

Heritage Proof of Evidence

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Land south of Rowtree Road and west of Windingbrook Lane, Northampton

On behalf of Northampton Borough Council

October 2015

PINS Refs:

Appeal A: APP/V2825/W/15/3028151

Appeal B: APP/V2825/W/15/3028155

LPA Refs: N/2013/1035 and N/2013/1063

Heritage Collective Project Ref: 1913

Project Number:	0913
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Date:	October 2015
Document version	M:\HC\Projects\Projects 1501- 2000\Projects 1901-2000\1913 - Collingtree Urban Extension, Northampton\Reports\Proof\Final Proof\2015.10.31 - Collingtree - Heritage Final Proof of Evidence.docx

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and experience

- 1.1 I am Ignus Froneman, a Director at Heritage Collective. I hold a degree in architecture; I am an Associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). Heritage Collective is an independent heritage consultancy that was established in 2010. Our clients are mostly, but not exclusively, private developers and we work on a wide variety of projects throughout the country.
- 1.2 Over the last 13 years I have specialised in the historic environment, both in terms of understanding and analysing physical fabric, and in terms of policy application, specifically assessing impacts and providing advice. In my role as a consultant I have been involved in a diverse range of cases relating to the assessment of physical changes to, and development affecting the setting of, heritage assets. To that end I have produced and contributed to numerous cultural heritage chapters for environmental statements, including ones for urban extensions and new settlements.
- 1.3 I am familiar with rural and semi-rural contexts, having undertaken environmental impact assessments where I have considered the effects of wind farms on the historic environment (mainly dealing with setting, views and inter-visibility) including in remote locations such as north Wales and Northumberland. In this capacity I have dealt with assets as diverse as prehistoric monuments, historic battlefields, formally designed landscapes and Second World War military structures.
- 1.4 I have provided expert evidence at appeals, including public inquiries, on behalf of appellants and the local planning authority.
- 1.5 I understand my duty to the Inquiry and have complied, and will continue to comply, with that duty. I confirm that this evidence identifies all facts which I regard as being relevant to the opinion that I have expressed and that the Inquiry's attention has been drawn to any matter which would affect the validity of that opinion. I believe that the facts stated within this proof are true and that the opinions expressed are correct.

1.6 I was first approached in relation to the appeal in March 2015, when I was asked to provide a quote for acting on behalf of Northampton Borough Council. I was formally instructed in April 2015. I discuss my involvement in more detail in Section 3 of my proof (Background to the Heritage Case).

2.0 THE APPEAL SCHEMES

- 2.1 There are two schemes subject to this appeal. Appeal A comprises an outline planning application, with means of access, for up to 1,000 dwellings, a mixed use local centre, a site for a primary school, and associated works (CD A.5). Appeal B comprises a full planning application for 378 dwellings served by a new access from Windingbrook Lane, the reconfiguration of part of Collingtree Park Golf Course and associated works (CD D.17). In a scenario where Appeal A is refused, Appeal B could be delivered as a standalone development.
- 2.2 Appeal B is a detailed development of the south-eastern part of the Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) and Parameter Plan (CD A.5) that was submitted as part of Appeal A, the outline application. The site of Appeal B is the part of the site of Appeal A which lies closest to the heritage assets in question. In this respect there is an overlap, although the Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) for Appeal A is illustrative only. The Parameter Plan (CD A.5) is less detailed than the Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6), but it sets out the parameters for the development as proposed in the outline application and identifies areas for residential development, up to 12m in height. The relevant part of the Parameter Plan (CD A.5) corresponds with the layout of Appeal B (CD D.17), the full planning application. In this respect there is again an overlap between the development proposed in Appeals A and B.
- 2.3 At its closest point, the Collingtree Village Conservation Area is located less than 50m from the part of the appeal site (both appeals) in the area to the west of Barn Corner. The grade II* listed church of St Columba lies further away, at a distance of approximately 175m from the closest part of the same part of the appeal site.
- 2.4 An irregularly shaped, but roughly rectangular parcel of land lies between the property boundaries of the houses to the west of Barn Corner and the appeal site. The parcel of land is undeveloped and measures roughly 150m by 35m. Its western boundary, with the appeal site, is a row of yew trees, which was planted at some point after 1972 and probably in the more recent past. A public footpath runs westwards from Barn Corner, across this parcel of land and it passes through the row of yews, to connect the Collingtree Village Conservation Area with the appeal site, across which it continues westwards towards another footpath and a bridge over the M1 motorway. The footpath across the appeal site follows the alignment of a pathway that can be seen on the 1780 Enclosure map for Milton and Collingtree (**Appendix 3.2**).

- 2.5 To the west of this parcel of land is a field or paddock, enclosed by the row of yews on the east and rows of poplar trees to the north and west (**Appendix 11**). Like the yews, the poplar trees have been planted in recent years (they post-date 1972). To the north of this paddock or field is the Collingtree Golf Course. The field (referred to hereafter as the field west of Barn Corner) is roughly rectangular but with an irregular southern protrusion and it forms the southernmost part of the appeal site.
- 2.6 The field contains residual ridge and furrow, which is described on page 3 of the Collingtree Conservation Area Appraisal (CD 1.2) as *"A fragment of land marked by ridges and furrows surviving from the old [field] system can be seen in the field to the west of Barn Corner."* On page 5 of the same document the land to the west of Barn Corner is described as an important open space which plays *"a significant role in providing the setting of the Conservation Area."*
- 2.7 The distance between the church tower and the midpoint of the field to the west of Barn Corner is approximately 250m. The church tower can clearly be seen from this field (**Appendix 7.1-7.6**) and the church bell can be heard from this area. The other buildings in the conservation area are not as readily visible from here because of the intervening trees and buildings.
- 2.8 My assessment, which follows in Section 5 of this proof, concludes that the field to the west of Barn Corner forms part of the setting of both the Collingtree Village Conservation Area and the grade II* listed church of St Columba. Part of this land was historically part of the Rector's Glebe and, for the reasons identified in Section 5, I consider this land to positively contribute to and reveal the significance of the church and the conservation area.

3.0 BACKGROUND TO THE HERITAGE CASE

The Appellant's submission

3.1 Chapter 10 of the Appellant's **Environmental Statement** (CD A.18.1, the 'ES') for the Outline Planning Application (Appeal A) deals with heritage. Paragraph 10.4.8, which deals with the baseline, describes the Collingtree Village Conservation Area as essentially relating to the historic village core around the church and along the High Street, with *"its orientation being essentially inward looking (away from the Site), rather than outward looking to the surrounding landscape."* The same paragraph goes on to state:

"Modern residential areas now surround the majority of the historic core of Collingtree, although it remains separate from Northampton and retains the character of a village. It is considered that its wider landscape setting does not make a significant contribution to the distinct character or heritage significance of the Conservation Area."

3.2 The baseline in the ES (CD A.18.1) does not clearly identify whether the closest part of the appeal site is categorically within the setting of the conservation area, although the conclusion that the site is within the setting of the conservation area appears to be implicit in the statement about its "wider landscape setting". The chapter does not refer to the Collingtree Conservation Area Appraisal (CD I.2) and it omits reference to ridge and furrow as on page 3 of that document. This was mentioned in an appendix, which is discussed separately below. The ES (CD A.18.1) also fails to mention the statement on page 5 of the Appraisal (CD I.2) that the land to the west of Barn Corner is identified as an important open space which plays **"a significant role in providing the setting of the Conservation Area."** There is no mention of the footpath crossing the appeal site, and no indication that it was understood to have formed an historic approach to Collingtree Village, which has existed at least for over two centuries and continues to be used as an approach to the historic village to the present-day.

3.3 Paragraph 10.4.9 describes the significance of the church of St Columba as *"derived from its architectural importance, having medieval fabric and fittings, including a restored 15th century roof and medieval sedilia and font. It also has communal value as a place of worship."* Unusually for a medieval building, the church is not described as having any historic interest. Paragraph 10.4.9 goes on to state that the

setting of the church *"is that of its immediate surroundings of the raised ground on which it stands, with a small enclosed graveyard and adjacent 18th century rectory, within the historic core of the village. The Application Site does not contribute to its heritage significance or setting. It is acknowledged that the church tower can be seen from the eastern part of the Site. However, this view does not contribute to the heritage significance of the church or its setting."*

- 3.4 The role of the appeal site and whether it constitutes part of the setting of the church is not fully resolved in paragraph 10.4.9 of the ES (CD A.18.1), i.e. *"The Application Site does not contribute to its [...] setting."* This implies that the appeal site falls outside of its setting (it almost seems as if the appeal site were treated as a secondary setting to the setting of the church). In any event, the view of the church from the appeal site **must form part of the 'surroundings in which the church is experienced' (the definition of setting in the NPPF)** but this was not acknowledged outright or explored further in the ES (CD A.18.1). At the time, the now superseded English Heritage guidance on setting¹ (NBC Supplementary Statement of Case, Document d.), which was referred to in the ES (CD A.18.1) albeit apparently not applied, stated in section 2.2 on page 4 that *"setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset."*
- 3.5 There is no acknowledgement in the ES (CD A.18.1) that the field with residual ridge and furrow could in any way be experienced as part of the pastoral hinterland and pre-enclosure supporting landscape in the setting of the medieval church, or that it plays a unique or important role, as being the closest and only such remnant to the west of the church, or that it forms part of the experience of the church. There are no indications in the ES (CD A.18.1) that there are any historic associations which could reinforce the historic connection between the church and this rural hinterland (e.g. part of this land was historically included in **the Rector's Glebe**), or spatial/physical connections which have existed for centuries (e.g. the footpath), or that this land is all the more important because the rural hinterland to the church has been largely or completely lost in other parts of its setting.
- 3.6 The implication that the Appellant considered that the appeal site could not, or should not, be regarded as part of the setting of the church appears to be borne out by the fact that there is no impact assessment for the church in the ES (CD A.18.1).

¹ *The Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance* (October 2011)

- 3.7 The impact assessment with regards to the conservation area is contained in paragraph 10.5.11:

"[...] there will be an indirect negligible adverse effect upon the wider landscape setting of Collingtree Village Conservation Area, through the introduction of modern development to the immediate north and west of the Barn Close extension of the Conservation Area and a consequent marginal alteration to the existing townscape extent. However, it is considered that the wider landscape setting does not make a significant contribution to the distinct character or heritage significance of the Conservation Area, which will remain intact."

- 3.8 Paragraph 10.6.3, which deals with mitigation, states that no specific mitigation was considered necessary, but goes on to say *"the Parameter Plan [CD A.5] makes provision for the retention of the existing trees and hedgerows which already provide screening around the Barn Close extension of the Conservation Area. The Parameter Plan also makes provision for a buffer of natural and semi-natural open spaces along the east and south perimeter and new planting, which will reinforce the separation between the historic core of the village and the Proposed Development."*

- 3.9 I would comment in this regard that the way in which the historic core of the conservation area would be divorced and separated from its former supporting rural hinterland, appears to be regarded in paragraph 10.6.3 of the ES as an almost positive outcome, and one **that would mitigate the "negligible adverse effect"** (the effect is described in paragraphs 10.5.11 and 10.5.13 of the ES (CD A.18.1)).

- 3.10 In this respect I consider it relevant to refer to paragraph 29 of the *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, which notes that screening may have as intrusive an effect on setting as the development it seeks to mitigate. The previous (superseded) English Heritage guidance stated the following (in the third paragraph on page 22):

"As screening can only mitigate negative impacts, rather than removing impacts or providing enhancement, it ought never to be regarded as a substitute for well-designed developments within the setting of heritage assets. Screening may have as intrusive an effect on the setting as the development it seeks to mitigate, so where it is necessary, it too merits careful design. This should take account of local landscape character ..."

- 3.11 A separate "Built Heritage Assessment" (CD A.18.10), written by Rachel Morse and dated August 2013, was appended to the ES (CD A.18.1) as a technical study (it was numbered Appendix 10.1). It is notable that whilst the document extensively quotes from, or paraphrases, the Collingtree Conservation Area Appraisal (CD I.2) (paragraphs 3.2.1-9), like the ES (CD A.18.1) it omits reference to ridge and furrow on the field to the west of Barn Corner both in the context of the conservation area and the church of St Columba.
- 3.12 It does, however, mention that the appeal site is identified as an important open space which plays a significant role in providing the setting of the conservation area, in paragraph 3.2.5. In paragraph 3.2.9 it also acknowledges that the setting of the Conservation Area within the appeal site *"is that of its wider surroundings, characterised by surrounding agricultural fields (predominantly laid to pasture) [...], providing a rural backdrop that has not changed substantially since the 19th century"*. However, it then concludes, in the same paragraph, that *"the setting of the Conservation Area within the study site does not make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area."* The explanation is essentially the same as that given in the baseline of the ES (CD A.18.1) chapter (paragraph 10.4.8).
- 3.13 Paragraph 4.2.1 assesses the impacts on the conservation area and states that *"The proposed development will considerably extend the buffer of modern development which currently surrounds the Collingtree Village Conservation Area to the west, into its wider setting. The setting of the Conservation Area is already compromised by surrounding buffer of modern development and extension of this will not affect its special character, which relates to the historic core of the village, which will remain intact."* This seems to me to ignore the value and contribution of the last vestige of a rural hinterland to the west of the conservation area – in fact the logic seems to be that the loss of this rural setting would be acceptable on the basis that it has already been lost or compromised elsewhere.
- 3.14 I note in this respect that the previous (superseded) English Heritage guidance states the following, in section 2.4 on page 8:
- "Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised by in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, [...] consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from [...] the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting ..."*

- 3.15 The Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) describes the baseline for the church of St Columba essentially the same as in the ES (CD A.18.1) chapter (paragraphs 3.3.1-2).
- 3.16 Paragraph 4.2.2 assesses the impacts on the church of St Columba. It first states that the appeal site is not included in the setting of the church, before stating that *"Whilst the Church tower can be seen from the eastern part of the study site the intervening residential development screens views of the all but the Church tower. No impact on the setting or significance of this asset are anticipated."* The Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) offers no further analysis or comment.

The Council's consideration of the application

- 3.17 The conservation officer's response to the application is set out in an 'Internal Memorandum' dated 9th January 2014 (CD E.1.21 **Appendix 14**). I highlight the following points from the document:
- i. The English Heritage guidance (which was then in place but which has since been superseded) states that setting embraces all of the surroundings of a heritage asset from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset.
 - ii. It is clear that the concept of setting is far wider than the visual setting or views from and to the site. The lie of the land in the area ensures that the visual impact of the proposed development on the conservation area of Collingtree is limited, but there are significant impacts on the character of Collingtree as a defined historic settlement.
 - iii. It is fundamental that Collingtree Village retains its historic integrity. There are no objections to the development as a whole, but it is considered that a greater separation should be provided between the historic settlement and the proposed Village 1.
 - iv. There would be an impact on the setting of the church of St Columba. The views of the church from the west of the settlement have already been compromised by the erection of modern housing, but the proposed new development would mean the building would be engulfed by modern development.
 - v. This would mean that the context and setting of the church would be significantly altered, with the church being located within a large expanse of development rather than within a rural village surrounded by open landscape.

- vi. The lie of the land in the area, does, however mean that the direct visual impact would be limited.
- 3.18 My reading of the **conservation officer's response** is that clear concerns about the impact of the development were expressed, both in relation to the Collingtree Village Conservation Area and the church of St Columba. I also understand the **conservation officer's comments** to mean that the development would be in the setting of St Columba and that there would be a harmful impact.
- 3.19 The comments, impacts and concerns were not, it seems, fully reflected in the committee report for both applications (CD F.1). Paragraph 1.6 of the committee report gives an overall summary and **states that** *"The design and layout of the proposed development are considered to be acceptable and would be in keeping with the nearby [...] Collingtree village without undue impact on the setting of the Collingtree Conservation Area."*
- 3.20 Paragraph 6.3, which references the **conservation officer's comments** (CD E.1.21), reads as follows:
- "No objection to the development as a whole but a greater separation should be provided between the historic settlement and Village 1. It is not considered that the setting of the Church of the Holy Cross would be significantly compromised by the proposed development."*
- 3.21 The above quote is the full summary as it appeared in the committee report (CD F.1). No mention was made of any impact on the church of St Columba.
- 3.22 Paragraph 7.13 of the committee report (CD F.1), which is part of the appraisal of the scheme, **states that** *"the application proposals, [...] set [the] development back from Collingtree village, incorporates low densities nearest to it, and preserve and enhance intervening vegetation. Through these means, the settings of the heritage assets at Collingtree village (including the conservation area and listed parish church) would also be conserved"*.
- 3.23 I think that the case officer did **not wholly reflect the conservation officer's views** in her summary of the consultation response at paragraph 6.3. The omission of any mention of the reference to the impact on the church of St Columba was in my view a critical oversight. That may help explain why she said at paragraph 7.13 that the

setting of the heritage assets at Collingtree village, including the conservation area and listed parish church, would be conserved.

My involvement

- 3.24 I was first approached in relation to the appeal in March 2015, when I was asked to provide a quote for acting on behalf of Northampton Borough Council. After establishing that I did not consider there to be any conflicts of interest, I provided a quote on the basis that the heritage related reasons for refusal would be supportable following an initial case review and site visit.
- 3.25 As part of my initial response I noted that the impact assessment provided by the appellant as part of the application submission did not appear to me to represent a correct, or balanced, assessment, although I also stated at the time that it would be premature for me to comment further until I had undertaken a full review of the case and a site visit. My suggested approach was to first undertake this initial work before accepting the instruction to provide evidence. This approach was agreed and I was formally instructed to that effect in April 2015. I reviewed the application documents and visited the appeal site and the surrounding area in June 2015.
- 3.26 This initial stage allowed me to confirm that I considered what was at that time reason(s) for refusal 5 to be reasonable and justifiable, notwithstanding the fact that the case officer did not object to the development on heritage grounds. It seemed to me that the impact assessment submitted by the appellant as part of the application was inadequate and that the impact on the conservation area was understated, and that the assessment dealing with the church was so inadequate that it was not fit for purpose.
- 3.27 The original refusal objected with reference to "*Collingtree Village and Collingtree Village Conservation Area*", with no reference to the grade II* listed parish church of St Columba. I therefore recommended that the reason for refusal should be reworded to avoid ambiguity in relation to Collingtree by replacing the reference to "*Collingtree Village and Collingtree Village Conservation Area*" with simply "*Collingtree Village Conservation Area*".
- 3.28 Despite the fact that the appellant considered that the proposed development would not fall within (or affect) the setting of the grade II* listed parish church of St

Columba in Collingtree, and the fact that this was not noted in the Committee Report, it seemed clear to me that:

- i. the proposed development (as per the Parameter Plan (CD A.5), the Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) and the full planning application) would fall within the setting of the church of St Columba;
- ii. the proposed development (as per the Parameter Plan (CD A.5), the Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) and the full planning application) would **harm the setting of the church, and that this would affect its setting's** contribution to its heritage significance.

3.29 Accordingly my advice was to change the reasons for refusal to include the setting of the church of St Columba.

3.30 In terms of the relationship between Appeal A and Appeal B, my understanding of the full application (CD D.17) is that it constitutes an element of the submitted Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) for the wider outline application and a detailed development of the Parameter Plan (CD A.5). If this element would cause unacceptable harm to two heritage assets – **one of which is an asset 'of the highest significance'**² – it follows that the outline application is open to objection in that a different parameter plan, and accompanying masterplan, would be required to demonstrate the ability to deliver a similar quantum of development without causing undue environmental impacts.

3.31 Because I considered that the development would fall within, and affect, the setting of a grade II* listed building it seemed to me that Historic England (formerly English Heritage) should have been consulted as a statutory consultee during the course of the applications³. English Heritage was consulted on the EIA Scoping Report for the proposed development and I highlight the following from the response (Ref: PA00059705, dated 25 May 2012 (CD I.5) **Appendix 12**):

- i. This development could, potentially, have an impact upon a number of designated heritage assets and their settings in the area around the site, of which at least two are higher graded assets.

