

Shepway District Council

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



LYMPNE



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The authors gratefully acknowledge the contributions and assistance of the following individuals and organisations:

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All stakeholders who contributed feedback for this appraisal

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 A conservation area (CA) is, by law, an area of special architectural and historic interest. The purpose of this appraisal is to help us understand why Lympne is special and provide a framework for keeping it that way. Its character, or specialness, needs to be defined. What is happening to it needs to be documented and analysed. What should happen in the future needs to be celebrated, guided and well managed.
- 2 This appraisal forms one of a series of 14 such appraisals, commissioned by Shepway District Council. Original designation came into effect on 12^h March 1971.
- 3 This review of the CA has been undertaken using the methodology of the English Heritage consultative '*Guidance on conservation area appraisals*', 2005. Annual reviews and 5 yearly updating are recommended. A companion guide, '*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*', recommends a procedure to follow the appraisal.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the process of assessment, definition or revision of boundaries and formulation of proposals for CA's as well as the identification and protection of listed buildings. Authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a CA, or in the case of listed buildings, to have special regard for their preservation in the exercise of their powers under the Planning Acts.
- 5 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 15, for local and other public authorities, property owners, developers, amenity bodies and the public, sets out Government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, CA's and other elements of the historic environment. Shepway Council's District Plan includes its statutory policies for implementing the Acts and applying the PPG. This Appraisal should be taken into account when considering, applying for or determining planning or listed building applications within the CA.
- 6 The underlying objective of the relevant legislation and guidance is the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of CA's. Any proposed development which conflicts with that objective should normally expect to be refused. PPG 15 and local policy support a presumption in favour of preservation of any building or object which is considered to make a positive contribution to the character of a CA. At the same time, the need to accommodate change which respects or reinforces the character of the area in order to maintain its vitality is recognised. Regard must also be had to the requirements of other national guidance, including PPG16 covering archaeology and PPS 1, which includes policies on sustainable development and urban design.

- 7 Many local planning policies, not just design and conservation, can affect what happens in a CA. For example, policies on sustainable development, meeting housing needs, affordable housing, landscape, biodiversity, energy efficiency, transport, people with disabilities, employment, town centres and many others can all influence development and the quality of the environment in CA's. However, policies concerned with design quality and character generally take on greater importance in CA's. The adopted District Plan's chapter on Built Environment covers conservation and design matters. The key policies of this chapter state:

POLICY BE3

- 8 When considering new CA's or reviewing existing CA's the following criteria will be taken into account:

The area is:

- a. of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance;
- b. includes sufficient buildings of historic and/or architectural interest, listed or unlisted, to give a strong character;
- c. includes sufficient good quality hard and/or soft landscape;
- d. shows strong relationships between buildings, and buildings and open spaces that create a sense of place;
- e. one which either illustrates local architectural development or an area of one architectural period which remains largely in its original condition.

POLICY BE4

- 9 The District Planning Authority will:
- a. refuse CA Consent for the demolition of buildings which contribute to the character or appearance of a CA;
 - b. refuse proposals for infill or backland development which would adversely affect the character of a CA;
 - c. require the height, scale, form and materials of new development, including alterations or extensions to existing buildings, to respect the character of CA's;
 - d. seek to retain materials, features and details of unlisted buildings or structures which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of CA's;
 - e. seek to retain the historic patterns, plot boundaries, building lines, open spaces, footways, footpaths and kerblines which are essential to the character or appearance of CA's;
 - f. protect trees and hedgerows which enhance both the setting and character of CA's.
- 10 Other policies dealing with historic or built environment matters are BE 1, 2 and 5-19.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

- 11 Greater restrictions on “permitted development” apply in CA’s than elsewhere. In CA’s an Article 4 Direction in force further restricts householder development without planning permission as well as the erection of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure. Anyone contemplating alterations, extensions or new building should familiarise themselves with the policies set out above and consult the Council’s Planning Department for advice on how to apply for permission and whether the proposal is likely to be acceptable.

