

Queen Charlton Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

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1.0 Queen Charlton Conservation Area

1.1 Introduction

The conservation area includes the historic settlement of Queen Charlton which was identified as being of special architectural and historic interest and designated as a conservation area on 2nd October 1985. The boundary today covers 12.11 hectares and is shown on the Conservation Area Character Appraisal Map. The conservation area contains 18 entries on the National Heritage List for England, and one Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Under the Town and Country Planning legislation the Council has a duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area in exercising its planning powers, and to periodically re-appraise its boundaries. This provides a consistent and sound basis on which planning and other applications are determined in the area.

As part of this process local planning authorities are encouraged to carry out character appraisals of its conservation areas. An appraisal identifies features which contribute toward the special interest and character of the area and those that detract from it. This enables local residents to participate in identifying features which are of particular value to them and to the special character of their area, and provides a base upon which to develop management proposals for preservation and enhancement.

This appraisal document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Queen Charlton Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area in the form of the character appraisal

- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement in the form of the management proposals

Following the appraisal, the conservation area boundary has been extended to include peripheral farm buildings, rear garden areas, individual properties and the historic stone horse trough on Queen Charlton Lane.

1.2 Context

Queen Charlton is located in the west part of the area covered by Bath and North East Somerset Council. It is in the Green Belt and the historic village is a designated conservation area, surrounded by open countryside. The village is in the parish of Compton Dando to the south of Keynsham, between Bath and Bristol. The parish consists of five separate villages or hamlets: Burnett, Chewton Keynsham, Compton Dando, Queen Charlton and Woollard (east).

The extent and built form of Queen Charlton has survived almost unaltered since the late C19 when it had 31 houses and 141 residents in 1872 (Source: John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales). In 2010 there were 33 houses, and a total of 85 residents (Source: Compton Dando Parish Plan), confirming the lack of change and growth to the village envelope during that period.

Today most inhabitants commute to work in Bath, Bristol, Keynsham or further afield, and a small but increasing number of self-employed people work from home in a variety of businesses.

1.3 Summary of key characteristics

This **character appraisal** concludes that key positive characteristics of the conservation area contributing to its high significance are:-

- Unusually well-preserved historic nucleated village astride ancient road

and footpath routes, with compact boundaries surviving largely intact since the late C19

- Attractive rural landscape setting and topography, with long vistas into and out of the village to and from Stockwood Vale on the north and east sides of the boundary
- Surviving remnants of the surrounding medieval field pattern
- The Parish Church of St Margaret together with Manor House, Tolzey House and the village green which represent early settlement and act as focal point in the conservation area
- Early road and track pattern lined with distinct stone boundary walls and vernacular and more prestigious historic buildings
- Boundaries typically enclosed by stone walls and/or hedging and planting
- Consistent use of local building materials, primarily lias stone, lime based mortars and clay pantiles
- Mainly residential and agricultural uses, but also a parish church and village hall
- Road surfaces shared with pedestrians, with grass verges adjoining them
- Townscape largely unaffected by modern street furniture or highway development
- Verdant mature trees and greenery
- Important green open spaces in the village, reinforcing the spacious low density and rural qualities of the conservation area

1.4 Summary of key recommendations

- The setting of the conservation area should be protected
- Important key views within, from and towards the conservation area should be protected
- Potential traffic calming measures on Queen Charlton Lane should be considered

- New development should preserve or enhance the existing built character and appearance and recognise existing density, including the important contribution made by private gardens.
- Historic buildings should retain original characteristics and traditional features, and avoid introduction of artificial materials and architectural detail
- Buildings which make a positive contribution will be protected from demolition. Demolition will only be considered if a high quality replacement scheme has been agreed
- Seek appropriate restoration and re-use of the listed telephone kiosk

1.5 Conservation area designation

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest. A conservation area is defined as: *'...an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.

The quality and interest of the area as a whole, rather than individual buildings, is the main consideration when designating such areas.

Conservation area designation introduces controls over:

- the way owners can alter or develop their properties. These include the requirement in legislation and national planning policies to preserve and/or enhance and for local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area in their local planning policies.

- demolition of most unlisted buildings/structures
- works to trees
- types of advertisements that can be displayed with ‘deemed consent’
- types and size of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (permitted development rights)

Designation provides the basis for applying national and local policies designed to preserve or enhance all aspects of character or appearance that define the special interest of a conservation area.

Section 71 of the 1990 Act requires the local planning authority to publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and an appraisal provides the means for this. Section 72 requires that, in considering applications for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of that area.

Conservation area appraisals are considered by Historic England to be vital to the conservation of these special areas. The content of this statement is based on the suggested approach set out by Historic England.

1.6 Community involvement

Public support and involvement is essential to the successful management of conservation areas.

This document was initially drafted following a meeting with representatives from Compton Dando Parish Council and the local Ward Councillor in July 2016, when the extent of the conservation area boundary was discussed together with the main problems and issues facing the local community.

