Appendix 1

THE CHARACTER AREAS ASSESSMENTS AND VILLAGE APPROACHES

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Purpose of the Character Areas Assessment

Places continue to adapt and evolve and development to provide new homes and businesses for Rolvenden will continue to come forward. The Parish Council is looking to ensure that future development in Rolvenden is suited to the local character.

The 'character of an area' is often mentioned in the context of considering development proposals. What is often missing is a clear identification of, and agreement about, the locally distinctive features of an area that give it character that should be given careful regard in considering proposals for development. For this purpose, the Character Areas Assessment sets out to define the character of distinctive local areas within the village envelopes of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne and the associated approaches to the villages.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that good design is a key element of sustainable development. The fact that the centres of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne are designated as Conservation Areas and that the whole Parish (including the built up areas) is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty raises the expectation that the design of development should fit well with the local settlement form and also respond well in terms of height, scale, density, layout, orientation, boundary treatment, landscape and materials to the local context. So the Parish Council will promote a high standard of design through the Neighbourhood Plan. A high quality, well designed, development can enhance the sense of place and identity of an area and can bring significant benefits to the local environment and economy.

The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The Neighbourhood Plan states that all new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. This Character Areas Assessment helps identify the local distinctive character and provides design guidance which is incorporated within the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan to assist in making decisions about the appropriateness of development proposals.

The over-riding purpose of this Character Areas Assessment is to inspire new development to respond to Rolvenden's distinctive character and heritage. The document aims to raise the standard of design of new proposals such that they fit well with the area in which they are located. Design which is considered to be inappropriate in its context is unlikely to be acceptable and planning permission should be refused. In addition, by identifying features which detract from the character of an area, the Assessment has also been able to identify features which could, through the application of Policy RNP1, be enhanced particularly through development opportunities.

Methodology

The NPPF advises local authorities to prepare robust policies on design. These should be based on an understanding and evaluation of the present defining characteristics of an area and that is the purpose and function of this Character Areas Assessment.

The evaluation of the Rolvenden villages and their approaches has involved an assessment of the character of the development of the area through the review of historic maps; existing studies[1]; comprehensive site surveys using the approach and characteristics advocated in By Design – Urban design in the planning system (DETR, 2000); local engagement and the support of planning and design consultants.

Field Surveys / Local Character Assessments

An initial appraisal was undertaken of the built up areas of Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne by a group of volunteers and it was evident that there were a number of distinctive character areas. An appraisal of the associated village approach was also undertaken.

Each character area grew up over a period of time using layouts, designs and materials which were based on the technology, legislation and planning and design philosophies of that time.

The initial appraisal identified 8 potentially separate character areas within Rolvenden's two built up areas and further street by street surveys saw these divided into 12 distinct character areas (see maps for Rolvenden and Rolvenden Layne in Appendix 1).

The street by street surveys identified features which were specific to each area such as

- Uses
- Height
- Form
- Layout/ orientation
- Materials
- Windows
- Boundary treatment
- Public realm: landscape features; surfaces and street furniture
- Buildings of Note
- Features which detracted from the character of an area

[1] Design Guidance: Maintaining Historical Landscape Coherence for Development — Rolvenden Street, Kent (2011 - revised 2014)

Public Engagement

It was important to understand how the areas are experienced, perceived and valued by the people who live here. To this end, a public engagement event was publicized and held in the village hall on Sunday 1st March 2015. Attendees were asked:

- *What is it about the character of Rolvenden we like so much?*
- *What makes it different to Benenden, Bethersden or Biddenden?*
- *We need to know what, in your opinion, gives Rolvenden its "sense of place"?*
- *Tell us about the street you live in.*
- *Tell us about the "experience" of each road.*
- *Is the aspect open and airy or cosy and compact? Is it an eye-sore?*
- *What about the surfacing, boundary treatment and frontages?*
- *What do we value in the parish landscape? Views? Vistas?*
- *What would you like to change/ improve?*

- Prompts were given:

  - *Tell us about the layout, the design, the architecture, natural habitats, important hedges and trees, fences, walls, views and building materials. Groups of buildings (how they sit in relation to each other?). Landmark buildings/characterful buildings: what makes them so? What detracts from a particular setting?*

Attendees were asked to:

Look at Rolvenden with 'fresh eyes' and `tell us about it'.

Sir Terry Farrell also presented his study and drawings of the 'Streyte' section, as the 'heart' of the village along with suggestions for improvement as examples

Fifty-eight local people attended and results were analysed in in two ways:

- by 'sensitivities' (i.e. unprompted topics mentioned and whether they were valued, not liked/ not encouraged or suggestions for improvements.
- by Character Area

The comments are integrated into the analysis of the character of each area.

Planning and Design Consultants

At the Public Consultation, Sir Terry Farrell CBE, RIBA, FRSA, FCSD, MRTPI presented his study and drawings of the Rolvenden section, as the 'heart' of the village, along with suggestions for improvement as examples and covered later in this report.

Tony Fullwood of Tony Fullwood Associates, Chartered Town Planners, advised on the methodology applied to the assessments and oversaw the compilation of the Character Areas Assessment.

High Street Character Area (A1)



Distinctive Characteristics of High Street Character Area

With the exception of the Vicarage and its grounds, the High Street Character Area falls entirely within the Rolvenden Conservation Area and represents the historic core of the village. The area generally comprises a gently curved linear street faced by small scale terraced dwellings interspersed with shops and public houses. The terraced dwellings are narrow, reflecting the narrow but deep medieval plots. Typically, dwellings in this part of High Street are two storeys (only occasionally with

attic windows) with pitched roofs sloping towards the street providing simple roof lines with no projections such as dormer windows. The heights of eves and ridges tend to be similar throughout, with the occasional variation and chimneys providing interest to the street scene.

The groups of terraced properties to the east of the junction with Regent Road (below left) and to the west of the High Street south of the Regent Street junction together with the clusters around the church (below right) are built up to, or near, the back edge of pavement.





In contrast to this tight knit development, later development on the opposite side of the street is generally set back from the road behind deeper front gardens or public open space.

Immediately to the south and continuing north of the junction with the road to Benenden, plots become wider with larger houses set back from the road (below).





To the south of the High Street, the more modern properties on the east side sit well back behind wide greens and mature trees (right).



Beyond the churchyard, the Vicarage is also set well back from the road behind a landscaped front garden (right).



Whilst the clusters of buildings provide tight knit development, the width of the High Street (A28); the set back of buildings on one side and the low height of properties result in a well-proportioned sense of enclosure.

The enclosure is assisted by the gentle curve in the road and the closing of the southern vista by St Mary's Church. The church also terminates the vista looking west from Maytham Road (adjacent Glebefield).

Materials

There is a predominance of white in this area comprising an abundance of weatherboard; geometric timber cladding (styled to look like brick) as well as white painted render (see below).






Later cottages (19th century) were built in a similar style but from local brick. The purple/black colouring of iron in the clay is evident (below left). Other properties are faced with tile hanging (below right). Plain orange/red clay roof tiles predominate with some slate roofs. Brick chimneys also punctuate the roof line. Georgian bar windows predominate. There are seven oval or round windows found along the High Street (see above right).






Front Boundaries



Where houses are set back from the pavement, white picket fences are a prominent boundary feature (left) as well as low brick walls (capped by decorative metal fencing) or hedge (above right).

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

Landscaped areas provide a contrast with the tight grain of the built form. To the south, the churchyard and memorial garden in which the Grade II listed Rolvenden Cross stands provide a landscaped setting to the church and add significantly to this part of the character area. There are several examples of ancient 'sacred' yew trees (below right). The view of and across the parkland of Gt Maytham Hall from the footpath gate at the south east corner of the churchyard contributes to the rural setting of the church and this character area.





The wide green area in front of No's 1 – 28 High Street (see below) is landscaped with mature trees and adjoins St Mary's Green. This landscaped area contrasts with, and provides the setting for, the tight knit development on the opposite site of the street and gives a spacious character to this part of the High Street.





Traditional street furniture such as the wooden finger post, telephone kiosk and pump complements the street scene.

Distinctive Characteristics of High Street Character Area

Height: two storeys (only occasionally with attic windows) with pitched roofs sloping towards the street; limited variation in heights of eves and ridges and chimneys punctuate the roofline.
Form: mainly groups of narrow terraced properties, some semi-detached and detached houses as well as flats**;** properties face the street with pitched roofs sloping towards the street providing simple roof lines.
Layout/ orientation: regular building lines set on, or close to, the back edge of pavement or set well back behind front gardens
Materials: mainly white weatherboard, geometric timber cladding, local brick, tile hung, plain clay roof tiles.
Windows: sash windows, Georgian casement, some round fixed window.
Boundary treatment: mainly white picket fences, low brick walls (capped by decorative metal fencing) or hedge.
Landscape features: landscaped areas of open space and mature trees provide a contrast with the tight grain of the built form

Buildings of Note

St Mary The Virgin stone church (right) with origins in the 13th century, remodeled in the 15th century and is thought to have been built on a ridge top green at a principal cross-route. It has 8 bells, is rightly the tallest building in the Parish and a key focal point. The clock face visible along the High Street is currently blue but has been red in recent history and the tower hosts an individually designed weather vane depicting The Virgin Mary riding a donkey.



Church House (right) often seen typically depicting Rolvenden, is an imposing, white geometric 'brickwork' timber clad building set up to the road with an impressive large bowed Georgian casement window.



The shop (right) is a rare example of a typical Victorian style building in this character area. It is a double fronted property with assertive gable ends addressing the street. The front comprises white painted brick to the ground floor and tile hung upper gables with decorative fascia and peak finials.



Kingpost (right) is one of the oldest houses in the village. The linked, part weather boarded house sits back in landscaped gardens with mature hedges. It is a fine example of a Wealden Hall House: full height in the centre of the building and two storeys of rooms on each side. Originally a farmhouse it was built of oak with wattle and daub and lime plaster infill in 1495, during the reign of Henry VII.



