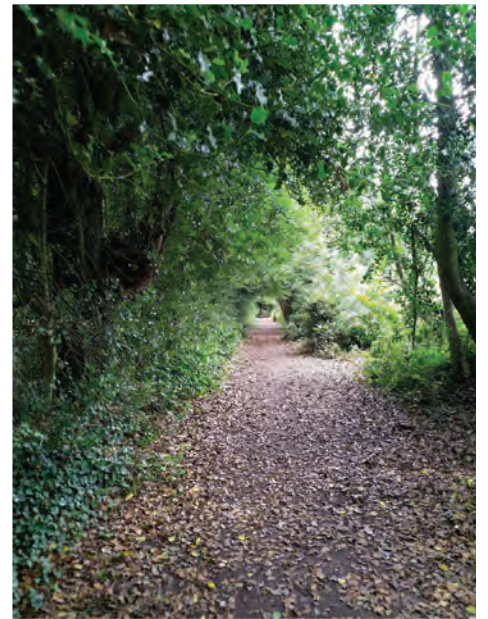




Conservation Area

appraisal



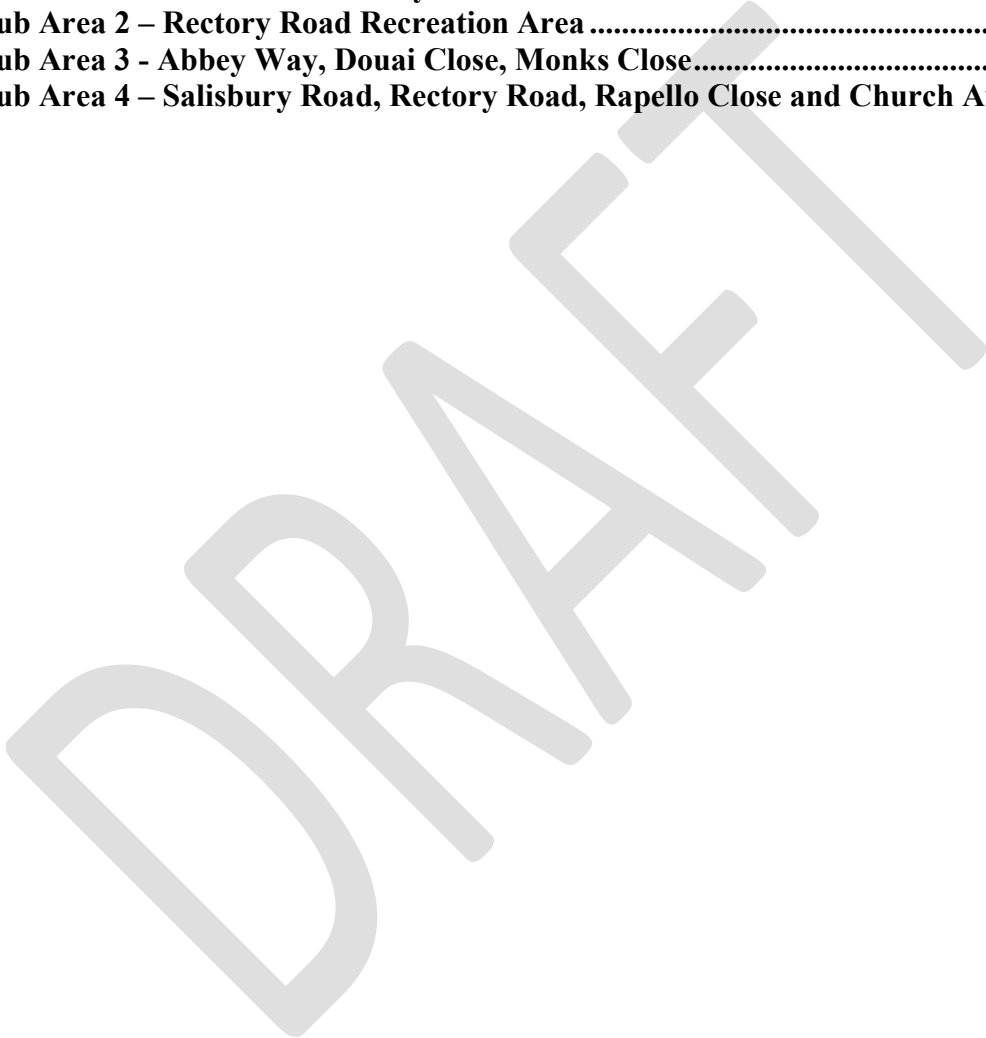
St Michael's Abbey



DRAFT

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1. Introduction

Conservation Area purpose

- 1.1 A Conservation Area is a place of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance. Building groups, walls, trees and hedges, open spaces, views and historic settlement patterns all combine to create a sense of place. It is this character that is required, rather than simply individual buildings, that the designation of Conservation Area status seeks to protect.
- 1.2 The location of the boundary for a conservation area is a qualitative decision relating to character. It is essential for the protection of conservation areas, that only areas which are a heritage asset are designated so that the concept of conservation is not devalued (NPPF Paragraph 191).

Appraisal

- 1.3 This appraisal documents explains why it is proposed to de-designate St. Michael's Abbey Conservation Area and what it implies for residents and businesses in the area.
- 1.4 The historical development of the St. Michael's Abbey area is investigated; it includes a detailed map survey of the area's special architectural and historic interest, with the identification of notable buildings already protected.
- 1.5 Every effort has been made to include or analyse those elements key to the special character of the area. However, where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted, it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value.

