Conservation Area Appraisal
and
Management Strategy

Warsash
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Fareham Borough Council has designated 13 conservation areas that are considered to be of special architectural or historic interest. They have been selected because each one has a character or appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

1.2 The character appraisal;

- identifies the special character that justifies conservation area status
- provides evidence to inform decision making affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area

1.3 The management strategy sets out how the council aims to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The management strategy;

- identifies the procedures currently in place to manage change and proposes additional measures where considered appropriate
- identifies areas that have potential for enhancement
CHARACTER APPRAISAL

2 LOCATION AND SETTING

2.1 Warsash Conservation Area comprises the small historic riverside settlement close to the mouth of the Hamble River. Included within its boundary is Shore Road, the waterfront and a group of buildings behind bounded on their north eastern side by Passage Lane, together with an area of open land known as the Strawberry Field.

2.2 The Hamble River and valley provide a setting for the Conservation Area. The activities, sounds and smells associated with the river and its boatyards provide a strong sense of place. The river is also an important habitat for wildfowl and has been given national and international protection. These aspects of the river contribute to the setting of the conservation area. There are important views of the river from locations throughout the conservation area.

3 ORIGINS OF THE SETTLEMENT

3.1 Warsash grew up as a small fishing, coal and timber port and as a landing place for the Hamble to Warsash ferry. The ferry is documented as early as 1535 and established the settlement as an important crossing point of the Hamble River en-route to Southampton.

3.2 The Ordnance Survey map of 1811 shows Warsash as a small isolated collection of buildings leading towards the shore and waterfront. By 1873 the Ordnance Survey map of the settlement shows that it had expanded. The cottages in Shore Road had been built as had further buildings on the waterfront. The original Rising Sun is shown, as is the large lobster pond that was sited on the land now occupied by the sailing school and dinghy park. Outside the conservation area boundary, Warsash House is clearly marked.

3.3 The Warsash House Estate underwent a period of Edwardian development which has left the conservation area with some notable landmarks, including the present Rising Sun and the Warsash Sailing Club building, Shore House. Following the sale of the estate in 1916 the village was left with other buildings of interest that lie outside the conservation area boundary, notably the clock tower. Warsash House itself no longer exists.
3.4 Between 1909 and 1931 map evidence suggests very little change in the settlement. After 1955 however, residential development on the former Warsash House Estate to the north east of the conservation area and infill housing south of Passage Lane reduced the isolation of the riverside settlement.

3.5 The river was, and remains, a major source of employment. The shipbuilder George Parsons of Bursledon, famous for construction of ‘HMS Elephant’, Nelson’s flagship at the battle of Copenhagen, relocated to a new yard close to Shore Road in 1807, where he continued to build ships for the Royal Navy. The development of private yachting provided work for many fishermen in the summer months as hired crew and the industry continues to be a major source of employment on the River Hamble today.

3.6 The fishing industry also provided employment and sprats were a common catch for local fishermen. The fish were either sold locally, often to the large houses of Sarisbury, Hook and Warsash or were taken for sale to the developing markets of Southampton and Portsmouth.

3.7 The settlement was home to two firms employed in the shellfish trade. They fished as far as Cornwall for crabs, Ireland for lobsters and in the North Sea for oyster. The shellfish were caught in large boats with two watertight bulkheads and a perforated mid section which allowed seawater to flow through and keep the fish alive. They were kept for sale in the lobster pond on the waterfront, which is clearly marked on older maps. Warsash became a popular destination for day trippers and was famous for its crab teas. Local houses and restaurants, including The Rising Sun, catered for up to 200 people a day at the height of the trade.

3.8 Prior to enclosure in 1864 a large amount of land at Warsash was common land. Following enclosure, large areas were brought into productive use as part of the wider strawberry growing industry that included much of Locks Heath, Sarisbury and Warsash. The strawberries were shipped to markets from Swanwick station.

3.9 Towards the end of the Second World War Hampshire became the focus of preparations for the Normandy invasion. The many inlets and small harbours, including Warsash that were served by the road and rail network in the Solent area were
ideal hiding places for men and equipment. British and Allied Naval Commando Units forming part of the Overlord invasion force left from the hard at Warsash on the night of 5 June 1944. A memorial commemorating this important historic event is located in the waterside car park.

