

A Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) of Plumpton Green, East Sussex

This HLC covers only the area of the modern village of Plumpton Green and will not look at those areas of the parish outside this specific location. It seeks to alert readers to the specific character of the village but not to make any firm recommendations. However its contents should be sufficient to assist in the preparation of such recommendations for the preservation of the unique character of the village and its immediate surroundings.

Medieval period

Plumpton Green is situated to the north of the demesne lands of the medieval manor of Plumpton, which was centred on the manor house and parish church of St Michael's at the scarpfoot, three kilometres to the south. It was formerly part of the waste or common lands to the manor, known as Plumpton Common, which was gradually colonised with small dispersed farmsteads during the medieval period.

Two potential examples of this early encroachment may be inferred by the names Riddens and Knowlands (now Whitehouse Farm) from references to Alice de Redene in 1297 and Wm Knollyng in 1332 (Short 1981, 26-27).

Post-medieval period

In the early years of Elizabeth I's reign the common was sold with a third already having been enclosed and the remainder being enclosed by the beginning of the 17th century. The results of these enclosures can still be seen in the smaller fields edged by shaws and in the names of farms ending in or incorporating the words ridde, rede, breche, broc, and inholmes (Short 1981, 2).

The most obvious extant example of this would be the fields to west of The Fountain, being part of Little Inholmes Farm, formerly part of Inholmes Farm i.e. an enclosed area of common land.

At the Tithes Apportionment 1842 (Figure 1)

The evidence from the tithes apportionment and accompanying map of 1842 by W. Figg and the map of Yeakell and Gardner of 1778 show the village in its pre-railway form. This shows ten properties dotted down the north-south linear feature of the road through the village with the last vestige of the manorial roadside waste to either side. All but Little Inholmes and the originally named Strollings, which were both demolished in the mid 20th century, are still extant in some form. These consist of:

Inholmes Farm : building possibly no longer exists?

Lentridge Farm: timber-frame house now part of larger property

The Well House: house extant, probably late 17th to early 18th century as house and garden; an encroachment on the roadside waste.

Upper Strollings Farm (now Strollings) probably early 18th-century house, extant although built with many reused timbers and altered in late 20th century. An encroachment on the roadside waste.

Knowle Land Farm (now Whitehouse Farm) – 18th century brick built but with some timbers suggesting an earlier house of timber frame. Built beyond the edge of the waste and having a unique vestige of the waste to the front of the property retaining the historic character of this important period of the village's development. The new Village Green created when the Village Hall and West Gate development was built has also preserved this feature and conserved to some extent with Whitehouse Farm, the otherwise lost feature of having open farmland fronting onto Station Road; an aspect of the village that was still preserved late into the 20th century (Figure 2).

Stonings Farm (now Rylands Cottage) is arguably the oldest surviving building in the village, having a substantially complete small square panelled timber frame with extant evidence of unglazed windeyes. It probably dates from around 1600 and is situated beyond the roadside waste.

Western House: built just within the roadside waste so probably 18th century.

Riddens Farm is situated well into the enclosed lands some three fields back for the lane so could have an early origin as suggested by its name.

All those properties built as encroachments on to the waste have characteristic garden plots of very shallow depth the house built to the extreme rear of the plot 'clinging' to the rear boundary of the waste i.e. encroaching to the very minimum onto the manorial lands.

Late Victorian/Edwardian Period

This period is dominated by the arrival of the railway and the widespread brick making industry. This has left the village with a listed Victorian railway station complex, a frontage development of Victorian/Edwardian houses (some small brick workers' cottages and some larger speculative housing), a public house, village shop and a series of ponds which were formerly clay extraction quarries (see Figures 3 & 4). There are also several other former commercial buildings that have been converted into housing including most recently the former Sun Hotel/Winning Post public house. This forms arguably the most important character group of the village as it represents the origins of the area as a distinct residential settlement, separate from Plumpton. The preservation of the remaining properties is paramount to the historic character of the village especially as several important buildings from this group, such as the Plumpton Green Garage and Wells Builders' joinery shop, have been lost in recent years.

Later 20th century speculative residential development

The vast majority of housing in the village was constructed during the second half of the 20th century. It comprises two distinct types:

1. individual speculative houses built as infills in the existing road network being mainly larger detached houses fronting onto Station Road;
2. speculative developments and two local authority housing schemes built on either former brickworking areas or on agricultural fields. The brownfield sites, Chapel Road and Woodgate Meadow etc, do occupy 'backland' to the rear of existing housing while the greenfield sites have tended to be built on lateral spurs jutting well into the surrounding farmland e.g. East View Fields, West Gate and Wells Close. The latter in particular provide another characteristic of this village.

