Rainbow Cottage

1 Shenton Lane, Market Bosworth CV13 0LA





Heritage Statement

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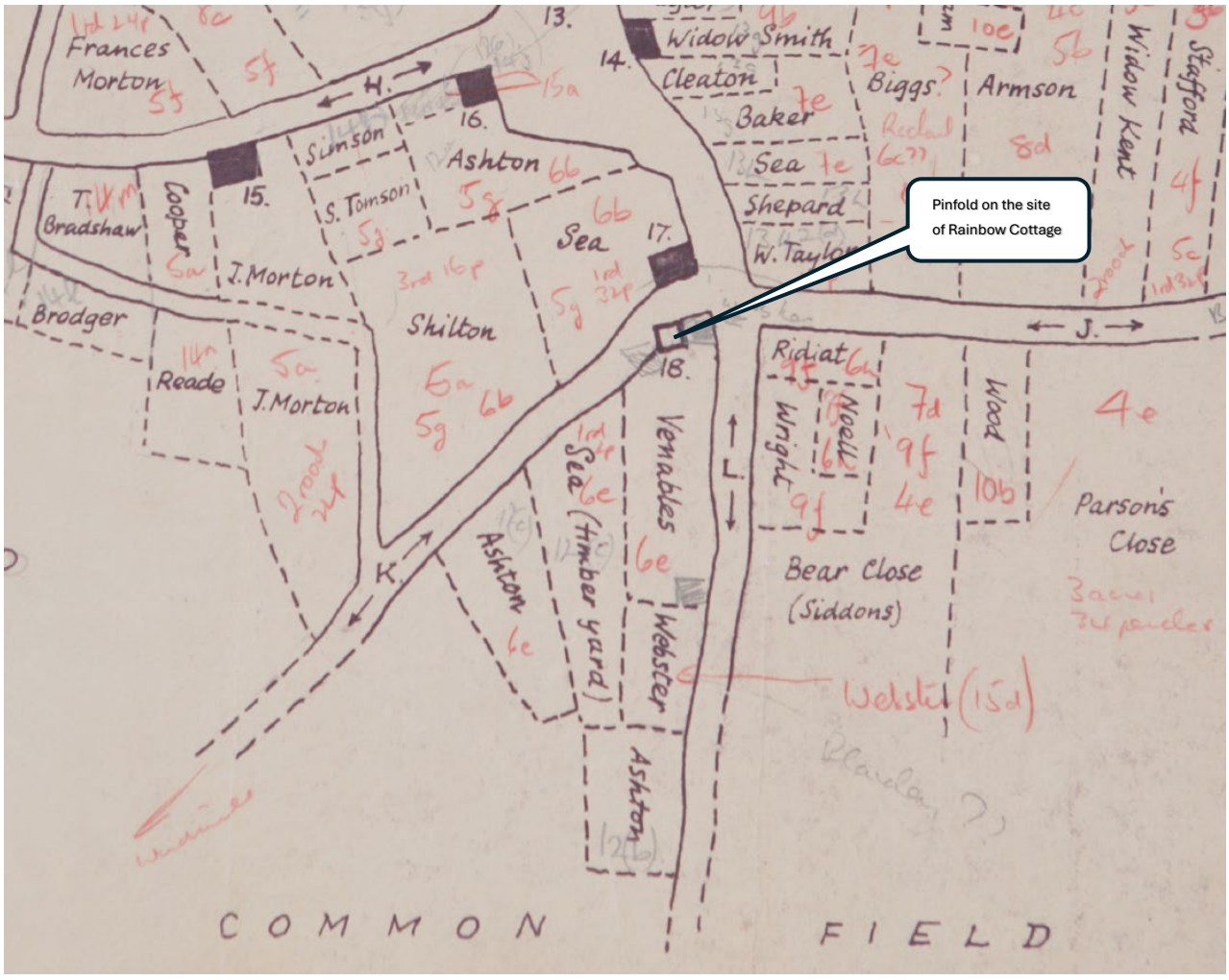
1.0 Introduction and General Description

1.1 This thatched, brick-walled cottage, which displays vestiges of timber framing externally and of cruck construction internally, has been grade II listed since 1986. It sits at the heart of the Market Bosworth Conservation Area, at the junction of four roads (Shenton Lane, Sutton Lane, Market Place and Rectory Road), with its entrance elevation accessed from Sutton Lane, although the postal address is No. 1, Shenton Lane, and the principal 'public' elevation faces that road. The water pump that still stands near the Sutton Lane entrance to the cottage is also separately listed (grade II, added 1986, dating from the early C19).

