



# Diss

## Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

---

January 2011



## **INTRODUCTION**

Under the terms of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority is required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as Conservation Areas.

The 1990 Act also requires local authorities to prepare policy statements for those Conservation Areas. These statements are to be more explicit and detailed than would be possible as part of a Local Plan, and seek to identify the components that give the Conservation Area its special character. This analysis will provide the context within which the particular problems of the area can be considered. The policies of the Council, and others, will be noted and assessed and a review of the achievements made since 1974 will demonstrate the effectiveness of previous efforts.

The history of Diss is of significant interest. Its development as one of the main market towns in South Norfolk, the unique impact of the Mere made the historic centre an obvious candidate as a Conservation Area in 1974. This latest review is being carried out in response to guidance issued by English Heritage (Appendix 6), which has amended the way the appraisals are prepared and the extent of their contents.

While the Council has prepared this statement, it cannot successfully deal with all the issues without the support of a number of individuals, groups and local and national organisations. Once approved, this Statement will help shape the future development of Diss, and with the co-operation of all concerned, it should do so in a way that respects the special character and appearance of the town.

## **VALUE OF THE APPRAISAL**

The publication of this appraisal aims to improve the understanding of the value of the built heritage, and provide property owners and potential developers within the conservation area with clearer guidance on planning matters and the types of development likely to be encouraged. It will enable South Norfolk Council to improve its strategies, policies and the attitude towards the conservation and development opportunities and priorities within the designated area. It will also support the effective determination of planning and listed building applications, and inform relevant evidence in planning particularly relating to the demolition of unlisted buildings.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The appraisal will be subject to a wide consultation process as advised in the above guidance. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted SNDC Local Plan, Planning Policy Statement 5, and other emerging documents, which are listed in Appendix 4.



St Nicholas Street



The Mere



Mount Street

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Much has been written about the history of Diss, its particular features, buildings and people who have all made an impression on the town. I am indebted to Basil Abbott whose publication *The Diss Book* has been a helpful source of information. It is also fortunate that an excellent collection of 19th century photographs taken by Cleer Algar of Diss survive in the Suffolk Record Office, and it is hoped that some can be featured in the final appraisal.

The origins of the name “Diss” is uncertain. It could come from the first settler, or even Dis Pater, the Roman god of the underworld. Some say that the name comes from the Old English “dic” meaning “ditch or moat” perhaps a reference to the Mere. In the *Domesday Book*, Diss is noted as a royal manor, and by the end of the 12th century, its commercial importance was firmly established. The market dates from 1135 and a charter for the great annual fair was granted in 1195.

Diss was a convenient focal point enjoying good communications in all directions, in particular the river crossing at Denmark Bridge, while the rising ground north of the Mere was clear of the flood plain, and had a good supply of water.

Two other focal points in the town were the market in the area of St Nicholas Street, and the fair by the bridge at Fair Green which hosted the annual fair for 700 years until 1872. The area of the market has been encroached upon over time, with evidence to suggest that the medieval occupation of Mere Street probably went no further south than number 1.

The Middle Ages ( 13th to 16thC) saw the rise of the wool and linen trades. The Saracen’s Head Inn was the Cloth hall of the Weaver’s Guild, while merchants used their wealth to build fine houses, warehouse and guild halls, and to build and add to the parish church.

This prosperity was consolidated in the 16th and 17th centuries. A large proportion of the buildings in the centre of Diss survive from this period, although some were lost in a fire in Mere Street in 1640.

Diss lost some of its importance with the decline in the wool and weaving industries in the region in the 18th and 19th centuries, but remained as a significant local market town. Some fine Georgian houses and smaller cottages were built in this period, mostly of brick, compared with the timber framing of their predecessors, some of which were refaced to match.

The town was noted for the number of brewers and associated professionals who needed to live close to their workplaces, and many of their buildings survive.

The arrival of the railway in the 19th century led to the growth of various industries and housing along Victoria Road, and helped the town to prosper without physically affecting the centre. In more recent times, the population of Diss has increased substantially to over 7400, (2006) even though the area was not subject to London overspill in the 1960s. With the limitations of the River Waveney, most of the expansion has occurred to the north, east and west of the town, including into the neighbouring parish of Roydon.

## **DISS AND ITS SETTING**

The countryside around Diss is characterised by gently sloping valley side rising from the flood plain of the river, joining a gently undulating plain extending to the north. To the east the land rises from the river to the railway line. This gives a reasonably pleasant approach from the south and north, although later development has affected the setting from east and west. These modest changes in level on the outside contrast with more dramatic changes within the town. The rising ground has created some spectacular viewpoints and townscapes within the streets and across to the Mere and park. The trees along Park Road are a significant element in the views from the north. While the church tower still dominates the view from the south.

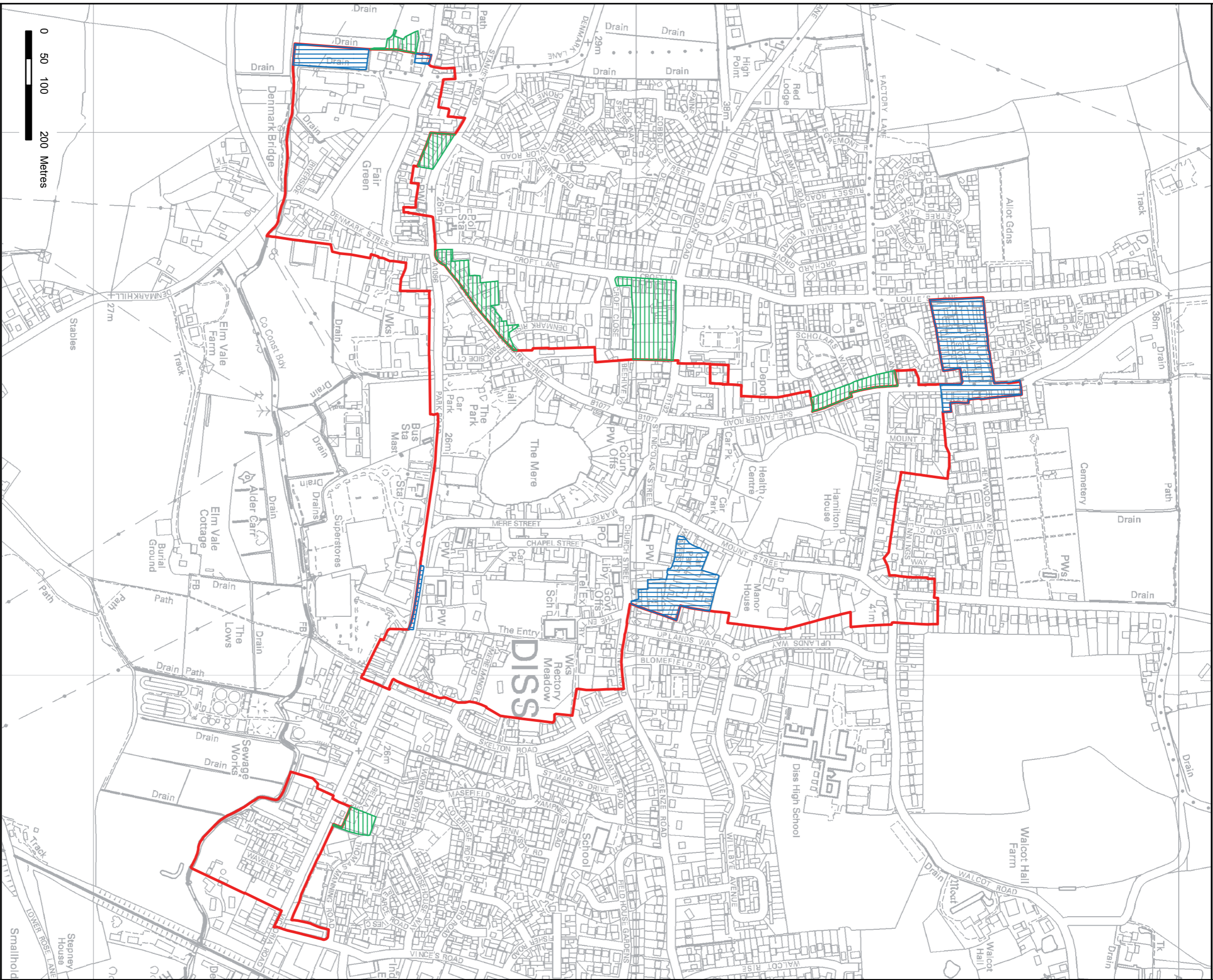
## **CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY**

