

Wheelerstreet, Witley Conservation Area Appraisal

(Draft) March 2012

[Insert pic on cover page: 2 Petworth Road]

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1. Conservation Areas

Conservation areas (CA) are defined as areas of special architectural and historical interest, the character of which is desirable to preserve and enhance. The character and appearance may be expressed through the buildings, layout and relationship to the landscape of the area.

Planning Policy Statement 5, the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and “saved” Policy HE8 in the Waverley Borough Council 2002 Local Plan (Conservation Areas) also detail the importance of protecting heritage assets (both designated and undesignated), see Appendix 2 for extract from Waverley Borough Council’s Local Plan.

CA designation gives a degree of protection against the demolition of buildings and walls and should ensure that new development is of high architectural quality and in keeping with the area’s existing character. Wheelerstreet, Witley was designated a CA in December 1989.

1.1 Definition of Conservation Area Appraisal

CAAs are undertaken to identify and explain the character of the CA. This document will identify the specific qualities of the Wheelerstreet CA and thereby help to manage change within the CA. It is not enough for a LPA to just designate an area as a CA, Section 71 of the 1990 act explains that “it shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas”. Policy HE8 in the Local Plan states that “the Council will seek to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas by.....(e) carrying out conservation area appraisals”. It is therefore considered pertinent for Waverley to undertake CAAs with the aim to appraise the character of each CA; identify the qualities which should be preserved and enhanced, and produce a management plan to include proposals for enhancement where necessary. There will be an opportunity to review the CA boundaries as part of the process.

1.2 Status of the CAA

The appraisal will be adopted as a material consideration and used in the determination of any application for planning permission, listed building consent and CA consent within the CA.

The document should be read in conjunction with Waverley's Local Plan and other relevant documents including supplementary planning documents and Town/ Village Design Statements.

1.3 Sources and Guidance for the Appraisal

This appraisal was compiled with the assistance of English Heritage's guidance "Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management" (March 2011)¹. English Heritage has also published guidance called "Knowing Your Place" (March 2011) and has funded the development of a (Character Assessment) toolkit used by Oxford City Council² to evaluate the heritage within their area.

1.4 Methodology

The conservation area was surveyed by visiting the site, noting the features as highlighted by English Heritage guidelines, conducting a photographic study and undertaking a desk top study using the internal mapping system to understand change over time. The survey data has been used to develop a draft CAA.

1.5 Community Involvement

An early draft appraisal was shared with the Parish Council. In addition, to ensure that this is a robust document a formal (6 week) consultation will be undertaken with Witley Parish Council, local residents and businesses and other relevant stakeholders. The consultation will inform any necessary amendments to the document before it is submitted through the Council's committee process for adoption at Full Council.

¹ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-place-conservation-area/>

² <http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decP/CharacterAppraisalToolkit.htm>

1.6 Definition of Special Interest

English Heritage defines special interest as the “special architectural or historic interest” of the area that warrants designation and the “character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. If character areas or zones are identified, the special interest of each area will be evaluated further on in the appraisals under “Character Zones”. Some CAs, such as Wheelerstreet are too small to have Character Zones.

2. Summary of Special Interest of Wheelerstreet, Witley

The CA of Wheelerstreet sits on the northern edge of Witley village. This area (Petworth Road and Wheeler Lane) is mainly a residential area and the small conservation area at the junction of these two roads has a positive effect on the area as a whole, due to the attractive listed buildings and varied building types. The area may well have developed around the original 16th Century “Old Manor” formerly the Old Manor Hotel. The Old Manor plot was divided up; its old barn has been converted into dwellings (Old Barn and Great Barn). The surrounding plots along Petworth Road have also been divided up into generous proportions and many have large single dwellings.

Overall the CA of Wheelerstreet appears to be in good condition and this appraisal ensures that it does not deteriorate.

Fig.1 1-5 Petworth Road

3. Assessing Special Interest

This section is the core of the appraisal aiming to give a more detailed analysis of the special interest of Wheelerstreet CA. This will consider its location and setting, historical development, architectural quality, open space and landscape, buildings of local merit and an assessment of condition.