² As categorised in paragraph 132 National Planning Policy Framework.

³ s.8.(2)(a) of Circular 01/01: *Arrangements for handling heritage applications - notification and directions by the Secretary of State* replaced in the *Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications – Notification to Historic England and National Amenity Societies and the Secretary of State (England) Direction 2015* which came into force on 15 April 2015. Also, Planning Practice Guidance (CD G.2) Paragraph 057 (Reference ID: 18a-057-20140306) Table 1: Applications for planning permission: requirements to consult or notify Historic England development that would affect the setting of a Grade I or Grade II* listed building.

- ii. English Heritage would expect the Environmental Statement to contain a thorough assessment of the likely effects which the proposed development might have upon those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets.
- iii. It is strongly recommended that the applicant has regard to the guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (which has since been superseded by new, albeit similar, guidance).
- iv. English Heritage strongly recommends that the applicant involves the Conservation Officer to advise on, amongst others, how the proposal can be tailored to avoid and minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment and take opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.
- v. It is important that the assessment is "*designed to ensure that all impacts are fully understood*".

3.32 On my recommendation Historic England was invited by the Council to provide a consultation response, albeit belatedly, and it was confirmed that their omission from the consultation was an oversight. The response, dated 24 July 2015 (Ref.: P00468514 & P00468530 CD I.7 - **Appendix 13**) states the following:

"Having examined the proposals, we conclude that the significance of Collingtree Conservation Area and the Grade II listed Church of St Columba would be affected by the proposals through development within their setting. The harm which the proposals would cause to the significance of these designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining the proposals, in line with paragraphs 132-134 of the National Planning Policy Framework and sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Consideration should be given to whether the harm is outweighed by any public benefits offered by the proposals. We recommend giving particular consideration to whether the proposals have addressed the issue of maintaining Collingtree as a separate historic settlement."*

Site visit, research and photographs

3.33 My site visit was on the morning of Friday, 26 June, 2015. On my site visit I saw the church of St Columba and the Collingtree Village Conservation Area, and the closest parts of the appeal site. I did not cover the whole of the appeal site on my visit, as

my focus was the specific area of the appeal site to the west of the church and conservation area, where I considered the appeal schemes in their present form would cause harm. I also visited other parts of the setting of the church and the Collingtree Village Conservation Area to get a better understanding of their overall **setting. The site visit was conducted on a fine summer's day with excellent visibility.** The deciduous trees were in full leaf.

- 3.34 I have not, in this case, undertaken a separate site visit at night or in hours of darkness. The reason for that is that the change to the setting of the conservation area and the church as proposed would be so fundamental as to completely change the character of this area, from open field to suburban housing development. In such a scenario a night time visit is not necessary to inform the assessment of the implications of the change.
- 3.35 I have commissioned research, mainly cartographic and photographic, from Dr Hannah Chavasse, an in-house researcher at Heritage Collective. The most relevant aspects of the documentary research are set out at **Appendix 3** of my proof, with an Ordnance Survey map regression separately at **Appendix 3A**. I did not consider it necessary in this case to commission detailed or specific research into the history of the church of St Columba, given that the issues are largely related to the spatial experience of the building and its relationship with its setting, rather than its fabric. I have not included all photos or references found as part of the research, which uncovered a considerable amount of information.
- 3.36 On my site visit I have taken photos of the church and the Collingtree Village Conservation Area, which I have included at Appendices 4-8 of my proof. The photos were taken with a compact, hand held digital camera and I have not enhanced or altered any of the photos, and I have not cropped them. The camera has a wide angle lens and I have used the zoom in some cases, which I have noted in the annotations where relevant.

4.0 LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Legislation

- 4.1 Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). Section 66(1) of the Act provides:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

- 4.2 Section 72(1) provides:

"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

- 4.3 The duty in s.72 of the Act does not extend to the setting of a conservation area in the same way as for a listed building⁴. It is a well established concept in case law that 'preserving' means doing no harm.

- 4.4 The Court of Appeal's decision in *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council* [2014] (EWCA Civ 137) established that, having 'special regard' to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building under s.66, involves more than merely giving weight to those matters in the planning balance. There is a strong statutory presumption against granting planning permission for any development which would fail to preserve the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area.

- 4.5 In cases where a proposed development would harm the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area, the Barnwell decision has established that the duties in s.66 (and in s.72) of the Act requires these must be given *"considerable importance and weight"*.

⁴ Whilst in primary legislation the setting of conservation areas is not a statutory duty, the NPPF states that the setting of a designated heritage asset can contribute to its significance.

- 4.6 In this context I would highlight that grade II* listed buildings are described by Historic England as “*particularly important buildings of more than special interest*” and they make up a small proportion, i.e. 5.5%, of all listed buildings (2.5% of all listed buildings are grade I, which means the two highest tiers of listed buildings combined make up only 8% of all listed buildings)⁵.

The National Planning Policy Framework (CD G.1)

- 4.7 Pursuant to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) is a material consideration. It was published in March 2012 and constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision makers.
- 4.8 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in paragraphs 126 to 141. The NPPF places much emphasis on heritage “significance”, which it defines in Annex 2 as:
- “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”*
- 4.9 The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:
- “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*
- 4.10 Paragraph 126 points out that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource; in this case the same could be said for the part of the setting of the church and the conservation area that I consider to be relevant, a matter which I deal with in more detail in my assessment.
- 4.11 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including the contribution of their setting, to

⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/listed-buildings/>

a proportionate level of detail. In my opinion neither the assessment in the submitted Environmental Statement (CD A.18.1) nor the Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) properly dealt with the extent, or the contribution, of the setting of the church of St Columba, or the setting of the conservation area.

4.12 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF requires essentially the same approach from local **planning authorities: to identify and assess the “particular significance” of any** heritage asset, against which the impacts of a proposal are to be assessed. Setting is again specifically mentioned. The same paragraph highlights taking measures to **avoid or minimise conflict between a heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of** a proposal.

4.13 According to paragraph 131, a number of considerations should be taken into account in determining planning applications, first of which is the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, as well as putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

4.14 Paragraph 132 applies specifically to designated heritage assets, such as listed buildings and conservation areas:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”*

4.15 I would highlight four key points arising from paragraph 132:

- i. Great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.
- ii. Significance can be harmed or lost through development within the setting of a heritage asset.
- iii. A proportionate approach is necessary: the more important the asset, the greater the weight attached to its conservation.

- iv. Any harm requires clear and convincing justification.
 - v. **Grade II* listed buildings are “heritage assets of the highest significance”.**
- 4.16 Paragraph 133 deals with substantial harm to, or total loss of significance, of a designated heritage asset. This is not in my opinion relevant to the appeal schemes because the proposals would not cause the scale of harm that could reasonably be **categorised as ‘substantial harm’ (either in relation to the church or the conservation area)**. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (CD G.2) describes the threshold for **substantial harm as a “high test” which may not arise in many cases⁶**; the total or partial destruction of heritage assets are given as examples.
- 4.17 Paragraph 134 deals with less than substantial harm. Harm in this category should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The PPG (CD G.2) describes **public benefits as “anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress”⁷**. It is worth noting here that the Court of Appeal’s decision in Barnwell Manor requires considerable weight to be given to harm in any event; even in cases **where the harm falls in the ‘less than substantial’ category, this still requires being given considerable weight and importance in the planning balance**. I do not make the planning balance myself, which is a matter for Mr Stephens.
- 4.18 **According to paragraph 137, proposals that preserve “those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset” should be treated favourably.**
- 4.19 The definition of “conservation” (for heritage policy) in Annex 2 of the NPPF is:
“The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”

Local Plan

- 4.20 The only policy cited in reason(s) for refusal 5 is Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) (CD G.4). The policy deals with all types of heritage assets and their settings:
“DESIGNATED AND NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS AND LANDSCAPES WILL BE CONSERVED AND ENHANCED IN RECOGNITION OF

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance (CD G.2) paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 18a-017-20140306.

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance (CD G.2) paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20140306.

THEIR INDIVIDUAL AND CUMULATIVE SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS AND SENSE OF PLACE.

IN ENVIRONMENTS WHERE VALUED HERITAGE ASSETS ARE AT RISK, THE ASSET AND ITS SETTING WILL BE APPROPRIATELY CONSERVED AND MANAGED.

IN ORDER TO SECURE AND ENHANCE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA'S HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS AND LANDSCAPES, DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS OF LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND/ OR KNOWN HISTORIC OR HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- 1. SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA INCLUDING:*
 - a) CONSERVATION AREAS;*
 - b) SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC LANDSCAPES INCLUDING HISTORIC PARKLAND, BATTLEFIELDS AND RIDGE AND FURROW;*
 - c) THE SKYLINE AND LANDSCAPE SETTINGS OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES;*
 - d) SITES OF KNOWN OR POTENTIAL HERITAGE OR HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE;*
 - e) LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND MONUMENTS*
- 2. DEMONSTRATE AN APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON SURROUNDING HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTING IN ORDER TO MINIMISE HARM TO THESE ASSETS; WHERE LOSS OF HISTORIC FEATURES OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS IS UNAVOIDABLE AND JUSTIFIED, PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR RECORDING AND THE PRODUCTION OF A SUITABLE ARCHIVE AND REPORT*
- 3. BE SYMPATHETIC TO LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPE FEATURES, DESIGN STYLES AND MATERIALS IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SENSE OF PLACE*

THE RETENTION AND SENSITIVE RE-USE OF DISUSED OR UNDERUSED HERITAGE ASSETS AND STRUCTURES IS ENCOURAGED IN ORDER TO RETAIN AND REFLECT THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CONTRIBUTE TO THE SENSE OF PLACE AND PROMOTE THE SUSTAINABLE AND PRUDENT USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

PROPOSALS TO SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE AREA'S UNDERSTANDING OF HERITAGE ASSETS, FOR TOURISM AND HISTORIC INTEREST AS PART OF CULTURAL, LEISURE AND GREEN NETWORKS WILL BE SUPPORTED."

- 4.21 I draw attention to part 2 of the policy, which requires developers to demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their setting, in order to minimise harm to these assets. I would comment on this in a similar way as my comments to paragraph 129 of the NPPF in relation to avoiding or minimising harm, and would again draw attention to the assessment of the setting of the church and the conservation area in the submitted ES (CD A.18.1) and accompanying Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10), which I regard to be dismissive and inadequate.
- 4.22 The last part of Policy BN5 states that proposals which would sustain and enhance the area's understanding of heritage assets, for tourism and historic interest as part of cultural, leisure and green networks will be supported.
- 4.23 According to paragraph 10.35 of the JCS (CD G.4) *"The historic environment is one of the plan area's most valued assets."* The same paragraph goes on to state that many assets *"are not covered by statutory designations; the improvement of our understanding of the significance of these non-designated assets, both their historical importance and their contribution to the place, together with designated assets is a process that will need to continue throughout the plan period to prevent further loss."*
- 4.24 It is also necessary to consider JCS Policy N5, which deals with the Northampton South Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). Paragraph 12.42 of the JCS states that *"There are no designated or known non-designated cultural heritage sites that are likely to place constraints on the development of the site [my emphasis]."*
- 4.25 My emphasis above indicates, firstly, that heritage constraints were considered unlikely but were not categorically ruled out. Secondly, it was not considered likely **at the time that 'heritage sites' would constrain the SUE development**, meaning the whole of the development in its totality, on the whole of the allocated site as described in the JCS and shown the associated map (Inset Map 12 of the JCS). Aside from an overall framework, including indicative structural green space, Policy N5 does not prescribe or describe how the development should be laid out or where the housing should be located. The policy provides for more than just housing and **does not prescribe a specific number of dwellings, just 'in the region of' 1000 units.**
- 4.26 Finally, I have looked at the Inspector's report on the examination into the JCS Local Plan (dated 2nd October 2014, Ref: PINS/Y2810/429/2) (CD G.5), and the

supporting evidence base documents. I have not found any evidence that there was, at the time of the **Inspector's examination, any reference to the Collingtree Village Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan** (May 2008) (CD I.2) or any detailed assessment of potential effects on the grade II* listed parish church of St Columba, or analysis of the role and contribution of the field west of Barn Corner to the church.

- 4.27 The conservation area and the church were briefly mentioned in a comment, submitted by Bovis Homes on 30 March 2011 (Ref.: 4618145/JCS_Full/1004053) (NBC Supplementary Statement of Case, Document f.), where it was simply stated that the setting of the conservation area and the church would be preserved. The Landscape Sensitivity Study and Green Infrastructure Study (NBC Supplementary Statement of Case, Document e.) was before the Inspector but whilst it identified the heritage assets in Collingtree, this document lacks sufficient depth and detail to have allowed a proper assessment of the potential effects of development of the whole of the Northampton South SUE allocation site.
- 4.28 In this respect it seems to me that the Inspector did not have sufficient, or detailed, technical information that would have allowed a more comprehensive assessment of the heritage implications, or constraints, that I have identified.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA 3) (CD I.4)

- 4.29 GPA 3 was published in March 2015, and was produced by English Heritage (now Historic England) on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum. The document was reissued with illustrations and a new layout in July 2015 under the banner of Historic England. The purpose of GPA 3 is to provide information on good practice to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF and the related guidance given in the PPG, but it does not constitute a statement of Government policy itself and it does not seek to prescribe a single methodology or particular data sources. It echoes earlier guidance on setting from English Heritage (*The Setting of Heritage Assets*, October 2010) (NBC Supplementary Statement of Case, Document d.), which was in place at the time of the determination of the applications.
- 4.30 In paragraph 3, GPA 3 explains setting, curtilage, character and context. The character of a historic place is explained as 'the sum of all its attributes'. Specifically these may include "... *spaces associated with its history, including its original configuration and subsequent losses and changes.*" This could be taken to include

part of the appeal site not only as contributing towards the character of the historic settlement of Collingtree, but as constituting part of its character by virtue of being a **'space associated with its history'**.

- 4.31 Paragraph 4 reiterates the NPPF definition of setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is **'experienced'**. **The definition is not the surroundings in which a heritage asset is 'seen or viewed'**. It is important, in this case, to make a distinction between visibility and experience. The impacts I describe in my assessment relate to experience as well as visual impressions, e.g. specific views, visibility or inter-visibility (although these are important in some areas).
- 4.32 Paragraphs 5-8 deal with **'views and setting'**. In paragraph 5 it is explained that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, which is a purely visual impression of an asset or place. These can be static or dynamic, and include a variety of views of, across, or including the asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset.
- 4.33 Paragraph 6 deals with views which contribute more to understanding the significance of a heritage asset, including i) those where relationships between the asset and other historic places or natural features are particularly relevant; and ii) those with historical associations.
- 4.34 Under the heading **"Setting and the significance of heritage assets"** paragraph 9 starts by noting that setting is not a heritage asset, and neither is it a heritage designation; its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. The critical point follows in the next sentence: this contribution of setting to significance will depend on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as **"... perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to, the heritage asset's surroundings"**. This relates to my emphasis on setting as experiential rather than purely visual; the reference to associational attributes is particularly relevant.
- 4.35 A series of bullet points then explore different considerations and aspects of setting, of which I highlight the first three: cumulative change; change over time; and appreciating setting. I discuss these briefly below.
- 4.36 **Cumulative change:** According to GPA 3 (page 4), where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional

change will further detract from (or enhance) the significance of the asset. A very relevant example of negative change provided in GPA 3 is that of severing the last link between an asset and its original setting.

- 4.37 **Change over time:** Under this heading, GPA 3 (page 4) notes that understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the **asset's setting is likely to affect the contribution made by its setting to its significance**. Settings which closely resemble the setting in which the asset was constructed are likely to contribute to significance.
- 4.38 **Appreciating setting:** GPA 3 (page 4) also states that setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, and significance does not depend on the numbers of people that may visit a place or see an asset.
- 4.39 Paragraph 10 notes that many settings may be enhanced by development, but this capacity may vary; not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset. The next paragraph again reinforces the concept that the protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive in some cases, but not necessarily always, and not all types of change.
- 4.40 From paragraph 12 onwards, a stepped approach to assessment is explained. The stepped approach makes the heritage asset the object of the assessment (in Step 2), and not the proposed development. Step 3 is also important in making it clear that a proposed development should not be assessed in terms of the degree of change (e.g. extent of visibility, etc.), but rather the impacts on significance.
- 4.41 In the text box on page 7 the document recommends a detailed approach to analysis for cases involving more significant assets. The church of St Columba is a heritage **asset 'of the highest significance' and one that is of 'more than special interest'**. This indicates that a detailed analysis is required for assessing impacts on its setting.
- 4.42 Historic England recommends that (GPA 3, text box on page 7), when submitted as part of an ES or evidence to a Public Inquiry, the analysis should be set out as a clearly expressed and non-**technical narrative argument that explains 'what matters and why' in terms of the heritage significance and setting of the assets affected**, together with the effects of the development upon them.

- 4.43 Paragraph 15 explains that, for developments that are not likely to be prominent or intrusive, the assessment of effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings, while taking account of the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape features, such as planting.
- 4.44 Paragraph 18 explains the second step of the assessment in more detail. The assessment should focus on the relevant attributes of setting and the way these attributes have contributed to the significance of the asset in the past (particularly when it was first built, constructed or laid out), the implications of change over time, and their contribution in the present. Paragraph 20 notes that Conservation Area Appraisals are important sources in this regard.
- 4.45 Attributes of the physical surroundings of the asset that may be relevant, and those which I consider to be relevant in this case (and return to in my assessment), as listed in the text box on page 9, are:
- i. topography;
 - ii. land use;
 - iii. openness, enclosure and boundaries;
 - iv. functional relationships and communications;
 - v. history and degree of change over time; and
 - vi. integrity.
- 4.46 Attributes of experience of the asset that may be relevant, and those which I consider to be relevant in this case (and return to in my assessment), as listed in the text box on page 9, are:
- i. surrounding landscape character;
 - ii. views towards and including the asset;
 - iii. visual prominence or role as focal point;
 - iv. noise and other nuisances;
 - v. accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement; and
 - vi. the rarity of comparable survivals of setting.

- 4.47 The text box on pages 11 and 12 provides a non-exhaustive check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting, the most relevant of which I consider to be:
- i. proximity to the asset;
 - ii. change to the general character; and
 - iii. changes to land use and land cover.
- 4.48 Paragraph 26 is relevant in noting that an early assessment of setting may provide a basis for agreeing the scope and form of development, and reducing the potential for disagreement and challenge later in the process. Paragraph 28 notes that options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the relocation of elements of a development or changes to its design. Paragraph 29 notes that screening may have as intrusive an effect on the setting as the development it seeks to mitigate.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING

The grade II* listed church of St Columba

5.1 According to the list description at Historic England's National Heritage List for England website (the full text is at **Appendix 1**), the church was listed on 3 May 1968 and the list description has not been amended. However, this is erroneous as Northampton Borough Council has an older, much shorter superseded list description on file (also included at **Appendix 1**). It is not known when the list description was updated but the entry reads very much like the typically more detailed recent ones, and it was probably updated in the past decade or so. The 'reasons for designation' in the list description gives a very concise summary of the significance of the building:

- Excellent medieval fabric, including a restored 15th century roof.
- The surviving medieval fittings, notably sedilia and font, are very fine.

5.2 It is worth also noting the history of the church, as it is summarised in the list description (which echoes the *Victoria County History*⁸):

"Collingtree is a small parish whose history is closely linked to that of neighbouring Milton Malsor, and for much of the middle ages, the advowsons (the right to appoint the rector) of both parishes were held jointly but divided into shares or moieties with rights in each. This arrangement was altered, and advowson of Collingtree fully separated from that of Milton Malzors, in the mid C15.

The late C12 aisles at Collingtree are the earliest evidence for a church there, but Collingtree itself existed at the time of Domesday and the aisles were probably added to an early C12 church comprising an aisleless nave and square chancel. The chancel was extended and the aisles remodelled in the C14, and other features of this period, including the font and the sedilia, suggest a fairly comprehensive reworking of the church. The tower dates to the C15. The N aisle was pulled down in 1808, leaving the arcade buried in the nave N wall, and the whole church restored in the later C19, with further work in the C20."