Detractors

The High Street Character Area is in good condition but there are a limited number of features which detract from the character.

On street parking detracts visually from the street scene and obscures the properties (most of which are listed buildings) facing the street.



Parking on open spaces has been an issue and the Parish Council have recently installed wooden posts to restrict vehicular access from the road onto the grass verges and greens.



The A28 road through the centre of this Character Area creates a level of traffic which could not have been envisaged when a predominately cottage frontage was first constructed.

The street scene of the High Street is interrupted by a limited number of buildings which do not respond well to their context.

Cornex Garage is a single storey 1960's plain brick building with an asbestos cement roof and cracked concrete forecourt (below left). Behind this, visible from the road, are two curved corrugated iron and cement storage structures along with a block of 1960's standard concrete garages (below right)





The detached 'Star' public house (right) is fronted by a plain rendered, single storey, flat roofed extension with modern windows.



Proposed Enhancements

As part of the public consultation meeting held at the Village Hall on 1 March 2015, Sir Terry Farrell produced a report in the form of an annotated plan with a number of suggestions as to how the High Street area could be improved:

Clutter

Rationalise signage, remove clutter of duplicated signage and ad hoc street signs.

Trees

Consider replacing some of the hawthorns and/or infill of different species on the east side of the High Street.

Plant larger specimen trees to create a focal point at The High Street / Maytham Road junction.

Village Pond / St Mary's Green

The Village Pond (in adjoining Character Area 6) and surrounding green is largely hidden.

Create a set-piece village green to open up views of the pond and reflect the churchyard on the opposite of Maytham Road.

Reduce dominance of Sparkeswood Avenue where it joins Maytham Road, possibly by use of "Shared Surface" initiatives.

Village Core Area

The core area of the High Street and including the approaches to the T-junctions at Maytham Road / Hastings Road and at Regent Street / Tenterden Road should if possible be defined by the introduction of 20mph speed limit, thus allowing for easier, and possibly, additional car parking.

The High Street

Possible infill opportunity on single storey corner building adjacent Branns Drive.

In addition, redevelopment of the Cornex Garage represents an opportunity to enhance the area.

Hastings Road Character Area (A2)



Distinctive Characteristics of Hastings Road Character Area

With the exception of the two southern-most properties, the Hastings Road Character Area falls within the Rolvenden Conservation Area.

The character area comprises a line of residential properties and Rolvenden Primary School on the west side of the A28 Hastings Road as it joins the High Street.

The houses are of a mix of heights and materials. The buildings are set back from the street on a fairly regular building line.

Materials

The area exhibits a mix of materials but the prominent school roof and the roofs of the houses which appear above the hedges comprise primarily orange/red clay plain tiles (right). The red brick of the prominent primary school predominates.



Front Boundaries
Front gardens are generally enclosed by hedged front boundaries though a low wall and metal railings fronts the school.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture
The public realm comprises standard tarmac roads and pavements. The hedged boundaries bring a verdant appearance to the street scene.

The view of the windmill from the School Field footpath looking north-west adds to the character of the area.

Distinctive Characteristics of Hastings Road Character Area

Height: one and two storeys.
Form: linear development of mainly detached houses and prominent school face the street with pitched roofs sloping.
Layout/ orientation: regular building lines set back behind front gardens
Materials: mixed but red brick of prominent primary school; and orange/red clay plain tiles predominate.
Windows: no prevailing style.
Boundary treatment: mainly hedged residential gardens. Low wall and metal railings front the school.

Buildings of Note

Rolvenden Primary School (right). Although not a listed building, the historic features, prominent location and community function of the primary school make it a building of note. The character of the building adds significantly to the character of this part of the Conservation Area.



The former Victorian Schoolmaster's house (right). The historic association of the white weatherboard, brick and tile hung house with the school and its location close to the road makes this a Building of Note which contributes to the character of the Conservation Area.



Detractors

The Hastings Road Character Area is in good condition and there are no significant detractors.

Regent Street Character Area (A3)



Distinctive Characteristics of Regent Street Character Area

All of the Regent Street Character Area (together with adjoining rural land) falls within the Rolvenden Conservation Area.



The character area comprises a row of closely spaced terraced and semi-detached residential properties and shop to the south of Regent Street opposite the recreation ground. The properties are set forward close to the road on a regular building line. Despite the closely spaced development to the south, the recreation ground and rural views beyond provide an open character to this part of the street.

Towards the High Street, development is located on both sides of the road with a modern residential close to the south and the Barn (a shop), the Bull public house and the Old Forge to the north side.

Though displaying a variety of roof pitches, the houses have a broad uniformity of height (two storeys). Alma Cottages (below centre) has small dormer windows vertically aligned with windows on lower floors. The shop has a more assertive gable end facing the street (below left). Brick chimneys add to the character and variety of roof shapes.

Materials

There is a predominance of red brick with some white weatherboard. Roofs are red/orange plain clay tiles.





Front Boundaries

White picket fences extend around front curtilages opposite the cricket field and outside the public house. Railings extend along the terrace with hedges and brick walls elsewhere.



Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The recreation ground to the north of Regent Street (right) plays an important role in the character of this area by providing an open aspect to this setting of the village and the listed buildings which line this route.



Distinctive Characteristics of Regent Street Character Area

Height: two storeys.
Form: linear development of closely spaced mainly terraced and semi-detached properties with a variety of roof orientations.
Layout/ orientation: regular building lines slightly set back from the back edge of pavement
Materials: red brick and orange/red clay plain tiles predominate.
Windows: various though some Victorian sash windows.
Boundary treatment: white picket fences extend around front curtilages opposite the cricket field and outside the public house. Railings extend along the terrace with hedges and brick walls elsewhere.

Buildings of Note



The Bull Public House (right), built in the 1700's of brick, tile hung with a pitched tiled roof, occupies a prominent position close to the road at this entrance to the village.



The Old Forge (right) built pre-1600 and is the oldest property in this Character Area. Exposed timbers with render infill and plain clay tiled roof provide a striking visual impact to Bull Corner from the High Street.

Detractors

The Regent Street Character Area is in good condition but there are a limited number of features which detract from the character.



On street parking detracts visually from the street scene and obscures the properties (most of which are listed buildings) facing the street.

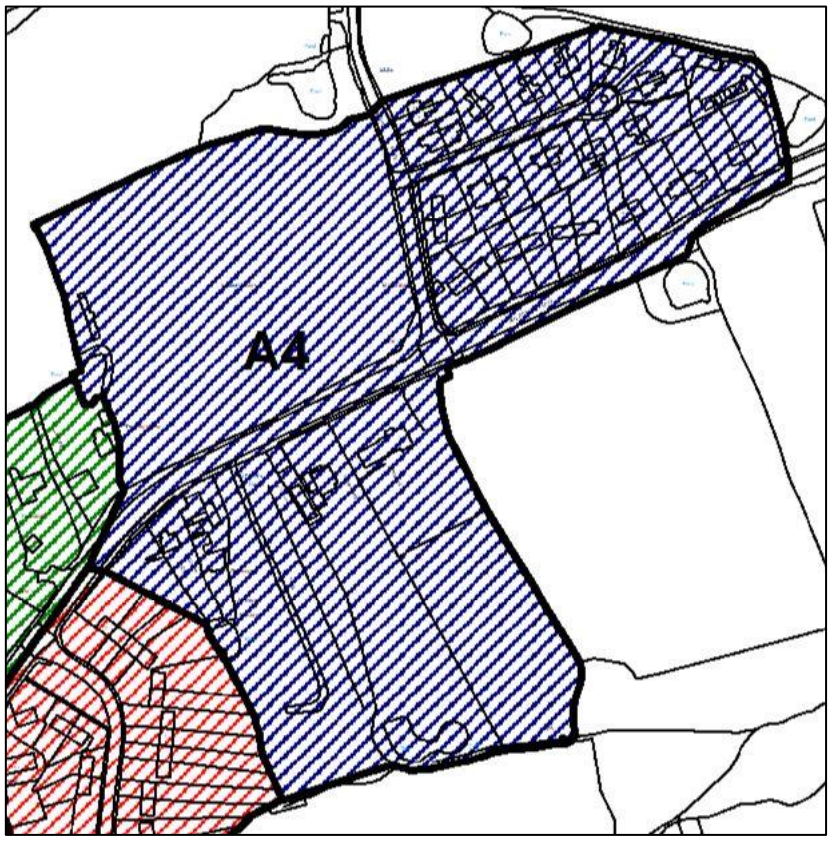
Large road signs

Proposed Enhancements

As part of the public consultation meeting held at the Village Hall on 1 March 2015, Sir Terry Farrell produced a report in the form of an annotated plan. He suggested adding more trees on both sides of Regent Street between The Bull Public House and the recreation ground to visually link the recreation ground with the village centre.

In addition, reduced sign clutter should be an objective.

Gatefield Character Area (A4)



Distinctive Characteristics of Gatefield Character Area



With properties set well back from the road, the wide A28 high ridge road and the open field to the south and north east with views to Sparkeswood Gill (right) and Tenterden and St Michaels' churches respectively, the Gatefield Character Area has an open, spacious character at the eastern edge of Rolvenden.



The 1920's Gatefield development comprises a cul de sac and a row of properties which front Tenterden Road. The cottages facing Tenterden Road comprise pairs of well-spaced, two-storey semi-detached properties which are of symmetrical designs and are set on a regular building line facing the road behind deep front gardens. To the north, the backs of pairs of well-spaced semi-detached properties with narrower rear additions face the countryside.



Properties have common design features such as hipped catslide tiled roofs; wide casement windows and chimneys. Although built to a standard design, the individual buildings are given variety with white weatherboarding or hung tiles (right).

To the south of Tenterden Road, there are five individually designed detached houses, partially hidden behind high hedges and fences. As with properties at Gatefield, the houses are set back from the road along a regular building line.

