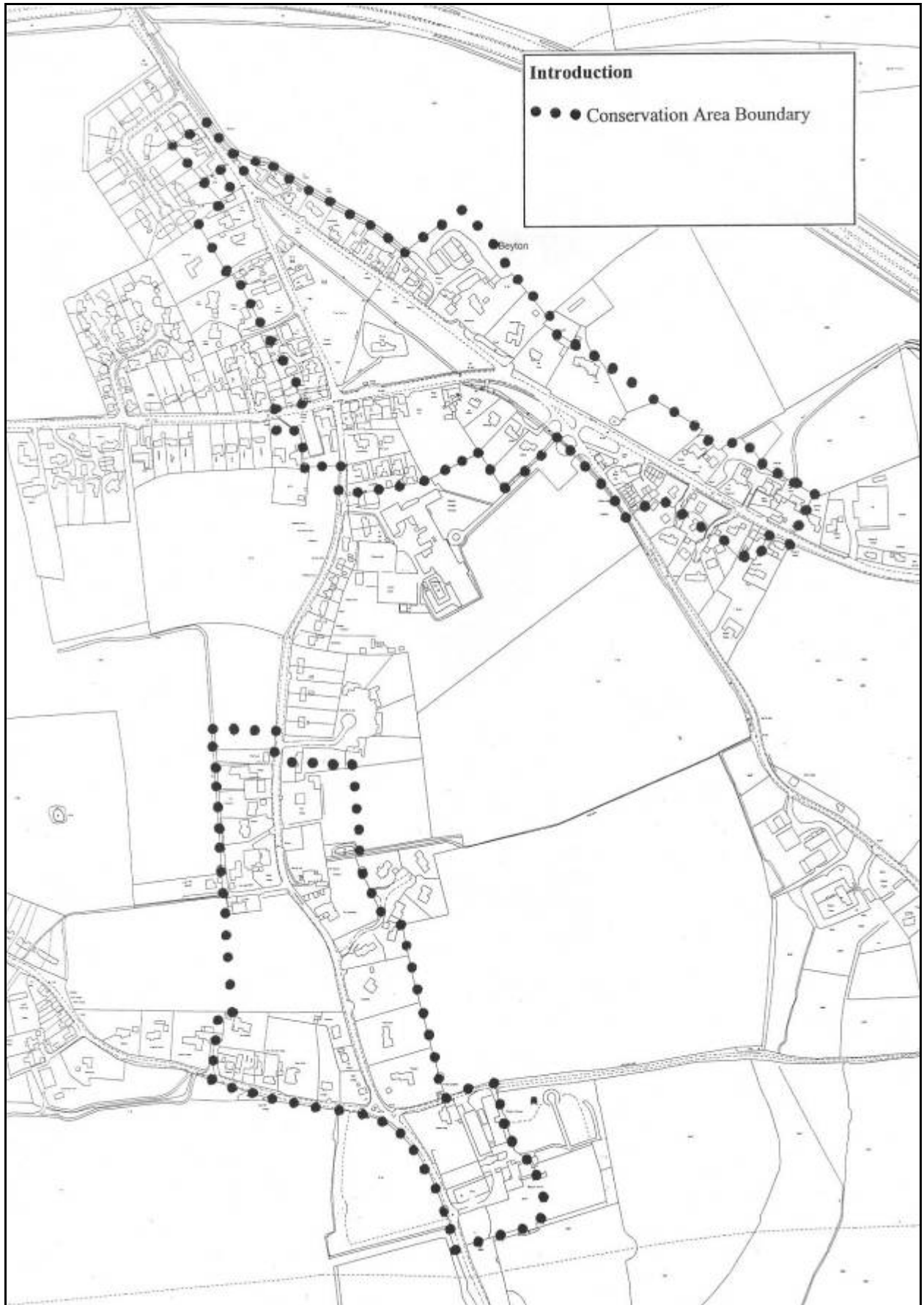




*conservation area appraisal*



# Introduction

*The conservation area in Beyton was originally designated by West Suffolk County Council in 1973, and inherited by Mid Suffolk District Council at its inception in 1974.*

*The Council has a duty to review its conservation area designations from time to time, and this appraisal examines Beyton under a number of different headings as set out in English Heritage's new 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' (2006).*

*As such it is a straightforward appraisal of Beyton's built environment in conservation terms and is essentially an update on a draft document originally produced back in 2000.*

