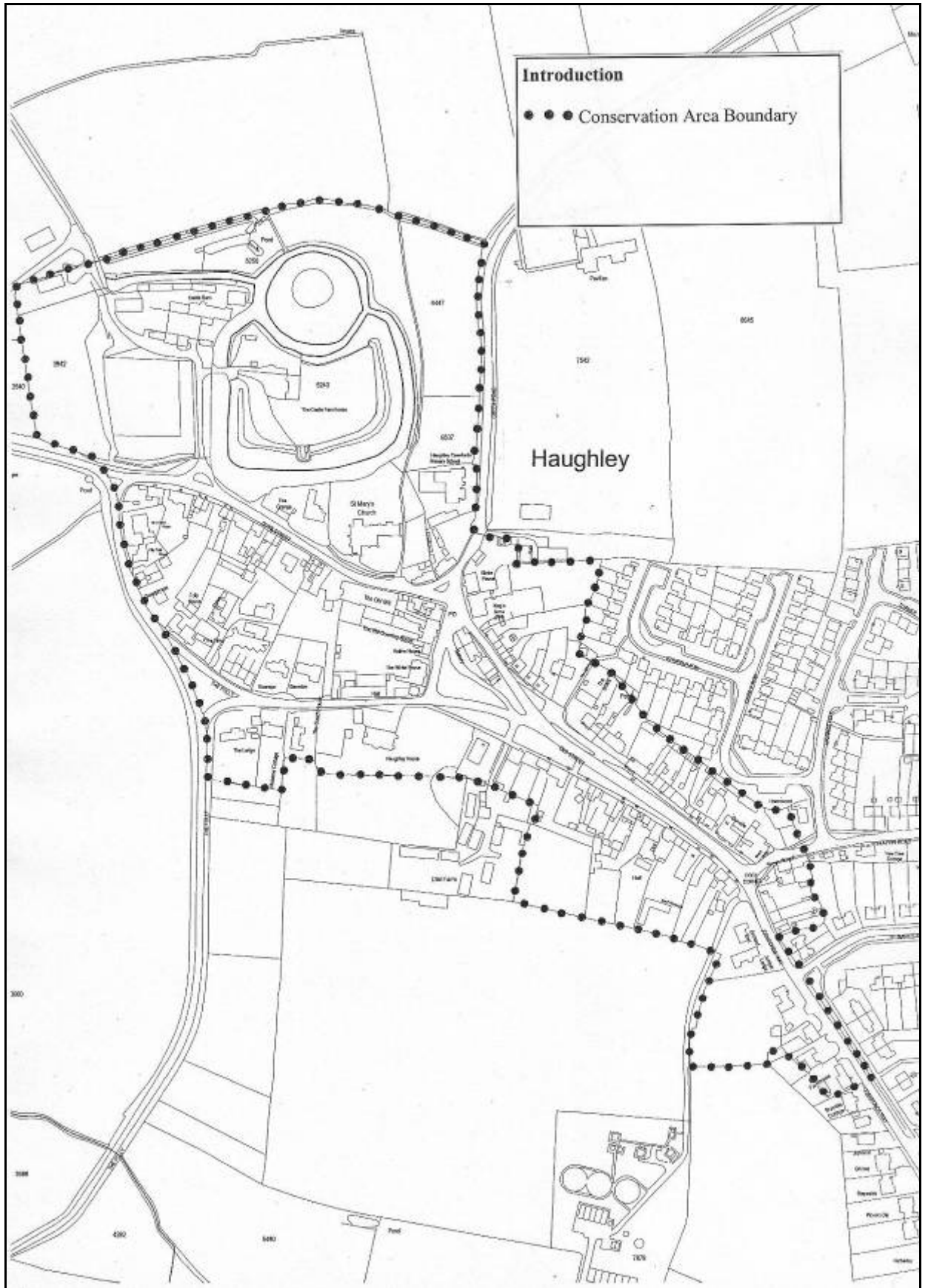


conservation area appraisal



Introduction

The conservation area in Haughley was originally designated by East Suffolk County Council in 1972, 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 Haughley 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 Haughley'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 2006.

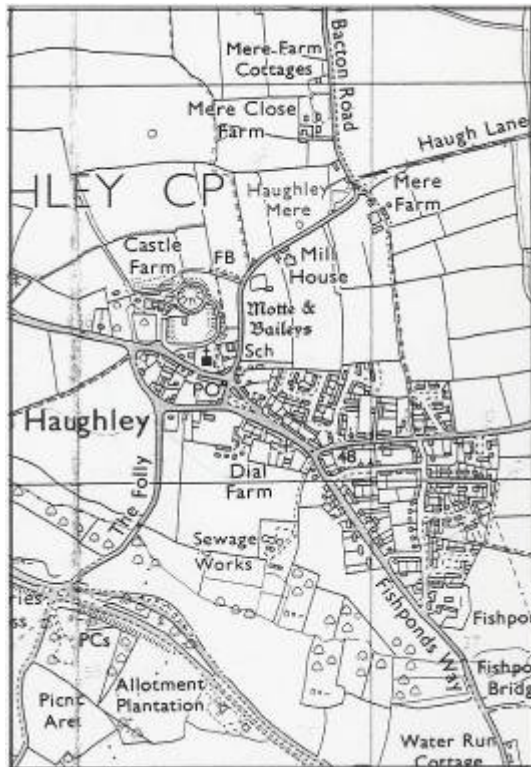


Topographical Framework

The village of Haughley is situated in central Suffolk, three miles north of Stowmarket and eleven miles east of Bury St Edmunds.