BOUNDARIES

- 12 The map in Appendix 2 indicates the present boundary of Lympne CA. Located in a small hamlet set back from the main Aldington Road (B2067), the northern boundary encompasses a small cluster of C18th and C19th dwellings. It continues a narrow route south along The Street, gradually widening out to the east to encircle the ancient core of Lympne, bounded by the escarpment to the south. To the west the boundary aligns the perimeter of the residential plots that back on to fields, continuing along the edge of the escarpment and skirting the curtilage of the churchyard of St Stephen’s before tailing back in a north west direction along the edge of the recreation ground.

SUMMARY of SPECIAL INTEREST

Location & setting

- 13 Lympne, located in South East Kent, is situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This designation reflects the fact that much of the area is the geological and ecological continuation of the famous North Downs. The village is relatively small and one with few shops. It does, however, maintain a post office, primary school, a hairdressers and public house. Modern suburban housing has not enhanced this historic village.



- 14 The CA encompasses the ancient core and enjoys a secluded setting back from the B2067, occupying an impressive vantage point on top of cliffs. Wide ranging views overlook the English Channel, with Hythe to the east and the Royal Military Canal and Romney Marsh spreading out below towards Dungeness in the south. On clear days France can be seen in the far distance.
- 15 Stone Street, a Roman road (now the B2068), leads due north from Lympne towards Canterbury, linking with the A261 Hythe Road to the east. This in turn merges with the A259 coast road towards Folkestone. The A20 to the north west, leads to Ashford approximately 11 miles distant.
- 16 Lympne has good connections for national and international travel. Westenhanger Station, approximately 3 miles to the north of the village is on the South Eastern Main Line and 65 miles south east of London's Charing Cross. The M20 motorway connects with Ashford International Station and the Channel Tunnel high-speed rail link brings the Kent coast and Northern France within commuting distance of London. Inevitably, development pressure is increasing as a result.

Landscape setting & geology

- 17 The beauty of the parish lies in its diverse and contrasting mix of physical features. The area is formed of Upper Greensand, Gault clay, Lower Greensand and Wealden clay. The cliff line at Lympne is formed almost entirely in Weald Clay and capped with overlying units of limestone known as the Hythe Beds. This limestone is commonly referred to as Kentish ragstone which is prevalent in so many of the buildings in the area. Landslides have been a frequent occurrence since Roman times, with the limestone and clay sliding over one another, aided by several streams outing from the escarpment.



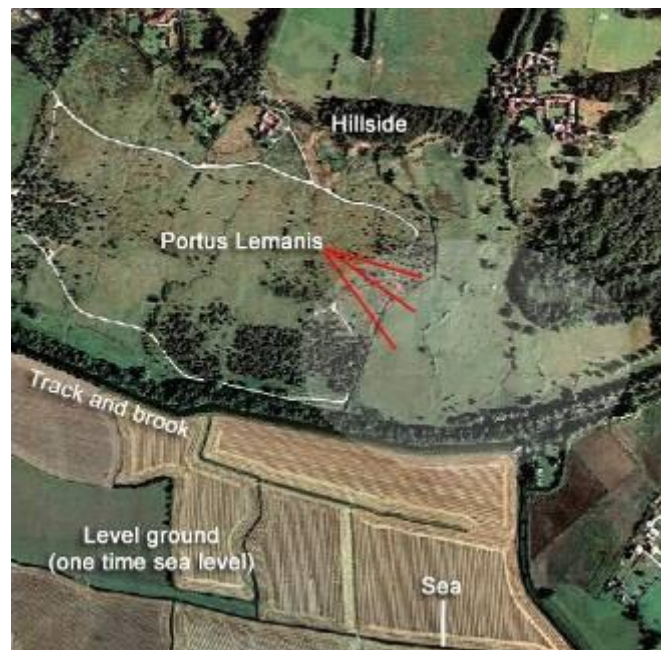
The limestone and clay escarpment with the ruins of the Roman fort at its base

- 18 The area of Marsh from the base of the escarpment to the Royal Military Canal is a site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In several parts of the Marsh below, peat beds of still recognizable forest matter have been found, indicating that in recent geological times, the land was wooded and therefore above sea level.