Sub area appraisals

- 1.6 This appraisal identifies four distinct areas within the current conservation boundary, notably:
 - Sub Area 1 – St Michael's Abbey and Grounds
 - Sub Area 2- Rectory Road Recreation Area
 - Sub Area 3 - Abbey Way, Douai Close, Monks Close
 - Sub Area 4 - Rectory Road, Rapello Close and Church Avenue

2. An Overview of St Michael's Abbey Conservation Area

Designation History

- 2.1 The St. Michael's Abbey Conservation Area was first designated in 1977 and has since been appraised in 1989.

Location

- 2.2 St. Michael's Abbey Conservation area is located on the north eastern periphery of modern Farnborough and covers an extensive area to the north of the settlement of centred around Farnborough Church and the former Manor House.

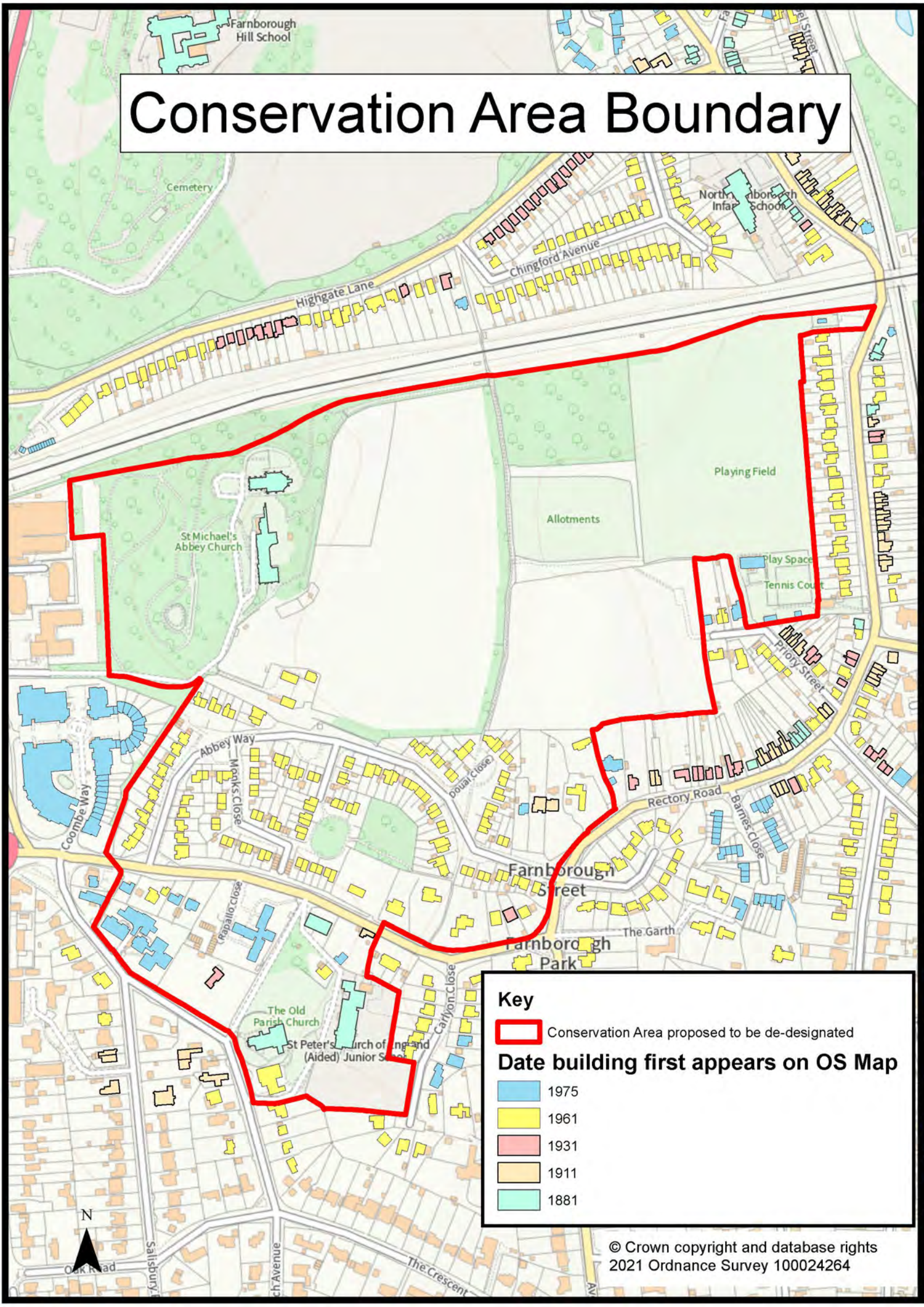
Area Development

- 2.3 The name Farnborough is thought to derive from the old English Ferneberg or Ferneberga or 'hill of ferns' and refers to the extensive areas of undulating heathland that originally covered the area. With a small station at Farnborough Street Village, the area became readily accessible from London and increased its potential for investment and an attractive place to live.
- 2.4 The northern boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by the London railway line. The manorial estate included all of Farnborough, apart from the common and was held by a succession of families until the late 19th century when the Farnborough Park Estate was broken up and sold for residential development, forming much of the modern housing in the area today.


