally designated in 1974. The designation covers the historic core of the village which lies along The Quay to the north, along Westgate Street, The High Street and Back Lane leading south. It also encompasses the north side of New Road and parts of Cley Road and Wiveton Road, including St Nicholas' Church. To the east the boundary is drawn along the parish boundary, which cuts through the caravan site but includes Friary Farm, the site of a former Carmelite Friary. Part of the salt marsh and coast path to the north is also included within the boundary.

## 1.2 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

### Definition of a Conservation Area

A conservation area is defined as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character of which is it desirable to preserve or enhance'.<sup>01</sup>

Designation of a conservation area recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole. It is the contribution of individual buildings and monuments as well as other features including (but not limited to) topography, materials, spatial relationships, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity.

The extent to which a building or group of buildings/ structures, positively shape the character of a conservation area comes from their street-facing elevations, the integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing, and materials. Rear and side elevations can also be important, as can side views from alleys and yards or views down into buildings in valleys or low-lying topographies.

If the significant qualities of a conservation area are retained and inappropriate alterations prevented, the benefits will be enjoyed by owners, occupiers and visitors to the place, including the ability to experience interesting and important heritage structures and places. It is therefore in the public interest to preserve the area for cultural appreciation. Furthermore, preservation benefits individuals as a pleasant environment helps to maintain property prices.<sup>02</sup>

Conservation Areas are governed under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and the *National Planning Policy Framework (2012)* sets out the overarching requirement for local planning authorities to identify and protect areas of special interest. North Norfolk District Council's (NNDC) Local Development Framework (LDF, adopted 2008) sets out the council's policies for guiding development within the district. See this link for the latest heritage related policy: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/section/planning/planning-policy/>



Blakeney Conservation Area Boundary © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.



In addition to the policies contained within the LDF, NNDC has produced a Design Guide which includes guidance on appropriate alterations to historic buildings and within conservation areas. This guidance should be referenced when considering development within the Blakeney Conservation Area and can be viewed here: [https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/1268/north\\_norfolk\\_design\\_guide\\_adopted\\_2008\\_-web.pdf](https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/1268/north_norfolk_design_guide_adopted_2008_-web.pdf)

### 1.3 THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Understanding the character and significance of conservation areas is essential for managing change within them. It is therefore a requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that all local planning authorities ‘*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*’ of conservation areas within their jurisdiction, and that these proposals are periodically reviewed.<sup>03</sup> The proposals are normally presented in the form of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, which defines and records the special interest of a conservation area, as well as setting out a plan of action for its on-going protection and enhancement.

Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change by changes in their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within them. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered.

Over time, conservation areas evolve and the characteristics which underpin their special interest may decrease in their integrity because of gradual alteration. It is therefore important to review and take stock of the character of a conservation area at intervals to ensure designation is still suitable and that the proper management of change is in place.

Often, conservation area boundaries have historically been drawn too tightly or include peripheral areas which do not contribute to an understanding of its character. Consequently, it is important to review the boundary and include/exclude buildings and spaces which do/not meet conservation area designation criteria.

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan therefore seeks to:

- **Record and analyse the special interest of Blakeney Conservation Area;**
- **Recognise the designated and non-designated heritage assets which comprise the Conservation Area;**
- **Identify issues relating to condition and pressures for change;**
- **Identify opportunities for the enhancement of the Conservation Area;**
- **Provide guidance and recommendations for the positive management, preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area; and**
- **Set out any proposals for changes to the Conservation Area boundary.**





Although this document is intended to be comprehensive, the omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area. The protocols and guidance provided in Section 9 (Management Plan) are applicable in every instance.

The assessments which provide the baseline information for this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan have been carried out utilising publicly-available resources and through on-site analysis from the public thoroughfares within the Conservation Area.

### Definition of a Heritage Asset

The NPPF defines a heritage asset 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).*

### 1.4 WHAT DOES DESIGNATION MEAN FOR ME?

To protect and enhance the Conservation Area, any changes that take place must positively conserve the character and special interest that make it significant. Statutory control measures are intended to prevent development that may have a negative or cumulative effect on this significance.

- Planning permission will be required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structures (including walls, gate piers and chimneys). This will also need a heritage statement (sometimes called a heritage impact assessment) as part of the application.
- The extent of permitted development (i.e. changes that are allowed without requiring consent from the local authority) may be restricted; for example, replacement windows, alterations to cladding or the installation of satellite dishes. Additional control may be sought through Article 4 Directions, which specifically remove permitted development rights.
- Trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5m from soil level, are protected. Any work proposed to these trees require permission from the local authority by means of a planning application. This allows the authority to determine whether a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is necessary.

- Advertisements and other commercial signage may be subject to additional controls and/or require planning permission.
- Changing the use of a building (e.g. from residential to commercial) will require planning permission.

### 1.5 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

If you require tailored planning advice or need assistance regarding a specific development proposal, North Norfolk District Council offers a pre-application advice service.

Whatever the scale of development proposed, applying to the Council for pre-application advice will add value to the design quality of your scheme and it will help reduce potential uncertainty and delays by identifying any issues at an early stage.

Meaningful public consultation is also a critical part of this process and whilst responsibility for this lies with the applicant, the Council strongly encourages you to undertake consultation with the local community and stakeholders.

For further information regarding pre-application advice, please visit our website: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/development-management/what-is-the-pre-application-service/>



### 1.6 WHO HAVE WE CONSULTED WHILE PREPARING THIS PLAN?

It is a statutory requirement under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* for conservation area guidance produced by local authorities to be subject to public review, including a public meeting, and for the local authority to have regard to any views expressed by consultees.<sup>04</sup>

The Draft Blakeney Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is being made available for public consultation across a six-week period between XXXXXX and XXXXX 2018. This includes the publication of the draft document on North Norfolk District Council’s website and a public consultation meeting held at XXXX on XXXX.

Other means of consultation carried out include:

- Discussions with Cllr. Karen Ward (Blakeney, Wiveton, Morston, Glaven Valley) and Cllr. David Young (Cley).
- In March 2018, NNDC and Purcell presented to local residents at the Annual Parish Meeting in Blakeney to inform them of the Appraisal process and the process for consultation.
- NNDC and Purcell met with the Friends of North Norfolk in March 2018 to discuss with them the content, scope and aims of the Appraisals.
- Discussions were carried out with the Blakeney Area Historical Society regarding historical sources and access to their archive.

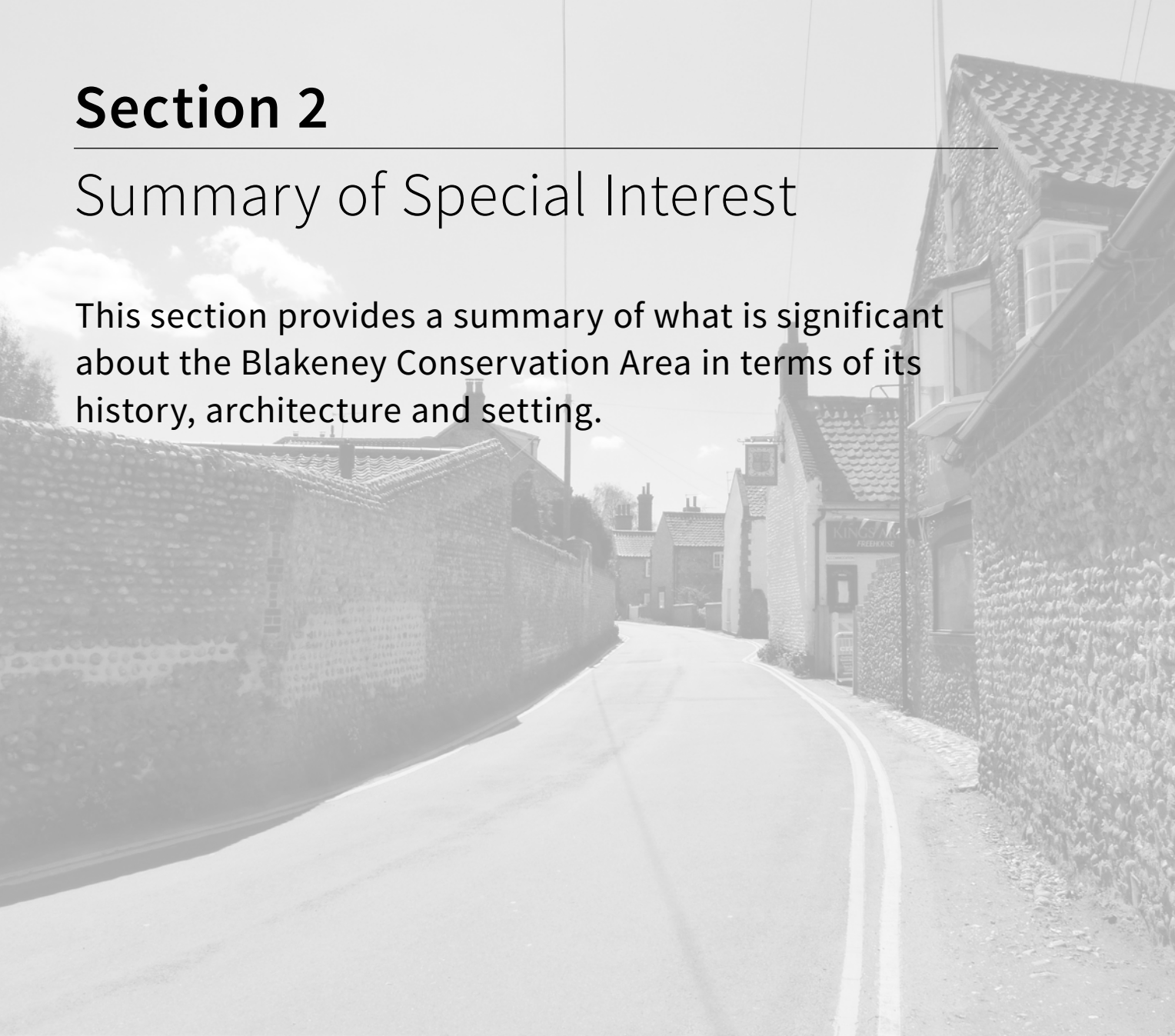




# Section 2

## Summary of Special Interest

This section provides a summary of what is significant about the Blakeney Conservation Area in terms of its history, architecture and setting.





