

Introduction

This character assessment has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to identify and describe the distinctive features, appearance and feel of Drinkstone. The Steering Group was assisted by Places4People Planning Consultancy, and this assessment is based on the guidelines published by Planning Aid England, a town planning advisory organisation that is part of the Royal Town Planning Institute. It states that ***"A character assessment is a document that describes the distinct appearance and feel of a settlement or an area. It communicates the key physical features and characteristics that combine to give a particular settlement or an area its local distinctiveness and unique identity"***

In addition to the Built Character Appraisal, a separate character appraisal has also been undertaken of the landscape in which the village sits. It identifies landform, underlying geology, special landscape areas, important features including views, woodland, pond and hedgerows across the parish. (See evidence document XXX)

A subgroup of the Steering Group identified 7 distinct character areas of the built up areas in the parish, as identified in the maps on the following pages. Members of the Steering Group assessed these areas by walking the roads and footpaths using the Planning Aid guidelines that cover:

- Topography
- Land uses
- Layout
- Roads, streets and routes
- Spaces
- Buildings
- Landmarks
- Green and natural features
- Streetscape
- Views

In addition, detailed information on individual buildings, covering age, history and construction, was incorporated from the output of a Millennium project "Drinkstone 200 - a photographic survey of the village at the turn of the century". This was produced by the Drinkstone Local History Group, and is held in the village archives.

All the information was collated to produce the character assessment tables for each area that form the basis for the contents of this document.

Drinkstone

The parish of Drinkstone is situated south of the A14 between the market towns of Bury St Edmunds (8 miles) and Stowmarket (7 miles). Like many Suffolk villages, Drinkstone has two settlements. One, known as The Street, is clustered around the church.

The main settlement, Drinkstone Green, as its name suggests, is located on and around the former Drinkstone Great Green. The layout of this settlement was determined by the lines of ancient tracks

and lanes alongside and across the Green. The Green disappeared with the Enclosure Act of 1853, and some lanes disappeared or were rerouted, but the dwellings with many subsequent additions remain.

There are also two small clusters of dwellings outside the current settlement boundary - one at the south end of Rattlesden Road, known as Potash, and one around and near Drinkstone Park, on the site of a large country house demolished in 1948.

There are also a number of outlying farms and cottages. Many of the farms date back to the 15th century, and some of the cottages built to house farm workers are still standing and are as old as these farms.

Within the parish boundary there are 37 listed buildings, including the church, 27 dwellings, 2 windmills, 6 barns and an 18C dovecote

The village is set within a landscape of Suffolk ancient rolling farmland. In recent years much of the farmland close to the village has been reclassified for equestrian use. All the former farm houses, farm buildings and yards within or close to the settlement boundary have been redeveloped for housing.

Character area assessments

The following pages contain the detailed assessments of each character area. Each assessment provides key bullet points under each of the 10 categories listed in the Planning Aid template. The tables are supplemented by mapping and photographs to illustrate key features

Drinkstone Green

This forms the main settlement of Drinkstone. It is a typical linear village shape, determined by the presence of old properties dotted along the routes of lanes and tracks on the former Drinkstone Great Green. There are four roads - Chapel Lane, Gedding Road, Rattlesden Road and Cross Street.

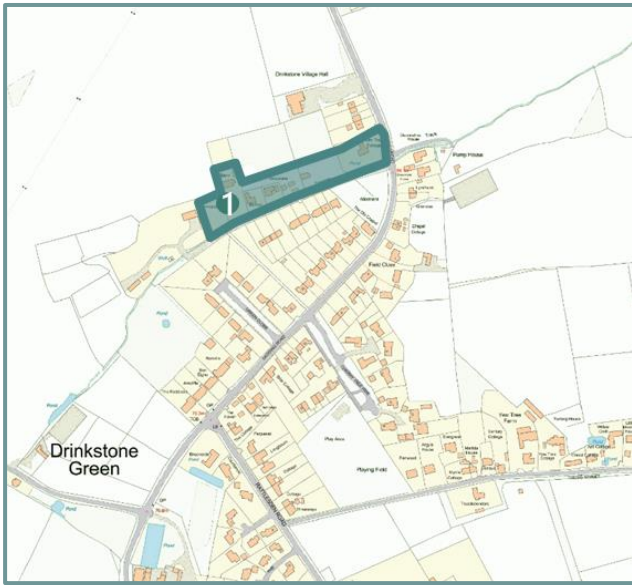
In 1920 there were around 25 recorded dwellings, some dating back to the 15th century. Since 1950 there has been significant development, largely by infilling along the four roads.

