

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 AREA BY AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1.1 AREA I : CLIFFE

(i) *New development*

At some stage in the future, the redevelopment of the Chandlers site would be welcome, bearing in mind that it lies on the site of the former gas works and therefore may be contaminated land. Apart from this site, there are few opportunities for new development in the Cliffe Area, but where new buildings are proposed they should respect the general advice contained in Appendix 4.

(ii) *Street surfaces*

There is very little historic street paving in Area I. The character of the conservation area would be greatly enhanced by the installation of good quality paving, using handmade clay bricks or York stone. Cliffe High Street is the main priority for improvements, and this could be allied to a full or partial pedestrianisation scheme.

(iii) *Improvements to car parks*

There are three public car parks in Cliffe (off Harvey's Way, on the corner of Cliffe High Street and Malling Street; and off South Street). All of these would benefit from improvements including the planting of more trees, so long as they are properly maintained. The Harvey's Way car park might be a suitable site for a low rise (two storey)

car park to provide additional visitors' car parking. The car park on the corner of Cliffe High Street and Malling Street might benefit from redevelopment, to provide a corner building and to re-enclose the street. However, any potential loss of car parking must be considered as part of the Council's overall strategy for car parking in Lewes.

(iv) *River walks*

The Council should seek to improve linkages with the River Ouse, and the provision of a riverside walk should be actively pursued, as has been provided as part of the new housing development off Hillmans Close. All materials used, such as bricks or flints for any new walls, should match those traditionally used in Lewes.



A riverside walk would add to the public's appreciation of the river Ouse



The public realm in Cliffe High Street urgently needs improving

9.1.2 AREA 2 : LOWER HIGH STREET

(i) New development

Development has already taken place in the lower part of the former garden to Lewes House, between School Hill and Friars Walk to provide a new public library. New houses are also proposed



The new Lewes Library



This site next to the river may be redeveloped soon

for the upper part of the site. These will replace a number of modern temporary office buildings of no merit, and several areas of car parking. The housing design was chosen as the result of an architectural competition but the need to reduce costs has meant that the present library design is not what was originally proposed. This has inevitably resulted in a less prestigious building being provided. Throughout the development of the housing scheme, the public has been involved and extensive consultation has taken place.

It is possible that two major sites within the conservation area may come up for development in the near future. These are the Bus Station (Eastgate Street), and the Timber Yard (Eastgate Wharf). The Council could consider the production of detailed Development Briefs for these sites, which should be subject to public consultation and could be approved as

Supplementary Planning Guidance. This would ensure that only the highest possible standards of design are submitted.

(ii) Protection of historic gardens and boundaries

New houses have recently been completed facing Albion Street which have cut across existing



New development in Albion Street

historic boundaries. Other proposals for backland development continue to come forward. If development is to be allowed, it should respect existing boundaries, preserve important views, not result in the loss of listed buildings or Buildings of Townscape Merit, and should reproduce the historic form of development, with buildings facing the street. The setting of historic buildings and the preservation of significant trees or tree groups is also important.

(iii) Street surfaces

There is very little historic street paving in Area 2. The character of the conservation area would be greatly enhanced by the installation of good quality paving, using handmade clay bricks or York stone.



New housing in Pinwell Road



The bus station site may be redeveloped soon

(iv) Improvements to car parking

There are several car parks in Area 2 of which the North Street and Little East Street car parks are the most visible. Both of these would benefit from resurfacing, the planting of new shrubs and trees, and better signage and lighting.

(v) Local List Review

A number of buildings, such as the former Turkish Baths in Friars Walk, might be eligible for local listing. A full survey should be carried out including detailed historical research.