The original boundary was reviewed in 1994, and various amendments were made to the Area first designated in 1974. The current Area includes the historic core, but also the important spaces at Fair Green, the Mere and Park, Rectory meadows, and the Parish Fields. The changes in 1994 saw the addition of an area along Victoria Road, and Sunnyside an example of 20th century housing.

The boundaries have been re-assessed as part of this appraisal, and further amendments are suggested:

- Extend the area along Roydon Road as far as Croft Lane to include the properties on the south side and the row of trees on the north. These houses are largely unspoilt and are part of an attractive approach to the town
- Include the properties on the north west side of Denmark Street, from Denmark Rise to Park Road, which would then bring both sides of the road into the Conservation Area
- Adjust and amend the boundaries around Fair Green and Stanley Road to make better sense of current property boundaries
- Amend the boundary along Victoria Road following road improvements
- Include an area of open land adjacent to the Dennyholme care centre
- Adjust the boundary along Shelfanger Road to take account of the maltings development and the new houses on the former Grammar School site (Scholar Walk).
- Omit parts of the Area along Louie's Lane, Shelfanger Road, and Heywood Road which have lost their special character and appearance.
- Omit the area now developed by Weavers Court off Mount Street

# Diss Conservation Area



**Key**

- Existing Conservation Area
- Areas to be included
- Area to be excluded

Scale at A3:  
1:7,000

Date: August 2011



South Norfolk Council  
Swan Lane  
Long Stratton  
Norwich  
NR15 2XE

Tel: (01508) 533633  
Fax: (01508) 533695



The Mere



Market Hill



Mere Street

## STREET PATTERN AND CHARACTER

This is a summary assessment of the character of the town; amore detailed analysis is given in appendix 1.

Sir John Betjeman thought that Diss was “ the perfect English Country town”, but one that was better appreciated if you walked about it, rather than just drive through it. This is still true today, where approaching from the east or west along the A1066, would leave the visitor largely unimpressed and certainly not convinced that this “status” was justified. But divert down Fair Green, or explore the roads and pathways that lead to the centre, and quickly the atmosphere changes.

## THE CENTRAL CORE

Market Place, the church, Market Hill, St Nicholas Street and a network of alleys, passages and yards comprise what is probably the original core of the town. To help describe it, it may help to refer to its land form, its layout and its buildings.

Land form. The ground rises from Mere’s Mouth gently to the Market Place where it continues more sharply to the church and Market Hill to the left. As it rises so the land behind the buildings on the south side falls ever more dramatically to the Mere.

Layout. The space, at first constricted by the narrow passage of Mere Street, bursts out into the Market Place, and fans upwards to the church and Market Hill. The impact of the Mere is lost except where intriguing glimpses can be had through archways and openings. The irregular layout of the area, small and large spaces or plains, linked by short streets or alleys, suggests a gradual evolution from market stalls to permanent buildings.



Market Place



Church of St Mary



Norfolk House Yard



Market Place



The Mere

Buildings. This layout shows off buildings from a variety of angles and viewpoints, rather than simply as part of the street scene. On the east side of Market Place, the buildings are set up on a terrace, while the church stands on a high plateau as a backdrop to the Market Place below.

Along Market Hill, buildings project one behind the other like side wings on a stage set, a constantly changing procession of building shapes and sizes, with attractive elements and details.

## THE MERE

Over time, the Mere has been used as a water supply, a wash tub, a drain into which a range of substances were flushed, and a venue for various sporting or recreational activities. But it has not only determined the shape of the town, but helped ensure the survival of Betjeman's perfect market town. The view from the park over the Mere to the tower beyond, brooding over a jumble of tiled roofs, gardens and yards, is unparalleled in the district.

## OUTSIDE THE CORE

The southern end of Mere Street is a broad plain enclosed at the end by the tree and Navire House. There are some good 19th century buildings and a surprise panoramic view of the Mere from Mere's Mouth.

Mount Street is the most consistently attractive of the historic streets in Diss with its changes of level and meandering route. The mix of large houses and modest cottages and the Park in the middle all contribute to its significance.



Mount Street



Mere Street



Upper Denmark Street



Church Street



Fair Green

Upper Denmark Street, Church Street and Chapel Street retain elements of their historic character , but this has been eroded over the 20th century by various developments.

Fair Green has improved since the 1960s but needs continued care to maintain the standards.

## BUILDINGS

Apart from the Parish Church, no buildings survive intact from the medieval period. Some of the structure in the Saracens Head and 1 Mere Street, for example, are known to date from this time. Many survive from the 16th and 17th centuries, notably the Dolphin, the Greyhound Inn, Mere Manor, and Fair Green House, but many others have been disguised by later windows, facings and shop fronts.

Fine examples of Georgian and Victorian buildings can be found on every street. The Manor House, the Corn Hall and Park House display an elegance associated with this period. The Maltings buildings are also noteworthy. Many buildings retain architectural details and elements from these times, with sash windows, chimneys, shop fronts and door cases .

The turn of the 20th century brought with it further building with a number of terraces, and several larger “suburban” houses in Upper Denmark Street and Victoria Road.

Diss has 244 buildings on the statutory list and a number of others noted as being of “townscape” significance. These are shown on the accompanying map and listed in appendix 2.



Corn Hall



Mount Street



Dolphin House



Fair Green



The Entry



Roydon Road

## TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

Examples of all materials traditional to South Norfolk can be found in Diss. Many roofs are steeply pitched to various degrees, mostly clay pantiles, black and red. While many of these would have been thatched, only 3 survive in the Area : 6 The Entry, 23/24 Denmark Street and part of the Friends meeting House..

There are a few roofs with peg tiles, but a higher number have slate on lower pitched hipped roofs and are more associated with 18th and 19th century houses. The roof scape is important in Diss where some streets are seen from various view points, and the significance of chimneys cannot be under estimated. Many are elaborately detailed, tall commanding structures that should be retained. Other roof details, particularly timber barge boards, parapets, and oversailing gable and eaves details, define the architecture above head height.

The quality of brickwork is high with good examples from the 17th through to the 20th century. Great emphasis is given to the detailing and decoration using gault brick by itself or with red as a contrast. There are many good boundary walls in both brick and flint, although apart from the church, few buildings are in flint.

Rendered and colourwashed buildings abound notably along Mount Street and Fair Green. The different colours and shades add interest. Most of the render covers timber framed buildings: the main exception being the Dolphin which presently has its frame on view.

Traditional windows, doors and shopfronts also make a positive contribution to the character of the town. Historic casement and sash windows, often embellished with decorative mouldings or set under brick arches can be seen in every street, while there are many good examples of shop windows.



