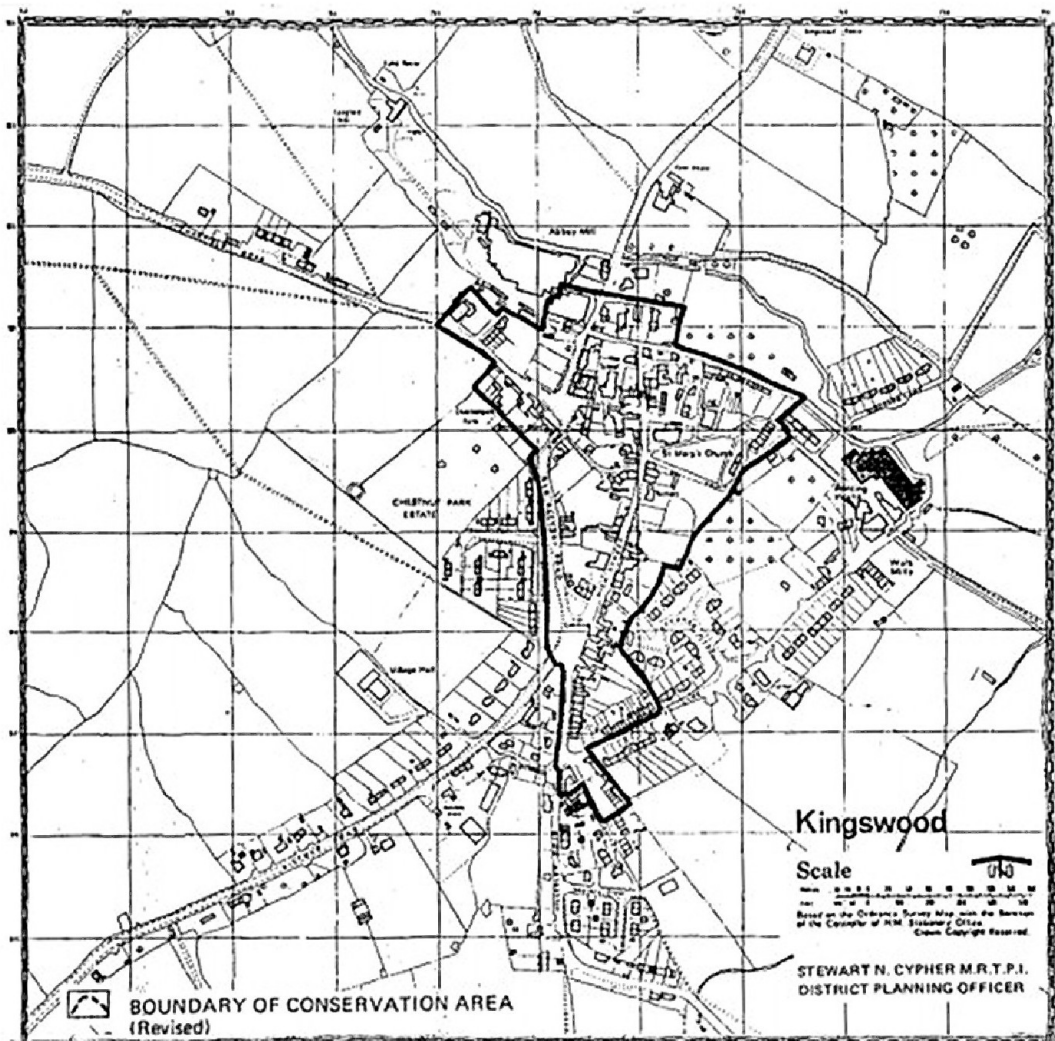


**CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT – Conservation Area No. 8:  
KINGSWOOD**



## I Part I: Introduction



### What is a Conservation Area?

The legal definition of a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (hereinafter called 'the Act'), as being:

“An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Conservation Areas are primarily concerned with the built environment. They are not appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment.

### Purpose of this document

The Act requires Planning Authorities to review their Conservation Areas from time to time. This is the main function of this document. Within the Stroud District, there are 42

Conservation Areas, some of which were first designated over 30 years ago, and the approach to designation has changed greatly in this time.

- Firstly, Planning Authorities are now required, in carrying out their planning functions, to “*pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area*” (Section 72 of the Act).
- Secondly, Planning Authorities should publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their Conservation Areas (Section 71 of the Act).

In this review, we aim to identify what makes up the “special interest” of Kingswood and to analyse and define its “character and appearance”. This will provide a firm basis for planning decisions within the Conservation Area, based on Development Plan policies.

