

Chilham Parish Design Statement



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Cover photographs:
 A Surrounding countryside
 B Chilham
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Introduction

An initiative was launched in 1996 by the then Countryside Commission (now Agency) to involve villages in their own development and future planning. Every village was encouraged to produce its own Village Design Statement, and many have now done so.

Chilham Parish Council set up a sub-committee in October 2001 to organise and implement a Design Statement for Chilham. Because the Parish comprises three disparate villages, Chilham, Old Wives Lees and Shottenden, within its boundaries, it elected to describe the document as a Parish Design Statement.

In October 2002, following postal invitations to every household in the Parish, a Workshop was held in the Village Hall attended by sixty people. Children at the primary school held a similar Workshop.

The Parish Design Statement has been written in full consultation with residents and submitted to Ashford Borough Council for adoption as supplementary planning guidance.

Landscape

The Parish of Chilham lies in the valley of the River Stour between Canterbury and Ashford on the northern edge of the North Downs. Chilham village occupies a promontory in the river valley and is overlooked by Old Wives Lees and Shottenden, situated on higher ground to the northeast and northwest, respectively. Chilham is located at the junction of the A28 (Ashford–Canterbury road) and the A252 (Maidstone–Canterbury road). Narrow lanes from the A252 connect Chilham with Old Wives Lees and Shottenden.

Due to its position, the Parish therefore lies just within the northern boundary of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Kent Downs have been protected by the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, which enabled them to be designated in 1968 as an AONB, to protect their diverse landscape of chalk



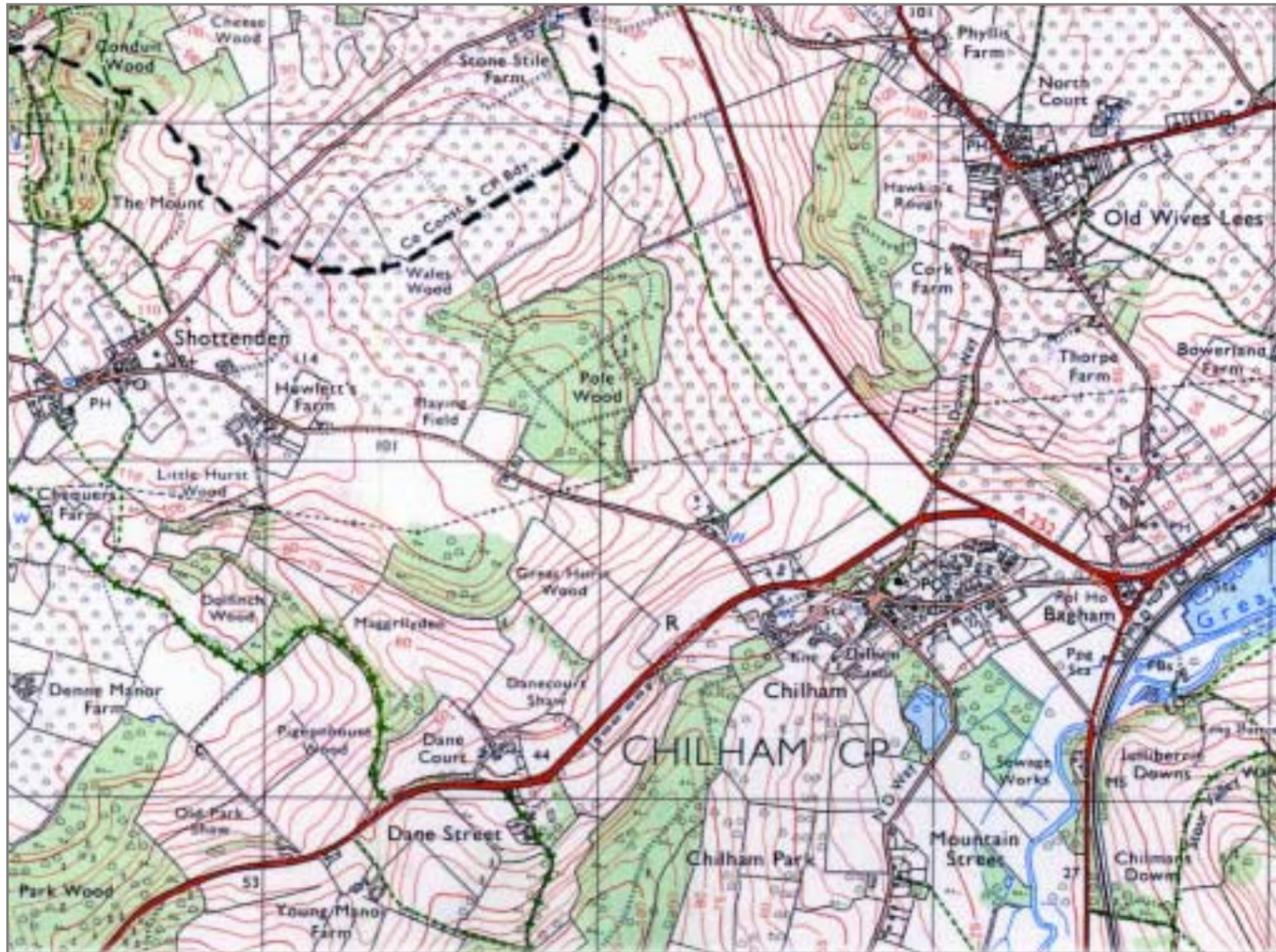
uplands, narrow lanes, sunken paths, ancient woods and hedgerows, historic villages and distinctive wildlife. In the Parish, therefore, most of the views to the south and west are over protected landscape: those to the north from Old Wives and Shottenden are mostly over areas lacking any protection and under the control of three different local authorities. Between the two parks of Chilham and Godmersham, along the Parish boundary line, are exceptionally fine views of Kentish landscape, especially of the Godmersham Downs and mansion.

The North Downs Way runs through the Parish from Mountain Street, Chilham, up Long Hill to Old Wives Lees and leaves the road near Pamphletts Green crossing the Parish boundary into Chartham and on to Canterbury. According to archaeologists this is one of the most important 'ancient trackways' in Britain because it was a main route by which early man gained access to Britain from the Continent. Along Mountain Street, it coincides with the Pilgrims route to Canterbury.

The landscape of the Parish, with its villages, downland, farmland, orchards and the river, lakes and water meadows along the Stour Valley, is characteristic of the Downs. There are extensive areas of deciduous woodland in the southeast, south, southwest and northwest of the Parish, of which the dominant species are oak, ash, beech, sweet chestnut and sycamore. At the end of Mountain Street, Kings Wood, a working forest of about 574 hectares (1418 acres) managed for deciduous and coniferous timber production, wildlife conservation and recreation by Forest Enterprise, is a treasured area of natural heritage in the Parish, a valuable resource for parishioners and visitors.