Mount Street



Market Place



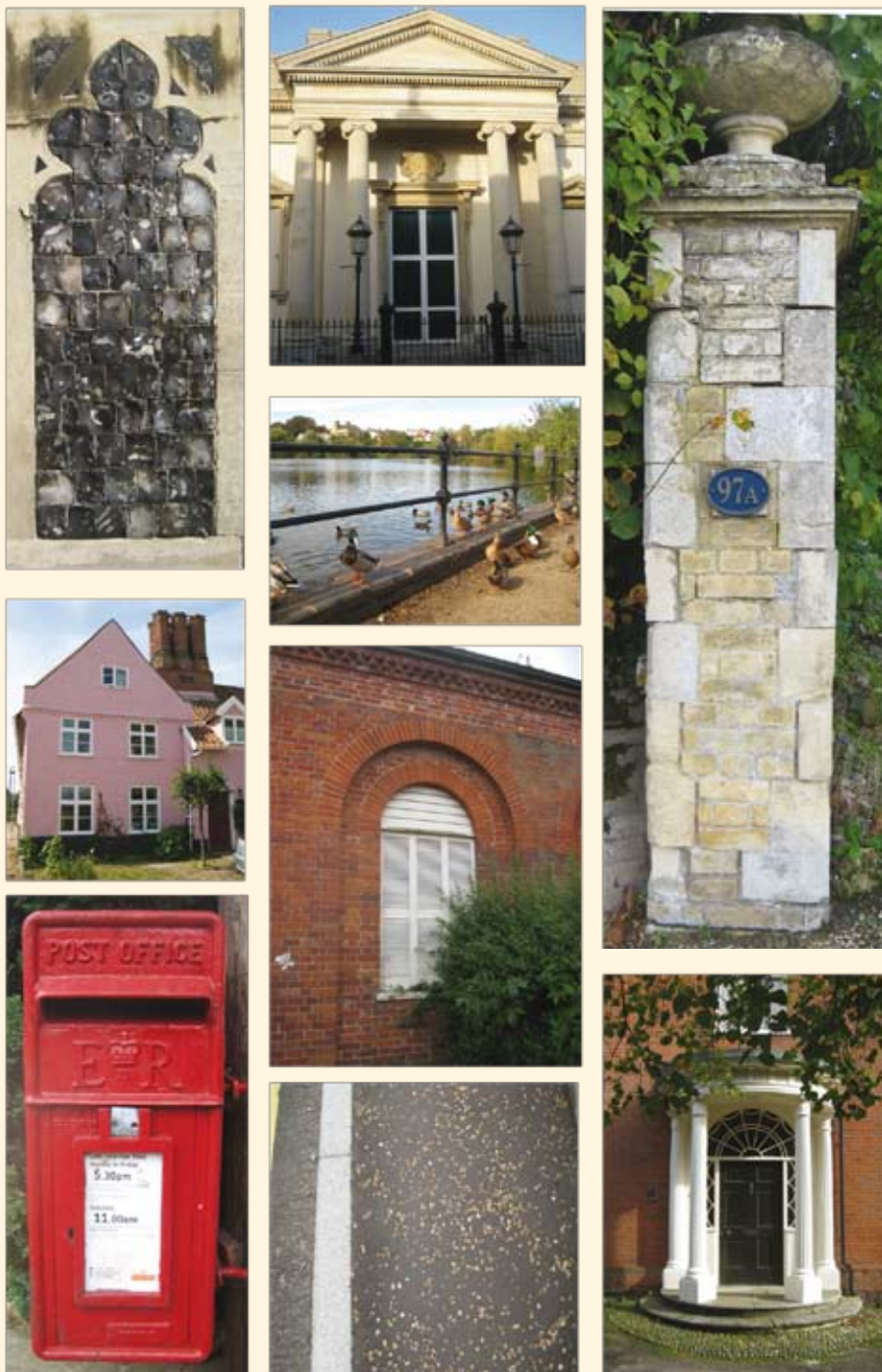
Mount Street

## SURFACE MATERIALS

Works in the town centre have used a light coloured pavior with blue coloured bricks aimed at reflecting the slate “cobble” used in some of the old yards and alleys. Other areas have been surfaced with loose shingle or stones rolled into a tar base. This option is favoured for irregular sites or paths especially those which cross open spaces like the Park. The retention of granite kerbs should be encouraged.

## STREET FURNITURE

Work carried out in recent times has tried to encourage a good standard for elements like the street lights and the metal sign posts, although highway signage has not always followed this example and can become visually dominant and excessive. Overhead wires are also a persistent eyesore.





Park Road



Shelfhanger Road



Shelfhanger Road

## Trees and open Spaces

In Diss, the contribution trees and open spaces make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is perhaps more significant than any other Area in the district. Individual trees or groups play a major role in the town both in their own right, but also as a backdrop or screen. Many of the trees are mature specimens, and decisions will need to be made about their future. As part of that, schemes for new planting should be encouraged to help ease the impact of any losses.

Many of the trees are protected by preservation orders, and these are listed and shown on the accompanying map:

- Denmark Street, on the corner of Denmark Rise
- Market Place outside the museum
- Mere Street south end
- Mount Street at 3 The Grove
- Park Road trees opposite the Park Hotel, the Park and Bus station
- Roydon Road at no 19 and 41
- Shelfhanger Road opposite the Youth centre and at no 61
- Stanley Road at the Catholic church
- Victoria Road : Mere manor, Mere Court and Whytehead Gardens and opposite Waveney Road



Church Street



Victoria Road



Mount Street

## OTHER TREES OF SIGNIFICANCE ARE:

**Church Street** : Churchyard of St Marys, 1 Church Street and on the corner of Chapel Street

**Denmark Street** : Grounds of no 99 and Beehive Yard, Oak Lodge and the Nunnery, grounds of the Park Hotel and the Limes

**The Entry** : Grounds of the Wilderness, corner of Frenze Road, along The Entry and Rectory Meadows. There are some good trees and hedges in the grounds of the school

**Fair Green** : South of no 2, Various trees on the Green and its borders including those recently planted, along the River Waveney and Riverside

**Frenze Road** ; Trees to friends Meeting House

**Mere Street** : Grounds of Park House, along the edges of the Mere, north of no 36

**Mount Street** : Weavers Court car park, the grounds of the Health centre and car parks, Parish Fields, Grounds of the Manor House, Eaton Lodge and the Rectory. The hedge along the east side, at the north end, is also of importance

**Park Road** : trees in the Park and along the road, not covered by the Preservation Order

**Roydon Road** : Oak on the corner of The Croft, trees along the south boundary of the auction site, trees on land to the rear of nos. 25 to 35

**Shelfanger Road** : Trees at the Maltings and car parks, trees either side of Scholar's Walk

**Sunnyside** : At the junction with Mount Pleasant

**The Causeway** : Trees in former school grounds, hedge and trees along the footpath

**The Heywood** : Trees at no 2

**Victoria Road** : Grounds on no 6, no 100 and Salisbury House, tree west of no 5

**Waveney Road** : trees along the river and west of the Mill.

The main open spaces have been described in the text but can be listed here:

- The Mere and Park fields
- Fair Green
- The Cedars and The lawn ( Parish Fields)
- Rectory playing fields and meadows
- St Marys Churchyard

There are a number of smaller areas and spaces that make positive contributions :

- The plains along Market Hill
- The Market place
- Mere's Mouth
- North of Navire House

Other spaces are created at the major road junctions in the Area many of which could be improved by further landscaping, reduction in street signage and furniture, or resurfacing. Some opportunities are identified in section 9.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The last appraisal was in 2002 and the period leading up to that was one of great activity in the town. Grant schemes in the 1990s enabled many owners to repair significant buildings and several major enhancement schemes were completed, notably the resurfacing of Mere Street and the Market Place. Since 2002, a number of new buildings have been completed and alterations to existing ones carried out in the designated area promoted by individual owners, many of which have added to the character of the town.