The vast majority of these more modern houses have been built mainly in brick and tile. Although this was most likely due to economy and fashion it means that they conform to possibly the most important vernacular materials of the village as a historic brickyard area set on Wealden Clay.

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References

Short, B. (ed), 1981. *Scarpfoot Parish: Plumpton 1830-1880* (2nd ed. 2013). Plumpton, Plumpton Ancient & Modern. 135pp. (available from Plumpton Green Stores)

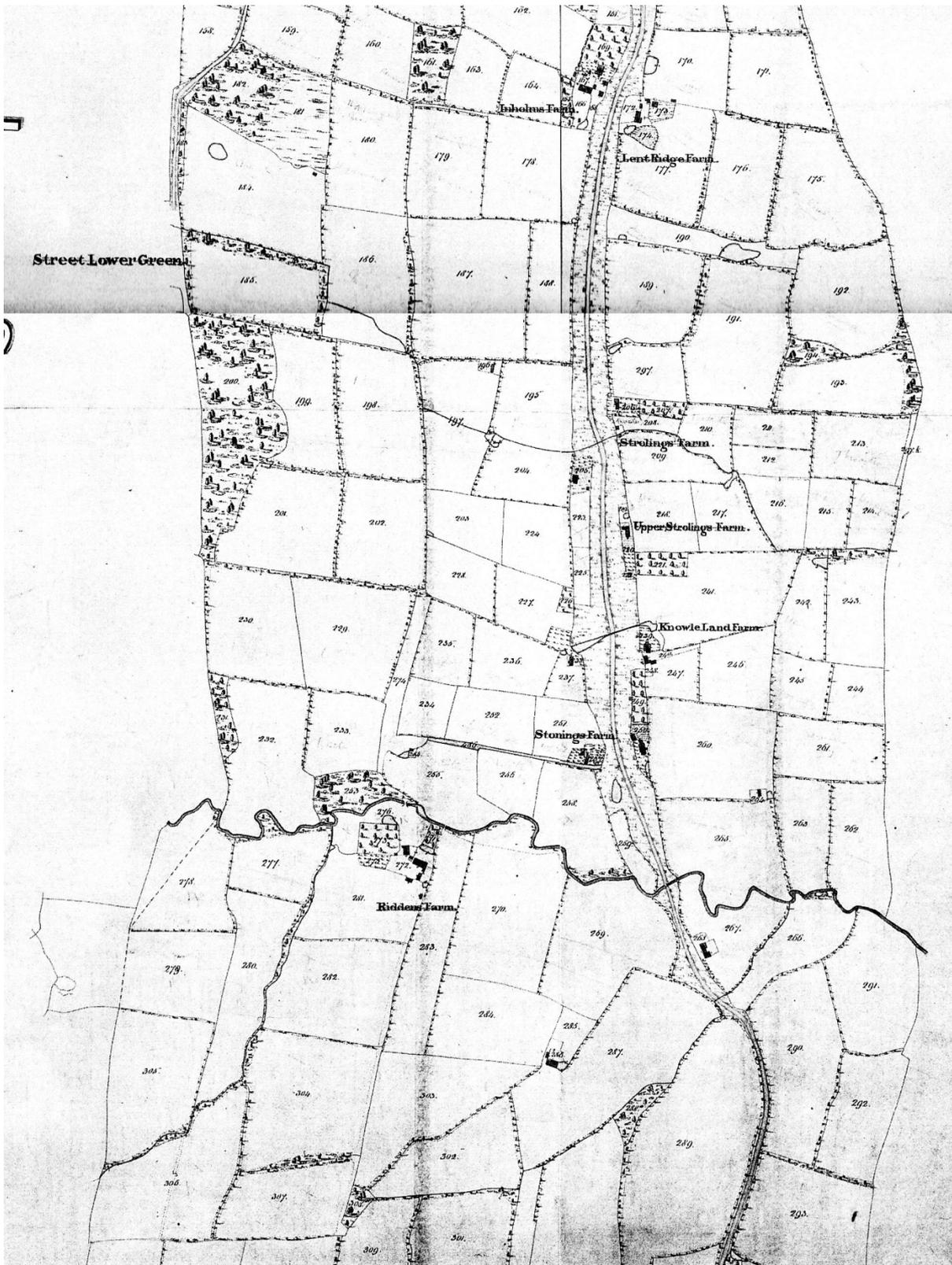


Figure 1: Northern half of the 1842 tithe map ESRO TD/E 95



- VPA - vestige roadside waste
- Current water features
- Current buildings
- Current boundaries