It also provides the groundwork for the preparation of policies and proposals intended for the preservation or enhancement of the area. These policies may be aimed at specific sites within the Conservation Area, or more general guidance relevant to the whole Conservation Area, such as the use of appropriate materials.

This Conservation Area Statement will become **Supplementary Planning Advice (SPA)** for Stroud District Council. As such, it will be used by the Planning Authority in conjunction with other Planning Policy and Guidance documents. Further policy information on the historic built environment can be found in:

- **National Planning Policy Framework**
- **PPS5 (Planning Policy Statement): Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guidance**
- **Stroud District Local Plan** (as adopted November 2005)

Guidance relating to sensitive, locally distinctive development can also be found in the Stroud District SPG **Residential Design Guide** (published November 2000).

This Conservation Area Statement is complemented by the Village Design Statement (subsequently abbreviated to VDS) that has been developed in parallel. In places it cross-references to sections of the VDS to locate relevant information.

### **The Kingswood Study Area**

**Kingswood Conservation Area** (identified as No. 8 (of 42) by Stroud District Council) was first designated in November 1975. No boundary changes have been made since its original designation.

The study area and the existing Conservation Area boundaries are shown on Map 1.

## **2 Part II: Analysis**

### **The analysis of character**

The aim of this section of the Conservation Area Statement is to define what makes up the special interest or ‘character’ of the study area, in order that this may be preserved and enhanced. Although the character of an area may be very obvious in visual terms, it is about much more than just appearance. History, geography, use and appearance are usually intricately and inextricably linked in the evolution of any settlement, and in the creation of its character.

- The origins of a settlement and what has happened to it in the past are often still evident in its current state. Its history can tell us more than simply the date of its buildings: The changing economic fortunes of an area, important historical events and individual patrons or developers may have played a role in shaping tastes and styles, as well as influencing the extent of expansion.
- Current or former uses often have implications for the shapes, sizes and types of buildings that are created, and their massing and relationships to each other. Uses can also create distinctive sounds or smells, adding ‘life’ to the built form.
- The origins and evolution of a settlement may frequently be dependent on its setting and location: these may have suggested a particular industrial, defensive or cultural role, for example. Furthermore, the location almost always dictates the types of materials and building traditions that prevail.
- The visual appearance of an area is often the cumulative effect of many influences. The appearance is frequently the aspect that most people relate to in terms of defining what is of special interest and worth preserving or enhancing. The appearance may be made up of locally typical buildings, or structures of great architectural importance.

The Conservation Area includes many buildings and structures that are of sufficient architectural or historical importance to be formally identified as “Listed Buildings”. More detailed information on these listed buildings is provided, along with photographs of them, in an associated “Supplementary Information Report”.

### **HISTORY OF KINGSWOOD**

Recent archaeological surveys of development sites have shown evidence of Romano-British activity over a period from the late 2nd century to the 4th century, that are consistent with the presence of a settlement in the locality, although this has not been located at the sites surveyed. The area appears to have been covered by dense woodland during Anglo-Saxon times and the recorded history of Kingswood as a place of settlement dates back to the foundation of the Abbey by the Cistercian Order of monks around the middle of the twelfth century. There is historical evidence that from this time, until 1845, Kingswood belonged to Wiltshire, in effect forming a detached island surrounded by Gloucestershire, and that it was

seen as a place of safety. Wool formed a hugely important part of the abbey economy and the monks established numerous monastic farms (granges) and mills in the surrounding area.

After the dissolution of the Abbey by King Henry VIII, Kingswood became something of a backwater. Building materials and ornaments from the Abbey were incorporated into other buildings in the village at the time. The Abbey's Lady Chapel was retained for use as the parish church for almost two hundred years before being replaced, in 1723, by St. Mary's Church, which was built on the abbey graveyard and incorporates some artefacts taken from the Lady Chapel. Previously, in 1662, the Rector of Kingswood was one of the two thousand clergy who left the established church in protest at the legislation compelling obedience to the Church of England: a meeting house for religious dissenters was established in 1668, leading eventually, in 1821, to the building of the present chapel as an Independent Church.

Until turnpike roads were laid through the village in about 1827, the roads in the district were generally appalling and most journeys could only be undertaken on foot or horseback. Wotton Road was laid to give a more direct route from Wotton-under-Edge to Kingswood, replacing a route along Vineyard Lane and Nind Lane, and was continued through Kingswood to Wickwar, superseding the ancient green road, "The Trench" which meandered to Chase Lane at the parish boundary. "Back Lane", a footpath between the rectory (now Boundary House) and Walnut Villa (the former rectory) was widened and became "Rectory Road" (now Old Rectory Road, since the rectory was moved to the High Street in 1961). Further turnpike roads were laid shortly after, one to Hillesley to provide a route to the Bath Road (now the A46), and another connecting with the old Charfield to Wotton road near New Mill. This latter created the village crossroads, which remains to the present day.