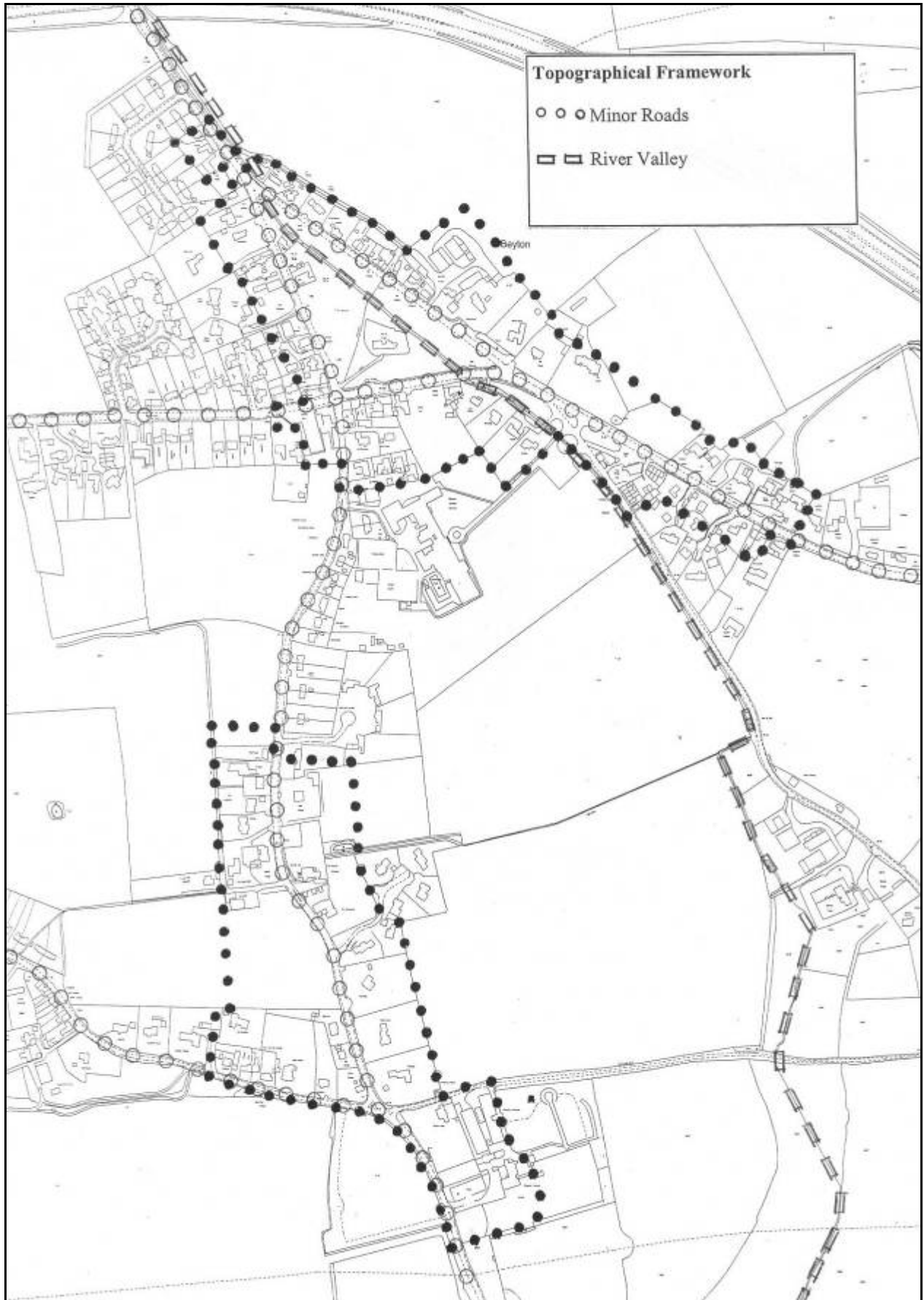


*This document is neither prescriptive nor overly descriptive, but more a demonstration of 'quality of place', sufficient for the briefing of the Planning Officer when assessing proposed works in the area. The photographs and maps are thus intended to contribute as much as the text itself.*

*As the English Heritage guidelines point out, the appraisal is to be read as a general overview, rather than as a comprehensive listing, and the omission of any particular building, feature or space does not imply that it is of no interest in conservation terms.*

*Text, photographs and map overlays by Patrick Taylor, Conservation Architect, Mid Suffolk District Council 2008.*





# Topographical Framework

*Beyton is a village in the middle of west Suffolk, approximately five miles east of Bury St. Edmunds, just inside the Mid Suffolk District boundary.*