9.1.3 AREA 3 : LEWES CASTLE AND MIDDLE HIGH STREET

(i) New development

There are now very few opportunities for new development in Area 3, due to the closely-knit townscape and the predominance of listed buildings. However, if development is to be allowed, it should follow the general advice in Appendix 4 including respecting existing boundaries and preserving important views. It should not result in the loss of listed buildings or Buildings of Townscape Merit, and should reproduce the



A new house in Castle Ditch Lane

historic form of development, with buildings facing the street. The setting of historic buildings and the preservation of existing gardens and significant trees or tree groups are also important.

(ii) Street surfaces

There are few examples of historic street surfaces and the improvement of the High Street particularly, with the installation of brick or natural stone paving, should be considered a priority.

(iii) Historic buildings

It has already been noted that Area 3 contains the highest concentration of listed buildings in Lewes, many of them listed grade II* or even I. There are also a number of unlisted Buildings of Townscape Merit. Very little detailed research has been done on these buildings, especially those facing the High Street, and undoubtedly, much remains to be discovered. A number of sources of information are available locally: the library of the Sussex Archaeological Society, located in Barbican House; the County Record Office, in The Maltings in Castle Precinct; and a unique and important collection of historic photographs of Lewes which are owned by Tom Reeves. Mr Reeves operates the photographic studio at no. 159/160 High Street, with a studio which overlooks Lewes Castle.

It is highly likely that some of the buildings facing the High Street date to the 15th or even 14th century, although they have been refronted in mathematical tiles or flint and therefore concealed for many years. Inside these buildings are timber-framed, often with medieval, chalk-lined cellars. These details all need to be surveyed and recorded.



Late medieval houses in High Street



A new pair of houses in Grange Road

9.1.4 AREA 4 : UPPER HIGH STREET AND WESTERN ROAD

(i) New development

A number of new houses have been built in Area 4 within the last 50 years, particularly in Rotten Row. Generally, but not always, these houses are discretely sited in mature gardens. No further loss of gardens should be allowed particularly where any new development would affect the setting of a listed building or a Building of Townscape Merit, which should also be protected from demolition or unsympathetic extension. Additionally, it is important to retain the spacious character of the area, defined by the generous plot sizes and historic flint and brick boundary walls. Ideally, Post-War development of no architectural merit should be demolished.

(ii) Water Board Reservoir

Recent ‘improvements’ to the boundaries of the reservoir have resulted in the opening-up of the site so it is now possible to see into the reservoir from the High Street. While this might be advisable from the security point of view, the structure is of no merit and the re-enclosure of the site would greatly benefit views along the street.

9.1.5 AREA 5 : THE PELLIS AND WEST STREET

(i) New development

There are potentially several sites in Area 5, particularly the public car parks facing North Street, where a substantial amount of new development might be possible, subject to the agreement of the Environment Agency, as much of the eastern and northern part of Area 5 was below water during the floods of October 2000. If development is to be allowed, it should respect existing boundaries, preserve important views, not



The Pellis Pond



The Police Station in West Street is a Building of Townscape Merit and should be retained

result in the loss of listed buildings or Buildings of Townscape Merit, and should reproduce the historic form of development, with buildings facing the street. The setting of historic buildings and the preservation of existing gardens and significant trees or tree groups are also important. The recreation of street frontages should also be encouraged.

Where large sites do come up for redevelopment, the Council should prepare a Development Brief first.

(ii) Street surfaces

There are some examples of historic street surfaces using brick or stone in Area 5. Streets which would particularly benefit from new brick paving include West Street, Sun Street and Abinger Place.

9.1.6 AREA 6 : THE WALLANDS

(i) New development

New development, such as the terrace of houses next to Segrave Close off King Henry's Road, is not enhancing the character of the conservation area, and is continuing the type of development allowed in the 1980s, such as nos. 20-20e King Henry's Road. Historically, The Wallands was developed as an up-market suburb with large family houses set in their own spacious garden. Development which does not continue this pattern will incrementally result in the erosion of

the special architectural and historic interest of the area, and should be resisted. Certainly, none of the buildings identified as Buildings of Townscape Merit should be demolished, and their gardens must be protected from backland development.

