

## **Newick (Church Road) Conservation Area Appraisal**



**Date of Designation: 10.02.1976**

**Reviewed 2006**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 What is a Conservation Area?**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’ Designation is the principal means by which local authorities apply conservation policies to a particular area. It introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve and enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define the special interest of an area.

Section 71 of the Act requires the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas within the District. Section 72 requires that in considering applications for development in a Conservation Area, attention shall be paid to the desirability of conserving or enhancing the character of that area.

### **1.2 The purpose of this Conservation Area Appraisal**

Conservation Area Appraisals are an important part of the process of enhancing and conserving the character and appearance of designated areas. They play a role in making informed and sustainable decisions about the future of the area. This appraisal offers the opportunity to reassess the designated area and to evaluate and record its special interest. It has been carried out in accordance with guidelines set out in the English Heritage publication, *Guidance on conservation area appraisals (2006)*.

## **2. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Adopted Lewes District Council Local Plan (2003) contains detailed policies relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. In particular, the policies detailed in Chapter 8 ‘The Historic Environment’ are applied to development in or affecting conservation areas and planning decisions will be determined with consideration given to them. For this reason, anyone considering making an application for consent within a conservation area should consult these policies. The Local Plan is available from Lewes District Council offices or online at [www.lewes.gov.uk](http://www.lewes.gov.uk). Pre-application advice can also be sought from Development Control and Design & Conservation Officers.

The Local Plan is currently under review and will be replaced with a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will consist of a portfolio of local development documents that set out the spatial planning strategy for the District Council area. Until this is in place, the Local Plan remains the statutory planning document.

In addition, broad policies relating to the consideration of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are detailed in the Adopted East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan (1999). National planning policy guidance also covers these areas. In particular, Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) – Planning and the Historic Environment, should be consulted.

### **3. SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

The key features which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area are as follows:

- The historic parish church and the open space of the churchyard
- The qualities of the buildings including the variety of materials used in their construction and the different periods to which they belong
- The abundance of trees and hedges which enhance the setting of the buildings
- The rural surroundings of the area, which provide fine views out across open countryside and enhance its setting

### **4. ASSESSING SPECIAL INTEREST**

#### **4.1 Location and Setting**

##### *4.1.1 Location and context*

Newick (Church Road) Conservation Area is situated in the southeast of the village of Newick, approximately nine miles north of Lewes. It is one of two conservation areas within the village; the second covers the area around the village green.

The village is set within a rural landscape, and expanded predominantly in the twentieth century. The early village was focused around two areas, the church and the village green. These two areas are still identifiable within the village today and correspond to the two conservation areas.

##### *4.1.2 General character and plan form*

The conservation area is irregular in form and focuses on Church Road, which runs through its centre. The majority of the conservation area is formed by properties to either side of this road, but it also branches off to include the area around the Church, part of Blind Lane, and part of Allington Road to the north. Church Road is characterised mainly by large, detached properties, with some smaller, terraced houses, and has a generally leafy, peaceful feel to it. Blind Lane is tree-lined and leads out towards open countryside. Allington Road is busy and links the conservation area to the more modern parts of the village.

##### *4.1.3 Landscape setting*

Newick is a fairly nucleated settlement within a largely open, rural landscape. This is a particular feature of the character of the Church Road conservation area. The area is approached from the south along a narrow country road, hedged on both sides. From here, glimpses can be seen through the hedge and across the fields to the southernmost property in the conservation area, The Old Rectory. From the churchyard, there are views out across fields and trees beyond, towards an area of ancient woodland.

To the north the conservation area leads into the rest of the village, with views towards The Green conservation area.

## **4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology**

### *4.2.1 The origins and historic development of the area*

The historical development of the conservation area should be considered in relation to that of the village as a whole and within the context of the wider area.

The name Newick has its origins in Old English (Saxon) and its meaning is 'new farm' – niwe (new), wic (farm). That this was an agricultural, rural village still has relevance to the present day.

The early settlement had two points of focus, around the village green and the church. Records reveal there was a church in Newick at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and part of south wall of the church is Norman. The two older areas of Newick are still clearly visible within the village today.

The oldest buildings within conservation area are found particularly in the vicinity of the church, with the Manor House and Ketches being the earliest. Newick Lodge, the Old Rectory, its former stables and the barn southwest of the church are slightly later in date. Along with the church, these buildings represent the earliest surviving evidence of the village.