1 Views from Old Wives Lees
 2 North Downs Way at Mountain Street and castle wall



Chilham

History and Development of the Village

Pre-historic archaeological remains and the Neolithic long barrow known as Julieberries Grave are confirmation of the ancient habitation of Chilham for many thousands of years. Evidence at the castle exists of Roman foundations, thought to be a small hill fort; and the site was subsequently occupied by Saxon kings.

The modern village evolved from former habitations which grew up around and depended upon the castle for protection and employment. The church, built on Saxon foundations, is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and a list of its incumbents starts in 1280.

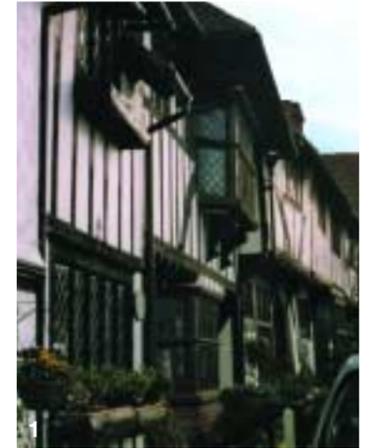
The central core of the village forms a square on a small plateau between the church and the castle. It was created during the great Tudor building era, probably built on many of the old existing foundations. The then wealth of oak enabled substantial timber framed houses to be erected. In what is now The Street, the fifteenth century Burgoyne (which, like many houses in the Parish, retains its historic name), with its pinched Wealden front, was a farm. Opposite is another hall house, built lat-

er that century, now named Cumberland House. In the Square, the dominant house of Wealden Hall plan is what is now called Tudor Lodge and Talisman shop, thought to have been built between 1370 and 1410. The original farmhouse buildings of what is the White Horse Inn public house are dated 1422.

The Norman castle was demolished in the early seventeenth century and replaced by a large red brick mansion, completed in 1616 for Sir Dudley Digges, and reputedly designed by Inigo Jones. In the eighteenth century, a great brick wall enclosing the castle's grounds was built, separating the grounds from the village.

The re-facing of the timber houses with brickwork in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, plus the red brick wall of the castle, changed the look of the village from daub and plaster to predominantly brick. Large dramatic chimneys were built.

About 1820, the village school moved from its class in the south porch of the church to a small brick and stone dressed building in School Hill. Extra classrooms were added in 1861 in a large red and yellow brick building with a plate traceried window.



1 An early house of Wealden Hall plan
2 A brickwork re-faced timber house
3 The May Fayre in Chilham Square
© Countryside Agency/Tina Stallard

1 Chilham's symbol of a heron reflects its long association with the ancient heronry
2 Fishing at Chilham Lakes

The upland areas of the Stour Valley consist of chalk deposits overlain by clay with flints, which provide the distinctive soils of the North Downs. The floor of the Stour Valley is composed of alluvial soils deposited by the river over millennia. These deposits have long been economically important as a source of gravel for the building industry and indeed continue to be worked elsewhere in the valley. Chilham Lakes are a legacy of earlier workings and this area is now a wild-fowl sanctuary and an amenity much appreciated by walkers, bird-watchers and fishermen. The lakes, with their reed beds, fringing alder trees and poplar plantation, form a distinctive and beautiful landscape at the foot of the Downs, despite being bounded on one side by the railway line and the A28.

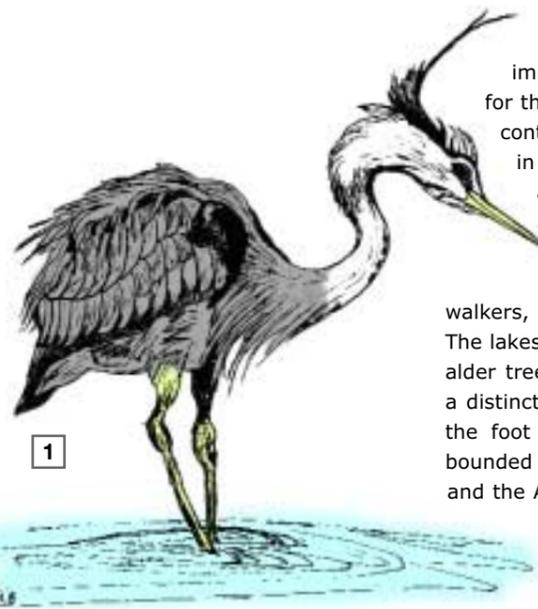
The three villages are united by the landscape in which they lie and each village has many treasured views. Any new development should seek to preserve and respect these.



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"The promontory of the chalk downs, overlooking a bend in the River Stour, and a straight view down to Canterbury half a dozen miles away, was an important defensive position". Pevsner N.E. and E. Kent. p.274

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Outside the centre of the village, Hurst Farm, at the end of Mountain Street, is Grade I Listed and is the oldest and one of the most important set of domestic buildings in the Parish.

Gradually, with increased population, many of the large dwellings were subdivided; infill between the existing buildings led to a more compact village and in the nineteenth century more cottages for estate workers were built in Mountain Street and Hambrook Lane. Clements Cottage was built at the entrance to the churchyard.

The twentieth century saw the final formalisation of the Square with the erection in 1922 of the paired castle gatehouses, designed by Sir Herbert Baker. Later, in the 1930s, several houses were built which have strong Arts and Crafts attention to detail.

In the 1930s, Sir Edmund Davis had an extension constructed to the seventeenth century rear wing at the back of Belke House built in the Tudor style, providing a large classroom for the school. At this time he also undertook changes in the Square, and many of the brick facades were removed and windows changed.

Post-war development

Much new development has occurred since the sale of the castle estate in 1949. A crisis arose for local people when the houses they had inhabited as tenants and employees were sold.

The first group of buildings to be built was Herons Close in 1953. Great attention was paid to this first new local authority building in Chilham; its design won an award at the time.

The second phase, Felborough Close, although using bricks and clay tiles, used 1960s pattern book designs of suburban scale, with no reference to location or traditions of the area.

The third phase of building (1980s) of brick and tiled low dwellings for elderly residents, sits appropriately at the foot of Felborough Close; its scale and grouping has been placed thoughtfully in the landscape.

