

# Joy Lane, Whitstable



## Design Guidance

2 May 2006

# INTRODUCTION

This document assesses the existing character of Joy Lane from 1 to 106 Joy Lane including 2 and 4 Borstal Hill, 1 Medina Avenue and properties in the Irish Village. Due to the generous size of the plots in this area they are coming under increased pressure for redevelopment for infill housing and house extensions. A handful of developments have been approved which have allowed back and side garden subdivision and development for housing.

At present the majority of developments have been undertaken in a sympathetic manner but several recent proposals have been less considerate of the nature and values of the street. With increasing pressure for housing in this area it is vitally important that any extensions or new housing developments are in keeping with the character of the area and do not detract from the street scene on what is an important link road between Whitstable and Seasalter and a unique area of Whitstable.



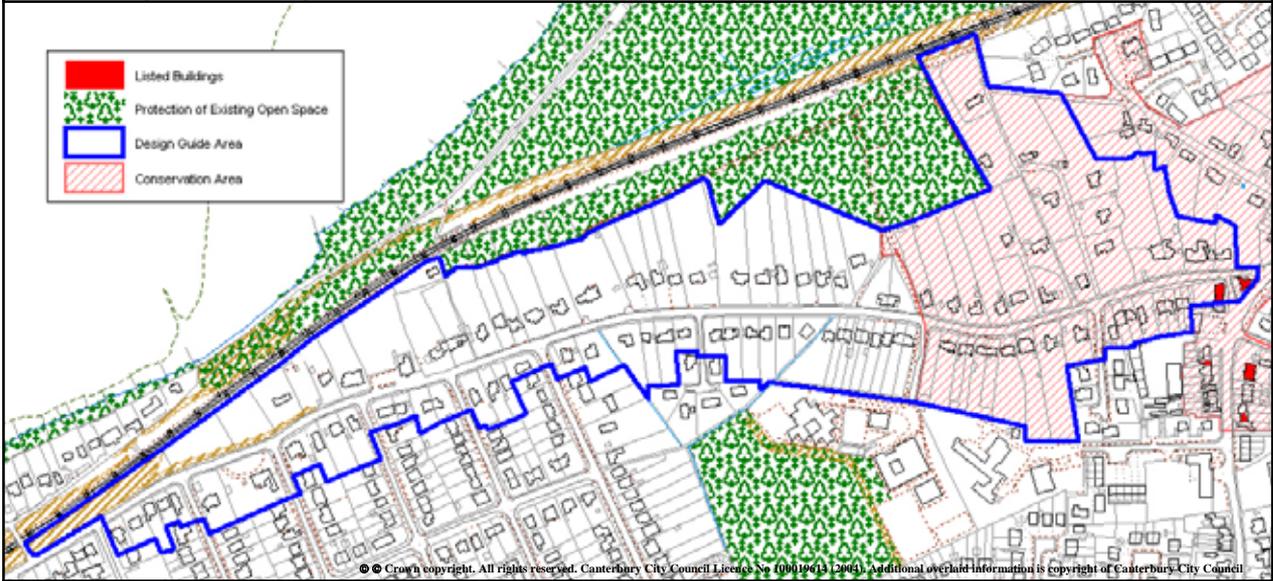
This document highlights the main themes and features of current buildings and plots, including the conservation area. It should act as a guide to assist persons intending to undertake any sort of development to design schemes that are in keeping with the character of the area and that make a positive contribution to the street scene.

# LOCATION

Whitstable is located on the north coast of Kent in a sheltered bay. Joy Lane runs along the sea frontage between Whitstable and Seasalter.

Joy Lane starts at Borstal Hill, which is the gateway to the town, and finishes at the corner with Faversham Road. The area covered by this design guide extends from Borstal Road to the corner of Medina Avenue and covers approximately two thirds of the length of Joy Lane.

**Map showing area of Design Guide and relevant local plan designations**



## DESCRIPTION OF AREA

As a link road between Seasalter and Whitstable Joy Lane is relatively busy and carries a steady flow of traffic. The road itself is narrow with parking on one side, which further reduces the road to 1.5 lanes in places. The roadway dates back to at least 1770 (see historic maps) and has always been an important link between Seasalter and Whitstable. The railway link (Southern Railway) runs along the bay's edge to the rear of the properties on the northern side of Joy Lane.



There is a large area of protected open space to the north east of Joy Lane and several public footpaths connect the street, open space and seafront. As Joy Lane runs close to the coast many of the properties on the northern side of the road enjoy sea views. Views of the bay and the Isle of Sheppey can also be glimpsed between buildings from Joy Lane itself.



Joy Lane's road appears to have been in existence for at least 250 years. Historically the area was associated with smuggling and farming. It is probable that Parsonage Farm, which included much of the land that now makes up Joy Lane, was leased (about 1700) by the founder of the

Seasalter Company. The company was originally a disguise for a crew of smugglers and Parsonage Farm continued to be occupied by people associated with the company until at least 1804. The area remained in farmland until after the turn of the century (see historic maps) when some housing development occurred in the vicinity of Parsonage Farm with approximately 6 houses being constructed and more residential development taking place near the junction with Canterbury Road (see the 1910's photo in the Conservation Area section).