5.3 **Architectural interest:** As a church of medieval origins, and with much retained medieval fabric, it is clear to me that the church of St Columba can lay claim to considerable architectural interest as a good example of English medieval

⁸ 'Parishes: Collingtree', in *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 4*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1937), pp. 240-242 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/northants/vol4/pp240-242> [accessed 8 July 2015].

ecclesiastical architecture. This is evident from the photos **Appendix 4.1**; **Appendix 4.4** and **Appendix 7.14**. The building has retained significant internal features and its architectural interest extends to include the internal features and plan form as well as the exterior.

- 5.4 As is commonly the case with medieval churches, the building has undergone alterations over the centuries; the structure can be summarised as made up of 12th century residual fabric (chancel and aisled nave, largely rebuilt) with a 14th century chancel and aisles, and with a 15th century tower and clerestory. It was also later restored; the history of alteration and restoration is in itself of interest, and adds to the interest and time depth of the building.
- 5.5 **Historic interest:** The early origins and relative intactness of the medieval fabric indicates clear historic interest, which is reinforced by the summary extract of the history of the church from the list description. **St Columba's Church is a building of considerable historic interest.** English Heritage's *Conservation Principles*⁹ describes how historical value derives from the ways in which past events, people, and aspects of life can be connected to the present through a building or place (paragraph 39). Illustrative value illustrates aspects of history – the perception of a place as a link between the past and present – and has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with, and providing insights into, past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place (paragraph 41). This **explanation essentially summarises the historic value of St Columba's Church.**
- 5.6 Although not everyone will be able to instantly recognise the church as a building of medieval origins, it seems to me that the church is easily recognisable as a historically significant structure and it is capable of evoking the past and making strong connections between the medieval origins of Collingtree village and the present-day (e.g. see my photos at **Appendix 4.2-4.4**). As is so often the case, it is the oldest and most dominant building in the settlement and it is, for the most part, a significant and defining element of the historic village.
- 5.7 **Artistic Interest:** The medieval carving and decorative architectural features can be regarded as having some artistic interest and the church plainly has some aesthetic value. However, I do not consider that the significance of the building substantially derives from artistic interest.

⁹ *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* English Heritage (April 2008)

- 5.8 **Archaeological Interest:** The fabric of the building will hold evidential value of the changes that have occurred over the centuries and will almost certainly contain **valuable archaeological information about the building's use and adaptation** over the centuries. The ground beneath the church, and the churchyard, will almost certainly also contain further archaeologically valuable artefacts and evidence (e.g. foundations).
- 5.9 **Contribution of setting to significance:** The church is by far the oldest building in Collingtree Village and it is set on a raised churchyard in the context of the 18th century Old Rectory (listed grade II) and Nos. 4-6 Barn Corner (listed grade II), at a node near the junction of the High Street, Barn Corner, Sargeants Lane and Lodge Avenue. The Collingtree Village Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan (CD I.2 - the 'CAA' hereafter) **describes this area, on page 4, as the culmination of the historic core.** It is clear to me that the fabric and detailing of the building, and something of its influence on the layout of the village, can be appreciated from these immediate surroundings.
- 5.10 However, the church does not stand in an area that is untouched by the influences of modern development. The modern development to the north on Spinney Drive (**referred to as the 'new Grange Estate' in some historic documents**), although fortunately relatively well screened – in some cases by the church itself – has radically changed the surroundings in which the church is experienced. This was historically open land, and subsequently occupied by Collingtree Grange (built in c. 1875), which was then demolished between the 1952 and 1965 Ordnance Survey maps (**Appendix 3A**). The oblique aerial photos at **Appendix 3.11-13** show the area under development. The presence and experience of the church from Spinney Drive can be seen on the photos at **Appendix 4.5-4.6**. It is not difficult to see that this post-war development has encroached on, and changed, the setting of the church in a way that has affected its relationship with the surrounding context and detracts from its appreciation. It obscures, rather than reveals or contributes towards, the significance and appreciation of the church.
- 5.11 Despite some modern infill buildings – mostly with efforts to be sympathetic to the character of the village – there is more time depth and character to the High Street, from where the church tower is visible in views to the north as something of a local landmark. Although much later in date, the built environment of the settlement is an important part of the context in which the older, medieval church is experienced.

- 5.12 In longer views from the High Street the church plays an important role in signifying the village core and its morphology. It is experienced as the most important building in the village – even if it is not possible to discern the details of the structure, etc. from a distance. The photo at **Appendix 5.1** shows a view in which the church tower is seen, somewhat distant, but it still has a presence, especially when standing on the ground rather than looking at a wide angle photo. The CAA (CD I.2), on page 5, states that “[...] *the Church is the single most visually and architecturally dominant building.*”
- 5.13 The CAA (CD I.2) also describes the church, on page 3, as follows:
“The earliest surviving building in the village is the church of St Columba. [...] the compact, buttressed tower [...] has been a cultural and visual reference point in the village since the 15th century.”
- 5.14 To put this into context, the church tower was added in the early 15th century and the historic maps at **Appendix 3** and **3A** shows that it would have stood in a small village context, set in a largely pastoral hinterland, for at least five centuries up to the 1952 Ordnance Survey map. Photos confirm that the land to the west of Barn Corner was still undeveloped in 1977 (**Appendix 3.18-20**). During this time the relationship between the tower of the parish church and its pastoral hinterland would have been immediate, readily apparent and easily understood. In 1937, Collingtree was described in the *Victoria County History* [ibid] as *“a small parish of only 688 acres, about a third of which is devoted to pasture.”*
- 5.15 However, the village has not been arrested in time; up to the 1952 Ordnance Survey map (**Appendix 3**) it had stayed a small rural settlement, but it has expanded notably since then. This post-war development includes not only the development of Spinney Drive, but also Barn Mews, Barn Corner, and Ash Lane as well as Glebe Farm Close and Lake Walk to the east of the High Street. As a result, much of the rural surroundings of the church have now been eroded or encroached and it has become far more difficult to envisage the tower as a local landmark in a bucolic rural setting.
- 5.16 The field to the west of Barn Corner is an exception, despite a limited amount of encroachment, and there are two strands to the way in which this field contributes to the appreciation of the church as a residual medieval structure with a supporting pastoral context: firstly its visibility, and secondly the experiential and associational attributes and relationships between the church and this field. I deal with these

below under separate headings. I finally deal with the uniqueness of the land to the west of the church, and its role as a relatively intact part of the setting of the church, again under separate headings.

Visibility

- 5.17 Visibility is the most obvious aspect of the **contribution of the church's setting to its** significance: the church tower can be seen, and therefore directly experienced, from the field to the west of Barn Corner. During my site visit the deciduous trees were in full leaf but the top of the church tower was clearly visible above and in between the trees in many locations, but particularly from the area to the south of the footpath that runs across the field. The photos at **Appendix 7.1-7.6** give an indication of this, although the photos are not a substitute for experiencing the situation on the ground.
- 5.18 I have not seen the area in leafless conditions, but I have included photos from the **appellant's** Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) at **Appendix 9** (Plates 1 and 2) which, although apparently taken in foggy conditions and of low resolution, with details difficult to make out, show the presence of the tower in leafless conditions. It is evident from these photos that the tower must have a considerable presence in leafless conditions when seen in silhouette, e.g. when the light is behind it with the sun to the east, or when it is seen in afternoon light when the sun is behind the viewer to the west. The view of the tower, seen in this way from an undeveloped rural field, is strongly evocative of the now largely lost medieval supporting landscape around the settlement and in close proximity to the church itself.
- 5.19 A further relevant attribute of the views of the church tower from this field is the presence of ridge and furrow. During my visit, in the midst of summer, the grass was high and the presence of ridge and furrow was not visibly obvious (although undulations could be felt underfoot when walking across it). This can be seen from the photos at **Appendix 6**.
- 5.20 It can certainly be seen on the oblique aerial photo at **Appendix 3.13**. The quality of the photos at **Appendix 9** unfortunately somewhat limits interpretation; in the winter conditions depicted, any residual ridge and furrow is likely to be evident when walking across the field.
- 5.21 The presence of ridge and furrow was notably also recognised, and must therefore have been evident, when the CAA (CD I.2) was prepared, which contains the

following reference on page 3 “*The mediaeval open field system of Collingtree parish was enclosed, together with that of Milton Malsor, in 1779. A fragment of land marked by ridges and furrows surviving from the old system can be seen in the field to the west of Barn Corner.*” I note that the ridge and furrow in this area falls within in the appeal site and can be seen on the oblique aerial photos at **Appendix 10**.

- 5.22 I accept that the ridge and furrow is not a strong feature and there will be times or conditions when it will be difficult, or impossible, to discern the ridge and furrow. I therefore do not base my assessment of the contribution of this field to the significance of the church purely on the presence of ridge and furrow. However, I would point out that there will also be times when this added layer of history will be evident or revealed (typically in the winter, or when the ground cover is reduced, when the sun is low or when there is frost or light snow). In those circumstances the ridge and furrow will be particularly evocative when experienced in the context of the medieval church tower. Even in the best of circumstances the ridge and furrow may only be a subtle part of the experience of the field, but it does not follow that it can be ignored or discounted.
- 5.23 In the context of paragraph 6 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) (which deals with views which contribute to understanding the significance of a heritage asset), I would describe the views of the church of St Columba from across the field to the west of Barn Corner as: i) views where relationships between the medieval church and the pre-enclosure ridge and furrow are particularly relevant; and ii) views which show historical associations between the church and its now almost completely lost pastoral setting.
- 5.24 Before concluding on the subject of views and visibility it is necessary to consider the fact that the field today is relatively well contained by trees on all sides – rows of poplars to the north and west (some also to the south) and a row of yews along the east, with a treed and hedged garden border to the south. None of these boundaries are historic, or reflect the alignment of historic land parcels and field boundaries, e.g. pre-enclosure field systems or enclosure field boundaries. Aside from the loosely scattered mature trees within the parcel of land, none of the present-day vegetation can be said to contribute to the ability to understand the historic relationship between this field and the church, or the settlement.
- 5.25 On the contrary, to the extent that the line of yews visually separates the field from **the village and the church, its presence is ‘artificial’**. As a boundary it hinders, rather

than helps, with the ability to appreciate the historic relationship between the church and the field to the west, which would have been more open. In 1953 Barn Corner was described as a “*gloomy road*” but it opened “*into a field with an excellent view over the surrounding country*”¹⁰ (**Appendix 3.8**). This outward view from Barn Corner over the surrounding country was recorded in the subsequent scrapbook of 1977, also compiled by the Women’s Institute; it can be seen at **Appendix 3.18**.

- 5.26 Paragraph 15 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) explains that the assessment of effects on setting should take into account the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape features, such as planting. The impermanence of planting is relevant to the row of yews; it is not inconceivable that this boundary could change, or disappear, in the future. In such a scenario a visually more noticeable relationship between the church and the field to the west of Barn Corner could be re-established. In other words, removal of the line of yew trees would be beneficial and this has the potential to positively reinforce and better reveal the relationship between church and its hinterland.

Experiential relationship

- 5.27 Aside from views, the second way in which the field to the west of Barn Corner contributes to the appreciation of the church, as a medieval structure with a supporting pastoral context to the west, is the experiential relationship between them. Paragraph 9 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) notes the contribution of setting to significance includes “... *perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to, the heritage asset’s surroundings*”. This is relevant to my emphasis on setting as experiential rather than purely visual; I deal first with perceptual attributes and then associational attributes.
- 5.28 Notwithstanding the presence of the present-day yew tree boundary, the church and the field west of Barn Corner plainly remain perceptually and associatively connected, rather than divorced and distinct from each other. In other words each **can still be experienced as related with the other despite this ‘artificial’ present-day boundary**.
- 5.29 In essence this can be summarised as the relative proximity between the church and its pastoral setting to the west, the nature of the area that separates them, and the

¹⁰ Collingtree Village Scrapbook, 1953, compiled by the Women’s Institute and held at the Northampton Record Office, Reference ZB0445.1

relative ease and rapidity with which it is possible to move through the field and into the immediate surroundings of the church (i.e. sequentially the field/footpath, Barn Corner and then the churchyard and the Old Rectory). This proximity helps to allow each to be experienced as associated and interconnected with the other, but that is also reinforced by the nature of the intervening environment, which includes the footpath extending westwards from Barn Corner as a semi-rural pathway.

- 5.30 The distance between the church tower and the midpoint of the field to the west is approximately 250m, but the point at which the semi-rural pathway of the footpath is encountered is only approximately 75m from the churchyard. From here there are views through to the rural hinterland that indicate the edge of the settlement (e.g. **Appendix 5.6-5.7**). It is therefore possible to already start to experience a rural hinterland while in close proximity to the church.
- 5.31 Although the yew trees intervene in making direct views or visual connections between the two, there is very little else that prevents the ability to experience one from the other. When walking along the footpath out of the village, the experience of the rural hinterland is not only visual. It is very much felt as a kinetic or sequential experience that is still part of the surroundings of the church, and vice versa when the church is approached from the footpath to the west¹¹. The series of sequential photos at **Appendix 5.3-5.8** and, also, those at **Appendix 6.1-6.2** illustrate the sequential experience as a continuation of the route. The photos at **Appendix 7.7-7.14** give a sense of the experience when approaching the church/village from the footpath to the west. The photos are just fragments of what is in reality a fluid experience, and they are not a substitute for the experience of walking the footpath.
- 5.32 In terms of the wider experience of the field itself, it is relevant to point out that the traffic on the M1 motorway can be heard clearly from this area and it undoubtedly forms part of the sensory experience of the surroundings of the church from this field. That said, the noise can be described as a distraction in the background, which does not obliterate the relationship between the church and its rural hinterland, or prevent the associative connections to be made. In other words it does not prevent the field (and the ridge and furrow in it), to be experienced as part of the setting of the church. At the time of my site visit I was able to clearly hear the sound of the

¹¹ In the winter of 1982 a group of villagers walked the footpath and the segment from the M1 to Barn Corner was described as 'only a few minute's walk' (*Life in Collingtree 1981-2*, as compiled by the Women's Institute and held at Northampton Record Office, Reference ZB0510).

church bell (in a location on the footpath near the western row of poplars); this manifestly strengthened the sense of association, and added an evocative additional dimension to the experience.

- 5.33 Paragraph 9 of GPA 3 (CD I.4), **under the heading 'appreciating setting' notes that** setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, and significance does not depend on the numbers of people that may visit a place or see an asset. My assessment in this case does not rely on public access, or large numbers of people accessing the appeal site, although I consider it relevant that there is a public footpath across the field to the west of Barn Corner in which this part of the setting of the church is accessible and can be experienced and enjoyed.
- 5.34 On my site visit I encountered several people and the footpath appeared to me to be well used, and it is a place from where the setting of the church can be, and is, enjoyed by many people. The text box on page 9 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) highlights accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement as an attribute of the experience of heritage assets that may be relevant. In terms of historic value and continuity I consider it relevant that a pathway on this alignment has existed for more than two centuries, at least, as can be seen from the 1780 Enclosure map (**Appendix 3.2**); this makes the existing footpath as an approach to the church and village by foot all the more redolent of the past.

Associational attributes and relationship

- 5.35 Paragraph 18 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) refers to the associations and patterns of use of heritage assets (with paragraph 9 referring to associational attributes pertaining to the setting of a heritage asset). I consider and explore historic use and association between the church and the field west of Barn Corner in the following paragraphs.
- 5.36 Up to 1952, there would have been a far more open and uninterrupted relationship between the church and its rural setting, and that existed to the west until at least 1977 (this can be seen from the historic photo at **Appendix 3.18**). Indeed, there would historically have been a functional relationship going back at least as far as the 18th century; the Enclosure map labels the area (in turn part of a larger broadly L-shaped piece of land) as the Rector of Collingtree's glebe (**Appendix 3.1**). This land, now in part included in the appeal site on the field to the west of Barn Corner, would therefore historically have provided the rector with an income and livelihood. The glebe is again shown in an 1872 map of Collingtree Glebe (the Rectorial Estate Collingtree) at **Appendix 3.4**, when the part of it included in the appeal site was

known as *The Leys* and laid to pasture. This reinforces a historic functional connection that is underlined by the area's proximity to the church and the rectory.

- 5.37 According to 1930s surveys (**Appendix 3.6-3.7**) the field was then known as Hillsfield or Hills Field. The '*Collingtree Village Scrapbook*', compiled in 1977 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO, contains a short piece by the then Rector, who described there were "*200 acres of Glebe which the Rector once farmed though not in living memory. All that remains [of the Glebe] is the field to the west of Rectory garden*" [now in part the appeal site] and the Rector noted the imminent development that would be built behind the rectory (**Appendix 3.21**). It is notable that the L-shaped piece of glebe land remained in single ownership up to at least 1915, as can be seen from **Appendix 3.5**.
- 5.38 The fact that this land was historically part of the Rector's Glebe and that it had an uninterrupted relationship with the village and the church up to 1977, indicates to me that there are important historic associations between the parish church and this land. Even though the row of yews has to some extent interrupted this relationship in visual terms (the association still exists), this row of trees could in the future be removed and the relationship could be re-established.

Uniqueness of the land to the west of the church

- 5.39 It is also relevant to consider whether the land to the west of the church is unusual in its relationship to the church, as I have described it in the preceding paragraphs. In my view it is unusual, and, I would say unique in the village. I do not consider there is any other site within the village which relates the church to its former rural surroundings in the way that the field to the west of Barn Corner does. The only possible candidate would be the undeveloped land to the east of **Sergeant's Lane**, marked on the aerial photo at **Appendix 8**. However, for the reasons below, I consider there are key differences between the land east of **Sergeant's Lane** and the field to the west of Barn Corner in relation to the church. The key differences can be summarised as:
- i. The church tower is not as readily visible from here, and it does not have the same influence over the land. This can be seen from the photos at **Appendix 8.1-8.6**. I have added a third zoomed-in photo in the cases of both representative views because, unlike the photos **at Appendix 7.1-7.6**, the tower is not so clearly visible from here (it may be more visible in leafless conditions).

- ii. There is no evidence of ridge and furrow on this land, which would (or could) reinforce the connection between the medieval church and a supporting medieval field system. In fact the land to the east has been parkland associated with Collingtree Grange since at least the 1885 Ordnance Survey map.
 - iii. The open land to the east was not part of the Glebe (at least since Enclosure). In 1780 a narrow strip of land to the east of the church, adjacent to which Glebe farm would later be established, was labelled “No. 6 The Rector of Collingtree” (**Appendix 3.2**). This strip of land would also have formed part the Glebe but, unlike the land to the west, this part of the Glebe has since been developed and now forms part of the townscape (**Appendix 8.8-8.10**). The eastern plot boundary of No. 2 Sargeants Lane, which is set at an angle and separates it from Glebe Farm, appears to me to be the former edge of the Glebe as shown on the Enclosure map (**Appendix 3.2**) and the 1872 Rectorial Estate (**Appendix 3.4**).
 - iv. There is a greater sense of separation in the experiential sequence between this land and the church. That is not so much a factor of distance *per se*, but rather the nature or type of environment which has to be navigated before arriving at the undeveloped land. The process of getting to this land through the townscape influences the directness of the experience and sense of association. The sequential views when approaching the church are represented by the photos at **Appendix 8.7-8.13** (these would culminate in the view at **Appendix 4.3**). When approaching the field to the west of Barn Corner from the church, a semi rural pathway is encountered within approximately 75m from the church (e.g. see **Appendix 5.5** onwards). By contrast, when approaching the land to the east, the townscape is very much still present at a distance of double that – approximately 150m, and there is a much greater presence of later development. As a result the sense of association between the church and the pastoral hinterland to the west is much more strongly felt than is the case with the land to the east.
 - v. When approaching Collingtree from the east, the presence of the little pump house, roughly halfway along the open land, introduces an urbanising influence extending deep into the space. That is further reinforced by the presence of an iron fence, and the well-manicured lawn between it and Glebe Farm Stable (now converted to residential).
- 5.40 For these reasons I would describe the visual, historical and experiential relationships between the field to the west of Barn Corner and the church of St

Columba as unique, stronger and more immediate than that with the land to the east of Sargeants lane.