We have divided Drinkstone Green into four character areas:



1. The North Side of Chapel Lane

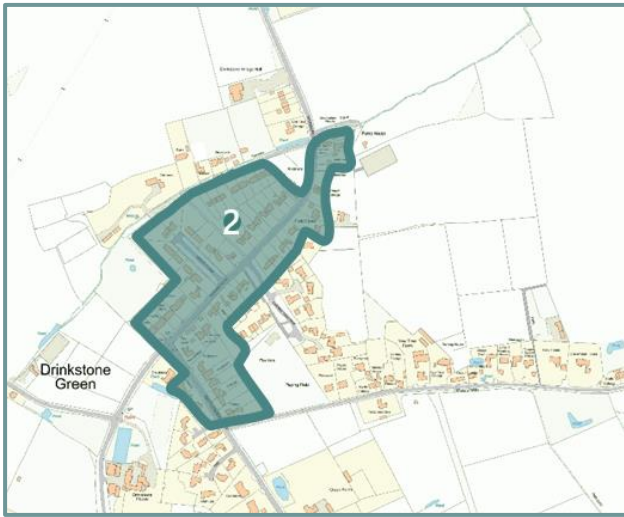
Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat, bounded by hedges on road side and belt of trees behind • Stream runs along road side 	Residential and some open land
Layout	Roads, streets, routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 properties border the road on the north side • All detached • All on individual plots • All have wide driveways and 4 of the 5 have large front gardens • The cluster of 3 listed buildings on this side of the road form a significant grouping. A fourth 15C cottage became derelict before WW2, and a further cottage across from the end of the lane was demolished and replaced with modern infill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A no through road restricted width lane, unadopted • No pavement • Public footpath access from Gedding Road • Very restricted visibility in both directions at junction with highway makes exiting the lane hazardous
Spaces	Buildings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each house is distinct. 4 are period built, with one modern house at the end of the lane • Mix of periods and finishes • Elm Tree Cottage - Grade II listed, ca.14C. Render over timber frame, part brick, thatch. Modern annexe with tiled roof. • Brookside - Grade II listed detached thatched cottage, rendered. Eyebrow dormer. The property has been extended with a modern timber built garage linked to the original by a single storey link. Pantile roofs to these. Driveway with bridge over stream • Belrod - ca. 18C clunch single storey cottage, pantile roof • High Barn. large detached Grade II listed. Early example of barn conversion ca. 1850 into two cottages. Typical four bay barn on edge of Drinkstone Green. Made into one house post WW2. Thatch, exposed exterior timbers. Modern detached annexe brick, pantile. All well set back and partially concealed from lane. Wide driveway access via bridge over stream • The Willows - constructed 1998 in field. Modern traditional house design with garage. Well in garden. Fully concealed from lane via a long curving driveway with bridge over stream
Landmarks	Green and natural features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tributary of Blackbourne runs along North side of lane. • Whole area framed by a belt of mature trees at the rear
Streetscape	Views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead cables • Boundary to Chapel Lane formed by mature hedges and trees 	



