

Long Clawson Conservation Area

Designated: October 1977

Designating Authority: Melton Borough Council

Area: 15.40 hectares

Introduction

Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Designation of a conservation area recognises the character of an area worthy of preservation and enhancement and ensures the safeguarding of the best of our local heritage as represented by both the buildings and the ambient environment, ie: the spaces between and around buildings when viewed as a whole. Local Planning Authorities have a general duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas, consequently there are more stringent planning controls and obligations in respect of new development, demolitions, alterations, highway works and advertisements.

Conservation Area status is not just about the attractive areas of settlements. In some instances, areas, which either contribute little, or are even detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area are included within the boundary because of their potential for enhancement. Conservation Area status does not mean that new development may not take place but must reflect the local architectural vernacular in scale, siting, massing, details and materials. Special attention should be paid not only to building form but also to fenestration and materials.

A Character Appraisal is seen as the best method of defining the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area. It is important that all interested parties are aware of those elements that must be preserved or enhanced. It is intended that the Character Appraisals will guide the local planning authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement schemes. It will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area.

Location and Context

Long Clawson is a substantial settlement situated in the southern part of the Vale of Belvoir approximately 8 miles north of Melton Mowbray. It sits at the foot of the escarpment which denotes the eastern side of the Vale.

The village features in the 1086 Domesday Book as Clachestone meaning clacs – tun, a mixture of Scandinavian and Saxon terms translating to a settlement associated with Klac. The name Long Clawson, which refers to the fact that the village has a main street over one mile in length with fourteen bends, appears to have been in common use since 1830.

The rich pasture soil in the area has given rise to its dairy heritage and Stilton Cheese has been produced in the village for many years. The Long Clawson Dairy, founded in 1911 is one of only six dairy's in England where Stilton is manufactured.

The village also boasts an ancient megalith – the Long Clawson stone is embedded near to the boundary wall of the Manor House and is allegedly a fragment of a larger ancient stone.

The Conservation Area Boundary

The conservation area was designated in 1977 and only includes part of the built up area – it extends from Manor Farm at the west end to Dovecote House to the east.

Special Character and Townscape Quality

The long linear form of the village is very distinctive with the collection of right angled bends along the 'spine road' which meanders through adding visual interest. It is a very open textured village, especially at West End, although there are several areas along the main village road where tight clusters of artisans cottages, farmsteads and other buildings close to the road frontage give a more urban feel to the settlement. When viewed from the Vale escarpment the clusters of mature trees and interspersed open spaces ensures that the village sits comfortably within the natural landscape. More intimately the built fabric of the villages merges easily into the rural scene.

Church Lane

The grade II* listed Manor Farmhouse with its extensive garden, including a fishpond, stands the junction of West End and Church Lane which demarks the western boundary of the conservation area. This magnificent stone and Swithland slate building dates from the late sixteenth century and began life as a Rectory House and subsequently became a farmhouse. The house as it stands today has survived almost intact from the early seventeenth century with minimal change. The mud boundary wall with Swithland slate copings, that encloses part of the garden area has recently been restored.

This part of the conservation area is very open textured and the lane loops around the Church and churchyard, the Old Vicarage and its garden and the adjacent Scheduled Monument, the site of a Castle or Medieval Keep, which taken together form a large protected open area. The grade II* listed Church of St Remigius which stands within an elevated churchyard is the focal point. It dates from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but has earlier origins and was extensively rebuilt and restored in 1893. It has a central tower and is built in ironstone with limestone dressings under a lead roofs. The Old Vicarage, immediately to the north of the Church, is grade II listed red brick dwelling that was built in 1734. Framland House, a seventeenth century building of local interest, completes the group of historic properties.

The moated site, a Scheduled Monument, lies in a pasture field to the east of the church. The moated area comprises the southern, eastern, and part of the western arms of the moat. The southern ditch is up to 1.5m deep, but the western arm is largely modified by the churchyard. To the north, the survival of the moat is unclear due to some infilling. The centre appears to be raised. An eighteenth century writer records that they had a 'castle' just by the church. The north-western corner of the moated area contains the ruined remains of a cottage probably dating to the seventeenth century,

Further east Church Lane becomes more regimented with properties to both sides although the highway verges, associated trees and hedgerow boundaries contribute to an open feel. The lane displays a mixture of building styles and ages, materials too are mixed. Buildings of note include Avenue House, a grade II listed building set back in mature gardens behind a tall brick boundary wall with ornate gate piers at the entrance and glimpsed through the trees; Long Clawson Baptist Chapel (datestone 1895) with small churchyard fronting enclosed by traditional railings; Rushland Cottage recently refurbished and set back behind a tall boundary wall and Rushmead a grade II listed building in red brick and stone with Yorkshire sliding sash windows and a fine original wide front door.

