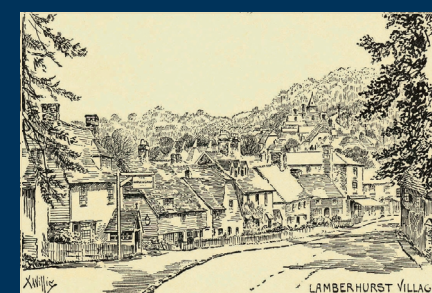


# Lamberhurst and The Down



# Lamberhurst and The Down

## *Conservation Areas Appraisal*

*Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
in partnership with  
Lamberhurst Parish Council, Lamberhurst  
Society,  
Lamberhurst Local History Society and other  
local representatives*

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**July 2002**

*Printed on environmentally friendly paper*

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*Central front cover illustration from 'A Saunter Through Kent with Pen and Pencil' Volume 17, author Charles Igglesden 1924, courtesy of Kent Messenger.*

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## 1 Introduction

### Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas

- 1.1 The first conservation areas were designated in England under the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and more than 8000 now exist. Under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, local planning authorities have a duty to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- 1.2 Conservation areas are diverse in size and character, but in general it is the quality and interest of the area that is of importance, rather than the individual buildings within it. Such designation gives the Authority greater control over demolition, minor development, works to trees and advertisements in the conservation area. However, it also brings certain responsibilities. Under the terms of the 1990 Act, local authorities have a duty to review the extent of designation from time to time, to designate further areas if appropriate, to bring forward proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas (with public consultation) and to pay special attention to the character or appearance of conservation areas in exercising their planning powers.
- 1.3 It is not just the local planning authority that has a role in protecting and enhancing conservation areas. The principal guardians are the residents and business people who live and work in the conservation area who are responsible for maintaining the individual properties, which together contribute to the character of the conservation area.
- 1.4 Designation also raises awareness of an area's special attributes and can foster pride in the locality. Government planning guidance stresses that our built and natural heritage should be valued and protected for their own sake as a central part of our cultural heritage and that the responsibility for environmental stewardship is shared by everyone.
- 1.5 New development and change can take place in conservation areas but designation should ensure that such proposals will not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area.

### Purpose of this Appraisal

- 1.6 This document attempts to define some of the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of the Lamberhurst and The Down Conservation Areas.
- 1.7 The character of a settlement is determined by more than just the age and style of buildings. It is also influenced by the positioning of the buildings, their use, the shape, size and use of spaces between them, the materials, colours and textures employed and the relationship between the built form and the landscape elements.
- 1.8 In addition, the Appraisal records some of the principal elements that detract from the appearance or historic character of the conservation area. These detractors include development which is out of keeping with the character of the conservation area, unkempt buildings and spaces, poor surfacing, inappropriate street furniture, clutter of street signs and inappropriate advertisements on business premises.
- 1.9 This Appraisal has been prepared in close partnership with a team of local people over a number of months. It will guide the Local Planning Authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement proposals. The Appraisal will also inform other agencies and individuals whose activities impact on the fabric of the Lamberhurst and The Down Conservation Areas, such as the County and Borough Councils and local traders and householders.

#### Lamberhurst Conservation Areas

- 1.10 The Parish of Lamberhurst lies within the Kentish High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The landscape in this area is generally one of undulating ridges and gentle valleys lying between the North and South Downs; with scattered copses with fields and more extensive deciduous woodland. There are also historic parklands associated with major landowners.
- 1.11 Whilst most settlements tend to be located on the ridges, or higher ground, Lamberhurst village sits in the valley, straddling the River Teise at a crossing point on the A21.
- 1.12 It lies some 8 km (5 miles) south east of Royal Tunbridge Wells and 20 km (12 miles) south west of Maidstone.
- 1.13 The Down is located immediately to the south of Lamberhurst on a knoll and at the junction of the old A21 and the B2100 to Wadhurst and the B2169 to Bayham.
- 1.14 The main settlement of Lamberhurst was originally designated in August 1971 and extended slightly in January 1992. The Down area to the south was designated as a separate conservation area in recognition of its distinctive character in January 1992.

#### Boundary Review

- 1.15 As part of this Appraisal the boundaries of the conservation areas were critically reviewed.
- 1.16 Some changes have been made, with extensions to include additional areas and buildings which contribute to the special character, e.g. The Slade area, together with minor adjustments to match identifiable features on the ground and properly include trees and curtilages.
- 1.17 The wider landscape setting, which is important to the character of both conservation areas, remains outside the boundary as it is currently protected through Local Plan policies and other designations, particularly the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## 2 Policy Background

### Local Plan Conservation Area Policies

- 2.1 There are two policies in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (adopted 1996) which relate to conservation areas. These will be updated by policies in the first review. Policy EN4 seeks to control the demolition of buildings within conservation areas.

#### **POLICY EN4**

**Proposals for the total or partial demolition of unlisted buildings which contribute positively to the character of a conservation area will not be permitted unless an overriding case can be made out against all of the following criteria:**

- 1 The condition of the building, and the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and the value derived from its continued use;**
- 2 The adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use, including efforts to find compatible alternative uses;**
- 3 The merits of alternative uses for the site; and**
- 4 Whether redevelopment will produce substantial planning benefits for the community, including economic regeneration or environmental enhancement.**

- 2.2 Policy EN5 sets out criteria for determining whether a development is appropriate within a conservation area.

#### **POLICY EN5**

**Proposals for development within, or affecting the character of, a conservation area will only be permitted if all of the following criteria are satisfied:**

- 1 The proposal would preserve or enhance the buildings, related spaces and vegetation which combine to form the character and appearance of the area;**
- 2 The siting of the development would be similar to adjoining building frontage lines where this is important to the character of the conservation area;**
- 3 The layout and arrangement of the building(s) would follow the pattern of existing development and spacing of adjoining plot widths where this is important to the character of the conservation area;**
- 4 The scale, massing, use of materials, detailing, boundary treatment and landscaping would preserve or enhance the character of that part of the conservation area in which the proposal would be situated;**
- 5 The use, or intensity of use, would be in sympathy with the character and appearance of that part of the conservation area in which the proposal would be situated;**
- 6 The proposal would not result in the loss of trees, shrubs, hedges or other features important to the character of that part of the conservation area in which the proposal would be situated; and**
- 7 In meeting the parking and access requirements, the character and amenity of the area would not be adversely affected.**

- 2.3 The detailed character appraisal contained in this document will assist in the interpretation of these policies.

#### Other Local Plan Policies

- 2.4 There are a number of other general and specific policies in the Local Plan, which are relevant to the Lamberhurst and The Down Conservation Areas. Specific policy designations are set out in detail in the Local Plan and the proposals maps. They are shown as Figures 1 and 2 and can be summarised as follows:

#### **Limits to Built Development**

Under Policy LBD1, the Limits to Built Development defines the built up edge of Lamberhurst Village, beyond which countryside policies apply.

#### **Landscape Protection**

Policy EN23 protects the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the High Weald Special Landscape Area, which applies to areas outside the Limits to Built Development of Lamberhurst and applies to the whole of The Down.

#### **Sites of Nature Conservation Interest**

Proposals affecting areas designated under Policy EN8 will only be permitted where the nature conservation interest of the site would be protected.

#### **Areas of Important Open Space and Areas of Landscape Importance**

Policies EN18 and EN19 recognise the visual significance of open and landscaped areas within the settlements.

#### **Shop Fronts**

Policy EN15 seeks to ensure that traditional shop fronts are retained in the conservation areas and any new ones are in sympathy with the character of the area.

#### **Advertisements**

Policy EN16 seeks to ensure that advertisement proposals would not be detrimental to the appearance of the conservation areas.

#### **Car Park**

Existing car parking areas will be retained under Policy VP13.

#### **School**

Policy CS3 safeguards land for new primary school provision with Policy CS6 permitting alternative uses for long-term redundant school buildings.

#### **Recreation Open Space**

Policy R1 seeks to protect areas of open space for recreation use.

#### Other Designations

- 2.5 Finally, there are designations which are made through other legislation. These are illustrated in the map series (a) attached to this document, and include listed buildings and tree preservation. It is advisable to check with the Borough Council on detailed enquiries, as these designations are subject to changes.



