

Chestfield Conservation Area Appraisal



Canterbury City Council

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1. Introduction

This appraisal examines the key elements that contribute to the special architectural and historic character of Chestfield. The character of any town is determined by the topography of its site, the layout of its streets and open spaces and the age, material and style of its buildings. The combination of all these factors creates a special 'sense of place' that the conservation area aims to preserve and enhance.

Conservation Areas were first introduced in 1967 and are defined as "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance", Section 69 (l) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation areas are diverse in size and character, and it is the quality and interest of the area that is of importance, rather than just the individual buildings within it. Such designation gives the authority greater control over demolition, minor development, works to trees and advertisements. However, it also brings certain responsibilities. Under the terms of the 1990 Act, local authorities have a duty to review the extent of designation from time to time, to designate further areas if appropriate, to bring forward proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to pay special attention to the character or appearance of conservation areas in exercising their planning powers.

Chestfield was designated a conservation area on 10 October 1983. Chestfield is now a relatively modern residential suburb to the southeast of Whitstable. Originally it was agricultural land with a small farming settlement and was transformed in the 1920's and 1930's into mock Tudor style suburbia.

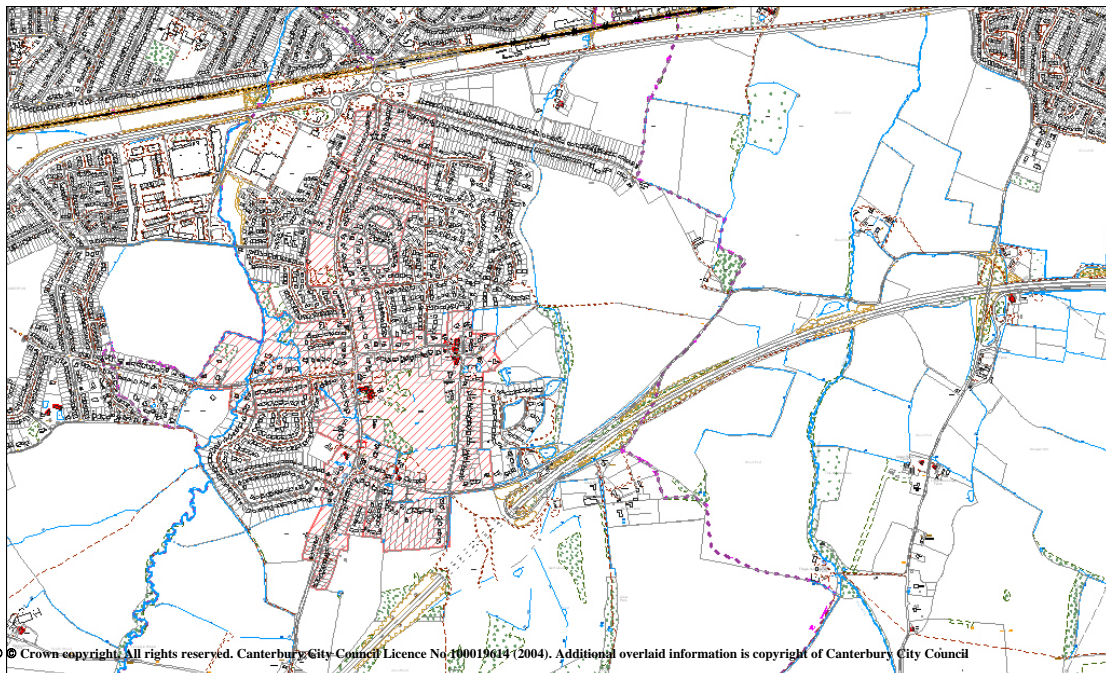


Figure 1: Conservation Area

1.1 The Purpose and Status of this Appraisal

The principal purpose of this appraisal is to provide a firm basis upon which proposals for development within the Chestfield conservation area can be assessed, through defining those key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character and which should be preserved. It supplements and provides clarity to policies contained in the Local Plan and the Local Development Framework, primarily those relating to demolition and development within conservation areas. It will therefore be a key document in

maintaining character and promoting appropriate, sensitive proposals in the conservation area. This document has the status of a background paper to the City Council's Local Development Framework.

Other purposes include undertaking a review of the boundary in accordance with section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires local planning authorities – *“from time to time to determine whether any further parts of the area should be designated.”* The appraisal also highlights particular issues and some of the elements that detract from the appearance or character of the conservation area. These provide the basis for potential future actions for improvement.

The City Council considers that the special interest justifying designation of a conservation area should be defined and analysed in a written appraisal of its character and appearance. The process of review has changed significantly since the first areas were designated in England under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and the current appraisal approach is one set down as a guideline format by English Heritage in various practice notes.

It is not just the local planning authority that has a role in protecting and enhancing conservation areas. The principal guardians are the residents and business people who live and work in the conservation area that are responsible for maintaining the individual properties, which together contribute to the character of the conservation area. Designation also raises awareness of an area's special attributes and can foster pride in the locality. Government planning guidance stresses that our built and natural heritage should be valued and protected for their own sake as a central part of our cultural heritage and that everyone shares the responsibility for environmental stewardship.

1.2 Policy Guidance

National Policy Guidance

Government advice on the control of conservation areas and historic buildings is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 12, the draft South East Plan (March 2006), Regional Spatial Strategy, Kent and Medway Structure Plan policies and Kent Design Guide provide the general strategic policy context under which the policies in the local plan function.

The new draft South East plan places importance on the protection of the historic environment and acknowledges the role that the historic environment plays in contributing towards sustainable development, regeneration, tourism and social inclusion. Policy BE7 requires local authorities to adopt policies and proposals, which support conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

The Kent & Medway Structure Plan policies also provide the general strategic policy context. Policy QL6: Conservation Areas, sets out specific policy with respect to conservation areas.