4 DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

4.1 The street pattern formed by Shore Road and Passage Lane has remained relatively unchanged, except for the introduction of a new access through the housing estate to the east in the 1950’s. The waterfront area retains a distinct character which distinguishes it from the more suburban development to the east.

4.2 When viewed from across the river the settlement has a distinct character seen below an unbroken skyline of trees and dominated by the landmark buildings of The Rising Sun, Shore House and the Harbormaster’s office. Shore Road marks an end to the settlement and the beginning of the open Strawberry Field. From this point the river bank retains its natural character.

4.3 For appraisal the conservation area has been considered as two areas of differing character that combine to give it its special character. Shore Road and Passage Lane represent the built up element, whilst the open character of the Strawberry Field provides a vital setting for the waterfront settlement and a reminder of its original isolation as a riverside hamlet.

5 SHORE ROAD AND PASSAGE LANE

5.1 At the entrance to the conservation area the high ground affords important views of the River Hamble and Southampton Water across the strawberry field to the south. The land descends from the junction of Shore Road and Passage Lane to the waterfront.

5.2 Shore Road descends steeply to the river with a slight curve midway. Its upper part is characteristic of a rural lane, undeveloped on the left hand side which is marked by a hedge and bank. At its top Stone Cottage, sits on the corner behind a stone wall that predates the house of 1905. The wall was formerly topped with railings which were replaced by the present brickwork in 1944. Formerly part of the Warsash House Estate the house and the boundary wall are both important to character. The stonework and domed caps to the gate piers are a
characteristic estate feature which can be found elsewhere in the conservation area.

5.3 The terrace of small cottages that front straight onto the road contribute strongly to the character of the lower part of Shore Road. They are all included in the statutory list, numbers 58-66 dating from the 18th century and numbers 68-72 from the early 19th century. The cottages all have old clay tiles on their roofs and all but the first, which is stone, are finished in white paint or render. Apart from these common characteristics the terrace is not uniform, but steps down the hill with a variety of ridge heights, chimney sizes, traditional window types, and other architectural features. These create visual diversity and a unique historic character that should be preserved.

5.4 The Rising Sun is an important Edwardian corner building with a substantial gabled outbuilding to the rear. It replaced an earlier building, The Sun Hotel, which can be seen in old photographs. The current building has an interesting fascia sign made up of glazed coloured tiles on the Shore Road frontage, which reads ‘Ye Rising Sun’, and ‘Strongs Romsey Ales’. This feature contributes to the local distinctiveness of the conservation area. The Rising Sun completes the run of buildings to the bottom of the hill and dominates both its corner location and the waterfront.

5.5 On the opposite side of the road another stone wall encloses the Warsash Sailing Club, Shore House, originally a residence which was part of the Warsash House Estate. This exhibits similar Edwardian architectural features to the other buildings of the Warsash House Estate and is complimented by a well designed extension.

6 THE WATERFRONT

6.1 The waterfront offers fine views of the river and of Southampton Water across Hamble Spit. These views are an essential element of the character of this part of the conservation area, as are the activities, sounds and smells associated with the river. The Solent Way footpath runs along this part of the river bank between the hard and the low stone wall that surrounds Shore House.

6.2 The waterfront itself is dominated by the large car park north of the hard. Environmental improvements carried out to this area between 1998 and 2005 have significantly enhanced the
character and appearance of the waterfront. North of the car park, the site of the old lobster pond is occupied by dinghy parks and small scale marine related buildings. The small scale of these buildings is important as they would otherwise erode the open character of the waterfront which is appropriately dominated by the open storage of boats. The boatyards adjacent to the northern boundary of the conservation area contribute to the maritime character and continue the tradition of boat building and repair.

6.3 Immediately to the north of the Rising Sun there is a development of flats, the design of which relates poorly to the character of the area. Further north the large industrial buildings on reclaimed land at Stone Pier Yard fall outside the conservation area boundary.

6.4 Behind the frontage of waterfront buildings the remainder of the triangular piece of land enclosed by Passage Lane and Shore Road is occupied by modern bungalows. Trees and planting in their rear gardens provide a backdrop to the waterfront area and contribute to its character. These low lying buildings also allow views of the river from the open space adjacent to Thornton Avenue. Their scale leaves The Rising Sun as the dominant feature on the waterfront and permits the roofs of the listed cottages in Shore Road to be visible in views to the south. It is important to the character of the conservation area that the scale of these buildings is not increased.