A public water supply was laid on in 1876 and streetlights using oil were erected in about 1881 and later changed to gas then electricity. Mains electricity came to the village in 1932/3 although some houses had already benefited from electricity supplied from privately-obtained accumulators. Probably reflecting one of the reasons for siting the Abbey in Kingswood, many properties had a good supply of water from wells and there was a public water stand outside the Abbey Gatehouse.

For centuries work available locally focused on mills and farming (see right) though it was not unusual in days before motorised transport for villagers to walk, and later cycle, many miles to work in surrounding towns such as Dursley or at the docks in Sharpness. Within living memory the village retained many shops and services and although these have largely disappeared from the High Street for example, there is still significant employment in the industrial and technological centres within the parish, notably based on the old mill locations.

At the end of the 19th century there were still remarkably few buildings in the village, largely comprising large, individual houses or terraces of cottages for farm labourers and home-weavers. Many of the former are listed as of Special Architectural or Historical Interest, while many of the terraced cottages form part of the designated Conservation Area. In the 20th century the village accommodated several new developments. Council houses were built in Wickwar Road (1927), Walk Mill Lane (1933) and Vineyard Lane (1939) to address the housing shortage after the First World War. Further house building was undertaken by the Council on Chestnut Park over the period 1948-1954.

With increased prosperity and the availability of private cars, many people prefer to live in the country and drive to work in nearby cities, or in the steadily growing number of industrial and technological sites in the surrounding area. This has led to the rapid expansion of the village through private housing developments since the late 1960s, particularly once ready access to the motorway system was afforded by the opening of the nearby Junction 14 on the M5. The multiple housing developments have occurred largely on land that was previously occupied by orchards, allotments or large gardens, although the largest development, Somerset Close, was carried out on the former site of a haulage business. Alongside these multiple housing developments, a significant number of individual houses have been built as infill between existing properties, often using brownfield sites.

### **KINGSWOOD IN ITS SETTING**

The landscape and geology of the Kingswood area has impacted on the character of the settlement in a number of ways, from the types of building materials most easily sourced, to the types of industries that developed.

In visual terms, the surrounding landscape influences the first impressions gained on approach to the village, and the local topography forms a significant component of views and vistas into and out of the settlement.



## **Geology**

The geology of the Kingswood area is summarised on page 8 of the Kingswood Environmental Character Assessment, 2014

## **Topography and landscape**

The topography and landscape character of the Kingswood area are summarised in Section 2.1.1 of the VDS

## **Approach routes and views**

The approach routes and views are described respectively in Sections 2.3 and 3.1 of the VDS

## **Sub Areas in Kingswood Study Area**

Within a Conservation Area, it is sometimes possible to identify parts of the Area which differ in character. Key factors in defining where one part of the Conservation Area differs from another include the density of buildings, and their relationship to one another and to the roads and footpaths. Where clear differences do exist, these are identified as 'sub-areas'. The Conservation Area is examined using those sub-areas.

Nine areas have been identified as being 'sub-areas' within the Kingswood Study Area. To a large extent, these sub-divisions reflect the historical evolution of the village. Changing tastes, styles and technical capabilities influenced the plan forms and sizes of buildings, thereby creating a variety of scale that contributes greatly to the distinctive character of the village.

### **Sub-area 1: Wotton Road**

i. Related to the very local landscape

Only the section of Wotton Road, to the south of its junction with Dye House Yard, lies within the Conservation Area. The northerly section, outwith the Conservation Area, is described in the VDS.

The views outwards from Wotton Road are limited, partly because of the buildings being linked and close to the road. Nevertheless there is a pleasing view north to Wotton Hill.





The important visual impact is of looking into the village on approaching it from outside. The town houses of Wotton Road, viewed , across the open space of Tubbs Turf multi-sports area, from Charfield Road, present a very fine and coherent entrance to the village. The view of the Old Rectory, coming into Kingswood along Wotton Road is as good or better. The crossroads formed by Wotton Road with Charfield Road, Abbey Street and Old Rectory Road (where the War Memorial is situated) is one of the key nodes that defines the core village (the others being the crossroads at the Chipping and by the Abbey Gatehouse).

## ii. Pattern and shape

Wotton Road runs due north from the war memorial and is the route to Wotton-under-Edge. It is a vital pedestrian as well as vehicular route into and from the village, in particular because of the presence of Katherine Lady Berkeley's (KLB) School just beyond the village boundary.



