

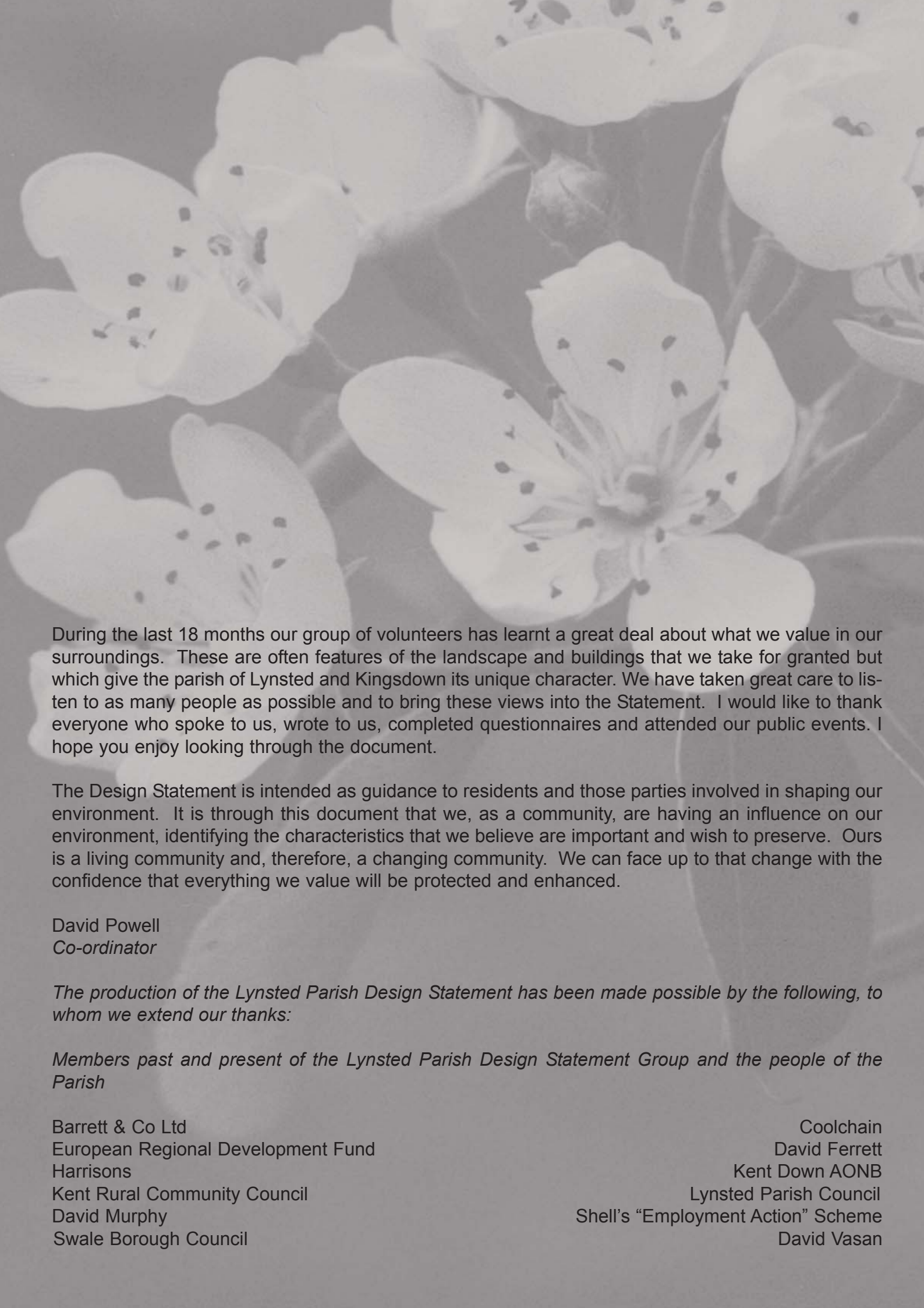


Lynsted

Published September 2002

Parish Design Statement

*Incorporating Design Guidelines as Supplementary Planning Guidance for Lynsted & Kingsdown.
Adopted by Swale Borough Council 30th April 2002.*



During the last 18 months our group of volunteers has learnt a great deal about what we value in our surroundings. These are often features of the landscape and buildings that we take for granted but which give the parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown its unique character. We have taken great care to listen to as many people as possible and to bring these views into the Statement. I would like to thank everyone who spoke to us, wrote to us, completed questionnaires and attended our public events. I hope you enjoy looking through the document.

The Design Statement is intended as guidance to residents and those parties involved in shaping our environment. It is through this document that we, as a community, are having an influence on our environment, identifying the characteristics that we believe are important and wish to preserve. Ours is a living community and, therefore, a changing community. We can face up to that change with the confidence that everything we value will be protected and enhanced.

David Powell
Co-ordinator

The production of the Lynsted Parish Design Statement has been made possible by the following, to whom we extend our thanks:

Members past and present of the Lynsted Parish Design Statement Group and the people of the Parish

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The Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Lynsted and Kingsdown Design Guidelines

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Mission Statement of the Lynsted Parish Design Statement Group

To prepare a Lynsted Design Statement document that describes the visual qualities and characteristics that people value in the parish of Lynsted, with a view to having it adopted by the local planning authority as a guide in the management of change.

Aims and Objectives

1. To analyse the parish of Lynsted, the visual character of the landscape, the settlement pattern, building and space, and its system of roads and paths.
2. To distil the essence of what makes the Parish unique and distinct, and to provide guidance as to how this can be conserved into the future.
3. To involve all individuals, groups and organisations that have an interest in the parish and its future.
4. To prepare an action plan that includes surveys, consultation, workshops, discussion, publicity and the timely production of a statement that is attractive, well illustrated and easy to read.

Swale Borough Council adopted the document, entitled "Lynsted and Kingsdown Design Guidelines", as 'supplementary planning guidance' on 30th April 2002.

The first part of this Statement looks at the development of the Community and its sense of place. The Supplementary Planning Guidance highlights key features and principles of design, which come together to make the Parish unique. The Annexes contain relevant extracts from and references to complementary documents such as the Swale Borough Local Plan. The whole Statement is intended to inform planners, developers and householders who want their proposals for change to enhance the identity of the communities of the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown.

Parish Context

The historical identity of the rural Parish and its network of minor lanes and paths draws much of its early character from its connections to the north and south.

Throughout the early history of the region, Conyer Creek to the north handled farm produce bound for London.

Goods and livestock have flowed for centuries across the lowland marshes, through the historic hamlets of Teynham, Greenstreet, Lynsted, Kingsdown, and Erriottwood and onwards across the North Downs.

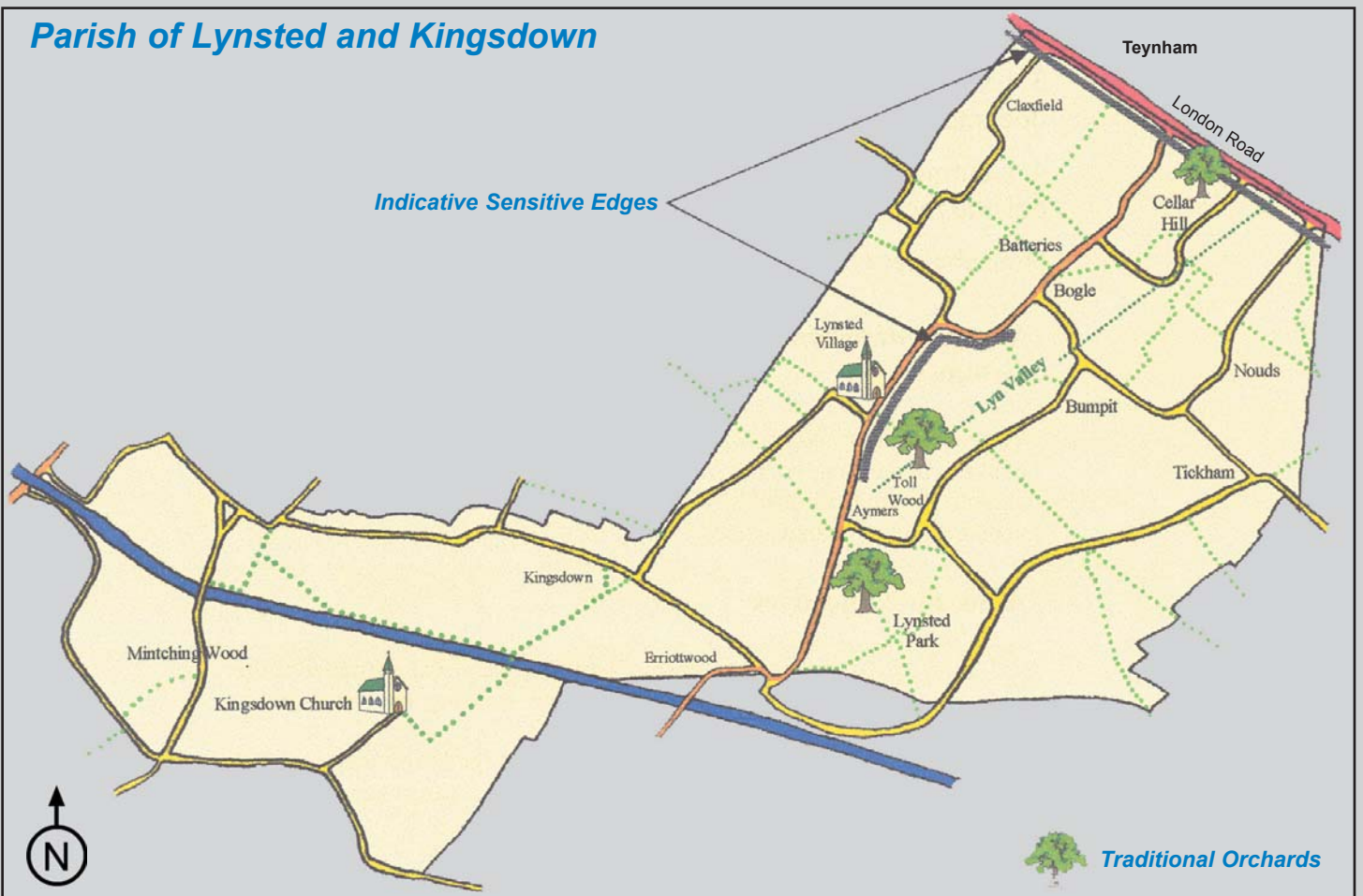
The importance of this route in the local economy was marked by a toll-house in what is now Lynsted village. Forges were also established alongside the Dover Castle on London Road and at Forge Cottage in Lynsted village.