The highways authority have resurfaced and improved several of the roads and footpaths. The Council has supported the market town initiative, while the neighbourhood teams have worked towards the creation of the Waveney Valley project. A master plan and site brief has been prepared for land south of Park Road.

The town council have made a number of improvements in the Area:

- providing new facilities and regeneration work in the Park
- continue to support the refurbishment of the Corn Hall which is being taken forward by a newly formed trust
- at Fair Green, part is now under wildflower management and part kept for amenity uses
- resurfacing of The Entry
- Further planting and new railings at Mere's Mouth and Madgett's Walk



Fair Green



The Mere



The Park



The Causeway



Waveney Road



Victoria Road

## PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The policies referred to in the appendix reflect the extent to which the Council can influence and respond to the problems and issues in the Conservation Area. This appraisal needs to acknowledge these limitations, but in identifying the issues, it is hoped that those that are responsible, be they individual owners or public authorities, would be encouraged to act in a positive way.

There are several issues on which attention should be focussed:

### Condition and use of buildings

Most of the buildings in the Area appear to be in good condition, but there are a number that are in need of attention or would benefit from a new use, or one that supports an existing occupier.

Of particular concern is the former school in The Causeway, which has been empty and semi derelict for some time. Other buildings that need attention are:

Mere Manor and no 5 Victoria Road, (both on the Council's buildings at risk register), the old Windmill and Mill Cottage, Waveney Road, the stable building in Beehive yard, no 2 Roydon Road, and 33 Chapel Street.

There are some empty commercial premises in the main shopping streets, which is a reflection of the current economic difficulties. This will hopefully, be a short term problem.

While the Council has a policy which seeks to encourage the residential use of upper floors, and this was identified as a cause for concern in the previous appraisal, little progress has been made in Diss. It would be worth carrying out a survey in the town to see what potential there might be and promote conversion as a way to help invigorate the town centre.



Chapel Street



Beehive Yard



Croft Lane



Rear Market Place



Chapel Street

## VACANT SITES

There are a few sites in the Area where redevelopment or enhancement would be beneficial. These are identified in the management proposals. There are former industrial sites to the south of Park Road which have been cleared. Although these are just outside the Area, they are part of the setting of the Park and Conservation Area. Any redevelopment should take account of this and enhance this relationship and take the opportunity to provide public access to the river.

## MERESIDE WALK

The proposal for a public walkway along the east side of the Mere has long been an aspiration of the Council. Policy Diss 12 of the Local Plan ( see policies in appendix) records that intention.

## TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The intensity of vehicular use of Victoria Road as the main access to the town has affected the character of that thoroughfare. Denmark Street and Lower Denmark Street have also become busy access routes to the town centre and the A143. Around Fair Green the traffic has caused damage to the surfaces. These issues will be referred to the County Highway Authority. Footpath circulation, coupled with the location of major open spaces which are open to the public, adds to the interest and perception of the town by residents and visitors. The policies ( see appendix) to promote the east bank of the Mere, the riverside walk, and public use of the Parish Fields, will all enhance this experience.



Fair Green



Victoria Road

## **CHANGES TO THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

The character of the Area can be eroded by seemingly minor, and often well intentioned, home improvements such as the replacement of windows and doors with ones of an inappropriate design or material. This is a concern about the impact these can have on unlisted buildings, especially those in terraces or small groups, which make a contribution to the Area ( see appendix). There are often more sympathetic ways of achieving these improvements. The Council's Conservation Officer would be pleased to advise.

The profusion of overhead wires in several key parts of the Area is unfortunate.

Recommendations and management proposals

## **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

Include policies in the emerging LDF relating to the management of conservation areas and listed buildings to enable appropriate advice to be given to owners and developers, and assist the effective determination of planning applications.

Update and revise existing Design guidance and advisory leaflets

Monitor and update the information on South Norfolk Council's website ([www.south-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk)) regarding advice for owners and residents on;

- the implications of conservation area designation
- Article 4 and Article 4(2) directions (see below)
- appropriate maintenance, repairs and alterations to buildings to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Publish advice on sustainable development and construction (in line with the Council's policies) taking into account the need to maintain the distinct character and appearance of the Conservation Areas, and include on the council's website.

## **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND SIGNS**

There are no realistic alternatives to the access problems to the town. The busy A1066 and the routes to the A143 will continue to affect the character and experience of these main thoroughfares. Recent improvements to provide access to Morrisons and Tescos are visually disruptive but the impact can be eased with good design and a greater emphasis on appearance.

One way would be to encourage tree planting along Victoria and Park Roads, rationalise traffic signs and street furniture.

## **ARTICLE 4 AND 4(2) DIRECTIONS**

Assess the need to restrict permitted development rights to protect the features and character of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area.

Examples for consideration include:

Sunnyside 9-19, Roydon Road 25-39, Victoria Road, 117-126 and 127-133.

## VACANCY AND USES

Carry out a survey of vacant sites and property, including upper floors.

Explore a new use for the old school on The Causeway

Promote and encourage repair of buildings identified in section...

### Specific enhancement proposals

- Promote new tree planting along Victoria and Park Roads to improve the appearance and to provide a new generation of trees along these primary routes.
- Promote tree planting where feasible throughout the Conservation Area in partnership with the parish tree warden and Town Council
- Plant indigenous hedge north of the trees opposite Waveney Road
- Add hedge planting along the Entry and Rectory Meadows and the school along the east boundary to screen Skelton Road
- Tree planting on main council car park on Chapel Street
- Sensitive repairs and resurfacing of the access ways around Fair Green in conjunction with a traffic management scheme for that area working with the new owners of the Green
- Encourage where possible the undergrounding of overhead cable and wires.
- Repair and reinstate boundary to the burial ground on Croft Lane
- Encourage greater public access to the Parish Fields and repair wall and railings on Mount Street frontage
- Support the repair of the wooden railings along the upper section of Mount Street
- Support the formation of a pathway along the east bank of the Mere in conjunction with improvements to the various yards, accesses and car parks
- Reinstall balustrades as per original design along 127 to 133 Victoria Road
- Explore improvements at key road junctions for example, Mount Street with Sunnyside, The Causeway and Victoria Road
- Better screen to car park north of the telephone exchange on Chapel Street
- Promote enhancement scheme south of the Riverside, Denmark Street

Amend Conservation Area boundary as shown on the accompanying map and described in section...



Former Windmill Waveney Road



Victoria Road



Victoria Road

## APPENDIX 1

### TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL

#### WAVENEY ROAD AND VICTORIA ROAD

This section of the Conservation Area is dominated by the mature horse chestnut trees on the north side, with the old maltings at the east end, and the high quality 19th century houses and terraces on the south. The sheltered housing behind the trees has an open layout, which is not characteristic of the pattern of the street. Most of the other houses are set to a clear building line, relatively close together, and with small front gardens; some still shaped by original walls and railings. The creation of a front boundary just north of the trees, by planting of a hedge, for example, would help and give the road a tighter definition.

The Victorian houses have been altered over time, but many retain details of interest and justify their status as being of townscape significance. Some original sashes and doors survive, the strong brick detailing and dominant chimneys are a positive feature in the street. Pressures for car parking in garden space has led to the loss of original front boundaries, but if an alternative solution can be found, reinstatement of front boundaries should be encouraged.