1.2 The cottage is stated in the listing description to date from the late 17th century (1600s) to the early 18th century (1700s), although several other sources allege that it originated in the 16th century, presumably because of its cruck frame construction (visible internally). However, on a surviving map of 1592 (see extract below) there is no cottage in this position, but there is a pinfold on roughly the same site, with the land plot identified as belonging to 'Venables'. Shenton Lane was described as the "lane leading from the pinfold to the windmill".



1.3 The cottage is now mostly of brick construction, resting on a Carlton stone plinth, with a Norfolk reed thatched roof, said to have been re-thatched in 1966 and again in 2014. Vestiges of the timber frame can be seen externally on the Shenton Lane elevation (which is actually the rear elevation) at a high level, consisting of part of a sill beam, wall plate and vestigial remnants of the top of several vertical posts. Internally, the ground floor rooms have beamed ceilings and parts of the roof structure and timber frame can be seen in the first-floor master bedroom and bathroom.

1.4 The pump outside the Sutton Lane entrance gate is an early 19th century public water pump of cast iron, with a segmental cap, decorative panels, a long, curved handle and a short spout.

1.5 The shields on the gable end of the cottage that faces the Market Place were placed there in 1985 to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Battle of Bosworth, which took place about 3 miles away, near Stoke Golding. Similar shields can be seen displayed on some other buildings in the town centre. They have no specific relevance to the history of the cottage, which post-dates the battle by a couple of centuries at least.

1.6 The building is regarded as a focal point in the Conservation Area, standing as it does at the junction of Shenton, Sutton and Rectory Lanes and the Market Place. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal makes reference to its roadside vegetation and notes that green boundaries are a feature of Shenton Lane.

1.7 Rainbow Cottage is included within a town trail published as *Welcome to Market Bosworth: A Guide Book* (Sue Styche and Michael Warr, Allan T. Condie Publications, 2001). This makes the following interesting observations:

- The cruck frame cannot be seen in the outer gable ends (which are now encased in later brickwork). The surviving cruck frame is at the centre of the cottage and is only visible internally.
- An ancient 'salt cupboard' was discovered in the cottage when accident damage repairs were being carried out in 2000.

1.8 An historic salt cupboard is a small, specialized, wall-mounted or built-in wooden recess used in old domestic kitchens and inns to keep salt dry. These compartments were typically positioned close to the hearth or fireplace because ambient warmth prevented hygroscopic table salt from absorbing household moisture and caking.

1.9 The proposal for which this Heritage Statement has been prepared is the creation of a car parking bay (to disabled standard) on the road frontage to Shenton Lane, just beyond the building footprint, which would involve setting back the existing railings over an 9.8-metre stretch, on top of a new, reclaimed brick retaining wall, and removing the existing outer, sloping planting bed to create the level bay, reusing the existing granite kerbstones as a sunken outer 'lip'. The Statement looks at the cottage's historical and architectural significance, including in the wider contest of the historic core of the town and the corresponding Conservation Area, then at the likely impact of the proposal on the listed building and its setting.

2.0 Chronology of Known Owners, Occupiers and Events; Historic Images

2.1 The name 'Rainbow Cottage' is not historic and can only be traced via newspaper archives back to 1971. One guide to the town suggests it was named thus after a past owner around that time and that might well be the case: people with the surname Rainbow can certainly be found living in Market Bosworth in the mid-20th century (there are records on the Ancestry website from 1945 and 1960), although the 1971 newspaper reference does not refer to the Rainbow name, but to the death of an owner called Reginald Warner.

2.2 A number of other past owners can be confirmed from the mid-20th century onwards. Land Registry records show that Charles Herbert Shave sold the cottage to Emily Birtles in June 1952. Newspaper archives confirm Margaret Clark was living there in 1993 and Jane Dwyer in 2014. Reginald Warner, who died while living there in March 1971, was co-founder of an engineering firm in Groby. He was a boating enthusiast and had also been involved with the town's Drama Society.

