

Linton Conservation Area Appraisal



Maidstone Borough Council
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LINTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

I Introduction

The Definition, Purpose and Effect of Conservation Areas

The concept of conservation areas was first brought into being by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, but the relevant legislation now is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. This act places a duty of local authorities to designate conservation areas where appropriate and defines a conservation area as "an area of architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

Designation as a conservation area being additional powers to the local authority. Briefly these include the control of demolition of unlisted buildings, more restricted permitted development rights for single dwelling houses and a notification system relating to works to trees now covered by a tree preservation order.

In addition to these enhanced powers, the local authority is also required when dealing with applications for planning permission to have special regard to the question of whether or not the proposed development would either preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area. There is a presumption that developments which would not preserve or enhance this special character should be refused planning permission.

The Purpose of the Appraisal

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time in order to consider the possibility of revising their extent and to identify changes and pressures which may affect the original reasons for their designation. In order that informed decisions can be made on planning applications it is important to identify the special character of conservation areas which it is sought to preserve or enhance.

The most appropriate form for fulfilling these requirements is the production of a conservation area appraisal for each individual conservation area. English Heritage published an advisory booklet on the form which conservation area appraisals should take in February 2006, and this current appraisal has been prepared in accordance with these guidelines. It is intended to identify the key elements which combine to produce the special historic and architectural character of the conservation area, to analyse how they interact and impact upon one another and to explain how the area has developed into its current form. It will also seek to identify pressures and developments which threaten the special character of the conservation area and sites and features which detract from its character and appearance.

The clear understanding of the conservation area's qualities which the appraisal will produce will provide suggestions for future policies and improvements as

well as providing a framework against which decisions on individual planning proposals may be assessed. These will be further elaborated in the future in a separate Conservation Area Management Plan.

History of Designation

The Linton Conservation area was first designated by the Kent County Council on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council on 4 September 1972. The area was again surveyed by the County Planning Officer in April 1974 with subsequent amendments made to the earlier area.

There were no individual designation reports for the conservation area, so the precise reasons for its designation are unrecorded. However, historically the area surrounding Linton Hill that runs through the designated area on a north – south alignment was settled somewhat sporadically with the earliest settlement site reputed to be where St Nicholas' Church is located entitled "Lilintona" circa 1100. To the east of this probable early settlement site is another site "Lodeinynton" circa 1313. To the west there is evidence of an ancient "royal forest" place named "Atte Snode" circa 1325. To the Southwest there is a moated site of circa 14th/15th century associated with a house and barn now know as "Bonfleur". These sites have survived under slightly different names; for example "Atte Snode" on Westerhill Road leading off Barnes Lane at the junction of Bonflower Lane to the south is know now as Snoads Hall. Loddington Lane, a north-south lane parallel to Linton Hill – which forms the eastern boundary to Linton Park, itself of historic significance and registered park – derives its name from Loddington Farm, formerly the probable early settlement site "de Lodeinynton"

The medieval Grade II parish church is the focus of a fine group of listed buildings and other buildings of historical and architectural interest. This concentration of historically important buildings along with the quality of many of the unlisted buildings in the general vicinity of the church and the homogeneity of the age of development in this essentially hilltop position is a primary reason for the area to have the status of conservation area designation imposed upon it. This group of buildings is set on either side of Linton Hill, a turnpike road leading from Maidstone to Cranbrook, and forms the core of Linton Village which in 1801 had a population of 590 rising to 733 in 1831 and in 1841 900 inhabitants. The parish in 1841 comprised a housing stock of 124 houses.

The village is pleasantly situated on the southern declivity of a hill commanding a fine view over a highly wooded countryside. The village centre is four miles south of Maidstone. However, leading away from the concentration of historic buildings just below the hilltop there are a number of 18th-19th and late 19th century buildings spread out in a loosely distributed linear form on the west side of Linton Hill, facing the open parkland of Linton Park on the opposite side of the road.

There are two defined groups of buildings along the full length of Linton Hill down to Redwall Lane which leads off the road at the foot of the hill towards the south west. The first group of openly distributed buildings more or less at midpoint on the hill is associated with Mullion Court, a late 19th century building.

The more evenly distributed group starts at the low point in the hill where Wheelers Lane spurs off it to the west leading to more modern and distinctly different groups of houses at Redwall Lane.

On the East side of Linton Hill more or less mid positioned between the aforementioned building groups is a lodge building entitled South Lodge. This is a gateway building of secondary value linking Linton Hill to Linton Park, a grade I listed building set centrally in Linton Park, which is not only in the special landscaped area around Linton Hill but also a registered historic park and garden.

Thus it can be construed that this overall grouping of historic buildings of various ages, arranged in linear form along the old turnpike road, now Linton Hill, and backing onto countryside of high quality landscape have formed the overall rationale for the designation as a conservation area.

Location and Topography

Linton village lies approximately 6 kilometres south of Maidstone. Leading from the area, Linton Hill connects to Cranbrook through Staplehurst 8 kilometres to the south.

It has already been outlined that the Conservation Area is sited on a hill which forms part of the Lower Greensand ridge. The northern part of the Conservation Area lies on a rich loam on a ragstone base whereas the land to the southern part is on Wealden Clay.

The overall topographic character derives from its hillside position with Linton Park forming the eastside boundary and open farming countryside beyond the western boundary.

Article 4 Directions

The character of conservation areas can suffer significantly from the cumulative impact of "minor alterations" which can be carried out to single dwelling houses as "permitted development" under the General Planning and Development Order without the need for planning permission. Such alterations can include replacement windows and doors and re-roofing in inappropriate non-traditional materials.