It lies just on the northern side of a valley formed by a tributary of the River Gipping that flows south eastwards through Stowmarket and then on to Ipswich and eventually the North Sea. This river was canalized as the Gipping Navigation up as far as Stowmarket in 1789.

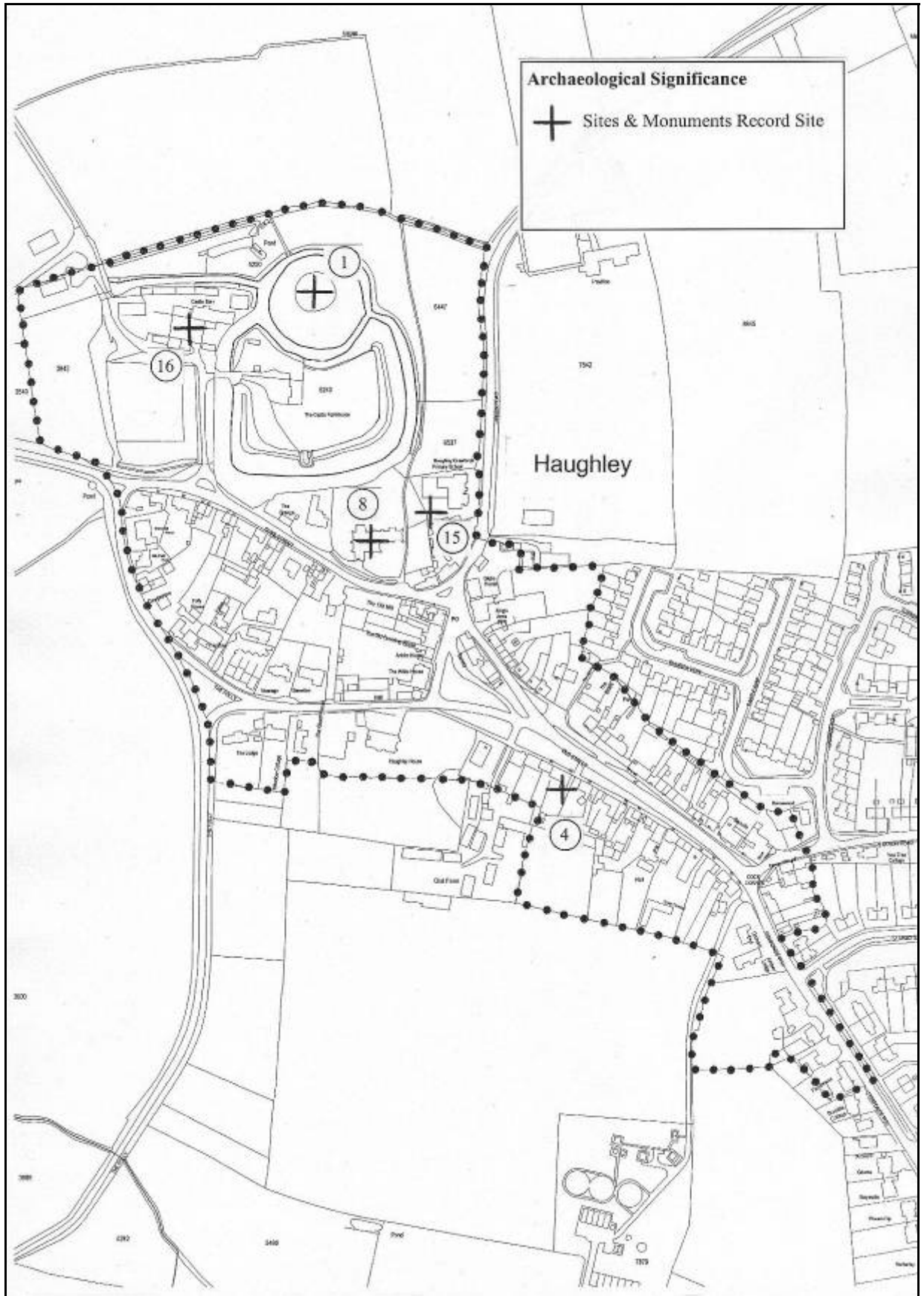
About half a mile south of the village the modern A14 trunk road follows the route, along the river valley and beyond, of the former Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds turnpike road.



From 1846 the Ipswich to Cambridge railway line passed north of the village providing a further east-west link parallel to both canal and road. This line branches off the north-south Ipswich to Norwich line at a former halt, Haughley Junction, about a mile to the east of the village centre.

The village centre is thus situated away from these river, road and railway transport connections, essentially an east-west street around a green, with the church and castle at its western end.

The village is situated on the claylands of High Suffolk, soils that make East Anglia the granary of Britain. The clay was deposited during the Ice Ages over the chalk that underlies most of Suffolk.