Beach sand lies above the peat, indicating a time when there was seashore along the foot of the greensand cliffs, which skirt the Marsh. This must have followed a sinking and drowning of the land. Above the sand, there is the alluvial sediment, which gives the Marsh its famed fertility.

Historic development & archaeology

- 19 Taking its name from the ancient river Limene (now Rother), Lymgne has taken a number of Latin forms: Lemanis, Lemanio, Limes, Limene and Lymme. It is considered to have derived from the root 'Lim' meaning 'mud' or 'marsh', in the sense of 'flooded areas'.
- 20 Located approximately 20 miles from the French coast, the region has always played a key part in defending against naval invasion. Lymgne was the Roman Portus Lemanis, one of the Forts of the Saxon Shore built against sea-raiders at the end of the third century AD. It stood on the now-vanished arm of the Rother that entered the sea at Hythe, creating a sufficient channel for the passage of ships and was of considerable strategic importance, guarding the Romney Marsh inlet that offered a sheltered haven. For almost a century this area was a flourishing port and the focus of intense activity.



Aerial view of the area giving an indication of how the area would have looked around 2000 years ago. Note the CA in the top right hand corner.

- 21 In a field below the castle are the remaining fragments of the Roman fort, originally one of a chain extending from Norfolk to Chichester with each in a strategic position guarding an inlet. The remains, composed of rubble-stone, show the walls to have been of exceptional thickness. The Saxons called it the 'stout wale' or strong fortress, a name down the years transmuted to 'Stutfall'. This fort most probably continued of use only so long as the harbour and port remained close by. Gradually the river Limene's course changed direction into another channel and became deserted by the sea, rendered useless through being choked up with silt.



The last remaining fragments of Stutfall, the Roman fort once the centre of intense port activity

- 22 In H G Wells' 1901 science fiction classic 'The First Men in the Moon' the area is described in the following excerpt:

'Certainly if any one wants solitude, the place is Lympe. It is in the clay part of Kent, and my bungalow stood on the edge of an old sea cliff and stared across the flats of Romney Marsh at the sea. In very wet weather the place is almost inaccessible, and I have heard that at times the postman used to traverse the more succulent portions of his route with boards upon his feet. I never saw him doing so, but I can quite imagine it. Outside the doors of the few cottages and houses that make up the present village big birch besoms are stuck, to wipe off the worst of the clay, which will give some idea of the texture of the district. I doubt if the place would be there at all, if it were not a fading memory of things gone for ever. It was the big port of England in Roman times, Portus Lemanus, and now the sea is four miles away. All down the steep hill are boulders and masses of Roman brickwork, and from it old Watling Street, still paved in places, starts like an arrow to the north. I used to stand on the hill and think of it all, the galleys and legions, the captives and officials, the women and traders, the speculators like myself, all the swarm and tumult that came clanking in and out of the harbour. And now just a few lumps of rubble on a grassy slope, and a sheep or two—and me! And where the port had been were the levels of the marsh, sweeping round in a broad curve to distant Dungeness, and dotted here and there with tree clumps and the church towers of old medieval towns that are following Lemanus now towards extinction.'

- 23 Roman remains are scattered throughout the area – including villas, coastal beacons and burial mounds. Although the fort seen today was built in c 270-80 and abandoned around 350, there is evidence that there may have been an earlier fort nearby. Earlier artifacts have been found built into the present structure and tiles are indicative of a local association with the Wealden iron industry, which would date it no later than the end of the C2nd.
- 24 Lympe is thought to have been the original harbour which gave Hythe its place among the Cinque Ports. Deriving its name from 'Shipway' due to its previous existence as a Roman port, the Court of Shepway was established less than a century after the Norman Conquest of 1066 and was formed to handle disputes between the Cinque Ports (then Dover, Sandwich, Romney, Hastings, and Hythe).