7 THE STRAWBERRY FIELD

7.1 The Strawberry Field stretches south along the undeveloped coast and provides a setting for the riverside settlement. The setting of the settlement is further strengthened by the contribution of open land on its northern side. The Solent Way footpath follows the cliff top beside the river, from which fine views of the river and of the historic riverside settlement can be enjoyed. These provide a reminder of the original isolation of the hamlet.

7.2 The sudden contrast between open and built character is immediately apparent when entering the village by the Solent Way footpath and is important to the character of the conservation area. The low density residential development, set in large gardens with mature trees, that borders the field to the south and east is important to the setting of the Strawberry Field and the character and

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appearance of the conservation area.

8 TREES AND PLANTING

8.1 The abundance of planting in gardens contributes to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area; this is particularly noticeable in Passage Lane and Shore Road. The hedge boundary to Shore Road is a particularly important feature.

8.2 There are significant mature trees in the gardens that border the southern and eastern boundaries of the Strawberry field that contribute to its setting and to the character and appearance of the conservation area. They form an important skyline feature in longer views and define the edge of the valley.

9 MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

9.1 The historic buildings in the conservation area range in date from the C18 to the present day. The eight listed buildings in the conservation area comprise the terrace of cottages that descend Shore Road to the waterfront. They date from the C18 & C19 and form an important group. Later buildings in the conservation area include the Victorian former coal yard building on Shore Road, now successfully converted to a residential use. Also those with a historic connection to the Warsash Estate; the 'Rising Sun' public house, Shore House and Stone Cottage all of which date from the early C20 and have been identified as buildings of townscape interest. The historic buildings display a variety of architectural detail, traditional construction and materials, such as render, timber, stone, clay tile and local red brick. The preservation of these details is important to character and appearance.

9.2 A number of walls, both old and new, contribute to character and appearance owing to their design and materials. The retention and proper repair of traditional walls is important and the use of stone, unusual locally, notably in the garden wall of Stone Cottage and the wall surrounding Shore House adds interest to the street. The surviving dome topped stone gate piers are an important survival.

9.3 Traditional timber windows make an important contribution to the character, particularly in the historic buildings; these include both sashes and multi-paned cottage casements. Traditional
fenestration makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

9.4 Other surviving architectural details such as surviving historic chimneys pots, ironwork such as the gate to Stone Cottage and the tiled sign on the flank wall of the Rising Sun all add to overall character. The use of appropriately designed lamp columns also contributes to character. The opportunity to re-instate appropriate architectural detail where it has been lost should be explored where an opportunity arises.

10 SUMMARY OF MAIN FEATURES TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE

- The riverside setting and the public hard
- The listed terrace of cottages at the lower end of Shore Road
- The surviving buildings of the Warsash House Estate including ‘The Rising Sun’ public house, Shore House and Stone Cottage with its spacious corner site and enclosing wall
- The Harbour Master’s Office
- The D-Day Memorial
- The dinghy parks and small scale marine-related buildings on the waterfront including the site of the former lobster pond
- The enclosing stone and brick boundary walls, gate piers and hedges
- Views of the River Hamble and Southampton Water across Hamble Spit
- The character and setting of the open land to the south known as the Strawberry Fields
- The low cliff along the shore to the south
- Views of the river, The Rising Sun and the roofs of the cottages in Shore Road from the open space and car park adjacent to Thornton Avenue
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

11 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT

11.1 The management strategy sets out how the council aims to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. It sets out the procedures currently in place to manage change and proposes additional measures and opportunities for enhancement where these are considered appropriate. The strategy also considers wider issues such as additions to the local list, boundary review, monitoring and the availability of resources.

12 THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

National Legislation and Guidance

12.1 The current legislation that governs the historic environment is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In exercising its powers under the Act the local planning authority has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area and the management of development is a key function in delivering this statutory objective. The provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that relate to the control of listed buildings through the listed building consent procedure and the management of trees are also important in preserving the character or appearance of the conservation area. Current Government guidance concerning conservation areas, which are designated heritage assets, and their significance can be found in Planning Policy Statement PPS5

Current Local Planning Policy

12.2 The Fareham Local Development Framework will eventually replace the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review which was adopted in March 2000. A number of the policies in the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review that relate to the historic environment have been 'saved'\(^1\) and in time will be replaced by the new policies of the Local Development Framework. The Fareham Borough Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in August 2011. Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy sets out the policies of the Local Plan Review which have now been superseded. New development will be considered in the light of these policies.

