

SE Div. Sub. Committee
3rd August 1972

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971

CONSERVATION AREAS

ITEM NO.9

GODSTONE RURAL DISTRICT

- Godstone (The Green) Conservation Area No. 21/21
 Godstone (Church Town) Conservation Area No. 21/22
 Lingsfield Conservation Area No. 21/3
 Lingfield (The Church) Conservation Area No. 21/41
 Lingfield (Gun Pond) Conservation Area No. 21/42
 Old Oxted Conservation Area No. 21/5

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 5 years since the passing of the Civic Amenities Act various problems of building preservation have arisen. Changes have taken place in the required legislation, most recently the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, and soon it is hoped, the Town & Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972 will introduce fresh provisions for further controlling demolitions of buildings within Conservation Areas irrespective of their listing.

Advice has been sought from the Department of the Environment and it would appear that there is a national tendency to delineate Conservation Areas first and then to report in detail later.

Members will know that the C.C. published a list of Conservation Areas with brief descriptions (for identification purposes only) at a very early stage, even before many other counties, and that the process of designation preceded by a full report has continued steadily so that we now have 29 areas fully designated and 5 more in various stages of Committee approval.

However, it appears that if full advantage is to be taken of the additional building protection measures for Conservation Areas contained in the forthcoming 1972 Act, then it is essential to have as many Conservation Areas designated as possible with their buildings categorised and listed as has been done in the reports prepared so far.

The report which follows giving details of 6 Conservation Areas is individually more abbreviated than is normally the case, fuller historical appraisals with accompanying notes on the character of the areas and possibilities for enhancement will be published at a later date. Meanwhile, it is hoped that the Committee will find this shortened version acceptable for the purposes of Designation. The level of information on the maps remains as before, showing the various categories of listed buildings, other buildings which it is desirable to keep, footpaths and any other local features.

2. GODSTONE (THE GREEN) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/21
GODSTONE (CHURCH TOWN) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/22

The historical appraisals for these two areas which are interdependent on each other are consequently combined in the following notes.

Godstone lies south of the North Downs some 10 miles from Croydon, 7 miles east of Reigate and 3 miles west of Oxted, and sits in the relatively flat area of a west-east valley where the important north-south route crosses. This road follows the lower land south-east around Tilburstow Hill and continues south to East Grinstead, Lewes and the south coast. Church Town lies at the end of a public footpath link about half a mile east of Godstone.

The Church of St. Nicholas really belongs to the Saxon settlement of Walkingstead which was recorded in the Domesday Surrey (1086). The route of the Roman Road to the west had become unused in the Saxon period and was more of a boundary line at the time of the Conquest. However, it gradually came back into use and Godstone grew on it to become more important than Walkingstead.

Some earlier forms of this older name have been WACHELESTEDE (1086), WOLCNESTED (1212), WULKESTED (1241) and WOLKESTED (1272). These have been taken to indicate the settlement where they fulled or walked the homespun cloth with fuller's earth. The earliest known use of the name was c. 970. The name Godstone appears first in the 13th Century and some earlier forms have been GODESTON (1248), CODESTON (1279), CODDESTONE (1288 et al.) and GODDESTON (1294). Examples commencing with 'C' and terminating in 'E' are slightly more numerous than 'G' and 'N' respectively, and suggest the meaning Codd's stone possibly from a marker on the old Roman Road. The alternative suggestion is a derivation from Goda's town, the name being that of the daughter of Edward the Confessor.

The Parish Church of St. Nicholas sits half mile east of Godstone Green in Church Town. The medieval building practically disappeared under the restoration of 1872/3 by Sir Gilbert Scott, although portions of the earlier structures do remain, such as part of a Norman window in the west wall. The font is c. 1500 and there is a fine tomb to Sir John Evelyn (d. 1641), a member of the gunpowder making branch of this famous family who lived at Marden, Leigh Place and Felbridge.

The manor houses of Marden and Lagham were apparently early centres of population until the Black Death of 1349, with another settlement near the Church on what was probably the main road. It seems that in Elizabethan times there was a diversion of north-south movement which was, in effect, a reversion to the approximate line of the Roman Road, and it has been suggested that this was to facilitate traffic movements associated with the iron working of the Weald or with the gunpowder mills which were active in the Godstone area 1612/13 to 1636.

The settlement at Godstone Green grew from its position on the renewed traffic route although the parish was essentially an agricultural one with the added activity of stone quarrying. The local building stone, called firestone, was not an ideal material but was fairly durable in conditions of constant wetness or dryness. It was therefore used in the construction of wet docks, furnaces and ovens. More recent mineral extraction has been of sand to the north-west of the village.