- 25 The Court had powers equivalent to those of the Shire Courts which administered the law in England at the time and sessions were usually held in the open, on Lympne Hill, where the Cinque Ports War Memorial now stands. Referred to by the locals as The Shepway Cross and located at about the centre of the original Cinque Ports, the civic war memorial was erected in 1923 to commemorate the deeds of the men of the Cinque Ports who fought in the 1st World War.
- 26 By the early C 17th the majority of the Romney Marsh area, famous for its secret tunnels and hideaways, was involved in smuggling which for many years provided income to the locals. Lympne is said to have been used by smugglers as a lookout and signaling post to warn of Excise men to those at sea. The fact and the fiction are often hard to separate and have provided inspiration to both authors and artists alike. Smuggling continued to thrive until 1833 and the introduction of the Coast guard.
- 27 In 1804, under threat of invasion by Napoleon, the government decided to try to stop a French invasion via the Romney Marshes and they built the Royal Military Canal as part of the nation's defences. The Canal runs to the south of Lympne at the base of the hill and was re-fortified in the 1940's by installing gun emplacements and pill boxes to try to delay a German invasion via the marshes.
- 28 Lympne Airfield was a base for the Royal Flying Corps during the 2nd World War and then an RAF station before it was demobbed. It was from this aerodrome that Amy Johnson made her historic and record breaking flight to Cape Town in 1932. The airfield has now been closed and turned into an industrial estate.

Map regression

- 29 In an early map of 'Lymne', Edward Hasted's Historical and Topographical Survey of Kent, 1793 (Appendix 1), the overall form of the CA has changed very little from what we see today.
- 30 The Tythe Map c.1840 clearly shows the village layout with a small cluster of buildings at the entrance to The Street, and a long tree lined avenue flanked by fields, leading to a small tightly formed hamlet around the Castle and Church. The Old Vicarage in Castle Close is still evident.
- 31 The OS map of 1898 shows an increase in density with the addition of a school, 2 public houses, and blacksmith with a compact formation of buildings around the Castle. The Old Vicarage by this time has been demolished and a replacement built on the Aldington Road. The large field between this and the Castle was acquired as glebe land and in 1872 the school was built on one corner of the glebe field, followed shortly after by the adjoining schoolmaster's residence.
- 32 The OS map of 1907 shows the addition of a post office and shop. The surrounding area still entirely rural and little change is evident until the interwar period.
- 33 The 1938 OS map shows considerable expansion starting from the top of the northern boundary of the CA, with creeping urbanisation at the start of Stone Street. This is presumably linked to the construction of Westenhanger Station to the north and Lympne Airfield to the north west of the village. In the CA itself the map shows a number of plots have been divided up, with others around the

Castle curtilage being combined to form larger building plots. A number of buildings in evidence on the 1907 map no longer exist.

- 34 Generally, post war development within the CA has remained relatively unobtrusive. The village Primary school has been relocated north of the Aldington Road and the Old School building (just outside the CA boundary) has been altered to residential use in recent years. Recent infill additions include 'Ashurst', 'The Bay Tree' and 'Lympne Court' located where Castle Close and The Street converge. 'Ashurst' and 'Lympne Court' both replace earlier buildings, with 'Lympe Court' taking the place of a village hall that occupied the site during the early part of the 20th century. In spite of these rather bland and uninspiring modern additions, the area around the castle retains character and a timeless quality.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Key views & vistas

- 35 Lympne's location is spectacular with commanding views from the top of the escarpment over the Marshes below stretching from Dover to Hastings. John Ruskin, the Victorian art critic, was said to visit Lympne especially to admire the spacious skies and sunsets, whilst H G Wells' hero, Kipps in the novel of the same name admires the famous view of the Marsh from Lympne Castle:

"Away below one's feet, almost at the bottom of the hill, the Marsh begins and spreads and spreads in a mighty crescent that sweeps about the sea, the Marsh dotted with the church towers of forgotten medieval towns, and breaking at last into the low blue hills by Winchelsea and Hastings; East hangs France between the sea and the sky; and round the north, bounding the wide perspectives of farms and houses and woods, the Downs, with their hangers and chalk-pits, sustain the passing shadows of the sailing clouds."



Romney Marsh from the escarpment with views of the Royal Military Canal on its winding course from Hythe to Appledore.

