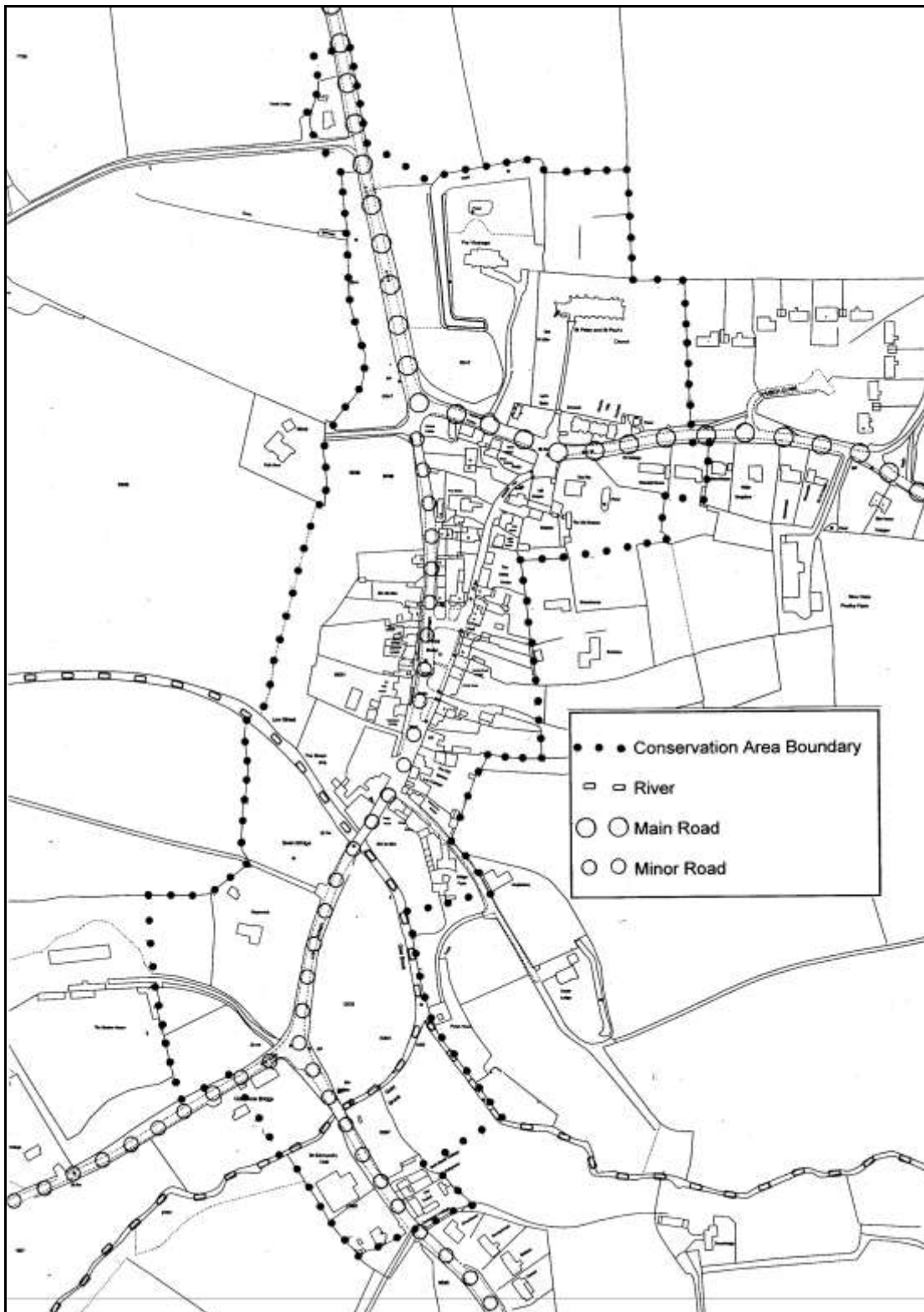


**HOXNE**

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

**Hoxne: Low Street**



## INTRODUCTION

The conservation area at Low Street, Hoxne was originally designated by East Suffolk County Council in 1973 and inherited by the newly formed Mid Suffolk District Council at its inception in 1974. The conservation area was last appraised and extended by Mid Suffolk District Council in 2000 to include an area at Cross Street.

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

As such it is a straightforward appraisal of Hoxne's built environment in conservation terms.

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 2012.