Tree Protection

- 2.5 Trees in a conservation area are protected by legislation so that the council should be notified of any works to a tree. By de-designating the conservation area this will mean that this protection will be removed, unless the trees benefit from a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). In order to ensure that valuable trees are not lost, our Arboricultural Officer has been kept abreast of the proposed de-designation of the conservation area and an initial observation of the trees which will be affected has been made, and the TPO process can be initiated where necessary.






Conservation Area Boundary



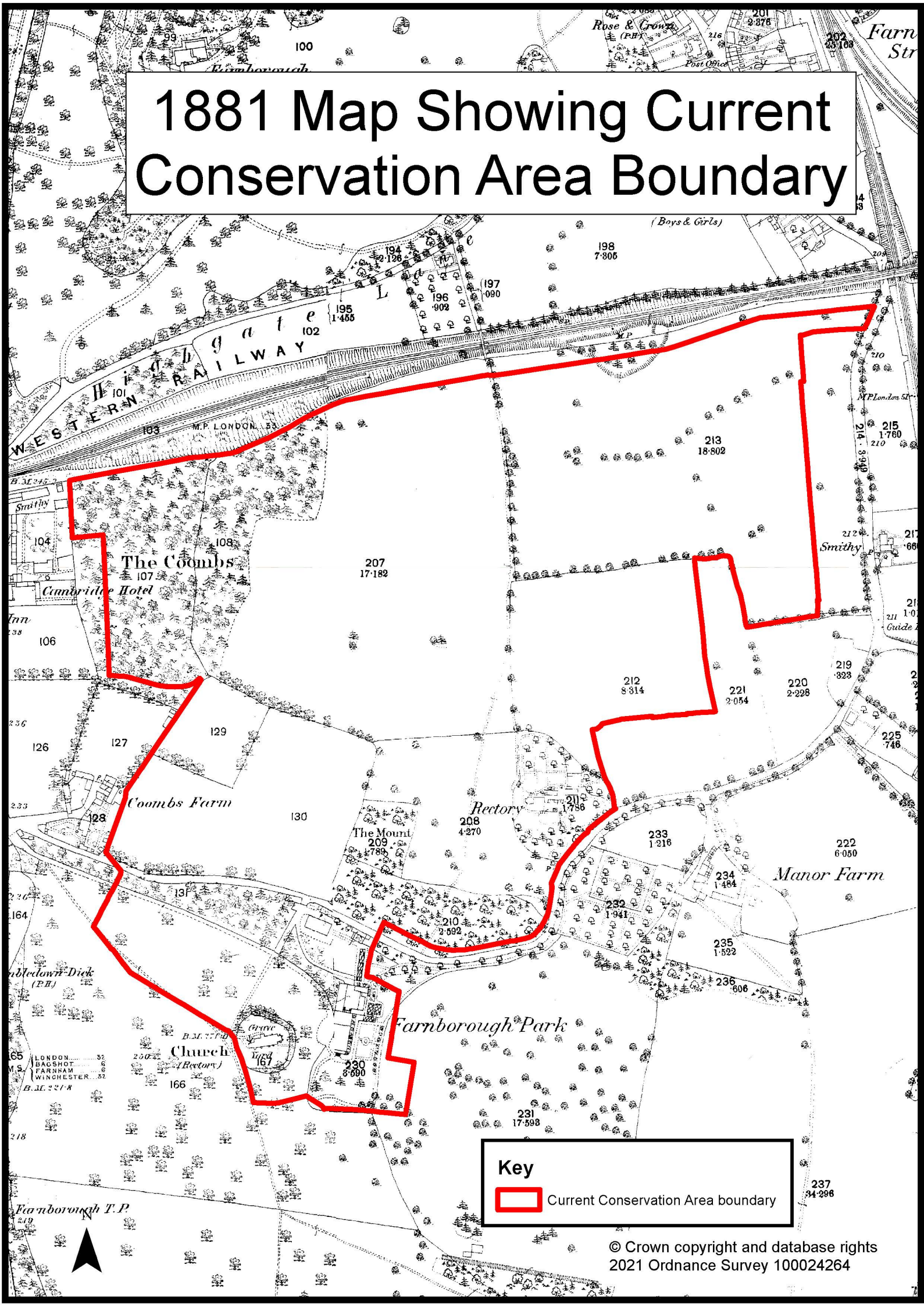
Key

 Conservation Area proposed to be de-designated

Date building first appears on OS Map

-  1975
-  1961
-  1931
-  1911
-  1881

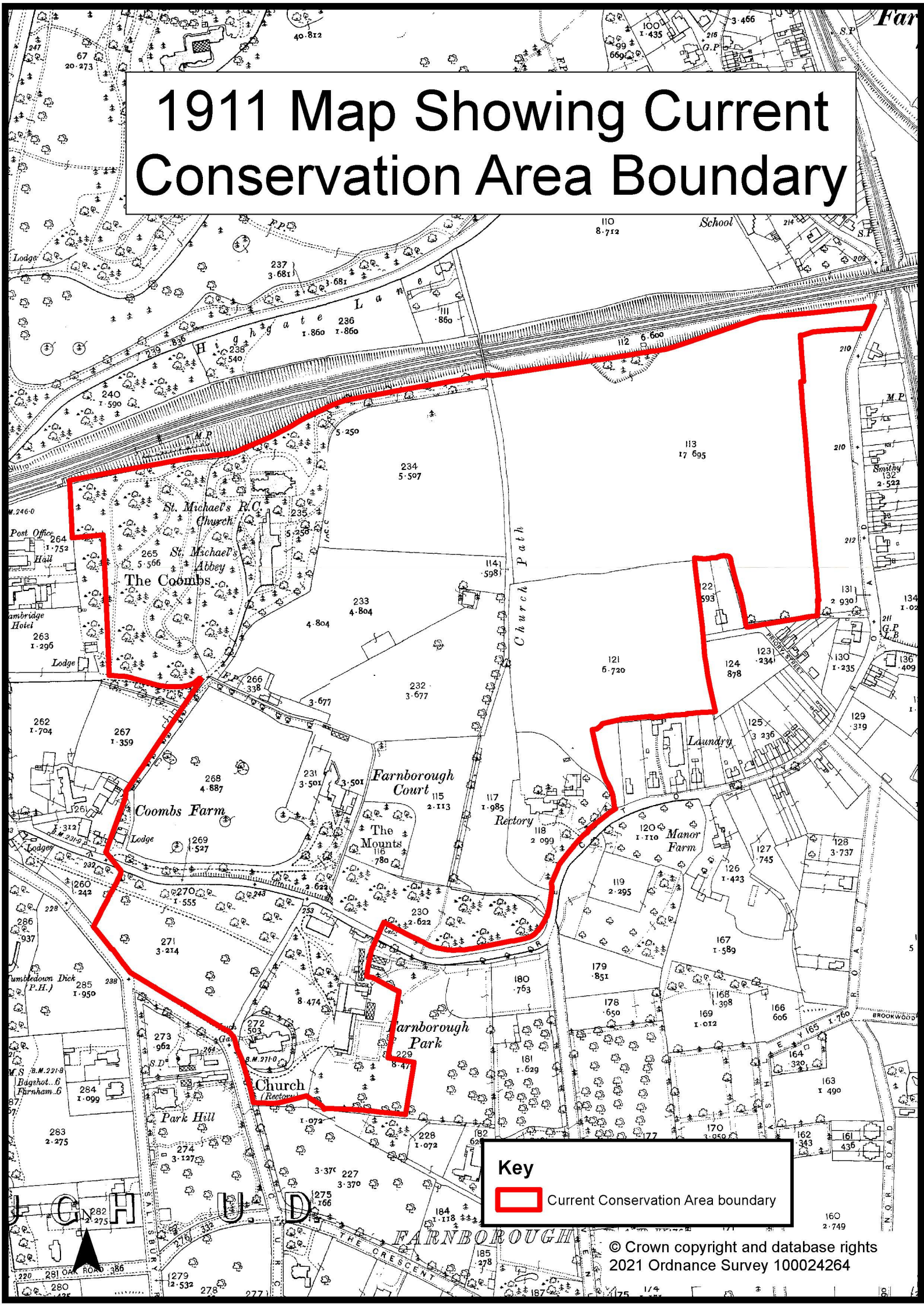
1881 Map Showing Current Conservation Area Boundary




Key

 Current Conservation Area boundary

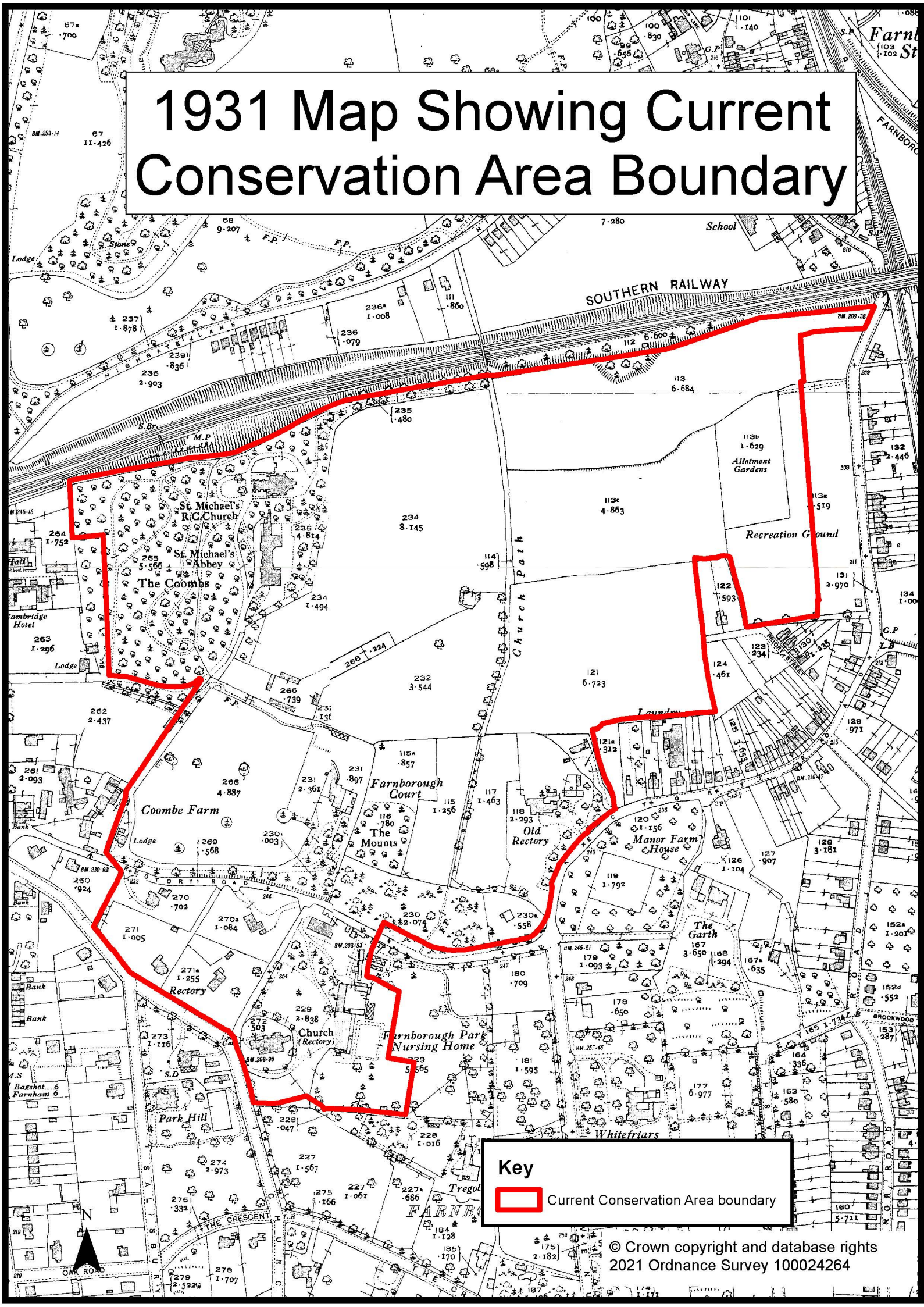
1911 Map Showing Current Conservation Area Boundary