There is a narrow break in the built up frontage for the entrance to the allotments (right).



St David's House and Chapel Cottage are set closer to the road (right) than adjoining properties. Red/orange brick; gable and hipped plain clay tiled roofs which face the street and chimneys add to the distinctive character. This part of the Character Area falls within the Rolvenden Conservation Area.





New development has been granted planning permission on Halden Field. When built, the development will visually connect the currently isolated Gatefield housing with Rolvenden along Tenterden Road. The planning permission has a row of properties fronting Tenterden Road which are proposed to be set back behind the existing hedge. The dwellings are all 2 storey houses in a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraces. The dwellings would be constructed in a mixture of brick, plain tile hanging and fibre cement weatherboard with plain tile roofs. The scheme includes a varied range of roof heights along with chimneys to create visual interest.

Materials

White weatherboard, hanging tiles and red/orange brick prevail with red/brown plain clay tile roofs.

Front Boundaries

Low hedges and fencing predominate though the hedges are gappy to the Gatefield properties. The continuous hedge along Halden Field is to be retained as part of new development on the site.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

This edge of Rolvenden is fronted by hedged field boundaries which add to the area's verdant approach.

Distinctive Characteristics of Gatefield Character Area

Height: predominantly 2 storeys.
Form: well spaced, symmetrically designed, mainly semi-detached properties with hipped catslide tiled roofs and chimneys to the north of Tenterden Road.
Layout/ orientation: regular building lines set well back from the road
Materials: white weather board, tile hung, red/orange brick with red/brown plain tile roofs
Windows: white casement windows.
Boundary treatment: predominantly hedge.

Detractors



Parking is difficult in the Gatefield development as cars were not considered at the time. Some residents have created their own crossovers and hard standing.

Road surfaces in the Gatefield development are very poor.

Excess signage results in street clutter.

Proposed Enhancements

Increased landscaping and tree planting along Tenterden Road would enhance this entrance to the village.

Coveneys' Corner Character Area (A5)



Distinctive Characteristics of Coveneys' Corner Character Area

Almost all of the Coveneys' Corner Character Area falls within the Rolvenden Conservation Area.

Large individually designed listed buildings and infill development are set well back from the road in large gardens and are well screened generally with a minimal impact on the street scene. Development is generally well hidden by hedged boundaries, treed gardens and narrow entrances. Mature trees (often protected by Tree Preservation Orders) are also prevalent between and behind buildings forming the backdrop and setting for development. The character of the area is unified not by the buildings themselves, but the verdant landscape framework and the discrete appearance of buildings.

Materials
Houses are faced primarily with red/orange brick/ tile hanging and white weatherboard with plain clay orange/red roof tiles.

Front Boundaries
High hedges dominate the front boundaries and help unify the street scene.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture
High hedges and mature trees are prevalent from Tenterden Road.

The view of open countryside and Winser and Rawlinson Ghylls from the public footpath at rear of Coveneys' adds to the character of the area and the setting of the Conservation Area.

Distinctive Characteristics of Coveneys' Corner Character Area

Height: 2 storey houses with pitched roofs.
Form: Well-spaced, large, individually designed generally detached buildings, with pitched roofs, in a variety of orientations.
Layout/ orientation: Loose-knit development of listed buildings and infill properties set well back from the street in large mature landscaped gardens.
Materials: Red brick; weatherboard and orange/red clay plain tiles predominate.
Windows: Sash and casement
Boundary treatment: High hedges

Buildings of Note

Chamberlaynes (right) is set well back in landscaped gardens behind tall hedge. The listed building is attached to a large listed country house (Tweedies) to the rear) and comprises brick to ground floor with tile hung first floor.



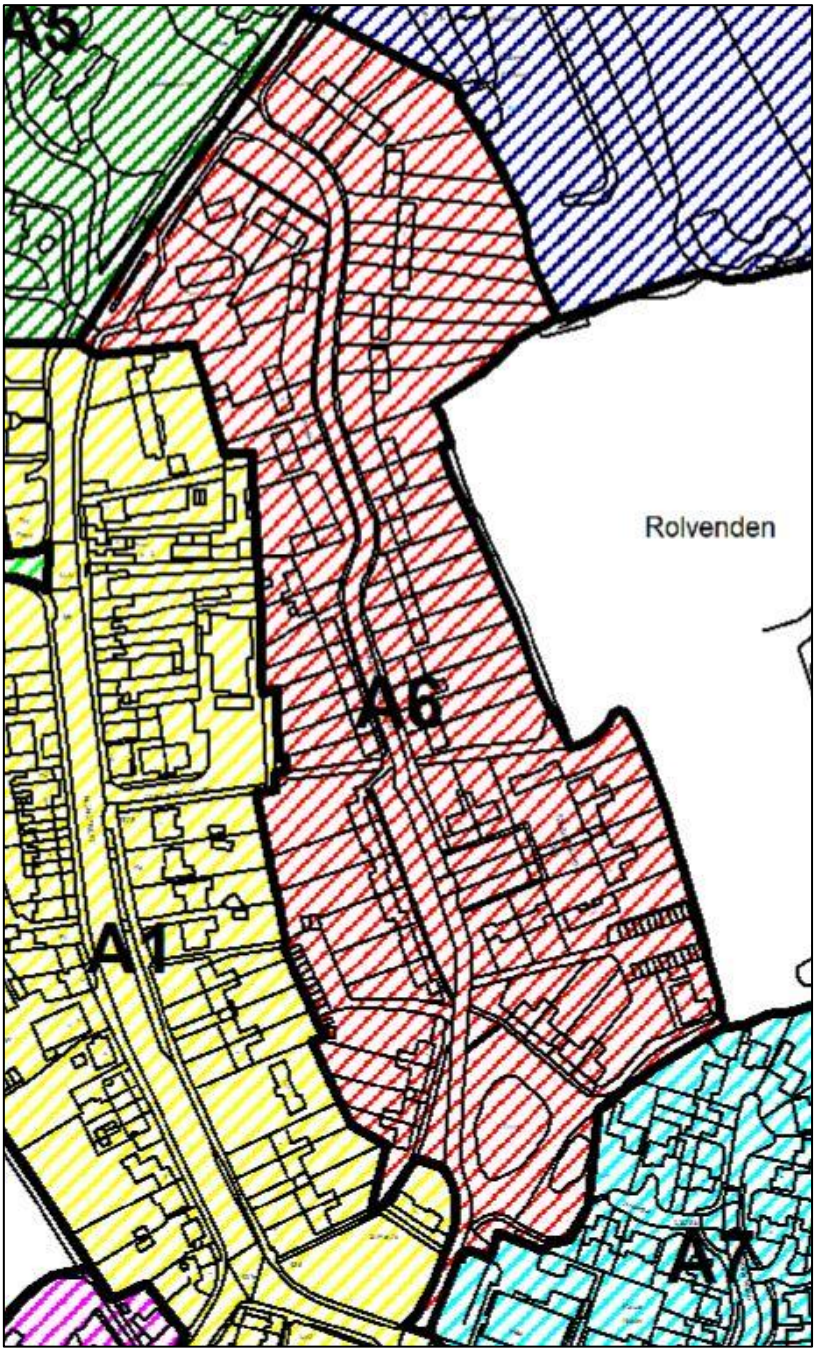
Coveneys' (right) is a white weather boarded two storey symmetrical listed house set back from the road facing the bend. Its prominent location and distinctive vernacular material contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Area.



Detractors

The Coveneys' Corner Character Area is in good condition and there are no significant detractors.

Sparkeswood Character Area (A6)



Distinctive Characteristics of Sparkeswood Character Area

Sparkswood is a post-World War II planned former Council housing estate with a distinctive character derived in part from garden city influences - laid out around a network of landscaped open spaces, footpaths and large gardens. This form of development was particularly popular in public housing schemes built in the inter-war and early post-war period and was laid out at the wishes of a local philanthropic landowner, Mr. Thoburn.



The properties are built along a linear street and are regularly spaced on a generally even building line. Almost all are set back from the roads with open plan frontages.



Sparkeswood Close is set back from the street and laid out as a square (below).



The character of the street scene is formed by two storey 'set piece' symmetrical groups of properties which face the street with wide frontages and shallow depth (below). Built in a vernacular cottage style of either brick or brick and render with gently pitched, occasionally hipped, roofs, the exterior designs are repeated through the development. The buildings are generally set back behind wide verges and landscaped open spaces to give a spacious character.





The two newer 1960's blocks of four council flats at Tanyard Flats (right), which repeat the height and form of Sparkeswood houses, are prominently positioned and dominate this section of the A28.



The north entrance to Sparkeswood Avenue from the A28 is open and spacious and flanked by two mirrored areas of green, which were planted with magnificent mature horse chestnuts (right). During the writing of this report one has been removed by the Borough Council and a tall fence placed around the garden of the end house. Discussions are underway regarding an appropriate replacement.





At the southern entrance to Sparkeswood Avenue special mention should be made of the pond (right) which adds to the open green character of the character area and provides an important local focal point. Volunteers regularly maintain the area.



The development is served by communal garage blocks which are tucked behind the residential properties.

This area today has a distinctive character. The uniformity of design and age of the houses, the consistent colours of the brick and render and the open green character provide a strong sense of identity.

Materials

Orange/yellow brick or light coloured render and red clay plain tiles predominate with small brick chimneys.

Front Boundaries

Open plan wide green verges and greens generally mean that there are no property boundaries. Those with boundaries generally have low hedges.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The wide green verges and greens, including at the northern and southern entrances, are a special feature. The avenue is tree lined in parts with magnificent mature specimens of lime trees which complement the verdant character.

Distinctive Characteristics of Sparkeswood Character Area

Height: 2 storeys
Form: two storey 'set piece' symmetrical groups of properties with wide frontages and shallow depths with gently pitched, occasionally hipped, roofs.
Layout/ orientation: groups of properties which face the linear street and set back along a regular building line within landscaped open spaces, footpaths and large gardens.
Materials: orange/yellow brick or light coloured render and red clay plain tiles predominate.
Windows: white casement windows.
Boundary treatment: open plan wide green verges and greens.

