

## **1. CHARACTER AREA – PYRFORD VILLAGE**

### **1.1 Location and extents**

The village of Pyrford is located to the south of greater Pyrford, south east of Woking town centre. It is adjacent to the Borough boundary with Guildford Borough and the Bourne stream, with the River Wey to the south. The B367 passes through the village, all of which is located within the green belt.

### **1.2 Description and history**

This village is one of the oldest within the Borough. The majority of properties are Pre-Victorian. Its name is said to derive from ‘Pear Tree Ford’ and is located close to the River Wey. Today the village remains little changed from its medieval origins. It is a dispersed collection of houses and farm buildings focused around the church of St Nicholas and its churchyard. Most of the properties are listed and are within a Conservation Area. The entire village is also located within the green belt.

### **1.3 Distinctive Features**

The following Listed buildings are included within the Pyrford Conservation Area:

- St Nicholas’ Church (Grade I)
- Church Farmhouse with barn (Grade II)
- Lady Place Cottage (Grade II)
- The Vicarage (Locally Listed)
- Lady Place Farm Cottages (Locally Listed)

At the time this document was compiled, Wheelers Farm and the adjacent Wheelers Barn lie outside the boundaries of the conservation area as does Stone Farm. All three buildings are Grade II Listed. (See Opportunities and Issues below.)

### **1.4 Typologies present**

The majority of properties within the village are pre Victorian.

### **1.5 Built Form Characteristics**

All the properties within Old Pyrford with the exception of a modern split-level house on the corner of Warren Lane are old and share many similar characteristics. They are generally red brick or of exposed timber construction with brick infill. The roofs are of red/brown clay tiling. St Nicholas’ Church is constructed of local stone with a red brick and exposed timber

porch, red clay tiled roof and a short tower tiled with wooden shingles. The most decorative building in the village is possibly the old Vicarage, with buff brick quoining around windows and the corners of buildings, unusually shaped gable ends to buildings and large decorative chimneys. Other properties in the village have large chimneys, but these are relatively plain. Windows are generally casement divided into small panes and, on upper storeys, abut the eaves of the roof. Most properties are two-storeys, although the old Vicarage has dormer windows in the roof indicating additional rooms in the roof-space. Properties are detached or semi-detached and many form part of a farm complex with associated barns. Wheelers Farm and Lady Place Cottage are late C15 and mid C16 respectively. Wheelers Barn is thought to be C18. Wheelers Farm and the adjacent barn are situated outside the main cluster of buildings – approximately 200m along Warren Lane. Stone Farm (C16) is also isolated and situated about 200m to the north on the west side of Church Hill and set well back from the road.

## **1.6 Streetscape and spaces**

The B367 through the village is relatively wide but without footpaths in its passage through most of the village. Warren Lane, which extends Eastwards from opposite the church, is narrow and also without a footpath. In some locations hedgerows line the road, whilst outside the church there is open grass and where there are other properties in the village their small front gardens abut the road, delineated by either brick walls or timber fencing, or there is a narrow verge. Where there is a verge present, this is sometimes used for parking. Otherwise, parking is located within the house plot. There are two dedicated car parks intended to serve the church. One of these is adjacent to the old Vicarage; the other is 150m along and on the North side of Warren Lane. Some of the properties front onto the road, otherwise larger properties are set back and side on to the road.

## **1.7 Greenspace and Vegetation**

The churchyard is split both sides of the main road through the village. These provide open space as well as providing their cemetery function. There is also informal open space to the front of the church, which is formed by an open area of grass. Landform plays an important part in the character of the village, with the church set on a hill and the road undulating alongside it

The village is surrounded by open countryside. Mature hedgerows and trees are located on the edges of the village. Species present include oak, horse chestnut and pine, with hawthorn or holly hedges. Small front gardens with a cottage character are located in front of the limited number of houses. Larger rear gardens are not visible from the street.

## **1.8 Perceptual Factors**

The village feels relatively open due to the small number of properties and the B367 passing through the heart of it. Views up to the church from the road are an important feature. The boundaries are formed by the edge of the built up area, although it is so small that it is possible to drive through without registering the presence of the village. However, the road through does make it legible and permeable.

The character of the housing is unified, with all properties sharing common materials and styles of front garden. The village is also well maintained and properties are in a good state of repair. There has been very little change within the village and no infill development is visible.

## **1.9 Opportunities and Issues**

St Nicholas' Church and the views towards it, as well as its churchyard setting, are important features of the village.

The properties within the more clustered part of the village form an attractive grouping.

The B367 passing through the village is a major detractor.

At the time this document was compiled, Wheelers Farm and the associated Barn are not included within the boundary of the Pyrford Conservation Area. This also applies to Stone Farm. It will therefore be a policy to have the boundaries of the conservation area extended to embrace all three of these historic buildings.