2.3 Unfortunately, tracing past occupiers of the cottage during the period covered by available census returns (1841 to 1921) is much more difficult, as none of the censuses for Market Bosworth give a name to the cottages in either Shenton or Sutton Lanes and a few enumerators did not even bother to specify the road names. Another problem is that, although the cottage is now No. 1 Shenton Lane, its entrance front is on Sutton Lane, so potentially it could have been listed under either lane in older census records.

2.4 It would seem reasonable to assume that, as the cottage sits at the entrance to both lanes, it would be listed either first or last, depending on the route followed by the enumerator. However, comparison of recurring occupant surnames in different censuses shows that the order of names was not necessarily sequential and therefore even this much cannot be assumed. Finally, the 1911 and 1921 censuses give the number of principal rooms in each dwelling; given the internal layout of Rainbow Cottage, it was unlikely to have had more than four principal rooms. However, the first houses listed for Shenton and Sutton Lanes in 1911 both had nine principal rooms; in 1921, the first entries were for dwellings with 6 principal rooms in both cases. In both censuses, there are other entries for Shenton Lane where the cottages had only three or four principal rooms, but these are listed later in the sequences.

2.5 With all the above provisos, these are the relevant details from the census returns for Shenton and Sutton Lanes between 1851 and 1921. I have suggested what appear to be the most plausible matches in each case, rather than listing every entry.

> **1851** Sutton Road (*sic*) is covered by entries 159 to 173, with one uninhabited house (16 in all) and Shenton Road is covered by entries 174 to 196 (23 dwellings). The first and last houses listed for Sutton Road were occupied by William Storer and Joseph Argyle; in Shenton Road these were Ellen Lythall and Charles Wain. Sixteen of the names listed also appear in the 1861 census, but not in the same order. Members of the poorer Hextall family, so prominent in these lanes in later censuses, do not feature at all in 1851.
>
> **1861** This census has Shenton Road from entry 100 to 117 and Sutton Road from 118 to 127, followed by The Rectory. The first and last Shenton Lane entries are Thomas Barsby and John Worley and the first and last Sutton Road entries are Joseph Goadby and James Grundy. Interestingly, John Worley was allocated to Sutton Road in 1851. As Rainbow Cottage is at the junction of those two roads, John Worley would seem to be a logical occupant; however, he appears part way through the 1851 list, at entry 167. Thomas Barsby appeared at entry 192 in 1851, Joseph Goadby at entry 165 and James Grundy at entry 168.
>
> **1871** This census return includes no road names (except Market Place), but by comparison with other censuses it looks as though Shenton Lane appears at the end (entries 161 to 170). The first and last entries are Richard Everett and Henry Miles. Richard Hextall is entry 163.
>
> **1881** The Sutton Lane entries follow Market Place and 'Park Lane' (including the Rectory). There are only nine entries, starting with Joseph Forman (96) and ending with John

Worley (104). Seventeen entries for Shenton Lane begin with Elijah Everett (144) and end with Elizabeth Beck and 'lodger' Frederick Linghurst (159, 160). Richard and Thomas Hextall are at entries 156 and 157. John Worley could again be a contender for Rainbow Cottage, as could Elijah Everett.

1891 Sutton Lane begins with entries 90 and 92, interrupted by a Market Place entry at 91. John and Sarah Bower were at entry 90. The last Sutton Lane entry (97) was George and Frances Chapman. In Shenton Road, the first entry was for William and Mary Henson (98) and the last, preceding the Police Station in Back Lane, was Richard Everett (109). Thomas Hextall is entry 99 and two Richard Hextalls occupy entries 101 and 107. Richard Everett could be a possible occupant for Rainbow Cottage. The Hensons appear in 1881 at entry 158 and in 1871 at entry 164. Martha Henson is entry 107 in 1861 and entry 186 in 1851.

1901 The first entry for Shenton Lane, following the Old Police Station, is 120, Henry William Beck, and the last (135) is Thomas Moreton at 'Beaumont' (the only named house). Richard Hextall is at entry 134. The Sutton Lane entries run from 136 to 144, followed by 'Biggin' (rectory) Lane. The first and last entries are Joseph Wright and Samuel Kendrick.