Modern OS lines data laid over image warped extract of the 1841 Plumpton tithe map

Figure 2: Showing the **vestige roadside waste** at the front of Whitehouse and Little Inholmes Farms, together with modern OS boundary and road lines from EDINA digimap, overlaid on a geo-referenced image from the 1841 tithe map ESRO TD/E 95.

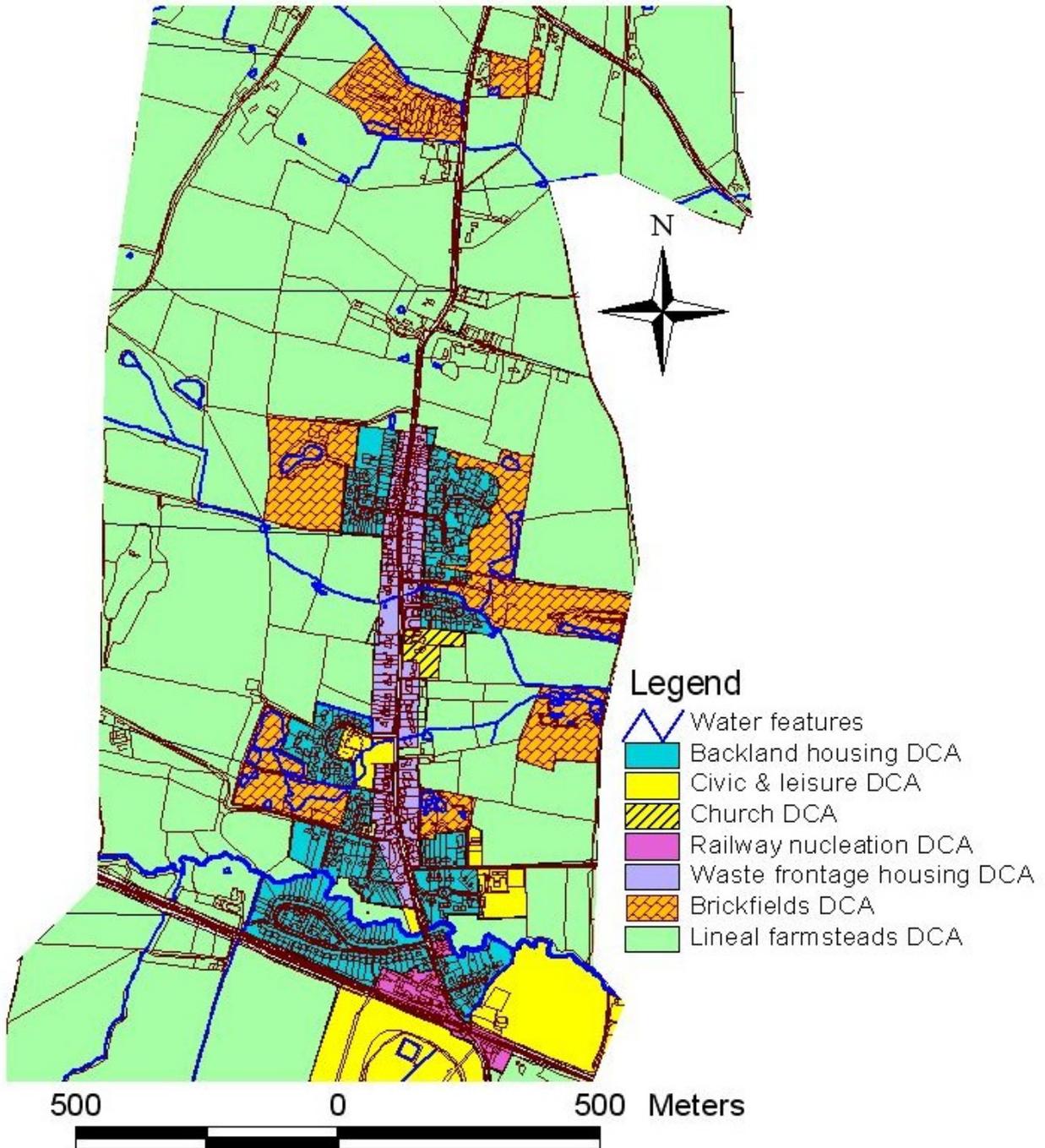


Figure 3: A plan of the Plumpton Green area showing the **Distinct Character Areas (DCAs)** from the Plumpton HLC Report (Millum 2009 unpublished)