After the meeting an initial draft was prepared which was agreed in principle by the Parish Council in September 2016 for this

public consultation. Full public consultation took place in June and July 2017. In response to comments received amendments were made to the documents and they were formally adopted by the council for planning guidance purposes on (adoption date to be entered here)

2.0 Landscape setting

2.1 Surrounding countryside

Setting is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework 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 the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”.

Queen Charlton Conservation Area is located on the edge of a limestone plateau. To the south and west it is bounded by the plateau with low rolling hills and valleys containing mature trees and hedge rows. The adjoining more visually open landscape of Stockwood Vale to the north and east is dominated by the steeply sloping narrow valley next to the village where two stream tributaries merge, before flowing into the River Avon. The lower more ‘intimate’ part of the valley is rich in mature trees and vegetation.

This is typical of the landscape north of the Mendip Hills, with gently sloping land near the farmstead for dairy grazing, wetter valley floors for hay production, steeper land on the valley sides and the limestone plateau for sheep or arable crops.

Most surrounding fields are of small to medium size and radiate out from the village. Field boundaries are a mix of dry stone walling, wire fencing and hedgerows, rich in wildlife. The sensitive landscapes of Stockwood Vale to the north and east of the village and its limestone plateau positioning are identified in the Council’s *Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset*:

A Landscape Character Assessment, which was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2003.

High importance and weight must therefore be given to this sensitive landscape setting of the conservation area in the consideration of any development proposals that may affect or harm it.

2.2 Topography and geology

The villages in Compton Dando Parish lie along the valley floor of the River Chew, a tributary of the River Avon, and on the ridges above the valley. Queen Charlton is set on the ridge of the Dundry Plateau adjoining the steeply sloping valley of Stockwood Vale to the north and west.

The main rock formation in the area is the Mercia Mudstones, which occupy most of the valley floor and sides, originating in the Triassic desert basins. Lias limestone of the Jurassic period is found on the higher ground with the Lias Limestone of the neighbouring Hicks Gate and Dundry Plateau areas. The other main formation within the area is the Panarth Group which consists of a band of clays and shale between the Lias Limestone and the Mercia Mudstones. Alluvium is found in the Chew Valley floor in a narrow band beside the tributaries that flow through the valleys.

The soils across the area are clayey. With the valleys over the Mercia Mudstones they are reddish in colour and slowly permeable, favouring grassland. Over limestone on the upper slopes, including Queen Charlton, they are shallow and better drained, more suited to cereal crops and grassland.

The rural landscape setting of the conservation area makes an important contribution to its significance. The visual attributes of this setting primarily derive from the topography and geology which also form the important views of the village on the skyline when viewed from Stockwood Vale.

2.3 Relationship with the surroundings

The conservation area is in close proximity to both Keynsham and Whitchurch on the urban edge of Bristol, but maintains a distinctly rural character, that of a nucleated village in an open countryside setting. Traffic levels and speeds at peak times of the day intrude on the tranquillity of the village. Despite this, it maintains an attractive 'isolated' rural character and setting, away from the adjacent urban areas.

There is a long distance view of the Bristol urban area which is in close proximity, looking north from the village along Stockwood Vale. Increased urban pressures are most recently evident in the use of local fields as horse paddocks with associated features such as post and rail fencing and field shelters.

A network of footpaths crosses and follows the valleys in the surrounding countryside, including those linking Whitchurch and Charlton Bottom with Keynsham and Queen Charlton. This includes the ancient route of the Priest's Path leading from the village to Whitchurch. The local network of rights of way is well used by visiting ramblers and villagers alike

These paths provide important views of the historic village and reinforce the important value of its landscape setting and the physical, visual and historic relationship with it.

3.0 Archaeology and historic development

Queen Charlton was not named in the Domesday Book but was recorded in 1291 as Cherleton, and later as Charlton. It was an estate of the nearby Keynsham Abbey from c1170 to c1486, and the now Parish Church of St Margaret originated as a daughter chapel of the mother-church in the late C12.

Origins of the grade II listed Norman gateway opposite Manor House are uncertain, but descriptions from the late C18 onwards refer to it as the entrance to (Keynsham Abbey)

Abbot's Court House. The Court House was demolished c1840. Pevsner suggests that the gateway might originally have been the south door of the parish church, but it was probably brought here when Keynsham Abbey was demolished to form the entrance for the Court House, to which the last Abbot had retired.

The village is located on a historic road route. The partly surviving field pattern radiating out from and around the village represent late mediaeval smaller enclosures for stock or orcharding. Villagers would have held strips of land in the open fields. Later enclosures of larger scale beyond have a more open field pattern. Enclosure appears to have taken place in a variety of ways and at different times.

The stone village cross located on the green is listed as being late-mediaeval and scheduled as an ancient monument. It may have originally been located opposite the church but was moved from the road junction just south west of the village to its present position and rebuilt in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria' Diamond Jubilee.