1911 Sutton Lane is covered by entries 1 to 11, followed by 'Big Inn Lane' (now Rectory Lane); Shenton Lane is covered by entries 32 to 45, followed by High Street (now Main Street). The first entry in Sutton Lane is John Thorpe (9 rooms) and the last is Arthur Thomas Kendrick (a baker) (8 rooms). This is consistent with Samuel Kendrick's position in 1901. James Collins, a farm labourer (entry 9), had only three rooms. In Shenton Lane, the first entry is Miss Ellen Moreton (9 rooms) and the last Richard Hextall (3 rooms, and therefore a contender for occupying Rainbow Cottage). Sarah and Richard Hextall (entries 34 and 45) had only three rooms and two other Richard Hextalls (35, 36) had four rooms, along with Ernest Knight, Edward Cheshire, Henry Mills and Henry Wright. Elizabeth Middleton (aged 81, entry 38) had only two habitable rooms. Henry Wright is the penultimate Shenton Lane entry at 44, perhaps matching Joseph Wright in 1901. A Henry Wright also appeared in the Sutton Road listing for 1851, but at entry 164.

1921 The first and last entries for Shenton Lane were for John and Elizabeth Liddington (6 rooms) (following the old Police Station) and Frank and Ida Johnson (7 rooms). In Sutton Lane, the first entry was for spinster Julia Morris, aged 69, living alone (6 rooms) and the last for Joseph Wright. Householders with only three principal rooms were the Reids in Sutton Lane and Sarah Hextall in Shenton Lane. Those with four main rooms were George Feasey, John Henry Lee and John Dolby in Sutton Lane and Richard Hextall, Joseph Bailey, Edward Cheshire and Thomas Hextall. Joseph Wright's position is consistent with the 1901 and 1911 entries.

2.6 All of this demonstrates how difficult it is to be at all certain who occupied the present Rainbow Cottage in any of the above censuses. Some evidence exists to suggest that John Worley could have been the occupant between 1851 and 1881, the Everetts from 1871 to 1891 or the Wrights from 1901 to 1921, but this cannot be confirmed without supporting evidence from other sources. Members of the longstanding Hextall family seem to have occupied small cottages in these lanes, but there is little other evidence for their occupation of Rainbow Cottage. The irony is that, whilst a thatched, timber-framed cottage is today regarded as a highly desirable property worthy of special protection, in past generations they were generally considered to be the commonplace homes of

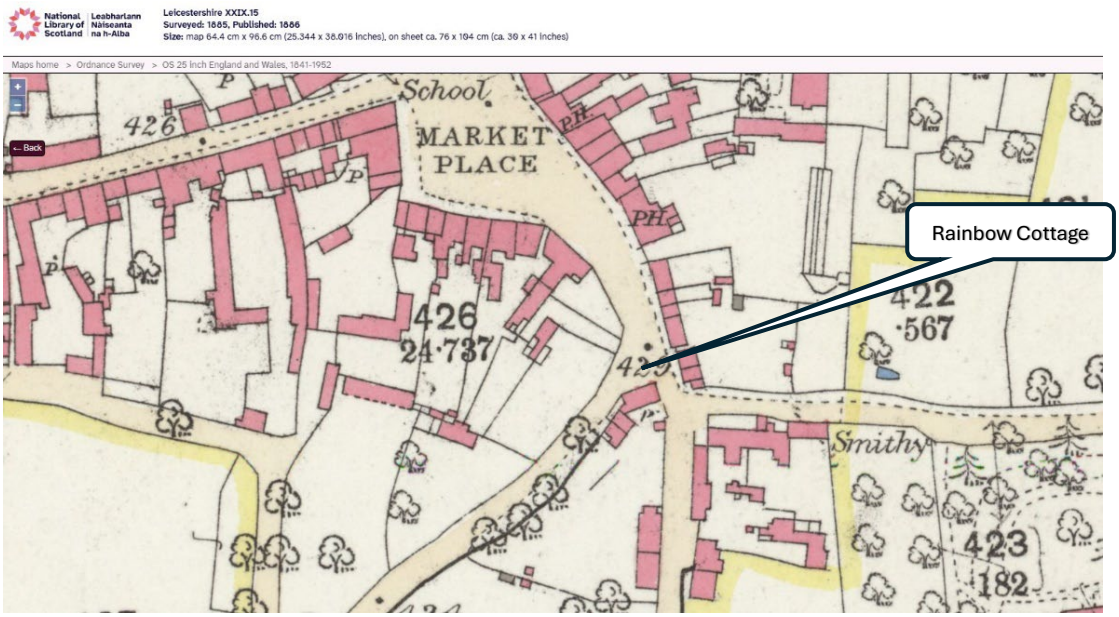
poorer and less notable citizens and therefore were afforded little attention and were not deemed worthy of record.