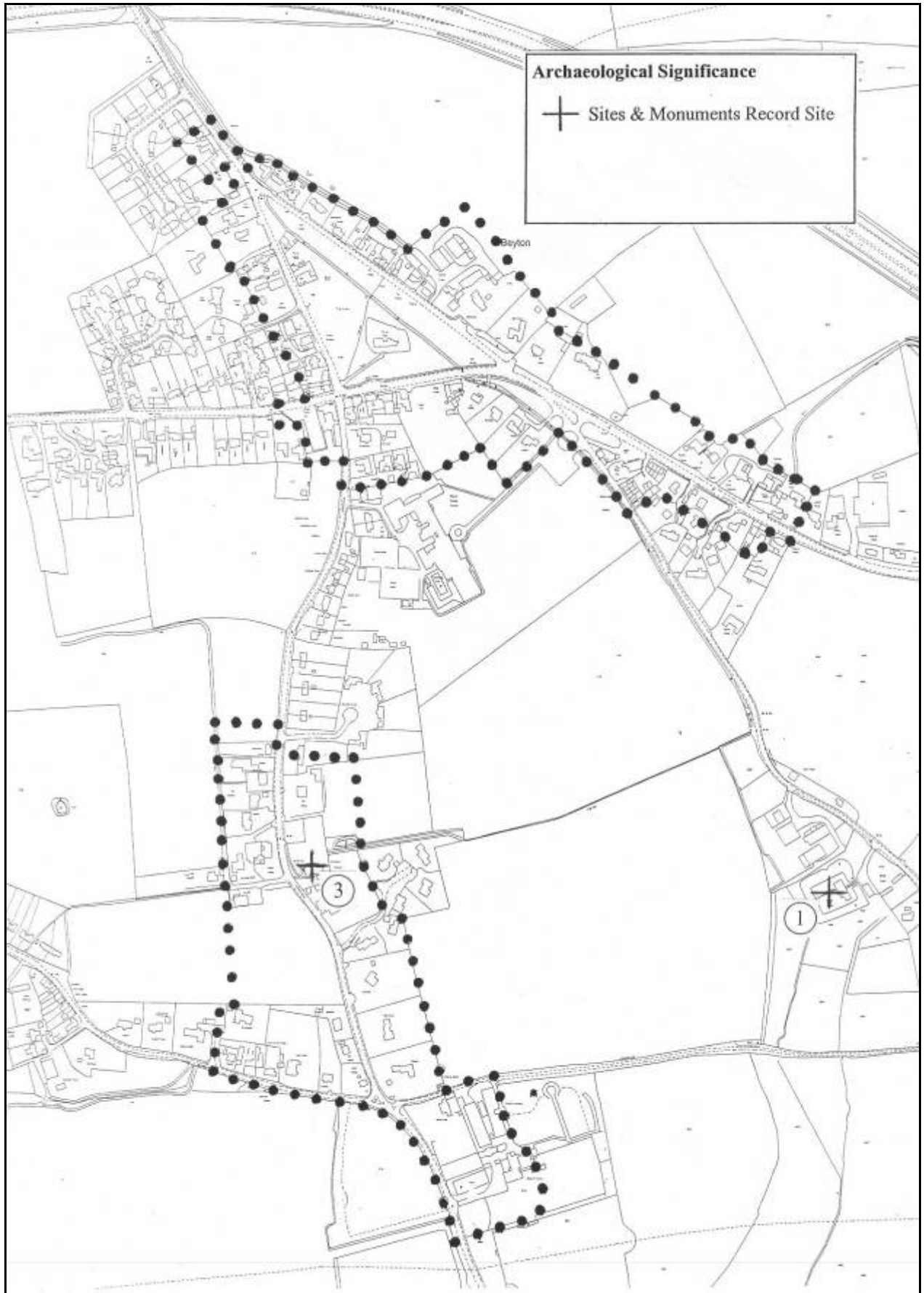
*The northern part of the village surrounds a large triangular green, one side of which formed part of the main Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds road which was turnpiked in 1711.*

*Formerly an 'accident black spot', the village was by-passed to the north by the A45 (now A14) trunk road in 1978. A mile further north, running parallel, the Ipswich to Bury railway line has a station at nearby Thurston.*



*The village lies approximately 50m above O.D. on land that rises slightly to the north. It is just north-east of the heads of two of Suffolk's river systems. The Lark heads off westwards towards Bury St Edmunds, whilst the Black Bourn passes south and then east of the village before proceeding northwards towards Thetford and ultimately The Wash.*

*The underlying geology locally is that of 'High' Suffolk's glacial clays, the Lowestoft Till formation, which in turn overlies the chalk. Around the village itself there is a patch of glacial sands and gravels.*

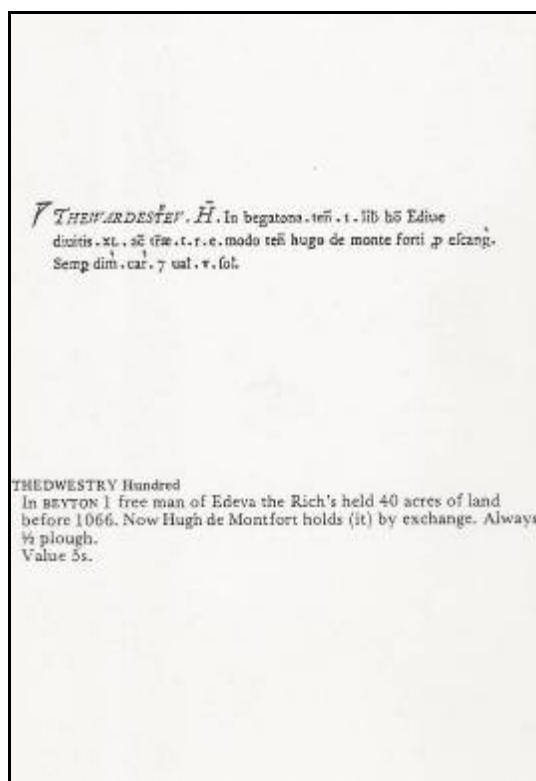


# Archaeological Significance

*The wider parish of Beyton is relatively small and consequently has given rise to few archaeological finds.*

