Stoke Holy Cross
Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan
September 2012

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2. Stoke Holy Cross Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Introduction

Under the terms of the 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 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 areas their special character.

This character appraisal for Stoke Holy Cross covers the historical background to the mill and describes the significance of features in the area. The policies of the Council, and others, are noted, and it is hoped that the assessment will help to guide any future change.

The conservation area at Stoke Holy Cross was originally designated in 1975 but the initial conservation area appraisal was carried out in 1980 and reviewed in 2002. This review of conservation area in 2010 is being carried out in response to new guidance issued by English Heritage, which requires that conservation area character appraisals include management proposals.

Value of the appraisal

The publication of this appraisal aims to improve the understanding of the value of the built heritage. It also aims to provide potential developers and property owners 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 attitude towards the conservation area and to identify 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.

While the Council has prepared this appraisal, it cannot successfully deal with all the issues without the support of the Parish Councils, and other groups and individuals. With the co-operation of all involved, this appraisal could have a positive effect on the appearance of the area.

Public consultation

The appraisal has been subject to public consultation and has been approved by the Design Champion and local members. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted SNDC Local Plan and detailed guidance and site-specific development briefs as appropriate.
Historical development

Stoke Holy Cross is situated approximately 8.5 kilometres almost due south of Norwich and is in the South Norfolk Local Government district. It is a large parish of some 923 hectares, straddling the River Tas and containing the settlements of Stoke Holy Cross, Upper Stoke and Dunston. The conservation area is to the west of Norwich Road and is centred on the mill and the bridge over the River Tas. The countryside around the conservation area is gently undulating, sloping down to the water meadows either side of the River Tas.

Stoke was recorded in the Domesday Book as Stoche (meaning place, religious place or dependant place) and Crouche-stoke in c1150. Presumably the “Holy Cross” addition is from the dedication of the Church. “Crouche” is an old form of cross.

Stoke Holy Cross was part of the Henstead Hundred. A ‘Hundred’ was a division of a shire and is a term dating from the 10th century. It was, as the name suggests, an area of land containing approximately 100 families, or 10 tithings. There were 33 Norfolk Hundreds listed in the Domesday Book in 1086, and they remained the accepted units of administration and taxation until 1834.

A mill in Stoke is mentioned in a deed dated 1306, and reference made again in an old record in 1482. The current building on the site dates to 1747, although it was significantly rebuilt in 1853 following a serious fire. In the latter part of the 18th century it was used to manufacture paper and only later adapted into a flour mill and mustard milling business.

Stoke Mill is most remembered for its association with the Colman family who leased the mill in 1814. The business prospered and the site underwent a dramatic change. Starch and mustard factories were added, a granary and warehouse. The Colmans also established a school above the granary.

A windmill was added in the early 19th century and by 1845, both it and the mustard mill operated entirely by steam power. A picture of a model of site as it looked during this period is shown on page 4.

However, it became evident that the mill could not cope with this continued expansion. This and other reasons, for example the growth of the railways, prompted the family to purchase the site at Carrow in Norwich. Thus when the lease eventually expired in 1862, the whole business was transferred to the new works.
With the departure of the Colmans, the industrial buildings they had erected were disposed of at auction in accordance with an agreement of the lease. Unfortunately, most were demolished: only the ruins of the granary and part of the ‘Blue’ Warehouse remain in a recognisable form. ‘Blue’ refers to the blue powder which was manufactured a whitener in laundry. The mill continued to grind corn under a succession of millers. Mr Brock bought the mill in 1936 and used it to mix cattle feeds until the 1960s after which its fittings were removed. The ground floor of the mill is now in use as a restaurant while its upper floors remain unused.

There are still other signs of the industrial past. Evidence suggests that Mill Cottages might have been converted from the Old Mustard factory. The area still retains a number of brick walls, which although not necessarily those of the original buildings, certainly could have been constructed out of their materials.

It may be said therefore that this is a key site in the history of the development of industry in 19th century Norfolk.
Character assessment

Boundary

The area includes the grounds of the mill and Mill Cottages, including the two modern houses to the east, together with part of the river valley to the south.

Form and Character

The setting of the mill is quite idyllic in the river valley and the building dominates the area. The present rural character would have contrasted dramatically with the industrial complex that existed in the 19th century. While some of those buildings survive, they are now part of a domestic scene subordinate to the mill.

The approaches to the area are more attractive from the west along the tree-lined roads and down the river valley. Glimpses of the mill from this route are enticing though they are admittedly, of its less impressive sides. Equally, the views back are attractive either along the valley or up to Dunston Hall and the tower of St Remigius’s Church.

Buildings and Materials

The Mill and Mill House are listed grade II while the buildings adjoining at Mill Cottage and the former ‘Blue Warehouse’ are all of significance. There are some boundary walls, which could be remnants of the buildings that adorned the site in its industrial heyday.

The mill has a boarded finish on a high brick plinth with a pantiled roof. For the remainder of the buildings in the group, brick is the dominant material, either painted or fair faced. The former “Blue Warehouse” is rendered, with a pantile roof. Mill Cottage is weatherboard on a rendered plinth with a recent extension to the side in painted brickwork. Surface materials are predominantly tarmac with compacted gravel to Mill Close and gravel to the Mill Restaurant car park.

There are a variety of boundary treatments. Attractive white painted iron railings to Mill House contrast markedly with the aluminium barriers on the bridge. Posts and chain link have been chosen to Mill Cottage while various hedges, indigenous and otherwise are used along Mill Road.

Trees and Hedges

There is a good bank of willow trees each side of the southern approach road, with a good individual lime tree on the riverbank south of the mill. Other trees and hedges make a contribution to the character of the area but are not dominant.

Problems and opportunities

Since the Conservation area reports (December 1980 and November 2002), the former ‘Blue Warehouse’ had been in commercial use. Planning consent was granted in 2005 to convert the building to residential use, and, although the building has been vacant and in poor repair for the last few years, re-roofing works have recently been completed using traditional pantiles to replace the metal corrugated finish. The ramshackle buildings behind, which may be in separate ownership, are in a particularly parlous state. The remains of the granary, which houses the
sub-station, continues to deteriorate.

Although the road through the mill is narrow and winding, it is still a popular short cut for road traffic. The nature of the road slows this traffic down but the uncertain demarcation outside the mill is confusing and visually unattractive. A rationalisation of the area and its surfacing would improve the situation.

A beneficial use or uses for the upper floors of the Mill would do much to safeguard the future of the building.

It is unfortunate how Mill Close and the buildings and spaces that shape it, have been neglected. While this is a private area, its comprehensive enhancement should be promoted.

There seems to be a wide choice of boundary treatments for such a modest area. The traditional white metal posts and railings to the western approaches have not been reflected in the aluminium railings to the main bridge. There are some good railings to Mill House but the simple metal bar railings opposite have been supplemented by an unattractive barbed wire fence. The adjacent building, Mill Cottage is separated from the road by a low post and chain fence to the street.

Leylandii has also been used which is totally alien to the character of the area. These should be removed and replaced with a more indigenous variety of hedge.

**Proposals**

Having provided an analysis of the conservation area, which recognises both the problems and potential, proposals can now be presented for the future enhancement and development of the area.

The Council will follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, which outlines the Government’s policies for Heritage Assets.

The Strategic Principles and Policies in the Norfolk Structure Plan 1999 and the South Norfolk Local Plan (currently under review as the Local Development Framework) have implications for the historic fabric of the conservation area and provide the local framework for the future of this part of Stoke Holy Cross.
Recommendations for management proposals

Local Plan

Include policies in the emerging Local Plan 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.

Design guidance and advisory leaflets

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

- The implications of conservation area designation
- 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 area, and include on the council’s website.