The Kent Design Guide provides a starting point for good design that is well considered and contextually sympathetic amongst other things. It emphasises the need for the layout and appearance of new development to be based on an appraisal of the existing character.

Canterbury City Council Local Plan

Paragraphs 6.83-6.93 of the Local Plan deal with conservation areas and include policies BE7, BE8, BE9 and NE5. Policy BE7 provides the primary guidance to developers about conservation areas.

The planning system has recently changed and ultimately the Local Plan will be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF consists of a collection of Local Development Documents will address a wide range of land use and planning issues.

2. Location, population and topography

2.1 Location

Chestfield is located 2.5 km to the south east of Whitstable between the old Thanet way to the north and the new Thanet way to the south. Herne Bay is 4.5 km to the northeast and Canterbury is 8 km south.

2.2 Population

The population of Chestfield ward in 2001 was 5,661 persons (2,751 males and 2,910 females). The ward boundary is however larger than the conservation area. Within the conservation area there are approximately 323 dwellings and assuming an average occupation of between 3 and 4 persons per house, the population of the conservation area would be between 969 and 1292 persons. The conservation area is some 62.2 hectares in area and the density of development is therefore in the order of 5 dwellings per hectare.

2.3 Geology and topography

The geology of the area is mainly London Clay where the clay cap of the Blean begins to run down to the coast. The resulting soil is heavy and poorly drained clay. Small streams flow across the London Clay towards the coast and the Swalecliffe Brook emerges from the west of Clowes Wood and flows to the west of Chestfield issuing into the sea at Long Rock, Swalecliffe. The land surrounding Chestfield is classified as grade 3 agricultural land. These soils support mainly cereals with some pasture.

The areas of open spaces combined with larger than normal rear gardens or encircling gardens around individual houses, amounts to approximately 43% of the conservation area. Open spaces and well landscaped gardens with matured shrubs and lawns reinforce the low-density, verdant, character of the area.

3. History

There is evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman occupation of the Chestfield area. The name Chestfield derives from the de Cestevile (or de Cestuill) family and is first recorded in 1242-3. This is a French name of manorial origin and could be a corruption of *chastel-ville* (old castle). Alternatively the name could have derived from the old English word Caet, or Chets meaning woodland. The name slowly changed over time to Chasteuile (1334), Chestvyle (1402) and then to Chestfeld (1486).

The Kent Lay subsidy of 1334 records the following Norman units of the Chestfield Manor estate, namely: Chestfield Manor Farm, Balsar Street Farm, Highgate Farm and Bodkin farm. These farmsteads provide the structure for the subsequent development of modern

Chestfield. Chestfield Manor farmhouse survives, as do Balsar Street farm (now the Golf Course clubhouse) and Bodkin Farm. The reproduction of an 1819 1st Edition O.S. map shows the limited pattern of development along the routes leading to the coast and Canterbury. The map gives a good picture of the medieval settlement pattern of the area with a number of individual farms along these routes (Chestfield, Bodkin, Balsar and Highgate). The two drove roads, on the line of The Drove and Canterbury Road can be seen and they provide the underlying structure to the modern settlement.

The Faversham to Herne Bay railway line was completed in July 1861. The line from Herne Bay to Margate was completed in 1863. Although this did not directly lead to the development of Chestfield the possibility of railway commuting was a factor in the subsequent development of the area.

In 1920 a local developer, Mr George Reeves, purchased Manor Farmhouse and 700 acres of farmland for £11,548. His vision was to develop a Chestfield Park Estate and he laid out roads and building plots. The early houses were substantial mock Tudor detached properties set in large gardens on Canterbury Road and on the Drive and the Drove. In addition a number of smaller cottages were developed round small greens (Green Leas and the Leas). The Golf Club opened in 1924 and was based on the Balsar Street farm complex. Reeves also planned to develop a riding school, allotments, a vegetable/local produce shop, tennis courts and a bowling green. One of the first new roads to be laid out was Grasmere Road and houses and bungalows were on sale from £320. The development of Chestfield as a low-density suburb is an early example of this form of development. By 1900 architects such as Baillie Scott and Voysey had designed individual, ruralised, Arts and Crafts houses. The influence of this style of housing quickly began to be adopted as the ideal for sub-urban developments. Hampstead Garden Suburb in 1907 and Welwyn Garden City dating from 1919 are the earliest examples of this genre. Chestfield is then at the early beginnings of the process of suburbanisation.

The Southern Railway Company helped to promote Chestfield stating that “ the locality is an attractive one for residents” (Lovely Kent, 1926). The Chestfield & Swalecliffe station opened in 1928 after lobbying from Mr Reeves and the possibility of attracting commuters gave a boost to the pace of development.



An aerial view of Chestfield as it was gradually being developed, taken in 1925, shows the 14th C. barn and Balsar Street farm (now Chestfield Golf Club House) and the north and south Oast Houses. That view shows the meandering Chestfield Road most probably on a similar alignment to that in medieval times.

The construction of the Thanet Way in the early 1930's gave a further impetus to the growth of Chestfield. A local historian, Mr R H Goodsall, wrote in 1938 that “Chestfield with its halt on the Southern Railway Line has ‘arrived’ and promises to be a flourishing residential area. Daily the town grows to east and west, and before long promises to join

with Herne Bay, a process which no doubt the Coastal Road (Thanet Way) will accelerate". In 1933 Mr Reeves gave a plot of land to the Women's Institute to allow a hall to be built. He stipulated that the hall had to be in the cottage style and if the WI no longer required the building it was to be given to the village. By 1939 Chestfield has its own entry in the Kelly's Directory. Mr Reeves is understood to have gone bankrupt in the 1940's and for several years after the War development was very limited.

In 1960 the Kent Development Plan allocated 101 acres for new residential development, together with 33 acres for secondary and further education uses at Chestfield. Development continued at a pace in the 1960's and 1970's and the population grew from 855 in 1958 to 2,527 in 1978. A total of 700 houses were planned for Chestfield and currently there are some 1250 houses in the village.

