

HUNSTANTON having a firm sandy beach, with much beautiful scenery in the vicinity, it offers many temptations as a bathing place, though it has yet only two or three private lodging houses, and a public-house.

WILLIAM WHITE 1845

INTRODUCTION

A Conservation Area - "An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

The conservation of the historic environment is part of our quality of life, helping to foster economic prosperity and providing an attractive environment in which to live or work. The Borough Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of West Norfolk's historic built environment and significant parts of it are designated as conservation areas.

Conservation areas were introduced by the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Local Authorities were required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest, whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as conservation areas. This duty is now part of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act which also requires the review of existing conservation areas and, where appropriate, the designation of new ones. The quality and interest of a conservation area depends upon a combination of factors including the relationship and architectural quality of buildings, materials, spaces, trees and other landscape features, together with views into and out of the area.

The Old Hunstanton Conservation Area was designated in 1977. This document highlights the special qualities that underpin the character of the conservation area, justifying its designation. It also seeks to increase awareness of those qualities so that where changes to the environment occur, they do so in a sympathetic way without harm to the essential character of the area. This type of assessment has been encouraged by recent Government Advice (PPG15) and it will eventually form supplementary planning guidance to those policies in the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan aimed at protecting the overall character of conservation areas. In particular, the guidance will supplement the Local Plan policies which deal with demolition and new development within the conservation area and new development on land adjoining the conservation area which might affect its setting or the views in or out of the area.

This character statement does not address enhancement proposals. Community led enhancement schemes will be considered as part of a separate process.

SETTING AND LOCATION

The Old Hunstanton Conservation Area spans two parishes. The area around the Church and pond is within the parish of Old Hunstanton. The area around Sea Lane and the A149 is generally known as Old Hunstanton but is actually within Hunstanton Parish. Although one Conservation Area, it gives the distinct impression of two different places in many ways.

ORIGIN AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Le Strange family established at Old Hunstanton by 1200. The parish of Hunstanton, including the decayed parish of Barret Ringstead, belonged to Henry L'Estrange Styleman Le Strange who was Lord of the Manor.

During 1835-6 he had renovated Hunstanton Hall seat of the L'Estrange Family since it was built in the late 1400s by Sir Roger L'Estrange. Gate house built in reign of Henry VIII. The deer park was extended in 1750 and again in 1900. In 1644 the then Sir Roger, planned to take the town of King's Lynn in support of King Charles I but his plans were made known, he was arrested, tried and sentenced to death. The punishment was commuted to life in prison and he was sent to Newgate jail from where he escaped in 1648 to live on the Continent. After the Restoration he returned to become a great political writer and newspaper founder. He was Knighted on the accession of James II.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW

The Le Strange Arms Hotel, at the northern tip of the conservation area, on Golf Course Road, is a centre of activity in the summer as the access to the beach is directly next to the hotel. The road curves around and trees and hedges enclose the lanes and block the view of the beach behind, with its dunes and beach huts. The Hotel itself dominates this area with its huge, but not unpleasant, extension. The front of the hotel faces away from the road and

looks over a large well laid out garden towards the summerhouse and the sea beyond.

Sea Lane is walled to the right and trees backing the car park to the left. The lane has a slight incline and has a sense of enclosure. On the west side of the lane are a nice group of small cottages.

Along Main Road and immediately in view from the top of Sea lane is the side of Lodge Hotel a listed 18th Century hotel. Main Road is lined with important unlisted boundary walls which are a key feature on the northern side of the road.

The last property on Main road within the conservation area is Caley Hall Farm House and outbuildings. Now a hotel it dates from 1648 and is constructed of knapped flint with galleting and some carstone dressings. It is barely visible from the road due to its boundary wall on both Main road and Waterworks Road, and trees.

The junction of Church Road and Main Road marks the end of seaside and countryside. The southern part of the conservation area is largely the grounds of Hunstanton hall. This area is quite different from the northern part of the conservation area. The small number of properties are less tightly packed and surrounded by fields and trees giving the impression that this area is more rural. The pond, with ducks and seat under the tree, on Church Road contribute to the small country village feel. St Mary's church is also situated in this area. The Churchyard wall runs for a long length along one side of the road and is listed. Steeply sloping roof is leaded and very noticeable, as it reflects the light. Generally this area is peaceful with very little traffic and not much noise.

At the end of Church Road is a gate house which marks the end of the village and the start of private property and the access road to Hunstanton Hall. The road is lined with hedges and trees so the Hall is hidden. The Hall itself is surrounded by a wall and moat dated 1622. It is a stunning building hidden away from the activities in the northern part of the conservation area. The hall is beautifully located in the park, and there is a very private feel to this area.