Millenium celebration



Lynsted village with its church



The essentially rural nature of the Parish and its neighbouring parishes in early times explains the network of minor lanes and pathways that bind together the isolated communities throughout this region of Kent.

Roman demands for greater efficiency in the movement of people and goods to Europe, led to the creation of Watling Street (named locally as London Road). It is here that the historic hamlet of Greenstreet has been centred since the 14th century in honour of the ancient family of Greenstreet, found at Claxfield. The original hamlet took in parts of what is now called Cellar Hill, London Road, and Station Road (then known as Teynham Lane). London Road cuts East to West. In doing so, it traverses the pattern of local economic development, in its early history, which tended to reflect the need to join the coastal communities and harbours to the downland communities to the south.

The long history of settlement in this Parish is confirmed by parts of Lynsted church that have been dated to the early 14th century. There are records of a chapel (associated with the older Teynham church) as early as the mid 13th century.

The identity of the hamlet of Greenstreet persisted until after the First World War when an administrative decision by the Faversham Post Office redesignated the local Post Office as "Teynham". By this time, the tiny hamlet of Teynham had grown rapidly under the impact of the brick-making industry and the railway (Chatham to Faversham line opened on 25th January 1858).

The modern M2 London to Dover motorway cuts through the Parish to the south along the whole length of Kingsdown.



The character of the landscape and setting

The visual character of the Parish and the surrounding countryside

The Parish lies on the dip slope of the North Downs as it gently rises from the coastal marshland of the Thames estuary in north Kent. Height above mean sea level ranges from 15m to 105m. The landform is typical of chalk land, with gently curving topography and a lack of surface drainage. Erosion at the end of the Ice Age caused the formation of steep-sided valleys, now containing no stream, except on rare occasions. The most important of these 'dry valleys' is the largely unspoilt and attractive Lyn Valley, which runs northeast from Lynsted Park. The southern part of the Parish centres on Kingsdown, which partly nestles in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and includes the backdrop of the locally important Mintching Wood, which forms a remnant of a much larger forest in a parish where there are few remaining woodlands. AONBs are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The primary objective of designation is to conserve the natural beauty of the landscape. Local authorities are expected to reflect this in their development plans and through the development control process.

Downland around Lynsted Parish



Fruit and hops have been the traditional crops for centuries, benefiting from flinty acid soils that overlie the chalk. The geometric patterns, and glorious blossom of cherry, apple and pear orchards have been characteristic of the area. The rows of columnar poplar and alder 'shelter belts' are also a typical feature in the landscape. In most cases they have outlasted the traditional orchards and hop gardens they once protected. Throughout the Parish, mixed hedgerows provide 'corridors', nesting sites and refuges for local wildlife along field margins and alongside the lanes. However, many hedgerows have been fragmented or removed over the years under pressure from modern farming methods and larger arable field systems. This has created in places an open 'prairie' landscape.



Visual impact of woodland and shelter belts

The Parish sits on the southern edge of the North Kent fruit belt. Orchards have been a major feature of the landscape since King Henry VIII introduced the first large-scale orchards in Britain, at neighbouring Teynham, to replace supplies from the continent. Today, nearby Brogdale hosts the National Fruit Collection.



The importance of preserving examples of traditional orchards lies in their contribution as touchstones for a unique sense of place, culture and natural environment. In north Kent the cherry first dominated, followed by the "temperate pippyn, and the golden reinette". The long association with fruit-growing can also be found in hedgerows with examples of crab apple, sloe, damson and wild cherry. The local brickearth was particularly suited to fruit production, interspersed with filberts and hops. The loss of such orchards also leads to a loss of local expertise, such as ladder skills, and tradition that contributes to the local distinctiveness of the whole parish and surrounding countryside. Gradually, their loss leads to fewer examples of traditional sheep-grazing too.



Traditional cherry orchard

Commercial pressures have led to many of the orchards being replaced by cereals and grazing. Dwarf trees are replacing traditional orchards of large trees with sheep grazing beneath. Efforts should be made *to retain and restore some traditional orchards in the Parish* where feasible.

Early redbrick at Bogle



The geological sub-surface deposits to the north of the Parish, around Claxfield Farm, are ideal for brick production. Brick making became established as a provider of *local building materials* in Tudor times, satisfying local demand through the 17th and 18th centuries. Industrialisation around London, from the 1820s, created demand for local brick. By 1870-1890, brick making employed 50% of the population from Faversham and Sittingbourne leading to growth of industrial villages including Teynham. The characteristic yellow stockbricks were only developed around 1700 and their use grew slowly until the mid 18th Century when they emerged as a cheaper/fashionable alternative to red bricks. Where brick earth has been removed and topsoil subsequently replaced, the field surface can be two or three metres lower than the surrounding land. This can be seen around Claxfield Farm.

The relationship between the countryside and settlement

Historically, the farms in the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown enjoyed considerable prosperity. This is evidenced by the historic homes and farmhouses, oast houses, barns, mills, and attractive cottages throughout the Parish.

The village of Lynsted sits comfortably on one border of its valley, overseen by the flint-faced mediaeval Church. The locally found flints are also to be seen in nearby buildings and walls. Many of the older village houses are of ***timber-frame construction with white-painted infill plaster***. Others are of characteristic yellow or red brick.

More than half of the population of the Parish lives along the south side of London Road and the lanes leading south from it. Open countryside provides the backdrop to this infill pattern of settlement with few examples of houses overlooking each other.

The Kingsdown area to the southwest is the highest part of the Parish. Beyond the Parish boundary to the west, the land falls away into Highsted Valley. Much of this area is covered by managed woodland (Mintching Wood) and is sparsely populated. The M2 motorway bisects the Kingsdown area, isolating the only remaining example of an Anglican church by Edward Welby Pugin from its local community. The elevated position of the Church dominates the ***prairie-style*** of farmland that surrounds it. The portion to the south of the motorway forms part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Shelter belts are a common feature

Scattered farmhouses punctuate the rest of the Parish, many of which once stood out in a sea of fruit orchards. Several houses benefit from ***shelter-belts, mature hedges and the remaining orchards*** to help them blend into the open spaces. The areas towards Erriotwood, Tickham and the Lyn valley (which takes in Nouds) are also sparsely populated.

Agriculture continues to hold centre-stage in the local economy. Its influence can be seen in the many functional buildings in a range of materials to meet the need for crop, livestock and equipment storage of local farmers.

Sensitive edges

London Road provides a logical boundary, which is most sensitive to change, beyond which development would damage telling local features such as all properties backing onto open farmland. The northern-most boundary of the Parish passes down the centre of the A2.

The concentration of historically interesting buildings along the south side of London Road, facing open agricultural land, establishes a “sensitive edge”. Urban development beyond this boundary would seriously damage the essentially rural characteristics to the rear of existing housing. Notably, the harsh symmetry and blue paintwork of the cold-store development to the west already intrudes visually at the extremity of the Parish.

The Parish enjoys the highest grade of agricultural land, which has led to its intensive cultivation over many centuries. This agricultural use also explains the characteristic open views of the countryside from most homes, whether isolated or part of the characteristic infill pattern throughout the Parish.

Lynsted village presents an exception to this rule of visual openness towards surrounding countryside. The development and location of this village is unusual for Kent, which generally favours villages on the flat with straight thoroughfares. Neither is true of Lynsted village, which tumbles incoherently down the slope below the Church and twists and turns as it does so. Any development away from the lane would seriously challenge this natural form and its secretive and enclosed location. The village margin facing the Lyn valley should, for this reason, be regarded as a “sensitive edge” against further development beyond a line taking in Swedish Houses, the school, St Peter’s Place, and the Vallance (see map). Protection of this sensitive edge should be respected if the whole character of the village, as defined from its easterly approaches, is to be conserved and the largely unspoilt Lyn valley is not to be encroached upon further.



Sensitive edge to the south of London Road



Modern cold store development



Sensitive edge from Lynsted Village to Swedish Houses

Relationships to special landscape features

Apart from the large Mintching Wood in the southwest corner, the Parish is not particularly wooded. Toll Wood and some woodland at Lynsted Park are the only significant areas as most woodland has been cleared over the years to cultivate the rich soil. However, old orchards are a particular feature in the Parish, especially to the south of the A2, and are widely valued by the community. These should be safeguarded from inappropriate development.

The Lyn valley contains harmonious examples of integrated hedgerow and tree-lined margins that are such important features of the environment, providing benefits to the communities and the wildlife of the Parish.