# 2 Summary of Special Interest



Blakeney is one of the Glaven ports, which owe their existence to their proximity to the sea and the River Glaven. Together with Wiveton and Cley-next-the-Sea, Blakeney was an important port on the North Norfolk coast, which served import and export trade for hundreds of years. The village's function as a port has shaped its pattern of development and the buildings within it, with the Quay to the north being the industrial hub where former warehouses and granaries are located, intimate historic streets leading south with former worker's and fishermen's cottages, and the Church located to the south on a rise where it could be visible as a beacon from the sea.

Within the layout of the streets in Blakeney, it is possible to trace the village's development over time, with the thoroughfares of Westgate Street, the High Street and Wiveton Road and the former Friary forming much of the medieval settlement. Eighteenth and nineteenth century development, responding to a growth period where the population expanded rapidly, was characterised by the infill of spaces on the historic streets, with a typical layout of terraced houses set perpendicular to the main street along lokes (close, narrow lanes) or courtyards. Lastly, twentieth and twenty-first century development is demonstrated in the more suburban areas of New Road and Back Lane, when the village expanded beyond its historic core.

Blakeney still has a strong relationship with the water, being the only one of the Glaven ports that retains a substantial Quay, where boats form an everyday part of the streetscape and character of the area. In comparison, Wiveton has lost its Quay completely and Cley retains only a small Quay, largely concealed from the rest of the village. The setting of the village is of significance to its character, with the open, flat salt marshes interspersed with channels and creeks, set below the broad Norfolk skies. Views into and out of the Conservation Area to the north are especially important to preserve. This coastal setting is known nationally, and even internationally, as characteristic of the North Norfolk coast and its frequently represented in photographs, art and film, making it well known to the general population.

The agricultural setting to the south and bank of tree planting along the southern and eastern edges of the village are also important, the latter creating a green backdrop to the village as seen from the marshes. The two towers of St. Nicholas Church provide a punctuating element to the skyline in views, above the varied roofline of the buildings in the historic core. The towers are also a key element in providing a visual link between the neighbouring villages of Cley and Wiveton, where it can be seen in views over the River Glaven. Green spaces within the village, such as The Pastures, are valued open areas for recreation.

Blakeney's historic buildings are rooted in the craft traditions of their locality. The predominant building materials for houses, former industrial buildings, public buildings and boundary walls is flint, from small pebbles neatly coursed to chunky flints mixed with brick rubble. Red brick is used for dressings as well as for the higher status buildings; stone and gault brick are rare in the village as they could not be locally sourced. Roofs are mostly covered with red clay pantiles. Whilst some of the buildings in Blakeney illustrate wider, fashionable influences on their design from at least the seventeenth century onwards, such as the Georgian design of merchant's houses on the Quay, the consistent use of local materials, especially flint, gives them a local vernacular touch.

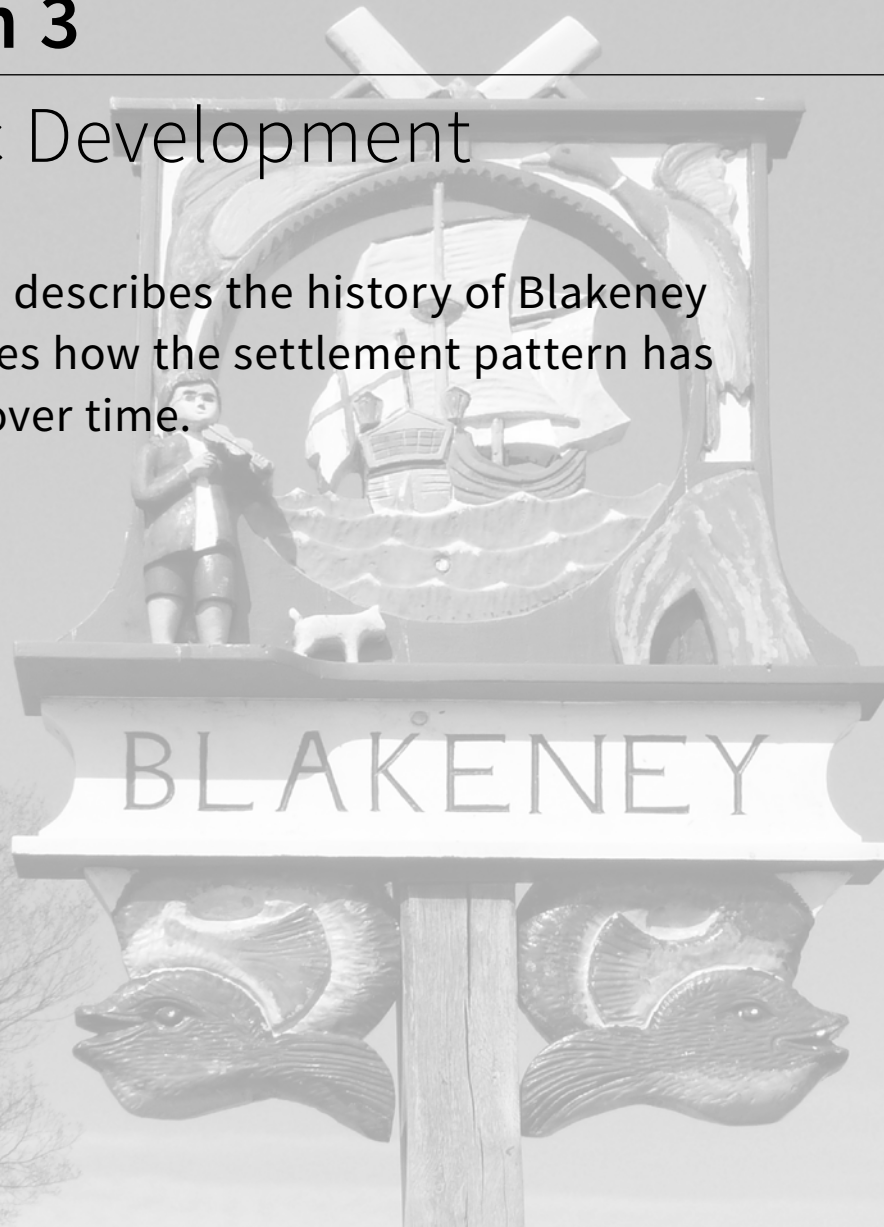
The most significant historic buildings in Blakeney are acknowledged through national listing, such as the Grade I listed St. Nicholas' Church, several Grade II\* larger houses and the Guildhall, and numerous Grade II listed smaller houses which all contribute to the character and local vernacular of the Conservation Area. This Appraisal also sets out the buildings proposed for local listing for their historic and aesthetic contribution to the village, such as the Church Hall, Methodist Church and Blakeney Hotel, that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.



# Section 3

## Historic Development

This section describes the history of Blakeney and discusses how the settlement pattern has developed over time.



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Blakeney has early origins but flourished from the thirteenth century as an international trading port. It became the key port in the Blakeney Haven after the decline of the ports of Cley-next-the-Sea and Wiveton in the early nineteenth century but from the end of that century maritime trade ceased and tourism has now replaced it as the key industry.

### 3.1 EARLY HISTORY

Artefacts, such as flint axe heads and pottery, from as early as the Mesolithic period (10000-4001 BC) have been found around Blakeney. Bronze Age (c2350-701 BC) and early Saxon (410-1065 AD) barrows (burial mounds) are located on the Blakeney Downs, and there was probably a small settlement in the parish in the Roman period (43-409 AD).<sup>05</sup>

The Domesday Book of 1086 records a settlement in the parish called Snitterley. It is unknown for certain whether Snitterley and Blakeney were two separate settlements in close proximity or whether Snitterley became Blakeney.<sup>06</sup> Blakeney comes from the Old English word meaning ‘an island or dry ground in marsh’; however, this name was not used until 1230 in the Patent Rolls.<sup>07</sup> After the thirteenth century, items relating to the port mentioned the place Blakeney but Snitterley was used when referring to the church, Carmelite Friary to the east of the settlement (established 1296) and the town itself.<sup>08</sup>

### 3.2 MEDIEVAL HEYDAY

Blakeney lay in the medieval Hundred of Holt.<sup>09</sup> During the early middle ages, Blakeney was not as important as Cley or Wiveton; whilst the former two were protected by the shelter of the estuary, Blakeney, before the growth of the spit, was exposed to northerly gales.<sup>10</sup>

Henry III endowed the town with its market charter in 1223, allowing it to hold a weekly market and an annual fair. The first written records documenting maritime trade at both Blakeney and Cley-next-the-Sea begin in the mid-thirteenth century; at this time both settlements were well-established ports with a coastal and foreign trade centred around fish. Boat building was also an important trade from the medieval period until the nineteenth century. The town was asked to supply ships to Edward the III in the 1320s-40s for various military campaigns. It is thought that there were no established boatyards but that ships were built in open bays along the cliffs to the north of Friary Farm; the last ship built in Blakeney was the Hull Packet in 1844.<sup>11</sup>

The establishment of the Carmelite Friary in 1296 reflected its importance as a trading port, as the Carmelites generally preferred larger towns; this was because they survived on charitable donations rather than revenue from land. Fragments of Friary masonry, including a buttress on the east side and some window and door fragments, remain in Friary Farmhouse to the north of the church. The Friary was sufficiently important to be included on a late-fourteenth century

map of Britain; one of just a handful depicted in north Norfolk.<sup>12</sup> The map, known as the Gough map after one of its former owners, Richard Gough, is one of the earliest maps produced on which Britain is geographically recognisable.

The Friary was dissolved in 1538.<sup>13</sup> Another marker of this medieval wealth of Blakeney is the Guildhall, built not by a local guild but probably as a two storey house for a successful merchant; its brick fourteenth century vaulted undercroft may later have been used by a guild of fish merchants.<sup>14</sup> Mariners’ Hill adjacent to the Guildhall is thought to be man-made in the medieval period as a vantage point and for defensive purposes; cannon balls were found there during excavations in the 1950s.<sup>15</sup>

The chancel of St Nicholas Church, dedicated to St Nicholas, the patron saint of fishing, was also built in the thirteenth century by the Friars of the Carmelite order; most of the present church is constructed in the late medieval Perpendicular Gothic style. The reconstruction of the nave and tower was probably complete by c1435.<sup>16</sup> The lantern tower on the east end served as a beacon to ships approaching Blakeney.