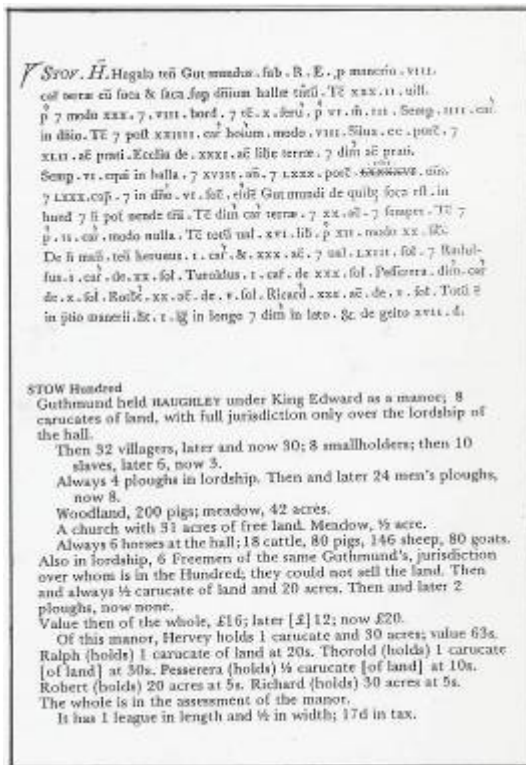
Archaeological Significance

The Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record lists eighteen sites of archaeological interest from the parish of Haughley.

These include finds scatters of Roman and Saxon date along with two undated ring ditches that are probably older.

More recent items recorded of Medieval date include several miscellaneous finds, the parish churchyard and two moated sites.

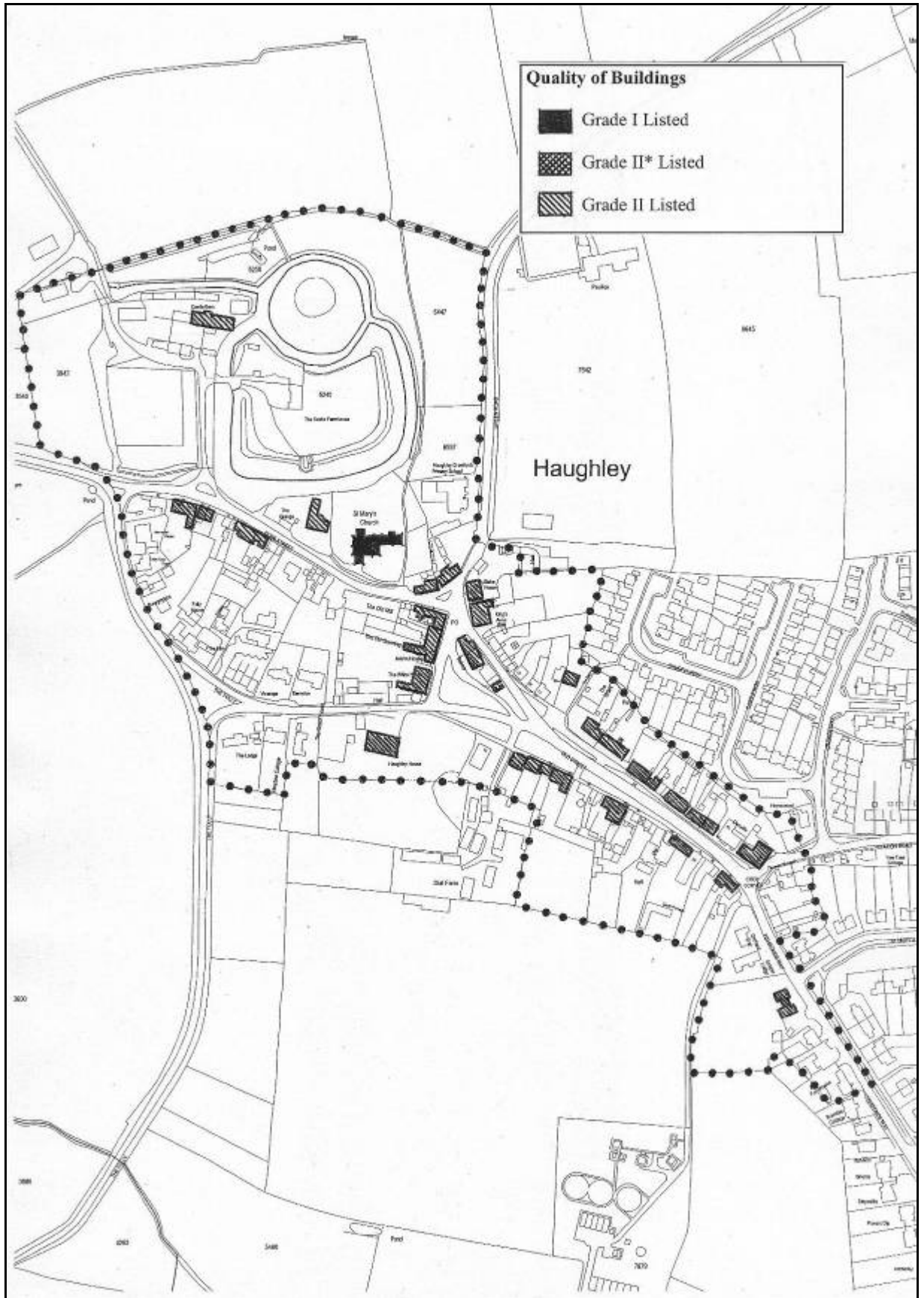
Pride of place however goes to the Norman Motte and Bailey of Haughley Castle with its moat at the north-west end of the village. The castle dates from c.1100 and was one of the strongest castles in England at the time.



The line of its large outer bailey contains most of the eastern half of the historic settlement and can still be detected in the curved street pattern of The Folly and Bacton Road to the south and east of the mound respectively.