3.1 Location and Setting

3.1.1 General Character

Wheelerstreet CA is small, linear and compact in plan. It is formed of approximately fifteen buildings around the T junction of Petworth Road (A283) and Wheeler Lane. The conservation area and the area surrounding it is predominantly residential. The busy Petworth Road which links Milford and Witley bisects the CA (Fig. 2). The built form is typical of a small rural settlement; historic farmhouses, artisan and labourers cottages and a village pub all heavily influenced by the local vernacular and using local materials. The area has a great variety of buildings and walls, both listed and unlisted. Some of the buildings, particularly on the western side of Petworth Road are loosely grouped, set back from the road and in large plots. The principle exception to this is the terrace of cottages on the eastern side of Petworth Road.

Unusually Wheelerstreet does not have significant views to the wider landscape even though it is in a semi rural environment. This is due to the enclosed nature of the buildings/plots and the flat plain on which the settlement grew.

3.1.2 Economic Profile and Potential forces for change

Fig. 2 Map of Wheelerstreet, Witley Conservation Area (2012)

Waverley is an affluent area with a buoyant local economy and low level of unemployment. Wheelerstreet is predominantly residential and the majority of homes are owner-occupied and well maintained. There are no empty properties or vacant plots of land.

Although the CA is mainly residential, there is one other commercial premises (6 Petworth Road) in addition to the public house “the Star Inn”. Day time activity is quite low

Pressure for development in Wheelerstreet CA is quite low. The CA does not fall within an AONB or an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). However it is entirely within the Green Belt, which is a significant planning constraint. It is also within the defined settlement boundary of Witley and is subject to Local Plan policy RD1 (Appendix 2)

3.1.3 Vistas

Due to the layout of the buildings within the CA and the degree of enclosure caused by the private amenity space and landscaping, there is limited accessibility and no views of the green space east and west of the conservation area. However there are locations within the CA which have important views, for example the view of 1 – 5

Petworth Road (Fig. 1). However Petworth Road itself is a physical barrier which impacts on the enjoyment of the views.

