ASHFORD
BOROUGH
LOCAL PLAN

Conservation Area Assessment

Bilsington

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.

BILSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

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

Based around crossroads, small village with a large Conservation Area, mainly fields. The village centre is dissected by roads with no pavements. It is a working village - public house, garage farm plus also village hall and cricket ground.

Willow Trees has lost its Listed Building wall which will be replaced in the near future.

ASPECT UNDER CONSIDERATION	COMMENT
topography/physical structure and its relationship to the sites topography	The site is above the Romney Marsh scarp. Going south the site slopes down to the canal after Court Lodge Farm. The Conservation Area undulates and land falls quite significantly to the north of the Monument and to the south of Woodmead. There is undulating countryside all around.
archaeological significance and potential of the area	The area around the Church and Court Lodge is identified as having potential. The Church is on top of The Ridge and has very fine views of the marsh and the electricity lines transecting the marsh. Court Lodge is a working farm with a moat and a large number of modern, agricultural buildings around.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality.	The churchyard is tucked away behind Court Lodge. The access is not immediately noticeable and is, in fact, adjacent to Courtside between it and the modern agricultural buildings of Court Lodge Farm. Once past Courtside the access is between a high hedge until you reach the Church. The churchyard has a large number of mature trees with good views south over the marsh. There are also significant views from the churchyard of the surrounding countryside. The cricket ground is an important open space in front of the Monument. Otherwise the village is fairly compact. Detached and semi detached houses in garden.
the use of distinctive and traditional building materials	There is a lot of white weatherboarding and rendering with peg tiles and also a certain amount of slate.
the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, or other organic elements to the character of the area	From the south, below the Conservation Area the road is in a cutting with a hedge and banks behind. Oak Trees in front of some of the agricultural buildings of Court Lodge and the Willow Trees in front of Willow Trees contribute to the street scene. The hedge on the west side of the road continues past the cricket club boundary. There are two important trees, a Chestnut and a Beech, at 1 and 2 Cosway Cottages, which are outside the Conservation Area but are a focal point of the crossroads. In addition there is a significant tree outside the Church in the field and not in the Conservation Area. The access track to the Church is bounded by a hedge of clipped Leylandi, fairly tall, which contributes to the setting and hides a tennis court to the north.
the prevailing or former uses of buildings in the area, and the influence of this on plan form and building types	An agricultural village which used to also have a school and post office. It still has a garage, public house, hall and farm.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
historical evolution	It appeared that the village grew up around the public house and Listed Buildings on the north side of the crossroads and also Court Lodge and the Church. Maybe the Church was built by the residents of Court Lodge which was obviously, as it has a moat and also a Grade II Listed Building, a powerful family house. Cosway Cottages, Council houses built in the 1940's and 1950's. There are a number of new properties, for example Woodmead and The Pastures which are modern bungalows and two nasty 1960's chalet bungalows adjacent to Romney Cottage and Courtside.
the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside.	
the extent of loss, intrusion, or damage sustained by an area	There are intrusive new agricultural buildings surrounding Court Lodge which do not contribute anything to the Conservation Area and mask the farm house and also the Listed Building. The tennis court and the extended garden of Court Lodge behind the Leylandi Hedge. Monument Garage, car sales area detracts from the setting of the Conservation Area. Tatty garage at Lawn Cottage which is quite visible even though they are growing Virginia Creeper over it. The White Horse - unauthorised mobile which we are currently taking Enforcement Action over, a car park and garden area could do with improvement. The area opposite Monument Garage is used informally for parking. The verge is churned up; perhaps parking should be provided for the cricket ground. Tatty garage at Romney Cottage which is visible when going to the Conservation Area from the north.
identification of features that detract from the special character of the area and that may provide sites where change could be encouraged	The access to the Church.