The Local Authority can seek to bring such minor alterations under planning control by the use of Directions under Article 4 of the General Planning and Development Order. A full Article 4 Direction requires the approval of the Secretary of State, but the Council can make an Article 4(2) Direction within a conservation area without the need for such approval. An Article 4(2) Direction can only relate to development fronting a highway, waterway or open space and is restricted to bringing under control specific forms of development within the curtilages of single dwelling houses.

There are no Article 4 Directions currently in force within Linton Conservation Area.

II Historical Development

Archaeology

Apart from the probability that there was a settlement in the area around St Nicholas' church circa 1100, there is no statutory data of scheduled ancient monuments within the designated area and no evidence of any systematic archaeological exploration.

Development History

As explained earlier the village of Linton is perched on a hill. Approaching from the Maidstone direction from the north, as you round the bend on the well tree-lined road leading to the beginnings of the steep hill you come upon the main village somewhat suddenly and unexpectedly. Extensive views over the Low Weald open up upon entrance to the village which add significantly to its special character.

Although the church is set back a few yards from the east side of Linton Hill and is on the top of a bank, it is above the average motorist or pedestrian's eye level as you descend the hill around the bend in the road. As a result, the most prominent building to be observed is the Old Bull Inn on the west side of Linton Hill opposite the church.

The few roadside cottages alongside the inn, which dates back to the 16th Century, do not directly suggest a large village. However, the village was significantly extended to the south in the 19th Century as an estate village for employees of Linton Place, now listed Grade I as Linton Park.

Around the general village core, there are 28 'listed' buildings including a telephone kiosk, a footpath and 12 monuments. These are intermixed with 10 buildings and wall structures of late 19th century architectural and local historical value, plus one or two 20th century buildings that make up the evolved village form. These buildings of varying forms and detailing were developed over time commencing in the 16th century but remain more or less unchanged apart from some modern extensions and associated garden structures and garages 400 years later; appended are a set of six plans showing the general progression of development from 1876-2005. What is clearly evident from all these plans is the consistent linear form of the village as it spreads out to the lower end of the hill characterised by tree-lined road side boundaries. The upper area is centred on the church and inn on opposite sides of the road; in this area there is less greenery but quite a lot of boundary walling which provides visual enclosure and the impression of a village centre, albeit very small in scale and proportion to the road that on its bending alignment bisects the area.

The church is a dominant building, (originally a Norman church), and is dedicated to St Nicholas. It is a neatly formed plain edifice building comprising a nave chancel, side aisles and an embattled tower surmounted by an octagonal spire with six bells – in the church and around it, there are a number of handsome monuments to the Cornwallis and other families historically associated with the area and in particular Linton Park, dating back to the 17th

Century. The land around the church defining the graveyard has remained more or less unchanged for 300 years.

To the north and east of this historic central area is Linton Park with its attractive well maintained meadows and treed areas served by a number of paths and tracks criss-crossing the parkland linking into the conservation area at various points. There are paths leading from the whole area on the west side of Linton Hill to the open countryside sloping away from the hill to the north-west and south-west as shown on the appended plans.

Historically although not within of the designated conservation area, Linton Park is a significant influence on the village. The focus of the park is Linton Park, which replaced an earlier house called Capell's Court. This was built in the 1730s for Robert Mann with additions and alterations, circa 1825 by Thomas and William Cubitt for the 5th Earl Cornwallis.

The building stands prominent in the countryside surrounded by the well wooded Linton Park covering an area of around 180 hectares. This important and influential historic building was listed Grade I on 25 July 1952. While not within the designated conservation area, it does provide a basis for the understanding of the historic evolution of the village by examining the wide range of owners going back to the 15th century. For example, Sir Anthony Mayne of Linton Place, who died in 1615, built 4 almshouses in the village. Eventually, Robert Mann built a seat in the Park partly on the site of the old mansion of Capell's Court. He resided there until his death in 1751.

The evolved mansion is a spacious edifice with a main central element and wings in the Grecian style of stucco finish (c 1825) under slate roofs. In the 1820s a terrace to "piano mobile" with a Coade Stone anthemion balustrade with arcading to the basement below was added. The whole building comprises many exceptional details. Doric pilasters, friezes and cornices, a 2-storey tetra style Corinthian portico with a moulded triangular pediment all of which aggregate together to produce a significant country house set in the midst of an extensive and finely wooded park. This 18th century landscape park was altered in the 19th century to provide the main more formal grounds over an area of approximately 40 hectares around the mansion. Distributed within the park area and at entrances to it are a stable complex and two lodges, one to the south west – on the east boundary of the conservation area, and the other to the north of the mansion. There is also a walled kitchen garden fairly close to the mansion off its north-east corner.

The development of this park stretches up to the east side of Linton Hill which is heavily tree lined, a thin strip of which is included within the conservation area because of its important visual contribution to it (see photos appended).

The park was formally registered in 1995. The western boundary forms an integral part of the eastern side of the conservation area and the early maps (especially those dated 1876-1895 and 1896-1898) show quite clearly that historically the area around part of the churchyard on its southeast and south side was heavily wooded. This wooded area continues approximately 10m wide on either side of a pathway leading down the hill from the churchyard. This pathway system continues southwards past the Linton Park lodge to the Redwall

Lane junction. This is a significant part of the conservation area and an essential visual characteristic which should be protected. Its overall greening impact sets the ambience of the area whether approaching it from the south looking up Linton Hill especially in the vicinity of the lodge (see photograph appended) and even more so further up the hill towards the bend in the road between Mullion Court and Toke Place on the west side where the treescape merges together on both sides (see also photograph appended). Looking down the hill travelling along the road approaching the bend in it round to the south east just past the lodge on the east side, the bold tree line strip is a notable and positive characteristic of the area. Again, looking down the road, the merging of greenery on both sides reinforces the distinctiveness of treescape along this linear stretch of the conservation area.

