



AGENDA

CABINET MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 13 April 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT*

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chairman), Monique Bonney, Angela Harrison, Ben J Martin, Richard Palmer, Julian Saunders, Roger Truelove (Chairman) and Tim Valentine.

Quorum = 3

Pages

Information for the Public

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Link to meeting:

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(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

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It is important that the Chairman is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 16 March 2022 (Minute Nos. 687 - 701) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

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To decide whether to pass the resolution set out below in respect of the following item:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3.

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Issued on Tuesday, 5 April 2022

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**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

Meeting Date	13 th April, 2022
Report Title	Rodmersham Green Conservation Area Review
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Mike Baldock - Cabinet Member for Planning
SMT Lead	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
Head of Service	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
Lead Officer	Simon Algar – Conservation & Design Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the responses received from the public consultation exercise (summarised in the response table at Appendix i). 2. To note the content of the conservation area character appraisal and associated management strategy document for the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area, as amended in response to the public consultation (set out in Appendix ii). 3. To agree the changes to the review document proposed by officers in response to the representations received during the course of the public consultation, and also following a re-evaluation of the conservation area boundary by officers following the close of consultation, to agree that a further 3-week period of public consultation be carried out (referencing the additional proposed boundary changes) 4. To grant delegated authority to the Head of Planning Services (in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Planning) to make a decision on re-designating the conservation area and adopting the amended appraisal and management plan review document for development management purposes, unless the reconsultation results in the receipt of significant objections to the proposed additional boundary changes – in which case the matter would be referred to the Council’s Policy & Resources Committee for consideration and a decision on re-designation and adoption.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make the Cabinet aware of some proposed boundary changes and to confirm that following the recent review work, the conservation area should be formally re-designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The proposals include a detailed character appraisal and associated management strategy in line with current good practice for the management of conservation areas. It is recommended that the Local Plan Panel agrees the changes to the review document set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendix ii: Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes) and Appendix iii: Proposed further changes to the conservation area boundary above and beyond those included in the public consultation document (see paragraphs 3.2 to 3.6 in this specific regard).**
- 1.2 The report also alerts Cabinet members to the significant benefit of re-consultation on a number of further appropriate boundary changes, now recommended by officers, which were unfortunately not picked up at the outset of the review work. The boundary changes in question (see Appendix iii) are not considered to be controversial and are sought to ensure that the boundary of the conservation area can be readily understood on the ground, and where possible does not cut through the middle of buildings and/or land in the same ownership. In the event that no significant objections are received in relation to the six further boundary changes proposed, delegated authority is sought by the Head of Service (in liaison with the Cabinet Member) to re-designate the conservation area with those further boundary changes, and with any necessary further minor amendment to the character appraisal and management plan, without the need for consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee, which would be the appropriate determining body in place of the Cabinet.

2 Background

- 2.1 Rodmersham Green Conservation Area was first designated in September 1973. The conservation area has, according to the available records, not been subject to any systematic review since that time. Up until now, this conservation area has therefore lacked a detailed appraisal or management strategy to underpin its continued designation. Case law concerning conservation area designation indicates that continued designation could be quashed by a legal challenge on the basis for its original designation not being fully evidenced.

- 2.2 The Council is now in receipt of two linked speculative major development applications (refs. 21/503906/EIOUT and 21/503914/EIOUT) for what amounts in combination, to a new settlement proposal to the east and southeast of Sittingbourne, referenced by the applicants, Quinn Estates Ltd, et al, as 'Highsted Park'. The application for the larger application site area on the south side of the A2 (which also extends south beyond the M2 and includes a new motorway junction) has the potential to impact on a large number of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including to the wider setting of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that having a detailed up-to-date character appraisal and management strategy in place for this conservation area should help to ensure that any strategic decisions concerning future development and infrastructure provision in this wider area can be made on a properly informed basis taking into account the need to conserve the setting and special interest of this longstanding conservation area, as far as reasonably possible, as well as the Council's requirement to deliver new homes and support employment opportunities.
- 2.3 This review work is part of a wider range of conservation area review work requested by the Western Area Committee (also including the review of Milstead and Tunstall conservation areas, and a proposed new conservation around Rodmersham parish church). As the existing level of officer resource did not allow for this review work to be carried out in-house, the Western Area Committee agreed to fund the use of an external consultant to carry out the work. The same consultancy practice (Wyvern Heritage and Landscape) which carried out the Tonge Conservation Area and Borden Parish Conservation Areas last year was re-appointed to undertake the review of the Milstead, Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas. In the event, Wyvern produced only 1 of the 3 review documents commissioned due to the consultancy practice in effect being a sole practitioner and the individual in question suffering some serious health problems which meant she was unable to continue with the work. This resulted in a significant delay in taking forward the review work and the necessary appointment of a replacement consultant to carry out the Rodmersham Green and Tunstall review work.
- 2.4 The review work on Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas has since been completed and the subsequent public consultation on this concluded on the 5th December 2021. It is anticipated that it will be possible to re-designate and adopt the appraisal and management plan documents for the Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas ahead of the Council reaching its decision on the Highsted Park planning applications. A decision was already made by Cabinet to designate a new conservation area at Rodmersham Church when it met in March this year, following on from the assessment work, public consultation, and careful review of and response to the feedback by officers.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to further amend the boundaries of the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area, to equip it with a detailed character appraisal and a complementary management strategy which will assist with development management and heritage conservation purposes over the next decade or so, and to then re-designate it.
- 3.2 Officers have identified 6 additional changes to the boundary of the conservation area over and above the 2 proposed in the conservation area review consultation document. These 6 changes are considered appropriate to put in place to ensure that the boundary wherever possible relates to altered property boundaries and does not cut through the middle of buildings or garden areas. Neither of the 2 proposed boundary changes referenced in the review consultation document have been challenged/questioned through the public consultation exercise, but there has been a suggestion of one further boundary change to include the property to the north of Fruiterers Close currently used as car parking and allotments. The considerations relating to this have been clearly set out in **Appendix i** to this report.
- 3.3 Officers recommend that the Cabinet agrees the proposed changes to the review document as set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendices ii and iii**. It should be noted that the version of the document provided at **Appendix ii** is set out purely to show how the changes to the document (which officers consider should be made) are to be incorporated. Final formatting of the document using professional editing software (which will also eliminate any remaining typos and grammatical errors) will be applied to the PDF version of the document which will form the adoption version, and which will be placed on the Council's website for public viewing.
- 3.4 In view of the proposed 6 extra changes to the conservation boundary which were not included within the review consultation document, and having taken legal advice on this matter, officers are proposing to go back out to public consultation for a further period of 3 weeks to ascertain whether there are any concerns in relation to those 6 additional boundary changes. This will also allow interested parties to comment on the relatively modest number of changes made to the review of the initial review consultation document.
- 3.5 To eliminate unnecessary to-ing and fro-ing and further delay in taking this work forward, delegated authority is sought from the Cabinet at its final meeting in April to allow officers to make any further changes to the boundary or appraisal & management plan document, following the further 3-week consultation period,

without the need to report back to the Local Plan Panel again, or the Policy & Resources Committee which will take on the role of making decisions on conservation area designation/re-designation instead of the Cabinet. This would be on the basis that no significant objections are received in relation to the additional boundary changes in the re-consultation. Should significant objections be received, then the matter of re-designation would be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for determination.

- 3.6 It should be noted that one of the six boundary changes recommended by officers, and as shown at Appendix iii, overlaps to some degree with the consultation feedback referenced at paragraph 3.2 (above), but is materially different, as *inter-alia*, there is no valid justification for including the parking area to a modern housing development otherwise to be (appropriately) excluded from the conservation area.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 One option would be to not take this review work any further and effectively abandon it. This is not recommended however because it would risk the justifiable continuation of the designation and/or the appropriately sensitive and positive management of the conservation area and its wider setting moving forward. It would also hinder the Council in forming an overall properly informed view of the level and nature of overall heritage impact harm arising from the Highsted Park development proposal for the application site area south of the A2.
- 4.2 A second possible option would be to suspend the work on this review until some point in the future. Whilst this option would not result in wasted consultancy fees and officer time, it could still lead to (a) the designation being challenged, (b) reputational damage to the Council and/or (c) the Highsted Park (south/main site) application being determined without a full understanding of heritage impact, which depending on which way the outcome goes, could either result in the Council not having the strongest possible heritage case to defend in the event of an appeal, or missing out on the opportunity to negotiate some important mitigations to limit visual harm to setting.
- 4.3 A third possible option would be to ignore some elements, or all of the feedback received, in terms of the suggested boundary change(s) and suggested corrections to factual information (dates and place names, etc). However, whilst it is considered that the appraisal and management plan (to support the redesignation of the conservation area) is essentially sound, the feedback provided from the local community in good faith and in a constructive vein is valuable and to ignore any of this feedback without sound reasons to do so would

call the value of the consultation process into question and potentially deliver a reputational blow to the Council.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 As agreed in advance with the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Baldock, a 6-week public consultation exercise ran from Monday the 25th October, 2021 until Sunday the 5th December, 2021.
- 5.2 All those parties with property within, immediately outside, or overlapping the current conservation area boundary and within or overlapping the proposed extensions to it, were notified in writing of the review and were invited to comment on it, as were key relevant organisations including Kent County Council and Historic England. Rodmersham Parish Council and the relevant ward councillor (West Downs Ward – Cllr. Bonney) were also consulted.
- 5.3 Restrictions on movement imposed due to the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the normal practice of providing hard copies of the review document at Swale House could not be followed, but the review document was available to view/download on-line via the Council's website for the duration of the 7-week public consultation period. Hard copies of the review document were made available to view at Sittingbourne Library, and at the more local level, on request via the Rodmersham Parish Council Clerk. In addition, officers designed a public consultation poster, copies of which were placed on the Swale House public notice board, public notice boards at Rodmersham and on the notice board at Sittingbourne Library in order to help further publicise the review work.
- 5.4 A total of 9 consultation responses have been received. Six of these have been from local residents. Their responses have largely focussed on some factual corrections within the draft document, but a few have expressed concerns about the current state of the village green.
- 5.5 In addition to the 6 local resident consultation responses referred to above, Rodmersham Parish Council has responded to the consultation advising that it fully supports the recommendations for changes to the conservation area boundary and also that it believes the review document to be accurate and fit for purpose, and it thus hopes to see it adopted at the end of the consultation period. The parish clerk, who is the author of a number of local history books, together with another long-established and knowledgeable local resident have also helpfully provided an altered hard copy of the review document showing some minor corrections and suggested minor changes. These have proved to be very

useful, and as such, are reflected in the tracked changes version of the review document at **Appendix ii**.

5.6 Bredgar Parish Council has commended the quality of the review document.

5.7 Historic England has responded advising that:

- all views identified should include a detailed description of the views and their constituent parts, alongside clear photographs, outlining the contribution the views make to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Positive Contributors: as identified in a map on page 7 of the document, should be listed in a separate table and described to ensure their qualities are fully explained and transparent.
- The appraisal states ‘...a handful of buildings within the proposed Rodmersham Green Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List’. It may be appropriate to list those that merit inclusion.
- Historic England supports the production of this statement and the associated management plan for the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area. However, we recommend your council takes the necessary steps to address the points made above to ensure the statements will facilitate sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and finally it says, that the comments provided do not address unscheduled archaeology. Please seek comments on these matters from your Council’s own Archaeology Officer

5.8 Finally, it should be noted that Kent County Council’s Heritage Conservation Team are contracted by the Council to provide archaeological advice on development proposals and in support of area appraisal work, as the Council, in line with most other local planning authorities does not have an in-house specialist in this respect. As such, there is no consultation response from the county’s Heritage Conservation Team as the Council’s consultant liaised with the county’s Principal Archaeologist at the outset of this review exercise, and his input was incorporated into the public consultation document. Kent County Council in its function as the Highway Authority was consulted on the conservation area review but provided no feedback in this respect. No response was received either from the county’s Ecology Team (which was also consulted).

5.9 As per the commentary at paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5, it is planned to go back out to public consultation for a further period of 3 weeks to ascertain whether there are any concerns in relation to the 6 additional boundary changes not shown in the original review document. This will also allow interested parties to comment on the relatively modest number of changes made to the review of the initial review consultation document. This course of action was unanimously supported by the Local Plan Panel at its meeting on the 24th March along with the related

recommendation for the Cabinet to give delegated authority to the Head of Service (in liaison with the Cabinet Member) to re-designate the conservation area following the close of the consultation (with any minor amendment to the review document as appropriate), unless any significant objections are received in relation to the proposed six additional boundary changes. Minutes of the March Local Plan Panel meeting will be available at the Cabinet meeting on the 13th April.

- 5.10 It is proposed that the re-consultation would take place following the final meeting of the Council’s Cabinet in April, and that the parties consulted would be as per the original consultation.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 2 of the Plan is: ‘Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges’. Objectives 2.1, 2.4 and 2.5 of this priority are respectively to:</p> <p>(2.1) ‘Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council’s own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2020, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough’.</p> <p>(2.4) ‘Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.’</p> <p>(2.5) ‘Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible’.</p> <p>The character appraisal and management strategy document, once amended as appropriate and subsequently adopted would support all 3 of the above-stated objectives from the Corporate Plan.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no financial implications for the Council
Legal and Statutory	<p>The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on every local planning authority to “<i>determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance</i>” and, from time to time, to review the functioning existing conservation areas. As such failure to follow through on this review work would mean that the council is failing to</p>

	meet its statutory duties in relation to the designation and ongoing management of conservation areas.
Crime & Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environmental Sustainability	One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is its environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. The other two dimensions are a strong economy and a healthy and socially vibrant community
Health and Wellbeing	The health and wellbeing aspects of interaction with heritage assets and heritage related projects are referenced in the adopted Swale Heritage Strategy which underpins this review work.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- **Appendix i:** Public consultation – table of representations (in summary form), and the council’s response to them
- **Appendix ii:** Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes)
- **Appendix iii:** Proposed boundary changes

Note: these include two of the proposed boundary changes shown in the review consultation document, and as included unchanged in Appendix ii to this report – see page 27. The conservation area boundary map shown at Appendix iii will effectively replace the equivalent map within Appendix ii, and form the basis on which the proposed reconsultation takes place.

8 Background Papers

None.

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APPENDIX i: TABLE OF REPRESENTATIONS, AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY CHANGES TO THE REVIEW DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO THEM – FOR RODMERSHAM GREEN CONSERVATION AREA

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
1	Rodmersham Parish Council (RPC)	RPC has been involved in the discussions around and production of the conservation area (CA) review document and very much welcomes this update. The proposed conservation area boundary changes are fully supported, and the document is considered to be accurate and fit for purpose. RPC hopes to see it adopted.	Noted and welcomed.	No change to review document needed.
2	Historic England	<p>Attention is drawn to the following aspects:</p> <p>View: all views identified should include a detailed description of the views and their constituent parts, alongside clear photographs, outlining the contribution the views make to the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>Positive Contributors: as identified in a map on page 7 of the document, should be listed in a separate table and described to ensure their qualities are fully explained and transparent.</p> <p>The appraisal states '<i>...a handful of buildings within the proposed Rodmersham Green Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List</i>'. It may be appropriate to list those that merit inclusion.</p>	<p>Noted and welcomed</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted. A list can be provided for buildings which on the face of it, would appear to meet the approved Swale Local List criteria, but this would nevertheless need to be subject to the building(s) in question being formally considered by the assessment panel to be set up to make decisions on what to include on the</p>	<p>Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions</p> <p>Document to be updated to provide a table of positive contributors with their qualities explained.</p> <p>Separate list of buildings (within the proposed new conservation area) to be considered for Swale Local List inclusion to be provided in an amendment to the assessment document.</p>

RODMERSHAM GREEN CONSERVATION AREA – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
2 (cont')	Historic England	<p>Historic England supports the production of this statement and the associated management plan for the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area. However, we recommend your council takes the necessary steps to address the points made above to ensure the statements will facilitate sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.</p> <p>The comments provided do not address unscheduled archaeology. Please seek comments on these matters from your Council's own Archaeology Officer</p>	<p>Swale Local List given that an element of subjectivity will inevitably apply.</p> <p>Noted and welcomed. The recommended steps are being taken as far as practically possible, as per the recommendations set out in this table.</p> <p>SBC does not have its own Archaeology Officer, but the advice of KCC's Principal Archaeologist was sought at the outset and his feedback is incorporated into the public consultation draft.</p>	<p>To make changes to the assessment document in line with those referenced above.</p> <p>No change to the assessment document needed.</p>
3	Bredgar Parish Council	Commended the work done in the Rodmersham Green Area Review, cited it as an excellent document setting out in clear terms the importance of these settlements as considered from multiple perspectives: historical, topographical, geological, in relation to their buildings, the local building materials, their highways, and so on. This kind of thorough analysis is of great significance, providing not only a clear-eyed picture of the character of Rodmersham Green as it is currently, which will be available for consultation in perpetuity, but also programmes of management, improvement and in some cases, extension.	Noted and welcomed.	No change to review document needed.
4	Local resident	4 pages of detailed notes and suggested changes provided regarding various areas.	Noted and welcomed.	Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.

RODMERSHAM GREEN CONSERVATION AREA – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
5	Local resident	Attention is drawn to current conditions and issues regarding the village green within the conservation area.	Noted and acknowledged.	No change to review document needed.
6	Local resident	Comments regarding factual corrections within the document.	Noted and welcomed	Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.
7	Local resident	Comments on the current state of the wider conservation area and advise on possible distracting elements within the conservation area.	Noted and acknowledged	No change to review document needed.
8	Local resident	Comment regarding factual correction within the document	Noted and welcomed	Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions.
9	Local resident	<p>The proposed designation is supported, and emphasised the need to preserve the historic significance of the CA.</p> <p>Recommendation to include the property to the north off Fruiterers Close currently used as car parking and allotments.</p>	<p>Noted and welcomed</p> <p>This particular plot of land neither contributes to, nor is historically significant in its own right to warrant inclusion in the conservation.</p>	<p>No change to review document needed</p> <p>No change to review document needed.</p>

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Rodmersham Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT October 2021
WITH AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION March 2022

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FOREWORD

“Historic buildings and places add to the quality of people’s lives and help to create a sense of place that we all identify with.

As a community and as a local authority, we have a responsibility to safeguard our historic assets for future generations and to make sure that they are not compromised by unsympathetic alterations or poor-quality developments. Conservation area designation and subsequent management is one way in which this can be achieved.

Conservation areas are not intended to halt progress or to prevent change. Rather, they give the local community and the Borough Council the means to positively manage change and to protect what is special about the area from being harmed or lost altogether.

Swale Borough is fortunate in having such a rich and varied mix of built and natural heritage. The Borough Council wants to see it used positively as a catalyst to sustainable, sensitive regeneration and development, and to creating places where people want to live, work, and make the most of their leisure time. To that end, we have reviewed the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area and the results of that review are set out in this document, which the Borough Council is now seeking constructive feedback on.

This is one of a series of conservation area reviews which the Borough Council is committed to undertaking, following the adoption of the Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032.”



Councillor Mike Baldock,
Cabinet Member for Planning and
Swale Borough Council Heritage
Champion

Mike Baldock

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rodmersham Green Conservation Area

Rodmersham Green Conservation Area was originally designated by Swale Borough Council on 26 September 1973. It has not been systematically reviewed since its original designation and until now there has been no character appraisal or published management strategy.

1.2 The Purpose of Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”¹.

It is the responsibility of individual local planning authorities to designate and review conservation areas from time to time using local criteria to determine and assess their special qualities and local distinctiveness².

The aim of conservation area designation is to protect historic places and to assist in positively managing change, so that their special character is safeguarded and sustained. Areas may be designated for their architecture, historic layout, use of characteristic or local materials, style, or landscaping.

Above all, conservation areas should be cohesive areas in which buildings and spaces create unique environments that are of special architectural or historic interest.

Conservation area designation provides extra protection in the following ways:

- Local planning authorities have control over most demolition of buildings.
- Local planning authorities have extra control over householder development.
- Special provision is made to protect trees in conservation areas.
- When assessing planning applications, the local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area and its setting.
- Policies in the Local Development Plan positively encourage development which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas.

¹ Section 69 (1)(a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

² Section 69 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

1.3 The Purpose and status of this Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

The purpose of this Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy is:

- To identify the significance of the heritage asset – i.e. the value that the conservation area has to this and future generations because of its heritage interest – which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
- To increase public awareness and involvement in the preservation and enhancement of the area.
- To provide a framework for making planning decisions, to guide positive change and regeneration.
- To review the conservation area boundary in accordance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- To highlight particular issues and features which detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area which offer potential for enhancement or improvement through positive management.

A Conservation Area Character Appraisal is an assessment and a record of the special architectural or historic interest which gives rise to the character and appearance of a place. The appraisal is a factual and objective analysis, which seeks to identify the distinctiveness of a place by defining the attributes that contribute to its special character. It should be noted, however, that the appraisal cannot be all-inclusive, and that the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest. In some cases, significance may only be fully identified at such time as a



feature, a building or site is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.

A fundamental part of this review of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area is to assess whether the area still possesses the special architectural and historic interest which merits its continued designation. It also provides an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the designation over the last 48 years and whether the extent of the area should be either extended or reduced.

The appraisal includes a management strategy to help the Borough Council and other stakeholders positively manage the conservation area. A management strategy may include action points, design guidance and site-specific guidance where appropriate: It can identify potential threats to the character of the area and can, where appropriate, identify the potential for Article 4 Directions or local heritage listing.

An appraisal serves as a basis for the formulation and evaluation of Development Plan policies, as a material consideration in the making of development management decisions by the local planning authority and by the Planning Inspectorate in determining planning appeals. It can also heighten awareness of the special character of the place to help inform local Parish Councils in the formulation of Neighbourhood Plans, Village Design Statements and individual's in design choices.

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been compiled in consultation with local organisations, elected representatives and council officials. It is to be the subject of public consultation and is prepared with a view to being formally adopted for development management purposes.

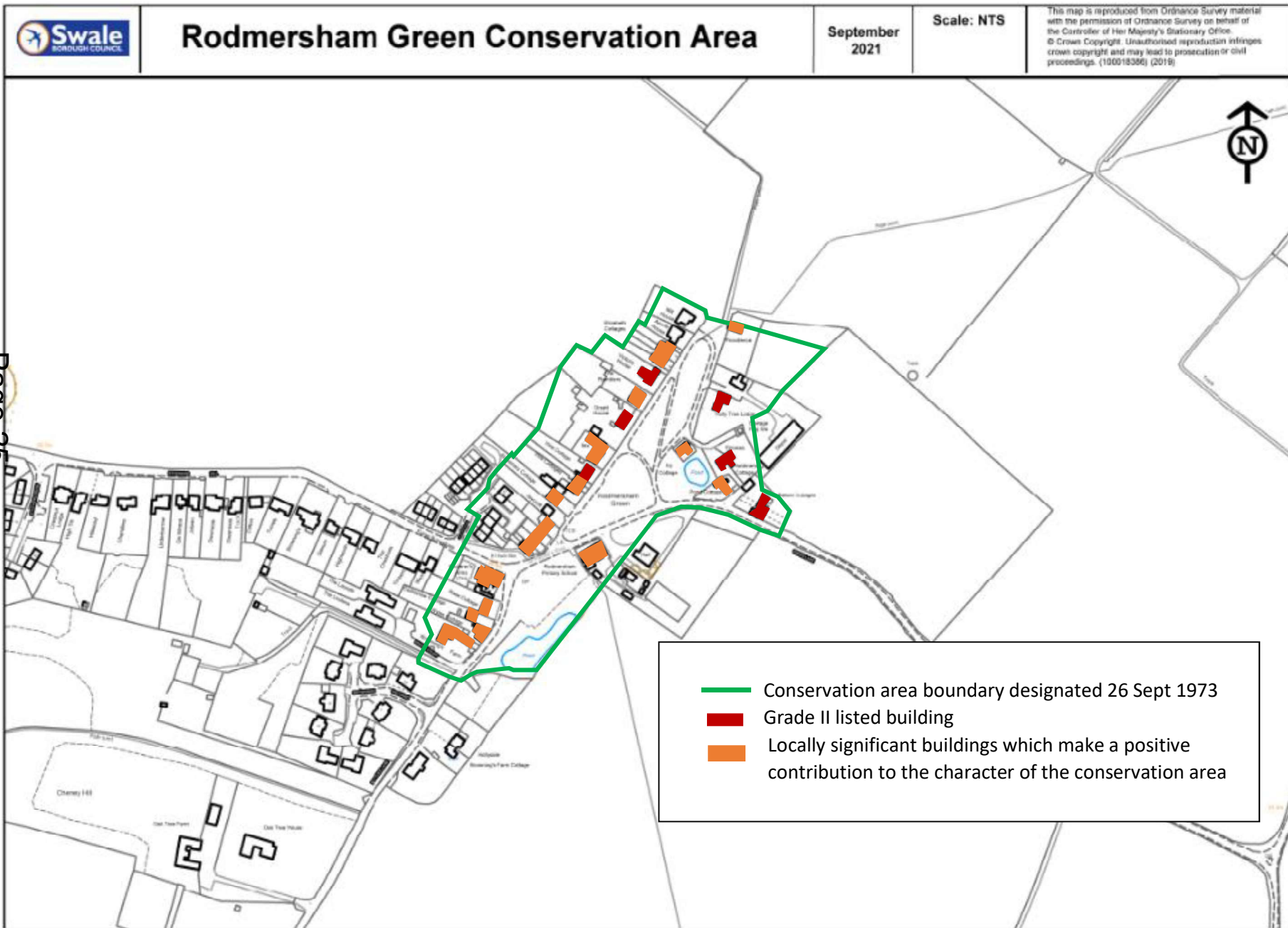
The map on page 7 shows the current extent of the conservation area as it was designated on 26 September 1973. It also shows listed

buildings which appeared on the National Heritage List in September 2021 and other buildings which have been assessed as having local heritage interest.