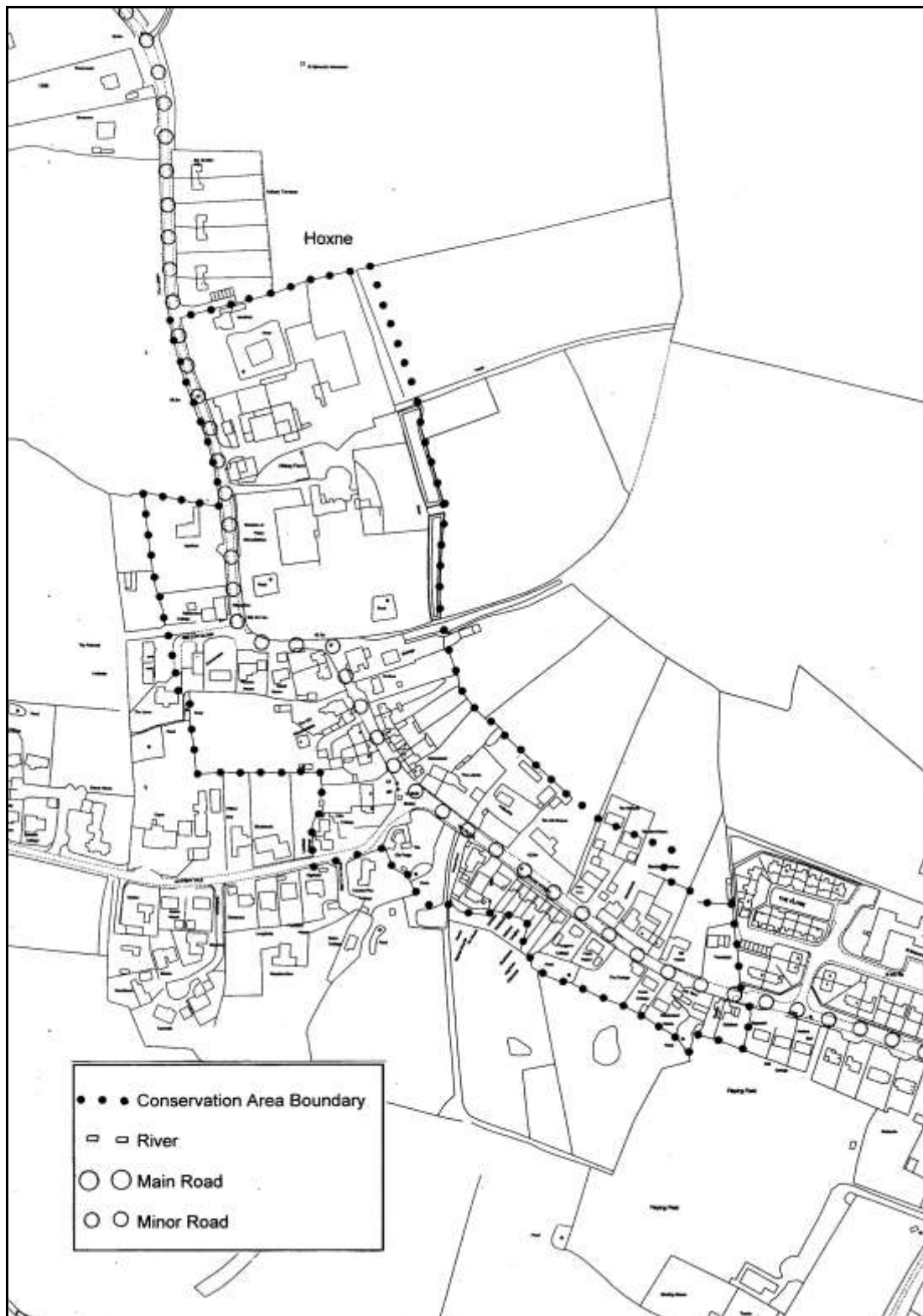


**Banham Bricks, Cross Street**



**Village Green, Low Street**

## Hoxne: Cross Street



## TOPOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK

The village of Hoxne consists of two main settlements: to the north Low Street and to the south Cross Street.

These sit on two spurs of higher land separated by a small stream, the Goldbrook, which flows westwards between them. A little to the west of Low Street, this tributary joins the river Dove which flows northwards before joining the east flowing river Waveney which passes to the north of the village. Norfolk is thus only half a mile away and Low Street almost an island.

At Hoxne, as we shall see, we can witness the interesting overlap between the Geological and the Archaeological.

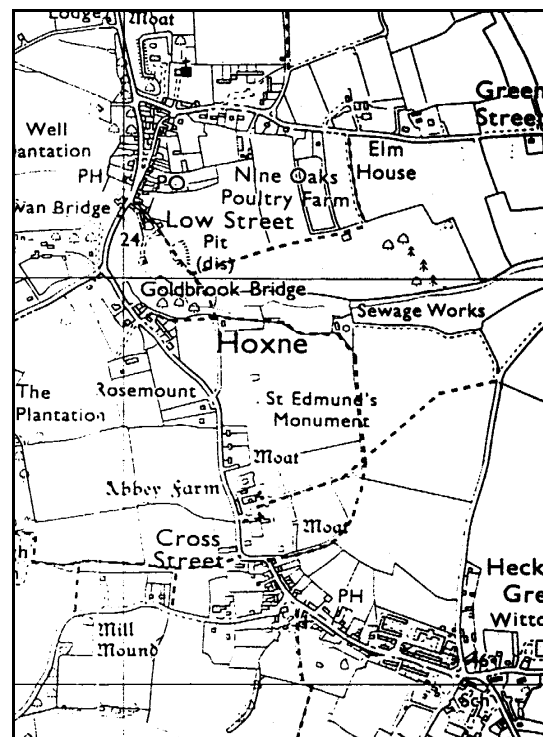
The underlying geology hereabouts is the usual boulder clay of 'High Suffolk', here overlying a layer of glacial crag deposits, sandy clays and gravels over in their turn East Anglia's ubiquitous chalk.

The majority of Low Street is situated around a triangular green on the south facing slope between the B1118 road that runs east-west and the parallel Goldbrook to the south.

Only the church buildings and a small estate of houses lie on top of the spur of land north of the main road. Beyond the Goldbrook, Cross Street lies straddled along the southern ridge of higher land.