By the early sixteenth century the Glaven estuary was flourishing in terms of coastal and foreign trade, the former largely depended on salt fish, both Icelandic cod and ling, as well as locally caught cod, herring and sprats. Foreign trade stemmed mainly from the Low



Countries, Norway and Iceland with imports centring around brick, iron, building stone and rope. Exports largely consisted of agricultural items: barley, malt and grain. During the sixteenth century, a trade of coal import and grain export emerged alongside the thriving fishing industry. By 1590 the Glaven ports were enjoying their most thriving period.

A 1586 map gives visual evidence of the position and size of Blakeney in the late sixteenth century. Whilst

Cley is shown as a relatively large settlement, with 59 buildings depicted, lying next to the main channel, Blakeney is smaller, with only 32 houses depicted. The Blakeney channel was illustrated as much smaller than that leading to Cley, suggesting that Blakeney was not as important a port at this date.<sup>17</sup> Blakeney is however notable for its two churches, ‘The Fryers’ (or the old Carmelite Friary) and St Nicholas Church. The houses at Blakeney lie along a road, which may be the High Street. The map, whilst showing buildings such

as churches, houses and mills, also includes pictorial details giving a sense of the local environment and industry, such as animals in fields, rabbits, a ship wreck, figures cockling on the beach and ship and fishes in the sea and along the channels.

In the late sixteenth century, Elizabeth I asked that Blakeney contribute two ships of 60 tons and a pinnace to the Armada; however, this was not possible as the vessels had all gone to Iceland.<sup>18</sup>



Map of Blakeney Haven and the Port of Cley, nineteenth century facsimile of a 1586 original, thought to have been surveyed by John Darby (Image courtesy of Norfolk Record Office: MC 106/28/1)

### 3.3 BLAKENEY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

During the seventeenth century, coastal trade increased; Blakeney and Cley were the major passage for agricultural produce from north-east Norfolk. The main traded items comprised barley, malt and fish, whilst London supplied wine, groceries, cloth and other materials. Produce imported included a range of objects, for example coal, iron, wood, luxury food items, spices and wine. By the early seventeenth century, trade had reached France, Spain and in 1589 there had been mention of the first Blakeney ship sailing for the Mediterranean to source exotic goods and spices.<sup>19</sup> However, from the seventeenth century, foreign trade began to decline as routes required larger ships which were too big for the harbour and Blakeney and Cley began to rely more upon London, Yarmouth and Hull for exotic goods rather than trade overseas themselves.<sup>20</sup>

During this century landowners began reclaiming and draining marshland to increase the acreage of their pasture. In the 1630s, Van Hasedunk, a Dutchman, began enclosing marshes in Salthouse. Sir Henry Calthorpe built a bank across the River Glaven in 1637.<sup>21</sup> The bank, combined with natural accretion, resulted in

the silting up of the main channel of the Glaven estuary. Owing to local protest, the Privy Council ordered Philip Calthorpe, Sir Henry's son, to remove the bank in 1639 but the years of interrupted trade and silting had permanently damaged the ports at Wiveton. Philip Calthorpe, instead, embanked Blakeney marshes to the west of the Cley channel and Simon Britiffe did the same to his marshes to the east around 1650.<sup>22</sup> Although the embankments did not immediately interfere with trade at Blakeney, they resulted in accelerating the silting up of the channels contributing to the eventual decline of the port.<sup>23</sup> However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries trade continued: in 1786 the combined port of Blakeney and Cley was given the title of chief port.<sup>24</sup>

A map of 1693 by Captain G. Collins gives a looser representation of the settlement, with buildings clustered along what is presumably the High Street, with the large church at the end. A square tower with battlements overlooks Blakeney Quay, which is possibly a representation of the Guildhall.<sup>25</sup> A bridge crosses the estuary and links Blakeney to the settlement at Cley.



Map dedicated to Sir Cloddsley Shovell (Rear Admiral of the Blue) by Captain G. Collins, 1693 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library) Note, the map is orientated with north to the bottom of the image.



### 3.4 BLAKENEY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In the eighteenth century, grain export, mainly barley, to London and coal import came into its own, and the population of Blakeney grew rapidly.<sup>26</sup> The town's prosperity at this point is reflected in the construction of large merchant's houses such as The Quay House and The Red House, both by the Quay.

In 1769, Lord James Calthorpe commissioned William and Corba Cranefield to survey Blakeney and parts of surrounding towns. The map depicts houses lining the High Street, particularly on the west side. A small cluster of buildings are also located around the cross roads adjacent to the church. The Rectory on the west side of Wiveton Road is shown as one of the biggest houses in the village. A note on the space just north of the Church indicates that this was formerly the market place, giving a sense that the Church and houses in this area were not so detached from the main centre of the village as they feel today. Houses also line Westgate Street, with a few to the west of this, on the coast side of Morston Road. The spaces in between houses were divided as fields. To the east, the north end of Back Lane has appeared, though it turns south-eastwards to pass to the east of the Church about half way along its length. No obvious remains of the Friary are shown but the windmill to the east is depicted. Finally, the prominence of the village as a port is shown by the depiction of a several large ships moored at the Quay or sailing on the Blakeney Channel.

Faden's map of Norfolk, dating to 1797, picks out the Church at the south end of Blakeney. A string of houses line the High Street, Westgate Street and the Quay, and a single large house is depicted in elevation on the west side of the Wiveton Road and labelled at the parsonage. The site of the Friary is marked to the east of the main village.



Faden, Map of Norfolk, 1797 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: C9111.4261)



An exact survey of Blakeney with part of towns adjacent, William and Corba Cranefield, 1769 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Record Office: BL49/1)



### 3.5 BLAKENEY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Whilst the low levels of foreign trade and silting up of the channels worsened throughout the nineteenth century for Cley, in 1817 Blakeney was revived by an Act of Parliament and the establishment of the Blakeney Harbour Company.<sup>27</sup> The Act called for the cutting of a new channel through 500 yards of marsh to the Haven, deepening the water at Blakeney Quay; Blakeney, therefore, became the dominant port.<sup>28</sup> Many of the buildings in the High Street date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a time when Blakeney's trade was still vibrant.

The Blakeney, Wiveton and Glandford Inclosure Act of 1820 and Award of 1824 resulted in the release of land in the form of small allotment plots, which were then used for building. Many of the flint cottages which form the yards off the High Street appear to date from this era of building, at a time when the population had grown from 618 in 1801 to more than 1,100 in 1851.<sup>29</sup> The Inclosure map shows the dense development along both sides of the High Street, with clusters of buildings lining Westgate Street. Larger buildings are set on the Quay, which can be married up with former barns existing now, which sit perpendicular to the Quay, and larger merchant's houses. Further buildings have been constructed at the north end of Back Lane. New Road is mentioned for the first time, on a section of road

leading west from the crossroads north-west of the Church, though this stops at a junction with an earlier route of the Saxlingham Road and does not curve up to the south end of Westgate Street yet, as it does today.

As ships sizes increased throughout the nineteenth century, Blakeney could not rival larger ports. In addition, the channel had begun to silt up again. The embankment has often been blamed for the decline of the port at Blakeney; however, it has been argued that, more importantly than the silting, was the competition from the railways.<sup>30</sup> Their arrival to North Norfolk in the 1870s and 80s enabled cheaper and faster transportation of goods which terminated the already dwindling streams of trade to and from the Glaven ports.

During the late nineteenth century, the tourism industry took over as the active industry in Blakeney. With an emphasis on bird-watching and sailing, the village became a coastal

resort and boating centre. Beginning as early as the 1860s, the annual Blakeney Regatta reflected the leisure and tourist industry of the town.

The 1887 OS map shows a similar pattern of development to the 1824 plan but with a few more buildings added on infill plots on Westgate Street and the High Street.



Plan of the parishes of Blakeney, Wiveton and Glandford: Inclosure, Benjamin Leak of Holt, 1824 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Record Office)





1887 OS map

### 3.6 BLAKENEY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the turn of the twentieth century, Blakeney was still a bustling harbour, with boats being loaded and unloaded at the Quay, goods transported around the town and marine industries still flourishing. Oysters and mussels were harvested and washed in pits on what is now the car park at the Quay. Lugworms, cockles and samphire were all collected in the locality. As well as the warehouses along the Quay, George Long ran a sail-making business, on the site which is now the public WCs.<sup>31</sup> Page and Turner were the most prominent merchants and ship owners in town, with offices at the north end of the High Street in the building now in use as The Moorings restaurant. Page and Turner had houses either side of Little Lane, with a tunnel connecting the two properties.<sup>32</sup>

By the 1910s, trade had significantly decreased; the last vessel to trade aboard was the Janie in 1889 bringing timber from Gothenburg,<sup>33</sup> the last sea-going vessel was sold in 1916<sup>34</sup> and the last harbour master left in 1917. Page and Turner's office closed in 1922. However, the tourist industry was growing, with Country Life reporting in 1907 that many inhabitants made livings from providing boat trips and renting rooms to artists, and in 1913 Blakeney Point was acquired by the National Trust, bringing further bird watchers and naturalists to the area.<sup>35</sup> By the 1920s, Blakeney had

made the transition from a busy harbour in the early nineteenth century to a holiday town and the coming of the motor car which brought holiday makers in tow. Tourism was served by the construction of Blakeney Hotel in 1923, built on the site of the old Crown and Anchor Inn, and several redundant maltings were either demolished or converted into shops and houses.<sup>36</sup> The Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society was established in 1946 in order to keep some of the old cottages for residents of Blakeney. Plaques marking these houses are still in place on several houses in the village. The Society still controls more than a third of the social housing in the village.<sup>37</sup>



Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society plaque on a house on the High Street

Early to mid-twentieth century photographs of Blakeney show how much of its character remains the same today. The High Street is characterised by flint and brick houses, with pitched roofs, bay windows and shop signs, lining a cobbled pavement. Many photographs show the Quay with the newly constructed Blakeney Hotel with buildings around it still in use as warehouses, though later photographs show one warehouse next to the Hotel with windows and a door, presumably one of the buildings converted to residential or holiday use. The Quay had seriously deteriorated by 1935 and was reconstructed shortly after. The poor condition of the timber retaining wall is seen in several photographs, followed by the newly reconstructed version. The photographs show that white railings, though timber at this time compared to metal now, have long been a feature of the Quay. Photographs looking out from the village also show the evolving course of the channel over time.