The grade II* listed Parish Church of St Margaret has late C12 Norman origins as previously described, with later C13 and C15 alterations. It was restored in 1859-61.

The manor and parish of Charlton became known as Queen Charlton in the C16, either from the ownership of Queen Catherine Parr when the estate was given to her by King Henry VIII following the dissolution of the monasteries (Keynsham Abbey was dissolved in 1539), or possibly that of Queen Elizabeth I who is alleged to have passed through the village on her way to Bristol in 1573.

To the south west of the church is Queen Charlton Manor House which is grade II* listed and of C16 origins, with C18, C19 and later extensions and alterations. Its C19 quasi-monastic walled Italianate garden is recognised as a locally registered garden.

Historically the village was not always wealthy and was therefore exempt from many taxes during the C16. It was however much respected locally as a healthy place to live, and during the mid C14 Bristol plagues wealthy people would stay there.

The village developed over the centuries, primarily as a rural farming community. Tolzey Cottage facing the green is listed as C17, but has C16 origins . It was mentioned in 1549 as part of the largest holding in the village and in 1584 was owned by a Bristol merchant attempting to escape the plagues in the city. Its name suggests an administrative role, including collection of fair tolls, appropriate to a chief house or Court House of a township of an Abbey manor rather than a manor house. None of the domestic early mediaeval village buildings survive today, and most now standing in the conservation area date from the C17 – C19, during a period of agricultural prosperity. The buildings adjoin the lanes, tracks and footpaths and present a largely unspoilt range of C17 - C19 century domestic architecture with unifying white lias limestone walls and clay roof pantiles.

In 1769, Vickris Dickinson, a rich merchant from Chew Magna bought the village and moved into Manor House. He arranged for works to be carried out to the parish church, and his grand-daughter Frances carried out a full-scale remodelling of it c1860.

Coal mining operated during the C18 in nearby local fields closer to Keynsham, primarily providing coal for Bristol. There was also local stone quarrying from that period which continued to more recent times. Farm traction engines and steam rollers would have brought the influence of 'industrial' agricultural practices into the village during the C19/early C20.

The architecturally distinct village school and school house were constructed c1847 and it was during the C19 that the large farms in the village made full use of their close proximity to Bristol, supplying milk, hay and straw for the city. The 1841 census records the

occupation of the great majority of the village population as agricultural labourers, farmers and servants. Nearby Keynsham was most probably relied on for local services.

The village is unusual in having been owned by an Italian count from the famous Chigi family of Florence and Sienna up to the 1960's.

Continuous historic estate ownership has assisted in ensuring the preservation of the historic appearance and character of buildings which are largely unaltered by modern interventions such as plastic windows and doors and artificial roof tiles.

The attractive compact nucleated form of the village and its rural landscape setting has survived largely unaltered for over a century. It has avoided peripheral modern housing estate development apart from Orchard Cottages, a short terrace of post-war council housing built on the southern approach to the village.

Today many of the former farm buildings are converted to residential use, mostly in the late C20/earlyC21. Three modern detached properties of traditional design have been constructed in the village, namely Appleacre c1952, Pear Tree Cottage c1958 and Ivy Cottage c1963.

4.0 Spatial analysis

4.1 Layout and road pattern

The principal spatial feature of the conservation area is its compact historic nucleated plan form, centred on the village green. Together with buildings fronting the lanes and spaces this creates one discernible character for the whole of the conservation area.

There are no footpaths in the village, affecting pedestrian safety at peak times due to high level traffic volumes and speeds. Most of the roads, lanes and tracks, including Queen Charlton Lane have green verges, some on

both sides. There are instances of vehicles driving over these grass verges to pass each other, causing damage to them.

There are two road entry points to the conservation area on Queen Charlton Lane. On its approach from the south west there is a chicane in the road designed to slow traffic speeds. A give-way sign signifies the approach from the south east.

Un-named lanes, tracks and paths radiate out from the green to the north, east and west, leading to the surrounding countryside and landscape. Most have grass verges of varying width which add to the local distinctiveness of the village.

The village green and cross lie at the core. They are privately owned and maintained and have high visual value. Listed buildings are grouped around the green, and form an attractive back-drop to this important central space in the village.

The triangular area set back from the road opposite Church Farm House, backing on to the high stone garden wall of Manor House forms a further distinctive green space in the conservation area.

There is a consistently low density of buildings throughout the village. Most private properties have large gardens to the front and/or rear, or completely surrounding them. Manor House has a large walled garden area to the south of the listed building which is included on the Local Register of Parks and Gardens.

A distinct local feature is the groupings of mainly modern steel framed agricultural buildings on the village edge, many of large scale footprint and bulk at Manor Farm, Home Farm and Ford's Farm.

4.2 Open spaces, trees and landscape

The most visually significant open space in the village is the privately owned central green, as described above.