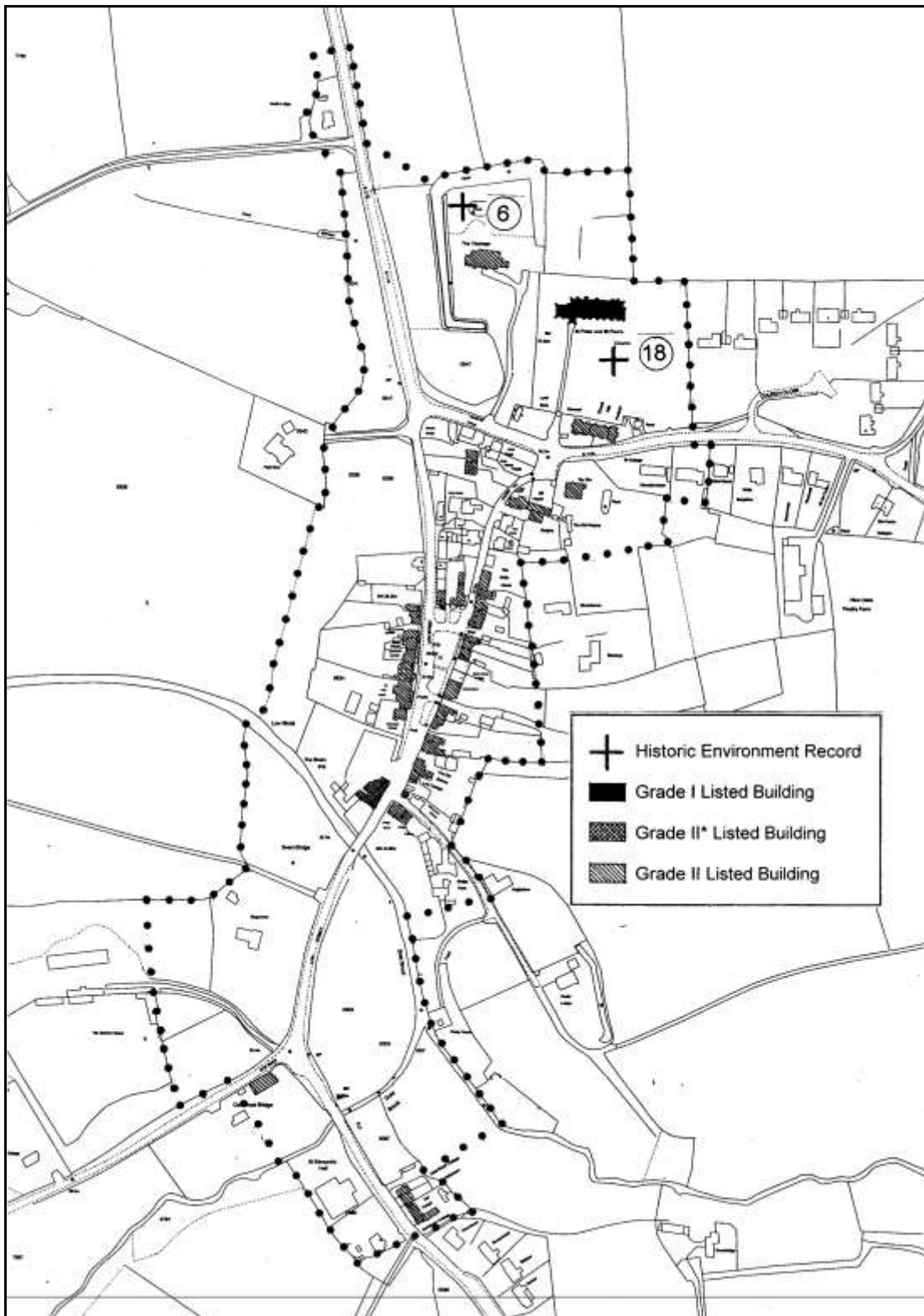


Aerial Photo



OS Extract

# Hoxne: Low Street



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Having lent its name to the Hoxnian interglacial which occurred some quarter of a million years ago, it is famous for both its deposits of brickearth, as exposed at the former Banham brickworks on the Eye road, and for the Palaeolithic (early stone age) tools found there and attributed to the Acheulian culture. Flint implements were found at this internationally important site from 1797 onwards.

Other than this Hoxne still has an interesting archaeological past. The Suffolk Historic Environment Record lists finds from the Mesolithic and Iron Age right through to several Medieval moated sites. Not forgetting of course the recent discovery of the 'Hoxne Hoard', a Roman treasure trove found in a field.

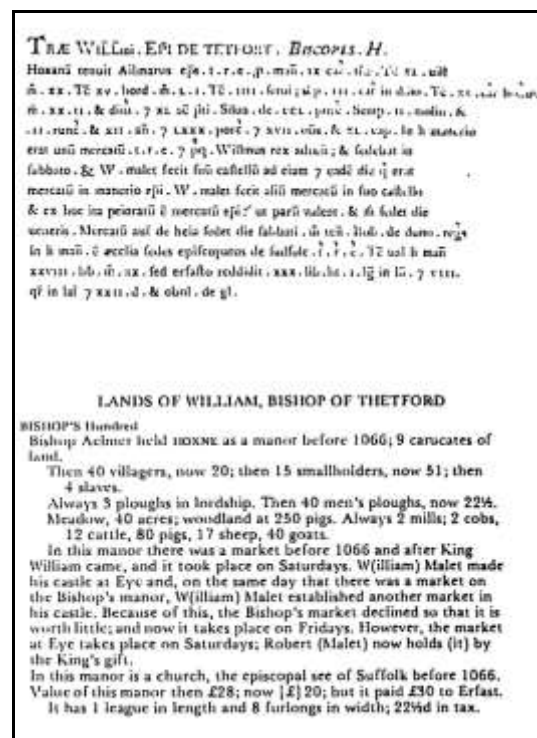
Two of the moated sites are within the conservation area and are also Scheduled Monuments: one moat near the Church surrounds the Vicarage whilst the other is at Abbey Farm in Cross Street, the site of Hoxne Priory.