4. Landscape setting and open spaces

The irregular shape of the conservation area is determined by the historic road structure and open spaces. The built urban form, including roads and gardens, is approximately 57% of the total area protected by the conservation area, the remaining 43% being open space. However of the built urban form only some 10% is actual buildings, which gives a general indication of how much of the area is set aside for the landscape setting.

For example, some of the houses along Molehill Road fronting Chestfield Village Green have very long, rear gardens, backing onto farmland. The buildings cover barely 5% of the total site area. This is an extreme case, but there are many houses around the centre of the conservation area that only take up 10% of the building plot area. Taken collectively, the overall landscape character is of a 'leafy' verdant suburb set in a relatively flat topography.

There are a number of open landscaped spaces within the conservation area apart from the golf course that act as landscaped focal points amongst the housing. These spaces provide a pleasing character to the area and reinforce the overall visual effect of a well-landscaped suburb rather than that of a village as originally planned in the 1920's. Chestfield has grown much larger than the first idea proposed by the initiator, Mr George Reeves, and then followed up in a more unstructured way by others.

A number of these open spaces in the conservation area, together with the central space at Birkdale Close and the area to the east of Carnoustie Close are all protected open spaces in the adopted Canterbury District Local Plan.

5. Biodiversity

Existing biodiversity interest.

- The grass lawn in front of St Joseph's Church is designated as a County Wildlife Site.
- Ponds and rear gardens support populations of great crested newts. Great Crested Newts have declined significantly throughout Europe and consequently have been listed on Annex 4 of the habitats and Species Directive.
- The large gardens often with many trees provide important habitat for many species including the following species on the red list of species of conservation concern, Skylark, Song Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, Starling, House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Linnet, Reed Bunting and amber listed species Barn Owl and Mistle Thrush.
- The veteran oak trees on the Village Green are amongst the largest and oldest in the district and significant for biodiversity

- The stream, which flows through the conservation area, is likely to be an important feature for biodiversity.
- Larger areas of grassland on the golf course, the playing field and the village green are important feeding areas for birds and invertebrates.
- Bats are likely to use both trees and houses within the conservation area.

The large gardens, open grassland, trees and stream are most significant biodiversity features. Any development should involve survey and if appropriate mitigation for protected species.

The main opportunities for enhancement are:

- the management of grassland and semi-natural vegetation on the large open spaces, and,
- promotion of native tree planting especially oaks on council owned land,

There are also several areas of biodiversity interest adjoining the conservation area including:

- Grasmere Pasture a large area of improved grassland opposite the cricket field,
- Radfall recreation ground
- Convicts Wood SNCI

6. Character and Townscape

The essential character of the conservation area is that of a garden suburb with the landscape and open spaces dominating the pattern of development and the built form. The characteristic built form is that of two-storey housing. This form of development together with a basically flat topography increases the importance of trees to create visual interest and variety.

For an analysis of the townscape character of Chestfield the conservation area can be divided into five character zones, each with its own distinct characteristics. These can be defined by: the form of development (plot layout, roads and boundaries); the relationship of buildings to spaces (the contribution of landscape, trees and hedges) the public realm, building types, and materials.

6.1 Chestfield Road – south

The road pattern sets the structure of the area with the spine route of Chestfield Road running through the whole area from south to north. Records show that this route dates back at least 1000 years, serving a number of farms in the wider area. The key farm in the conservation area was Balsar Street Farm, the remaining buildings of which form an important group serving the Golf Club and act as a focal point of the area as one passes through.

The southern entrance to the conservation area is formed by a mix of bungalows to the east side of Chestfield Road and two-storey house to the west. These houses are all set back from the road frontage with verges, pavements and front gardens apart from number 141/143 on the eastern side which fronts directly onto the pavement creating some visual interest. The row of bungalows continues on the eastern side of the road until the Molehill Road junction. After this junction, heading into Chestfield the character of the area changes significantly. On the western side a mix of listed buildings and houses dating from the early 1920's create character. These properties are all set back from the road by large front gardens. However enclosure is created by mature hedgerows and trees

fronting directly onto the road. The pavement to the western side disappears as does the verge on the eastern side and consequently the road appears narrower. The road verge to the west is soft (no kerb) and there is a feeling of houses being set into a verdant, landscaped setting. Cherry Orchard to the west (just before the Molehill Road junction) has two half-timbered houses framing the entrance. Cherry Orchard itself is a wide concrete road with pavements and verges that make it feel wider than it seemingly needs to be.