The Ancient Monument to the north-west of the centre is a tumulus which for part of the 19th century was the site of a windmill. It was a frequent practice in lowland areas to locate these structures on minor prominences which were often such earthworks. The mill was shown on the 1816 edition of the 1"/mile O.S. and also on the first edition of the 25"/mile O.S. of 1870. This represents the approximate life of the mill which ceased activity c. 1876 and was a total wreck by the 1880s.

To the south west of the Green in Ivy Mill Lane was a watermill of greater antiquity and longevity. Its site has been identified as the mill at Civenstone in Domesday and the last active mill was apparently burned down c. 1930. The extensive mill pond was drained in 1947, and Stratton Brook returned to its pre-Domesday course.

The Redhill-Tonbridge railway passed some 2 miles south of the historic centre with a station at South Godstone where a new village grew and probably kept pressure

for development out of the area around The Green. However, since the turn of the century and in more recent years there has been some expansion of the village to the north-east and to the south, but without affecting the character of the historic core.

3. DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED GODSTONE (THE GREEN) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/21

Commencing in HIGH STREET at the junction with SALISBURY ROAD the boundary moves eastward some 35 metres (115 feet) before turning south to pass to the rear of Nos. 165 and 167 HIGH STREET. It continues south for 150 metres (490 feet) before turning eastwards to follow the rear boundaries of properties fronting COURT ROAD, and continues southwards to enclose the curtilages of GODSTONE PLACE and THE WHITE HART and other properties on the east side of the HIGH STREET, before following the rear of the curtilage of OLD GARSTON FARMHOUSE westwards to rejoin the HIGH STREET. The line continues briefly southwards, before crossing the rear boundary of properties in BELL MEADOW. It turns northwards and westwards and finally southwards to exclude these properties, before continuing westwards to IVY MILL LANE. It moves northwards some 100 metres (328 feet) before turning briefly westwards and continuing north to include the curtilages of those properties fronting the western side of THE GREEN. The line crosses the A.25 and passes to the west of properties on the north side of THE GREEN and continues northwards for some 250 metres (820 feet) to FOOTPATH No. 122. It then turns sharply east for 100 metres (328 feet) before following the boundary of the old ALLOTMENT GARDENS northwards briefly then eastwards for some 100 metres (328 feet) before turning northwards to include properties on the west side of HIGH STREET and eastwards to complete the boundary opposite SALISBURY ROAD.

4. DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED GODSTONE (CHURCH TOWN) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/22

Commencing in CHURCH LANE opposite BRANSFIELD COTTAGE the boundary moves briefly southwards before turning east to follow the boundary of ELM BANK to FOOTPATH 129. The line follows the footpath south-westwards some 60 metres (197 feet) before turning east and then south to include the churchyard of St. NICHOLAS CHURCH, continuing southwards to include the curtilage of St. MARY'S HOMES. The line turns westwards to include the curtilage of as MARYLANDS, and turns north and briefly west to include those properties known moving north passing to the rear of HOMEFIELD COTTAGES, POTTERS COTTAGE and CHURCH END. It turns briefly west and then north to the west of the PRIMARY SCHOOL to join FOOTPATH 129. It follows the FOOTPATH eastwards a short distance before moving northwards some 100 metres (328 feet) and turning eastwards to include the curtilages of BRANSFIELD and BRANSFIELD COTTAGE, completing the boundary in CHURCH LANE.

5. LIMPSFIELD CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/3
HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

Limpsfield lies only 2 miles from the county boundary with Kent, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Old Oxted and 1 mile south of Titsey which is at the foot of the scarp face of the North Downs. The location of the village is related to the upper course of the valley of the River Eden which runs south-west from the foot of the Downs through the Greensand ridge just south-east of Old Oxted. The village occupies a relatively flat site in an area of steep slopes and complex topography, sitting to the north of a slightly lower point in the Greensand ridge of Limpsfield Common, to the south-west of Pebble Hill. The area has a long history of human occupation with archaeological finds of many periods, and

...h it passed the historic east-west trade route along the line of the North Downs. A Roman villa site has been discovered to the north in Titsey Park, while to the east is the line of the north-south running Roman Road which passes through Limpsfield. The site of what was probably a watch tower has been found alongside this road.

Some earlier forms of the place name have been LIMENESFELD (1086), LYMESFELDE (1321), LEMPNESFELD (1426) and LIMINISFELT (1431). These are taken to indicate the field or clearing of Leofman or Leman, an Anglo-Saxon masculine name.