Key

 Current Conservation Area boundary

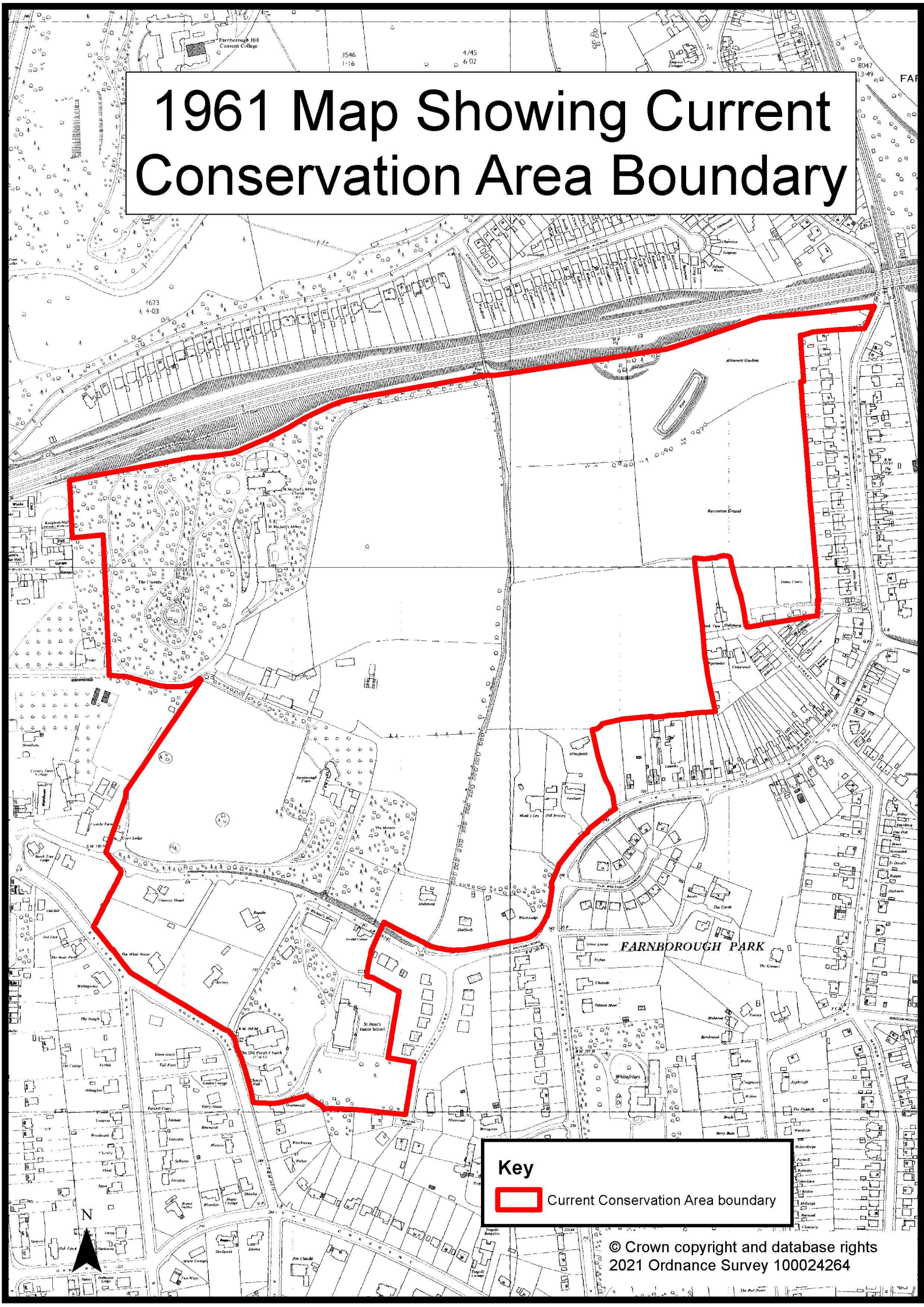
1931 Map Showing Current Conservation Area Boundary