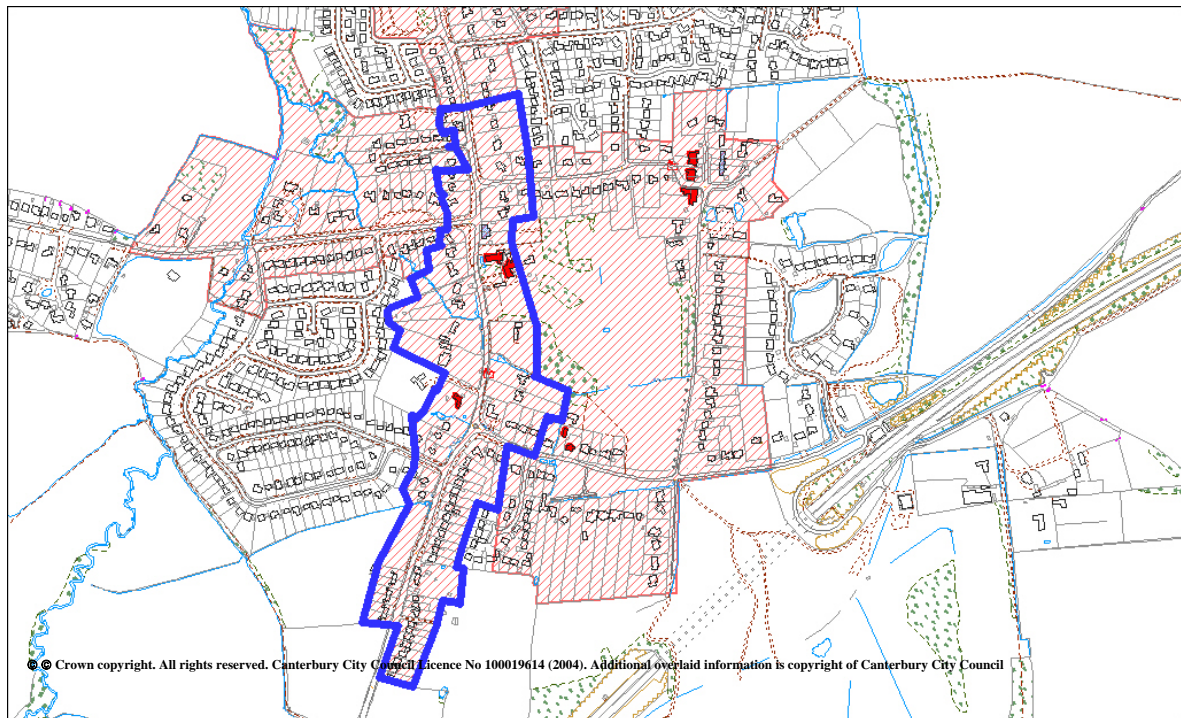


Figure 2: Character area 1- Chestfield Rd south

Continuing northwards into the heart of the conservation area the mix of hedges, trees, and large gardens continues. However on the east the Golf Course, and its car park, creates a major point of interest. Open views across the car park and golf course become possible and views of the wider area are possible. The remaining buildings of Balsar Farm have been converted to a Golf Course clubhouse and a pub (in the barn). This group of listed buildings are surrounded by a good group of trees.

The development along Chestfield Road northwards to Polo Way is of a similar character to that to the south of the golf course. The properties on the west side of road are set in more open matured gardens than those along the east side.





Key characteristics

- Mature landscape setting to the houses
- Large houses set in large gardens
- Houses dating from the 1920's generally half timbered, often very ornate detailing (decorative barge boards, gables, dormers, tall chimneys, clay tile roofs, ground floors constructed in rustic stonework, half timbering and/or decorative tile hanging)
- Later houses simpler with less decoration and not so flamboyant, but still have the same types of decoration as above
- Freestanding porches (in the style of lych gates) or garages are constructed backing onto the road frontage (or back of footway if one exists). The porch frames the main pedestrian path to the house
- Screening provided by tall hedges and trees with glimpses through to the houses

6.2. Molehill Road/The Drove/The Drive

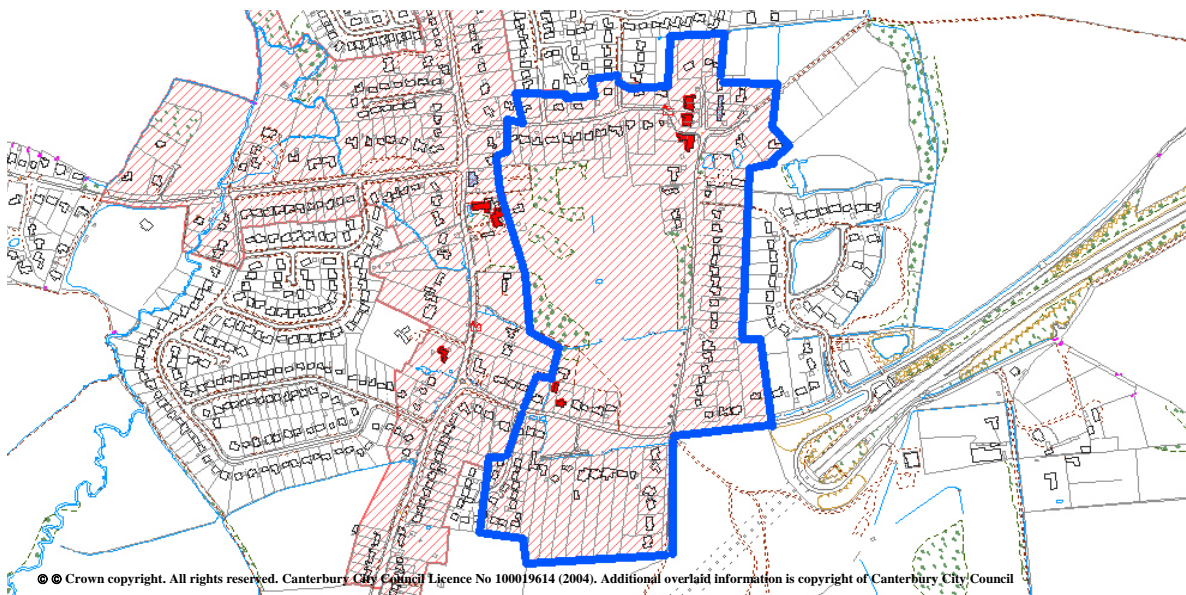


Figure 3: Character area 2 - Molehill Road/The Drove/The Drive

Chestfield Village Green is an important space linked visually and physically, but not functionally, with the golf course area. The 'green' is triangular-shaped with the widest section at the west end seven individual house plots from Chestfield Road. Around this important space on all sides are mature trees, many protected by Tree Protection Orders. Behind this tree screen is an eclectic mix of houses of varying sizes and architectural character. Molehill Road has a rural character; it is narrow with soft verges, an open drainage ditch on the southern side and vegetation growing right up to the road edge. The houses are all well set back and well screened behind mature hedges. Sparrer Court adds historic character to the area, a remnant from a bygone age.