*The White Horse, High Street, undated (early twentieth century)  
(Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: C/Bla)*



*Blakeney Quay, 1935 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: BLA-R 6156)*





Blakeney Quay, 1911 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: Bla-R NS 2988)



Blakeney Harbour, 1929 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: BLA-R 5253)



Blakeney Quay, post-1935 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: Blakeney)



Westgate Street before the conversion of the houses on the right to the Spar, early twentieth century? (Blakeney History Centre), \*\*permission pending



The Spar on Westgate Street in 2018

There was little development in Blakeney between the 1887 and 1950 OS maps. However, the town expanded south in the second half of the twentieth century. Until the mid-twentieth century, Blakeney was concentrated north of the coast road. However, after the Second World War (during which time troops were billeted in homes and hotels around Blakeney) most of the new homes were built along or south of the coast road.<sup>38</sup> An aerial photograph from 1964 illustrates this development; the land at the south (both sides of New Road) which previously contained allotment gardens, had largely been converted to detached houses with spacious gardens. Some houses had also been constructed on Saxlingham Road and on the west side of Back Lane, though there was little new development on the east side of Back Lane. Caravans are dotted on land around Friary Farm.



1950 OS map (National Library of Scotland)



Aerial Perspective of Blakeney, 1964 (Image courtesy of Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library: BLA-O 30113)

A photograph from c1959 captures a view of the High Street looking south from the Quay, while another shows it in today. The timber huts to the left in the earlier photograph were replaced with a block of apartments by the 1980s. In the latter, several modern buildings and extensions have altered the character of the north end of the High Street as depicted in the early twentieth century. However, much of its character remains today.



High Street looking south from the Quay in 2018



High Street looking south from the Quay c.1959 (Blakeney History Centre), \*\*permission pending





### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- Site Boundary
- Pre-1700
- 1700 to 1825
- 1825 to 1900
- 1900 to 1950
- 1950 to Present

*This plan indicates the age of the existing built fabric of the main buildings and structures in Blakeney. It is mostly based on a comparison of historic maps with limited verification through viewing of the existing building from the street. Some buildings may have been constructed in phases but generally only the main phase is shown here. Some buildings may have been partially rebuilt or substantially repaired since they were first built but their footprint was unchanged and so the change is not obvious in map comparisons. Where this is the case, generally the building is coloured for the earliest date that it appears on the map.*

*This plan is not to scale*

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# Section 4

## Character Assessment

This section describes the elements of the Blakeney Conservation Area that contribute to its setting, architecture form, street pattern and townscape character.

### Contents

- 4.1 Location and Topography
- 4.2 Setting and Views
- 4.3 Townscape and Spatial Analysis
- 4.4 Architecture
- 4.5 Green Landscaping

## 4.1 LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Blakeney Conservation Area covers the central core of the village of Blakeney, including the High Street, the Quay and Westgate Street, as well as encompassing areas more recently developed to the south along New Road, and to the west, along Back Lane. To the north, part of the salt marsh is included in the boundary and to the west the former Carmelite Friary site, now Friary Farm, and the caravan site are included.

Blakeney is a village of roughly 402 households.<sup>39</sup> It is located approximately five miles north-west of Holt and 28 miles north-west of Norwich. Blakeney is located within the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In addition, it is part of the area known as the North Norfolk Heritage Coast and the marshland coast to the north forms part of the North Norfolk Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which constitutes one of the largest undeveloped coastal habitats of its type in Europe.<sup>40</sup>

The village is set on a gentle slope, which rises southwards from the marshes to the area of Howe Hill, on which the church is situated. At the heart of the village, the land slopes gradually downwards from New Road as it approaches the Quay to the north. From here, long range views are afforded across the flat salt marshes beyond.

At the outskirts of the village, to the east, the land rises as it moves away from the village, passing the church, which is located near the apex of the hill. Beyond this,

the land falls away again on the approach to Cley-next-the-Sea. The elevated position of the church means it is visible from a number of vantage points outside the village, particularly to the south, where the land gradually declines along Wiveton Road.

At the west of the village, along Morston Road, the land rises as it leaves the village, towards the apex at Kettle Hill, and then falls away towards Morston.





## 4.2 SETTING AND VIEWS

### Definition of Setting

The setting of a conservation area provides its physical context, reflecting the landscape character around it. Setting is made up of several elements beyond just topographical or natural parameters; it is also made up of sounds, smells, environmental atmosphere and the way people move around it and experience. It can contribute both positively and negatively to the significance of a site and can provide evidence of the historic context of a place. Views also form part of the contribution to the setting of conservation areas. They may include views from, to, within or across an area, taking into consideration the area's surroundings, local topography, natural and built features, and relationships between buildings and spaces.

### The Importance of Views

The assessment of views within the setting of heritage assets is an important part of establishing its heritage value. A view may be significant for a number of reasons: it may clearly show a key building or group of buildings, it may show the relationship of one heritage asset to another or to the natural landscape, it may illustrate the unplanned beauty of a village-scape, it may tell the narrative of how a place has evolved over time, or it may show how a view has been deliberately designed. Views can be static or may change as a viewer moves through a place. They may be short or long range, or look across, through, to or from a heritage asset.

At Blakeney the natural landscape setting is a key part of the character of the village. It affects the physicality of the conservation area in a variety of ways, from the materiality of the buildings' construction through to the salty smell, cold winds and sound of birds from the salt marshes and sea beyond. This is described below, together with details of Blakeney's relationship with the nearby Glaven Port villages and a discussion of views of the Conservation Area. The view photographs included in this Appraisal are a representative selection. The omission of any view imagery here does not mean they have no value.





### 4.2.1 Surrounding Landscape

To the south, east and west, the village is surrounded by agricultural land and open fields. To the north, the village is bordered by saltmarshes, and beyond that, the estuary of the River Glaven and the shingle spit of Blakeney Point.

The coastal landscape at Blakeney is dominated by views over the saltmarshes and of the estuary of the River Glaven, visible from the Quay and from the North Norfolk Coastal Path. This area is a landscape of low level vegetation and tidal creeks. The salt marsh, natural and artificial brackish lagoons, reedbeds and maritime pasture of the SSSI provides important habitats for a variety of flora and fauna, including many nationally and internationally important breeding bird communities.<sup>41</sup> The physical character of the marshes includes a flat, open plain of grasses and reeds, stretching northwards to broad open skies. The Blakeney Channel is a key part of the surrounding landscape, forming the northern boundary of the village by the Quay, with water playing a key part of the setting of the northern end of the village.

To the east and south of the Conservation Area boundary are roads leading out of the village which are lined with individual houses or small housing estates. Many are modern but there are some on Wiveton Road which date back as far as the seventeenth century. These areas have a more suburban feel than the historic core of the village, with houses generally detached and with neat front gardens. These areas form the immediate setting of the Conservation Area but beyond is an agricultural landscape, with fields of grasses surrounded by hedges and some trees. The land is generally quite flat, with some slight rises, often topped with clumps of trees. Narrow roads branch out from Blakeney and snake across the landscape to neighbouring settlements.

To the west the land slopes gently down towards the valley of the River Glaven, which separates Blakeney from Wiveton and Cley-next-the-Sea. The wide, flat former riverbed is now reclaimed agricultural land on the silted-up banks of the river. The character of the agricultural landscape is generally very green and lush, particularly in the summer.



*Water plays a key role in the setting of the Conservation Area along The Quay*



*The salt marshes as seen from raised ground to the north of Friary Farm*



*Agricultural landscape surrounding Blakeney to the south. This image shows the view off Langham Road with Blakeney Church in the distance*



*Suburban style houses within the setting of Blakeney, on Langham Road*

#### 4.2.2 Relationship with Other Settlements

Blakeney is one of a group of villages along the North Norfolk coast which have a visual, spatial and historic relationship. A description of their links is given here to provide an understanding of the importance of their relationships.

In physical terms, the closest settlement to Blakeney by distance is Morston, located roughly one mile to the west. The two villages are connected by a short section of the Coast Road, as well as by the North Norfolk Coastal Path. Wiveton and Cley-next-the-Sea are located within 1.5 miles to the east.

Blakeney is one of the group of villages, which also includes Cley and Wiveton, that formed the Glaven Ports historically. These were fishing ports in the medieval period, with origins as inlets around the coast which provided a base for longshore fishermen. Overseas imports of salt for the fishing industry lead to the expansion of the ports and by the early sixteenth century the Glaven estuary was flourishing in terms of coastal and foreign trade. The substantial medieval churches in these villages are testament to their former prominence as trading ports.

The landscape surrounding the villages has changed dramatically since that time. Previously a much wider estuary and river would have meant a greater expanse

of water along the Quay, where substantial ships could harbour and a much closer connection to the open water due to narrower salt marshes.

Since the demise of trade and the silting up of the river and estuary, the connection between the Glaven Ports is via road or by the coastal path which runs out into the marshes from Blakeney to Cley. Agricultural land lies between these three villages, though Wiveton Hall also sits on the north side of the Coast Road approximately equidistant between Blakeney and Cley.

Morston was of less importance in trade historically. However today, like its neighbour at Blakeney, it plays a role in tourism of the local area, with the quay at Morston a popular mooring point.

The agricultural, coastal and river landscape around these settlements forms an important open setting. The villages are also connected by views, with the tall tower of Blakeney church visible from Cley and Wiveton. Both Cley and Blakeney are visible within the same vista when on the coastal path. Views are discussed in more detail below.

All the villages have similarities in terms of the relatively small scale and massing of most buildings, and the use of brick and flint as the predominant building materials.

### 4.2.3 Views into Conservation Area

A selection of numbered key views has been included here, with further view images included in Appendix B.

Due to the open nature of the landscape surrounding the village, it is possible to gain long range views showing the Conservation Area from several directions.

In general, the most important of these views are those of the church tower and of the Quay and marshes. The church is the most visible building in the Conservation Area and it is seen in views from Langham Road, Saxlingham Road and Cley Road, and from as far away as Wiveton village. These long-range views are in part possible due to the elevated ground on which the church sits; the village more generally sits on lower ground which further facilitates these views.

From the north, views of Blakeney can be gained from long distance, viewed across the flat saltmarshes from the coastal paths with the wide open skies above.