Detractors

Large vehicles turning or reversing into Sparkeswood Avenue are invariably forced to mount the curb to avoid other vehicles parked by St Mary's Green causing further damage.

Some of the properties have access to communal garage blocks which are not overlooked and can become an underused eyesore. For the most part the road is two car width only adopted tarmac road) and parking on both sides makes access very difficult.

Overall this leaves a deficiency in parking provision. Consequently, some properties now have hard standing within the front gardens for parking. This can erode the landscaped open spaces and gardens which gives the area its special character.





Proposed Enhancements

The village would benefit from the addition of considered planting fronting the A28 outside Tanyard Flats to ensure greater unity with the character of Sparkeswood and Character Area 5 on the opposite side of the street.

Applications for additional off street residential parking facilities should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. Where off-street parking is proposed within existing front curtilages, boundaries with neighbouring properties and the maximum length of front boundary should be retained and enhanced to help enclose the road space, define the boundary between public and private space and help reinforce the character of an area. Where no front or side boundaries exist, low hedges should be planted to help screen the impact of vehicles and hard surfacing and compensate for the loss of green space. Wherever possible permeable surfaces should be used which are in keeping with the character of the property, its curtilage and the street scene.

Gybbons Character Area (A7)



Distinctive Characteristics of Gybbons Character Area

The entire area falls within the Rolvenden Conservation Area.

The 1980's cul-de-sac development consists of a mix of compact detached, semi-detached and link detached houses and bungalows, set along an uneven building line or at angles to the road. The different roof forms (including half hipped) and details (such as half dormer windows, bay windows, chimneys and porches) give an interesting and varied streetscape. Houses have parking spaces or garages. The steep roofs and more compact form give the development a more enclosed urban character. The urban form is softened by the use of a short curved cul-de-sac layout which keeps traffic speeds low and encourages shared road use for pedestrians and cars. The enclosed cul de sac layouts create a quiet, private character.





The curved street layout combined with the variable building line creates a series of enclosed spaces. Whilst a variety of materials and building designs are used, the overall form, materials, scale and character is generally very cohesive.

Materials

Properties are finished in a variety of traditional materials with relevance to the Rolvenden and Kent vernacular such as weatherboarding (black and white painted), white painted render and yellow or red/brown bricks.



Front Boundaries

Properties are set behind shallow unenclosed front gardens or low hedging.

The Gybbons Character Area also contains the Village Hall (below left) and the old Police House (below right) on the north side of High Street. Both buildings are two storeys in height with shallow pitched roofs and are set back from the road, in the case of the Old Police House behind a hedge which encloses the street. The open space on the corner by the Village Hall has seating and a tall beech hedge behind and is designated in the Neighbourhood Plan as an Important Open Space.





There is a view of St Mary's Church travelling west along this length of the High Street.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The culs de sac are generally narrow tarmac shared surfaces with pedestrians sharing the space with vehicles. The compact streetscape is softened by shallow front gardens (some of which are enclosed by low hedges).

The northern side of Maytham Road is enclosed by high hedging and large expanse of brickwork.



Distinctive Characteristics of Gybbons Character Area

Height: predominantly two storeys with a limited number of bungalows.
Large community facility built with a high roof for sports facilities.
Form: detached, semi-detached and link detached houses and bungalows with different roof forms (including half hipped) and details (such as half dormer windows, bay windows, chimneys and porches).
Layout/ orientation: houses set along short culs de sac in an uneven building line or at angles to the road. The steep roofs and more compact layout give the development an enclosed character.
Materials: variety of traditional materials including weatherboarding (black and white painted), white painted render and yellow or red/brown bricks.
Windows: dark stained casement windows and doors are well aligned with each other.
Boundary treatment: open plan or low hedges.

Detractors

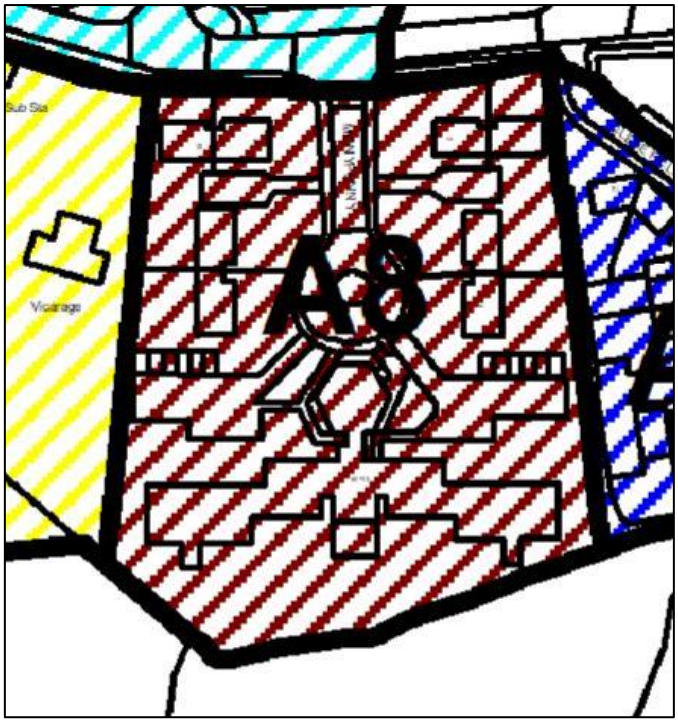
The shared spaces were identified in the public consultations as "not liked" by some of the residents living in this area.

Limited parking facilities for the weekly village markets and other functions held in the Village Hall and in the Church results in overspill parking which turns the grass verges to mud in inclement weather in this location.

Proposed Enhancements

The stretch of green to the west between the Village Hall and Sparkeswood Avenue adjacent to the Village Hall is identified as a possible area to extend parking for the hall.

Monypenny Character Area (A8)



Distinctive Characteristics of Monypenny Character Area

In the 1960s a small development of sheltered flats and eight linked bungalows for older residents was constructed on the site of the Victorian vicarage. It is formally laid out in a symmetrical 'set piece' estate and consists of a mix of bungalows and flats arranged around a square. The road space; roundabout and parking areas dominate and contrast sharply with the open spaces. The scale of buildings, width of open space and highway between them and limited landscaping creates a spacious character.





Materials

The estate is constructed principally in plain yellow or pink/buff brick with tile hanging on the main two storey building and concrete rolled roof tiles. There is limited weatherboarding.

Front Boundaries

The estate is open plan with no front boundaries.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The development is open plan with wide verges and small cherry trees.

A hawthorn and traditional hedge boundary fronts the High Street (right).



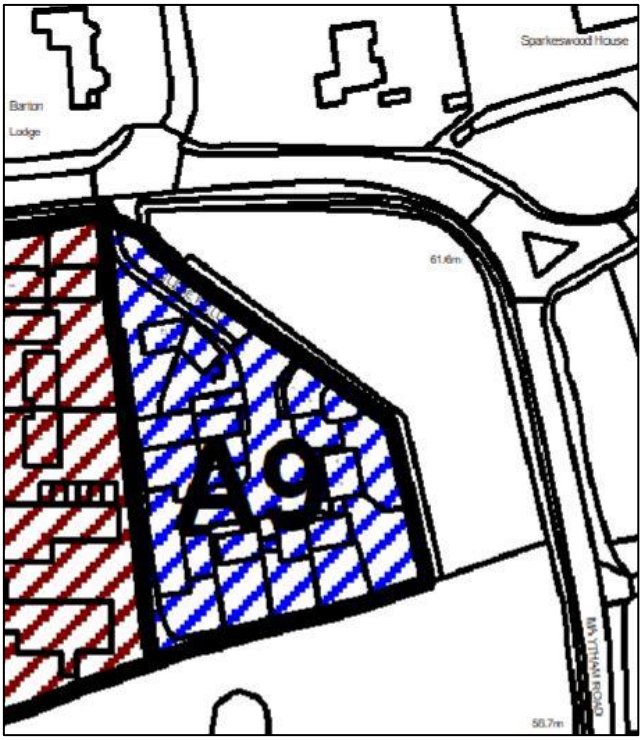
Distinctive Characteristics of Monypenny Character Area

Height: one and two storeys.
Form: semi-detached bungalows and block of flats with shallow pitched roofs.
Layout/ orientation: enclosed square arranged around a cul de sac and parking areas.
Materials: plain yellow or pink/buff brick work with tile hanging on the main two storey building and concrete rolled roof tiles. Limited weatherboarding.
Windows: large white picture windows.
Boundary treatment: open plan.

Detractors

The Monypenny Character Area is in good condition and there are no significant detractors.

Glebe Field Character Area (A9)



Distinctive Characteristics of Glebe Field Character Area

This is a small development of twelve units built by the English Rural Housing Association completed in 2010. Considered to be on a sensitive site by the local planning authority, permission was only granted under stringent conditions.

The linked two storey development has steep roofs and is located close to the street. The height and layout of the development gives it a distinctive enclosed character. Generally speaking, although unconventional in many respects in its form, it has been successful as a 'gateway' development for the village. The materials and the window designs and regular spacing bring a sense of uniformity to the area.



Materials

The development is constructed principally in white weatherboarding, common brick and hanging tiles with plain red roof tiles.

Front Boundaries

The narrow spaces between the street and the house are not enclosed.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The shared road space results in the absence of a pavement. There are limited dedicated parking spaces in an area to the south west.

Distinctive Characteristics of Glebe Field Character Area

Height: two storeys
Form: semi-detached houses (often linked by garages) and block of flats with steep pitched roofs.
Layout/ orientation: enclosed mews arranged around a cul de sac with separate parking area to the south west. Properties are designed to turn the corner.
Materials: white weatherboarding, common brick and hanging tiles with plain red roof tiles.
Windows: small casement windows with glazing bars.
Boundary treatment: no boundaries.