Haughley appeared in the Domesday survey of 1086 as 'Hagala'. It had been formerly held by Guthmund under King Edward. Under Norman rule it was held by Hugh de Montfort and contained woodland for 200 pigs, a meadow of 42 acres plus a church and 31 acres of land.

Records indicate the existence of two or more gilds in the village, and there is one remaining building believed to have formerly been a gild-hall having spent some time as the parish Town House: Chilton House on Old Street.



Intrinsic Quality of Buildings

There are sixty three listed buildings within the wider parish of Haughley, thirty two of which are inside the conservation area boundary enclosing the historic centre of the village.

The majority of the listings are of houses and farms of a domestic scale, mainly timber-framed and rendered.

New Bells Farm, near the outlying hamlet of Haughley Green, is grade II and stands in the centre of a complete surviving mediaeval moat.*

About two miles west of the village there stands a large grade I listed Jacobean country house set in its own parkland. Haughley Park was built c.1620 by the catholic Sulyard family, remodeled in the early 19th Century and rebuilt following a fire in 1961.

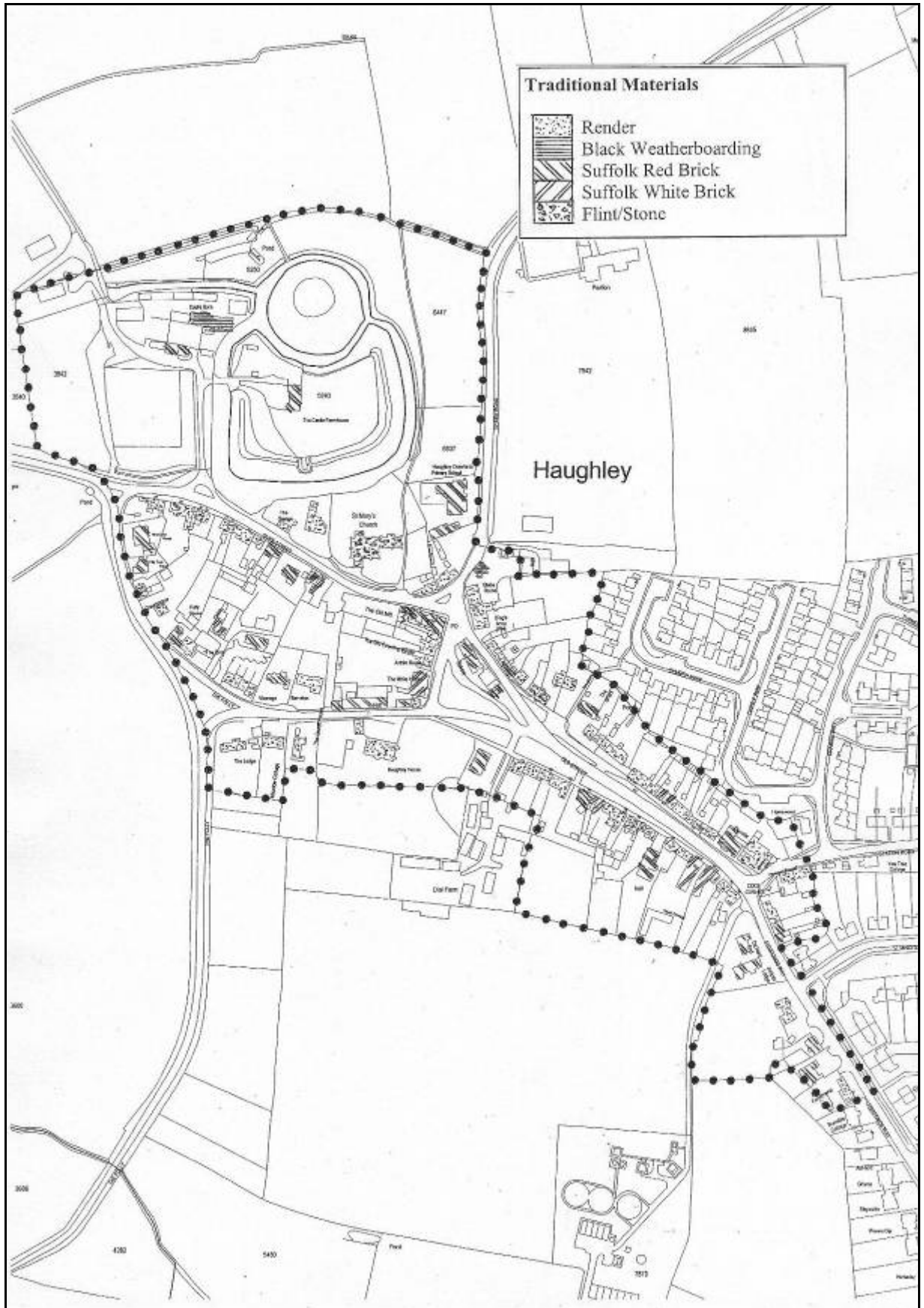


The grade I listed Church of St Mary is the only higher listing within the conservation area and stands at the western end of the village. It is mainly 14th Century with a late 15th Century clerestory and roof. A collection of 33 leather buckets dating from the 18th Century at one time adorned the porch.

One recent addition to the listings is equally unusual: the grade II listed parish coalhouse of 1861 on the green, of red brick construction with crow-stepped gables and a black glazed pantile roof.

