

COBDOWN FARM CONSERVATION AREA



Introduction

The objective of the Cobdown Farm 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.

Importantly, it is hoped that the appraisal will prove to be of help to residents 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.

The Conservation Area comprises the residual group of farm buildings from Cobdown Farm which have retained much of their original character. The listed buildings of 578-580 (even numbers) London Road were possibly originally a hall house. The building, now a pair of cottages, is of 15th Century origin with 18th Century cladding. The listed former oast building date from the mid 19th Century whilst the three barns are also of 19th Century origin. The terrace of former agricultural cottages 562 – 568 (even numbers) London Road were also built in the 19th Century and formed part of this former working farm.



*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.*

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.

The Conservation Area adjoins the busy London Road (A20). The setting of this farm complex has significantly changed since its 19th Century origins with a widened road, street lights, road signs and markings and traffic noise all impacting on the character of the area. New culs de sac (Orchard Grove and Cobdown Close) serving modern housing development have been built on former

agricultural land immediately to the west of the Conservation Area. Nevertheless the traditional buildings have largely retained their character and some, because of their location and inward facing orientation, are insulated from these changes and the integrity of the Conservation Area remains.



The extensive open space (sports fields), with a significant group of trees adjoining London Road, provides an attractive and generally open setting to the north and east of the Conservation Area.

The London Road frontage comprises a contrast between buildings set close to the road and those set back behind gardens, enclosed by low ragstone walls. The historic walls are important in providing continuity of built form and defining the public space.

Two groups of buildings are set close to the road.

The elevations of the timber framed listed buildings of 578-580 (even numbers) London Road facing the road comprise red and blue bricks with a hipped red plain tile roof and tall chimney stack. A number of protected trees provide an attractive setting to these buildings, help enclose the road space and provide a contrast to the built form. The 16th Century 2 storey wing to the rear with exposed timber framing and brick infill panels is largely screened from view.



The single storey former agricultural buildings are set to the back edge of the pavement and faced in orange/red brick and black stained weather boarding with a red plain tile roof (half hipped to the western elevation). The buildings, now converted to residential use, maintain their historic agricultural appearance through a lack of windows, doors and other domestic paraphernalia on the London Road elevation.

Set back from the road immediately behind the converted agricultural buildings is a recent 2 storey house in agricultural style with a red/ orange brick ground floor, black stained weather boarded first floor, hipped red plain tile roof, a large full height central opening and minimal door and window openings set in an informal pattern. The courtyard is completed with a long low rise building with black stained weather boarding and red plain tile roof. The gable end of the adjoining former agricultural cottages can be seen above this low rise building and the matching materials and scale of these buildings add harmoniously to the composition.



The former oast house with roundels and cowls is set within extensive grounds which include a number of specimen trees. To the west of the building, a row of trees (willows) follow the stream which encloses the space and marks the edge of the Conservation Area.

The former agricultural cottages are set back from the road behind deep front gardens. The red/ orange brick harmonises with the other buildings in the Conservation Area. Unlike the other buildings, slate is used for the roof. The gardens are enclosed by a low ragstone wall with a brick coping and detailing forming the gate openings. The gardens to the side of this short terrace are important in providing an historic setting to the cottages and, to the east, provide a transition to the extensive sports grounds and allow glimpses of the North Downs in the distance.








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)

COBDOWN FARM

-  Listed Buildings
-  Views/vista
-  Important visual space
-  Important trees - acting as focal points etc.
-  Boundary treatment contributing to special character