- 36 At just about every turn notable views are evident from both within and into the CA. In main:
1. The tree lined approach from the Aldington Road towards the church of St Stephen and Castle Close beyond.
 2. Castle Close from both directions.
 3. From the churchyard and Castle over Romney Marsh and across to France.
 4. Towards the CA from the marsh below taking in the ruins of Stutfall Castle, Lympne Castle and the Church.
 5. Out of the CA, east along the Aldington Road



Clockwise from top left: View towards the Castle from the Aldington Road entrance; Castle Close and the Lych Gate; The Castle and St Stephen's Church from Stutfall Ruins; View east out of the CA along the Aldington Road.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Activity, uses & influence on layout & building types

- 37 Portus Lemanis once served the Weald Industrial area of iron mining and smelting, with the rivers Rother and Breda providing access right into the heart of the Weald. A 'vicus' (Roman settlement) is bound to have built up around the export of iron and timber from the port - and most probably salt, from panning on the Romney Marsh.
- 38 With its strategic location as a former coastal defence, Roman roads radiate from Lympne to the military centres at London, Colchester and front-line legionary forts. The most noteworthy of these roads is Stone Street, now the B2068. Connecting

Lympne to Canterbury, it is likely to have been the route taken by Henry II's men on their way to murder Archbishop Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170.

- 39 The village has experienced a chequered and uncertain past with a variety of conflicts. From persistent struggles between excise and the notorious smugglers along the Kent Coast (local records show that the majority of the population within the area was involved with smuggling), to an important strategic role in both defence and combat. Over the centuries a small agricultural hamlet has grown up around the fortified castle, which together with the Church is the prevalent influence in the CA.
- 40 Formerly the home of the Archdeacon of Canterbury Lympne Castle has undergone extensive changes over the years. The old manor house was considerably fortified against French raiders in the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) and again during the time of the civil war (1642).



C18th engraving of Lympne Castle

- 41 During the C17th the Castle was managed as a farm, and it was only upon the death of Archdeacon Croft in 1860 that Lympne Castle was no longer in the ownership of the Archdeacons - the first time since the Norman Conquest.
- 42 The principal local industry continues to be agriculture. This predominance is reflected in the local landscape that is characterised by very limited industrial development and an abundance of open farm land inhabited by sheep, cattle and a variety of wildlife. However, modern day farming techniques, coupled with the national farming decline, mean that only a very small proportion of today's parishioners is locally employed. By far the majority work in nearby towns such as Ashford, Canterbury and Folkestone, or further afield in London and beyond.

Architectural & historic qualities & contribution to special interest

- 43 One of the oldest surviving buildings is St Stephen's, Lympne's Grade I listed medieval church, looking more fortress like than the castle itself. The site and church date from the early Norman times 1100AD and the remains of the original tower can be seen in fragments on the south side of the present church.

Incrementally added to over the centuries and restored in the C19th it is constructed of uncoursed ragstone with Caen-stone, tufa and ragstone dressings with a plain tile roof. To the interior, a continuous crown-post roof covers the north aisle and chapel with moulded octagonal crown posts, chamfered tie beams and solid spandrel braces.



The Norman Church of St Stephen's – one of Lympe's oldest surviving structures

- 44 Next door to the Church, Lympe Castle (also Grade I listed) was built overlooking Stutfall using stone from the Roman walls below. Standing in a superb situation with wide-ranging views across the rich farmland of Romney Marsh, the earliest part of the building is the square tower which dates from the C13th with walls five feet thick. The building was modernized in 1420 and the Great Hall converted into a house by fitting a first floor halfway up its walls and the addition of the Great Tower. Construction is of ragstone with ashlar dressings and plain tile roofs around a courtyard and terraced garden.
- 45 The former service quarters, now converted to 3 dwellings, front onto Castle Close and are also constructed of ragstone. Hipped dormers project from the plain tile roofs and stone mullions frame leaded windows and boarded doors, some with idiosyncratically carved architraves. Sturdy lead rainwater goods lend a pleasing finish to this well presented group.