An estate plan of 1778 of lands belonging to Dame Philadelphia Paine Dyke, lists major farms in the area as being Church Farm (the Manor House) and Ketches. Ketches held extensive lands to the east of Church Road up to where the present Allington Road lies, plus a substantial part of land between Allington Road and Western Road, while Church Farm held lands immediately to the east of the church. An 1818 plan of lands belonging to William Sturt also depicts Church Farm as continuing in prominence.

By the time of the Newick tithe map, produced c.1840, many of the present buildings were in existence. Previously, settlement had focused on the church, but by this time it was progressing northwards towards The Green. The landscape was being farmed in a number of different ways: Ketches had arable, pasture, coppice and orchard in its lands immediately to the south and east.

The Ordnance Survey first edition of 1873 and subsequent editions in 1899, 1910 and 1931 show some further development, although much of the form we see today had been established by 1873. More recent development has occurred as the village has expanded, but the plan form of this part of the village is essentially unchanged since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### *4.2.2 Archaeology, including scheduled monuments*

The conservation area south of Blind Lane and east of Church Road lies within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area, associated with the 11<sup>th</sup> century church, a Bronze Age axe hoard found to the east of the church and the site of a 16<sup>th</sup> century manor house within the grounds of the Old Rectory.

## 4.3 Spatial Analysis

### 4.3.1 *The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area*

The conservation area is generally peaceful and, in Church Road, it has a sense of being enclosed from the countryside around it. There is a more open character to the churchyard area, and to the rear of the properties north of Blind Lane, with views out across the neighbouring fields. The recreational ground at King George's Field lies immediately to the west of Church Road, and glimpses of it can be seen from the road.

The general character of the conservation area is that of public roadway flanked by private garden areas. The majority of properties in Church Road are large and detached with front gardens setting them back some distance from the roadway. They are often partially screened from view by trees and hedges. By nature of its setting, the public space of the churchyard is more open in its character.

### 4.3.2 *Key views and vistas*

There are a number of significant views into, out of and within the conservation area. It is important that these views are protected.

The setting of the village within a rural landscape makes a positive contribution in enhancing its character. Approached from the south the views are across open fields to either side of the road, and the conservation area is marked by the concentration of trees ahead as the road moves up the hill. The Old Rectory, the southernmost building in the conservation area, stands out as a prominent feature on the skyline.

From the north, the conservation area is approached along Church Road from the village green. Initial views are again of trees which have a heavy presence in the area. The estate agent/post office building, northernmost in the conservation area, and the sign of the Crown Inn beyond are also visible.

There are clear views of the church from the footpaths running through the fields east and north east of the conservation area. The east elevation of Newick Lodge can also be seen.

On entering the conservation area from the north, there is an attractive view along Church Road of Burnt House, framed by the trees around it. Similarly, there is a good view of the Manor House from the junction of the footpath which runs between the recreation ground and Ketches.

From Church Road there is a fine view of the 15<sup>th</sup> century church tower along the lane between Newick Lodge and the Manor House.

From the churchyard, the importance of the rural setting is clear. There are far-reaching views out across the surrounding countryside. This provides an attractive setting for the church and churchyard.



*The Parish Church of St Mary, viewed from fields to the east of the churchyard*

Moving north along Church Road, glimpses of the recreational ground at King George's Field can be caught through the hedge boundary between field and road. It is only to the north of the recreation ground that the views become more enclosed.

#### **4.4 Character Analysis**

##### *4.4.1 Definition of character areas or zones*

There are two character zones which can be identified within the conservation area. The southern half of the area consists predominantly of detached properties set in large gardens. Within this, the parish church and buildings to the south west of it, including the Manor House and the Old Rectory to the south, historically form a character group.

In the north of the conservation area, the buildings are more closely spaced and more visible from the main road. The later buildings are also concentrated in this area.

##### *4.4.2 Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on the plan form and buildings.*

The prevailing use of the area is residential, with a concentration of older buildings around the parish church. The converted barn provides a link to the agricultural history of the village, the Manor House once being Church Farm.

Later buildings, particularly dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, are evidence of the expansion of Newick as a residential area, and these can be seen to stretch northwards in the direction of the second focal point of the village, The Green.

