

# BULLEN CORNER CONSERVATION AREA



## *Introduction*

The objective of the Bullen Corner Conservation Area Appraisal is to analyse and record the special character of the Conservation Area, which was originally designated in 1993. The appraisal covers the area within the Conservation Area boundary and provides further details to assist with the interpretation and use of planning policies. It will help guide the Council in making planning decisions on planning applications and to this end will be adopted for development control purposes.

It is intended that this appraisal will inform and influence the activities of the Council and other bodies (eg. Kent County Council and other statutory agencies) where these impact on the Conservation Area. It will also assist in the identification of any programmes of action that are considered appropriate by these bodies, subject, of course, to financial limitations and other priorities they may have.

Importantly, it is hoped that the appraisal will prove to be of help to residents, businesses and landowners. For anyone proposing new development or changes within the Conservation Area, the appraisal should be read in conjunction with the Borough Council's **Conservation Area Advice Note**. This includes guidance on the broad issues to be considered and the special controls that apply in Conservation Areas.



*As the purpose of this appraisal is to describe the **character** of the area, it does not include a detailed description of every feature or building. Omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken therefore, to imply that it is not of interest or similarly that there are no opportunities to improve the character of the area.*

## *Location, Setting and Physical Form*

Bullen Corner is located on the western margins of East Peckham at the junction of a number of lanes.

The historic cluster of properties which form the Conservation Area directly abut the countryside. The surrounding landscape is relatively flat with several fields dedicated to orchards. Some fields such as those fronting the Chidley Cross Road are hedged, giving an enclosed setting to the Conservation Area. Others such as Addlestead Road are more open and provide direct views into the orchard from the Conservation Area. The approaches to the Conservation Area are all well hedged. A high hedge enclosing the garden to Three Points Cottage forms a strong southern edge to the Conservation Area.



Chidley Cross Road

The narrow, winding country lanes, flat topography and hedged fields or orchards means that long views from, and of, the Conservation Area are constrained.

Modern development extends eastwards of the Conservation Area served by Westwood Road.

## *Origins and Development of the Settlement*

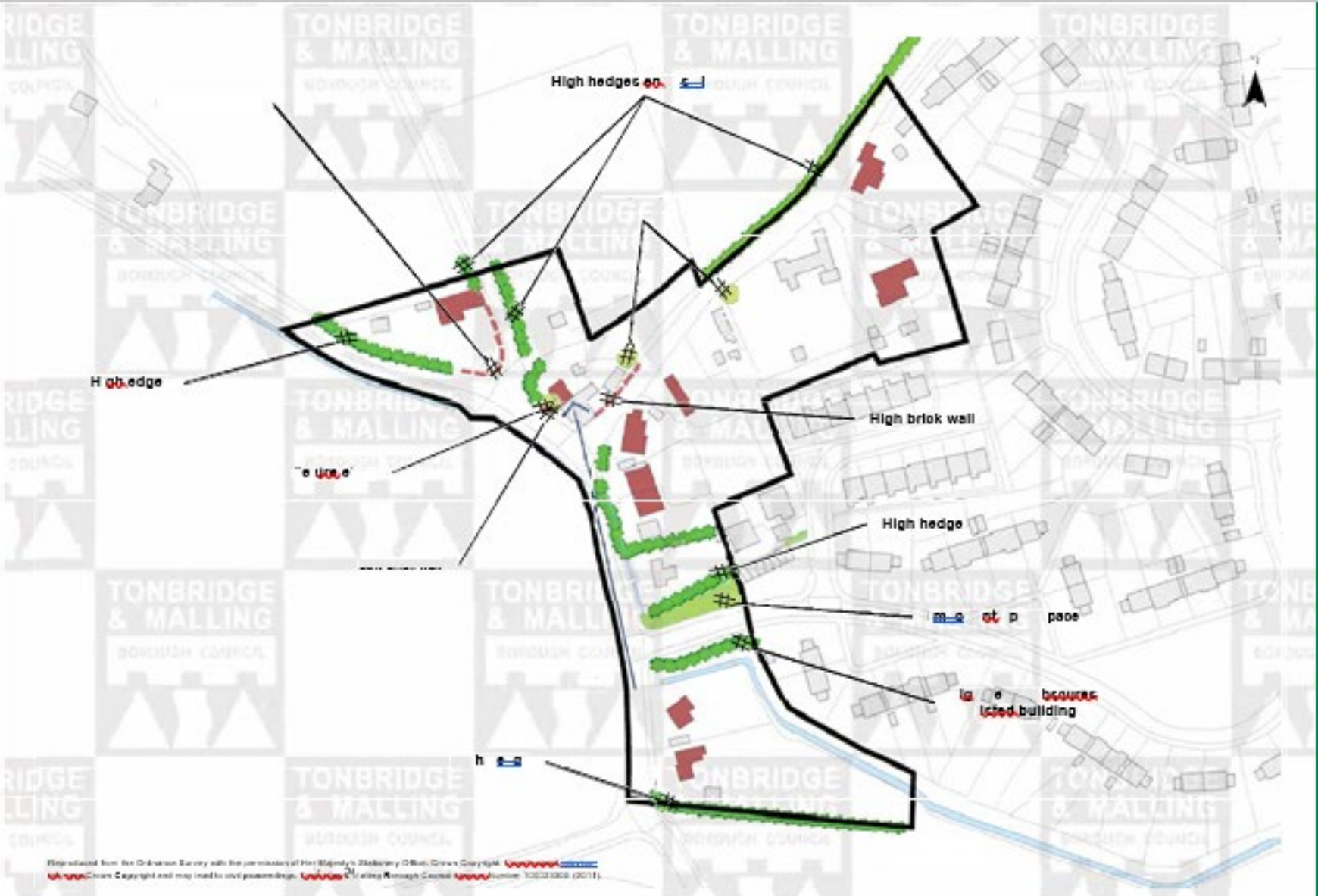
The area was originally a small linear hamlet focussed on two roads in the close proximity of Snoll Hatch and Little Mill.

