

**CONSERVATION AREA
APPRAISAL**

**CHURCH ROAD,
BARCOMBE**

DESIGNATED 16.6.76

CHURCH ROAD, BARCOMBE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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1 SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST

1.1 Key positive characteristics

The special architectural and historic interest of the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area derives from a number of factors including:

- The informal layout of the houses and other buildings associated with agriculture;
- The architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, nine of which are listed;
- The prevalent use of distinctive and local building materials notably the red and vitrified bricks, plain clay tiles, roughcast render, flint, timber, slate and, with a more limited presence of thatch and stucco;
- The attractive area around the pond, St. Mary's Church, Penance Pond, Court House and its surrounding farm outbuildings;
- The dominance of the tall garden wall that runs along the boundary of Beeches on Church Road;
- The distinctive local features and details for example, the granite war memorial adjacent to St. Mary's, the way stone indicating the entrance to the footpath which runs through the field adjacent to the Old Rectory on Church Road, the black and white painted timber finger posts (adjacent to the conservation area) and the post box.
- Presence of agricultural land in and around the area;
- The setting of the settlement in a rural landscape with attractive views and vistas of the surrounding countryside;
- The historic street layout;
- The simple treatment of the public highway with its lack of road markings, narrow road width, lack of pavements and kerbs and the narrow grass verges;
- The area's trees and other vegetation. Notable are the hedgerows that run along the fields and the public highway;

- The variety of residential boundary treatments including hedges, mixed vegetation, timber posts with riven rail fences and brick walls;
- The lack of significant vehicular traffic through the village and its notable use by walkers and cyclists;
- The tranquil village atmosphere.

1.2 Recommendations

- That the quality of new development, particularly residential alterations and extensions, be better controlled through the planning process. It is suggested that an Article 4 Direction is designated to reduce permitted development rights and allow the Local Planning Authority greater control over minor development.
- That protection of the rural character of the conservation area be sought through the retention of existing agricultural buildings, new planting along field boundaries to replace and reinforce hedge rows and the repointing of flint walls.
- That traffic management within the public realm is preserved and enhanced through the repair of damaged grass verges and that over engineered solutions to traffic management are not introduced.
- Minor alterations to the conservation area boundary are proposed.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area

The Conservation Area centred around Church Road is a settlement a few miles to the north of Lewes. It should not be confused with the Barcombe Cross Conservation Area located to the north. The Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area was first designated by Lewes District Council on June 1976 and its boundary has remained unaltered or extended since this time. The boundaries of the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area have been drawn to include the St. Mary's Church and the surrounding historic buildings

and farmland. Most of buildings and land within the conservation area are located off Church Road between the railway bridge and Orchard House to St. Mary's Church and Penance Pond, see Townscape Appraisal Map.

2.2 The Purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal

This document seeks to record and define the special architectural and historic interest of the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area, to help ensure that it is both preserved and enhanced, not only for people today, but also for future generations to enjoy. The content of this appraisal is based on best practice as advised in English Heritage's publication "Understanding Place: Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals" (2005).

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 where 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". It is the quality and interest of a whole area and not just individual buildings which are important considerations when designating conservation areas.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

This appraisal will help satisfy the requirements of the Act by defining the special character and appearance of the Barcombe Conservation Area and by setting out a number of recommendations for its preservation and enhancement. It therefore provides a consistent and sound basis on which to determine applications for development within, or that affect the setting of, the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area.

2.3 Planning Policy Context

The policies which seek to preserve and enhance conservation areas and other relevant planning policies are set out in the Lewes District Local Plan (adopted March 2003). This Conservation Area Appraisal needs to be read in conjunction with Lewes District Local Plan. The Local Plan is available from Lewes District Council offices or online at www.lewes.gov.uk.

The Council is currently drawing up revised policies as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF), which will ultimately replace the Local Plan. This appraisal will form part of the evidence base for the LDF and will be supplemented in due course by a further document, the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area Management Plan, which will set out a programme for improvements and monitoring.

This document should also be read in conjunction the South East Plan and national Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15) – Planning and the Historic Environment or any documents superseding these.