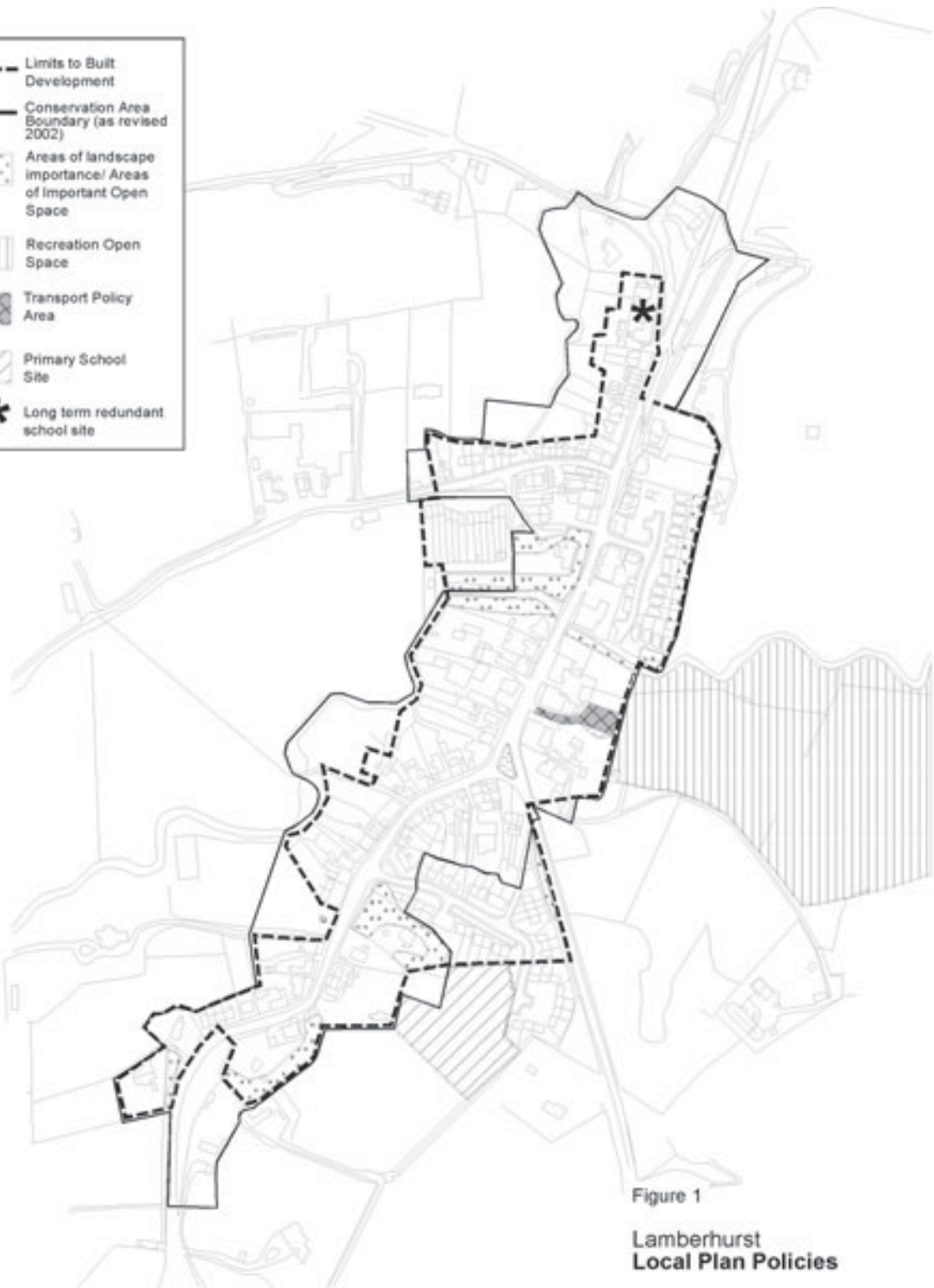
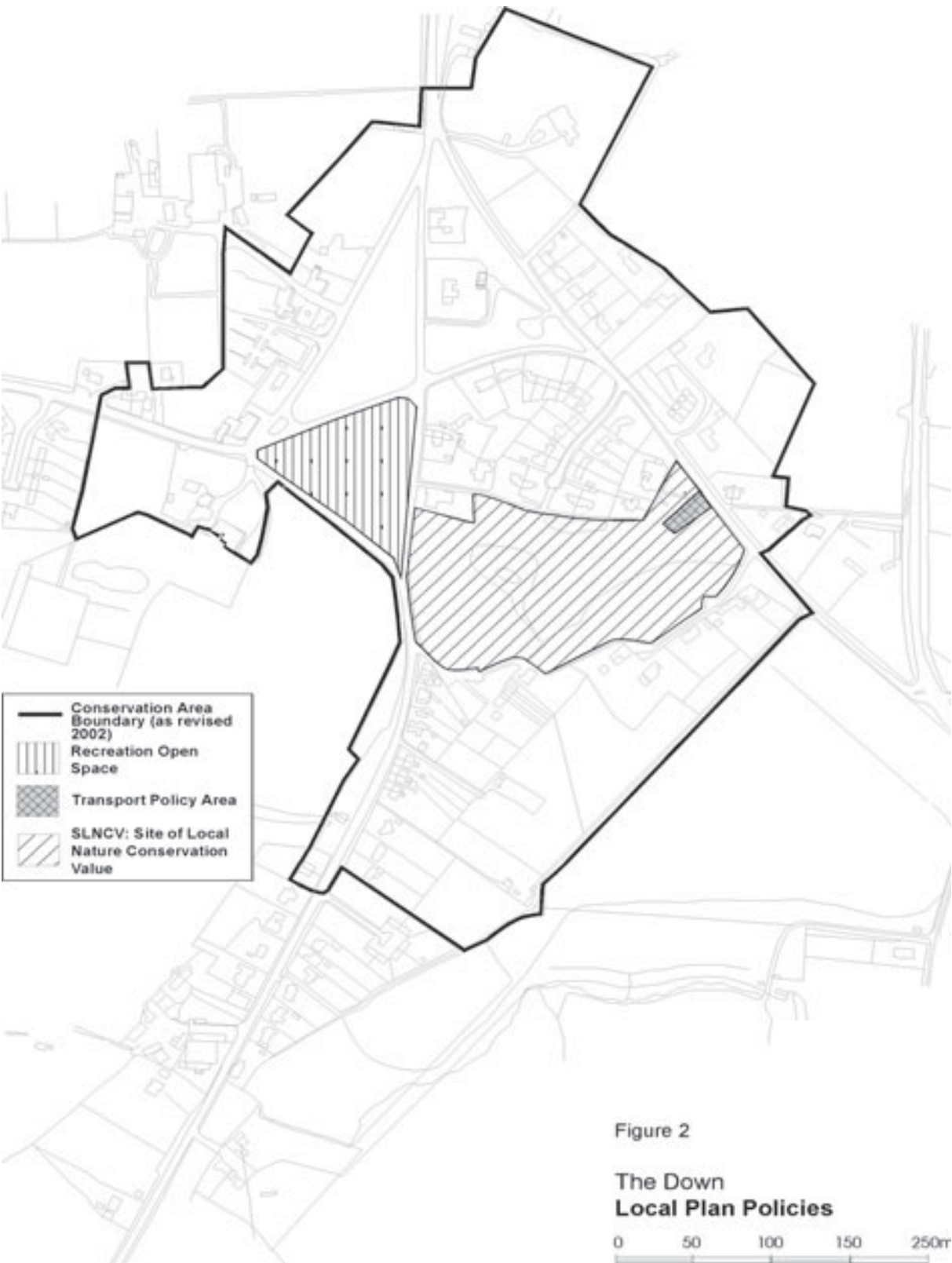


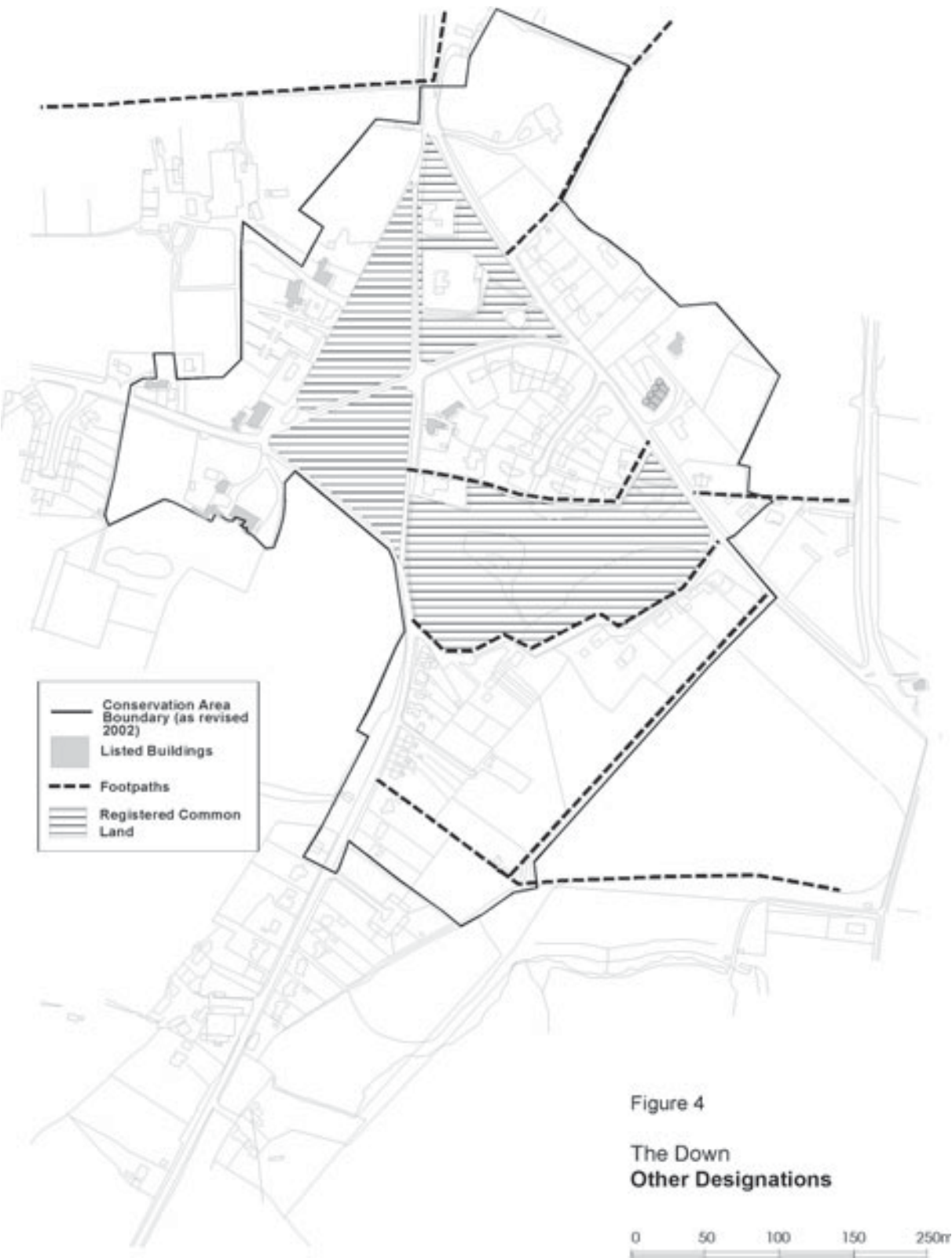
Figure 1

**Lamberhurst  
Local Plan Policies**











### 3 The Evolution and Form of Lamberhurst

#### Pre-1400

- 3.1 During the late Saxon period the Kent/Sussex border of the Weald was used by the manors of north Kent for fattening up pigs during the pannage season. Lamberhurst can trace its origins to the clearings or swine pastures carved from the Wealden Forest. A charter of 747 mentions Lindridge (Lime Tree Ridge) as a den of the Men of Rochester. They had the right to fell timber and graze sheep and pigs. There was, however, very little permanent settlement in the area of the Weald until after the Norman Conquest.
- 3.2 Many of the present roadways follow the droveways and boundary ditches created by these early visitors. Earlier iron age trackways were also used as the principal droves. One cut across the north of the parish along the present Parsonage Lane and up to Goudhurst Road. Another followed the line of the present A21 from Flimwell to Tonbridge, crossing the River Teise where the present bridge is situated.
- 3.3 The river crossing at Lamberhurst has always played an important role in the development of Lamberhurst, being the only easily accessible site at which to cross the River Teise. Both banks, both up and downstream are marsh, water meadow or dense woodland.
- 3.4 In the 9th century it began to attract trade and settlement, and as it was customary for the lord of the home manor to build a church on his subordinate dens, it is in this period that a small wooden church was built on the nearby hill, above the present-day Lady Well on the site of the present chancel of the St Mary's Church. This, and the importance of the crossing, made the development of the subsequent village inevitable. With the settled community being established on both sides of the river, a summerhus or dwelling for the use of the lord or his representative was built on the site of the present Stair House. By 1070 this was a stone building.
- 3.5 The first documentary reference to Lamberhurst is 'Lamberhurste' in a Chrism List of 1115. This form means 'a wooded hill for lambs, or lambing, near a stream'. Both banks of the River Teise, both up and downstream from the bridge site consisted of large areas of water meadow, a rarity within the Weald. Outside Romney Marsh there were few suitable sites for raising and grazing sheep during this early period.
- 3.6 The raising of sheep for the sale of wool was the initial principal economic activity within the area, and around 1275 the Cogger family from Wadhurst set up the first cloth industry in the parish. By the 1280s, a fall in the price of wool, a loss of overseas markets and a virulent sheep disease made cattle husbandry a more profitable activity. The population at this time would have been no more than 100 people.
- 3.7 This early period of Lamberhurst was also characterised by constant litigation about land ownership. This monastic rivalry between Leeds Priory and Robertsbridge Abbey probably led to the Primate granting a weekly market and fair in 1314. This market, held on the Broadway, ensured that the drovers of Welsh cattle on their way through to summer pasture on Romney Marsh made Lamberhurst one of their overnight stopovers.
- 3.8 The Broadway could be explained by the fact that Lamberhurst had no village green for setting up booths or cattle pens and, therefore, during this time when much of the roadside waste was being built upon, the dwellings were set back along this part of the High Street.
- 3.9 The drovers lodged at what is now the Memorial Hall site. This early legacy of cattle industry also established a shambles (slaughter house) which was on the Coggers Cottage site, a substantial stone built tannery at Tanyard Cottages with another occupying the Tanhouse site. The Horse & Groom and Rose Villas site was where finished leather workshops were built.