2. Chapel Lane South Side, Gedding Road and Rattlesden Road as far as Cross Street.

Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This character area covers the junction of two routes through the village - Gedding Road and Rattlesden Road • After dipping down to a stream Gedding Road rises gently to the SW. After the junction, Rattlesden Road rises gently to the S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and recreational • Outside immediate area is arable farmland to the E and W • Views over open farmland to E
Layout	Roads, Streets, Routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The character area is roughly L shaped. Overall layout mainly follows tracks and lanes existing prior to the enclosure of Drinkstone Great Green, or which were rerouted after enclosure • Largely linear development except for the cul de sac of Drinkstone Green Close • Spacing and set back from the road is variable, reflecting waves of development, though each development has a consistent building line • Buildings set back from the road with smaller front gardens and driveways • Buildings mainly back onto other buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main vehicular route in and out of the village • Pavement along parts of Gedding Road and Rattlesden Road. Otherwise hazardous walking • Public footpath access at Cherry Tree Rise, and at the end of Chapel Lane linking with an extensive footpath network to the E • Bend and limited visibility at junction with Chapel Lane and at Rattlesden Road
Spaces	Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotment site at junction with Chapel Lane • Village Hall at N end of area • Wide grass verge with mature ornamental trees on Drinkstone Green close 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterised by smaller semi-detached or detached cottages, houses and bungalows • Mix of periods and finishes, 12 brick semi detached cottages pre WW1, 14 local authority houses built 1930-1950, with a further 14 local authority bungalows on the south side of Chapel Lane added in the 1960s. 12 chalet bungalows for private sale on Drinkstone Green Close built 1964 • 8 detached bungalows as infill along the road, with 2 detached houses infill in garden land. • Various materials and finishes - render, red brick, Woolpit white brick; pantile roofs • Most houses have driveways • There are no listed buildings in this area • A building of note is the Old Chapel, a former baptist chapel, now converted to a house and much altered
Landmarks	Green and natural features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village sign on Drinkstone Green Close 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area framed by belt of large mature native trees on NW side
Streetscape	Views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead cables • Road signs including 30mph speed limit • Mixture of boundary treatments at road side - some hedges, some fences, some open plan where original boundary structure has been removed • No street lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive views to the E across open landscape opposite Village Hall

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3 and 3a The Meadows and Cherry Tree Rise

Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meadows is level • Cherry Tree Rise rises to the E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Outside immediate area is arable farmland to the E and residential to the N,S and W • Views over open farmland to E
Layout	Roads, Streets, Routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area 3 and 3a are separated by character area 2, and differ from their surrounding areas in layout and density • The Meadows is formed by 2 cul-de-sac developments with dwellings clustered around access spine roads • Cherry Tree rise has dwellings clustered off an access road with wide grass verges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meadows has 2 access roads to separate cul de sacs • Cherry Tree Rise has a paved curving access road with wide grass verges planted with ornamental trees, 3 cul de sacs off central access road, a public footpath along W side of site giving access to wider footpath network
Spaces	Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide grass verge with ornamental trees on Cherry Tree Rise • Narrow verges on the Meadows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential estates, characterised by large modern detached 4-5 bedroom houses. 13 on The Meadows and 13 on Cherry Tree rise • Relatively small plot sizes • Cherry Tree Rise has 4 semi detached affordable houses
Landmarks	Green and natural features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original hedges preserved on Cherry Tree Rise
Streetscape	Views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead cables • Mixture of boundary treatments at road side, hedges or open plan • Cherry Tree Rise has preserved original hedge line • No street lights • No pavements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive views to the E across open land from Cherry Tree Rise, with a view over the playing field to the W



4a. Cross Street

Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly undulating lane running NE • Hedges on road side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and recreational • Playing field at W end of road • Open farm land to N,S and E
Layout	Roads, Streets, Routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Street follows the line of an ancient named route across the former Drinkstone Great Green • Layout is linear along the road with dwellings predominantly on the N side of the road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single track no through road • No pavements, narrow grass verges • Mature hedges marking boundaries along the road
Spaces	Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing field at W end of road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large detached houses infilling between older listed and unlisted properties • 3 listed properties, 4 unlisted pre 1900, 12 post 1950 • Mix of periods and materials, white and red brick, flint, render, thatch, pantiles • Each house is distinct • All properties have extensive views over open land to front and rear • Treaclebenders - the only property on the S side of Cross Street. Grade II listed, part 15C, combination of rendered clay lump, wattle and daub and lath and plaster. 15C part thatched, 19C addition pantiled. Thatched dormer on E elevation • Stotts cottages - 16C Grade II listed, semi detached timber frame, rendered cottages. Wood shingle roof • Matilda House - unlisted semi detached cottage, flint with brick surrounds, thatched • Chesil Cottage - unlisted. Originally 2 dwellings, one timber frame and one flint. Rendered at front, pantile roof
Landmarks	Green and natural features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small copse on N side behind Stotts Cottages
Streetscape	Views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overhead cables • Road signs including 30mph speed limit • Mainly hedges at road sides • No street lights • No pavements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive views over open land to N, S, and E

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4. Rattlesden Road South of Cross Street

Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rises gently to the S• The highest point in the parish is on Rattlesden Road at junction with Garden House Lane• Extensive views over open land to W, E and S• Open views to NW beyond The Drift	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential and recreational• Allotments and parish grazing land on E side just before Garden House Lane• Outside immediate area are arable farmland or paddocks to the W, E and S
Layout	Roads, Streets, Routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The character area follows the line of an ancient track alongside Drinkstone Great Green, rerouted at N end after enclosure.• Largely linear development of modern infilling between scattered older properties.• 1 small close of 3 cottages dating back to the 15thC, and 1 modern infill development of 3 large detached houses on a former farmyard.• Spacing is wide, and properties are generally well set back from the road, with variable building lines• Most properties back onto open land and are well screened by mature hedges and trees at the front and rear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main vehicular route in and out of the village• No pavements, makes walking hazardous• Narrow grass verges• One small unpaved lane, known locally as Shop Lane, giving access to 3 15C cottages• One unpaved access lane to 3 dwellings at The Drift, one 15C, 2 modern infilling• One private road, Garden House Lane giving access to the E to 3 dwellings• Public footpath access opposite Shop Lane giving access to Gedding Road to the W• Public footpath giving access via the Drift to wider footpath network to the E• 2 public footpaths through the fields just beyond the settlement boundary giving access to the wider footpath network to the W and E

Spaces	Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allotment site and parish grazing land on E side just before Garden House Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each detached house has distinct and different features. 15 houses are pre 1950; 21 houses built post 1950, most in the 1970s Mix of periods and finishes, red brick and render, pantile, plain tile and slate roofs The Gables - Grade II listed, set back along an unpaved shared drive, 14/15C, rendered timber frame and thatch, well in garden. <p>Shop lane cluster: a group of 4 15C dwellings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kopsey Cottage - 15C grade II listed former hall house. Became 3 dwellings in 18C, now one. Rendered timber frame with modern brick additions. Original section thatched, modern extensions pantiles or flat felt roof. 4 eyebrow dormers. Well in garden Fyfers - 15C Grade II listed, was 2 dwellings, now one. Rendered timber frame with brick addition at rear. Original section thatched, addition pantiled. Chimbleys - unlisted. Original section ca. 15C, timber framed and originally thatched. Major renovation and extension in the 1970s Needles Eye - unlisted 15C house, originally two dwellings. Rendered timber frame, extended in the 1960s, originally thatched but reroofed in plain tiles at the same time. 3 original dormer windows to front Green Farm - unlisted 17C former farmhouse. Timber frame, rendered, some old red brick, plain tiled roof. Two wells in Garden, large pond at roadside Meadow cottage - off the Drift. Unlisted 16/17C. Timber frame, formerly thatched, now tiled roof. mullion window, well in garden Cambourne Cottage - unlisted 15/16C thatched cottage, with modern extensions pantiled. Probably originally 2 dwellings. Well in garden Elm Green Cottage - unlisted, ca.16C. Formerly two cottages. Rendered timber frame, modern brick extension. Pantiled roof, originally thatched Hammond Hall - unlisted, ca 18C. Rendered, slate roof Ivy Cottage. Former beer house, late 18 early 19C. Red brick, slate roof The Homestead - only example in Drinkstone of small Edwardian double fronted villa built 1912. Woolpit white brick construction, pantiled roof
Landmarks	Green and natural features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area framed by mature hedges and trees to the rear along its W side Mature hedges and trees along the road side Small copse and pond opposite Hammond House Open farm land or paddocks on both sides

5 Drinkstone Street

Topography	Land uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The settlement is clustered near the church of All Saints • The road curves and slopes down to the Blackbourne • It meets the Beyton-Woolpit Road at a staggered cross roads known locally as Blacksmiths Corner • Beyton Road rises the the W. otherwise level • Dwellings on the E side are elevated above the road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential, some open grazing land • The settlement is bounded on all sides by arable farmland
Layout	Roads, Streets, Routes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development is largely linear, with limited modern infilling between a number of old and listed properties. • One small modern residential close of 4 houses but post 2000 • Dwellings are generally set back from the road with large front gardens and driveways • Incipient ribbon development along Beyton Road, begun in the 1960s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main vehicular route in and out of the village • No pavements, hazardous walking and driving due to blind bends • The cross roads have poor visibility from the Street looking W and E. The unadopted lane next to Street Farmhouse has extremely limited visibility looking E • Public footpath going E through the churchyard to link with wider footpath network