2.7 The Market Bosworth Tithe Map (1848) is not available online, but the accompanying owner and occupier schedules would supply the Rainbow Cottage information for that date and might provide vital clues as to later occupants, also. No Enclosure Act or Map exists for Market Bosworth, as much of its open field system was gradually partitioned and enclosed through private, informal agreements prior to the mid-18th-century parliamentary boom.

2.8 Although the Bosworth Estate, which for several centuries was linked with the Harcourts and Dixies (as longstanding Lords of the Manor), consisted mostly of farms, it did also include some houses in the village, but whether Rainbow Cottage was ever one of them I have not been able to ascertain.

2.9 The Cottage was put up for sale for just £70,000 in 1975. The only planning history for this property obtainable via the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council website is an application to re-thatch the roof in 2014, 14/00695/LBC.

2.10 The cottage's position at the junction of four quite narrow roads has left it prone to having its corner struck by badly driven vehicles: see the attached newspaper article from 1972 (page 7).



25-inch Ordnance Survey mapping, surveyed in 1885, showing Rainbow Cottage at the south-eastern edge of Market Place

Architectural Significance

2.11 Rainbow Cottage is one of only a small number of buildings in the town centre with thatched roofs and exposed timber-framing. Although only vestiges of the timber frame are now externally visible (see at paragraph 1.3 above), the building still retains much of its cruck frame construction internally. The only other timber-framed buildings with thatched roofs in the locality lie at the southern end of Market Place and can be seen from Rainbow Cottage. These are a row of three 17th-century thatched cottages with timber framing supported on a limestone plinth, with brick infill panels to the frame. Although there are a few other surviving timber-framed buildings in the town, these were encased in the

then more fashionable red brick facing during the 18th and 19th centuries (for example, the Olde Red Lion Hotel and Nos. 3, 5 and 7 Main Street). This scarcity, together with Rainbow Cottage's very prominent position at the junction of four roads, makes the building an important visual and architectural focal point in the Conservation Area. See further at paragraphs 3.10 to 3.12 below.



BOSWORTH CONCERN GROWS OVER DANGER FROM TRAFFIC

RESIDENTS of Market Bosworth are growing increasingly anxious about the dangers of large vehicles passing through the narrow streets of their town centre.

Large modern transporters find great difficulty in negotiating roads in and out of the Market Place. They are also the cause of real concern in Station Road, where a narrow pavement means that primary school children are walking within inches of these moving vehicles.

In the town centre lorries often need to make several reversing movements in order to get round the narrow street corners.

At the junction of Rectory Lane and the Market Place, Mr. S. T. S. McDougall, chairman of the parish council, has recently replaced his garden fence destroyed by a large lorry. Now this new fencing has been damaged.

High vehicle

At the ancient thatched "Rainbow Cottage" opposite, the gable end appears to have been struck by some high vehicle.

concerned as Park Street houses the infant school.

The Member of Parliament for Bosworth, Mr. Adam Butler, has been approached about the problem, and at the request of the parish council and the rural district council a meeting is to take place with county council officials to see what can be done.

A tricky junction for lorry drivers at Market Bosworth — where Rectory Lane meets Market Place. In the foreground is the thatched Rainbow Cottage, which is constantly being grazed by passing vehicles. Its gable end has recently been damaged by a high truck.

2.12 The following historic images of the cottage have been collated from various published histories of Market Bosworth. Their exact dates and the photographers are unknown, except for the last, which forms part of the famous Francis Frith photographic archive.