Buildings seen in the Parish

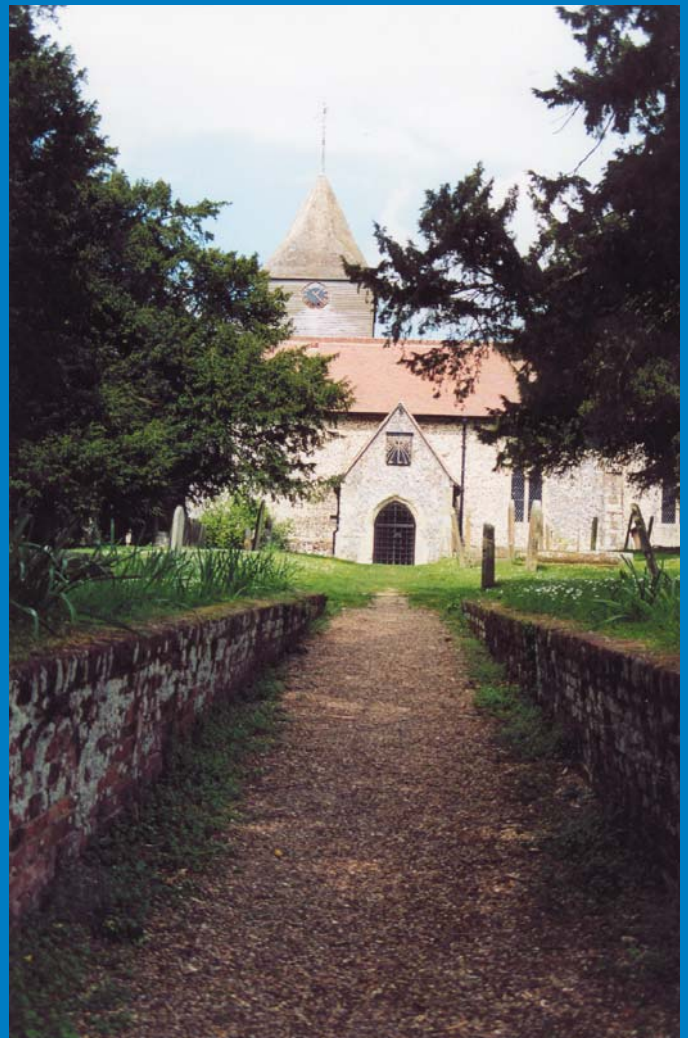
The clustered village of Lynsted, with its broach-steepled church, forms an attractive feature in itself.

Bogle is also striking, set as it is within a hamlet of smaller houses to the north of the village. Mediaeval Bumpit nestles in the Lyn valley where Mill Cottage makes a modern statement.

There are a few oast houses in the Parish and one good example sits next to Kingsdown church. Most oasts are now in residential use, with derelict ones at Batteries Farm and near the mediaeval Bumpit.

The Victorian village school building with its complex rooflines and use of **local brick** is widely valued in the community and its retention is vital. In a school project the children identified strongly with the school bell, the boot-scraper and an attractive lamppost dedicated to Belle Friday, once a Chairman of the School Governors.

With suitable use of **mature planting**, modern low-density homes have found their place in the sparsely populated Tickham area.



Church of St Peter and Paul, Lynsted

Oast house, Kingsdown



Settlement pattern and character

The settlement pattern within the Parish is tied, in large part, to the early economic development of the area. This gave rise to a large hamlet at the northern edge of the Parish that was characterised by smallholdings from the 14th and 15th centuries, stretching south towards Lynsted Court. This pattern supported a typical development of isolated houses along the edge of the old Roman road that have since been infilled. Smallholdings were also typical around Erriottwood during this period, stretching down towards Doddington.

The Parish population has changed very little over the past one hundred years or so, peaking in the census of 1921. In 1801 the population of Lynsted (without Kingsdown) is recorded as 796, in 1829 as 890, in 1841 as 1,050, far larger than Teynham at that date, in 1881 as 1284, in 1901 as 1213, in 1922 as 1169 and in 1981 as 951. The present population of Lynsted and Kingsdown is 1036 persons. The inhabitants at those earlier dates were almost entirely engaged in agriculture.

There is an *ancient hamlet*, known locally as Cellar Hill, just south of the eastern extremity of Greenstreet. This is unusual for this part of Kent as it contains several fine thatched buildings interspersed with more modern development. These include a 1930's pre-fabricated home believed to have been from the Ideal Homes Exhibition. Thatch roofs are unusual given the dominance of Kent peg-tiles based on availability of local clay.

Lynsted Lane flows south along higher-level ground for about a mile before it becomes Lynsted Street and encounters the Church before its end at Toll Lane to the south. The lane continues for about two miles before the lane branches to the east and west where the hamlet of Erriottwood and village of Kingsdown can be found.



Tudor Cottage, Cellar Hill

The Street, Lynsted



Down the years we have seen a variety of planned housing developments throughout the Parish. Immediately south of the village, by the nineteenth century pond, lies the Vallance: an estate development of detached houses located within the grounds of the old Aymers country house estate. The Vallance bears little relationship with the rest of the village form into which it has been introduced. However, the presence of many *mature trees* softens its impact.

One response to rural poverty and post-war needs was the development of affordable public housing as well as privately funded estate development. The Parish has several examples of housing that has responded to the need for improved and affordable housing stock. Small terrace and semi-detached developments can be found at Vigo, St. Peter's Place, and Kingsdown. St. Peter's Place was designed in a *balanced, uniform and evenly spread way* around a green. Over the years, householders here and throughout the Parish have invested in the upkeep of their homes and gardens. This has led to a reduction in harsh edges and reduced the uniformity of otherwise similar homes in their settings. The harmony that results from thoughtful investment can be broken through the introduction of discordant materials in extensions, porches, windows, and fencing.

St. Peter's Place surrounds a small green that pushes the houses away from the road and opens up a community space. There is a similar development in Kingsdown called "Hunters". The uncharacteristic introduction of front gardens and open spaces to the front of houses can also be found in infilling along the south side of the Greenstreet community.

Towards Tickham, there are a few isolated and distinctive 20th century houses. The scattering of buildings around Nouds is also sympathetically absorbed into the natural form of the surrounding landscape by mature planting and the remaining hedgerows and windbreaks. At Nouds there is a poignant memorial to a British fighter pilot who crashed there in 1941.

Throughout the Parish, one should not lose sight of the importance of the needs of our largest local industry – agricultural production. This has led to a mix of *functional designs and materials in farm buildings* made necessary by the unavoidable economics of farming, which govern cost, husbandry and hygiene requirements.



St Peter's Place, Lynsted

Although fewer people are now directly dependent upon rural employment, the land stewardship offered by local farmers and landowners remains essential to the shape, character and overall community health of Lynsted and Kingsdown. The local communities should find ways of working alongside farmers and landowners to discharge this duty of care. For example, in the maintenance of paths, hedgerows, stiles, and neighbourhood watches to protect machinery, crops and farm buildings.



Buildings and spaces

Dominant themes based on use of local materials

Very broadly, the most obvious impact over time of available materials on the design of basic structures has been:

- Oak timber-framed farm and domestic buildings that have survived from the 16th century and earlier;
- Locally produced red brick became widespread from the 17th century. They are recognisable by their reduced depth and irregular hand-made character, often complemented by examples of the Kent peg-tile roofs that are found throughout the Parish;
- The use of local (e.g. Sittingbourne, Teynham and Conyer) yellow stock bricks from the mid 18th Century with some interesting examples of locally produced fused-brick (burr-brick) in retaining walls in Cellar Hill; and
- Use of yellow-brick with red-brick detailing emerged thereafter and through the 19th Century to the modern day.

Key materials and styles identified within the Parish as a whole, include: wooden feather-edged weatherboarding (traditionally painted or tarred); steeply-pitched roofs clad in Kent peg-tiles or Welsh slate (after the arrival of the railways), often displaying gables decorated with bargeboards; hung tiling; wood framed windows including sash windows; long-straw (and water reed) thatched roofing; mixed elevations and informality; walls and buildings made of local flint (found throughout the Parish); Kentish rag stone and Caen stone (used exceptionally from the 13th Century in Lynsted church and in the 19th Century Kingsdown church); the use of traditional hand-made red bricks (with mixed tones) and clamp-fired yellow brick; and timber-framed structures which include both plaster and brick; garden boundaries of hedgerows.

Lynsted and Norton Primary School, yellow stock brick & red detailing



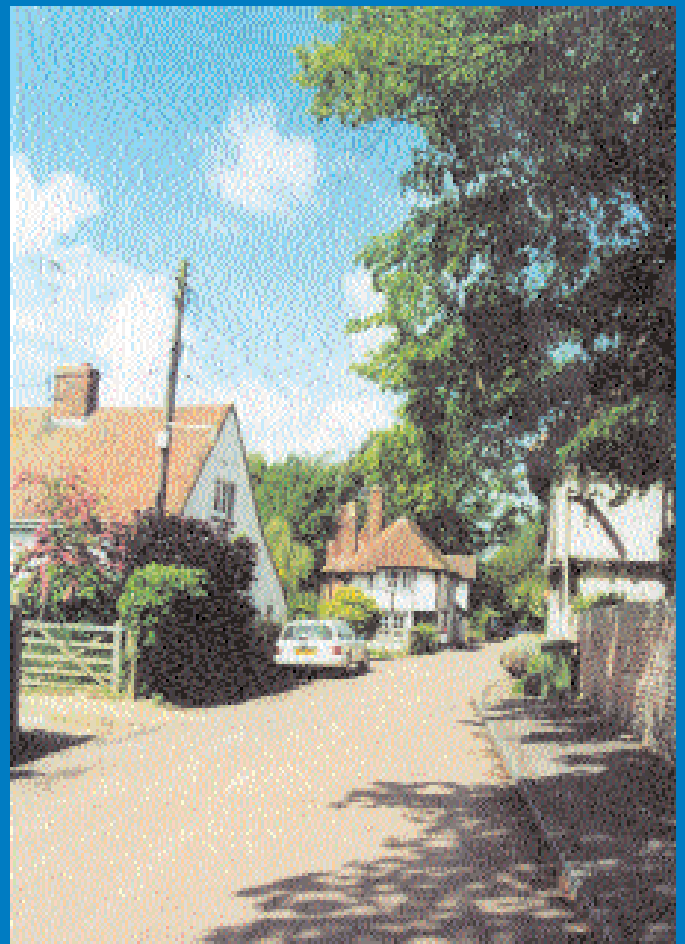
Bumpit, Lyn Valley



The unique identity of “place” is closely tied to key building features – use of traditional building materials is only part of the equation. It is equally important to ensure sympathetic treatment of wood and building surfaces, detailing of windows and doors, planting of native species, and variations in the height of roof-lines. The most important method of preserving local distinctiveness of the Parish is to ensure that infill, new buildings, changes to existing buildings and introduction of street furniture are *in sympathy with appropriate styles and good quality materials*.