2.4 Community Involvement

The first draft of the Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area Appraisal was produced following a meeting on 17th January 2008 with the area's District and Parish Councillors. Copies of this draft appraisal and maps were provided for consultation purposes to District Councillors, Barcombe Parish Council, relevant amenity groups, East Sussex County Council and English Heritage. A copy was also posted on the Council's website and a press release was sent to local papers. Following formal consultation two months were allowed for comments to be submitted, after which the comments were taken into consideration and the draft was amended for adoption.

3 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

3.1 Location and Activities

Church Road, Barcombe is a settlement just over a mile from Barcombe Cross, 3 miles north of Lewes, 5 miles south-west of Uckfield, 12 miles north of Brighton and 47 miles from London. The settlement is located in open countryside close to, but not along, the River Ouse.

Land uses in the conservation area are not varied. The area has a small but notable residential use comprised of a variety of types of properties from larger houses, including medieval timber frame houses and grand Georgian houses to humbler cottages including properties from the Georgian, Victorian and early twentieth century eras. There are working farms in the surrounding area with many fields used for growing cereal crops and vegetables and grazing cattle. These agricultural uses are crucial to Barcombe's rural ambiance.

The Church Road, Barcombe Conservation Area has few amenities, lacking sufficient population to support a wider range. Barcombe Cross is the nearest, much better serviced, settlement. The exception to this is St. Mary's Church and its recently built church hall. There are no other notable uses within the conservation area.

The roads in the area are distinctly rural in character. They connect Church Road, Barcombe with Barcombe Cross to the north and Cooksbridge and Hamsey and the town of Lewes, the County town of East Sussex, to the South. The only notable main roads in the area are the A275 and the A26, although neither road runs through the Conservation Area. Historically there were two railway stations close by, one at Barcombe Cross to the north, the other at Barcombe Mills to the east. Both have now closed. Today the nearest train station is at Cooksbridge. A network of public footpaths link the area to the surrounding countryside and neighbouring villages.

3.2 Topography and Geology

The area lies along the valley of the River Ouse which runs near the eastern side of the village, although it is not within its flood plain. It is located along a contour between 10 and 20 metres that runs through the conservation area, rising from southeast to northwest.

The geology of the area is comprised of a mixed loam soil, with a subsoil of Weald Clay (a light grey and red mottled clay), Lower Greensand (sand and limestone), with a small area north of St. Mary's of Valley Gravels.

3.3 Relationship of the Conservation Area to its Surroundings

The Church Road, Barcombe Conservation and its surrounding area are defined mainly by agricultural uses and residential properties. The Conservation Area itself is defined primarily by Church Road along which most of the buildings can be found. The historic core of the settlement is the area around St. Mary's Church and the small cluster of buildings along Church Approach Lane. However this area does not dominate the wider area, it being set away from Church Road.

Despite being within the open countryside, the conservation area has a pervading sense of enclosure. This is due to the boundary treatments around fields and residential properties, with open spaces in and around the area not being prominent. There are, however, many glimpsed views and vistas of the open countryside from the changes in topography, through field gates and down driveways or through gaps in hedges, that help to relieve this sense of enclosure.

The busiest roads in the area are the nearby A275 and A26. However, they are far enough away not to impede visually and are out of hearing range. The other roads in the area are quiet rural roads, only occasionally bothered by traffic. The area has tranquil rural quality which must be preserved.

3.4 Biodiversity

The Barcombe Conservation Area is identified in the Lewes District Local Plan as being within the countryside outside the Planning Boundary. New development within this area is therefore very strictly controlled. Policy CT1 of the Lewes District Local Plan (Adopted March 2003) and any subsequent replacement should be referred to.

There are no landscape conservation designations either within or close to the Barcombe Conservation Area. However, while there are no statutory designations, this should not undermine the contribution that the countryside makes to the character of the conservation area.