The author would like to thank all those who contributed the production of this character appraisal.



Early 20th century photograph of the Fruiterers Arms



2.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

2.1 The History of Rodmersham Green

Rodmersham Green is part of the civil parish of Rodmersham. The name is derived from Anglo Saxon 'Hrothmaer's Ham' meaning Hrothmaer's settlement or village. Perhaps surprisingly, there is no mention of Rodmersham in the Domesday survey of 1086.

In medieval times the settlement fell under the Manor of Milton and consisted primarily of dispersed farmhouses and cottages. The parish church, located some 1km to the east of the green, dates from the 13th century and is dedicated to St. Nicholas. The only surviving medieval houses on the green today are Holly Tree Lodge, Pardoners Cottage and Baker Cottage. If other houses existed at that time they would have been of poor construction or they have been replaced or rebuilt during later centuries.

A handful of houses and cottages were built around the green during the 17th and 18th centuries at which time owners would have benefited from commoners' rights to graze cattle on the green, courtesy of the Lord of the Manor.

In 1798 Edward Hasted described the Parish as: "The land in the lower or northern part of this parish is rich and fertile for corn, and is let at a high rent, but higher up among the hills it becomes chalky and light, and much of it very poor. It is not an unpleasant situation, and considering its nearness to a very unwholesome country, is not so unhealthy as might be expected."³

³ Edward Hasted. *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798).



Early 20th century photograph of the former windmill

A tower windmill was built to the north of the green in 1835, grinding corn from local arable farming to produce flour. The windmill was a local landmark seen for miles around from all points of the compass but it fell into disuse during the 20th century. ~~It suffered a disastrous fire in 1969 after which it was demolished and the site was redeveloped with two detached houses.~~

Terraced housing for farm workers and their families, was added to the north-west side of the green during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Today, Rodmersham Green comprises a vibrant small community served by a public house, a primary school, a shop and a village hall.



2.2 Topography, Geology, Landscape and Setting

Rodmersham Green lies 3 kilometres (2 miles) south of Sittingbourne town centre, on the northern edge of the North Downs dip slope and to the east of Highsted Valley. It has always been a small, distinctly separate settlement, in a characterful countryside setting. The topography is characterised by undulating chalk downland and dry valleys supporting productive farmland on loamy soils.



For a large part of the 20th century Rodmersham Green was surrounded by fruit orchards but by the turn of the 21st century many of the orchards had been grubbed out and turned over to arable farming. The local landscape is identified in the Swale Local Landscape Designation as the Rodmersham Mixed Farmlands⁴ and described as “a rural landscape, much opened up for intensive arable farmland, although locally valued elements are present including a sense of openness and long views”.

The green itself has a strong identity and sense of place. Its extent is well defined, mainly by buildings, but also by trees, particularly along its southern edge. Trees make a significant contribution to the special character of the area.



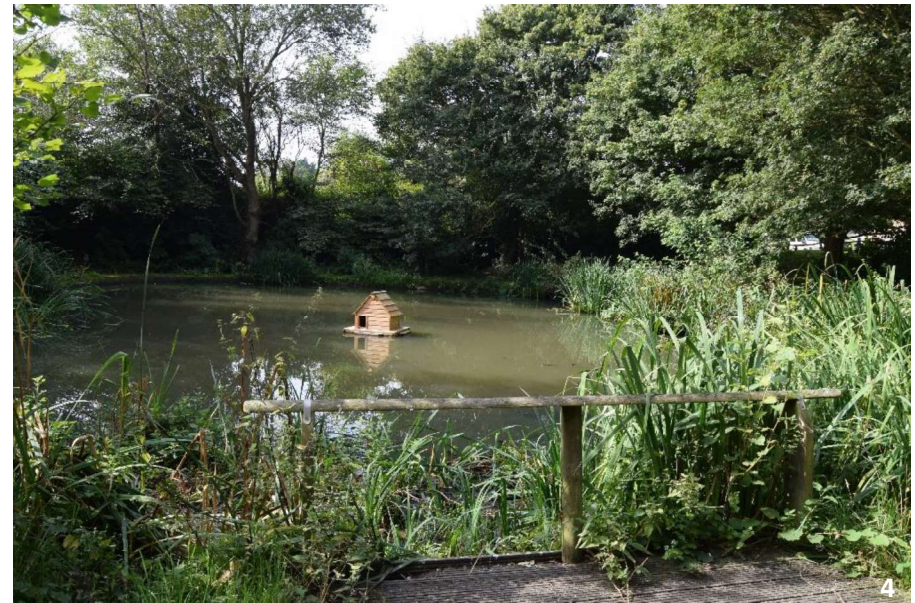
⁴ in the Swale Local Landscape Designation LUC October 2018 and the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal, Jacobs 2011

Grassy verges are a defining feature of the roads on the green (plate 2). Where concrete kerbs have been introduced (such as outside the school) they have a harsh and uncharacteristic urbanizing effect.

The entrances to the village from Bottles Lane (plate 3) and Green Lane are well defined by trees, vegetation and roadside banks which provide a pleasing counterpoint to the openness of the green itself.



Two ponds collect water from the fields and the roads and form part of the natural water course which eventually passes Rodmersham Court through Bapchild and into Tonge millpond. As well as being picturesque and a valuable local amenity, the ponds are host a variety of flora and fauna so they make an important contribution to local biodiversity. The duck house is a recent installation by the Parish Council to encourage wildlife (plate 4).



The aerial photograph on page 12 illustrates the strong relationship which exists between Rodmersham Green and its surrounding landscape.



2.3 Buildings

It is the green itself that is the defining feature of the village of Rodmersham Green but it is the buildings that give definition to the green.

The earliest houses are of medieval date and include Holly Tree Lodge (5), Pardoners Cottage (6) and Baker Cottage (7). They are located close to each other on the south-east side of the green or, in the case of Baker Cottage, on Green Lane. The oldest and most significant of the early buildings is Holly Tree Lodge, a classic Wealden hall house dating from the 15th century. It is regrettable that today it is largely hidden from public view behind an overly tall hedge.



All three early buildings are of timber-framed construction and all have characteristic steeply-pitched Kent peg tile roofs with prominent chimney stacks. Holly Tree Lodge and Baker Cottage have had their jetties under built in brickwork whereas at Pardoners Cottage the timber frame is concealed behind painted render.



Other significant houses facing the south-east side of the green include Ivy Cottage (8), a restrained yellow stock brick house with an unexpected semi-octagonal north-west elevation, and the former Providence Chapel, built in 1848, now converted to a house (9).



The north-west side of the green is more tightly knit, with an interesting mix of buildings which provide a richness in their variety

of dates, styles and building materials. Vine Cottage (10) is the earliest, the statutory list suggesting an early 18th century date, although there may be earlier fabric concealed within.



10

The Georgian period also saw the construction of Rosemary Cottage (11), Vine Cottages (12), Orsett House (1832) (13) and Victoria House (dated 1752 but said to include earlier work) (14). Interestingly, the five houses which were built within roughly 130 years of each other are all of different materials and in distinctly different architectural styles. The elegant wrought iron railings at Orsett House are particularly noteworthy (1).



11



12



13



14

The Victorian and Edwardian periods saw further additions to the north-west side of the green. St Patrick's Row (circa 1860) (15) is a terrace of former farm workers' cottages constructed in yellow stock brickwork: It has always housed the village shop, but in different locations. Elizabeth Cottages (16) date from 1904 and a detached house at The Ramblers (17) is of similar date. The spearhead railings at The Ramblers are another good example of their kind (see p17).



15



16



17

1970s detached houses at the northern end of the green are a little more universal in their style and materials so contribute little to the special character of the place.

Jaycroft and Ilex (18 and 19) are two 21st century rebuilds in distinctly modern styles. Some would say that they are a little over-scaled but their use of traditional forms and building materials were clearly intended to reference their traditional surroundings.



18



19

The Fruiterers Arms, circa 1835, (21) occupies a strategic location at the junction of Bottles Lane and Green Lane but its tarmac forecourt and prominent bottle banks provide scope for improvement. Rose Cottage (20), Wyles Cottage and Brownings Farm all provide a pleasant frontage to the west side of Bottles Lane.



20



21

It is Rodmersham Primary School, built circa 1869 and later, (22) which provides the visual focus to the south of the Green. Constructed in yellow stock brick with red brick dressings under a steep Kent peg tile roof, it is a good example of a Victorian village school. The village Hall to its south is modern and rather ordinary; it is set behind trees and a car park so it features little in views from the green.



universally fashionable during the 17th and 18th centuries. Brick was used extensively for new buildings and to over-clad old buildings to give them a more fashionable appearance. Kent peg tiles were the preferred choice for roofing in the 17th and 18th centuries but they gave way to slate during the early 19th century, particularly once the railway came to Sittingbourne in 1848. Modern concrete roof tiles and uPVC windows are less sympathetic materials introduced during the mid to late 20th century.

Timber frame: Oak framing was commonly used in building construction during the medieval period when local woodlands offered an ample supply of good and durable building materials. Several historic buildings in Rodmersham Green are constructed of timber framing and others have had their frames concealed behind later facades or cladding. The timber-framed tradition continued in softwood framing well into the Georgian period and even later in farm and utility buildings.

2.4 Building Materials

The distinct character of Rodmersham Green owes much to the variety of architectural styles, materials and details displayed in its buildings. Building materials were used to express architectural aspirations as well as changing fashions. Until the transport revolution of the mid-19th century, virtually all building materials were locally sourced and manufactured. Consequently they are often a true expression of the locality and its natural resources. Even materials that were in common use at the time make a valuable contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The earlier domestic buildings of Rodmersham Green were of timber-framed construction and are important survivals because of their age and type. As oak for building became harder to source, brick became



Brick: Brick earth was in plentiful supply in North Kent so, not surprisingly, brickwork is a familiar building material in Rodmersham Green. There is a wide variety in the size, bond, colour and character of the bricks, depending on their age, style or function.

Earlier examples are irregular clamp-fired red bricks used during the 17th century. In the centuries that followed, the shape, size and coursing of brickwork became more regularised and uniform. Yellow stock brickwork was commonly used from the Regency period onwards and the combination of yellow and red brick achieved the polychromatic effect that was associated with the High Victorian era and the Arts and Crafts Movement. There is an interesting example of burr brickwork (over-fired bricks which fused together in the kiln) in the wall attached to Orsett House.



Rodmersham Primary School



Victoria House



Elizabeth Cottages

Kent peg tiles: The name 'peg tile' refers to a plain clay tile suspended from the top edge of a tiling lath. Traditionally peg tiles were held in place by a small wooden peg or latterly an aluminium 'drop', wedged into, or passed through one of the two holes in the head of the tile. Simple firing methods and local clays produced strong, durable and light peg tiles in warm orange/red terracotta colours. Imperfections in the raw clay and the hand manufacturing process resulted in a richness and variety in colour and shape. They

are renowned for their warm and varied colours and rich texture which cannot be replicated in modern machine-made tiles.

Until the 19th century, hand-made clay peg tiles were the preferred roof covering for buildings throughout Kent. Tiles continued to be handmade from local clays well into the 20th century and there are still a handful of manufacturers today. They are a characteristic roofing material of the south-east of England and dominate the roofscapes of many towns, villages and small settlements including Rodmersham Green. Kent peg tile roofs are visually prominent because of the steep pitch of the roofs on which they are laid (typically steeper than 35 degrees).



Slate: Slate roofs rarely appear before the turn of the 19th century. However, they became very widely used in the area after rail transport made it more easily accessible. Slate was imported, mainly from Wales, and gave rise to shallower roof pitches of between 30 and 35 degrees. Slate appears on a handful of buildings in Rodmersham Green.

Weatherboarding: Painted feather-edged weatherboarding is a traditional walling material in the south-east of England. There are several examples on the green.

Modern building materials: In recent decades mass produced concrete roof tiles and uPVC windows have been used within Rodmersham Green but they do not generally sit comfortably within the context of the historic village.

2.5 Boundary fences, railings and walls

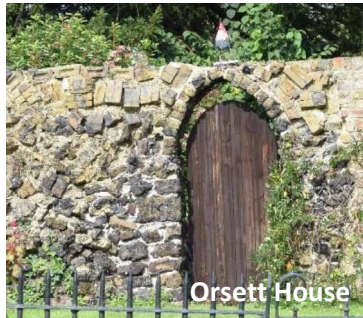
Boundary treatments are an important aspect of the character of Rodmersham Green. Railings, picket fences, walls and hedges all help to define spaces in a pleasing way. Modern close-boarded fences are less sympathetic and less pleasing to the eye.



Vine Cottages



The Ramblers



Orsett House



Orsett House

2.6 Archaeology

The Kent Heritage Environment Record (HER) notes little of archaeological significance at Rodmersham Green, most likely due to the lack of investigation. Most of its entries relate to prehistoric flints dating from the Palaeolithic age.

There are earthworks in Highsted Wood to the west of the village and findings during nearby quarrying show rich Iron Age and Roman remains as well as Bronze Age and Neolithic.

2.7 The Public Highway

The winding geometry and the inclination of the highway as it approaches Rodmersham Green adds to the experience and the sense of arrival.

For as long as there has been a green it has been bisected not only by Green Lane but by a network of roads, tracks and footpaths. They are a defining feature of the village. The pleasant informality of the unmade track along the south-east boundary contrasts with the more formal tarmac surfaces of the other roads. Fortunately any temptation to add concrete kerbs to the green itself has been resisted in favour of simple timber posts which appear to serve their purpose well.

Soft margins, grassy verges and tree/hedge-lined banks are a defining feature of the highway. Where concrete kerb lines have been introduced in the recent past on Green Lane and Bottles Lane they generally detract from the rural character of the place.

Highway signs are typically utilitarian and uncoordinated.

Frequently used public footpaths radiate from the green to the north and the south across farmland.



3.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Rodmersham Green is a place with a strong and distinctive identity based on the manorial history of the green and the buildings which surround it. The variety of building styles, spanning the last seven centuries, and their relationship to green and to the surrounding countryside are a defining feature of the village.

Local building materials are strongly in evidence, including timber framing, yellow and red brickwork, Kent peg tiles, slate and feather-edged weatherboarding. Fences, railings, hedgerows and trees also make a distinct contribution to the special character of the place.

The mix of buildings and spaces, intersected by footpaths and roads, continue to make Rodmersham Green an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve.

The conservation area has served its purpose well over the 48 years since it was first designated. The key characteristics that gave rise to its designation in 1973 appear to have been well managed by local owners, the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority. That is not to say that there have not been changes because there have, but they have typically been made with respect to the distinct character of the place and have integrated well into their historic context.

There is no doubt that Rodmersham Green should continue to be designated as a conservation area.

There are some areas where the line of the boundary has become less relevant over time or where circumstances dictate that the boundary should be changed. Proposed changes are detailed in appendix 1 below.

Summary of significance

The significance and special interest of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- A small settlement which originated as a farming community in the medieval period.
- The manorial history which gave rise to the green which provided grazing rights for the commoners.
- The architectural contribution made by several listed buildings as well as some notable non-designated buildings.
- The eclectic mix of traditional building styles, forms and building materials.
- Boundary walls, railings and fences are a defining feature.
- The strong historic, visual and functional link between the settlement and its surrounding landscape, in particular the views which connect Rodmersham Green to Rodmersham and the parish church and the more distant views across the landscape.
- The green spaces between and around buildings which bring the countryside into the village.
- The contribution which mature trees make to the character and appearance of the village.

Summary of Key Characteristics

Key Positive Characteristics:

- The strong sense of visual identity provided by the green.
- The historical significance of the green and its manorial connection.
- The mix of building styles exhibiting buildings from seven centuries. Key historic buildings such as the village school, the Fruiterers Arms, Holly Tree Lodge and Orsett House play an important role in defining the character of the village.
- The use of vernacular building materials: in particular timber-framing, brickwork, weather boarding, Kent peg tile and slate.
- The character of Green Lane, its soft verges and highway banks.
- The contribution made by mature trees, hedgerows and planting.
- The strong relationship between the village and the surrounding landscape, experienced through views and vistas and through the public footpath network.
- Despite its close proximity to suburban Sittingbourne, it retains a strong and independent sense of identity and place.

Key Negative Characteristics:

- The occasional use of non-indigenous building materials such as uPVC windows or concrete roof tiles.
- Overhead cables and utility poles.
- Concrete highway kerbs and signs which detract from the rural character of the village.

4.0 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Conservation Area designation is not an end in itself. It is a way of recognising the special architectural or historic character of an area so that appropriate steps can be taken to preserve or enhance it.

Conservation is not about preventing change; Rodmersham Green Conservation Area is part of a living community and change is needed to sustain and meet its future needs. It is about positively managing change so that what the community cherishes today can be properly looked after and passed on to future generations in good condition.

This management strategy is intended to encourage active involvement in the future management of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area. It provides the opportunity for the Borough Council, the Parish Council, local amenity groups, Kent Highways, Kent County Council, individual householders and local businesses to take part in positively managing the area.

4.1 Statutes and policies

When a conservation area is designated there are statutes, planning policies and regulations which govern which types of development require planning permission and the way that the local planning authority undertakes plan making and decision taking. The statutes and policies that directly affect designated conservation areas are outlined in appendix 4 below.

It is those statutes and policies which provide the framework for managing change in conservation areas. Most significantly, the local

planning authority is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in the exercise of all its planning functions.

The Swale Borough Local Plan aims to ensure that the significance of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area is sustained and enhanced through:

- Preserving or enhancing the area's special character or appearance.
- Preserving or enhancing the setting of the conservation area and of other designated heritage assets.
- Safeguarding and better revealing the significance of any archaeology.
- Protection and enhancement of landmarks, views and vistas within and without the conservation area.
- Safeguarding non-designated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the significance of the area.
- Safeguarding significant spaces.
- Safeguarding significant trees.
- Promoting high quality design in new development which responds positively to context and the distinct character of the conservation area.
- Continued sensitive management of the public realm.
- Requiring new development to respond positively to the Conservation Area Character Appraisal,

4.2 Published guidance

There is a wealth of published guidance on positively managing change in conservation areas. Historic England has published a

range of guidance and advice notes which are listed in the bibliography at appendix 5 below. Swale Borough Council has adopted supplementary planning documents which are listed in appendix 3 below.

4.3 Householder alterations

Where householder alterations are proposed which require planning permission the Council will typically seek to ensure that those alterations enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

Opportunities to reinstate missing architectural features (such as sash windows, panelled doors or original roof coverings) and traditional boundary treatments will be encouraged by the Council and may be requested in relation to planning applications for extensions and/or alterations, where appropriate.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has identified some householder alterations which have involved the removal of historic features such as period windows, doors, roof coverings and chimney stacks.

Even in conservation areas, some householder alterations to unlisted buildings can be undertaken without the need for planning permission. The cumulative impact of ill-considered alterations to traditional properties can have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Such alterations have, and could continue to erode the character of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area over time.

In light of the above, Swale Borough Council may consider the use of an Article 4 Direction in order to bring some householder

alterations (which are currently classed as permitted development) under planning control, to ensure that all alterations are positively managed through the planning system.

Householder alterations which could be brought under control by an Article 4 Direction at Rodmersham Green include the following:

- Replacement windows and doors.
- Changes to roof coverings.
- Removal of chimney stacks.
- The installation of solar and photovoltaic panels on the front wall or roof slope.
- Alterations to fences, railings and boundary walls.
- Adding a front porch.
- Installing rooflights in the front roof slope.
- Replacing a front garden with a hard surface.

4.4 Swale local heritage list

Arising from Swale's adopted Heritage Strategy 2020-2032, the Borough Council is compiling a Local Heritage List in order to identify heritage assets which are not formally designated.

The Local Heritage List:

- raises awareness of an area's local heritage assets and their importance to local distinctiveness;
- informs developers, owners, council officers and members about buildings within the local authority boundary that are desirable to retain and protect;
- provides guidance and specialist advice to owners to help protect the character and setting of those buildings, structures, sites and landscapes;

- helps the council in its decision making when discussing proposals and determining planning applications; and
- records the nature of the local historic environment more accurately.

The impact of any development on a building or site included within the Local Heritage List will be a material consideration when the council considers an application for planning permission.

Several unlisted buildings in Rodmersham Green Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm (that is those areas which fall between the buildings and are enjoyed by the public) makes a significant positive contribution to the special character of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area. The green, the highway, public footpaths, signage and the ponds, all fall within the public realm and provide opportunities for enhancement.

In rural conservation areas, it is especially necessary to guard against standard highway ‘improvements’ which do not necessarily respect the special character of the place. The injudicious use of concrete kerbs and off-the-shelf road signs in Rodmersham Green has detracted from its special character and rural charm.

The retention of soft verges (without concrete kerbs) and roadside banks is fundamental to the future sensitive management of the highway.



Restrained use of highway signing and road markings is also critically important. Where signs, road markings, street furniture, salt bins or rubbish bins are necessary they should be located and designed carefully.

Future highway maintenance, improvements and alterations will be carried out in accordance with *Streets for All*, Historic England (2018) and *Highway Works and Heritage Assets: the Kent Protocol for Highway Works in Relation to Designated Heritage Assets*, KCC and KCOG (2011). Both provide advice on good practice for highway and public realm works in historic places. Early consultation with all stakeholders (including Swale Borough Council’s Conservation and Design Team and Rodmersham Parish Council) will be fundamental to achieving appropriate standards in future changes.

In the past it is clear that there has been pressure to park on the green, or for vehicles to turn on or pass over the green. This clearly needs to be positively managed in order to prevent damage and to resist visual harm caused by parking. The existing timber stumps and raised grass verges appear to work well but may well need to be extended in future in order to prevent increasing pressure from more determined drivers.

Rodmersham Green has more than its fair share of overhead cables and poles. Despite some very recent rationalisation to the number of cables they are still visually intrusive. Where possible, opportunities should be taken to investigate removal of redundant overhead cables, reducing the number of poles and undergrounding of services.

The ponds provide valuable amenity as well as biodiversity and ecology. Future management is likely to involve a light touch but may require removal of leaf litter (during the winter to avoid hibernation times) and tree canopy reduction to improve photosynthesis of pond plants.

The Parish Council, Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council will seek to ensure that the public realm continues to be sensitively managed.

Opportunities for enhancement in the public realm:

- An audit of public signage (including highway signage) to establish whether all current signage and road markings are necessary, well designed and appropriately located.
- An audit of street furniture (bollards, benches, dog waste bins, salt bin etc.) to establish whether street furniture is necessary, well designed and appropriately located.
- An audit of overhead supply lines and poles with the statutory undertakers to establish whether there is scope to remove any overhead cables or poles or to underground services.
- The removal of concrete highway kerbs and their replacement with grassy verges.
- The grass area to the west of 6 St Patricks Row (1) is poorly designed and would benefit from better design and landscaping.
- The forecourt to the Fruiterers Arms (2) and the bottle bank offer considerable scope for improvement.
- Ongoing 'light touch' management of the ponds.



4.6 Trees and planting

Trees and hedgerows play a vital role in the special character of Rodmersham Green.

The retention and active management of trees and hedgerows should be encouraged. Opportunities for new planting should be considered. Planting which contributes to the form and structure of the local environment in and around Rodmersham Green should normally be comprised of native species, although other species now assimilated into the Kentish rural scene may also be appropriate.

Six weeks' notice must be given to the Borough Council in writing before any works are undertaken to trees within conservation areas.

Where hedges have been removed on Bottles Lane consideration should be given to replanting in order to conceal the close boarded fence (3).



Opportunities for enhancing landscape and ecology:

- An audit of trees, hedgerows, green spaces and orchards may be undertaken to establish whether there is any scope for better management or for further planting.
- Positive management may occasionally involve the removal of trees to preserve, restore or open up significant views. The reduction in height of the tall hedge in front of Holly Tree Lodge has been identified as a potential enhancement.

4.7 New development opportunities

Potential for new development within the Rodmersham Green Conservation Area is extremely limited. If proposals for development come forward they will be considered against local and national planning policies which attach great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets and their settings.

Development within the setting of the conservation area may affect its heritage significance. The local planning authority is required to pay special attention to preserving the setting of the conservation area (or any listed buildings) in any plan making or decision taking.

4.8 Heritage at risk

There are no designated heritage assets within Rodmersham Green on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register or on the Swale Borough Council's Heritage at Risk Register. Neither has this appraisal identified any heritage assets which are currently at risk.

However, if any of the identified locally significant features or buildings become at risk in the future, these may be added to the Heritage at Risk Registers if their significance is threatened by their condition or lack of appropriate use.

In such cases the Council will notify respective owners and, where appropriate, work with them and other stakeholders to investigate opportunities for removing the risk and securing the asset's future.



St Patrick's Row 1930s

APPENDIX 1

Proposed amendments to Rodmersham Green Conservation Area boundary

As part of the review of Rodmersham Green Conservation Area, consideration has been given to whether the current boundaries accurately reflect the area which has special architectural or historic interest.

In large part, the area covered by the current boundaries is considered to be appropriate in that it still possesses special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. However, there are two alterations proposed, as follows:

Boundary adjustment 1 (please refer to map on page 27)

Currently the boundary follows the middle of Fruiterers Close, so the bungalows to the east of the close are included within the conservation area and those to the west are not. As none of the bungalows are of architectural or historic significance, the proposal is to exclude numbers 12 to 17 (consecutive) from the conservation area and to redraw the boundary line along the back gardens of numbers 1 to 6 St. Patrick's Row.