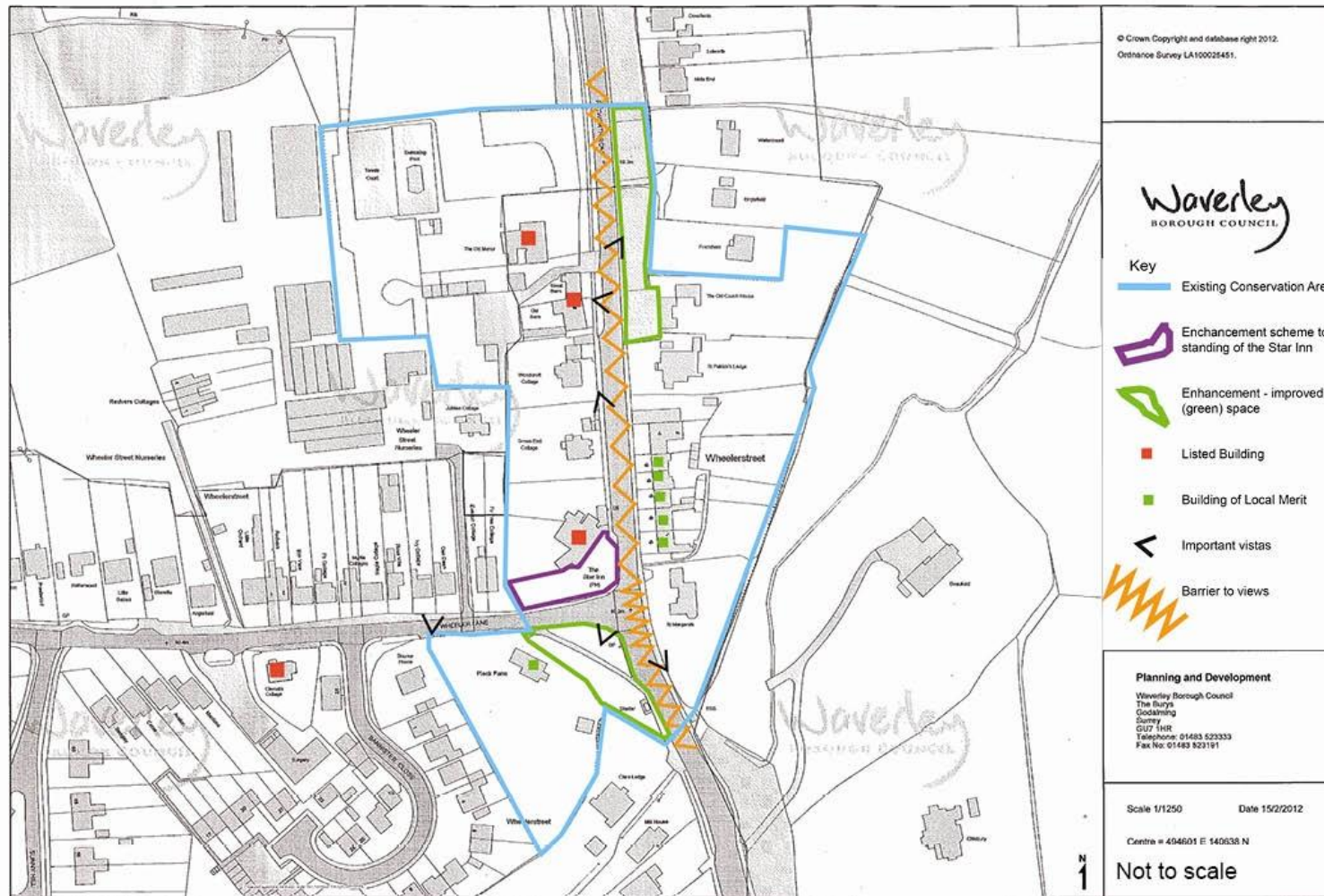


Fig. 3 Opportunities & Constraints

3.2 Historic Development

Since 1871, it's evident that many historic elements have survived (see Appendix 1). This determined the extent of the conservation area when it was designated; however there are a few notable differences in the maps which followed (1898 & 1914).

Post 1871, there were significant changes to what is now called St. Patricks Lodge and the Old Coach House. The original building on the Old Coach House site was demolished and replaced with a smaller building by 1898. Similarly the building on the St. Patrick's Lodge site was also changed during this time, increasing in size. On the 1898 map there is a small change in the road pattern with a traffic island at the junction of Petworth Road and Wheeler Lane. Post 1898 a new building, St. Margarets was built and this buildings has been much altered over the years.

Post 1914 there were changes to the access of fields just outside the CA, seen in the South East area of the 1914 map (see Appendix 1). This access point is no longer shown on today's map. Additional changes post 1914 includes the demolition/ changes to some of the buildings on the plots of the Old Barn, Great Barn, Woodcroft Cottage and the Star Inn.

3.3 Architectural Quality and Built Form

The built form varies from large single dwellings on large plots to terraces on smaller plots. Most dwellings are slightly set back from the main road and on the western side of Petworth Road there is distance between each of the detached properties. The type and style of the buildings are varied because they span a number of centuries. There are three statutory listed buildings and six Buildings of Local Merit. Many of the homes have the typical Surrey vernacular of pitched roofs, clay tiles, red brick and tile hanging. Some also have a cream or white render. These factors create the distinctiveness of the area

The first recorded building in the Wheelerstreet CA was "The Old Manor" dating back to the 16th Century which had associated outbuildings/ barns which have now been converted into separate dwellings and associated plots post 1914. "The Old Manor" is quite concealed from the main (Petworth) Road however it's "Old Barn" and "Great Barn" along with the row of terraces (1-5 Petworth Road) contribute to the streetscape and help to define what is distinctive about this area (Fig. 1).

3.4 Listed Buildings

Fig. 4. The Old Manor

Fig. 5 The Star Inn

The Old Manor, formerly The Old Manor Hotel, is a Grade II listed house (Fig. 4) originally built in the 16th Century. It was extended to the left in 17th Century and further extended and re-fronted in the 18th Century. It has a timber framed core, typical of 16th Century and similar to its original ancillary buildings, “Old Barn” and “Great Barn” (Fig. 6), but later interventions on the Old Manor would have involved cladding in brown and blue brick in chequer work pattern, typical of the style in the 18th Century.

The Star Public House is a Grade II listed and extended public house (Fig. 5). It is 17th Century to rear, and 18th Century to the front.

The other buildings in the CA are pre-1871, except for St. Patricks Lodge (Fig. 8) and the Old Coach House (Fig. 7) which had significant changes to their structure by 1898. St. Margarets (Fig. 9) is post 1898 and has experienced the most change of all the buildings in the CA.

All the statutory listed buildings and BLMs help to define the character of the CA. Additionally St Patricks Lodge and the Old Coach House also add to the character.