The importance of the park cannot be overvalued in appraising its relationship with the conservation area since the distinctive estate cottage development which defines the essential character of the southern part of the Conservation Area is directly attributable to the presence of the "big house".

In addition, the ornamental gardens centred on the main house but stretching westwards towards the church and churchyard setting and interlinking these areas by numerous direct and indirect pathways, the main ones connecting the church setting quite positively to the main house.

A further 120 hectares of parkland, woodland, and associated farm buildings and domestic land occupies the crest and south facing slope of a greens and ridge descending steeply at first, and then more gently as it approaches the levels of the river Beult Valley 1km beyond the site's southern boundary.

Closer to the churchyard and an important setting characteristic of the north eastern corner of the conservation area is the well-maintained and open farmland within the historic park – see a set of four photographs appended clearly illustrating the visual and functional value of this area.

The immediate setting of the churchyard to the north comprises a large car park area with an approach drive to Linton Hill close to the brow of the hill. This area is already within the registered Linton Park area and in an Area of Special Landscape Value where it is subject to planning policies seeking to protect it. The car park is relatively neutral in character but is positively useful functional space and given its overall landscaped character could well be considered to be included into the designated conservation area should the park be included.

To reinforce the latter view, since in the broadest sense the churchyard and its immediate environs is an important part of the conservation area, appended are three views of the churchyard looking towards the park.

III Character Appraisal

General Village Character

The general character is of a village form in two distinct parts; a central top of hill group of buildings on either side of the road and a lower long linear group tightly arranged on one side of the main road descending through it north to south with an abundance of greenery on both sides through which on the east side glimpses of the large park are available. On the west side views towards open countryside are further important conservation area setting characteristics, particularly at the higher end of the village.

The village core at the top of the hill comprises a fairly tight group of buildings. This is separated from other building groups by large areas of open space located at various points lower down the hill until it levels out to the valley floor to the south.

Travelling down the hill, approaching the building group associated with the Bull Inn just below the brow of the hill, views towards the distant open countryside are visible over the roof tops of this "gateway" group of four buildings, two of which are listed as having special architectural or historic character, namely the Bull Inn and the adjacent Forge Cottage and Milady's Forge House to the north. The Old Forge, shown as the smithy on the 1896-1898 map, is not listed and not of any particular architectural merit is nevertheless of historic value as part of the group and is connected at its northern end to a ragstone boundary wall with treescape atop it. This building and indeed the wall and treed area are not in the current designated area but are clearly integrated with it as the photograph appended illustrates.

Further down the hill, glimpses of the distant low lands are to be observed as the 5 photographs appended illustrate, some taken from behind "Ragstone" in the churchyard.

Between The Bull Inn and the Old Vicarage there is firstly a large area associated with The Inn behind a wall screening it from the hill. Immediately south of this relatively neutral space is the 19th century village hall. This boldly detailed building setback slightly from the rear of the pavement is an important contrasting style of building to the timber framed frontage of the old vicarage itself set further back from the road behind a ragstone boundary wall. Between the old vicarage and the village hall set even further back from the road is a modern house, Iona, which forms part of a small group of buildings well away from easy visual connection with the main thoroughfare.

The village centre can be seen to be set in this general area. Interestingly the Linton village sign post is located to the south east of the Bull Inn close to the village hall area even though the full extent of the built form of the village group down the hill towards Toke Place, comprising a number of architecturally interesting buildings. This whole group is dramatically separated from the next group of buildings around Mullion Court by a large, open landscaped area providing visual contact with the open countryside to the west. This "green lung" is matched by a further gap between Mullion Court and the linear group of

estate cottages further down the hill which terminate at Redwall Lane, the southernmost entry point to the conservation area.

Travelling down Linton Hill from the north or up from the south present quite different impressions mainly because of the curved alignment of the road which prevents a clear view from one end to the other. Because of this it is useful to describe the visual impressions of this journey.

Travelling through the area rising up from the south end there are first of all two listed buildings. The first one entering the conservation area just slightly northwards beyond Redwall Lane is Linton Cottage, a quite distinct architectural building form with its simple tiled roof and upper floor façade facing the road with Kent peg tile hanging, multiple paned first floor and ground floor windows. There are two lead-lined lead flat roofed dormers and at each gabled end there is a wide chimney stack. This building is quite different in character to the ragstone constructed gable fronted two-storey semi detached cottages along the road to the north. None of these most attractive and characterful buildings are listed; nevertheless they are distinguished by their bold gabled roof form, tall dominant moulded chimney stacks, attractive patterned bargeboards, dressed window heads at first floor level facing the Hill Road (see photographs appended of typical views from various vantage points down the Hill Road and up it to show the front and side gables to full effect).

Further along the road close to Wheelers Lane there is a small group on its south side comprising two modern houses and one building which is now listed grade II (namely Three Chimneys). It is of 17th century origin. Its bold locational value as a corner building acts a visual foil to the tight group of buildings on the north side of the junction between Wheelers Lanes and Linton Hill. This group comprises five buildings altogether, 3 facing Wheelers Lane of late 19th and early 20th century date. Two other houses to the north along Linton Hill fall into the same historic category and contribute to the built character of the linear form of housing along the base of the hill.