The village also has important connections with the martyrdom of King Edmund, who was reputedly hiding beneath Goldbrook Bridge after the English lost to the Danes in 869 A.D. His presence betrayed by newly-weds crossing the bridge, he was captured and killed nearby, as attested by a local monument in a field on the site of the oak to which he was tied.

The manor of Hoxne was listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 as belonging to William, Bishop of Thetford, and included a church, the Episcopal See of Suffolk before 1066.

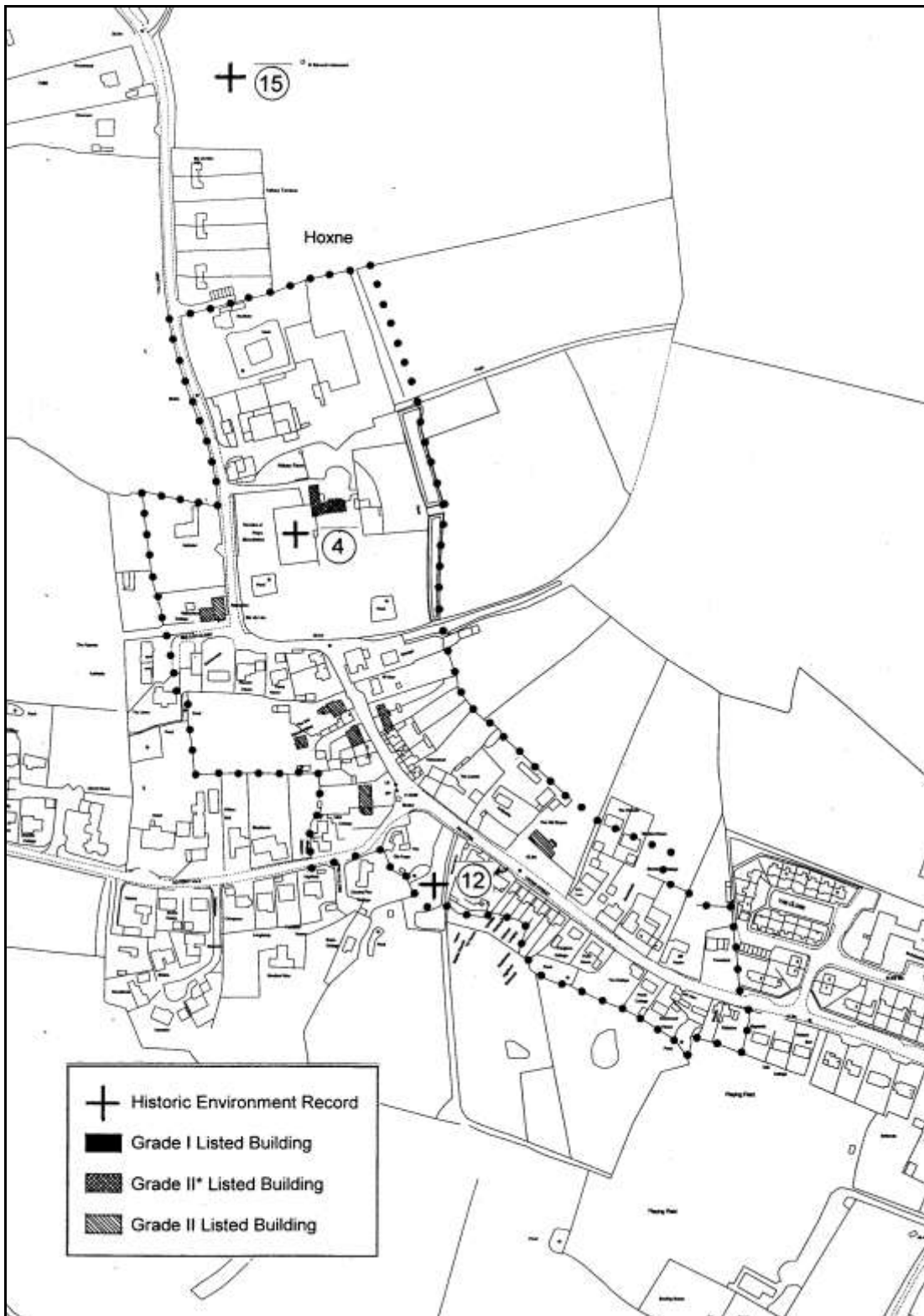


Church Tower



Domesday Extract

# Hoxne: Cross Street





## QUALITY OF BUILDINGS

The Church of Ss Peter and Paul is probably built over the original Bishop's church, his palace most likely having been at nearby Hoxne Hall, now known as Oakley Park. The church is grade I listed, Perpendicular in style with, according to Pevsner 'one of the grandest of the west towers in this part of Suffolk'.

It has on the north wall of the nave a series of wall paintings dating from the close of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century depicting St Christopher, the seven deadly sins and seven works of mercy and the last judgement.

The parish has five grade II\* buildings of which three are outlying timber-framed farmhouses on moated sites: Thorpe Hall, Chickering Hall and Red House.

The other two grade II\* buildings are in the village: The Swan Inn at the south end of Low Street is an early 16<sup>th</sup> Century hall with exposed timber-framing at the rear; Abbey Farmhouse is another timber-framed farmhouse on a moated site, at the west end of Cross Street. This last gets its name from the Benedictine Priory that once stood on the site, having grown up as a result of St Edmund's nearby martyrdom.

The remaining listed buildings in the parish are grade II and mostly timber-framed rendered houses, clustered together in their various hamlets.