Of the four routes into the village, Wotton Road is unique in having no modern housing to dilute the visual impact of entering the village from Wotton. On the eastern side there are



several significant buildings with well proportioned Georgian facades: numbers 7, 5 and 3 Wotton Road. The Tubbs Turf Sports Facility and Abbey Mill lie on the western side of the road.

The highway itself is of some interest. It crosses the leat that once provided water power to Abbey Mill by a narrow bridge that is possibly medieval. It has only been possible to widen it to a small extent, due to restrictions presented by adjacent houses and the leat itself. The need to provide a pavement for the many pupils walking to KLB has meant that a priority traffic flow operates over and on either side of the bridge.

### iii. Nature of buildings

The built environment on the easterly side of this part of Wotton Road comprises four houses, two of which can be described as large town houses. Though varied in size, they provide a pleasing homogeneity through the use of similar materials, window styles etc. They all date from periods when it was normal to build close to the road. Nevertheless, the presence of Tubbs Turf and other open spaces along the road means that there is no sense of oppressive enclosure that can occur when such development has occurred on both sides of the road.

Wotton Road comprises an important sub-area of the designated Conservation Area, containing many buildings formally listed as being of historical and architectural interest.



Number 7 Wotton Road though having a Georgian facade is, in fact, medieval and contemporary with the Abbey.



The most obvious exterior evidence of this is an oriel window overlooking the mill leat surmounted by an imposing period chimney. No. 7 is listed grade II\*, whilst Nos. 5 and 3 are listed grade II.



Facing these buildings, on the west side of Wotton Road, is the Tubbs Turf Sports facility and gardens. This is a major amenity, built by the village, with two high quality courts, one exclusively for tennis and the other accommodating a range of ball games in addition to tennis. There is a pleasing wooden pavilion built in an Edwardian style. The open nature of Tubbs Turf is important in allowing the architecturally important buildings that surround it to be seen to best advantage.



Immediately to the north of Tubbs Turf is the Abbey Business Park occupying land once occupied by a large woollen mill, largely destroyed by fire in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. From Wotton Road, little more than the reduced end wall of the original mill is visible. This has been topped with a pediment and presents a quite pleasing aspect for an industrial building.



Within the site is a large cast iron water tank with elaborate moulded decorations. It arrived on the site in the 1940s and subsequently has been listed as being of architectural significance.

#### iv. Building materials

The great majority is render, over local ragstone.

Distinctive features are as follows:

- Georgian Town Houses
- An important medieval house
- Tubbs Turf
- Historic mill and industrial infrastructure
- Cohesion of building period, style and materials.

### **Sub-area 2: Dye House Yard**

#### i. Related to the very local landscape

This is the lowest point in the village; it is situated between the mill leat and the course of the main river and has suffered from flooding from time to time. There are six properties located here, but only five of these, on the southerly side, fall within the Conservation Area.

#### ii. Pattern and shape

Dye House Yard takes the form of a narrow single carriageway access from Wotton Road, flanked to the south by two properties and to the northerly side by Aston Cottage before opening out into a spacious yard with buildings on the eastern and western sides.



The garden of Aston Cottage (outwith the Conservation Area) provides a pleasant vista to the northerly side and there is an attractive view to the south of the properties in the “Abbey Yard” backing onto Ozleworth Brook.

### iii. Nature of buildings

There is no uniformity of design in the buildings comprising Dye House Yard. The two buildings flanking the carriageway section, Avondale (shown below), a three-storey building, and Knoll View, a two-storey building, are both imposing but built in very different styles.



The two cottages to the western side of the yard come the nearest to uniformity of style being typical of cottages associated with the weaving industry, in which Dye House Yard had its origin. The cottage to the western side has been created by converting the stables, originally used in connection with the weaving trade, but in recent memory as the base for a locally owned lorry haulage business.

### iv. Building materials

Avondale has cream rendered front and side elevations but a stone rear elevation while Knoll View is wholly cement-rendered. The two original cottages in the yard, Dyehouse Cottage and Coach House Cottage, are both rendered but in rather different styles and colours and both have been subject to extensions. The modern stable conversion is a stone building with dark-stained wooden joinery.

Distinctive features: walls of properties making the boundary of the carriageway; open views to north and south of yard itself; secluded island between water courses.

### **Sub-area 3: Golden Lane, The Walk and Bruton Lane**

i. Related to the very local landscape:

To the north and east there is a valued view of the Cotswold escarpment, behind St. Mary's Parish Church and the Congregational Church.



