



Conservation Area Assessment

St. Michaels

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.

ST MICHAELS CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

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

St Michaels Conservation Area forms part of the built up area of St Michaels, Tenterden. It is centred around two main roads, the A28 Ashford Road and Grange Road which meet at a busy junction. The area contains a mixture of residential and commercial properties. There is a commercial core area located round the Grange Road/Ashford Road junction containing retail shops, Take-aways and a public house. Beyond this commercial area to the west along Grange Road and to the north along Ashford Road is primarily residential properties. The northern part of the Conservation Area includes St Michaels Church with a large spire which is a prominent feature in the surrounding area, and St Michaels Church of England Primary School which has a large adjoining playing field. The Conservation Area is surrounded by other built up areas forming part of the wider settlement of St Michaels and Tenterden which significantly impact upon the area. St Michaels forms part of the "gateway" to Tenterden. The Conservation Area was originally designated on 29 March 1974.

ASPECT UNDER CONSIDERATION	COMMENT
topography/physical structure and its relationship to the sites topography	There are two main roads the A28 Ashford Road and Grange Road which both travel through the area meeting at a junction where the commercial properties are concentrated. The development is of a high density following the road network except at the northern part of the Conservation Area containing the Church and Primary School which is surrounded by a large playing field area. The boundary also includes part of Swain Road. The premises are generally close to and visible from the street.
archaeological significance and potential of the area	There are no ancient monuments or areas of archaeological safeguarding in the locality.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality.	Major open spaces within the Conservation Area are the grounds of St Michaels Church and the school playing fields which is visually prominent from along the A28 Ashford Road. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the Conservation Area and forming part of its setting is a recreation ground. Opposite the Swain Road/Ashford Road junction is a small open grassed area reminiscent of a small village green area where footpaths run through. This lies partly within the setting of Isleden a Listed Building. A mature Horse Chestnut tree is located here which is large and of great prominence in the area.
the use of distinctive and traditional building materials	There is a mixture of materials reflecting the mixture of buildings in the locality. White weatherboarding is quite prevalent on residential and commercial properties along Grange Road and Ashford Road. Other buildings are a combination of brick work and tile hanging elevations. A particular prominent tile hanging building is St Michaels terrace. Roof tiles are a mixture of traditional clay tiles, slate in particular in the commercial area and plain concrete tiles on more modern buildings. The Church of St Michaels is built of irregular ashlar blocks. Its spire is very prominent and distinctive in the area.
the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, or other organic elements to the character of the area	A major tree within the Conservation Area is the mature Chestnut tree in front of the Listed Building - Isleden, close to the Ashford Road/Grange Road junction. This is a very dominant feature at the junction in particular during the summer when in leaf. The tree is surrounded by a small open grassed area. There are also other surrounding trees on the Ashford Road verge on the approach into the Conservation Area, and mature trees to the north of the Crown Inn. Hedgerow and mature vegetation is very prevalent along Grange Road. There are major hedgerows along Ashford Road by the primary school which helps provide some screening to the mobile classrooms in the playing field.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the prevailing or former uses of buildings in the area, and the influence of this on plan form and building types	<p>There is a commercial core area around the Ashford Road/Grange Road junction which contains a range of shops, Take-aways and the Crown Public House which is of particular prominence. The commercial area spreads along the Ashford Road outside the Conservation Area boundary. There is a modern flat roof extension to the commercial premises along Grange Road used currently by the Stanley George DIY shop which contains a strong horizontal fascia which is a somewhat incongruous feature in the generally traditional environment. The primary school is not only prominent but occupies a large area of land with is associated open playing field, as does the Church and its grounds. Beyond the commercial core area the primary use is residential linking into other residential estates beyond the boundaries of the Conservation Area.</p>
historical evolution	<p>Isleden is one of the oldest recorded Listed Buildings in the area dating from the late 17th Century. Other Listed Buildings in the area date from the 18th and 19th Century. Prominent buildings such as St Michaels Church was built in 1893 and St Michaels Terrace along Grange Road in 1870. The settlement has expanded beyond its original core area around the Ashford Road/Grange Road junction with new residential estates located off Grange Road and Ashford Road. The new development has resulted in the settlement becoming more suburban in character rather than a rural village. It also impacts significantly on its setting such as the modern retail premises on the Ashford Road, the Marshall's land housing estate, its flat roof garages, and the adjoining village hall building. These are not of the architectural quality of most buildings in the Conservation Area, and therefore negatively impacts on its setting.</p>
the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside.	<p>The Conservation Area is surrounded by other built development due to the settlement's expansion. There are no rural outlooks and in this sense the "rural village" character has been virtually consumed.</p> <p>A significant land mark is the Church with its prominent spire visible from along the Ashford Road, and partly along Grange Road.</p>
the extent of loss, intrusion, or damage sustained by an area	<p>The A28 Ashford Road is a busy through road resulting in continual traffic noise and disturbance. There are excessive road signs at the junction with Grange Road. The pavements at the junction are also in poor condition.</p>

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
<p>the existence of any neutral areas - those that neither enhance nor detract from the character of the conservation area</p>	<p>The car parking area at St Michaels School which provides off street parking.</p>
<p>the existence of any threats to the area</p>	<p>Excessive traffic along the A28, lack of off street parking resulting in parking congestion in the commercial area around Grange Road.</p>

OUTCOMES

Area boundary	<p>A proposed change is the incorporation of the rear curtilage gardens of St Michaels Terrace within the Conservation Area which are at present excluded.</p> <p>No other changes are proposed.</p>
Potential Article 4 Directions	None.
Site Policies (proposals and protection)	None.
Potential improvement schemes	<p>Improvement in the pavement and roadside verge around the Ashford Road/Grange Road junction area. A more suitable termination of the commercial buildings along Grange Road rather than the Stanley George DIY premises.</p>

Officer: M DAVIES

Date: 10 November 1995

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ST. MICHAELS CONSERVATION AREA

— Existing Boundary

—X— Deleted Boundary

- - - Amended Boundary