Modern intrusions like Velux windows, flat roof extensions, concrete tiles and machine-made bricks have no counterpart in the traditional identity of houses in the Parish. Windows constructed of uPVC contrast markedly with the narrow-featured frames that are traditional to the Parish, throwing out of balance the accent of existing house frontages. *Further details can be found in The Supplementary Planning Guidance part of this document.*

Lynsted village features a closely gathered group of dwellings centred on the Church. There are few open views of the surrounding countryside from houses in the heart of the settlement and a variety of mature deciduous trees enhance the established feel. The visual characteristics of the buildings complement the Church, echoing the Kent peg-tiles and feather-edged weatherboarding to the tower; the flint is replicated in many boundary walls. The older buildings share white-painted plaster, brick and weatherboarding. Use of such traditional materials serves to unify the different periods. The new developments within the village differ markedly in their use of building materials and open spaces between them and the lane.



Ludgate Lane

Church of St. Catherine, Kingsdown



Kingsdown village spreads loosely along its secluded lane with magnificent farmhouses and homes mixed with a small terrace of post-war housing as well as modern farm buildings. The M2 has separated much of the attractive village from the only remaining Anglican Church designed by Edward Welby Pugin (1834-75). This late Decorated style church, adopted by the Redundant Churches Fund in 1989, is constructed of Kentish rag stone with Bath stone dressing. The patterned tiling of its roof is striking.

Traditional materials and windows in London Road



Throughout the Parish there are *tight-knit small settlements* or “hamlets” often surrounding single farms and based on farm cottage style housing. These settlements are surrounded by farmland and can vary from two to three cottages such as at Bumpit to a larger number of houses and cottages such as Erriottwood and Tickham.

The development of the Parish over the last two hundred years has given rise to three significant changes in community forms throughout the Parish, with distinct styles and appearances. The result has been *mixed* and *uneven* in the ways they have tied into traditional materials and styles of the area. Thus, they are characterised as follows:

- *London Road – a representative example of infill development, echoes of which can be found in the villages of Lynsted and Kingsdown;*
- *Estate developments, such as Batteries Close;*
and
- *Executive style housing such as the Vallance, also found scattered around the remainder of the Parish.*



Hamlet around Bogle

The Greenstreet community initially followed the organic and balanced development of Lynsted and Kingsdown. There are many listed and historic buildings along the A2 from The Walnuts to Claxfield. Cellar Hill makes its own unique contribution of a scattering of thatched houses. These early houses anchor the identity of this community as far back as the 15th century.

With disregard to the local history and the *loose linear settlement patterns* of this ancient Parish, sometimes inappropriate and insensitive development has infilled on both sides of London Road. This has disrupted the use of traditional materials and styles to be found there. The traditional layout of housing, so close to the highway, reflects the high premium of rich agricultural land to the rear of the associated “villa” style development of larger houses and small-holder cottages. There are also many examples of unfitting extensions (including dormer extensions and flat roofs) and alterations incorporating materials and styles that are out of keeping with existing buildings.

Modern infilling along London Road



Batteries Close provides estate-style houses around a central play area to the rear of Batteries Terrace. The Close, is important as an example of the improvement of affordable local housing stock. This included the provision of a community space with a children’s play area that was an early example of local authority co-operating with a developer to achieve “planning gain”. The modern estate replaced pre-fabricated housing found on the same site that had begun seriously to deteriorate. Similar “Airey houses”, in Deerton Street and Painters Forstal, remained intact but were faced off using red brick that contains varied tones.

In the case of Batteries Close, the developers missed an opportunity to use sympathetic design, layout and building materials that drew their reference from the wider Parish. The development takes a prominent position and might have benefited from more sympathetic use of building materials and variation in styles. The choice of modern brick, with a high density of colours, has led to a solid bright yellow in contrast to the more discoloured yellows of older hand-made bricks that are present throughout this and neighbouring parishes. Nearby, Vigo Terrace has used the local brick. The impact of developments might have been lessened with the introduction of mature planting.

Yellow brickwork with red brick detailing can also be found throughout the Parish, with some notable examples at its boundary at Tickham where a local builder employed this style of building both here and towards Painters Forstal.

The Vallance developers adopted inappropriately uniform style, in uncharacteristic materials and layout. Their use of large spaces between dwellings is also not characteristic of traditional development in the village. Its impact is managed through the presence of mature trees.

Boundaries

The physical limits of fields and residential land have received a range of treatments. Most common is the use of hedge and tree planting. This has the effect of softening the visual impact of buildings on their surroundings and using nature to draw houses and their gardens into the surrounding countryside. *Mixed planting* also offers benefits to natural habitats of our native species (*see the Supplementary Planning Guidance part of this document for examples of hedging plants and trees common to the area*). The use of estate railings also has its place throughout the Parish. Less sympathetic is the use of barbed wire adjacent to public paths, and larchlap fencing or prefabricated concrete slabs, which tend to impose solid barriers. Non-native and intrusive trees such as Leylandii (Leyland Cypress) and firs should not be used.

The Community is particularly proud of its Millennium Hedge along Cambridge Lane. Its planting involved pupils from the village school and was made possible through the generosity of a local landowner together with the support of Kent Rural Community Council, Rural Action for the Environment and the Association of the Men of Kent and Kentish Men.

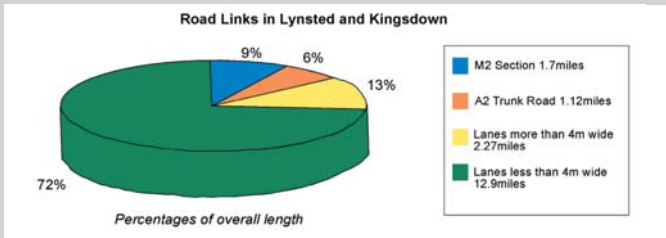


An example of a local builder using brick detailing, Tickham Farm



Highways and traffic

The lanes, paths and bridleways provide the ‘threads’ that bind together the widely spread and sometimes isolated parts of the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown. They also link our and neighbouring communities and should be preserved and maintained. The Parish almost universally values recreational access to the surrounding countryside – this view is given particular importance by those who feel most under threat from the spread of urbanisation from the north.



Roads, lanes and streets

Unclassified narrow country lanes dominate the Parish. There is one stretch of the A2 on the north edge and a stretch of the M2 that cuts through, but is not accessible from, Kingsdown.

Traffic Flow

Excessive speed of traffic has been identified throughout the Parish as one of the most severe pressures on community life, amenity and personal safety. This was emphasised in a recent opinion survey in the Parish. This judgement is confirmed in the Government’s Rural White Paper (2000).



The arterial A2 (London Road) as well as Lynsted Lane (onwards to Doddington) were universally criticised in the community questionnaire for the *speed and volume of its traffic*. Lynsted Lane provides part of a short cut in the area between the A20 and the A2.

Planning for heavy vehicles

It is widely accepted that heavy goods vehicles are an *increasing problem throughout the Parish*. Residents using the roads and pavements feel threatened by the increasing numbers of heavy vehicles. Freight traffic also contributes greatly to noise, vibration, air pollution, and damage to the fabric of the roads and verges, and to trees and older buildings.

In 1996, a CPRE study of Lynsted Lane (which they defined as Teynham to Doddington) concluded that average daily traffic, which stood at 1,872 at that time, was forecast to grow to 5,111 by 2025. The Report draws attention to the adverse impact on tranquillity and the use of lanes for recreational purposes as well as predicting the “loss of rural character”.

Pressures on the margins of lanes and roads

Increasing vehicle numbers, including heavy and large vehicles, threaten most of our highways, especially our narrow lanes. Damage has been inflicted on verges, hedges, pathways, pavements and buildings adjacent to the highways.

The modern love affair with the motorcar has also led to increased pressure for additional parking. The ancient pattern of settlement throughout the Parish often lacks places for off-road parking. The impact of road, lane-side and pavement parking, has been to restrict already difficult road and pedestrian access and to interrupt the flow of traffic along the A2, which builds up localised pollution.

In an attempt to avoid damage to residents’ vehicles, pavement parking has become commonplace along London Road as has the mounting of pavements by lorries and buses passing each other. This has accelerated the deterioration of pavements and represents a hazard to pedestrians. Haphazard parking throughout the Parish also presents hazards to others such as horse riders and cyclists. The relevant authorities should also take measures to help *halt the deterioration of and restore the footways along the A2*. Communities throughout the Parish rely on the services found along London Road, in the community of Greenstreet, and have identified the need to remedy this particular problem as a priority in a recent opinion survey. Hardest hit are those with mobility problems, the elderly (who need unrestricted access to the Age Concern drop-in centre at the Belle Friday Centre), infirm, and parents with young children in pushchairs. Pedestrians are often forced to step off the pavement into the road to avoid obstructions.



Listed building !

Street furniture

Inappropriate furniture acts to disrupt the identity and design coherence of the Parish. The poor standard of planning for street furniture extends to street lamps, signage, bus shelters, litterbins, bollards, benches, and the proliferation of overhead wiring.

There is no evidence that relevant decision-makers have tried to tie in the design of street furniture to adjacent buildings and open spaces. Modern telephone boxes and bus shelters have been positioned without regard to the buildings they are masking. Recently introduced bus-shelters are open to the road, affording no protection to waiting passengers. One shelter has been turned round but only after prolonged petitioning.