Notably, trees within the conservation area are protected. Prior to commencement of tree works the local planning authority needs to be notified. Further guidance regarding trees in conservation areas is given in Appendix 3: Works to Trees in Conservation Areas

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Historic Development

The Barcombe Conservation Area comprises the medieval core of the settlement and later development along Church Road, it does not include the settlements around Barcombe Cross (which is within the Barcombe Cross Conservation Area) or Barcombe Mills.

The earliest known settlement in Barcombe is a Roman settlement close by. The village also lies near the path of Ermine Street, the old Roman road from Newhaven to London.

Barcombe, originally known as Bercham, is mentioned in the Domesday Book. It states the settlement as having “a church and three and a half mills”, as one mill was in both Barcombe and Isfield, straddling the river Ouse.

The settlement’s earlier development, including the historic street pattern and several medieval buildings of note, still exists within the Barcombe Conservation Area. Court House, Penance Pond and associated land represent the core of what was formally the demesne land, i.e. land retained by the manorial lord of Barcombe.

In total, the conservation area contains nine listed buildings and one building of local interest. The most notable is the grade II* listed medieval Parish Church of St. Mary. St. Mary’s which helps to define the medieval core of the settlement.

4.2 Historical Personalities

It is believed that Simon de Montford and his troops passed through the area on their way to and from the Battle of Lewes in 1264, as he was known to have been at Fletching before the battle and at Isfield afterwards.

4.3 Archaeology

There is an Area of Archaeological Interest in the conservation area around the area of the Parish Church of St. Mary, Penance Pond and Court House and to the west outside of the conservation area.

Archaeologists have identified the development, layout and features of a Romano-British settlement, including an initial phase of Iron Age type timber roundhouses, a suite of Roman baths and a large, aisled building, although most of the original masonry has been removed, perhaps plundered to build St Mary’s Church.

5 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Plan form, site layout and boundaries

The area has a linear form with gentle curves in the road and an undulating topography that gives a pleasing appearance to the area. There is a notable bend in Church Road adjacent to The Beeches which is given more of a focus by the dwelling's imposing brick boundary wall.

There are two distinct areas where a stronger sense of a settlement can be identified. Historically the most significant of these two groups of buildings is the medieval core of the village comprising St. Mary's Church, Penance Pond, Court House and its associated former farm buildings. Development has organically spread over time to the north along Church Road from this medieval core.

The second grouping of buildings is found around and near to the junction of Church Road and Mill Lane and is comprised of a cluster of cottages of the 18th and 19th century including White Lodge, The Lodge, Glebe Cottage and several others. These are located close to each other, are closer to the road and some have a more open boundary treatment than is usual in the conservation area. This results in these cottages being more visible and reinforces this sense of a group of dwellings.



White Lodge located at the junction of Church Road and Mill Lane

Generally however there is a sense of separateness to the properties due to the often heavy boundary treatments, the generous size of the plots dwellings are located on, the distance between the dwellings and the agricultural land found between the dwellings.

Residential properties are set back at various distances into their plots but, generally, all have their front elevations facing onto Church Road. A notable exception is The Beeches, which is set at a right angle to Church Road, its side elevation prominently visible over its brick boundary wall. Other notable exceptions are The Old Rectory and Court House which, unlike the other dwellings, are set further away from Church Road, giving them much less of a presence within the public realm, although there are various glimpsed views of them around the conservation area.

The larger dwellings e.g. Court House, Penance Pond, The Beeches, Old Rectory and Holmbush have generous gardens, mostly concealed by various boundary treatments. The smaller houses and cottages have correspondingly

smaller gardens which are sometimes located to the side of the dwelling as can be seen at White Lodge, Beeches Cottage and Bercham.

There are a number of farm buildings within the conservation area, most of which have been incorporated as outbuildings within the residential curtilages. These have an informal layout.

The boundary treatments of the agricultural fields, farms and residential properties play a significant role, creating a sense of enclosure around much of the conservation area. Typically the boundaries of agricultural land in and around the conservation area consist of hedge rows, although there are frequently trees located along boundaries too. However, the sense of enclosure created by these boundary treatments along agricultural land is relieved by field gates, openings and the accessibility to public foot paths that run through these fields. These create glimpses of the wider countryside that play an important role in the character of the conservation area.