Unlisted, but notably mentioned by Pevsner is the grain silo building near the old station halt, a large concrete structure designed by A. Swift for the Ministry of Works.





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Traditional Building Materials

The majority of the listed buildings in Haughley are of timber-framed construction with rendered external walls. A few have subsequently received a roughcast or pebbledash finish to the render and some have been refronted in the local Suffolk soft red or white brick (the latter probably from nearby Woolpit), most notably the White House facing the Green at its western end.

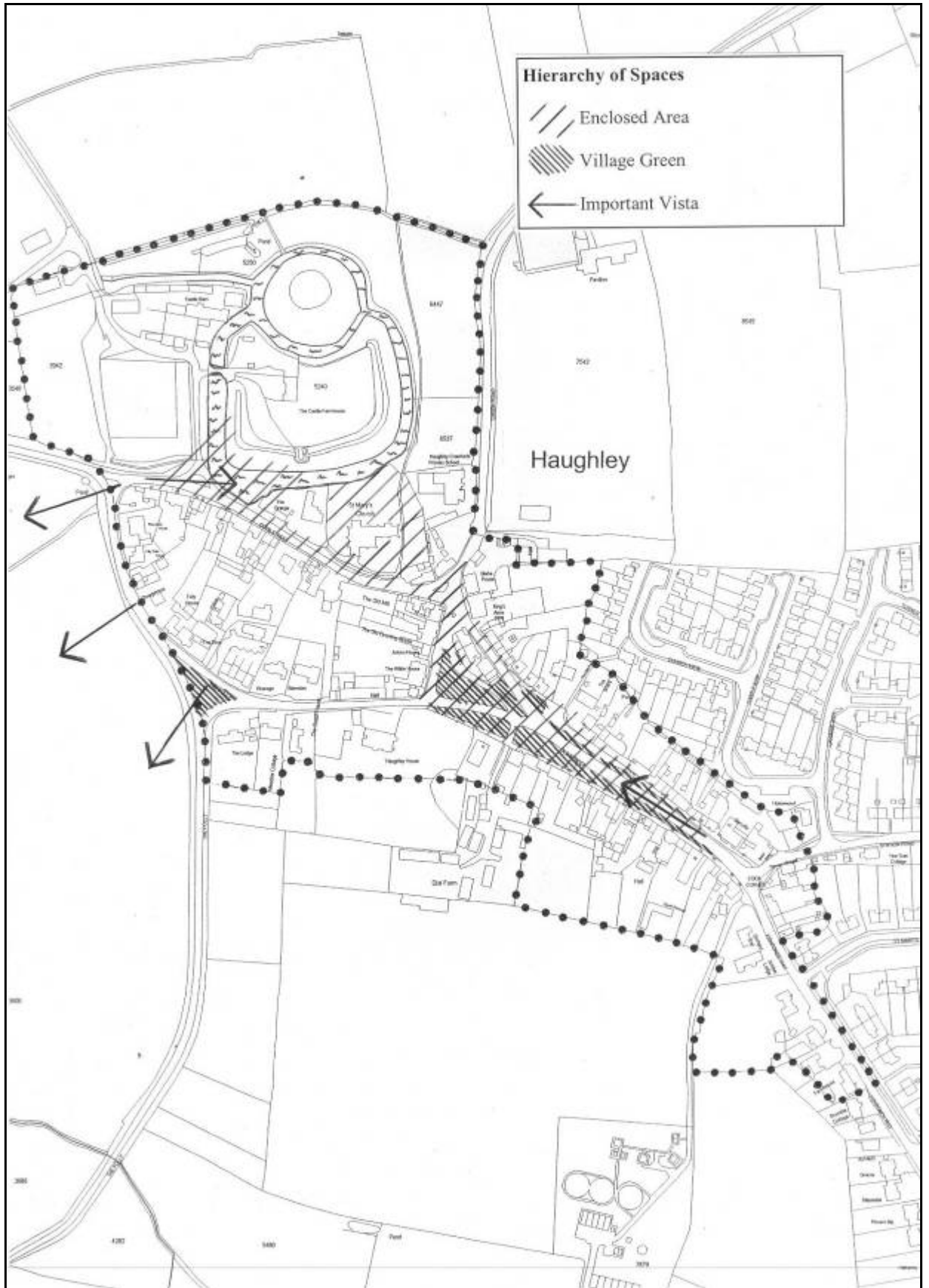
Red brick occurs in its own right as a walling material on a few of the listed buildings plus on a great many unlisted ones, mainly cottages of Victorian date, although many of these now carry a coat or two of paint.

Some of the unlisted buildings have also suffered the insertion of inappropriate uPVC windows and doors.



Roofing materials in the village are many and varied. The listed buildings are mainly roofed in slate or pantile (both in its natural clay and black glazed varieties). Many of these have replaced thatch as a roofing material, but there still remains a scattering of original longstraw thatch plus some clay plaintile roofing as well.

There are also several examples of inappropriate concrete tiles as a replacement material.



Hierarchy of Spaces

Haughley is centred on its ample green, either side of which are clustered many of its domestic scale listed buildings. At its eastern end the road is central to a gradually widening space between grassed areas fronting the buildings, eventually splitting as one moves westwards into two carriageways either side of a central triangular area, 'The Green' proper.