Change over time and relative intactness of the land to the west of the church

- 5.41 Paragraph 9 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) deals, amongst other things, **with 'cumulative change'** scenarios where the significance of a heritage asset has already been compromised by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, as is the case in this instance. According to GPA 3 consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from the significance of the asset. A very relevant example of negative change provided in GPA 3 is that of severing the last link between an asset and its original setting. This is relevant because in some respects the setting of the church of St Columba has been compromised and encroached on, and the field to the west of Barn Corner is the most tangible, readily accessible and important remnant of its now almost entirely lost rural setting. In addition it also contains residual pre-enclosure ridge and furrow which, to the extent that it is appreciable, adds a further layer of significance.
- 5.42 The same section of GPA 3 (CD I.4) **deals with 'change over time' where it is** explained that a setting (or by implication part of a setting) which closely resembles the original setting of the asset is likely to contribute to significance. Whilst I would **not suggest that the field to the west of Barn Corner 'closely resembles' the setting** in which the medieval church was constructed, it does still very much resemble a pastoral landscape and the ridge and furrow, to the extent that it can be discerned, suggests a medieval field system. It is, therefore, now the component of the **church's setting that bears the** closest resemblance to its original rural setting. The fact that the rest of the once rural setting has been compromised elsewhere makes this last surviving part of it even more valuable.

Summary

- 5.43 In summary, the field to the west of Barn Corner plays an important role in revealing and enhancing the significance of the church because of visual connections with the church, and also experiential and associational connections. This land facilitates appreciation of the illustrative historic interest of the church of St Columba along an approach that has existed for centuries. It is unique as the closest and most evocative part of the pastoral hinterland to the church, and the last remnant of this hinterland to the west of Collingtree. It can be described as the most intact part of **the church's original pastoral setting**.

The Collingtree Village Conservation Area

- 5.44 The CAA (CD I.2) describes the boundary of Collingtree Village as *“drawn tightly around the centrally-placed High Street which runs north to south within the settlement.”* Modern residential areas *“now surround the majority of the historic core of this settlement”*.
- 5.45 **Architectural interest:** The architectural interest of the area derives from a reasonably coherent vernacular or traditional architectural character, despite variation and differences in styles and the materials of individual buildings. Architecturally the vernacular or traditional language permeates through to most buildings; there is no one single overriding or common characteristic, but a reasonable degree of consistency in scale etc. and the built environment is generally of good quality. Materials such as coursed rubble with ironstone dressings, brick, dressed stone and slate are all common, as are white painted timber sashes. Thatch is now the exception rather than the commonplace roofing material it once would have been, but the older roof slopes still give an indication of former thatched roofs.
- 5.46 **Historic interest:** The conservation area boundary takes in the historic core and parts of the village, essentially a linear or ribbon development, and includes several listed buildings, mostly of 17th and 18th century origin/date. The listed buildings are testimony to the time depth, quality and character of the village as an ensemble of buildings and spaces. The medieval church stands as a focal point and is indicative of the early origins of the village. In short, the conservation area takes in a village that is recognisably historic in origin and character, and its significance derives from this time depth and appreciable historic village character.
- 5.47 **Artistic Interest:** The significance of the conservation area is not attributable to artistic interest.
- 5.48 **Archaeological Interest:** Although the village has early origins, and the area around the church is likely to contain some archaeological remains, the significance of the conservation area does not stem from its archaeological interest.

5.49 **Contribution of setting to significance:** Paragraph 20 of GPA 3 (CD I.4) notes that Conservation Area Appraisals are important sources to support assessments, and I have referred to the CAA (CD I.2) where relevant. The following extracts from the CAA elaborate on the nature of the conservation area and its relation with the area to the west of Barn Corner:

"Both the M1 and the A45 are busy dual carriageways radically altering Collingtree's links with its historic neighbours. They are in marked contrast to the historic context of the village, which was predominantly farmland laid to pasture." [page 2, bottom left]

"A fragment of land marked by ridges and furrows surviving from the old system can be seen in the field to the west of Barn Corner." [page 3, top right]

"To the south the M1, running in a cutting, breaks the historic links with the surrounding landscape. The village feels somewhat truncated by the development of this major route way and yet no part of it was lost in the construction." [page 4, top right]

"The historic core of the village effectively culminates in the area surrounding St Columba's Church, at the north end of the village, where there was a farm before the Grange was built." [page 4, top right]

"The historic core of Collingtree is encircled by modern residential development, with the exception of areas to the south-east [...], land to the east of Applebarn Close / Sargeants Lane, and land to the west of Barn Corner. These areas are important open spaces which play a significant role in providing the setting of the Conservation Area." [page 4, bottom right]

5.50 The following can be deduced from the CAA (CD I.2):

- i. The fact that the village feels somewhat truncated by the development of the M1 indicates that the experience of the conservation area takes in a much wider area than its boundary and its immediate context. It also indicates that the setting of the conservation area is so integral to its experience that truncation of its setting feels like a truncation of the historic village itself.
- ii. The historic context of the conservation area was predominantly farmland, laid to pasture. Modern residential areas now surround the majority of the conservation area but there are still three areas where the conservation area is not surrounded by modern development.

- iii. These areas are described as 'important' open spaces which play a significant role in providing the setting of the conservation area, and it can be added that their importance lies in the fact that they are now all that is left of the pastoral surroundings of the historic settlement.
 - iv. Only one area of ridge and furrow in the immediate surroundings of the conservation area still survives; this is on the appeal site in the field to the west of Barn Corner (see **Appendix 11**).
 - v. The area surrounding St Columba's Church is the culmination of the historic core of the village and can be described as the single most significant element of the conservation area.
- 5.51 The church of St Columba is an important element of the conservation area – in fact it is described in the CAA (CD I.2) as the single most visually and architecturally dominant building. It is by far the oldest and most significant standing building and it is a local landmark, located in the historic core of the village. As such the relationship between the church and the field to the west of Barn Corner remains equally important and relevant to the conservation area as it is to the church, although the field is much closer to the conservation area (less than 50m away), and in this sense it is even more closely experienced as part of the setting of the area.
- 5.52 Views across the field to the west of Barn Corner towards the church are equally relevant to the experience of the conservation area, with the church performing a landmark function and, as with innumerable villages across the country, the church is the most prominent and recognisable 'signifier' of the settlement. The CAA (CD I.2) describes views of the church, on page 9: *"The single most important view within the village is that of the church. It stands prominently on a mound and, together with the mature sycamore tree, dominates views northward up the High Street. [...] The best view into the conservation area is from the north. [...] The approaches from the east and west are particularly bland and open. They are uncharacteristic of the village and marred by street clutter, old road signs and poorly sited speed restriction signs."*
- 5.53 It seems to me that the last reference to approaches from the east and west must be the roads, i.e. Watering Lane/Ash Lane, rather than the public footpath which crosses the village roughly east-west. In fact the CAA (CD I.2) does not appear to have given this route proper consideration. Despite that, and although it is not a conventional 'main' approach in the same way as the aforementioned roads, my own

experience is that the footpath does play an important role as a route into, out of, or through the conservation area. That is because it crosses two of the three remaining adjoining areas of open land, which means it is an approach or route that is still capable of revealing the once rural setting of the village. Approaching the village by foot in this way also adds an experiential dimension to the setting of the historic village.

- 5.54 In this sense the footpath is, in my view, an important approach and/or component of the setting of the conservation **area, in stark contrast to the 'bland' approaches by road, marred by street clutter and signage.** Also, a footpath or pathway in this location has evidently been in existence for well over two centuries, at the least (**Appendix 3.2**). Although that historic dimension cannot be seen or tangibly experienced, it adds a level of **interest and it could easily be added to the users'** experience, for example by means of an interpretation board or sign.

6.0 THE EFFECT OF THE APPEAL SCHEME

- 6.1 The effect of the appeal schemes (Appeals A and B) in the context of the church and the conservation area could be summarised as a comprehensive urbanisation of the field to the west of Barn Corner, and the associated destruction of any remnant ridge and furrow.
- 6.2 In relation to Appeal A, the Parameter Plan (CD A.5) identifies, indicatively, a line of acoustic mitigation along the eastern boundary of the appeal site, i.e. along the line of the row of yew trees. My understanding is that this would be in the form of a 3 m high fence. **A narrow strip of "proposed woodland" is also** shown in this location. This indicates that the physical and visual (and potentially acoustic) separation between the field to the west of Barn Corner and the village and the church would be reinforced. Collingtree Village would be further divorced from this land (i.e. in addition to the line of yews); the land itself would of course change from pastoral hinterland to a suburban housing development.
- 6.3 The Parameter Plan (CD A.5) shows the footpath as penetrating the acoustic mitigation and the woodland to run across this part of the appeal site in much the same alignment as it is at present. However, instead of approaching (or leaving) Collingtree Village through a paddock or field, the historic approach to the village along the footpath would be through a modern suburban housing development.
- 6.4 The full application layout (Appeal B; CD D.17) shows the footpath as encountering a hard landscaped access road surrounded by detached, double storey houses as soon as the appeal site is entered from Collingtree Village, before a small square surrounded by a road and fronted by double storey houses is encountered. Once the road is crossed, the footpath leads over the small square, at an angle, before the road on the other side is again crossed. Beyond that the footpath passes between two double storey houses, and then along a footpath to the west, passing in between their rear gardens, before emerging in the open countryside beyond the appeal site.
- 6.5 It is not possible to say with certainty whether any views of the church tower would still be obtainable from this area of land, or from the footpath (e.g. **Appendix 7.1-7.6**). It has been assumed for the purposes of assessment that it would be possible that there would still be glimpses of the tower over the roofs of the two storey houses surrounding the central square, or in glimpses between the houses. In these cases the present-day prominence of the tower as a feature breaking the line of tree

canopies, or seen though them in leafless months, would be greatly diminished; instead it would become a peripheral background element amongst a suburban development, with all it entails, in the foreground.

- 6.6 It is clear that the experience of this part of the setting of the church, and the nature of the approach to Collingtree Village, would be radically and permanently transformed. This land would bear no resemblance to a rural or pastoral hinterland and it would be difficult to imagine this land in the same way as it exists today (see the photos at **Appendix 6**).
- 6.7 Although the design of the new houses would be different, the overall suburbanisation effect of the development would be comparable to that of the modern development on Spinney Drive to the north of the church (**Appendix 4.6**). The Spinney Drive development has completely transformed the area, such that it is now difficult to imagine this area as the site of a former country house (Collingtree Grange) and its associated park in the late 19th century (see **Appendix 3A** and **Appendix 3.11**) or, before that, the northern edge of the rural settlement around the church, with open fields beyond (**Appendix 3.2**).

7.0 EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The grade II* listed church of St Columba

- 7.1 English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* [ibid] notes, in paragraph 44, that historical value depends on 'sound identification and direct experience' of fabric or, as is the case in this instance, landscape that has survived from the past. On the other hand it notes that subsequent changes do not necessarily obliterate authenticity, which often lies in visible evidence of change over time as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. In terms of the setting of St Columba, an example of this is the 17th and 18th century historic village core that the medieval church is now seen and experienced in conjunction with, and which adds a sense of time depth and authenticity despite not being medieval.
- 7.2 The field to the west of Barn Corner similarly reflects changing circumstances in that it no longer has the appearance of arable land or a cultivated agricultural field of ridge and furrow (it appeared more like pasture or a paddock on my visit), and its boundaries have changed. It has nevertheless retained a sense of authenticity as an instantly recognisable rural setting to the village, and to the church tower that can be seen from it and across it. It is likely that the remnants of the ridge and furrow will be evident under some conditions. The boundaries around the field are not historically authentic and the row of yews along the east has to an extent affected the visual relationship between the church and this remainder of its rural hinterland, which had survived largely unaltered until recent decades (**Appendix 3.18**). Nevertheless, the land to the west of Barn Corner still plays an important role as part of the setting of the church.
- 7.3 *Conservation Principles* notes, in paragraph 44, that completeness tends to strengthen illustrative value, and that historical values are harmed to the extent that adaptation obliterates or conceals them. The development of the field to the west of Barn Corner as proposed in Appeals A and B would obliterate the remaining rural setting to the west of the parish church. It would no longer be possible to see the 15th century tower across a field of undeveloped countryside redolent of its once pastoral setting and it would no longer be possible to see the tower in the context of residual ridge and furrow. The experience of the church from and in conjunction with the last remaining part of its once rural setting to the west would be permanently lost. The character of the western approach, along a historic footpath, would be irreversibly changed, much like the way in which the modern development

on Spinney Drive to the north of the church has radically changed that area and its relationship with the church.

- 7.4 It is clear to me that the field to the west of Barn Corner is part of the setting of the church, and that it contributes in a positive way to its significance. The change brought about by the appeal schemes could plainly not be described as preserving this unique, and important, part of the setting of the church. In spite of the changes to the field in recent decades, it is still a visually and experientially important part of the setting of the church and it reveals the important historic relationship between the church and its once rural surroundings. The loss of this part of the setting of the medieval parish church, which is the closest and best preserved remaining vestige of its pastoral hinterland, would fundamentally and detrimentally change the ability to experience a connection between the church and the countryside. To paraphrase the Conservation Officer, the experience of the church would be that it is engulfed by modern development.
- 7.5 This loss of significance is perhaps best summarised in paragraph 163 of *Conservation Principles*:
- "The historic environment is constantly changing, but each significant part of it represents a finite resource. If it is not sustained, not only are its heritage values eroded or lost, but so is its potential to give distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which people live, and provide people with a sense of continuity and a source of identity. The historic environment is a social and economic asset and a cultural resource for learning and enjoyment."*
- 7.6 In summary the impact of the proposed development (both Appeals A and B) on the significance of the parish church of St Columba would be an erosion of its historic interest and legibility as a medieval parish church, which had stood for centuries as the focus of a small rural village surrounded by fields. The development on the field to the west of Barn Corner would radically transform the relationships (historic, associative, experiential and visual) between the church and the one remaining part of its setting that can still be experienced and understood as a remnant of its supporting pastoral hinterland, and which contains a historic approach from the west in which the church can still be experienced as set within a remnant of its original pastoral hinterland.

- 7.7 In my opinion the severity of the impact is amplified by the fact that this part of the setting of the church is unique, for the following reasons:
- i. it is the closest and most evocative part of the pastoral hinterland to the church;
 - ii. it can still be directly experienced in conjunction with the church by means of a historic footpath;
 - iii. it bears the closest resemblance to the original rural setting of the church;
 - iv. it has an associative historic relationship with the church as part of the historic Glebe, which has retained its pastoral character;
 - v. it contains residual ridge and furrow which, when visible, can assist in understanding the time depth and associative interest of the land;
 - vi. it is the last remnant of the once rural hinterland to the west of the church and the village of Collingtree.
- 7.8 For the avoidance of doubt, the harm I have ascribed to the significance of St Columba would be less than substantial within the meaning of the NPPF. It would nevertheless be harm – and particularly relevant because of the uniqueness of the character and contribution of this part of its setting – and it would be a material consideration in the determination of the appeal.
- 7.9 Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act does not distinguish between substantial and less than substantial harm. It places instead a strong statutory presumption against granting planning permission for development that would fail to preserve the setting of a listed building, as would be the case if the appeal schemes were allowed. It is a matter that must be given considerable importance and weight in the planning balance. In considering the impact and in making the decision, I would reinforce again that the grade II* listed parish church is a heritage asset of the highest significance and a building that is of greater than special interest.
- 7.10 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including the contribution of their setting. Paragraph 129 highlights taking measures to avoid or minimise conflict between a **heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of a proposal**. According to Paragraph 132 of the NPPF, any harm requires clear and convincing justification. JCS Policy BN5 requires developers to demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the

impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their setting, in order to **minimise harm. It then deals with cases where harm is “unavoidable and justified”.**

- 7.11 It seems clear to me from the **appellant’s** assessment in the ES (CD A.18.1) and the accompanying Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) that the Parameter Plan (CD A.5) and accompanying Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) for the development was not informed by a sound assessment in relation to the setting of the church; neither the contribution of the appeal site to the significance of the church, nor the impact of the development were properly understood, or even recognised. That stems from the failure in both the ES (CD A.18.1) and the Built Heritage Assessment (CD A.18.10) to identify the field to the west of Barn Corner as part of the setting of the church, and the failure to recognise or acknowledge its contribution to the significance of the church. This is in contrast with my own assessment, and that of **the Council’s Conservation Officer, and that of Historic England.**
- 7.12 Overall, I have identified that development of the field to the west of Barn Corner will lead to serious harm to the setting of the grade II* listed church of St Columba. In terms of section 66 of the 1990 Act, there is therefore a strong presumption against granting planning permission for the development. Further, the NPPF places great weight on the conservation of designated assets, and the church in this case is a heritage asset of the highest significance.
- 7.13 I recognise that harm to heritage assets has to be weighed against the benefits of the proposals, including the provision of housing. That balance is dealt with by Mr Stephens. However, I would point out that the specific area of the appeal site, and the allocation site of JCS Policy N5, whose development I consider would cause harm to the church of St Columba if developed in the way proposed, is limited to the field to the west of Barn Corner. I do not object to development of the rest of the allocation site; whilst I consider there would be some effect beyond the field to the west of Barn Corner, this is not sufficient in my view to sustain a reasonable objection.
- 7.14 The field to the west of Barn Corner makes up a very small part of the overall allocation area. I have seen no evidence that the development referred to in the allocation and proposed in Appeal A could not be accommodated within the remainder of the allocation site. At worst, by simply avoiding development of the field to the west of Barn Corner, the housing as proposed in Appeal A would be reduced by only a small proportion. In this respect I note that the housing provided

for in JCS Policy N5 is 'in the region of' 1000 dwellings. The policy does not prescribe a specific number of dwellings and there must therefore be a degree of flexibility in the number of dwellings, which could be somewhat less than 1000 and still satisfy the allocation.

- 7.15 This means the harm I have identified is neither an inevitable consequence of the allocation, nor unavoidable. I have not seen evidence to demonstrate that measures were taken to minimise harm to the setting of the church of St Columba, or that the harm that would result from the appeal schemes under these circumstances would be justified.
- 7.16 Therefore, in heritage terms, the impact of the appeal schemes on the grade II* listed church of St Columba is unacceptable.

The Collingtree Village Conservation Area

- 7.17 The nature of the impacts as described at the church of St Columba could be phrased in a similar way in relation to the Collingtree Village Conservation Area. That is because:
- i. the church constitutes an important element of the conservation area;
 - ii. it performs a landmark function;
 - iii. it is the most prominent and recognisable 'signifier' of the historic settlement, which can be appreciated from the appeal site; and
 - iv. it is the oldest, largest and the single most significant element of the conservation area, and it stands as the focus of the historic core.
- 7.18 The impacts on the church can therefore also be applied to the conservation area as representative of the historic rural settlement immediately around the medieval church.
- 7.19 However, the boundary of the Collingtree Village Conservation Area is much closer to the field to the west of Barn Corner, which is therefore even more closely experienced as part of the surroundings of the conservation area. For the reasons I have set out in the previous section, the footpath across the field to the west of Barn Corner is an important approach and/or component of the setting and experience of the historic village and the impact of a housing development here would be a radical

and irreversible transformation of this historic approach to the settlement, and the only remaining part of its rural hinterland in this location.

7.20 Whilst the small parcel of land between the appeal site and the conservation area would remain, the rest of its historic supporting pastoral hinterland would be lost. The small parcel of land is not nearly enough to form a rural hinterland and the historic village would in effect merge with a new adjacent village, with which it would be connected by the footpath. The last remaining connection with a rural hinterland to the west of the conservation area would be eradicated. The experience of approaching a historic village, with a medieval church tower, seen over a field (which contains residual ridge and furrow), from a centuries-old pathway, would be permanently lost. The alignment of the pathway would remain but the route would be experienced as completely different, crossing a modern suburban extension rather than a field or paddock. The historic settlement would be experienced as engulfed by modern development to the west.