**Painted Brick and Plaittile**



**Render and Thatch**



**Flint, Red Brick and Plintile**



**Black Pantile, Red Brick and Plintile**



**Red Brick and Black Pantile**



**Render. Slate and Pantile**

## TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

The proximity of the river Waveney has left its mark on Hoxne, the majority of the roofs being pantiles, mostly the plain red variety, but with a good proportion of the black glazed ones so common up this valley.

Other roofing materials can be found, there being a scattering of plaintile, slate and thatch as well as a few intrusions of modern concrete tiles.

The majority of buildings are timber-framed, a few with exposed framing and brick nogging, but mostly they are rendered all over in the usual Suffolk manner.

Although there are examples of flint and white brick buildings, the majority of those not timber-framed are in red brick, most likely from the local brickworks on the Eye road. Some of these have treble roll red pantiles on their roofs, possibly also made there.

The brickworks has also left its mark on the locality, as both here and in nearby Eye there are many examples of 'Banham walling'. These garden walls are built of 9" half round hollow coping bricks, set at 90° to their original design in staggered courses.

The result is a very pleasing to the eye perforated garden wall, which can be found in a number of variations on the theme, particularly at Cross Street.

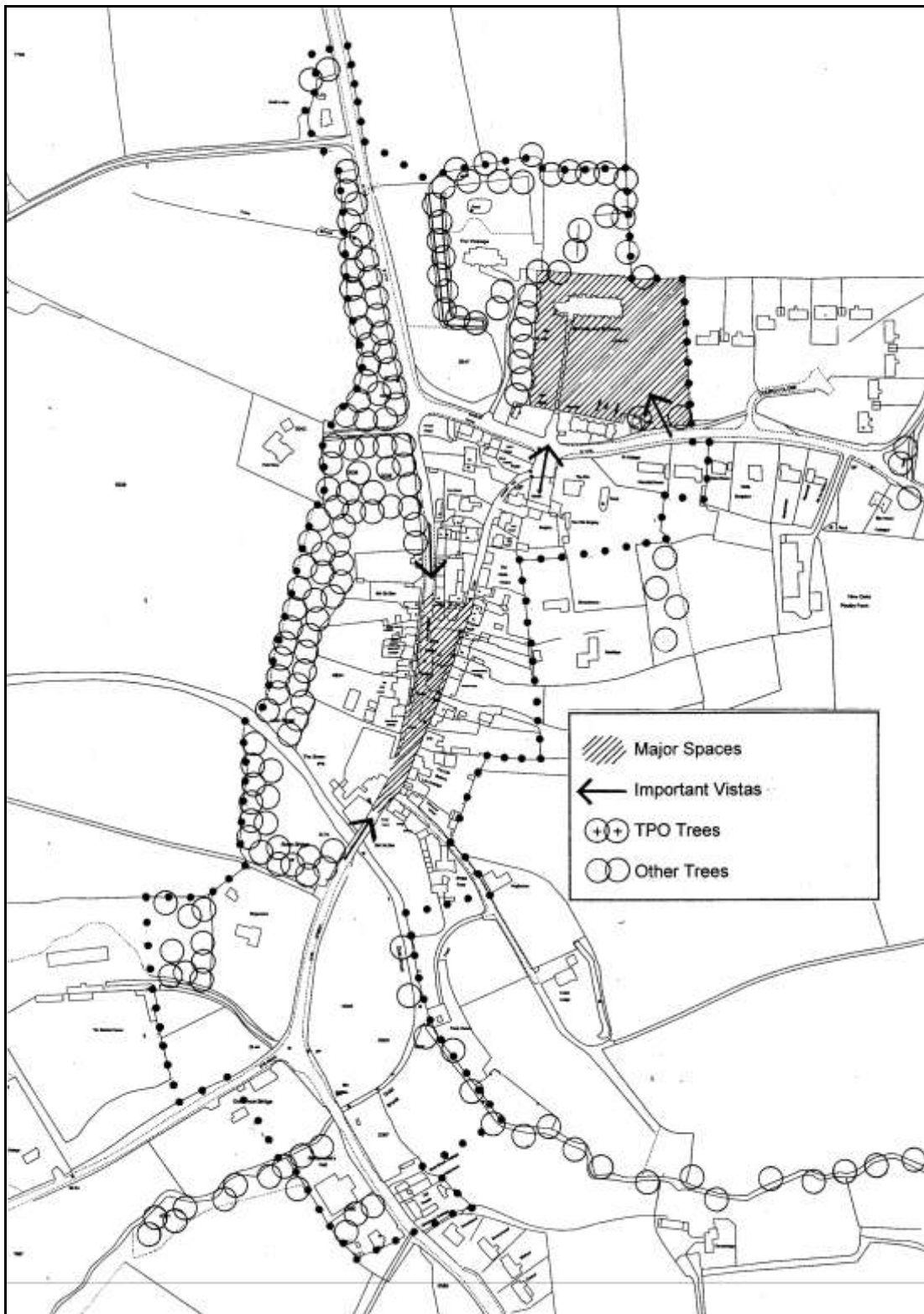


**'Classical' Timber Boarding**



**Flint, White Brick and Slate**

# Hoxne: Low Street



## HIERARCHY OF SPACES

The major space in the settlement at Low Street is the triangular Registered Village Green that rises gently to the north with its adjoining cottages and houses stepping up the slope on both sides.

North of the main B1118 road the church and vicarage occupy another important green space, but this time tree-lined and somewhat secluded from the rest of the village.

The approaches to the green at Low Street are pleasantly framed by arches of trees, both as one comes off the main road in the north and as one crosses Swan Bridge from the south.

