ASHFORD
BOROUGH
LOCAL PLAN

Conservation Area Assessment

Smeeth

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.

SMEETH CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

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

Smeeth Conservation Area around St Mary's Church and the Listed Buildings associated with it. It is a very spacious Conservation Area with only twelve houses plus the Church. The houses are either detached or semi detached or lying within large gardens.

ASPECT UNDER CONSIDERATION	COMMENT
topography/physical structure and its relationship to the sites topography	The land rises steeply from the A20 crossroads towards the Church and there are a series of bends past the Church. From the main entrance of the Church there are views westwards over agricultural land. Going eastwards the land slopes towards Smeeth Hill House and then down Hythe Road.
archaeological significance and potential of the area	The area around the Church and Church Green Cottages.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality.	There are large areas of open space either agricultural land or garden. The churchyard is partly unkempt as is the area around the war memorial. There are a large number of significant trees, especially those around the war memorial, those in Church Road approaching the Conservation Area from the north, in the churchyard and on the approach to Smeeth Hill House. The boundary of Smeeth Cottage and Little Smeeth is very well defined by landscaping. The area in front of Smeeth Hill from the A20 looks like parkland.
the use of distinctive and traditional building materials	The dominant materials are brick and ragstone and a particular feature is the war memorial.
the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, or other organic elements to the character of the area	There are a large number of mature trees especially around the Church and Church Hall and there are a lot of Horse Chestnuts. There is one Larch which is in a very prominent position by the crossroads and that is dying. There is also a row of Silver Birch on the eastern side of Church Road from the A20. The green spaces contribute to the Conservation Area.
the prevailing or former uses of buildings in the area, and the influence of this on plan form and building types	The Church is eleventh century and it may be that Smeeth Hill House had some connection with the Church. It is obviously an agricultural community that has grown up around the Church. There is also a Church farm which has a Grade II agricultural barn attached to it. There has been some recent developments, notably Marklets which is a chalet type bungalow adjacent to the Church and also Mead House which is outside the Conservation Area and the rectory. Village Hall or Church Hall is a very small sort of wooden shack built fairly recently otherwise all the properties are historic.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
historical evolution	As above.
the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside	From the Church gates there are significant views westwards across the open fields. There are also views from the A20 southwards towards Aldington and views into the Conservation Area from the A20 and also from Church Road.
the extent of loss, intrusion, or damage sustained by an area	The road, specifically the bends, are intrusive to the area. The verges are deteriorating because the road is narrow and the bends so sharp. The Church nor the Church Hall has car parking and therefore you get problems with on-street parking.
identification of features that detract from the special character of the area and that may provide sites where change could be encouraged	Apart from a replacement tree at the junction of the A20 crossroads, there is not much else that detracts from the area.