THE FRANCIS FRITH COLLECTION





A modern photograph showing the entrance front of the cottage (Sutton Lane side)

3.0 Market Bosworth: Historical Significance

3.1 Key features of the core of Market Bosworth are its hilltop location, long-term agricultural-based economy, and enduring manorial tradition. Its longevity as a settlement is shown by the discovery of Bronze Age and even earlier archaeological remains in the locality and evidence for Roman settlement was found during excavations in 1966. The town features as the village of 'Bosworde' in the 1086 Domesday Survey. The Lords of the Manor during the early medieval period were the Earls of Leicester and the Beaumonts took on this role in the 13th century. A royal charter of 1285 granted Bosworth a weekly market on Wednesdays, hence its new name of 'Market Bosworth'. There were two watermills operating in the town in 1420. The last mill, Bosworth Mill, closed as late as 1957.

3.2 The Harcourt family (of French origin) were the major demesne tenants until the early Tudor period (c. 1510), and the Hastings family had taken over by the mid-16th century. The Manor was sold in 1589 and Sir Wolstan Dixie, Lord Mayor of London, became the owner of the Bosworth Estate, establishing a line of succession that lasted around 400 years. He founded the Free School, later the Dixie Grammar School, in 1593. Bosworth Hall dates from the late 17th century.

3.3 In 1610, there were an estimated 543 people living in the town, A century later, in 1710, this had only increased to 618 people. The population peaked in the mid-19th century but had fallen again to 729 by 1911 (census). The current population stands at a little over 2,000.

3.4 Famous names associated with the town include Samuel Johnson, who was briefly an 'usher' or schoolmaster there in 1733, and the Quaker founder George Fox, who came here in 1649 but suffered an abusive reception.

3.5 The town was still primarily an agricultural centre at the start of the 20th century, although a cottage weaving industry, known as framework knitting (mainly for stockings) also employed many local people around 1810 and continued to flourish during the 1820s and 1830s. The weekly market had gone into decline by the late 18th century, but we are also told that by 1849 the commercial premises in the Market Place were "crowded with a variety of small businesses".

3.6 Lady Florence Dixie of Bosworth Hall was a writer of poetry and children's novels. While these have fallen into obscurity, she also wrote books about her travels in South Africa (*In the Land of Misfortune,* 1882), reporting on the aftermath of the Anglo-Zulu War, and in South America (*Across Patagonia*, 1880), describing her 1878–1879 horseback expedition through the remote and rugged wilderness there, detailing the landscape, wildlife, and her encounters with indigenous peoples. These have proved to be of more enduring interest.

3.7 The Bosworth Estate was sold in 1885 and purchased by Charles Tollemache Scott, who effected many improvements in the town. After his time, the Hall and remaining estate of 13 farms (3,130 acres) was sold at auction. The Hall itself was bought by Leicestershire County Council for conversion into a hospital, but more recently became a country house hotel.

The Conservation Area

3.8 The Conservation Area Appraisal notes how the street layout seen on the map of 1592 is largely preserved today, with the principal roads radiating from the Market Place like the spokes of a wheel from its hub (page 8). Rainbow Cottage is a focal building at the southern termination of the Market Place and at the point where Shenton, Sutton and Rectory Lanes radiate out from there.

3.9 A summary of the Conservation Area provided on the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council website says:

> *"The Market Place defines the character of Market Bosworth. This central space is enclosed on all sides by buildings set at the back edge of the pavement. These edges are broken only by a few narrow-paved jitties and alleyways. Radiating from this space, Main Street,* ***Sutton Lane, Shenton Lane*** *and Station Road provide more open views with occasional views of the countryside."*

Rainbow Cottage's Contribution

3.10 The list of key views on page 9 of the appraisal include views in both directions along Sutton Lane (nos. 10 and 11), which would start or terminate with Rainbow Cottage. The description of Sutton Lane and Shenton Lane on page 12 mention the listed pump outside the cottage and that the cottage is the only listed building in Shenton Lane.

