



## **Conservation Area Assessment**

### **Stone-in-Oxney**

Conservation Areas are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve all aspects of character or appearance that define an area’s special interest.

There are 43 Conservation Areas in Ashford Borough.

## STONE CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

**AREA APPRAISAL** [Brief, objective description of Conservation Area - scale, location, other special characteristics]

Stone is principally a linear village lying on part of the Old Romney shoreline. Three main areas can be identified. The area around the Church; an area down Church Hill towards "Rysings" and an area centred on the public house and the former Post Office, by the junction of The Street leading towards Catts Hill.

Each of these areas has its own distinctive character which are drawn together by the topographical changes stemming from the location of the village on the old shoreline.

ASPECT UNDER CONSIDERATION	COMMENT
topography/physical structure and its relationship to the sites topography	Stone lies in an area where there are very marked topographical changes; essentially the village lies on part of the Old Romney shoreline. The Church stands on high ground. There is a marked change with a slope down towards the Royal Military Canal about 1 km. distant. Lying to the north of the Church there is also a marked drop to lower ground down near the northern part of the village. There are very marked topographical features in and adjoining the Conservation Area. Another distinctive feature is the fact that Church Hill and the road past the Church to Huggits Farm is incised with steep banks in places which are planted. The northern part of the village lies on lower ground and this again is marked by a character which has a closer affinity to Romney Marsh. In particular, the flatter ground lying to the north-west and north together with outlines of the former shoreline in the Stone Green area.
archaeological significance and potential of the area	There is an area of archaeological significance in the area of the Church.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
<p>the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality.</p>	<p>There is a clear succession of spaces within the existing Conservation Area. From the north this is marked on one side of the road by the relatively flat area of land which is agricultural together with the area of the cricket ground leading to and around the junction of Catts Hill and The Street with the Crown Public House acting as a focal point. Approached from Catts Hill there is a distinctive contrast between the development on the eastern side of the road and the open space on the north-western side. Stone Green, which is an immediate post war Council estate has a distinctive character. The south-western side of The Street at this point is on slightly higher ground looking towards the Marsh. Again, there is a group of Council houses on the north-eastern side of the road. There is also the new local needs development. The area of Church Hill has a distinctive character with significant planting leading up to the Church. The Church, the old school and the former Vicarage forms a distinctive group.</p>
<p>the use of distinctive and traditional building materials</p>	<p>The primary building material is red brick with plain tiles. There is a limited use of other materials.</p>
<p>the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, or other organic elements to the character of the area</p>	<p>In the case of this Conservation Area there needs to be a distinction made between the attractive countryside and the areas within the Conservation Area. There are few distinctive formal green spaces within the Conservation Area. However, the spacious grounds of some of the dwellings within the area is of importance in particular at "Rysings" and in the area of Huggets Farm. Trees are of particular importance in the area of Huggets Farm through to the Church and along Church Hill. The importance of trees is heightened by the contrast between this area and the wider open spaces of the Marsh.</p>

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the prevailing or former uses of buildings in the area, and the influence of this on plan form and building types	The predominant use within the Conservation Area is residential. A number of buildings have been converted from other uses such as the oasthouse at Huggets Farm, the old school, the former Post Office, the Old Forge.
historical evolution	The core of the original village would appear to be the area around the Church. A secondary focus is the group of buildings next to the Crown Public House, in between the two there are a succession of houses set in relatively large grounds. The principal development of the village took place in the late 1940s with the construction of the Council houses at Stone Green, there appears to be earlier Council house development in the area of Oxney Cottages which is outside the existing Conservation Area.
the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside	There are very strong visual links between the built area and its surrounding landscape. There is a dramatic view from St Mary's Church to the north and a dramatic view from the area of The Glebe next to Greystone House out towards Romney Marsh. There are also views in the area along the north-western side of The Street. There are also views to open countryside from Catts Hill and The Street to the north-west. There is a very close relationship between countryside and this village.
the extent of loss, intrusion, or damage sustained by an area	The area does not suffer from any great loss, intrusion or damage.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
<p>identification of features that detract from the special character of the area and that may provide sites where change could be encouraged</p>	<p>There are no significant features that detract from the special character of the area.</p>
<p>the existence of any neutral areas - those that neither enhance nor detract from the character of the conservation area</p>	<p>The area of Stone Green is a period piece from the late 1940s, this tends to be neutral in character as are the Council houses opposite which are of roughly the same period.</p>
<p>the existence of any threats to the area</p>	<p>There are no significant threats to the area.</p>

## OUTCOMES

<p>Area boundary</p> <p><i>On the OS map and electoral register this is not Highfield House → but Stepfield House!</i></p> <p><i>TB. 8/4/96</i></p>	<p>Lying between Greystone House and the drive to Churchlands Farm is the area of The Glebe which is National Trust property. This forms a distinctive part of the group of buildings around the Church. It is understood that Greystone House was the former Vicarage and so there is a distinct grouping of Church, Rectory and Glebeland together with a school building of the late 19th Century lying to the north of the track to Churchlands Farm. The inclusion of the area to the east of the existing boundary by the old school would be logical as it visually forms part of this area and there is a treed boundary which forms a logical boundary between a break of slope leading from the old shoreline down onto the Marsh. In the area to the rear of Rysings and Highfield House it is proposed to extend the boundary along the existing curtilage boundaries rather than cut through the middle of the gardens as at the present time.</p>
<p>Potential Article 4 Directions</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Site Policies (proposals and protection)</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Potential improvement schemes</p>	<p>None.</p>

Officer:

Date: 7 November 1995