The majority of the residential development was undertaken between the First and Second World Wars with the 1938 map showing the form and layout of the area almost as it is today. The properties in the road are an eclectic but appealing mix of suburban styles with their designs following generally the revival of the vernacular tradition. The buildings along Joy Lane vary from a few large Victorian style detached villas and a public house to a predominance of interwar detached houses and bungalows on relatively large plots. Most of the properties are in residential use although a few have been adapted for commercial use including an osteopath, rest home and holiday accommodation.

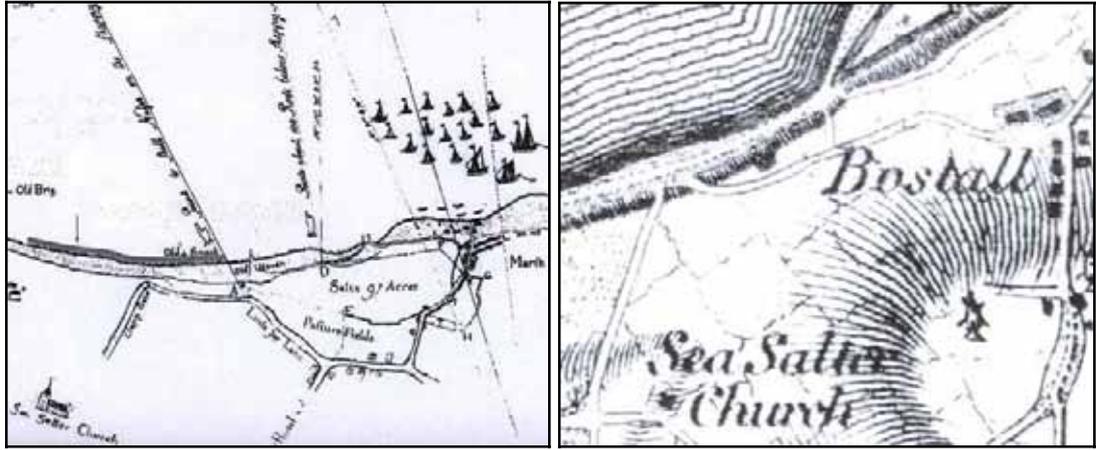


The area was subject to a previous episode of infill building and extensions in the 1960's and again at the end of the

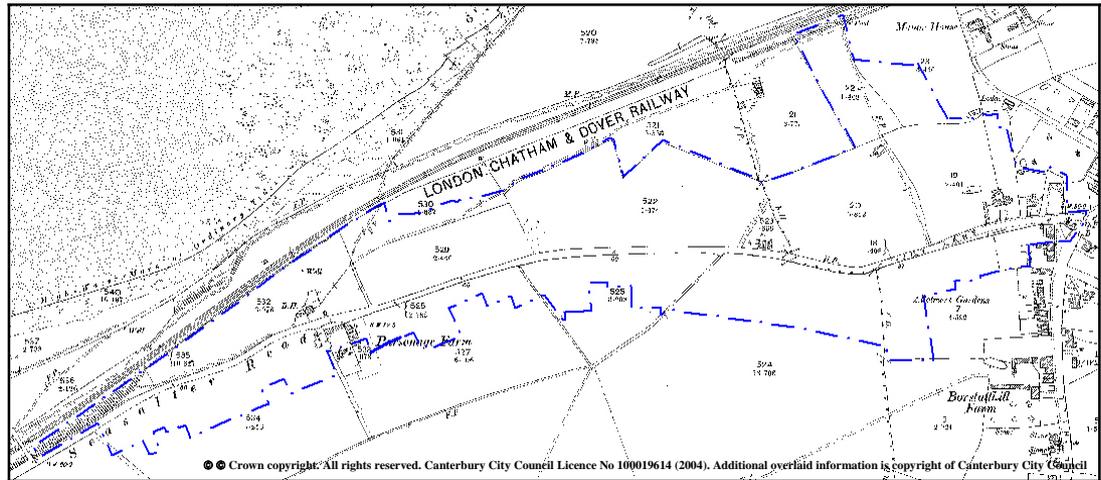
1980s through to 1992. However, these more modern buildings and developments have tended to reflect the original vernacular style of the street.

