

**Deal South Barracks**

**Conservation Area Appraisal**

**Draft for consultation**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

“The symmetry and orderly layout of the old barracks buildings and their somewhat forbidding and functional design are typical of 19th century institutions such as barracks, hospitals and prisons.” (Walmer Design Statement 2006)

The Deal South Barracks Conservation Area is in Lower Walmer. It was designated on the 9th of January 1997 based on the historic boundary of the barracks. The principal use of the conservation area is residential but it also contains the Rugby Club and car park, the Deal Parochial Church of England primary school and St Michael and All Angels Church (now converted into residences). The conservation area contains 133 homes. Seven of the historical buildings are Grade II listed, most of the listings postdate the creation of the conservation area.

The construction of the Barracks commenced in 1795. There was further building following the occupation of the site by the Royal Marines in 1869, and further development at the beginning of the 21st century following the departure of the Royal Marines and subsequent closure of the Barracks.

An appraisal is intended to provide an understanding of the special interest of a conservation area and to set out options and recommendations to help ensure that any changes are informed by an understanding of the local character and distinctiveness of the conservation area. When this appraisal is adopted by Dover District Council (DDC) it will become a Supplementary Planning Document which will be material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission within and adjacent to the conservation area.

This appraisal looks at the following issues:

1. The origins and evolution of the area under consideration.
2. The current boundary of the area and any review that should be made of that.
3. The positive and negative factors that contribute to or detract from the current condition of the conservation area.
4. Any recommendations that will protect and enhance the conservation area. Any changes proposed must sustain and enhance the historic environment and its heritage.

### 1.2. Planning Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory definition of a Conservation Area, which is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (s.69(1)). Dover District currently has 57 designated Conservation Areas.

There is a requirement under the legislation to review Conservation Areas “from time to time” to ensure that the boundary captures all the area that is of special interest and to assist in developing plans for the management of change within the conservation area. This is further endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which urges the need to ensure that an area justifies the designation because of its special architectural or historic character or appearance.

The Dover District Heritage Strategy (2013) presents the district’s Heritage Assets as Themes; Theme 13 dealing with conservation areas. The districts conservation areas are considered to be heritage assets of **outstanding significance**, and in addition to being attractive places to live and work, contribute to the economic wealth of the district by being a magnet for visitors. Seven Conservation Areas lie within the area that the Deal Society undertook to monitor - four of these lie in the Town of Deal and three lie within the Parish of Walmer.

A methodology was developed for the Heritage Strategy enabling a rapid desk-based assessment of the general condition of the district's conservation areas and was applied to 19 of the conservation areas, of which Deal South Barracks is one. The results of this overview, using a "traffic-light" system to classify their condition, indicate that of the 57 conservation areas in the district 12 of these conservation areas were identified as 'performing well' and achieved a green light, six achieved an amber light, requiring some enhancement, and one area required considerable enhancement or potential "de-designation" as a conservation area, due to the substantial loss of its character of special interest.

Theme 13 prescribes methods and techniques by which an area's condition may be measured, assessed and managed; Article 4 Direction is one method. An Article 4 Direction removes permitted development rights from residential properties to ensure that certain changes, such as the replacement of windows, is managed to ensure that the change is appropriate to the special character of the conservation area. Article 4 Directions have been applied so far to two of the 19 conservation areas, one of them being the Middle Street Conservation Area in Deal.

The Heritage Strategy also suggested the formulation of a system for the assessment of a conservation areas condition such as that developed and adopted by the Oxford City Council, endorsed by Historic England and used by the Oxford Preservation Trust. An amended version of that system is used in this character appraisal.

### **1.3. Community Involvement**

This character appraisal has been prepared by The Deal Society in close liaison with DDC. The Dover District Heritage Strategy highlights the importance of local community involvement in the protection of the historic environment. There are two specific areas where that involvement is encouraged. First of all, local civic groups are encouraged to develop appraisals of conservation areas within their locality. Secondly, the production of a List of Heritage Assets is encouraged. This appraisal is, therefore, consistent with the aspirations of the Heritage Strategy. (For a more detailed analysis of the Strategy see 1.2).

Every resident in this conservation area was informed by letter that the appraisal would be carried out in the early summer of 2016. The letter also contained a short questionnaire to which the residents were invited to respond. A small percentage did so and the issues raised by the residents are reflected in this appraisal. A presentation was also made to Walmer Parish Council; the members passed a motion unanimously supporting conservation area character appraisals.