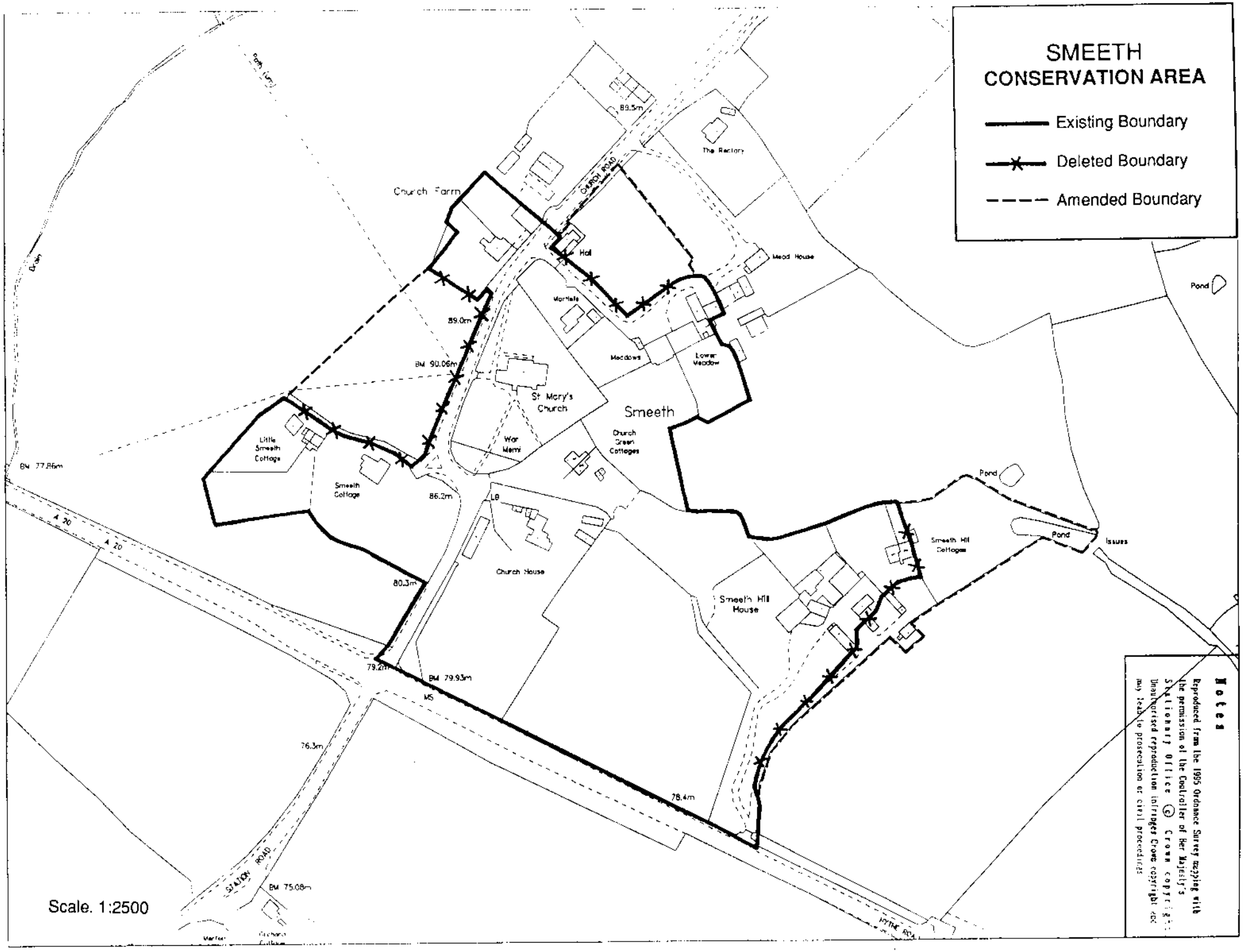
AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the existence of any neutral areas - those that neither enhance nor detract from the character of the conservation area	The area in front of Smeeth Hill House which is parkland where it would seem that the trees have died over the years.
the existence of any threats to the area	None

OUTCOMES

Area boundary	The area boundary needs changing to include the area in front of the Church between Little Smeeth Cottage and Church Farm. Although this is open farmland it is important in relation to the setting of the Church. Also to include the field in front of Meadows and Lower Meadow which contribute to the setting of those properties and are important to the entrance of the Conservation Area. In addition the boundary around Smeeth Hill Cottage should be amended to reflect what is now on site and the garden of that cottage.
Potential Article 4 Directions	
Site Policies (proposals and protection)	
Potential improvement schemes	Car park for the Church?

Officer: Mrs C Ridings

Date: 3 January 1996


SMEETH
CONSERVATION AREA
Existing Boundary
Deleted Boundary
Amended Boundary
Church Farm
The Rectory
Hall
Mead House
Pond
Meadows
Lower Meadow
St Mary's Church
Smeeth
War Mem
Church Green Cottages
Little Smeeth Cottage
Smeeth Cottage
Church House
Smeeth Hill Cottages
Smeeth Hill House
Issues
Church Road
Station Road
A 20
M5
Hythe Rd
BM 90.06m
BM 77.86m
BM 79.93m
BM 75.08m
89.5m
89.0m
86.2m
80.3m
79.2m
78.4m
76.3m
Scale. 1:2500
Notes
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