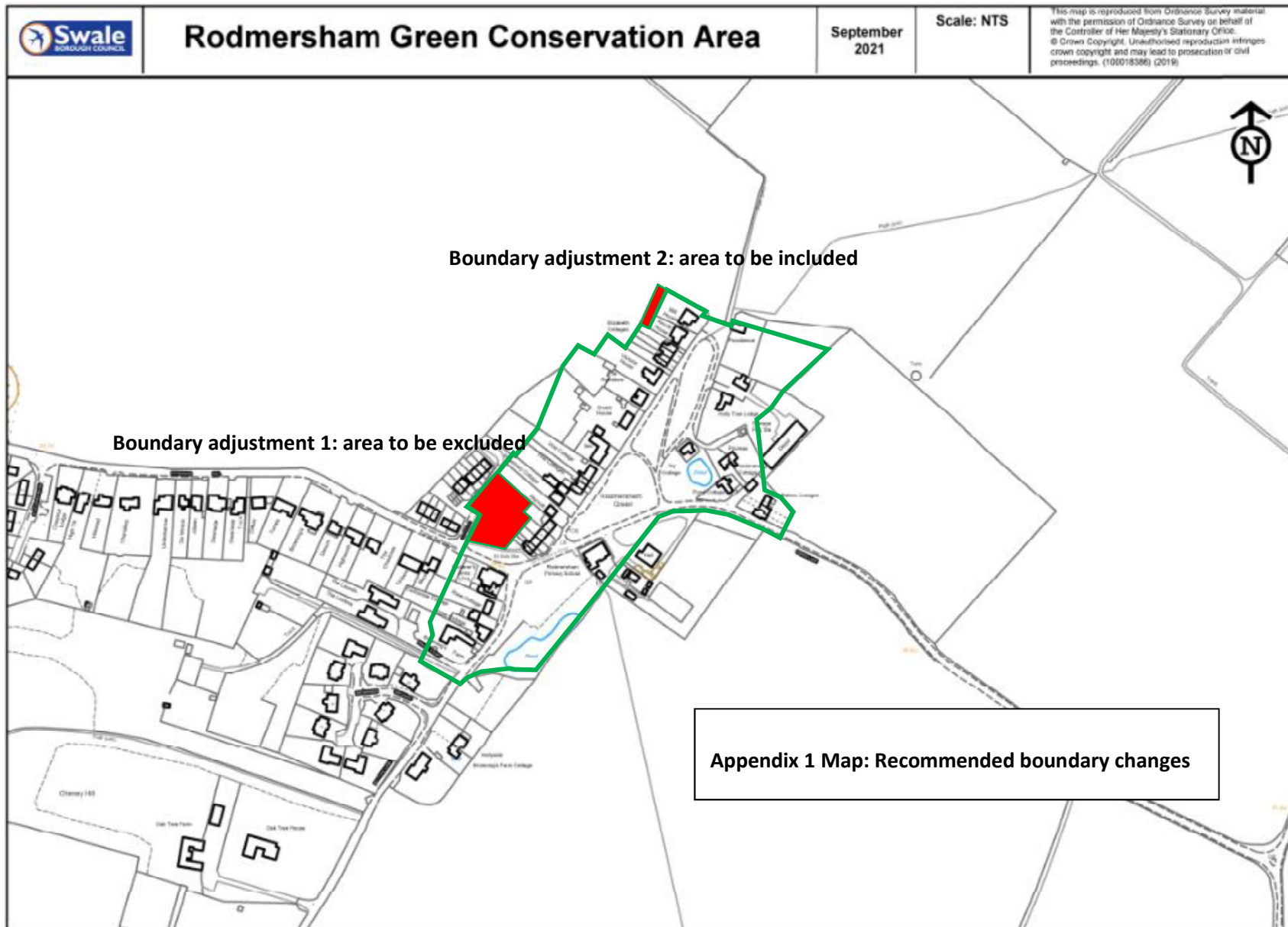
Boundary adjustment 2 (please refer to the map on page 27)

There is a minor irregularity in the line at the rear of Mill House and Ainslie House where the current boundary does not follow the line of the current gardens. The adjustment is proposed simply to reflect current circumstances.

Other areas

Consideration has been given to extending the conservation area to the south along Bottles Lane to include the area of the former farm, now The Barn. However, most of the historic farm buildings and the farmhouse have long been demolished. The Barn is visually and spatially separated from the green by modern development at Hollyside and Brownings Orchard on the west side of Bottles Lane and a pair of modern houses on the east. On balance it was decided that, despite the fact that The Barn is of some architectural and historic interest, the extension to the conservation area could not be justified.

Consideration was also given to Church Road and the cluster of buildings around St Nicholas Church in Rodmersham itself. This area has a good concentration of listed buildings and other heritage assets. It also forms part of the civil parish of Rodmersham and there has always been a strong connection between Rodmersham Green and Rodmersham. However, Court Farm is 0.6km from Rodmersham Green and St. Nicholas Church is 1km away. The character of the hamlet is also distinct and very different from that of Rodmersham Green. Consequently it is recommended that Rodmersham be the subject of a separate conservation assessment and appraisal to determine whether it should be designated as a conservation area in its own right.



APPENDIX 2

Map regression

Page 46



Saxton's map of Kent 1575



Captain William Mudge's map of Kent of c.1800



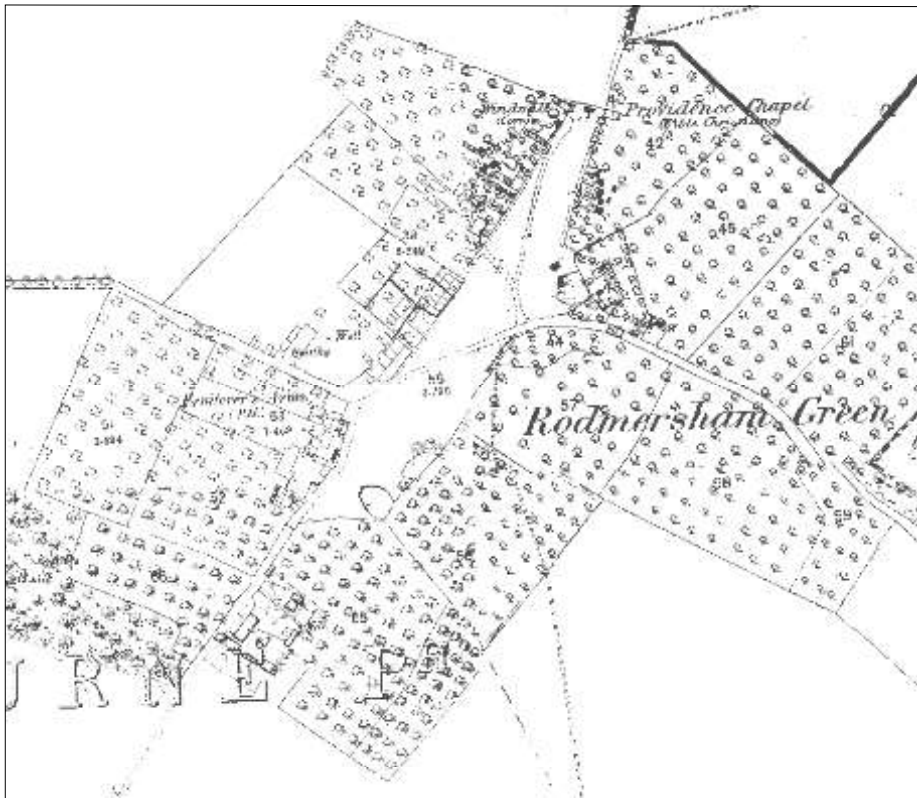
Andrews topographical map of the county of Kent 1769



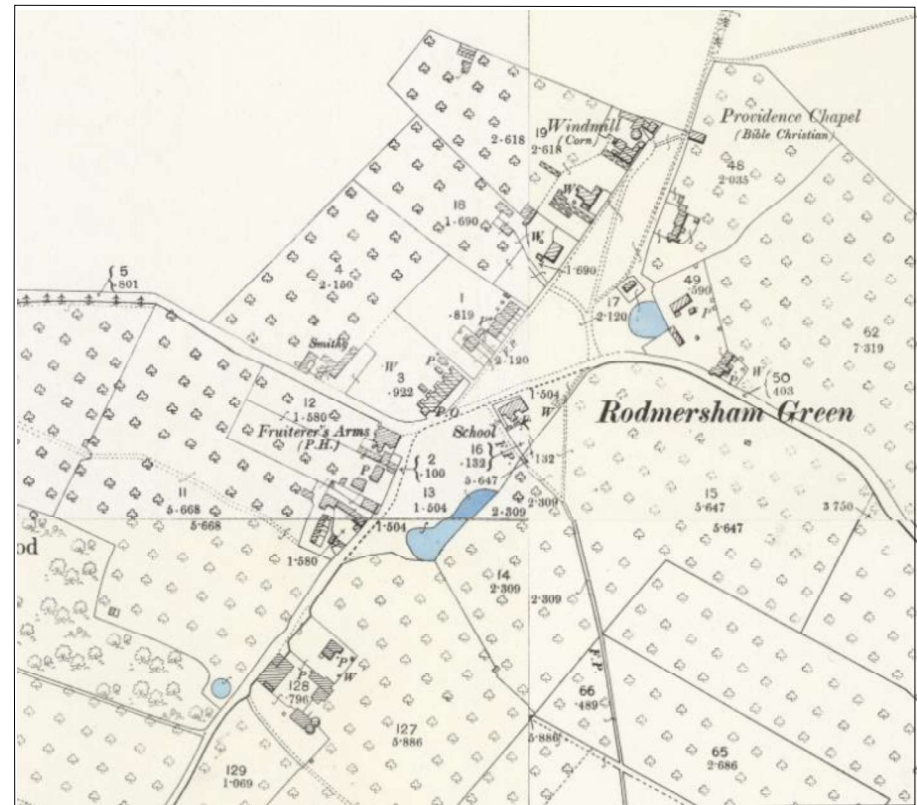
Ordnance Survey First Series 1816

Tithe map 1838 (Kent Archives)





1871 Ordnance Survey map



1896 Ordnance Survey map

APPENDIX 3

Extracts from the National Heritage List for England (the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest)

The statutory list for Rodmersham Green is compiled by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and is altered and amended from time to time as buildings are added or removed from the list. The list descriptions below are taken from the statutory list and were current in September 2021. For more detailed and up to date information please refer to the National Heritage List for England at www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list.

Features and structures which are not specifically mentioned in the statutory list are not necessarily excluded from statutory protection which extends to the listed building as well as to any object or structure fixed to the building and to any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which predates July 1948.

The omission of a building from this list should not necessarily be taken to indicate that it is not listed without first referring to the National Heritage List.

VINE COTTAGES, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

House, sometime cottage pair. C18. Timber framed and exposed with plaster infill on red brick ground floor. Plain tiled roof. Two storeys and hipped roof with gabled dormer and stack to right. Four wood casements on first floor and 3 on ground floor, with glazed door in glazed sloping porch to left.

ORSETT HOUSE, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

House. Circa 1830. Yellow stock brick and slate roof. Two storeys and hipped roof with 2 stacks at end right and 1 at end left. Regular fenestration of 3 glazing bar sashes on first floor and 2 on ground floor all with gauged heads. Central door of 6 raised and fielded panels with semi-circular fanlight in Doric porch.

VICTORIA HOUSE, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

House. C18, dated 1752, and extended early C19. Chequered red and grey brick with plain tiled roof. Originally 2 cell lobby entry, with later bay to right. Two storeys and brick cornice to hipped roof with stacks to end left and end right. Regular fenestration of 2 wood casements with central window space and glazing bar sash added to right on first floor, and 2 segment headed wood casements with central door of 6 raised and fielded panels and flat hood, with segment headed glazing bar

sash added to right. Wood and glass conservatory to left. Plaque in window space over door reads: M. 1752. I. E.

HOLLY TREE LODGE, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

Wealden hall house now house. C15. Timber framed and exposed with plaster infill and underbuilt in red brick, with plain tiled roof. Four framed bays. Two storeys, originally jettied to left and to right, now underbuilt. Recessed hall bays with flying wall plate on arched braces. Hipped roof with gablets and stacks to centre left and projecting end right and end left. Four wood casements to each floor and boarded door to left.

PARDONERS COTTAGE, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

House, now cottage pair. C15. Timber framed and plastered with plain tiled roof. Two bay lobby entry plan. One storey and attic in hipped roof with gablets, 1 gabled dormer and central stack. Two wood casements on ground floor and 2 central boarded doors. Catslide outshot to right in yellow stock bricks.

BAKER COTTAGES, RODMERSHAM GREEN. Grade II

House, sometime cottage row. C16. Timber framed and exposed close studded with brick nogging and plaster infill and part underbuilt with red brick. Plain tiled roof. Five framed bay range and projecting wing. Two storeys and hipped roof with gablets, and projecting wing right with wavy bracing and return hip. Roof steps up at centre point to right. Stacks to centre, and projecting end left and end right. Five wood casements on first floor and 4 on ground floor, with boarded doors to centre in hipped porch with side lights, and to right in projecting wing.



Pardoners Cottage, Pond Cottage and Baker Cottage

APPENDIX 4

Legislation, national policy and local policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions:

(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 69 Designation of conservation areas:

(1) Every local planning authority— (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time to time determine that any part of a local planning authority's area which is not for the time being designated as a conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance; and, if he so determines, he may designate that part as a conservation area.

(4) The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge.

Section 71 Formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

(1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.

(3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.

Section 72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions:

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection

(2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies and how they should be applied. It provides the national framework for conserving and enhancing the historic environment, including conservation areas.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The NPPG sets out government's guidance on how the act and national planning policy should be applied.

Adopted Local Plan- Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan (2017)

Relevant objectives and policies within the local plan include:

Policy ST 1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale.
To deliver sustainable development in Swale, all development proposals will, as appropriate:..... 8. Achieve good design through reflecting the best of an area's defining characteristics; 9. Promote healthy communities through:..... maintaining the individual character, integrity, identities and settings of settlements; 12. Conserve and enhance the historic environment by applying national and local planning policy through the identification, assessment and integration of development with the importance, form and character of heritage assets (including historic landscape

Policy CP 4 Requiring good design.
All development proposals will be of a high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings. Development proposals will, as appropriate:... 2. Enrich the qualities of the existing environment by promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and strengthening

sense of place; 5. Retain and enhance features which contribute to local character and distinctiveness;..... 8. Be appropriate to the context in respect of materials, scale, height and massing; 9. Make best use of texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials; 10. Use densities determined by the context and the defining characteristics of the area; 11. Ensure the long-term maintenance and management of buildings, spaces, features and social infrastructure;.....

Policy DM 32 Development involving listed buildings.
Development proposals, including any change of use, affecting a listed building, and/ or its setting, will be permitted provided that:

1. The building's special architectural or historic interest, and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, are preserved, paying special attention to the: a. design, including scale, materials, situation and detailing; b. appropriateness of the proposed use of the building; and c. desirability of removing unsightly or negative features or restoring or reinstating historic features.
2. The total or part demolition of a listed building is wholly exceptional, and will only be permitted provided convincing evidence has been submitted showing that: a. All reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or viable new uses and have failed; b. Preservation in charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; and c. The cost of maintaining and repairing the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its continued use.
3. If as a last resort, the Borough Council is prepared to consider the grant of a listed building consent for demolition, it may, in appropriate circumstances, consider whether the building could be re-erected elsewhere to an appropriate location. When re-location is not possible and demolition is permitted, arrangements will be required to allow access to the building prior to demolition to make a record of it and to allow for the salvaging of materials and features.

Policy DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area.

Development (including changes of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance. The Borough Council expects development proposals to:

1. Respond positively to its conservation area appraisals where these have been prepared;
2. Retain the layout, form of streets, spaces, means of enclosure and buildings, and pay special attention to the use of detail and materials, surfaces, landform, vegetation and land use;
3. Remove features that detract from the character of the area and reinstate those that would enhance it; and
4. Retain unlisted buildings or other structures that make, or could make, a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

Policy DM 34 Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites

1. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect a Scheduled Monument, and/or its setting, as shown on the Proposals Map, or subsequently designated, or any other monument or archaeological site demonstrated as being of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments. Development that may affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset of less than national significance will require a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
2. Whether they are currently known, or discovered during the Plan period, there will be a preference to preserve important archaeological sites in-situ and to protect their settings. Development that does not achieve acceptable mitigation of adverse archaeological effects will not be permitted.
3. Where development is permitted and preservation in-situ is not justified, the applicant will be required to ensure that provision will be made for archaeological excavation and recording, in advance of

and/or during development, including the necessary post-excavation study and assessment along with the appropriate deposition of any artefacts in an archaeological archive or museum to be approved by the Borough Council.

Swale Borough Council Key Supplementary Planning Guidance

Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 2: Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers.

Swale Borough Council No 3: The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings.

Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 8: Conservation Areas.

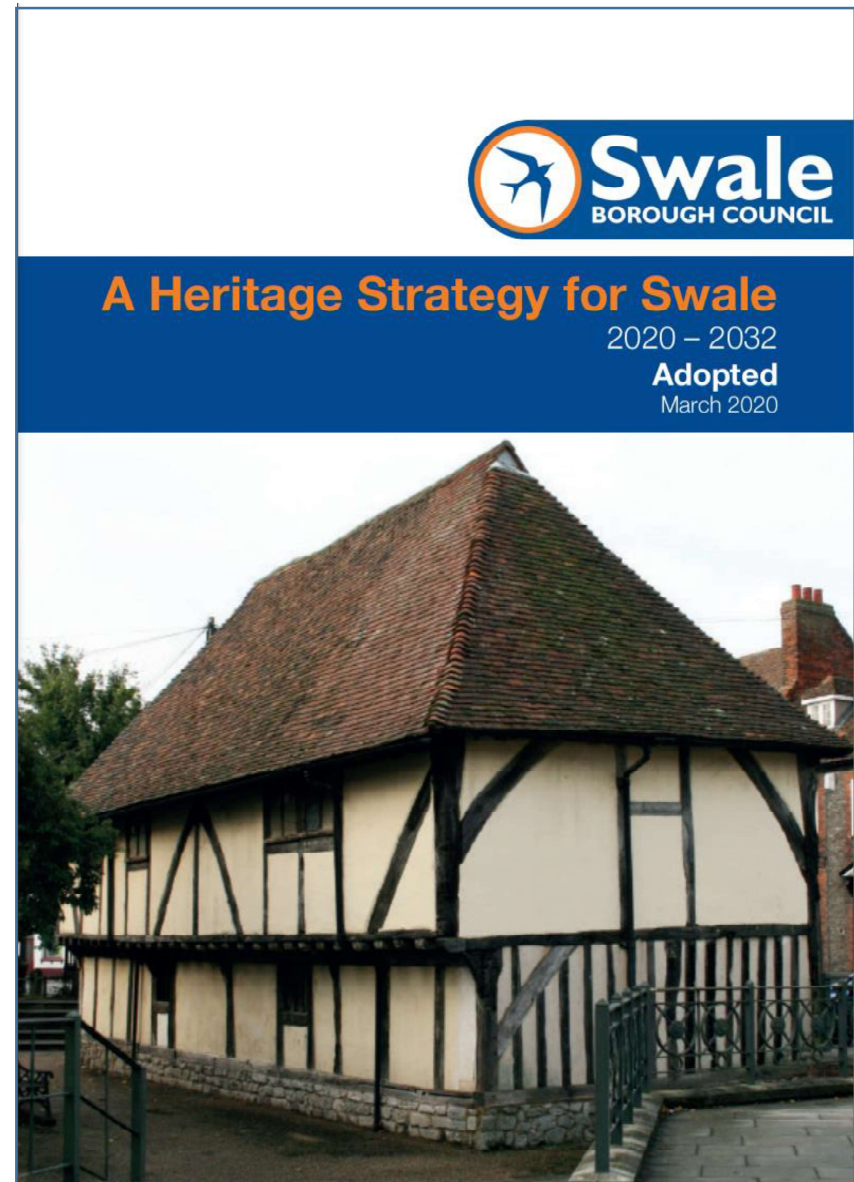
Swale Borough Council Heritage Strategy 2020-2032

The Council has developed a borough-wide heritage strategy to help it, along with key stakeholders and other interested parties, to protect and manage the historic environment in Swale in a positive and sustainable way, on a suitably informed basis.

A key element of the strategy is setting out the Council's overall vision and priorities, which it is hoped will align with the vision and priorities of local communities and local amenity societies as far as possible, in order that the strategy can be widely supported.

The strategy sets out a series of proposals in the associated initial 3-year action plan which are aimed at enabling the positive and sustainable management of different elements of the borough's historic environment for the foreseeable future. Priority is given to those parts of the borough's historic environment which are already suffering from, and at risk from negative change, and/or which face significant development pressure, threatening their special

character. The proposed set of actions will involve joint project working with amenity societies and/or volunteers from the community wherever this is possible.



APPENDIX 5

Bibliography

Edward Hasted *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798).

R. Muir *The New Reading the Landscape. Fieldwork in Landscape History* (2000)

John Newman *The Buildings of England North East and East Kent* (2013)

Kent County Council *South east Archaeological Research Framework* www.kent.gov.uk

Kent County Council *Historic Environment Record* www.kent.gov.uk

Kent County Council *Exploring Kent's Past* www.kent.gov.uk

Kent County Council and Kent Conservation Officers Group, *Highway Works and Heritage Assets: the Kent Protocol for Highway Works in Relation to Designated Heritage Assets* (2011)

LUC Swale *Local Landscape Designation* (October 2018)

Jacobs Swale *Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal* (2011)

Rodmersham 2000, *The Storey of a Village* (2000)

Historic England Guidance, Advice and Publications

Historic England Good Practice Advice Notes (GPAs) provide advice on good practice and how national policy and guidance should be applied.

GPA1: *The Historic Environment in Local Plan Making* (March 2015)

GPA2 - *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (March 2015)

GPA3 – *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017)

Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance.

HEAN 1: *Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Management* (Feb 2019)

HEAN 2: *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016)

HEAN 9: *The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings* (October 2017)

HEAN 10: *Listed Buildings and Curtilage* (February 2018)

HEAN 12: *Statements of Heritage Significance* (October 2019)

HEAN 16: *Listed Building Consent* (June 2021)

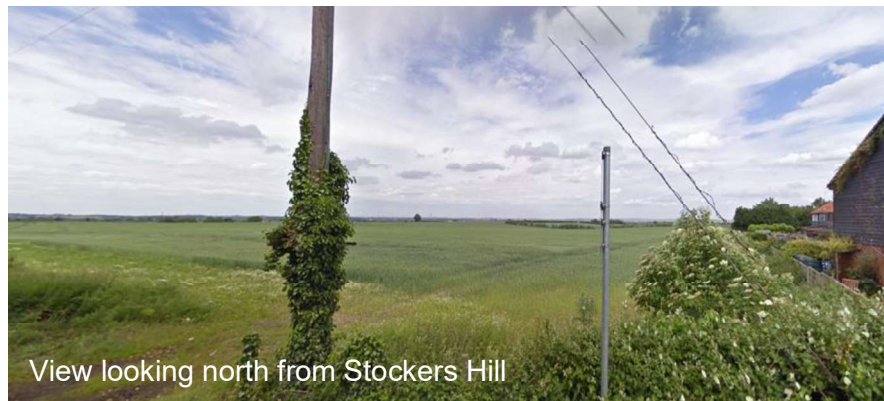
Streets For All (May 2018)

APPENDIX 6

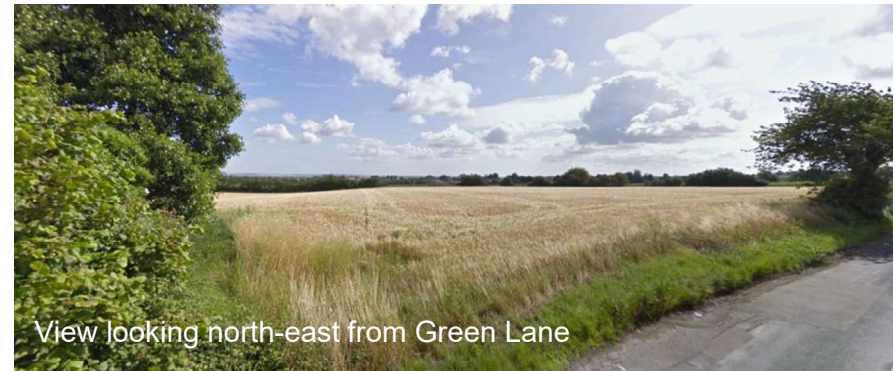
Assessment of significant views

Views make a valuable contribution to the way in which the character or appearance of a place is experienced, enjoyed and appreciated. Identifying significant views allows the contribution they make to be protected and enables the effective management of development in and around those views. Significant views are annotated on the aerial photograph on page 12 and described below:

View 1: Panoramic outward-looking views across the landscape provide a strong connection between the village and its historic farmland setting. They provide visual links to reference points such as Rodmersham Church tower and Rodmersham Court as well as further afield. The contrast between the enclosure experienced within the Green and the openness of the landscape views adds to the experience. As such they are of high heritage significance.



View looking north from Stockers Hill



View looking north-east from Green Lane

View 2: All views along and across the Green are of high significance. They epitomise the history and the unique spatial character of Rodmersham Green where settlement grew up along the perimeter but not on the Green itself.