There are buildings along Wheelers Lane on both sides distributed unevenly up to a point where the Cornwallis Avenue cul-de-sac off the north side is located. All these properties fall outside the designated area and are not in any way distinctive enough individually or collectively to merit inclusion into the area which tightly follows a narrow form along Linton Hill with buildings on the west side and the treed boundary planting of Linton park on the east side.

Rising up the hill from the Wheelers Lane group of buildings, there is a large gap up to the point where another small group of buildings occurs comprising Mullion Court, The Old School House and The Cherry Patch.

To the southeast of this group on the opposite side of the road is the Old South Lodge to Linton Park. This building is of mid/late 19th Century origin but has in recent time had a modern flat-roofed two storey extension added to it on the south side which challenges the visual value of the lodge somewhat as often modern interventions can do. Nevertheless, this lone building along the eastern side of the hill until the main building group around the church is reached signifies the link between the park and the village and is of historic value.

Associated with the centrally located group of buildings focused on Mullion Court and South Mullion is the Coach House and Old School House to the north west and north respectively. At the rear of the Old School House there is a modern attachment.

Next to Old School House set in spacious grounds at a lower level to Linton Hill is Toke Farm, also a modern building. This building is set well back from Linton Hill. The setting of this building is very open and acts as a break in building development along the west side of Linton Hill. This spatial characteristic continues up to Toke Place and the Toke Oast building that form a group of interesting structures set back somewhat less so than Toke Farm from Linton Hill. These buildings are also set at a lower level than Linton Hill.

Along the frontage boundary of Toke Place, as in other parts of Linton Hill, mainly on the west side, there is a ragstone wall intermixed with fencing and hedges. Looking over this wall as one passes the spatial quality is quite dramatic with distant views towards the Weald countryside over the roofs of Toke Place and Toke Oast which are both sited significantly lower than Linton Hill. A similar characteristic exists lower down the hill where a more open vista to the Weald over and past Toke Farm occurs. These open gaps combined with the dominance of mature trees and hedges on both sides of the road are important characteristics of the area. This is further reinforced by the gentle bending of the road along its entire length thereby preventing the passer-by, whether travelling down or up the hill from being fully aware of what is ahead, except perhaps to the north of the Toke Place, Toke Oast and School House/School Cottage group where one's vision is lead up the greener part of the hill towards the main building group of the village core associated with the church, the old vicarage, the village hall, the Bull Inn and the Almshouses. This relatively compact group owes its overall character to the way in which the buildings respond to the changes in levels up the hill and the different forms and architectural detailing each one offers. These overriding characteristics intermixed with boundary walls, hedges and some trees all contribute towards the special interest of the area.

Village Analysis/ Approaches and Views

The conservation area in general is very rural in character centred on one main road. It is bordered on its east side by the grand country park which with its abundance of trees, especially those bordering the road itself sets the over-riding character of a village set amongst a dramatic green backcloth. The major built focus of the area is the village centre set either side of the steepest part of the road with the church on its east side sited on higher ground being a landmark building seen from many miles away when approaching the village from the south, south east or south west.

A high proportion of the buildings within the area date from the 19th century mostly built in ragstone with Kent peg tile clay roofs. This mixture of stone with its weathered finish and colour with the Kent Wealden red/orange clay colour to the roofs now in the main weathered to a red/brown gives a consistent unity of character. There are of course some earlier period buildings, the church in particular stands out as an important focal point.

A noticeable feature throughout the village is the varied sky line caused in the main by the buildings set at different ground levels as the village spreads out from its centre down to the flatter lower levels to the south. Roof materials assume special importance since many roofs are seen from above.

This skyline variation is reinforced by an abundance of very tall chimney stacks and by large mature trees.

Boundaries to properties marked by low walls mainly in ragstone are a further characteristic of the Conservation Area.

There are few negative features which detract from character or visual quality.

From the standpoint of land use as a contributing characteristic in the main, apart from the church the public house and the village hall, residential land use predominates; there are regrettably no commercial uses such as village shops and such like to add to the ambience generally. A dominant feature really is the heavily trafficked Linton Hill itself. Fortunately, due to the curvilinear alignment and steepness in parts, its impact is softened somewhat. Nevertheless, it is an important route into Maidstone from the south and its heavy vehicular use does detract from the ambience of the village and results in a barrier to pedestrian movement.

From the north where Linton Hill joins up with Heath Road the dominant character is of woodland on the east side and to the west some buildings, a farm and boundary walling with trees behind. The road quickly moves to a change in level and it is at this point an impression of passing into a strongly wooded area is obtained. Moving down the hill towards its steepest point views over the buildings that make up the village centre towards the Weald in the far distance is a very special characteristic of the area. Views as mentioned earlier of the open countryside can be glimpsed at various points along the Hill Road towards the south as one approaches the bottom of the hill and towards the west through gaps between building groups.

Detailed Analysis and Description

A detailed description of all buildings and sites within the Conservation Area follows. These descriptions are based on examination from the road and historic map analysis. Buildings have not been examined internally or from non-public viewpoints.

Buildings and structures have been assessed according to their value to the character of the Conservation Area. They have been graded as follows: -

- Essential - buildings which because of their high historic or architectural interest or townscape function must be retained.
- Positive - buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and interest of the Conservation Area and whose retention should be encouraged wherever possible. Some buildings in this grade may have suffered from unsympathetic alteration but could be restored to their original appearance relatively easily.

- Neutral - buildings which do not harm the character of the area but whose retention is not necessary.
- Negative - buildings which harm the area's character and where redevelopment would be advantageous.