Key

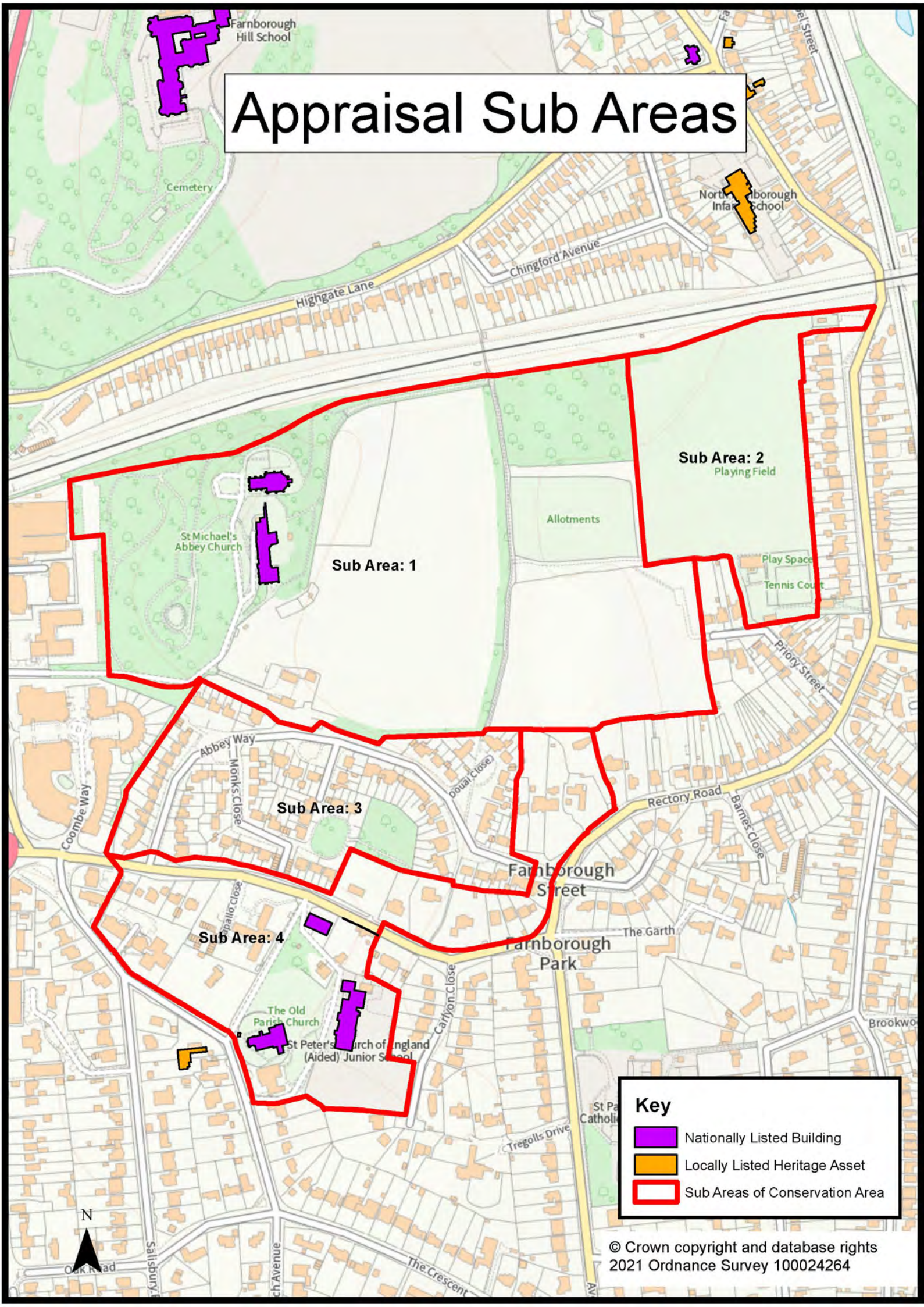
 Current Conservation Area boundary

1961 Map Showing Current Conservation Area Boundary






Key
[Red outline] Current Conservation Area boundary

Appraisal Sub Areas



Key

-  Nationally Listed Building
-  Locally Listed Heritage Asset
-  Sub Areas of Conservation Area