9.1.7 AREA 7: SOUTHOVER

(i) New development

The principal threat to the historic environment in Southover is from the incremental loss of existing gardens for new development. This is particularly important where the historic form of development is ignored, such as Priory Flats in Priory Street, which sits back from the road rather than continuing the existing building line. Further new development may not be possible in the Southover area without adversely affecting the character and appearance of the conservation area, as so many of the buildings are either listed or have been identified as Buildings of Townscape Merit. The only sites where new development might be possible without harming the conservation area are the Station car park; the auction rooms, Garden Street; and the Removal Company site, behind but not including no. 26 Southover High Street.



St John's Church, Southover



These houses in Dorset Road are already protected from unsympathetic alterations by the Article 4 Direction

9.2 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

There is already an Article 4 Direction in Lewes, served in 1995 and covering all of the unlisted family houses in the conservation area (this does not include the Malling Conservation Area). The Article 4 Direction requires that house owners or tenants obtain planning permission from Lewes District Council for a number of alterations, listed below, which would normally be considered permitted development. This is done to ensure that all alterations to these buildings are carried out sensitively and enhance the special character of the conservation area by using the correct materials and details. Listed buildings are already controlled under different legislation and other unlisted buildings in non-residential uses, such as shops, offices and educational buildings, have fewer permitted development rights so the District Council already has greater control over many kinds of external alterations.

Under the Article 4 Direction, work which requires planning permission includes:

- Any alteration to a roof, including roof coverings, roof lights and solar panels;
- Building a porch;
- Erecting sheds and temporary buildings;
- Building a swimming pool;
- Building a hard standing;
- Installing a satellite dish or antenna;
- Removing, or building walls, gates, fences or other means of enclosure;
- Exterior painting of previously unpainted surfaces or changes of external colour schemes;
- Any enlargement or improvement or alteration such as an extension or conservatory;
- Any changes to doors or windows, including changed materials, details and designs and types of decorative finish.

There is no fee for an Article 4 planning application and because the Council has powers of enforcement to ensure that any unauthorised work is rectified at the owner's expense, it is always advisable to contact the Planning and Environmental Services Department before commencing work. Because permission may also be required separately under the Building Regulations, it is also advisable to contact the Council's Building Control Department.

9.3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY CHANGES

There is only one proposed alteration to the existing conservation area boundary, to include a piece of land to the west of St Pancras Road and south of St Anne's Crescent, as far as Bell Lane in the west. Winterbourne Close and the former Boeringer Mannheim Factory facing Bell Lane are not included.