View looking across the green from the north-east



View 3: Views on entering the conservation area by road or by footpath provide an interesting ‘gateway experience’. The contrast between the tree or building-lined approaches and then the sudden openness of the Green provides contrast and drama to the experience.

View 4: Views created between buildings, such as the view towards Pardoners Cottage, Pond Cottage and Baker Cottage, illustrated on page 32, have picturesque as well as heritage value. Glimpsed views of buildings through vegetation or across one of the ponds can also have delightful effect.

For further information contact:

Swale Borough Council Planning Services 01795 417850

www.Swale.gov.uk



This Conservation Area Character Appraisal was prepared by:
Peter Bell Historic Building Consultancy Peter@Bell.uk.com

on behalf of:

Swale Borough Council

Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT

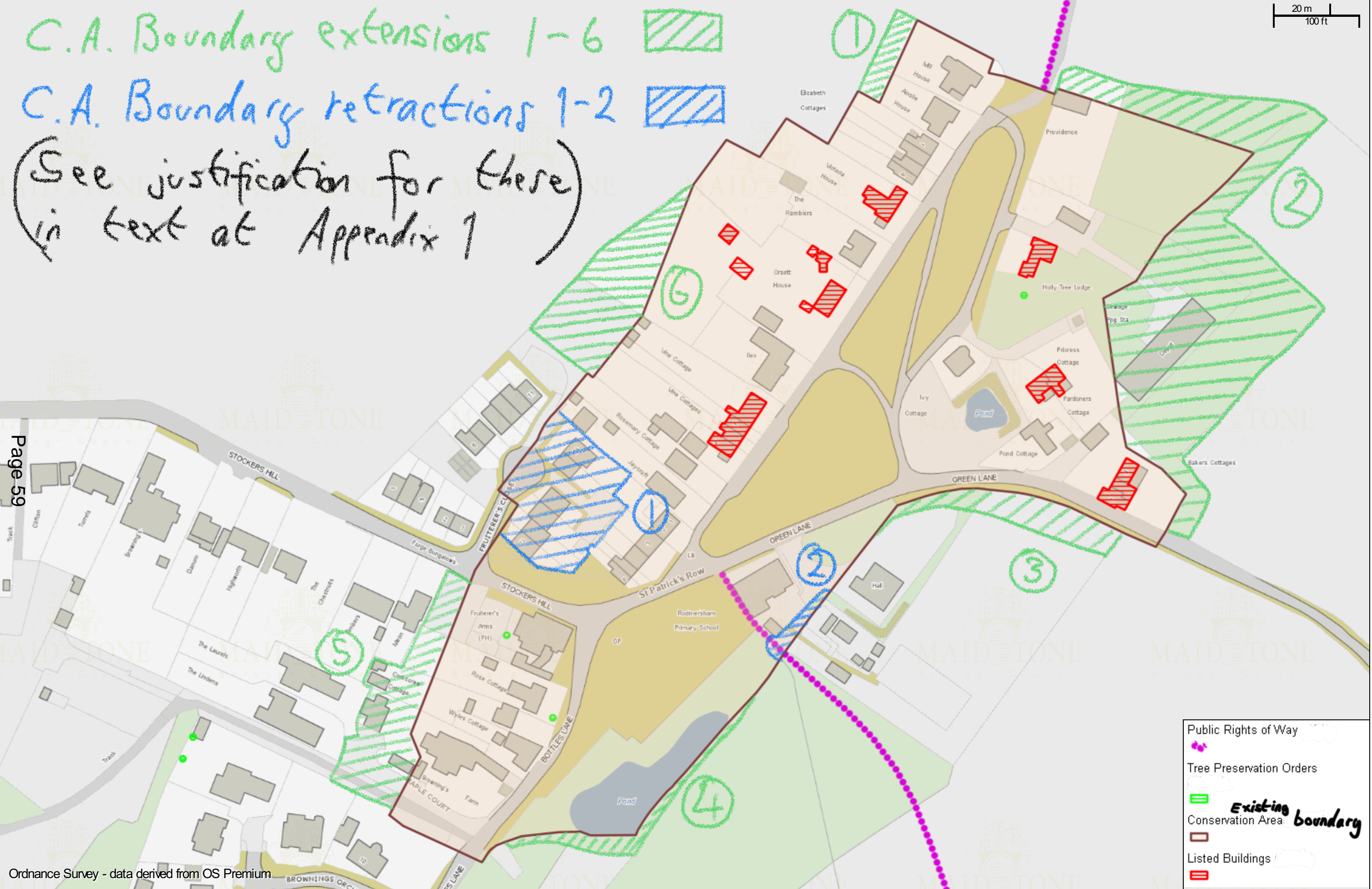


C.A. Boundary extensions 1-6 

C.A. Boundary retractions 1-2 

(See justification for these
in text at Appendix 1)


20 m
100 ft





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Ordnance Survey - data derived from OS Premium

Public Rights of Way 

Tree Preservation Orders 

Existing boundary 

Conservation Area boundary 

Listed Buildings 

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Cabinet	Agenda Item: 7
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Meeting Date	13 th April, 2022
Report Title	Tunstall Conservation Area Review
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Mike Baldock - Cabinet Member for Planning
SMT Lead	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
Head of Service	James Freeman – Head of Planning Services
Lead Officer	Simon Algar – Conservation & Design Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the content of the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, and the representations made on this by interested parties, the details of which are set out in the report appendices. 2. To note the content of the conservation area character appraisal and associated management strategy document for the Tunstall Conservation Area, as amended in response to the public consultation (set out in Appendix ii). 3. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the Tunstall Conservation Area is of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and that as such, that it should be re-designated as a conservation area in accordance with section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. 4. In light of 1 and 2 above, to resolve that the boundary to the conservation area be re-drawn as proposed in the amended character appraisal and management plan document, and that this document for the Milstead Conservation Area be formally adopted for development management purposes.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make the Local Plan Panel aware of some proposed boundary changes and to confirm that following the recent review work, the conservation area should be formally re-designated under section 69 of the

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The proposals include a detailed character appraisal and associated management strategy in line with current good practice for the management of conservation areas. Officers recommend that the Local Plan Panel supports the changes to the review document set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendix ii**: Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes), as supported by the Local Plan Panel.

2 Background

- 2.1 Tunstall Conservation Area was first designated in April 1973. The boundary was reviewed and amended on 27 February 2003 when the conservation area was redesignated. At that time a summary conservation area character appraisal was published which also included proposals for its continuing preservation and enhancement. However, case law concerning conservation area designation indicates that continued designation could be quashed by a legal challenge on the basis for its original designation not being fully evidenced, and hence the genuine need for review of conservation areas from time to time, which is also a best practice recommendation by Historic England.
- 2.2 The Council is now in receipt of two linked speculative major development applications (refs. 21/503906/EIOUT and 21/503914/EIOUT) for what amounts in combination, to a new settlement proposal to the east and southeast of Sittingbourne, referenced by the applicants, Quinn Estates Ltd, et al, as 'Highsted Park'. The application for the larger application site area on the south side of the A2 (which also extends south beyond the M2 and includes a new motorway junction) has the potential to impact on a large number of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including to the wider setting of Tunstall Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that having a detailed up-to-date character appraisal and management strategy in place for this conservation area should help to ensure that any strategic decisions concerning future development and infrastructure provision in this wider area can be made on a properly informed basis taking into account the need to conserve the setting and special interest of this longstanding conservation area, as far as reasonably possible, as well as the Council's requirement to deliver new homes and support employment opportunities.
- 2.3 This review work is part of a wider range of conservation area review work requested by the Western Area Committee (also including the review of Milstead and Rodmersham Green conservation areas, and a proposed new conservation around Rodmersham parish church). As the existing level of officer resource did

not allow for this review work to be carried out in-house, the Western Area Committee agreed to fund the use of an external consultant to carry out the work. The same consultancy practice (Wyvern Heritage and Landscape) which carried out the Tonge Conservation Area and Borden Parish Conservation Areas last year was re-appointed to undertake the review of the Milstead, Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas. In the event, Wyvern produced only 1 of the 3 review documents commissioned due to the consultancy practice in effect being a sole practitioner and the individual in question suffering some serious health problems which meant she was unable to continue with the work. This resulted in a significant delay in taking forward the review work and the necessary appointment of a replacement consultant to carry out the Rodmersham Green and Tunstall review work.

- 2.4 The review work on Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas has since been completed and the subsequent public consultation on this concluded on the 5th December 2021. It is anticipated that it will be possible to re-designate and adopt the appraisal and management plan documents for the Rodmersham Green and Tunstall conservation areas ahead of the Council reaching its decision on the Highsted Park planning applications. A decision was already made by Cabinet to designate a new conservation area at Rodmersham Church when it met in March this year, following on from the assessment work, public consultation, and careful review of and response to the feedback by officers.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to re-designate and amend the boundaries of the Tunstall Conservation Area and to equip it with a detailed character appraisal and a complementary management strategy which will assist with development management and heritage conservation purposes over the next decade or so. It will be a matter for the Cabinet to decide whether to formally adopt the Tunstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (as recommended with the changes set out in Appendix ii, following consultation feedback, or otherwise).
- 3.2 There are no proposed changes to the boundaries of the conservation area over and above the one recommended by the Council's heritage consultant in the public consultation document (which is to include a locally important distinct green space known as Shooting Meadow). None of the proposed boundary changes have been challenged/questioned through the public consultation exercise, but there has been a suggestion of one extension to the boundary alignment to include the area of open land between Cedar House (the former rectory) and Tunstall Primary School. It is not recommended that this suggestion

is taken forward however, and the considerations relating to this have been clearly set out in **Appendix i** to this report.

- 3.3 Officers recommend that the proposed changes to the review document as set out in **Appendix i** and as reflected in **Appendix ii** are agreed by the Cabinet, and that the amended version of the character appraisal and management plan document set out at **Appendix ii** is formally adopted for development management purposes. It should be noted that the PDF version of the document provided at **Appendix ii** is set out purely to show how the changes to the document (which officers consider should be made) are to be incorporated. Final formatting of the document using professional editing software (which will also eliminate any remaining typos and grammatical errors) will be applied to the PDF version of the document which will form the adoption version, and which will be placed on the Council's website for public viewing.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 One option would be to not take this review work any further and effectively abandon it. This is not recommended however because it would risk the justifiable continuation of the designation and/or the appropriately sensitive and positive management of the conservation area and its wider setting moving forward.
- 4.2 A second possible option would be to suspend the work on this review until some point in the future. Whilst this option would not result in wasted consultancy fees and officer time, it could still lead to (a) the designation being challenged, (b) reputational damage to the Council and/or (c) development and associated infrastructure provision decisions being made for the locality without an appropriate understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the Tunstall Conservation Area.
- 4.3 A third possible option would be to ignore some elements, or all of the feedback received, in terms of the suggested boundary change(s) and suggested corrections to factual information (dates and place names, etc). However, whilst it is considered that the appraisal and management plan (to support the redesignation of the conservation area) is essentially sound, the feedback provided from the local community in good faith and in a constructive vein is valuable and to ignore any of this feedback without sound reasons to do so would call the value of the consultation process into question and potentially deliver a reputational blow to the Council.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 As agreed in advance with the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Baldock, a 6-week public consultation exercise ran from Monday the 25th October, 2021 until Sunday the 5th December, 2021.
- 5.2 All those parties with property within, immediately outside, or overlapping the current conservation area boundary and within or overlapping the proposed extensions to it, were notified in writing of the review and were invited to comment on it, as were key relevant organisations including Kent County Council and Historic England. Tunstall Parish Council and the relevant ward councillors (West Downs Ward – Cllr. Bonney and Woodstock Ward – Cllrs P. Stephen and S. Stephen) were also consulted.
- 5.3 Restrictions on movement imposed due to the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the normal practice of providing hard copies of the review document at Swale House could not be followed, but the review document was available to view/download on-line via the Council's website for the duration of the 7-week public consultation period. Hard copies of the review document were made available to view at Sittingbourne Library, and at the more local level, on request via the Rodmersham Parish Council Clerk. In addition, officers designed a public consultation poster, copies of which were placed on the Swale House public notice board, public notice boards at Rodmersham and on the notice board at Sittingbourne Library in order to help further publicise the review work.
- 5.4 A total of 15 consultation responses have been received, and 12 of these have been from local residents. The responses have principally been to welcome the review and support the conclusions, but a number of factual corrections to the draft document have been suggested, as have some modest changes to the management plan recommendations.
- 5.5 In addition to the 12 local resident consultation responses referred to above, Tunstall Parish Council (TPC) has responded to the consultation advising that it fully supports the recommendations for changes to the conservation area boundary. TPC has confirmed it is pleased to see Shooting Meadow included in a proposed amendment to the boundary and this historic importance of the Grove End Farm complex recognised, although not being included within any amendment to the boundary. It has also helpfully pointed out planned improvement works to the village pond which Kent County Council is leading on and financing.
- 5.6 Bredgar Parish Council has commended the quality of the review document.

- 5.7 Historic England has responded advising that:
- all views identified should include a detailed description of the views and their constituent parts, alongside clear photographs, outlining the contribution the views make to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
 - Positive Contributors: as identified in a map on page 7 of the document, should be listed in a separate table and described to ensure their qualities are fully explained and transparent.
 - The appraisal states '*...a handful of buildings within the proposed Tunstall Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List*'. It may be appropriate to list those that merit inclusion.
 - Historic England supports the production of this statement and the associated management plan for the Tunstall Conservation Area. However, we recommend your council takes the necessary steps to address the points made above to ensure the statements will facilitate sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and finally it says, that the comments provided do not address unscheduled archaeology. Please seek comments on these matters from your Council's own Archaeology Officer
- 5.8 Finally, it should be noted that Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation Team are contracted by the Council to provide archaeological advice on development proposals and in support of area appraisal work, as the Council, in line with most other local planning authorities does not have an in-house specialist in this respect. As such, there is no consultation response from the county's Heritage Conservation Team as the Council's consultant liaised with the county's Principal Archaeologist at the outset of this review exercise, and his input was incorporated into the public consultation document. Kent County Council in its function as the Highway Authority was consulted on the conservation area review but provided no feedback in this respect. No response was received either from the county's Ecology Team (which was also consulted).
- 5.9 A report on the public consultation and same Appendix ii document showing the recommended changes to the character appraisal and management plan (following that consultation) was presented to the Local Plan Panel at its meeting on the 24th March. The Panel unanimously agreed the officer recommendation that its support for adoption of the character appraisal and management plan in its amended form (taking into account the feedback from the public consultation) be noted by the Cabinet in informing the Cabinet's decision making on this matter. Minutes of the March Local Plan Panel meeting will be available at the Cabinet meeting on the 13th April.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 2 of the Plan is: 'Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges'. Objectives 2.1, 2.4 and 2.5 of this priority are respectively to:</p> <p>(2.1) 'Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2020, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough'.</p> <p>(2.4) 'Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.'</p> <p>(2.5) 'Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible'.</p> <p>The character appraisal and management strategy document, once amended as appropriate and subsequently adopted would support all 3 of the above-stated objectives from the Corporate Plan.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	There are no financial implications for the Council
Legal and Statutory	<p>The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on every local planning authority to "<i>determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance</i>" and, from time to time, to review the functioning existing conservation areas. As such failure to follow through on this review work would mean that the council is failing to meet its statutory duties in relation to the designation and ongoing management of conservation areas.</p>
Crime & Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environmental Sustainability	One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is its environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. The other two dimensions are a strong economy and a healthy and socially vibrant community
Health and Wellbeing	The health and wellbeing aspects of interaction with heritage assets and heritage related projects are referenced in the adopted Swale Heritage Strategy which underpins this review work.

Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- **Appendix i:** Public consultation – table of representations (in summary form), and the council’s response to them
- **Appendix ii:** Public consultation version of the 2021 draft character appraisal and management plan document, showing alterations recommended by officers (as tracked changes)

8 Background Papers

None.

APPENDIX i: TABLE OF REPRESENTATIONS, AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY CHANGES TO THE REVIEW DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO THEM – FOR TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
1	Tunstall Parish Council	<p>Commended and fully support the Review, the continuation of this Conservation Area and the boundary changes/extensions.</p> <p>In particular, we welcome the recognition of the importance of the setting of the historic buildings which includes important green spaces as shown on page 11 diagram. It is these green spaces, trees and hedgerows, woven in amongst the historic buildings which give Tunstall its unique character and setting, flowing through to important views across adjacent fields.</p> <p>We are pleased that the key views in and out across the corner field to the south of School View houses have been recognised and marked as such on the page 11 image, aiding protection of this field for the future as part of the Tunstall street scene. Approaching the Conservation Area from the south and west, it is the sweeping view across this meadow, usually with grazing sheep, which is distinctive and defines the character of the Area on entry.</p> <p>Although not included in the Conservation Area, we are pleased to see the historic importance of the Grove End Farm complex recognised and noted.</p> <p>We welcome and support the inclusion of the meadows (shown as Shooting Meadows on page 30 in the Review) to the east of the 2003 Conservation Area as important parts of Tunstall history and more recent community use by Tunstall residents.</p>	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
1 (cont')	Tunstall Parish Council	We welcome the management plan in the Review to help focus management for the future. We note the suggestions on Coffin Pond, for example, as a key site. Tunstall Parish Council is already working with KCC in a major review of this site with a committed project from KCC to rectify the drainage problems there and replace the pond above. The site can then play both its dual roles of land drainage and wildlife pond.	Noted and welcomed	Section 4.5 of the review document to be updated to reflect this project, the works for which are already scheduled.
2	Bredgar Parish Council	Commended the work done in the Tunstall Conservation Area Review, cited it as an excellent document setting out in clear terms the importance of these settlements as considered from multiple perspectives: historical, topographical, geological, in relation to their buildings, the local building materials, their highways, and so on. This kind of thorough analysis is of great significance, providing not only a clear-eyed picture of the character of Tunstall as it is currently, which will be available for consultation in perpetuity, but also programmes of management, improvement and in some cases, extension.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
3	Historic England	Attention is drawn to the following aspects: View: all views identified should include a detailed description of the views and their constituent parts, alongside clear photographs, outlining the contribution the views make to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Positive Contributors: as identified in a map on page 7 of the document, should be listed in a separate table and described to ensure their qualities are described to ensure their qualities are fully explained.	Noted and welcomed Noted	Document to be updated to incorporate these revisions Document to be updated to provide a table of positive contributors with their qualities explained.

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
3 (cont')	Historic England	<p>The appraisal states '<i>...a handful of buildings within the Tunstall Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List</i>'. It may be appropriate to list those that merit inclusion.</p> <p>Historic England supports the production of this statement and the associated management plan and proposed boundary changes for the Tunstall Conservation Area.</p> <p>The comments provided do not address unscheduled archaeology. Please seek comments on these matters from your Council's own Archaeology Officer</p>	<p>Noted. A list can be provided for buildings which on the face of it, would appear to meet the approved Swale Local List criteria, but this would nevertheless need to be subject to the building(s) in question being formally considered by the assessment panel to be set up to make decisions on what to include on the Swale Local List given that an element of subjectivity will inevitably apply.</p> <p>Noted and welcomed.</p> <p>SBC does not have its own Archaeology Officer, but the advice of KCC's Principal Archaeologist was sought at the outset and his feedback is incorporated into the public consultation draft</p>	<p>Separate list of buildings (within the proposed new conservation area) to be considered for Swale Local List inclusion to be provided in an amendment to the assessment document.</p> <p>No change to the assessment document needed.</p> <p>No change to the assessment document needed.</p>

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
4	Local Resident	<p>Supports proposals to include Shooting Meadow within the conservation area boundary</p> <p>Pond requires major work to restore it after several botched repairs over many years. Puddled clay base as original. The wall needs restoring to its original height</p> <p>Village sign would be better with a wrought iron one</p> <p>Traffic calming would be better if removed. Causes noise over bumps and encourages road rage</p> <p>Remove excessive street signs. i.e. Ducks, haven't seen any for over 10 years! Deep water signs, water less than a metre deep!</p> <p>The flint wall ending at the church carpark next to our garden steps is damaged every few months requiring continual repair. A suitable rural bollard is needed to prevent tails of lorries swinging and causing damage.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted. See comments on this in relation to Rep. No. 1 from Tunstall Parish Council.</p> <p>Noted. Consideration could be given to this when the current (perfectly adequate) sign needs replacing</p> <p>Noted. This is a matter for KCC.</p> <p>Noted. Management recommendations already include an audit of street signage</p> <p>Noted.</p>	<p>No change to the review document needed</p> <p>No further change to the review document needed over and above those recommended in relation to Rep. No. 1.</p> <p>No change to the review document needed.</p> <p>No change to the review document needed.</p> <p>No change to the review document needed.</p> <p>Management plan recommendation updated to include provision of protective bollard.</p>

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
4 (cont')	Local Resident	In the Northeast of the existing Conservation area there may be merit in including the rectangular field next to the corner paddock in the proposals.	The area of arable field in question is of no particular interest or importance.	No change to review document needed.
5	Local Resident	Fully support the consultation document, in favour of the proposed amendment to adjust the boundary to include the land known as "Shooting Meadows"; Commended the document as a very well-produced and impressive piece of work which really highlights the special character and charm of this ancient little Kentish village.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
6	Local Resident	<i>'Extremely well written and clearly set out document'</i> . In summary, I SUPPORT adoption of the draft Tunstall Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan. I would ask that consideration should also be given to auditing/reviewing the traffic calming throughout the conservation area, which is not fit for purpose, as well as consideration of a width restriction for vehicles for 'other than access' purposes, so as not to interfere with the haulage business in Grove End farm.	Noted and welcomed Noted, but this is a matter for KCC Highways to consider (see also the comments and officer response in relation to Rep. No. 12)	No change to review document needed. No change to review document needed.
7	Local Resident	Fully support and commend the recognition of the historical significance of Shooting Meadow in Tunstall, Queried exclusion of Grove End Farm within the current appraisal and suggested could Tunstall not have a second CA that specifically encompasses that location, or an Article 4 direction placed?	Noted and welcomed There is a large gap between Grove End farm and the current CA boundary, it might be prudent to apply Article 4 direction on the properties that fall within the setting of the Designated Grove Farm House cluster of buildings. To be explored.	No change to review document needed. No change to review document needed.

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
8	Local Resident	Having been a resident of Tunstall for many years, I was delighted that Swale were able to undertake a Conservation Area review and the special character of Tunstall has been recognised. I fully support the report and its recommendations.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
9	Local Resident	Tunstall and its surrounding area has a special character to it that is essential that it is preserved. The Tunstall Conservation Area Appraisal and Management plan document that has been produced has accurately captured the special qualities of this historic village, its buildings, its Trees and hedgerows, and surrounding land. Definitely an area that requires care and attention to maintain for future generations.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
10	Local Resident	This comprehensive study emphasises the value and unique character of the village I have known all my life. The proposed changes to the boundary seem sensible and I would urge you to adopt the review.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
11	Local Resident	Commended the document as a first-class piece of work and strongly supported and endorsed its conclusions regarding this very special village.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.
12	Local Resident	Raised concerns regarding high traffic through Tunstall	Noted, but outside the scope of this work. A matter for KCC Highways to consider at a more strategic level.	No change to review document needed.
13	Local Resident	Support the Conservation Area review and proposed boundary extensions and commend the special character of Tunstall described and recognised in this Review.	Noted and welcomed	No change to review document needed.

TUNSTALL C.A. REVIEW – REPRESENTATIONS, RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS TABLE (Continued)

Rep. No(s).	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Officer Response	Recommendation
14	Local Resident	Support the appraisal document and have raised concerns regarding escalating costs of upkeep of listed buildings and the advice available.	Noted	No change to the review document needed.
15	Local Resident	Tunstall is a unique and beautiful village and should be preserved for future generations to enjoy	Noted and welcomed	No change to the review document needed.

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Tunstall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

Public consultation draft October 2021 with amendments following public consultation March 2022

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Front cover: Tunstall House (Historic England Archive 1964)

FOREWORD

“Historic buildings and places add to the quality of people’s lives and help to create a sense of place that we all identify with.

As a community and as a local authority, we have a responsibility to safeguard our historic assets for future generations and to make sure that they are not compromised by unsympathetic alterations or poor-quality developments. Conservation area designation and subsequent management is one way in which this can be achieved.

Conservation areas are not intended to halt progress or to prevent change. Rather, they give the local community and the Borough Council the means to positively manage change and to protect what is special about the area from being harmed or lost altogether.

Swale Borough is fortunate in having such a rich and varied mix of built and natural heritage. The Borough Council wants to see it used positively as a catalyst to sustainable, sensitive regeneration and development, and to creating places where people want to live, work, and make the most of their leisure time. To that end, we have reviewed the Tunstall Conservation Area and the results of that review are set out in this document, which the Borough Council is now seeking constructive feedback on.

This is one of a series of conservation area reviews which the Borough Council is committed to undertaking, following the adoption of the Swale Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032.”

Page 79



Councillor Mike Baldock,
Cabinet Member for Planning
and Swale Borough Council
Heritage Champion

Mike Baldock

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tunstall Conservation Area

Tunstall Conservation Area was originally designated by Swale Borough Council on 20 April 1973. The boundary was reviewed and amended on 27 February 2003 when the conservation area was redesignated. At that time a summary conservation area character appraisal was published which also included proposals for its continuing preservation and enhancement.

Above all, conservation areas should be cohesive areas in which buildings and spaces create unique environments that are of special architectural or historic interest.

1.2 The Purpose of Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”¹.

It is the responsibility of individual local planning authorities to designate and review conservation areas from time to time using local criteria to determine and assess their special qualities and local distinctiveness².

The aim of conservation area designation is to protect historic places and to assist in positively managing change, so that their special character is safeguarded and sustained. Areas may be designated for their architecture, historic layout, use of characteristic or local materials, style or landscaping.