Views are possible from Morston, Cley and walking out from Blakeney itself. Views back to the village from boats on the water also give a very long distance perspective of the village. The buildings of the village are less distinctive in these views but the varied rooflines of buildings are visible clustered at the base of the rise in the land behind. Trees cover this rise, giving a green backdrop to the village, and the church towers are a prominent feature on the skyline which mark the location of the village from a distance out at sea.

Many of the views into the Conservation Area from the south give little sense of form of the village, due to the lie of the land with the village proper set down below the rise of Howe Hill. Views along Morston Road, Langham Road and Saxlingham Road instead

capture the more modern housing developments lining the roads at the outskirts of the village. Views along Wiveton Road conversely present the viewer with a bank of trees marking the entrance to the village.



*A selection of numbered key views has been included here, with further view images included in Appendix B. Base map © Google Earth 2018*





### View 1

View of the two towers of Blakeney Church from Wiveton village across the surrounding agricultural landscape



### View 2

View across Blakeney from Kettle Hill. The rise of land at the view point and around the site of the church is evident. In the foreground is a modern housing development, but parts of the historic core, the marshes and Church tower are visible in the distance.



### View 3

View of Blakeney Church approaching along Cley Road with its two towers visible as key landmarks when approaching the village. The gates to Wiveton Hall are visible to the right



### View 4

View along Wiveton Road, looking into Blakeney, showing the tree cover which marks the entrance to the village at this location





### View 5

View back towards Blakeney from the Coastal Path showing the low-lying nature of the village, though with a variety of roofscapes, the green backdrop of trees and the church tower projecting above the horizon



### View 6

Long distance view of Blakeney as seen from a boat near Morston Quay (c2013). The sea and the salt marshes provide the wide, flat landscape with broad skies above. The green rise of the low hills around Blakeney with the church on top show its location, with scatterings of houses visible at the base of the hill



#### 4.2.4 Views within Conservation Area

A selection of numbered key views has been included here, with further view images included in Appendix B.

Views within the Conservation Area can be considered under four broad categories:

- Views along streets and across spaces, usually with no set focal point but which reflect the character of the Conservation Area.
- Views looking out northwards to the salt marshes and estuary.
- Short range views down lanes and side passages.
- Views of landmark buildings.

#### Views along streets and across spaces

The views identified in this section give a general sense of the character of different parts of the Conservation Area. Firstly, views along the narrow Westgate Street and High Street capture the intimate atmosphere of these medieval streets, with views looking north and south channelled by the buildings either side which are set right up against the street. Views show the varied roof lines, gables and other architectural details, and demonstrate the mixture of use of flint, brick and render. Walls often form a feature lining the streets, particularly at the southern ends where they have a framing effect to the view. The density of buildings,

similarity of scale, massing and materiality are all clearly evident in these views.

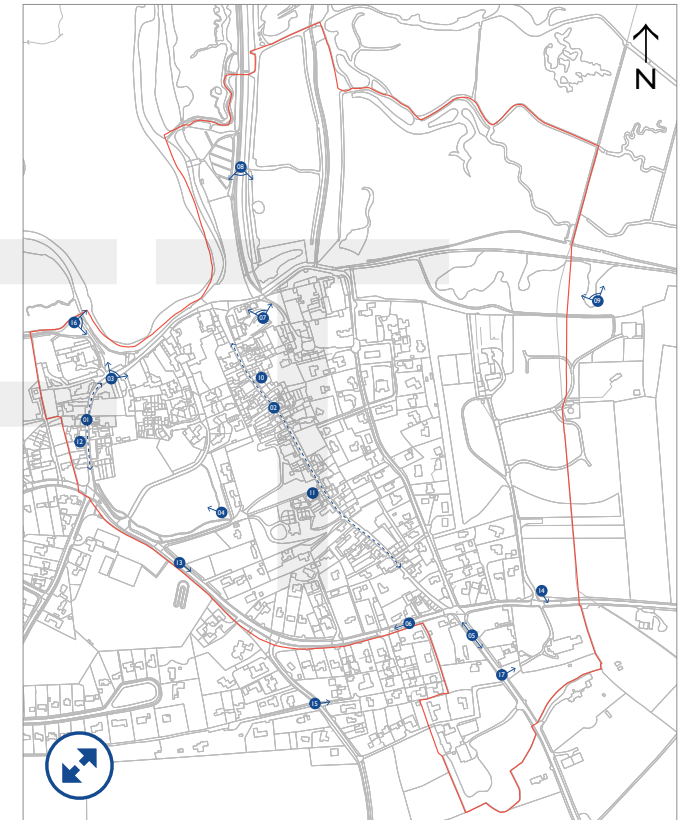
The wider New Road has a much more open and leafy character. Views along this road are characterised by the set back of the houses from the street and their surrounding gardens, creating a more suburban feel than the densely packed historic streets to the north. Back Lane also has this character, though with a narrower road which channels views along it and numerous mature trees which create a greater sense of enclosure.

The defining features of views along Wiveton Road are the flint walls lining the street and channelling the views each way, plus the mature trees and vegetation which create an enclosed feeling.

The Quay is one of the significant open spaces within the conservation area. Views along this road are framed by the white railings, walkway and timber posts along the waterside, with the Blakeney Hotel and large gable ends of former warehouses and barns on the south side. A sense of built development interspersed with large spaces between buildings is also gained on the south side of the road where there are yards between the former warehouses, while on the other side wide views open to the marshes.

Further within the village, The Pastures is one of the largest areas of green space. Views are of a wide open space surrounded by trees and vegetation, but with

houses glimpsed beyond. From the top of the Pastures, looking north, the estuary is also a feature in views, while from the west side there are occasional glimpses of the Church tower.



A selection of numbered key views has been included here and numbered on the plan, with further view images included in Appendix B. © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.

### View 1

View looking south along Westgate Street showing the narrow street and buildings set up against the road



### View 2

View looking south along the High Street from near the Deli



### View 3

View looking eastwards along the Quay to the Blakeney Hotel





#### View 4

View west across the Pastures



#### View 5

View north along Wiveton Road, with flint walls lining both sides



#### View 6

View west along New Road showing its more suburban character



### Views to and from the salt marshes and estuary

Some of the key views within the conservation area focus on the saltmarshes. From the three routes which traverse the village north to south, glimpsed views of the marshes are possible before the vista opens out on the approach to the Quay. From the Quay itself, long range views out over the marshes are one of Blakeney's most enduring sites encompassing the flat marsh plains and broad skies beyond; these are impressive from street level, as well as from the elevated position on Mariners' Hill. Reflections on the water of buildings, boats and mooring posts are an important part of views here.

The area to the north of Friary Farm is also included within the Conservation Area and has a very different character, with the coastal landscape a key part of its immediate setting. The village itself is only apparent in the few houses seen at the north end of Back Lane and boats moored in the Blakeney Channel.

Conversely, key views exist looking back from the marshes towards the village. These views focus on the area of the Quay, with varied rooflines apparent, the Church tower projecting over the tree line and the regular rhythm of fenestration to the Blakeney Hotel lining the Quay.

### View 7

Panoramic view of the Blakeney Salt Marshes, from Mariners' Hill on the Quay



### View 8

Key vista looking from the Coast Path to the north-west, back towards the Blakeney Hotel and the Manor Hotel



### View 9

Vista looking out over the salt marshes from near Friary Farm





### Short range views down lanes and side passages

One key features of the layout of buildings on the medieval Westgate Street and High Street are the side passages, or lokes, and small yards set perpendicular to the streets, off which small cottages were constructed. These make for short range views channelled or framed by the buildings either side. Along the narrow historic streets these glimpsed views afforded while walking along the main street are a pleasant and interesting surprise which create interest and character to the narrow streetscape. Little Lane provides a similar effect, with walls framing the view from the High Street, though without the same termination of the view with buildings as in the lokes.

In contrast, Sheila's Way, a short path set behind the hedge on the north side of New Road provides a leafy rural route by an open space, though a recently planted hedge creates a greater sense of enclosure than previously afforded.

### View 10

Example of a side passage off the High Street



### View 11

View down Little Lane off the High Street





### View 12

Houses set around a small yard off Westgate Street



### View 13

View south-east along Shelia's Way



### View 14

View from the west end of the Quay, back towards the Blakeney Hotel





### Views of landmark buildings

The Grade I listed St. Nicholas Church is the primary landmark building in Blakeney. The two principle views of the church are from Cley and Wiveton Roads, where its impressive towers can be viewed at close range. From within the rest of the village, views are generally curtailed due to the dense nature of development. However, occasional glimpses are afforded between buildings, such as from Saxlingham Road.

The Blakeney Hotel is also a distinctive building on one of the key thoroughfares around the village. Its relatively large size, regular pattern of fenestration and curved west end give it a strong presence on the quayside and the building is regularly featured in artworks as part of a view of the Quay.

### View 15

View of the Church from Cley Road



### View 16

Glimpsed view of the Church tower from Saxlingham Road



### View 17

Close range view of the Church, as seen along Wiveton Road





## 4.3 TOWNSCAPE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### 4.3.1 Street and Plot Patterns

Historic plot boundaries and patterns are important in defining how a settlement has developed over time or where change has occurred, and are therefore important to preserve where they survive. They can relate to historic open spaces, routes, gardens and ownerships. They can also demonstrate how buildings were sited practically to relate to an original function, for aesthetic reasons to relate in a picturesque way to a garden, or in order to make them prominent in the landscape, as in the case of the church.

The core of the village is arranged along the historic routes of the High Street and Westgate Street, both running from north to south, and the Quay, connecting the two streets on an east/west axis. Plot patterns are dense on the former two streets, with houses either facing front on to the street, set back behind small front yards surrounded by low walls, or arranged in terraces on small alleyways, known as 'lokes', or courtyards leading off the main street. This arrangement means there are several houses that are end to the main street, with their front elevation onto the loke. These houses appear to have been a later eighteenth/early nineteenth century response to a rapid increase in

population at the time, filling in gaps between existing houses. A later nineteenth century development partially completed on the north side of the Morston Road, outside the Conservation Area, was built on a similar arrangement, with houses facing on to the central alleyway rather than the main street.

The plot pattern along the Quay is different, composed of several former warehouses and barns arranged perpendicular to the Quay itself on a north/south axis. Interspersed with these are larger former merchant's houses facing the road, though set well back from it. The Blakeney Hotel sits on a large plot that once housed more warehouses, while the Manor Hotel is another larger building set to the east.