The Beeches, Church Road

The boundary treatment of the residential properties are more varied. There are hedges similar to the hedges found along the agricultural fields although there are also more managed, topiary hedges e.g. along the boundaries of The Beeches, Bercham House and Glebe Cottage. Red brick walls are also prominent, none more prominent than the three metre high boundary wall of The Beeches. Less noticeable are flint walls which, while contributing to the character of the area, form a more minor element. Also less common are timber posts with riven rail fences, which are sometimes combined with other types of boundary treatment.

5.2 Focal Points, Views and Vistas

The conservation area is comprised of a number of attractive historic buildings which together form a cohesive whole. With the exception of those listed below many of the buildings, structures and views can only be partially glimpsed from the public realm. This should not be considered a criticism of the conservation area as these glimpses are very attractive and should not be underestimated in terms of their contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Listed below are the key focal points, views and vistas. However these are addressed in more detail in the Townscape Appraisal Map.

- St. Mary's Church is the building of most historic and architectural interest in the conservation area, as indicated by its grade II* listing. While considered a focal point, views of it within the conservation area are limited from Church Road and the surrounding area. St. Mary's only has strong presence from within the medieval core of the village and from the church car park to the west, where it can be seen behind a row of mature trees.



St. Mary's Church

- A notable focal point within the churchyard of St. Mary's is the granite war memorial commemorating those who fell in the first and second world wars.
- A strong focal point opposite St. Mary's is a hedge over which can be viewed a house, Penance Pond, and its associated pond.
- The grouping of farm buildings around Court House, including the barn to north-west of Court House and the octagonal horse-gin or threshing floor, are visually significant, at least when viewed from the medieval core of the village. Court House itself, however, is not considered a landmark in its own right as it is set back and largely hidden from the public highway.



Group of farm buildings around Court House

- The Beeches has a high brick garden wall running along Church Road acting as a focal point, having a very imposing presence on the road.
- Notable also is The Beeches itself which can be seen over the garden wall. Due to its location and angle onto Church Road it has a strong presence within the road.
- Although two of the more modest buildings within the conservation area White Cottage and The Lodge are considered to be landmark buildings due their prominence at the junction of Church Road and Mill Lane and their relatively unspoilt appearance.
- There are attractive views of the surrounding countryside looking south from the eastern elevation of St. Mary's. These are best enjoyed sitting on the conveniently located bench.



View south of St. Mary's Church

- There are attractive views of the Old Rectory along the footpath that runs diagonally through the adjacent field to the northeast.

There are also many fine views and vistas into and out of the conservation area, particularly southward to the Downs around Lewes and Ringmer which form a distant backdrop to the village. These views are not always obvious as some can only be viewed along the network of public footpaths that run through fields or glimpsed over gates however each are important to the character of the conservation area and need to be protected. Some of these views and vistas are indicated in the Townscape Appraisal Map. However, this should by no means be read as being comprehensive.

5.3 Open Spaces, Trees and Landscape

There are no notable large areas of publicly accessible open space clearly visible within the conservation area. Perhaps the only area that could be

described as an open space is the area around St. Mary's Church and the farm buildings associated with Court House, with their views of the wider countryside greatly contributing to the more open feel of the area. Views into the property known as Penance Pond and the pond it is named after, also enhance this openness. However, the spaciousness here is not publicly accessible.

There are a number of other less obvious open spaces in the form of agricultural fields, many of which can be glimpsed through hedges and gates or can be accessed along the public foot paths that run through several of them.

The presence of groups and individual trees, both within and around the village, are notable. These add significantly to the interest of the area and many make a positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area.

Those trees that are especially prominent and make a contribution to the conservation area are identified in the Townscape Appraisal Map. However, due to there being so many trees within the conservation area, it has not been possible to identify every notable tree and a lack of specific reference does not imply that any particular tree is not of value. Trees within the conservation area are protected. Prior to the commencement of any tree works the District Council Tree and Landscape Officer needs to be notified.