#### **1.4. Summary of Significance**

- a. The historical development of the Barracks from the late 18th century and throughout the mid to late 19th century defines the significance of the area. Its appearance as a military complex is inescapable. It was a critical element in the national response to the Napoleonic wars and later as a Depot for the Royal Marines.
- b. The additional buildings created after its closure as a military establishment in the late 20th century have enhanced that sense of continuity. The site has been further developed with considerable sensitivity to its historic and architectural character and to the heritage of the site.
- c. The sense of cohesion in the use of building materials, building form and layout, the design of windows and doors, the architectural detailing and the character of the street furniture and landscaping creates an overall environment that respects the historic character but is also fit for 21st century living.
- d. The open spaces are key contributors to the character of the conservation area. The relationship between buildings and open spaces are interdependent. In parts of the conservation area the open spaces counteract a strong sense of enclosure that might otherwise be detrimental.
- e. When carrying out this appraisal, most of the estate was comparatively quiet with a small amount of car movement and not a lot of pedestrian movement. The perimeter walls significantly reduce traffic noise from the surrounding roads leading to a tranquillity which is in contrast to the busyness outside the boundary walls.
- f. The conservation area is a pleasingly attractive, mainly residential, community with well-maintained buildings and landscape, and generous open spaces with a distinct sense of place. A few residents would welcome a higher standard of maintenance but the appraisal group was impressed by the high standards of both the buildings and the grounds.

## **2. The Character Appraisal**

### **2.1. Overview**

The overwhelming impression of the conservation area is one of cohesion and strong architectural uniformity despite buildings being separated by over two centuries. The high boundary wall which encloses three sides of the residential area physically cuts the conservation area off from the surrounding town and creates a sense of separation. Inside the wall the sense is one of openness and this is enhanced by the very large open spaces adjacent to and adjoining the residential buildings. A remarkable degree of continuity has been achieved in the transformation of the site from a military complex to a residential estate.

The vast majority of the properties are of an exceptionally high standard. The low response to the residents' questionnaire may suggest a very high level of satisfaction among those living there to their built environment. The natural environment is also maintained to a very high standard. Lawns, trees and shrubs and other natural planting enhance the residential complex in many places. A few of the residents' responses reflected some dissatisfaction with the car parking arrangements and also with a lack of signage in relation to dog walking. However the uniformity of street furniture in street signage, street lighting and flower planters enhance the uniformity and coherence of the whole complex.

#### **2.1.1. Buildings**

The buildings, regardless of the date they were constructed, show the characteristics typical of a Georgian development. This is characterised by respect for the proportions of the design, the use of brick with slate or tile roofs, and the character of detailing around windows and doors.

The buildings dating from the late 18th and 19th centuries reflect the history of the site as a military/administrative complex. This is also reflected in the large open spaces used as a drill field, training and sporting facilities. The newer buildings constructed between 2000 and 2013 reflect the character and personality of the historic architecture. There is, for example, continuity in the brick detailing between the old and the new. This is also reflected in the character of the windows and doors and some attempt has been made to reflect the chimney stacks which are not always an architectural enhancement. The original chimney stacks on buildings in Halliday Drive and the glass lanterns on the Old Gymnasium and canteen add interest and create a refreshing sense of originality and distinctiveness to the area.

St. Michael and All Angels, the Garrison Church, built between 1905 and 1907, is at some distance from the main barracks complex and is a separated gated complex. The building, with a large apse, has a dominant appearance in its immediate context but it does not impact on the wider residential environment.

The Rugby Club appears to be an early 1930's building which has been extended in the first decade of the 21st century. The Parochial School building was opened in 2001. Although of no particular historic or architectural merit in themselves they are situated on land which originally formed the drill ground for the barracks.

#### **2.1.2. Spaces**

The overall environment of the South Barracks is of open, light and gracious spaces. The drill field and lawns are a key component of the conservation area and being enclosed by walls, hedges and railings enhance the buildings as much as the buildings create defining boundaries to the spaces. The lines of trees both at the perimeter wall and along the paths and roads within the estate also give clear definition to the large spaces. The lawns and trees within the centre of Cavalry Court also create a sense of openness that might not otherwise exist in this part of the complex.

### **2.1.3. Streets and Paths**

The street, pavements and street furniture are maintained to a high standard. Parking spaces appeared to be well defined, discretely located, and during the appraisal visits appeared to be in good supply. Some residents have commented that this is not always the case and that street parking outside of designated areas sometimes has a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of the site.

### **2.1.4. Views and Landscape**

Because of the enclosed nature of the conservation area and limited number of openings in the high brick wall the views into and out of the conservation area are limited. The view from the Jubilee Gates towards the 1795 building with its distinctive clock tower is a classic example of the military landscape.

### **2.1.5. Ambience**

Spacious, light, airy and quiet with comparatively low levels of traffic movement are the distinctive features of this space. The one activity that changes the ambience at specific times is the Rugby Club where events have an inevitable impact in terms of noise and greater movement in and adjacent to the Barracks.

### **3. Management Plan**

#### **3.1. Vulnerabilities and Negative Features**

- a. Some of the boundary walls were in need of restoration and repair, particularly on the outside. This especially applied to the walls in Canada and Cornwall Roads. Some restoration had been done to the Dover Road wall but the quality of the work was irregular and the some of the materials used for the pointing do not blend in.
- b. The Rugby Club car park was not well maintained and did little to enhance the appearance of a conservation area.