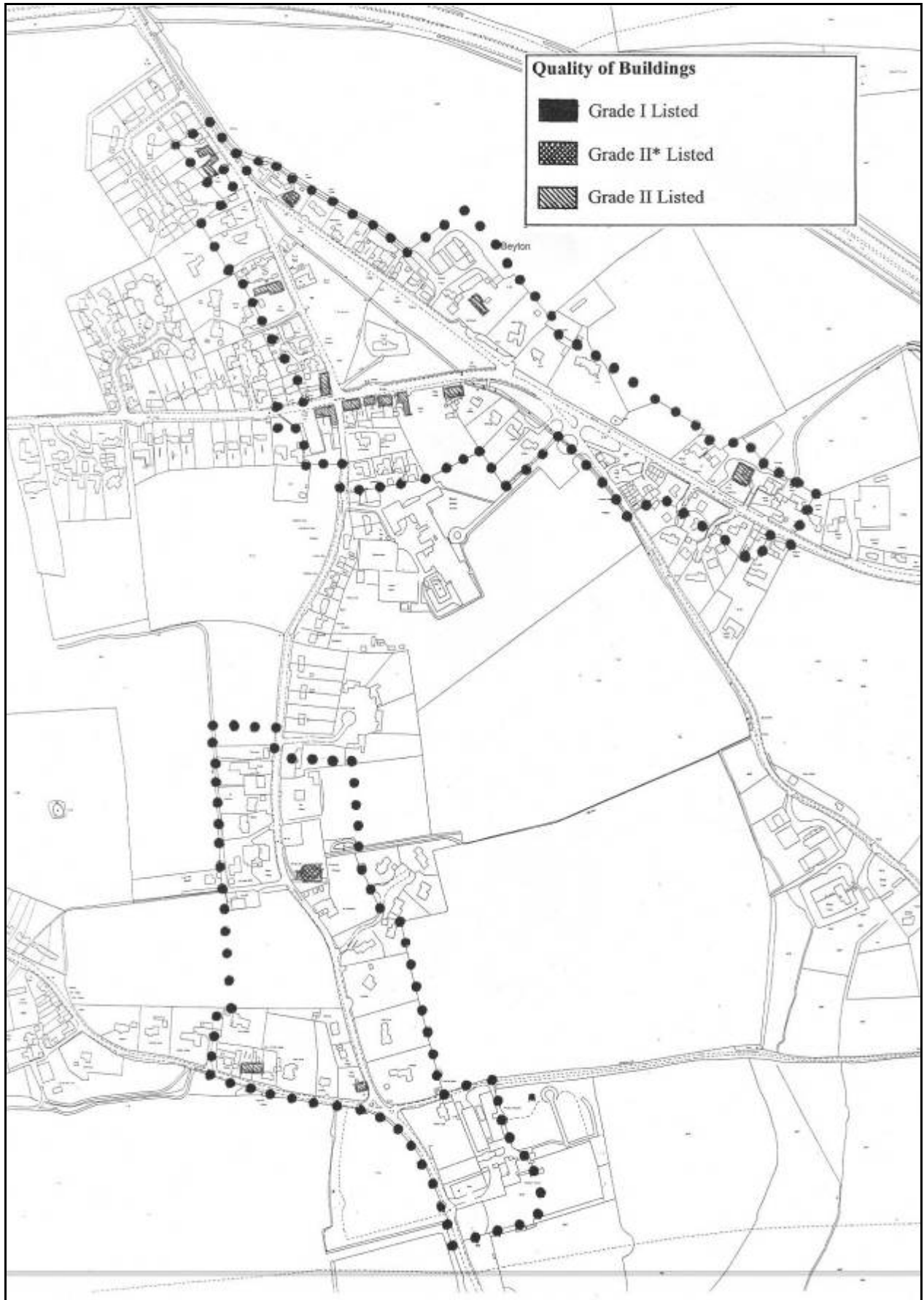
*The Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record lists only three sites, all of Medieval date: a scatter find of pottery off the Woolpit Road to the east of the village; the parish church with its round tower, usually a sign of early origin, and a moated site at Brook Farm, east of the church.*

*Further Medieval moated sites are common in the adjoining parishes, one can be found at Rougham Place about a mile west of the village green, and at least three more in Hessett, the nearest village to the south.*



*A short section of Roman road approaches the south-west corner of Beyton parish, adjoining Chevin's Wood, running along the boundary between Rougham and Hessett. This is parallel to the better defined north-south route from Pakenham to Long Melford, which runs two miles further west.*

*The Domesday survey records but three lines on Beyton: 'Forty acres and half a plough', held formerly (pre 1066) by Edeva the Rich, and now (1086) by Hugh de Montfort. Interestingly the church does not get a mention in spite of its alleged early date.*





# *Intrinsic Quality of Buildings*

*Beyton has no grade I listed buildings, the majority of its listed buildings being grade II.*

*There is but one exception to this, the grade II\* listed Church of All Saints. The distinctive round tower (which is actually oval in plan) is variously attributed Saxon, Norman or 13<sup>th</sup> century origin. However the church mostly dates from the rebuild of 1853/4 under the direction of Bury St. Edmunds architect J. Johnson. Pevsner only gives it a peremptory four lines, but picks out some remnants built back in e.g. a Perpendicular west window to the tower and a simple Norman north doorway.*



*The grade II buildings are for the most part farmhouses and cottages mainly of timber-framed construction originally with thatched roofs, although a number have now been re-roofed with plaintiles or pantiles.*

*Grange Farm was refronted in red brick in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century with interesting diaper work to the side elevation.*

*One 19<sup>th</sup> Century house on The Green, Holly House, is of particular note for its good pediment and pilasters on the doorcase, and some fine cast iron railings to the frontage.*





# *Traditional Building Materials*

*Overall the village presents a good selection of Suffolk's many and varied local materials.*

*The Church is in flint with a plaintile roof; the older farmhouses are of rendered timber frame construction with thatched roofs.*

*The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries have also left their mark with their replacement roofs in plaintile or pantile and some buildings in local brick, both red and white, usually with slate roofs.*

*A number of these brick buildings have subsequently been reabsorbed into the local colour-washed vernacular by the application of a coat of paint.*