At the eastern edge of the conservation area is the Drove, which runs north-south along the east boundary of the golf course. This was part of the George Reeves layout of the 'village' and is a unique feature of Chestfield. To the west are views across the golf course (a private space), a mix of well-maintained grass (fairways) and trees (individuals and groups). The properties along the east side of the Drove have a varied architectural character, but again, as elsewhere in the older parts of Chestfield they have well maintained and attractively landscaped large front gardens. The gardens visually compliment the manicured landscaped character of the golf course. Chestfield Farm still survives on the Drove towards the northern end as a reminder of the agricultural heritage of the area. The adjoining Little Granary is a single storey weather boarded cottage that survives as a reminder of the type of simply constructed housing that was common in the early 20th century.



At the northern end of the Drove is a group of listed buildings and locally listed buildings, The Manor House, Old Farm House, the North and South Tythe Barns, the Paddock, Paddock South (all listed) and the range of cottages formed by Sea View, Alcrest, Kennel Meadow and Huntsman Cottage (all locally listed).



The Drive contains several half-timbered buildings from the interwar period of development. The road is narrow, with a gravel surface, and has soft verges. Trees and well-maintained leylandii hedges informally front onto the Drive, some are at the road edge others set behind a grass frontage. The grassed areas are defined and protected by a variety of methods (stones, low fences and timber bollards). Towards the western end of the Drive, near the Canterbury Road junction, the grass frontages tend to be replaced by hedges and shrubs that visually make the road narrower.

Key Characteristics

- Large houses set in large gardens often with open grassed frontages providing an attractive setting
- Houses dating from the 1920's generally half timbered, often very ornate detailing (decorative barge boards, gables, dormers, tall chimneys, clay tile roofs, ground floors constructed in rustic stonework, half timbering and/or decorative tile hanging
- Later houses simpler with less decoration and not so flamboyant, but still have the same types of decoration as above
- Access roads have a 'rural' appearance, soft verges, informal tree planting, hedges and grass verges
- Screening provided by tall hedges and trees with glimpses through to the houses

6.3. Grasmere Road

This road is understood to be one of the first new roads laid out by George Reeves. It is a wide straight road with generous verges and large buildings plots.

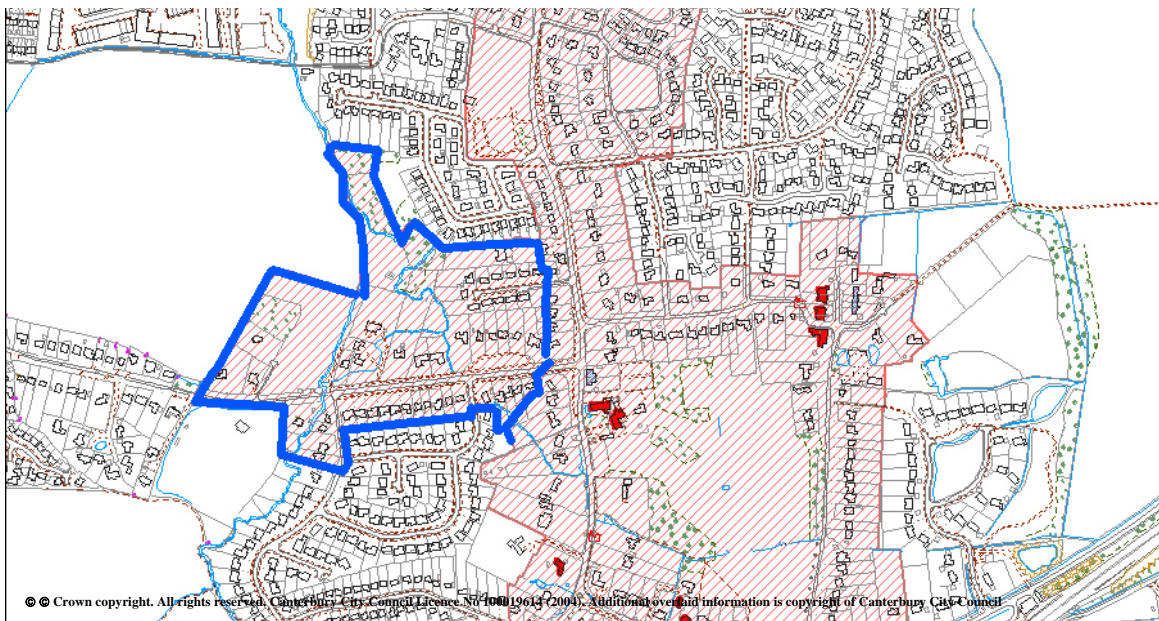


Figure 4: Character Area 3 – Grasmere Road

An area of open space and landscape value is located at the western end of Grasmere Road adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation area. This is the location of the cricket ground and it is visually and physically 'special' due to its entry point being over a small narrow bridge. This cricket ground is not within the conservation area but is an attractive landscaped area. Surrounded more or less by trees and shrubs. Beyond the conservation area boundary are views of open countryside to the south and a large open field to the north between Grasmere Road and Ridgeway. The narrow bridge over the stream carrying Grasmere Road to the west past the open space is with its dense greenery either side, is a visual pinch point of much attractiveness.

A further important treed open space is located along the western boundary of the conservation area at the end of Willow Way, (with no direct access to the road system), to the north of Grasmere Road and is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.



The visual attractiveness of Grasmere Road is in the result of all the properties being well set back from the road edge. The avenue of trees along the grass verges separated by a pattern of pathways and vehicle cross over points to garages and the open almost North American style of front gardens without the usual abundance of site boundary feature create a distinctive character. The linear landscaped effect is reinforced by the shallow crescent formed by a shared private drive setting the houses back from the main road allowing the verge to be much wider and thus intensifying the overall attractiveness of the road.

Willow Way is a short cul-de-sac of bungalows dating from the 1960's. The development is suburban and derives much of its character from the hedges and trees planted in front gardens. The block of trees at the western end of the street forms an important backcloth to the development.