Ribbon development has occurred in Hambrook Lane, with a mixture of modern and copybook design housing styles. The flat roof of the doctor's surgery built about 1960, now looks out of keeping in Chilham. A fire station was built at the bottom of Taylors Hill and a police house in Bagham Lane. Recent additions to the village include the Sports Hall in 1998 and, in 2002, one of the war-time air raid shelters at the school was converted to a classroom and ICT suite for use by the school and the community.

The village has two public houses, the White Horse Inn and the Woolpack Inn, and is the only one of the three villages to have retained some shops including the Post Office.

The village remains relatively unspoilt, but constant vigilance to retain its beauty is required. The Parish values its history and the recording of archaeological investigations at buildings and landscape when work is being undertaken should be encouraged.

Chilham Castle and keep

The Norman keep (under separate ownership from the castle), Grade I Listed, was built for King Henry II and dates from 1174 but archaeological excavations suggest that it stands on the



foundations of a much older Anglo-Saxon fortification, possibly dating from the fifth century. There is evidence of earlier Roman habitation in the vicinity. Stonemasons and carpenters from Canterbury Cathedral have recently restored the fireplace canopy and doors, and installed appropriate ironwork. The donkey house over the well is also listed.

The Grade I Listed Jacobean building, now known as Chilham Castle, was constructed in 1616 for Sir Dudley Digges. It is one of the finer mansions in the South-East and commands exceptional views across the Stour Valley. The gardens, originally laid out

- 1 1820 new school
- 2 Hurst Farm, the oldest dwelling in the Parish
- 3 1980 dwellings for retired residents
- 4 1953 Herons Close



by John Tradescant (senior), were redesigned in the eighteenth century under the guidance of Capability Brown and include a fine terrace leading down to a fishing lake.

After its sale in 1949, the fabric of the building gradually deteriorated. On its re-sale in 1997, the new owner undertook restoration work. As English Heritage was not involved, much of this required re-visiting and when the castle was again sold in 2002, a major restoration was undertaken, and completed in October 2004. The main gates have been altered to enable the house to be seen, so re-connecting it visually to the Square.

The gardens too are being restored. The landscape historian John Phipps has researched and written the history of the park and garden, and his results will inform the planned restoration. The avenue of lime trees destroyed in the 1987 gale was apparently replanted with an incorrect species. The front of the house is being replanted with single trees to replace the feeling of a park.

The estate since 1949 has greatly diminished in acreage. However, the remaining grounds constituting the major part of the Chilham Conservation Area include an ancient avenue of chestnuts, a lake and heronry. An appraisal of ecological interests by Landscape Architects dated 2003 notes the extensive area of "lowland wood-pasture and historic parkland, included in the Kent Biodiversity Action plan as priority habitat". The eighteenth century wall surrounding the estate is an important feature but listed only down School Hill and on either side of the gatehouses. Its loss would be greatly regretted by the village, however, the present owners are maintaining it under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

St Mary's Church

There has probably been a church on the site since the seventh century. The present church, built of flint in the English Perpendicular style, is of an unusual size for a relatively small village.

In 1534, the church was left a legacy towards the construction of the great perpendicular west tower, 68 feet tall, which dominates the village to great effect. It is chequered with flint and local stone and also contains some Roman bricks or tiles. It has magnificent view of the Downs, the beautiful Stour Valley, and even of the Bell Harry Tower of Canterbury Cathedral.

The clock was made in 1727 but had no minute hand until 1790. The fine peal of eight bells weighs nearly four tons altogether.

Chilham Mill

Chilham Mill is located between the River Stour and a carrier stream and has been situated at the mill race for many centuries. The present mill is thought to stand on the site of a Saxon mill and is the last survivor of the six mills recorded in the Domesday Book.

The present building was rebuilt in the mid-nineteenth century, and is considered to be the best preserved of its kind in the South of England. It is known as a French mill as the six pairs of grinding stones came from France. It ceased production in 1934 and nowadays is a pumping station.

It is a striking building of brick and white clapboard, with an adjoining low brick miller's house. The mill is a splendidly restored piece of English industrial heritage.



1 St Mary's Church
2 Chilham Mill and mill race
3 Engraving showing Chilham Castle: the Norman keep and seventeenth century house





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1 The Old Vicarage: stone Venetian window over stone pediment of doorcase
2 Woolpack Inn
3 White Horse Inn

Qualities and Character

The Square and the Conservation Area

The village still retains the appearance of a strategic settlement rising from the rural Stour valley, crowned by its church and castle, surrounded by the huddled roofs of its mediaeval houses. Recent housing running down the east side of the hill on which the settlement stands has not, so far, detracted from the sense of the village as an island. Narrow steep lanes rising from the valley emerge, one to each corner, into a unique and beautiful square, formed by mediaeval houses on its north and south sides, and the entrance to the castle on the west and the church and graveyard on the east. Most of the buildings in the Square and in the four streets leading to it are black and white, half timbered structures, some faced with brick. Almost all are listed buildings and the greater part of the village is a Conservation Area, under the 1972 Act. Chilham Square is considered by many to be one of the most perfectly preserved mediaeval settings in the country but is currently predominantly used as a car park. Chilham Parish Council has set up a committee which is working to improve the appearance and function of the Square.

Roofs within the Conservation Area are largely steeply pitched with clay tiles and a variety of red brick chimneys. Windows are normally timber sashes or timber casements, often with the

frames painted black and opening lights painted white. The houses generally front directly on to the streets, with only the occasional small front garden behind low walls or timber paling fences. High warm red stock brick walls surround the castle with occasional gateways leading to the castle or other properties, which were once part of the estate. Most of the roads have views closed by buildings but occasionally, as on School Hill, vistas open up across the Downs.

Chilham's special sense of place is at present preserved by orchards, woods and trees surrounding the village.

Characteristic features

● **Materials**

The palette of materials and colours used in Chilham is restrained. The distinctive red bricks and clay tiles have ensured a visual cohesion of the village. Red brick faced houses and their chimneys, red tiled roofs, and occasionally hung tiles, form a warm counterpoint to the now stained black timbers and white infill panels of the other buildings.

Flint has receded as an important material, and now occurs only in the Norman keep, the church, a few remaining plinths on which the timber frames stand, and some walls. Stone is used sparingly, as roughly dressed blocks in the keep, the chequered decoration in the church tower, as dressings to windows and doors in the castle and its gatehouses, and a few other buildings.

There are a few examples of painted weather boarding which is not a characteristic feature of the village but there are several examples of painted brickwork in Chilham, notably on the two public houses.

The character of the mediaeval Square is marred by its surface which is grey patched municipal tarmac.