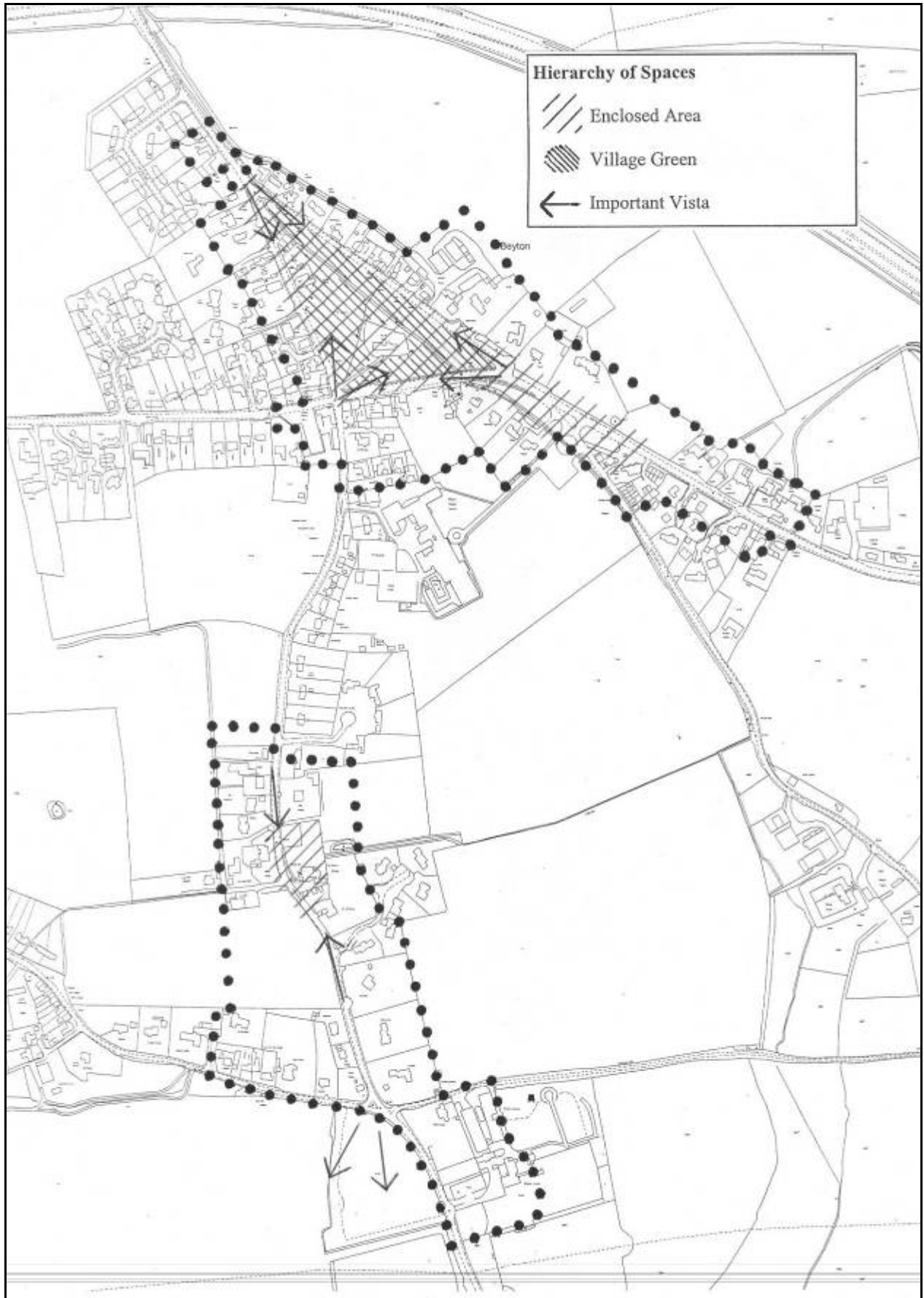


*Around the village there are also several instances of black boarded outbuildings with pantile roofs and a scattering of remnant flint walls.*

*Most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century domestic infill does follow the local vernacular in terms of walling materials, if not their design or their roofs which seem to be consistently in concrete tiles.*

*Some of the more recent agricultural buildings, however, are a little more intrusive with their fletton brickwork and asbestos roofs.*





# Hierarchy of Spaces

*The major dominating space in the village is the extensive triangular green.*

*This has only been encroached upon by the Old Forge, near its centre and the group of former School buildings at the northern end. Otherwise it remains intact, surrounded on its three outer sides by a ribbon of farm and domestic buildings.*