Since 1989, the KCC has progressively replaced wood and cast iron road signs in favour of high visibility ones. Recent reporting by CPRE suggests that use of the new high-reflective signs along rural lanes encourages speeding (as does intense lighting levels). This increases inappropriate perceptions of safety when driving along narrow lanes.

Footpaths, bridleways and cycle tracks

The Parish has 9.6 miles of public footpaths. All 1.7 miles of bridleways are found around Kingsdown. There are no cycle ways. Of particular local interest is the picturesque 'Stony Path', which is reputed to have its origins in an early Roman track leading from Cambridge Lane towards Lewson Street.

The community should explore options for partnership with landowners to create needed footways and help **maintain paths and stiles** to improve amenity use of the footpath network.

Lighting

Light pollution takes several damaging forms. "Sky glow" is the result of light which colours and brightens the night sky and reduces the visibility of stars. Low-pressure "orange" lamps, with unsuitable emission characteristics, dominate London Road and their light spills into the homes of residents and across the fields of the Parish. Improvements should include lowering of lamps and their replacement with high-pressure sodium with full cut-off optics. High intensity lights also encourage drivers to believe the roads are safer (at speed) than those with lower levels of lighting. Street lighting elsewhere in the Parish is less intrusive in intensity and design. The Parish and Borough Councils should press developers and residents to adopt a "**dark**" policy to encourage less intrusive light pollution.

Properties also increasingly use **high intensity security lamps**. CPRE has reported that bright security lighting is not always as effective as low-level light because bright lights cause deep shadows that can actually assist in hiding would-be criminals. Often insufficient precautions are taken to reduce the impact of security lighting on neighbouring properties.

Utilities

It is the perception of the community that the infrastructure across the Parish will not accommodate a vast increase of either traffic or population.

The population of the Parish has grown very little over the last two hundred years (peaking in 1921) during which time most of the utilities infrastructure was developed. Water, gas, electricity and sewerage mains and their distribution to houses are in a fragile condition. This is made worse by increasing pressure from heavy traffic leading to soil movement and compaction. Residents have repeatedly complained to the local authorities about the unevenness of the road surface arising from frequent patching which, in turn, leads to increased vibration to properties, and poor drainage.

Pavements throughout the Parish have been subject to frequently inadequate repairs by the utility companies. Car parking on pavements has eroded the surfaces and lowered the kerbs. This threatens adjacent properties with flooding.

One consequence of the pattern of development for our Parish is the weakness of our infrastructure, which is unlikely to support the demands of industrial or estate housing developments without further improvement. The high voltage circuit frequently breaks down in even moderately adverse weather conditions. Concerns over this have been highlighted in responses to the recent Opinion Survey.



Design Guidelines

Lynsted and Kingsdown

Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted by Swale Borough Council 30th April 2002

Lynsted and Kingsdown Supplementary Planning Guidance

This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) provides examples of key local community views. Whilst change is inevitable it need not be destructive and should be based on a clearly informed understanding of the visual nature of the area, and add to, not detract from, the architectural heritage and history of the local community.

The Lynsted Parish Design Statement (which also contains the SPG) draws attention to the importance of detailed design to the enhancement of the unique sense of place for the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown. The Statement reflects the desire of the Community to influence developments of all types in a way that celebrates examples of good design in the use of materials and avoids the intrusion of design principles that compete with the local vernacular and that employ unsympathetic materials. This Supplementary Planning Guidance is intended to assist all developers, decision-makers and property-holders to bring changes that employ contextual designs and that respect environmental concerns.

During the development of the Design Statement, further proposals for potential community action have been identified that fall outside the formal local planning process. For the sake of clarity, those “community action points” have been identified and listed in Annex 2, which does not form part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance.

After a further series of consultations on the text with local Parish Councils and Swale Borough Council, the draft document was considered by Members of the Faversham and Swale East Area Committee of Swale Borough Council on 20th November 2001. Members recommended that, subject to a number of amendments being made to the document, The Executive Committee of the Borough Council be asked to approve the document as supplementary planning guidance. Members of The Executive of Swale Borough Council considered the draft document, together with the recommendation of the Area Committee on 30th January 2002 where it was resolved that the Lynsted and Kingsdown Design Guidelines be adopted as ‘supplementary planning guidance’.

This decision was confirmed at a full meeting of Swale Borough Council on 6th March 2002. Such decisions were made subject to the amendments approved by the Executive Committee being incorporated into the final document. Such changes have been made. Swale Borough Council confirmed the adoption of the Design Guidelines on 30th April 2002.

Procedural Advice to Developers and Householders

1. All development proposals for which planning approval is sought should include a statement explicitly illustrating how the Lynsted Parish Design Statement SPG principles and guidelines will be applied. All proposals should include plan and elevation drawings and supporting photographs to illustrate the application of these guidelines.

Character Analysis

Characteristics to be retained or enhanced

2. The Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown is predominantly a rural one in character based on a long and rich history of sustained agriculture and local trade that has been complemented by the evolution of a largely unspoilt network of fragile lanes (vulnerable to heavy vehicles and traffic) and paths that tie the Parish together.
3. Throughout the history of the Parish, local materials have been employed for building. The use of materials reflects the local abundance of oak, brick clay, long-straw and characteristic use of peg-tiles.
4. The scale, pattern and distribution of buildings has harmonised with local landforms. The richness of the land has led to the characteristic development pattern “one building deep” alongside lanes and roads. This leads to comparatively small plot sizes for most homes in relation to the fields and orchards that surround them.
5. Agriculture has dominated land use for centuries and is most often associated with the early apple, pear and cherry orchards along with later hops. Animal husbandry has been a feature of the landscape throughout the Parish history. There are some remaining and important traditional orchards.
6. The pattern of development has led to nearly all households having uninterrupted views of open farmland in at least one direction with the “countryside” being on the doorstep of all Parishioners. There are also significant areas that are largely unpopulated such as Mintching Wood, Toll Wood, Lyn valley, and large tracts of farmed land throughout giving a strongly rural nature to the Parish

7. The Parish benefits from buildings that are varied in style and type and have largely tied in with surrounding developments in the use of materials, form, mass and scale.
8. The position of the two Parish churches (Lynsted and Kingsdown) provides a visual reference point to the respective communities that can be appreciated from many vantage points. They benefit from the lack of intrusion of contrasting or competing materials and design styles. They provide an important 'touchstone' to the early development of the Parish.
9. Scattered smaller hamlets have evolved around farm holdings, typically estate or workers cottages.
10. Field margins generally retain a patchwork of hedgerows of local species and windbreaks that protect or have protected orchards. These help accentuate the landforms, support diverse habitats and reduce soil erosion.

Design Guidance

General Principles

11. Development must be consistent with the Swale Borough Local Plan and the principles and objectives of Kent Design.
12. Care should be taken to design the layout and density of new developments, extensions and alterations so as to ensure privacy and freedom from excessive noise for residents in surrounding gardens and dwellings.
13. It is essential that traditional buildings and their relationship with surrounding properties and landform, found in the villages, hamlets and scattered farmhouses and residences, should be regarded as 'touchstones' for any future developments and designs. This means that all new developments (including infill, extensions, modifications and street furniture) should draw their architectural concepts and choice of materials from those common to the Parish with particular importance being attached to examples in surrounding buildings and landscape features. New buildings and extensions should also reflect the variations in form, mass, scale and styles of their surroundings. Roof heights, spans and pitches should be in keeping with the variety to be found throughout the Parish. See also paragraphs 20-22.
14. On old buildings, original details should be retained and repaired where feasible. Traditional techniques and sympathetic materials should be used. Special care needs to be taken with extensions and alterations.
15. Local materials and the mixture of architectural styles common to the Parish should be employed in new buildings, thereby avoiding imported and anonymous 'pattern-book' styles of house design that are entirely alien to the area.
16. Shop fronts should not be intrusive or mutilate existing buildings. Standardised and illuminated fascias should be avoided. Opportunities to return to a more traditional style should be encouraged. The south side of London Road is part of a rural settlement, but has become 'urbanised' over time. Efforts should be made to halt and reverse this trend on both sides of London Road. Equally, shops that have been converted to residential use should receive sympathetic treatment to mark their change in use.
17. Signage. Given the rural and historic character of the area, the introduction of poster hoardings should be avoided, whilst other advertisements should be appropriate to their surroundings and avoid a proliferation of signs and repetition of information. Internally illuminated signs should not be permitted. Professionally hand-painted wood ensignage is to be encouraged. External spot lighting may be considered where this can be provided unobtrusively.

18. Features aimed at conserving natural resources such as energy, water and minerals should be encouraged in new building, wherever feasible. New buildings should incorporate space and facilities to encourage the recycling of waste.
19. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of convenient cycle storage space or facilities in the design of all new buildings.