3.11 The Conservation Area Appraisal is against allowing further on-street parking on Shenton Lane (page 19), but it also refers to Rainbow Cottage's importance as the only listed building in the lane and the predominance of 'soft' (natural) landscaping and low walls to boundaries, a balance which is to be retained to maintain this street's special character (page 12).

3.12 Rainbow Cottage's contribution to the Conservation Area is partly its distinctiveness as one of the few thatched houses remaining in the town centre, its distinctive positioning at the junction of several streets at the southern end of the important Market Place grouping of varied historic buildings, and its attractive garden setting, together with the listed village pump (once one of several but now the only survivor).

4.0 Likely Impact of the Proposed Parking Bay on the Setting of the Listed Building and on the Conservation Area

4.1 The client had originally enquired as to the possibility of creating a vehicular access either from Shenton Lane or Sutton Lane, or both, but after due consideration this has been dismissed as impractical and undesirable. Any such driveway would have to be tightly squeezed in and would have involved the loss of ornamental railings and planting, a sharp turn to the left from Shenton Lane, no space for on-site turning or manoeuvring and potential adverse impacts upon the current setting of the locally listed Old Police Station and Police House on the opposite side of the road, as well as that of the statutorily listed Rainbow Cottage itself and the row of statutorily listed thatched cottages that terminate the Market Place, which can be prominently seen from the end of Shenton Lane. On Sutton Lane, any vehicular access would again be constricted by the neighbouring property boundary to the south (left) side and the existing lamppost, finger signpost, listed water pump and pedestrian gate to the north (right). The setting of the locally listed Bakery Cottage on the opposite side of the road would be adversely affected and the 'green' setting of Rainbow Cottage compromised.

4.2 We have therefore formulated an alternative scheme which we believe would be much less harmful to the setting of the listed building and the Conservation Area, whilst allowing the occupant's car to be parked off the road itself, reducing congestion on the narrow Shenton Lane and visual impact on the listed cottage itself. This involves relocating the existing ornamental railings, which currently sit at the top of a gently sloping planting bed facing the highway, around 1.2 to 1.3 metres back from the highway edge, to a position approximately 4 metres back, allowing a single parking bay and pull-in/out space around 9.8 metres long to be created directly off the highway. Most of the existing planting could be transplanted or replicated at the end of the parking area or behind the repositioned railings.

4.3 The existing planting bed, which is edged with deep granite kerbstones, would be dug out and levelled and the parking area surfaced with brick paviours set over water retaining frames about 2 inches deep, allowing gradual soakaway without the need for the installation of a complex drainage system. The higher garden ground beyond would be supported by a reclaimed, imperial brick retaining wall about 900 mm high, coped and surmounted by the re-used railings. The wall is an engineering necessity rather than simply a new boundary feature. The granite kerbstones would be reused in a semi-sunken form to create the outer 'lip' to the parking bar where it met the highway carriageway. The photographs provided here, and in the Design and Access Statement, demonstrate that the Shenton Lane frontage already incorporates retaining features, paving and raised planting areas. Therefore, the proposed alterations can be accommodated without fundamentally changing the character of the garden.

4.4 Currently, cars are commonly parked immediately beyond the cottage on Shenton Lane, largely hiding the ornamental railings and planting from view and causing obstruction at this potentially dangerous junction (see photographs below and on page 12).







4.5 There is no parking allowed directly in front of Rainbow Cottage and there are also double-yellow lines in front of its single-storey outbuilding, although this does not always prevent parking there in practice, as the above photograph demonstrates. The proposed inset parking bay would lie beyond both buildings, resulting in further separation of the historic buildings from the on-street parking provision and reducing the visual clutter and obstruction caused by vehicles to the street scene.

4.6 The ornamental railings and kerbstones, while they may not have been in position here for a long period, are nevertheless sympathetic elements in the current setting of the listed cottage, and this proposal allows for their full retention, together with continued opportunity for ornamental planting, all of which would have been largely sacrificed if a conventional access driveway had been installed. The proposed block paving to the parking area would be in harmony with the existing pathways running through the garden.

4.7 The existing railings, planting, pump and other historic features of the Sutton Lane boundary to the property would be left untouched by this alternative proposal, leaving the setting of the listed building on this side undisturbed and undiminished.