● **Windows**

The windows in the village are extremely varied and reflect the changes that have been made to the houses over the centuries. Original mediaeval windows were high and small and placed between the timber framing, often in an informal

and irregular way. Evidence of such windows remains in some of the old houses where they have been filled in.

The seventeenth and eighteenth century brick facing of dwellings enabled the enlargement of windows to be made and their arrangement formalised. Classically proportioned sash windows or casements were often inserted.

The large two storeyed bay window of the Woolpack Inn was built in the nineteenth century, with stone mullions and a stone battlemented parapet.

Clements Cottage has triangular leaded lights in iron frames, as do some other properties. The back of Belke House, clearly visible down School Hill, has modern coarsely proportioned fanlight windows.

The windows in some houses in the Square were restored during the twentieth century and have rubbed brick mullions and labels. Timber oriels were inserted in several houses at about this time. The mid-twentieth century houses built for castle estate staff, such as Belwether and Castle Oak, have rectangular leaded lights in iron frames.

● **Doors and door frames**

A few original and some reproduction mediaeval shaped door frames remain, namely at the Talisman shop, Vergers Lodge and Cumberland House. Little Belke has a four centred basket arch. Doors require replacing over the years, and many in Chilham are of nineteenth century plank and stud design. Some good examples of appropriate replacements are seen in Taylors Hill and Church Hill.

● **Porches**

The predominant form of porch in the centre of Chilham is a flat lead covered hood, occasionally with moulded surrounds, supported on brackets. Elsewhere the porches are mostly of brick.

● **Roofs and chimneys**

The huddled roofs and dramatic brick chimneys are a strong architectural feature of Chilham. The warm orange hue of the Kent peg tiles is a cohesive and distinctive feature of the village. Some roofs have decorative 'fish tail' tiles in

rows. Burgoyne still retains its original shaped hall house roof without chimneys. Slate is little used.

● **Walls and boundaries**

The red brick wall partially surrounding the castle estate is a strong element. It is listed only down School Hill and on either side of the gatehouses, and these sections are in good repair. The low brick wall opposite, on the boundary of Castle Oak, continues the theme round into Hambrook Lane.

In the Square itself, the frontage of most of the houses is about one metre. Boundaries are characterised by link chain and posts, picket fences and low walls or planters.

The post-war houses of Felborough Close all have front gardens, with generous swathes of public grass in front of many of the dwellings.

● **Street furniture**

The Square, has in the past been marred by the use of inappropriate, poorly designed contemporary planters and it is hoped that the street furniture would be appropriate for a Conservation Area with the use of wood and cast iron.

● **Lighting**

The Square is at present lit effectively from individual properties; this creates a natural and rather magical effect, especially when the church is floodlit. It would be regrettable if this level was increased. An orange street light at the bottom of School Hill lights it sufficiently, especially as it is supplemented with lighting from the school and Castle Oak. Felborough Close necessarily has a high level of lighting in a suburban rather than rural manner. All light fittings should be appropriate to a Conservation Area.

● **Trees**

Chilham is particularly rich in mature trees. Its entrance along The Avenue is lined on each side with full grown limes, and there is also a row of extremely tall and dramatic limes by Herons Close. The pleached limes in front of Cumberland House are an unusual feature. The ancient yew in the churchyard has died but still stands; a young replacement has been planted.



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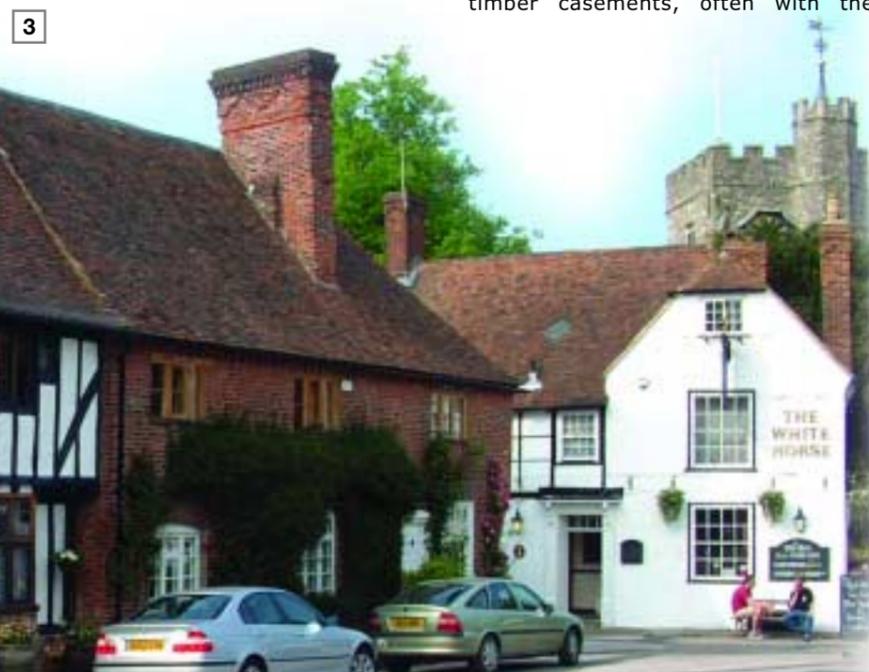


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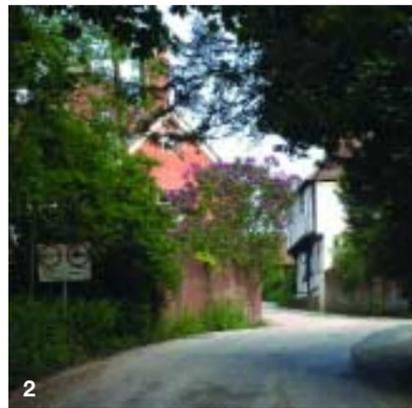


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1 Brick porch
2 Doorway at Belke House
3 Doorway at the Talisman shop
4 Early nineteenth century Clements Cottage



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- 1 Entrance to Chilham coming from Canterbury
- 2 Looking up Taylors Hill towards village
- 3 Inappropriate sign to centre of the village
- 4 Entrance to Chilham from the A252

Entrances to Chilham

(a) Mountain Street

Mountain Street is on the North Downs Way and is an exceptionally beautiful Kentish lane. There is a sense of leaving habitation behind and fine views open up across the wide floodplain of the River Stour to the wooded Julieberrie Downs beyond. The orchard and copse which mark the beginning of the rural edge of the village should be protected. Mountain Street closely follows the castle estate's boundary; its immense red brick wall runs on one side for about a quarter of a mile.