#### **3.2. Recommendations**

##### **3.2.1. Heritage Assets of Local Importance**

The following should be designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance:

- The Garrison Church
- The Globe and Laurel plaque at the gates of the Parochial School
- The iron fencing around the open space, and the boundary stones on Gladstone (others may be listed as part of the wall)

##### **3.2.2. Name of the conservation area**

The current name of the conservation area 'Deal South Barracks' arises from the historical name of the military barracks. The conservation area is situated in the Parish of Walmer and we recommend that DDC investigates with Historic England the possibility of renaming the conservation area 'Walmer – South Barracks'.



## **4. Appendices**

### **4.1. Historical development**

In 1790 approximately 70 houses and 350 people comprised the Parish of Walmer, mainly situated around old St Mary's Church, Upper Walmer. From 1793 war with France significantly increased the number of military personnel in Deal. On 16 April 1794 George Leith senior and his son, George Leith junior, entered into an agreement to sell a portion of meadow land (Lees Pasture) in Lower Walmer, to the Board of Ordnance for the building of new barracks. From 1795 Army units occupied South Barracks. Peace with France reduced that military presence and from 1816 the site was shared with the Coast Blockade Service and the Coast Guards.

In 1869 part of the South Barracks was handed over to the Royal Marines, separated from the Cavalry Barracks by a wall. In order to meet their needs during the mid to late Victorian period some buildings were adapted and others were newly built (including the Gymnasium and a canteen). The existing Jubilee Gate was also erected. In 1905 the foundation stone for the new Garrison Church, St Michael and All Angels, was laid and the building was consecrated in January 1907. In 1937 extensions were added to the north and south ends of the Officers Mess building.

By late 1981 the Royal Marines School of Music remained the sole occupant of the South, North and East Barracks sites. In 1988 the sell-off and demolition of parts of South Barracks began. In March 1996 military occupation of all three sites ceased. By 1997 an application had been submitted to DDC for the conversion of various South Barracks' buildings for housing and for the construction of new homes on the site. This was granted in March 2000 and building was completed by 2013. In 2001 Deal Parochial Church of England Primary School relocated to a purpose built school erected on part of the former South Barracks Military Drill Field. By 2005 a change of use had been approved to convert the military drill field for civilian recreational use and sports pitches, and to upgrade the existing sports pavilion.

### **4.2. Maps**

#### **Barracks before 1800**

From: The Historic and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent by Edward Hasted; first published 1800

#### **Barracks in about 1897**

OS Six-inch; Surveyed: 1871 to 1872; Revised: 1896 to 1897; Published: 1899

#### **South Barracks development**

OS Six-inch; Surveyed: 1871 to 1872; Published: 1877

OS Six-inch; Surveyed: 1871 to 1872; Revised: 1896 to 1897; Published: 1899

OS Six-inch; Surveyed: 1871 to 1872; Revised: 1905; Published: 1907

### **4.3. Acknowledgements and references**

#### **Bibliography**

- Deal Past and Present by Henry Stephen Chapman – 1890
- History of Walmer and Walmer Castle by Charles R Elvin – 1894
- History of Deal by John Laker (second edition) – 1921
- Old Deal and Walmer Postcards by Gregory Holyoake – 1981
- Royal Marines Deal by Andrew Lane – 2000
- The Old Pubs of Deal and Walmer by Steve Glover and Michael Rogers - 2010

#### 4.4. Glossary

- **Conservation Area** is an area designated so that the planning authority can control changes within it. They can be defined as “Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Details can be found in the conservation pages of the DDC website.
- **Dover District Council (DDC)** is the planning authority with responsibility for this conservation area. Their website is [www.dover.gov.uk](http://www.dover.gov.uk).
- **Heritage Strategy** is a DDC strategy which aims to enable them to achieve their objectives for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. The strategy documents can be found in the conservation pages of the DDC website.
- **Historic England** is the public body that looks after England's historic environment. Their website is [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk).
- **Kent County Council (KCC)** is the authority with responsibility for, amongst other things, the highways in this conservation area. That responsibility includes road and pavement surfaces, signage and street lighting. Their website is [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk).
- **Listed Building** is one designated as listed in the National Heritage List for England (NHLE). It marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system so that some thought will be taken about its future. There are three categories of listed building: Grade I, Grade II\* and Grade II. Details are on the Historic England website.
- **National Planning Policy Framework** is a key part of Government reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth. Details can be found at the government's planning portal [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk).
- **Non-designated Building** refers to one which is not listed.
- **The Deal Society** is the civic society for Deal and Walmer. Their website is [www.thedealsociety.org.uk](http://www.thedealsociety.org.uk).