The newer houses at the south end of Waveney Road have been set back in contrast to the compact nature of the original street. Car parking is an issue, but the young trees are making a contribution. The tower of the former Mill is still a prominent feature but it, and the associated cottage, are in poor condition. The natural character of the water meadows should be retained as part of a new development recently approved.

The new development at Old Coaching Place has some interesting features, maintaining the street line, but the treatment at the riverside is disappointing.



The Old Coaching Place



The Causeway

## VICTORIA ROAD

Only the section from Skelton Road to Mere Street is included.

On the south side, numbers 127 to 133 are a fine Victorian terrace, with a significant “presence”, although some have been spoilt by later alterations. Credit should be given to the owners of 133, which has been maintained in an exemplary manner and, with the alteration to the road junction, now forms an important part of the view from the west. The retention and reinstatement of the front balustrades should be encouraged.

The 19th century houses to the east are of interest retaining most of their original features.

Compare this with the character of the 20th century development opposite, which claimed a significant part of the grounds to Mere Manor. The Limes and Oak trees still make a significant contribution softening the newer houses, and adding a welcomed natural line to this approach to the town.

Beyond these there is a mixture of old and new: no.6 is an impressive 17th century house in mature grounds, no 5 is a Georgian house, sadly boarded up at present, with a modern bungalow between them. The Methodist church is set back, but Mavery Terrace is an over dominant building with little to commend it. The forecourt has been improved with some planting and reordering of the access, but would benefit from tree planting.

The new road layout has an unfortunate impact at this key junction in the town. Some improvements have been made to the commercial buildings and to Morrison’s, which, with the trees along the east wall of the supermarket garage, have made a positive difference. It is suggested however, that the boundary of the Area be amended to follow the north side of the street (See map).

The Causeway itself is an attractive access and footpath, with some good brick and flint walls and hedging defining its route. The rear car park to Mavery House is rather bleak but of major concern is the condition of the former infants school and its grounds. This building has significant character and every effort should be made to retain it with a new use. Part of its boundary wall has collapsed, but beyond that is a fine flint wall and some good trees. The schoolhouse and no 3 are of interest.

## FRENZE ROAD

The Meeting House is a fine 18th century building, simple and dignified and well proportioned. It has good brick detailing, while the thatched outbuilding makes for an unusual contrast. The front railings are of value while the two pollarded limes and the yew provide a discrete level of privacy. The graveyard behind is pleasant with some fine mature trees forming the south boundary. There is a good view of the church tower from this point, although further along the presence of poles and overhead wires is unfortunate.

The only other building of note is Corner house and no 2, on the street edge and a good “stop” in the view down Uplands Way.

## THE ENTRY

The Entry is a valuable thoroughfare between Church Street and Victoria Road, mostly footpath width, but providing vehicular access at the north end. South of the school, extended views can be had both to the west over the centre of the town, and to the east across the Rectory meadows, before the path is closed in by walls and hedges. The resurfacing of the path makes the experience more enjoyable.

At the north end, the thatched house and no 3 are of prime importance leading up to the school, which closes the view, as the route turns sharply left. The school is a mixture of Victorian and modern elements which co-exist quite successfully. The group of buildings around Wilderness House are charming, in good condition nestling amongst mature trees.

Hedges and trees on the west side and a chain link fence to the school shape the section between the two main open spaces. It would be an improvement if the fence could be supplemented by a hedge, whilst further infill planting on the west side would be welcomed. Views to the east over the later development along Skelton Road are not that attractive and further tree planting should be encouraged. Views to the west are eased by the tree belt on the western school boundary, but it reminds us that the impacts of modern buildings like the telephone exchange, whose “lumpish” skyline blocks the view of the church, need to be taken into account from a wider perspective.

Further south, the former wall to Mere Manor has been breached in several places by the developments at Mere Manor Court and Whytehead gardens. The former has eaten into the Rectory Meadows and the junction is not entirely satisfactory with the high wire fence protecting the occupants from the activities of the cricket club. Some good trees remain however, and are key to both housing schemes. Mere Manor is an exceptional building but is in need of considerable repair. It is a pity that its once extensive setting has been eroded, and that its contribution to the Conservation Area is now much reduced.



The Entry



Frenze Road



The Entry



Chapel Street



Chapel Street

## CHAPEL STREET

Chapel Street has changed significantly since the mid 20th century. Previously the street was tightly defined by buildings, especially on its west side ( see map) comprising modest cottages and outbuildings serving the primary shops on Mere Street. The need for off street parking and better service access, combined with the limitations imposed by the pedestrian priority scheme for Mere Street, prompted the clearance of buildings, walls and the consequent opening up of sites all along the street. These are invariably filled with vehicles. With the major builds associated with the post office and telephone exchange, it has left the street with a much harsher and fragmented character.

Nevertheless, there are several attractive buildings along the street, particularly numbers 33 to 39 where all except the former are in good repair, and which retain a flavour of its past character.

There are also some good brick and flint walls that help shape and maintain the street. The redevelopment of Wills Yard has been successful maintaining the building line. Various outbuildings serve to contribute to the “townscape” of the street. The brick storage building behind Westgate is one example; not a particularly attractive building but one that performs a key role in “stopping” the view from the south. Its demolition should be resisted, while its contribution could be improved by decoration. Another example is the boarded garaging next to the access to the Council car park.

The car park “leaks” out into the street and would be improved by a better boundary and some tree planting. The same would apply to the car park north of the telephone exchange which only has a chain link fence as a screen.

It is also of interest to note the change in levels between the street and Mere Street especially at the rear of no 1. The street scene is spoilt by the presence of overhead cables and poles.



Church Street



Church Street



Church Street

## CHURCH STREET

At the west end, the street begins with great promise, with the magnificent Church of St Mary and its churchyard, and 1 and 2 Market Place on one side, and the Dolphin and town museum on the other. The north side continues with no 1, set back with a spectacular cedar tree, and numbers 2 and 3, a nice pair of cottages close to the footpath. Unfortunately, the one time prospect of road widening has left gaps in the street, or buildings which have been set back, breaking the line. The fortunate retention of no 18 has prevented the total loss of character on this side, while the tree on the corner of Chapel Street makes a substantial contribution. The library now looks very dated, while the Employment office is better placed and screens the car park behind it.

The brick wall to the post office service yard does help, but its coping detail is poor, while the flat roofed unit on the corner is a disappointment.

Further west the restoration and conversion of no 7 is welcomed retaining its attractive brickwork. The three-way road access to the east has an unfortunate impact.

## SHELFANGER ROAD

Shelfanger Road has a mixed character. The Maltings, now converted to dwellings, still retains its industrial character, but has commercial uses to the north and south. Travis Perkins makes good use of older buildings; compare that with the Youth centre opposite which is a major disappointment. The two car parks fit in well, especially the east one which successfully negotiates the changes in level, and the trees and shrubs both help to minimise the impact of the cars, and make a positive contribution in their own right. Pine House has a significant presence, even behind the garden wall, with the two storey bay window an impressive feature. Note the historical alterations in the brick gable.

Shelfanger Court is a modern housing scheme which tries to maintain the street line but is not of good quality. Further north the dwellings vary from pairs of late Victorian houses with impressive detailing, and a “rat trap” bonding that is seen in other buildings scattered around the town, to modern houses of no particular merit. It is unfortunate that most of the earlier houses have been altered, particularly with new windows.

Scholars Walk “turns away” from the street, which is a pity, but the trees are making a difference in the street scene. Beyond that, new development and alterations to existing buildings, have affected the interest in the street and is suggested to be omitted from the designated area.