Elsewhere, the large grassed private garden space of Manor House, set behind the Norman gateway and stone walling on the opposite side of the road to the house is clearly visible. It positively contributes to the setting of this part of the conservation area and to that of the listed Manor House and provides a significant visual green gap in the village street scene.

By contrast the enclosed space of the churchyard provides a tranquil environment and escape from traffic passing through the village.

The value of the grassed set-back area on Queen Charlton Lane enclosed by the dramatically high stone garden wall of Manor House, south of the church, has previously been recognised.

A further distinct open space is the grassed area at the front of the village hall, formerly the school playground. Its pleasing proportions and appearance provide an attractive and well-kept public setting for the listed building.

Gardens within the village also create visually significant spaces. They are an important element of the setting of the conservation area, particularly front gardens in the public realm and where they provide visual gaps between buildings, adding to the loose-knit and low density local character. The abundance of planting is highly significant, much of it in the summer months of the traditional 'cottage garden' type.

Many of the gardens also contain large mature trees which project into the street scene and make a significant visual contribution to local character and appearance.

Visually significant trees include the magnificent mature specimens located in and

about the churchyard which are visible from many viewpoints in the conservation area. Other significant mature trees contributing to local character include the historic yew in the garden of The Brow, and other important specimens on the lane leading to this property.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders covering these individual trees or groups of trees, but works to them require 'notifying' the local planning authority because they are in the conservation area.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

Focal points

Due to the informal rural character of the conservation area there are no 'planned' focal points within the village.

The village green and cross, together with the backdrop of historic buildings form the key focal point in the village. Its edge adjoining the group of historic buildings, including Tolzey House, is defined by traditional low white painted timber posts, linked by chains. Visually this green space combines with the grassed triangular shaped traffic island at the adjoining road junction. The well-maintained historic cast iron finger post on the traffic island adds further distinctiveness to this focal point.

The combination of the church tower and the high mature trees in and about it provide a significant focal point in the village worthy of protection.

Approaching the village from the south west, the view of Manor House rising above its garden wall, combined with the stand-alone Norman gateway on the opposite side of the road creates a further focal point.

Arrival in the village from the south east is visually marked by the properties on the north east side of the road from Orchard Cottages onwards, and on the other side by the green set-back area, enclosed by the

dramatically high stone garden wall of Manor House.

Focal buildings

Key focal buildings in the conservation area both listed and non-listed include:

- Parish Church of St Margaret
- The Manor House
- Tolzey House
- Rose Cottage and The Gables
- Manor Farmhouse and its group of historic farm buildings
- Fords Farmhouse (and cottage)
- The village hall
- The village cross
- The Norman gateway
- Post box and telephone box which group together

Key views and vistas

The attractive views within the conservation area are contributed to by the consistent use of limestone and clay pantile for building materials, enclosure and framing of views by buildings and trees, and the distinct stone walling and vegetation.

Important views to and from the conservation area from the surrounding countryside add to the significance of its setting.

The most important views are described below and noted on the Conservation Area Appraisal Map, but the omission of a view does not mean it has no significance.

Views and vistas within the conservation area

Key viewpoint 1: the progressive view on the south west approach to the village along Queen Charlton Lane

The series of views start with the silhouette view of the village from the plateau landscape at the junction of Queen Charlton lane with Highwall Lane and Dapwell Lane. Moving towards the village it then embraces uninterrupted views of the Manor Farm outbuildings to the north-west, the high stone wall running along the north west boundary of Manor House and the historic building

itself, rising up above the front boundary wall. These combined features in the view create a distinct 'sense of arrival' at the village from the adjoining countryside.

Key viewpoint 2: approaching the village from the south east

Queen Charlton Lane slopes gently down towards the north west with the attractive view framed by high green banks, vegetation and trees. The poor appearance of the entrance to the gypsy site is passed prior to this approach.

Key viewpoint 3: looking south across the village green

View south from the lane leading to Manor Farm, focussing on the historic church tower landmark and the large churchyard trees.

Key viewpoint(s) 4: important views of the village green historic core area from both the north-east and north-west, approaching along Queen Charlton Lane.

These views are enhanced by the backdrop of historic buildings and their front gardens.

Key viewpoint(s) 5: rural landscape long-distance views of the setting of Queen Charlton from the historic route of the Priest's Path to the west of the village. The path then runs along the south side of Cross Cottage. From the path the views include the large scale farm buildings of both Manor Farm and Ford's Farm which are clearly visible, initially on the skyline. Their visual presence and impact progressively increases when approaching the conservation area from this direction.

In reverse, the view looking west from the conservation area across its attractive surrounding landscape setting has high visual importance.

Key viewpoint(s) 6: views of the conservation area setting looking south from the public footpaths in Stockwood Vale

These sensitive views include the silhouette of the village on the skyline.