St. Mary's churchyard is a tranquil, grassed area. Mature trees and grass dominate over any street furniture.

ii. Pattern and shape

Golden Lane bounds two sides of the triangular St. Mary's churchyard, which is focal to the distinctive character of the area. This is filled with C18 and C19 grave stones, many of which are listed (see Supplementary Information Report). An open square at the end of Golden Lane (outwith the Conservation Area) classified as The Walk, but not linked by any highway to The Walk within the Conservation Area, gives an additional breathing space. There is a footpath through the churchyard, and Golden Lane provides only a small single carriageway for vehicular access to link round the churchyard to the square at the end. The front of the Congregational Church abuts immediately onto St. Mary's churchyard on the remaining, northerly side. Clearly the open green space is the focus about which the housing is grouped.

Vehicular access to majority of buildings in The Walk is via a junction of High Street with an unadopted highway running along the north side of St. Mary's Church. The start of The Walk then runs along the west side of the Congregational Church.

Bruton Lane runs northwards off this unadopted highway, in parallel with the start of The Walk at a distance of about 20 metres.

There are no pavements here except for a small part of the easterly end of Golden Lane.



### iii. Nature of buildings

Older buildings give the main structure to the area, as well as the old red brick wall, attractively capped with darker, half-round coping bricks, which bounds two sides of the churchyard.



At the easterly end of Golden Lane, six terraced cottages built circa 1830 front directly onto the pavement (see pictures below).



These cottages have back gardens bordering on a grassed area alongside the footpath that traverses the churchyard. Two further linked cottages have back gardens that back immediately onto a further footpath that runs along the eastern side of the churchyard. On the southern side of Golden Lane, 12 modern flats (3X2 storey blocks) have balconies overlooking the churchyard.

Buildings in The Walk comprise the Congregational Church, The Lower School Room and former millworkers cottages.

The Congregational Church built in 1821 is a Grade II Listed Building and is described in more detail in the Supplementary information Report.

The Lower Schoolroom was built in 1845 to serve on weekdays as a “British School” (i.e. a day school for dissenters or non-conformists) and on Sundays as the Sabbath School.



Lower Schoolroom

The Walk culminates in nine mill cottages which were built around 1700.



The cottages are two-storey and all have chimneys. The gardens for these cottages are accessed by crossing the road to the front of them. The cottages back onto Ozelworth Brook at the rear.

Buildings in Bruton Lane comprise three cottages and some modern lock-up garage buildings set around a gravel yard.

#### iv. Building materials

There is a noticeable use of brick, which is usually red. However, most of the older cottages, representing the dominant building type in this sub-area, are now white, grey or cream



rendered, over local ragstone. The Congregational Church and Lower School Room are largely built in ragstone with some brick features.

Distinctive features are as follows:

- Congregational Church with particularly distinctive bell tower and clock;
- St. Mary's churchyard and green space;
- black railing fence around St. Mary's churchyard;
- visually important red brick walls on the southern side of Golden Lane and around the southern and eastern sides of the churchyard
- two specimen trees in front of the modern flats to the south of Golden Lane
- attic windows in the roofs of the former millworkers and farm labourers cottages in Golden Lane and The Walk
- restricted vehicular access and limited space for parking

#### **Sub-area 4: Weavers' Cottages**

i. Related to the very local landscape

A cluster of three terraced rows of former weavers' cottages, lying respectively along Hillesley Road, Walk Mill Lane and Crow Meadow, is located towards the southerly edge of the built settlement of the village. Although originally surrounded by open countryside and orchards and being situated at one of the highest points in the village, subsequent development has surrounded these cottages with more modern housing.

ii. Pattern and shape

The three terraces form a T-configuration with the crown at the junction between the three roads, with only a few more modern houses interspersed between these terraces. There is no pavement in front of the short front gardens of the Hillesley Road terrace, as shown below: looking along the road in the direction of the village centre with the terraced cottages on the right.



The terrace (Comley's Row, named after George Comley who caused the terrace to be built) in Walk Mill Lane has no front gardens, with front doors opening onto a narrow pavement, as shown below.



The terrace (Rose Terrace) in Crow Meadow originally was fronted by exceptionally long front gardens but many of these are now partly lost to parking spaces.



### iii. Nature of buildings

There is a uniformity of style within each terrace as would be expected, although the terrace in Hillesley Road comprises lower cottages towards the junction with Walk Mill Lane compared with those at The Chipping end of the terrace (see pictures below).



One cottage in this higher section has third-storey windows set into its eaves.

Porches have been added to a number of the cottages in Rose Terrace on Crow Meadow in a variety of styles.