Conservation area designation provides extra protection in the following ways:

- Local planning authorities have control over most demolition of buildings.
- Local planning authorities have extra control over householder development.
- Special provision is made to protect trees in conservation areas.
- When assessing planning applications, the local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area and its setting.
- Policies in the Local Development Plan positively encourage development which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas.

¹ Section 69 (1)(a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

² Section 69 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

1.3 The Purpose and Status of this Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

The purpose of this Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy is:

- To identify the significance of the heritage asset – i.e. the value that the conservation area has to this and future generations because of its heritage interest – which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
- To increase public awareness and involvement in the preservation and enhancement of the area.
- To provide a framework for planning decisions, to guide positive change and regeneration.
- To review the conservation area boundary in accordance with Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- To highlight particular issues and features which detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area which offer potential for enhancement or improvement through positive management.

A Conservation Area Character Appraisal is an assessment and a record of the special architectural or historic interest which gives rise to the character and appearance of a place. The appraisal is a factual and objective analysis, which seeks to identify the distinctiveness of a place by defining the attributes that contribute to its special character. It should be noted, however, that the appraisal cannot be all-inclusive, and that the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is not of interest. In some cases, significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature, a building or a site is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.



A fundamental part of this review of Tunstall Conservation Area is to assess whether the area still possesses the special architectural and historic interest which merits its continued designation. It also provides an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the designation over the last 47 years and whether the extent of the area should be extended or reduced.

The appraisal includes a management strategy to help the Borough Council and other stakeholders positively manage the conservation area. A management strategy may include action points, design guidance and site-specific guidance where appropriate: It can identify potential threats to the character of the area and can, where appropriate, identify the potential for Article 4 Directions or local heritage listing.

An appraisal serves as a basis for the formulation and evaluation of Development Plan policies, as a material consideration in the making of development management decisions by the local planning authority, and by the Planning Inspectorate in determining planning appeals. It can also heighten awareness of the special character of the place to help inform local Parish Councils in the formulation of Neighbourhood Plans, Village Design Statements and individual's in design choices.

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been compiled in consultation with local organisations, elected representatives and council officials. It is to be the subject of public consultation and is prepared with a view to being formally adopted for development management purposes.

The map on page 7 shows the current extent of the conservation area as it was designated on 27 February 2003. It also shows listed buildings which appeared on the National Heritage List in September

2021 and other buildings which have been assessed as having local heritage interest.

The author would like to thank all those who contributed the production of this character appraisal.



Homewood tomb and Church of St. John the Baptist

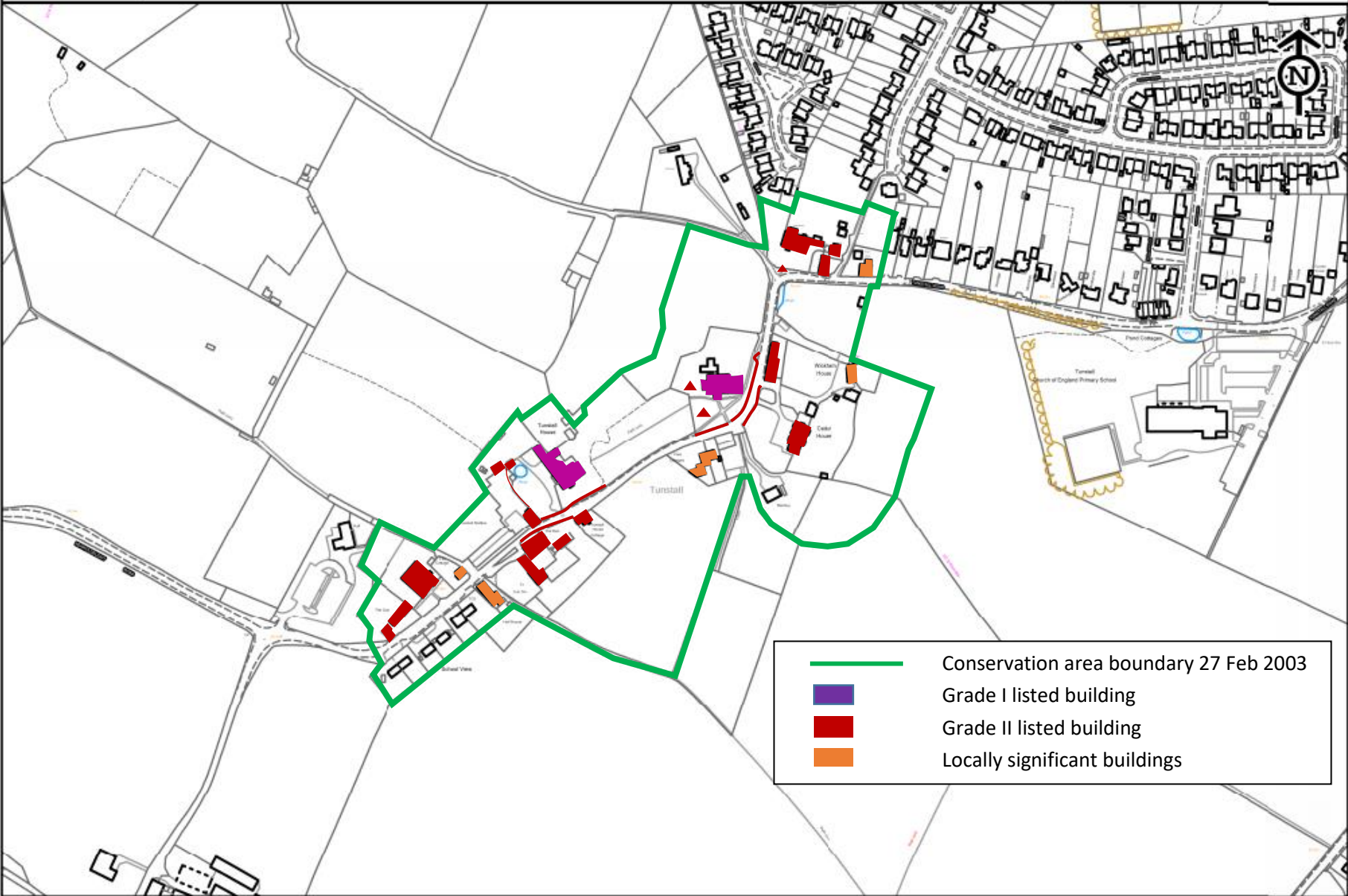


Tunstall Conservation Area

September 2021

Scale: NTS

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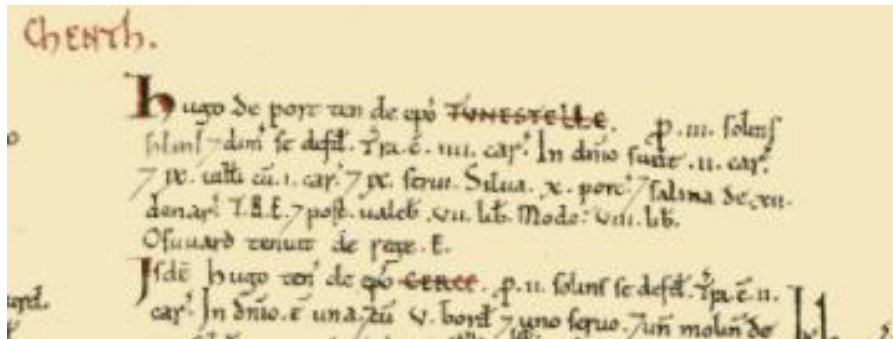


2.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

2.1 The History of Tunstall

In 1798 Edward Hasted recorded that Tunstall was called Dunstall 'by the common people'³ and that the name derives from the Saxon *dun* or *dune* meaning a hill and *stealle* meaning place.

It appeared in the Domesday survey as Tunestelle in 1086 which records that it had 18 households (9 villagers and 9 slaves), 4 ploughlands (the area of land that could be ploughed by eight oxen in a year), 2 lords plough teams and 1 men's plough team. It also referred to woodland 10 swine render and one salthouse.



The manor was held by Oswald in the 11th century and then by Odo, Earl of Kent. It eventually passed to Sir William Cromer in 1413 and stayed in his family until 1613 when it was carried in marriage to John Hales.

Its early history would have been that of a small farming community answering to the lord of the manor, although few farm buildings survive in the village today with the exception of the oast house at its southern extreme. The closest working farm today is Grove End, located some 250m to the south-west of the village.

Given the existence of the church in the 13th century (some suggest there may have been a church on the site as early as Saxon times) it is likely that there were domestic buildings in the village at that period but none survive today. The oldest standing fragments of building in Tunstall are contained within the church whereas the oldest domestic property is The Den, where the rear part of the house is timber-framed and dates from the late-medieval period.

The village grew slowly and sporadically during the 17th to the 21st centuries to include a school in 1846, a village hall in 1920, and a new village hall in circa 2000. Unusually, the village never had a pub a post office or a village shop.

2.2 Topography, Geology, Landscape and Setting

The village of Tunstall lies approximately 2 kilometres (1.25 miles) south of Sittingbourne town centre, on the northern edge of the North Downs dip slope. Tunstall has always been a small, distinctly separate settlement set in countryside a discrete distance from Sittingbourne, but at the beginning of the 21st century it finds itself on the very edge of post-war housing development which now defines a new southern edge to Sittingbourne, following the town's rapid outward growth onto farmland, including the Gore Court estate.

³Edward Hasted. *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798).

Despite the southwards expansion of Sittingbourne up to its very northern edge, Tunstall's identity continues to remain remarkably rural in character and distinct from Sittingbourne's suburbs.

The area is identified in the Swale Local Landscape Designation as the Tunstall Farmlands⁴, part of the gently undulating chalk downs which extend across the southern part of the Borough. Historically the village was surrounded by fruit orchards but they have declined in recent decades. Some of the orchards remain, derelict, but others have been turned over to mixed arable or pastoral farming.

Whilst Tunstall is characterised by a strong sense of enclosure created by buildings, trees and hedgerows, the gaps between building groups are equally important to its character. Significant green gaps between the buildings provide a strong connection with the countryside and are a key feature of the village. They complement and provide a setting for the buildings and in certain key respects are as important as the buildings themselves because of the resulting interplay. These gaps and the strong connection the village has with the surrounding landscape are consequently an integral part of the character of the place and their preservation in their current form is critical to the special character of Tunstall.

Significant green spaces are identified on page 11. They exist between the former school and Tunstall House, and also between Tunstall House and the church (plate 1). Both of these are embraced within the curtilages of the adjoining properties. By contrast the larger gaps between Tunstall House Cottage and Flint Cottages, and between the church and Hales House both continue to be used as grazing meadows so that the character of the surrounding Kentish countryside is here attractively interwoven with the built environment of Tunstall. The paddock opposite Hales House and the fields

between Hales House and the church provide an important and defining green gap between suburban Sittingbourne and Tunstall village.



Trees and hedgerows also make a significant contribution to the appearance and character of Tunstall. In the vicinity of the church the tree canopies meet across the Tunstall Road, and the strong presence of evergreen trees results in a dark and somewhat mysterious character (plate 2). Huge cedar and Wellingtonia are particularly noteworthy, but native species make an important contribution also and ancient yew trees are prominent in the churchyard. Hedgerows, trees and roadside banks abutting the carriageway give important form and definition, at intervals, along the length of Tunstall Road.

⁴ Swale Local Landscape Designation LUC October 2018 and the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal, Jacobs 2011



The pond, situated opposite Hales House (plate 3) is hidden behind an over-engineered encircling low brick wall and in some respects is visually isolated so limiting its value as a local amenity. However, the village sign and seat, positioned immediately to the south, have helped to reinforce the local importance of this feature (plate 4).





2.3 Buildings

Tunstall is comprised of three small groups of properties interspersed with parcels of undeveloped green space. The buildings are set along Tunstall Road for a distance of some 500 metres.

The largest group of buildings is situated at the south-western end of the village and includes the former school and Tunstall House. The second group embraces the church and Cedar House (formerly The Rectory). The third and smallest group of properties marks the northern edge of Tunstall and is centred on Hales House.

The (new) village hall sits comfortably alongside the historic village and defines a new south-western edge to Tunstall, but on approach from the south it is the yellow brick oast roundel and thatched oast house (plate 5) prominently situated on a bend in the road on the very edge of the carriageway that marks the start to the village. The



former oast retains a pleasingly authentic character. Oast Cottage, a thatched single-storey cottage with dormer windows (plate 6), lies to the north where red brick cladding hides the 17th century timber framing within.



The former Tunstall Primary School (plate 7) built in 1846, is a delightful building faced with knapped flints and with details executed in contrasting red brick; the gabled roof is covered with Kent peg tiles. The flintwork is distinctive and an excellent example of the skillful and sensitive use of a locally sourced building material. White-painted diamond-paned windows and a studded central door complete the picturesque architectural composition of the front elevation. The

building makes an important contribution to Tunstall's distinctive identity. It is currently undergoing conversion to residential use.



To the north is a pleasant cottage (plate 12) built in 1863, originally occupied by the coachman to the Rectory. Next is Tunstall House (plate 8) built circa 1660 either for Sir Edward Hales or John Grove, gentleman steward to Sir Edward. It stands behind a high, buttressed boundary wall. John Newman refers to it as “a delightful 17th century house”⁵. Viewed from the south the peg-tiled roofs and lead-capped and louvred cupola can be seen above the boundary wall attractively silhouetted against the high trees in the nearby churchyard. The warm colours of the red and blue chequered brickwork are especially appealing. Writing at the end of the 18th century Hasted observed:

⁵ John Newman *The Buildings of England, North East and East Kent* (1983) p481

‘Tunstall House which although not large yet has the look of some respectability’⁶.



Public views of the house are restricted to glimpses through gates positioned between high brick pillars topped with ball finials. A simple gravelled and grassed forecourt lies to one side attractively enclosed by a converted stable building, brick-built dovecot, store buildings and boundary walls which all complement the setting of the house. The buttressed high brick wall along the front boundary is a distinct feature and gives a clue to the stature of the house. The proximity of the wall to the carriageway markedly narrows and focuses the street scene. A small Victorian post box inserted into the wall creates an additional point of interest (plate 23).

⁶ Edward Hasted. *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798)

Tunstall House Cottage (plate 9) is situated on the opposite side of the road; it also dates from the seventeenth century and is built in a red brick. Lead-light windows on the ground floor, small mullioned windows on the upper floor and a steep tiled roof all contribute to its special character.



Tunstall House Cottage is linked to the south-west by a high brick boundary wall which markedly squeezes the width of the road. 'The Den' (plate 10) then faces squarely onto the road. The front portion of the house dates from the eighteenth century; it is proudly symmetrical and built of grey bricks with red brick dressings, unusually laid in header bond. The section to the rear is older, being timber framed and dating from the late medieval period. A range of outbuildings includes stables, a coach house and a dairy, creating a good group with the main house.



A public footpath separates The Den from the former village hall (now Hall House) built in 1920 (plate 11). Following the construction of the new village hall it has been converted to residential use. There is a pleasing resonance between the gabled frontage of the former village hall and that of cottage on the opposite side of Tunstall Road (plate 12).



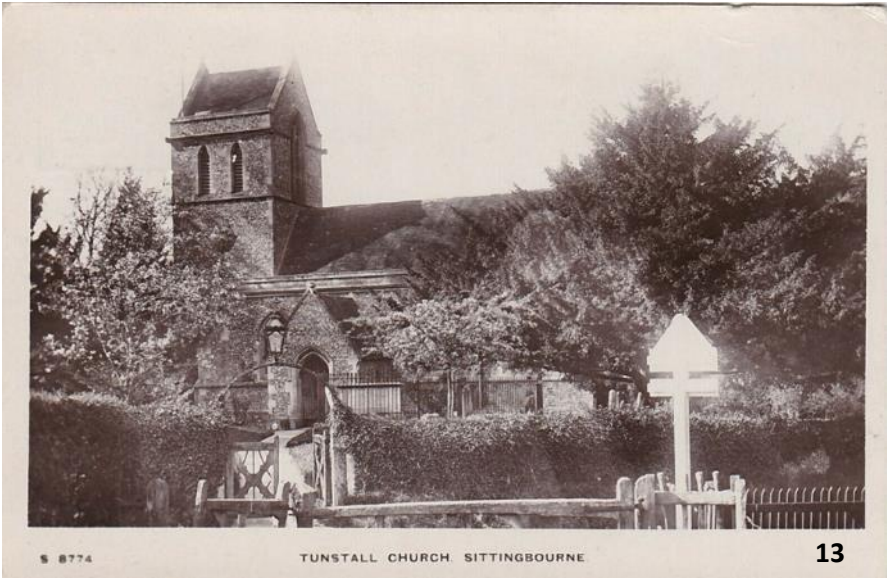
To the south again are two pairs of semi-detached houses built in the 1940s plus a pair of linked detached former police houses which were completed in 1952. These buildings are relatively ordinary and restrained in appearance, but they are prominently positioned at the southern end of Tunstall and occupy a substantial length of road frontage.

The second group of buildings is centred on the parish church of St John The Baptist (plate 13). The church dates from the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries with extensions in 1655. It was heavily restored by architect R.C. Hussey in 1848-56, including the addition of the west tower with its distinct saddleback roof. Built mainly of knapped flint with stone dressings, and with Kent peg tiled roofs, the church has a distinctive appearance and is another fine example of the use of local building materials. Despite the tower at the western end of the building, the church is relatively modest in size and is consequently rather hidden behind a screen of encircling trees which virtually fill the surrounding churchyard.

The graveyard is bounded on the highway frontage by a long length of knapped flint wall, topped partly with stone copings and partly with red brick. This boundary is important in the street scene and plays a key role in defining the shape of Tunstall Road.

The churchyard contains a number of noteworthy monuments and headstones including the chest tomb of George Smeed, brick-maker and self-made entrepreneur.

A red brick vestry building with pre-cast stone detailing, completed in 1987, stands immediately behind the church. Each of the three pedestrian entrances into the churchyard is nicely framed by a wrought iron overthrow supporting Victorian style lanterns.



On the opposite side of the road the former rectory (plate 16) now known as Cedar House, is set well back within its own grounds. This is a restrained, regular fronted yellow brick house which dates from the 1830s (Hasted refers to the earlier rectory, built in 1712, as a 'small modern house'⁷). The front boundary walls marking the entrance into the grounds are built of flint; they nicely echo the flint wall around the churchyard and also play a key role in defining the shape of Tunstall Road.



Two houses, Wickham House and a The Rectory (plate 17), have been built in the grounds of the former rectory within the last fifty years, but being set well back from the road and screened by trees they have little direct impact on the street scene. A tarmac parking area for the church has been formed in front of the new rectory.

Flint Cottages (plate 18) to the west of Cedar House, use dark knapped flint with decorative red brick dressings and banding in a picturesque architectural composition. Steeply pitched roofs with decorative tile bands feature prominent gables with enriched bargeboards.



The third group of buildings is centred on Hales House (plate 19) which was built for Sir Edward Hales' grandson which is, in effect, a rather plainer and reduced version of Tunstall House. Also built in the seventeenth century, and also in red brick under a Kent peg tile roof, it has prominent gables and large mullion and transom windows. Its position on the right-angled bend in Tunstall Road is especially important in the street scene as the house closes the view on approach from the south.

⁷ Edward Hasted. *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798).



Stables (plate 20) in matching brickwork are situated alongside to the east; the flank wall projects southwards to create a pinch-point in the road, and is consequently important in defining the form of the street. Hales Cottage (plate 21) also dating from the seventeenth century, is tucked in behind the stable building. A brick and stone mounting step adjoining the front boundary wall to Hales House is an interesting historical survival.



Orchard Cottage (plate 21) was a late 18th century former dovecote which served Hales House. It has been extensively modernised and extended to the extent that much of its character has been lost. Nevertheless, the building forms part of the historic Hales House complex and relates to Tunstall's history rather than the expansion of suburban Sittingbourne.

2.4 Building Materials

The distinct character of Tunstall owes much to the variety of architectural styles, materials and details displayed in its buildings. Building materials were used to express architectural aspirations as well as changing fashions. Until the transport revolution of the mid-19th century, virtually all building materials were locally sourced and manufactured, so they are frequently a true expression of the locality and its natural resources. Even materials that were in common use at the time make a valuable contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

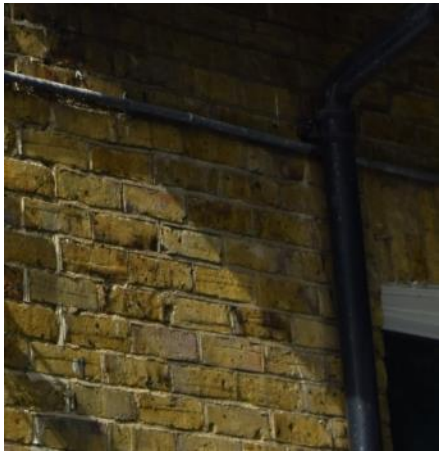
The earlier domestic buildings in Tunstall were timber-framed but any framing that survives today is now concealed behind later elevations. As oak for building became harder to source during the 17th century, brick became universally fashionable. Brick was used extensively for new buildings and to over-clad old buildings to give them a more fashionable appearance. Thatch may once have been more widespread in Tunstall but Kent peg tile were the preferred choice in the 17th and 18th centuries but they gave way to slate during the early 19th century, particularly once the railway came to Sittingbourne in 1848. Modern concrete roof tiles and uPVC windows are less sympathetic materials introduced during the mid to late 20th century.

Stone: Building stone was not readily available in this part of Kent with the exception of flint which was the only naturally occurring building stone available around Tunstall. Flints appear in seams within the chalk bedrock and were either brought to the surface naturally by farming or uncovered as a by-product of lime quarrying which took place locally. Flints were either laid as field flints in lesser buildings or split and knapped with a hammer in order to reveal the dark shiny inner surface in more polite architecture.

Flint is the main walling material on several buildings in Tunstall where it is used to great aesthetic effect. Field flints appear in some boundary walls with stone or brick cappings. Split flints appear in more prestigious buildings such as the former school and Flint Cottages, whereas fine quality knapped and squared flints are found in the porch of the parish church.

Brick: Brick earth was readily available in north Kent so, not surprisingly, brickwork is a familiar building material in Tunstall. There is variety and richness in the size, bond, colour and character of the bricks, depending on their age, style or function. Earlier examples are irregular clamp-fired red bricks used during the 17th century in buildings such as Tunstall House and Hales House.

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In the centuries that followed, the shape, size and coursing of brickwork became more regularised and uniform. Yellow stock brickwork was commonly used from the Regency period onwards.

Tunstall has a particular connection with George Smeed of Smeed Dean brickworks. The brickworks developed during the second half of 19th century and it was renowned for its yellow stock bricks which were exported to London and around the world.

Thatch: Longstraw thatch was a bi-product of arable farming and was widely used across Kent, often on lesser buildings or farm buildings but also for its picturesque effect. It has a very characteristic appearance which makes a particular contribution to local distinctiveness.



Kent peg tiles: The name 'peg tile' refers to a plain clay tile suspended from the top edge of a tiling lath. Traditionally peg tiles

were held in place by a small wooden peg or latterly an aluminium 'drop', wedged into, or passed through one of the two holes in the head of the tile. Simple firing methods and local clays produced strong, durable and light peg tiles, many in warm orange/red/terracotta colours. Imperfections in the raw clay and the hand manufacturing process resulted in a richness and variety in colour and shape. They are renowned for their warm and varied colours and rich texture which cannot be replicated in modern machine-made tiles.

Until the 19th century, hand-made clay peg tiles were the preferred roof covering for buildings throughout Kent. Tiles continued to be handmade from local clays well into the 20th century and there are still a handful of manufacturers today. They are a characteristic roofing material of the south-east of England and dominate the roofscapes of many towns and villages including Tunstall. Kent peg



tile roofs are visually prominent because of the steep pitch of the roofs on which they are laid (typically steeper than 35 degrees).

Slate: Slate rarely appears on roofs before the turn of the 19th century. However, it became very widely used in the area after rail transport made it more easily accessible. Slate was imported, mainly from Wales, and gave rise to shallower roof pitches of between 30 and 35 degrees. Slate appears on a handful of buildings in Tunstall.

Modern building materials: In recent decades mass-produced concrete roof tiles and uPVC windows have been used within Tunstall but they do not generally sit comfortably within the context of the historic village.

2.5 Boundary fences, railings and walls

Boundary treatments in Tunstall make a particularly important contribution to the character and appearance of the street scene, almost to the extent of there being an observable order: brick boundary walls associated with prestigious properties, flint walls for other important situations, close-boarded fences, diamond chestnut spile fences and paling fences for cottages, and post-and-rail and estate railings for agricultural land. Boundary treatments here might be said to reflect, albeit unconsciously, the character and standings



of the buildings and uses to which they relate. These boundaries all help to define and shape the street scene in crucial ways.

It is unfortunate that the wrought iron estate railings which were noted in the 2003 Conservation Area Character Appraisal fronting Tunstall Road between Tunstall Cottage and Flint Cottages have been replaced by standard post and rail fencing.

2.6 Archaeology

There has been limited archaeological investigation in Tunstall but detectorists are highlighting Roman, medieval and post-medieval findings in the surrounding fields, including a 17th century gold coin hoard east of the village. There is an Iron Age and Roman focus around Highsted Wood to the east. It is possible that a Roman road, suggested by cropmarks, runs south of the village between Sutton Barron and Highsted but more investigation is required.

Brick making evidence (clamps used in the manufacture of handmade bricks) were found during the construction of the new school. The former site of Cromers Mansion lies in a field alongside Ruins Barn Road to the east of the village.