5.4 Public Realm

The public realm reflects the countryside setting and informal character of the settlement. Features of note are:

- No notable pavements in the area. However, there are many soft grass verges which reinforces the area's rural character. The introduction of pavements and verges would be an unwelcome urbanisation, detrimental to the rural character of the conservation area.

- The drainage channels along many of the roads.
- Traditional white finger post with black lettering marking several of the junctions in and around Barcombe.
- The post box close to the junction of Mill Lane/Church Road.
- There is a way stone engraved with 'Public Footpath' along Church Road identifying a public right of way.
- There are a number of timber telegraph poles with associated wires lining the road.

6 DEFINITION OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST

6.1 Building Types

The village is mainly residential, the historic building types typical to the area including larger houses e.g. Court House which was the core of the medieval manorial complex, the Old Rectory and The Beeches, two larger Georgian houses. There are also a number of more modest houses and cottages from a variety of periods including Georgian, Victorian and early 20th century e.g. White Lodge, The Lodge, Bow Cottage, Old Rectory Cottage and Bercham House. There are also a small number of agricultural buildings which are no longer used for agriculture, now associated with residential dwellings e.g. Beeches Barn within the curtilage of The Beeches and the various farm outbuildings associated with Court House, including the barn to north-west and the octagonal horse-gin or threshing floor. The only other notable building type is St. Mary's Church.

Modern infill development is not a significant concern within the conservation area. However, several of the historic houses have been altered, extended or have outbuildings that are not sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6.2 Listed Buildings

There are nine listed building entries on the statutory list and further one contained on the Council's local list within the conservation area. All the statutory listed buildings are grade II listed with the exception of the Parish Church of St. Mary which is grade II*. St. Mary's retains historic walls dated circa 1100, 13th century chancel and tower, the arcade of the nave 1400 and a south aisle 1879-80, when the whole church was restored. Unusually for the conservation area, St. Mary's is built of flint with plain clay tiled roof and a shingle spire.

The other listed buildings in the conservation area are; the Court House and the adjacent farm buildings including the 16th - 17th century barn to north-west and the octagonal horse-gin or threshing floor. There are two larger houses; these are Penance Pond and The Beeches, dating from the 18th century. Within the grounds of The Beeches there is a mid to late 17th century barn. There are two smaller semi-detached cottages of the 18th century or earlier, these are Beeches Cottage and Pump Cottage, formally known as Beeches Cottages (listed as one entry on the statutory list) and the locally listed Church Cottage.

6.3 Positive Buildings

In addition to the conservation area's nine statutory listed buildings and one building on the Council's local list, a number of unlisted buildings have been noted as being positive buildings, i.e. buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. These buildings have been identified during the survey process and, as recommended by PPG15, are recorded in the Townscape Appraisal Map.



Hollybush Cottage, Church Road, unlisted building making a positive contribution to the conservation area

Buildings identified as making 'positive' contribution to the conservation area vary but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provide the conservation area with architectural and or historic interest.

As stated in PPG15 there is a presumption that positive buildings within the conservation area will be protected from demolition and the Council will only grant consent for applications for alterations or extensions to these buildings where they preserve or enhance their character and appearance.

6.4 Building styles, materials and colours

Historic settlements are traditionally constructed from locally available materials and Barcombe's most distinctive building materials are red clay bricks used in the construction of buildings and boundary walls and red plain clay tiles used on buildings roofs and hanging from walls. These warm coloured materials are used throughout the conservation area.

Notable is the decorative checked brick pattern found on the Georgian cottages, created by using darker coloured headers for contrast. This can be seen at The Lodge and Bow Cottage, while different coloured bricks are used less convincingly at Bercham House.

Red plain clay tiles can be seen on all periods of property within the conservation area. They are very common as a roofing material, and are also frequently seen as tile hanging for example; on the first floors of the timber framed Penance Pond, Court House and Georgian Hollybush Cottage and Beeches Cottages. Tile hanging is also found in the early 20th century dwelling Orchard House where the first floor and part of the gable is tile hung, and in the gables of Glebe Cottage.