- 3.10 The establishing of two inns at the river crossing (the Chequers was an ale and cider house by at least 1200), also accommodated travellers to and from the coast. Up to 1377 the Teise was the Kent/Sussex border plus an area north of the river. The whole parish was not placed within Kent until 1894.
- 3.11 The village nucleus, therefore, appears to have been formed at the base of Town Hill and just north of the bridge at first. Ribbon development on the Kent side from the bridge to halfway up School Hill had occurred by 1400. In reality the bridge site was little more than a hamlet, a staging post and commercial centre. The outlying areas were gradually being opened up and a farming community established.



*Clout's Map of Lamberhurst 1750 (courtesy Kent County Archives service)*

1400 – 1800

- 3.12 During the 14th and early 15th century the cattle industry centred on the village nucleus, including an abattoir. The Broadway and river were awash with blood and tannin. By the 1450s the leather trade had moved to a large tannery at Hook Green to the west. Weaving was established at the Tanhouse and in other parts of the settlement, including the Tiled House in the 1570s. Taint Mead behind Coggers Hall is where the cloth was stretched on the 'tenterhooks'. The fulling water mill was situated nearby, powered by the Gill Stream.

- 3.13 The River Teise and its tributaries has provided water power for the grist mills to grind corn from the early 1100s, also fulling mills for the cloth industry and later the motive force behind the forge trip hammers and even a blast furnace.
- 3.14 Iron had been cast in the Weald long before the Roman Occupation, but it was not until the 16th up to 18th century that Lamberhurst became an important centre for iron working. The first mention of the iron industry in Lamberhurst is in 1522.
- 3.15 The best remembered is the Gloucester Furnace at Hoathly to the west of The Down, seemingly established as early as 1476. It was re-named following a visit by Queen Anne and the young Duke of Gloucester in 1697. Initially it specialised in the production of ordnance and cannon, much of which was exported (illegally) to the continent, and later for more domestic items such as skillets and firebacks. It closed finally in the 1780s. It is perhaps most famous for 'obtaining' the contract for supplying the 'Iron Fence' for Wren's new St Paul's Cathedral. Hasted hailed it as the "most magnificent balustrade perhaps in the Universe."! Wren himself would have preferred a lighter Italianate style of ironwork. In 1976 a section of the original railing from St Paul's was placed outside the Memorial Hall.



*Section of railing from St Paul's Cathedral*

- 3.16 The iron industry dominated the general area for nearly 300 years. However, Lamberhurst was also a centre for a number of parallel commercial ventures. This included a number of beer brewhouses (there had also been cider brewing historically from the late 10th century), leather workshops, some woodworking shops and an unusual number of tailors, clock and watch makers.
- 3.17 Although communications were important to Lamberhurst its roads had a bad reputation. London Coaches stopped at the Chequers (a coaching inn which first received its licence in 1412) and refused to venture on into Sussex and risk some of the worst roads in the country. With the advent of the Turnpike Trusts in the 1750s, the A21 was turnpiked in about 1750. Spray Hill was cut by local workmen, supervised by Macadam and formed the first bypass to Lamberhurst.
- 3.18 The demise in the smuggling 'trade' and the run down of the local iron industry led to a sudden increase of pauper families seeking parish relief. It is perhaps from this time that an industrialised Lamberhurst takes a more agrarian-based, idealised village character.
- 3.19 Evidence suggests that Lamberhurst had been a healthy place to live, thriving and entrepreneurial. In 1684 the Wealden Hall House, now known as the Charity, was left to the parish, to be used as a parish workhouse. It opened as the village poorhouse in 1740 and remained so until 1837 when Lamberhurst's paupers were removed to the new Ticehurst Union workhouse.

#### The 19th Century

- 3.20 The tithe map of 1840 shows that the parish consisted of a few large landowners. The big three, the Manor of Lamberhurst together with Bayham and Scotney, had always shaped the history of the area. Few farms and buildings in the area were owned, most being tenanted.
- 3.21 All three local squires set up non-profitable schemes such as drainage and the grubbing out of coppice wood to give work to alleviate poverty. In 1840 they also set up various legal encroachments in the Green Lane area due to overcrowding in the village housing stock.
- 3.22 The village school was built in 1836.
- 3.23 From the early 19th century, hops and arable farming became the main industry, apart from the Star Brewery (later Smith & Co) at Stair House.
- 3.24 The hop industry was in its prime, the earliest remaining oast house still existing at Ridge Farm on The Down, although little of the original structure survives. Most oasts in the area have been converted to residential use.
- 3.25 The Down had been common, historically used for pasture and grazing. It also became the site for a big marquee on Club Day where members sat down to a hot dinner, followed by sports and games. Other big social events were the servants' balls held at the various big houses.

#### Lamberhurst in the 20th Century

- 3.26 The variety of clubs and activities continued with most entertainment being home grown. The Memorial Hall, built by appeal in 1921, provided a centre for social activities, and continues to do so today.
- 3.27 Lamberhurst saw plenty of action in the early 1940s, being in the front line for stray doodlebugs. Troops were stationed in the village and nearby Court Lodge was used as an evacuation centre.
- 3.28 The Crown Chemical Company Ltd. took over Stair House after the war in 1948. When it closed down in 1987 it was the largest manufacturer of veterinary pharmaceuticals in the country.
- 3.29 The weekly market first granted in 1315 had died out in the 1700s, the annual cattle fair being held in the village up until the 1950s. This was a colourful event, often with herds of bullocks or flocks of sheep escaping onto the A21 as they were being loaded up.
- 3.30 The abattoir in Brewer Street closed down in 2001. It was at one time the largest in the south of England.
- 3.31 Closure of shops and businesses in recent years have changed the character of what was a very active village centre. There is still, however, a strong identity as a bustling commercial village.
- 3.32 In 1977, Lamberhurst Vineyard, based at Ridge Farm on The Down, began wine making, produced from locally grown grapes, continuing the tradition of the brewing industry, but following the new changes in taste.
- 3.33 There has been little new development in the village in the later periods, those at Brewer Street and Morland Drive not perhaps respecting the character of the area. Others at Sand Lane and Down Avenue are perhaps a little more successful.
- 3.34 The village bridge, having been rebuilt on several occasions since 1070, and being the main reason for the flow of traffic through the village over the centuries, now suffers the increasing dominance of through traffic. The possible construction of the long threatened bypass to the east will change the village dramatically. The future 'industry' of Lamberhurst stands at a crossroads, needing perhaps to rely more on tourism, recreation and leisure activities.



## 4 Landscape Setting

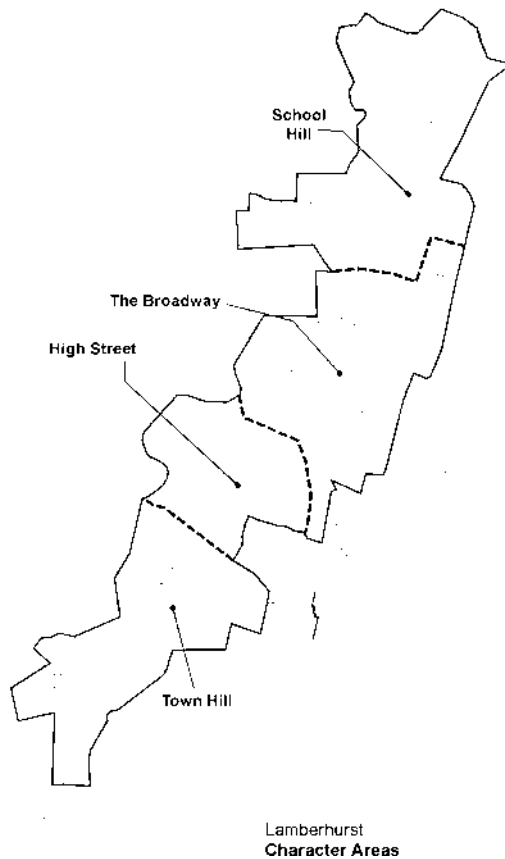
- 4.1 Lamberhurst and The Down are situated in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with Lamberhurst village focused on a crossing of the River Teise and The Down set above on a wooded plateau.
- 4.2 The geology of the area is comprised mainly of a series of hard sandstone strata underlain by heavy clays, giving rise to a combination that occurs across the High Weald of sandstone ridges and clay vales. The landscape of the High Weald in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells is characterised by a rolling upland plateau strongly incised by narrow, deep-sided river valleys (ghylls). In the areas surrounding Lamberhurst and The Down wooded farmland is the dominant characteristic, retaining a traditional pattern of land uses with medium to large blocks of woodland linked by thick shaws and narrow ghylls.
- 4.3 The River Teise forms a narrow, low lying valley which, until it enters the built up area of Lamberhurst, still retains a characteristic flat and open valley floor of rich alluvial soil. The sandstone ridges provide for a natural crossing point of the river valley which has resulted in the linear settlement of Lamberhurst centred on the bridge and which is currently the route of the A21. The valley has a strong sense of enclosure created by steep valley sides topped by the wooded plateau of the High Weald. To the west of Lamberhurst the river valley character is dissipated by rising land and woodland which, together with the riverine vegetation and strong tree groups around the village, add to the sense of enclosure.



*View northwards over Teise valley to School Hill, the Manor and St Mary's Church*

- 4.4 The valley sides are a transition between the arable valley floor and wooded plateau marked by the change in land use which includes orchards but today is notable as vineyards. To the east of Lamberhurst the golf course, whilst retaining woodland blocks and riverine vegetation, lacks the distinctive pattern and character found elsewhere around Lamberhurst and The Down. The elements of enclosure and the absence of a visually distinctive bridge do not prohibit the experience of the landscape setting of a rural river valley, steep valley sides and wooded plateau which, even when passing through by car, leave a distinct and memorable impression.
- 4.5 The Down is set on a sandstone knoll or promontory above and to the south of Lamberhurst village. Except where viewpoints to the north behind houses and from footpaths offer views over the Teise valley, the area is enclosed by belts of trees and woodland. This enclosure ensures that the character of the area derives almost entirely from the wooded farmland of the High Weald plateau.
- 4.6 The distinct landscape character of wooded farmland and river valley that make up the landscape of Lamberhurst and the surrounding area is described in the Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## 5 Character Appraisal – Lamberhurst



### Context

- 5.1 The conservation area covers the majority of the village which grew up either side of the crossing of the River Teise. The village assumes a linear form with development of the steeply sloping approaches to the valley bottom.
- 5.2 They comprise compact groups of buildings varying considerably in architectural style, form, detailing, eaves, height and materials: an attractive architectural jumble leading the eye downwards to the Broadway and the river crossing. This area is wider with a more open form of development both in the buildings and the spaces between.
- 5.3 The linear form is essentially a single depth of development, with a hard edge to the street front and a soft edge to the rear, adjoining the countryside.
- 5.4 A good proportion of the buildings are early in origin and of substantial construction, reflecting in their quality the prosperous nature of the area.

### Approach

- 5.5 For the purposes of presentation of this part of the Appraisal, Lamberhurst Conservation Area is described in four character areas which reflect their differing characteristics of building typologies, layout, landscape and topography.

These are:

- Town Hill;
- High Street;
- School Hill; and
- The Broadway.