#### *4.4.3 The qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area*

The buildings within the Conservation Area span nine centuries, with evidence of building from the 11<sup>th</sup> century up to more recent times.

There are eleven entries on the statutory list within the Conservation Area, covering thirteen properties. The statutory lists record buildings which are of special architectural or historic interest. There are three categories of listed building:

Grade I buildings are those of exceptional interest

Grade II\* are particularly important buildings of more than special interest

Grade II are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them

Of the listed buildings in the conservation area, two are listed Grade II\*. The others are listed Grade II. There is also one building of local interest.

The Old Rectory is the southernmost property in the conservation area. It is a grade II listed 18<sup>th</sup> century red brick building with later additions. Its principal façade faces east and is not visible from within the conservation area.

To the north of the Old Rectory lies Tudor Barn. This is an 18<sup>th</sup> century barn which was converted to a dwelling house in the 1980s. The building is grade II listed. It is faced in black weatherboarding and has a characteristic hipped tiled roof. Immediately to the north east, there are the former stables to the Old Rectory. This L-shaped grade II listed building dates back at least to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and is constructed in alternating red brick stretchers and grey headers on a stone base. On its western elevation, the stable doorways can be seen at each end, and at the centre is the carriage entrance, notable for its flat archway and the brick stringcourse which steps up over it. The building is now used as the church centre.

The grade II\* listed Parish Church of St Mary has evidence of building work from several centuries. The oldest visible part of the church is 11<sup>th</sup> century walling surrounding the distinctive timber porch on the south side of the church. It is markedly different to the stonework to the east of it. There is also a small Norman window, close to the roof of the porch. The porch dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with much of its original decorative timber surviving, and has a steeply pitched tiled roof. The church tower is later, dating to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The west doorway of the tower is a four-centred arch set within a decorative square frame flanked by sculptured stone heads at door head level. The curved wall which encloses the churchyard is an attractive feature and steps set into it lead to footpaths out across the surrounding countryside.

The Manor House is the second grade II\* listed building in the conservation area. It was known until 1925 as Church House or Farm. The building is timber framed with plaster and painted brick infill panels, has a steeply pitched hipped tiled roof, and casement windows with small square panes. Above the entrance are the date 1599 and the initials D.O.M.



*The Manor House*

Ketches, 48 Church Road, is a grade II listed painted brick building set well back from the road within a large secluded garden. The earliest part of the building, the north end, is 17<sup>th</sup> century, the remainder 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are also later 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions to the building.

Newick Lodge dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century with 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations, and is grade II listed. The front and back of the building are stuccoed, with painted brick side elevations. The roof is hipped and tiled.

51 (Choisya), 53 and 55 Church Road form a grade II listed 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace. This red brick building with its slate roof is distinguished by its central veranda, also finished in slate, with decorative timber pelmets over the doorways of numbers 51 and 55. The heads of the bay windows at either end of the terrace also have decorative mouldings and slate cladding between ground and first floor.

The Burnt House, 47 Church Road, dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and is grade II listed. This well-proportioned three-storey house is faced with grey brick headers on the ground floor, with black mathematical tiles facing the two upper floors and white painted brick quoins. There are two white painted wooden stringcourses, which run horizontally between the three floors. The building has sash windows and the interesting feature of a false window at the centre of its upper floor. This is probably evidence of avoiding window tax, which was not repealed until 1851, whilst keeping the important proportions of a Georgian building. The gable roof is slate and there is a chimney stack at both gable ends. The Georgian townhouse appearance would not be out of place in nearby Lewes.



*The Burnt House*

Old Greenfields and New Greenfields, Church Road, is a grade II listed building of two periods. The north wing (Old Greenfields) is early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date whilst the large south wing dates to the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. The north wing is painted brick, and has a trellised wooden porch. The south wing is of red brick on the ground floor with decorative diamond clay tile hanging above, and mock-Tudor timbering on the gables. The south wing also has decorative roof ridge tiles and a gabled porch.

The Crown Inn is a 19<sup>th</sup> century building of painted brick with a hipped slate roof. Grade II listed, it is a well-proportioned building with a central gabled porch with decorative bargeboard. The carriage entrance archway is still visible at the southern end of the building.