7.21 The nature of the impact **reflects the Conservation Officer's** concerns in response to the application (**Appendix 13**), i.e. that the proposed development would affect the character of Collingtree as a 'defined historic settlement'. **It also reflects the Conservation Officer's** concern **about the impact on the** 'historic integrity' of Collingtree Village. The rural hinterland is important to the setting of the historic settlement and the importance of the field to the west of Barn Corner has also been expressly stated in the Collingtree Village Conservation Area Appraisal (CD I.2). My own view about avoiding harm by removing development on the field to the west of Barn Corner in the Parameter Plan (CD A.5) and Illustrative Masterplan (CD A.6) as expressed above seems to me to accord very much with **the Conservation Officer's** view that greater separation should be provided between the historic settlement and the proposed **Village 1**. **It also aligns with Historic England's response** (CD I.7) to the application (albeit post-determination) that the expanded village of Collingtree is separated from Northampton's housing by green space, and that the applicant was specifically urged to address the issue of maintaining a separate settlement through the masterplanning process and the provision of green infrastructure.

7.22 The harm I have identified to the conservation area means that the appeal schemes are unacceptable in heritage terms. As I have already said in relation to the effect on the church of St Columba, as a listed building, the harm that would follow from developing this field is not unavoidable. I have not seen evidence that measures were taken to minimise harm through the layouts of the appeal schemes (although

mitigation in the form of a stronger boundary treatment was included). Therefore, any benefits associated with the specific layout subject to Appeals A and B have to be set against the harm, in accordance with paragraph 134 of the NPPF. However, again, the proportion of the allocation area that is affected is small.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 My assessment demonstrates that the field to the west of Barn Corner plays an important role in revealing and enhancing the significance of the grade II* church of St Columba, in spite of the fact that the motorway nearby can be heard from it and in spite of the later boundary enclosures.
- 8.2 That is because of the visual connections between this land and the church, but also experiential and associational connections. This land facilitates appreciation of the illustrative historic interest of the church of St Columba along an approach that has existed for centuries. It is unique as the closest and most evocative part of the pastoral hinterland to the church, and the last remnant of this hinterland to the west of Collingtree. It can be described as **the most intact part of the church's original** pastoral setting. The significance of the field is further underlined and reinforced by, but not dependant on, the residual pre-enclosure ridge and furrow.
- 8.3 The field plays a similar role in relation to the conservation area, although it is physically and experientially closer. The footpath across the field is an important approach to the historic village, and it is a fossilised pathway that has existed since at least the late 18th century but probably much earlier.
- 8.4 The effect of the appeal schemes (Appeals A and B) in the context of the church and the conservation area could be summarised as a comprehensive urbanisation of the field to the west of Barn Corner, and the associated destruction of any remnant ridge and furrow. This would entail the loss of the closest and most evocative part of the pastoral hinterland to the church and the conservation area and constitute harm to a part of their setting that makes a positive contribution to and reveals their significance.
- 8.5 Overall, I have identified that development of the field to the west of Barn Corner will lead to serious harm to both the church of St Columba and the Collingtree Village Conservation Area. In terms of section 66 of the 1990 Act there is therefore a strong presumption against granting planning permission for the development. Further, the NPPF places great weight on conservation of designated assets. Both the church and conservation area are designated assets, and the church is of the highest significance.

- 8.6 Finally, although any benefits of the development have to be weighed against the serious harm I have identified, my objection on conservation grounds relates to development of a small proportion of the overall area allocated for development by JCS Policy N5. The harm associated with development of the field to the west of Barn Corner is not inevitable or unavoidable, and it has not been justified. In heritage terms, the impacts of the proposals are therefore unacceptable.

9.0 SUMMARY

- 9.1 Following my appointment, an initial review of the case and a site visit, I advised Northampton Borough Council that I considered the objection to the proposed development on the basis of impacts on the setting of the Collingtree Village Conservation Area reasonable and supportable. I also advised that I believed part of the proposed development (both the outline and the full applications) would fall within, and affect, the setting of the grade II* listed parish church of St Columba and that the reasons for refusal should be amended to include it. In this **respect I believe both the appellant and the local authority's** planning case officer failed to properly take into account a material consideration, and that Historic England should have been consulted on the applications. On my advice Historic England was given an opportunity to provide a consultation response, and the response confirmed both that the appeal site falls in the setting of the church and would cause harm.
- 9.2 I acknowledge in my assessment that the motorway nearby can be heard from the field to the west of Barn Corner and that the later boundary enclosures around the field, including the row of yews along the east, are not historically authentic. The boundary changes in particular have, to an extent, affected the visual relationship between the church and this remainder of its rural hinterland, which had survived largely unaltered until recent decades. In spite of that it is clear to me that the field to the west of Barn Corner is part of the setting of the church of St Columba and the conservation area. It is also clear to me that it is part of their setting which positively contributes to their significance. It relates to the church in particular on a number of different levels; visual, experiential, associative and historic. The church in turn is an important element of the conservation area and it is a signifier of the historic village.
- 9.3 **Visibility is the most obvious aspect of the contribution of the church's setting to** its significance: the church tower can be seen, and therefore directly experienced, from the field to the west of Barn Corner. The extent of visibility and prominence will vary according to the season, but my site visit confirmed that the tower can be seen across the field above the tree canopies when in full leaf in the height of summer. The views of the tower, seen in this way from an undeveloped rural field, are strongly evocative of the now largely lost medieval supporting landscape around the historic settlement and in close proximity to the church itself. Whilst the residual ridge and furrow on this land may not always be apparent or easily

visible, and it may therefore only be an occasional and subtle part of the experience of the church from its setting, when visible it will add another layer to the experience of the church from this area.

- 9.4 The church and the field west of Barn Corner can be experienced as related with each other, despite the '**artificial**' **present**-day intervening yew boundary. The yew trees were planted in recent decades and they could be removed in the future, thereby reinstating an even closer experiential connection between the church and this part of the appeal site. Despite the row of yews it is possible to experience the field west of Barn Corner as part of the surroundings of the church because of the proximity between the church and its pastoral setting to the west, the semi-rural nature of the area that separates them, and the relative ease and rapidity with which it is possible to move through the field and into the immediate surroundings of the church, or vice versa. The proximity allows each to be experienced as interconnected with the other. Moreover it is possible to hear the church bell from this land, which manifestly strengthens the sense of association, and adds an evocative additional dimension to the experience of the church.
- 9.5 Experientially the field is the closest surviving rural setting to the church, and its rural presence can be felt as part of a sequential experience both when approaching the church from the west, and when moving away from it out of the historic village along the footpath to the west. The footpath across the field west of Barn Corner has existed for at least two centuries, which emphasises its historic importance as an approach to the church by foot.
- 9.6 In terms of historic association and use, the field to the west of Barn Corner is part of the closest and most intact surviving area of the **Rector's** Glebe, and the only part of it from where the tower can still be experienced. This again further underlines its illustrative value.
- 9.7 The field plays a similar role in relation to the conservation area, although it is experientially closer because the conservation area boundary is closer to it. The footpath across the field is an important approach to the historic village in which something of its once rural surroundings can still be experienced along a historic approach. This retains a sense of the original rural setting of Collingtree Village and it is all the more important given the changes that have occurred as a result of modern development.

- 9.8 The setting of the church of St Columba and the Collingtree Village Conservation Area has been compromised and encroached on by modern developments. However, careful consideration still needs to be given to the impact of additional change. The existing encroachment and unsympathetic changes do not justify further loss, or development of what still remains of the rural setting of the church and the conservation area. Instead it makes the contribution of the field to the west of Barn Corner all the more important and valuable. It is unique as the most tangible, readily accessible and important remnant of the now almost entirely lost rural setting to the church and the historic village. The loss of this land to urbanisation would entail severing the last link between the heritage assets and their rural hinterland to the west.
- 9.9 The effect of the appeal schemes (Appeals A and B) in the context of the church and the conservation area would result in a comprehensive urbanisation of the field to the west of Barn Corner, and the associated destruction of any remnant ridge and furrow. This would entail the loss of the closest and most evocative part of the pastoral hinterland to the church and the conservation area. Whilst the alignment of the footpath across the appeal site would remain similar, the experience of the church and the historic village from here would be fundamentally different. It would no longer be possible to see the 15th century church tower across a field of undeveloped countryside redolent of its once pastoral setting and it would no longer be possible to see the tower in the context of residual ridge and furrow. The experience of the church and the historic village from and in conjunction with the last remaining part of their once rural setting to the west would be permanently lost. The character of the western approach, along a historic footpath, would be irreversibly changed.
- 9.10 The change brought about by the appeal schemes could not be described as preserving this unique, and important, part of the setting of the church and the historic village, as encapsulated in the conservation area. The loss of this part of their setting would fundamentally and detrimentally change the ability to experience a connection between the heritage assets and the countryside. The harm would be less than substantial within the meaning of the NPPF, but nevertheless particularly relevant and serious because of the uniqueness of the character and contribution of this part of the setting of the church and the conservation area.

- 9.11 **It seems clear to me from the appellant's application submission that the appeal schemes were not informed by a sound assessment in relation to the setting of the church and the historic village.**
- 9.12 The harm that I have identified is not an inevitable consequence of the allocations set out in the JCS Policy N5. I have not seen the clear and convincing justification for development on the field west of Barn Corner that the NPPF requires. By simply avoiding harm to the heritage assets by not developing that field, there would be only a limited effect on the benefits associated with the appeals, even if (which has not been demonstrated) the housing lost from the field could not be compensated for elsewhere.
- 9.13 Against what would be at most a relatively minor adjustment to the benefits of the appeal schemes has to be weighed the serious and irreversible harm that the appeal schemes would cause by developing the field to the west of Barn Corner. This includes harm to a grade II* listed building, which is a heritage asset of the highest significance and a building of more than special interest. Considerable importance and weight must be given to the preservation of the setting of the parish church of St Columba. The weight to be attached to the preservation of **the Collingtree Village Conservation Area's significance as a historic village is also** a material consideration that adds further weight to the planning balance against both appeals.
- 9.14 Given the weight to be attached to the harm arising from the appeal schemes in heritage terms, the objection on this ground to both appeals is in my view compelling.

Appendices to Heritage Proof of Evidence (A3 document)

Ignus Froneman B.Arch.Stud ACIFA IHBC

**Land south of Rowtree Road and west of Windingbrook
Lane, Northampton**

On behalf of Northampton Borough Council

October 2015

PINS Refs:

Appeal A: APP/V2825/W/15/3028151

Appeal B: APP/V2825/W/15/3028155

LPA Refs: N/2013/1035 and N/2013/1063

Heritage Collective Project Ref: 1913

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Project Number:	1913	Date:	30/10/2015
Authored by:	Ignus Froneman BA Stud. ACIfA IHBC	Document Version:	v.5
Reviewed by:	Team		

APPENDIX 1:

LIST DESCRIPTION TEXT FOR THE CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA

(superseded file copy and current from Historic England's National Heritage List)

Superseded list description (Northampton Borough Council file copy)

Address	Grade	LBS No.	NBC Ref.	Map	Date Listed
HIGH STREET, Collingtree Church of St Columba NN4 0NF	A	232093	LB0231	32	3 May 1968
Limestone with ironstone quoins and bands. Plain parapets, lead roofs, slate chancel roof. C12 origin, retaining chancel with south doorway and east pair of arches in nave. C13 west extension of nave by 2 more pairs of arches. C14 chancel windows and sedilia under ogee arches. C15 nave clerestory, east window and west tower. North aisle demolished and arcade filled in 1808. Restored and south porch rebuilt 1871-3. North organ chamber added 1891. Carved C13 font. Chancel brass of 1679 and C19 wall tablets.					

Current list description from Historic England’s National Heritage List

List entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA

List entry Number: 1293721

Location

CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA, HIGH STREET

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
Northamptonshire	Northampton	District Authority	Collingtree

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 03-May-1968

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

UID: 232093

Details

725/22/406 HIGH STREET 03-MAY-68 (West side) CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA

II*

The church was probably built in the early C12, and the western part of the chancel and the nave walls date to this period. The N aisle and all or part of the S aisle were added in the later C12. The chancel was extended eastwards and the aisles apparently rebuilt in the C14, at which time new fittings including the chancel sedilia and the font were also installed.

There was further remodelling in the C15, when the tower and clerestory were added and the E window replaced. The N aisle was pulled down in 1808, preserving the N arcade and reusing some older materials including windows. Restoration of 1871-73 included the construction of the S porch. The N organ chamber was added in 1891, and the nave and aisle roofs were renewed in 1929, reusing much of the old timber.

MATERIALS: Largely coursed limestone stone rubble with stone dressings, with some ashlar. The tower is uncoursed limestone rubble. Lead roofs to nave, aisle, porch and tower, slate to chancel. Nave interior stripped, chancel plastered with exposed stone dressings.

PLAN: Nave with 2-bay S aisle, S porch and blocked 2-bay N aisle. W tower with shallow, rectangular SE stair turret. Chancel with N organ chamber.

EXTERIOR: Three stage, C15 embattled W tower with very high, moulded plinth, the stages separated by strings. Diagonal buttresses and rectangular stair turret like an over-sized buttress. Blocked 4-centred W door with continuous moulded arch, square hood mould and carved spandrels. Above it is a tall, 2-light Perpendicular window; there are similar, smaller 2-light windows in each face of the bell stage and a very small, rectangular opening in the 2nd stage on the W face.

Nave has a shallow pitched roof and small plain parapets. There are 3 plain 2-light windows with square heads on the S only. E nave gable rises above the roof line. S aisle is unbuttressed and has much restored Perpendicular windows with trefoiled ogee lights under square heads with hood moulds. Those in the S wall have 3 lights, and those in the E and W walls 2 lights. The C19 S porch has a pointed outer opening with continuous mouldings under a hood mould, and 2 light Perpendicular style windows with 4-centred heads. The nave S door has a continuous double ogee moulding and a trefoil headed niche above.

The chancel has diagonal SE and NE buttresses of two stages. There is a blocked late C12 doorway in the N (the VCH suggests this led to a former chapel or sacristy, though this need not have been the case and it may have been simply a priest's door) and to the right of it a round-headed recess, probably for a tomb, and perhaps also dating to the late C12. To the left is a square, later medieval low-side window or squint. The chancel S windows are both heavily renewed, but are C14 Decorated in style. That to the W has two ogee lights with an ogee quatrefoil in the head, and the other to the E has 3-light intersecting Y-tracery. The masonry is too heavily renewed for any building break between the C12 and C14 work to be visible. Chancel E window of 5 lights with a 4 centred head; chancel N window is similar but of three lights. The N vestry in a harsher Gothic Revival style with a plate tracery trefoil in its E window.

The N aisle, which has a plain parapet and a small, two stage buttress at the W end, preserves the outline of the former N aisle. There is a single C19 lancet with a trefoiled head in each arch, but these are set within blocked openings, the westernmost rounded headed and probably a former Georgian or churchwarden's gothic style window of 1808, the other two four-centred and probably reused C15 windows removed in the C19.

INTERIOR: The nave and aisle walls are stripped stone, the chancel is plastered and painted. Tall, pointed tower arch the full width of the tower, with three chamfered dying orders of C15 form. The nave has a very shallow, plain roof probably of the C15, much restored in the C20. Tie beam, short posts, curved arch braces to the tie beam and arched braces up to the roof. The roof is boarded behind the rafters. The former N arcade is visible inside the nave. Both N and S arcades appear to have been built in the late C12 and altered in the C14. The E respond and 1st pier of each arcade has a square, C12 capital, while the other capitals on each side are moulded. The arches are of 2 hollow chamfered orders with a hood mould on the nave side and date to the C14, perhaps suggesting that 2 bay C12 chapels were lengthened to aisles in the C14, retaining the E responds and 1st piers, but rebuilding the rest including new arches.

Tall, C15, pointed chancel arch of two hollow chamfered orders, with a hood mould to the nave side. The inner order is supported on half-octagonal responds with moulded capitals and bases. A blocked rood stair door is visible to the N of the chancel arch. The blocked C12 door or opening to a former chapel is visible in the S wall of the chancel, and in the S chancel wall there is a blocked rectangular opening, apparently a former squint. C19 doorway to the vestry and arch to the organ chamber on the N. The chancel has a 3-seat, C14 sedilia and an aumbry, but no piscina.

PRINCIPAL FIXTURES: Very fine, though very worn, early C14 font. The rounded bowl has a king's head in the style of Edward I, a winged figure, a monster and one unrecognisable motif on its lower corners. It stands on a cylindrical central shaft and four moulded corner shafts, the latter apparently replacements. The cover with ogee traceried buttress forms is C19. Three seat early C14 sedilia in the chancel, each niche with a trefoiled ogee head and the seats level. There is a hood mould with head stops and finials over each arch, and the niches are divided by moulded shafts very similar to the outer shafts on the font, suggesting a similar date for the font and sedilia. There is a plain aumbry in the N chancel wall. The S aisle has a piscina with a shouldered head. C19 encaustic tiles in chancel. Simple

C19 choir stalls with shouldered ends decorated with sunk roundels. Polygonal C19 timber pulpit with traceried sides. Unusual late C19 or early C20 brass lectern with a winged female figure supporting the bookrest. E window of 1893, possibly by Clayton and Bell. The NE and SE windows of the sanctuary are signed by A Stoddart of Nottingham, one is dated 1916. One lancet in the N nave wall by Powell. A brass to Horatio Woodhouse (d.1679), rector for almost 37 years, in the chancel and some C19 wall slabs.

HISTORY: Collingtree is a small parish whose history is closely linked to that of neighbouring Milton Malsor, and for much of the middle ages, the advowsons (the right to appoint the rector) of both parishes were held jointly but divided into shares or moieties with rights in each. This arrangement was altered, and advowson of Collingtree fully separated from that of Milton Malzors, in the mid C15.

The late C12 aisles at Collingtree are the earliest evidence for a church there, but Collingtree itself existed at the time of Domesday and the aisles were probably added to an early C12 church comprising an aisleless nave and square chancel. The chancel was extended and the aisles remodelled in the C14, and other features of this period, including the font and the sedilia, suggest a fairly comprehensive reworking of the church. The tower dates to the C15. The N aisle was pulled down in 1808, leaving the arcade buried in the nave N wall, and the whole church restored in the later C19, with further work in the C20.

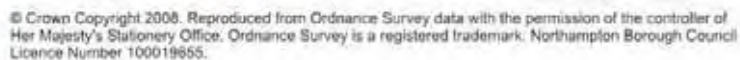
SOURCES: Salzman, L F, ed, The Victoria County History of Northamptonshire, vol 4 (1937), 240-42. Pevsner, N and Cherry, B. The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire (2nd ed., 1973), 153.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: The church of St Columba, Collingtree, is designated at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: * Excellent medieval fabric, including a restored C15 roof. * The surviving medieval fittings, notably sedilia and font, are very fine.