The thatched 16<sup>th</sup> Century Bullen Cottage (formerly Yew Tree Cottages) is the oldest surviving property in the hamlet. Forming only part of a bigger house, Bullen Cottage is said to be the old manor house of the Manor of Blackpitts. The adjoining Three Points Cottage was sold in 1734 so a 17<sup>th</sup> century date is suggested. St. Ann's Cottage was built by a carpenter in 1701 and was later merged with his adjoining workshop to provide the present street frontage. Also shown built on site was a barn oast, later converted into two cottages now known as Linden Lee. The neighbouring house Coppers and Bucklers was also built around the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century on Wagon Lodge Platt, land sold by the carpenter. Walnut Cottage and The Bullens were apparently built later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and, together, these buildings began to shape the form of the hamlet. Coppers and Bucklers were marked on the 1823 map as 'Old School House' educating those children whose parents could not afford to pay for their education. St Ann's became a public house and in 1850 was sold as The Horse and Groom. It was replaced in the same year by the newly built Addlestead Public House. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century much of the hamlet was built. Rose Villa was built in 1850 as an undertakers with the low shop to the side. A supposed coffin door can still be seen as a reminder of the business.



The integrity of the historic hamlet was interrupted by the introduction of Westwood Road in the 1950s. At this point, it followed the route of a public footpath but severed Bullen Cottage and Three Points Cottage from the rest of the hamlet.

# BULLEN CORNER



## ***Townscape/Landscape Analysis***

The map shows the key features of the Conservation Area and forms part of the townscape appraisal. It should be looked at in conjunction with this text.

This small Conservation Area has a rural location and maintains a rural character with small scale two storey buildings, many of them listed, set within a strong landscape setting. With the exception of the former public house, and three cottages in Chidley Cross Road, buildings in the Conservation Area are generally set back from the road behind a small garden surrounded by a hedge. A small stream, known as the Coult Stream, is visible in the front gardens along Addlestead Road and Westwood Road.



**Chidley Cross Road**



**Westwood Road**

The wide verge to the north side of Westwood Road, enclosed by a hedge, allows views of the orchard to the west and enhances the rural character of the Conservation Area.

The hedged garden boundaries, together with the hedged lanes and fields, create a strong landscape setting for the buildings. Specimen trees are also features which help frame the lanes particularly in Addlestead Road at Walnut Cottage and in Chidley Cross Road.



Unlike most properties which can be seen above the garden hedge and between the trees, the historic Bullen Cottage is hidden by conifer and other trees.



The former public house is set in a prominent location and terminates the vista looking north along Addlestead Road.

**Vista of former public house**

The former public house at the junction of Hatches Lane and Addlestead Road and Rose Villa at the junction of Hatches Lane and Bullen Lane announce themselves with gabled ended roofs facing the road giving an appearance of greater scale.



Buildings are typically interspersed with vegetation which, together with their small scale and limited pallet of materials, brings a unity of appearance.



The contrast between brick walls and hedges where they directly abut is evident in the Conservation Area. The boundary of Rose Villa is formed by a high brick wall and hedge and the front boundary of Walnut Cottage by a low brick wall and hedge.



## Physical Fabric

The use of traditional building materials – primarily bricks, clay peg roof and hanging tiles, white painted weather board, brick and render – creates a subtle palette of colours based around red, orange and white. There are few decorative features on the older cottages. In contrast, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Bullen Cottage has an exposed timber frame and thatched roof.



The pitched, and sometimes hipped or half hipped, roofs are formed predominantly of orange clay peg tile roofs. Hanging tiles of the same colour are also used, generally on the first floor.

In the case of the Edwardian or Victorian houses, slate roofs have been used. There is also more decorative brickwork on the later properties, with contrasting detailed quoins, string courses and arches.