The Maltings



Off Shelfanger Road



Shelfanger Road

## SUNNYSIDE

The Council house scheme continues into Mount Pleasant. Although alterations have been made to the houses, the original form and layout survives, together with most of the boundary railings which should be maintained. There are some good early 20th century terraces along the street, some retaining their original features and worthy of note ( see Appendix 2). As with Shelfanger Road, the presence of overhead wires and poles does spoil the appearance.

## ROYDON ROAD AND CROFT LANE

At the east end, the buildings are close to the road and shape the entrance to the town from this side. Behind these frontage properties are a variety of cottages and outbuildings in close proximity. This character has been reflected in the development of Cherry Tree Court, where the new houses weave their way northwards in the shadow of the Maltings opposite. Further west, the road widens and trees become a dominant boundary feature. Those fronting the auction site are welcomed. The houses on the south side are almost all in their original state and are a valuable asset to the street.

At Croft lane, note how the building turns the corner with matching gables. The two Oak trees are of importance. The older houses along the east side of the lane have been altered, most with modern windows, save for no 27. The burial ground has all its memorials resting against the boundary walls. It would be worthwhile promoting the repair of the road side wall and gate.



Roydon Road



Roydon Road



Croft Lane



Fair Green



Fair Green



Fair Green

## FAIR GREEN

This is the site of the historic yearly fair, close to the river crossing at Denmark bridge. It was originally separate from the town, but with later development along Park Road and Stanley Road, it is now an integral part of Diss, though clearly distinct. It is a large open space reminiscent of a village green, but whose impact is delayed by the narrow definition of both the north and south entrances. There are modest, small scale buildings on all sides, many dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, and timber framed. There is a fine group on the east side, on Lower Denmark Street, and the south side ending in Fair Green House with its impressive chimneys. Note how the gables have been used to add interest.

The east side is an almost continuous built up frontage of historic buildings, mostly painted with steep pantiled roofs. New developments behind these buildings have not impacted upon the character of Fair Green. The later houses in the south east corner, however, have been set back and have weakened the strong line of this side.

On the north side, the Maltings have a strong presence but the details of the conversion are a disappointment. The new and adapted buildings fronting Stanley Road are better. The form of building on both north and south sides of the Green becomes more fragmented towards the west as the open space narrows. The houses, mostly 20th century, do not make such a positive contribution as those along the east end. The industrial buildings in the south west sector also rest uneasily in this context despite the screening offered by the trees.

The small development of the Riverside looks dated and the area next to the bridge needs attention.

Improvements to the Green itself were made in 1975, and while other works have been carried out since, the area would benefit from new investment linked to a management plan agreed with all concerned. The perimeter tracks and verges need repair, the overhead wires could be laid underground, while some further tree/hedge planting would help define the spaces. Treatment of the front gardens could be better coordinated.

## PARK ROAD

The road begins and ends with a roundabout, the one at the east end being part of a complicated arrangement that must confuse the visitor. Between these, the road is dominated by the trees, which are a significant asset. They are not a continuous avenue, but every opportunity should be taken to make them so. Young trees should be planted to supplement the existing trees, and ensure that the avenue survives into the future. On the south side, there has been much activity with the removal of major industrial units; redevelopment here could be a great opportunity to visually link both sides of the road.



Mount Street



Mount Street



Mount Street

## MOUNT STREET

Despite its proximity to the town centre, the street remains almost entirely residential and has been unaffected by commercial activity. The houses are generally well maintained; vary considerably in size and type, but the use of local materials, colours and traditional detailing, has ensured an overall harmony. The significance of the street and its character as one of the best streets in South Norfolk, is derived some certain elements:

- A bend about halfway along the street
- A curve round the church tower
- A slope down from both ends
- A changed level between road and footpath at the northern end
- A divergence between the street line and building line on the west side north of the Old Rectory

Only at the north end is the space poorly defined.

The street can be assessed in four sections:

- The southern part built up with a continuous frontage
- The large houses together with the Park
- The section with the raised footpath and bank
- A Sub urban area at the northern end

Dealing with each in turn:

The entrance to Mount Street is powerfully framed by the church tower on one side and the "Italianate" bank on the other. The road then swings round and falls away, concealing the view ahead and allowing each building to be revealed in turn. The Saracen's Head combines a 16th century timber framed interior with ornate Victorian brackets and barge boards on the outside. Opposite, number 2 is an impressive Georgian building with a fine doorway. No. 3 has a jettied timber frame, no. 4 an ornate Victorian frontage. The buildings that follow have retained their traditional features and their harmony as a result. The entrances to the car park and the Health centre have broken what was a solid line of buildings on both sides, and further improvements should be considered. The health centre is now shrouded in trees, while buildings screen the car park so neither have a detrimental affect on this street.

Number 60 is the first of the large houses, an impressive house with a Georgian exterior and prominent boundary walls with good detailing. The front faces the Park ( see later) which has been associated with the house since at least the early 19th century, and is the only known example of a detached parkland style landscape in a Norfolk town.

The low wall and railings, both of which need repair, allow the passer by to enjoy this valuable space.

The Manor House is a fine 18th century building with its two primary elevations visible from the south. The curved boundary walls reflects the shape of the Doric porch emphasising the commanding presence of the house in the street. The outbuildings to the north and east and a number of mature trees dominate the grounds.

The Grove is the third of the larger houses, dating from the 16th century, has been, literally cut down the middle to make two detached buildings. It is rendered as opposed to brick, and set back behind the hedge and on higher ground. It too has a good brick wall to the garden. Recent improvements have made a positive difference.

It is important that these large houses with their associated walls and mature gardens are retained intact.

North from the park are a pleasing group of 17th and 18th century cottages. Beyond the Rectory, the level of the pavement rises above that of the road on the west side and the buildings sit on a “plinth” formed by a retaining wall, occasional steps, and a timber post and railing, all of which needs maintenance. The building line slowly tapers back, with one or two interruptions, as the cottages negotiate the slope. Opposite, the level change has been accommodated by a grass bank and hedge/trees with The Grove and The Manor House acting as bookends. These views both up and down the street are among the finest in the town. The north entrance to the street is a disappointment. Most of the houses have lost their original detailing, and the space lacks the definition and character demonstrated elsewhere along its length.

There is a footpath alongside the Health Centre car park that links the street to Shelfanger Road. The high wall along its south side is of townscape significance, and the changes provides a platform for a variety of views over the backs of houses and across to the centre and Park beyond. The mature trees and those planted in the western car park add considerable interest.

#### The Park

Although its history is related to the house opposite, the Park with its mature trees and rolling meadows makes a major contribution not only to the street, but to Diss as a whole. It may be necessary to introduce new planting soon to supplement the existing trees, and the poor state of the wall and railing should be attended to. Currently the public can only enjoy the space from the street.



St Nicholas Street



St Nicholas Street



St Nicholas Street

## ST NICHOLAS STREET

The wide upper part of the street is a continuation of Market Hill. Common to both is the giant portico of the Corn Hall, dominating the street and closing the view up Market Hill. It was designed by George Atkins in 1854 and is the most important monument to “Classical Revival” in the town. In many ways it is out of keeping with its neighbours, but its scale accords with the significance of its original use and role in the town.

Other buildings of note are the Greyhound PH, which has the only brick front to date from the 17th century, and the fine commercial frontages to the buildings on the south side. The Crown PH closes the view at the head of the street, while the Weavers acts as a pivotal building at the junction..

In contrast, the lower part of the street is much narrower with a variety of buildings leading down to the church tower which closes the view at this end. Norfolk House has an attractive shop front framed in brass, while the unusual “wedge” shaped portion to the left catches the eye.