APPENDIX 2:

COLLINGTREE VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA MAP

(From Northampton Borough Council's website: <http://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200207/building-conservation-and-trees/1625/collingtree-conservation-area>)



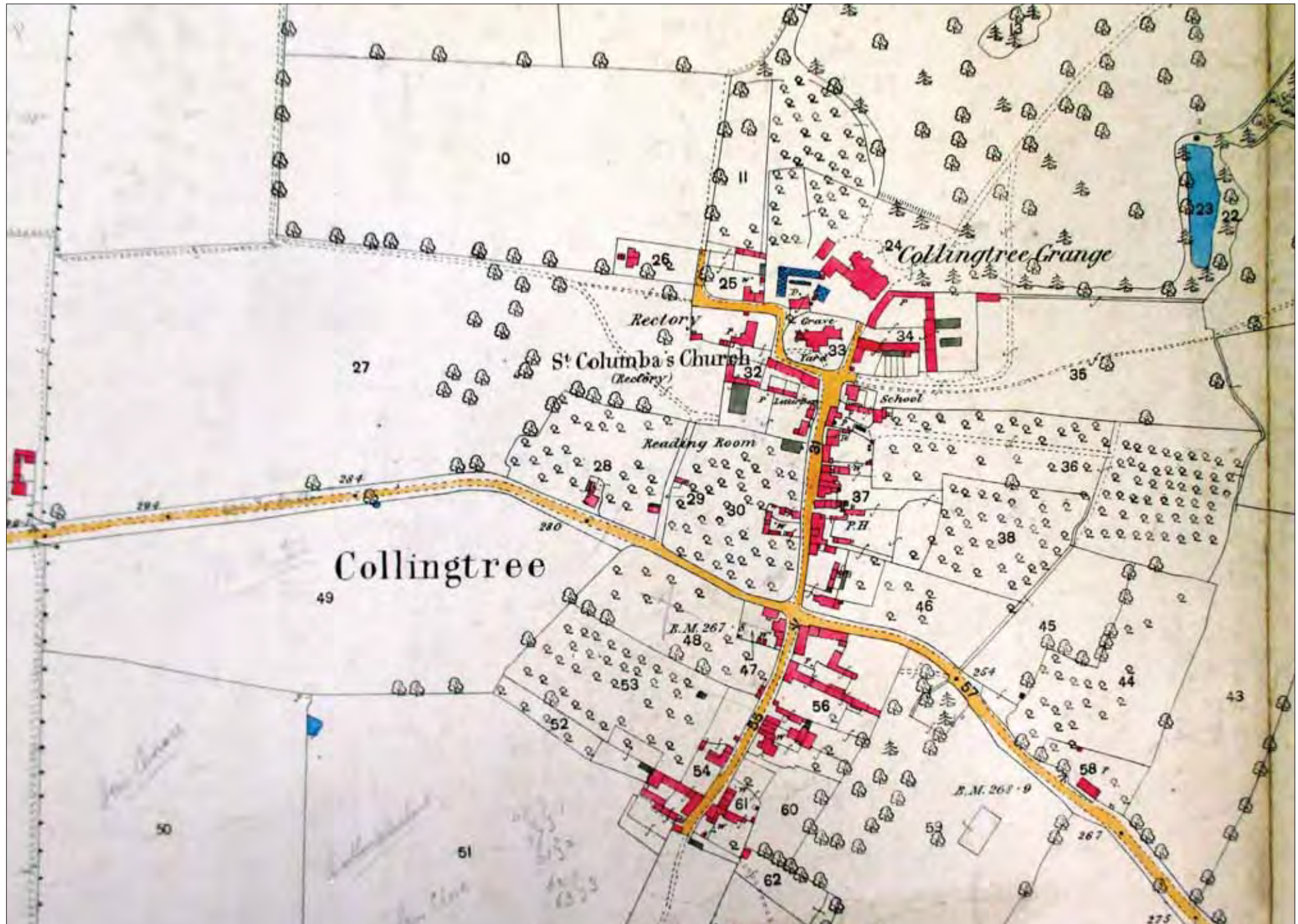
APPENDIX 3:
DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH



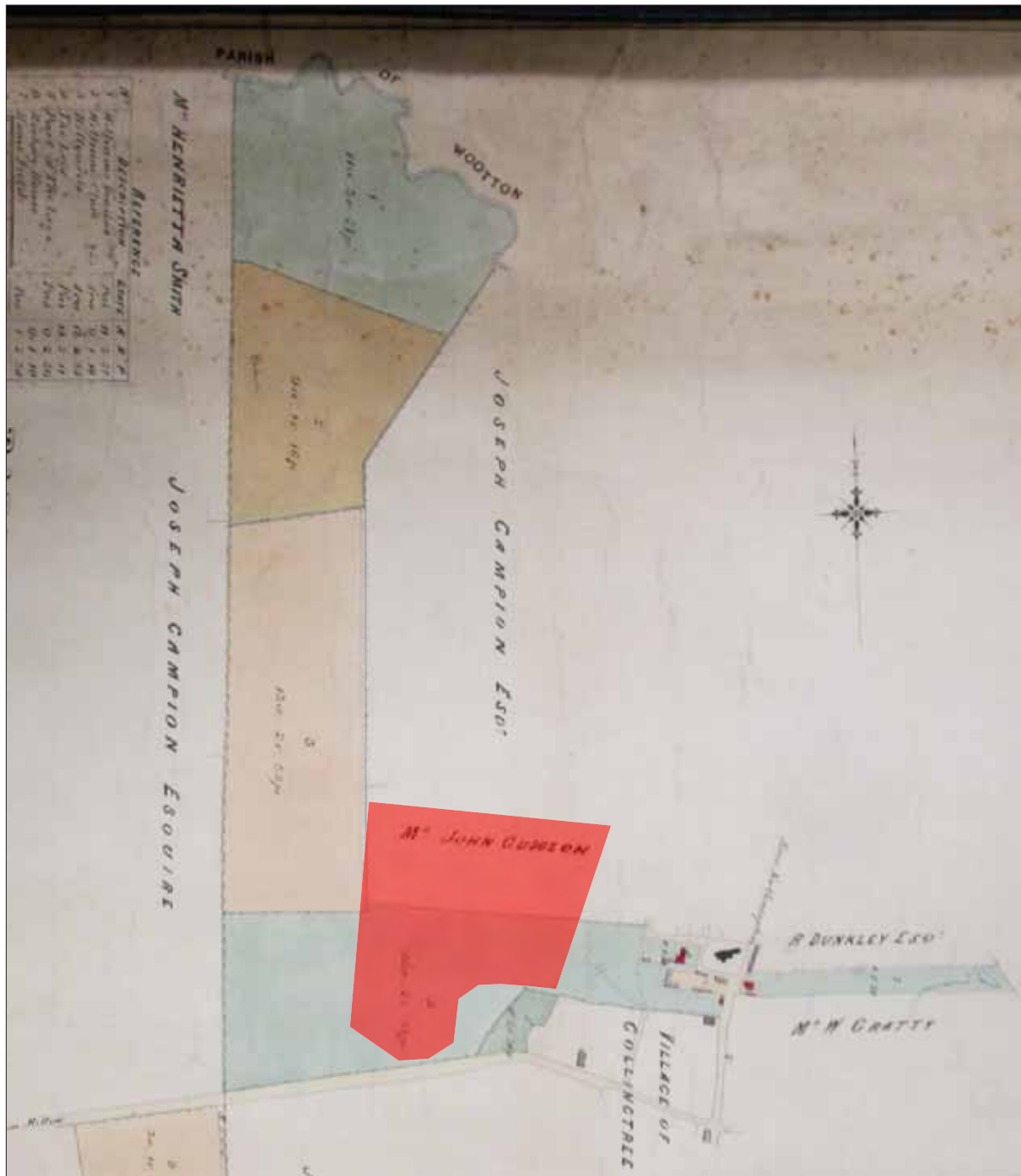
Appendix 3.1: Digitally enhanced extract of the 1780 Enclosure map for Milton and Collingtree, with title (inset). Northampton Record Office (NRO),



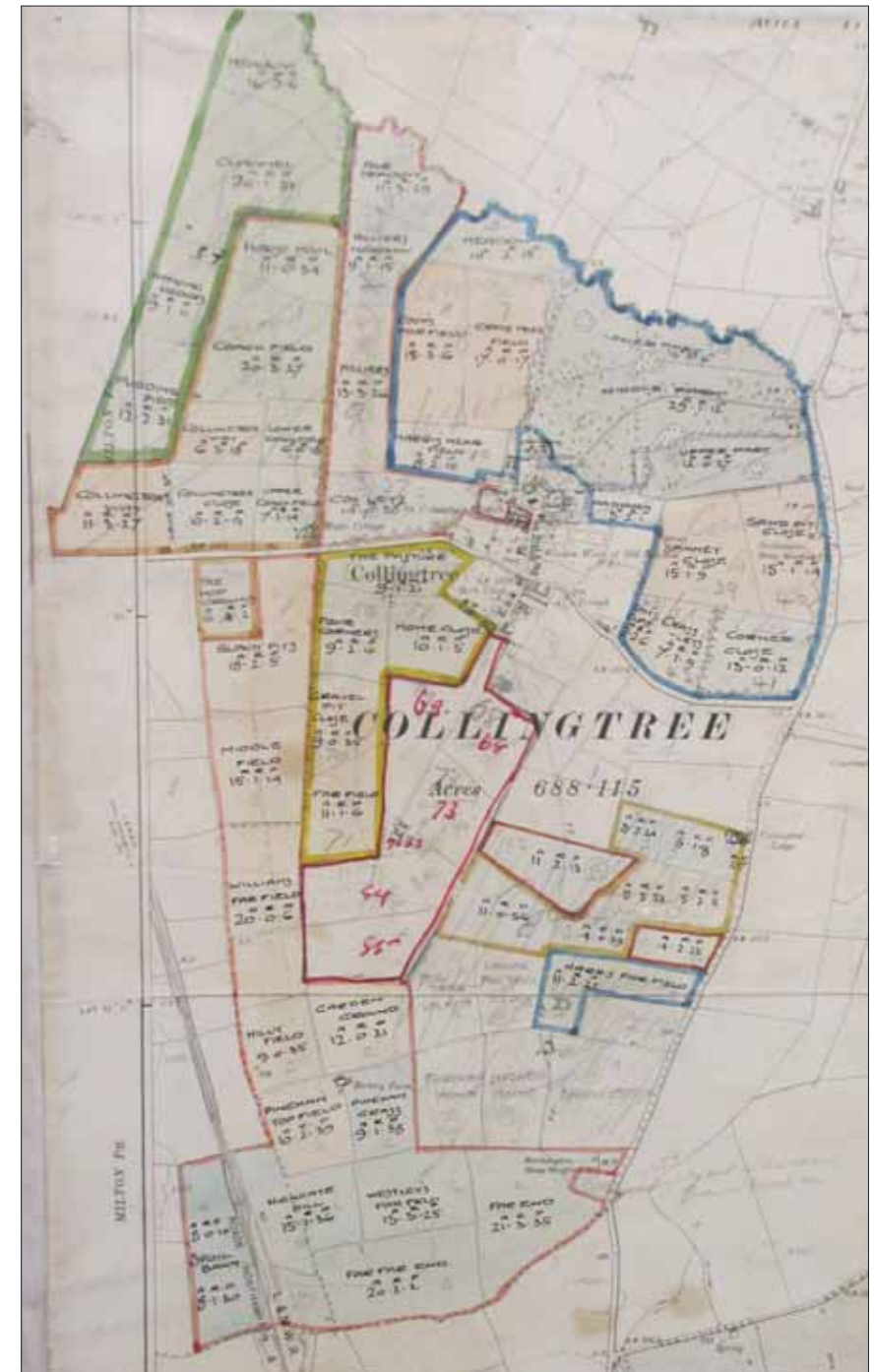
Appendix 3.2: Digitally enhanced extract of the 1780 Enclosure map for Milton and Collingtree, with pathway on approximate location of existing footpath shown in dotted red. From NRO.



Appendix 3.3: Digitally enhanced extract of the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. From NRO.



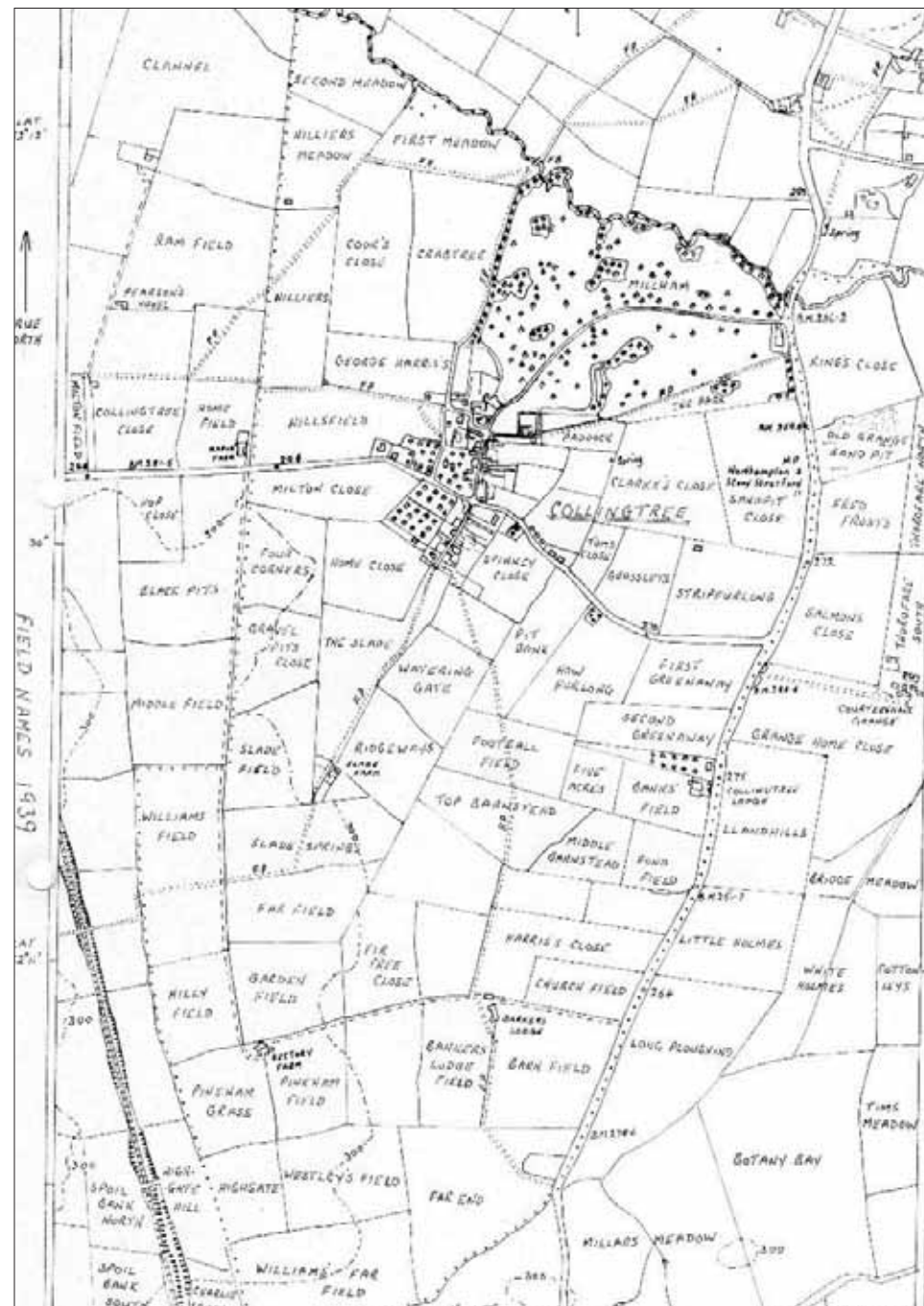
Appendix 3.4: 1872 map of Collingtree Glebe (Plan of the Rectorial Estate Collingtree). From NRO. The red shaded area roughly corresponds with the present-day field to the west of Barn Corner.



Appendix 3.5: Map of J. G. Sears' Collingtree estate, 1915. From NRO.



Appendix 3.6: Digitally enhanced extract of a 1932 map showing field names, catalogued by the elementary school. The accompanying schedule identifies the field to the west of Barn Corner (No. 11) as Hills Field. From NRO.



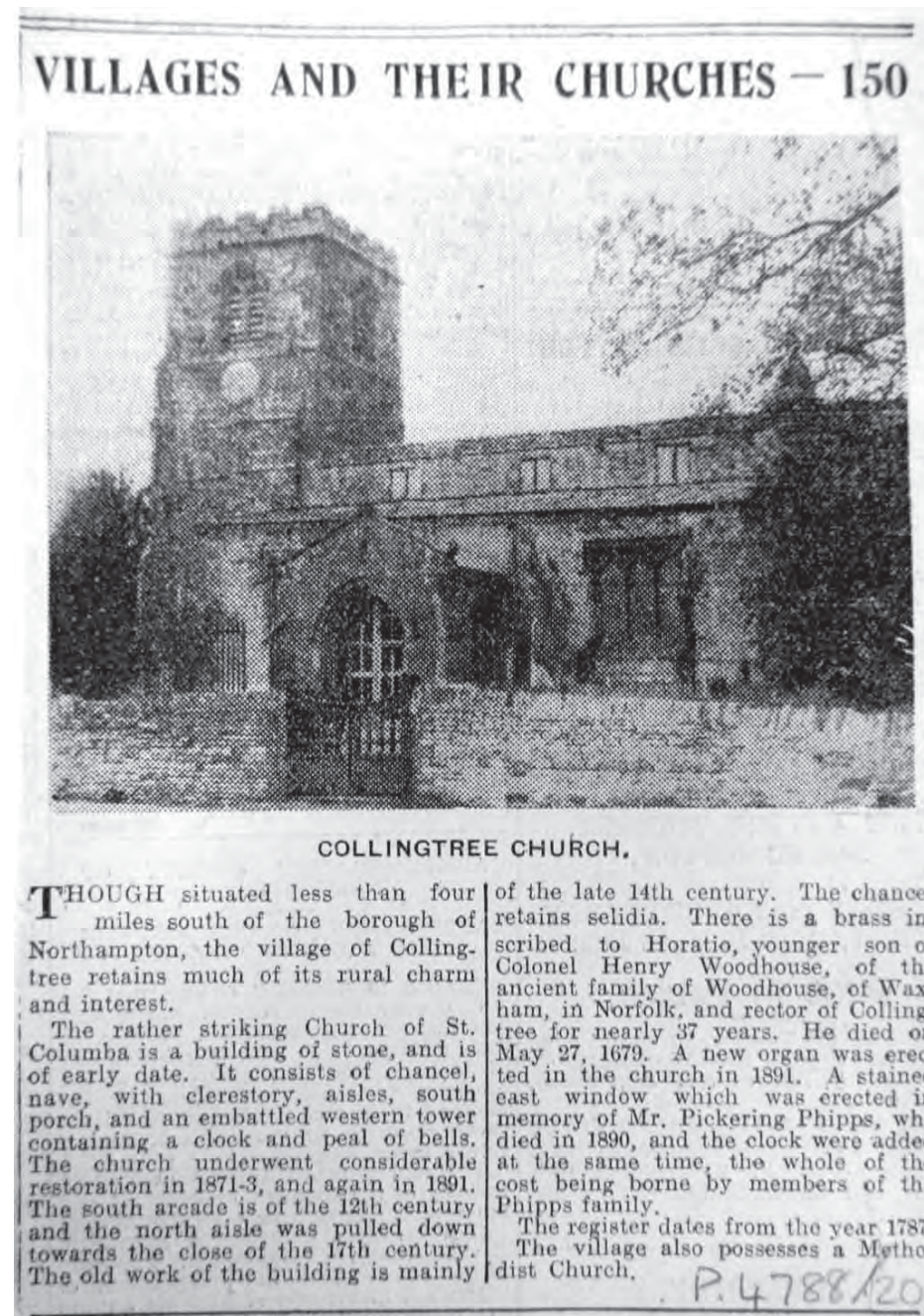
Appendix 3.7: Field names around Collingtree, recorded by Jim Patrick in 1939 (from <http://www.justcollingtree.co.uk/parish-field-names.php>).

Round the corner are two semi detached houses occupied by Mr Yates and Mrs Hankins. They were built for farm cottages at the end of the nineteenth century in the corner of Harris's field. As they stand well back from the road they have long gardens in front. A path leads down in front of the houses between a high wall on the right which surrounds the Grange and a spinney on the left. It is a gloomy road, but the gate at the end opens into a field with an excellent view over the surrounding country. A footpath at the side of the field leads down to the brook which forms one of the boundaries of the village.

