

OSTLINGS LANE

Ostlings Lane runs downhill from Church Street where its beginning, almost opposite St Swithun's Church, is easy to miss. It finishes at Bathford Hill by The Crown Inn. It is one of the older roads in the village, shown on the earliest detailed map of 1742 and originally called Horselands Lane since it bordered 'Horselands' a large field running down to the river. There is some preference locally for the reversion to the old road name.

The lane can be divided into three sections: the top narrow section with its high stone walls; the wider, almost level middle section and the steep tree-lined part leading down to The Crown. The Conservation Area boundary runs along Ostlings Lane and the dwellings to the right are within it. The dwellings to the left, which back onto the Bradford Road, have all been built since 1920, 'The Lawns' being the oldest.

The junction with Church Street is flanked by Briscoe House to one side and the very high beautiful stone wall surrounding 'Bidston' to the other. Stone blocks to prevent carts hitting the walls can be seen at the base of the wall. A milestone and a mason's mark are also noted. Some of the stonework is damaged.

Ostlings Lane has no pavements and is quite narrow along its whole length. Near the top of the lane on the right is a pair of driveways. The first drive leads to the garden of Briscoe House and Squirrel Lodge, formerly the servants' wing of Briscoe house and attached to it. The second leads to 'Tamarisk', built in 1970 on land once part of Briscoe House. The new vicarage also dates from this time. An interesting stone tower on the wall of Tamarisk was unfortunately demolished in 1970.

Beyond 'Tamarisk' the lane turns through a right angle to the right. The turning off to the left here is Church Close with its three detached modern dwellings built on the site of Bathford House, well after its demolition in 1913.

Beyond the bend, the road widens slightly and on the left is a series of modern detached houses and bungalows with gardens running down to Bradford Road and fine views over the Avon valley below. Of course this means that these properties can be clearly seen from the water meadows around the river. A common drive gives access to five properties on this side as the lane becomes steeper. There is concern, from these residents in particular, regarding increased traffic noise from the Bradford Road and the potential A36 / A46 link road.

On the opposite side of the lane a shared drive leads to two recently built houses and a third, The Old Vicarage. This is the latest building on a site that was the location of the vicarage in several forms for many years. Further down the lane are the modern detached houses in large mature gardens: 'Yew Tree House', 'Rustlings' and 'Hill House', which originally had its access off Bathford Hill.

There are in fact very few accesses off Ostlings Lane, which enhances both the rural character and road safety on this narrow, steep section.

As the lane becomes very steep the roadside foliage becomes denser and the dwellings beyond are barely viewed. The ground rises to the right and the building density becomes less. The lane becomes increasingly contained by greenery with a good stone wall seen on the right. Mature trees overhang the lane and the character becomes more rural as it winds gently towards the Crown Inn, the rear of which can be seen through the trees.

Finally the lane emerges beside the old stables of the Crown, with the road name sign on the building. The narrowness of the lane here is exacerbated by large vehicles parking at the junction.

Ostlings Lane is shared by vehicles and walkers although it is not a busy traffic route as most traffic uses Church Street. The lane is difficult during icy conditions due to its steepness and to water seepage across the road from the bank opposite Rustlings.



Former Crown stables at the bottom of Ostlings Lane

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES of the Ostlings Lane area