Specific enhancement issues

- Repairs to the remains of the old granary and brick dome once housing an hydraulic ram
- Enhancements to the boundary and surface treatment at Mill Close
- Improvements to boundary treatments, including the aluminium barriers on the bridge
- Rationalisation and enhancement of the highway and footpath in front of the Mill
- The replacement of leylandii with indigenous species of hedging and similar additional planting to the west of the Mill car park.
- Under-grounding of overhead lines and wires

Monitor the Conservation area

The Local Authority has a duty from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990).
Appendix 1
Townscape and buildings - Stoke Holy Cross

The Stoke Mill is one of the most significant in South Norfolk both visually and historically. That it has survived is a credit to the owners but a new use or uses for the upper floors would be beneficial to the building. It is a formidable building in the river landscape and also in the wider setting, which includes Dunston Hall to the northwest.

The boarded framed section is raised on a brick ground floor, with its more modest return wing to the south. This wing effectively closes the view down Mill Road and forces the road to bend sharply around it. The approach from the south is framed by the two banks of willows and alders that are the most significant group of trees in the conservation area. The car park to the west is rather open but the gravel surface is appropriate. The setting could be improved by an indigenous hedge along the west side, and the removal of the leylandii at the entrance. This sensitive area should not be crowded with trees and other elements, keeping the setting of the mill as natural as possible.

Near the road is a brick dome, once housing an hydraulic ram, which used to pump water to the stables at Dunston Hall. It appears to be in reasonable condition although covered in ivy. Its restoration and ‘unveiling’ could add further interest to the area.

The mill is linked to the Mill House by a single storey extension partly obscured by a holly tree. Mill House is a charming 18th century brick and pantiled house with a wide bay window on the ground floor. The bay on the first floor flanked by pedimented sashes is unusual. Its colour scheme of white respects that of the mill, with darkened surrounds to the openings, creating a pleasant contrast. The rear of the house has been altered and its once secluded garden now extends down to the river. According to records there are some beautifully designed ceilings inside the house, which the Colmans are said to have left.

The old Blue Warehouse had been converted to a commercial use, but is once again vacant.

The cottage opposite reflects the design of the mill. A later extension noted as red brick in the 2005 report, has been harmonised with the cottage through colour washing. Together with the old Warehouse they form a gateway into the conservation area. The natural river meadow to the south contrasts with the almost urban character across the road. While there may be opportunities for development on the north side, the south side must remain open in character.

At Mill Cottages little remains of the character of the original mustard factory from which they may have been derived. The UPVC windows do little to enhance their character, but the
recent timber replacements in No 3 are a great improvement. They share a good traditional front boundary wall.

Mill Close threads its way through a maze of outbuildings and while this informal character should remain, its appearance could be improved.

The remains of the old granary are now on the verge of collapse. In view of its historical association, its repair should be encouraged.

The presence of overhead poles and wires does spoil the view of the mill and Mill House and any opportunity to underground them should be grasped.

The two relatively new houses, Rivendell House and Tas Valley, on the east side of the area are not unattractive and do not unduly affect the character of the area. At Mill Cottages little remains of the character of the original mustard factory from which they may have been derived. The UPVC windows do little to enhance their character, but the recent timber replacements in No 3 are a great improvement. They share a good traditional front boundary wall.

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Appendix 3
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 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, guidance concerning the design of new buildings and alterations and repairs to existing buildings in conservation areas is available from South Norfolk Council.

Appendix 4
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.

1. Department for Communities and Local Government
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

The new NPPF replaces all the previous Planning Policy Statements. Section 12, paragraphs 126 to 141 cover “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”.

2. South Norfolk Local Plan

South Norfolk Council is currently reviewing and revising local policies, which will be published in a new Local Plan. In the meantime the more specific local policies included in the South Norfolk Local Plan (1998) are still relevant and include;
IMP1 is replaced by Policy 2 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich & South Norfolk: Promoting Good 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
IMP 23 Control of advertisements in the open countryside
IMP 24 Illuminated advertisements in the open countryside
IMP 25 Outdoor lighting

Appendix 5
Listed Buildings

Grade II

Stoke Mill
Mill House

Unlisted Buildings of Special Interest

Former Blue Warehouse and cottages to the south
Mill Cottage,
1 – 4 (consecutive) Mill Close
Various boundary walls in Mill Close as shown on accompanying map.

Tree Preservation Orders

There are currently no tree preservation orders in the conservation area.
Appendix 6
Sources and references

The Buildings of England, Norfolk 2: North West and South, Nicholas Pevsner and Bill Wilson
GENUKI website
Norfolk Mills website
White’s Gazetteer and Directory of Norfolk 1845
Norwich and its Region, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1961
English Heritage: Guidance on conservation area appraisals, 2006
English Heritage: Guidance on the management of conservation areas, 2006
English Heritage and CABE: Building in Context: New development in historic areas

Photographs on page 4 - The Mill 1901, Model of The Mill 1862 - images courtesy of Norfolk County Council Library and Information Service.

Appendix 7
Contacts:

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Norfolk County Council - 0344 800 8020
www.norfolk.gov.uk

Historic Environment Service – 01362 869276
www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

Broads Authority - 01603 610734
www.broads-authority.gov.uk
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The 1990 Act also requires local authorities to prepare policy statements for 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, are noted, and it is hoped that the assessment will help to guide any future change.

The history and development of Trowse with Newton is closely associated with the Colman family, and the way they shaped the growth of the village was largely responsible for the designation of the conservation area in 1978.

This review of Trowse Conservation Area in 2010 is being carried out in response to new guidance issued by English Heritage, which requires that conservation area character appraisals also include management proposals.

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 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.

While the Council has prepared this appraisal, it cannot successfully deal with all the issues without the support of the Parish Council, other groups and individuals. Once approved, this appraisal will help shape the future of Trowse, and with the co-operation of all concerned, it could have a positive effect on the development of the village.

Public consultation

The appraisal has been subject to public consultation and has been approved by the Design Champion and local member. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted SNDC Local Plan and detailed guidance and site-specific development briefs as appropriate.
Historical development

The village of Trowse is situated approximately 2 kilometres south east of the City of Norwich, and is in the South Norfolk local government district. The parish has an area of 450 hectares and includes the outlying parts of the Whitlingham and Bixley areas. The parish is bordered to the west by the River Yare across which is the City of Norwich. The southern tip of the parish contains the A146/A47 road junction and bypass, which divert traffic away from the village. The conservation area is centred on the village and includes areas of the flood plain of the River Yare to the west and north.

The correct name for the village is Trowse Newton or Trowse-with-Newton. The manor of Newton was originally larger than that of Trowse, which was its berewic or outlier. Trowse has been known at various times as Trows, Treus or Treussa and the name is said to derive from the Saxon term tree-house, meaning a wooden house.

The earliest surviving reference to the village is from the Saxon period, when Bishop Stigard owned the whole of Newton and part of Trowse. In 1205 the lands were handed over to the Cathedral Priory of Norwich, a Norman foundation.

The Priors built Trowse Newton Hall as their country retreat and it is recorded that in 1335 King Edward 111 and Queen Phillipa lodged there. After the Dissolution of the Monasteries the hall was used by the Priors’ successors, the Deans of Norwich Cathedral, until about 1850 when it became a farmhouse. Later it fell into disrepair and was finally demolished by Sir Robert Harvey, who built Crown Point House. The remains of the hall may still be seen beside Whitlingham Lane.

Sir Robert Harvey had founded Crown Bank in Norwich (until recently its building was part of Anglia Television). But in 1871 the bank failed and Sir Robert committed suicide. In 1872 Messrs. J. and J. Colman bought Crown Point Estate. They had started making mustard at Stoke Holy Cross Mill but the coming of the railways to Norwich and their need for a larger supply of labour had caused them to move to Carrow in 1856.

The Colman family is largely responsible for Trowse as we know it today. At the time they acquired the village it was very poor. Indeed one of its yards, Lent Yard, was nicknamed “the slums of Trowse”, and it would seem that the village attracted people of ill repute, who had been expelled from Norwich. The Colmans set about transforming Trowse into a “model village” as a part of a miniature “cradle to grave” welfare state.