### Town Hill

- 5.6 Entering the Conservation Area from The Down to the south, the approach to Lamberhurst seems to disappear steeply down into a green tunnel of trees, contained between steeply-cut banks in the sandstone, and with the trees forming the roof over.
- 5.7 The road curves to the right revealing in front, and emphasised by the sudden openness, a foretaste of the built up area. The mown grass bank, street light and litter bin provide the first clues of habitation. A group of bungalows is then apparent on the outside of the bend. They are all fairly typical 1960s design, not typical of the character of the conservation area and their contribution is at best neutral. They would benefit from having stronger boundary treatment. Their single storey height does at least allow a view over to the school and its landmark tower on the other side of the valley, which is set against the green backdrop of the steeply rising valley sides and wooded ridges beyond.
- 5.8 To the left, and to the rear of the bungalows, a small plantation of conifers presents a rather alien feature in the landscape. To the right, the high bank of trees continues on the inside of the bend with the elevated footpath behind. There is a limited awareness of buildings beyond – with the wall to Stable Cottage and the highly framed glimpse of Sunnybank, a mid-19th century house built in Tudor style.
- 5.9 The sharp changes in direction of the descending road provide a constantly changing sequence of views allowing many views of the building from different aspects.
- 5.10 At the inside corner on the north side is the circa 16th century group of Bankside and Walsynghams (formerly Hillside). Some of these buildings are tight to the back edge of the pavement and, turning the corner, they closely define the views both up and down this section of Town Hill.
- 5.11 The buildings of Bankside, Hill House and the Strict and Particular Baptist church of 1817, form a small cohesive little group, derived in part from their more elevated positions, modest front garden areas and their boundary treatment. This quality and architectural and historical importance is indeed recognised by the 18th century wall and railings of Bankside being listed.
- 5.12 To the south and east is the former Methodist School building, now a house. It is a large Arts & Crafts influenced building of 1886, sitting side-on to the road (a flèche still exists in the garden to the rear). Its left hand gable and chimney are a local focal point when viewed up the hill, from the High Street area below.
- 5.13 The framed view from the north (High Street) up the hill also contains the little Ranters chapel, now a garage; an oddly scaled, single storey building, seemingly surrounded by tarmac. This view also emphasises the general importance of the treed backdrop and the significant contribution from the trees in the grounds of The Mount.

- 5.14 There are wide views to the north east, with the road and the densely built up high street below with its well punctuated, varied roofscape. Beyond is the rising ground of the northern slopes of the Teise valley, with its wooded shaws and plateau of the High Weald beyond. The distant landmark of the school tower, together with Court Lodge and St Mary's Church, can be picked out.
- 5.15 The remaining buildings on the east side are neutral in their contribution to the character of the area. Hollybank is a 1950s development and, although well mannered in its scale and form, in particular it is less successful in its detailing and materials. Beyond is the rather more suburban Springrose bungalow. Its set-back from the road and its elevated position prevent it from playing a prominent role in the streetscene.
- 5.16 The approach is now more dominated by trees. A gap in development with the wall and 'billowy' trees of the vicarage are an important feature. The 'new' vicarage itself (formerly Oak Lodge) was built in 1714, of red and blue chequered brick and simple, classical proportions. The entrance elevation is on the side to Town Hill, with its principal front elevation facing north over Pearse Place, where it can be glimpsed over car parking and garages and between bungalows.
- 5.17 The landmark tree at the corner of Town Hill and Pearse Place marks a transition into the High Street, as well as framing views back up Town Hill.
- 5.18 On the opposite (west) side to the vicarage, the road widens out with the 'garden' of Murlingden adjoining Town Hill at this point. This gap in the built form allows the trees to frame and separate the buildings. Again, glimpses across the valley are revealed, allowing appreciation of the topography. The trees, particularly the limes and hedging, complement the trees opposite in the grounds of the vicarage. Of note are the listed entrance gate piers to Murlingden, which are the only punctuation in this otherwise open frontage. This open appearance is continued on the west side by the deep fronted gardens of Brook Cottages, with hedging and front boundary treatments, including the characteristic delicate, hooped railings. The buildings themselves are neutral in design.



*High Street from Town Hill*

- 5.19 It is at this point that the flank elevation of Horse and Groom Cottage (formerly the Horse and Groom pub) steps forward and there is a more noticeable change in character. The curved approach down Town Hill is more densely built up, with its more sporadic mix of sizes and styles of buildings and with a stronger emphasis on landscape and front gardens – a change from the more open textured character, often with suburban intrusions.
- 5.20 The change is now to a more completely built up character, with tightly packed buildings, more consistently scaled, close to the highway and with a flattening out of the road.
- High Street
- 5.21 From Town Hill, the timber structure of the old pub sign of the Horse & Groom and the tree opposite, mark the entry into the High Street character area. The buildings are tighter to the pavement, closely spaced and, with the flattening out of the approach, give a sense of arrival.

- 5.22 The High Street area itself is in two parts, defined to some extent by the change in angle of the road and punctuated by the three-storey Arnold House (newsagents) on the outside of the bend, and the angle of buildings leading into Mill Lane.
- 5.23 To the south uses are generally residential, a high proportion of the buildings are white in colour, whether as render or boarding, with small gardens on the west side set down slightly from the road and with picket fencing onto pavements on the west side. There is a subtle harmony where nothing dominates.
- 5.24 To the north of Mill Lane, buildings are set onto the back edge of the pavement. The retail activity and its associated bustle is an important component of the character.
- 5.25 On the corner, and turning into Mill Lane, is Mill Cottage, a two-storey, early 18th century building with interesting later additions to the rear.
- 5.26 To the east is the Pearse Place development of 1971. It exhibits the unfortunate standard estate road junction with open grass areas, wide areas of tarmac and lack of enclosure. The buildings themselves in Pearse Place and Tuttyshams exhibit a more horizontal emphasis and not the vertical proportions of the earlier buildings nearby.
- 5.27 On the west side, between the Horse & Groom and Mill Lane, is a variety of building styles and heights which are linked by the consistent use of clay tiles to roofs, themselves punctuated by chimneys and dormers and by white painted windows and the consistent front boundary treatment – in this case picket fencing and hooped railings.
- 5.28 Mill Lane itself is a tranquil area leading to the site of the former water mill to the rear of 16th century Mill House. The track links to the footpath over the River Teise. The relationship with the countryside at this point provides an easy transition and maintains the important link of the village with its immediate setting, with the lack of enclosure to the public footpath through the rear garden which reinforces the link between countryside and village. This flat backwater is a space affording unusual views of the village and an appreciation of Lamberhurst's historic links with the river as a resource for industry.
- 5.29 To the north of Mill Lane the buildings are tight to the back edge of the pavement and level with the footway. Tile and brick predominate as materials. The tight enclosure distinguishes this area from other parts of the conservation area.
- 5.30 Apart from Mill Lane Cottage, which is early 18th century, the remaining buildings on the north side are 19th century or more recent. The three-storey Arnold House, with its display of goods on the pavement and extensive signing, forms both a visual and activity focus. Together with the adjacent terrace, of circa 1900, they are some of the few slate roofed buildings in the whole conservation area.



*North side of the High Street*

- 5.31 The enclosure is then lost by the set-back of 1950s flats at Lydwells, together with the currently vacant site. This is reflected on the opposite side by the 'mean' single-storey building with access drives either side of it. However, the tall, timber-clad three-storey industrial/workshop building behind contributes to the urbanity and provides a visual reference to the industrial heritage of the High Street area and the mill which once stood there.
- 5.32 The alleyways to the south provide both physical links to rear deep plots and allow glimpses beyond, including unfortunately the poorly designed, out-of-scale telephone exchange.
- 5.33 Either side of the single storey building are characteristic buildings which provide good examples of townscape. Dolphin Cottage, Mansard House and Nos. 1 and 2 date variously from 18th century or earlier. Nos. 1 and 2 show evidence of former retail use. Many were shops at some time but regrettably have lost their details as they were converted to residential.
- 5.34 Hickmott Cottage has an earliest recorded date of 1525. The gabled portion fronting the road with its sweeping catslide and half hip roof forms a distinctive feature that has 'evolved' over the years. The near continuous run of wooden casements on the ground floor is also a unique feature.
- 5.35 Overall, the High Street exhibits a subtle blend and variety of building forms. The natural texture of materials and their limited use of colours is distinctive. The roofscape and their chimneys, particularly from elevated vantage points on Town Hill, are important in this character. Particular details important to this area are the half hips and sweeping roofs and small paned white windows. The scale and proportion of buildings in the area is of a human scale, and the mix of roofs and heights with a subtle balance of recessive roofs and assertive gables.
- 5.36 The retail activity is also a key component of the character and links the High Street to the Broadway area. The bustle of people and vehicles puts the area at the operational heart of the village. However, the quality of the signing and introduction of alien features of Dutch canopies and plastic signs is uncharacteristic of the conservation area.
- 5.37 The busy character is compounded by the lack of clarity of pavement, road and parking. The low kerbs and expanse of tarmac detract from this key space which could benefit from a closer examination and possibly some rationalisation and enhancement. Further up, Town Hill also experiences similar lack of definition in paving surfaces.
- 5.38 The village green, with its trees and railings, terminates the view and contains the intimate feel of the High Street which otherwise would dissipate into the more open area of the Broadway. The green also acts as a buffer between the traffic on the A21 and the more relaxed character of the High Street.

#### School Hill

- 5.39 One's approach from the north is along a narrow rural road with high hedges and trees bounding fields. After passing the junction with Church Road the entrance to the village is experienced. This point is marked by the set-back and main drive to Court Lodge across the golf course on the east side, with the Park Gate Cottages opposite. This building is set down from the road, its principal aspect being of roof and chimneys. At one time this was the Orange Tree pub with an 18th century rendered exterior to an older core. Beneath the cottages is a cellar cave in the steep western hillside to the rear – this was associated with smuggling gangs.
- 5.40 From this entry point the busy road drops steeply, revealing a dramatic view. The eye is both drawn down the hill towards the village and also across the valley to the southern slope opposite with its layers of trees. The whole view is framed by the trees on the east of School Hill and stepping roofs punctuated by chimneys to the west. There is an awareness that the heart of the village is nestling in the bottom of the valley, contained by the topography, the trees and the buildings.



- 5.41 The trees to the east are set on a high sandstone bank and form an important containing edge, adding to the character. There is also an elevated footpath running south from the golf course entry. This generous footpath in a wide grass 'verge' contains a line of six lime trees which provide a strong containing element. Although being elevated and separated from the main road, the constant traffic on the busy A21 School Hill is a prominent feature.
- 5.42 The War Memorial within this grass verge provides a further reference point of interest.
- 5.43 The 'exuberant' school building opposite on the west side of School Hill is a prominent feature and landmark. Built originally in 1836 and extended soon after, it is a red brick building with sandstone dressing in a Renaissance style, with a series of shaped Dutch gables.
- 5.44 Its distinctive feature is the clock tower with broach spire and lucarnes which not only dramatically punctuate the building itself but provide a landmark feature visible from the south side of the Teise valley.
- 5.45 Alongside the school is Parsonage Lane, an old drover's route from the west and important historically to the commercial origins of Lamberhurst. This lane crosses Gill Stream from more open flat countryside entering a dark tunnel of trees near the back of Park Gate Cottages – accentuated by the fact that the road is cut into the steep hill.
- 5.46 On turning the corner, the school building itself suddenly appears. Climbing the steep lane up to the junction with School Hill the 'framed' panorama to the south appears as you re-emerge into daylight. This approach is somewhat marred by parked cars and the clutter of signage and road barriers at the junction.
- 5.47 From the south looking up the hill, the school and its tower sit forward of the general building line forming a punctuation/bookend to development on the west side of School Hill. Tucked back and alongside the school is the house and forge, built in 1722 and originally called Rock House. The use of dressed sandstone and slate roofs introduces one of the examples of use of a variety of building materials. This small-scale building is punctuated by small dormer windows.
- 5.48 Adjoining, and to the south, is a recent housing development. The scale is appropriate to its context. However, the horizontal emphasis, together with window sizes and proportions, are somewhat out of character. Whilst weatherboarding is used in other parts of the area, in this location the material becomes highly visible from the south west when it is seen across the valley and in the context of the predominant school and the huddle of buildings beneath it. This emphasises the importance of careful choice of materials and detailing in this conservation area and the need to take into account long views. The open forecourt/parking area and the weak boundary treatment also detract from the character of the conservation area.
- 5.49 One of the main characteristics of this side of School Hill, and the area in general, is the unity and strength of boundary treatments and the general lack of cars in front gardens.