4.8 The current proposal therefore allows the cottage to have its own, off-street parking bay, large enough to serve any future occupant needing disabled parking facilities, while retaining the essential elements of the existing boundary treatment and reducing the impact of a parked vehicle on the setting of the listed cottage and the way it is visually perceived from Shenton Lane. There would be no disturbance at all to the historic structures.

4.9 Unlike a conventional vehicular access/driveway, the inset roadside parking space would result in no loss to the main landscaped garden area to the ‘rear’ or entrance elevation of the cottage, as seen from Sutton Lane, and therefore views of the cottage from that side would remain unobstructed and pleasantly landscaped (see photographs below).





4.10 In summary, therefore, the proposal provides the occupant of Rainbow Cottage with a dedicated, off road, private parking space, reducing on-street parking clutter and improving the setting of the listed building. At the same time, the existing railings and kerbstones would be reused and the planting areas reinstated further back, with minimal loss of private amenity space and the established landscaping for the occupants of the cottage. This is a much more satisfactory solution than a conventional vehicular access, which would result in the loss of much of the existing garden area and roadside boundary treatment and would likely require vehicles to reverse out on to a narrow lane near a junction, with restricted visibility. Such a solution would not obstruct views of the listed building, harm its setting or diminish in any way its historic and architectural significance.

5.0 Planning Legislation Context

5.1 The key legislation under which local planning authorities should examine the impact of proposed development affecting listed buildings or their setting on their special significance is found in sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended):

> ***"66*** *General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.*
>
> *(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*
>
> *(2) Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provisions of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal Act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.*
>
> ***72*** *General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.*
>
> *(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special*

attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework, as recently extensively revised in August 2026, imposes similar duties on the local planning authority (HE5, HE6, HE9):

"HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets

1. Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. …

2. Assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:

a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or

b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or

c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or

d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

3. In making this assessment it is the effect on a heritage asset's significance rather than the scale of the development which should be considered. …

HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

1. When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.

2. Development proposals which would have a positive effect on a designated heritage asset should be supported.

3. Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.

4. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

HE9: Conservation areas

1. Development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:

a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and

b. Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development. …

3. Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported."

5.3 The requirements of HE5 (1) are met in Sections 1 and 2 of this Heritage Statement and those of HE5 (2) in Section 4. The requirements of HE9 (1) (b) are met in Section 3. It is clear that nothing in this proposal would directly affect the listed Rainbow Cottage, insofar as no physical changes are proposed to be made to it in terms of extension, alteration or demolition and the car parking bay would not obscure views of it in any direction.

5.4 The current setting is an attractively landscaped garden and traditional boundary treatments which, while not historic or architecturally important in themselves, are sympathetic in character and make a visually appealing backdrop to the cottage, as well as providing some separation from the neighbouring modern dwellings to either side. The proposal has a limited impact on this setting on the Shenton Lane side of the property, inasmuch as there would be a reduced area of ornamental planting at the roadside edge and the existing ornamental gateway and railings would be repositioned further back.

5.5 The general character of the setting would be preserved, however, and the use of reclaimed bricks in the construction of the retaining wall, together with the re-use of the granite kerbstones, may be seen as enhancing features. Moreover, the presence of on-street (carriageway) car parking close to the cottage tends to detract from the building's historic ambience and obscure its attractive landscaped setting. Recessing one of those parking spaces back from the road would reduce the 'car clutter' impact in the area closest to the listed building.

5.6 The cottage is an important and prominent focal point in the Conservation Area, lying as it does at the southern termination of the Market Place and at the junction of three other roads. It is one of a very few thatched buildings remaining in the town centre and forms part of a pleasant group with other listed and locally listed buildings nearby. The roadside landscaping flanking the cottage in Shenton and Sutton Lanes is also a visual enhancement to this part of the Conservation Area. The proposed car parking bay will not detract from existing available views of the cottage within its surrounding context. Rows of parked cars can be a distracting, jarring and often obscuring element in an historic street scene and this proposal seeks to reduce the visual impact of at least one car parking space. Landscaping that is closest to the cottage will not be impacted.

Mark Singlehurst, for Alder Mill Enterprise Ltd, Atherstone

29th July 2026, revised 5th August, 1st, 7th & 16th October 2026