In their enlightened attitude towards their employees, the Colmans were typical of a number
of successful industrialists of the nineteenth century. They had themselves risen from humble beginnings and were Nonconformists. They believed it was their duty to preserve their workers from sin and squalor and to set them on the path of virtue and self-improvement, while also noting that a contented work force was a hard working one. They were following in the tradition of Sir Robert Owen, the founder of New Lanark in the early years of the century. Their contemporaries were the Lever Brothers at Port Sunlight and Sir Titus Salt at Saltaire and they pre-dated the Rowntrees at New Earswick and the Cadburys at Bournville.

At Trowse the Colmans built terraced houses for their workers and semi-detached ones for their foremen. In 1870 they built the present village school and a Congregational Chapel. The chapel stood immediately east of Chapel Terrace but was unfortunately demolished some years ago. Houses for pensioners in the Dell followed in 1890. In 1899 the seventeenth century Manor House was restored and extended as a Reading Room.

In 1890 the Common was made over to the village in exchange for land in Whitlingham Lane. This prompted the demolition of several cottages and the old White Horse public house, which stood on what is now the Common.

After the Colmans joined the Church of England, the medieval Parish Church played a growing part in the life of the village. Under the leadership of the Reverend W. Macnaughton-Jones, appointed vicar in 1899, the church was restored and the old church school converted into a Parish Hall.

The death of Mrs. Russell Colman in 1954 and the conversion of Crown Point Hall to a hospital (Whitlingham Hospital) marked the end of an era for Trowse. Though the main estate has survived, the subsequent sale by the Company of houses in the village has directly affected its character as a “model village”.

The fabric of the village has changed relatively little during the twentieth century. The most significant development has been the recent completion of the Trowse Bypass together with the Norwich Southern Bypass in 1992, allowing the village to become, once again, a pleasant place in which to live, after a half-century of ever increasing pollution by through traffic. There are small pockets of new residential development at Meadow Close, Old Hall Close, Newton Close (outside the conservation area) and at Barn Meadow, in addition to the building of a number of individual houses, and more recently on the land at Crown Point between the village and the bypass. The development of a dry ski slope and the recent and continuing extraction of gravel and the consequent development of water sports facilities along Whitlingham Lane have had little effect on the village itself.
The population of the parish had grown to 644 by 1921. It then declined, no doubt due to a reduction in family size, so that in 1951 it stood at only 468. It then grew again, due to the building of new houses, to 569 by 1961. Following the closure of Whitlingham Hospital, the population for 1991 had fallen to 479, but with the developments in recent years, the population increased once again to an estimated 720 in 2004.

Much of this section of the report is based on a history of Trowse by the Reverend C. H. Flack, Vicar of Trowse from 1943 to 1956 and on information provided by Colman Foods Ltd. for the Conservation area Report of 1985.

Character assessment

Trowse and its setting

Trowse is situated on the outskirts of Norwich, from which it is separated by the river Yare. The presence of low-lying meadows along the valley and resistance by the Crown Point Estate to new development prevented the village from being engulfed by the City’s suburban sprawl. From the river, which forms the northwest boundary of the village, the land slopes gently upwards towards the southeast. But, whereas to the south the valley bottom widens out, to the east the glacial deposit of Crown Point forms a dramatic wooded backcloth to the village. On the slopes of the valley sides, the open view southwards across agricultural land has now been cut off by the new road embankment, but the village has gained a southern ‘gateway” in the new fly-over on White Horse Lane, from which are the only views of the village from the bypass.

Conservation area boundary

The Conservation area, as designated in 1978, includes properties on both sides of the Street from St. Andrew’s Church and Whitlingham Lane to Crown Point public house; Blockhill Cottages and the frontage on the north side of Kirby Road as far as Stone Cottages; the Common and properties on both sides of White Horse Lane to a little beyond the converted farm buildings; Dell Loke, School Terrace and the Dell, together with land to the south (allotments) and to the east (Barn Meadow); meadows northwest of Whittingham Lane, which fall within the Broads Authority (see appendix 4) and west of the Common, stretching to the stream which by-passes Trowse Mill; and meadows between this stream and the river Yare itself.

In 2010 the effectiveness of the boundaries was re-assessed to reflect the expansion of the village envelope since the construction of the bypass and the following changes have been made:

- Include the new development at Highland Crescent, Julian Drive, Devon Way, Charolais Close and Hudson Avenue, including the allotment gardens adjoining the rear of Devon Way, thus; extend boundary along the northern edge of the line of Kirby Road (now pedestrian only) to the bypass (A47), return south west along the bypass to the southern corner of the allotment gardens, then turn west to meet the existing boundary at the allotment gardens behind The Dell.

- Re-align the northern boundary to include the whole of the White Horse public house car park.
Form and character

This is a summary assessment of the character of the village. A more detailed analysis is given in Appendix 3.

Trowse owes its unique character to its development by Colman’s in the late nineteenth century as a “model” village for their employees. Trowse was close to their new works at Carrow and much of the village was in need of rebuilding or improvement.

The ‘model’ village comprises of both housing and public buildings, as well as extensive areas set aside for allotment gardens: housing at Russell Terrace, School Terrace, Stanton Terrace, Chapel Place, Vulcan Cottages, Crown Point Villas, Blockhill Cottages and the pensioners’ cottages in the Dell; public buildings include the School, a Congregational Chapel (east of Chapel Place, but now demolished) and the Reading Room (in the former Manor House). Some allotment areas were developed in the 20th century for housing such as those at Newton Close, but others still survive such as those adjacent to The Dell and behind the new houses on Devon Way.

The juxtaposition of Russell Terrace, Chapel Place and Stanton Terrace with the open Common and meadows beyond provides a striking and unusual contrast of townscape and landscape. To complement this, the medieval church of St. Andrew provides a more traditional focal point across the Common.

The Street between the new restaurant and Crown Point Tavern has a much more varied character. Older buildings stand side by side with Colman buildings of the late nineteenth century and modern developments. The Crown Point public house closes the view looking up The Street, although its previous prominence has been somewhat diminished by the new development of Highland Crescent and Devon Way.

The woods on the steeply rising ground north of the Street and along Whitlingham Lane and the trees surrounding the church form an attractive back drop to the village and help to draw together its different elements.
Buildings

The Conservation area contains five buildings on the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are also a large number of buildings, which, though not listed, are considered to be of townscape significance. Both categories are shown on the map in appendix 2.

This is a summary assessment of the character of buildings in the Conservation area. A more detailed assessment is given in Appendix 3 (ii).

Of the buildings of particular interest which pre-date the ‘model village”, the most important, architecturally and historically, is the Church of St. Andrew. Its unusually fine thirteenth century east window and fourteenth century tower command the view looking west along the Street. Other pre-Colman buildings of interest include the Old Hall, refaced in a picturesque Gothic style around 1770; Old Hall Farmhouse in The Street (formerly Sunnydale), a small thatched flint house; Crown Point Tavern, a good Georgian building of red brick; Old Hall Farmhouse in White Horse Lane, a substantial flint house; the Manor House and Manor Rooms, flint buildings of the seventeenth century; a flint barn and several flint cottages in The Street and flint farm buildings in White Horse Lane (now in residential use).

It was noted in the 1985 report, that Easter Cottage had a doorway of historic interest but only the plaque over it can still be seen. This cottage may therefore be of greater interest than appears from the outside.

The houses built by Colman’s for their employees and their pensioners are of great interest historically. They are also of architectural interest and of townscape value. Despite their late nineteenth century date, the majority of them have an almost Georgian simplicity and dignity:
thus Russell Terrace, School Terrace, Stanton Terrace and Blockhill Cottages. Others display more complex details, typical of their period: thus Crown Point Villas, Vulcan Cottages (1890) and Chapel Place (1893). The restoration work on the Manor Rooms (1889) is richly picturesque rather than historically correct. The school is important as the one surviving public building wholly built as part of the ‘model village”. With the exception of those to Crown Point Villas, nearly all the original railings have survived and make a significant contribution to the character of the area.