Beyond the Swan and off to the left over Goldbrook Bridge the road climbs gently up Oak Hill to Cross Street. Here, beyond Abbey Farm, one is again within an enclosed space.

This is well defined by the grade II listed red brick boundary wall to Abbey Farm at the north-west end, and slightly less well by the triangular area where Nuttery Vale joins Cross Street next to the public shelter. Continuing further along Cross Street a pair of red brick semi-detached houses with an Oak tree beyond closes the vista at the south-east end.

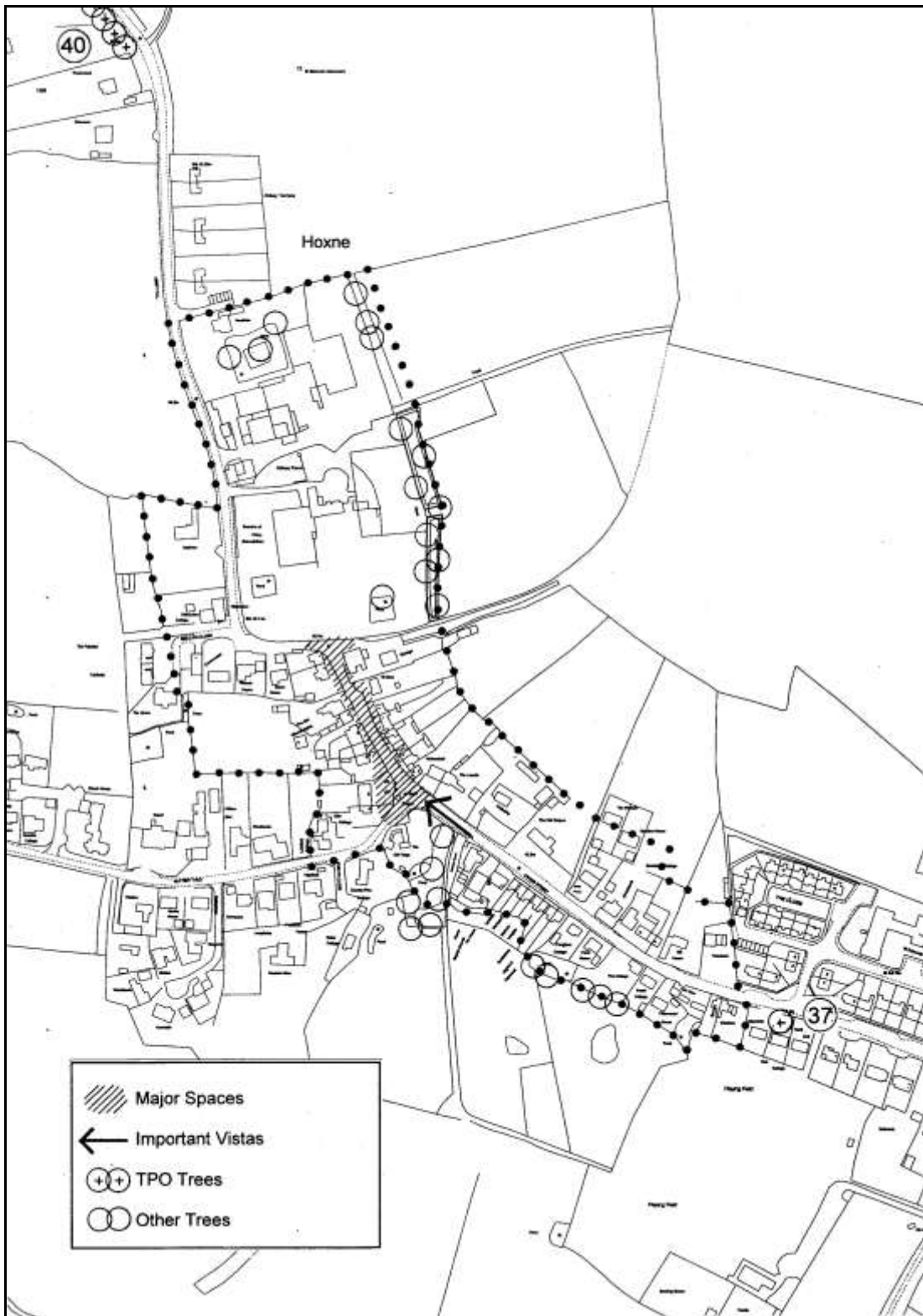


**North Entry, Low Street**



**Banham Brick Wall, Cross Street**

# Hoxne: Cross Street



## TREES AND PLANTING

Within the parish of Hoxne there is a small remnant of medieval woodland, situated at the eastern end, adjoining Stradbroke parish. In addition there are documented records of at least two medieval deer parks in the parish.

Within the built-up areas there are no major specimen trees, however extensive areas of trees abound and form an important backdrop to the village's centres.

One such strip, of mainly Oak and Beech, borders Oakley Park and encloses the western edge of the Low Street settlement. This continues at its northern end across the road to the area around the vicarage and church.

The area around Goldbrook Bridge is cast into deep shade in the summer by fine specimens of Plane tree that are thriving near the stream.

Elsewhere in the parish there are trees considered sufficiently at risk to warrant Tree Preservation Orders. One of these is particularly extensive, covering a large number of trees of many species in the grounds of the Depperhaugh, a large grade II listed house at Chickering Green (TPO 21).

More pertinent to the conservation area are TPO 40, covering 17 Limes, 7 Oaks and 3 Birch trees on Oak Hill between the two main settlements and TPO 37 which protects one remaining Oak of what was once a pair at the east end of Cross Street.