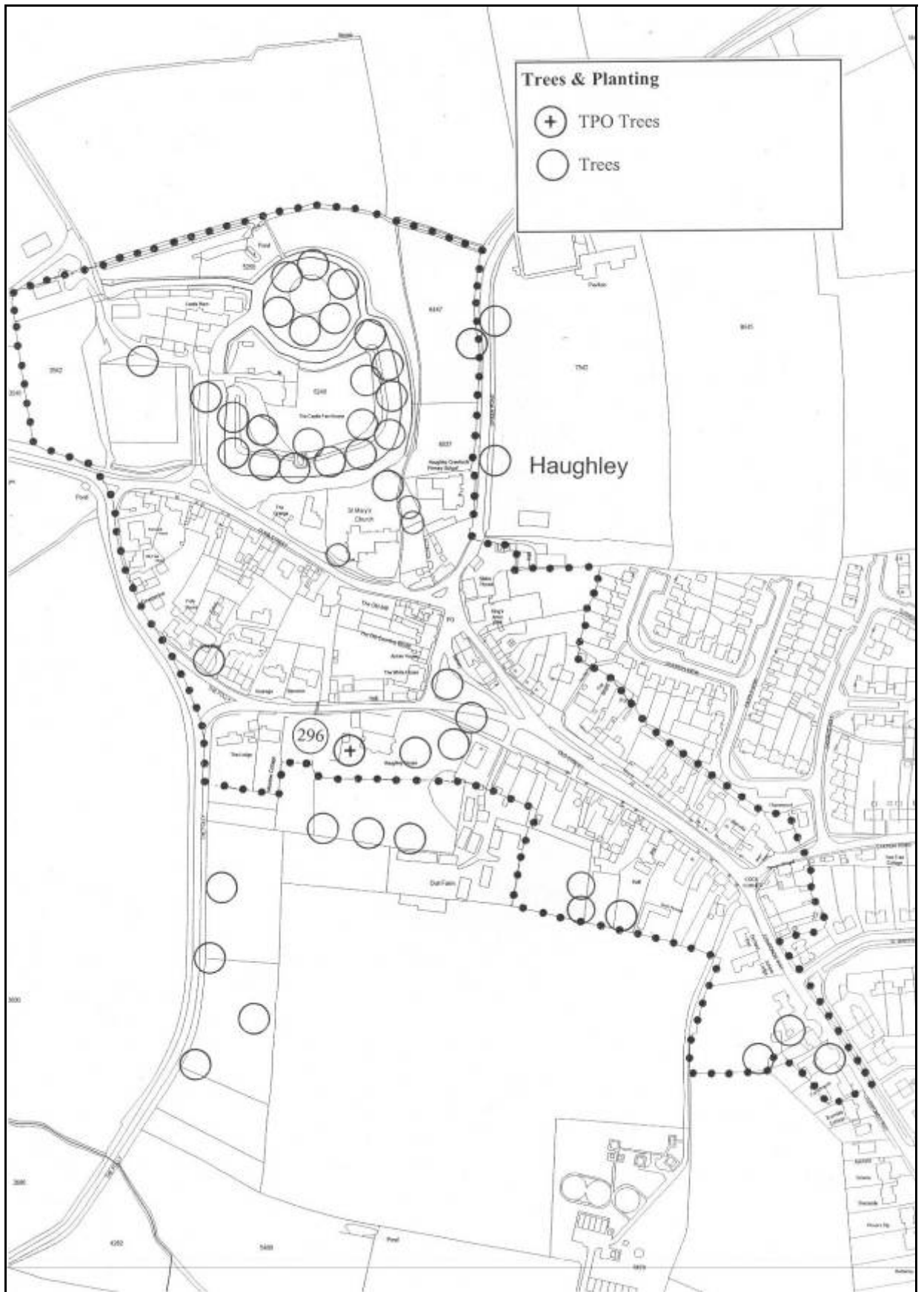
The left hand fork here veers further left into 'The Folly', and then around a gentle curve to the right following the line of the former outer bailey of the castle. Around the last half of this curve, past triangular Folly Green where a road joins from the south, the road forms the edge of the settlement giving good views across open countryside to the west.



The road to the right off The Green proceeds into a more built up space containing a distorted crossroads, before carrying on westwards as Duke Street.

Here is the second important space in the village, dominated as it is by the Castle mound with its moat and the adjoining churchyard. The actual mound is not visible directly, but it is covered with mature trees, which along with the glimpses of open water give this part of the village a character not usually found in inland Suffolk.





Trees & Planting

The Green at Haughley has a number of fairly recent tree plantings mainly along its southern side.

On the central green and eastwards along the south side of Old Street, the trees are smaller shrub types from the rose family: Plum, Rowan, Hawthorn etc., some already pollarded to keep them small.