There are 4 yards that lead off the north side of the street, each giving access to commercial buildings. The Greyhound yard outbuildings can be seen through the archway, while Norfolk House Yard has retained its character with the retention of two major former warehouse buildings. This is linked to Cobbs Yard to the east. The speciality shops and restaurants on offer here add considerably to the vitality of the area.

On the south side, the yards are replaced by narrow lanes and alleyways which are characteristic of the piecemeal development of market towns. The long alley parallel to the street reveals a jettied building at the east end, but elsewhere the appearance is unattractive as the space is dominated by wheelie bins.



Market Place



Market Place



Market Place

## MARKET PLACE AND MARKET HILL

This represents the historic market area of the town. Although much overlaid by rebuilding and refacing in recent centuries, the haphazard late medieval layout can still be seen. There are few regular building lines, but a series of open spaces of varying shapes, and alleyways that divide the areas into smaller parcels, and give access through to other streets or the Mere.

Market Place is shaped like a funnel, constricted into a single outlet to Mere Street at the low end, but at the higher end, spreading out into the space in front of the Dolphin. There is a narrow link past the church to Mount Street, while to the left, Market Hill climbs away in a series of spaces or “plains”.

The irregular plan of this area, the lie of the land, and the variety of the buildings, combine to form one of the finest pieces of “townscape” in the county. From the narrow entrance at Mere Street, the view opens out in easy stages along the raised terrace to Westgates, the Post Office, the museum building and finally up the steps to the Church porch. The tower and nave wall is like a great screen across the top of the Market Place, dwarfing the buildings below.

Many buildings are of interest here: the “Lutyens” style Post Office, The fine timber frame to the Dolphin, the “mini Skyscraper” at 1 and 2 Market Place, while the Italianate HSBC bank closes the view past the church. A number of buildings have good shop fronts and other detailing: the museum, the Norwich and Peterborough, the White Horse PH are just three examples.

Later changes have not all been successful: for example, the window less upper section above numbers 12 and 12A while a new first floor and pitched roof above numbers 17 and 18 would be an improvement.

In Market Hill, buildings are ranged one above the other like the “flats” in a stage set. No. 2 with its balcony and portico, no 13 with its elaborate façade and lantern, and the restaurant with its tall chimney and attic “lookout”.

At either end of the historic market area are two remarkable survivals from the Middle Ages. At the top of Market Hill a corner post is carved with the Annunciation and the Nativity, while at the lower end a corner post has an angel with outstretched wings.

The resurfacing and improvements to the raised walkway carried out in the 1990s has improved the setting of the buildings and the experience for users of the Market Place.



Mere Street



Mere Street



Mere Street

## MERE STREET

The street is a narrow corridor between Mere's Mouth and the Market Place, but an important high street. At Mere's Mouth, the street opens out to include a paved plain with a view over the Mere towards the Park and the rear of Upper Denmark Street and Market Hill. It is a major delight of the town justifying the improvements carried out a few years ago. Access to the Park is possible via Madgett's Walk to the left but no corresponding path has been created to the right, which should be encouraged. Some of the buildings around the plain are of interest, Park House for example, while the improvements to the book shop have been a success. The 20th century redevelopment opposite was a lost opportunity and does not do justice to this prime position.

Looking south, Navire House closes the view, while the mature tree makes a valuable contribution. In comparison, looking north, the street is aligned to the church tower. In between there are a range of buildings, most of which are of interest but whose impact is limited by the width of the street. Alterations have been carried out to several of the shops, in terms of new signs and colours, which could be improved.



Upper Denmark Street



Upper Denmark Street



Upper Denmark Street

## UPPER DENMARK STREET

The attractive character of the street derives as much from its topography as from its buildings. On one side the land falls sharply to the Mere, giving fine, and revealing, views across the water to the town centre. On the other side, the road is cut into the bank, so that hedges and trees stand high above retaining walls, while at the north end, the buildings are raised above the street level. There is also a steady rise from one end of the street to the other, and combined with the slow curve, gives a series of changing and mounting views culminating in the towers of the Baptist Chapel.

At the north end the frontages are continuous as an extension of the commercial centre, while further down, on the west side are several large 19th century houses in attractive grounds. On both sides the street has been permeated by alleyways and secondary closes that give access to other buildings. Beehive yard is an interesting back water where its principle building, the stable, still awaits a new use. Denmark hall can be found tucked behind a cottage. On the opposite side, Parkfield Place is a good example of urban development which also gives access to the Park past the Freemason's Hall.

Denmark Rise has been inserted rather roughly into this setting, although the corner planting is now making a worthwhile impact. The sheltered housing scheme at Parkside Court is much better so too are the new houses opposite which maintain the building line.

Leading down to Park Road, the thatched house, the original hotel building and The Limes present a more appealing side to the street.

## **APPENDIX 2 (I)**

### **Archaeology**

The Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service compile records of all areas of known archaeological activity, sites, finds, cropmarks, earthworks, industrial remains, defensive structures and historic buildings in the county. These records are known as the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER). The NHER contains 281 entries for Diss with examples from the medieval period right through to the 20th century.

### **Appendix 2(ii)**

#### **Conservation Areas**

The majority of conservation areas are historic settlements and often include a number of buildings which are designated as 'Listed Buildings', in recognition of their individual architectural or historic value. However, the character of conservation areas depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings. They take into account features such as building layout, open spaces, boundaries, thoroughfares, the mix of uses, use of materials and street furniture.

#### **Within the conservation area;**

- Buildings and other structures are protected from substantial demolition
- Works to trees are controlled by giving the local authority six weeks to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should be made
- Some minor developments (such as stone cladding, the positioning of satellite dishes and dormer windows), which do not require consent outside conservation areas may require consent within the designated area
- Special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the special character of the conservation area throughout the planning process
- Enhancement schemes are the subject of public debate
- Reviews take place from time to time.

In addition to the guidance available from central government, and to support local policies, leaflets concerning the design of new buildings and alterations and repairs to existing buildings in conservation areas are available from South Norfolk Council; a list of relevant topics is included in Appendix 5.

## APPENDIX 3 (I) LIST OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

<b>Chapel Street</b>	19, 35 to 37, 38 and 39
<b>Church Street</b>	Church of St Mary, churchyard walls, 1, West boundary wall to no 1, 2 and 3, 7, 18,24, Dolphin House
<b>Denmark Street</b>	3 to 5, 7 to 9, 18a (Masonic hall), railings To Masonic hall, 19,23 and 24, 26 to 28 Park hotel, front walls to hotel, 32, 37 to 45 47 to 49, 50, 51 and 52, 53 and 54, 55 and 56, 57 and 58, 60 and 61,62 and 63, 65 to 67, 82 and 83, 84 to 86, 95 (Oak lodge), walls and gate piers at front of oak lodge Denmark Street Hall, 97A, entrance piers Of Linden House, 99,100 to 102, 103
<b>The Entry</b>	no 4, 6 and 7,
<b>Fair Green</b>	2 and 2A, 4, 21, 28 and 29, 30 and 31, 33, 35, 36, telephone kiosk
<b>Frenze Road</b>	Friends meeting House
<b>Market Hill</b>	1A,1B and 1C, 2, 4 to 6, 8 and 9, 11 and 12 13, 14 and 15.
<b>Market Place</b>	1 to 3, 4 and 5, 8,9,10,11,14,15,15A,16, 16A 17,17A,18,20, telephone kiosk
<b>Mere Street</b>	1,2 and 3, 6, 7 and 8, 9 to 12, 13 to 15,18, 25 to 27, 33 to 35, Congregational church, 36, 36A and 36B, 39, 41, 42, 43,44 and 45, 46 and 47, 48 to 50, 51 to 53A.
<b>Mount Street</b>	2,3, 10 to 13, 14,18,18A,19,23 and 24, 26, 29,30 to 33,34,35,48,49 and 50,51,57, 59 (Manor House), 60 (The Cedars), garden wall, entrance wall and piers to The Cedars, 62,64 and 64A, 68 and 69, Saracen's Head, Wall east of Saracen's Head,
<b>Roydon Road</b>	2 and 4, 6 (Brewery House)
<b>St Nicholas Street</b>	2,3,4,5,6 and 6A,7,8,9,( Greyhound Inn), Corn Hall, 11,12 and 12A, 13,14,14A and 14B,17 and 18,19 and 20,21,22,23 and 23A, 24, 24A and 25,26,27,28,29.
<b>Shelfanger Road</b>	2 and 4, Pine House, Old Maltings, 52
<b>Victoria Road</b>	2,5,6,Mere Manor
<b>Vinces Road</b>	Former Maltings