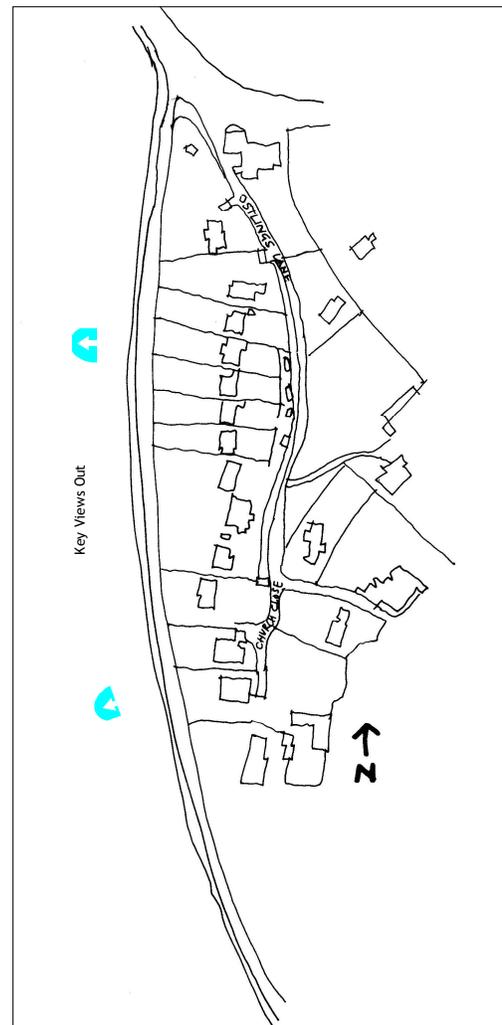
- Topography:** Level between Church Street and Church Close, then steeply falling northwards to join Bathford Hill. Ground falls away towards Bradford Road to the west and rises to the east. Generally straight routes with some gentle curves downhill and sharp bend at top of lane.
- Access:** Old established village route now linking Church Street and Bathford Hill, winding as if formed by animals. No adjoining routes. Rural character enhanced by lack of pavement and road markings and minimal signage. Minimal street lighting. The lack of access drives and breaches in the lane edge adds to rural character.
- Street Pattern:** Historic Ostlings Lane undeveloped with Crown Inn at Bathford Hill junction and Briscoe House and Bathford House at Church Street junction. Old Vicarage established by 1904 and remainder of dwellings 20th century. All dwellings detached, located generally to take advantage of views.
- Morphology:** Old established route with most development consisting of discreetly sited modern buildings. Important historic landmark buildings at extreme ends of lane. Modern rebuilding on former Bathford House site.
- Activities:** Quiet residential, mostly medium sized dwellings. Village edge location, some noise from major roads nearby.
- Space:** Ostlings Lane links village edge at Bathford Hill with historic core of village. Contained views down to the Crown Inn towards the bottom of the hill, opening out to Bathford Bridge at junction with Bathford Hill. Otherwise space well contained by stone walls and foliage. Mature foliage in gardens very important to character of area.
- Buildings:** Partly within the Conservation Area. Mostly modern detached one and two storey dwellings with no particular architectural character. Most buildings set back from the road and barely visible due to mature landscaping. No particular development pattern; location of buildings takes advantage of topography and views. Landmark historic buildings at ends of lane.
- Materials/Detail:** Older buildings of local stone with traditional detailing. Modern buildings in real or reconstructed stone, mostly lacking in traditional details.

GUIDANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure retention of rural character of Ostlings Lane and resist introduction of footpaths, road markings and excessive street lighting.
- Resist formation of additional accesses onto lane.
- Protect and maintain stone boundary walls.
- Resist additional large scale development.
- Encourage extensions to be designed with respect to village character using natural materials where appropriate and high quality design.
- Encourage retention and management of existing mature trees, particularly those outside the Conservation Area.
- Ensure setting of existing landmark buildings is retained.
- Consider reinstatement of historic nomenclature.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS & ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES

- Monitor traffic and pedestrian safety at junction with Bathford Hill, particularly with regard to parked traffic.
- Ensure retention of historic features such as wheel stones and masons marks.
- Lobby for Local Authority grant aid for repairs to stone walls.



Sketch map of Ostlings Lane area.

Ostlings Lane area pictures



Junction of Ostlings Lane and Church St. showing high stone walls.



Wider roadway at top of lane.



Sharp bend at junction of Church Close.



Properties on the west side have views across to Bathampton.



Communal driveways reduce the number of accesses.



Elevated properties on the east side.



Rural character of steep lower part of lane.



Contained view at the bottom of the lane.



Lane opens out with pylon dominating the view.



Junction of Ostlings Lane and Bathford Hill.