Key viewpoint 7: reverse view of viewpoints 6, looking north and east across Stockwood Vale and the open countryside.

Key viewpoint 8: view from the rear of Monks Court looking east across Stockwood Vale. This is moderately harmed by the gypsy site which is visible on the horizon to the east of the village, impacting on the important landscape setting of the conservation area.

4.4 Boundary treatments

Hedgerows provide vital wildlife corridors for local fauna including dormice, bats and birds. The hedgerows in the surrounding countryside and also within the conservation area make a significant contribution to this value, and their preservation and maintenance is important for the character of the area, as well as biodiversity.

Boundaries in the village are generally restricted to coursed limestone walling and natural planting, including hedging. The most visually dominant treatment is the consistent use of lias stone set in lime mortar for walling which vary in height throughout the area and make an extremely important contribution to local character. Many boundary walls act as visual and physical links between the historic buildings. They vary from rubble stone to coursed stonework. Some have the distinctive traditional 'cock and hen' treatment of stones at their top whilst others are finished with simple stone block copings. The wall fronting the road outside Manor House has a unique red brick coping.

The stonework of walls is generally in a sound condition and has avoided unsympathetic repointing.

Lower walls are often backed by hedging or other 'cottage garden' type planting, with some of the best examples facing on to the village green. Other boundaries comprise stand-alone hedging, some clipped, and/or shrub planting to delineate boundaries. This is particularly evident at the edge of the area where boundaries become more natural and hedging is more dominant.

Timber fencing visible from public areas is scarce.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm treatment in the conservation area is simple and very low key. There are no footpaths, and roads are generally surfaced in tarmac. This material sometimes changes to visually more informal gravelled type surfaces towards the perimeter, leading to the countryside and into the surrounding farmyards. As previously mentioned, green verges to the roads and lanes are a consistent feature throughout the conservation area, contributing to local character.

Use of natural stone for paving and other surface treatments is limited to private properties. It is also found in small quantities in the churchyard.

There is one street light and no unsightly telegraph poles and wires or other such paraphernalia to cause concern.

The village notice board is well kept, and the cast iron finger post on the main road is maintained in good condition.

The main road has a 20 mph speed limit which is signed and visually denoted on the southern approach by the chicane arrangement, designed to slow traffic speeds.

There are no parking restrictions, and both locals and visitors cars are accommodated without causing visual harm to the character or appearance of the village. Some difficulties arise when the village hall is in use during the day when parking in the lane restricts access

for large vehicles, including refuse vehicles. This inconvenience is not presently considered to be an issue.

5.0 Buildings of the conservation area

5.1 Local character

The Compton Dando Parish Plan identifies buildings or structures in the Queen Charlton Conservation Area which are considered as 'Assets of Community Value' by the local community as:

- The village green and cross
- The telephone kiosk and post box
- Village Hall
- Horse trough on Queen Charlton Lane adjacent to the farm near the church

As previously described, the most unifying element of the conservation area character results from the consistent use of local white Lias stone and lime mortar for walling together with clay pantiles for roofs. Visually, these natural materials complement each other and significantly contribute to the sense of place.

Throughout the conservation area architectural detailing and traditional fenestration has survived relatively intact. For example, very few properties have replaced traditional painted timber windows or doors with plastic, and many retain cast iron rainwater goods rather than plastic replacements.

The height and scale of buildings varies from that of the grander buildings such as the church, Manor House and The Gables to that of the more humble vernacular two storey buildings in the village.

A high proportion of these buildings are listed and date from the main period of village growth between the late C17 - C19, although closer internal inspection may reveal that some have earlier origins.

Several of the undesignated, modest vernacular buildings throughout the conservation area are regarded as 'positive' buildings which are undesignated heritage

assets. They are identified in paragraph 5.2, and their retention and preservation plays an important part in the character of the village.

Architecturally and historically the most significant buildings are the Parish Church of St Margaret, Manor House and Tolzey House.

The conservation area is also characterised by the high number of stone boundary walls. Constructed of the local Lias stone they vary from low front garden boundaries to the high structures around Manor House garden. All stone walls are important to local character.

5.2 Listed buildings

Eighteen buildings in the conservation area are included on the National Heritage List for England. They are focussed on the village core in the vicinity of the road junction, parish church and village green, and vary in period and type from the Norman archway on Queen Charlton Road to the c1935 K6 type telephone kiosk adjacent to the village green.

The buildings are itemised below and identified on the Conservation Area Character Appraisal Map. Apart from the village hall and school house the dates are taken from the statutory list. It is recognised that further inspection and research may reveal more accurate dates.