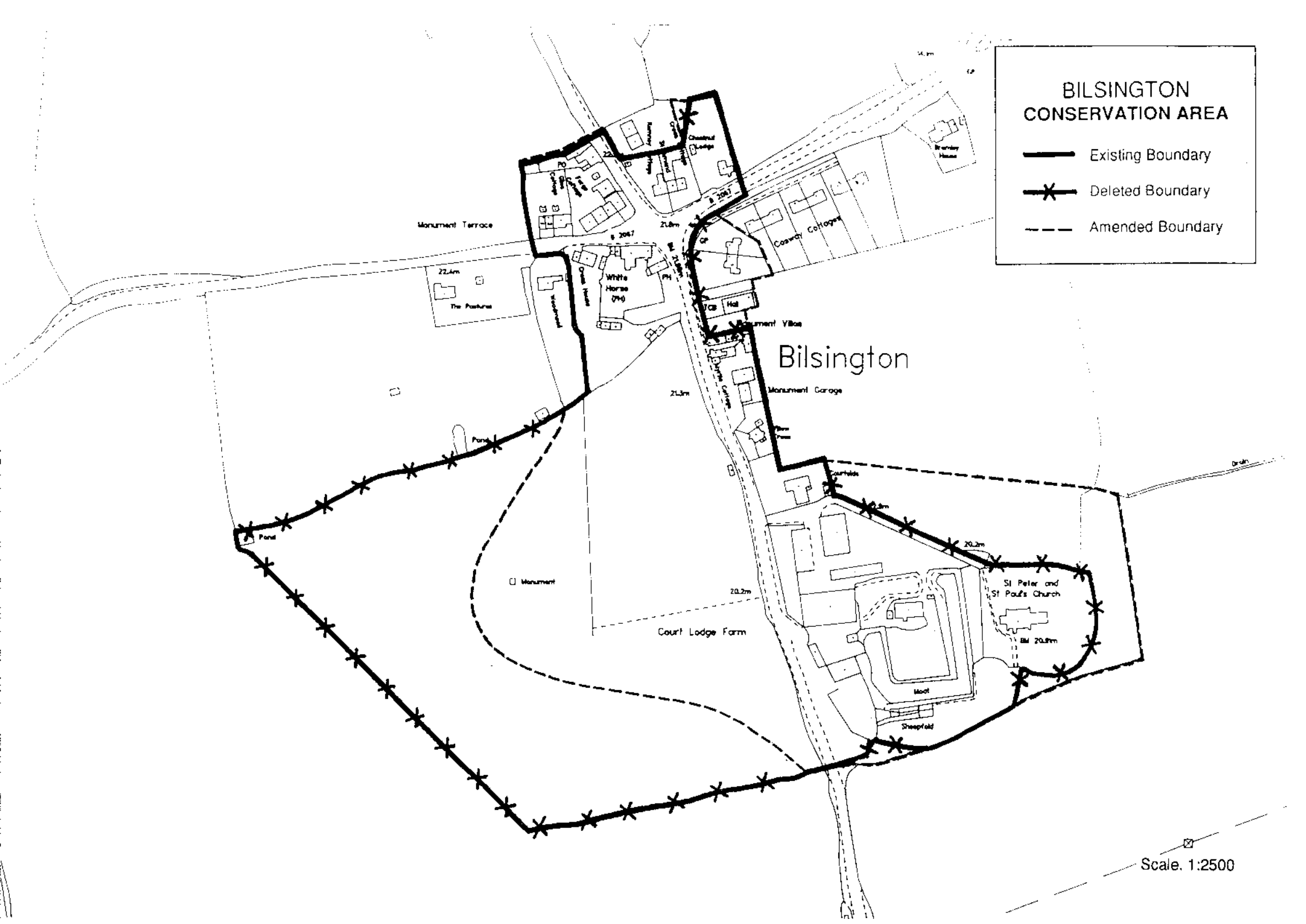
AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the existence of any neutral areas - those that neither enhance nor detract from the character of the conservation area	
the existence of any threats to the area	

OUTCOMES

Area boundary	The area boundary needs to be reviewed taking into account extended gardens which have grown over the years, significant trees, for example the trees at 1 and 2 Cosway Cottages adjacent to the Old Post Office and the extension of the garden of Chestnut Lodge. The tree adjacent to the Church is very important and also the setting of the Church needs to be taken into account. Need to review setting of the Monument as the current Conservation Area is very large and it is not a natural boundary. The proposed boundary tries to reflect the natural contours of the site.
Potential Article 4 Directions	
Site Policies (proposals and protection)	
Potential improvement schemes	The grass verge opposite the Monument Garage. Signage and better entrance to the Church. Improve the White Horse at Bilsington.

Officer: Mrs C Ridings

Date: 18 January 1996


BILSINGTON
CONSERVATION AREA
Existing Boundary
Deleted Boundary
Amended Boundary
Bilsington
Monument Terrace
Monument Village
Monument Garage
Monument
Court Lodge Farm
St Peter and St Paul's Church
Moat
Sheepfold
White Horse (PH)
Hall
Scale. 1:2500