Detractors

The limited dedicated parking facilities results in cars parked within the narrow street causing visual clutter within the development.

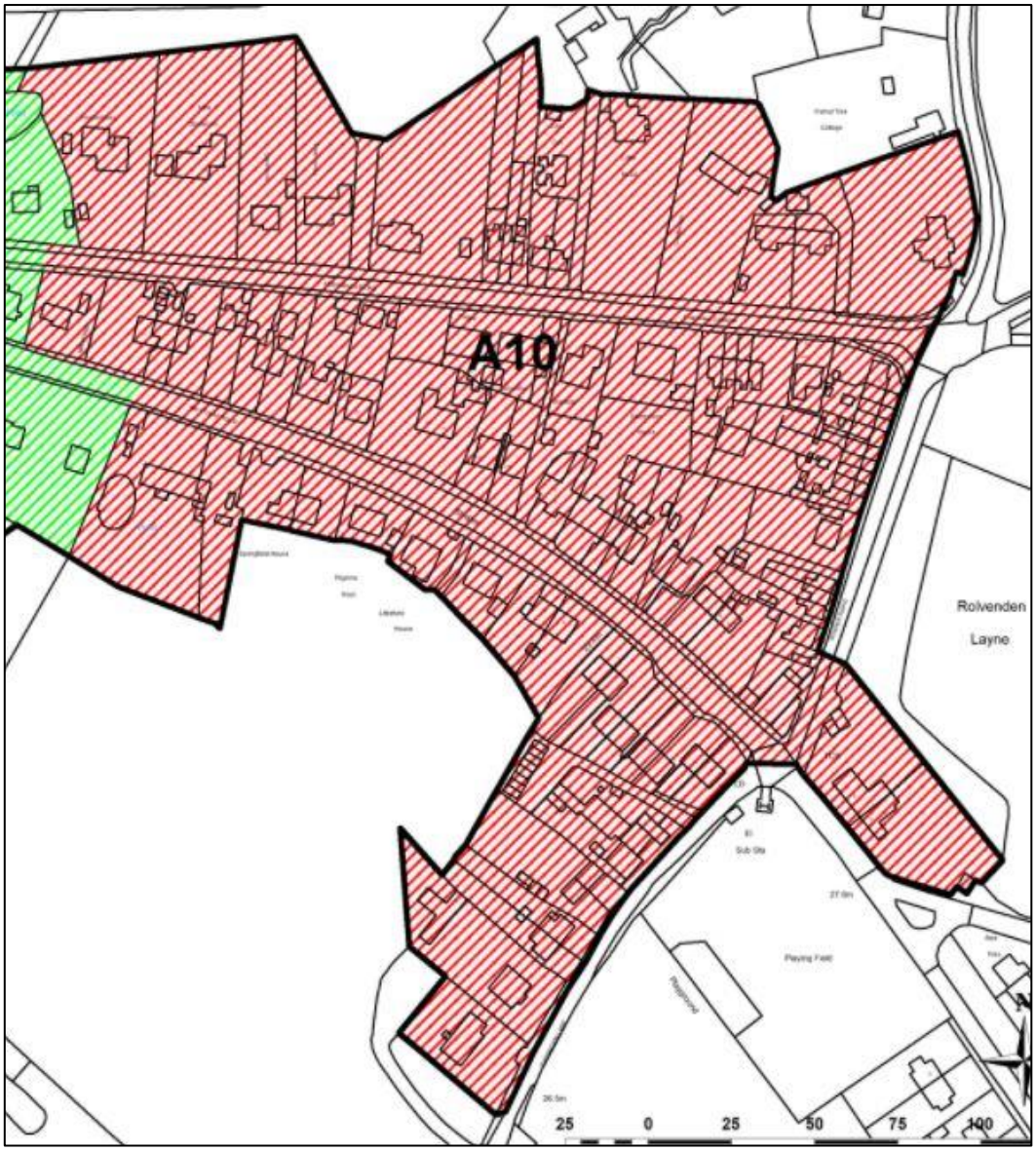
The plain brick rear façade of properties in Glebefield is visible from the Rolvenden Layne approach and is not particularly attractive.

Proposed Enhancements

Any further schemes of exception sites in this vicinity should ensure adequate parking within the scheme.

Additional landscaping to the southern boundary of development to help soften the appearance of the rear façade.

Maytham / Winser / Frensham Character Area (A10)



Distinctive Characteristics of Maytham / Winser / Frensham Character Area

The 'triangle' comprises the historic core of the hamlet built on and around the original common land, Lain Green. The hamlet grew to its present form when houses in Rolvenden High Street were burned down during the Great Plague of the 1660's: villagers moved one mile down the hill to the common land and water. With the exception of two properties in Thornden Lane, the character area falls entirely within the Rolvenden Layne Conservation Area.

The area generally comprises the central section of Maytham Road; Frensham Road; Winser Road and the north western built section of Thornden Lane. With the exception of the Ewe and Lamb public house, all streets are fronted by residential properties.

The main thoroughfare, Maytham Road (right), is wider than the other streets and gently curves and slopes down towards the south east. The street alignment and distant trees enclose the street scene looking south east (right). Two storey houses are set back from the road behind front gardens. The treed and hedged boundaries together with the distant trees give a verdant appearance to the street. At the western end, properties are detached whilst at the eastern end semi-detached houses predominate.



Maytham Road generally comprises detached, two storey brick houses set back from the road behind gardens with hedged or picket fencing. Many properties are modern in a neo-Georgian style (below)







At the eastern end of Maytham Road, the enclosed verdant street scene is replaced by semi-detached dwellings to the north with a low wall (below)





Frensham Road (right) is a straight street enclosed by treed and hedged boundaries which provide a verdant character and enclose the street scene.



As with Maytham Road, two storey detached brick houses are set back from the road behind front gardens with many modern properties in a neo-Georgian style (below).







A number of bungalows are also situated in Frensham Road (right). They appear out of scale with the general character of the street and the wider Conservation Area





One of the bungalows has been replaced by a new two storey dwelling September House (right).







White Gates (left) is an example of an infill property which employs the local built form and materials.



Winser Road (left) is fronted on the west side by tight knit development of terraced and semi-detached two storey dwellings set close to the road. The prominent materials are hanging tiles and white weatherboarding.

The contrasting eastern side comprises a landscaped edge.

Materials

White weatherboarded cottages abound in this historic core character area (below).





Tile hanging at first floor level is use on a number of old and new properties (below).






Roofs, often shallow pitched and hipped, are typically of slate and red/orange plain tile.

White painted wooden sash or casement windows predominate throughout the area.

Front Boundaries





Hedges and white picket fences are a prominent boundary feature (above) as well as low brick walls.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The public realm comprises standard tarmac roads and pavements. There are no open spaces within this character area, but the recreation ground extends south eastwards giving extensive views of open countryside and rising ground towards Newenden, Northiam and Fairlight and makes an important contribution to the character of the area. The hedged boundaries; woodland to the east of Winser Road and trees beyond the character area bring a verdant appearance to the streets in this area.

There is a notable tree at 28 Maytham Road supported by prop and metal strap which, although leaning, the owners consider is in good condition.

Distinctive Characteristics of Maytham / Winser / Frensham Character Area

Height: predominantly 2 storeys with some bungalows
Form: Maytham Road detached and semi-detached properties; Frensham principally well-spaced detached properties; and Winser mainly terraced and semi-detached properties. Pitched roofs often hipped on detached and semi-detached properties.
Layout/ orientation: Maytham Road has a **r**egular building line set back from the road behind front gardens; Frensham Road has an irregular building line with some properties set well back from the road; Winser Road properties are grouped on a regular building line behind shallow front gardens.
Materials: white weatherboard; red/ orange brick; first floor tile hanging; mix of red/orange plain tile, slate and concrete tile roofs.
Windows: a mix of wooden sash, casement and leaded lights.
Boundary treatment: mature hedges, picket fences, low brick walls.

Buildings of Note



The **Ewe and Lamb public house** (left) is a prominent listed building on the north side of the principal street, Maytham Lane. The building is faced with brick and tile hanging at first floor and is typical of Rolvenden Layne. The scale and use of the building make it notable within the character area.

The listed **Ten Dwellings** (right) comprises a distinctive long row of small, terraced one and two bedroomed cottages. There is a covered central passageway giving access to gardens at the rear. Half tile hung to front and rear, continuous slate roof are typical of the area. Repeated windows, doors and chimneys give a regular rhythm to the row. Front boundaries of low hedge, picket fence railings or fencing enclose shallow front gardens.





3 – 5 Maytham Road (left) is one of the oldest buildings in Rolvenden Layne but is now partially hidden for the most part behind a tall hedge. Built pre-1600 the listed timber framed property forms a distinctive historic feature within the area.

The corner of Maytham Road and Winser Road is marked by **the former corner shop** (right). The listed white weather boarded property with hipped slate roof and the rear extension exhibit the traditional form and materials of the area which, together with its prominent position and former use, make this a notable building within this character area.





Common Garden, (left) stands prominently on a bank overlooking the junction of Frensham and Winser Roads and Mounts Lane as well as the entrance to Frensham Manor. The house is a Grade II listed building built in the 1920's. Detached with high brick wall, hedge and high wooden fencing to Frensham Road; boasts some interesting features in the brick wall and high chimneys. It is said to have been built for the "Nanny" employed at the Manor house.

Detractors

The Maytham / Winser / Frensham Character Area is in good condition but there are a limited number of features which detract from the character.