Grade II*

- Parish Church of St Margaret (late C12 origins)
- The Manor House (C16 origins)

Grade II

- Archway (gateway) to the north of Manor Farm House (C12)
- Pair of gate piers 20m to the north of The Manor House (early C19)
- Garden wall running to east from centre and rear of The Manor House (probably C19)
- Monument to John Boulter in churchyard (early C19)
- Cross on village green (mediaeval, of possible late C19 reconstruction)

- Cross Cottage and Manor Farm Cottage (mid/late C17)
- Diamond's Cottage (C17 and later)
- Ford's Farmhouse (mid/late C17)
- The Gables (mid/late C17)
- Manor farmhouse (mid/late C17)
- Penhill Cottage (formerly part of Ford's Farmhouse (mid/late c17)
- Rose Cottage (mid/late C17)
- School Cottage (c1858)
- Tolzey House (C17 or earlier)
- Village Hall (former school - c1858)
- K6 telephone box (c1935)

5.3 Positive buildings/undesigned heritage assets

The most significant buildings in the conservation area are listed, but there are also several other 'positive' buildings as identified below and shown on the Character Appraisal Map:

- The Brow – late C18/early C19
- Pennhill Farm – mid C19
- Charlton House – early/mid c19
- Model farm buildings at Manor Farm – early/mid C19
- Church Farmhouse - early C19
- Late C19 horsetrough on Queen Charlton Lane

Buildings identified as 'positive' will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where buildings are heavily altered and restoration would be impractical they are excluded.

Walls can also be considered as positive buildings. The most significant of these in Queen Charlton are also protected under the legislation where they form listed building boundaries. The distinctive stone garden boundary wall at The Manor House is itself individually listed.

These positive buildings are classified as 'undesigned heritage assets.' Such buildings are considered worthy of adding to any Local List and a more detailed survey could help to further identify and preserve their character. Review of the National Heritage List could be considered as part of such process.

5.4 Building types

Queen Charlton Conservation Area is notable for its exceptionally high proportion of historic buildings located throughout the area. These buildings tend to be of vernacular architecture related to the agricultural past of the village. The detached and linked properties together form recognisable groupings, for example the group of historic buildings facing on to the village green.

The majority of historic buildings are associated with existing and former farms, including farmhouses, barns, stables and other outbuildings. A notable example is Manor Farmhouse with its group of mid C19 stone farm buildings built around a courtyard in the 'model farm' style popular at the time.

Many of the former outbuildings, including barns and stables were converted to residential use in the late C20/early C21. Modern farm buildings are located on the periphery of the proposed conservation area boundary, which are generally large scale framed structures.

Modern detached housing is limited to Appleacre, Rickyard, Pear Tree Cottage and Ivy Cottage on the eastern side of the village. The control of their design appears to have been influenced by the historic environment.

The former early Victorian school is now converted for use as the Village Hall. There is no evidence of other uses in the village, although in the past it had a public house and would probably have had a bakery and local craft based uses, such as a blacksmith and forge.

5.5 Building styles, materials and colours

The overall character of the historic buildings in Queen Charlton is now domestic and vernacular, most modestly sized (one and a half or two storeys high) with traditionally proportioned spans, pitched and gabled roofs, and many with stone chimney stacks. Roof ridge lines generally run parallel to the roads and lanes. Some have dormer windows. Each building is different, and some were previously thatched. Simple lean-to or gabled open or enclosed front porches are also typical of the area.

Exceptions to the vernacular are the formalised C18/C19 architecture of Manor House, the monumental architecture of the church and the Victorian Gothic qualities of the former school and school house, now the village hall.

Recognition should also be given to the modern large-scale portal framed farm buildings on the periphery of the village. These are less attractive but important to sustaining continued farming uses which contribute to local economy and character.

Stone has been used in a variety of forms including squared and coursed rubble stone, un-coursed rubble stone, and some ashlar for window and door dressings.

The orangey-brown clay pantiles are the most commonly used and visually distinct roofing material which would have been locally produced. Many of the earlier buildings would have had thatched roofs, now clad in pantiles. There are also some shallower pitch roofs clad in natural grey slate, generally found on mid C19 - early C20 buildings, such as at Pennhill Farm.

Windows throughout the conservation area are generally vertically proportioned and limited to horizontal sliding sashes and side-hung casements, some with small panes and others with larger glazed sections. The distinctive 'Gothik' arched windows of Tolzey House and at the former school both contribute to the visual quality and interest of the area. Fortunately a large proportion of

windows survive as traditional painted timber types, with few changed to modern plastic or dark-stained hardwood. Most front doors have been retained as traditionally painted timber types.

Many traditional cast iron rainwater goods survive throughout Queen Charlton, but some plastic types have also been installed.

6.0 Issues

Based on the findings of the appraisal process negative features have been identified in the conservation area as issues.