There is one building which is included on the Lewes District Council list of Buildings of Local Interest. Baldwins, 24 Church Road, is situated towards the north of the conservation area. It is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century building, constructed in red brick in header bond and has a slate roof. It has two distinctive bow bay windows on the ground floor to either side of the portico entrance. Its brickwork boundary wall, fronting the road, has decorative diamond patterning in grey headers.

#### *4.4.4 Unlisted buildings*

There are a number of buildings which, although not included on the statutory or local lists, make a contribution to the special character of the conservation area, in terms of architecture, building materials or historical interest.

The Reading Room dates to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and is a prominent building within the conservation area. It has a steeply pitched gabled roof and is constructed in red brick with tile hanging on the upper part of the gable ends. It has decorative ridge tiles on the roof and a central louvered and tiled 'spire', which was probably originally a ventilator. Its white-painted railings are also a distinctive boundary within the area, contrasting with the hedged boundaries of many of the other buildings.



*The Reading Room*

There are several other properties which make a positive contribution to the conservation area. In particular, there are a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century houses which complement the listed buildings. Among these, of particular note are:

49 Church Road, a well-proportioned house built in red brick in header bond, with a gabled porch, slate roof and two full-height bay windows with tile hanging.

'Fairview', 24 Church Road, located north of the Crown Inn, a large red brick property with a slate roof, which also has an attractive brick boundary wall with decorative white painted railings.

26 Church Road, a red brick building with a slate roof and a central veranda between two square full-height bays.

These buildings have qualities of style, age and materials reflected elsewhere in statutorily and locally listed buildings in the conservation area and make a positive contribution both to their setting and the appearance of the area.

46 Church Road is set back from the main road between Ketches and the recreation ground. It is marked on the 1873 Ordnance Survey map as a Hop Oast and its former function is demonstrated by its circular kiln building in red stretchers and grey headers. Attached is a long square building constructed in random rubble stone. This building reflects former agricultural use in the area and thereby contributes to its special interest.

#### *4.4.5 Local details*

Local details make an interesting contribution to the character of the conservation area. The black mathematical tiles on the front elevation of Burnt House are seen on a number of buildings in Lewes, and they make an interesting feature in this village context.

The iron water pump attached to the outbuilding in the garden of 1 Blind Lane, visible from the road, is an unusual surviving feature which adds to the character of the area.

#### *4.4.6 Prevalent and traditional building materials and the public realm*

The buildings in the conservation area display a wide range of building materials.

There is a predominance of brick in a number of different types. Red, blue and grey brick can be seen in a variety of bonded constructions: header, stretcher and Flemish bond, which is a construction of alternating stretcher and header bricks. Some brickwork is painted, and the north elevation of Old Greenfields is tarred. Building materials also present are timber framing, black glazed mathematical tile, stucco, weatherboarding and painted render. The church is built from iron sandstone with both roughly dressed and more regular ashlar blocks reflecting the different periods of its development. Roofing materials found throughout the area are slates and clay tiles; the Reading Room has decorative ridge tiles.

Road and pedestrian area surfaces are predominantly tarmac/black top material, with rough grey granite setts edging the raised pedestrian areas in Church Road. These are an attractive feature defining the pedestrian areas from the road.

#### *4.4.7 The contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces; and its biodiversity value*

The approach to the conservation area from the south is via a tree-lined stretch of road.

Particularly on Church Road, the conservation area is characterised by its many trees and hedges often secluding properties in large gardens behind. These combine to create a tree-lined road which forms an attractive setting for the buildings.

The churchyard is a peaceful, open green space with views out across the open countryside. In addition to the character provided by features and green spaces within the conservation area, its character is enhanced considerably by this rural setting.

The large yew tree in the churchyard is of particular note, making a major contribution to the area. It is in very good condition, and is of considerable age, numbering several hundred years.

#### *4.4.8 The extent of intrusion or damage (negative factors)*

There are a number of factors which have a negative impact on the character of the conservation area. Firstly, there is an excess of overhead wires which are highly noticeable. These detract from the roofscape of the conservation area.

Most of the properties are well-maintained and in a good state of repair. However, 1 Blind Lane, situated on the corner of Blind Lane and Church Road, is on the Lewes District Council Buildings at Risk Register. The other half of this building forms the property next door in Church Lane and, in contrast, looks to be in a good state of repair. The general dilapidation of this property spoils the appearance of what would otherwise be an attractive terrace of houses enhancing the character of the conservation area.