### Appendix 2 (ii) List of buildings of "Townscape significance"

<b>Chapel Street</b>	Outbuilding opposite the telephone exchange
<b>Church Street</b>	11,16,17,20,33,34, building rear of 18 Mere Street
<b>Church Street</b>	4

<b>Denmark Street</b>	Baptist Chapel and adjacent hall, 12,13 And wall alongside, The Nunnery, and wall to South, Parkside, 1to 4 Park Villas, 20, 22, The Limes, 76,77, Baldrys,96, 98, Stable Block in Beehive Yard and building to south 105,106, The Crown and adjoining buildings
<b>The Causeway</b>	Former school, Caxton cottage, School House and cottage, flint wall to footpath
<b>Croft Lane</b>	No 1 and burial ground
<b>The Entry</b>	3,The school, Cupiss Printers and Victoria House, wall at south end (part listed formerly In conjunction with Mere Manor)
<b>Fair Green</b>	Former Chapel, 5 to 11
<b>Frenze Road</b>	Corner House
<b>Market Hill</b>	10 (Gazes) and 14 (Barclays bank)
<b>Market Place</b>	The Post Office
<b>Mere Street</b>	4 and 5, 16 and 17, 19 to 21
<b>Mount Pleasant</b>	13 to 36
<b>Mount Street</b>	1,4,5,6,6A,7,9,railings and wall opposite no 60, 26 and range to north, 36,40,41,42,43,44 45,55,56 and former coach house to rear. Outbuilding to rear of manor House, 58,63, 64A,65,66,67. Wall south and east of car park
<b>Roydon Road</b>	Building to east of no 6, 8, Cherry tree Stables, 1C and 1D 9 and 11, 13 to 17, 19, 21 and 23, 25 to 39
<b>St Nicholas Street</b>	Buildings in Norfolk House Yard and Cobbs Yard, and rear of The Greyhound
<b>Shelfanger Road</b>	Dorset House, 30 and range to the south, 6 and 8, Maltings buildings 16 to 21 and 10 to 15, 39, 49 and 51, 53 and 55, 57 and 59, 61 and 63, 48 and 50 and flint wall, 64, 70 to 74, 76 to 88. Wall to footpath south of car park.
<b>Sunnyside</b>	2 and 4, 8 and 10, 42 to 58, 9 to 19, 21 to 27 and 37 to 43
<b>Victoria Road</b>	Salisbury House, 85 to 89, 90 to 93, building South of 96, 101,102, 103 and wall to west, 104,117 to 126, 127 to 133
<b>Waveney Road</b>	Former windmill, and cottage

## APPENDIX 4

### POLICY BACKGROUND

#### Conservation area Appraisals and Policy Background

In recent years, the approach to conservation area designation has changed considerably. It is now recognised that development plan policies, development control decisions, proposals for the preservation or enhancement and the 'management' of conservation areas can be best achieved when there is a sound understanding of the special interest of the conservation area.

This has been reinforced by Planning Policy Statement 5 : Planning for the Historic Environment.

Norfolk Structure Plan, 1999, in particular policies under Section 5: Environment which aim to:

- Protect the historic character of the towns and villages, its buildings and open spaces;
- Improve the quality of design for new development, alterations and extensions;
- Encourage the continued maintenance of historic buildings;
- Promote works which preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area

The Joint Core Strategy for the Greater Norwich Development Partnership was prepared in November 2009, and is scheduled for public examination in 2011, following which it will be adopted and guide development in the area up to 2026. Diss is identified as one of 4 main towns in Policy 13, where new growth of up to 300 houses is proposed, together with associated provisions and improvements to the town centre. Insofar as this may affect the setting and character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the following is relevant:

There are various policies suggested in the strategy that will influence and shape the impact of the expansion from the framework objectives 1, 8 and 9, to the area wide policies, 1, 2 and policy 10 which adds details to the proposals for Diss.

#### South Norfolk Local Plan

South Norfolk Council is currently reviewing and revising local policies, which will be published in a new Local Development Framework (LDF). In the meantime the more specific local policies included in the South Norfolk Local Plan (1998) are still relevant and include;

IMP1	Design
IMP2	Landscaping
IMP3	Protection of Important Spaces
IMP4	Important frontages
IMP5	Streetscape
IMP6	Visual impact of parked cars
IMP11	Demolition of Listed Buildings
IMP12	Redevelopment following demolition of Listed Buildings
IMP13	Alteration of Listed Buildings
IMP14	Buildings at Risk
IMP15	Setting of Listed Buildings
IMP16	Demolition in Conservation Areas
IMP17	Alterations and extensions in Conservation Areas
IMP18	Development in Conservation Areas
IMP19	Advertisements

IMP20	Shopfronts
IMP21	Illuminated advertisements
IMP22	Corporate signs
IMP26	Percentage for art

## **POLICIES SPECIFIC TO THE CONSERVATION AREA IN DISS**

DIS 6	Allocates an area south of Park Road for retail and leisure Uses
DIS 10	Enhancement of townscape
DIS 12	Enhancement of east bank of the Mere
DIS 14	Use of the Parish Fields
DIS 15	Riverside Walk

## **APPENDIX 5**

To support these policies, the Council provides further advice and details in a series of design guides, which are currently being reviewed and expanded as part of the LDF process.

## **SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL GUIDANCE LEAFLETS**

1. Building Materials and Details
2. Extensions and Alterations to Houses
3. Shopfronts and Advertisements
4. Windows and Doors in Historic Buildings
5. Listed Buildings – Alterations and Extensions
6. Alterations and Repairs to “Tayler & Green” housing
7. Walls, Railings, Fences & Hedges
8. Prevention is better than cure – a guide for owners of historic buildings
9. Conservation Areas and the design of new buildings
10. Individual Dwellings and Small Groups

Advice leaflets: Conservation Areas in South Norfolk & advice notes on listed buildings to be updated

## **APPENDIX 6**

Sources and references (for current review)

GENUKI website

Whites Gazetteer and History of Norfolk 1854

Kelly’s Directory 1883

South Norfolk Council Character Appraisal 2002

Norfolk Garden Trust: Town Gardens Survey: Diss 1997 – Anthea Taigell

English Heritage: Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals 2006

Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas 2006

Basil Abbott for the sections on the history of Diss

### **Contacts:**

**South Norfolk Council, Swan Lane, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2XE**

**www.south-norfolk.gov.uk. Email council@s-norfolk.gov.uk**

**tel: 01508 533633**