A mostly linear development of 14 dwellings commences where the castle wall ends. There are Victorian workers cottages and three Grade II Listed buildings: Heron Manor, Monckton Manor and April Cottage. At Monckton Manor there is an especially good example of an appropriate new garage in relation to a timber framed medieval house. Also of interest are the former gamekeeper's and estate manager's houses.

(b) Dane Street and the north-west of Chilham

There are isolated pockets of dwellings running perpendicular to the A252, separated by fields with attractive views up to the Downs on either side of the road. Dane Street, on the course of the original road from Challock to Chilham, is the largest of these hamlets, with an attractive group of houses including the castle's former Dower House and Dane Court Farm, as well as Tavern Cottage, a fifteenth century half timbered hall house. One interesting local feature is the ornate dormers to the same pattern as found on cottages at the end of Dane Street and on the opposite side of the main road at Dane Court Farm. There is also a prominent and attractive brick wall running up the side of Dane Street similar to that found on Mountain Street on the opposite side of the village. The tight grouping of houses and converted farm buildings, with Kent peg roofs, blend into their wooded valley locations well and this local character should be preserved.

The wood at the bottom of Taylors Hill in Chilham is an important entrance to the village from the A252, and also provides a valuable wildlife habitat.

(c) Canterbury entrance to Chilham A28

The listed toll cottage now called Shalmsford Bridge Cottage is on the boundary of the Parish. It is linked to Chilham by ribbon development – both housing and light industry. Approaching Bagham Cross Junction (A28/A252), the station, The Alma Inn and former railway cottages, were joined later by buildings for the Chilham Gas Consumers Co. Ltd. The gasometers were demolished in the 1930s and the land and orchards sold. The Chilham Fruit Stall was built subsequently, together with the adjacent building, now an agricultural and garden machinery business.

The area has become the light industrial estate of Chilham and includes three second-hand car businesses. This approach to Chilham has a large number of poles, overhead wires and cables and a confusion of business signs.

Pilgrims Lane lies high above the A28 and is separated from it by long steep gardens. The ancient narrow lane is built up, with a mixture of houses and bungalows. The dwellings command views of the valley and its lakes to the Downs beyond.

At Bagham Cross lies an old farmhouse with its barn. The latter has been converted recently for business use. The derelict old sawmill site continues to remain undeveloped; its eventual appearance will be an important aspect of the approach to Chilham.

(d) Entrance from Ashford A28

This valley route into Chilham runs from the Parish boundary with Godmersham through woods and meadows, and alongside the River Stour where it is lined with alder and willow trees. East Stour Farmhouse and its converted barns, are located at the last point to which the Stour was at one time navigable. The Beeches gypsy site and the sewage works are situated further on. The view of the village opens up over the bridge across the water meadows. Just before Bagham Cross Junction and next to the old sawmill site, there is a series of light industrial buildings and houses.

Old Wives Lees

History and Development of the Village

Old Wives Lees is a small village of around 240 houses located approximately one mile north of Chilham, arranged around a crossroads and transected by the North Downs Way. The settlement (then named Ealdewode) was certainly known in the thirteenth century. While there exists a variety of theories as to the origin of the name, the village was called Old Wyves Lease in 1610, and it appears with the present spelling in the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1801). It is doubted, however, whether it was ever a main pilgrim route, despite the present-day long-distance path, since a lower and easier route (probably along the present Pilgrims Lane) would have been preferable to one involving a steep climb from Chilham and then a route along what one author has called "the damp and northern side of a loamy hill".

The oldest buildings in the village date from the eighteenth century and are either farmhouses or small cottages. Of the farmhouses, Upper Ensign House (which is sited away from the main village) was mentioned as belonging to Corpus Christi College Oxford by Thomas Heron in his 1791 *Antiquities of Chilham*. Lower Ensdon Farmhouse (also situated away from the main village) has

an eighteenth century exterior on what is probably an older building.

Around 30 cottages date from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, though several have been added to in more recent years, some quite substantially.

The 1908 edition of the Ordnance Survey six inch map records a chapel (in addition to the Methodist Church built in 1868) and a smithy. These have subsequently been turned into private dwellings, as have two oast house complexes. The Mission (now village) Hall was built in 1904, originally as a parish room. The map suggests that there were around 35 dwelling houses in the village at the turn of the century as well as a number of farm buildings, but this figure may underestimate the size of the village at this time. Allowing for such an underestimate, approximately 60 further houses were built between the late nineteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century, some mirroring earlier cottage developments while others show more of a 'villa' style.

Since the end of the Second World War, the village has doubled in size with the addition of approximately 125 houses. About 50 are individual constructions, infilling along the line of the four main roads which structure the village and



- 1 Whittington and Rosecroft cottages
- 2 Dwellings in converted oast houses
- 3 Stowe Cottage
- 4 North Court Fruit Farm



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1 Lees Terrace
2 Play equipment on Village Green
3 Methodist Church

adding to what was already an eclectic range of styles. A further 75 houses have been built since the War in specific public and private developments dating from early 1950s to the 1990s reflecting the styles of each period. Two groups (12 and 10) of council houses were built in Cobbs Hill in the early 1950s. The Paddock, a grouping of 14 dwellings, of which eight are bungalows for elderly people, was built around this time. Shrimpton Close is a grouping of 10 dwellings built in the late 1980s by a housing association as 'local needs' housing. Ten private houses – Northdown Close – were built in the early 1980s, while Cherry Orchard a grouping of 19 houses was built in 1997.

Old Wives Lees still has a strong agricultural identity with several working farms close to the housing in the village.

Qualities and Character

While, at first sight Old Wives Lees appears a sprawl of houses around a crossroads, in fact the village contains many buildings of real architectural value. Some examples of fine substantial buildings around the village include Cork Farm, Ensign House, Lower Ensden Farmhouse, North Court, Phyllis Farm and Thorpe Oast Farmhouse. In slightly different ways they are characteristic East Kent farmhouses – Kent pegs with varied roof-lines, chimneys and red brick. All are in spacious settings reflecting their importance in the village.

Some of the village houses are quite substantial whilst others are modest in size, but all have large gardens. A key feature is space between buildings and, in particular, front gardens enclosed by low level boundary finishes, which do not obstruct the view of the houses, or of the views beyond to the Downs and the woods. They have either Kent peg or slate roofs and have their own village style and character. These include Rochester Villas, the two oast houses, Chapel House and Shepherd's Rise. Some have ornate carved wood features, for example, Willow Cottages, and ornate brick detailing, such as the Methodist Church, and some, such as The Star Inn and Cork Farm Cottages, are part clad with dark stained timber, giving them real distinction.