Left: Lympe Castle, restored in 1905 by Sir Robert Lorimer

Right: The service range, now residential dwellings, faces onto Castle Close

- 46 By the beginning of the C20th, Lympne Castle had declined into agricultural storage and was near to ruins. In 1905 Sir Robert Lorimer was commissioned to restore the property. The Great Hall was restored to its original condition and many of the old features were preserved and incorporated in the rebuilding of this hall-house castle.



The WW 2 addition to Lympne Castle remains on account of its historic significance

- 47 During the Second World War a concrete observation post was constructed by the army and the castle was again used as a lookout from the same spot used by the Romans around 2,000 years earlier. It was felt that this concrete addition, although incongruous with the medieval structure of the castle, should remain due to its contribution to the history of the castle. Today the castle is privately owned and used primarily as a venue for corporate events and private functions.



Lympne Hall still retains internal features dating back to the 1500's

- 48 One of the oldest houses in the CA is Lympne Hall, a C16th timber framed house with an C18th façade and C20th alterations. The front elevation consists of red brick with uncoursed galleted stone to part of the ground floor and a plain tile roof.

- 49 The Pump (or Spout) House, Grade II listed, is located halfway down the side of the escarpment to the south of the Castle. Now disused, it formerly served Lympne Castle. Constructed of un-coursed stone with vermiculated stone dressings, it is a simple but eye catching structure with curved corners, a flat roof and external stone steps leading to the entrance on the first floor.



The Pump/Spout House

Contribution made by key unlisted buildings

- 50 The importance of a local list is twofold: to acknowledge and raise awareness of buildings of higher than average importance and to establish potential candidates for statutory listing, particularly where their significance may be diminished through alteration or lost entirely through demolition.
- 51 Key unlisted buildings are those which fall within one or more of the following criteria:
- a. Age – the earliest buildings should merit greater attention towards preservation.
 - b. Authenticity - Buildings or structures should be substantially unaltered and should retain the majority of their original features.
 - c. Architectural Significance - Buildings or structures of local architectural significance for aesthetic merit or craftsmanship of any period; principal works of principal architects or designers of local importance; exemplars of key building types.
 - d. Local technological significance or innovation.
 - e. Historic Significance – Buildings/structures illustrating or associated with local architectural/social/cultural history or events, locally or nationally well known people.
 - f. Townscape Significance - Individual buildings, objects or groups of exceptional quality in their context - for example, landmark buildings, notable buildings marking or creating interesting places, vistas, or interesting skylines.

- 52 Despite their varying condition and state of tidiness the following buildings, indicated on the Historic Environment Analysis in Appendix 2, are suggested for consideration for inclusion on a new Local List to be adopted and regularly reviewed by the Council.
- 53 The Cottage and Smugglers End at the bottom of The Street would appear to be of C17th origin (and previously the village post office & shop?). At one time a single dwelling the building has now been divided to create two residences. It is described in Charles Igglesden's 'A Saunter through Kent':

'The house with a square porch was a great smuggling centre – it's difficult to find any old house in this part of the world that was not – and below the floor of the passage was found a hole or hide about four feet square. In the store above the shop is a small square piece of plain glass facing the Marsh and sea, behind which beacon lights were won't to flicker as signals to the smugglers below.'



Smugglers End – recommended for Local Listing

- 54 The square porch referred to has now been removed from Smugglers End, though visible evidence remains. Painted render covers brick or stone construction with a half hipped clay tile roof. Sliding sash windows arranged 3 over 2 remain giving great character to the house, with the exception of a multi paned replacement to the ground floor. Sympathetic restoration and general maintenance would restore integrity to this property and make a valid contribution to the CA.
- 55 The Vicarage, a double fronted Victorian dwelling with painted stucco finish, cornice band detailing and slate roof is considered noteworthy due to its authenticity and retention of the majority of its original features, despite a later extension to the west. It was built during the second half of the C19th on land given by the church. Archdeacon Croft of Saltwood was required to give up 10 acres of the land attached to the Castle after the original Vicarage in Castle Close was demolished.



*Left: The Vicarage – a Local List candidate on account of the retention of many original details
Right: The Sanctuary, one of Lympne's earlier buildings has now been Grade II listed.*

- 56 The Sanctuary, at the time of the initial fieldwork survey, was considered a potential Local List candidate. This has now been awarded Grade II listed status.

