





<u>Date</u>	<u>Title</u>
01/09/2023	 Village Character Assessment 1980-present
31/08/2023	 Village Character Assessment 1960-80
31/08/2023	 Village Character Assessment to 1960
18/05/2012	 Eynsham housing map

FROM 1960 TO 1980

Between 1960 and 1980, there was a large expansion of the village which led to a doubling of the population. However, because the plot sizes were much smaller than pre-1960, the increase in area covered was not as great. Most of the houses were grouped in two main areas to the north of the village taking advantage of vacant areas lying between the 1914-1960 developments.

SPACES: gaps between built elements – streets, gardens, etc.

Much of the development was planned around gently winding roads and culs-de-sac with open plan front gardens often giving attractive views down the street. However there seems to have been little enforcement of the original open plan aspect with many people having constructed fences and planted hedges giving a bitty look to many of developments built in this era. This coupled with the common paving-over of front gardens for parking and the presence of cars now parked on these “drives” as well as wheelie bins permanently placed in front gardens gives an untidiness much removed from the architect's original vision. However, when designed, the explosion in car ownership and the move towards waste recycling was not of course envisaged. There are in fact a few groups of garages including two blocks in Evans Road and Hanborough Close but their size is inadequate for most modern cars. The tarmac footways alongside the roads and neat kerbstones seem appropriate, though sadly neglected now.



BUILDINGS: Most houses are two-storey semi-detached and terraced constructed in light coloured brick relieved in many cases by white weatherboarding. Roofs are shallow pitched in interlocking concrete tiles and for the most part the chimneys are non-functional serving only as boiler vents.

There are occasional blocks of 3 storey town houses (John Lopes Road and Evans Road) as well as a few barely detached houses and bungalows although higher prices of the latter limit their potential for aging / less mobile residents. There are also a surprising number of “chalet bungalows”. Most of the houses are visually quite similar, although there were efforts by the builders to vary the building line and trim details as well as the occasional house constructed “gable end on”.



As land values had increased by 1960, plot sizes are quite small for a family home, apart from the houses in Spareacre Lane which back on to the A40, presumably to give the residents some distance from the traffic noise. However, the ends of some of their gardens are earmarked for future widening of the A40.

In addition, there is a block of flats for senior citizens at the corner of Mill Street / Spareacre Lane, begun in 1967 and expanded when the water tower came down in 1972.



The architectural style of this period is only now beginning to be appreciated and has therefore over the years been debased by haphazard alterations carried out under permitted development such as replacement of doors and windows in upvc, replacement of boarding in a variety of materials and probably most significantly the conversion of garages to habitable rooms and the construction of filled-in porches. As each alteration has been done to the owner's taste and budget there is a huge variation of styles and any cohesion in the streetscape has been lost.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS: This period also saw the construction of 4 major public village buildings -

- [Eynsham Primary School](#) (built 1967 with a footpath connecting to earlier and later developments)
- [Bartholomew School](#) (main building built 1958 but later extended)
- [Eynsham Medical Centre](#) (built in 1978 on part of the garden of the former Vicarage)
- [St Peter's Church](#) (built in 1968)



The schools and medical centre have little architectural merit but the schools benefit from spacious grounds and playing fields which as well as being a benefit to the school's themselves make the schools appear more visually attractive. [Bartholomew School](#) also incorporates an attractive listed building constructed in local stone (1877) fronting the Witney Road.

There is also a small parade of flats and shops on Mill Street, and another in Spareacre Lane which includes a Spar minimarket. This is a particularly unattractive area with featureless walls alongside the Spar and an unloved area used for bins and fly-tipping.



VIEWS: Some of the planting has been beneficial and mature trees such as the magnificent beech tree in Beech Road and trees opposite Spar shop, in John Lopes Road and the top of Falstaff Close and Shakespeare Road all contribute significantly to the views and vistas. Unfortunately, the elms on Spareacre Lane succumbed to disease before they could benefit the new houses.

GREENERY & LANDSCAPE FEATURES: There are a number of "left over" green spaces such as the small area of green at the end of Hawthorn Road and the larger one behind The Spar which are an asset to the residents and could become more so if the community could be engaged in their use. There is also an ancient bridleway running west east which provides a useful short-cut as well as a green lung.



SPIRIT OF PLACE: The presence of the two schools brings a vitality and youthfulness to the surrounding areas at least twice a day as well as providing a rhythm to the day

EVIDENTIAL VALUE: There is little reminder of the past in these areas of Eynsham. There is the ancient bridleway and Spareacre Lane hails back to an agricultural past but in general street names have been chosen by developers and the Council rather than reflect an earlier history. Beech Road for example is built on the site of a former quarry which few residents will now be aware of - the opportunity to call it Quarry Road having been missed. John Lopes Road is named in honour of Eynsham's first catholic priest but there is no particular link to the location.

OTHER REMARKS: As noted, the architectural style of this period is now becoming more appreciated. However, the 1960-1980 developments in Eynsham were constructed in an "Anywhereville" style and do not exhibit any sense of "Eynsham-ness", an issue common to many (though not all) developments in the periods before and after. There is little therefore that can be carried forward to designing the expansion of the village.

The area has already been developed quite densely and it would be desirable if any remaining open areas could be safeguarded. Any limited one-off infill developments that do take place should respect their immediate surroundings in scale and character. It is also to be hoped that as the architecture of the