Pressure for new development may be an issue for the area in the future. The Church Road conservation area, with many properties being situated in large gardens, may come under pressure. Additionally, the open land surrounding the conservation area, the importance of which has been demonstrated, may also be considered for development. The peaceful feel of the conservation area and its rural setting are of crucial importance to the character of the area and should not be compromised in the future.

#### *4.4.9 The existence of any neutral areas*

There are a number of modern buildings which neither enhance, nor detract from the appearance of the conservation area. These are generally well secluded behind hedged boundaries along Church Road.

#### *4.4.10 General condition*

The area is predominantly residential, and the majority of the buildings appear to be in a good state of repair and well-maintained. Many of the buildings are listed but the imposition of an Article 4 Direction would further control permitted development in terms of the unlisted buildings in the area. This would be of benefit as many of the unlisted buildings contribute significantly to the special character of the area and enhance the setting of the listed buildings around them. To prevent the erosion of the special interest of the area by an accumulation of change, such as modern replacement windows and doors, which may be unsympathetic to the character of the area, an Article 4 Direction would offer more control.

## **5. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

This appraisal was compiled following discussions with ward and parish councillors, Newick Village Society and organisations within the village. The appraisal was published in draft form for public consultation and comments received were evaluated and appropriate alterations made before final publication.

## **6. SUGGESTED BOUNDARY REVISIONS**

This conservation area has good potential for extending its boundary. As previously discussed, the rural setting is of crucial importance to the character of the area and this should be protected. Although the planning boundary currently prevents development in these areas, giving further protection to the setting would be of benefit should the planning boundary be subject to alteration in the future. Therefore, it is suggested that the boundary is extended to include the fields immediately encircling the Churchyard. This would also incorporate the area into which the Churchyard has been extended, which is currently outside the conservation area. Here, it would also be sensible to include the Church car parking area which lies between the churchyard and the Old Rectory. Historically, this area has associations with the Church and the Old Rectory as a path running between them passes through it.

The southern half of the garden of Ketches is currently not within the boundary, which should be extended to include it.

King George's Field and the rugby ground now attached to it provide an attractive recreational space which has an impact on the setting of the conservation area and is important within the village itself. The boundary should be extended to include this in the conservation area. 44 Church Road and its garden should also be included, as being highly visible from the rugby ground any changes made here may have an impact on character and setting.

The conservation area should also be extended northwards from the recreation ground to include the entrance to the field from Allington Road with its attractive commemorative plaques. The Oast Cottage at 15 Allington Road, adjacent to the entrance, should also be included. This is an interesting building with a circular white painted brick hop kiln with two extensions: one clad in white painted weatherboarding, the other tile hung.

## **7. LOCAL GENERIC GUIDANCE**

Advice for owners of properties in conservation areas on the relevant planning legislation which affects them can be found in the leaflet *Planning Controls in Conservation Areas*, available online at <http://www.lewes.gov.uk/environment/1098.asp>

Further information on Listed Buildings can be found in the leaflet *Listed Buildings: An owner's guide to alteration and repairs*, available online at: <http://www.lewes.gov.uk/environment/3600.asp>

Both leaflets are also available from the Planning and Environmental Services Department of Lewes District Council (contact details below).

## **8. SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

The boundary of the conservation area should be altered as described above in order to preserve the setting and special interest of the conservation area.

The imposition of an Article 4 Direction would ensure that the character of non-listed buildings is preserved and consequently assist in preserving and enhancing the area's special interest and character.

## **9. USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS**

For further information and advice, please contact the Design and Conservation department at Lewes District Council:

Planning and Environmental Services  
Southover House  
Southover Road  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 1AB  
Tel: 01273 471600

This is one of a series of leaflets about the 35 Conservation Areas in the Lewes District. A full list can be obtained by contacting the above officers, or by visiting the Council's website ([www.lewes.gov.uk](http://www.lewes.gov.uk)).

Historic records and Ordnance Survey maps of the area can be viewed at:

East Sussex Records Office  
The Maltings  
Castle Precincts  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 1YT  
Tel: 01273 482349

## **10. FURTHER READING**

*Guidance on conservation area appraisals*, English Heritage, 2006.

*Newick Retold*, Tony Mayes, 2002.

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*Cover photograph: The Parish Church of St Mary*