Prevalent local and traditional building materials & the public realm

- 57 Kentish ragstone, brick and clay tiles are the prevalent materials in the CA. The majority of buildings are coursed rubble with red brick quoins and window dressings. Some tile hanging and painted render is evident. Lympne Hall is the only surviving example of timber framed construction, however red brick facing now hides the original structure.
- 58 Roofs are either clay or slate. Fenestration is a mixture of wooden sash, metal casement and, increasingly, UPVC. Boundary walls are coursed rubble.
- 59 The single road that runs through the CA is principally tarmac with areas of shingle around by the Church. Driveways are a mixture of block work, gravel and tarmac. Street lighting is minimal and of mid C20th design.

Greenery, green spaces & ecology

- 60 A sense of open space, changing landform and the abundance of trees are important features of the CA. Both roads into the CA are tree lined avenues bounded by the escarpment and Romney Marsh land to the south, farmland to the west and the recreation ground to the east. These open spaces play an important part in contributing to the views into and out of the CA. The visual quality of the streetscape is further enhanced by mature, well maintained hedging and stone walling that provide privacy and screening to a number of properties.



Castle Close – enhanced by well maintained boundary walls and hedging

- 61 The woodland and riding stables to the south of the CA provide further rural character. The Saxon Shore Way, a footpath from Gravesend to Hastings around the old coastline of Kent as it was in later Roman times, runs through the CA and out along the edge of the escarpment.

Negative & neutral factors

- 62 The overall condition of most fabric in the CA is sound, however many buildings have accumulated a variety of small scale changes over time, the sum of which cause significant harm. For example the projecting bay, addition of a covered porch, flank extension, replacement doors and windows and excessive area of hardstanding to the front of The Coach House has cumulatively detracted from the original character of the cottage. This is an ancient historic area of considerable charm whose preservation should be paramount.



The cumulative effect of changes detract from the original character of the building and cause negative impact on the character of the CA

- 63 Relatively recent development that has taken place has resulted in non-descript, standardised additions to the CA, as in the form of Lymphne Court and The Bay Tree. Little reference to the local vernacular has been made in either of these buildings.
- 64 Areas of the village would benefit greatly from maintenance. The Lymphne village sign at the entrance to the CA is tired and in need of redecoration. Lamp posts are in need of decorative maintenance. Signposts for the Saxon Shore Way are standard and utilitarian and, together with the railings along the footpath, would benefit from a more conservation led design.



*Left: The village sign, in need of decorative maintenance;
Right: Utilitarian signage offers the potential for enhancement through design.*

- 65 Landscaping along The Street has become overgrown with a number of recently planted cherry trees becoming obscured due to the density of undergrowth. This area would benefit from maintenance and clearing.



*Left: The Street – certain areas would benefit from maintenance and clearing;
Right: Potential for sensitively designed fencing along the Saxon Shore Way*

- 66 A number of properties have fallen foul of UPVC replacements and additions that disfigure and create negative impact on otherwise well presented buildings. It cannot be stressed enough how detrimental an effect the unsympathetic use of materials and loss of architectural detail impacts on a CA.

General condition, problems, pressures and the capacity for change

- 67 In general the condition of the buildings in the CA is good. Though a number of buildings around the core have been redeveloped, the majority are well maintained. However, the use of inappropriate materials will lead to the deterioration of the character of the CA. The appearance of a number of changes to window patterns and the use of UPVC windows, doors and conservatories should be strongly resisted.



*Left: Gradual deterioration is becoming prevalent within the CA through use of inappropriate materials
Right: School House presents an enhancement opportunity*

- 68 A recent appeal concerning the proposed erection of a UPVC conservatory has brought to light a controversial decision by an inspector to overturn what we consider to have been a good decision by the Local Authority. In the light of this unfortunate appeal decision, we consider that guidance on acceptable materials and details should be strengthened in conjunction with Article 4 directions.
- 69 In spite of the urbanisation to the north of the Lympne, the CA itself has remained relatively unscathed from modern development and urban growth. The character of the CA is dependent on its setting and if steps are not taken to protect it from erosion, then the special quality of the area will inevitably be compromised.