2.7 The Public Highway

The alignment of the Tunstall Road is notable for its sequence of sharp turns and pinch points which are an integral part of the form and character of the place. The changing shape to the road gives rise to constantly changing views and vistas which are a special feature of Tunstall.

Sections of the road are kerbed in concrete whilst other parts have soft margins. Discontinuous lengths of footways, some extremely narrow, are present alongside the carriageway, but so limited is the road space that in places the footway is forced to divert through the churchyard and behind hedgerows in order to thread its way through. This all adds to the individuality of the place, although pedestrian safety is a continuing problem.

Concrete haunching formed at the base of the churchyard boundary wall effectively deters pedestrians from straying into a dangerous section of carriageway, but detracts markedly from the character of the flintwork and the general appearance of the road.

Traffic calming measures introduced in the early 2000s are, in places, visually obtrusive and their effectiveness is questionable.

Tunstall is served by a good network of public footpaths which allow it to be appreciated from the surrounding countryside where glimpses

of the church tower, the oast kiln or the gables of Tunstall House or The Den are a delight (plate 22).



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Tunstall Road circa 1900

3.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Tunstall is a place with a strong and distinctive identity, bound together by Tunstall Road which winds with pleasing eccentricity through the historic settlement. It is comprised of an attractive mix of historic buildings interspersed with pockets of countryside. Local materials are strongly in evidence, including yellow and red brickwork, Kent peg roofing tiles, longstraw thatch and flint. The sequence of brick walls, rustic flint walls, paling and chestnut spile fences and hedgerows make a good contribution to the character of the place.

The mix of historic Kentish buildings interspersed at intervals with pockets of countryside, linked together by the winding form of Tunstall Road, continue to be an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve. The conservation area has served its purpose well over the over the 47 years since it was first designated. The key characteristics that gave rise to the designation in 1974 appear to have been well managed by local owners, the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority. That is not to say that there have not been changes because there have, but they have typically been made with respect to the distinct character of the place and have integrated well into their context.

There is no doubt that Tunstall should continue to be designated as a conservation area.

Summary of significance

The significance and special interest of Tunstall Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- A small settlement historically centred on the Medieval Church of St. John the Baptist, Tunstall House and Hales Place.
- The winding eccentricity of Tunstall Road.
- The architectural contribution made by several listed buildings as well as some non-designated buildings and structures.
- The eclectic mix of traditional building styles, forms and building materials. The frequent occurrence of flint and 17th century brickwork is particularly noteworthy.
- Frontage boundary walls, railings and fences are a defining feature.
- The strong historic, visual and functional link between the village and its surrounding landscape.
- The green spaces between and around buildings which bring the countryside into the village.
- The contribution which mature trees make to the character and appearance of the village.
- The historical connections with the Cromer and Hales families.

Summary of Key Characteristics

Key Positive Characteristics:

- The mix of building styles exhibiting buildings from the last eight centuries. Key buildings such as the parish church, the former village school, Tunstall House and The Den play a key role in defining the character of Tunstall.
- The use of vernacular building materials: in particular brick, flint, weather boarding, Kent peg tile, slate and thatch.
- The distinct geometry of Tunstall Road, accentuated by the pinch points and the variety and inconsistency in boundary walls and fences.
- The abundance of mature trees, hedgerows and planting both inside and outside of the conservation area.
- The strong relationship between the conservation area and the surrounding landscape, experienced through views and vistas and through the public footpath network.
- Green gaps and spaces between buildings are particularly significant within the village.
- The survival of traditional roadside features such as the post box.
- Despite its close proximity to suburban Sittingbourne it retains a strong individual sense of identity and place.

Key Negative Characteristics:

- The occasional use of non-indigenous building materials such as uPVC windows or concrete roof tiles.
- Overhead cables and utility poles which can be visually intrusive.
- Highway kerbs, highway traffic management measures, signs and bollards.
- Unsympathetic pebble and concrete haunching alongside the graveyard wall.



4.0 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Conservation area designation is not an end in itself. It is a way of recognising the special architectural or historic character of an area so that appropriate steps can be taken to preserve or enhance it.

Conservation is not about preventing change; Tunstall Conservation Area is part of a living community and change is needed to sustain and meet its future needs. It is about positively managing change so that what the community cherishes today can be properly looked after and passed on to future generations in good condition.

This management strategy is intended to encourage active involvement in the future management of Tunstall Conservation Area. It provides the opportunity for the Borough Council, the Parish Council, local amenity groups, Kent Highways, Kent County Council, individual householders and local businesses to take part in positively managing the area.

4.1 Statutes and policies

When a conservation area is designated there are statutes, planning policies and regulations which govern which types of development requires planning permission and the way that the local planning authority undertakes plan making and decision taking. The statutes and policies that directly affect designated conservation areas are outlined in appendix 4 below.

It is those statutes and policies which provide the framework for managing change in conservation areas. Most significantly the local planning authority is required to pay special attention to the

desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in the exercise of all its planning functions.

The Swale Borough Local Plan aims to ensure that the significance of Tunstall Conservation Area is sustained and enhanced through:

- Preserving or enhancing the area's special character or appearance.
- Preserving or enhancing the setting of the conservation area and of other designated heritage assets.
- Safeguarding and better revealing the significance of any archaeology.
- Protection and enhancement of landmarks, views and vistas within and without the conservation area.
- Safeguarding non-designated heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the significance of the area.
- Safeguarding significant spaces.
- Safeguarding significant trees.
- Promoting of high quality design in new development which responds positively to context and the distinct characteristics of the conservation area.
- Continued sensitive management of the public realm.
- Requiring development to respond positively to the Borough Council's Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

4.2 Published guidance

There is a wealth of published guidance on positively managing change in conservation areas. In particular, Historic England has produced a range of guidance and advice notes which are listed in the appendix 5 below and Swale Borough Council has adopted supplementary planning documents which are listed in appendix 4.

4.3 Householder alterations

Where householder alterations are proposed which require planning permission the Council will typically seek to ensure that those alterations enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

Opportunities to reinstate missing architectural features (such as sash windows, panelled doors or original roof coverings) and traditional boundary treatments will be encouraged by the Council and may be requested in relation to planning applications for extensions and/or alterations, where appropriate.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has identified some householder alterations which have involved the removal of historic features such as period windows, doors, roof coverings and chimney stacks.

Even in conservation areas, some householder alterations to unlisted buildings can be undertaken without the need for planning permission. The cumulative impact of ill-considered alterations to traditional properties can have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Such alterations have, and could continue to erode the character of Tunstall Conservation Area over time.

In light of the above Swale Borough Council as the local planning authority may consider the use of an Article 4 Direction in order to bring some householder alterations (which are currently classed as permitted development) under planning control, to ensure that all alterations are positively managed through the planning system.

There is already an Article 4 Direction in place at Flint Cottages which has been effective in maintaining the special character and

appearance of this building. Such measures could usefully be employed elsewhere in the Tunstall Conservation Area.

Householder alterations which could be brought under control by an Article 4 Direction include the following:

- Replacement windows and doors.
- Changes to roof coverings.
- Removal of chimney stacks.
- The installation of solar and photovoltaic panels on the front wall or roof slope.
- Alterations to fences, railings and boundary walls.
- Adding a front porch.
- Installing rooflights in the front roofslope.
- Replacing a front garden with a hard surface.

4.4 Swale local heritage list

Arising from Swale's adopted Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032, the Borough Council is compiling a Local Heritage List in order to identify heritage assets which are not formally designated.

The Swale Local Heritage List:

- raises awareness of an area's local heritage assets and their importance to local distinctiveness;
- informs developers, owners, council officers and members about buildings within the local authority boundary that are desirable to retain and protect;
- provides guidance and specialist advice to owners to help protect the character and setting of those buildings, structures, sites and landscapes;

- helps the council in its decision making when discussing proposals and determining planning applications; and
- records the nature of the local historic environment more accurately.

The impact of any development on a building or site included within the Local Heritage List is a material consideration when the council considers an application for planning permission.

A handful of buildings within Tunstall Conservation Area would be eligible for inclusion within the Swale Local Heritage List.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm (that is those areas which fall between the buildings and are enjoyed by the public) makes a significant positive contribution to the special character of Tunstall Conservation Area. The highway, including the footway, public footpaths, signage and the pond, all fall within the public realm and provide opportunities for enhancement.

In rural conservation areas, it is especially necessary to guard against standard highway ‘improvements’ which do not necessarily respect the special character of the place.

The form and appearance of Tunstall Road is crucial to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the sensitive treatment of the highway environment will therefore be important, including the retention of the informal character and shape of both the road and the carriageway areas; the retention of soft edges, verges and roadside banks; the choice of materials used and the manner of their use; and the restrained use of signing and road markings.

Pedestrian safety, the speed of traffic, and the vulnerability of buildings/walls to physical damage at carriageway pinch-points present particular problems in Tunstall. The highway environment is of such fundamental importance to the special character of the conservation area that conventional traffic engineering solutions to these and other problems are unlikely to be appropriate. Off-the-shelf bollards, signs, lamp posts, planters, bins and standard road markings all dilute the special character of Tunstall.



Future highway maintenance and improvements will be carried out in accordance with *Streets For All*, Historic England (2018) and *Highway Works and Heritage Assets: the Kent Protocol for Highway Works in Relation to Designated Heritage Assets*, KCC and KCOG (2011) both of which contain specific provisions for works in conservation areas. Early consultation with all stakeholders (including Swale Borough Council’s Conservation and Design Team and Tunstall Parish Council) will be fundamental to achieving appropriate standards in future changes.

Coffin pond offers considerable opportunity for enhancement in order to improve its appearance and its contribution to local ecology and biodiversity. Any enhancement to the pond will start with a detailed understanding of its water quality and its water regime, whether the pond liner is necessary and how pollutants can be filtered and biodiversity improved. Kent Countryside Partnerships (www.kentcountrysidepartnerships.org) may be able to provide assistance and advice.

Tunstall Parish Council, Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council will seek to ensure that the public realm continues to be sensitively managed.

Opportunities for enhancement in the public realm:

- An audit of public signage (including highway signage) to establish whether all current signage and road markings are necessary, well designed and appropriately located.
- An audit of street furniture (bollards, benches, bins, dog waste bins) to establish whether street furniture is necessary, well designed and appropriately located.
- An audit of street lighting to establish whether existing lighting is appropriate, well positioned and well designed.

- An audit of overhead supply lines and poles with the statutory undertakers to establish whether there is scope to remove any overhead cables or poles.
- The replacement of concrete road kerbs with granite as and when the opportunity arises.
- Improvements to the concrete/pebble haunching alongside the flint boundary wall to the parish church.
- A review of Coffin Pond including its potential for improved biodiversity, its visual appearance and its immediate surroundings.

4.6 Trees and planting

The established pattern of trees and hedgerows plays a vital role in the special character of Tunstall. Features of particular importance in the Tunstall landscape include: trees and hedgerows which define and enclose the undeveloped gaps within the built environment; areas of dense and distinctive planting such as around the church, Tunstall House and Cedar House; and roadside trees, hedges, hedgerows and vegetated embankments alongside Tunstall Road.

The retention and enhancement of all these features of local distinctiveness in the Tunstall landscape will be important for the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character of the place and the positive management of these planting areas will be essential to ensure their future well-being.

However, occasionally consideration may be given to the removal of trees in order to maintain significant views or spaces (such as the self-set sycamore trees on the fence line between Tunstall Cottage and Flint Cottages or those in front of Flint Cottages). There may even be a case to be made for thinning the amount of trees around

the parish church to restore some views which have disappeared over time.

Planting which contributes to the form and structure of the local environment in and around Tunstall should normally be comprised of native species, although other species now assimilated into the Kentish rural scene may also be appropriate.

Six weeks' notice must be given to the Borough Council in writing before any works are undertaken to trees within conservation areas.

Opportunities for enhancing trees and planting:

- An audit of trees, hedgerows, green spaces and orchards could be undertaken to establish whether there is any scope for better management or for further planting or for felling or thinning.
- Positive tree management may occasionally involve the removal of trees in order to preserve, restore or open up significant views.

4.7 New development opportunities

Potential for new development within the Tunstall Conservation Area is extremely limited. If proposals for development come forward they will be considered against local and national planning policy which requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and their settings.

Development within the setting of the conservation area may affect its heritage significance. The council is required by to pay special

attention to preserving the setting of the conservation area (or any listed buildings) in any plan making or decision taking.

4.8 Heritage at risk

There are no designated heritage assets within Tunstall Conservation Area on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register or on the Swale Borough Council's Heritage at Risk Register. This appraisal has not identified any heritage assets which are at risk.

However, if any of the locally significant features or buildings identified in this appraisal become at risk in the future, they may be added to the Heritage at Risk Registers if their significance is threatened by their condition or lack of appropriate use.

In such cases the Council will notify respective owners and, where appropriate, work with them and other stakeholders to investigate opportunities for removing the risk and securing the asset's future.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed amendments to Tunstall Conservation Area boundary

As part of the review of Tunstall Conservation Area, consideration has been given to whether the current boundaries accurately reflect the area which has special architectural or historic interest.

In large part, the area covered by the current boundaries is considered to be appropriate in that it still possesses special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. However, there is one proposed amendment to the conservation area boundary, as follows:

Boundary adjustment 1 (please refer to appendix 1 map below)

The field known as ‘Shooting Meadows’ is located to the south of the Rectory and Flint Cottages.

The story that Sir Edward Hales was shot by Cromwell’s soldiers and died at Shooting Meadows is not founded on fact. However, the field does have strong historical connections as the venue for obligatory archery practice in Tudor times.

In 1840 Shooting Meadow is referred to as ‘pasture’ in the tithe apportionment. At that time it was owned by the ‘Trustees of Edward Hales viz Edward Darrell’ and tenanted by George Baker.

In the 20th century what was historically one field was split into two, the southern part being used as the playing field for Tunstall Primary School. As such it has communal value for the recent generations of children who used it for exercise and sporting activities.

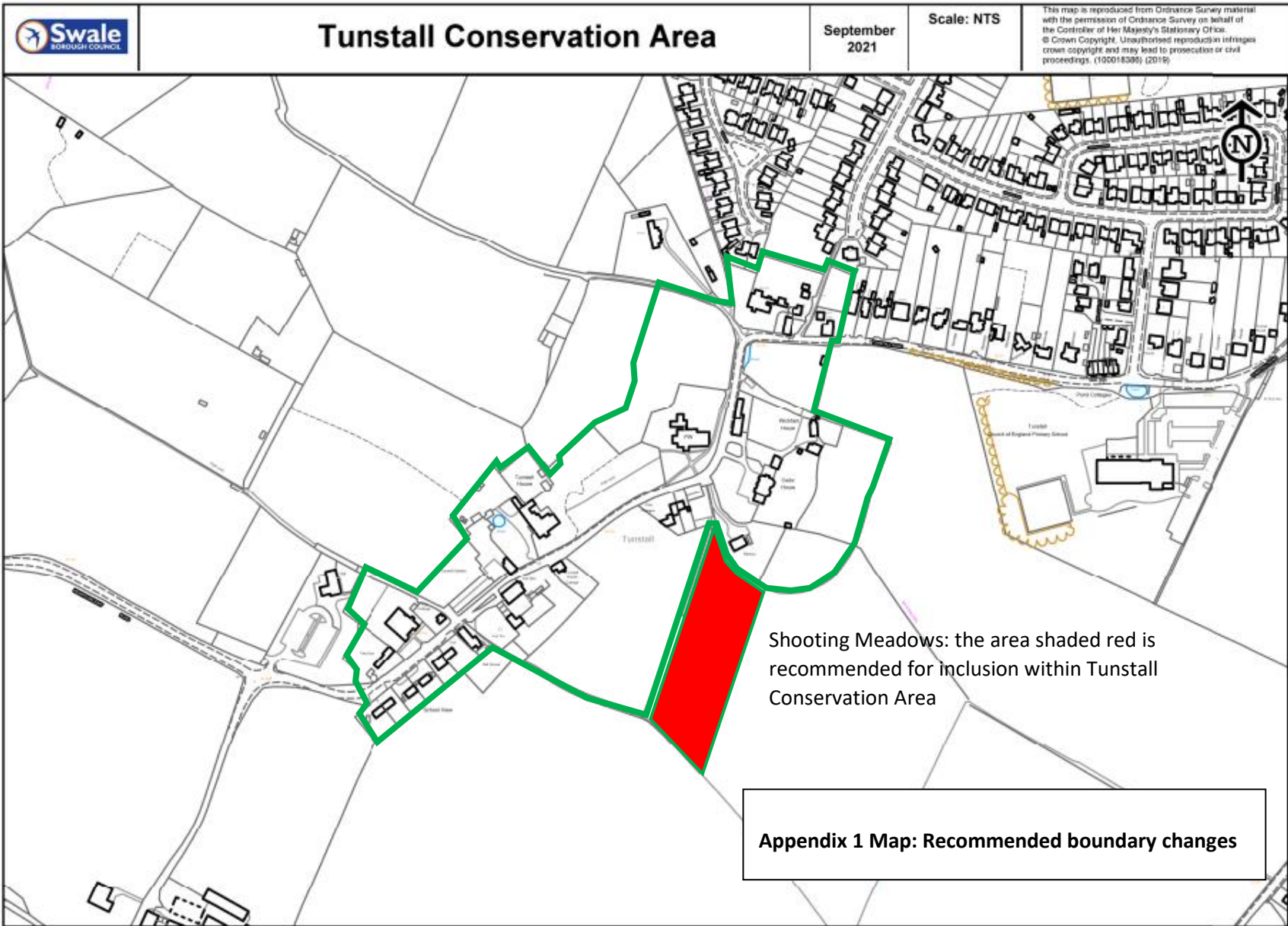
Given this level of historical and communal value, and its close visual and physical proximity to the centre of the village, its inclusion within the conservation area is justified.

Other areas

Consideration was given to extending Tunstall Conservation Area to include the Grove Farm complex which lies some 300m south-west of the existing conservation area. The historic farm complex includes a significant historic farmhouse as well as two barns and a brick-built stable, all dating from the 16th and 17th centuries and all Grade II listed buildings.

However, after careful consideration it was decided not to recommend their inclusion within the conservation area because:

- They are physically separated from the conservation area by a field, by a poplar tree belt and by a range of sizeable modern agricultural buildings.
- There is no intervisibility between the existing conservation area and the historic farm complex at Grove Farm.
- There are few locations where the conservation area can be seen in the same views as the historic buildings at Grove Farm.
- The heritage significance of the Grove Farm complex is already highly protected by statutory listing.

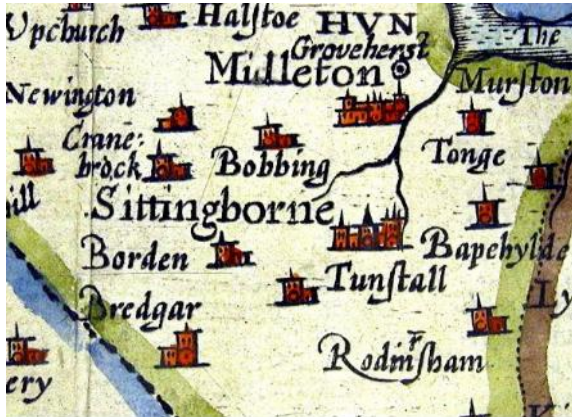


Shooting Meadows: the area shaded red is recommended for inclusion within Tunstall Conservation Area

Appendix 1 Map: Recommended boundary changes

APPENDIX 2

Map regression



Saxton's map of Kent
1575



Captain William Mudge's
map of Kent of c.1800



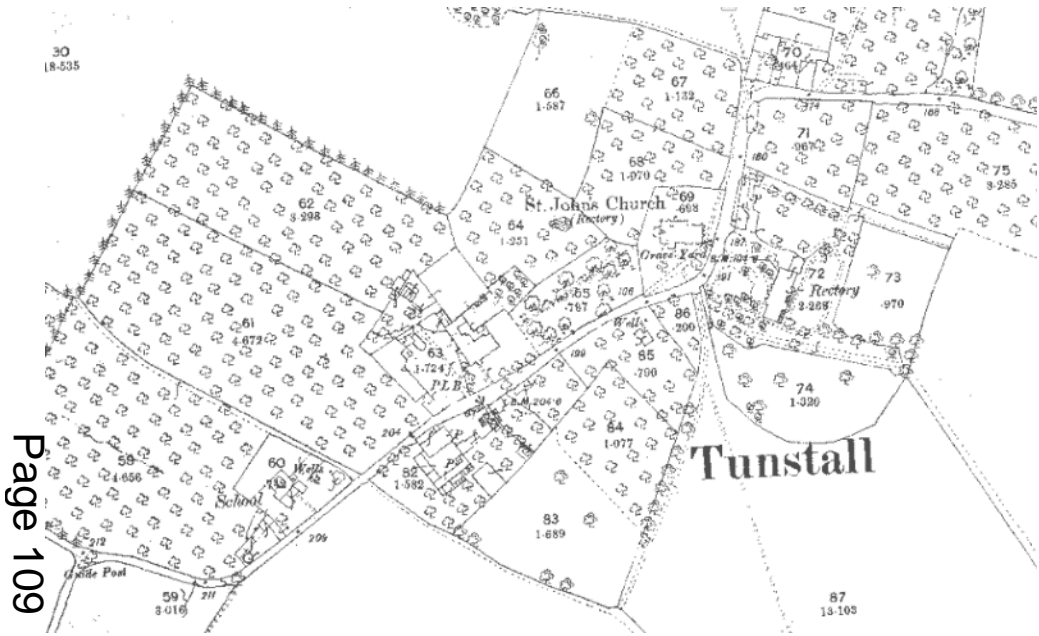
Andrews topographical
map of the county of
Kent 1769



Ordnance Survey First
Series 1816

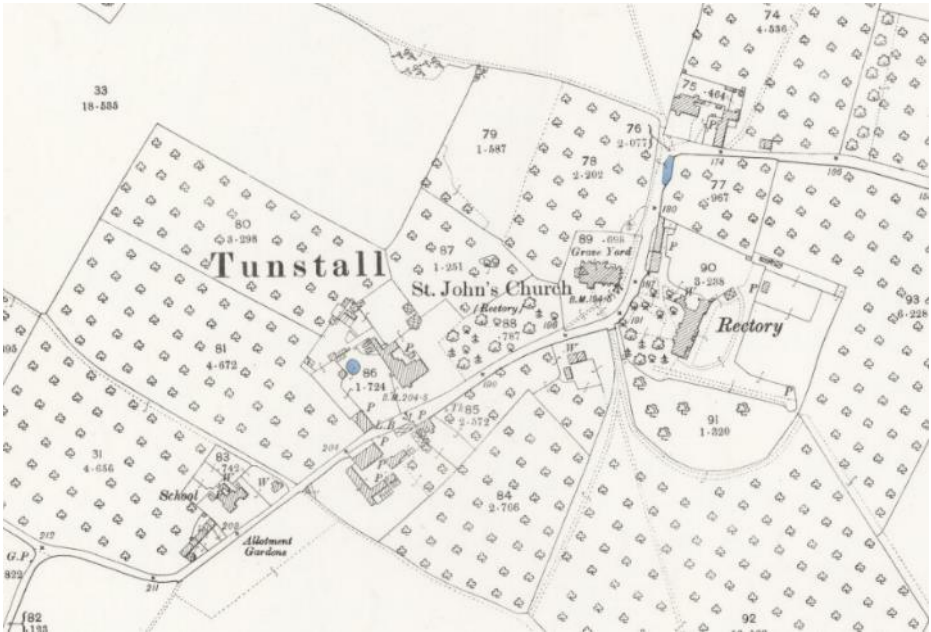


Tithe map 1840 (Kent Archives)

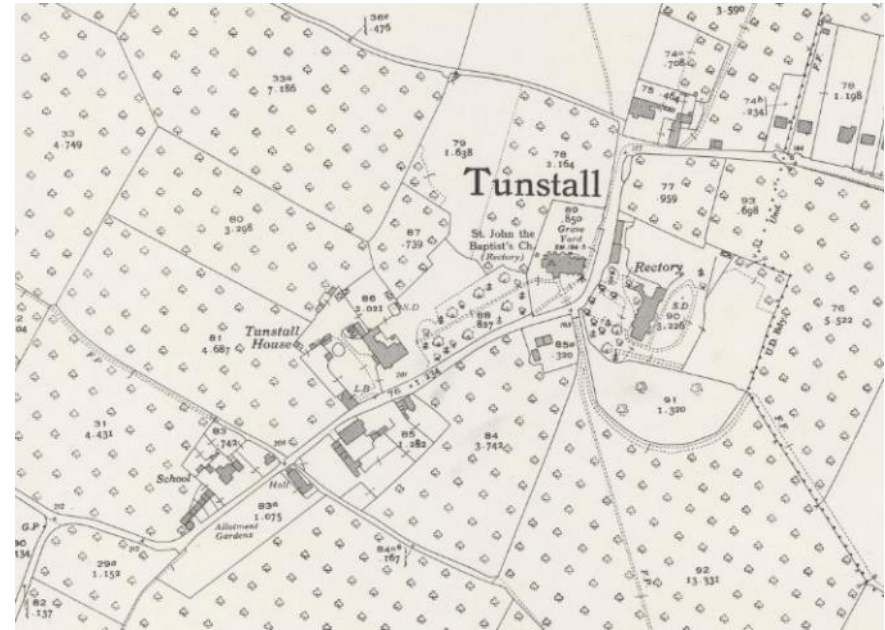
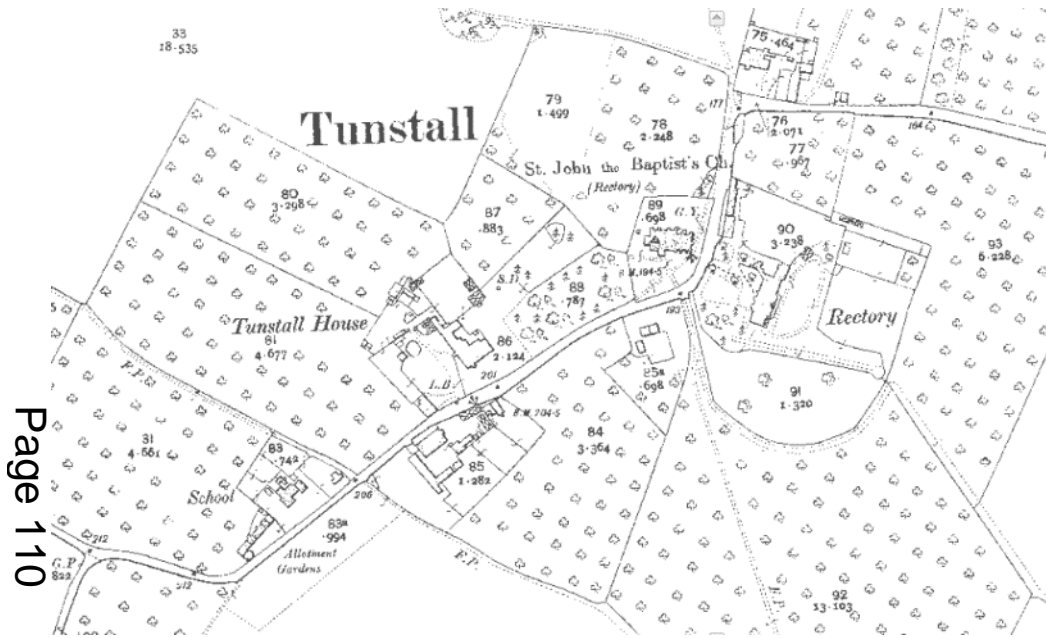


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1871 Ordnance Survey map



1897 Ordnance Survey map



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1907 Ordnance Survey map

1938 Ordnance Survey Map

APPENDIX 3

Extracts from the National Heritage List for England (the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest)

The statutory list for Tunstall is compiled by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and is altered and amended from time to time. The list descriptions below are taken from the statutory list and were current in September 2021. However, for more detailed and up to date information please refer to the National Heritage List for England at www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list.