Fig. 6 Old Barn & Great Barn

Fig. 7 Old Coach House

Fig. 8 St. Patricks Lodge

Fig. 9 St. Margarets

3.5 Heritage Features

There are no heritage features within the Wheelerstreet CA.

3.6 Buildings of Local Merit

Of the 15 buildings within the Wheeler CA, only six have no statutory or local designation. The Council has an agreed process for the identification and designation of buildings of local merit (BLM). There are buildings within the Wheelerstreet CA that may merit consideration as BLM but this will require further investigation.

3.7 Open Space and Landscape

Fig. 10 Green space next at intersection of Petworth Road and Wheeler Lane

The land to the east and west of the CA is Green Belt and offers views of surrounding countryside, however there is limited public access to it and no views of it from the CA.

There is a small green space (Fig. 10) which contains the bus shelter at the corner of Petworth Road and Wheeler Lane; however it lacks public seating to take in the views of the CA. The space has been classified as an “undesigned/ unregistered” village green. Surrey County Council (SCC) own 1m from the highway as well as the footpath and the owners of Pleck Farm own a small strip, where it fronts onto it. SCC maintain it in terms of cutting grass or dealing with drainage issues, however the Parish Council has done some landscaping such as planting cherry trees and blubs. The area is “boggy” and has been known to flood. In the past a pond was located here. There is also a narrow strip of common land to the north of the CA on the east side of Petworth Road, which has visual rather than recreational value. The area was originally proposed for inclusion as part of the CA because it was “planted with an assortment of attractive tree species which are important to the street scene”.

The majority of the boundaries of plots are walled; however some have hedges which add to the green landscape. Front (private) gardens also add a significant contribution. In addition to hedges, some have planted colourful shrubs such as 2 Petworth Road (cover page).

3.8 Assessment of Condition

In general the state of the area is good.

Economically, high home ownership has probably ensured that the area is well looked after and the physical condition of the buildings within the CA is good. There is evidence of unsympathetic uPVC windows fitted into a BLM and some private land should be improved, for example The Star Inn has a screen for the bin area showing some signs of disrepair (Fig.11) and there could be scope to soften the area of hard standing at the front of the building.

The general condition of the public realm is good. There has been no apparent loss of front gardens to hard standing however there is some evidence of a few dwellings

where unsympathetic extensions or garages have been created which do not respect or respond to with the character of the building.

4 Management plan

4.1 Enhancement Schemes

Given the form and type of development, there is limited need for environmental improvement within Wheelerstreet CA. However as mentioned above, there may be scope for limited alteration to the parking area of the Star Inn (Fig. 12).

Fig.12 the Star Inn forecourt

Landscaping, in the form of trees and hedgerows could be integrated into the car park, whilst refuse and recycling bins should be stored out of sight. Wrought iron work or trellising along the wall could also improve the appearance of this area.

The green space which currently occupies the bus shelter at the corner of Petworth Road and Wheeler Lane could be upgraded to incorporate a public seat and pond.

4.2 Street and Traffic Management

Fig. 13 Traffic on Petworth Road

As the CA is bisected by Petworth Road, the volume of traffic can have a negative impact on the CA (Fig.13). However this is one of the main roads in Waverley and there is limited scope within the CA to influence this.

4.3 Trees Open Space and Green infrastructure Strategy

There is no designated amenity green space in the CA. An appropriate place might be to consider the area at the junction of Wheeler Lane and Petworth Road (Fig.10). This land is managed by Witley Parish Council and maintained by Surrey County Council. It is understood that the area is prone to flood and that there was a pond there originally. It might be possible to reinstate a pond which would also add to local biodiversity. The area of common land on the north east side of the CA, next to Petworth Road (see Appendix 1) is also an important area. This land is maintained

by the Parish Council and makes an important contribution to the character of the area due to the “attractive tree species”.

4.4 Restriction on Permitted Development rights through Article 4 directions

Minor development such as domestic alterations and extensions can normally be carried out without planning permission under the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO). Article 4 of GPDO gives local planning authorities the power to restrict these “permitted development rights” where they have the potential to undermine protection for the historic environment. English Heritage says that it is only appropriate to remove permitted development rights where there is a real and specific threat. There is no real or specific threat currently in the Wheelerstreet CA.