The Church of St. Peter has features of many periods with the oldest parts, the west wall and the tower, dating from circa 1180. The nave, chancel, north chancel chapel and the south aisle are 13th century work and there are 19th century alterations and additions. The font is a plain, square bowl of the 13th century with supports which appear to be altered later. The composer Frederick Delius is buried in the churchyard.

Limpsfield parish stretches from the North Downs to the Weald with the church and village situated typically on the intervening sand. The oldest parts of the village lie along the road which leads north to Warlingham, but in 1839 Pigot and Co.'s Directory described Limpsfield as "neither a place of thoroughfare or trade, its inhabitants being for the most part engaged in cultivating the land, which is here very fertile". Kelly's Directory of 1882 noted the principal crops as wheat, oats, barley, roots and a few hops.

Accessibility to this part of the County was relatively poor until the railway was finally tunnelled under the Downs in the 1880s and a station established between Limpsfield and Oxted. For the first few years there was little change although the area became a favourite place for establishing schools and institutions such as convalescent homes. From the turn of the century there has been a considerable increase in the number of private residents, but this development has been to the west and north-west of the village related to the location of Oxted Station, and to the south related to Limpsfield Common and The Chart. The historic village centre has therefore largely avoided the pressures of development. Over a long period there has been some gradual infilling but Limpsfield retains a considerable number of buildings of architectural or historic interest. The High Street still exhibits an elongated, gently meandering character preventing long views and giving a sense of enclosure, emphasised by the buildings aligned close to the back of the pavements, and forms the heart of the proposed Conservation Area.

The village has considerable visual appeal and is generally well maintained, a factor which has earned it the best kept village award in the past.

6. DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED LIMPSFIELD CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/3

It should be noted that the village extends across the A.25 main road and consequently there is a small portion of the area known as Wolf's Row which is detached and lies to the south of the A.25.

Commencing at the junction of the A25 (WESTERHAM ROAD) and HIGH STREET, the boundary moves westwards and northwards to include the curtilages of THE BOWER, BOWER COURT and PLOVERS, continuing north-westwards to include properties on the north side of SYLVAN CLOSE, before passing to the rear of PRIEST HILL COTTAGE to join FOOTPATH 78A. It follows the footpath westwards some 70 metres (230 feet) before turning briefly northwards to exclude WHITE HART BUNGALOW and continuing north-westwards at the rear of properties fronting the west side of the HIGH STREET to DETILLEN'S LANE. The line continues north-westwards across the grounds of the LIMPSFIELD LAWN TENNIS CLUB and continues in this direction to include the curtilages of THE RECTORY and the other properties fronting the west side of

HIGH STREET until it crosses the RIVER EDEN. The boundary then turns north-
passing BLUEHOUSE LANE and after a short distance moves sharply eastward to recross
RIVER at the FOOTBRIDGE, and follows the northern boundaries of those properties
between the RIVER and TITSEY ROAD. It meets TITSEY ROAD opposite OLD COURT COTTAGE
and continues some 200 metres (656 feet) north-eastwards before turning south to
include the curtilage of CHURCH ACRE and following FOOTPATH 81 for some 210 metres
(688 feet) southwards to the churchyard of ST. PETER'S CHURCH. It follows the
rear boundary of the churchyard south-eastwards and continues in this direction
passing to the rear of MANOR HOUSE SCHOOL. After crossing FOOTPATH 82 the line
turns eastwards at the eastern boundary of the property known as COLTS CORNER to
include HOOKWOOD BUNGALOWS before continuing south-eastwards crossing BRIDLEWAY 83
to join FOOTPATH 83A. It continues south-eastwards a further 160 metres (525 feet)
before turning south-west and following the eastern boundary of PEBBLE HILL HOUSE
to join FOOTPATH 84. The line follows the FOOTPATH for some 40 metres (131 feet)
before turning south-west to rejoin WESTERHAM ROAD and continuing westwards for
50 metres (164 feet) to complete this section of the boundary at the junction with
HIGH STREET.

To the south of WESTERHAM ROAD a detached section of the Conservation Area is
bounded by a line moving south west from WOLF'S CORNER some 130 metres (426 feet)
along WOLF'S ROW, turning south-eastwards to enclose THE POUND, and moving north-
wards following FOOTPATH 85 to return to WESTERHAM ROAD. The line turns westwards
for 50 metres (164 feet) to complete this section of the boundary at WOLF'S CORNER.