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
Nos. 1-5 (inclusive) The Almshouses	Listed Grade II	Row of single storey Almshouses. Mid C19 origin. Constructed in uncoursed ragstone with ashlar dressings. Plain tile roof. E-plan with only slightly projecting wings. Broader central wing comprises 2 gables. Attractive cusped bargeboards with moulded finials and pendants to 4 front gables and to slight projection to centre of right return elevation. Roof of main range carried down to rustic posts, forming shelters between wings. Regular 6 window front of one canted bay window to each outer wing, one 3 light leaded casement with top lights to each central gable and 2 similar 2 light casements between wings. 4 ribbed 4 centred arched doors, one to side of each wing, beneath the shelters. Half-glazed door to right return elevation. Raised blank stone shield to each outer gable and recessed rectangular panel to each central gable. Rear return wing to right. (founded on this site by Sir Anthony Mayne, 1611).	Essential
Path running straight from road to within about 1½ metres of west doorway of church of St Nicholas, with curving branch running in front of Almshouses	Listed Grade II	Path. C19 or early C20. Stone setts, evenly laid, with narrow border forming path about 1½ metres wide.	Positive
Church of St Nicholas	Listed Grade II*	Parish church C14 and C15. Alterations and additions of 1860 by R.C. Hussey in a C15 style. Constructed of ragstone, with plain tile roof. Comprising a nave, south aisle, south porch, chancel, south	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		chancel chapel and north chancel chapel. This nave and south aisle was extended to the west, the north aisle and north west tower were added in 1860.	
East side St Nicholas church churchyard monuments Monument of Margaret Avenell about 2.5 metres north of the vestry of the church	Listed Grade II	In the churchyard there are a number of historical monuments which contribute to the character and are essential to the setting of the church. This monument is a table tomb (late c17 or early c18) in stone on a rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth, corniced lid and moulded side panels.	Essential
Monument to Caroline Cornwallis about 40 metres south of chancel of the Church	Listed Grade II	This monument is early to mid C19 in stone with a square plinth with moulded base and cornice, surmounted by gadrooned urn. Inscription to Caroline Frances Cornwallis, d. 1838.	Essential
Monument to Stephen Dartnall about 5 metres south of the south chapel of the Church	Listed Grade II	This is another table tomb. Early c19 statue in stone, on rectangular stone base, with moulded (1823) plinth, corniced lid and moulded side panels.	Essential
Monument to Sophia de Brette about 23 metres south-east of chancel of the Church	Listed Grade II	This table tomb is early to mid C19 in stone, (1833) on rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth and corniced lid. Recessed side panels, each with 2 narrow moulded panels. Surrounded by stone kerb, formerly railed.	Essential
Monument about 3 metres south of the porch of the Church	Listed Grade II	This table tomb monument is late c18 or early c19 in stone on a rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth and corniced lid. Moulded side pilasters with gadrooned bases. Fielded inscription panel with concave corners.	Essential
Monument about 2 metres north of chancel of the Church	Listed Grade II	Mid C18 table tomb in stone, on a rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth and corniced lid. Recessed inscription panels. Festooned side panels. Formerly railed. Date of death 1765.	Essential

Monument against north wall of tower of church	Listed Grade II	This table tomb is late c18 in stone, on a rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth, corniced lid and unadorned side pilasters.	Essential
Monument about 6.5 metres north west of the tower of the Church	Listed Grade II	This early to mid c18 table tomb is in stone, on a rectangular stone base, with moulded plinth, corniced lid and plain side panels.	Essential
Monument to George Maytham about 6 metres south of south aisle of the Church	Listed Grade II	This table tomb is late c18 or early c19 in stone, on a rectangular stone base, with moulded stone plinth and corniced lid. Moulded side pilasters. To George Maytham. Inscription barely legible at time of re-survey.	Essential
Monument to Thomas Paul about 6 metres east of chancel of the church	Listed Grade II	This headstone is mid c17 in stone with a shaped double head, with face to left and hour glass to right. Right side to Thomas Paul, left side to wife.	Essential
Monument to Richard Rich is about 5.5 metres south of east end of south aisle of the Church	Listed Grade II	This table tomb (late c18) in stone with moulded plinth, corniced lid and dressed stone side panels.	Essential
Monument to Thomas Watkins about 2.5 metres north of east end of north aisle of Church	Listed Grade II status	Table tomb. Early to mid C18. Stone, on rectangular stone base, moulded plinth and corniced lid. Roll moulded corners. Fielded inscription panel with concave corners. Fielded side panels. North side to Thomas Watkins, d. 1733 aged 64.	Essential
East side Folly	Listed Grade II	Just outside the Conservation Area this garden building forms a terminal feature at the end of a main east-west footpath in Linton Park. Of single storey form circa mid to late C18. In brick, rendered with channelled stucco and a slate roof. Small and rectangular in a Gothic style with gables with moulded coping to each face. Moulded pointed-arched open doorway to each gable end with clustered shafts to jambs. 3 similar doorways, stepped in height, spanning east face. West face	Positive