Appendix 1

Clockwise top left, 1871 map, 1898 map, 2012 map, 1914 map.

Appendix 2

Extracts from Waverley BC Local Plan 2002

POLICY HE8 – Conservation Areas

The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas by:

- (a) the retention of those buildings and other features, including trees, which make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area;
- (b) requiring a high standard for any new development within or adjoining conservation areas, to ensure that the design is in harmony with the characteristic form of the area and surrounding buildings, in terms of scale, height, layout, design, building style and materials;
- (c) in exceptional circumstances, allowing the relaxation of planning policies and building regulations to secure the retention of a significant unlisted building;
- (d) protecting open spaces and views important to the character and setting of the area;
- (e) carrying out conservation area appraisals;
- (f) requiring a high standard and sympathetic design for advertisements. Internally illuminated signs will not be permitted;
- (g) encouraging the retention and restoration of shop fronts where much of the original detailing still remains. Alterations will take into account the upper floors in terms of scale, proportion, vertical alignment, architectural style and materials. Regard shall be paid to the appearance of neighbouring shop fronts, so that the proposal will blend in with the street scene.
- (h) encouraging the Highway Authority to have regard to environmental and conservation considerations in implementing works associated with its statutory duties, including the maintenance, repair and improvement of public highways and the provision of yellow lines, street direction signs and street lighting.

POLICY RD1 : Rural Settlements

Within the Rural Settlement boundaries identified on the Proposals Map, the Council will only permit appropriate development which is well-related in scale and location to the existing development and which:-

- (a) comprises infilling of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built up frontage or the development of land or buildings that are substantially surrounded by existing buildings; and
- (b) does not result in the development of land which, by reason of its openness, physical characteristics or ecological value, makes a significant contribution to the character and amenities of the village; and

- (c) does not adversely affect the urban/ rural transition by using open land within the curtilage of buildings at the edge of the settlement; and
- (d) takes account of the form, setting, local building style and heritage of the settlement; and
- (e) generates a level of traffic which is compatible with the environment of the village and which can be satisfactorily accommodated on the surrounding network.

Appendix 3

Glossary of terms

IMPORTANT NOTE: This glossary does not provide legal definitions, but acts as a guide to key planning terms.

Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)

A local landscape designation for an area considered to have high visual quality complementing areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Nature Beauty (AONB). In 1958, 1971 and 1984 Surrey County Council designated parts of the County as AGLV. For much of the area in Waverley the AONB and AGLV designations are contiguous; however there are areas where the AGLV designation extends beyond the AONB.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (from Natural England)

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are areas of high scenic quality that have statutory protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of their landscapes. Natural England has a statutory power to designate land as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Building of Local Merit

It is a building identified by Waverley as of local historic, architectural or townscape merit. BLM stands for Building of Local Merit. Many local authorities have lists of such buildings, sometimes called the local list and sometimes Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM). In Waverley we chose the designation BLM because it is less likely to be confused with statutory listed buildings and also recognises that not all our valuable buildings are within towns.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the term used to describe the whole variety of life on Earth. It includes not only all species of plants and animals, but also the complex ecosystems they live within. It ranges from species and habitats which are considered commonplace to those considered critically endangered.

Conservation Areas

Areas designated by the Local Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 69 as being of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.

Development

Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land."

Green Belt

A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purposes of the green belt is to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas, prevent neighbouring towns from merging, safeguard the countryside from encroachment, preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. For more information see PPG2: Green Belt.

Listed Building

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures (e.g. wells within its curtilage). English Heritage is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England.

Local Plan

A development plan prepared by district and other local planning authorities.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and their replacements Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are issued by central government setting out its national land use policies for England on different areas of planning. These will be replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework.

Saved Policies

Policies within unitary development plans, local plans and structure plans that are 'saved' for a time period during the production of policies in Local Development Documents, which will eventually replace them.

Supplementary Planning Documents

A Supplementary Planning Document is a Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' Development Plan Document.

Village Design Statements (VDS; from www.countryside.gov.uk)

Village Design statements are produced by communities to identify local character and set out design guidance to help guide new development. as well as space heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting and hot water.

Source of Information

Where possible explanations of terms are taken from the appropriate Planning Policy Statement (PPS). Alternatively, the explanation of planning terms is taken from a range of sources, including Waverley Local Plan 2002, Planning Portal, South East Plan, Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Communities and Local Government.