7. LINGFIELD (THE CHURCH) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/41
HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

Lingfield lies in the south east of the county some $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of East
Grinstead, 4 miles west of Edenbridge and 6 miles south of Oxted. It is some
2 miles east of the main London to Eastbourne road (A.22) and is a large village
in the Weald with picturesque parts but no coherent centre. Growth occurred at
two diagonally opposite corners of a quadrilateral of roads; one around the Church
and the site of the College, and the other around Gun Pond at Plaistow Street.
The uniting of the two began in the 1880's after the opening of the railway to
the east.

Physically the village sits on a slightly higher area of land between the
upper reaches of tributaries of the Eden Brook, in what was once a relatively
inaccessible area at the edge of the Weald proper. Lingfield now lies on either
side of one of the east-west routes from the A.22 to Edenbridge, and Route 54 on
the Surrey Development Plan 1971 County Map envisages by-passing it to the south.

Some earlier forms of the name have been LINGEDEFELDE (11th century),
LENGEFELDE (1279), LYNGEFELD (1359) and LINVIL (1675). The derivation is difficult
to determine, but the name possibly indicates open land of, or with, terraces.
This would not be inappropriate to the site, although an alternative could be
the feld of the people in a wood or clearing in a wood.

Lingfield is noted as the site of a college for secular chaplains founded in
1431 by Sir Reginald Lord Cobham of Sterborough. At the same time a licence was
granted permitting the conversion of the parish church into a collegiate one of
6 chaplains, one of whom would govern as master, and 4 clerks together with
13 poor persons. The college was built at the west end of the churchyard in 1431
and the institution was dissolved in 1544. However, Aubrey found in the late
17th century that the building was still standing. "I have seen no remains of
any Religious House, so entire as this is. The first storey of the college is of
freestone: above that, the buildings are of brick and timber, which was the

in fashion heretofore, when the land was so encumbered with trees. Within the college is a little square court, and round that a cloister for conveniency walking for the priests here..... Here is a convenient and handsome hall and flour.....". The college building must have been demolished around the turn of the century and certainly about the reign of George I (1714-27). The building at present called The College occupies part of the former site and dates from the early 18th century, possibly c. 1700.

The neighbouring parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul, once the collegiate church, is the County's only Perpendicular example of any size or pretension. The tower is 14th century but the remainder was rebuilt circa 1431. The result is sober but very satisfying especially internally. There is a good set of medieval fittings, Lingfield being about the only Surrey church to have them, and the brasses are the finest collection in the county.

The best corner of the village is the short funnel of buildings at the south end of the churchyard, including Pollard Cottage, Star Inn Cottages and Church Gate Cottage. The first mentioned is a 15th century hall house with a 16th century wing in which there is a rare example of a contemporary shop front with the upper parts of two shop windows remaining. To the north of the churchyard is the Old Guest House, now a branch library, which is also a 15th century hall house, restored in 1898; and to the west is The College of the early 18th century, restored in 1971 with financial assistance from the County and District Councils.

8. DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED LINGFIELD (THE CHURCH) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/41

Commencing in VICARAGE ROAD on the east side of LINGFIELD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL the boundary runs east in the centre of the road to cross the CHURCH ROAD junction into BAKERS LANE as far as the west boundary of No. 30 BAKERS LANE which it follows then runs roughly east across O.S. parcel No. 1388, along the boundary between O.S. parcels Nos. 2091 and 1780 to pass out into STATION ROAD. Continuing southwards along STATION ROAD the boundary then turns west along the southern curtilage of PETREAN HOUSE and continues in a westerly direction behind those properties fronting the north side of TOWN HILL and CHURCH ROAD as far as HOBBS END. At this point it emerges into CHURCH ROAD, runs north for a short distance and then east again along the southern boundary of THE BARN to cross footpath No. F.P.440 and to follow the eastern boundary of LINGFIELD COUNTRY PRIMARY SCHOOL, enclosing THE COLLEGE development and rejoining the starting point in VICARAGE ROAD.

9. LINGFIELD (GUN POND) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/42

Gun Pond, St. Peter's Cross and the village cage are the central features of the second historic nucleus in Lingfield. It has been said that the pond formed after the digging out of road making materials. The cross and cage form a composite building with the former at one end as a stepped tower. This cross is supposed to be 15th century and to mark the boundary between the Manors of Puttenden and Billeshurst. The cage was added in 1773, although it has been said that "the whole thing looks C.18, except for the base of a cross which is the finial to the tower (Nairn/Pevsner/Cherry)". Opposite is the early 18th century Magnus Deo Farm another good example of its kind and period.

