

Bentley Historic Core Conservation Area

Bentley Parish Council totally supports the designation of the proposed Historic Core Conservation Area.

Both the original Conservation Area Appraisal carried out by Handforth Heritage and its review by Icení consider that the proposed area demonstrably meets the requirements of Historic England's Conservation Area Criteria.

In terms of its rarity, it incorporates a virtually intact medieval landscape, despite changes to agricultural practices, with a high number of significant medieval and post-medieval structures of Grade 1 and Grade 2* listed buildings.

Bentley has the largest number of named ancient woodlands in Suffolk and a large number of these ancient woodlands are in the proposed area. Their timbers have been used for centuries and have helped shape many aspects of modern Britain, which further reinforces the inherent significance of the area.

The sheer quantum of highly graded listed buildings reflects the 'special' nature of the historic and architectural interest of the area. The historic manorial holdings, and the role of the Tollemache family as something of a 'golden thread' ties the whole Area together in a cohesive manner.

It is possible to experience this special interest through the vast number of publicly accessible footpaths, bridleways and designated Quiet Lanes, which are all well maintained and well used by residents and visitors alike. The long established ['Six Country Walks from The Case'](#) provides a walking guide to residents and visitors from our Community Pub around this area.

This rural, agricultural and in parts, formal landscape has remained relatively untouched by modern development, which is a rare commodity in the 21st century. In the village survey to inform our Neighbourhood Plan, residents wanted to ensure that our ancient woodlands and adjacent rural fields are protected from development. Residents hope that designation will help bring greater protection for the "at risk" Grade 1 listed Bentley Barn. This Elizabethan Barn is amongst the largest and most impressive Tudor structures in Britain and according to Historic England may be the longest timber-framed barn of the period in the country.

The designation of the area would help to retain this unique medieval landscape for generations to come, allowing visitors to experience the peace and tranquillity the area offers, whilst also enabling an appreciation of the historic setting of so many designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Bentley Parish Council consider it is imperative that the District Council fulfils its duty to protect this area under section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Bentley Parish Council
17th February 2025