Spaces	Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churchyard of All Saint's Church • Small triangular green outside church, planted with memorial tree in memory of a Drinkstone man who fell in WW1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterised by mainly large detached houses • Modern infilling between much older dwellings • 14 dwellings pre 1950, 8 post 1970, 4 post 2000 • 9 Grade II, 1 Grade II* listed buildings • Most dwellings back onto open farm land • The Old Almshouses - 16C Grade II listed former almshouses. Rendered timber frame, thatched, detached thatched garage. Low flint wall to front. A stream flows alongside the road at the front boundary, before being taken underground • Whitegate Cottage, Tanwood Cottage, The Old Post Office - a terrace of 17C Grade II listed cottages. Rendered timber frame, various modern extensions at rear, pantiled roofs, horizontal sliding windows to front. Front gardens slope down to road. • The Blacksmiths Cottage - 16C Grade II listed, Rendered timber frame and brick, reed thatched roof. Ca.19C metal casement windows, Double hung sash window in brick gable, Gabled thatched dormer, serpentine bargeboard soffits. Well in garden • Home Farm - Grade II listed early 17C, with 19C alterations. Red brick, in part encasing timber framing. Plaintiled roof. Includes Grade II listed 18C dovecote • Street Farmhouse - Grade II listed, 17C core, altered and extended 18/19C, brick, flint and render, plaintiled roof • Abbots Lodge - Grade II listed, ca 1500, possibly the oldest house in the village. Rendered timber frame, plaintiled roof, decorative barge board at gable end. Well in garden. • Church Cottage - 16C Grade II listed, rendered timber frame thatched. Additions with pantiled roof. • The Old Rectory - Grade II listed former rectory, built 1760. Red brick, slate roof. Double walled garden with flint and brick trim walls bordering the road, large pond • Drinkstone Lodge - Grade II listed former farmhouse with extensive flint outbuildings. Timber frame with Woolpit white brick front added early 19C, plaintiled roof. Flat-roofed bays added early 19C. Lies adjacent to settlement boundary. Pond, well. • All Saints Church - Grade II* listed. Flint nave, stone mullion windows, Tudor red brick tower. Has original rood screen still in place • Church Pightle - formerly the village school, now a private dwelling. Victorian red brick with slate roof • Rectory Cottage - Victorian, probably contemporaneous with the school. Red brick, slate roof, dormer windows, decorative barge boards • Dene Cottage - unlisted cottage ca. 1750. Rendered timber frame, timber frame extensions, thatched
Landmarks	Green and natural features

- Red telephone box on green outside church

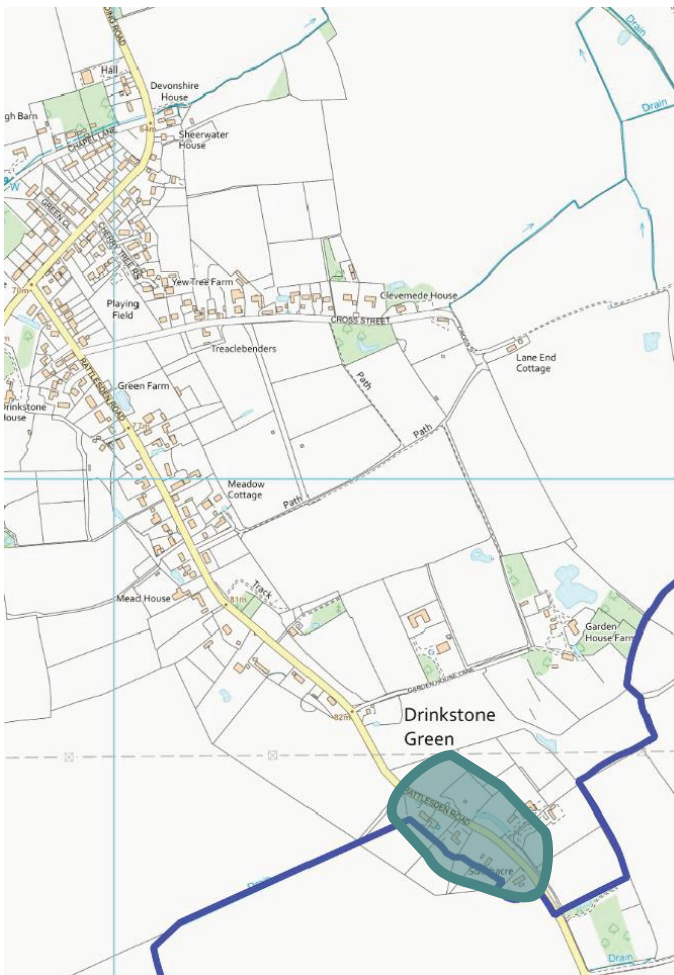
- Numerous ponds
- Area framed by mature trees and hedges