3. Sub Area 1 – St Michael's Abbey and Grounds

- 3.1 Until the early 19th century, much of Windmill Hill, now Farnborough Hill, was still part of the common lands of Farnborough Manor. A separate house on the western flanks of the hill was recorded on maps by the mid 18th century.
- 3.2 In 1860, the wealthy Victorian publisher Thomas Longman acquired the house at Farnborough Hill, including the now substantial grounds. He redeveloped the old house and relocated the new mansion to the present hilltop site where it became known as 'Farnborough Hill'.
- 3.3 On the death of Thomas Longman in 1879, the mansion and grounds were bought by the Empress Eugenie, the widow of Napoleon III of France. The house then became her home in exile from 1880 to 1920. In addition to the Farnborough Hill estate, she also acquired the wooded hillside beyond the railway line to the south of the existing parkland. Here, on the summit of the opposing mount, she constructed a permanent mausoleum for the bodies of her husband and son in a church that she could view from her private rooms. The mausoleum included a monastery building and lands for a permanent community of monks to serve the chapel. At first it was the Premonstratensian order, then later, and as is today, the Benedictine order. The priory was raised to abbey status in 1903 and is known today as the complex of St. Michael's Abbey, held in trust as a Benedictine Monastery.
- 3.4 The Abbey Church of St Michael and its associated monastic buildings are approached from the main Farnborough Road. This informal approach winds uphill through overhanging tree canopies to reveal an eclectic range of monastery buildings, culminating in the Abbey Church in an elevated and discretely detached position to the north of the group. The original entrance had a lodge and gates at the foot of the inclined and wooded driveway to the buildings. The appearance was of similar rustic character as the existing entrance lodges to Farnborough Hill. The lodge no longer exists and there is currently little indication from this approach, nor indeed in general views from the south west, of the character of the Abbey complex beyond the wooded slopes and trees.
- 3.5 St. Michael's Abbey grounds have mature tree planted boundaries that buffer the site in all directions from the modern housing, Farnborough town centre, Farnborough Street and the historic settlement centred around the Church and former Manor House.
- 3.6 A public footpath runs through the grounds of Abbey which is predominantly tree lined. To the West of the footpath lies the abbey buildings and grounds whilst to the east the open grounds continue which three fields, the North Field, central field where

the Jubilee Allotment Gardens were established in 2012 and to the South the larger Laundry Field. The three fields did not originally belong to the Abbey but belonged to Farnborough Manor, however they were believed to have been purchased in the early 20th century to enable the Abbey to expand their farm.

- 3.7 The listed abbey and monastery form their own curtilage and protection, with the grounds in the listed curtilage and wider setting, all protected under the listing as governed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Part 1, Section 16 (2) and Part 1, Section 66 (1) & (2) and the National Planning Policy Framework. The protection of being nationally listed provides greater security than that of a conservation area, therefore the de-designation of the conservation area will not reduce the level of protection offered, except for trees.
- 3.8 The entire sub area is designated as an Important Open Area in the Rushmoor Local Plan Policy NE2 (green Infrastructure) in recognition that large open spaces within the urban area are significant in terms of amenity, health and well-being. In addition, the allotments are protected through Local Plan Policy DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) which seeks to protect against the loss of existing open space and focus on its enhancement given the limited opportunity to create new open space in the borough.
- 3.9 The trees within the sub area will be surveyed by the Tree Officer for any necessary protection orders in order to protect this landscape character prior to the de-designation of the Conservation Area.

Sub Area 1— St Michaels Abbey & Grounds



Image 1 —Exterior of the Abbey



Image 2— View of the Abbey looking West from the Historic Footpath

Sub Area 1— St Michaels Abbey & Grounds



Image 3—View looking North along public footpath



Image 4 — View of allotments looking North East from informal path

4. Sub Area 2 – Rectory Road Recreation Area

- 4.1 Within the sub area lies the Rectory Road Recreation Area and Playground which offers a range of facilities including grass football pitches, hard tennis courts, modern play area in addition to a car park. There are also a number of structures in the sub area including Roberts Hall, a building housing a pre -school and public toilets.
- 4.2 This open space reinforces the natural setting of the Abbey and associated buildings on the hilltop to the west, as well as providing well cared for important public amenity space. It is believed that part of the land transferred from the Abbey in the mid 1950's to the then Farnborough Urban District Council to create an expanded recreation ground.
- 4.3 The sub area is owned by Rushmoor Borough Council and the buildings and structures are modern that have no significance to warrant conserving in a conservation area. There are some notable mature trees within the sub area that will be surveyed by the Tree Officer for any necessary protection orders in order to protect this landscape character prior to the deletion of the boundary.
- 4.4 The recreation ground is protected through Local Plan Policy DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) which seeks to protect against the loss of existing open space and focus on its enhancement given the limited opportunity to create new open space in the borough. In addition, the playing pitches are protected by Local Plan Policy DE7 (Playing Fields and Ancillary Facilities) which seeks to protect the existing provision of playing fields to meet current and future demands.