Beeches Cottages, Church Road, with red clay hanging tiles on the first floor

While plain red clay tiles are a common roof material the use of slate on several of the properties should not be overlooked. It appears on roofs including The Beeches, Beech Cottages and White Cottage.

The only other notable roofing material is thatch. Several of the older buildings within the conservation area are likely to have once been thatched. However, these buildings have now had their thatch removed and replaced with red clay tiles. A notable exception to this is the horse gin/threshing floor which has had its thatch restored.

Another important building material in Barcombe is timber. There are several timber framed buildings in the conservation area including Court House and Penance Pond and the agricultural buildings, although these do not have their frames exposed externally. The timber would have been sourced from Wealden forests. Timber is also used as weather-boarding on agricultural and residential buildings, most notably at Beeches Barn, the barn north-east of Court House, which has been tarred, and White Cottage which as the name implies has had its timber boarding painted white, as has Church Cottage. Windows and doors are typically made of timber with casement windows being more common than sash windows. Regrettably, several properties in the conservation area have had their timber windows replaced with UPVC windows, which are unsympathetic to the character of the conservation area.



White Lodge, Church Lane, detail of white painted weatherboarding and timber casement window

Stone is not a common material in the conservation area, although the church is constructed of knapped flints with quoins, window and door surrounds and buttresses of Wealden sandstone, a material imported to distinguish the church from the local vernacular buildings and giving it prestige.



The Lodge, Church Road example of a field flint wall located on a side boundary

There are a number of boundary walls constructed of field flints, (i.e. flints literally picked up from nearby fields). However flint walls are not a prominent feature of the conservation area, their use being limited to side and rear boundary walls as can be seen at White Cottage and The Lodge. They are not typically used in boundary walls facing the public highway. An exception to this is the flint wall located between the barn to the north-west of Court House and St. Mary's Church which encloses a field. Sections of this wall are constructed of field flints and, unusually for the conservation area, a section of the wall is constructed of flint cobbles, rounded by the action of water.

7 ISSUES

The Barcombe Conservation Area encompasses an attractive rural settlement with few obvious threats to its character, although incremental change could adversely affect the quality of the environment, if not controlled properly. The buildings are generally in good condition and the area is clearly a desirable location in which to live. However, there are a number of issues which will need to be resolved if the conservation area is to be protected from unsympathetic changes. These are:

7.1 The Quality of New Development

Fortunately, the conservation area has been spared any significant infill development. However, inappropriate alterations to dwellings are one of the most significant concerns in the conservation area. There are several buildings in the conservation area that have been subject to changes that harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The inappropriate changes are extensions and outbuildings to residential properties where their location, scale and character are considered to be harmful to the character of the conservation area.

These inappropriate changes are not limited to new development. The conservation area has also been affected by the use of non-traditional materials and architectural detailing, for example the use of UPVC windows, felt on modern flat roofed extensions and garages, and poorer quality plain clay tiles being used to replace the traditional hand made plain clay tile.

7.2 Protecting the Rural Character of the Conservation Area

The conservation area and surrounding area supports a small number of farms and agricultural land. These uses provide a continuous link to the agricultural past of the settlement.

Hedge rows contribute to the character of the Conservation Area, their loss and damage is a concern. In places the hedges along fields have thinned or died, to the detriment of the rural qualities of the area.

The flint walls in the conservation area have a small, but significant, contribution to the character of the area. However, they are in need of repointing or risk collapsing.

7.3 Traffic Management and the Public Realm

The edges of the roads in the conservation area are often defined by narrow grass verges. Some have become damaged where vehicles have driven over them. They need to be maintained as an important part of the character of the conservation area.

The introduction of a verge outside the front of Old Vicarage Cottage is not characteristic of the conservation area. The introduction of further verges is not desirable.

There is a fortunate lack of street signage and road markings within the conservation area.

Overhead telephone wires are notable in certain parts of the Conservation Area. Whenever the opportunity arises these should be relocated underground.