SPACES AND BUILDINGS

There are many small cottages which are very picturesque as well as a few modern additions, which in some cases sit well with their older neighbours and reflect some local character. There is a mix of materials and scale of cottages which ties the conservation area together.

Big Yard square of cottages which are set back from Main Road is very pretty and similar to Big Yard at Ringstead.

Caley Hall forms the end of the conservation area, the building is well maintained and is an attractive building and gardens. The railings with shrubs are an attractive feature.

There are many holiday homes with a recent addition being the conversion of the old garage block east of The Lodge.

The southern part of the conservation area included several listed buildings the magnificent Hunstanton Hall and St Mary's Church, a large number of the other properties in the area not listed but are still important.

LISTED BUILDINGS

There are 44 listed buildings within the conservation area. fall with the parish of Hunstanton, Statutory List revised in, and are within the Parish of Old Hunstanton, Statutory List revised in.....

Listed Grade I

- **Church of St. Mary**, Church Road. 14th Century Parish Church. Fabric by two members of the Le Strange family of Hunstanton Hall. Re-roofed and restored in 1860 by Henry Le Strange, developer of New Hunstanton. The work "was completed from the designs of that accomplished gentleman" and "carried out by masons and carpenters under his supervision". Similarities with St. Edmund's New Hunstanton suggest the involvement of Frederick Preedy, architect and Le Strange's cousin. Flint, stone dressings and lead roofs. North west tower. South aisle east window stained High Victorian Tree of Jesse by Henry Le Strange who painted the roof of Ely Cathedral nave. Mosaic on floor by Earp. marble stone and alabaster pulpit perhaps by Earp or Boulton of Cheltenham. Alter tomb of Henry Le Strange 1485, brass to Sir Roger Le Strange 1506 east window 1867 in memory of Henry Le Strange.

- **Hunstanton Hall, bridge, moat, garden**

and forecourt walls. Country House. Gatehouse 1487, wings c.1625-1640, alterations 1835, 1873 and 1879. Seat of the Le Strange family from marriage with the heiress of the Domesday owner until sale after Second World War. Inherited by the Stylemman Family in 1760. Henry Styleman (1815-1862) added Le Strange to his name in 1839. Gatehouse brick, wings chequer-work clunch and carstone. Returns carstone; 19th Century wings flint and carstone. Largely 2-storey moated courtyard house. Gatehouse and bridge, originally detached. To west, a 16th Century house burnt down and demolished in 1853 except for porch, now free standing, dated 1618. Courtyard formed by wings to north, south and west of gatehouse c.1620-1640. Perpendicular gateway block 2 storeys with parapet and flat roof. Central Gateway with 4-centred stone carriage arch with shields and clasped hands in spandrels, drip moulds above. 15th Century 2-leaf oak panelled gates. Ranges to north and south of gatehouse forming an enclosed court c.1625-1640 for Sir Hamon Le Strange (b.1583) a mixture of vernacular Gothic and Jacobean classicism, perhaps by William Edge (1584-1643), stone mason, and his family. At north west corner a domestic range dated 1873 with a single storey wall attached. Behind this block a two storey range of said to be the earliest part of the house and at the north west corner a Tudoresque single storey brick block. Service wing of flint with stone dressing dated 1835 with attics and gables dated 1879. Single storey "L" plan wing at north east. In all a highly decorative complex with mullioned and sash windows some with lead glazing bars, brick battlements, shields and spandrels, stone tracery ventilation panels, stone quoins and parapet string course. Two lead downpipes with monogram and date HS 1757. Attached garden carstone garden walls and parapet wall to moat dated 1622.

- **Detached porch in the Garden of Hunstanton Hall.** Former porch to the 16th Century range of the Hall dated 1618. Freestanding since fire of 1855. Stone chequerwork with stone and flint, returns of coursed carstone with galleting, clunch and brick rubble. Two Tuscan Doric columns. Freize with strapwork obelisks with masks. Central stone coat of arms and motto "Mihi Parva Teure."

- **Entrance Gate, courtyard, walls and barn to east of Hunstanton Hall.** 1623. Walls of coursed, galleted carstone with stone coped battlements. Brick arched entrance to park and opposite entrance known as the "Indigo Jones Gateway" but attributed to Thomas Thorpe.