Mid/late twentieth century buildings include old peoples’ bungalows at Meadow Close, houses at Old Hall Close, individual houses opposite the Old Hall, a large sports hall opposite Old Hall Farmhouse (formerly Sunnydale) in The Street, houses opposite and to the north of Old Hall Farmhouse in White Horse Lane and Newton Close off Whitlingham Lane (outside the conservation area). Late twentieth century development adjacent to the bypass includes houses at Highland Crescent, Devon Way, Julian Drive, Charolais Close and Hudson Avenue.

**Traditional building materials**

Examples of most of the building materials traditional to South Norfolk can be found within the Conservation area. The major exception is timber framed construction, though it is likely that there would have been some timber framed buildings in Trowse before the slum clearance in the late nineteenth century, which accompanied Colmans redevelopment.

**Roofs**

Clay pantiles are the prevalent material, the majority red. Slate roofs include those of Old Hall Farmhouse in White Horse Lane (though its steep pitched hipped roof suggests it was originally peg-tiled or perhaps thatched), the School, Crown Point Tavern and Crown Point Villas (no doubt reflecting their status, higher than that of the terraces). The only thatched roof is that of Old Hall Farmhouse in The Street (formerly Sunnydale).

**Walls**

All the buildings of the Colman development are of local red brick. Earlier brick buildings include Crown Point Tavern and Alburgh Cottages. The School has Costessey-ware terracotta dressings and corbels.

Most of the surviving earlier buildings are of flint, including the Church, the former Church Hall, Flint Cottages (next to the shop), the Manor House and Manor Rooms, Trowse Old Hall, Stone Cottages (“white’ flints), Limekiln Cottages, Old Hall Farmhouse, The Street and its former farm buildings, as well as a number of boundary walls. Rendered buildings may be of flint or brick underneath.

An unusual feature, surely a survival from the Colman era, are the names of the terraces and houses, mainly on painted timber signs mounted on walls, although Blockhill Cottages and School Cottage are in terracotta panels and the Manor House restoration is commemorated in stone.

**Building materials for the new developments**

Traditional materials have been used in the most recent developments to the south of Crown Point Tavern; brick, render, and flint facing for walls (the latter mainly for boundary walls or garages); pantiles and slate roofing, and a variety of brick walls, hedges and metal railings for boundaries.
Ground Surface Materials

Public roads and pavements are largely of tarmacadam. So also are the yard to the White Horse and the forecourt to Crown Point Tavern. Many private driveways are gravelled which is an appropriate material for the conservation area. The footpath from the Street to Newton Close is of compacted gravel with grass verges, and that beside the White Horse to the bowling green is concrete and in poor condition.

Tarmacadum and setts have been used in the new development beyond Crown Point, where there are some shared surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles, which gives a traditional narrow width to the roadways. Bound gravel has been used for some private driveways.

The pavements in The Street have in recent years been resurfaced in tarmacadum with exposed aggregate and realigned to create designated parking bays and more space for pedestrians. A raised crossing area in concrete blocks has been constructed in front of the loke to the school.

Street furniture

The lighting in The Street has recently been replaced with Victorian style black painted metal lamp columns and lights, but the older style concrete columns remain in White Horse Lane, Meadow Close and Kirby Road. Street signs and overhead cables are not over-obtrusive. Attractive or interesting features include the village sign by the entrance to Whitlingham Lane, the old horse trough at the corner of White Horse Lane (used as a flower box), the Victorian letter box in the wall of the Manor House (now out of use), the milestone in front of Vulcan Cottages and the ‘old style’, red telephone box beside the White Horse. There is a brick bus shelter opposite Stanton Terrace and a modern red post box outside the shop. On the Common there are several seats, litter bins with slatted wood surrounds, children’s play equipment and a parish notice board. A new parish notice board and seats in a recycled material have been installed on the new green at Highland Crescent, where stout oak posts are used as bollards.
Trees and Hedges

There are a number of sites where trees or hedges play an important visual role in the village.

i. The meadows west and south of the Church.
ii. The churchyard and round the Parish Hall,
iii. The Common.
iv. Round the school playground,
v. The Dell.
vi. The garden of Easter Cottage (north side of the Dell).

vii. Along the south side of the Street, in front of (i) the barn (opposite Alburgh Cottages), (ii) three modern houses and (iii) the sports field.
viii. East of Blockhill Cottages and Stone Cottages (outside the Conservation area).
ix. Along north side of Kirby Road, from Stone Cottages to Limekiln Cottages.
x. North of the Conservation area, from Newton Close to Stone Cottages.
xii. In front of Old Hall Farmhouse (formerly Sunnydale).
xiii. The grounds of Trowse Old Hall and Old Hall Close.
xiv. Meadow Close.
xv. The grounds of the Vicarage.
xvi. Grounds of houses on south side of Whitlingham Lane.
xvii. Meadow on north side of Whitlingham Lane (falls within Broads Authority).

New trees have been planted on the new green in front of Highland Crescent and at Julian Drive. These will make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area when they are mature.

Conservation area designation affords protection to trees within the boundaries. However there are a number of trees and groups of trees within the village, which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

Boundary treatments

Many of the original iron railings and gates around the front boundaries to the Colman properties, the Old Hall, the church and the school survive and a number are stamped with the maker’s name – J Barnes, Norwich. The gate and a short section of railing to the former Chapel survive beside the footpath to the school on The Street and other historic gates can be found at Stone Cottages and Old Hall Farmhouse at the southeast end of The Street. There are modern metal railings on The Street west of Newton Cottage in front of the access to 3 Dell Loke. New railings have been erected at Highland Crescent. These have been designed to echo those traditional railings in front of Blockhill Cottages. In the rest of the recent housing development beyond Crown Point, front boundaries are a mixture of flint or brick walls, hedges, railings and picket fences.

Many boundaries, especially in the street are mixed hedges of indigenous species, some of considerable size. At Crown House, a low flint wall retains the ground below the hedge. The historic field boundary hedge alongside the footpath to Kirby and Poringland (the old Kirby Road) has been retained and the road narrowed with additional planting, which is now coming to maturity.
**Significant open spaces**

To the west of the conservation area a number of significant open spaces contribute to the biodiversity and character of the area:

- The meadows west and south of the church
- The churchyard and around the Parish Hall including the water meadows down to the river
- The Common
- The school playground
- The courtyard of The Dell
- Allotment gardens adjacent to The Dell and Devon Way
- Devon Way (formerly Loddon Road)
- Highland Crescent
- Meadow to the north side of Whitlingham Lane (falls within Broads Authority)

Gardens to private houses also contribute to the character, both individually and collectively. An example of the latter is the rear gardens to Russell Terrace, which are on rising ground and separated from the houses by a wide loke.

**Developments**

A number of developments affecting the Area have taken place since 1985, when the Trowse Conservation area Report was adopted.

The completion of the Norwich Southern Bypass and Trowse Bypass from the Outer Ring Road in 1992 has transformed the village. The eastern section of the Street is now a cul-de-sac, while the traffic on the western section and on White Horse Lane is greatly reduced. The ‘danger, noise, dirt and vibration caused by heavy commuter traffic', identified as ‘a major problem’ in the 1985 Report, is now a thing of the past. The village is once more a pleasant place in which to live and walk about and buildings are no longer spattered with dirt.

Other effects on the character of the village of the new road pattern include (i) the blocking of the open view to the south of the Common by the new embankment; (ii) the fly-over across White Horse Lane, creating a “gateway' to the village; (iii) The closure of Kirby Road and Loddon Road by gates. Loddon Road is now Devon Way.

The farm buildings of Old Hall Farm have been converted to residential use.