The Croydon-East Grinstead railway opened in 1884 with a station for Lingfield between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the various parts of the village. The gradual joining of the two historic centres began although development was never on a large scale. To the south east of the village Lingfield racecourse and club were established in 1890 after the closing of the Croydon course, while to the north east development has gradually extended the village away from the historic core.

DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED LINGFIELD (GUN POND) CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/42

Commencing in VICARAGE ROAD the boundary runs east along the southern curtilage of ST. BERNARD'S CHURCH, south along the western boundary of the COUNTY SECONDARY SCHOOL and then east again behind these properties on the north side of the HIGH STREET (B.2028) as far as the SALEM BAPTIST CHAPEL site. Here it turns south across HIGH STREET to enclose PLAISTOW COTTAGE. The boundary crosses EAST GRINSTEAD (JACKSBRIDGE) ROAD in a north westerly direction to meet the south eastern boundary of MAGNUS DEO FARM, which it follows before swinging north west again behind the properties fronting the south side of PLAISTOW STREET and passing out to the NEWCHAPEL ROAD on the west side of No. 4 NEW BUILDINGS. The boundary then turns north-east again across GODSTONE ROAD (B.2029) and continues along the footpath at the side of THE OLD CAGE Restaurant to rejoin the commencing point in VICARAGE ROAD.

11. OLD OXTED CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/5
HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

Oxted lies some 3 miles east of Godstone Green and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of Limpsfield. The historic centre of Old Oxted was, until 1971, astride the main east-west route (A.25) but is now by-passed to the great advantage of the place. It sits at the north-east corner of the higher land of Beechwood Hill. The surrounding land falls to the north and to the east with the High Street running west to east down slope to the upper course of a tributary stream of the River Eden. To the east the road rises briefly to pass over the ridge between this tributary and that running from north of Limpsfield.

Some earlier forms of the place name have been ACSTED (1086), OCSTED (1225), OXSTED (1261-9), and OCKSTEDE (1292-9). These indicate the place of oak trees. Rocque's map of 1762 shows the village as Oxted Street.

The parish is typically long and narrow running from the Downs to the Weald with the village on the intervening sand. In 1839 Pigot and Co.'s Directory called Oxted "a neat little rural place. The inhabitants are chiefly employed in agriculture ... The Country in this neighbourhood is in a fine state of cultivation, abounding with wood and water, and containing many respectable residences." Kelly's Directory of 1882 noted the chief crops as wheat, oats, grass, roots and hops.

The Victoria County History found that, after the coming of the railway in the 1880's, small houses and villas had begun to spring up rapidly, and this period at the turn of the century was certainly one of a great increase in residential development. The trend continued particularly in relation to the railway station about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north-east, where a new centre was created to meet the demand. This kept the pressure off the historic centre of Old Oxted, although residential development has taken place close by without affecting the character of High Street.

While the centre has retained a large number of its old buildings it suffered until recently from the volume and nature of the traffic passing through on the main east-west route (A.25). Respite finally came in 1971 with the opening of the by-pass, which has left the High Street a more fitting heart to the proposed Conservation Area and one in which improvement and enhancement can take place without competing with the former traffic problems.

12. DELINEATION OF THE PROPOSED OLD OXTED CONSERVATION AREA NO. 21/5

Commencing in GODSTONE ROAD opposite No. 15, the boundary moves northwards following the western boundary of No. 20 before moving north-eastwards along the

the BY PASS to its junction with CHURCH LANE, passing to the rear of the properties to the north side of the HIGH STREET. The line turns south for some metres (230 feet) and moves westwards following the rear boundaries of properties SPRINGFIELD, and passes to the south of 19 BEADLES LANE to join this road opposite No. 16. The boundary follows BEADLES LANE southwards some 60 metres (197 feet) before turning westwards and northwards to include the curtilages of Nos. 16-22 and other properties on the west side of BEADLES LANE. The line moves northwards to rejoin GODSTONE ROAD opposite No. 16, before continuing westwards some 40 metres (131 feet) to complete the boundary in GODSTONE ROAD.

13. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Sub-Committee refer this report containing details and the plans of the six suggested Conservation Areas of GODSTONE (THE GREEN) NO. 21/21, GODSTONE (CHURCH TOWN) NO. 21/22, LIMPSFIELD NO. 21/3, LINGFIELD (THE CHURCH) NO. 21/41, LINGFIELD (GUN POND) NO. 21/42 and OLD OXTED NO. 21/5 to the Godstone Rural District Council and to the Records, Historic Buildings and Antiquities Committee for their views and that a notice be published in the local press in accordance with previous practice.