6.1 Summary of issues

- Harm caused by the visual and physical intrusion of peak hour traffic passing through the village, often at speed, on occasion damaging grass verges
- The need to find a new use for the redundant listed telephone phone box, owned by the Parish Council. Elsewhere, such telephone boxes have new innovative uses such as a community book swap, local information point or to house a defibrillator
- The visual impact of some large scale modern farm buildings moderately harms the appearance of the village, particularly in views from the surrounding countryside, including those looking towards the skyline
- Concern has been raised locally regarding the future of the parish church
- The visual impact of the gypsy site to the east of the conservation area causes some limited harm to its setting. The high boarded entrance gates to the site are an alien urban feature on the Queen Charlton Lane approach, and the caravans, other associated features and boundary treatment collectively intrude on the landscape setting of Queen Charlton.

7.0 Management proposals

7.1 Issues and recommendations

The character appraisal has identified the special positive qualities of the Queen Charlton Conservation Area which contribute to its high significance and individual character.

The following management proposals build upon the negative features which have also been identified, to provide a series of issues and recommendations for improvement and/or change.

Based on the negative features identified in the appraisal, the following are considered to be the key issues for the conservation area.

7.2 Protecting the conservation area landscape setting

Protection of the setting of Queen Charlton Conservation Area

The rural landscape surrounding the conservation area is notable for its topography, attractive fields, woodland, hedgerows and valleys. The land beyond the village is already protected by relevant planning policies, and the land within the conservation area boundary itself has similar policy protection. Constraints are also imposed on the historic environment by guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and advice published by Historic England.

However, there may be potential threats from new development, particularly for new large scale housing development within the setting of the conservation area, or from changes to buildings or sites which lie within it. For example, from redevelopment of one or more of the historic or modern farm building sites on the periphery of the village.

Recommendation:

Any new development beyond and on the edge of the conservation area boundary should not harm its setting. This important setting will continue to be protected through the strict enforcement of policies contained in the Development Plan. Applications for change which would have a detrimental effect on land within or on the edges of the conservation area and its setting will be resisted.

Views within and from the landscape setting outside the conservation area

There are several important views within, towards and from the conservation area, including those looking out to the north and east across the countryside of Stockbridge Vale. There are also important views of the village from the surrounding landscape setting. These important views need to be protected by the careful control of proposed development which must seek to preserve the special character and setting of the conservation area.

Recommendation:

Views within and around the conservation area, particularly from and to the surrounding open landscape, will continue to be protected. Proposals for new development which would impinge on these views will be resisted.

Any landscaping scheme that should be approved for the gypsy site to the south east of the village should be fully implemented to mitigate the visual impact of such development on important views.

7.3 Traffic, pedestrian movement and parking

Busy and fast moving traffic on Queen Charlton Lane at peak periods

The road serves both local residents and other road users who use it to access the area and beyond. Some traffic, particularly at peak times moves at high speeds.

Pedestrian movement

Despite the lack of footpaths in the village, pedestrian movement is unrestricted. There does not appear to be any necessity to provide footpaths which could detract from the rural character.

Parking

There is no formalised public off-street parking in the village but this is not considered locally to be an issue. Some difficulties arise when the village hall is in use during daytime when parking in the lane restricts access for large vehicles, including refuse vehicles.

Recommendation:

Further opportunities for improving the impact of traffic on the village should be explored with the highway authority

7.4 Control of new development

Pressure for new development

There is pressure for new development, and particularly new housing sites within and around the existing settlements in Bath and North East Somerset, including the Keynsham and south Bristol areas. Both are in close proximity to Queen Charlton. This demand for new housing land needs to be balanced against the equal requirement to preserve or enhance the conservation area and its setting.

There are already policies in the Development Plan to protect all conservation areas and other heritage assets in the district. Constant vigilance is needed to ensure that new development does not occur, whether major or minor, that would adversely affect the special interest of the conservation area and/or its setting.

Recommendation:

Only development of the highest quality should take place in the Queen Charlton Conservation Area. Open spaces, including private gardens, should be protected from inappropriate new development, and development resisted on open areas with

important views, short or long distance, that contribute to the special character and setting of the area.

Quality of new and existing building - design guidance

General design guidance is included in the Bath and North East Somerset Development Plan and in the NPPF. Historic England has also issued relevant best practice guidance. The recommendations below provide some guidance on 'good practice' for new development in or on the edges of the conservation area:

Recommendations:

New development in or on the edges of the conservation area should respect existing plot boundaries and patterns, plot ratios and historic forms of development;

Where backland or infill sites are being developed the existing open character of private gardens should be maintained and the density and scale of new development should reflect that of the surrounding historic environment;

New development should preserve or enhance the historic grain of development established by plot boundaries and existing historic buildings;

New development should not impinge on important views within the conservation area or views of it from outside and should be carefully sited to minimise visual impact;

Existing open green space should be protected from unsympathetic development where this would have an adverse impact on the spacious character of the area;

Innovative modern design may be appropriate in certain cases subject to it respecting context, reflecting local built character and form and being of the highest possible design quality. Any new development is encouraged to engage with the traditional existing built form, reference detailing and use of local materials to enhance the conservation area;

The use of traditional building materials is prevalent but unsympathetic changes to some details such as windows, doors and rainwater goods can have a negative effect on the appearance of traditional buildings. Restoring and reinstating traditional and appropriately detailed windows and doors enhances the character of the buildings. The use of traditional building materials such as timber, lime mortars and renders as opposed to plastic and cement based materials is important in preserving the traditional character and maintaining traditionally constructed buildings;

Boundaries without stone walling can be made more secure by the use of defensive planting which will contribute to the special qualities of the conservation area, rather than by the construction of high or low fences. Where fencing is constructed it should be kept simple and of 'rural' appearance, such as wicker panels. Standard lap-boarded fence panels lack this characteristic and detract.