Five houses have been built at Old Hall Close, in the grounds of the Old Hall in White Horse Lane.

Thirteen houses have been built at Barn Meadow, on land east of the Dell, and barn beside the entrance on the south side of The Street has recently been converted to a dwelling.

A bungalow has been built immediately east of the barn in the Street.

A large area of residential development has taken place beside and in front of the sports hall, and between Crown Point and the bypass. The houses in front of the sports hall on Highland Crescent mask the view of this bulky building.
Problems and opportunities

The policies referred to in Appendix 4 are limited to those areas where the Council can have an influence, either by its own actions or by using its legislative powers to guide the actions of others. However, while acknowledging these limitations, this statement also identifies other issues outside its control, in the hope that those responsible, be they individual owners or public organisations, may be encouraged to act in a positive way.

There are several issues on which attention should be focused:

Condition of Buildings

Generally the buildings in the conservation area are in good condition. However, the joinery on School Cottage is deteriorating and in need of repair and decoration. One or two of properties at Block Hill cottages are also in need of repairs.

Vacant or disused buildings or sites

School Cottage appears to be the only property that has been vacant and unused for some time.

Changes to the character of the conservation area

As already noted, the buildings in the conservation area are generally well maintained. However, the special character of conservation areas can easily be eroded by seemingly minor, well-intentioned home improvements such as the insertion of replacement windows and doors with ones of an inappropriate design or material, (for example hinged opening lights in lieu of sash windows and wood effect UPVC instead of painted timber). This is a particular issue with unlisted buildings, especially in terraces that have been identified as contributing to the character of the conservation area. In line with current legislation, all complete window replacements are required to achieve minimum insulation values, but recognising the affect that inappropriate replacements can have, local authorities are empowered to relax that requirement when considering works to listed buildings. Advice should be sought from the local planning department at an early stage.

Proposals

Having provided an analysis of the Conservation area, proposals can now be presented for the future enhancement and development of the Village.

The Council will follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, which outlines the Government’s policies for Heritage Assets.

The Strategic Principles and Policies in the Norfolk Structure Plan 1999 and the South Norfolk Local Plan have implications for the historic fabric of the Conservation area and provide the local framework for the future of Trowse.
Recommendations for management proposals.

Local Plan

Include policies in the emerging Local Plan 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.

Design guidance and advisory leaflets

Monitor and update the information on South Norfolk Council’s website (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 area, and include on the council’s website.

Article 4 and Article 4(2) directions

Assess the need to restrict permitted development rights to protect architectural features on unlisted buildings which contribute to the special character of the conservation area, through Article 4 or Article 4(2), for buildings and structures included in the list of buildings of local interest (see appendix 3 (ii)).

Monitor the Conservation area

The Local Authority has a duty from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990).

Specific enhancement proposals

1. Renew remaining lamp columns and lights in White Horse Lane, Kirby Road and Meadow Close to match those in The Street and the new developments.
2. Resurfacing of the footpath beside the White Horse in a more sympathetic material.
3. Improvements to the surface materials to the parking areas at The White Horse and The Crown Point Tavern.
Appendix 1
Townscape and buildings

This Appendix describes in more detail the character of the principal roads, yards, open spaces and buildings in the Conservation area.

(1) Kirby Road

Characterised by the contrast between, on the south side, Crown Point Villas and Blockhill Cottages and, on the north side, a flint retaining wall, a steep bank and a belt of woodland, Kirby Road is attractive, if somewhat sunless and hemmed in.

The road is truncated just beyond Blockhill Cottage where it meets Julian Drive, a late twentieth century development of mainly detached, Georgian style houses that has been built between the bypass and the line of Kirby Road. The former field boundary to the old Kirby Road has been supplemented with additional tree planting to narrow the thoroughfare as a footpath leading to Kirby Bedon and Poringland.

On the south side, Crown Point Villas comprise three pairs of semi-detached houses and a short terrace of four. They have hipped slate roofs with forward projecting gables, ornamental bargeboards to gables and open porches with similar bargeboards. Original windows have large-paned sashes, although the majority have been replaced with a variety of styles and materials. The only original front railings to survive are those of No.4, although some of the side boundary railings remain. The frontages to Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 have been opened up to provide parking.

Blockhill Cottages are much more modest than the adjoining “villas” and probably date a little earlier. They comprise a terrace of twelve set back behind long front gardens sloping up from the road. They have a simple dignity and could almost be mistaken for Georgian. Original windows have small paned sashes, although a large number have been replaced with a variety of styles and materials. Original doors have flush “bead and butt” panels. All but two of the original front railings survive.

On the north side the only building is Stone Cottages, comprising four cottages converted to two. Essentially rural in character, they are built, unusually, of white flints and must surely pre-date Colmans. Window replacements are reasonably sympathetic.
West of Crown Point Villas, Crown Point Tavern stands boldly at the V-junction with the former Loddon Road facing down the Street. Its previous prominence at the head of the village street has been somewhat diminished by Highland Crescent to the south, a group of late twentieth century houses constructed around a green facing north in front of the pub. The curved gables of the houses either side of the entrance to Hudson Avenue are an attractive feature, although slightly overbearing in this village position. Recently planted trees compliment this space. Crown Point Tavern is a grade II listed Georgian building dating from around 1830. It has fine brickwork and doorways and small paneled sash windows with shutters. The roof is slate and gabled, with end chimneys, and remnants of a high brick boundary wall with substantial piers survive at the rear. It has a tarmacadom triangular forecourt.

(2) Devon Way (formerly Loddon Road)

The north side of the road is bounded by a flint retaining wall which varies in height on top of which is a variety of garden fences, shielding the backs of the houses in Kirby Road. There are fine trees beyond Blockhill Cottages.

The wide grass verge on the south side has been retained, along with a banked hedge to the new development in Devon Way. A variety of sizes and styles of house, some 'cottagey' with casement windows, others in a more formal Georgian style loop round via Charolais Close beside the bypass, where the rising ground restrict views out of the conservation area. At the western end of Charolais Close views open up across the river valley to the wooded ridge beside and beyond County Hall. Substantial banks of planting hide views of the new development from the bypass to the west.

(3) The Street: east of White Horse Lane

Despite its great variety of building types, this section of The Street has a strongly linear form, with buildings, walls and hedges maintaining a continuous frontage on either side. The Church and Crown Point Tavern and the new houses to the east provide focal points in views up and down the street.

(a) Northside

Crown House (formerly Limekiln Cottage), set in a hollow of old lime workings, has undergone major alterations and extensions since the 1985 Report. It is a mix of flint, brick and painted boarding. The new work has been sympathetically done. Old Hall Farmhouse (formerly Sunnydale) is an attractive flint and thatched cottage nestled behind a hedge. It is now linked
to the traditional outbuildings, which have been converted to residential use. Trowse Old Hall dates from 1721, but its present Gothic front dates from around 1770. Features include flint rustications, pointed arched window openings, giant pilasters, cinquefoil and oval openings and a crenellated parapet. Five houses - Old Hall Close - have been built in its grounds. Although clearly late twentieth century in appearance their materials and layout (including the retention of trees) make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Alburgh Cottages, a red brick and pantiled terrace, dates from the late nineteenth century, but incorporates earlier, probably eighteenth century fabric, including a blocked pointed arch. Gothic Cottage has pointed arched windows and door, perhaps related to those of the Old Hall. Reading Room Cottages are set at right angles to the street and probably date from the seventeenth or eighteenth century. Much of their architectural interest has been obliterated by modern rendering. Meadow Close is a 20th century development on this side of the street comprising post-war dwellings with gardens grouped around a footpath at right angles to the street. Though of no particular architectural merit, trees and hedges make for a pleasant break in the street scene.