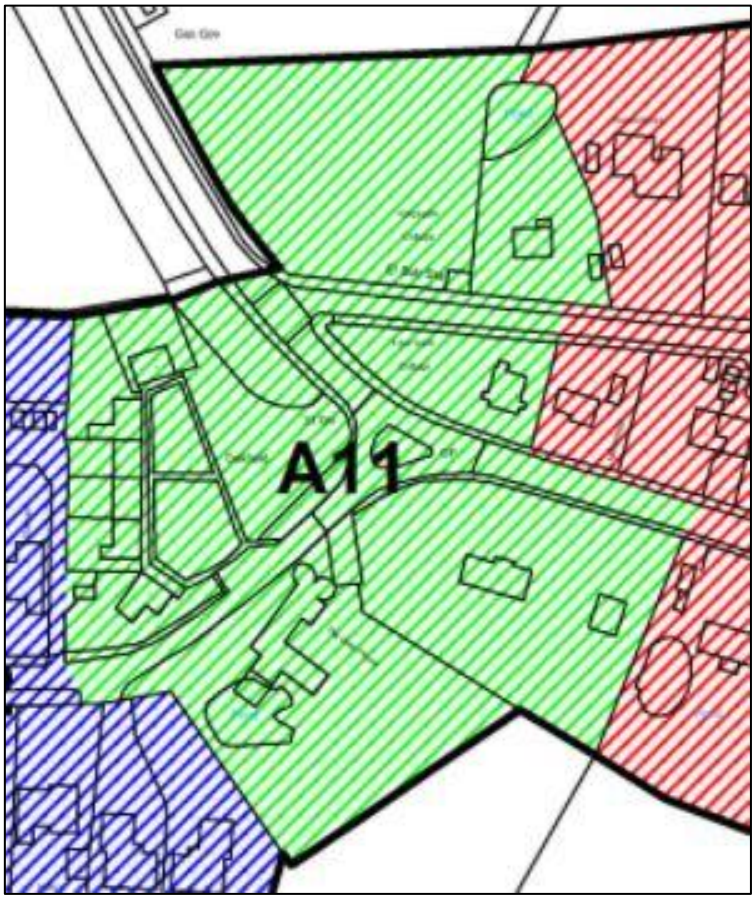
On street parking detracts visually from the street scene and obscures the properties (most of which are listed buildings) facing the street.

The street scene is interrupted by a limited number of buildings which do not respond well to their context by virtue of their scale.

Proposed Enhancements

New buildings should reflect the predominant two storey scale of properties in the area. Retrofit energy efficient cladding to improve energy efficiency and appearance could be used to uplift undistinguished, standardised architecture and to achieve a better fit with the distinctive characteristics of the area

Four Wents Character Area (A11)



Distinctive Characteristics of Four Wents Character Area

Four Wents generally comprises large properties in substantial grounds set around a grass triangle presenting a well landscaped entrance to Rolvenden Layne from Rolvenden.





The green and mature roadside trees standing on the green in front of Oakfield cottages (left) add significantly to the landscape character of this entrance to the hamlet.

Materials

Brick is the prominent material with some tile hanging and white weather board. Plain clay tiles predominate on the roofs of historic buildings with one roundel oast with Kent peg tiles (below left). The Oakfield cottages have uncharacteristic concrete roof tiles (below right).





Front Boundaries



Tall hedges generally form the front boundaries in this character area.

Public Realm: Landscape and street furniture

The green with mature trees which fronts Oakfield and the green triangle at the junction between Maytham Road and Frogs Lane are open spaces which are important to the character of this area.

The triangle of grass at the centre of the road junction hosts a metal sign post and daffodils have been planted here in the past which continue to bloom each year.



Distinctive Characteristics of Four Wents Character Area

Height: two storeys (only occasionally with attic windows) with pitched roofs; one catslide and two roundels.
Form: mainly large individually designed historic properties; one group of terraced house with detached properties at either end which turn the linear form into a 'crescent' form.
Layout/ orientation: large houses facing, but set well back from the road.
Materials: brick; tile hanging and white weather board. One roundel oast with Kent peg tiles.
Windows: white painted casement.
Boundary treatment: mainly high hedges.
Landscape features: landscaped areas of open space and mature trees at the entrance to the hamlet.

Buildings of Note



The Oast House residential conversion (left) is situated close to the road and has characteristic roundels. The unlisted brick and Kent peg contains a variety of window styles.



Wesley House (left) is prominently located at the junction between Maytham Road and Frogs Lane. The impressive Grade II listed Hall House was formerly a farmhouse where the founder of the Methodist movement preached from the large upstairs window. Built in the 16th century of local brick and exposed timber and render. The steeply pitched tiled (previously thatched) roof adds scale at this prominent location. Landscaped gardens, and manicured yew hedges add to the landscaped character of the area.



Four Wents Cottage (left) occupies the tip of the triangle on the original 'Lain Green' at the entrance to the village. The grade ll listed building was built in the 1700's of brick with a Kent peg tile cat slide roof.

Detractors

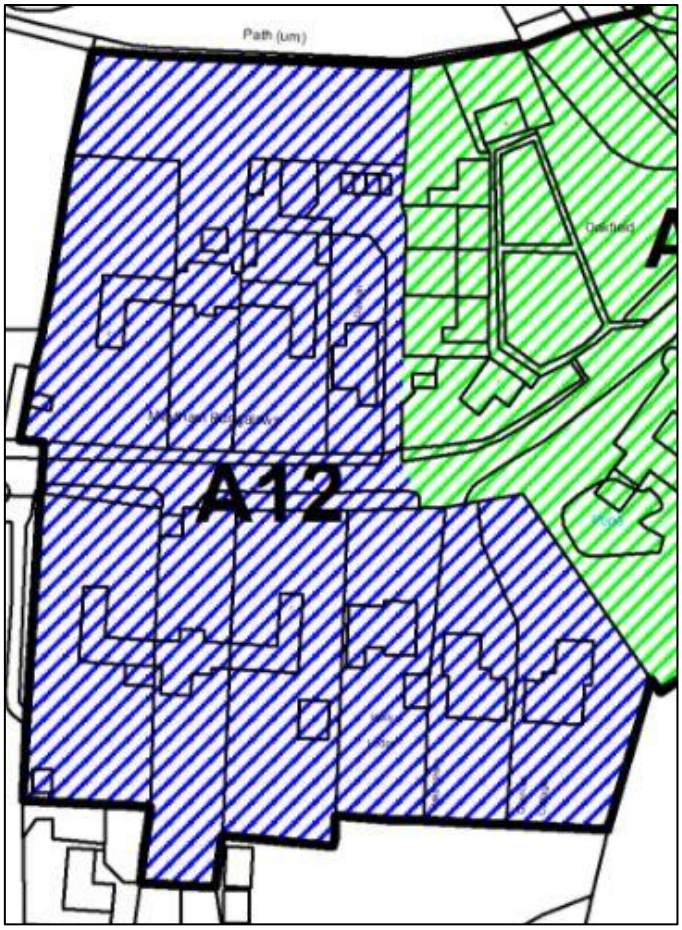
The central green triangle at the junction of roads becomes eroded by traffic.

Some uncared for boundaries make the entrance into Frogs Lane look untidy compared to the manicured yew hedge at Wesley House.

Proposed Enhancements

Introduce new wooden posts around the green triangle to stop vehicle run over and protect the grass from vehicles.

Maytham Cottages Character Area (A12)



Distinctive Characteristics of Maytham Cottages Character Area

The area is characterised by two sets of three linked cottages (Maytham Bungalows) which are mirrored on either side of Frogs Lane (below). These Lutyens-designed listed buildings comprise symmetrically arranged one and two storey cottages with hipped tiled roofs and chimneys. The centre houses are 2 storeys flanked by two one-storey black weatherboarded wings. The cottages are set well back from the road behind long front gardens.







There are four other houses adjoining the set piece of Maytham Bungalows. The single bungalow and integral garage to the north of Frogs Lane (below) is set forward of the building line of the listed cottages and is more prominent in the street scene.



The properties to the south side of Frogs Lane are set well back from the road using brick and tile hanging.

Materials
Black weather boarding is prominent on the Maytham Bungalows with brick and tile hanging used on other properties.

Front Boundaries
Hedges enclose front gardens.

Distinctive Characteristics of Maytham Cottages Character Area

Height: single and two storeys.
Form: predominantly single storey linked buildings with steeply pitched hipped roofs and tall chimneys.
Layout/ orientation: pair of symmetrically designed groups of cottages set well back on either side of the road.
Materials: black weather boarding; brick; tile hanging. Plain tiled roofs.
Windows: white painted casement with glazing bars.
Boundary treatment: mainly high hedges.
Landscape features: hedged front gardens.