Building Materials

20. Materials should be of the highest quality and selected from those that equal or match the traditional fabric of local buildings in texture, colour and appearance. Where possible, as an environmental issue, materials should not be imported over great distance. Wood should come from sustainable sources where possible. Good bricks and tiles are available locally made from Weald clay and their use is recommended. (Sources of local brick manufacture include: Chelwood Brick Ltd of Sittingbourne; the Funton Factory (Ibstock Building Products Ltd) of Lower Halstow; and Cremer Whiting & Co Ltd of Faversham).
21. Principles of environmental sustainability should be central to all decisions on the choice and source of materials, design, construction and site management.
22. Materials and design characteristics that contribute to the unique sense of place for the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown include:

Materials

- *Wooden feather-edged weatherboarding (especially applied to upper storeys) that is traditionally painted or tarred (plastic boards and sheets should not be used; nor should 'shiplap' boards be used);*
- *Steeply pitched roofs clad in Kent peg-tiles and slate, some display gables decorated with barge boards;*
- *Hung tiling can be seen to be traditional, although not a predominant feature, and relieves excessive uniform brickwork;*
- *Long straw thatch roofs should be retained and repaired using local traditional methods and details. Thatch roofs on new buildings are to be encouraged particularly in long straw but also in water reed. Preference should be given to locally produced thatching materials as an environmental measure;*
- *Flint walls and buildings;*
- *Occasional use of Kentish ragstone;*
- *White-painted structures (including plaster and brick infill to timber-framed buildings);*
- *Use of traditional handmade red bricks (with mixed shades of red) and clamp-fired yellow brick, often using red brick detailing;*
- *Timber-framed structures.*

Design characteristics

- *Mixed elevations and informality (for example, staggered lines of frontages along the lane-side and in groups and the use of chimneys to help break up roof-lines);*
- *Square and roundel oasts with both slate and Kent peg-tile roofs;*
- *Wooden sash and casement windows with careful consideration given to proportion and size of pane (retaining use of small panes of glass and leaded lights where appropriate);*
- *Retain the close relationship of structures with the highway;*
- *Use of mixed hedging plants to mark boundaries in favour of larchlap fencing;*
- *Use of estate railings to retain the open transition between buildings and countryside;*

Materials to be avoided

- *Pebbledash and stone-clad finishes to house frontages;*
- *Concrete tiles;*
- *Concrete kerbs (including their 'urbanising' use around islands and at road junctions);*
- *uPVC windows;*
- *Extensive use of bitumen Macadam.*

23. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to use of planning conditions on new build development to control further development changes.

Development Patterns

24. “Sensitive edges” identified in the Statement shall be safeguarded against any further development. The village edge facing the Lyn valley should be regarded as a “sensitive edge” against further development beyond a line taking in the Swedish Houses, the school, St Peter’s Place, and the Vallance. Safeguarding of these sensitive edges should be respected if the whole character of the village of Lynsted, as defined from its easterly approaches, is to be maintained and the largely unspoilt Lyn valley is not to be further encroached upon.
25. A second “sensitive edge” has been identified along the south of London Road (A2), which provides a logical boundary to the current extent of development, protecting against encroaching urbanisation pressures and loss of identity, including the traditional orchards found there.
26. The settlements in Lynsted Parish are for the most part along the two major routes and 'one building deep'. Any new development should continue this tradition of having the countryside on the doorstep. Where the dominant pattern in the locality is for houses to be built adjacent to highways, this pattern should be respected (examples are most marked in London Road and Lynsted Village but can be found throughout the Parish).
27. The buildings and settlement patterns of the Parish within its landscape setting have given the Parish its own 'sense of place'. New development should be in keeping with this, and make a positive contribution to the environment and community.
28. Consistent with the Borough Local Plan, new-build backland development (away from existing highways) should be avoided throughout the Parish, as being inconsistent with the traditional layout of residential and farming development.
29. The traditional settlement pattern for the Parish has no counterpart for “estate style” development. This modern form of development should be avoided.
30. Layouts should be designed to reflect traditional local treatments of boundaries such as walls, fences, verges and use of traditional North Kentish hedgerow and shelterbelt planting.
31. Adequate off-street car parking should be provided for all new developments. Blocks of garages that are isolated from the homes they serve should be avoided.
32. Plot size and layout should be appropriate to the surrounding development pattern common to the Parish.

33. Provision should be made for a people-friendly network of safe routes within new developments, and between them and the existing settlements, for the benefit of non-car users such as children, those with pushchairs, wheel chairs, bicycles or for those with limited mobility.
34. Sympathetic use of trees, planters and street furniture should be employed to discourage driving and parking on pavements.

Landscape

35. Full advantage should be taken of the landform when considering new developments, particularly when visible in long views. Attention should be given to the impact of new building on landmark features such as the Lyn valley and to sensitive views within and out of settlements.
36. Two sensitive edges have been identified as being of particular importance to the preservation of community distinctiveness. In the case of the south edge of the A2, open views over agricultural land should be safeguarded and in the case of the eastern edge of Lynsted village the Lyn valley should be safeguarded. Development beyond these limits should be avoided, as set out in the Borough Plan.
37. Existing green and other open spaces should be preserved. Any significant new development should incorporate green spaces and recreation areas.
38. Examples of traditional orchards should be preserved, restored or introduced.
39. Designs for new development should provide details of hard and soft landscaping. A variety of appropriate (preferably native and traditional to North Kent) trees, hedging and border plants should be used. A sustainable maintenance plan should be provided as part of the design, where appropriate.
40. Shelterbelts, hedgerows and other borders should be preserved and enhanced throughout the Parish as an amenity feature and in support of biodiversity in local wildlife and flora. Examples of boundary plants that we recommend and are common to the Parish include: buckthorn, common juniper, crab apple, dogwood, elder, guelderrose, holly, spindle, wild privet, sloe, hazelnut/cobnut, blackthorn, bramble, damson, blackberry, broom, dewberry, dog-rose, field rose, gooseberry, gorse and raspberry. Typical trees include alder, ash, beech, common whitebeam, English elm, field maple, hornbeam, lime, pedunculate and sessile oak, poplar, rowan, silver birch, wayfaring tree, wild cherry, wych elm, and yew. These recommendations are suited also for use in gardens and as part of landscaping schemes. Trees to avoid include non-native species such as fir trees, the Leyland Cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*), pine, and weeping willow (except by open water). A problem plant in the Parish is hawthorn. We recommend the indigenous hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and advise against non-indigenous varieties as they are reputed to harbour fireblight, which represents a serious threat to apple growers.

Highways and Paths

41. Vehicle parking and movement should be addressed in all development proposals in the context of the principles of design and layout identified in the Lynsted Parish Design Statement for the area of the proposed development.
42. New developments should not lead to loss or erosion of character of existing rural lanes and pathways. Existing lanes are an essential characteristic of the Parish and cannot sustain significant increases in traffic, especially heavy vehicles.
43. Street furniture should always tie in with the adjacent buildings and spaces in order to emphasise its essentially rural nature. Modern intrusions such as concrete bollards, metal-panelled fences and illuminated advertising on bus-shelters should be avoided. Good examples include use of cast iron bollards and 'traditional' forms of street lighting using cast iron designs. The brick bus-shelter in Kingsdown is an example of traditional design and materials preferable to steel and plastic.
44. On sites on approaches to settlements, developments should use appropriate signage with the avoidance of visual "clutter". Suburban influences and spread (e.g. sprawl of industrial and residential developments) should be resisted along the approaches to the Parish and inside the Parish.
45. Care should be exercised in minimising the number and size of signs throughout the Parish to avoid visual clutter. The rural nature of the Parish should be reinforced by the reintroduction of traditional wooden and cast iron road and path signs together with the introduction of signs showing names of lanes.
46. Consideration should be given to planting hedgerows along the weather-side of public footpaths (to protect paths from prevailing direction of rain and wind – generally from the south and west).

47. "Urbanisation" of rural lanes with, e.g. kerbstones and other features alien to the countryside should be avoided.
48. There are opportunities to improve pedestrian safety in the vicinity of the Village school. Consideration should be given to the development of adequate and safe pathways alongside Lynsted Lane in consultation with local landowners. Although there is no space for a pull-in for buses outside the school, there may be space further along the lane in order to reduce obstructions in line of sight and passing traffic. As a last resort, use of flashing warning lights on the approaches may improve safety but would not fit in with the surroundings.
49. Effective kerb heights should be reinstated along the A2 and taken into account with all new developments.

How the Statement was developed in consultation with the Community

In 1996, the Countryside Agency launched a national strategy to encourage local communities to publish statements that captured the detailed design characteristics that make their communities unique. The publication on 28 November 2000 of the Rural White Paper ("Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for Rural England") further reinforces the importance of local design statements in national planning strategy. The White Paper wants "people living in rural areas (to be) fully involved in developing their community, safeguarding its valued features, and shaping the decisions that affect them ... to identify key facilities and services, to set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how its distinctive character and features can be preserved". Throughout the development of a statement for the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown, support has been received from planning and conservation officers of Swale Borough Council.

The response of Lynsted and Kingsdown

In April 1999, Lynsted Parish Council first raised the idea of a Parish Design Statement. The scope of the Statement was defined as Lynsted and Kingsdown in recognition of plans to join the two parishes in 2003. On 17th January 2000, a large group of Parishioners attended a public meeting to hear about Design Statements for the first time; 35 of whom signed up to declare their interest and skills on offer. Several volunteers met formally on 2nd February 2000 to carry the project forward encouraged by two donations of £100 each from local residents.

Over the following twelve months, consultation, fundraising and awareness activities included: an Open Day held at the village primary school (20 May 2000); a multimedia display at the Church Flower Festival (2-4 June 2000); a boundary walk and picnic taking in the whole of the Parish (6 August 2000); an exhibition at the Church Fete (28 August 2000); a public training day, supported by the European Regional Development Fund through the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (2 September 2000); and a public Character Workshop (21 October 2000) supported by funding from the Parish Council, Swale Borough Council and the active and continuing participation by our then Mayor and Mayoress. In January 2001, a questionnaire was issued to all households in the Parish of Lynsted and Kingsdown and relevant organisations outside the community. Drafts of the Statement were also placed in public places and for final consultation, an open morning held on 2nd June 2001. Following this consultation with the Community, the Core Group met on 24th June 2001 to discuss comments and log decisions made on whether those comments should lead to amendments to the text or adoption into the Community Action Plan (Annex 2). After a further series of consultations on the text with local Parish Councils and Swale Borough Council, the draft text was agreed by the Core Group on 15th October 2001.

Awareness was also raised through regular updates in the monthly Parish Newsletter and through local press coverage, and by writing to a wider group of more than 100 individuals and organisations.