Features and structures which are not specifically mentioned in the statutory list are not necessarily exempt from statutory protection which extends to the building as well as to any object or structure fixed to the building and to any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which predates July 1948.

The omission of a building from this list should not necessarily be taken to indicate that it is not listed without first referring to the National Heritage List.

THE OAST, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Former cottage pair, now house. C17 and clad C18, C19, dated on brick 1791 E by door to right. Timber framed and clad with red C.B. brick, with thatched roof and plain tiles around dormers. One storey and attic, with 3 gabled dormers and stacks to centre right and right. Six wood casement windows on ground floor, and board door to left in gabled porch, and board door at end right. Left return front with exposed timbers.

FORMER OAST, 10 YARDS SOUTH OF THE OAST, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Oast. Early C19. Buff brick with plain tiled conical oast, and rendered oast house with plain tiled and thatched roof. The oast house of 1 storey and attic, with 1 gabled dormer, and garage doors on north front. Included for group value only.

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

School. 1846. Knapped flint with red brick dressings and plain tiled roof. Central block with 2 projecting wings. Two storeys on plinth, with brick quoins, string course, and gables left and right with pierced barge-boards and pendants. Two gabled dormers to centre and stacks to left and at end left. Regular fenestration of 4 transomed leaded lights on each floor with red brick surrounds, and niches in each gable. Central plank and stud door in brick arched surround with 2 large inscribed plaques over.

TUNSTALL HOUSE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade I

House. C17 (pre-1678). Chequered brick in Flemish bond and plain tiled roof. Two storeys and attic on plinth with plat band, 4 corniced

gables, and projecting gabled porch of 2 storeys and garret to left, with large stacks of 4 panels to right and 2 panels to left, and wood turret to end left capped with lead cupola. Regular fenestration of 5 wood casements in gables with segmental heads except in porch, the end left window blocked by lozenge-shaped clock face. Four mullioned and transomed windows to first and ground floors, with cross-window in porch. Multi-panelled door. Porch entry round arched on imposts with panelled soffits, fluted Doric pilasters, frieze, bolection cornice, and pediment with bust of Shakespeare. Built either for Sir Edward Hales d. 1654, or his steward John Grove, d. 1678. (See BOE Kent II, 1983 481-2).

WALL, STABLES AND DOVECOT SOUTH OF TUNSTALL HOUSE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Garden wall, dovecot and stables. C17. Chequered red and blue brick in English bond and plain tiled roofs. The wall extends approx 70 yards along road to east of Tunstall House, and returns to enclose courtyard approx. 50 yards with series of weathered but- tresses (22 to road front), 2 sets of gate piers with cornices and ball finials to east, and one set to west (rear wall of courtyard). In the south-east corner, the stables, 2 storeys on plinth, with plat band and hipped roof with stacks to rear right and centre. 3 leaded wood casements on first floor, 2 segment headed wood case- ments on ground floor and boarded door to left. Double door and tiled pentice to centre and board door right. In the south- west corner, a dovecot, 1 storey on plinth with plat band, hipped roof and lantern, 1 hipped dormer, and central board door.



Tunstall House Stables



Tunstall House Dovecot, 1972, Historic England Archive

CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade I

Parish Church. C13 chancel, C14 nave, chapel C15, extended 1655, restored 1848-56 by R.C. Hussey. Knapped and coursed flint some brick and plain tiled roofs. Chancel, south-east chapel, nave and aisles, west tower, south porch. Exterior: C14 west doorway, with roll-mould and double hollow chamfer, and crocketed ogee hood. South aisle with diagonal buttresses, cornice and parapet and C19 decorated-style windows. C14 door with strap hinges and 2 grilles; doorway with roll and billet moulding and attached shafts in south porch. South east chapel of flint and rubble, extended 1 bay east in brick, with brick parapet and repairs to buttresses. Two 3-light C15 windows, 1 C17 4 light Perpendicular survival window (i.e. uncusped). Restored 5-light east window, originally of c. 1510 Chancel north wall with 3 lancet windows. North aisle with plinth string course blocked chamfered doorway, and 3 C-19 windows. Interior: tower arch and 4 bay nave arcade with double hollow chamfer and octagonal piers, wooden tunnel roofs, plastered in aisles. Wide channel arch on corbels. Double chamfered arches without responds from chancel and south aisle to south chapel and roll and hollow- chamfered four-centred arch from chancel to chapel and remains of one lancet in chancel wouth wall. Panelled and bossed chancel roof. Fittings: C13 double piscina in chancel with solid cusped heads and chamfered pier, and C15 piscina with fernleaf spandrels in south chapel. Monuments: in the south east (or Hales') chapel. Sir James Crowmer d. 1613, fragments re-erected 1935, an armoured knight and his lady kneeling with 3 daughters, obelisks left and right, deaths heads and achievement over. Late medieval alabaster tomb chest, with 5 panels with shields. Sir Edward Hales, d. 1654, signed W. Sweet and M. Miles 1655. Recumbent knight in white marble resting on his arm, on black and white marble sarcophagus with achievements and inscription on parchment rolls, with cornice, and helm and gaunt- lets over. Chancel south wall, monument to Robert Cheke d. 1647, black and white marble. Doric columns on plinth support frieze and broken segmental pediments and frame semi-circular niche with half-bust of man holding book with hand on heart. To east of it white marble monument to Rev. Edward Mores, d. 1740, a bewigged divine in keyed niche with open pediment over. Wall plaque in south aisle to

John and Catherine Grove, d. 1755 and 1758, a white plaque on scrolled base with medallion and frieze and floral cornice over with draped urn on plinth. Brasses: Ralph Wulf d. 1525 (17 in), a priest; a lady, probably Dame-Francis Crowmer, d. 1597 (18 in). Hanging rood: in chancel given by artist Martin Travers 1968. Glass: mid C19, the east window by Ward and Nixon 1850. Victorian Royal Arms over north door, 4 lozenge achievements in south chapel. (See B.O.E. Kent II 1983, 480-481, and also church guide).

MONUMENT, HOMEWOOD CHILDREN, 25 YARDS SOUTH WEST OF TUNSTALL CHURCH TOWER, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Tomb. Homewood children, 1828. Stone. A square base with square, coved sarcophagus on ball feet, with an urn over.

LAW FAMILY MONUMENT 15 YARDS WEST OF TUNSTALL CHURCH TOWER, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Tomb. Law family, 1838-42. Stone. Large urn on elliptical octagonal plinth with cornice, with slab to fore engraved "Entrance".

HALES HOUSE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

House. Mid C17, restored C19. Red brick and plain tiled roof. Two storeys and attic on plinth with discontinuous plat band and cornice, with 2 gabled projections, C17 stack to left and C19 stack to right. Irregular fenestration of 5 large segment-headed wood casements on each floor. Plank and stud door to left in gabled porch of 2 storeys and attic. Similar to Tunstall House, and indeed built for Sir Edward Hale's grandson c.1640. (See B.O.E. Kent II 1983, 482)

THE COACH HOUSE, TUNSTALL ROAD, TUNSTALL, SITTINGBOURNE, ME10 1YQ Grade II

GV II Stables. C17. Red brick in English bond and plain tiled roof. One storey on plinth and hipped roof with stack to rear. Garage doors to left, boarded door and rectangular fan-light to centre left, and boarded door to centre right, both with segmental heads, and double board doors to end right. Included for group value only.

HALES COTTAGE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

House. C17 and early C19. Red brick part in English bond with plain tiled roof. Originally square plan, possibly a dovecot with C19 extension. Two storeys and hipped roof with hipped extension and central C19 stack. One wood casement with shutters and glazed porch to left, and 2 wood casements on each floor on right return front.

CEDAR HOUSE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

Former Rectory. c. 1830. White brick and slate roof. Two storeys and eaves cornice to hipped roof. Central canted projection. 5 glazing bar sashes to first floor, segmented bays to left and right on ground floor, with central double doors of 2 fielded panels and narrow sidelights, with cornice hood on consoles.

TUNSTALL HOUSE COTTAGE, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

House. C17. Red brick in English bond with plain tiled roof. Lobby entry plan. Two storeys on plinth with plat band and roof hipped with gablet to left and with end stack right, and 2 stacks to rear left on C19 rear wing. Two 3-light brick mullioned windows on first floor with single light end right, and 2 metal casements on ground floor with basket arched heads. Door of 2 panels with bolection mouldings and moulded architrave to right in segment headed opening.

THE DEN, TUNSTALL ROAD. Grade II

House. C16 and C18. Front range (C18) grey brick with red brick dressings and plain tiled roof, rear (C16) range timber framed and clad with red brick on ground floor, plaster on first floor and plain tiled hipped roof with gablets. Two parallel ranges. Front elevation: 2 storeys on plinth with plat band, moulded wood eaves cornice and stacks at end left and end right. Regular fenestration of 2 tripartite sashes with central glazing bar sash on first floor, and 2 tripartite sashes on ground floor with gauged heads. Central door of 6 raised and fielded panels with traceried rectangular fanlight, and broken pediment on pilasters. One storey, 1 window extension to left.

APPENDIX 4:

Legislation, national policy and local policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions:

(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 69 Designation of conservation areas:

(1) Every local planning authority— (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time to time determine that any part of a local planning authority's area which is not for the time being designated as a conservation area is an area of special architectural

or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance; and, if he so determines, he may designate that part as a conservation area.

(4) The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge.

Section 71 Formulation and publication of proposals for preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

(1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.

(3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.

Section 72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions:

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection

(2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the government’s planning policies and how they should be applied. It provides the national framework for conserving and enhancing the historic environment, including conservation areas.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The NPPG sets out government’s guidance on how the act and national planning policy should be applied.

Adopted Local Plan Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017)

Relevant objectives and policies within the local plan include:

Policy ST 1 Delivering sustainable development in Swale. To deliver sustainable development in Swale, all development proposals will, as appropriate:..... 8. Achieve good design through reflecting the best of an area’s defining characteristics; 9. Promote healthy communities through:..... maintaining the individual character, integrity, identities and settings of settlements; 12. Conserve and enhance the historic environment by applying national and local planning policy through the identification, assessment and integration of development with the importance, form and character of heritage assets (including historic landscapes).

Policy CP 4 Requiring good design. All development proposals will be of a high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings. Development proposals will, as appropriate:... 2. Enrich the qualities of the existing environment by promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and strengthening

sense of place; 5. Retain and enhance features which contribute to local character and distinctiveness;..... 8. Be appropriate to the context in respect of materials, scale, height and massing; 9. Make best use of texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials; 10. Use densities determined by the context and the defining characteristics of the area; 11. Ensure the long-term maintenance and management of buildings, spaces, features and social infrastructure;.....

Policy DM 32 Development involving listed buildings.

Development proposals, including any change of use, affecting a listed building, and/ or its setting, will be permitted provided that:

1. The building’s special architectural or historic interest, and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, are preserved, paying special attention to the: a. design, including scale, materials, situation and detailing; b. appropriateness of the proposed use of the building; and c. desirability of removing unsightly or negative features or restoring or reinstating historic features.
2. The total or part demolition of a listed building is wholly exceptional, and will only be permitted provided convincing evidence has been submitted showing that: a. All reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or viable new uses and have failed; b. Preservation in charitable or community ownership is not possible or suitable; and c. The cost of maintaining and repairing the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its continued use.
3. If as a last resort, the Borough Council is prepared to consider the grant of a listed building consent for demolition, it may, in appropriate circumstances, consider whether the building could be re-erected elsewhere to an appropriate location. When re-location is not possible and demolition is permitted, arrangements will be required to allow access to the building prior to demolition to make a record of it and to allow for the salvaging of materials and features.

Policy DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area.

Development (including changes of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance. The Borough Council expects development proposals to:

1. Respond positively to its conservation area appraisals where these have been prepared;
2. Retain the layout, form of streets, spaces, means of enclosure and buildings, and pay special attention to the use of detail and materials, surfaces, landform, vegetation and land use;
3. Remove features that detract from the character of the area and reinstate those that would enhance it; and
4. Retain unlisted buildings or other structures that make, or could make, a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

Policy DM 34 Scheduled Monuments and archaeological sites

1. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect a Scheduled Monument, and/or its setting, as shown on the Proposals Map, or subsequently designated, or any other monument or archaeological site demonstrated as being of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments. Development that may affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset of less than national significance will require a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
2. Whether they are currently known, or discovered during the Plan period, there will be a preference to preserve important archaeological sites in-situ and to protect their settings. Development that does not achieve acceptable mitigation of adverse archaeological effects will not be permitted.
3. Where development is permitted and preservation in-situ is not justified, the applicant will be required to ensure that provision will be made for archaeological excavation and recording, in advance of

and/or during development, including the necessary post-excavation study and assessment along with the appropriate deposition of any artefacts in an archaeological archive or museum to be approved by the Borough Council.

Swale Borough Council Key Supplementary Planning Guidance

Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 2: Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers

Swale Borough Council No 3: The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings.

Swale Borough Council Planning and Development Guidelines No 8: Conservation Areas

Swale Borough Council Heritage Strategy 2020 - 2032

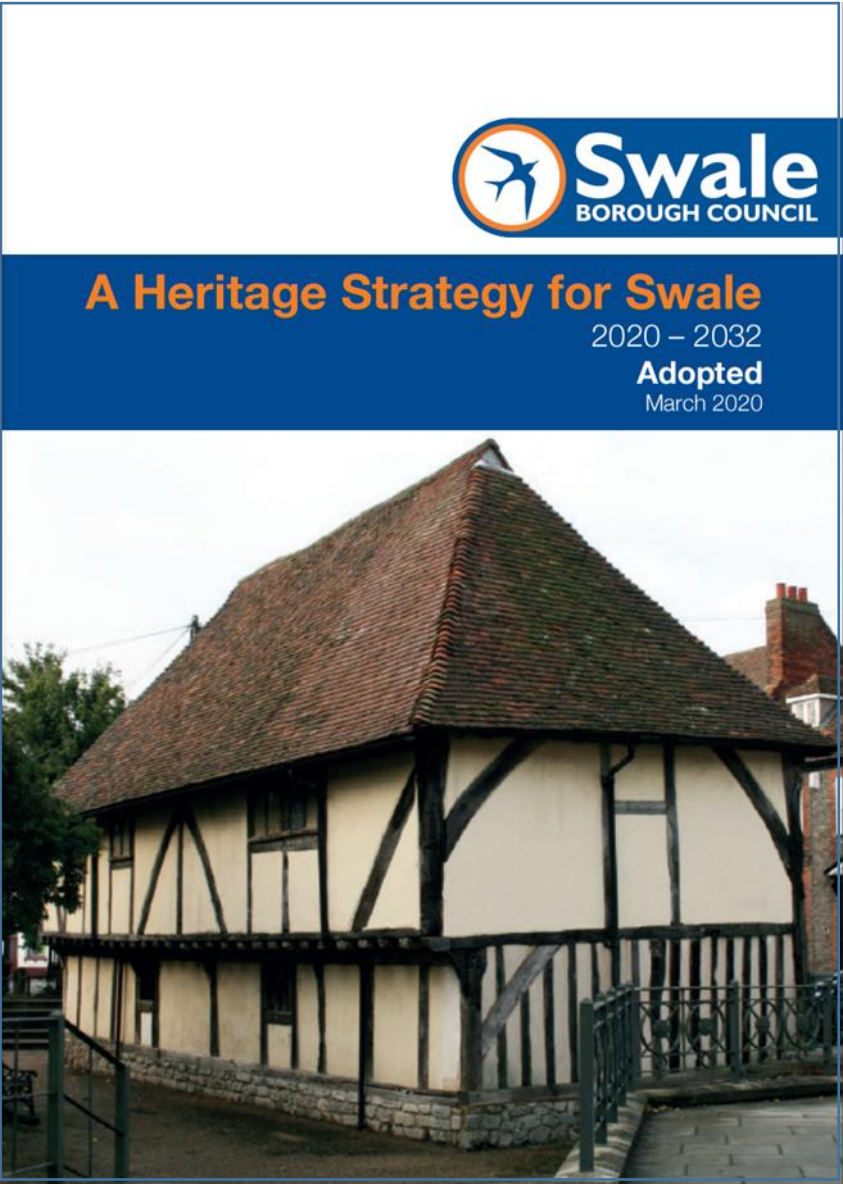
The Council has developed a borough-wide heritage strategy to help it, along with key stakeholders and other interested parties, to protect and manage the historic environment in Swale in a positive and sustainable way, on a suitably informed basis.

A key element of the strategy is setting out the Council's overall vision and priorities, which it is hoped will align with the vision and priorities of local communities and local amenity societies as far as possible, in order that the strategy can be widely supported.

The strategy sets out a series of proposals in the associated initial 3-year action plan which are aimed at enabling the positive and sustainable management of different elements of the borough's historic environment for the foreseeable future. Priority is given to those parts of the borough's historic environment which are already suffering from, and at risk from negative change, and/or which face significant development pressure, threatening their special character. The proposed set of actions will involve joint project

working with amenity societies and/or volunteers from the community wherever this is possible.

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APPENDIX 5:

Bibliography

- Helen Allinson and Brian Turner, *Tunstall the History of a Kentish Parish* (2015)
- Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1798).
- Arthur Midwinter, *The Church and Village of Tunstall, Kent* (1992)
- R Muir, *The New Reading the Landscape. Fieldwork in Landscape History* (2000)
- John Newman, *The Buildings of England North East and East Kent* (2013)
- Kent County Council, *South east Archaeological Research Framework* www.kent.gov.uk
- Kent County Council, *Historic Environment Record* www.kent.gov.uk
- Kent County Council, *Exploring Kent's Past* www.kent.gov.uk
- Kent County Council and Kent Conservation Officers Group, *Highway Works and Heritage Assets: the Kent Protocol for Highway Works in Relation to Designated Heritage Assets* (2011)
- LUC, *Swale Local Landscape Designation* (October 2018)
- Jacobs, *Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal* (2011)

Historic England Guidance, Advice and Publications

Historic England Good Practice Advice Notes (GPAs) provide supporting advice on good practice and how national heritage conservation policy should be applied.

- GPA1: *The Historic Environment in Local Plan Making* (March 2015)
 GPA2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (March 2015)
 GPA3 : *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017)

Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) provide detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance.

- HEAN 1: *Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Management* (Feb 2019)
 HEAN 2: *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016)
 HEAN 9: *The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings* (October 2017)
 HEAN 10: *Listed Buildings and Curtilage* (February 2018)
 HEAN 12: *Statements of Heritage Significance* (October 2019)
 HEAN 16: *Listed Building Consent* (June 2021)

Streets for All (May 2018)

APPENDIX 6:

Assesment of Significant views

Views make a valuable contribution to the way in which the character or appearance of a place is experienced, enjoyed and appreciated. Identifying significant views allows the contribution they make to be protected and enables the effective management of development in and around those views. Significant views are annotated on the aerial photograph on page 11 and are described below.

View 1: All views from the village to its historic farmland setting are of high heritage significance. They have provided the context and setting to the village for centuries. They are visually pleasing and they contribute to the distinct local identity and character of Tunstall.



View from the public footpath looking south-west



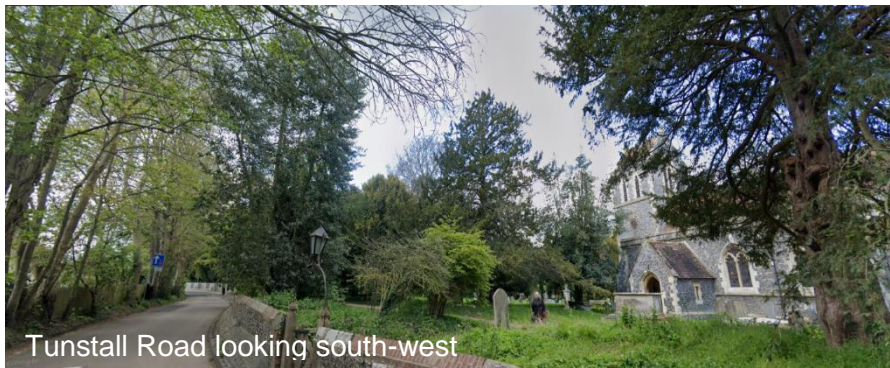
View from the public footpath looking north-east

View 2: Occasional views of surrounding farmland from Tunstall Road provide a strong sense that the countryside is never far away. This close visual connection between the village and the countryside is a defining feature of the conservation area and so these views are of high heritage significance (see plate 1 on page 9).

View 3: Many people experience Tunstall as they walk or drive along Tunstall Road or footpath. The changing geometry of the road and the frequent occurrence of historic buildings interspersed with trees and boundary walls results in picturesque views with an abundance of architectural and historic interest. All linear views along Tunstall Road are of high heritage significance (see plates 2, 3 and 4 and below).



Tunstall Road looking north-east



Tunstall Road looking south-west



View 4: The Church tower is surrounded by trees so it is less visible than one might expect. However, it is the focus of some views from the north-east. These, and other glimpsed views of the larger buildings, particularly Tunstall House (see plate 22), The Den and Hales House, all add to the way in which the conservation area is enjoyed and experienced. They are of heritage significance.

For further information contact:
Swale Borough Council Planning Services 01795 417850

www.Swale.gov.uk



Tunstall Road circa 1900

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal was prepared by:
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on behalf of:
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**PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT October 2021 with
amendments following public consultation March 2021**



Cabinet Meeting		Agenda Item: 7
Meeting Date	13 April 2022	
Report Title	Extension of Staying Put Framework	
Cabinet Member	Cllr. Ben Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing	
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director Regeneration and neighbourhoods.	
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson Head of Housing and Community Services.	
Lead Officer	Susan Hughes	
Key Decision	Yes	
Classification	Open	
Recommendations	1. Cabinet approves the extension of the contractor framework for Staying Put started April 2020 for an additional 2 years until April 2024.	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The current framework contract expires on 29 April 2022. In 2020 the Staying put team carried out a one stage tender process based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) which was evaluated on 40% price and 60% quality. This started April 2020 for 2 years with an option to extend for additional 2 years.
- 1.2 This report summarises the procurement process and the benefits of this framework and seeks Cabinet approval of the recommended contractors to be extended for a further 2 years.

2 Background

- 2.1 Staying Put is the Council's in-house Home Improvement Agency, which provides adaptations and repairs within the homes of elderly and vulnerable residents across the Borough. The service manages a Contractor Framework for the delivery of works funded primarily through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). The current Framework started in April 2020 and consists of 16 contractors as 2 have been taken off the list due to not meeting the quality standards required.
- 2.2 The Framework operates as a preferred suppliers list for physical works carried out in people's private homes. Works undertaken through the Framework are DFG adaptations to properties, such as the installation of flush-floor showers, work to

prevent falls, such as the installation of grab rails, work to enable people to be discharged from hospital; such as moving bedrooms downstairs; and other minor works and adaptations to a property, such as installing wheelchair ramps or clearing rooms where hoarding has been taking place to allow a person to live safely. The Council undertook a procurement exercise for a new framework agreement in April 2020 for a 2 plus 2 years to enable us to continue if this system was working well which it is.