Detractors

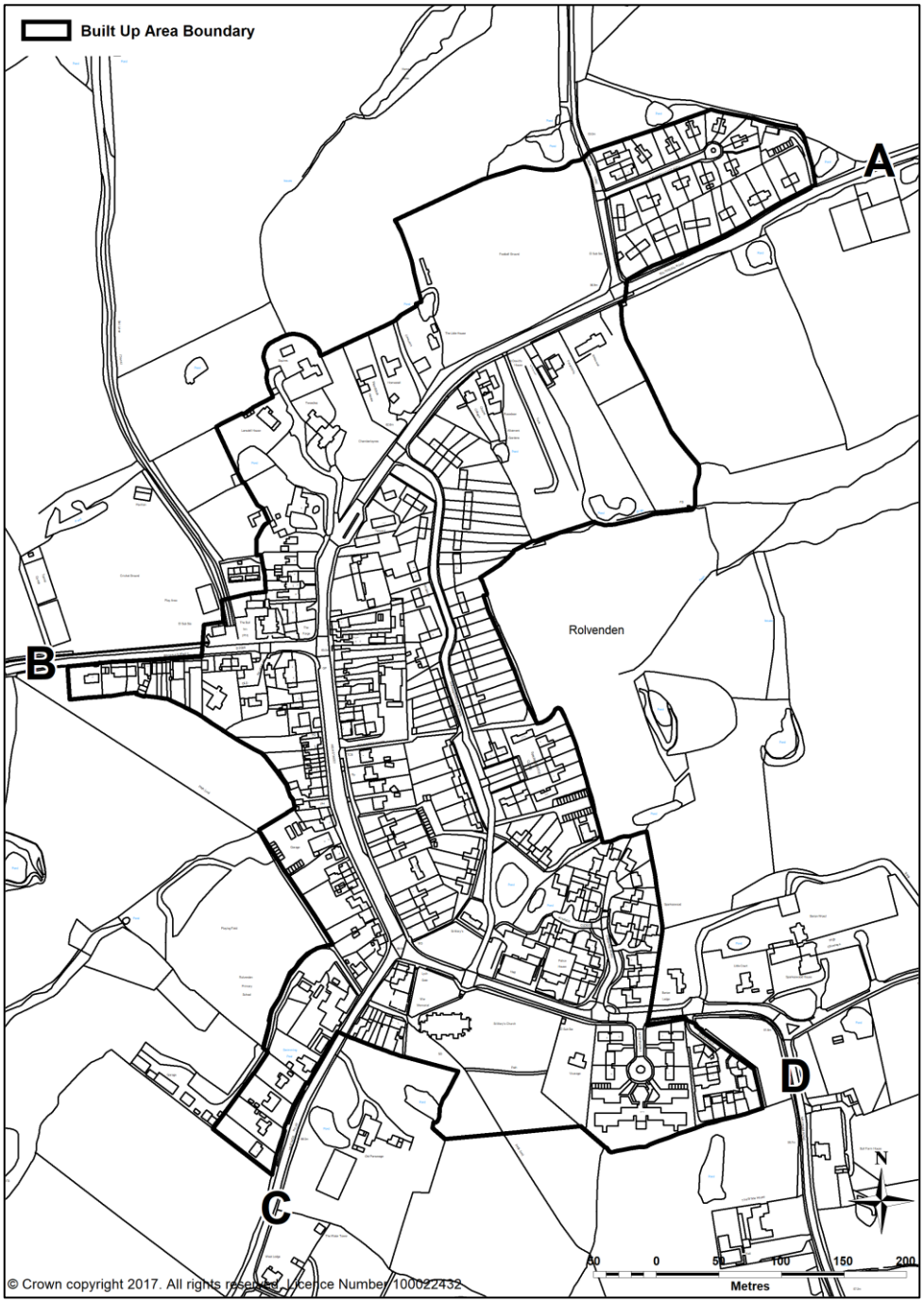
The Maytham Cottages Character Area is generally in good condition and there are no significant detractors.

VILLAGE APPROACHES

This section describes the key features of the principal approaches to the village of Rolvenden and the hamlet of Rolvenden Layne:

Rolvenden Approaches

A – Tenterden Approach
B – Benenden Approach
C – Newenden Approach
D – Layne Approach



A – Tenterden Approach

The entrance into Rolvenden on the A28 comprises a wide road on a high ridge. The road is enclosed by mostly low hedging either side overlooking open countryside with far reaching views.

Various isolated farm buildings can be seen in the middle distance and individual houses dotted along the A28 including the white weatherboarded, white picket fenced *Stillwate*rs. The outstanding long views towards Tenterden and St Michaels and across to Sparkeswood Gill ancient woodland give the area an open character and are identified as Important Public Views in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The view to Sparkeswood Gill abuts the built area (right).



The village pond to the south side of the A28 close to the village (right) and casual lay-by are sometimes used as a tip.



Suggestions for improvements to landscaping in the Tenterden Approach

Suggestions from the Public Consultation called for landscaping as a fitting welcome into this historic village in the 'Garden of England' and AONB.

It has also been suggested that the layby could be improved, and from there along the field hedge, oaks or groups of trees could be planted to enhance this approach. Scots Pine are associated with this end of the village.

B – Benenden Approach

This approach bends through attractive rolling landscape and incorporates a scatter of well kept buildings associated with the countryside. The road has a generally open character with low hedges allowing views across to these buildings and to Rolvenden village itself. The cricket field with its white pavilion and tennis courts extend this open approach close to the village and form part of the character of Regent Street.

The outlying, distinctive, properties include:

The restored windmill and Mill House farm with its commercial units/holiday lets (right)



The Elizabethan listed ‘Saxby’s (right)

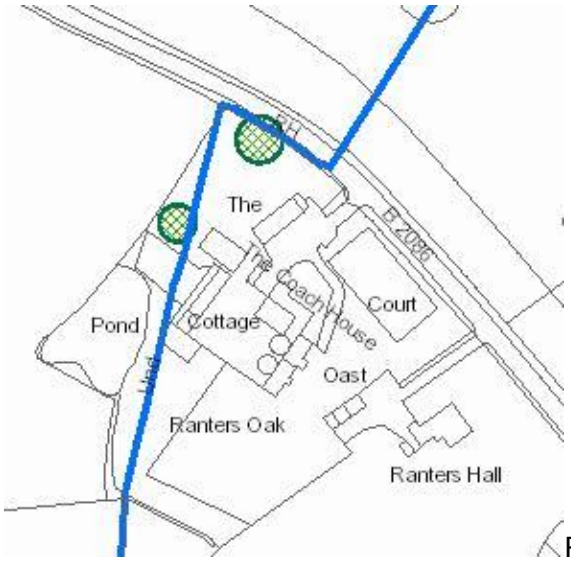


Windmill Oast, the small converted industrial estate and offices (right)



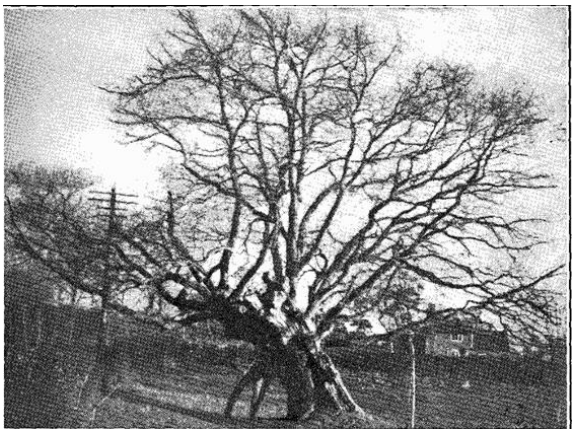
Landscaping in the Benenden Approach

There are two protected trees at Ranters Oak. The oak tree to the east lies within Rolvenden Parish (see map below).



Ranters oak and the parish boundary

The Pedunculate Oak (below left) is probably the most famous tree in the area from its association with the travelling Methodist (Wesleyan) preachers in mid-18th early 19th century (below right). At least three quarters of original trunk now dead/removed but the surviving third remains alive with several metal/wooden props supporting trunk.





TPO/00/0001230 Nov 2000

The Oak, Ranters Oak, Benenden Road, Rolvenden

The Oak trees are an important feature of the local landscape, one of them having historical significance. Their protection is expedient in the context of development proposals and highway safety issues, which may require reduction of their crowns. Such works could threaten the long-term amenity value and viability of the trees if not made subject to appropriate standards of tree surgery.

There is local concern that the nearby young willow will compromise the oak in time.

The horse chestnut opposite Mill House Farm and the mature trees along the Benenden Road entrance to the village were identified as ‘valued assets’ at the Public Consultation 2015.

Hole Park

The parkland at Hole Park is enjoyed by many walking the PROW network and during open days and events. The 6.5 hectare garden comprises extensive yew hedges; herbaceous borders meadow and woodland gardens in this parkland setting. It contains many notable trees of great diversity and age. The ongoing management of it is under a plan agreed with Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

There were no suggestions to improve landscaping in this character area.

C – Newenden Approach

The approach along the A28 northwards rises gently towards to the village. Lower hedges to the west with sheep fields behind create an open character. A large woodland block encloses the eastern side of the road and is a designated group Tree Preservation Order. Views towards Rolvenden and beyond are wide reaching from the direction of the Hastings/Rye Road but are restricted by hedges and trees closer to the village.

The Newenden approach contains a scattered handful of highly individual, detached properties. To the east is a mix of older, larger buildings generally having had community significance in the past - including the Old Parsonage; the contemporary ' Grand Design' converted water tower (below left) that once served the Great Maytham estate and the associated Victorian West Lodge house (below centre). These are mainly shielded from the road and street scene by high hedges and some are accessed by a side road. One of the newest builds in the parish, Oak View, (right) is in keeping with the local vernacular.

The Water Tower



West Lodge



Oak View



Landscaping in the Newenden Approach.



Along the east side of Hastings Road are several examples of Hornbeam, probably several hundred years old – lining each side of the byways and PROW's– originally paved with evidence of iron slag - remnants of the iron industry in this area.

The hedge stool by the north side of the track on the top of the bank (left) was probably bundle planted with three roots, now grown into one. Some trunks are cut at the top of the stool, but it still has three healthy tall stems. This was originally part of a mixed hedge including hazel, beech, and oak, all of which can be seen along the trackside. The sunken nature of the lane and the state of the stump all show that it is very old.

Protection Order: PO/07/00015 27 Nov 2007 Great Job's Cross Bungalow, Hastings Road, Rolvenden.



The Council made this Protection Order due to a planning application and the significant oak trees on the site. The row of large mature oak trees forming a row parallel to the Hastings Road is highly visible and forms a significant visual feature. A further six large mature oaks within a belt of broad-leaved species are also prominent in the landscape and clearly visible from the Public Right of Way (AT62). The new house became known as Oak View. (L8)

There were no suggestions to improve landscaping in this character area.

D – Layne Approach

The break in the built area along Maytham Road provides definition between Rolvenden and its hamlet Rolvenden Layne. The road slopes up from Rolvenden Layne to Rolvenden and is generally enclosed with tall hedges. The area boasts valued ancient parkland, farming land and several mature trees.

Great Maytham Hall with its impressive frontage, grandeur, distinctive clock tower (below left) and related history (Lutyens-designed; the Tennant family; Frances Hodgson Burnett and the various roles it had during the war) is a building of architectural and social significance. The main block now comprises privately owned apartments and a recent development of further exclusive serviced homes has been built to replace garages and the old vegetable garden.