The arrangement gives a sense of larger built forms alternating with open spaces between buildings, including Mariner's Hill at the east end of the Quay.

A few larger historic plots with detached houses sit on Wiveton Road near the church. More modern residential development within the village is set along New Road, Back Lane, The Pastures behind the Blakeney Hotel and those areas to the south and west outside of the Conservation Area. Along these streets, buildings

consist of detached properties set in large plots, with the house generally set back from the road. Most have modestly sized plots but a few, between New Road and the High Street, sit in larger plots of land. Built development outside of the Conservation Area is mainly to the west with either single detached houses or detached houses arranged on cul-de-sacs or estates.

Footpaths are a feature of the coastline, running east-west from Morston and along to Cley, as well as out northwards on the Carnser. Additional footpaths within the village run around the perimeter of The Pastures, along Little Lane and next to New Road on 'Shelia's Way'. These are all informal gravel paths apart from Little Lane which is tarmacked.





### 4.3.2 Public Realm

Public realm includes the treatment of spaces around buildings, such as surfacing, signage and street furniture. On the historic Westgate and High Street there is not a great deal of managed public realm, with limited number of pavements for example, giving a rural village feel. This is also the case for Back Lane and Cley Road, but is in contrast to New Road which has a more suburban character to its streetscape. There are no real designed public spaces. Instead the character of Blakeney derives from its rural character and anything overly manicured would lead to an inappropriate suburban character. There needs to remain a sense of this natural character, with grass or small plants growing along the edges of streets, for example, not necessarily being an issue unless they are causing damage to built fabric.

Roads within the Conservation Area are tarmacked and, other than some sections of kerbed pavements on one or both sides of the street on New Road, Wiveton Road, the Quay and Westgate Street, roads are generally set up against grass verges, the edges of buildings or walls in an informal manner. On the High Street and Westgate Street are occasional strips of flint cobbles, gravel or paving edging the street, sometimes with larger stones set on top to prevent parking. Bollards are occasionally also used, usually in timber or stone. Apart from on the busiest roads and in key places on smaller roads, for example double yellow lines to prevent parking on the narrowest streets, there are few road markings. Wiveton Road is provided with extra road markings and modern safety railings on the pavement outside the school. Lokes are usually gravelled or paved informally and often have areas of planting. Car parking areas throughout the Conservation Area, off the High Street and on the Quay, are gravelled rather than hard tarmac or paving.

Plan showing pedestrian routes in Blakeney Conservation Area © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.



Along the Quay the pedestrian promenade is tarmacked, with large stones set on the edge to the channel. At the west end of the Quay the town sign, which features a ship, fish, birds and the a fiddler and his cat (who, legend has it, were lost in fabled tunnels leading away from the Guildhall) is an attractive feature, set within a grassy area adjacent to some gravel car parking which is demarcated with timber bollards. White metal railings in a traditional style separate the walkway along the Quay and the road. These are a key feature in this part of the village, together with the verticality of the timber mooring posts and boat masts. Timber or timber and concrete benches line the Quay and there are a few municipal style black and gold bins. In summer kiosks and huts are located at the east end of the car park, selling food and arts/crafts. A designated food area is sometimes demarcated with traffic cones. This is a low-key arrangement which is relatively unobtrusive and removable. By the church hall, public toilets and Mariner's Hill there is an ad-hoc mixture of white painted metal railings, timber fence and black metal railings. Timber bollards, some with chains linking them, are used around the Manor Hotel and along the northern part of Back Lane.

Throughout the Conservation Area are typical road signs, though these are generally concentrated along New Road, with few, other than speed limit signs located within the more historic areas. Some temporary A-board signage and banners tend to be located on the grassed area at the New Road/Westgate Street/Morston Road junction. At this junction a brick, flint and pantile bus shelter has been provided, set on the south side of New Road just outside the Conservation Area, which is in keeping with the local character. However, two metal and glazed modern bus shelters are also located either side of the road here, which are functional in design and less sensitive to the local character.

The Millennium Stone and The Snitterley Stone are commemorative pieces of public art set within The Pastures, which both add interest to the space. The brick and flint town war memorial (Grade II listed) is located on the south side of New Road, outside the Conservation Area but a key part of its immediate setting. A Grade II listed K6 telephone box is set on the High Street.



*Informal flint cobbles, paving and planting on a lobe off the High Street*



*Pavement along the Quay, separated from the road by white railings and from the water by wooden mooring posts*





*Ad-hoc railings outside the public toilet, Mariner's Hill and village hall*



*Town sign at the west end of the Quay*



*Temporary and permanent signage at the junction of New Road and Langham Road*



*Bus stops located along New Road, as well as permanent road signage and temporary A-boards*

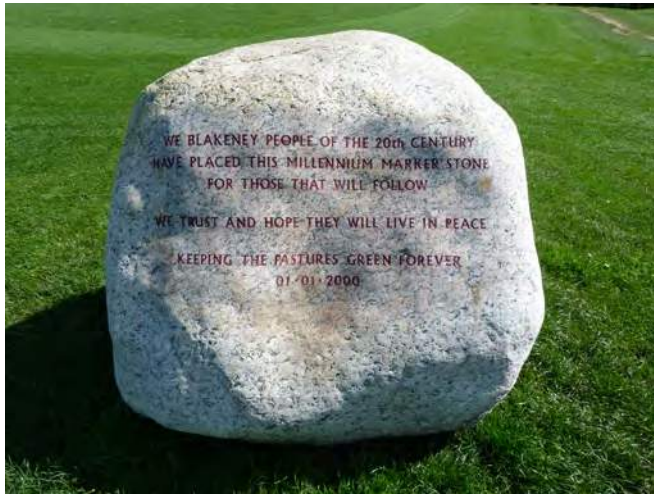


*Wiveton Road, outside the school*



*Section of bollards around the green at the entrance to Manor Hotel, Back Lane*





The Millennium Stone in The Pastures



The War Memorial



The Snitterley Stone in The Pastures

## 4.4 ARCHITECTURE

### 4.4.1 Scale and Massing

Scale relates to the size of a building and is influenced by the number of storeys and also the height of each storey, which affects the eaves height of a building. Two buildings adjacent to each that are both two storeys high may be of different scales if one building has taller storeys and therefore a higher eaves height. Scale also relates to the size of the building in terms of its width and/or depth.

Throughout Blakeney, most houses are of either one or two storeys in height. This is particularly evident on the narrow and densely developed historic streets, where rooflines vary in height and massing from building to building or even between different sections of the same building. Houses found on lokes are generally smaller in scale than those on the main streets. Roofs are typically pitched and set at varying angles. Most have a brick chimney or two which adds interest to the skyline.

There are a few properties which exceed two storeys, notably the Church. Buildings along the Quay are also generally larger, commonly two and half or three storeys tall. Particularly prominent is the Blakeney Hotel, while the former warehouses and granaries have a bulkier massing than residential buildings in the village. Larger former merchant's houses on the Quay are also of a grander scale than the typical cottages, with wide frontages. The larger historic houses on Wiveton Road are also larger in scale than the historic core of the Conservation Area.

Non-residential buildings, such as the Harbour Rooms on the High Street, the village hall on the Quay and public houses (the White House, King’s Arms and Manor Hotel) all tend to be slightly larger in massing but still generally on a scale similar to the domestic properties surrounding them.

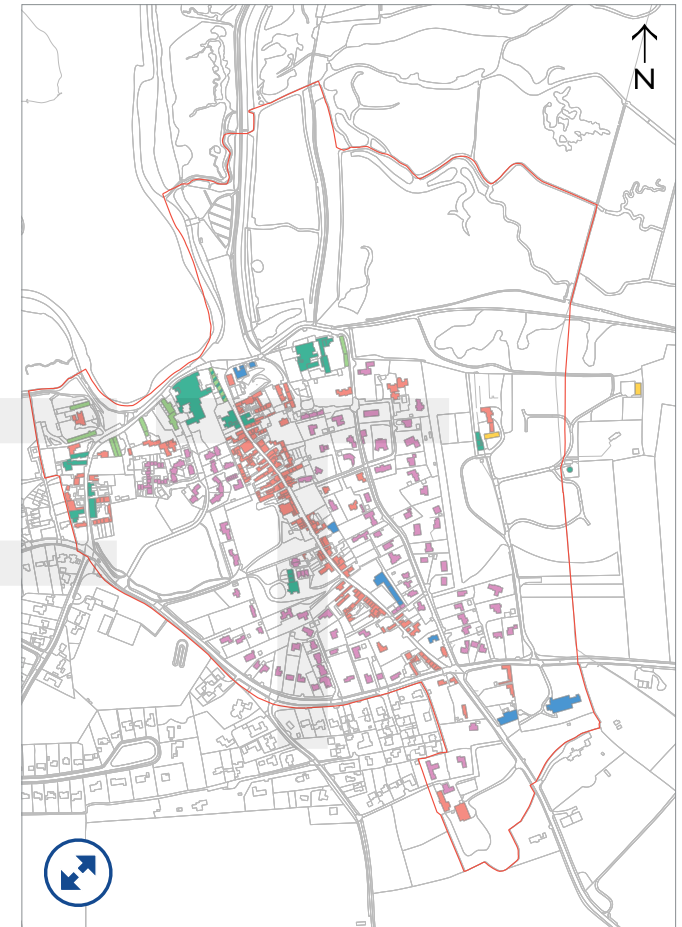
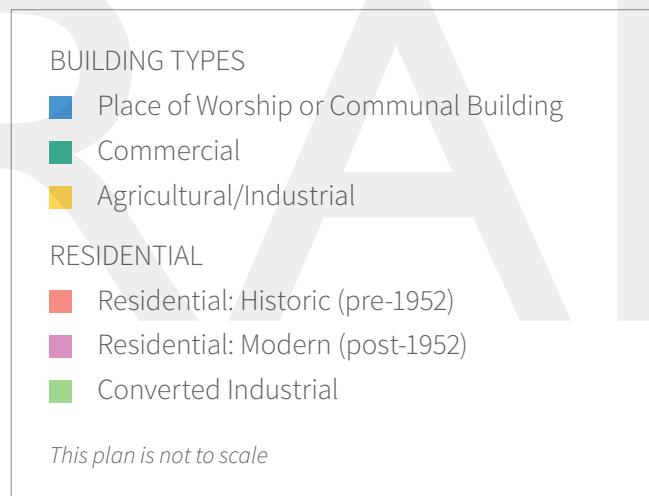
In the newer parts of the Conservation Area, typically along New Road, Back Lane but also in pockets of new development throughout the village, housing is also one or two storeys, though the larger plots mean houses are bigger in scale than those on the historic streets. Generally, though, there is a consistency of scale that should not be exceeded.

