ASHFORD
BOROUGH
LOCAL PLAN

Conservation Area Assessment

Ashford - Lacton Green

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.

LACTON GREEN CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

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

This is an urban Conservation Area straddled along The Street. It is a mixture of detached and terraced housing in varying sized gardens. It has a hamlet like character, separate from the main Willesborough Conservation Area, and Willesborough itself. Its historic character is the reason for it being a Conservation Area.

ASPECT UNDER CONSIDERATION	COMMENT
topography/physical structure and its relationship to the sites topography	The Conservation Area itself is flat although the land rises significantly behind No. 72 and the Blacksmiths Arms up to the hospital which is on higher ground. The hospital dominates much of the Conservation Area. The road runs in an east/west direction and then turns a significant corner and runs north/south. Footpaths spur off this road. It is ribbon development compact.
archaeological significance and potential of the area	

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality.	The green is an important open space, it is surrounded by a hedge. Trees behind The Street in the north-east corner are important as are the ones on the north and west approach around Lacton House. The skyline is the William Harvey Hospital and especially the cooling tower and the chimney.
the use of distinctive and traditional building materials	The ragstone wall between the Sparrow development and No. 97 is the dominating building material.
the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, or other organic elements to the character of the area	There are important trees around Lacton Hall and the Sparrow development also adjacent to the green and along Hythe Road next to No. 125. The important trees are Horse Chestnuts, Silver Birch and a Blue Cedar which lies in the garden of Tollgate. Some of these trees have TPOs. There is also an important hedge on the north side of The Street outside Nos. 68 to 72.
the prevailing or former uses of buildings in the area, and the influence of this on plan form and building types	Lacton Oast and The Barn used to be probably part of a farmyard, the oast conversion is not very attractive. The pub is historic. The Street was the old A20 running through to the Tollgate and there is still that building on the site adjacent 152 The Street. The ragstone wall was part of the curtilage of the old Lacton Farmhouse which was demolished either when the A20 or the M20 were constructed.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
historical evolution	There used to be a Lacton Farmhouse and the wall was part of its curtilage as were, I think, the agricultural buildings. The oldest buildings are 124/126 The Street, 15th Century farmhouse now two cottages and Walnut Tree House, 16th Century.
the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside.	Views of the open countryside from around 101, otherwise there are very little views outside the Conservation Area.
the extent of loss, intrusion, or damage sustained by an area	Views of the William Harvey Hospital detract from the area, there is also a problem of on-street parking and a deteriorating road surface and pavements especially around the eastern edge of the Conservation Area.
identification of features that detract from the special character of the area and that may provide sites where change could be encouraged	The Blacksmith Arms car park, the tennis court adjacent to Lacton Oast and Lacton Oast itself which is a poor conversion.

AREA APPRAISAL	COMMENT
the existence of any neutral areas - those that neither enhance nor detract from the character of the conservation area	All the new development along The Street for which there is quite a lot, including the Police houses, Council houses and bungalows.
the existence of any threats to the area	

OUTCOMES

Area boundary	Unchanged
Potential Article 4 Directions	
Site Policies (proposals and protection)	
Potential improvement schemes	The pub car park and the tennis court.

Officer: .....

Date: 6 November 1995

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