The Clock Tower



New development at Gt Maytham Hall

This approach is also home to a pre-1600 grade II listed farmhouse. The distinctive 18th Century listed Kingsgate is hidden from view but its Victorian lodge House with its rounded turret window and decorative white iron fence (right) is attractive and characterful



Closer to Rolvenden, Barton Lodge bend (right) contains a handful of dispersed large properties in extensive landscaped gardens, including Barton Lodge and Sparkeswood House (below)





Landscaping in the Layne Approach

Great Maytham Estate is listed within the register of Historic Parks and Gardens by English Heritage for its special historic interest. In 1909, Edwin Lutyens was commissioned to re-build the house and lay out the formal gardens. It is one of the few houses and gardens in Kent designed by Lutyens. It has woodland of three hectares, set within a larger estate of park, wood and agricultural use covering 41 hectares.

Tree preservation orders
TPO/54/00001 1955 Great Maytham Estate, Rolvenden

W1 and A1 area including wilderness with variety of broadleaved and coniferous trees south of parkland area with mainly scattered trees and some small groups

Other notable trees on the Great Maytham Hall Estate:

Spanish Chestnut, - Sweet chestnut, - Copper Beech, - Wild Service tree to south of the main drive in grounds of Great Maytham Hall. A healthy tree with a sound bole that forks at 1.3m above ground, - Smooth-leaved Elm in parkland of Great Maytham Hall, Rolvenden. A big example of a long-leaved High Wealden wild form in good health in 1999 but standing dead in 2010, - Wild Service tree in parkland of Great Maytham Hall, just off the line of the footpath. Clean columnar bole; growing very slowly, - Cornish Elm, standing.

Other notable trees on the Layne Approach



A number of Scots Pines frame the sweeping bend at Barton Lodge bend (left)



Opposite Bull Farm on the Layne Approach but adjoining Glebefield, is another magnificent mature Horse Chestnut. It sits in pastureland close to the hedge.

Close by, at the entrance to the car park of Rolvenden Club

and the *White House* and are two unremarkable Wild Cherry trees, planted for the coronation of George the sixth (below).

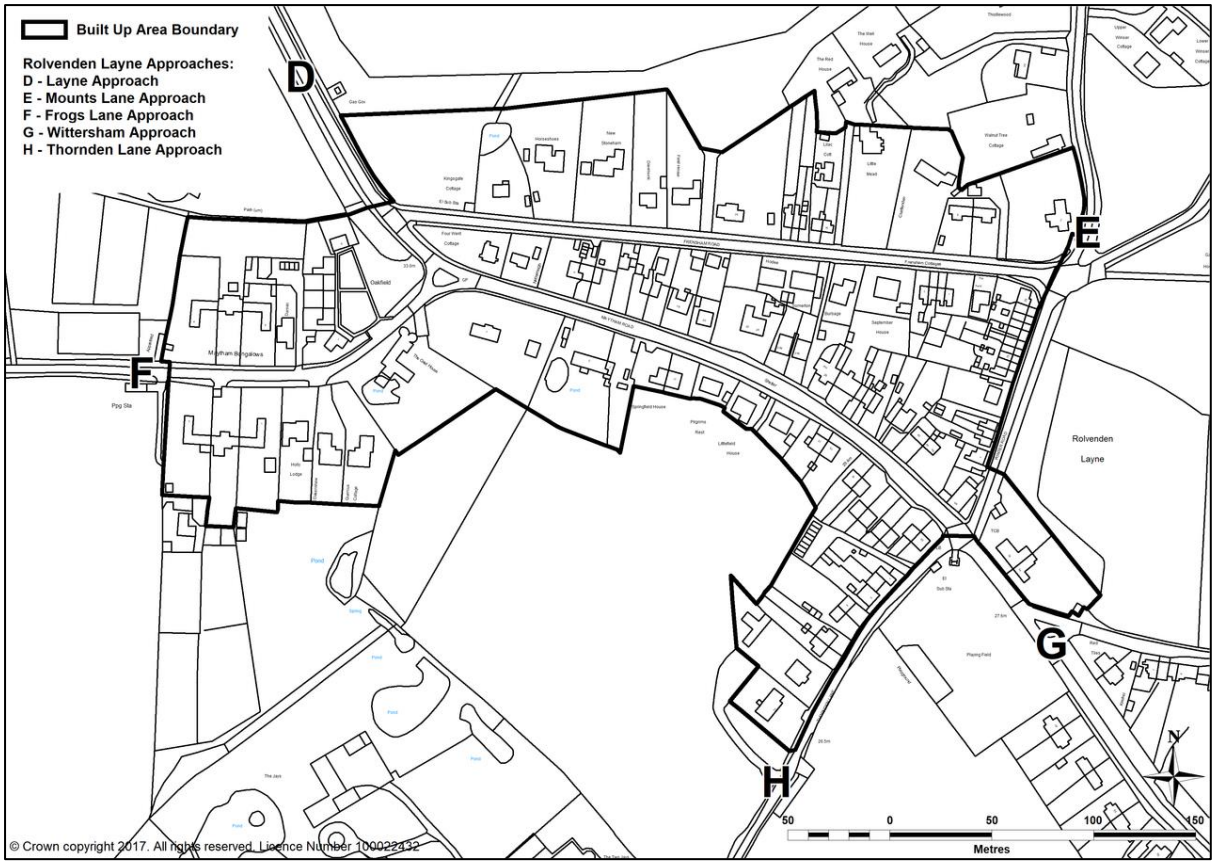




There were no suggestions to improve landscaping in this character area.

Rolvenden Layne Approaches

E – Mounts Lane Approach
F – Frogs Lane Approach
G – Wittersham Approach
H – Thornden Lane Approach



E – Mounts Lane Approach

This approach to Rolvenden Layne is a narrow, enclosed and verdant country lane. Unsuitable for through traffic, the lane is quiet. With the exception of the utilitarian Sub Station (below right), overgrown vegetation and grass verges create a tunnel effect in the dip and a pleasing entrance to the hamlet. The feeling is one of remoteness at the edge of the village.







There is a great feeling of spaciousness at the top of the hill in Mounts Lane with outstanding views from the ridge towards Newenden, Wittersham, Fairlight and Tenterden.

To the east of Mounts Lane, landscaped gardens and wooded areas including pine trees and mature rhododendrons surround Frensham Manor (possibly the oldest building in the Parish) which is located down a long cobbled driveway and is not visible from the public domain.

A few individual half tile hung and brick or weatherboarded cottages are set back from the road behind hedges or garages. Two modern chalet bungalows and a 17th century house line the east side of the road.

Similar to the other approaches, houses here tend to be larger detached homes with large gardens. Most stand back from the roadside and are hidden from immediate view by tall hedges.

Mounts View (rear view pictured right) is understood to be possibly the oldest house in the Rolvenden Layne part of the Parish.



To the rear of Common Garden is Well House, an unusual infill linking Mounts Lane with Frensham Road.

At the higher southern section, houses are set in relatively large gardens overlooking a field to the east. Moving north a few weatherboarded cottages become clustered away from the roadside.

There are examples of the properties being renovated or extended in traditional designs and materials from the local vernacular. Rose Cottage (below left) is a half tile hung 20th century addition using locally traditional materials. Similarly the property (below right) uses weather boarding in a relatively modern renovation.





There were no suggestions for improvements to landscaping in this character area.

F - Frogs Lane Approach

This approach to Rolvenden Layne is a narrow, verdant country lane generally lined by high hedges, verges and ditches. The lane runs through farming land and coppices, recently cut back. There are open views particularly to the south over open farmland. There are two isolated houses, an old pump station, wooden buildings in the wooded area and equestrian outbuildings on both sides of the road.





Landscaping in Frogs Lane Approach.

TPO/83/000063 Slade Wood

The grounds for the making of the Order are as follows: It is considered that the woodland is of special amenity value to the area.

W1 mixed hardwoods, mainly Oak over underwood - south of Frogs Lane, Rolvenden

There were no suggestions for improvements to landscaping in this character area.

G – Wittersham Approach

This approach slopes up towards Rolvenden Layne and low hedges and the elevated position towards the hamlet offer long views to the south.



The area to the west of the approach includes "Tompsett's" grass triangle (right) - so called for the seasonal fruit stall and apple containers found here from Tompsett's Farm.



There are farm buildings further out, a new commercial enterprise in previously underused farm buildings and individual houses scattered along the approach – most notably Lowden Farm built alongside the site of an ancient Manor and moat remains (a scheduled monument).

Properties closest to, but separate from, the hamlet include a modern chalet bungalow, a row of 6 large council-built houses, (right), listed white weatherboard cottages (below).





The recreation ground extends this open approach close to the village and, together with the long interrupted views to the south, forms part of the character of this part of the hamlet.

Landscaping in the Wittersham Approach.

Rolvenden Layne playing field has several trees planted for special occasions. The corner catalpa was planted by the WI to commemorate a specific anniversary and the Sorbus torminalis (Chequer tree), by the War Memorial Trust for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The oak tree further into the field was planted by the oldest resident, Mr. Steadman, for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

Note: This is a very windy site for establishing trees and there is a concern not to block views.

H – Thornden Lane Approach

Thornden Lane is a narrow country lane with low hedging (below left) and far reaching views to the south east (below right).





The southern section comprises several scattered properties to the south and west. The properties generally comprise converted farm buildings (Thornden farmhouse (listed), the dairy (listed), the oast, the piggery barn, the converted stable block (below left)) These buildings are separated from the nucleus by an undeveloped area of rural character.





Landscaping in the Thornden Lane Approach

Tree Preservation Order TPO/84/00011 1984 Thornden Lane, Rolvenden Layne

T1 Horse Chestnut - field no OS 2296, north east of Thornden Lane

T2 Horse Chestnut

There were no suggestions for improvements to landscaping in this character area.