*West side of School Hill*

- 5.50 Further to the south of these buildings is an eclectic group of buildings of various ages, styles and use of materials. Collectively they do, however, provide a strong edge. They comprise short terraces, pairs and single dwellings, all with a variety of natural materials. There is stone, tile hanging, even weatherboarding with both tile and slate for roofing. Their unifying features are the strong building line and the manner in which the buildings step up the hill, following the natural topography. Their scale is also consistent with a small size and similar proportion to windows. Windows are all painted white, whether sash or casement. Roofs are punctuated by significant chimney structures and they are generally simply gabled in form with slopes facing the road and no dormer windows. Buildings are slightly set back from the road and of a consistent height and front boundaries are intact, other than allowing for pedestrian entrances. They all have planted gardens providing a unified setting.
- 5.51 Within the group is the mid-19th century red/blue brick boarding of 5, 6 and 7 Manor Cottages. The crisp stone and slate of 1, 2, 3 and 4 with its less imposing flank elevations, the tile-hung Tudor cottage with its landmark chimney stack and the 16th century pair of Campers and Laburnum Cottage are important to the character at this part of the conservation area. This is due to the quality of materials, proportion of the design and detailing of the elements.
- 5.52 Upway on the corner of Brewer Street breaks forward of the general building line to the north and south providing a strong punctuation in the streetscene. It is seen, therefore, on the front and flanks. With the garden area on the north side of the building, this introduces a rare space in an otherwise complete frontage. It also provides a reference point and contrast. This space allows an important view through to the rear of properties and chimneys in Brewer Street behind and a visual link with the landscape beyond.
- 5.53 Upway is further differentiated by the colonnaded veranda, expressing its former use as a shop and adding a strong architectural element to the building as well as the streetscene. The building itself is simply proportioned, built in restrained materials and does not intrude architecturally – it rather relies on its visual prominence by virtue of its townscape location and the colonnade.
- 5.54 Framed by Upway and the Charity to the south is the narrow entrance to Brewer Street. This narrowness and the tightness of buildings emphasises the change in scale and character to a more intimate, quiet area.
- 5.55 The gentle curvature of the road and the small, well-proportioned red brick Victorian terraces on the north side tight to the footpath close the view.
- 5.56 The change in level between School Hill and Brewer Street is emphasised by the undercroft to Upways and the lock-up behind the Charity.
- 5.57 The intimate and domestic character of the eastern end of Brewer Street is established by the Old Brewery Cottages – Nos. 1-7 and Nos. 8-11 with front garden areas being no more than 1 ft deep in places. They are bounded by a smaller scale version of the looped railing.



*North side of Brewer Street*



- 5.58 Bracketed porch hoods, usually with pitched roofs, are also a particular feature of this group of properties and add to the intimacy and privacy even though the buildings are close to the pavement. They also, together with some dormer windows on Nos. 5-7, add modelling and a level of detailing, creating good townscape.
- 5.59 The southern side of Brewer Street at this eastern end is less successful, the buildings by comparison appearing flat. This is due in part to the fact that windows are set forward in their reveals. The garage court to the rear of the Charity breaks down the intimacy and scale of the street and introduces a low quality intrusion. This is further compounded by the 1960s bungalow adjoining Gill Stream which is at variance with the height and window proportions of the buildings on the north side.
- 5.60 Beyond the stream to the west lies a development which is uncharacteristic of the character of the conservation area. It has a shallow and therefore alien roof form, white boarding and buildings which are set back from the road, providing no enclosure but rather an empty space to the front. The view from the rear and the countryside is equally poor where the development seems to encroach into the water meadow/valley bottom, rather than being contained within the village.
- 5.61 The quiet enclave of Brewer Street suffers from a number of cars, many parking on pavements, which mars the character. This is particularly unfortunate as the area dedicated to the parking of cars, which is less obtrusive, appears to be underused.
- 5.62 Beyond Gill Stream on the north side the curve of buildings continues with the set-back opening out more. The view is terminated by the gable of the 2½ storey 19th century pair of cottages which step forward and are somewhat taller than all the nearby properties.
- 5.63 The view is one of low key domestic gardens. The interrelation of small trees, railings and walls, however, could be easily damaged by the intrusion of parked cars and ill-considered landscape, trellis fencing, etc.
- 5.64 Dating from the early 18th century is the group of three modest cottages with their white weatherboarding. Their stone boundaries, together with the similar stone abutments to the stream, complemented by simple railings elsewhere, are one of the characteristic features of this part of the area.
- 5.65 The view back along Brewer Street eastwards emphasises the characteristic mix of clay roofs, chimneys and the importance of the rear elevations to School Hill.
- 5.66 Returning to School Hill, the Charity on the corner with Brewer Street is historically an interesting building, being one of the substantial buildings in the village and built in the late 14th century. It started out as a Wealden hall house and at one time became the poor house. It still has exposed framing, although sadly not of the original quality and form.
- 5.67 The tile hung elevation of Holly House and Ricards Toft contains another good example of a medium sized Wealden hall house built during the 15th century. Later 18th century alterations and a 20th century 'reconditioning' (including windows) have eroded some of its quality.
- 5.68 Again, and similar to the upper School Hill area, the raised ground floors, front gardens and intact front boundaries provide a unifying feature.
- 5.69 To the south is Ricards Flats built by the Crown Chemical Co. with the entrance to the more recent Ricard Mews development to the rear.
- 5.70 On the east side of School Hill, and past the trees, the space opens out and, together with the elevated levels, this provides a dramatic setting for the buildings.

- 5.71 The steep road verge and the elevated footpath continues down from the golf course entrance and incorporates car access points which are included very discreetly and without being 'over engineered'. Their form does not compromise the distinctive quality. The properties themselves invariably have retaining walls to the footpath with steps to front doors.
- 5.72 The view opens out to reveal a variety of buildings: the old Mrs Morlands' Infants School with its gabled form facing the road and ornate barge boards. With its ecclesiastical feel, and built in 1854 originally as a school, it later become The Institute, a working men's club. With the high wall and hedge the building remains half hidden.
- 5.73 To the south is the charming Tyled Cottage, a small two-bay, 16th century cottage. There is Tyled House also of 16th century origins, at one time selling leather goods. The shopfront still survives to the left of the front elevation.
- 5.74 Adjoining this is a new housing development which is reasonably well integrated into the conservation area. In this instance the use of an assertive gable to the front elevation provides a visual termination of the view from Brewer Street. The use of monochrome cladding and roofing materials give a rather bland appearance when compared with nearby examples. The use of dark coloured windows is also at variance with the characteristic white painted windows of the conservation area.
- 5.75 Durham and Hops Cottages are sandwiched between the new development and they are simple brick and tile hung cottages of 16th century origin.
- 5.76 Looking back up School Hill the road is set down deeply in a cutting with gardens and high embankment, all backed by trees. The subtle balance of fairly dense, small-scale development, the topography and the trees is important.
- 5.77 The area is also one where the roofscape viewed from above, and in silhouette from below, punctuates the views.
- 5.78 It is at this point that the road levels flatten out, the path is now at the same level and the characteristics of the buildings themselves change.

#### The Broadway

- 5.79 Ricards Toft and Morland Drive mark the transition from the School Hill tightly packed, small-scale buildings set on high embankments, into the Broadway area. This is characterised by being a level area on the floodplain of the river, with larger buildings, situated generally on wider, deeper plots than elsewhere in the conservation area.
- 5.80 It is noticeable that in this part of the conservation area white external finishes predominate, whether render, boarding or even painted brick. There is also an obvious commercial feel with the incidence of shops and public houses. The space between buildings and the roadway is wider than elsewhere.
- 5.81 On the west between Ricards and the River Teise is Coggers Hall, a mid to late 16th century large, jettied house. Built or remodelled for wealthy ironmasters, it has been associated with the Thomas family during its history.
- 5.82 Set behind a substantial stone wall and high hedge, it remains rather hidden from view in the streetscene, maintaining only glimpses, particularly of its sweeping roof and punctuating chimney stacks. Trees and hedging are important townscape elements in the streetscene. This all serves to reinforce the transition between School Hill and the Broadway on the south side of the river.

- 5.83 The River Teise itself is rather hidden, its presence marked only by a utilitarian guard-rail and the green/treed edges to the river which link east and west. The previous substantial bridge which had a hump and narrowed is still apparently incorporated into the structure of the present bridge. A section of the 1750s arches are still visible from Coggers Hall garden. It is disappointing that the river crossing is so underplayed as it was a major influence on the history and development of the village.
- 5.84 On the east side, opposite Coggers Hall, is Stair House. Re-built in 1889 by Christopher & White in the style of Norman Shaw, it once formed the offices of the brewery. Its assertive gables, half timbered bays and dormers and soaring chimneys give it a dramatic character and provide a local visual point of reference.
- 5.85 The recent development to the rear in Morland Drive is on the site of the former brewery. It comprises large houses with open fronts and driveways in a cul-de-sac layout. The architectural style is not necessarily of Lamberhurst. This form of backland development should also not set a precedent in what is essentially a linear village. The main regret has been that the small rear gardens have led to erosion/pressure on rear planting which has been thinned. The result is that the buildings are more visible from the golf course and the east, unlike elsewhere where the development of the village is provided with a landscape foil.
- 5.86 Adjoining Stair House to the south is the George & Dragon public house, a solid black and white Tudoresque building of the late Victorian period (1882), with its flank elevation overlooking the River Teise. Its setting, however, is marred by the highway railings alongside to the front and the open car park to the north.
- 5.87 Continuing south on the south side of the river is the Chequers Inn. A long-established hostelry, the building was originally a hall house which dates from the 16th century and has many subsequent alterations and additions. It has a tile hung and render elevation with chimneys which punctuate the skyline. The trellised garden alongside the river is weak in detail and enclosure.



*The Broadway*

- 5.88 The two pubs, together with Stair House, are three buildings on a grand scale which establish many of the characteristics prevalent in this part of the conservation area – not least the roofscape and chimney stacks.
- 5.89 To the rear of the Chequers Inn is an area that is interesting historically, now a jumble of buildings, spaces and car parking with tarmac surrounding the vibrant, although utilitarian, Memorial Hall.
- 5.90 The small section of railing to the design used on St Paul's Cathedral is an interesting link to the ironworking industry that once existed in the area around Lamberhurst.
- 5.91 To the south the buildings become 'looser' in their layout and are set further back with Rope House (c 1600) and Chequers Oast, together with Tanyard Cottages, on the south side. These once formed the containment to the green with cattle market behind. The later Spray Hill, constructed in 1837 by Macadam's son as a bypass, has left these buildings set down and poorly related to the green, with an awkward and unresolved enclosure of the area.