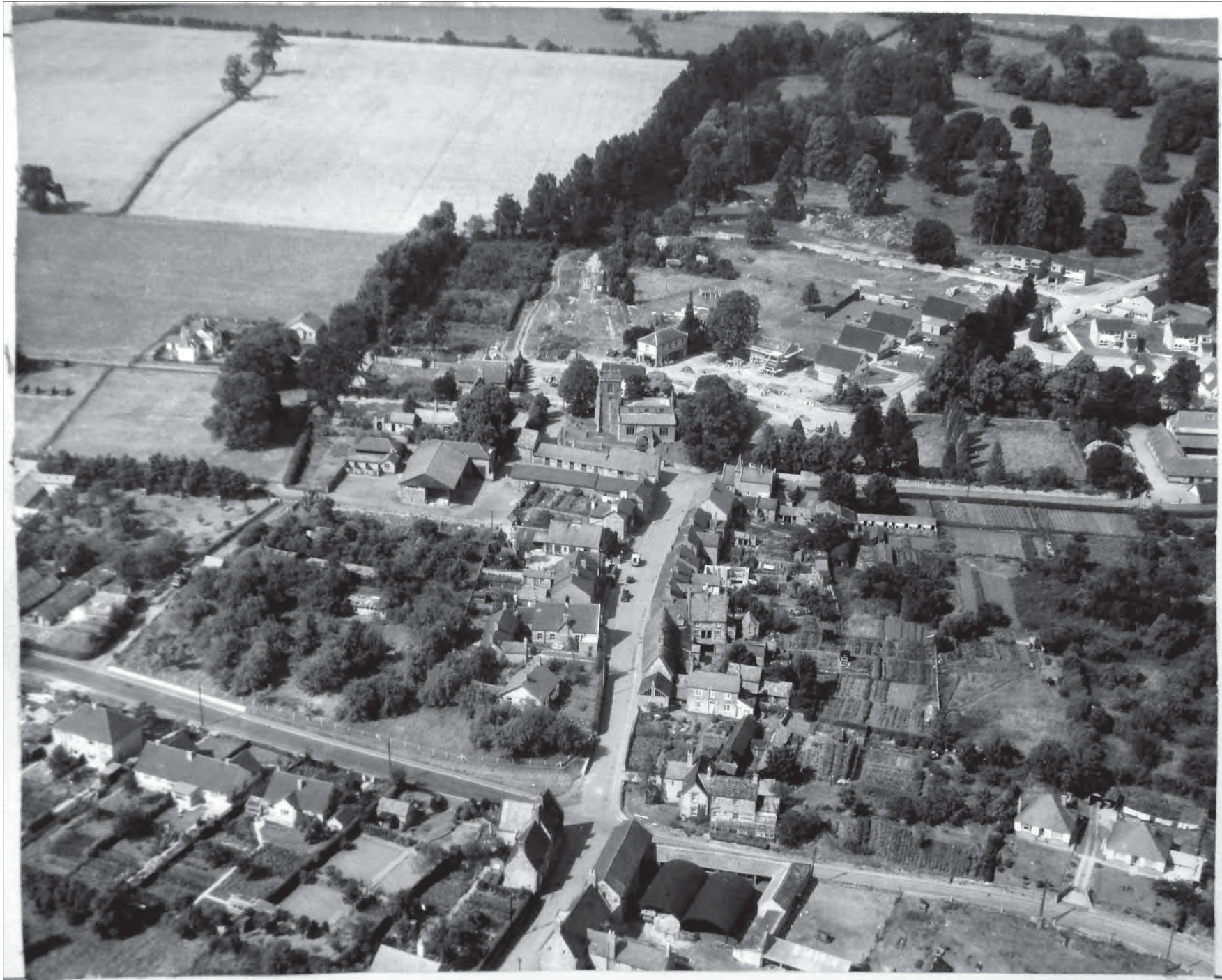
Appendix 3.8: Extract from the 'Collingtree Village Scrapbook', compiled in 1953 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO, describing the footpath from Barn Corner opening "*into a field with an excellent view over the surrounding country*". The 'farm cottages in the corner of Harris's field', also referred to in the text, are the buildings at the western end of Barn Corner and included in the conservation area. Harris's field is shown on the c. 1965 map below. The view is well illustrated on the 1977 photo at **Appendix 3.18**.



Appendix 3.9: Extract from the '*Collingtree Village Scrapbook*', compiled in 1965 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO, showing field boundaries and names.



Appendix 3.10: An undated (probably c. mid 20th century) newspaper article about the church of St Columba, held at the NRO, describing Collingtree as having retained its “*rural charm and interest*”.



Appendix 3.11: An undated c. 1965 oblique aerial photo of the northern part of Collingtree, from the '*Collingtree Village Scrapbook*', compiled in 1965 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO.



Appendix 3.12: A cropped version of an undated oblique aerial photo of Collingtree, from the east, held at the Northampton Central Library (NCL) and received in 1970.



Appendix 3.13: A cropped version of an oblique aerial photo of Collingtree, from the west, dated 1972 and held at the NCL. The ridge and furrow on the field to the west of Barn Corner is clearly visible in the foreground.



Appendix 3.14: An undated (probably pre-1942) photo of the church of St Columba, held at the NRO.



Appendix 3.15: An undated (probably pre-1942) photo of the church of St Columba, held at the NRO.



Appendix 3.16: An undated (probably early 20th century) photo of the church of St Columba, held at the NCL.



Appendix 3.17: An undated photo looking north along the High Street, showing the church tower, held at the NCL.



Appendix 3.18: Digitally enhanced photo from the 'Collingtree Village Scrapbook', compiled in 1977 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO. It shows the footpath to the west of the church from Barn Corner, described in the 1953 WI Scrapbook as "a gloomy road, but the gate at the end opens into a field with an excellent view over the surrounding country". The 'farm cottages in the corner of Harris's field', also referred to in 1953, are the buildings on the right, which are included in the conservation area.



Appendix 3.19: Digitally enhanced photo from the *'Collingtree Village Scrapbook'*, compiled in 1977 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO. It shows the view from the footpath to the west of the church where it meets Barn Corner, looking towards the church and into what is now the conservation area. Compare with the photo at **Appendix 7.11**.



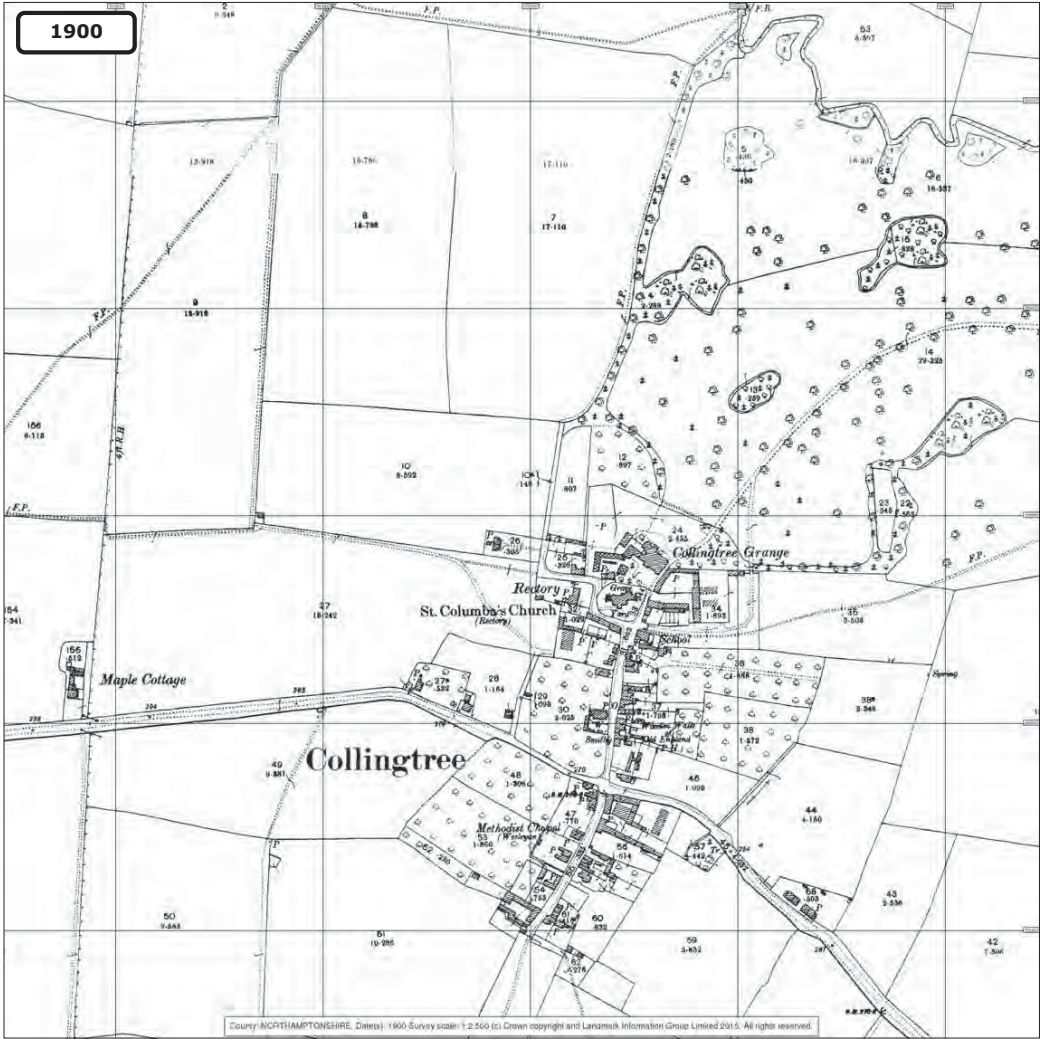
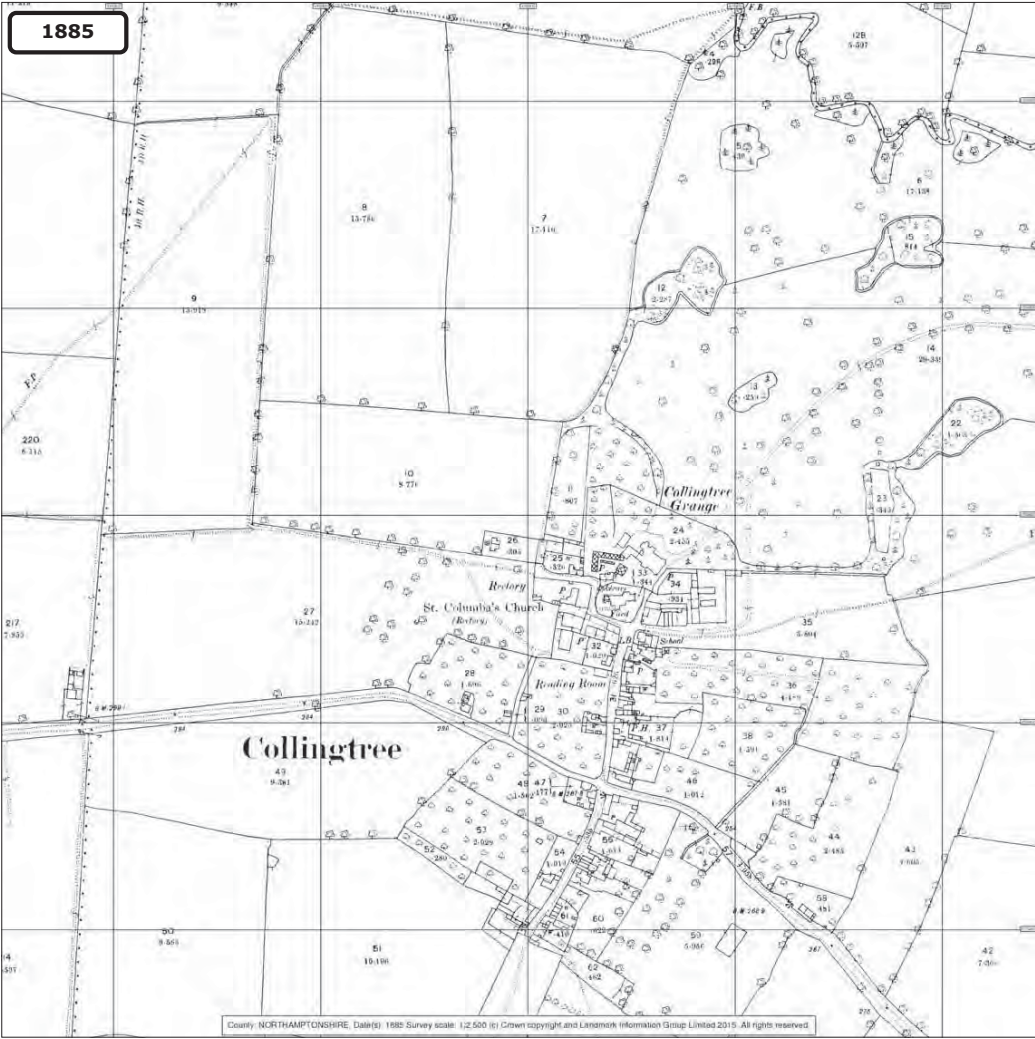
Appendix 3.20: Digitally enhanced and slightly cropped photo of "Rectory Pasture" from the '*Collingtree Village Scrapbook*', compiled in 1977 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO. It shows the view north of the now developed area to the west of the rectory. The white building is the side of the cottages included in the conservation area closest to the appeal site, which is to the left.

The Rectory dates from the mid-eighteenth century, although there are several obvious additions of the last century. There were 200 acres of Glebe which the Rector once farmed though not in living memory. All that remains is the field to the west of the Rectory garden. This is due for development shortly, including a new and more convenient rectory.

Appendix 3.21: Extract from the '*Collingtree Village Scrapbook*', compiled in 1977 by the Women's Institute and held at the NRO, with the Rector's description of the old rectory and glebe.

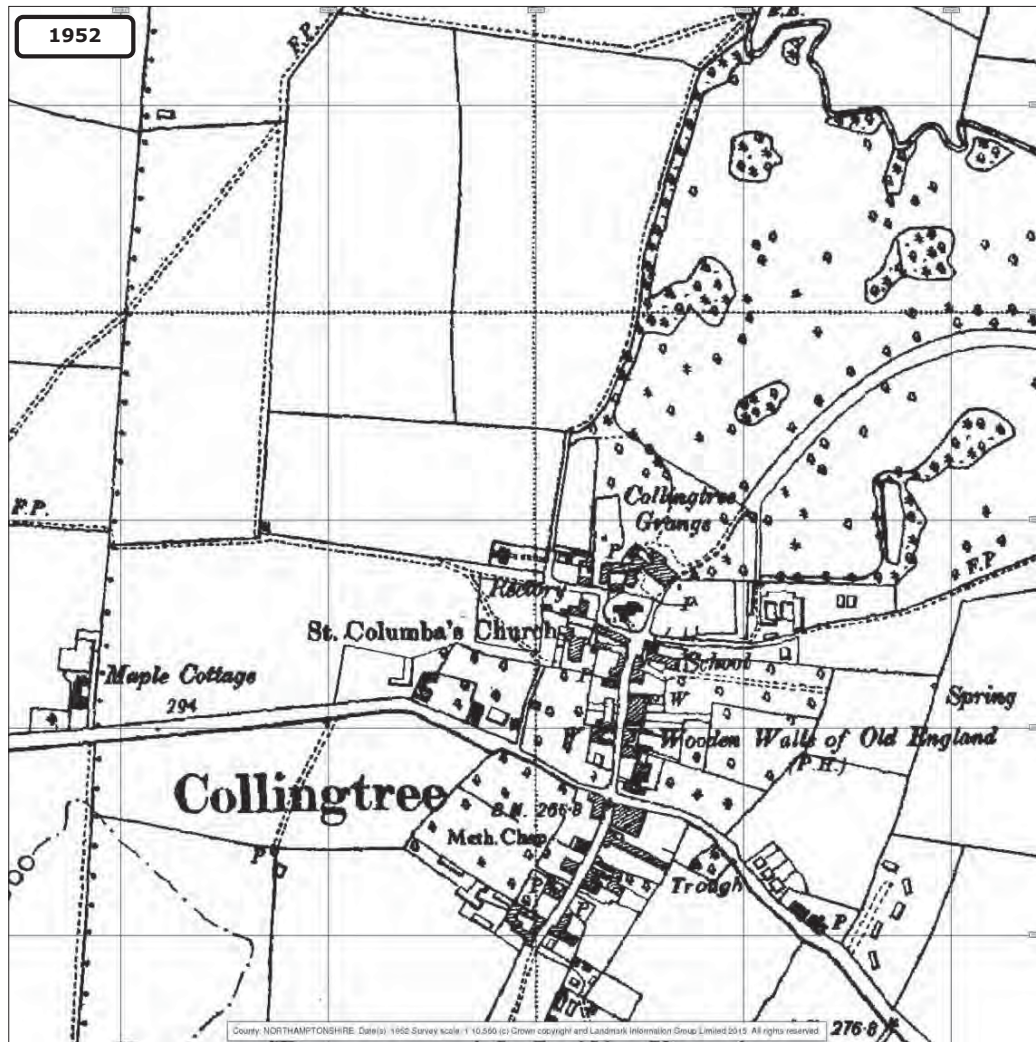
APPENDIX 3A:
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REGRESSION