- 2.3 Funding for works under the Contractor Framework is secured through Swale's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). DFG's can be used for home adaptations, home repair works and for work associated with hospital discharges and falls prevention namely works that fall within the Housing Assistance Policy.
- 2.4 In addition, rates for individual types of works are fixed under the Framework Agreement, meaning that the Council knows the costs of works for the lifetime of Agreement and that they are competitive, providing better value for money for the customer and taxpayers. If the Council were to seek quotes for each item of individual work, there would be less control over costs
- 2.5 16 of the 18 contractors are still on the list and the list is working well. Therefore, it is proposed to continue this contract for a further 2 years. Some works may be small like galvanised rails and some larger like flush floor showers and extensions. 9 of the companies are local to Swale. All 9 local builders are in the top 10. We will continue to use the top scoring 10 contractors and if any contractor is taken off or decides to stop working with us, we will then use the next contractor from the waiting list.
- 2.6 The following is the list of builders that are still on the list.

Placing on list	Propose to use from April 2020		Waiting list
1	JD Systems	11	Advance Building and Maintenance Services
2	Hubbard and Houghton	12	DBM Properties Limited
3	Daytrad	13	MCL Mechanical Houlding Limited
4	Gregory Kent Limited	14	Tailored Maintenance and Home Improvements
5	Acorn Maintenance Services Limited	15	Metro Rod

Placing on list	Propose to use from April 2020		Waiting list
6	Astral Limited	16	Perfect Homes Limited
7	South East Builders		
8	Willow Tree Homes Solutions		
9	Evolve Mas UK Limited		
10	Wynsdale (for clearing only)		

3 Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet approves to extend the contractor framework for Staying Put started April 2020 for an additional 2 years until April 2024, with the remaining 16 contractors on the current framework,

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 If extension of this Framework Agreement is not put in place, works would need to be procured using the Council's Contract Standing Orders approach to procurement, i.e. a new tender process would have to be undertaken.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Customer satisfaction surveys are carried out following works being undertaken. Customer feedback from previous clients was used to inform the specification used during the procurement exercise.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Appointing contractors that meet a good quality standard and provide good value for money is supporting the priorities within the emerging corporate plan. Appointing contractors that meet a good quality standard and provide good value for money is supporting the priorities within the corporate plan as works in Priority 1 1.2 and Priority 3 3.1 and 3.2.

Issue	Implications
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Works undertaken as part of the Contractor Framework Agreement are provided under the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). This has been growing over the years due an increased Grant budget.</p> <p>Anticipated annual spend on the framework contract will be £1,000,000 per year. The value of the extension for the next two years is therefore, estimated as £2,000,000</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>The nature of the works carried out under this agreement fall under the Public Contracts Regulations, constituting Works within the meaning of the Regulations.</p> <p>The total value of contract works over a 2-year period has been estimated at £2,000,000.</p> <p>In consideration to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 a percentage of the scoring was contributed to social value. This encouraged contractors to use local employees and some gave examples of things they have done to support the local community with a few saying they support work experience places.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Sustainability	None identified at this stage
Health and Wellbeing	<p>The works carried out under the Framework will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of elderly and disabled residents across Swale. Works undertaken will provide adaptations and home improvements that will make residents' homes safer and help them to live in their own homes for longer rather than either staying in hospital or moving into residential care.</p>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>The management of financial and operational risks, including health and safety, were considered as part of the Council's agreed procurement processes. Successful organisations will be required to ensure that they comply with minimum health and safety standards and adhere to the Council's Health and Safety policy. Responsibility for health and safety of contractors will remain with the contractor organisation.</p>

Issue	Implications
Equality and Diversity	<p>The new Framework will actively support elderly and disabled residents within Swale, by helping them to live in their own homes for longer.</p> <p>As part of the procurement exercise, bidders were asked to confirm their commitment to comply with the Equalities Act 2010 around discrimination. They were also checked to ensure that they have not been found guilty of any unlawful discrimination or been subject to a formal investigation by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) within the proceeding three years.</p> <p>These proposals do not envisage any change in the level of service provision to residents with particular protected characteristics (age, disability) and therefore does not require a formal impact assessment.</p>
Privacy and Data Protection	<p>Information from customers is held on the Foundations database. All personal information held as part of the DFG application process or Staying Put casework is protected from unauthorised access or disclosure as per council policy.</p>

7 Appendices

None

8 Background Documents

[Cabinet meeting report 12 Feb 2020](#)

[minutes from 12 Feb 2020 cabinet meeting](#)

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Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	13 th April 2022
Report Title	BEAM Partnership – Housing and Employment Support
Cabinet Member	Cllr Ben Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Lead Officer	Roxanne Sheppard, Housing Options Manager
Key Decision	Yes/No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To enter into a spend to save pilot in partnership with Beam.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update to Cabinet with an opportunity to enter into a partnership arrangement with social enterprise Beam to access their platform and support for our homeless households.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2017 the introduction of the Housing Reduction Act extended the Council's Statutory duties to incorporate prevention and relief duties. Prevention duties include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless. Relief duties are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation.
- 2.2 These responsibilities are reflected in The Council's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy with priorities to prevent homelessness and reduce the need for emergency and temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 In 2019 the Housing Options service was restructured to create dedicated teams around prevention, homelessness, and accommodation. Although implementation of the new structure has not been smooth due to the onset of the pandemic. Having dedicated focused teams has enabled focus on different residents needs and the development of different interventions to support these needs.
- 2.4 Demand for the service remains high, at the end of Q3 we have carried out 699 initial assessments of those 288 (41%) were owed a prevention duty and 388 (56%) were owed a relief duty only 23 (3%) were not threatened with homelessness. At the end of December 2021, we had 323 households in

temporary accommodation. Of those cases we owed a prevention duty around 60% have been resolved with finding suitable accommodation for 6+months, which although an excellent outcome demonstrates that more needs to be done.

- 2.5 The 2021/22 budget for Temporary Accommodation is £1.5m, which is net of housing benefit, grant income and contributions from clients. The gross position is closer to £3m.
- 2.6 Demand for the service is not predicted to reduce, with current economic issues in the UK and the cost-of-living crisis is a concern for many. It is predicted that low-income families will be disproportionately impacted, and this is likely to translate in an increase in homelessness.
- 2.7 The team have a range of tools to assist including rent deposit and guarantees and strong linkage with local landlords to enable sustained tenancies. We are constantly looking at ways to improve support our clients and are currently working on several initiatives to enhance our offer.
- 2.8 We have been exploring a partnership opportunity with Beam. Beam are a social enterprise that have been established to tackle social problems – starting with homelessness. Beam’s crowdfunding platform can help individual homeless people overcome financial barriers to career progression for someone experiencing homelessness - including training, transport, tools and even childcare. But the model does more than just remove financial barriers. A key part of Beam’s model is crowdsourcing support from the people who fund the campaign. When people donate, they often write confidence-boosting messages of support and even surface job and work experience opportunities. Beam currently have 26,716 supporters who regularly donate to support campaigns. Campaigns are usually successful within weeks, enabling motivation and momentum for the client.
- 2.9 The model also provides dedicated support works for the clients to assist and support them. BEAM have links with over 100+ employer partners providing access to quality jobs and support is provided for the first 3 months of starting in work. Case studies from beam can be viewed [here](#).
- 2.10 BEAM will support multiple groups
 - People at risk of homelessness
 - People without access to benefits
 - People rough sleeping
 - People in temporary accommodation.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposal is to enter a spend to save pilot for 1 year with Beam. The 12-month programme will enable Beam to work with 50 homeless clients. The expected outcomes of the pilot are 38 people start jobs, 15 people leave homelessness and 23 people avoid homelessness.

- 3.2 The cost to the Council for the pilot is £80k which provides dedicated caseworkers as well as a local marketing drive to raise awareness. Beam have an impact calculator based upon their previous work with other local authorities and using Swale’s data and it is predicated that total cashable savings would be £132,530 and therefore providing a net overall saving of £52,530.
- 3.3 As this is a spend to save pilot, it is proposed that the £80k is taken from the Temporary Accommodation budget to support this initiative.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 That we don’t enter a partnership with Beam and continue to respond in the existing way. This is not recommended as the volume of cases is increasing and we have limited resources to assist our homeless households and need to diversify our response.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 None.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Priority 3 - Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone. Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all
Financial, Resource and Property	The contribution to the partnership from the Council is £80k and this will be taken from the temporary accommodation budget. This will enable BEAM to work with 50 clients. The model predicts total cashable savings would be £132,530 and therefore providing a net overall saving of £52,530.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	[Waiting confirmation from Beam on the partnership arrangements. Waiver may be requested dependent on answer]
Crime and Disorder	Some of our client base are offenders and ex-offenders, providing support to stable housing and employment direct reduces the likelihood of further offending or re-offending.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	Support with stable housing and employment has a positive correlation to improved health outcomes.

Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	As Beam will be dealing with potentially vulnerable adults, then compliance with the Council's Safeguarding Policy will be ensured.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	The scheme is targeted at vulnerable clients who are at risk of homelessness. Beam operates a transparent equality monitoring process as part of their scheme.
Privacy and Data Protection	Clients will only be referred to the scheme with their consent and any privacy and data protection requirements will be dealt with within the partnership agreement.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

None

8 Background Papers

None.

Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	13 April 2022
Report Title	One Off Project Funding
Cabinet Member	Cllr Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
SMT Lead	Lisa Fillery
Head of Service	Lisa Fillery
Lead Officer	Lisa Fillery
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That Cabinet note the schemes funded from the Improvement & Resilience Fund; the Special Projects Fund and the High Street Fund.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report details the projects that have been funded from one-off reserve allocations to deliver a range public improvements for the sake of Swale’s community. Improvements have been focussed on the public realm, open spaces and town centres, along with measures to support the Council’s climate emergency agenda. Especially since 2020, funds have been used to support resilience and recovery in our local communities following the arrival of the Covid pandemic.

2 Background

2.1 The Improvement & Resilience Fund was established as part of the budget build for 2021/22 as a one off allocation to support public improvement projects across the district.

2.2 The fund was allocated as follows:

Priority Area	Allocation
Economic Development	250,000
Health	125,000
Communities	125,000
Planning, Heritage & Culture	250,000
Climate Emergency	250,000
Total	1,000,000

- 2.3 The fund has been fully committed to deliver projects across the borough, the details of which are included in Appendix I.
- 2.4 The Special Projects Fund has been allocated funding of £3.2m since the creation of the scheme in 2019/20. Details of the projects delivered from this fund are included in Appendix II.
- 2.5 The High Street Fund was created to deliver improvements to the districts three main high streets. The forecast of how the £800,000 allocation is to be spent across the three High Streets is included in Appendix III.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to note the total funds committed from the Improvement and Resilience Fund and approve that uncommitted allocations are transferred back to the initial funding source of the Pooled Business Rates Reserve.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 To allocate the unspent funds to I&R projects for 2021/22, this option does not allow sufficient time for the funds to be spent within the current financial year.
- 4.2 To transfer the unspent funds to an alternative reserve. This is not recommended due to the purpose for which the reserve funded is held.

5 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Funding allocated to deliver on the priorities identified within the corporate plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	Contained in the report
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified
Crime and Disorder	None identified
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Funding allocated to projects to deliver on tackling the ecological emergency.

Health and Wellbeing	Funding allocated to projects to deliver support to health and wellbeing.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified
Equality and Diversity	None identified.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Improvement and Resilience Fund commitment details
- Appendix II : Special Project Fund project details
- Appendix III: High Street Fund project details.

8 Background Papers

Budget and Council Tax for 2021/22 Report to Cabinet 24 February 2021

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Improvement & Resilience - Update March 2022

Priority Area	Allocation
Economic Development	250,000
Health	125,000
Communities	125,000
Planning, Heritage & Culture	250,000
Climate Emergency	250,000
	1,000,000

IRBid	TITLE OF BID (cc0601)	APPROVED TOTAL £
BID01	Early Childhood Development Pilot Project	39,916
BID02	Digital review of Visit Swale (web portal or microsite) and its current digital media channels (Twitter and Facebook)	5,000
BID03	Sheppey Community Bus	10,000
BID04	Milton Creek Country Park Container	2,800
BID05	Sheerness Clock Tower	19,572
BID06	Toilets for Qboro All Tide Landing	6,895
BID07	Commissioning of Cultural Activity	6,000
BID08	Hop Festival - eCommerce Website	4,000
BID09	Summer Festival 2021 - Saturday 21 August 2021	5,500
BID10	Tree Planting	25,000
BID11	LED in SBC Properties, Car Parks and Open Spaces	70,000
BID12	EV Chargers On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme Application	50,000
BID13	Car Club	52,000
BID14	Climate and Ecological Emergency Business Event	5,000
BID15	Breaking Barriers Innovations – Isle of Sheppey Project	36,000
BID16	Sittingbourne Remembrance Service	3,000
BID17	Additional Tree Officer resource – TPO register	17,500
BID18	1 Year Fixed term Principal Planning Officer in Planning Policy	48,500
BID19	Planning Enforcement Notice Register	11,000
BID20	Sittingbourne Christmas Lights	4,270
BID21	Sheerness Community Lantern Parade	2,415
BID22	Sheppey District Scout Centre Works	19,490
BID23	Closed Churchyards / War Memorials Repairs & Maintenance April 2021	45,000
BID24	Closed Churchyards / War Memorials Repairs & Maintenance October 2021	25,000
BID25	Community Event - St George's Day - Saturday 23 April 2022	7,500
BID26	Sheerness Youth Centre CCTV & Defibrillator Installation	3,750
BID27	Community Improvement – Shellness Car Parking	14,300
BID28	Eastchurch War Memorial	10,000
BID29	Sittingbourne High Street S.215 / LB Notices + Sheerness Water Tower Buildings and Land	30,000
BID30	Air Quality	48,000
BID31	Supporting Young people – Hartlip Play Area	1,709
BID32	Master's House	129,929
BID33	High Street Regeneration	88,604
BID34	Oare Gunpowder Works Visitor Centre Steward	15,800
BID35	2316 Sheppey Sqn RAF Air Cadets	2,000
BID36	SMAC Young People Arts Action Project	14,243
BID37	The Avenue of Remembrance	15,000
BID38	Children's Festival, Sheerness - May 2022	5,000
TBC	Increased resource to deliver additional heritage Strategy requests and Conservation Area reviews	63,000
TBC	Thistle Hill Community Centre CCTV	3,570
TBC	Breaking Barriers Innovations – Isle of Sheppey Project	33,284
Total Committed		999,547

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SPECIAL PROJECT FUND

Funding allocated	(3,188,703)
Total Projects approved.	3,188,703
Balance remaining	(0)

SPBID	DESCRIPTION	FORECAST TOTAL SPEND TO MARCH 2023 (£)
BID01	Carbon Management Plan 2019-2023	25,000
BID02	Member Grants 2020/21	53,800
BID02	Member Grants 2021/22	53,800
BID02	Member Grants 2019/20	50,314
BID03	Parks Infrastructure Fund 2019/2020	150,000
BID03	Parks Infrastructure Fund 2021/22	83,987
BID03	Play Area Funding 2022/23	150,000
BID04	Fuel and Water Poverty Outreach Worker	100,000
BID04	Fuel & Poverty outreach yr 3	50,000
BID05	Special Project Officer (grade 7) 2020/21 #1	55,000
BID05	Special Project Officer (grade 7) 2021/22 #2	55,000
BID05	Special Project Officer (grade 7) 2022/23 #3	55,000
BID06	Traffic Pollution – Additional Planting on SBC Land	21,884
BID07	Playground Improvements	40,000
BID08	Recycling Bins on our main bathing beaches	10,000
BID09	Faversham Swimming Pool Boiler Replacement	93,000
BID10	Climate and Ecological Emergency	7,200
BID11	Sheppey Hall Improvement	40,000
BID12	Clean Air Action Zone Feasibility Study	44,926
BID13	Eco Stars (continued participation)	5,000
BID15	Restoring the Artesian Well at Oare Marshes	8,100
BID16	St Anne's Footbridge Lighting	41,250
BID17	Engaging and Delivering for Our Communities	120,000
BID17	Engaging and Delivering for Our Communities	2,000
BID17	Engaging and Delivering for Our Communities	15,000
BID18	The Mill Skatepark / Dolphin Barge Museum Site	40,000
BID19	West Faversham Community Association New Building and Facilities #1	25,000
BID20	West Faversham Community Association New Building and Facilities #2	50,000
BID21	Upgrade 8 Planned EV Charging Points	32,000
BID22	Minster Leas Toilets	93,000
BID23	Barton Point Toilet & Showers	184,281
BID24	Sittingbourne Forum Toilets	50,000
BID25	Faversham Central Car Park Toilets	40,000
BID26	Milton Creek Country Park Toilets	65,719
BID27	Leysdown Spinney Toilets	31,566
BID28	Research project into PM exceedances and Air Quality Action Plan at St Pauls Street	21,500
BID29	Provision of Heating for Faversham Strike Force Football Club	6,000

SPBID	DESCRIPTION	FORECAST TOTAL SPEND TO MARCH 2023 (£)
BID30	Thistle Hill community centre - Solar PV installation	20,000
BID31	Gate at Oak Rd Bus Lane	5,000
BID32	Leysdown Village Hall Kitchen Refurbishment	5,424
BID33	Climate and Ecological Emergency Project Officer #1	50,000
BID33	Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Project Officer #2	31,614
BID34	Greenspaces Activities Co-Ordinator #1	35,000
BID34	Greenspaces Activities Co-Ordinator #2	35,000
BID34	Greenspaces Activities Co-ordinator #3 22/23	35,000
BID35	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Faversham Area	30,000
BID36	Interpretation boards Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park	10,363
BID37	Sheppey Sea Cadets planning fees support	15,000
BID38	Newington Playground	20,000
BID39	Area Committees #1 20/21	188,000
BID39	Area Committees #2 21/22	188,000
BID40	Wild Estuary	37,080
BID41	Play Area Refurbishment	28,000
BID42	Kemsley Community Centre (Hall)	47,242
BID43	Biodiversity, Queens Hall car park Faversham	5,460
BID44	Bowls Wheelchair	2,394
BID45	Cricket Nets – Colts Cricket Club Upchurch	10,000
BID46	Active Travel and Recreation – Walking and Cycling for Commuting and Leisure	100,000
BID47	CCTV Milton Park	14,000
BID48	Painters Forstal Village Hall	65,000
BID02	Member Grants 2022/23	53,800
BID39	Area Committees #3 22/23	158,000
TBC	Play area painting programme	30,000
Total projects funded		3,188,703

High Street Fund £800,000 planned expenditure			
Sittingbourne			
Alleyway improvements	5,440		
Bench replacement	12,046		
Bourne place wayfinding	4,286		
Landscaping	7,452		
MSCP artwork	2,500		
Pathways	3,535		
Planters	43,914		
Signage improvements	4,587		
Street furniture painting	40,751		
St Micheals Church wall repairs	88,000		
	212,511		
Sheerness			
Street Light Banners	284		
Signage Improvement	893		
Clock Tower	156,012		
Street furniture painting	2,280		
Planters	200		
Bench replacement	4,059		
	163,728		
Faversham			
Totem design/Installation	70,725		
Design TRO proc	35,185		
Mitigation measures	22,000		
Forbes Road Underpass	9,035		
Planters	1,742		
Dropped Kerb	3,101		
Street furniture repainting	2,680		
Bench Replacement	2,635		
	147,103		
Staffing - project delivery	276,658		
Total planned Expenditure	800,000		

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Extraordinary Cabinet 13 April 2022

Recommendations for approval

Local Plan Panel – 24 March 2022

Minute No. 728 – Swale Local Plan Issues and Preferred Options: Main Issues

Recommended:

(1) That the summary of main issues, as set out in Appendix I, raised by representations received during the Swale Local Plan Issues and Preferred Options consultation be noted.

Minute No. 729 – Local Plan review next steps

Recommended:

(1) That the content of the report be noted, including the revised timetable for the Regulation 19 consultation on the Local Plan Review.

Minute No. 730 - Rodmersham Green Conservation Area Review

Recommended:

(1) That the content of the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, and the representations made on this by interested parties, the details of which are set-out in the report appendices be noted.

(2) That the changes to the review document proposed by officers in response to the representations received during the course of the public consultation, and also following a re-evaluation of the conservation area boundary by officers following the close of consultation, to support a recommendation to Cabinet that further 3-week period of public consultation be carried out (referencing the additional proposed boundary changes) be supported.

(3) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning Services (in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Planning) to make a decision on re-designated the conservation area and adopting the amended appraisal and management plan review document for development management purposes, unless the re-consultation results in the receipt of significant objections to the proposed additional boundary changes.

Minute Nos. 731 - Tunstall Conservation Area Review

Recommended:

(1) That the content of the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, and the representations made on this by interested parties, as set-out in the report appendices be noted.

(2) That the changes to the review document proposed by officers in response to the representations received during the course of the public consultation, be agreed.

Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	13 th April 2022
Report Title	Approval to Let Retail/Leisure Units on the Bourne Place Scheme Sittingbourne Town Centre.
Cabinet Member	Cllr Monique Bonney Cabinet Member for Economy & Property
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins Director for Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson Head of Regeneration & Economic Development
Lead Officer	Jeremy Pilgrim Interim Property Manager
Key Decision	Yes
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the proposed letting as set out within Appendix One (commercially sensitive) 2. To give delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Economy & Property, or the chairs of the relevant service committees in future municipal years, to negotiate, agree and complete leases in relation to remaining units on Bourne Place, in the event that the letting proposed in this report does not proceed.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Swale Borough Council has appointed letting agents to seek tenants for the last remaining units on the Bourne Place, Spirit of Sittingbourne Scheme. Three Units Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3a totalling 9,975 ft sq remain vacant. The Council has received an offer to lease all three units upon terms subject to contract and agreement on outstanding issues.

2 Background

- 2.1 Previous lettings on the scheme were let under the former agreement and previous funding arrangements and led by the development partner Spirit of Sittingbourne. In 2016 the Council became the funding partner to the development which was based on a financially viable funding model. The council is the freehold owner of the scheme.

- 2.2 A number of units on the scheme were either pre-let or let prior to completion including Travel Lodge; Loungers; The Light Cinema and Bowling Alley and Nando's Chicken Lounge. In order to secure these lettings, it was necessary to provide rent free periods and capital contributions.
- 2.3 At the time of completion of the development and handover to Swale Borough Council, there remained three units un-let and vacant. As part of the funding agreement, the developer is responsible for the payment of rent/ service charge for a two-year period from date of completion of the scheme until 26th June 2022 whereafter the Council is responsible for void costs.
- 2.4 Since 2020 work has been underway to secure tenants for the unlet units working with the appointed letting agents. Due to the covid pandemic and economic uncertainty caused by these global events and the continuing economic uncertainty caused by the tragic events in Ukraine, companies remain nervous on future plans and any growth. As such there has been limited market interest and any offers represent a discount against rental values of three years ago. It has been difficult in securing tenant(s) on appropriate terms.
- 2.5 Officers together with the Council's Professional Advisers, believe that the proposed offer detailed in the exempt Appendix One represents the best terms that can be achieved currently and propose subject to approval to conclude terms as quickly as possible.
- 2.6 There are significant benefits to letting the units as proposed;
- All 3 units will be let and so completing the Bourne Place scheme;
 - The council is not at risk of paying for unlet units once the developers void costs term ends;
 - A strong covenant and a boost to the investment value of the scheme;
 - Supports health and well being offer in the town; and
 - Increases footfall.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To approve the proposed letting as set out within Appendix One (commercially sensitive).
- 3.2 To give delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Economy & Property, or the chairs of the relevant service committees in future municipal years, to negotiate, agree and complete leases in relation to remaining units on Bourne Place, in the event that the letting proposed in this report does not proceed.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 It is considered that this offer represents the best consideration currently available. Not to proceed would severely delay the possibility of letting the remaining units and in the current economic climate that uncertainty will increase holding costs to the Council.
- 4.2 Seeking alternative occupiers particularly restaurant operators is not considered appropriate as it is unlikely to find a tenant willing to take all three remaining units and to agree terms without offering extensive rent-free periods and capital expenditure contributions.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 As part of the Development programme Property advisers are appointed to act on behalf of the Council in provision of marketing services and consultation advice in respect to the market conditions and evaluations of offers. This consultation is on-going until completion of the all the lettings on the scheme.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	It supports the corporate objectives of investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges, tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone and building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all.
Financial, Resource and Property	Completing this letting will not only provide the Council with a significant income but substantially improve the Developments investment profile. Completion of this proposal for the end of June 2022 will substantially reduce the Council's risk to void costs and unsightly empty units. The rents that are achievable in the current market are below the assumptions within the budget and so shortfalls in the target rents will lead to forecast overspends within the current year. Assumptions within the in MTFP will need to be updated in line with current market rents.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	There are no known legal issues associated with this proposal. There are no Procurement requirements associated with this proposal as the units have been extensively marketed in the open market.
Crime and Disorder	It is considered that the letting of these units to this specific tenant will assist in reducing crime and disorder in the area due to their on-site present increase footfall and nature of their operation on a 24/7 basis

Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	Not applicable to this proposal
Health and Wellbeing	This proposal is expected to have a beneficial impact on health inequality within the borough by providing leisure and health facilities.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Not applicable to this proposal
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Not applicable to this proposal
Equality and Diversity	Not applicable to this proposal
Privacy and Data Protection	None at this stage

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Exempt report summarising terms

The exempt appendices contain information relating to the financial and business affairs of particular persons. The public interest in the council being able to conduct this negotiation in a commercially confidential manner outweighs the general public interest in disclosure. The information is therefore exempt under paragraphs 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

8 Background Papers

None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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