12.3 This appraisal and management strategy has been prepared in accordance with national guidance as evidence in support of the saved policies of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review, policies contained within the Core Strategy and the emerging policies of the Local Development Framework for Fareham. As such the appraisal and management strategy will be treated as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Development Management

12.4 In a conservation area planning permission is required for a greater range of extensions, alterations and other development. Conservation Area Consent may also be required for the demolition of unlisted buildings and other structures. Listed building consent may be required for alterations to listed buildings. It is advisable to contact the Department of Planning and Environment for advice about the need for an application. It is an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot or willfully damage or destroy trees in a conservation area without the consent of the local planning authority and the local planning authority must be given six weeks prior notice of any such works to trees.

\(^1\) The Fareham Borough Local Plan Review expired in September 2007, but many of its policies have been saved as part of the Local Development Framework (Direction under paragraph 1(3) of schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)
12.5 To ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is given proper consideration in the exercise of planning functions the following approach will be followed:

- The evidence in this appraisal should be taken into account for development management purposes as a material consideration in support of the policies of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review and the Local Development Framework for Fareham.
- Specialist advice relating to the historic environment should be sought in the exercise of development management functions likely to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area and the architectural or historic interest and setting of its listed buildings.
- Specialist advice relating to the management of trees should be sought in the exercise of development management functions likely to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Effective liaison should be undertaken with other bodies, including statutory undertakers and other council departments who are responsible for, or undertake, works that are likely to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Prospective applicants should be encouraged to seek pre-application advice for development that is likely to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area and the architectural or historic interest of the historic buildings.

13 **ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION**

13.1 Permitted development allows a variety of minor alterations and extensions to be made to dwellings without the need for a planning application. The use of an article 4 direction would not necessarily prevent development but by requiring a planning application to be made allows proper assessment of its impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. There is no fee for such an application. It is recommended that the use of an article 4 direction is considered in Warsash to preserve the important boundary walls surrounding Stone Cottage and Shore House.

13.2 The formal procedure for serving an article 4 direction requires a separate period of public consultation on the detailed proposals.

14 **RESOURCES**

14.1 Current resources for development management, including enforcement, and specialist advice relating to the historic environment and arboriculture, including resources for the environmental improvement programme, are provided by the Department of Planning and Environment. The suggestions for enhancement of the conservation area that are recommended in this document are subject to the availability of appropriate resources in relation to publicly owned land or in other cases discussion with individual landowners where an opportunity arises.

15 **MONITORING**

15.1 Monitoring of change in the conservation area is considered necessary to enable the council to review the effectiveness of planning control over time and to address any need for action. A dated photographic survey, to be updated every 4 years, is recommended for this purpose.

16 **BUILDINGS AT RISK**

16.1 There are no listed buildings at risk in the Warsash Conservation Area.
17 **BOUNDARY REVIEW**

17.1 The local Planning Authority has a duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to determine which parts of the borough are ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. This includes assessment of the current boundaries of existing conservation areas. There are no boundary changes recommended for the Warsash Conservation Area.

18 **ADDITIONS TO THE LOCAL LIST**

18.1 The council maintains a list of buildings considered to be of Local Architectural or Historic Interest. There are no additions proposed to the local list.

19 **PROPOSALS FOR ENHANCEMENT**

19.1 The local Planning Authority has a duty imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area. This section of the management strategy updates the opportunities for enhancement identified in the previous assessment and includes any further recommendations for enhancement arising from this appraisal.

**Improvements Following the Last Appraisal**

19.2 Environmental Improvements were undertaken by the Hampshire County Council in the conservation area between 1998 and 2005. These comprised:

- widening and resurfacing of the entrance to the public hard
- construction of a boardwalk
- improvements to Shore Road Car Park and the setting of the war memorial
- reversal of the one way system on Shore Road
- re-surfacing and new lighting in Lower Shore Road

**Suggestions for Future Preservation and Enhancement**

19.3 The suggestions for enhancement of the conservation area that are recommended in this document are subject to the availability of appropriate resources in relation to publicly owned land or in other cases discussion with individual landowners where an opportunity arises.

- Review of signage at the junction of Shore Road and Passage Lane

20 **CONTACTS:**

20.1 Advice concerning conservation areas and listed buildings can be obtained from:

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