Key characteristics

- Long, straight, wide road with generous verges leading to the narrow pinch point over the stream
- Large front gardens with an open plan appearance, some properties served of a secondary access drive set behind a crescent shaped open space
- Mix of two storey and single storey houses, many finished in white render with steeply pitched tiles roofs that give an 'arts and crafts' appearance
- Character to the west of the bridge changes to a more 'rural' character with a mix of open spaces and houses
- At the western end of the conservation area the contribution of the cricket club and the well treed open space on the northern side of the road form the character of the area.

6.4. Chestfield Road and the Leas

To the north of Polo Way/Laxton Way along Chestfield Road on its west is a large suburban public open space integral to the overall character of the area. The space is rectangular shaped area and is 150m from north to south. On its north, south and west sides, houses are located with attractive and varied landscaped front gardens, adding to the visual ambience. On the eastern side of Chestfield Road there is a row of distinguished looking houses of varied sizes, style and architectural detailing, all set well back from the road behind a landscaped grass verge and footpath. The front gardens of these houses intensify the overall visual effect of this open space, albeit that it is cut through on its east side by the main road.

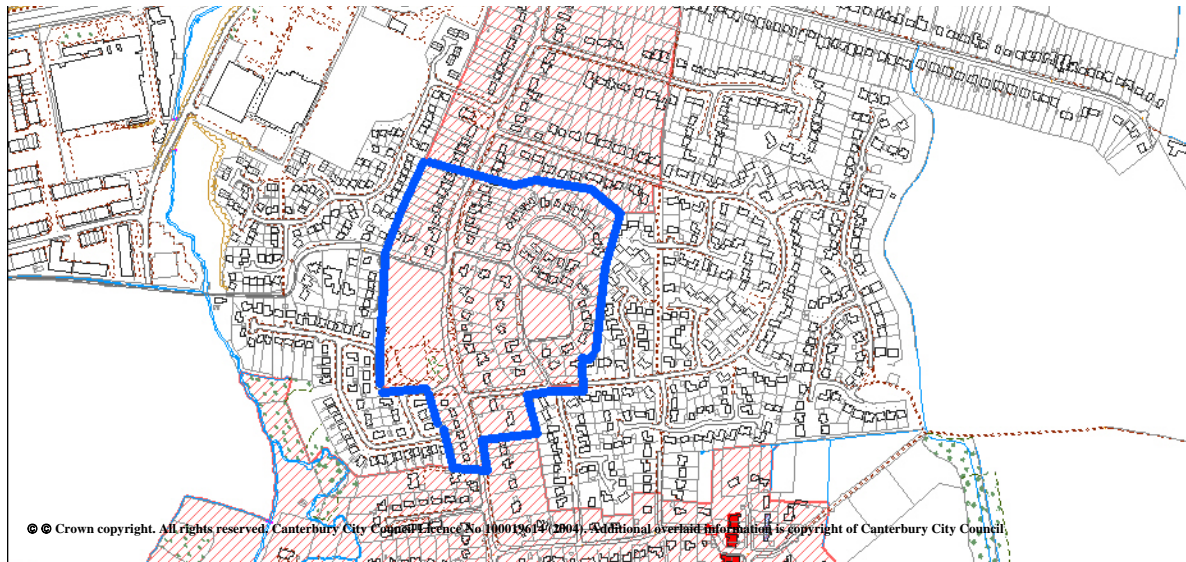


Figure 5: Character Area 4 – Chestfield Rd and the Leas

To the northeast the road pattern is more organic in form than elsewhere. The Leas on the eastern side of Chestfield Road leads to two substantially sized open spaces, Green Leas to the northeast and Fairlawn to the southeast. The latter links up with The Leas which joins up with Polo Way, a main road serving a large suburb area of housing beyond the conservation area to the east. Green Leas is oval shaped, which gives it a special character and the other to the south, Fairlawn is more or less square shaped on plan. These open spaces are an integral part of the plan form for the area. Beyond this further to the north, there is residential development without open spaces as focal points or, indeed, the same low-density, well landscaped character that pertains elsewhere.



Within the residential areas to the beyond the conservation area boundary to the north-west, north-east, east and south-east, the density of bungalows and houses is higher with smaller plot sizes and properties set closer together and arranged into numerous cul-de-sac groups. The architectural styles, size of gardens and the less lush landscaping, means that these areas are not considered having the special interest to merit conservation area status.

Key Characteristics

- Dwellings fronting or grouped around green spaces
- Front gardens defined by picket fencing and/or hedges
- Mix of property types, one and two storey. Majority of properties on Green Leas are single storey
- Many properties in white render with half timbering or with tile hanging
- Historic street lights are located round the green spaces
- Several properties have freestanding porches or gates (in the style of lych gates) to frame the pedestrian path to the house.

6.5. Chestfield Road – north

The residential development to the north of the Ridgeway is not the same quality or character as that in the adjoining areas to the south, and does not have the landscaped setting and built form of the earlier housing built in the Drove or Molehill Road. There are, however, one or two exceptions at the northern end of the conservation area and near to the Women's Institute hall. The housing is pre-dominantly bungalows and the landscaping is more formal and sub-urban. St. Joseph's Catholic Church (a modern church on the west side) dating from 1964 is opposite Share and Coulter Road.