Wrought iron carriage gates. 17th Century two storey stable block of coursed and galleted carstone, red pantiled roof

Listed Grade II

- **Gates and Gate piers at entrance to Hunstanton Park.** Gates, gate piers and abutments of random coursed carstone with stone dressings. Mid to late 19th Century, perhaps part of the improvements to Hunstanton Hall in 1873. High Victorian Gothic of severe military appearance with single arrow slits. Pair of boarded carriage gates and a solid boarded pedestrian entrance door with stone dressed gothic arch in eastern pier. They mark the termination of Church Street and the main entrance to Hunstanton Park.

- **Barn to the north east of Hunstanton Hall.** 17th Century barn. Coursed rubble carstone, rick and clunch dressings, steeply pitched red pantiled roof.

- **Stable court to north of Hunstanton Hall.** Dated 1873, perhaps by Frederick Preedy.. High Victorian Gothic in random coursed squared carstone. Red brick tiled roof. Single storey wings and stable court to north.

- **Game Larder to north of Hunstanton Hall.** Game larder in Stable Court to north of Hall. Century, Random coursed squared carstone, deep eaves and tiled roof.

- **Cottage to west of Stable Court, Hunstanton Hall.** Late 19th presumed contemporary with stables.. Two storey "L" plan. Random coursed shaped carstone, brick dressings, tiled roof.

- **Gate pier and wall 115 metres west of Hunstanton Hall.** Late 17th Century remains of formal garden laid out by Sir Nicholas Le Strange after his marriage in 1686. Classical style. Red brick with stone dressings. Garden wall to north face with red brick on east, squared, coursed carstone on west. Triangular copings.

- **Gate piers and wall at Hunstanton Hall.** Late 17th Century remains of formal garden laid out by Sir Nicholas Le Strange after his marriage in 1686. Gate pier red brick with stone dressings. Garden wall to south face with red brick on east, squared, coursed carstone on west. Triangular copings.

- **Nos. 1- 6 Big Yard, Old Hunstanton Road.** Range of 5 cottages originally barns. 17th and 18th Century with 19th Century details. Mainly carstone to west, chalk lump to east with brick dressing, slate and pantiled roofs with stacks. Casement windows. West gable return is brick rubble, knapped and galleted coursed flint with carstone chequerwork and heightened gable.

No. 5 built into former brick dressed cart entrance infilled with carstone.

- **53, 55 Old Hunstanton Road.** 17th Century House now a pair of cottages. Flint with brick dressings, and dog toothed eaves cornice. East gable has brick coped parapet, west gable knapped and galleted flint with carstone chequerwork. 20th Century red pantiled roof.

- **69, 71, 73, Old Hunstanton Road.** House now three two storey cottages with attics. Circa 1700. Flint, red and white chalk lump, brick dressings and red pantiled roof with three Norfolk ridge roofed dormers with casements. East gable with chalk quoins, brick eaves kneeler and coped parapet, west gable largely pink chalk with flint, brick kneelers and parapet.

- **Caley Hall Farm House, Old Hunstanton Road.** Now an hotel. Dated 1648 in south gable. Original house to east two storey with attics. Additions on north and west forming "L" plan. Knapped flint with galleting and some carstone, brick dressings, tiled roofs. Off centre gabled porch with arched entrance. Northern two storey service wing continuing to east with 17th Century two storey cottage of chalk with brick dressing. To west 2 2storey mid 19th century gabled wings at right angles in carstone with pantiled roofs.

- **The Lodge, Old Hunstanton Road.** Mid to late 18th Century hotel in two storeys with attics. Red brick fascade, carstone returns and rear, red pantiled roof. 20th Century flat roofed extension to east. Tripartite sash windows with rubbed brick arches with painted keystones,

- **Cliff Farm House, Old Hunstanton Road.** Mid to late 17th Century farm house in two storeys with attics. Groundfloor of coursed carstone with galleting, first floor squared and coursed carstone with galleting suggesting 18th Century heightening. Brick dressings and 20th Century red pantiled roof. Elaborate gables of carstone and chalk chequer work.

- **School and former School House, Old Hunstanton Road.** Carstone with tiled and slated roofs dated circa 1850 in Gothic Revival style. Two storey house to south, single storey hall school to north forming "L" plan. School room has bell-cope to east gable, casement windows with Gothic arched windows and buttresses porch at angle to house.

- **12 and 14 Sea Lane.** 17th Century cottages of whitewashed carstone, natural carstone and red and white clunch. Steeply pitched red pantiled roof.