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Character area 6 - outlying areas

Potash

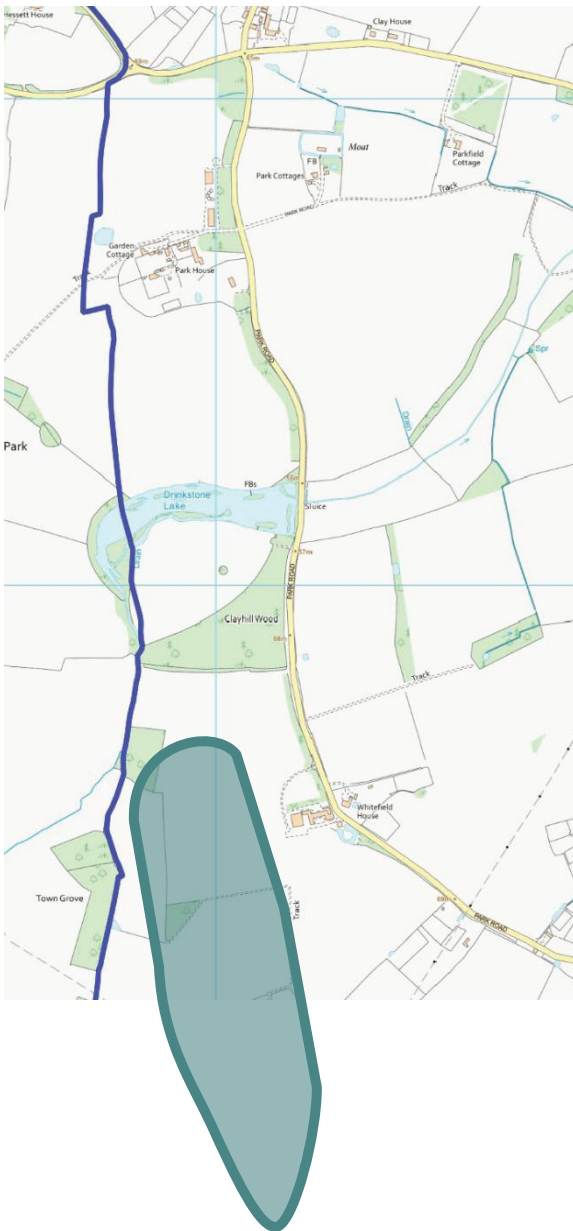
- Small group of buildings at southern end of Rattlesden Road, separated from main settlement by open land
- Originally a cluster of cottages and flint outbuildings around a farmhouse now known as The Chestnuts
- 2 unlisted cottages, one 16C, one 17/18 C. 3 post 1970 infill detached individual dwellings in former gardens
- The Chestnuts - late 16/early 17C Grade II listed farmhouse. Rendered timber frame, plain tiled roof. Large pond in garden adjacent to road
- Quaker Cottage - unlisted 16C cottage. Formerly a Quaker meeting house and burial ground
- Arable farm land to W,E,S . Grazing land to N
- Panoramic views to the S over the Rattlesden River valley



Drinkstone Park

Drinkstone Park

- An almost completely hidden cluster of 5 large dwellings, some converted from the stables and other ancillary buildings of the original 18C country house, Drinkstone Park, demolished in 1948
- Mainly white brick and flint, slate roofs
- Large plots, well screened by mature trees
- A modern bungalow stands on the site of the old house, with remains of the original cellars visible in the garden
- Extensive views over the Blackbourne valley towards Drinkstone church, the Rectory and Woolpit. View painted by Gainsborough in 1782. Original now in Sao Paulo



Drinkstone Mills Conservation Area

Drinkstone Mills

- Situated on the Woolpit Road at the N end of the parish
- Designated a conservation area in 1991
- Cluster of a Grade I listed post mill, a Grade II* listed smock mill, a Grade II listed 19C cottage, included in the listing to protect the integrity of the group
- Screened by mature trees and hedges of native species
- Surrounded by grazing land
- Farmland views to the S. To the N view now dominated by the prominent Woolpit Business Park



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