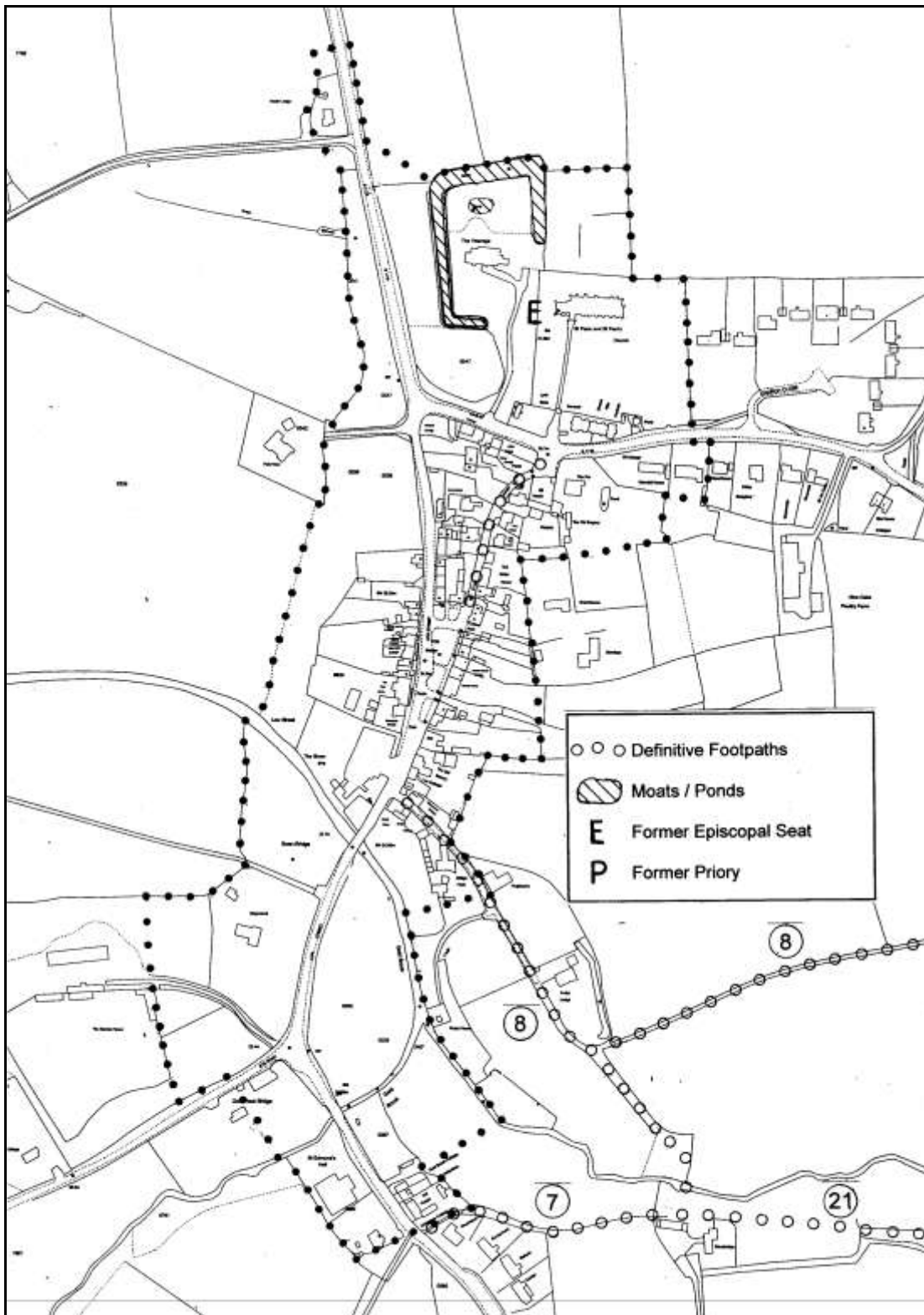


**Churchyard Trees**



**Abbey Farm Trees**

# Hoxne: Low Street





## COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

Hoxne's settlement pattern is mainly one of small nucleated hamlets, for the most part with one plot deep development, even in the larger groupings at Low Street and Cross Street.

Consequently there is countryside in the form of farmland or trees to the rear of most properties. Indeed behind those on the west side of Low Street there are both, a tree belt with beyond it the open park landscape with specimen trees of Oakley Park. Low Street itself is entirely within the Waveney valley Special Landscape Area, whilst Cross Street on relatively higher land is entirely outside.

The lack of any major roads through the area has left it well served by numerous minor roads and lanes, with a scattering of footpath links where old routes have not become vehicular.

One footpath link remains between the two main settlements running parallel to and generally north-east of Oak Hill (FPs 20 and 21). This leaves Low Street just before Swan Bridge, follows the valley of the Goldbrook eastwards for a while and then strikes south to rejoin civilisation along the line of the boundary wall of Abbey Farm at Cross Street.

Others can be found radiating from these two centres: FPs 8, 9 and 22 around Low Street and FPs 1-5, 18 and 19 radiating from Cross Street. With these Cross Street is perhaps better connected by footpath links to the surrounding countryside than is Low Street.