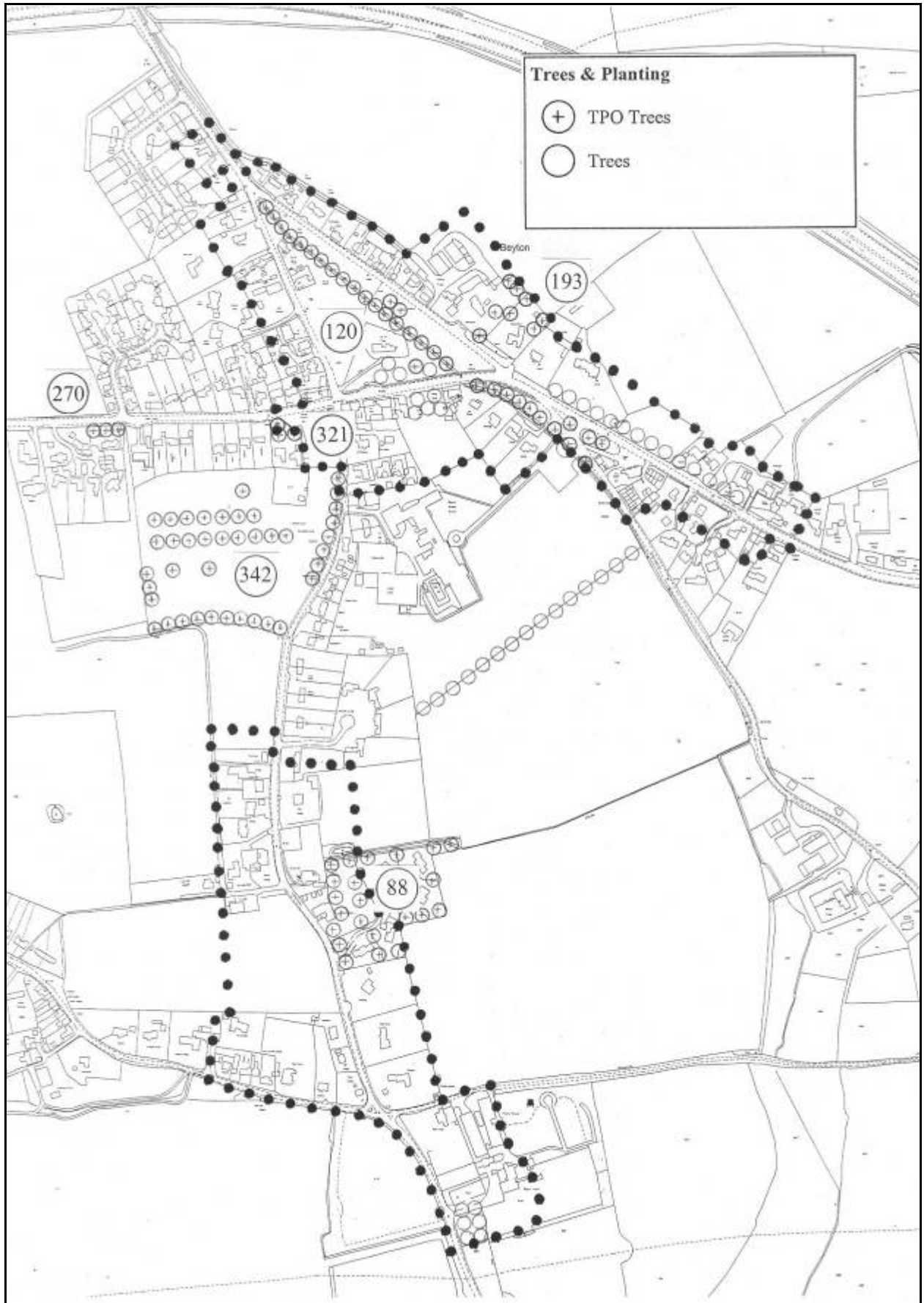
*A small stream runs through the green from south-east to north-west, parallel with its longer side, making it a noticeably wet area with its attendant row of willow trees.*

*The stream is bridged about halfway along, the path giving access to a small play area.*



*The south-west corner of the green forms a cross roads with a main road heading westwards to Bury St Edmunds and a smaller lane heading off to the south. This is the gently winding Church Road, which leads via some modern infill, to the village's secondary historic focal point, the area between the Church and Beyton House.*

*Here enclosure is maintained by a number of flint and brick boundary walls and some remnant hedges. At the southern end of Church Road, a junction with a triangular green marks the beginning of Quaker's Lane to the west, whilst the narrower Cripple's Lane goes eastwards to the north of Beyton Lodge. This green and Quaker's Lane itself are possible candidates for extending the conservation area.*



# Trees and Planting

*Beyton is relatively well endowed with trees, both mature and those more recently planted. The willows along the stream on the green are perhaps the most dominant and were, along with a nearby Oak, two Ashes, a Beech and a Horse Chestnut, given the protection of a Tree Preservation Order (WSCC no.120) in 1970 before the area was given conservation area status.*