The Manor Rooms, dating (according to a Victorian plaque) from 1604, is of considerable architectural and historic interest but is not listed, possibly due to “restoration” works carried out in 1889. The alterations made at that time, comprising high quality flint work, terracotta and half timbering in a “seventeenth century” style, could now be considered for Listing in their own right. Also of 1889, and in the same rich “Jacobean” style, is Manor House attached to the west side of the Manor Rooms. Railings at the front are contemporary with the house. Behind the Manor House is an attractive bowling green that can be reached from a footpath beside the White Horse connecting The Street and Whitlingham Lane via Newton Close. The White Horse public house dates from the late nineteenth century and replaced an inn of the same name,
which stood on the Common. Its style is in harmony with that of the Colman terraces nearby. Buildings to the rear have recently been sympathetically converted to an extension to the pub and living accommodation. The car park to the west and the newly widened footpath in front are both tarmacadam.

(b) South side

The impact of the large sports hall mentioned in the 1985 report is all but hidden by the houses on the western end of Highland Crescent and now is only glimpsed through an alleyway. Three modern houses, Hilltop, Copper Penny and a more recent bungalow, are all reasonably well screened by hedges and trees and make little impact on the street. A flint barn, with slate roof, has recently been converted to a house.

Vulcan Cottages, dated 1890 and part of the Colman ‘model village”, have a single central gable to the front and open porches: a break with the “Georgian” simplicity of, for example, Russell Terrace. Easter Cottage and Newton Cottage are much older, though rendering and modern windows etc. make it hard to ‘read’ their history from the outside. New railings in front of a grassed area and a boarded fence screen a bungalow, No. 3 Dell Loke.

Wayside, a brick house of the early 1980s, fits in reasonably well and is enhanced by a flint front garden wall. It replaced the Congregational Chapel, which was of particular historic interest: it affirmed the Colman family’s original Nonconformist convictions, which, it could be said, were a strong contributory factor in their business success, in their beneficent attitude to their employees and hence in the building at Trowse of the ‘model village” itself. A gate and a small section of elaborate iron railings beside the Chapel survive.

Chapel Place, incorporating a restaurant, completes this side of the street, and - as it turns the corner - becomes the point round which the village pivots. Dated 1893, it is the latest and most elaborately detailed of all the terraces. Any hint of “Georgian” simplicity is gone: all is large mullioned and transomed windows, gables, bargeboards, exposed rafters and little porches. The replacement of some of the windows is an unfortunate alteration to the rhythm of this block, but thankfully the shop windows, which are a variation on the domestic ones, survive.

(4) The Street: west of White Horse Lane

Quite different from the eastern section of the Street, this section is open: to the south over the Common, to the southwest towards the churchyard and its trees and to the northwest to the trees of the Vicarage garden and those along Whitlingham Lane beyond.
(a) North side

From the White Horse to the garden of the former Vicarage the frontage is solidly built up. Stanton Terrace is typical of the Colman development: red brick and pantiles with small paned sash windows under rubbed brick arches. It is the only terrace in the village with no rear access and therefore there are shared “tunnel entrances” to the back. Flint Cottages, a row of three in flint and pantiles, is older. The Shop (No. 1B) is rendered, but its small windows suggest a pre-Colman date. It has an attractive late nineteenth century shop front. No. 1 is a small double-fronted house of a well-proportioned straight forward design, late nineteenth century and possibly a Colman house.

The style of the large former Vicarage is typical of the turn of the nineteenth- twentieth century. A complex plan-form is allied to a complex silhouette of roofs, gables, chimneys and bays and a mixture of brickwork, pebble dash and mock half timbering. Its date suggests it was financed by the Colman family. It stands in substantial grounds. To improve sight lines, the garden front has been moved back from the street. In its place is a wooden fence with concrete posts, on a rigidly straight line, which hardly does justice to the curve of the street or to the attractive setting of church and trees; while two small Prunus trees on the wide verge fail to make up for what has been lost.

(b) South side

The railings to the Common are an attractive feature: oak posts with cast iron caps hold stout tubular horizontal rails. A drainage ditch (already noted on the north side of the Street), much choked with undergrowth, separates the Common from the meadow to the west. Vertical iron railings continue along the front of this meadow. The former Church Hall, of flint, grey brick and slate, is in early Gothic Revival style. Its front railings have been removed but attractive ground
planning makes up for this loss. The Parish Church of St. Andrew has a thirteenth century chancel, which includes a splendid east window, a fourteenth century square tower and a fifteenth century nave. The north aisle was added in 1901, to accommodate the expanding population. Materials are flint, stone and lead. Railings at the front have survived.

(5) White Horse Lane

(a) East side

School Cottage (1895), though detached, is in the same style as, and visually forms part of, Chapel Place. This continuity gives added “strength” to this important corner. Its railings survive and are continued by the railings of the school playground on the corner of Dell Loke. Trees along the edge of the playground soften a space, which is really little more than a yard.

Russell Terrace is the glory of Trowse. It comprises four identical short blocks, each of eight houses; the northern two at a slight angle to the southern two. The relationship of the whole terrace to the open Common in front is in the tradition, albeit at a much humbler scale, of some of the grand crescents or parades of Bath or Brighton. The uniformity and simple elegance of the houses and railings allows the terrace to be seen as one, each individual house enhanced by being part of a grander whole. It is nothing less than a tragedy that, following the sale of the houses to individual owners, so many of them have been altered by the insertion of a multiplicity of different types of windows and doors.

Nos. 33 and 34 are a semi-detached pair of houses, dating from the early 1960’s. No.35 is a large bungalow of similar date. They have little architectural merit and “blur” the otherwise clear distinction between Russell Terrace and the surrounding landscape. An old flint wall survives to “pull together” the frontages of the three new houses.

The rest of the Conservation area on this side of the road is still farmland. It is important that it should remain so, in order that the form of the “model village” is not further ‘blurred”.

Church Hall

St Andrew’s Church

St Andrew’s Church
(b) West side

The Common stretches southwards to the end of Russell Terrace. Trees have been planted at the southern end: two are now growing to the scale required for their site, but the third is of too small a species. The solidity of the posts and rails along the full length of the Common complement the delicacy of the cast iron railings, which run the full length of Russell Terrace. There is a fine open view from Russell Terrace over the Common towards the Street, the Church and the meadows of the Yare Valley beyond. In summer substantial trees mask views of County Hall and the wooded ridge beyond the river valley.

Two houses, built immediately south of the Common since 1967, like those opposite, ‘blur’ the setting of older buildings in the rural landscape and are architecturally of little merit. The use of a pink sand-lime brick is alien to the village, and changes in cladding “stone” facing and PVC ‘boarding’ respectively - mean that they no longer match even one-another. It is unfortunate that the flint wall, which previously fronted their site, was demolished.

Old Hall Farmhouse, listed and dating from around 1740, with later alterations, is of colour-washed flint with a steep slate hipped roof. The stack right of centre suggests an original ‘lobby entrance” plan, old fashioned for this date. It has a good high flint wall in front, but the need to provide access to the converted barns next door has caused the front garden to be drastically reduced and the house now appears hemmed in.

The conversion of the barns and other farm buildings, once part of Old Hall Farm, has enabled them to survive with their external character largely intact, though inevitably the insertion of new windows, roof lights and flues has to an extent changed their appearance. They sit well in the landscape and are visible from many vantage points.
The School is built on a sloping site, so that the playground is on two levels and to the east the building is hemmed in by a high retaining wall. At the same time, the Chapel, until it was demolished, butted hard up against the north end of the School. Why did the Colmans choose such an awkward and cramped site? The school building resembles a Board school of its time: classrooms with large windows and high ceilings grouped round a large central hall. It is solidly built of red brick with a slate roof and with terra cotta to openings and eaves. Its style is loosely “Jacobean”. The old metal windows have been replaced in UPVC: this changes the appearance of the building, but is consistent throughout and not unpleasing. Outside are two open shelters, on cast iron columns.

East of the School there is a substantial building of brick and slate: it appears originally to have been a hall with tall side windows under wedge dormers, but a floor has later been inserted and the windows partly blocked. Its original use is not known. Further east are the back entrances to properties in the Street. High flint walls conceal gardens behind. There is a fine mature tree in the garden of Easter Cottage.