#### iv. Building materials

The elevations of the terraces in Hillesley Road and Walk Mill Lane are largely cream-rendered although there is a range of different colours used along Hillesley Road and one property in walk mill lane is pebble-dashed. From photographs dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the terrace in Hillesley Road was originally red brick and one of the cottages towards The Chipping retains this feature. A number of roofs have been renovated, often replacing clay tiles with slate. Imposing red brick chimney stacks top many of the cottages.

Distinctive features: uniformity of style, building line and heights, and (largely) building materials; chimney stacks; first-floor windows set under eaves in Comley's Row.

### **Sub-area 5: The Chipping**

#### i. Related to the very local landscape

Situated at the top of the rise to the southerly end of the village, The Chipping is the hub of the village for road traffic and pedestrian movements. It forms a natural village centre where the majority of the facilities are located, including the Dinneywicks Pub, Post Office and shop, and a community fitness centre and coffee shop. There is also Highways Department-owned public parking in a tarmacked area of The Chipping. To the south are Hillesley Road and Wickwar Road; to the north Old Rectory Road and the High Street.

The village green is on The Chipping with a mature flowering cherry and 2 newly planted trees surrounded by circular wrought iron seats.



Some properties on The Chipping have views to the North and East of the Cotswold Escarpment and Wotton-under-Edge, and to the West towards New Mills and Charfield.

To the West, looking across Old Rectory Road, there is a wide grassed area with well-maintained flower beds and beyond that the frontage of houses in Chestnut Park.

This part of the village is visible from the Cotswold Escarpment and Wotton-under-Edge (AONB). It also provides a pleasant visual amenity with views from Hillesley Road, Wickwar Road and Chestnut Park.

#### ii. Pattern and shape

The Chipping forms an L-shaped built settlement of period properties bordering onto an important open space, now occupied by the Village Green and parking area.

#### iii. Nature of buildings

A high proportion of the buildings are 3 storey or higher. With the open space in front of both lines of the built settlement these do not overpower the lower buildings.



Chipping House (cream rendered property in centre of photograph) is the one listed building on The Chipping.





Facing directly onto the Village Green is a terrace of 3 storey cream rendered Weavers' Cottages. Buildings in this location are believed to originate back as far as the 15<sup>th</sup> Century (although the current properties date back to the 1700s it is believed). They form part of Kingswood's strong local heritage as a cloth mill village (there are many weavers' cottages and old mills still extant).



The terrace of red-brick cottages facing onto the long side of The Chipping juxtaposed with the white rendered cottage shows the wide variety of building styles and materials used in this sub-area. It is very much the layout of the buildings around the open space that makes this a distinctive sub-area.

#### iv. Building materials

There is a wide variety of building materials but for the facades onto The Chipping, white or cream render over local ragstone walls predominates. The red-brick terraced cottages provide a marked contrast but there are a number of brick-built chimney stacks. Roofs are in a variety of clay and stone tiles.

Distinctive features are as follows:

- Chipping House, a classical Georgian-style listed building

- Former weavers' cottages
- The Upper Schoolroom, formerly the Church of England School, then Sunday School rooms, and now housing a community fitness centre and coffee shop
- Village green with traditional red telephone box, retained by the Parish Council
- Memorial fingerpost sign



This commemorates three young people from two families in the village who died in a tragic road accident. As well as commemorating these young people, it enhances the appearance of the village as it is beautifully maintained and planted throughout the year, providing a striking and colourful feature in contrast to the otherwise grey and white-lined expanse of the adjacent parking area. The sign itself emphasises that this is the communications hub of the village.

### **Sub-area 6: Old Rectory Road and Round The Town**

#### **i. Relation to very local landscape**

Old Rectory Road used to be a footpath known as 'Back Lane' until becoming Rectory Road around 1827 (on the opposite side of the older built settlement of the village to the High Street). It runs downhill from The Chipping, alongside the Village Green and, on the opposite side, adjacent to the open grassed frontage of houses in Chestnut Park, towards the village War Memorial at the bottom end. Travelling in this direction, the road has a blind left-hand bend just before the junction with the Charfield Road.

Old Rectory Road provides the only through-route in the village, connecting northwards with the M5 motorway, the A38, Wotton-under-Edge and Charfield, and southwards with Chipping Sodbury and Yate, the A46 and the M4 motorway.

Round The Town is a pedestrian footpath that connects Old Rectory Road to High Street. It has strong historical connections with old Rectory Road although may well be one of the oldest by-ways in the village since it is speculated that it formed the then southerly boundary of the abbey settlement.