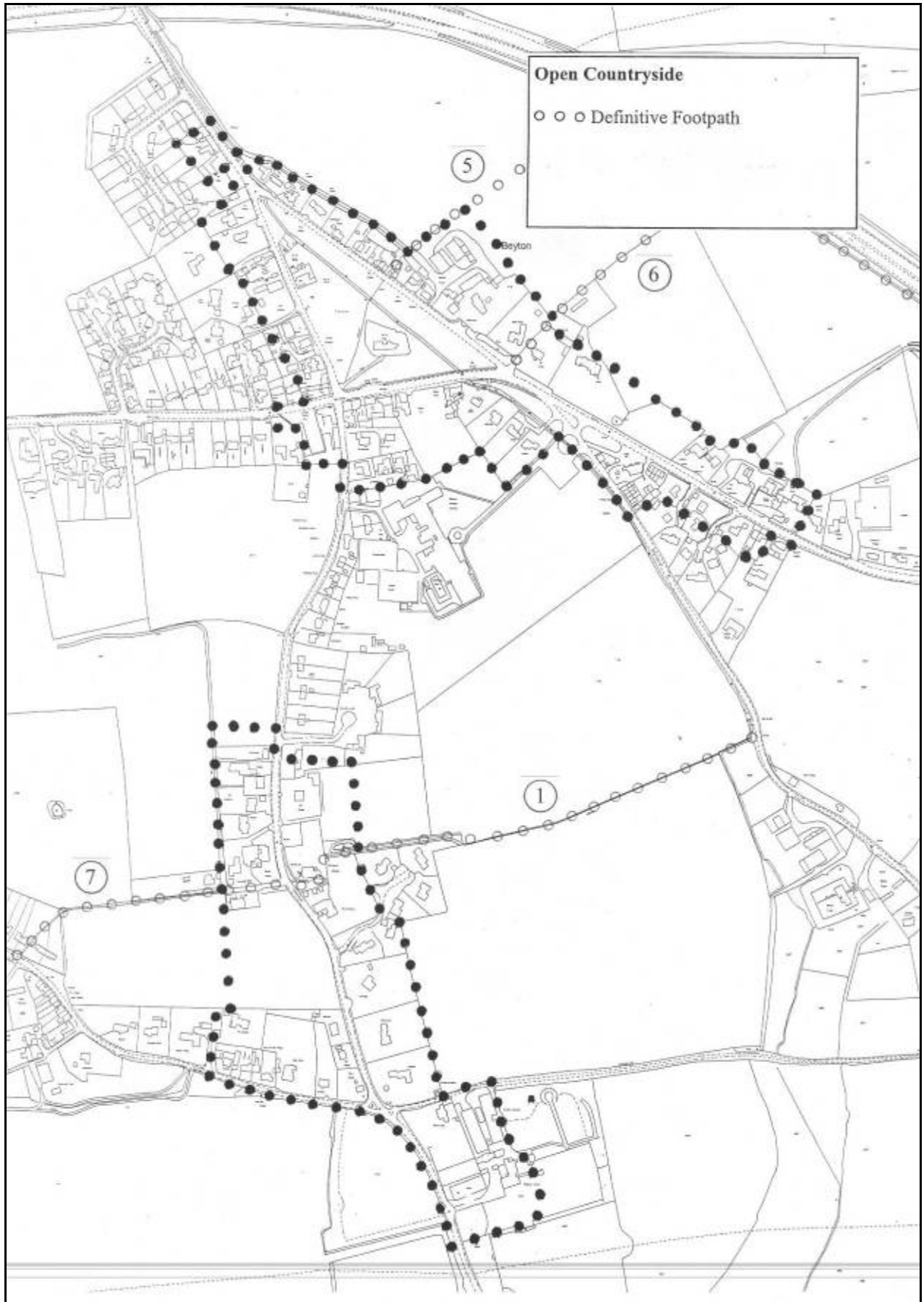
*Other trees on the green include Lime, Rowan, Cherry and Italian Alder, whilst immediately to the south around Scott's Hall, there are Oak, Sycamore, Copper Beech, False Acacia and Scots Pine. A further early TPO (WSCC 342) applies to a large area of Lime and Walnut trees off Church Road, behind the properties along Bury Road, another possible extension to the conservation area.*



*Four later TPOs were made by Mid Suffolk D.C.: no.88 to an area of trees around the Old Rectory behind the Church, no.193 in the grounds of Manor House, adjoining a pond north of the green, including four Horse Chestnuts, three Oaks and one each of Scots Pine, Beech and Ash and nos.270 and 321 covering respectively clumps of conifers and thorn fronting onto Bury Road..*

*To the east of this, along the Woolpit Road, there is a stretch of species-rich hedge which includes Field Maple, Wych Elm, Hawthorn, Cherry Plum, Dogwood and Tree of Heaven.*

*Some non-native species have invaded the area, mostly in the form of Cypresses, giving an inappropriate suburban feel to some areas of infill.*





## Relationship to Open Countryside

*Whilst Beyton is a fairly large village, it has not actually spread itself much beyond its historic limits. There are a couple of small housing estates to the west of the green, and there has been some modern infill particularly along Bury Road and Church Road, joining the two historic areas together.*

*The result is that it is still essentially a one plot deep settlement, clustered along and around the many-junctioned road network. Thus at any point in the village the fields of adjoining farms will be found to the rear of most properties.*