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		unbroken. Slender pinnacled pilaster buttresses to each corner, and flanking central opening to east.	
East side Ragstone	Listed Grade II	This building is in close proximity of St Nicholas church off its south east corner. The house is mid c19 of uncoursed ragstone with ashlar dressings under a plain tile roof of H-plan, built at right-angles to the road. It is 1½ storeys. Gables with cusped bargeboards and moulded pendants and a roof of narrow central section carried down to rustic posts, forming a lean-to shelter between wings. There is a right hand rear wing with attic roofed at right angles and jettied to road to right. 3 pairs of octagonal brick stacks with moulded cornices and plinths and stone bases; one to each gable end and one to rear to left. Gabled dormer to centre of central section. One 2 light leaded casement to each gable end with canted bay window to ground floor below. Half glazed door to right end of central section.	Essential
West side Forge Cottage and Miladys Forge House	Listed Grade II	House row. (c17 and c18) There are exposed broadly-spaced studs with painted brick infilling to ground floor of right section. Left section and first floor of right section rendered. Timber-framed rear wing to right section. Plain tile roof. 2 storeys and attic on stone plinth. Slightly jettied eaves to front with moulded wooden eaves cornice to right section. Roof hipped to right. Projecting red and grey brick stack to left gable end and brick ridge stack towards centre of right section. 4 small hipped dormers. Irregular fenestration of 5 front of broadly-spaced 2 light C20 leaded wooden casements to left section, and regular 3 window front of cross windows to right section. Ribbed door to right of centre of left section and half-glazed door under	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		flat corniced floating hood to centre of right section. Lean-to to left end and to rear of left section. Rear wing to left of right section, with ogee tension braces.	
The Bull Inn (formerly listed as Post Office Stores and Bull Inn)	Listed Grade II	C16 or early C17, with later C17 and C19 alterations. Timber framed. Exposed framing with plaster infilling to first floor of left wing, rest rendered. Plain tile roof. Main range, with cross-wing projecting forwards to left. Right end of main range possibly added. Cross-wing 2 storeys, attic and cellar on brick plinth, main range 2 storeys on rendered plinth. Under-built jetty to gable end of cross-wing. Continuous jetty on moulded bressumer to all but right end of main range. Wing close-studded, with plain bargeboards. Roof of main range half-hipped to right with higher ridge than wing. Projecting brick stack to left side elevation of wing and rear stacks towards centre and right end of main range. Irregular fenestration of 6 casements; one 3 light to cross-wing, three 3 light to central section of main range, and one 5 light and one single light to former post office to right. Slightly canted C19 shop front to former post-office to right, with two 3 light windows flanking half-glazed door, and with moulded cornice and plain fascia. Ribbed door up 2 steps to right side elevation of wing, ribbed door up 2 steps towards centre of main range, and ribbed door to right of shop front. Rear left return wing to main range, immediately to right of cross-wing, and 3 short rear wings to main range. Date 1674 AG painted on main range.	Essential
Village Hall	Unlisted	To the south of the Bull Inn and predominately positioned opposite 'Ragstone' is the Village Hall. This large building with its striking bold tiled roof gabled ended facing the road, has a side entrance porch with a quarter hip to the road	Positive

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		frontage slipping down to the South with a small catslide extension, slightly set back from the main full height triple window gable. The gables characterised by a bold bargeboard and framed apex. Close to the hall is the listed Grade II telephone box.	
K6 Telephone Kiosk west side to the south side in front of the Village Hall	Listed Grade II	Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made in cast iron by various contractors. Square on plan with domed roof. Un-perforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door.	Essential
Iona	Unlisted	This modern house is located between the Village Hall and the Old Vicarage further down the hill.	Neutral
The Old Vicarage	Listed Grade II	This historic house set back from the road was formerly the vicarage. (C15 or early C16). Timber framed with painted brick infilling to ground floor and rendered infilling to first floor. Plain tile roof. 2 unequal length hall bays and storeyed end bays. 2 storeys on stone plinth. Broadly spaced studding with low former window cill across right hall bay. Tension braces and arch braces. Higher mid-rail to hall bays. Right gable and jettied. Hipped roof with gablets. Multiple brick stack in front slope of roof, to narrow left hall bay. Irregular fenestration of one gabled 3 light eaves dormer to centre of right hall bay and one 2 light leaded casement to right end bay. Small casement to ground floor of each end bay. Diamond mullion window to first floor of right gable end. Boarded door to centre of right hall bay. Weather-boarded rear wing to right.	Essential
Everest	Unlisted	This building is set well behind Iona and not of any significant historic or architectural value.	Neutral
The Laurels	Listed Grade II	This house is late C18 or early c19 with a ground floor painted brick	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		and a first floor tile-hung. Plain tile roof. 2 storeys and garret. Half-hipped roof. Central brick stack in front slope of roof. Regular 2 window front of 3-light leaded casements. Central boarded door with segmental head. Rear wing to left with tile-hung first floor.	
School Cottage and School House	Unlisted	These two buildings of late 19 th century origin are architecturally important buildings in the street. They are constructed out of yellow stock bricks with gabled fronts and projecting bay windows at ground floor level. The gables are parapetted and the first floor windows have attractive stone dressed heads. The chimneys are tall and capped with moulded bricks. The plan form comprises a number of projections across the full frontage; this articulated effect is reflected also at roof level with a variety of roof forms under slate finish.	Positive
Tokes Oast and Toke Place	Unlisted	This 'u' shaped oast and associated buildings of late 19 th origin, forms a group with the larger brick and tile hung 2 storeyed Toke Place to south. Both are set well below the street level. Toke Place comprises a number of gables facing Linton Hill with loft room windows in the apex of the gables over two storey bays. This large building is dominant in its setting complemented by the oast building set at a slightly higher level but nonetheless also still below road level. The clay tiled roofs of both buildings are significant features of visual character as indeed are the buildings themselves. They are however both unlisted but nonetheless of historic and architectural value in the area.	Essential
Toke Farm	Unlisted	This modern two storey house is set well down in lower ground quite a long way into the site from Linton Hill. It is gabled at each end with a brick ground floor and tile hung first floor. The main elevation	Neutral