This is the first Village or Parish Design Statement produced in the Borough of Swale.

General Development Criteria

Policy G1

All development proposals will be expected to:

1. accord with the policies and proposals of the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise;
2. have regard to the characteristics and features of the site and locality;
3. avoid an unacceptable impact on the natural and built environment;
4. be well sited and of a scale, design and appearance appropriate to the location with a high standard of landscaping;
5. cause no demonstrable harm to residential amenity and other sensitive neighbouring uses;
6. provide convenient and safe pedestrian (including disabled) and vehicular access and avoid any unacceptable consequences in highway and infrastructure terms; and
7. provide parking and servicing facilities sufficient for the traffic likely to be generated.

Land for new housing development

Policy H1

Permission for new residential development will be granted for sites:

1. shown as such on the Proposals Map; and
2. within the built-up area boundary in accordance with policies H3, H4 and H5.

Redevelopment sites

Policy H3

The redevelopment of industrial, commercial, or other land for residential purposes will be permitted provided this would accord with Policy B2 and the new use does not conflict with other Local Plan policies, and the development:

1. meets normal residential standards;
2. does not undermine or significantly harm built or nature conservation interests;
3. does not adversely affect the quality of the environment and where appropriate takes the opportunity to improve it;
4. protects areas of open space which contribute to the quality of the environment;
5. has regard to the provisions of policies H4, H5 and H10 of the Local Plan, if appropriate; and
6. satisfies appropriate criteria in Policy G1.

Small sites

Policy H4

Within defined built-up areas, proposals for the development of small sites for up to four dwellings will be permitted provided:

1. they provide a beneficial use for derelict, disused or waste land, or involve the use of land currently occupied by an inappropriate use in a residential area;
2. they do not involve the loss of a locally important area of open space;
3. they do not involve the loss of larger properties and their gardens;
4. they do not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity;
5. they have adequate access and car parking provision; and
6. the appropriate criteria in Policy G1 are satisfied.

Infilling

Policy H5

Within defined built-up areas proposals for infill development (i.e. the completion of an otherwise substantially built-up frontage by one or two dwellings) will be permitted provided:

1. it will provide a beneficial use for derelict, disused, waste land, or involves the change of use of an inappropriate activity in a residential area;
2. there will be no significant loss of trees, habitats, site features and green space;
3. the free flow and safety of traffic and pedestrians will not be adversely affected;
4. the appearance of new buildings will enhance the character of the surrounding area by their scale, design, materials and landscaping; and
5. appropriate criteria in Policy G1 are satisfied.

Extension to, and replacement of, dwellings in the built-up area

Policy H8

Proposals for the replacement of dwellings within the built-up area will be considered under Policy H3

Subject to compliance with other policies in the Plan, proposals for extensions to dwellings within the built-up area will be granted planning permission.

Extension to, and replacement of, dwellings in the Countryside

Policy H9

The Borough Council will permit the appropriate rebuilding or extension of an existing dwelling in the countryside where proposals:

1. involve a building in residential use;
2. are for a new dwelling appropriate in scale, design and materials to the locality;
3. involve a modest extension or replacement building which is of an appropriate scale, mass and appearance;
4. do not adversely affect a building of special architectural or historic interest, or a building which is itself a particularly significant feature in the landscape; and
5. the appropriate criteria in Policy G1 are satisfied.

Affordable housing in rural areas

Policy H11

In rural areas, at sites where planning permission for residential development would not normally be granted, the Borough Council will grant planning permission for schemes that are specifically and wholly intended to meet the local housing needs of the community, provided the promoter of a scheme demonstrates:

1. the local needs exist;
2. the needs cannot otherwise be met in that rural area;
3. the development is of a size and type suitable to meet the needs identified;
4. the site is well related, in scale, location and siting, to a village and its services, including public transport; and
5. there are no overriding highway, landscape, agricultural land, listed building, conservation area, or nature conservation objections.

The appropriate Parish Council should be fully involved at an early stage in any proposal, as their support will be an important consideration in deciding on the proposal.

The Borough Council will, where necessary, seek to ensure through planning conditions and appropriate legal agreements, that the dwellings so provided remain genuinely available to meet the needs of those who are unable to afford a property on the open market and will, where appropriate, involve the housing associations at an early stage.

Protection of the countryside

Policy E9

The countryside of the Borough, which is all the land falling outside the defined built-up area boundaries, will be protected for its own sake. Development in this area will not be granted planning approval unless:

1. it is demonstrated to be reasonably necessary to agriculture, forestry, or the winning or import of minerals; or
2. it essentially demands a rural location, or it is considered by the Local Planning Authority to be appropriate in a rural location, in accordance with other policies in the Plan; or
3. it is the re-use or adaptation of an existing rural building; or
4. it relates to development which is essential to meet the needs of local communities, and which cannot be accommodated satisfactorily within the defined built-up area; or
5. it consists of the acceptable re-use or redevelopment of the existing built-area of redundant institutional complexes; or
6. it relates to the acceptable rebuilding, or modest extension, of a dwelling currently in residential use in an appropriate location and complies with Policy H9; or
7. it is for the provision of public or institutional uses for which the rural location is justified; or
8. it is a site allocated in the Local Plan; and
9. appropriate criteria in Policy G1 are satisfied.

In the case of farm diversification proposals, regard is given to policies B5 and B7.

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy E13

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Proposals Map, will be afforded long-term protection. The Borough Council will give priority to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty (including landscape, wildlife and geological features) over other planning considerations. Proposals within the AONB will be weighed against their importance in securing the economic and social well-being of the area. Major industrial and commercial development will not be permitted unless there is a proven national interest and no alternative sites.

Trees

Policy E18

The Borough Council will seek the protection of important trees in the local landscape. Development affecting trees shall be in accordance with policies E19 to E21 and will be permitted where trees can be integrated successfully into the development, or where the replacement with a younger specimen would not result in a significant deterioration of local amenity, landscape, or nature conservation value.

On new developments the Borough Council will require a suitable level of planting.

Existing Woodlands

Policy E20

The Borough Council will seek to protect areas of woodland, particularly Ancient Woodland, and will seek to establish appropriate management measures.

Orchards

2.4.48 A particular feature of the Borough's landscape is provided by traditional fruit orchards. Many of the orchard trees are now mature and are extremely attractive, particularly in blossom. Regrettably, significant numbers are being replaced with smaller growing species or lost through grubbing-out. The Countryside Agency's Countryside Stewardship Scheme will, in some instances, be able to influence the retention and management of some of these orchards.

2.4.49 The Borough Council has limited opportunities to influence the retention of these areas. Where development involves the loss of part, or possibly all, of an orchard, some continued representation of the orchard will be sought.

Hedges

Policy E22

Existing hedges should be protected in new development and whenever appropriate the Borough Council will require new hedges to be planted as part of landscaping schemes, using appropriate native species. The Borough Council will also seek their preservation elsewhere.

Nature Conservation outside Designated Sites

Policy E30

The Borough Council will seek to protect currently undesignated sites and features which have a nature conservation interest. Development proposals involving such areas will normally only be permitted if there is a need for the development which outweighs the nature conservation interest and, where appropriate, the development incorporates or retains as much of the nature conservation interest as possible. Where possible, development proposals should include provision for the repair, creation and management of features.

Conservation Areas

Policy E36

When considering development within or adjacent to Conservation Areas the Borough Council will pay special attention to ensure that:

- 1.** the character or appearance of the area is preserved or enhanced;
- 2.** a high standard of design is achieved;
- 3.** the scale, mass and form are compatible with adjacent buildings and their setting; and
- 4.** appropriate criteria in Policy G1 are satisfied.

Policy E37

The Borough Council will seek to retain unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area and, in the absence of special circumstances, will not permit demolition where either would be harmed.

In addition, when considering proposals for demolition in a Conservation Area, the Borough Council will take account of:

1. the cost of maintaining and repairing the building in relation to its importance and the value derived from its use;
2. the adequacy of efforts to continue the building in an acceptable use;
3. the merits of alternative proposals for the site; and
4. where appropriate, whether there are acceptable and detailed plans for redevelopment.

Infilling and conservation character

Policy E38

In the villages of Borden, Bredgar, Doddington, Hartlip, Lynsted, Newnham and Rodmersham Green, proposals for infilling and small site development must have particular regard to the conservation of the built environment, in addition to the criteria contained in policies H4 and H5.

Listed Buildings

Policy E39

Proposals affecting a listed building, or its setting, will only be permitted if the character of the building and its setting are maintained and preserved and they:

1. are of appropriate scale, and respect the character of the building, its setting, surroundings and historic integrity;
2. preserve those features which are of architectural or historic merit;
3. are of a high standard of design and use appropriate materials; and
4. satisfy appropriate criteria in Policy G1.

Policy E40

Proposals for a change of use of a listed building will be permitted where:

1. the proposed new use is the use for which the building was originally constructed; or
2. the proposed new use is not the original use and the original use is not practicable or is not appropriate.

In all cases it will be necessary to ensure that the character and setting of the building are not adversely affected, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses are preserved, and that any alterations to the building associated with the change of use accord with Policy E43.

Policy E41

The Borough Council will seek the protection of all Listed Buildings.

The demolition of Grade I and II* buildings will be wholly exceptional, requiring the strongest justification.

The total, or part, demolition of a Listed Building will only be permitted provided convincing evidence has been submitted showing that:

1. real efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or viable new uses and have failed;
2. redevelopment would produce substantial planning benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition; and
3. the cost of maintaining and repairing the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its continued use.

If, as a last resort, demolition is considered appropriate, arrangements will be required to allow access to the building prior to demolition to make a record of it.

Kent Design - A Guide to Sustainable Development March 2000

All the Local Authorities in Kent published this document, adopted by Swale Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance, jointly. Its purpose is to promote sustainability and good design in Kent. Its aim is to encourage development that safeguards what is of value whilst enriching the environment for future generations.