The Dell itself stands in a hollow - probably created as a result of mineral extraction. To east and south the enclosing banks are planted with trees. The pensioners’ houses form three sides of a ‘square’, open at the corners. They are single storey of red brick and slate, with low eaves and simple and uniform door and window openings. The original wood sash windows have been replaced by mock sashes in PVC: this is regrettable, although the uniformity of the new windows reduces the impact of this change. Other alterations include flat felt-roofed rear extensions and porches: a better matching brick could have been used for the extensions and the porches could perhaps have been more attractively detailed. The fourth side of the ‘square” is filled by a modern building comprising a central two storey warden’s house with other single storey accommodation to each side: while not in the same style as the older buildings, it fits in well - though a matching brick could perhaps have been used. Further new residents’ bungalows have been built on the north side of The Dell. The grounds, including the central ‘square”, are mostly grassed, with attractive trees and seats. Hard surfacing is all in tarmac or concrete.

School Terrace borders The Dell on its west side. It comprises two blocks, very similar to those of Russell Terrace. Again, it is unfortunate that changes have been made to a number of windows and doors. Chain link fences separate the back gardens of both terraces from Dell Loke.

A substantial area of well used allotment gardens remains to the south of The Dell and School Terrace.
(7) Whitlingham Lane

Tall trees, hedges and undergrowth line both sides, establishing - only a few yards from the city boundary - its essentially rural character. On the west corner attractive shrub planting adjoins the village sign, which looks as though it has recently been restored, and a field gate leads into a meadow (within the Broads Authority, see appendix 4) with a view of industrial buildings across a stream. On the eastern side of the lane, the former Vicarage garden is screened by an unattractive timber boarded and concrete fence. Two modern houses beyond the former Vicarage sit comfortably behind mature trees and hedges.
Trowse Conservation Area
Historic Map 1891-1912

Key

Existing Conservation Area

Scale at A3:
1:4,000
Date: June 2012

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Trowse Conservation Area
Historic Map 1919-1939

Key

Existing Conservation Area

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Scale at A3:
1:4,000
Date: June 2012

26. Trowse Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Appendix 3
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.

Appendix 4
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.

1. Department for Communities and Local Government
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

The new NPPF replaces all the previous Planning Policy Statements. Section 12, paragraphs 126 to 141 cover: “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”.

2. South Norfolk Local Plan

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

IMP1 is replaced by Policy 2 of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich & South Norfolk: Promoting Good 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
IMP 23 Control of advertisements in the open countryside
IMP 24 Illuminated advertisements in the open countryside
IMP 25 Outdoor lighting

Parts of the Conservation area that fall within the Broads Authority will be subject to their policies as a separate planning authority and not those of South Norfolk Council. The Broads Authority are a special statutory authority that is part of the National Park family but not a National park. They were set up by their own Act of Parliament and have an additional statutory purpose to other parks. The Broads are Article 1(5) land and therefore many of the restrictions with regard to permitted development that apply in conservation areas already apply in the Broads.

Appendix 5
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 82 entries for the parish of Trowse representing almost every period from prehistoric times to the 20th century, reflecting the development of the settlement on the outskirts of Norwich. The majority of the entries within the conservation area are buildings, including those that are listed and all the ‘Colman’ properties.
### Appendix 6(i)
**Listed Buildings in the Trowse Conservation area**

(All Grade II, except as noted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Street (north side)</td>
<td>Trowse Old Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunnydale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Street (south side)</td>
<td>Church of St. Andrew (Grade I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirby Road (south side)</td>
<td>Crown Point Tavern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Horse Lane (west side)</td>
<td>Old Hall Farmhouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 6 (ii)
**Unlisted Buildings, Walls and Railings of Townscape Significance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Street (north side)</td>
<td>Limekiln Cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alburgh Cottages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gothic Cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Room Cottages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manor House (Reading Room)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House attached west of Manor House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings to ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White Horse Public House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stanton Terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flint Cottages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Shop and No.1B The Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.1 The Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The former Vicarage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Street (south side)</td>
<td>Barn at entrance to Barn Meadow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vulcan Cottages, incl. railings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easter Cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newton Cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings east of Chapel Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapel Place and Baker’s Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings to Common and to meadow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings to Church of St. Andrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirby Road (north side)</td>
<td>Stone Cottages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirby Road (south side)</td>
<td>Blockhill Cottages, incl. railings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crown Point Villas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings to No.4 Crown Point Villas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Horse Lane (east side)</td>
<td>School House, incl. railings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railings to School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russell Terrace, incl railings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Front walls to Nos. 33, 34 and 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trowse Conservation Area Character Appraisal

White Horse Lane (west side)  
Front wall to Old Hall Farmhouse  
Former farm buildings of Old Hall Farm

Dell Loke and The Dell  
School, incl. railings  
Building next east of school  
Flint Walls to gardens north of The Dell  
The Dell Pensioners’ Cottages  
School Terrace

Appendix 6 (iii)  
Tree Preservation Orders

Works to trees within the conservation area are controlled by giving the local authority six weeks to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should be made.

Appendix 7  
Sources and references (for this review)

The Buildings of England, Norfolk 2: North West and South, Nicholas Pevsner and Bill Wilson  
GENUKI website  
White’s Gazetteer and Directory of Norfolk 1845  
Norwich and its Region, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1961  
English Heritage: Guidance on conservation area appraisals, 2006  
English Heritage: Guidance on the management of conservation areas, 2006  
English Heritage and CABE: Building in Context: New development in historic areas

Appendix 8  
Contacts:

SNDC Conservation Team – 01508 533812/533948  
www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

Norfolk County Council - 0344 800 8020  
www.norfolk.gov.uk

Historic Environment Service – 01362 869276  
www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

Broads Authority - 01603 610734  
www.broads-authority.gov.uk
Diss
Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan
September 2012

Enhancing the environment we live in
2. Diss Conservation Area Character Appraisal
**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 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, are noted and it is hoped that the assessment will help guide any future changes.

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 which requires that Conservation Area appraisals also include management proposals.

**Value of the appraisal**

The 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.

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. This statement will help shape the future of Diss, and with the co-operation of all concerned, it could have a positive effect on its development.

**Public consultation**

The appraisal has been subject to wide public consultation, and was adopted by the Council on the 24 September 2012. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted SNDC Local Plan, and detailed guidance and site-specific development briefs as appropriate.
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 some are featured in this 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 natural boundary 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.

The boundaries have been re-assessed as part of this appraisal, and following comments made, further amendments are included:

• Omit parts of the Area along Louie’s Lane, Shelfanger Road, and Heywood Road which have lost their special character and appearance.

• Adjust the boundary along Shelfanger Road to take account of the maltings development and the new houses on Scholar Walk.

• Extend the area along Roydon Road as far as Croft Lane to include the properties on the south side and the row of trees opposite. These houses are largely unspolit and are part of an attractive approach to the town

• Include the properties on the 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 and to include a strip of land on the south side of Park Road
Street pattern and character

This is a summary assessment of the character of the town; a more 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. Approaching from the east or west along the A1066, leaves the visitor largely unimpressed and confused by this “status”. But a diversion down Fair Green, or along the roads and pathways that lead to the centre, quickly restores the image.

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. This area has been described as the Diss Heritage Triangle.

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.
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.

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. There is an unexpected contrast here. The panoramic view from the park, over the Mere to the church tower beyond, is unparalleled in the district, but from the main streets, the Mere is rarely visible, except an occasional glimpse through a gap or archway.

Outside the core

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

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 was improved in the 1960s and more recently following a change in the ownership and maintenance responsibilities.