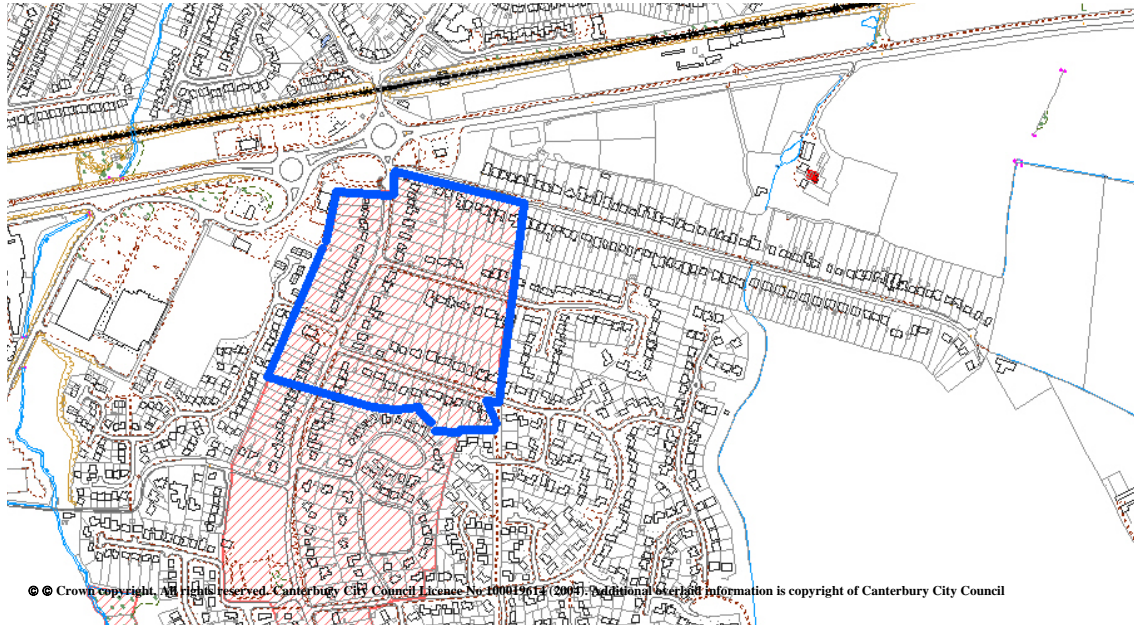


Figure 6: Character Area 5 – Chestfield Road north

This northern part of the conservation area up to the link with Thanet Way was included because it forms an entry point into Chestfield, rather than for any special architectural or landscape value. An early photograph of a general view from the Chestfield and Swalecliffe station looking across the Thanet Way roundabout at the junction with Chestfield Road, illustrates the early form of the area. While including some houses in the mock Tudor style on the eastern side of the road its intrinsic value is as the initial entry point into Chestfield from the north.



Key characteristics

- Single storey development, detached bungalows set in open plan gardens
- Front gardens defined by low boundary walls or fences
- Some properties with half timbering

7. Key buildings

There are three groups of important listed and locally listed buildings in the conservation area. They are located on Chestfield Road, at the junction of the Drive/Drove and in Molehill Road.

On Chestfield Road are the Old Dower House (Balsar Farm) group. The Club House group centres on the Old Dower House located well back from Chestfield Road. This building was formerly a farm house and is a 15th C. timber-framed building with a centre and 2 slightly projecting wings rebuilt in red brick on the ground floor. Its function now as the Club House is reputedly to be the oldest in the country.

Initially when the golf course was constructed in 1924, the nearby 14th C. barn was used as the Club House. This is now a bar and restaurant, and because of its late medieval origins, it is Listed Grade II. This building is set in front of the main Club House and perpendicular to it on site plan, with its hipped ended thatched roof quite close to the back of pavement and is an important statement of historical form in the street.

In the early days of the Golf Club the farmyard appearance was still in existence and an early photograph of the barn and the open thatched animal and storage shelter opposite on the south side of the main building, shows how rugged the setting was. The thatched outbuilding is now the club offices and a Golf Pro's shop with the main members and visitors' car park on its south side parallel to the road.

To complete this group is the locally Listed Oasthouse. This is a prominent streetscape building, but one that has been 'quirkily' altered into two houses in the eccentric architectural style prevalent in the area.

The second, larger, group of historical interest and a focal point in the area is the group of buildings centred on the Manor House attached to the Old Farmhouse. This building is a dominant feature at the junction of The Drive and the Drove. To the north of the Drive is the North and South Tythe barn now two houses, but at one time, a 15th C. large multi-bay barn. To the south is another large barn-like building, which also shows evidence of being 15th C. in origin with a steep tiled roof partially thatched. The building is split into The Paddock and The Paddock South, the latter sited virtually at the road edge.

Associated with the pair of 'barn' houses is a Grade II Gas Lantern and Column. Across from the north and south barn houses there is a locally Listed row of 4 cottages, Seaview at the north end, Alcrest and Kennel Meadow Cottage in the centre and Huntsman's Cottage at the south end. To the north of this historic group of the cul-de-sac end of The Drive there are 4 properties completing the streetscape of this area. All are set in a spacious landscaped setting.

The third group of listed are located on the north side of Molehill Road opposite the village green. They are Molehill Cottage and Sparrer Court. Molehill Cottage in particular has as an entrance gateway building, a thatched roof open timber framed structure that screens the main cottage from the road, but with its white horizontal bar small gate with matured hedges both sides, and this is a characteristic that typifies much of the earlier development of the 'village'.

A further listed building of note is No.88 Chestfield Road (Shepherd's Cottage). This 17th C. Grade II Listed Building is set in very spacious grounds well treed and a building of much character.

The local building materials include Kent peg tile roofs, thatch, tile hanging, half timbering (mock Tudor style), rendered panels, and painted brickwork. In addition there are several buildings that have stonework mixed with brickwork to the ground floor (mainly soft red/brown bricks). In the more modern housing areas there is weatherboarding and some roofs in slate.

7.1 Listed buildings

The following listed buildings and structures contribute to the special character of the Chestfield Conservation Area. These buildings were listed in May 1977 unless an alternative date is shown; all the buildings are grade II.