Kent Downs AONB Guidelines

This is summarised below and includes objectives from the Kent Downs AONB Management Strategy, which is endorsed by Swale Borough Council.

All developments should be in accordance with national planning guidance for AONBs as set out in Planning Policy Guide Note 7 (PPG7). The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 has strengthened these guidelines and local authorities and all statutory undertakers now have a statutory duty to show due regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB.

The CROW Act 2000 also provides for the same assessment of major projects in AONBs as in National Parks. Major development projects must be shown to be in the public interest. Their consideration should include an assessment of need, the cost of and scope for developing elsewhere and any detrimental effect on the environment and the landscape.

All developments should enhance landscape character and natural beauty through the removal or amelioration of unsightly structures and sites.

All developments should promote the recognition and reinforcement of local character and distinctiveness in the design, scale, setting and materials used in new development in the AONB.

Kent Thames Gateway Landscape Assessment (1996)

The VDS Group agrees with the Kent Thames Gateway Landscape Assessment (1996), which states that the main priorities within the "Fruit Belt" must be to provide long-term conservation and enhancement of areas of nature conservation and landscape value. Elsewhere the priority must be to restore the more traditional fruit belt character and to reduce the effects of intrusive development. Strategic landscape priorities include:

- *The maintenance of a predominantly rural character to the landscape of the Fruit Belt;*
- *The conservation and enhancement of areas of importance for nature conservation and features of the traditional farmed landscape;*
- *The promotion of major woodland and shelterbelt planting and the restoration of landscape features, especially orchards, shelterbelts and hedgerows, in denuded parts of the landscape;*
- *The careful siting, design and integration of any new development so that it does not intrude unnecessarily or significantly exacerbate or extend existing visual impacts; and*
- *Improve integration of existing roads, buildings and urban edges by strategic and appropriate planting.*

MAFF, England Rural Development Programme 2000-2006: Executive Summary.

Overall characteristics of the South East have been given by MAFF (now DEFRA) as:

- *High quality landscape (about a third classified as AONB) is important to those who live or work in, or visit, the region;*
- *Vulnerability of the traditional farming practices which underpin this landscape;*
- *Wide diversity of lowland wildlife habitats, including chalk rivers, ancient woodland, wood pastures, downland, heath and coast; the region has the highest proportion of woodland area in England, but it is an under-managed resource*
- *Densely populated and highly developed region, with significant development pressures on the countryside;*
- *Areas and pockets of rural deprivation and isolation in a generally prosperous region.*

Other documents

There are nine existing SPG Guides already adopted by Swale Borough Council.

1. *The Conversion of Buildings into Flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation.*
2. *Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers.*
3. *The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings.*
4. *The Design of Shop Fronts, Signs and Advertisements.*
5. *Designing an Extension – Guide to Householders.*
6. *Planting on New Developments – A Guide to Developers.*
7. *The Erection of Stables and Keeping Horses.*
8. *Conservation Areas.*
9. *Kent Design – ‘A Guide to Sustainable Development’, March 2000.*

Other relevant documents include:

- *Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Strategy;*
- *KCC Rural Lanes Study;*
- *KCC Advisory Lorry Route Map for Kent.*

Community Action Plan

Annex 2

This Community Action Plan identifies areas raised by the Community as being of particular importance to the unique sense of place of the parish, but which fall outside the formal planning processes for land use covered by supplementary planning guidance. Nevertheless, they raise important contextual issues which should be borne in mind as background information during the planning process. These have found expression in the Opinion Survey completed by residents and businesses of Lynsted and Kingsdown.

The Communities in the Parish of Lynsted may also regard what follows as a summary of potential areas for future lobbying action with suggested “partners” and “targets” for lobbying action.

The Community with Lynsted Parish Council and Swale Borough Council

1. Some local landowners have taken advantage of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme to help restore hedgerows on their land and the community, in partnership with landowners and Swale Borough Council, should further encourage this development for hedges and orchards.
2. More consideration should be given to planting of trees and use of planters along the A2. This view was very strongly represented in the Opinion Survey of the Parish.
3. The Parish Council in conjunction with others should pursue the development and adoption of an attractive and distinct Parish Gateway sign (e.g. Tunstall’s recent project) employing natural materials for road and path signs.
4. Swale Borough Council to be encouraged to develop policies for Areas of Special Control of Advertisements (ASCAs) with a general presumption against advertising and a complete ban on advertising hoardings, balloon advertising and certain illuminated advertisements in the Parish of Lynsted.
5. The Parish Council should take the lead in ensuring that the correct road and lane names are adopted throughout the Parish and are not imposed wrongly by outside bodies. For example, “Greenstreet” (as one word) refers to a hamlet taking in parts of Cellar Hill, London Road, and Station Road. The lane between the A2 and Doddington end of the Parish, begins as Lynsted Lane, becomes Lynsted Street and thereafter is unnamed. The length of lane between Erriotwood Corner and Ludgate Lane is “Erriot Wood” (two words). “Kingsdown Street” extends through to the end of the houses in Kingsdown. [With thanks to research by David Bage]
6. The Parish and Borough Councils should be encouraged to reinstate recycling bins and other waste recycling projects in the Parish taking account of the impact of noise and traffic.
7. Transport and Planning Authorities should be encouraged to work together to avoid contradictory decisions. New business development should be encouraged by our local authority to locate in areas with direct access to a motorway link.

8. Consideration should be given by the Borough Council to provision of dog litterbins throughout the Parish in order to reduce the impact of dog fouling.
9. The Parish Council should encourage residents to design and locate external lighting, including private security lights, to reduce 'skyglow' and unnecessary overspill into neighbouring properties.
10. Consideration should be given by the Parish Council to the introduction of path-maps at strategic entry points to the system of paths and bridleways and on Parish notice boards.
11. Consideration should be given by the Parish Council to the introduction of a Parish Notice Board on London Road
12. Some consideration should be given to the development of a local nature reserve.

The Community with the Highways Authorities and the Department for Transport – drawing in Swale Borough Council and Parish Councils where appropriate.

13. Local authorities should designate 'quiet areas' where lorries are prohibited in order to protect the tranquil nature of our rural community. This might manage some of the pressures on our community. So too would lower speed limits. All Kent and Swale Council departments should work together with the local communities to produce a traffic management plan.
14. Early opportunities should be taken to redesign lighting along London Road in order to reduce light trespass into properties. Highway authorities should be encouraged to replace existing lamps employing suitable 'low cut-off' emission characteristics. In consultation with residents, the authorities should improve design characteristics to harmonise with surrounding buildings and open spaces. Imaginative use of lower light levels should be explored along the A2 to discourage speeding and the illusion of safety. This should form part of coherent traffic management strategy along the A2.
15. Relevant authorities should work toward the objective of reducing the speed limit along the length of Lynsted Lane between London Road and Lynsted Village to 30 mph.
16. Double yellow lines should be introduced in built up areas where bottlenecks exist (including the very narrow stretch outside Lynsted church that also suffers from restricted line of sight). Restrictions should be enforced, especially along London Road.
17. Highway authorities should reinstate effective kerb heights along the A2.
18. Highways and local authorities should ensure regular maintenance and reinstatement of pavements after utility and other excavations have been made.
19. Highways and local authorities should ensure regular maintenance and reinstatement of metalled road-surfaces throughout the Parish.
20. Paths should be protected from fly-tipping and motorcycles by introduction of wooden stiles and wooden chicanes.

The Community and Swale Borough Council with Kent County Council

21. The Borough Council should encourage widespread circulation of the "Advisory Lorry Route Map for Kent" provided by Kent County Council.
22. Consideration should be given to the development of a defined network of trunk roads and motorways in the county for Heavy Goods Vehicles.
23. Kent County Council should be encouraged to lift their restrictions on light goods vehicles using their waste disposal sites.
24. Consideration should be given to the provision of cycle ways and links to local cycle routes and towards the National Cycle Route. For example, a "Toucan" crossing at, or near to, the junction between the A2 and Station Road.
25. Consideration should be given to the use of remote cameras to minimise vandalism in public spaces.
26. The community strongly believe that no further telecommunications masts should be erected in the Parish. It was felt that further structures of this kind were inappropriate to the Parish.

Householder Guidance

PREPARE YOUR OWN 'DESIGN ASSESSMENT'

If you are considering altering the exterior of your property, changing any external detail of the building, its paintwork, signs, garden or surrounds then:-

1. Look at its frontage from some distance. Note down the most distinctive features and, separately, those that seem to be more recent and out of character with the building and surrounding properties; perhaps take some photographs.
2. Now stand right in front of the property and do the same; but this time study the details of the windows, doors, eaves and so forth.
3. Repeat these processes for each elevation or aspect of the property after studying the guidance given in this Design Statement.
4. Now think about the changes you have in mind. Consider whether they could prejudice the distinctive characteristics and details that you have noted down. If so, examine other ways of meeting your requirements - but which will conserve this irreplaceable heritage.

A policy of minimal intervention and simplicity of design is nearly always appropriate.

5. Next check whether the changes you now envisage will assist in removing any of the uncharacteristic features and details you have noted.
6. Finally, go to the Borough Council, go to your builder or architect and ask whether they agree with your Design Assessment or can suggest any improvements to it.

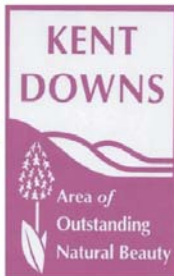
Separate supplementary planning guidance are available from Swale Borough Council on, for example, listed buildings, shop fronts, traditional farm buildings, and extensions. See list at end of **Annex 1**.

Based on Cartmel Design Statement

Thank you for helping to conserve the heritage of Lynsted and Kingsdown.



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Lynsted Parish Council