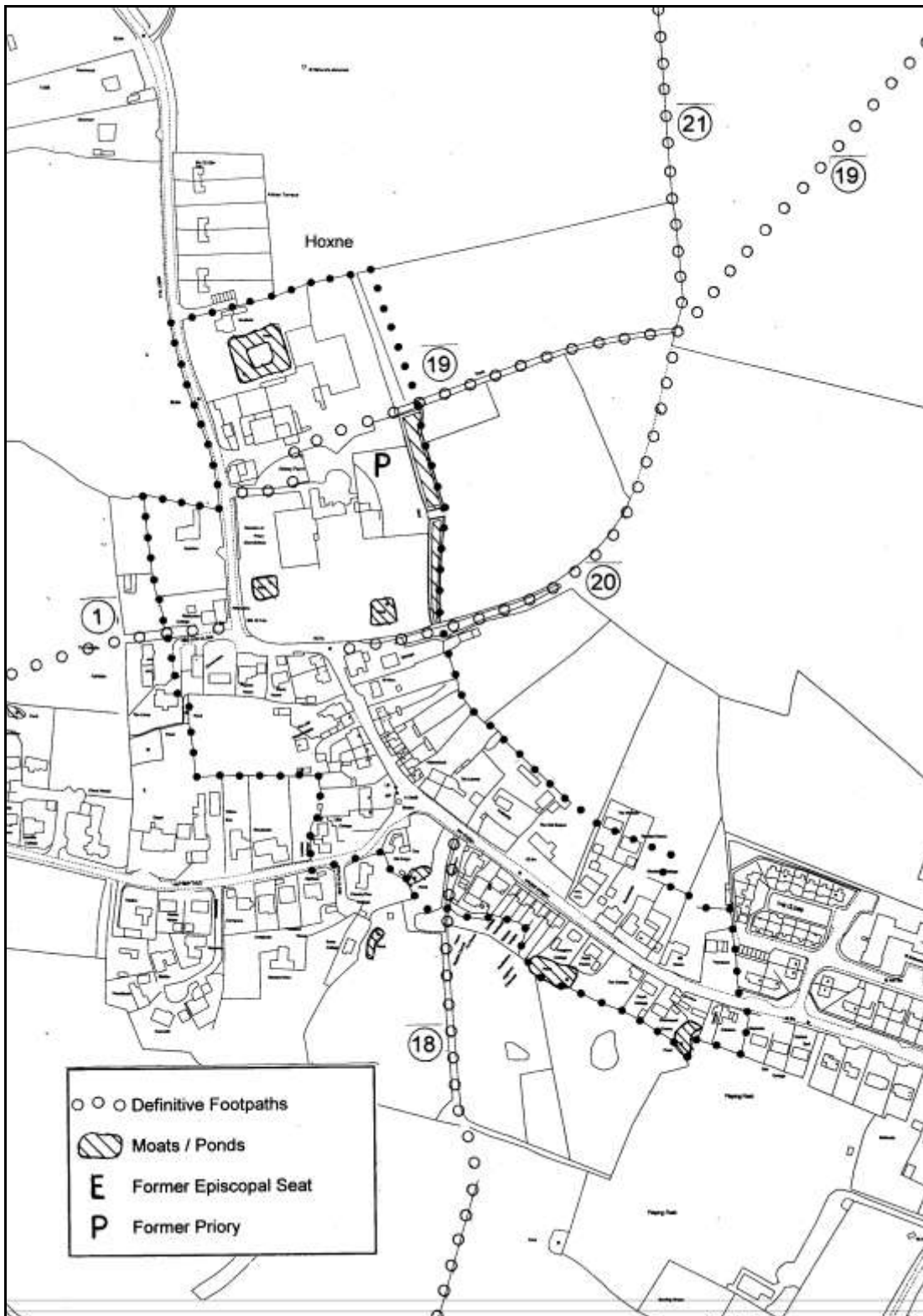


**Low Street**



**Start of Footpath 8**

# Hoxne: Cross Street



## PREVAILING & FORMER USAGE

Hoxne's origins are to some extent the result of the church's interest in the area, both as the Episcopal See originally centred at Low Street and the later Benedictine priory centred near Cross Street.

Its later agricultural base was primarily the Waveney valley linen industry. Several linen weavers are recorded in the village over the years and the tithe map of 1842 reveals a great many instances of 'Hemplands' as a field name.

Also recorded in the tithe apportionment there is 'Brick Kiln Field', 'Kiln Close' and 'Clay Pit Piece', documenting the presence of the brickworks in the village. Cross Street contains the 'Old Forge' and a fine collection of Banham brick garden walls that vouch for its historic settlement status.

The parish had at one time up to four windmills of which there are no remains. Chase's Mill to the north-east of Low Street off the Stradbroke road was a post and round-house type, demolished around 1923. Further south stood Cross Street mill, of post and open trestle type, the buck of which was moved to Worlingworth some time after 1824.

Two other mill sites are listed in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record, one to the west of Cross Street and the other near Thorpe Hall in the far south-east of the parish.

The only mill in the parish to survive is the watermill adjoining the River Waveney. Situated in Watermill Lane it was built in 1846 and is now listed grade II.



**Banham Brick Walls**



**Hoxne Watermill**



## LOSSES AND POSSIBLE GAINS

Overall, Hoxne has fared reasonably well against the onslaught of modern intrusions within the village. At Low Street there are occasional examples of modern windows with inappropriate asymmetric nightvents, and some dormer type loft extensions that could have been more sympathetic. The new brick cottages at 46-47 Low Street seem to blend in well, whilst the newer houses on the main road south of the church are fairly neutral in their impact.

Cross Street, meanwhile, has fared a little less well, having not had until recently the protection afforded by conservation area status. Compared to Low Street this settlement has fewer listed buildings, but a greater proportion of good 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings with consequently more examples of inappropriate modern windows, overpainted brickwork and infill development in modern materials generally of a lesser quality.



**Oversized Dormer**



**Former Chapel**



**Modern Infill**

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This Appraisal adopted as  
Supplementary Planning Guidance  
by Mid Suffolk District Council  
Environment Policy Panel  
18 September 2012