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		faces the hill.	
The Cherry Patch and The Old School House	Unlisted	<p>This modern building at the rear of the 19th century Old School House is not of significant architectural value whereas The Old School House is a fine example of its period. Again, as with practically all the buildings from the village centre down to the conservation area boundary the dominant element is the large steeply pitched gable ended tiled roof arrangement emphasised by the bold exposed timber-framed first floor apex design separated from the robustly constructed ragstone ground floor walls by a heavily moulded jetty style bracketed detail. The plan is quite rambling in form which adds to its dominant character. The whole impact onto the street reinforced by being set back from the pavement behind a low stone boundary wall.</p> <p>The building as set out on the appended 1896-1898 ordnance plan was split into two buildings. The main building denoted as the school with the southern side extension as presumably the original school house. The currently evolved building with its multi-gabled façade facing the road is now pleasantly located amongst mature trees all of which with the irregular plan form produces a distinctive character with bold shadow projection; this is particularly noticeable with the projecting roof gable bargeboard arrangement.</p>	Essential
The Coach House, Mullion Court and South Mullion	Unlisted	<p>The Coach House historically served the 19th century main building now split into Mullion Court and South Mullion</p> <p>These now three separate residences, are well screened from the road by mature trees and</p>	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		close to the pavement a ragstone boundary wall adds to the attractive spatial character. The prominence of greenery over building is a key characteristic of this section of the conservation area reinforced by its location on a gentle curve of the road.	
Weatherstones, Andred, Lyndale Cottage, Haven Hurst and nos. 1 – 6 Wheelers Lane	Unlisted	These four gabled roofed 19 th century semi-detached cottages in Linton Hill combined with three pairs of similarly styled semi-detached cottages along the north side of Wheelers Lane form a significant group of buildings. They share a common architectural form each with dominant gabled roofs with moulded bargeboards and tall chimney stacks topped with numerous elegant tall chimney pots. The roofs when seen collectively, whether travelling up the hill or down it are significant area characteristics. There is also a consistency with the fenestration in each case which combined with porches, bay windows and the setting amongst mature trees and shrubs all behind boundary hedges and fences adds to the attractive appearance of this important section of the conservation area.	Essential
Three chimneys	Listed Grade II	This early c17 timber framed house is located on the south corner of the junction between Linton Hill and Wheelers Lane. The ground floor of the front elevation is chequered red and grey brick, first floor weather-boarded. Exposed framing to rear, with plaster infilling. Plain tile roof. Probably lobby-entry plan. Rear elevation: symmetrically divided by full height posts into 6 units (3 timber-framed bays), short bay comprising one unit to left end,	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
		<p>longer bay of 3 units to centre, with stack in third (right) unit, and one timber-framed bay of 2 units to right end. 2 storeys and attic. Rendered plinth. Square panelling, 2 panels per storey. 2 tension braces. Half-hipped roof, with gablet to left. Red and grey brick stack in English bond slightly to right of centre, set at right angles to ridge, with 3 diagonally set corbelled flues. Hipped dormer. Irregular fenestration of 3 windows; one 2 light leaded casement towards each end and one 5 light ovolo-moulded mullion window under eaves beneath stack. 2 light ovolo-moulded mullion window to ground floor to left of door. Boarded door under stack, in re-set moulded 4 centred arched architrave. Lean-to to left end of elevation.</p>	
No. 12 St Cross	Unlisted	<p>This building is set in a spacious garden with mature trees and shrubs. It is an attractive building but the spatial context is the all important contribution to the area's special character.</p>	Essential
<p>No. 13 No. 14 No. 15 No. 16 No. 17 – Merryville No. 18 – Honey Cottage No. 19 – Stone Cottage No. 20 – Redpot No. 21 No. 22 No. 23 – Northenden Cottage No. 24</p>	Unlisted	<p>These six pairs of semi-detached stone built 19th century cottages collectively add real character to the area because of their dominant tiled gabled large roofs and consistent architectural detailing. The combination of weathered Kent peg tiled roofs, tall heavily moulded chimney stacks, white painted moulded projecting bargeboards, bay windows and attractive windows with stone surrounds, all set on the same building line behind, in the main, boundary hedges more or less on level ground and well spaced out from each other results in a characterful and significant linear built form at the south end of the village. Opposite to them Linton Park is seen through the heavily treed east side of Linton Hill.</p>	Essential

Address	Listed/Unlisted	Description/Comments	Value to Character
Linton Cottage	Listed Grade II	<p>This historic house is late c18. The ground floor is chequered red and grey brick towards left end, red brick in Flemish bond to right of porch. First floor tile-hung. Gable ends red brick in English bond. Plain tile roof. 2 storeys and attics. Finely-dentilled wooden eaves cornice. Gable end stacks. 2 flat-roofed dormers with leaded lights. Rectangular 3 window front of 2 tripartite sashes and central 12 pane sash. Tripartite sashes with shutters to ground floor. Central panelled door with top lights and with 3 light fanlight and short flat hood on shaped brackets. Rear lean-to.</p>	Essential
Yew Tree Cottage	Unlisted	<p>This cottage was in 1898, a pair of cottages and is of general architectural and historic value. It is located on the north side of the corner of the junction between Linton Hill and Redwall Lane and is prominent as the first house leading up Linton Hill at the south edge of the designated conservation area. It therefore forms a 'gateway' function to the area in some respects.</p>	Positive
Old South Lodge	Unlisted	<p>2 storeyed Ragstone lodge with clay – tiled roof. Gables with decorative bargeboards. Mid / late 19th Century. Unfortunate late 20th Century 2 storey flat roofed extension to south side.</p>	Positive

IV Conclusions

The conservation area is an excellent example of a small medieval village extended and developed to support a large country house and estate.