Applications to demolish existing buildings will be carefully considered and only replacement buildings of the highest quality allowed, which preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.5 Buildings

The control of undesignated heritage assets

As part of the appraisal process and in accordance with Historic England guidance, a number of 'positive' historic buildings have been identified as shown on the Character Appraisal Map. These are defined as 'Undesignated Heritage Assets.' Generally they are individual historic building structures which retain all or a high proportion of their original character, including architectural detailing and materials, and which add interest and vitality to the appearance of the conservation area. Most of them in Queen Charlton date to the C19. Where buildings have been excessively altered and restoration

to original appearance is not easily achievable they are excluded.

As with listed buildings there is a general presumption in favour of their retention. Any application to demolish such a building will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained and how any replacement structure would positively improve the conservation area. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the existing building, or to find a suitable new use, before any application can be determined.

Recommendation:

Applications to demolish undesignated heritage assets will generally be refused. They should be retained as valuable features contributing to the significance of the conservation area;

Proposals for change to undesignated heritage assets should not adversely affect their architectural or historic interest;

Undesignated heritage assets identified as part of this appraisal should be included in any future local list. Further more detailed survey work could help to identify their significance and potential to include on the National Heritage List for England, subject to confirmation by Historic England.

7.6 Possible enhancements

Enhancing the conservation area is a requirement of the legislation. This appraisal suggests that the following enhancement projects in Queen Charlton should be considered, subject to availability of funding and land/property ownership.

- A sensitively designed traffic management scheme on Queen Charlton Lane to help reduce traffic speeds
- New use for the listed telephone box

8.0 Monitoring and review

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework guidance published by Historic England in *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (February 2016)*.

As recommended by Historic England and subject to resources, this document should be regularly reviewed from the date of its formal adoption by the council. It will need to be assessed in the light of the current Development Plan, government guidance and guidance from Historic England generally.

APPENDICES

1. National and local planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for sustainable development, which includes the conservation of the historic environment. When developments are proposed, the Framework requires the significance of heritage assets – archaeology, listed buildings and conservation areas – to be defined and it stresses that 'as heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.'

The NPPF is further explained in the National Planning Practice Guidance. Chapter 18 provides answers to a series of questions about the way in which heritage assets should be addressed through the planning system.

The statutory development plan for B&NES comprises the Core Strategy (July 2014), Placemaking Plan (July 2017), saved Local Plan policy GDS1 sites K2, NR2, V3 and V8 (2007), Joint Waste Core Strategy (March 2011) and made Neighbourhood Plans.

Further information on the current Development Plan for Bath & North East Somerset can be viewed on the Council's

website by following the link to the Planning Policy homepage.

2. Further reading

Compton Dando Parish Plan 2015
The Buildings of England - Somerset North and Bristol: Pevsner, N (2011)
Queen Charlton Perambulation: Loxton, GAT (1999)
The History of Queen Charlton Manor House: Manco, J (2012)
Field Boundaries Project, BANES (2006)
Streetscape Manual, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Adopted April 2005
Policy and General Guidance
The Bath & North East Somerset Development Plan 2016
The National Planning Policy Framework – Chapter 12 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment', DCLG2012
The National Planning Practice Guidance, DCLG 2014
Bath & North East Somerset, Living in a Conservation Area, 2003
Bath & North East Somerset Streetscape Manual, April 2005
Archaeology in Bath and North East Somerset: Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004
Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset: A Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance 2003
Avon Historic Landscape Characterisation Methodology, Chapman, 1997
The 1984 revision to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan 2007 as revised
Historic England : Advice Note 1 - Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016)
Historic England : The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3 2015)
Historic England: Understanding Historic Buildings (2016)
Historic England: Local Heritage Listing (2016)

3. Glossary

Listed buildings: Buildings on the National Heritage List for England compiled by the

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, available on line on the Historic England web site.

Heritage asset: A designated or undesignated building, monument, archaeological site, place, area or landscape identified as possessing local or national significance and heritage and cultural value meriting special consideration in planning decisions and the planning process.

Conservation area: Defined by legislation as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Some permitted development rights are removed for owners of buildings in a conservation area and special planning controls may apply.

4. Contact details

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This document can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from Planning Services on 01225 394041

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