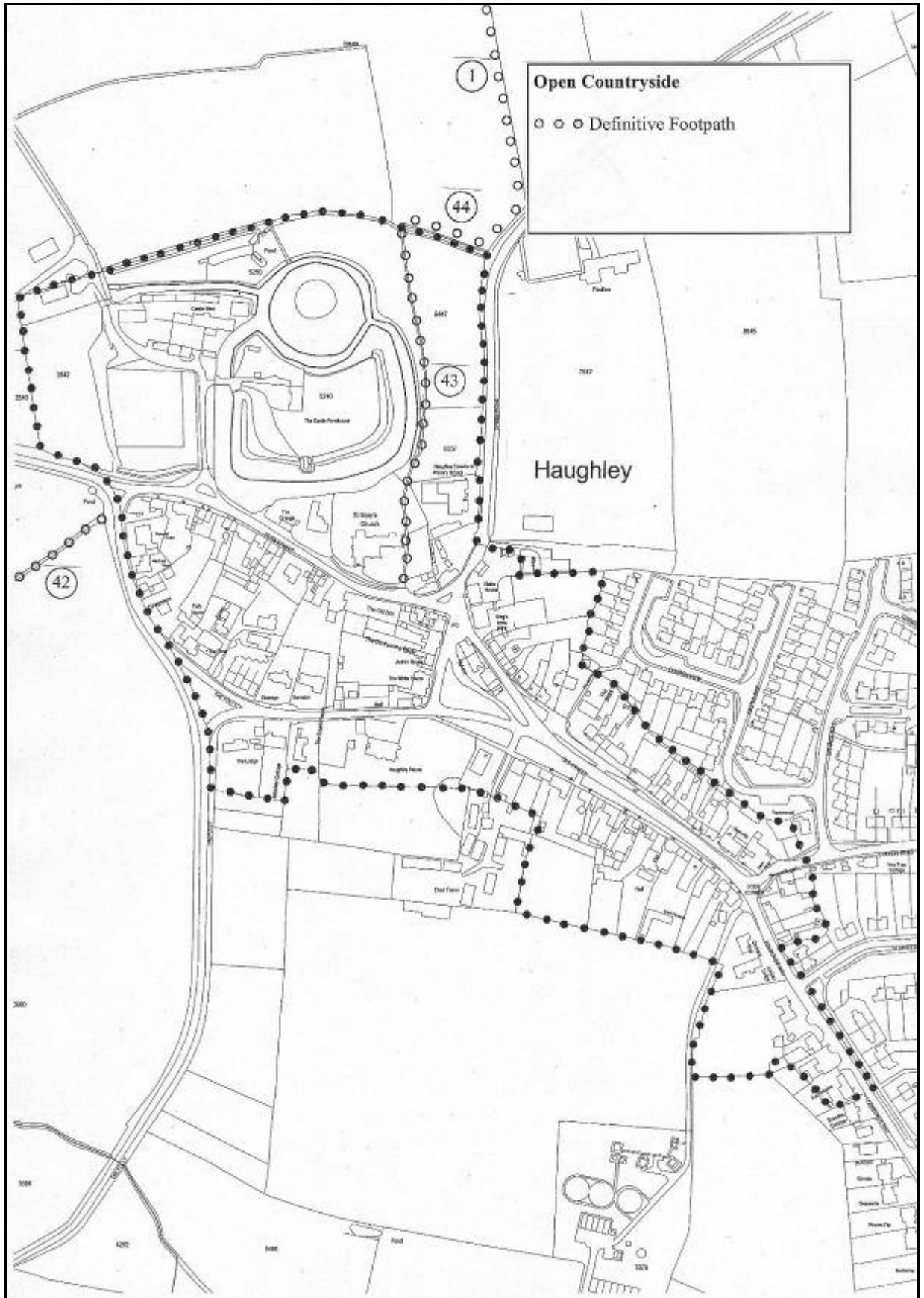
Only the Horse Chestnut and Norway Maple will make sizeable specimens, and these are fortunately at the wider western end, which will adequately accommodate them.



Just to the south of these new plantings, in the grounds of Haughley House, there is a large mature Beech and at the other end of the house a Lime . In 2001 this last was under threat of removal, and given the protection of Tree Preservation Order no.296.



Away from the green to the west there are more mature trees especially around the castle mound and within the inner bailey. Here there are large Oaks, Ash and Silver Birch plus fine specimens of Cedar of Lebanon.



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Relationship to Open Countryside