**Buildings**

Apart from the Parish Church, no buildings survive intact from the medieval period, although parts of 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.
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 underestimated. 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.
Surface materials

Works in the town centre have used a light coloured pavior with blue coloured bricks aimed at reflecting the slate “cobbles” 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.
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 in the district. Individual trees or groups play a major role in the town both in their own right, and as a backdrop or screen. Many of the trees are mature specimens, and in some cases, schemes for new planting should be encouraged to help ease the impact of any losses that may occur in the future. Many of the trees are protected by preservation orders, but other trees of significance include:

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 a positive contribution to the form and character of the town including:

- The plains and yards along Market Hill
- The Market place
- Mere's Mouth
- North of Navire House
- The yards off St Nicholas Street
- Madgett’s Walk

A key feature of the town is how these spaces are often linked by a network of alleys, back courts and thoroughfares which add significantly to the character and appeal of the town by: enabling access behind street frontages and buildings; creating sheltered, intimate spaces to explore and enjoy; maintaining the use of the town’s heritage of commercial buildings, and providing an attractive and appealing asset of specialist premises.

Every opportunity should be taken to enhance and expand this special legacy.

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.
Developments

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. South Norfolk Council has supported the market town initiative, while the neighbourhood teams have worked towards the creation of the Waveney Valley project.

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

- providing new facilities and continuing improvements in the Park as part of its regeneration project
- continue to support the refurbishment of the Corn Hall which is being taken forward by a newly formed trust
- Promoting the Vision for the Diss Heritage Triangle
- 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

The Fair Green residents association has carried out much needed resurfacing and access improvements.

Fair Green  The Mere  The Park
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 indentifying 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 and site in The Causeway, which has been empty and semi derelict for some time. Mere Manor and no 5 Victoria Road are on the Council’s buildings at risk register, while the old Windmill and Mill Cottage, Waveney Road, the stable building in Beehive yard, no 2 Roydon Road, and the building south of 34 Chapel Street are among those needing attention.

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. Temporary uses or redecoration/enhancement of the shop fronts would improve the street scene in the meantime.

While the Council has a policy which seeks to encourage the residential use of upper floors, little progress has been made in Diss. A survey should be carried out in the town to see what potential there might be and promote conversion as a way to help invigorate the town centre.
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 its character. 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, which has been largely resolved by the Resident's Association. 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 to promote a route along the east bank of the Mere, extending the riverside walk to Denmark bridge, and public use of the Parish Fields, will all enhance this experience. The access to and use of the back courts in the core of the town should be encouraged and expanded.
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. There 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 Plan

Include policies in the emerging LP 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) 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

The access problems to the town are a concern. Assuming there are no realistic prospects for major works that would take the through traffic away from 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 Tesco are visually disruptive but the impact can be eased with good design and a greater emphasis on appearance.

A study of this principle route, in conjunction with the appropriate organisations, could inform the prospects for various improvements.

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 and its site on The Causeway. Promote and encourage repair of buildings identified. Discuss with owners of vacant buildings the prospects for temporary uses and/or enhancement schemes that would improve their appearance and the street scene.

Diss Heritage Triangle

Engage with the Corn Hall Trust, the Town Council and other interested parties, to promote and enhance the special character and commercial attractiveness of the core of the town.

Specific enhancement proposals

- Promote new tree planting along Victoria and Park Roads as part of a wider study into the problems of the roads.
- Promote tree planting and management 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.
- Explore the possibility of tree planting on main council car park on Chapel Street.
- Discuss with the relevant authorities, the undergrounding of overhead cable and wires.
- Encourage and support 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/boardwalk along the east bank of the Mere in conjunction with improvements to the various yards and spaces that lead onto it.
- Work with the Waveney Valley project and others to extend the river side walk west to Denmark Bridge.
- Reinstate 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 in Appendix 2.
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 lead 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.
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.
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

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.
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.

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**

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
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 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

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.
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

Diss Conservation Area
Historic Map 1891-1912

Key
- Existing Conservation Area

Scale at A3:
1:5,200
Date: June 2012

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30. Diss Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Appendix 3

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.

Appendix 4

Policy background

Policies

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.

1. Department for Communities and Local Government
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

The new NPPF replaces all the previous Planning Policy Statements. Section 12, paragraphs 126 to 141 cover: “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment”.

2. South Norfolk Local Plan

South Norfolk Council is currently reviewing and revising local policies, which will be published in a new Local Plan (LP). In the meantime the more specific local policies included in the South Norfolk Local Plan (1998) are still relevant and include;
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
IMP23 Control of advertisements in the open countryside
IMP24 Illuminated advertisements in the open countryside
IMP25 Outdoor lighting

There are policies specific to the Conservation Area in the Local Plan, but these will be reviewed in the future:

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

The Norfolk Museums and Archaeological Service complier cords 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 for Diss contains 281 entries with examples from the medieval period through to the 20th century.
Appendix 6(i)

List of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest within the Conservation Area

Chapel Street 19, 35 to 37, 38 and 39
Church Street Church of St Mary, churchyard walls, 1, West boundary wall to no 1, 2 and 3, 7, 18, 24, Dolphin House

Denmark Street 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

The Entry no 4, 6 and 7,
Fair Green 2 and 2A, 4, 21, 28 and 29, 30 and 31, 33, 35, 36, telephone kiosk

Frenze Road Friends meeting House
Market Hill 1A, 1B and 1C, 2, 4 to 6, 8 and 9, 11 and 12, 13, 14 and 15.
Market Place 1 to 3, 4 and 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 15A, 16, 16A 17, 17A, 18, 20, telephone kiosk

Mere Street 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.

Mount Street 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,

Roydon Road 2 and 4, 6 (Brewery House)
St Nicholas Street 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 6A, 7, 8, 9, 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.

Shelfanger Road 2 and 4, Pine House, Old Maltings, 52
Victoria Road 2, 5, 6, Mere Manor and walls
Vinces Road Former Maltings

36. Diss Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Appendix 6(ii)

List of buildings of “Townscape significance”

Chapel Street
Outbuilding opposite the telephone exchange, 11,16,17,20, 34
and adjoining building, building rear of 18 Mere Street

Church Street
4

Denmark Street
Baptist Chapel and adjacent hall, 12,13
The Nunnery, and wall to
South, 14, Parkside, 1 to 4 Park Villas (15-18), 20, 22,
The Limes, 76,78, 87-89, 90,93, Baldrys,96, 98, Stable
Block in Beehive Yard and building to south, 99a,
105,106, The Crown and adjoining buildings to south (108 and
110)

The Causeway
Former school, 3 Caxton cottage, School
House and cottage, flint wall to footpath

Croft Lane
No 1 and burial ground

The Entry
3,The school, Cupiss Printers and Victoria
House, wall at south end (part listed formerly
In conjunction with Mere Manor)

Fair Green
Former Chapel, 5 to 11, 7 Baldry’s yard

Frenze Road
Corner House

Market Hill
10 (Gazes) and building to rear, 14 (Barclays bank)

Market Place
The Post Office

Mere Street
4 and 5, 16 and 17, 19 to 21

Mount Pleasant
13 to 36

Mount Street
1, 4, 5, 6, 6A, 7, 9,
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, railings and wall
opposite no 60, 63, 64A, 65, 66, 67. Wall south and east of car
park

Park Road
13

Roydon Road
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

St Nicholas Street
Buildings in Norfolk House Yard and Cobbs Yard, and rear of
The Greyhound

Shelfanger Road
Dorset House,(7-11), 30 and range to the south, building and
walls opposite 1 Pine Court 6 and 8, 12-16, 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

Stanley Road
7-13

Sunnyside
2 and 4, 8 and 10, 42 to 58, 9 to 19, 21 to 27 and 37 to 43

Victoria Road
Salisbury House, 85 to 89, 90 to 93,101,102, 103 and wall to
west, 104,117 to 126, 127 to 133

Waveney Road
Former windmill, and cottage
Appendix 7

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
Norwich City Council for mapping services

Appendix 8

Contacts:

SNDC Conservation Team – 01508 533812/533948
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