Chestfield Road:

- Chestfield Golf Club house – listed in 1951
- Chestfield Barn
- No.88 Shepherd's cottage

The Drive:

- The Old Farm House
- North and South Tythe Barn
- Gas lantern west of North and South Tythe Barn
- The Paddock and Paddock South

The Drove:

- The Manor House

Molehill Road:

- Molehill cottage
- Sparrer Court

In addition to the statutory listed buildings above the Government's listed building inspectors identified the following buildings as being of local interest in 1977:

- Chestfield Road
- The Oast (North Oast and South Oast)
- The Drive
- Seaview, Alcrest, Kennel Meadow cottage and Huntsman Cottage

Apart from the Listed and locally listed buildings mentioned above there are other buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and which the City Council would not wish to see demolished as their removal would harm the character of the conservation area. These are shown on the accompanying map.

8. Conservation area management

8.1 Pressures and issues

The management issues facing the Chestfield conservation area are summarised in the SWOT analysis below:

Strengths

- Contribution of the natural and man-made landscape to the setting of the Chestfield Conservation area.
- Varied but harmonised townscape, notably at the central area around the golf course.
- Historic street furniture such as the Gas Lanterns in key areas.
- Protection afforded to the conservation setting by designated areas of special landscape value.
- Protection afforded to certain notable buildings by designations such as Listed Building status and locally Listed status.
- Tree Preservation Orders contribute towards the protection of the landscape elements of the Conservation area.
- Sympathetically planned road pattern.

Weaknesses

- Sporadic 1960s/1970s buildings intrude unsympathetically into the historic townscape.
- The level of unsympathetic development is such that the positive features of the environment are not continuous as they are very frequently interrupted by developments that have a neutral, or sometimes a negative, effect on the area.
- Traffic flow from Thanet Way leads to noise and safety issues.
- Some areas of housing in later developed areas, lack the quality of building design, streetscape and landscape character, evident in the earlier residential areas entering and leaving the central Golf Club and course orientated main 'village' area.

Opportunities

- The cricket ground area – at present this is not included in the Conservation area. This results in an unnatural break in the existing Conservation area between the open land and housing group associated with it to the north of Grasmere Road and the cricket ground. It is therefore recommended to include this area in the Conservation area.

Threats

- Untidy street furniture.
- Traffic and noise from Thanet Way.

8.2 Management Issues

Following on from the Appraisal and SWOT analysis, several recommendations for the future management of the conservation area are proposed:

- Access along footpaths, throughout the area, should be enhanced, whilst ensuring that the tranquil rustic feel of the area is retained.
- It is considered important to protect the area of the cricket ground as indicated on the map below. This could be included in the conservation area, which would ensure continuity of the conservation area, and to act as a basis for ensuring enhancements to this area are sensitive to the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area.
- The northern and southern sections of the residential area, have either suffered many modern changes, or are simply modern developments (as discussed above) and could be removed from the conservation area as indicated on the map below.

At this stage a boundary change is not being proposed but may come forward at the next review period after further consultation with Councillors and the public.

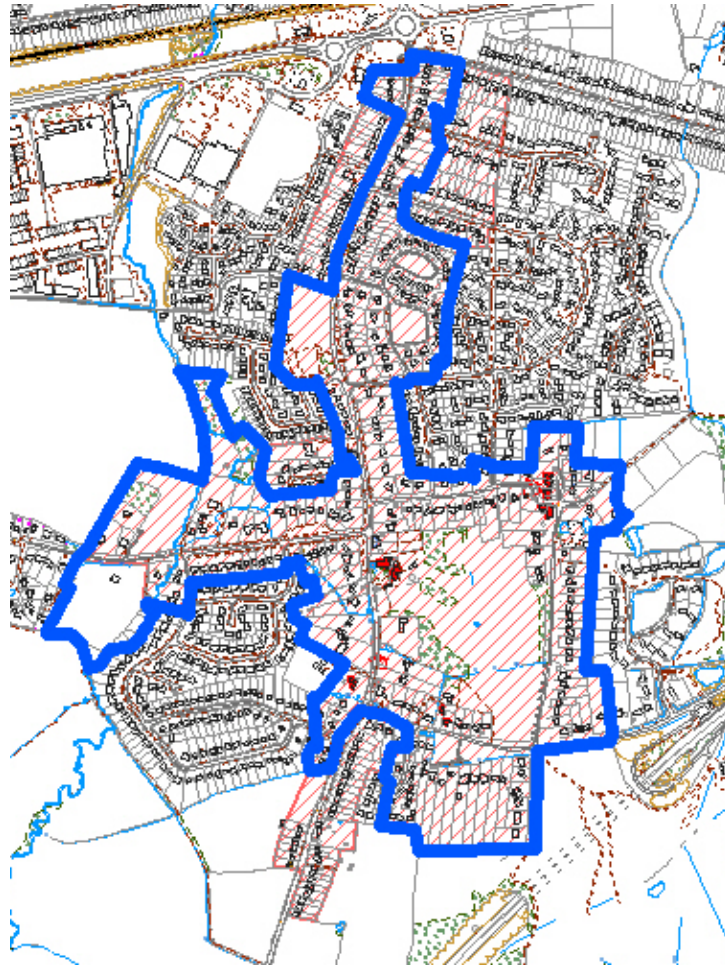


Figure 7: Possible areas for review of the conservation area boundary - shown by blue line

9. Statement of Consultation

A copy of the draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Chestfield Conservation Area was sent to all property owners, local councillors, the Parish Council and interest groups within the Chestfield Conservation Area. The period for consultation was 3rd August 2007 and finished on 28th September 2007 and comments received after that date were also considered. Thirteen responses were received.

The draft Conservation Area Appraisal and a report including the summarised responses from the consultation were reported to the Canterbury City Council Whitstable Area Members Panel on 12 November 2007. All persons who responded to the consultation made aware of the fact that they could speak at the meeting.

The Conservation Area Appraisal was amended in light of the consultation and presented to the Canterbury City Council's Development Control Committee on 11 December 2007 along with a summary of all responses received.

The Development Control Committee approved the Conservation Area Appraisal as a material consideration for development control purposes and a background paper to the local plan.