#### 4.4.2 Building Types and design

This section considers the different building types that can be found in the Blakeney Conservation Area and the architectural design associated with them. The buildings in the Conservation Area are predominantly in residential use but a proportion of these have been converted from other building types and, although altered, are recognisable as being of a different type of building originally. For example, there are a number of former warehouses and granaries on the Quay

which are no longer in their original use but have been converted into residential use but still retain their industrial character. The plan adjacent indicates building types. The subsequent text considers four principal building types:

- Residential;
- Commercial; and
- Public and Communal.



Plan showing types of buildings in Blakeney Conservation Area © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.



## Residential Buildings

The majority of the buildings within the Conservation Area are residential dwellings. These are located on the High Street, New Road, Westgate Street, Back Lane, Wiveton Road and Cley Road. Within this type, the most prevalent style is for small, cottage development, clustered around the historic core of the High Street and Westgate Street. These buildings are typically one or two storeys and composed of traditional brick and flint, to a vernacular design, though a number have classical detailing to doors and windows. Often façades face immediately onto the street, but many are side of where they face onto lokes and courtyards.

Along the Quay, the scale of building is much larger, being composed largely of warehouse/granary conversions and high status former merchant houses. Despite inserted doors and windows, the massing of the former warehouses means they still retain their industrial character. A polite classical style is typical to these higher status buildings, giving them a polite, refined appearance. There is a mixture of building materials, from those former barn buildings composed of modest brick and flint, to the higher status brick-built houses. Generally, both barn conversions and houses are either two or three storeys tall.

Throughout the rest of the village, residential development takes the form of detached properties, set within generous garden plots. These buildings are constructed of a variety of styles, indicative of the date at which they were built, though it should be noted almost all are twentieth century. Exceptions include the houses along Wiveton Road, which are historic buildings, though still sit in large individual plots.



*Alley leading to courtyard from the High Street, showing the typical arrangement of cottage type properties at the historic heart of the village*



*High status merchants house on the Quay*



*Typical scale of development along the High Street and Westgate Street*





Two and a half storey barn conversion along the Quay



Modern detached property, constructed to a traditional brick and flint style



Historic detached property along Wiveton Road

### Commercial Buildings

Within the Conservation Area, the main commercial buildings are clustered around the northern portions of both Westgate Street and the High Street, profiting from their proximity to the Quay. Along the northern end of the High Street, some of these commercial buildings are principally small shops, and do not differ a great deal architecturally from the domestic dwellings around them, except for the provision of shop signage and some ground floor shop windows. The same is true to Weston's Fish and Grey Seal Coffee on Westgate Street. However, the Spar has much more obviously modern shops alterations, including large fascia boards and windows. Opposite, a store for the shop has large

bay doors and shop signage to the window which is atypical of the Conservation Area. A number of shops at the very north of the High Street and Westgate Street have been formed in converted granaries, with larger windows to the ground floor and signage added. The Flint Gallery is atypical as it utilises weatherboarding, while the Crab Hut adjacent is a modern single storey structure.

There are a number of pubs, restaurants and hotels within the village, again, clustered around the Quay. Pubs include the White Horse and the Kings Arms both of which are located in modest two storey buildings, only differentiated from the surrounding structures through pub signage. The hotels in the village are the Blakeney Hotel and the Manor Hotel, both prominent landmarks along the Quay front, and Blakeney House Hotel. The Manor Hotel is situated in an historic building and, though it is distinctive with its white render, other than signage, there is little that architecturally marks it as a hotel. The Blakeney Hotel, by contrast, was purpose built in the early twentieth century, and is one of the most architecturally distinctive buildings in the village, with its used of mansard roofs and irregular curved profile, as well as large picture windows on the first floor to take in the view. The Blakeney House Hotel is situated well back from the road, in a large, brick built detached house, which is atypical of the houses on the High Street.

Outside of the area concentrated on the Quay, there are almost no commercial buildings. The exception is the Harbour Rooms, located at the southern end of the High Street. This modern building was purpose built as an events venue, catering for music, theatre and private events such as weddings. The venue forms a rare open section of the densely developed High Street, and its design picks up on vernacular flint and brick traditions.



*Spur, located in a former cottage along Westgate Street*



*The Harbour Room*



*The Kings Arms*



*Crab Hut and Flint Gallery in the courtyard behind the Kings Arms*



*The Manor Hotel*



*The Blakeney Hotel*



### Public and Communal Buildings

The other type of building within the village is communal and public buildings, which are dispersed around the village. The foremost of these is the parish Church, which serves as a prominent local landmark in the area. The structure of the Church is primarily medieval, though it has been altered since. Another building which is both a medieval survival and a communal building is the Guildhall, located on the Quay. The Guildhall would have been an important meeting point for the town during the medieval period; today it is operated as a free tourist attraction by English Heritage.

Other public buildings includes the St Nicholas Church Hall on the Quay, St Peter's Catholic Church and the village school. Both the Catholic Church and the Church Hall are twentieth century structures, though constructed of brick and flint. The Church Hall, located in a prominent position on the Quayside is constructed to a historically sensitive design, whereas the Catholic Church, located at the corner of the High Street and Back Lane, employs a more modern design.

In contrast to both, the school is designed in a way much more typical of national school building of the late nineteenth century, employing brick and large windows over a single storey. It has been added to in the twentieth century and is one of the most recently listed buildings in the village, having been designated in 2015.

The communal buildings are generally spread across the village, reflecting their purpose to serve the village, not the tourists. The exception is public toilets, which are constructed at busy locations such as along the Quay, and the Village Hall carpark.



Church Hall



Entrance to the Guildhall



Blakeney Parish Church



St Peter's Catholic Church





LANDMARK BUILDINGS

- ★ Major Landmark
- ★ Local Landmark

*This plan is not to scale*

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Plan showing landmark buildings in the Blakeney Conservation Area © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.

### 4.4.3 Typical Materials

Within the Conservation Area, as with Norfolk more typically, the most common building material is flint. A number of different flint walling techniques have been used. These include:

- Cobbles;
- Coursed flint;
- A mixture of flint and brick construction; and
- Knapped flint, found on areas of the Church and other high-status buildings.

Mostly, the flint has been left uncovered, though there are a number of instances of it being painted. On most buildings, the flint walls have been paired with brick detailing, such as window surrounds, quoins and string courses. Brick and flint are sometimes interspersed to create decorative patterns to walls. Typically, the brick used is red in colour, though it is sometimes painted white to pick out the architectural detailing.

There are several buildings constructed wholly of brick, such as polite eighteenth or nineteenth century houses on the High Street and Quay. Most of the modern houses in the Conservation Area are also brick and flint, though weatherboarding is also used as cladding in some cases to buildings of this date which are either in or adjacent to the Conservation Area. Render is also used, though to a lesser extent than brick and flint.

Stone is used sparingly in the village as it is not a local material. It is therefore found only on the higher-status buildings, such as the Guildhall, where it is used to create a door surround and internal columns, and on the Church.

Almost all the roofs within the Conservation Area are constructed of clay pantiles, mainly coloured red but with a few examples of black or grey. One unusual roof is to the King's Arms which is red pantile, with black tiles used to pick out the letters FH and the date 1760. The Church roof, which is lead, is one exception to the use of pantile, though there are also two cottages along Back Lane which utilise thatch as a roof material.

Windows are typically wooden, though there is some usage of uPVC both on modern and historic properties. Doors are also most commonly wooden, often with glazed sections. On modern properties, uPVC doors are also common, though these are typically not used on historic buildings.

Colours which form the palette of Blakeney are therefore the grey of flint, red of bricks and roof tiles, white, cream or buff coloured paint, render or occasionally stone. These are interspersed with occasional coloured paints for windows and doors, typically pale colours though a few bolder ones. A few rendered houses on the High Street are painted with pale blues, rusty oranges or pale greens.

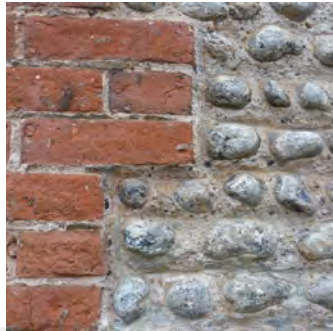


*Brick and flint used in decorative patterns on a house on the High Street*



*The Kings Arms with decorative roof tiling*

## Typical Materials in the Blakeney Conservation Area







#### 4.4.4 Architectural Details

The properties in the Conservation Area are generally built to a simple vernacular style. Windows are typically either wooden casement or sashes; there is no common style of sash, with many different arrangements and number of panes used. There are also a number of uPVC windows which have been inserted in historic properties, both on front and side elevations, which detract from their overall appearance. uPVC windows are also common to modern build housing.

A key characteristic along the northern end of the High Street is bow or oriel windows on the street frontage of properties on both ground and first floor. These come in a number of styles, some curved and others chamfered. A number at first floor level are triangular on plan, a device seemingly local to this area, perhaps to make best use of natural light and views. There are generally a number of unusual shaped windows in the historic parts of the Conservation Area, with some oval shaped frames and a curved corner window on the Flint Gallery on Westgate Street for example. Several properties along the High Street contain historic shop fronts; not all these examples are presently functioning as shops and are instead reminders of the historic use of the property. The shop fronts have painted timber fascia boards and wider areas of glazing.

There are a variety of door styles, principally in painted timber. More modest properties generally have simple

plank or panelled doors, some with glazed panes to the upper half. Houses that are grander than the small cottages typically have smarter panelled doors, often with classical ornamentation, including architraves, columns and fanlights. Modern houses use similar styles but sometimes in uPVC.

Brick detailing employed throughout the conservation area takes the form of dentilled cornices and alternating quoins, this motif also being employed to frame doors and windows. On certain properties, the bricks have been picked out in white, to distinguish them from the dark flint used for walling. The use of Flemish gables, which is common in neighbouring Cley-next-the-Sea, is not employed in Blakeney. Curved or chamfered corners to buildings are a common feature along the historic streets. Brick chimneys are a feature of residential buildings and typically have a cap which steps out and sometimes has brick corbelled details. They are usually sited on end gables.