## ii. Pattern and shape

Old Rectory Road forms the western side of the 'triangle' which comprises much of the older built settlement in the village (The Chipping; Old Rectory Road, High Street and Abbey Street) and hence forms part of the boundary the Conservation Area. There are a small number of buildings to the east side of the road and none on the west side although Boundary House or The Old Rectory (dealt with separately as sub-area 8) sits on the western side of the junction with Charfield Road.



Attractive stone walls border the upper end of the east side of the road, marking the rear of properties on High Street.

Round The Town is in the form of a dog-leg. It is relatively narrow, producing a quiet secluded atmosphere with limited views out to the rest of the village. It provides a secure pedestrian link to the Abbey Gateway and Church on High Street.

## iii. Nature of buildings

Three small detached cottages of individual design and materials, dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, front onto Old Rectory Road.





Two distinctive large buildings, both dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Walnut Villa (seen behind a high conifer hedge in left-hand picture) and The Old Manse (seen at the bend in Round The Town in the right hand picture) are at either end of Round The Town. There are two other buildings on Round The Town, a bungalow and a modern two-storey detached house.

#### iv. Building materials

There is a wide variety of building materials. Two of the small cottages on Old Rectory Road and Walnut Villa are render over local ragstone. The Old Manse is Cotswold stone and the other buildings are in red brick or reconstituted Cotswold stone.



Cotswold stone facade of The Old Manse, now divided vertically into two three-storey apartments. The red brick house beyond has its frontage onto High Street and was originally a mill building.

### **Sub-area 7: High Street and Abbey Street**

#### i. Relation to the very local landscape

High Street and Abbey Street are located downhill from the centre of the village at The Chipping. High Street starts at The Chipping and leads down to the historic Abbey Gateway, passing the Parish Church on the right hand side, two-thirds of the way down. There is a narrow, right-hand turning into Golden Lane which runs past the churchyard and a pedestrian path leads off on the right from High Street through the churchyard.



Almost opposite, on the left hand side is Round the Town, a paved footpath that links High Street with Old Rectory Road well-used by pedestrians walking through the village (see sub-area 6). It is speculated that the name derives from the lane's forming the southerly boundary of the "old town" that was centred on the abbey and its surrounding buildings.

The churchyard and Abbey Green by the Gateway provide the only open spaces within High Street itself but there are good views of the Cotswold escarpment beyond the Gateway. Ozleworth Brook runs at right angles to the continuation of the line of High Street just beyond the Gateway and Abbey Street, which is on the left of the Gateway, runs parallel to the line of the brook.

## ii. Pattern and shape

High Street, Round the Town and Abbey Street form the core of the designated Conservation Area of Kingswood Village. Spreading out from the historic Abbey Gateway, all three streets still show evidence of the former Abbey's location.

This part of the village is characterised by very narrow streets that now are frequently congested by parked cars as the houses were typically built before the era of motor transport. Most of the houses abut directly onto the street where there is generally a narrow pavement. Many of the houses are terraced reflecting, in some cases, historical infilling between properties. Whilst the overall impression is of historic buildings, there is considerable variation with some houses having a Georgian-style frontage and others being Victorian or renovated cottages.



The Abbey Gateway, the only remaining structure from the former Kingswood Abbey, lies at the bottom of High Street. The paved surface continues through it to allow access for both cars and pedestrians to a cul-de-sac of houses located between the Gateway and the Ozleworth Brook, onto which some of these houses abut. This group of housing includes one of the many historical public houses in the village, now the Old Plume (formerly The Plume of Feathers).



High Street meets Abbey Street at right angles in front of the Abbey Gateway. Abbey Street is very narrow over its whole length of about 70 metres. It runs from the Abbey Gateway to form, at its other end, one arm of a very busy crossroads, opposite the junction of the Charfield Road with the main through-road in the village between Wickwar and Wotton. It is a one-way street because the totally blind corner at the crossroads makes it dangerous for cars to turn out of Abbey Street onto the main road.

### iii. Nature of buildings

The Abbey Gateway dominates the bottom of the High Street and is frequently used as an icon to represent the village. It is maintained by English Heritage. There is an enclosed green by the Abbey gateway.



The Abbey Gateway itself is a Grade 1 listed building. All that now remains of the Abbey is the early 16th century gatehouse with a range of precinct wall on each side. It is built of ashlar with a Cotswold stone-tile roof and has two entrances, one for wheeled traffic and the other for pedestrians. Over the main arch is a mullioned window with the figure of God the Father carved into the tracery and below it is a carving of a pot of lilies.

The upper room of the gatehouse is reached from a stone doorway immediately to the rear of the gateway. The gate passage has a lierne vault (one that has ribs running between the bosses as well as to and from the wall).