- **16 and 18 Sea Lane.** Pair of 17th Century cottages of random material with red pantiled roofs. No 16 single storey only.

- **36, 38 & 40, Sea Lane. 35 Wodehouse Road. 37, 39 & 41 Wodehouse Road.** Two rows of three, and one single dwelling making an enclosed courtyard. All former Coastguard Cottages of squared and coursed carstone with hipped red pantiled roofs. Single datestone HS 1818 (Henry Styleman Le Strange?) at eaves level in No. 39.

- **Le Strange Arms Hotel.** Hotel dated approximately 1900 but with an 18th Century front pile. The two storey house is squared and coursed carstone with a tiled roof. The hotel is carstone with red brick dressings. Built in three storeys with attics and a slate roof. To the south is a set back two storey wing with a ground floor fascade and south gable of squared clunch with brick dressings and a carstone first floor suggesting a 16th Century date.

- **62 & 63 Church Road.** House of red and white clunch and carstone rubble with brick dressings and red pantiled roof. 62 to north 17th Century, 63 to south is an 18th Century addition and has a coped parapet the height of an earlier and steeper roof.

- **66 Church Road.** Late 17th or early 18th Century cottage. Rubble clunch with red brick dressings and red pantiled roofs. Two storey with single storey lean-to to north. Brick coped northern gable, later brick gable to south with datestone RB 1788. Church wall attached to south.

- **Churchyard wall, Church Street.** Part brick, central section of pebble flint with some clunch and brick, southern section of coursed clunch with carstone. Triangular section brick coped parapet. Central date stone 1773.

- **Monument to William Webb, St Mary's Churchyard.** Headstone 1784. Sandstone. Bas-relief putti with wings. Inscription: "In memory of william Webb, late of the 15 Light Dragoons who / was shot from his horse by a party of smugglers / On 26 September 1784 / Aged 26 years. Iam not dead, but Sleepeth hrer / And when the trumpet sound I will appear / Four balls through me pearced there way / Hard it was I had no time to pray."

- **Monument to William Green, St Mary's Churchyard.** Headstone 1784. Limestone slab. Segmental arched head, cherub with flower sprays. Inscribed "Here be the mangled remains of poor William Green an Honest Officer of Government who / in the faithful discharge of his duty / was inhumanly murdered / by a gang of smugglers in this parish".

IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS

The important unlisted buildings have been identified because of their prominent position, use of traditional materials, their character is substantially intact, and because they often relate to other historic buildings close by.

POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT

The Conservation Area is dominated by historic buildings in traditional, vernacular materials but there has been some infill development with modern houses and barn conversions.

TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

The character of Old Hunstanton Conservation Area owes a great deal to the use of local traditional materials in the construction of its historic buildings.

These materials include:

- Blockwork, coursed and random rubble Carstone
- Red brick
- Red pantiles, some slate
- Knapped flint, coursed flint
- Chalk lump, red and white
- Clunch
- Galleting

Hunstanton Red Rock. Rose coloured rock found between brown carstone and white chalk of Hunstanton Cliffs. Harder than white chalk but only used locally and even then normally mixed with other materials eg random mix with carstone, chalk flint or brick.

Rare example of red rock used on its own is in part of the walls of a house near the church in Old Hunstanton.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

There are no significant sites of archaeological interest.

DETRACTORS

The special quality of conservation areas can easily be eroded by seemingly minor alterations such as unsuitable replacement windows and doors, inappropriate materials or unsympathetic paintwork, removal of walls, railings, trees and hedges.

- Overhead wires, poles and other equipment.
- The large amount of traffic especially in the summer season.
- Signage.
- Double glazing and inappropriate use of non traditional materials on properties.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

The overall conservation objective is to protect and reinforce the established special character of Conservation Areas and their setting.

This will be achieved by:

- encouraging the retention and maintenance of buildings which contribute to the overall character of each conservation area, whether listed or not
- ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of each conservation area
- protecting the setting of the conservation area from development which adversely affects views into or out of the area
- the retention, maintenance and locally appropriate new planting of trees
- maintaining and enhancing local features and details which contribute towards an area's local distinctiveness
- working with the community to prepare schemes of enhancement
- encouraging the removal of detractors to the special character of each conservation area

CONTACTS AND ADVICE

Within conservation areas, a number of special controls apply and it is advisable that anyone proposing to carry out new development, alterations, extensions, installations or should seek advice from the Planning Department at an early stage. Special controls apply to the trees and some may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone wishing to carry out work to trees within a conservation area should therefore seek advice from the Planning Department.