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REGRESSION

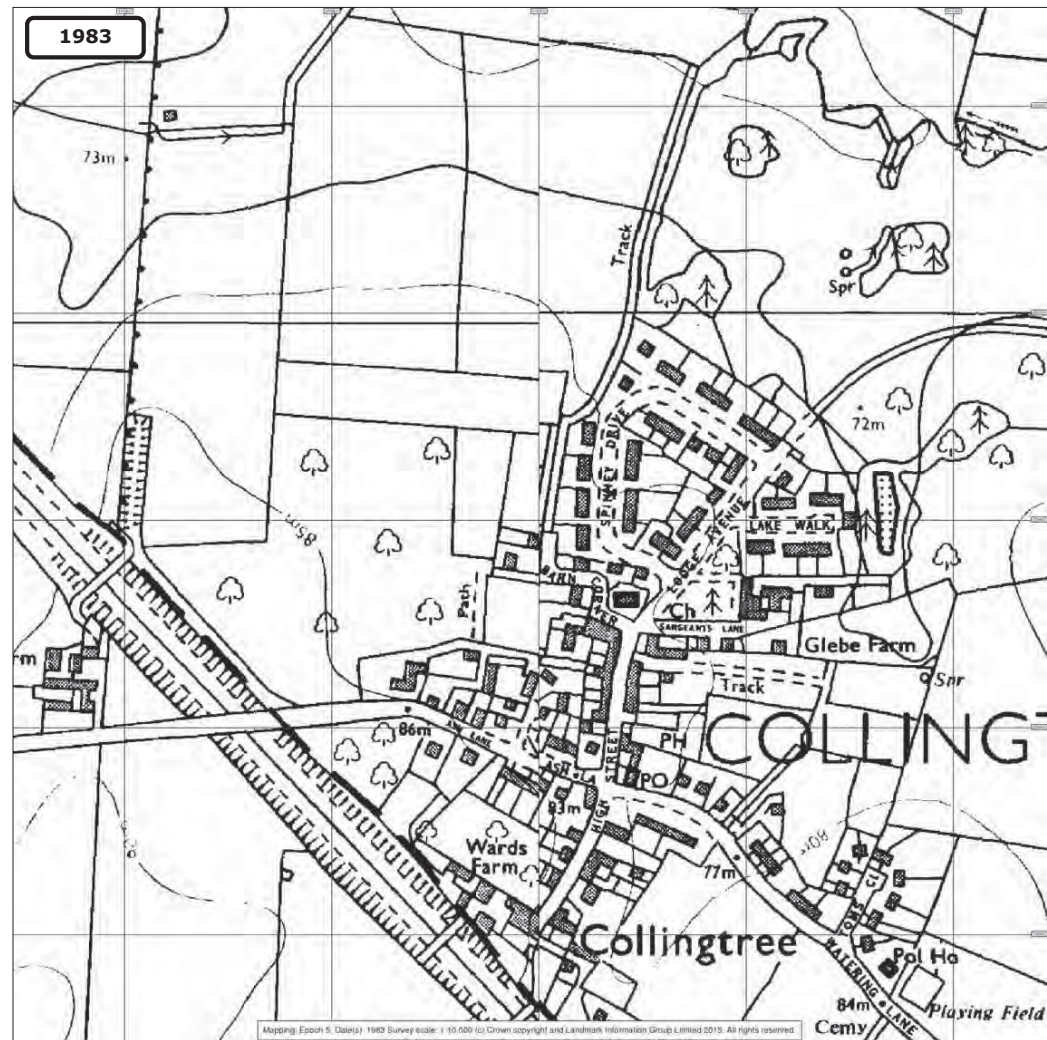
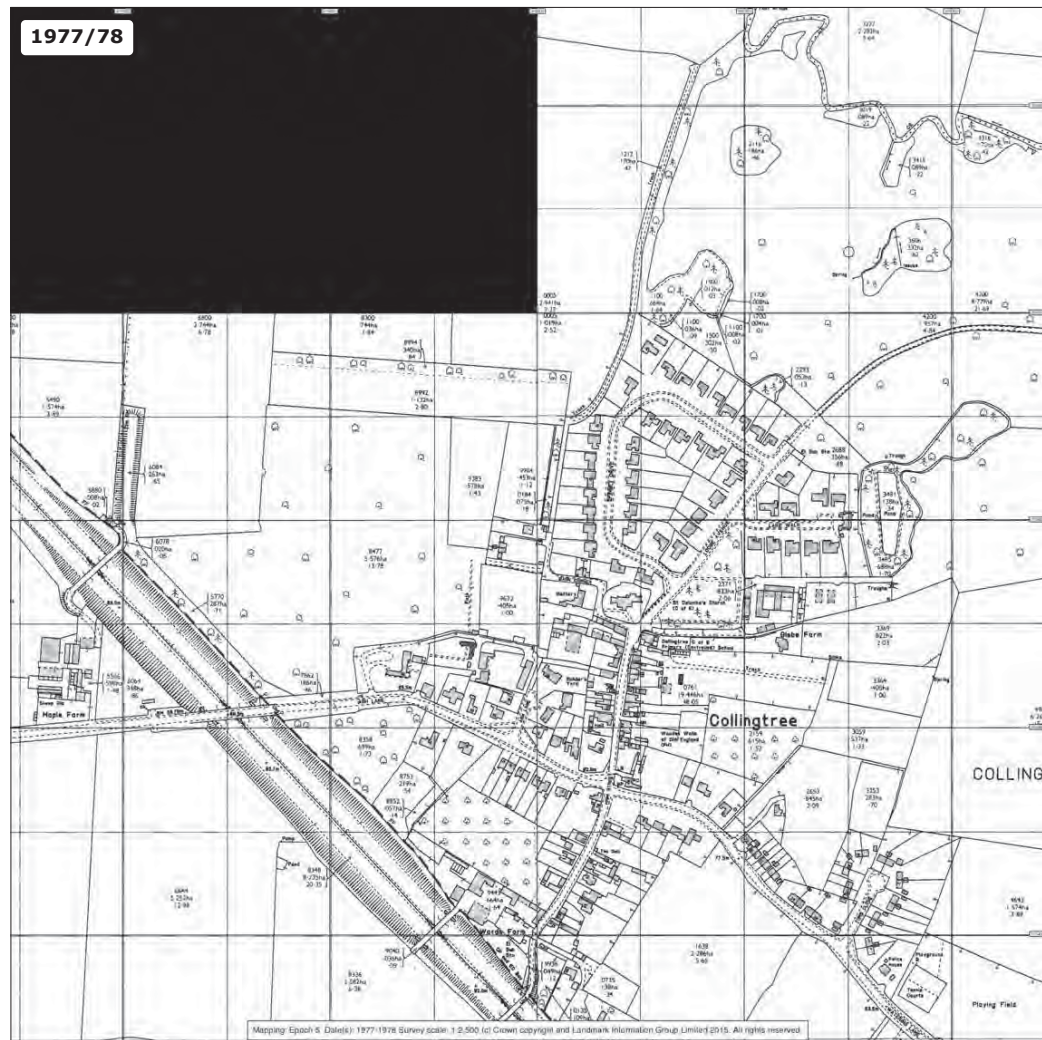


APPENDIX 3A

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REGRESSION



ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP REGRESSION



APPENDIX 4:
PHOTOS OF THE CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA (JUNE 2015)



Appendix 4.1: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the raised churchyard (south-east).



Appendix 4.3: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the junction of Barn Corner.



Appendix 4.2: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the churchyard entrance (south-east).



Appendix 4.4: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the south.



Appendix 4.5: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the north-east (Lodge Avenue/Spinney Drive).



Appendix 4.6: The church of St Columba, in its context, from the north (Spinney Drive).

APPENDIX 5:

PHOTOS OF COLLINGTREE VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA AND ILLUSTRATING SEQUENTIAL EXPERIENCE MOVING TOWARDS THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER (JUNE 2015)

APPENDIX 5



Appendix 5.1: Collingtree Village Conservation Area, general view north along the High Street.



Appendix 5.2: Collingtree Village Conservation Area, general view south along the High Street.



Appendix 5.4: The view north along Barn Corner, passing the church of St Columba.



Appendix 5.3: The view west along Barn Corner, from the churchyard of St Columba.



Appendix 5.5: The view west along Barn Corner, with the church of St Columba immediately behind.



Appendix 5.6: The view west along the footpath west of Barn Corner, leading to the appeal site.



Appendix 5.7: The view west along the footpath west of Barn Corner, leading to the appeal site.



Appendix 5.8: The view west along the footpath west of Barn Corner, leading to the appeal site.

APPENDIX 6:
PHOTOS OF THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER (JUNE 2015)



Appendix 6.1: The field to the west of Barn Corner, from the footpath, looking south-west.



Appendix 6.3: The field to the west of Barn Corner, looking east at the southern end along the alignment of the ridge and furrow.



Appendix 6.2: The field to the west of Barn Corner, looking west along the footpath.



Appendix 6.4: The field to the west of Barn Corner, general view north-east from the southern end.



Appendix 6.5: The field to the west of Barn Corner, general view south-east from the poplars to the north.



Appendix 6.7: The area beyond the poplar trees to the west, looking east along the footpath.



Appendix 6.6: The field to the west of Barn Corner, general view south along the planted eastern boundary.



Appendix 6.8: The field to the west of Barn Corner, general view east along the footpath from the poplar trees.

APPENDIX 7:

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER AND ILLUSTRATING SEQUENTIAL EXPERIENCE MOVING TOWARDS THE CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA (JUNE 2015)



Appendix 7.1: General (wide angle) view towards the church of St Columba from the field to the west of Barn Corner.



Appendix 7.2: Zoomed-in view of the photo on the previous page (**Appendix 7.1**).



Appendix 7.3: General (wide angle) view towards the church of St Columba from the field to the west of Barn Corner.



Appendix 7.4: Zoomed-in view of the photo on the previous page (**Appendix 7.3**).



Appendix 7.5: General (wide angle) view towards the church of St Columba from the field to the west of Barn Corner. The footpath can be seen to the right.



Appendix 7.6: Zoomed-in view of the photo on the previous page (**Appendix 7.5**).



Appendix 7.7: The field to the west of Barn Corner, looking east along the footpath, approaching Barn Corner.



Appendix 7.9: View east along the footpath, approaching Barn Corner, immediately outside the conservation area.



Appendix 7.8: View east along the footpath, approaching Barn Corner, at the boundary of the appeal site.



Appendix 7.10: View east along the footpath, approaching Barn Corner, along the conservation area boundary.



Appendix 7.11: View east along Barn Corner, the church tower just visible behind the evergreen tree.



Appendix 7.12: View east along Barn Corner, with Nos. 4 & 6 to the left.



Appendix 7.12: View east along Barn Corner, with the Old Rectory and its boundary wall on the right.



Appendix 7.13: View east along Barn Corner, at the corner where the church of St Columba is revealed.



Appendix 7.14: The church of St Columba at the culmination of the sequential views from the west.

APPENDIX 8:

AEARIAL PHOTO SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE FIELD TO THE EAST OF SARGEANTS LANE AND PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD TO THE EAST OF SARGEANTS LANE ILLUSTRATING SEQUENTIAL EXPERIENCE MOVING TOWARDS THE CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA (JUNE 2015)



An aerial photo of Collingtree with the location of the field to the east of Sargeants Lane shown in red.



Appendix 8.1: General (wide angle) view towards the church of St Columba from the footpath east of Sargeants Lane.



Appendix 8.2: Zoomed-in view of the photo above.



Appendix 8.3: Zoomed-in view of the photos to the left.



Appendix 8.4: General (wide angle) view towards the church of St Columba from the footpath east of Sargeants Lane.



Appendix 8.6: Zoomed-in view of the photos to the left.



Appendix 8.5: Zoomed-in view of the photo above.



Appendix 8.7: View west along the footpath, approaching Sargeants Lane.



Appendix 8.8: View west along the gravel track to the east of Sargeants Lane, at Glebe Farm.



Appendix 8.10: View west along Sargeants Lane. The church of St Columba (not visible) is located in the centre right of this view.



Appendix 8.9: View west into the eastern end of Sargeants Lane.



Appendix 8.11: View west along Sargeants Lane.



Appendix 8.12: View west along Sargeants Lane. The church of St Columba (not visible) is located towards the right of this view.



Appendix 8.13: View west along Sargeants Lane, near the junction with the High Street. The church of St Columba can be glimpsed through the tree to the right).

APPENDIX 9:

WINTER PHOTOS OF THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER AND THE CHURCH OF ST COLUMBA, FROM THE SUBMITTED BUILT HERITAGE ASSESSMENT (PLATES 1 & 2) AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT (PLATE 10)



Plate 1: View south-east from boundary of the site



Plate 10: Photo of south-east corner of site, facing west



Plate 2: View south-east from centre of the site

APPENDIX 10:
OBLIQUE AERIAL PHOTOS OF THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER











APPENDIX 11:

ANNOTATED OBLIQUE AERIAL PHOTO OF THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF BARN CORNER AND CLEAN BASE PHOTO





APPENDIX 12:

ENGLISH HERITAGE RESPONSE TO EIA SCOPING REPORT, DATED 25 MAY 2012 (Ref.: PA00059705)



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EAST MIDLANDS OFFICE

Mr Chris Preston
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 1DE

Northampton Borough Council Planning & Regeneration	
Date	30 MAY 2012
File Number	

Direct Dial: 01223 323452
Direct Fax: -

Our ref: PA00059705
Your ref: N/2012/0387

25 May 2012

Dear Mr Preston

Request for Pre-application Advice

**NORTHAMPTON SOUTH S U E, COLLINGTREE, NORTHAMPTON,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Thank you for your email of 3 May 2012 consulting English Heritage about the above EIA Scoping Report.

This development could, potentially, have an impact upon a number of designated heritage assets and their settings in the area around the site, of which at least two are higher graded assets. In line with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, we would expect the Environmental Statement to contain a thorough assessment of the likely effects which the proposed development might have upon those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets.

We note from paragraph 8.6 of the applicant's scoping report that only the Church of St. Columba is identified as being a potential receptor. We would also like to highlight that the Church of The Holy Cross lies within 1 Kilometre to the south-west of the application site on Colingtree Road, Milton Malsor. This building is listed at Grade II* and the Environmental Impact Assessment should therefore assess the impact that the proposed development would have upon the building and its setting. We would also strongly recommend that the applicant has regard to our guidance 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' which can be downloaded from our website.

We note that the conservation area and many of the listed buildings are already surrounded by modern development, although the expanded village is separated from the Northampton housing by green space. It would therefore seem that the issue of maintaining a separate settlement could be achieved through the masterplanning process and the provision of green infrastructure, and we would urge the applicant to



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www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.

English Heritage will use the information provided by you to evaluate any applications you make for statutory or quasi-statutory consent, or for grant or other funding. Information provided by you and any information obtained from other sources will be retained in all cases in hard copy form and/or on computer for administration purposes and future consideration where applicable.



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give this serious consideration as part of the EIA process.

We would also expect the Environmental Statement to consider the potential impacts which the proposals might have upon those heritage assets which are not designated, defined in PPS 5 as "a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions". These should also be included as heritage assets, designated or otherwise, as they are valued components of the historic environment. This information is available via the local authority Historic Environment Record (www.heritagegateway.org.uk) and relevant local authority staff.

We note that the conservation area and many of the listed buildings are already surrounded by modern development, although the expanded village is separated from the Northampton housing by green space. It would therefore seem that the issue of maintaining a separate settlement could be achieved through the masterplanning process and the provision of green infrastructure.

We would strongly recommend that you involve the Conservation Officer of Northampton Borough Council and the archaeological staff at the Northamptonshire HER in the development of this assessment. They are best placed to advise on: local historic environment issues and priorities; how the proposal can be tailored to avoid and minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

It is important that the assessment is designed to ensure that all impacts are fully understood. Section drawings and techniques such as photomontages are a useful part of this.

The assessment should also take account of the potential impact which associated activities (such as construction, servicing and maintenance, and associated traffic) might have upon perceptions, understanding and appreciation of the heritage assets

If you have any queries about any of the above, or would like to discuss anything further, please contact me.



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Yours sincerely

SJT Midg

PP **Neville Doe**
Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor
E-mail: neville.doe@english-heritage.org.uk

APPENDIX 12



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APPENDIX 13:

HISTORIC ENGLAND CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO APPLICATION NOS N/2013/1035 & N/2013/1063, DATED 24 JULY 2015 (Ref.: P00468514 & P00468530)



Historic England

EAST MIDLANDS OFFICE

Mrs Rita Bovey
Northampton Borough Council
1st Floor The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
NN1 1DE

Direct Dial: 01536 422735

Our ref: P00468514 &
P00468530

24 July 2015

Dear Mrs Bovey

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015 &
T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015**

**COLLINGTREE SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION, NORTHAMPTON
Application Nos N/2013/1035 & N/2013/1063**

Thank you for your email of 6 July 2015 consulting Historic England on the above planning applications N/2013/1035 (outline application for the development of 1,000 dwellings) and N/2013/1063 (full application for 378 dwellings as Phase 1). We note however that planning permission for both these applications was already refused by your authority on 2 February 2015.

We are surprised to be consulted by your authority at this late stage. We would have expected to have been consulted on the proposals at the time of application in accordance with Circular 01/01 which was then in place.

We note that we were contacted by your authority on 3 May 2012 with a request for pre-application advice on the EIA Scoping Report for this development. We responded with a letter dated 25 May 2012 (copy attached) outlining the potential impacts on heritage assets which we thought the EIA should address. We specifically mentioned that the expanded village of Collingtree is separated from the Northampton housing by green space, and urged the applicant to address the issue of maintaining a separate settlement through the masterplanning process and the provision of green infrastructure.

Having examined the proposals, we conclude that the significance of Collingtree Conservation Area and the Grade II* listed Church of St Columba would be affected by the proposals through development within their setting. The harm which the proposals would cause to the significance of these designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining the proposals, in line with paragraphs 132-134 of the National Planning Policy Framework and sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Consideration should be given to



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whether the harm is outweighed by any public benefits offered by the proposals.

We recommend giving particular consideration to whether the proposals have addressed the issue of maintaining Collingtree as a separate historic settlement.

We trust these comments are of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr Dale Dishon

Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: dale.dishon@HistoricEngland.org.uk



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APPENDIX 14:

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM, CONSERVATION OFFICER 9TH JANUARY 2014

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL		INTERNAL MEMORANDUM	
From: Jenny Ballinger	Northampton Borough Council Planning	To: Rita Bovey	
Ref:	09 JAN 2014	Ref: N/2013/1035 and N/2013/1063	
		Date 9 th January 2014	

Land south of Rowtree road and west of Windingbrook Lane, Northampton

Outline application for the Northampton South Sustainable Urban extension to comprise up to 1000 dwellings, a mixed use local centre, a site for a primary school, green infrastructure including formal and informal open space, reconfiguration and extension of Collingtree Park Golf Course, demolition of all existing buildings and structures within the site, new vehicular accesses off Windingbrook Lane and Rowtree Road, car parking, sustainable drainage systems (including flood risk betterment) and infrastructure (including highway improvements) all matters reserved except access

Site / Context

The site lies to the south of Northampton in a parcel of land between Collingtree Park and golfcourse, Collingtree village and the M1. The proposed development is in close proximity to Collingtree Conservation Area.

Historic OS maps

The site is shown as open agricultural land on all historic OS maps.

Relevant Policy, Guidance & Duties

Section 16 of Planning (Listed building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy Framework

Collingtree Conservation Area Re-appraisal

Key Issues

The key is whether the proposed development preserves and enhances the setting, character and appearance of the Collingtree Conservation Area and associated assets.

Analysis/Evaluation

The proposed development is a Sustainable Urban Extension divided into three separate 'villages'.

The Cultural Heritage section of the Northampton South SUE Environmental Statement identifies three heritage assets in the vicinity of the area whose setting could be effected by the proposed development these comprise Collingtree Village Conservation Area, St Columba Church, Collingtree and Church of the Holy Cross, Milton Malsor. The assessment concludes 'This assessment has established that there will be an indirect negligible adverse effect upon the wider landscape setting of Collingtree Village Conservation Area, through the introduction of modern development to the immediate north and west of the Barn Close extension of the Conservation Area and a consequent marginal alteration to the existing townscape extent. However, it is considered that the

wider landscape setting does not make a significant contribution to the distinct character or heritage significance of the Conservation Area, which will remain intact'

Impact on setting of Collingtree Conservation Area

The Collingtree Conservation Re-appraisal has a section on 'Key views and vistas'. This makes a clear point about views of the conservation area

'The local topography and the surrounding belt of modern development mean that there are no significant distant views of the historic village of Collingtree'.

The English Heritage guidance 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' defines setting as 'the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral' and It can be understood that setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset. Setting does not have a fixed boundary and cannot be definitively and permanently described as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. View on what comprises a heritage asset's setting may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve, or as the asset become better understood'.

It is clear that the concept of setting is far wider than the visual setting or views from and to the site. The lie of the land in the area ensures that the visual impact of the proposed development on the conservation area of Collingtree is limited, but there are significant impacts on the character of Collingtree as a defined historic settlement. The concept of the proposed development of the Northampton South Sustainable Urban Extension is that it is a series of separate, but interlinking villages lying between Collingtree and Collingtree Park. There is, however, very little physical separation between Collingtree and proposed 'Village 1'. A parcel of land which lies between the two is not within the application boundary and has already been the subject of a planning application (now withdrawn) for four houses.

Conservation Areas are designed to protect *character* as well *appearance* and in the case of Collingtree it is fundamental that the village retains its historic integrity. There are no objections to the development as a whole, but it is considered that a greater separation should be provided between the historic settlement and Village 1.

Impact on Collingtree and Milton Malsor Churches

The Church of St Columba, Collingtree is grade II* listed. There would be an impact on the setting of the church by the proposed development. The Collingtree Conservation Area Re-appraisal states 'The single most important view within the village is that of the church. It stands prominently on a mound and together with the mature sycamore tree dominates views northward up the High Street'. The views of the church from the west of the settlement have already been compromised by the erection of modern housing, but the proposed new development would mean the building would be engulfed by modern development. This would mean that the context and setting of the heritage asset would be significantly altered with the church being located within a large expanse of

development rather than within a rural village surrounded by open landscape. The lie of the land in the area, does, however mean that the direct visual impact would be limited.

Church of the Holy Cross, Milton Malsor is grade II* listed and lies within Milton Malsor Conservation Area. The church lies within South Northamptonshire District Council and there is no Conservation Area appraisal on the relevant website. The church is visible from a number of locations in the surrounding vicinity, but has been surrounded by modern development in close proximity and is located at a considerable distance from the proposed development. It is not considered that the setting of the church would be significantly compromised by the proposed development.

Jenny Ballinger
Planning Officer (Conservation)