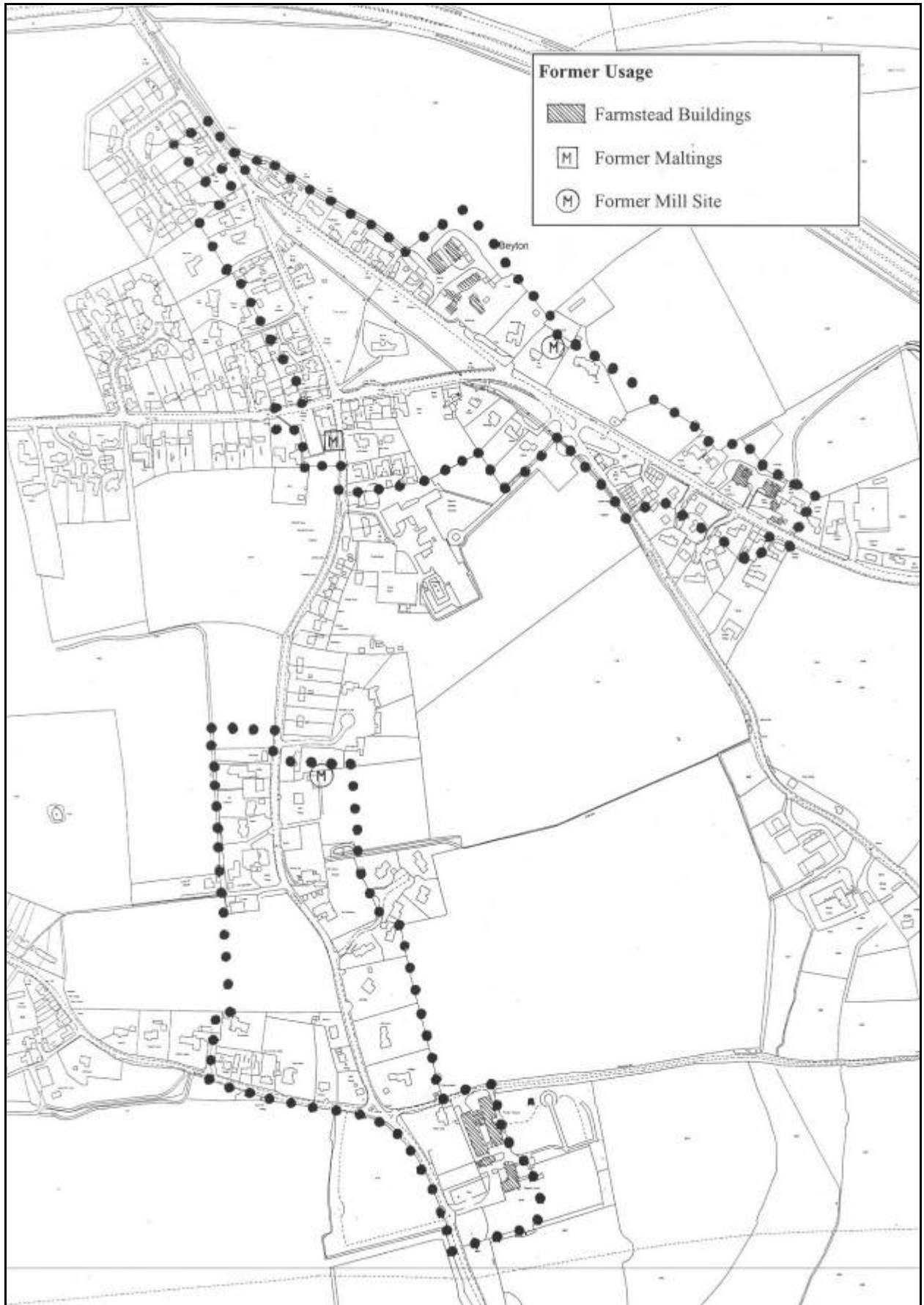


*Both parts of the village are fairly well served by footpaths giving access to this adjacent countryside.*

*Definitive footpaths FP1 and FP7 both start at the Church, heading off eastwards and westwards respectively. The former connects across to the Drinkstone Road, whilst the latter cuts through to Quaker's Lane, from where FP8 can be taken northwards to the Bury Road, west of the green.*

*From the green itself two footpaths, FP5 and FP6, lead off north-eastwards before negotiating crossing the A14.*





## Prevailing & Former Usage

*Beyton was originally a farming based community with a cluster of farmhouses collected around the large green. Its position on a major through route also allowed it to take advantage of passing trade, the houses at the south-west corner of the green having at one time been used as shops.*

*Records indicate a maltings having been located in the village in 1855; this is believed to have been in the large flint and brick building behind the White Horse public house.*

*Other agriculturally based industries were also carried on in the village.*



*There was a post-mill type windmill just north of the Church, which has now been lost. This was originally Baxter's Mill, brought from Wickhambrook, some 14 miles away, in about 1830. Also just north of the Church was 'Marl Pit Field', as recorded in the Tithe Apportionment of 1837.*

*Just east of the green, the present day Mill House has old mill stones on its frontage, and at the rear can be found a 19<sup>th</sup> Century range of industrial buildings that presumably housed a mechanical mill, now converted to flats.*



# Losses & Possible Gains

*The spread out nature of Beyton means that the quality of the conservation area is nowhere particularly concentrated. The omission from the conservation area of the modern infill link between the green and church areas is felt still to be correct. Smaller bits of similar modern infill within the two areas designated are not always of the highest standard and often accompanied by foreign tree species.*

*Some of the more recent development around the green could be better screened, so that the green itself has a greater sense of enclosure rather than seeming to be someone's front lawn. Some additional walling or hedging here would help, maybe along with some strategically placed native tree planting.*



*Modern development has also brought with it modern apparatus in the form of incongruous overhead wiring. Although this has recently been put underground at the west end of the green, it still remains along the north side of the old main road through and in places along Church Road. This should be undergrounded if at all possible.*

*The area around the church has been relatively well looked after, although along the lane heading west from it, and just inside the conservation area there is a wire fenced compound full of cars and a garage workshop. This is fortunately not visible from the church although it can be seen across the field from the road to the south.*

# References and Further Reading

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*Pevsner, N 1976 The Buildings of England: Suffolk Penguin*

*Suffolk County Council 1997 Sites and Monuments Record*

*Tithe Map & Apportionment 1837 Beyton Suffolk Records Office*

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*This Appraisal adopted as  
Supplementary Planning Guidance  
by Mid Suffolk District Council  
Environment Policy Panel  
5 May 2009*