The District Council built houses in Cobbs Hill reflect the architectural character of the village. The views from these houses to the Village Green as well as from the Green to these houses are important and complete the setting of that part of the village. Some less pleasing modern development has been interspersed with the houses of character but, despite these unfortunate occurrences, the village has managed to retain an identifiable character of its own.

The Village Green was constructed in 1997, adding to the central focus of the village provided by the Village Hall, the Star Inn and Cashel.

Much of the village of Old Wives Lees lies within the AONB, emphasising the national recognition of the landscape quality. The many extensive and panoramic views seen from the village are to be treasured. In a southerly direction, viewed from many parts of Old Wives Lees and especially from Cobbs Hill are the beautiful Downs. From much of Lower Lees Road, Lower Ensden and the north of the village are views across to Sandwich. Also from the north of the village and the Mount, which is now a Conservation Walk Area, the Swale Estuary, Sheppey and, on a clear day, Essex can be viewed. Looking to the west from Grove Lane and New Forest Lane are the most splendid near and distant views sweeping across

orchards, soft fruit beds and arable fields to Shottenden and Perry Wood. From Long Hill and the Village Green are views of Mystole and Stone Street.

Entrances to Old Wives Lees are via steep hills and very narrow lanes, which are characteristic of the area. The lanes are unsuited to heavy traffic and help retain the rural character of the village. Orchards, arable land, hop gardens and woodland surround the village. They retain the agricultural aspect of the village and provide an important 'break' between Old Wives Lees, Chilham and Shottenden. Hawkins Rough wood is a key example of this as well as providing a haven for wildlife.

Characteristic features

Materials
Walls are mostly warm heather/soft red brick. Nearly all buildings are of one brick colour only. Ebony stained weatherboarding with brick is featured in a number of the village houses and a fine example is at The Star Inn. Some properties are brick and hung with plain tiles in a similar colour to the brick, such as Rochester villas.

Windows
Over recent years many of the original leaded lights have been removed, but there are still some fine examples at 1 Willow Cottages, Rose Croft and Honeypot Cottage and leaded lights have been replicated in some of the more recent houses on Selling Road, Lower Lees Road, Cobbs Hill and Cherry Orchard. Windows divided into small panes are mostly used in the village;



there are few instances of sash windows and the lack of coherence is regretted.

Doors
There are some fine examples of wooden panelled doors, but there is a large variety of styles and materials throughout the village.

Roofs and chimneys
Roofing materials are mostly a mix of heather clay or concrete tiles and slate; a few have Kent peg tiles and one cottage is thatched. Most dwellings have a chimney, the majority of which are plain.

Boundaries
The type of boundary used can change the character of a village. Traditionally in Old Wives Lees low picket fencing with native species hedging and low front walls with planting are most frequently seen. Iron gates are also a feature.

Lighting
The village has some footpath lighting, but fortunately has avoided light pollution.

Power lines
Unfortunately power lines are mostly overhead, however, recently cables were placed underground in the southern part of the village, which is a great improvement.



1 The Star Inn
2 View from the Mount to Shottenden
3 Window in oast house
4 Willow Cottages



Shottenden

History and Development of the Village

Formed by its links with farming that go back many years, some of the 80 dwellings of Shottenden are located on either side of a narrow high street, which arose when there were sufficient numbers of villagers to support the now defunct public house, Post Office store, Methodist chapel and Church of England Mission Hall, which were well used. The remaining dwellings are scattered around the four major farms, whose intensively cropped fruit and hops provided employment and housing.

There were possibly twelve other small farms in the early twentieth century, many of the names of which survive on the houses today. Today the main farms are Cock Farm, Hares Farm, Howletts Farm and Newhouse Farm.

The decline in agriculture has reduced the numbers employed drastically and changed the type of residents. The great majority now go elsewhere for employment relying on their own transport.

There is a range of houses, from listed farm buildings to modern bungalows. There has been no major development since the early 1970s and there is unlikely to be without improvements in the village infrastructure. For example, the village no longer has a Post Office, public house, village hall or shop and has only a limited bus service. Also the village is not on main drainage.

There is an important public right of way linking Shottenden to neighbouring Chilham via Dane Street.

Qualities and Character

Shottenden has a small number of principal old character houses of red brick construction with Kent peg roof tiles interspersed with smaller dwellings once farmhouses in their own right. Throughout the hamlet are many former tied cottages and a few council houses now privately owned with their individual style. All the houses are pre-1975 and are built of brick or weatherboard, these factors have contributed to Shottenden retaining its rural character.



1 Oast house roofs at Howletts Farm
2 Chapel converted to a dwelling
3 View towards village of Shottenden and its setting



Characteristic features

There is a mix of building styles and materials.

Materials

Walls are mainly red brick. There are areas with white weatherboarding, which is a particular feature of the high street, and a few buildings built of flint with brick dressings.

Roofs

Roofs are peg tile to a steep pitch and slate and concrete tile to a shallower pitch.

Boundaries

Boundaries are mainly hedging but there are some walls and close spaced boarding. There are some flint and brick walls.

3

Future technology

Future technology is having more impact on the external appearance of buildings. Solar panels, satellite dishes, radio masts and receivers are becoming more common but they can seem out of place in the village setting.

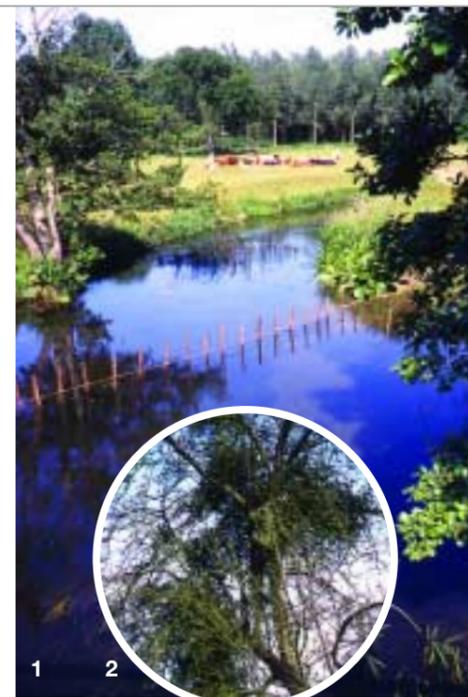
Planning consent is needed in the Conservation Area for satellite dishes, etc. The Parish has tried to resist several mobile phone masts, the ones we have are unsightly and intrusions into the landscape.