- 5.92 A glimpse can be seen of the timber boarded industrial building between, and over, Tanyard Cottages and Hickmott Cottages.
- 5.93 Turning back to the west side of the Broadway, just to the south of the River Teise, is Bridge House, part of a Wealden hall house of 1370 with a later 17th century projecting gabled wing to the left. Being built end-on to the street, it is one of the few assertive elements in a scene of recessive roof forms. In this instance it provides an appropriate punctuation which, however, should not be repeated too often in any future developments.
- 5.94 There follows a series of buildings with white walls and red clay roofs. They all have a slightly harder edge to the back edge of the pavement with minimal gardens and more utilitarian, less verdant planting. The delicate railings, with the typical hooped style of Lamberhurst, are particularly noticeable in this stretch.
- 5.95 Many of the buildings have shopfronts, several still being in business. This is an indication of the role that Lamberhurst played and still plays in the local economy and they provide an important historic and visual reference point. These are characteristic features that should be retained wherever possible.
- 5.96 Dormer windows are another noticeable element, complementing the more modest chimney stacks in the locality.
- 5.97 Also noticeable are wider gaps between buildings, often leading through to industrial uses behind. This area was the centre of the fulling/leather trade historically.
- 5.98 At Coggers Cottages, the buildings form a continuous frontage – all white and formerly shops. Together with Victoria House, they all date from the 16th century and formed the commercial heart of the village, with pubs and workshops.
- 5.99 The buildings turn the corner into the High Street area.
- 5.100 The village green was created by Hussey of Scotney just prior to 1886. The railings surrounding it were necessary to keep cattle out in the days when Lamberhurst held the cattle auctions on Fair Field to the south where Spray Hill now is.
- 5.101 The village green at this central location is rather isolated and appears as a small patch of grass in relation to the surrounding areas of traffic, roadway and footpaths. The four trees are, however, a stronger feature and provide an important vertical element in the street scene. The green should function more as a focal point for nearby buildings and link the High Street and Broadway at what is essentially the heart of the village. Opportunities should be sought to protect and reinforce this key element.

## 6 Summary of Elements that Contribute to Lamberhurst Conservation Area's Special Character

### Key Characteristics

#### Setting

- 6.1 The conservation area straddles the River Teise with steep approaches from north and south. The topography, the inter-visibility across the valley and the containing landscape provide a strong setting of the conservation area. There is a relationship between gardens and the countryside and strong landscape edges to the village.



*Northern approach down School Hill*

#### Contrast between Sub-Areas

- 6.2 It is possible to clearly define sub-areas within the conservation area, which exhibit different characteristics:
- School Hill;
  - The Broadway;
  - High Street; and
  - Town Hill.

#### Roofscape

- 6.3 The roofscape is made significant by the topology and elevated views. Variations in roof and building height are also emphasised by the interplay of gables, half hips and sweeping catslides, all punctuated by chimneys. Many areas have the recessive roof form, i.e. front to back.
- 6.4 Rear views of buildings are also important, particularly with single depth development.

#### Chimneys

- 6.5 The skyline of the conservation area is punctuated by a number of chimney stacks, visible from ground level, between buildings and from elevated positions. They are often substantial structures and characterised by mouldings and corbelling.

### **Boundaries**



*Typical railing detail*

- 6.6 Front gardens are generally always contained by 'transparent' detail of railings or fences. There is a general absence of walls. The railing pattern is also quite distinct to the conservation area, being a hooped 'hairpin' type, or varieties of this.

### **Containment**

- 6.7 Streets are generally visually well contained by strong continuous frontages, with occasional gaps and glimpses providing some visual permeability. The proportion, scale and form of containment varies between the four sub-areas, Town Hill and School Hill being higher than the road with embankments and trees providing enclosing elements. The Broadway is wide and more open – with the complete contrast of the High Street, which is highly enclosed, with strongly defined edges.

### **Building Layout, Density and Size**

- 6.8 The layout, density and size of buildings are some of the distinguishing characteristics between the four sub-areas. School Hill and Brewer Street comprise domestic scale, residential buildings often in terrace form. Town Hill is similar in character but comprises larger individual buildings with more greenery between. High Street is tightly knit and densely developed but with long rear gardens. By contrast the Broadway comprises larger buildings in a looser layout, occupying the flatter parts of the conservation area.

### **Commercial Character**

- 6.9 The whole conservation area has a bustling character to it, probably due to in part to the heavy traffic. The history of the commercial character, however, is also evidenced by the number of shops and businesses, particularly in the High Street and Broadway areas. Retention of remaining shopfronts is therefore important, as is maintaining key uses such as public houses.

### **Materials**

- 6.10 Traditional building materials dominate in the conservation area and their variety and contrast is a key characteristic. Brick, painted brick, stone and boarding are all present. It is, however, noticeable that the sub-areas exhibit subtle distinctions in the use of materials.

### **Details**

- 6.11 Many of the details are straightforward, simple and typical. There is, however, a noticeable incidence of half-hipped roofs in the High Street, and door hoods and small bays in the Broadway.

### **Colour**

- 6.12 A simple palette is used – red tile, white windows, white decoration, white doors or black, occasionally dark colours. This palette should be retained. There is little use of bright colouring.

## 7 Summary of Elements that Detract from Lamberhurst Conservation Area's Special Character and Opportunities for Enhancement

### Recent Developments

- 7.1 The design quality of the 1960s development at Brewer Street, choice of materials and prominence in the landscape setting, mar the character of the conservation area. A similar monolithic estate at Morland Drive in particular erodes the soft edge of the village and intrudes into the landscape setting.

### Brewers Lane Corner

- 7.2 The substantial crash barrier and utilitarian bollards in the verge to the south of Brewers Lane are unsightly intrusions.

### Morland Drive

- 7.3 The entry to the new estate is dominated by road design.

### Car Parks

- 7.4 Car parks to the east side of the Broadway lack definition. The George & Dragon in particular presents very poor boundary treatment to the main road.

### Bridge

- 7.5 The bridge abutments to the River Teise are of utilitarian design. There is little recognition of river views, nor of the importance of the river crossing historically.

### Vacant Sites

- 7.6 There are a number of vacant or underused sites in the area.

### The Broadway

- 7.7 The wide expanse of roadway and poor definition of lay-by to the front of the Memorial Hall cause difficulty of pedestrian movement across the road. The bypass provides a substantial opportunity to provide greater pedestrian emphasis, improvements around the village green, improve the character of area and to calm traffic.

### The Green

- 7.8 Separated from pedestrian areas, surrounded by roadway and with limited access, the Village Green represents an under-utilised asset.

### **High Street**



*High Street parking*

- 7.9 Low profile curbs, wall-to-wall tarmac and poor environment present a lost opportunity to reinforce the commercial heart of the village. There is also scope to improve car parking/delivery arrangements, whilst retaining car parking provision.

### **Pearse Place**

- 7.10 The highway dominates the layout at its junction, also with a lack of enclosure by buildings. The large area of amenity grass is out of keeping.

### **Mill Site**

- 7.11 The old mill site and footpath offer the opportunity to add to the historical and visual appreciation of Lamberhurst.

### **Tree Planting**

- 7.12 Some inappropriate tree planting compromises the setting of Lamberhurst.

### **Suburbanisation**

- 7.13 Some suburbanising features have appeared in the Town Hill area, e.g. drives either side of the chapel building, open frontages to bungalows and other poor recent developments, e.g. Telephone Exchange, South of Brewer Street, Morland Drive.

### **Signs and Shopfronts**

- 7.14 Introduction of plastic signs, Dutch canopies and uncharacteristic shopfronts could easily erode the character of the existing and previous shops.



## 8 Character Appraisal – The Down



### Context

- 8.1 The Down Conservation Area is very open in character, dominated by landscaping features rather than built development, in contrast with the tightly packed village environment of Lamberhurst in the valley below. Within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, The Down is centred on a sandstone knoll, with the main expanse of open grass dissected by a number of roads and footpaths. Lying on the north-south and east-west crossroads it was, and still is, at the heart of local communications network.
- 8.2 The conservation area is generally well contained by trees and hidden from long distance views. Even from closer up, it is not until one enters The Down on rising approaches and through tree cover that one is aware of its existence. Within the conservation area views out are fairly limited and only available at set locations. This reinforces the introvert character.
- 8.3 Historically it was part of the Lamberhurst Manor demesne from medieval times. The central area is now designated as common land.
- 8.4 The general character is distinct from Lamberhurst itself, being open textured, low density and with sporadic development. With a variety of building styles, ages and materials it is the landscape, the spaces and their edge treatment that provide a strong characteristic.

### Approach

- 8.5 For the purposes of presentation of this part of the Appraisal, The Down Conservation Area is described in three sub-character areas which exhibit differing characteristics and which reflect geographic building typology and spatial differences:

- The Slade/Green Lane;
- Down Farm; and
- The Down.

### The Slade/Green Lane

- 8.6 The approach to the conservation area from the south passes the interesting Slade farm group, including bottle oast and tollhouse, and is fairly flat. It then leads into an area of bungalows and undistinguished development, with open character, formed by low boundaries and grass verge.
- 8.7 The appearance of Greenfields and Norton on the west side, however, marks a change in emphasis in the character of the approach. At this point the ground begins to rise more steeply at the entry to the conservation area.
- 8.8 The hedges to gardens are stronger and therefore contain the road more effectively, with few exceptions. The trees are more noticeable and dominate the backdrop. Indeed, the boundary trees between the development at Wiseacre and The Firs forms an important defining threshold to the conservation area, together with the trees on the west side of The Slade.
- 8.9 The view to the north is framed by the gently curving development on the east, visible in the distance, and the strong shaw of woodland on the west.
- 8.10 This enclosure of the approach formed by buildings and trees maintains a strong 'tunnel' characteristic which continues until emerging suddenly onto the open Down. The pair of buildings of Nortons/Greenfields acts as a 'marker', defining the threshold to the conservation area.



*The Slade*

- 8.11 They are most distinctive in part by the use of slate for their roofing, the remainder in this part of the area being clay tile. This pair of late 19th century buildings are strongly detailed with bands of scalloped clay tile hanging and simple bracketed hoods to front doors. The later extension to the southernmost of the pair of cottages is well mannered and has not compromised the visual integrity of the original pair.
- 8.12 The white gable of Woodside Cottage (No. 4a The Slade) and No. 2 The Slade provide a rather sharp contrast to the general, more natural, colouring of buildings.
- 8.13 Materials are generally clay tiles and red brick, with white painted windows. Detailing includes chimneys and bay windows which contrast to tile hanging. Some rendering is also evident. The more modern 1990s building at Lyndhurst is at variance to this consistent palette with boarding being used for cladding and brown roof tiles, and therefore detracts.