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

- 70 In accordance with English Heritage advice, the Council's brief included a requirement to involve key stakeholders in the appraisal process. The principal means was by a questionnaire, the content of which was agreed with the Council, requiring careful consideration and in some instances detailed responses. Careful regard to the questionnaire responses has been paid in this text.

71 The questionnaire was sent to 3 groups and individuals as advised by the Council. Of these, 2 responses were received. These are reported upon at Appendix 3. The most significant positive themes expressed were:

- Tranquillity within the village
- An overall appreciation of historic heritage
- Lack of traffic disturbance
- Acknowledgement of the proactive approach taken towards Planning Applications by the District Council

72 Critical comments raised by stakeholders, with our responses are set out in the table below.

Summary of issues raised by stakeholders

Comment	Response
<i>Due to the CA regulations and the positive stance taken by the Parish Council, there have been no negative aspects</i>	Disagree. Use of replacement UPVC windows has denigrated the appearance of a number of buildings within the CA, creating a negative impact.
<i>Areas to be included in the CA: French House, Port Lympe and Coombe Farm on Escarpment. School House and Old School House. It is part of original old village whose identity should not be lost. Part of the recreation ground.</i>	These properties are considered too far removed from the existing CA to be included. Agree. These have been included in the proposed CA boundary. Agree.
<i>The present controls on planning all depends on opinion of junior Planning Officer as it is too vague and not too specific.</i>	All decisions are assessed in accordance with adopted planning policy and have to be agreed by a senior planning officer.
<i>The Parish Council believe that the current regulations, particularly those relating to the choice of building materials, are sufficient to control planning applications within the CA.</i>	The use of inappropriate materials is of great concern and is leading to the erosion of the character of the CA.

SUGGESTED BOUNDARY REVISIONS

- 73 The boundary map in Appendix 2 outlines the proposed extension to the CA. This would extend the boundary to the north east to incorporate The Old School, Lympne Villa, School House, The Vicarage and the playing fields. This extension is proposed on account of the surrounding area forming an integral part of the setting and preserving key views across to the church and castle which contribute considerably to the character of the CA.

LOCAL GENERIC GUIDANCE

Summary of issues

- 74 Threats to the character of the CA have been noted in this appraisal. The worst detractors are the erosion of detail, inappropriate alteration or extension and uncontrolled, disfiguring householder alterations.
- 75 The public realm maintenance issues such as decoration and maintenance are relatively minor and would not require large scale resources to tackle.

MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS / STRATEGY

Design guidance

- 76 A local design guide is desirable to inform building owners of best practice with regard to maintenance, repair and reinstatement, as well as what the council is likely to consider acceptable by way of alteration and extension of property. In the interim, the IHBC/SPAB guide, A Stitch in Time, directed at householders, and downloadable from the IHBC website, is recommended for publicising and distribution. Encouragement to reverse inappropriate changes to historic buildings is desirable.
- 77 Guidance providing topic-based detailed advice on process, acceptable and unacceptable design and other relevant matters should therefore be considered as a priority. This could include details of any Article 4 Directions, as they may arise.
- 78 The main problems and pressures identified in the analyses of the character areas, as identified above should be addressed in this guide. Topics could include:
- Description of principal design features
 - Extensions
 - Building materials and details
 - Roof conversions and dormers
 - Rain and foul water systems
 - Chimneys
 - Porches
 - Windows and doors
 - Garages and parking spaces
 - Garden buildings

- Fences, walls and hedges
- Trees and landscape
- Communication aerials
- Reinstating lost features
- How to make an application

79 Issues concerning works within the public realm, which are within the control of the Council, should be grouped together for inclusion in a policy document for implementation by the Council or County Councils, as appropriate. Specific guidance on the importance of co-ordinated design of objects, installations and surfaces within the CA and of collaboration between Council services to that end should be included.

USEFUL INFORMATION

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Appendices

Appendix 1	Historic Maps
Appendix 2	Analysis Maps
Appendix 3	Stakeholder Consultation