Sub Area 2—Recreation Ground



Image 5 —View from top of the recreation ground looking South



Image 6 —View football field looking South East



Image 7—View of the Abbey looking west from football pitch

Sub Area 2—Recreation Ground



Image 8 —View Looking North East of tennis Courts



Image 9 —View of modern structure

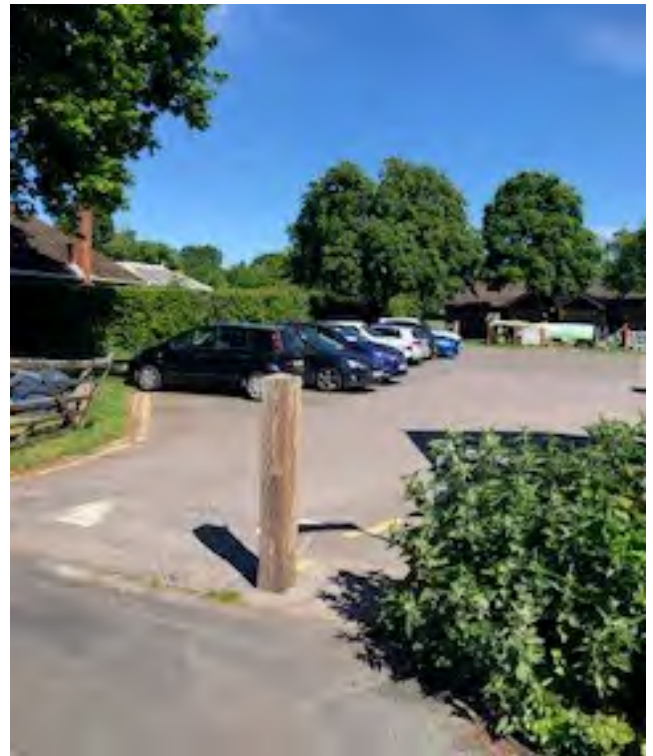


Image 10 —View Looking North West into

5. Sub Area 3 - Abbey Way, Douai Close, Monks Close

- 5.1 The buildings within the sub area are modern residential properties that have no significance to warrant conserving in a conservation area and also provide a contrast in architecture and in character, to that of the Abbey and its grounds. Within the sub area there are not any nationally listed or locally listed buildings.
- 5.2 The sub area is well screened from the St. Michael's Abbey by trees within the Abbey grounds that border the residential area and some mature trees within the rear gardens of properties along Douai Close and Abbey Way, the majority of which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- 5.3 The mature street trees within the sub area that are located in residential gardens and areas of informal public space area a key character feature of the area. Several of the mature trees within the area benefit from Tree Preservation Orders, however prior to de-designation trees within the sub area will be surveyed by the Tree Officer to determine whether additional Tree Preservation Orders are required.

Sub Area 3—Abbey Way, Douai Close, Monks Close



**Image 11—Modern Properties
Along Abbey Way**



**Image 12—Abbey Way / Monks
Close Open Space**

6. Sub Area 4 – Salisbury Road, Rectory Road, Rapello Close and Church Avenue

6.1 The Manor of Farnborough' is mentioned in the Domesday Book as part of the Hundred of Crondall, in the Shire of Southampton, which covered 30,000 acres of land in Hampshire. In the medieval period, the Manor of Farnborough, with its fields and settlement is thought to have centred on the Manor House and the adjacent Church of St. Peter. Elements of the existing church date from the 12th and 13th centuries, whilst the circular plan form of the churchyard suggests the possible site of an earlier Saxon building.

6.2 The Manor House has changed names over the centuries, it was known as Farnborough Place in the 1660s and Farnborough Park in the mid 19th century and today is St Peter's School.

6.3 Both the School and Church are grade II listed buildings, as are the grounds and boundary features/structures, with curtilage listed protection. The Lych Gate is locally listed and St Michael's Mews is grade II listed. The buildings, features and wider setting are all protected under the listings as governed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Part 1, Section 16 (2) and Part 1, Section 66 (1) & (2) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.4 As noted above the historic buildings within the sub area already benefit from protection.

6.5 In addition, the school playing fields are protected by Local Plan Policy DE7 (Playing Fields and Ancillary Facilities) which seeks to protect the existing provision of playing fields to meet current and future demands.

Rectory Road

6.6 Along Rectory road are a number of modern properties of no historic value, the majority of which are well screened by planting along their boundaries. The development in Rapallo Close is a modern flatted development sit in a landscaped setting set back from the road. The mature trees within the grounds of the Rapallo Close development make a valuable contribution to its character and these trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

6.7 The sarsen stone wall to Fernhill Cottage, 30 Rectory Road is a locally listed structure (Locally listed Heritage Asset) which benefits from protection under national and local planning policy.

6.8 The Northern side of Rectory Road (no's 11a – 17) are well screened from the highway by vegetation and trees within the curtilage of the properties. The historic Church Path

that is visible on maps dating back to 1881 runs between No17 and No19 Rectory Road and connects to Abbey Wey where the path continues. The remaining houses that lie within the conservation area along Rectory Road (numbers 19-29) are modern developments with some mature trees within the curtilage which add to the character of the area.

Salisbury Avenue / Church Avenue

- 6.9 Cooper Court on Salisbury road is a modern development with only the mature trees within the grounds that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order making a positive contribution towards the character of the area.
- 6.10 To the East of Copper Court is the Rectory on Church Avenue that is located in a sizable plot with the Church of St. Peter being located to the East. Historic maps indicate that the rectory was constructed between 1911 and 1931. The Rectory is set in mature ground with a number of the trees within the ground benefiting from a Tree Preservation Order.
- 6.11 To the East of the Grade II Listed Church of St Peter is the church hall which is a modern building with a mature tree in its grounds that adds to the character of the area.
- 6.12 To conclude the majority of the buildings within the sub area, except those that are protected through National or Local Listing have no historic or architectural interest to be included within a conservation area. Prior to de-designation trees within the sub area that are not already covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) will be surveyed by the Tree Officer to determine whether a TPO required.

Sub Area 4– Church Avenue, Rectory Road



Image 13—St Peter's Church Hill



Image 14—St Peter's School



Image 15—30 Rectory Road

Sub Area 4 - Rectory Road, Rapello Close



Image 16 —Modern Church Hall, Church Avenue



Image 17—Rapello Close



Image 18 —Modern Properties along Rectory Road