- 8.14 A number of buildings on the east side date from around the 1920s. The Firs, Orchard House and the semi-detached at Nos. 3 to 8 are well mannered, with pleasant proportions. The use of red clay tile hanging, red brick, chimneys and some render give them a consistency which integrates them together.
- 8.15 The backdrop of trees is an important ingredient in the overall character, the shaw on the west allowing glimpses under the canopies across the 'parkland' to the simple, classically proportioned east elevation of The Down House.
- 8.16 The northern group of buildings on The Slade dates from around the 1900s. Their location, tighter to the back edge of the pavement, narrows the containment and accentuates the sense of approach.
- 8.17 To the immediate north of No. 1 Mons Cottage is the entry to the western limb of Farthing Lane. This is an un-metalled track leading to a group of small dwellings; Gravel Pit Cottages. The eastern limb, accessed from the B2169, is similar.
- 8.18 Whilst this area has un-metalled roads with no kerbs or edges, it does provide a characteristic rural feel to the area, essential to its relationship with the gravel pit area immediately to the north. This 'soft', informal edge is wholly appropriate to the context, and whilst there are opportunities to improve the area, it should not be at the expense of this character.
- 8.19 Between the eastern and western limbs, there is a footpath link, somewhat spoilt by the suburban fencing to the boundary with the Croft which is rather too intrusive. The buildings to Farthing Lane themselves are varied, often probably often based on original small cottages.
- 8.20 There have also been some modern insertions. These, however, are buildings of modest height and 'cottage' scale, not grand or imposing. The use of materials and scale of windows are still generally appropriate and reinforce the general character.
- 8.21 The land to the south east is generally garden plots, but 'informally' managed and not 'over-manicured'. There is evidence that they are remnants of orchards. The land slopes down to Green Lane, a wide footpath/track which forms a strong edge, well enclosed by trees to the rear of the garden areas and by the trees to the edge of the field to the south east, with Marwicks Wood beyond. This bridleway may originally have been an important component in the communications network.
- 8.22 The history of this area is interesting with examples of sporadic building, e.g. Herons Cottage, Green Lane Cottage and Prospect Cottages all appearing to reflect an early to mid-19th century origin. These may have origins from 1839 when William Morland, Lord of the Manor, 'allowed' encroachment on The Down among fruit trees. At that time they were probably no more than rough wooden shelters, infilled with clay daub.
- 8.23 Immediately to the north of Farthing Lane is the gravel pit and pond. Very much a hidden asset, now overgrown, this was originally established as a gravel pit providing road building material at the end of the 18th century to various Turnpike trusts.
- 8.24 The self-sown trees and dense undergrowth have created impenetrable edges. This adds to the containment of this enclave and provides a defining edge to surrounding development and roadways.



*Gravel Pit Pond*

- 8.25 The steep changes in level ensure and reinforce its containment. The whole area is designated as a Site of Local Nature Conservation Value.
- 8.26 There has been some encroachment by gardens on the northern edge against the twitten which forms the northern boundary, and the car park to the east. These intrusions need to be screened and managed. Parking encroachment from the Gravel Pit Cottages/Farthing Lane dwellings also needs careful attention. Indeed this area offers considerable scope for enhancement with a careful balance of clearance and management.

#### **Down Farm**

- 8.27 This approach from the south east was historically the principal road to Hastings and the coast. It also links the village of Lamberhurst with the west lodge of Scotney Castle estate, the seat of the Husseys for many centuries.
- 8.28 The existence of mixed hedgerow species and the 'soft' verges are features that establish much of the character of the approach. The gently rising ground adds to the perception of entry.
- 8.29 The first real awareness of entry to the conservation area is marked by the motley variety of traffic signs, pub signboards and the wirescape.
- 8.30 Buildings on the right (north east) begin to appear behind their strong hedging. Of particular note is the strongly detailed and coloured Anglefield Cottages. Built in 1876, the building is strongly influenced by the Arts & Crafts movement, with simple gabled roof, hipped dormers, alternate plain and scalloped tile hanging, white painted casements and an intricately moulded chimney stack – a building of quality. It also forms an important visual stop for the trackway to the south west. The adjoining Down Farm Cottages are a more self-effacing pair of cottages, but with the same chimney stack design.
- 8.31 The hedges are only broken sufficiently to afford narrow access to the properties, thereby maintaining the rural character. The south western side of the road, however, is less successful in this regard. The appearance of the car park introduces a rather utilitarian element. The rear portion backs onto the quarry pond area and has become a dump for rubbish and garden waste.
- 8.32 The Brown Trout public house is a pleasant building, occupying an elevated position and angled to the road. Its scale and proportions are complemented by the outbuildings to the left (south) and the cottages further down fronting the 'twitten' which runs along the northern edge of the gravel quarry pond. The inappropriate ginger windows of Elmore Cottage, however, stand out against the white weatherboarding, making them obtrusive from the road.
- 8.33 The pub was previously a butchers, a link with the strong agricultural past of Lamberhurst. It became a pub in 1880 as The Rising Sun, changing its name again to the Brown Trout when frequented by workers building the nearby reservoir at Bewl Water. The character, however, is devalued by the pub car park with its poorly defined edges and very exposed car parking.
- 8.34 This, together with the previously highlighted signing, spoils the character of the approach. The character of the rural lane is further eroded by the incursion of inappropriate hedging species. The introduction of conifers and laurels creates a more 'suburbanised' character. This also continues further along the road westwards.



**Down Farm Oasts**

- 8.35 The rising approach is crested by the pub and the dramatic oast which appears on the opposite side. This is a group of four tall oast kilns and three-storey 'industrial' stowage. Originally built in 1876, it has now been converted to residential use and has consequently lost some of its character through the insertion of large casement windows and domestic curtilage. The adjoining barn tucked to the east has suffered a similar fate.
- 8.36 The oast cowls, with their tall rendered brick and tarred finish are a dramatic interlude in the streetscene, also being glimpsed in the general treed landscape from the north. Historically, oasts were in Sussex before county boundary changes and this was the only Sussex oast house to ever display the Kent Invicta.
- 8.37 Beyond the pub and oast the containing hedging to the edge of the road is re-established, albeit with conifers and spotted laurel included.
- 8.38 On the left (south side) is the pleasant enclave of Down Avenue. The buildings themselves are typical 1923 municipal, of a simple design, well-scaled and proportioned. The agreeable character of the road is essentially derived from the soft edged grass verges, the large horse chestnut trees in the verges and boundaries to properties in privet, beech and holly. The informal parking amongst the trees in this instance adds to the character. This coherent appearance only begins to break down where forecourt parking is formalised and close-boarded fencing is introduced in lieu of hedging.



**Down Avenue**

- 8.39 To the south of the cul-de-sac a footpath link leads through to the quarry pond area and the east-west twitten which runs between the Brown Trout pub and The Down itself to the west. This footpath and edge to the pond is overgrown in places, masking views and camouflaging the amenity potential of this area. Tipping of garden rubbish and escaped garden species add to the neglected air and erosion of ecological value.
- 8.40 The main road sweeps round to the left towards The Down. The awkward junction with Sand Road presents an unresolved traffic priority, with its area of tarmac and the area alongside at the corner being poorly defined. This is compounded by a clutter of signs, bus shelter and the informal car lay-by and sections of footpath which peter out.
- 8.41 Running northwards, Sand Road is bounded by woodland on the west. This road was first cited in 1070 as a sandstone ridgeway. Within the wooded area is a rough open area used as a temporary car park. It is irregular, overgrown and unsightly. Off it also runs the rough track through the trees to the garage of Manordown.



- 8.42 On the east side are a variety of bungalows and houses dating from the 1960s. Although they are built in a variety of different materials and styles, they do have a cohesive quality which respects the character of the area. This is due to their modest height and general use of clay roof tiles, and mostly white painted windows. It is also due to their being set back from the lane and not imposing too much on it, but more particularly it derives from the generally good 'green' boundaries, whether they be substantial indigenous hedges or picket fencing with hedging behind. It is noticeable that this soft feel has been eroded so far only by one close-boarded fence.
- 8.43 Further to the north there is an open garden area forming part of the grounds of the Mount. This is strongly bounded by sweet chestnut trees which complement the trees of the common on the opposite, west side.
- 8.44 On the main road beyond Down Avenue the level road sweeps westwards with buildings on the south side set well back, Nos. 13 and 14 with a more stark black and white elevational treatment to the first floor.
- 8.45 There are a variety of boundaries, with beech and holly to No. 13, the plain conifers of No. 14 which will inevitably soon dominate, and then the open front to Woodbine Cottages. These buildings were recently rebuilt following a major fire and, although appearing pristine, they will weather in. The use of good simple materials, apart from the unfortunate use of UPVC windows, will help in this. The picket timber fencing is still 'new' and could benefit by supplemental planting in character with the area.
- 8.46 The road continues onto The Down itself, the lush woodland appearance on the north side marred again by a collection of road traffic signs, other 'furniture' and the informal lay-by.

#### **The Down**

- 8.47 This part of the conservation area comprises a large green space, some woodland and a small collection of sporadic buildings to the edge. It sits on a high point surrounded by the River Teise to the north, the River Bewl to the east and their smaller tributaries. The elevated position means that all its approaches rise up and open out onto The Down.
- 8.48 The approach road from the north up Town Hill from the main village is cut deeply into the slope with steep banks either side to the east and west. The large overhanging trees link overhead creating a dark, enclosed space which accentuates the sense of arrival onto The Down when emerging into the light. It should be noted, however, that there is a separate, secret footpath on the east side, set back from the road below and behind the row of lime trees.
- 8.49 The arrival on to The Down is almost confusing with a choice of three routes plus the residential driveways leading to Stable Cottage and The Mount. The heavy-gated entrance and lush planting give a reclusive feel to the latter. There is also the more secretive footpath through the tree edge on the west which bursts out into the countryside with panoramic views to the north.
- 8.50 The principal road to the south becomes more obvious as The Down opens up. On the east side is the old post office and tea shop which is one of the few buildings which is close to the pavement. It sits sideways onto the road with two shallow slate roof gables and clay tile hanging to first floor with white painted brickwork to ground floor. The gables are both punctuated by white painted brick stacks with two more at the far end. The main elevations face to the north and south at right angles to the road. The building exhibits a rather odd selection of windows.
- 8.51 Manordown is a 19th century, well mannered and classically proportioned large house which adds a restrained dignity to this part of the area. It appears to have been several cottages originally. It also offers a good example of the characteristic hedging and soft edge details which is one of the main features of this part of the conservation area. This building, and the previous 'post office', have the appearance of being 'carved out' of the woodland area which runs back to Sand Road.

- 8.52 The approach from the east and The Down Farm area emerges at this point, having risen up from the south east. It is also at this point that there is the key road junction on The Down, unfortunately marred by an assortment of traffic signing, islands, kerbs and a plethora of bollards, all of which are at odds with the essential 'soft' character.
- 8.53 To the south of this junction, on the corner, is the 17th century, or possibly earlier, 1-3 Down Cottages, tile hung at first floor and feather-edged boarding to ground – a rare configuration. The building is set well back from the corner which reinforces the openness and shows off its well-manicured front garden.
- 8.54 Alongside, but facing The Down to the west, is the distinctive hammer-dressed stone elevations of 4-6 Down Cottages, built in the early 19th century using natural materials which have mellowed. Although close to the road it is well hidden behind a high hedge, so it does not intrude. The car garaging and bins alongside, however, are on display.
- 8.55 Marlpit Cottage is another sandstone building set well back from the road. It has, however, been extended and presents a more modern appearance to the front with weatherboarding and horizontally proportioned windows.
- 8.56 It is at this point that the 'twtten' (footpath) that links to the rear of Down Avenue emerges, having run along the north edge of the quarry.
- 8.57 On the south side is the doctors' surgery, a single-storey, rather undistinguished building. This is particularly noticeable from distant views, particularly the approach to The Down from the west, where its scale does not relate to other buildings on The Down. The main feature that perhaps lets it down is the open frontage and lack of substantial planting to the front. Happily, the same cannot be said of the rear car park which is unobtrusive, well hidden and with its gated entrance to the quarry pond.
- 8.58 The entrance to The Down from The Slade emerges up the slope, squeezing between the trees bounding the quarry pond and Down House.
- 8.59 The southern edge of The Down is strongly contained by the boundary trees to The Down House, giving a rural feel. This is only subtly punctuated by the short section of white fencing and the park gate towards the western end. Down House replaced a Wealden hall house called 'Geldenhalle'. The current building is dated 1810 but incorporates earlier buildings, at least 18th century, and is grouped with associated buildings such as the Coach House. They are set well back from The Down and are only visible as glimpses. The principal 'front' elevation is, in fact, facing eastwards to its 'park' and The Slade.
- 8.60 The western approach to The Down from Bayham is, however, a more open orchard, pastureland character, having passed the hamlet around Furnace Farm.
- 8.61 The important open space on the south side marks the entry to the conservation area and maintains an appropriate separation between the conservation area and more recent developments further to the west, protecting the open rural character of the area. The low-key boundary treatment reinforces this rural informality. A glimpse through the trees is available to the lunette window of the granary to Down House.
- 8.62 The opposite northern aspect is of Inglenook and Hall Cottage, c.1600, with the strong red brick garage with its crest tiles and scalloped barge board. Next is a severe line of conifers and the garden area to the rear of the Swan public house. Recent engineering earthworks, opening up of car parking, the conifer belt and other paraphernalia badly detract from the rural informality.
- 8.63 Entry along Furnace Lane into The Down itself is through a 'gateway' defined by the trees on the south side and by the simple 19th century Coach House to the rear of the Swan public house. The road then curves sharply, opening up the view of the southern part of The Down – an open area of grass with an eclectic mix of buildings opposite. This eastern group of buildings, although varied, presents a pleasant mix of buildings, landscape and even The Down Farm Oasts beyond. Only the doctors' surgery appears to be out of character.