The architectural character of the buildings varies given the varied dates of the historic buildings between the 16th and 19th centuries. These are mixed in with a number of late 19th and early 20th century buildings most of which provide a consistent character from the point of view of materials usage, building scale, architectural style detail, site distribution and building layout. There are altogether 28 listed buildings throughout the whole area. However, these include a telephone box and a number of monuments in the churchyard of the Church of St Nicholas.

The overriding character derives from the abundance of trees along most of Linton Hill, the village linear form, the historic park to the east boundary and finally the spaces between the various building groups along the lower end of Linton Hill which provide visual contact with the countryside setting to the west.

The most powerful connection with the Weald countryside is obtained visually upon entering the village from the north. This connection with the countryside setting has not over the years been spoiled. Indeed there has not been significant development pressure throughout the whole area to cause any serious damage to the character. There has however been a serious increase in heavy traffic which points to the need for a management plan in the area to address the functional and physical impact this intensity of use has had on the general environment, especially surfaces on roads and footpaths and, of course, the visual intrusion of signage.

A further concern is with the need now to cater for controls on energy wastage. In this regard a number of the unlisted stone faced estate cottages among the lower sections of Linton Hill have had their windows changed without the need for planning permission. Since many of those cottages originally had windows with leaded tracery detailing which contributed to their collective value and character, the special qualities of the Conservation Area has been diluted. This points to the need for an article IV direction to be considered in any subsequent Management Plan.

Studies carried out in connection with the historical development of the area and with the village appraisal suggest that there may be justification to extend the Linton area, for example areas which may be appropriate for inclusion subject to further study and survey can be outlined as follows: -

i) Minor Boundary changes

In the main the existing boundary around the area is tightly drawn with very few irregularities. However, some fine tuning is required in one or two minor areas where the boundary not only leaves out buildings that have past historic value such as the Old Forge to the north of the northern boundary just beyond the Bull Inn but also bisects a building and its garden setting such as "Willow Court" along Wheelers Lane.

ii) Village Car Park Area

At the northern end of the area to the north and east of the Almshouses opposite the Bull Inn and to the north east of St Nicholas Church there is a car parking area with access to the top part of Linton Hill. This car park its access drive and the land between the drive and Linton Hill is not included in the conservation area. This area and the meadows and well maintained grazing areas to the north east and south east of the car parking area and the church area contributes to the visual character and functioning of the conservation area and as such could be considered for inclusion into the area.

iii) Northern village access road: A229

A further area that points to the need for a possible boundary change is the road entrance zone of the A229 itself as it leads into Linton Hill from Heath Road. This road, defined so clearly by the wooded area on its east side within Linton Park and the retaining wall along the west side could be included as the integral entrance route into the area.

iv) Linton Park

At the broader level the whole of Linton Park should ideally be included given its important setting value to the whole area and its historic interest as a designed landscape.

The detailed street and building analysis carried out in Section III of this Conservation Area Appraisal provides a basis for considering future proposals for redevelopment or alterations. Those buildings or sites which are assessed as "essential" or "positive" will not be considered appropriate for redevelopment, proposals for redevelopment of "neutral" sites will need to provide an enhancement over the existing situation, and the redevelopment of sites/buildings as "negative" will be positively encouraged wherever possible.

It will be important to ensure that where redevelopment is appropriate in principle that it is of suitable form, scale and quality. Buildings should be of two or three storeys, they should adhere to established building lines and not be set back from the street by any great distance, they should utilise good quality materials which reflect those currently predominant (red or yellow stock bricks; ragstone; clay roof tiles) and be of a high architectural standard. In order to achieve an appropriate form of development it may prove necessary to consider the relaxation of normal planning standards in some instances.

Where significant trees exist within the Conservation Area it will be important to seek their retention – this is particularly the case with trees in the churchyard and burial ground which have an especially important role in the townscape character of the area.

At present there are three Tree Preservation Orders in the Conservation Area and in the park there are over 80 protected trees, many being part of large groups of trees. There are no orders involving the linear group of trees that forms the important eastern boundary of Linton Hill from the village centre to

the southern most boundary of the area at the junction of Redwall Lane and Linton Hill. However, this relatively wide strip of greenery is protected by being within the designated area.

Within the Conservation Area it is necessary for 6 weeks notice in writing to be given of any proposed works to trees with a trunk diameter greater than 75mm measured at a height of 1.5 metres above ground level. In the case of any sites coming forward for redevelopment the Council will require tree surveys, assessments and protection measures to be submitted with any planning application wherever trees are present. Where expedient it will seek to protect suitable trees by the making of Tree Preservation Orders. In relation to significant trees existing within the Conservation Area it will be important to seek their retention or replacement if appropriate.

As mentioned earlier, often in the past a cause of loss of character has not been redevelopment. It has been the cumulative impact of individually relatively minor alterations (e.g. replacement windows, loss of porches/door-cases, changes of roofing materials) which has resulted in the loss of original character. These processes are slowed down by Conservation Area designation, but the making of an Article 4(2) Direction would give the Council greater powers to prevent such alterations where they would impact upon the character of the Conservation Areas.

Essentially, therefore, it will be important to preserve minor features which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area and give local distinctiveness, for example, boundary walls, building signs and similar details. In carrying out this Appraisal a number of areas for investigation regarding the enhancement of the Conservation Area in any management plan should include:

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- i) Improvement to paving surfaces.
- ii) A programme of re-instatement of original features/details, especially windows, doors, decorative bargeboards, etc.
- iii) The removal of inappropriate signs.
- iv) Improvements/rationalisation of road traffic signage and street lighting.