Some of the houses on Abbey Street are formed out of the actual Abbey Gateway and retain the building features of the Abbey in their windows and overall architecture. The old houses and cottages on both sides of the very narrow street are clustered closely together.

Not far from the Abbey Gateway itself, and on the same side of the road, is Kingswood Primary School. This was opened in 1892 in response to the legislation requiring free education and is largely based on the original Victorian-era building (see picture below). Its site is very tightly constrained and its use has been maximised by a sympathetic modernisation and extension carried out in 1997.





High Street is a very narrow street with cottages and larger houses reflecting successive building over many centuries. As a result of this, many of the houses are listed.



The very historic nature of the High Street has resulted in a great diversity of building styles with houses in many cases in small terraces and clustered very closely together. Two modern red-brick houses built in the 1970s stand out very starkly from the old houses in the rest of the street.

There is evidence of old Abbey building materials in some remaining walls in the High Street.



The parish church is surrounded by a ragstone and render wall (seen in the left of this picture) which is in poor condition. The larger houses that characterise the upper, southerly end of the High Street reflect their origins as former farm-houses. Most retain large gardens. In the grounds of the property Amercombe, about halfway up the High Street, there is a very large, listed copper beech tree. This is located in a former, private graveyard that still retains a number of substantial gravestones.

#### iv. Building materials

Most of the properties in this part of the village are built of rendered local rag-stone with isolated examples of brick-built properties including two newer, red-brick, detached houses in the High Street. Some roofs are of Cotswold Stone and others of tiles and slate.

Distinctive features in this part of the village are as follows:

- The Parish Church and churchyard with listed memorials;
- The Abbey Gateway;
- The cottages alongside the Abbey Gateway;
- The enclosed green area in front of the Abbey Gateway;
- The historic and varied rendered houses and cottages built over many centuries, many of which are formally listed as being of historical and architectural interest;
- A very large, mature copper-beech tree;
- A private graveyard
- Decorative finials on the top of power and telecommunications distribution poles (see below)



### **Sub-area 8: Charfield Road**

#### **i. Relation to the very local landscape**

A terrace of five cottages runs at right angles to the Charfield Road along the westerly edge of the Tubbs Turf Sports Facility. These cottages and an industrial building that was once part of The Abbey Mill works lie within the Conservation Area, forming its westerly boundary. The land immediately to the north of this area falls away quite steeply to the Ozleworth Brook, leading to uninterrupted views of the Cotswold Escarpment and in particular Wotton Hill from the rear of the cottages.

#### **ii. Pattern and Shape**

Given their orientation, the cottages form a pleasing terrace with a relatively secluded area to the front, given the proximity to one of the main routes serving the village. Some cottages have had porches added to the original structure, slightly perturbing the original building line.





### iii. Nature of Buildings

The cottages are built largely in local ragstone but have attractive lintels and surrounds built in red brick above windows and around doorways.



Slate roofs are topped by period brick-built chimney stacks and ornamented chimney pots. Most cottages have roof lights which will lead to a more light and airy third-storey in the attic-space. Some uniformity in the facade of the terrace has been lost by the replacement of window frames in individual cottages but the designs used all have decorative glazing bar features.

The period industrial building situated 20 metres to the west along the Charfield Road shares many of the architectural features of the terrace of cottages as can be seen in the picture below. It now has modern industrial use as part of the Abbey Mills estate.



### iv. Building Materials

These have been described adequately in the preceding sections.

Distinctive features are an attractive period terrace of cottages retaining many of the original architectural features.

### **Sub-area 9: The Old Rectory and Chestnut Park Farmhouse**

These two imposing adjacent buildings lying on the junction of Old Rectory Road and Charfield Road are of such importance that they merit identification as a separate sub-area.



They are closely linked in history as well as space since Chestnut Park Farmhouse was formerly the service wing for Boundary House (later The Old Rectory). The latter is, by some margin, the most architecturally important house in the village. Built in the mid 18th Century, the imposing front has three main storeys with a central pediment. It has merited an extensive description in Pevsner's "The Buildings of England".

### **3 Summary**

The Conservation Area lies at the heart of the built settlement and contributes strongly to the distinctive character of Kingswood. It contains many of the Listed Buildings in the Parish. Also, many well-frequented public buildings and the two churches serving the village lie within its boundaries. Therefore, there are heightened issues in relation to modern use and infrastructure, most notably concerning the use and parking of cars in an area built prior to the car's existence. Getting the right balance here is essential to support the needs of modern life while conserving the distinctive, historic character.

In the light of this analysis, eleven guidelines (KCA 1-11) have been developed specifically in relation to the Conservation Area. These are to be found in the section of the Design Statement dealing with policies and guidelines.