Biodiversity

The Parish has a wealth of natural habitats, including Kings Wood and Chilham Lakes. Through the planning process, the Parish wishes to protect, conserve and enhance the diversity of its wildlife.

Planning applications should consider the Kent Biodiversity Action Plan. This should apply not only to designated areas but also other land of wildlife conservation value. The Parish has a tree warden who can advise on the care of trees, their pruning and their removal, and also where consent is needed.

1 Water meadows
2 Although scarce in many parts of East Kent, mistletoe occurs commonly in the Parish



Care of old and listed property

Extensions, alterations, decoration and maintenance are particularly important. Guidelines are produced by the Conservation Office at Ashford Borough Council, and the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). Day to day inappropriate maintenance with unsuitable modern materials gradu-

ally leads to a general degradation of the historical appearance of the village. Traditional materials and methods, such as lime washes, mortar and plaster, and materials that enable the old timbers, infill panels and brickwork to breathe, should be used. Modern oil-based finishes trap moisture, and close inspection of many of the ancient houses in Chilham Square, for instance, reveal rotting junctions patched with concrete building up further problems. The Parish is rich in old timber framed properties, outside the Conservation Area, but which require the same guidelines; SPAB has observed that there is a crisis in the state of old timber framed buildings due to their being almost too cared for, but by inappropriate methods.

Since the nineteenth century it has become fashionable to stain the timbers of old houses. Historically these were untreated, the oak acquiring a natural weathered beauty. Sometimes they were limewashed. English Heritage supervised the restoration of

Cumberland House in Chilham and its unstained timbers are considered a desirable example. Directly opposite is Burgoyne, which was 'restored' in the late 1940s and its timbers painted black, as too its red brick and flint foundations. Apart from the loss of the subtle natural colours, any rot or damage and the history of the building is concealed. There also are similar practical reasons against painted brickwork.



3 Cumberland House and Cumberland Cottage
4 Burgoyne



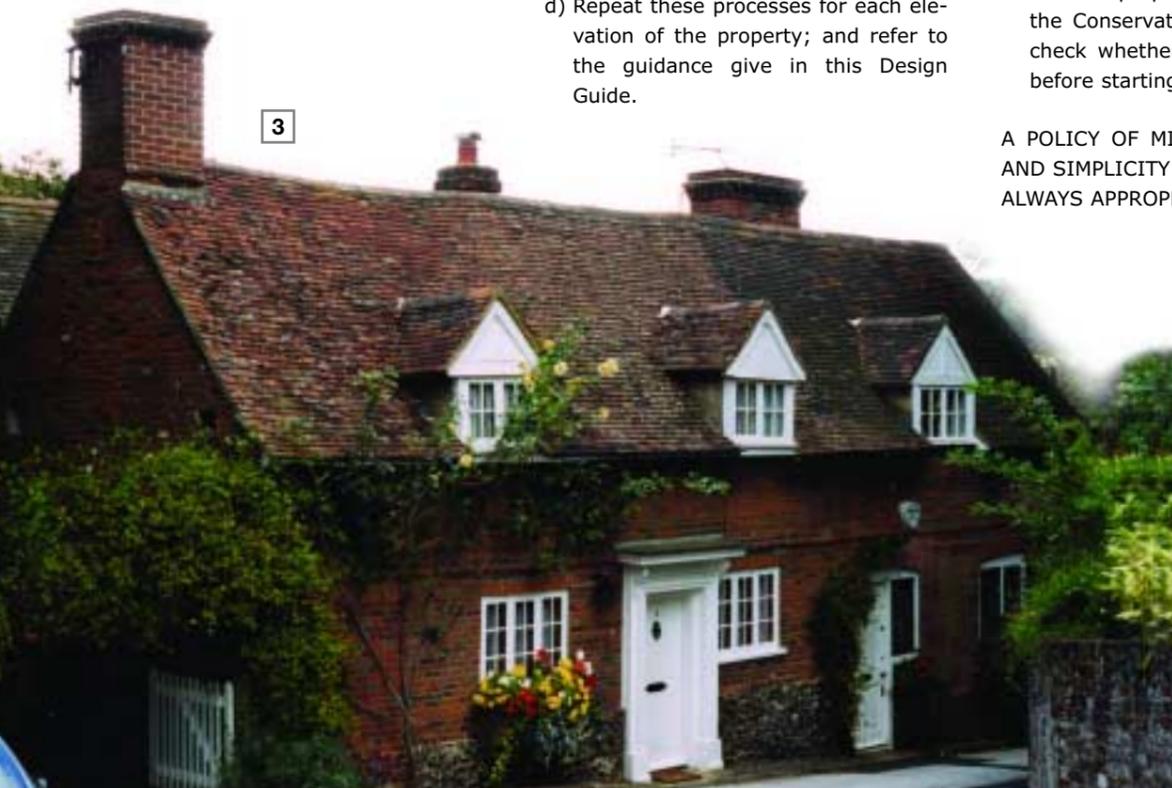
Householders' own design assessment

If you are considering altering doors or windows, building a new garage, adding a conservatory or porch, inserting rooflights or dormers, or changing any other external features of your property, the following steps may help you to achieve the best results.

- a) Research the age and history of your house, and attempt to find old photographs. If your building is listed, you can get a brief description of it from Ashford Borough Council Planning Department, the local Reference Library, or the National Monuments Record, which holds information and sometimes early photographs.
- b) Stand some way back from the frontage of the property. Note distinctive features and, separately, those that seem to be recent and out of character with the building's history and with surrounding properties; take photographs.
- c) Stand close to the property and do the same, but study the details of the windows, doors, eaves, etc.
- d) Repeat these processes for each elevation of the property; and refer to the guidance give in this Design Guide.

- e) Consider the changes you have in mind – do they prejudice the distinctive characteristics and details you have noted? If so, examine other ways of conserving the irreplaceable heritage.
- f) It is advisable not to make decisions on the position of new windows entirely from a consideration of internal arrangements. Their size, design and proportion to the elevation can make or mar the appearance and historic value of the dwelling. Neighbouring windows in a terrace may have a homogeneity which should be continued.
- g) Finally, before submitting an application for Listed Building Consent, consult Ashford Borough Council Conservation Officer, or an architect, and ask whether they agree with your Design Assessment, or can suggest any improvements to it. Interiors of listed buildings are also protected by law. The Council has useful guidelines also for shop fronts and barn conversions.
- h) Some restrictions may also apply to unlisted properties that stand within the Conservation Area. It is wise to check whether you need permission before starting work.