7.4 Conservation Area Boundary Review

A review of the historic and architectural interest of the existing conservation area and the area immediately outside the conservation area was carried out to establish whether the existing boundary defines the areas special interest. A brief summary of the boundary review is detailed in section 8.4.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the various issues identified in the Chapter 7, the following recommendations are made:

8.1 The Quality of New Development

The Local Planning Authority needs to ensure that all new development in the conservation area adheres to Local Plan policies and to the advice contained in PPG15 and any subsequent guidance.

Applications for extensions to residential properties, garages and other outbuildings will only be allowed where the proposal preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and its curtilage and the wider street scene.

The Local Planning Authority will ensure that all new buildings and extensions include traditional materials and architectural detailing or materials and architectural details that of a similar high quality.

Consideration should also be given to the designation of an Article 4 Direction to reduce permitted development rights and allow the Local Planning Authority greater control over minor development to ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced.

8.2 Protecting the Rural Character of the Conservation Area

The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the agricultural buildings in and around the conservation area in their original uses, and should resist further planning applications for change that do not reinforce these agricultural uses.

The Local Planning Authority will encourage the relevant landowners to put new planting along field boundaries to replace and reinforce hedge rows to help reinforce the rural character of the area.

The Local Planning Authority will encourage the relevant landowners to repoint their flint walls which need to be protected from demolition or neglect.

8.3 Traffic Management and the Public Realm

The County Council and utility companies need to be made aware that works carried out in the conservation area need to be sympathetic to its character and appearance.

The issue of the damaged grass verges needs to be brought to the attention of East Sussex County Council and a solution that is sympathetic to the conservation area be pursued. The insertion of bollards or kerbs will not be a satisfactory solution, as they are not a characteristic feature of the conservation area, and risk creating a more urban feel.

The necessity of any additional street signage and road markings needs to be questioned and where there is a real need they must be kept to a minimum to preserve the rural character of the area.

The relevant utility companies need to be contacted to discuss the possibility of burying the existing overhead telephone wires.

8.4 Conservation Area Boundary Review

As part of the appraisal process, the conservation area boundary was reviewed and the following extensions, shown in Appendix 1: Townscape Appraisal Map, are recommended;

- The car park to the west of St. Mary's was formally a field but now has a close functional relationship with the church. Inclusion of this area would

allow the Local Planning Authority better control over the quality of any future proposals associated with the car park.

- Conyboro Lodge South and Conyboro Lodge North are an attractive pair of Victorian semi-detached properties and there is a traditional finger post at this junction which would help to mark a clear 'entrance' to the conservation area.

The following changes need further consideration after public consultation;

- The area to the west of the conservation area includes a large Edwardian house, Croft Ham, which has a large curtilage several associated outbuildings and a walled vegetable garden. However it has a remote relationship with the existing conservation area. Should there be further information giving the property a stronger link to Barcombe and if there is a positive public reaction to including it during the initial consultation, consideration could be given to its inclusion.

TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL MAP

Please see associated attachment.

LOCAL GENERIC GUIDANCE

Advice for owners of properties in conservation areas on the relevant planning legislation which affects them can be found in the leaflet Planning Controls in Conservation Areas, available online at:

<http://www.lewes.gov.uk/environment/1098.asp>

Further information on Listed Buildings can be found in the leaflet Listed Buildings: An owner's guide to alteration and repairs, available online at:

<http://www.lewes.gov.uk/environment/3600.asp>

Both leaflets are also available from the Planning and Environmental Services Department of Lewes District Council.

USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

For further information and advice, please contact the Design and Conservation department at Lewes District Council:

Planning and Environmental Services
PO Box 166
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 9EY
Tel: 01273 471600

This is one of a series of leaflets about the 35 Conservation Areas in the Lewes District. A full list can be obtained by contacting the above officers, or by visiting the Council's website (www.lewes.gov.uk).

Historic records and Ordnance Survey maps of the area can be viewed at:

East Sussex Records Office
The Maltings
Castle Precincts
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1YT
Tel: 01273 482349

FURTHER READING

The Barcombe and Hamsey Project have a website which provides information on historic maps, census, historic photographs, archaeology and buildings, www.bandhpast.co.uk

Understanding Place: Guidance on conservation area appraisals, English Heritage, 2005.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15