*The Down*

- 8.64 The western edge to The Down is perhaps less successful at integrating with the character of the conservation area. The Swan pub, which is an encroachment from the early 1820s, is a picturesque building; its forecourt, however, lets it down together with the confusing road junction at this point.
- 8.65 The remainder of the western edge exhibits a domestic selection in planting, neatly clipped low hedges and wide access driveways. The former entrance to the Lamberhurst Vineyards retains its wide entrance, strong kerbs, low boundary wall and overrun onto the green. This loss of enclosure and also fewer trees of significant stature are at variance with the general character of the conservation area.
- 8.66 The commercial nature of the converted oast and barn still require careful handling to respect the low key character of The Down.
- 8.67 The 17th century Ridge Farmhouse reflects the strong red palette of tile and brick found elsewhere in the conservation area, although it has had a number of 20th century extensions and alterations. The encroachment of its garden into previously agricultural land is unfortunate, particularly with the domestication of greenhouse, sheds, etc. on prominent display and detracting from the enclosure of The Down and the glimpses across to the north west.
- 8.68 The containing trees are re-established either side of the footpath that runs westwards from the top of Town Hill.
- 8.69 The central area of The Down itself, although essentially a grassy common, lacks clarity of purpose. The uninterrupted amenity grass area to the south is used as an occasional events field and is under appropriate management for this. The area to the north, however, is more ambiguous with scattered specimen trees and areas of regenerative vegetation. Several undulations, including a ditch, create a more varied sward despite the consistent grass cutting. This lack of purpose and approach to management is likely to result in a landscape that significantly detracts from the conservation area. The disorientation and confusion of roads is only saved by the Swan public house providing a focal point to help orientation, otherwise The Down can only rely on the bus shelter, the crossroads and its attendant clutter, for 'features'.



## 9 Summary of Elements that Contribute to The Down Conservation Area's Special Character

### Key Characteristics

#### Contrast between the sub-areas

- 9.1 It is possible to define the sub-areas within the conservation area which exhibit quite distinct characteristics:

- The Down;
- Down Farm Oasts; and
- The Slade and Gravel Pit.

#### The Down

#### Green Spaces

- 9.2 The principal feature of the sub-area is the open green sitting on a crest. Although open, there have been some incursions of trees. The roads running across the green generally have natural soft edges.

#### Containment

- 9.3 Although elevated, The Down is well contained by buildings, trees and boundaries with vistas and panoramic views being limited. The 'loose edge' is quite distinctive, with buildings being set back and more recessive as opposed to the stronger containing tree/hedge line. The only building which could be considered dominant is the Swan public house, which acts as a reference point and assists in orientation.

#### Gateways

- 9.4 The Down is rather an introverted space with clearly defined entry points. These are evident on approaching from the north, east and south on rising approach roads which emerge from the trees onto The Down. The gateway from the west is on passing the Swan public house with the group of trees opposite.



Swan 'gateway'

#### Trees

- 9.5 These are obviously a key element on The Down in containing and defining the space and providing a general backdrop: an indigenous mix of species with no particular specimens standing out.

#### Gravel Pit/The Slade

#### Topography

- 9.6 The nature of topography defines fairly clearly the extent of the Gravel Pit within the sub-area with steep slopes with a sunken area. The pond in the west extends to a flat wet area to the east.

### **Vegetation**

- 9.7 Vegetation and trees also provide a backdrop to many views and containment of dense regenerative woodland.
- 9.8 The historical and visual importance of the open Green Lane Area emphasises its contrast with the more built up character of The Slade. Consistency of materials in the area is a key feature.

Down Farm Oast

### **Juxtaposition of Buildings**

- 9.9 There is a variety of building types and ages with no particular cohesion of style or materials.

### **Layout and Density of Buildings**

- 9.10 Buildings are scattered, with a fairly 'open-textured' layout. This produces an open and balanced layout with no particular emphasis of buildings or groups of buildings.

### **Boundary Treatment**

- 9.11 Hedging is the prevalent boundary treatment within this area providing a soft, rural aspect to development and reinforcing the secondary importance of the buildings themselves.

10 Summary of Elements that Detract from The Down Conservation Area's Special Character and Opportunities for Enhancement

Bus Stops

- 10.1 Prominent and ugly.

Wooden Posts

- 10.2 Add to the clutter of street furniture around The Down. More sensitive parking control measures are required.

Trees/Management

- 10.3 Haphazard arrangement of trees on and around The Down has compromised character, further threatened by lack of positive management. Quarry pond area suffers from self-sown sycamores and from little management. This prevents proper appreciation and allows poor biodiversity.

Doctors' Surgery

- 10.4 The view on approaching from the west is compromised by this poor scale building and weak boundary treatment.

Public House Forecourts

- 10.5 Both pub forecourts suffer from ill-defined edges.



Hedging and Boundary Treatments

- 10.6 Some erosion of a distinctive feature has occurred through the insertion of laurels, conifers and close-boarded fencing. There is poor boundary definition on the west side of The Down and introduction of inappropriate and domestic planting. Removal of planting to the rear of the Swan pub has opened up views to the car park and play equipment and has lost enclosure to the road.

Highway Works

- 10.7 The extent of concrete curbing beyond junctions severely compromises the 'soft' character of roads. The introduction of tarmac footpaths adds further to the 'suburbanisation' of the area.



#### Street Furniture

- 10.8 There is an untidy collection of traffic signs, bollards, bins etc, particularly at the crossroads on The Down. Future signing and lining should seek to remove 'clutter'.

#### Car Parks

- 10.9 The Brown Trout car park is poorly laid out.

#### Sand Lane/Furnace Lane Junction

- 10.10 The woodland is overgrown, the hard-standing together with the informal lay-by on Furnace Lane, are unmanaged.

## 11 Next Steps

- 11.1 This Character Appraisal will assist the Borough Council's decision and policy making in the following ways:
- The Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan was adopted in March 1996 and is being reviewed. This Appraisal will feed into the review process and will help in drawing up any new policies for the Lamberhurst area;
  - The Appraisal will help in the interpretation of Policy EN5 of the Local Plan. Under this Policy, development must meet certain criteria in terms of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area in which they are situated; and
  - The Appraisal will form the basis and focus for any future enhancement proposals in the conservation area.

## 12 Further Information

- 12.1 For queries on planning matters or general conservation advice you are encouraged to consult the Borough Council's planning officers who will be pleased to assist.

**Telephone**     **01892 526121**

**Fax**             **01892 544746**

**e-mail**           **planning.buildingcontrol@tunbridgewells.gov.uk**

Or write to:     **Head of Planning and Building Control Services**  
**Town Hall**  
**Royal Tunbridge Wells**  
**Kent TN1 1RS**

- 12.2 For enquiries regarding the Parishes of Benenden, Brenchley, Cranbrook, Frittenden, Goudhurst, Hawkhurst, Horsmonden, Lamberhurst, Sandhurst and Sissinghurst contact:

**Telephone**     **01580 712771**

**Fax**             **01580 712649**

**e-mail**           **planning.buildingcontrol@tunbridgewells.gov.uk**

Or write to:     **Head of Planning and Building Control Services**  
**Cranbrook Council Offices**  
**High Street**  
**Cranbrook**  
**Kent TN17 3EN**

# 13 Character Appraisal Maps



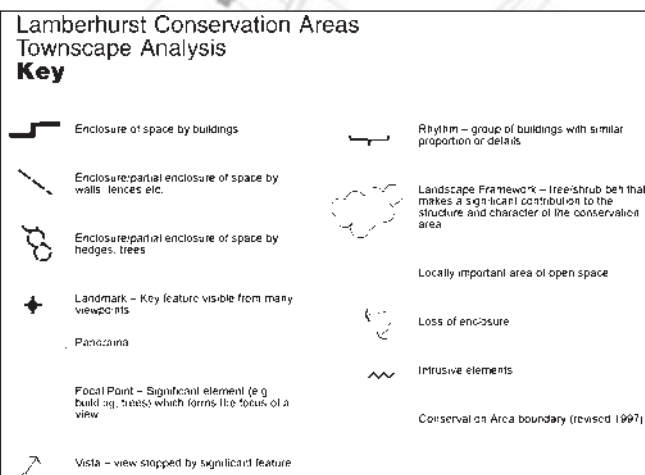


Figure 6

**The Down Conservation Area**





## 14 Consultation

### Introduction

This document has been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out in PPG12 regarding Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The relevant Local Plan Policies are set out in this document at section 2.

This document is intended to support these policies.

### Consultation Process

The initial preparation of the document was through a working party made up of officers together with representatives from local organisations, which included the Lamberhurst Parish Council, Lamberhurst Society and Lamberhurst Local History Society.

The process included a walkabout of the conservation areas and a follow-up workshop session. The resultant informal draft was then subject to scrutiny and input from all members of the working group, together with other key officers.

The draft document was then reported to the Borough Councils Operational Services Board on 7th February 2002 and approved as the basis for public consultation. (item OPS/01/02/07)

During the consultation period of 4 weeks the consultation draft was sent to all parish councillors, Lamberhurst Society, Lamberhurst Local History Society, English Heritage, the national amenity societies, CPRE, Weald of Kent Preservation Society, Great Weald Enterprise, GOSE, Kent County Council, senior officers in TWBC, etc.

The consultation draft was also reported to the Borough Councils eastern area planning committee for comment, and was made available to all borough councillors.

Additionally those properties directly affected by proposed boundary changes were written to, informing them of proposals.

Finally, a two-day manned exhibition on the appraisal was held in Lamberhurst.

### Response to Consultation

All responses were recorded with recommendations for change where considered appropriate.

The report, with details of the responses and changes, can be found in papers from the meeting of the Councils Cabinet for 18 July 2002 (item 020718/CAB030) which is available from the Council or can be viewed on the website.

The Cabinet resolution was to approve the appraisal as Supplementary Planning Guidance and that the conservation area boundaries be modified as proposed.

### Notices

Relevant notices were placed in the London Gazette 27th September 2002 and the Courier Newspaper 27th September 2002 in accordance with S70 of the Act.