The lane drops down towards The Sands and at the junction views open out to the varied roofscape of East End which is very dominant visually. The three storey building on the junction is particularly fine with its original mid nineteenth century gabled door case, bay windows and margin pane sash windows – it is notified as being a building of local interest.

East End

East End climbs uphill away from The Sands - the boundary wall of the Manor House and associated mature trees together with the gable end of the butchers shop opposite framing the distant uphill view. Properties are randomly arranged, some close to the back edge others set back and some elevated. These are generally older but with some newer infill.

At the brow of the hill the character of the street changes with smaller cottage properties set close to the highway giving a generally more intimate feel. Honeysuckle Cottage is a particularly good example. The road narrows before the tight bend as it snakes out of the village. Dovecote House, its boundary wall and associated outbuildings are dominant. The wall continues to follow the road beyond the house which together with the mature trees and greenery beyond encloses the street scene.

The Sands

The Sands has a character of its own within the conservation area. It is very much the focal centre of village life and a busy social hub. It contains a variety of facilities, services and retail facilities including the Doctors Surgery and Pharmacy, three shops, public house, post box, K6 telephone kiosk, bus shelter (1954) and large parking area. There is also a village green area with the village sign, trees and benches and an associated green space equipped play area.

Properties on the east side closely follow the line of the road and are older, more traditional properties which display a mixture of materials including brick and coloured render, the rooflines are a particularly strong feature.

To the west side properties are predominantly new but there are some older ones. They are in a staggered arrangement adding visual interest and again the roofscape is visually strong.

The road leads uphill at the north end and follows the bend towards Back Lane

Mill Lane

Leads uphill from The Sands towards Long Clawson Mill and basically comprises a handful of brick cottages dating from 1879 supplemented by a few newer properties at the south end

Back Lane

Corner House a small traditional unspoilt cottage marks the transition between The Sands and Back Lane. Around the bend views broaden, the lane enclosed by a tall mature hedgerow on the north side and a group of buildings including the brick gable end of Grooms Cottage and cream rendered Victoria Cottage. Further in the distance the fine red brick boundary wall of The Hollies comes into view defining the highway. Beyond this point greenery dominates the street view with hedgerows and interspersed trees to both sides as the road snakes back around towards the Church.

School Lane

This is a narrow lane with some granite kerbing. The Village School is the most prominent building in the lane, the original red brick and slate building supplemented by later additions to the rear. The associated playing field is adjacent presenting an open texture to the street scene. The other properties are generally older but there is also some newer infill.

Quality and Character of Buildings

The majority of buildings within the conservation area date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

The village demonstrates a mixture of building materials but red brick, white render with pantile or slate roofs predominating within the conservation area.

There are seven listed buildings within the conservation area, most of which have been mentioned previously together with three more buildings notified as being of local interest. Other listed buildings include The Crown and Plough Public House which is situated on The Sands. It dates from 1730, as witnessed by a datestone, but has later alterations. It is rendered with a slate roof.

The early nineteenth century Manor House sits back in its own grounds off East End. It is a painted red brick house with a hipped slate roof with a mixture of 12 and 16 pane sash windows.

Natural Elements

There are many important open areas within the village, that around the Sands forming a focal point of the settlement. There are also extensive areas of open countryside abutting the main village road particularly to the west of Sandpit Lane and along Back Lane.

There are clusters of mature trees around the Church and along Church Lane but elsewhere tree cover is not extensive

Negative Factors

The use of inappropriate materials such as upvc double glazed window units and plastic rainwater goods is evident within Long Clawson and is widespread. Overhead cables also mar the street scene in some parts of the village.

For further help and advice please contact:

The Regulatory Services Section
Melton Borough Council
Parkside
Station Approach
Burton Street
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 1GH
Telephone: 01664 502502

The Council has prepared a leaflet entitled 'A Guide to Conservation Area' which gives general advice. Copies are available from the Regulatory Services Section as detailed above

The above is an appraisal for the Long Clawson Conservation Area which highlights the most significant factors which make it worthy of Conservation status. The omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to apply that it is of no interest.