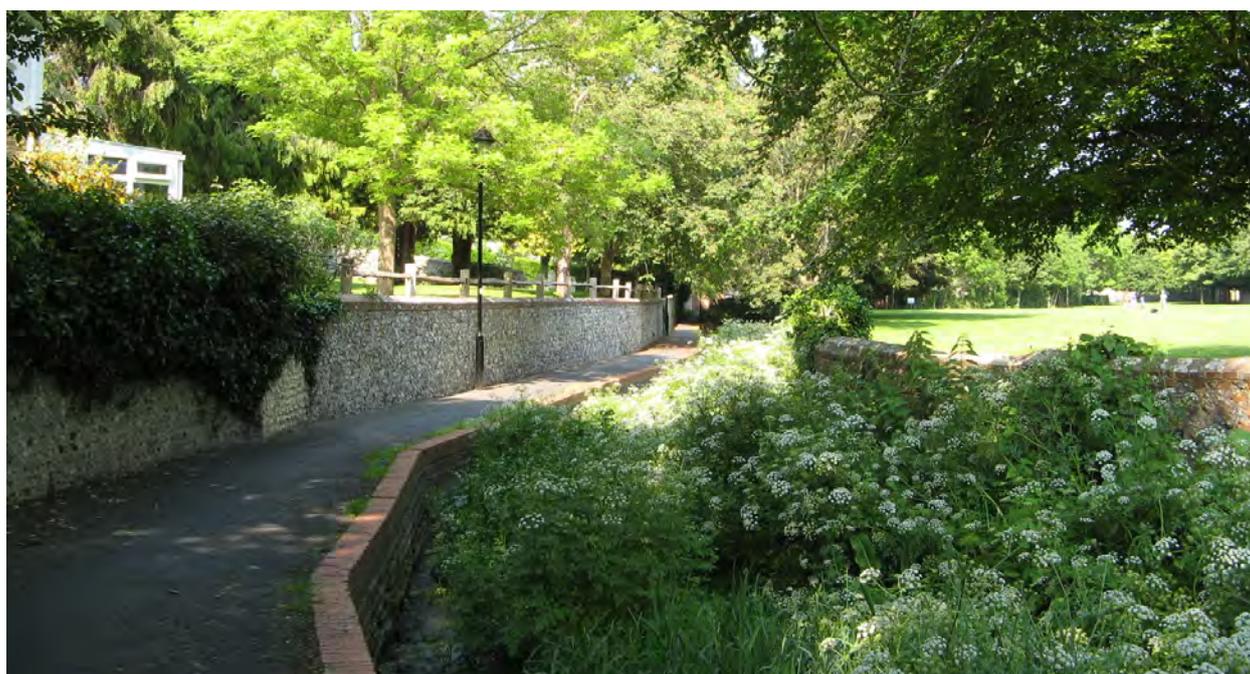
The extension would include:

- The County Hall site;
- The cemetery;
- The former St Anne's School and its playing fields (now closed);
- Glebe House and its garden;
- The lower portion of Rotten Row as far as Bell Lane;
- The recreation ground facing Bell Lane;
- A section of the Winterbourne Stream.

This proposed extension to the conservation area is a hilly, well tree'd site, facing southwards, with an almost rural quality to parts of it due to the valley of the Winterbourne stream. The stream can be dry or full of water, depending on the season, and whilst it has been lined with concrete further eastwards, this section retains its more meandering route and selection of wild plants.

Although the proposed extension includes the 1968 County Hall complex, it also includes a number of positive features as follows:

- Glebe House, Rotten Row – a well preserved house of c1910 with a large garden, many mature trees, and an important flint wall (currently just within the conservation area) facing Rotten Row;
- St Anne's School, built as the rectory to St Anne's Church in the mid-19th century and purchased by East Sussex County Council in 1955 as a site for a new special school, with a number of modern buildings and playing fields around it;
- The lower section of Rotten Row, lined on one side by a high flint wall and on the other by a selection of paired 1930s cottages, relatively unaltered;
- The Recreation Ground and the Children's Playground;
- The winding Winterbourne Stream and the many wild plants and mature trees along its edge;
- The Victorian cemetery with its attractive tomb stones and original late 19th century chapel, defined by a number of flint walls.



Add the Recreation Ground, the Winterbourne Stream, and the cemetery to the Conservation Area



The cemetery looking south-west

It is accepted that the County Hall building, which was constructed in 1968, is an unattractive, visually dominant building of no architectural



Rotten Row



County Hall

merit whose demolition would be welcome by most Lewes residents. However there are plenty of examples of similar buildings of the same era which are included in a conservation area of a major historic town or city, including Canterbury, Exeter and Lincoln. Designation as a conservation area would not prevent the redevelopment of the County Hall site, but would encourage the construction of well designed new buildings which would fit in with the surrounding landscape and not dominate this part of the town. It is therefore suggested that if the County Hall site comes up for redevelopment at some stage in the future, then the District or County Council prepares a Development Brief to ensure that the new development is of the highest possible quality.

9.4 LOCAL LIST REVIEW

A number of buildings, walls and other structures or features throughout the conservation area may be eligible for statutory or local listing – a thorough survey including historical research should be carried out.