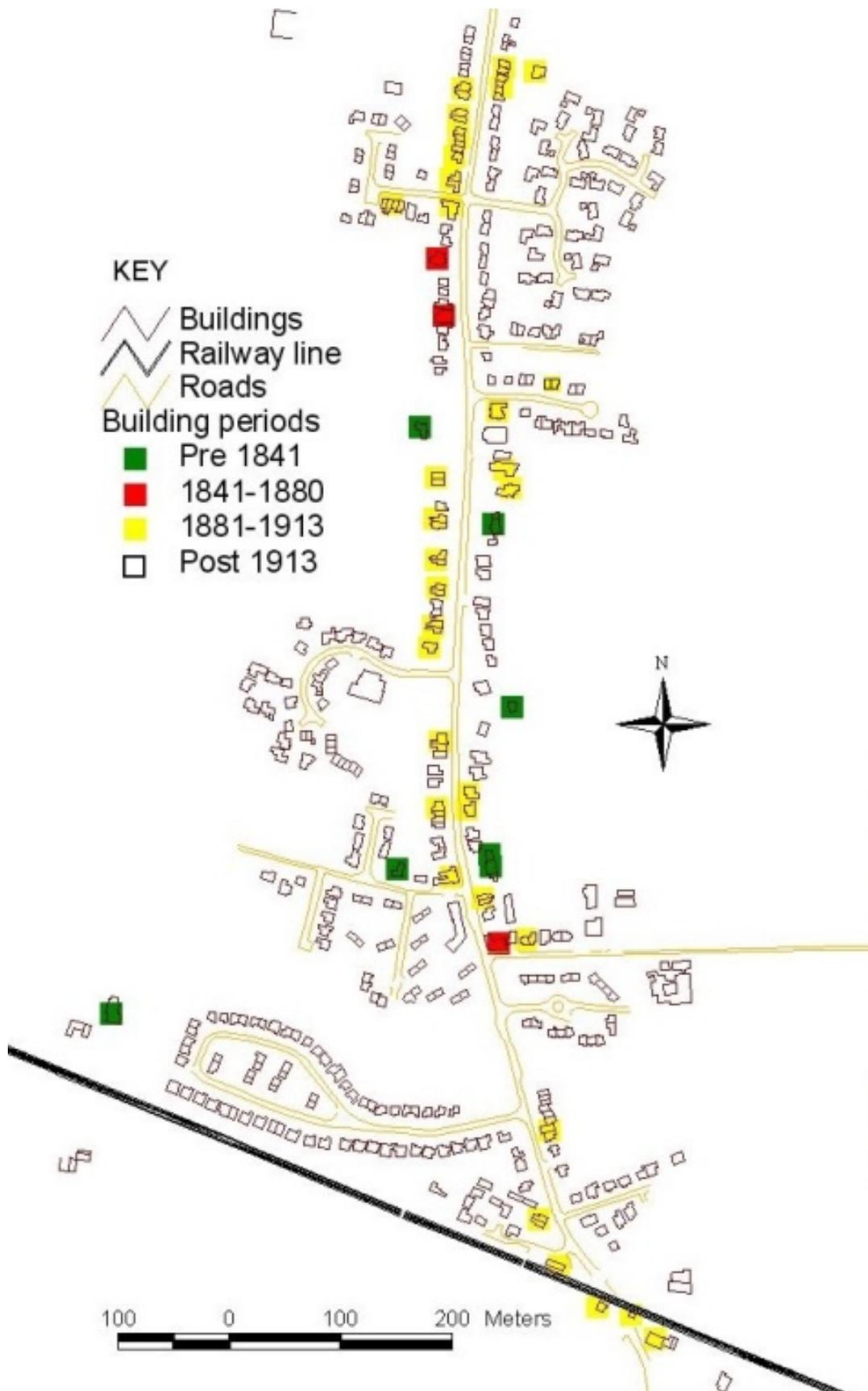


Figure 4: Map of building periods compiled from reference to tithe, early OS and EDINA OS lines data.
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