A POLICY OF MINIMAL INTERVENTION AND SIMPLICITY OF DESIGN IS NEARLY ALWAYS APPROPRIATE.



1 Rear elevation of old house in Chilham
 2 Learning early to appreciate their built environment; pupils of St Mary's School at their Parish Design Statement Workshop
 3 Cottages in Church Hill

Design Guidelines

Parish Design

- Due to the location of the three villages on hills within the AONB, any proposed new development in the villages must be considered for its impact on the landscape viewed outwards from the villages, and conversely towards the villages.
- The ancient narrow lanes leading into the villages are an essential part of the area. Their existing character should be respected and any new development should not detract from that.
- Oast houses and their kilns should be preserved as a testimony to the agricultural background of the Parish.
- Any tree planting should be with native species appropriate to the area and the planting of *C. leylandii* and other non-native conifers should be discouraged as they are not characteristic of the Parish. Native broadleaf species are to be preferred, specifically those native to the Kent Downs and/or endangered species such as *Sorbus torminalis* (wild service tree). Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hedging along lanes is a distinctive feature throughout the Parish and ought to be protected and new planting encouraged.

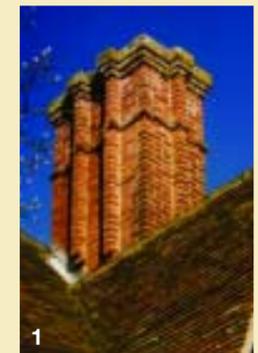
- When new works are carried out, the opportunity should be taken to put all power cables and telephone wires underground.
- Any alterations to the light industrial build on the A28 must be of appropriate scale, well landscaped, and of design and materials appropriate to the gateway to Chilham as outlined earlier in this document.

- Rationalisation and co-ordination of signage on the highways is encouraged. Proliferation of unnecessary signs should be avoided. Size and appropriateness to the historic setting should be borne in mind.

- When considering new applications for mobile phone masts, etc., in the future, consideration needs to be given to protecting the views and landscape, which are so valued by the Parish. Locations should avoid the AONB. Masts, etc. should be in muted colours appropriate to the surroundings and be screened by existing foliage. The use of disguise should be considered.

Village Design

- Earlier in the text we mentioned the character of the villages, this should be retained and enhanced through the use of quality design and appropriate materials; local distinctiveness should be retained.
- The character of the entrances to the villages should be protected and retained in any new development.
- The scale of new buildings should be appropriate to that site and not overwhelm their neighbouring surroundings.
- New building work on existing properties or disused farm buildings should be in proportion to the size of the original building, retaining its original style and using matching materials.
- New developments and extensions should make an appropriate contribution to the villages' sense of identity. Old properties throughout the Parish should retain the character of their age and period including their windows and doors. Care should be taken when extending terraces to match windows and doors with the original design.
- Chilham Square is at present lit effectively from individual properties. It would be regrettable if this level was increased. All future street lighting should have downward light direction to prevent light pollution.
- In the past, inappropriate street furniture has been used in Chilham Square.



1 Chimneys and local detailing
 2 Local materials



More traditional styles and materials such as cast iron and wood should be used.

Buildings Design

● No alterations to buildings, back or front should be undertaken without following the guidelines listed in this Design Statement.

● The variety of angles and pitches has created interesting and historic roofscapes, which should be reflected in any new development.

● Appropriate materials for each village should be used for roofs, such as clay tiles of local colour in the Conservation Area or slate and clay tiles in Old Wives Lees and Shottenden.

● Extensions using flat roofs are to be avoided.

● Walls should be constructed with facing brickwork of local colour and detail as described earlier. Hung tiles should be clay and in a colour used elsewhere locally. Painted weatherboarding is not a local feature of the Parish and should be discouraged.

● New plate glass windows and fanlights, which replace sash or casements, can quickly remove the character and history of a house, whether an ancient timber frame or Victorian villa. Mass-produced joinery or plastic windows with fanlights and plate glass, with or without 'leaded' lights, should be avoided. Sash or casements to be used where appropriate, with two or three lights, simply divided and set into brickwork with segmental arched brick lintels. Outside the Conservation Area, windows should be of high quality and in a style that best reflects the character of that locality, and in keeping with the original windows of the house or terrace.

● Where the rear elevation of a property is visible from the highways and footpaths, it is recommended that as much thought is given to it as to the façade, during alterations to the property.

● The villages have many pleasant historic houses, which are not listed nor in

the Conservation Area. The materials used to build them, and their historic joinery, contribute to the character of the area. The use of plastic or very modern timber windows and doors in refurbishment, maintenance and extensions can destroy the local ambience. Where the traditional light coloured lime mortar has been used on one of these historic houses, the use of modern 'grey coloured' mortar on new work or refurbishment can look inappropriate.

● Care needs to be taken in the location of solar panels, aerials, satellite dishes, radio masts and receivers and where possible they should be sited to the rear of properties and out of sight, especially in the Conservation Area.

● Garages should relate to the period of the house they adjoin. Construction should be of brick and tile, or timber,

with pitched tiled roof. Flat roofed, pre-fabricated, concrete, mass-produced types are not acceptable as they are not in keeping with the character of the Parish.

● The character of pavements, street furniture in driveways and access roads should reflect the existing areas in the villages. Appropriate materials for pavements and driveways include pea shingle on hoggin in light use areas, brick and blockwork where appropriate. Plain concrete drives should be avoided.

● Boundaries should be of natural species planting or low chain-link fences, low picket fences, low brick walls with natural species planting in order to retain the rural aspect of the villages. Brickwork walls, some with flintwork, are a strong Parish feature and should be encouraged.



Useful Contacts

Ashford Borough Council Planning and Conservation Officers
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford
Telephone 01233 637311

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London
E1 6DY
Telephone: 0207 377 1644
E-mail: info@spab.org.uk
Website: www.spab.org.uk

Heritage Information Exchange
15 Kensington Palace Gardens
London
W8 4QG
Telephone: 0207 243 5888
E-mail: info@heritageinformation.org.uk

National Monuments Record Centre (NMRC)
English Heritage
Great Western Village
Kemble Drive
Swindon
SN2 2GZ
Telephone: 01793 414600
E-mail: info@rchme.co.uk
Website: www.english-heritage.org.uk

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Committee members: A. Baker (Chairman); P. Aylward; R. Berry; G. Davis; T. Dawes; D. Holbrook (Treasurer); H. Kirwan; N. Lee Evans; C. List (Clerk); J. Marriott; R. Palmar; P. O'Shea; J. Pickett; A. Rogers; J. Smith; T. Wheeler; M. Wilson.