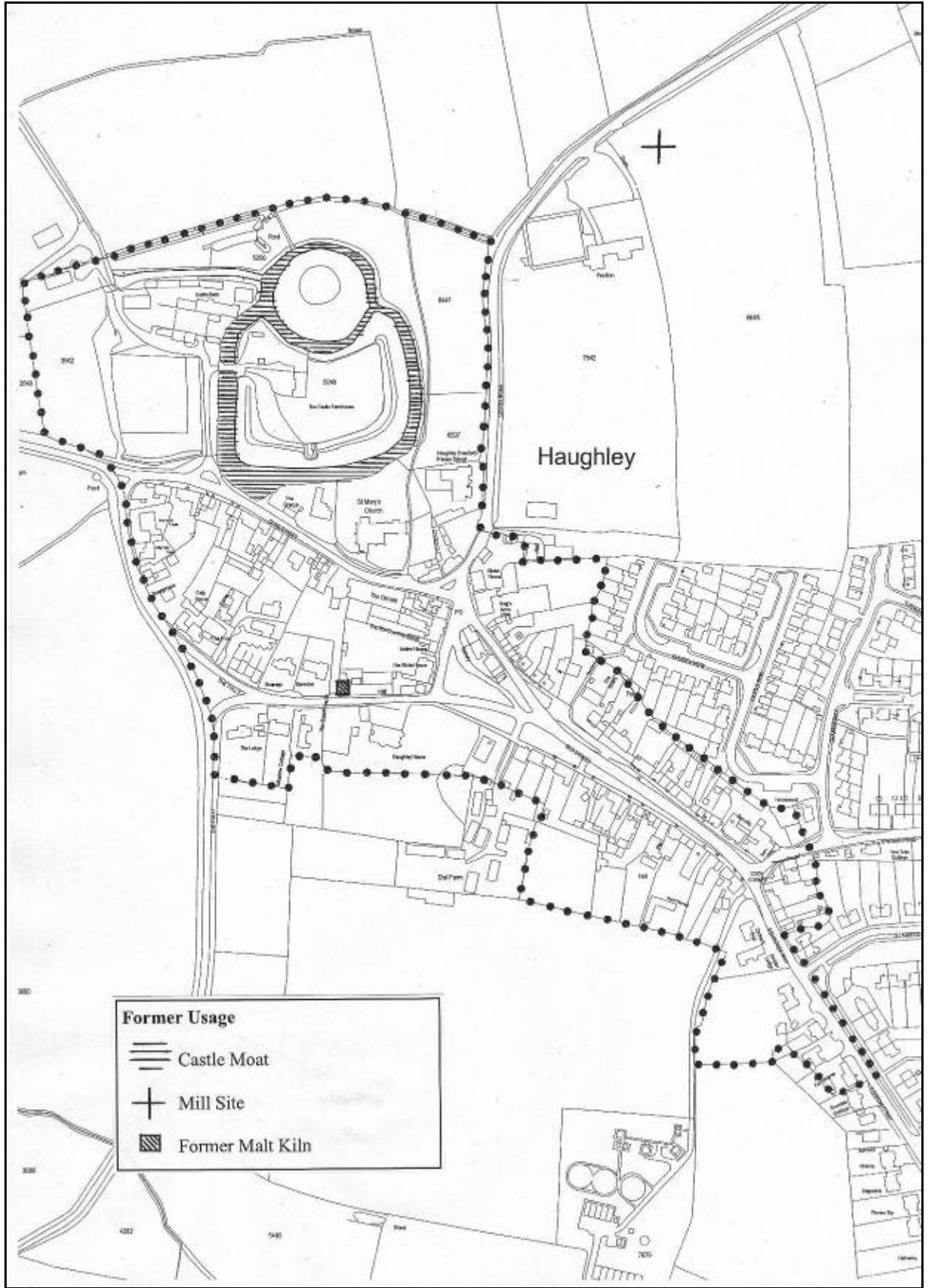
Apart from the loop at the western end formed by Duke Street and The Folly, Haughley is for the most part a linear village with one plot deep development either side of The Green and Old Street to its east.

A modern estate behind Old Street on the northern side has changed this of late, but the overriding impression is still that the countryside is never far away. The very centre around the cross-roads has a slight urban feel, but the footpath through the churchyard (FP43) brings you to a field adjoining the castle site very quickly.



To the north of the village off the Bacton Road this path continues northwards into the deeper countryside as footpath 1.

Beyond the central core the landscape quickly opens up to fields and woods, very visibly so from the west end of The Folly, with its wide views across the valley beyond. From here footpath 42 heads off westwards towards the outlying hamlet of Haughley New Street.



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Prevailing & Former Usage

With its Norman castle, Haughley was important from early times. Indeed it was granted a market in 1231, actually before Stowmarket, which eventually overshadowed it as a trading place.

As early as 1600-49 records show the presence of 26 yeomen, 6 husbandmen, an upholsterer, a carpenter, two blacksmiths, a grocer, a wheelwright, a clothier, a tanner, a cordwainer and even a surgeon.

Later records from 1844 show 2 joiners, two corn millers, a malster and many more trades present in the village. A typical malt kiln high pitched hipped roof remains adjoining the village hall on The Folly.



The Tithe Map Apportionment of 1844 confirms three separate mill sites with entries such as 'Mill Field' and 'Mill & Yard' and also includes a number of Hop Grounds, a Malting and several Kiln Fields. The mills were at Haughley Green to the north, off Station Road to the east and Mere Mill, near the castle. Other Tithe entries are the more usual for a larger agricultural community. There are 'Brickyard', a 'Gravel Pit Field' and a 'Sawpit Ley'. Unexplained entries include 'Coal Earth Field' and 'Hither Old Plough'd Park'.

Nowadays however, the village is largely a dormitory, providing homes for those who work elsewhere or have retired there, the only industry carried on being that at the new food factory adjoining Haughley Park.

Losses & Possible Gains

Haughley's growth as a dormitory village has brought with it inevitable development, most of it to the east between the roads to Old Newton and Stowmarket, outside the conservation area.

There is some infill which has respected the local vernacular, but some of it that has not. There are thus foreign forms and some use made of modern materials such as uPVC windows or concrete roof tiles, which are out of place in such an historic environment.

Similarly frontage boundary treatments vary enormously from the non-existent through the acceptable to inappropriate modern materials.



One area that might be considered an unfortunate eyesore is that part of the Green used as a van park/loading yard for the bakery business. The trackway used to access this from the south may be historic, but is poorly maintained and causing excessive damage and resultant loss to the grassed area. If access could be restricted to and from the north end only, grassing this area over would be a positive enhancement.

Another feature that is detrimental to parts of Haughley is the overhead wiring carrying the village's telephone and electricity supplies. The undergrounding of these utility supply lines appears to have been carried out around parts of the village, but its completion would greatly improve the appearance of the skyline throughout.

References & Further Reading

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by Mid Suffolk District Council
Environmental Policy Panel
27 May 2008*