Plaques are also a feature of the Conservation Area, with several painted metal ones for the Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society and a few commemorative blue plaques.

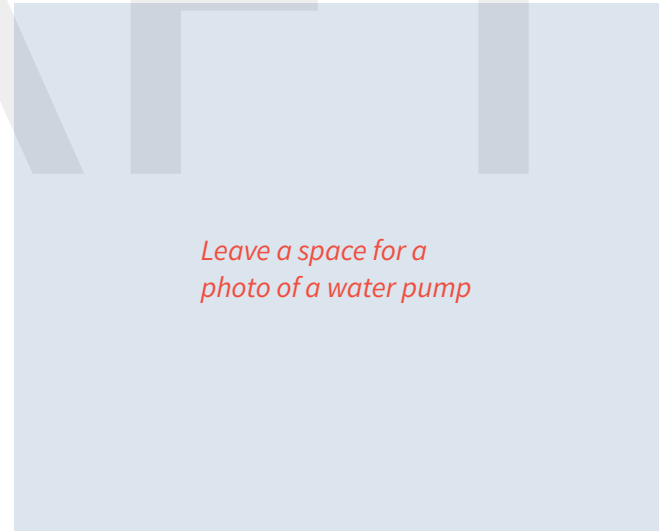
There are a number of historic communal well heads and water pumps in the yards and lokes which inform the understanding of the shared spaces between buildings.













#### 4.4.5 Boundary Treatments

The predominant boundary treatments within the Conservation Area are walls, which are used extensively in the historic parts of the village, in particular on the High Street, Quay, Wiveton Road and Westgate Street, but also throughout the area generally to mark property boundaries. These are almost always flint, with brick coping and detailing. The walls are often capped with a build-up of flints on a slope to shed water. Clinker from the tug Comet has also been used to cap some walls as a security measure. Examples can be seen on the walls either side of Little Lane. Sections of walling around the former Friary, Manor Hotel and along Westgate Street are listed at Grade II status. Walls are a variety of heights, from low walls surrounding small front yards to mid-height or very tall property boundaries. Several large gateways are set in the taller walls.

Hedges are another common boundary treatment, marking boundaries between properties, and between the highway and private land. They are more common on the more peripheral roads such as New Road, Back Lane and Cley Road.

Where panelled fences are used as boundary markers, it is typically along rear elevations, and within gardens, though there are sections of fencing separating properties from the road along Back Lane. Along the northern portion of Back Lane, post and rail fencing separates the road from the Friary area to the east, with post and wire fencing enclosing the town duck pond to the north.



Listed friary gateway and wall at the north end of Back Lane, with sloped flint capping detail



Gateway and wall on High Street, with sloped flint capping detail



Low wall surrounding small front yard to a property on the High Street





High and mid-height walls on the High Street



Walls flanking Wiveton Road on both sides



Town duck pond, enclosed in wire and rail fencing



High walling (Grade II listed) enclosing Manor Hotel



Hedgerow leading out of the village to the east, along Cley Road



Fencing marking the property boundary within two gardens



A variety of boundary treatments on New Road



Typical use of softer, green boundary treatments on Back Lane



#### BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- Walls
- Hedges

*This plan is not to scale*

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*Plan showing boundary treatments within Blakeney Conservation Area © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.*





## 4.5 GREEN LANDSCAPING

### 4.5.1 Open spaces and greens

The Quay and marshes to the north is the key open space within the Conservation Area, representing the historic port use and the current leisure use of the space. The Carnser raised walkway delineates the more man-made areas of car and boat parking to the west, from the natural marshes to the east that are within the current Conservation Area boundary. The promenade of the Quay westwards is set against the water and open landscape, and the green area at the west end of the Quay also provides further breathing spaces between the water and adjacent buildings. Sounds are important here, with the lapping of the water and tapping of rigging lines against masts blowing in the wind being characteristic seaside sounds.

The largest open, green space within the village is the Pastures at the south-west of the Conservation Area. This is complemented by the additional open space of Blakeney playing field on the south side of New Road, set just outside the Conservation Area but the two providing a green lung within the village and separating much of the modern development to the south-west from the historic core.

The Pastures is a large open grassed space, dotted with mature tree planting, particularly within the northern half. The space is surrounded by hedges and bisected with the driveway for the Blakeney Hotel. As well as the Millennium and Snitterley Stones mentioned above, benches are also provided around the periphery, as well as municipal style black and gold bins.

Another large green space within the Conservation Area is the area north of Friary Farm. This area is managed by the National Trust and is crossed with the coast path to Cley. It is covered with grass and gorse, which gives way to the north to the salt marshes. The southern part of the area is raised up, with wide open views across the marshes and out to sea. A simple timber bench is provided for the enjoyment of the view.

The caravan park at Friary Farm is a pleasant green space, though interspersed with static caravans. The area is grassed, with trees and shrubs lining the tracks around the site. The former mill is a focal point of this site, set behind a low flint and brick wall. There are glimpsed views of the sea to the north.

Mariner's Hill is also an important green space in the village, providing a view point out across the Quay, channel and marshes. Historically it was a vantage point and defensive position. It is a valued spot where people can view the landscape from the heart of the historic village. Several timber benches are provided and a flag pole is set on top of the hill.

Inland, the churchyard is important both for its open space and its commemorative value. Gravel pathways provide a soft landscaping amongst the large areas of gravestones, with a circular landscaped area with a central sundial to the west, around which are set memorial plaques. A few mature trees are set within the churchyard, with a backdrop of trees to the south.

Other green spaces within the Conservation Area are private gardens, mostly enclosed behind buildings but on New Road and Back Lane, where there are larger garden plots, they form part of the streetscape and help to create a sense of openness. A few larger garden plots, such as those adjacent to Shelia's Way and on Wiveton Road, add to this open sense. The bowling green at the Harbour Rooms on the High Street is a rare open space along this tightly packed street.



Mariners' Hill



The Pastures



Friary Farm Hills



Churchyard



Quay, car park, the Carnser and salt marshes



The caravan site



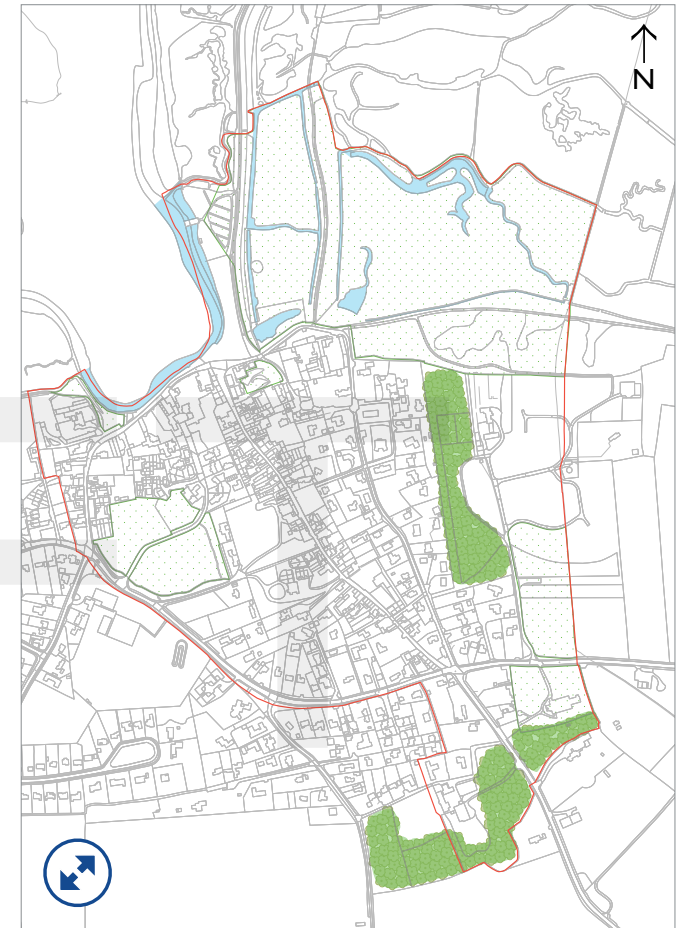
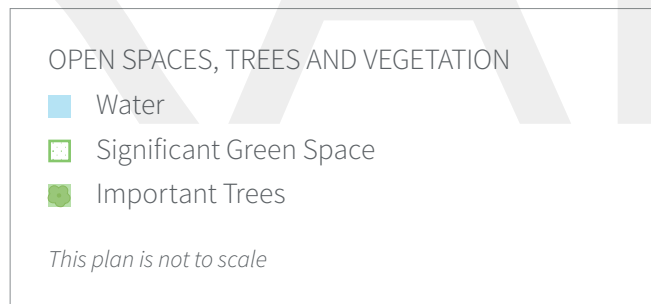
The former mill within the caravan site

#### 4.5.2 Trees and Vegetation

Trees contribute, along with gorse bushes, the reeds and salt marshes, to the character of the landscape in and around the village. Blakeney's proximity to the sea is reflected in both its comparatively few trees at the north end of the village, though at the south and west boundaries there are some fairly substantial groups of trees. The village's location also affects the types of trees that grow. Pine trees of different varieties, which are better suited to sandy soils, are examples of the type of tree that would naturally grow here. However, planting of deciduous trees on private land off Wiveton Road, the Churchyard and to the east of the caravan park are also a key part of the green character of the Conservation Area. These groups of trees provide an important green backdrop to the village when viewed from the marshes.

Back Lane and New Road, particularly the west end, also feel particularly 'green'. New Road is lined with hedges at the west end, plus trees and hedges along Little Lane, and planted gardens to the east contribute to the character of the streetscape. Back Lane it is flanked by hedges, which open at points to gardens and to Friars Field Hills and the salt marshes in the north. Back Lane is overhung with dense evergreen and deciduous trees and hedgerows, separating the road from the houses. Narrow grass verges are also a feature of these streets.

By contrast, greenery along Westgate Street and the High Street is limited to those plants and lawns visible in the private gardens of houses and along lokes, giving glimpses and small pockets of greenery. Small naturally seeded vegetation also tends to grow alongside the base of walls, which adds to the rural, unmanicured feeling of the area.



Plan showing open spaces, trees and vegetation within Blakeney Conservation Area © North Norfolk District Council. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright and database right [2009]. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100018623.