Runnymede



Occasionally white weather board is used on the first floor.

Red brick or white painted brick or render are the predominant materials used on the ground floor.

The white paintwork on these houses brightens the townscape, providing a pleasant foil to the orange/red tile and brick work.

Brick chimney stacks are a particular feature on most buildings with prominent decorative chimneys visible on Rose Villa.



Chimneys on Rose Villa

The majority of cottages have 19<sup>th</sup> century casement windows whilst the larger properties and the later Edwardian or Victorian

houses have sash windows. Many original windows have been replaced.

Most cottages have a simple rectangular form. Some have modest porches with pitched tiled roofs which match the ground floor brick or render. The original roof lines are generally unbroken with very few dormer windows visible. In contrast, double storey canted bay windows and pitched roofs covered in slate became more fashionable after 1850 and can be seen on Runnymede and Rose Villa.



Boundary treatments are predominantly hedges and red brick walls. The tall brick walls bordering Bullen Lane and Chidley Cross Road are particular features.

## Conservation Area

English Heritage guide to good practice advocates that local authorities should prepare a management plan to address the issues arising from the Conservation Area Appraisal and set out recommendations for action. Some of these actions will be applied generally to Conservation Areas in the Borough, whilst others, such as enhancement proposals, are specific to the Bullen Corner Conservation Area.

### Management Proposals applicable to all Conservation Areas in the Borough

#### Application of Planning Policy and Building Regulations

*The Borough Council will consistently apply adopted and future planning policy to ensure high quality design which is appropriate to protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and will continue to apply Building and Fire Regulations sensitively in Conservation Areas and to Listed Buildings to attempt to ensure that there is no conflict with the preservation of the character of the area or the building.*

#### Repairs to Buildings in Conservation Area Good Practice Guide

*It would particularly assist home owners if the Borough Council's Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Good Practice Guides were complemented by an information leaflet on replacement doors, windows and roof materials considered to be suitable within Conservation Areas.*

### Features affecting the character of Bullen Corner Conservation Area and proposals for enhancement

#### Enhancement of Property Frontages



A mix of inappropriate front boundaries has led to an erosion of the character of the area. Wherever possible, traditional boundary enclosure should be reinstated. Where the opportunity arises, new boundaries should use the prevailing materials and designs particularly 1 metre high hedges in front of properties or 2m high field and side boundaries

#### Street Furniture



Modern metal fingerposts do not enhance the rural character of the Conservation Area and could with benefit be replaced by more traditional style posts as on the right.

Overhead wires detract from the attractiveness of the Conservation Area though the cost of replacing these underground is normally prohibitive.



## Design Guidelines

- It is not anticipated that there will be significant change in the Conservation Area. However, when proposals come forward, the scale, massing, height, form, alignment, density and layout of any new development should respect the character of the area within which it is proposed as described in this Appraisal. Buildings within the Conservation Area should generally be 2 storeys in height and set back from the road behind a hedged boundary.
- Good quality design relies, amongst other things, on the choice and combination of materials. This is crucial to the success of a scheme. A richness of design and texture can be achieved through careful detailing and use of materials, and through a fine balance between variety and uniformity in a building or development. The number of different materials used should generally be kept to a minimum. Any new buildings should consist of materials which respect the character of the area within which they are proposed as described in the Physical Fabric section.
- Extensions and new outbuildings should be well designed and be subordinate to the original building. Where buildings are set back a consistent distance from the street along a common building line the visual integrity of a whole street should not be compromised by porches or front extensions.
- Replacement doors, windows and roofs should closely match the design and materials of the original features of the building.
- Careful consideration should be given to ensuring that good quality traditional detailing on buildings is retained eg brick detailing such as string courses, quoins and chimneys. Where removed, efforts should be made to restore them.
- Additions such as satellite dishes, flues, extractor fans and alarm boxes should preferably be located where they are not visible from public vantage points.
- Front boundaries should be retained or restored to the prevailing feature in the area: for example, approximately 1 - 2 metre high hedges or brick walls.
- Provision of off-street parking should not erode the character of the Conservation Area.
- Trees, hedgerows and verges which are important to the character of the Conservation Area, should be retained.
- Views and vistas of townscape features such as the countryside beyond the built up area should be preserved.
- Buildings which would be visible from the Conservation Area, or form part of its setting, should preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

## Planning Policy Background

The Appraisal will help interpret

- Planning Policy Statement 5 (Planning for the Historic Environment),
- the Tonbridge and Malling Core Strategy (Policies CP1 – Sustainable Development; CP24 – Achieving a High Quality Environment and CP25 – Mitigation of Development Impacts), and
- the Managing Development and the Environment DPD (Policy SQ1)

*Planning Consultants Tony Fullwood Associates and the Borough Council would like to thank members of the East Peckham Parish Council, the Historic Society and individual residents who contributed to the Appraisal*

**Adopted June 2011**