**Historic  
Maps of  
Joy Lane**

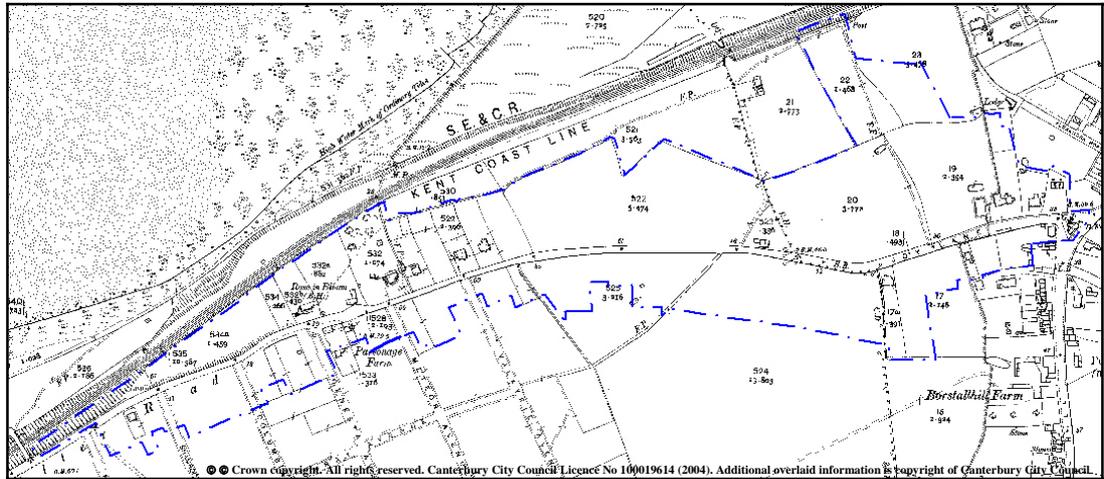
**1770 (left)  
1801 (right)**



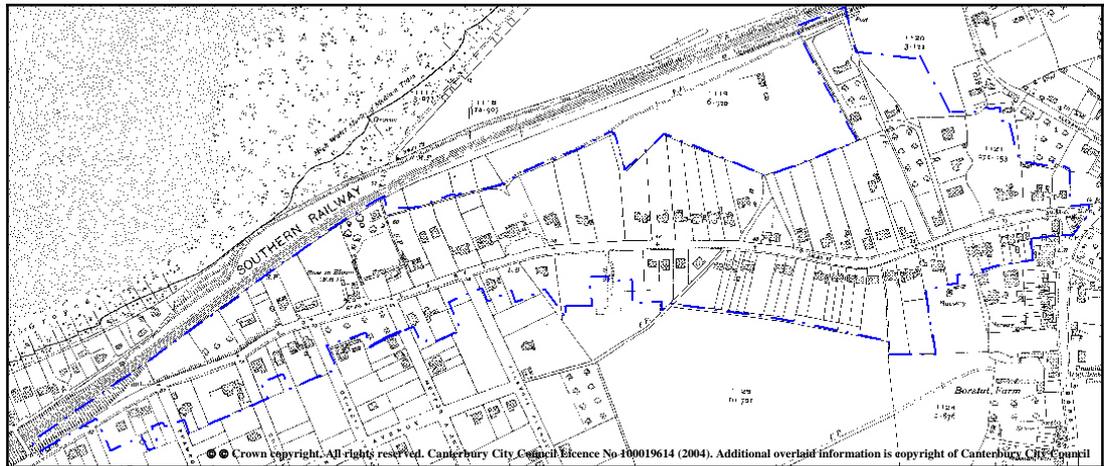
**1891 - 1912**



**1904 - 1919**



**1919 - 1943  
(1938)**



## CONSERVATION AREA

The South Whitstable Conservation Area was designated March 1991 to protect the area's inherent beauty and value. The conservation area includes properties from 2 to 34 on the south



side of the street and 1 to 25 to the north. There are also two listed buildings included being 2 and 4 Bortsal Hill (shown in adjacent picture taken about 1910). Other properties of particular significance in the Design Guide area include The Rose in Bloom Pub, 96, 63, 53, 43, 15, 4 and 2 Joy Lane.

Policy BE7 of the Draft Local Plan states that developments affecting the setting of or views into or out of conservation areas should preserve or enhance all of the features that contribute positively to the area's character or appearance. Any development in the area would have to respect and protect the character and appearance of the conservation area. Building design that complements and ties in with the adjacent buildings in the area would be vital to any successful development proposal. Of particular importance in this instance will be:

- *utilisation of architectural details that contribute to the areas values,*
- *the scale of the buildings;*
- *the visual spaces between buildings, and;*
- *the retention of trees and front landscaping and avoidance of large hard surfaces areas.*

Policies BE5 and BE6 of the Draft Local Plan require that any alterations to listed buildings preserve the building's setting and features of architectural of historic interest.

## MAIN THEMES

### Style

The majority of the houses in the street reflect the conscious revival of the vernacular tradition which was predominate in suburban England from the early 1900's until after the second world war. The character of the area as a whole reflects the residential seaside location and what was a middleclass family orientated environment.



All of the houses in Joy Lane face the street. Those on the northern side back onto the railway and protected open space and have sea views from the rear windows. The properties on this



side of the street tend to be substantial on large plots with considerable gaps between them allowing sea views from the road. Those on the south side of the street are smaller but still substantially built with reasonably sized gardens. Houses are set back in their plots and are generally framed by trees and hedges and in some instances hard landscaping. The combination of the vernacular style of the properties, the gardens, sea views and a network of public footpaths to the adjacent open space give this area its open residential character.



### Scale

The houses are generally substantial detached single-family dwelling houses set in large gardens. The properties vary from 1 storey bungalows to 2 storey detached houses. Many of the properties have dormer windows with living space under the roof. The northern side of the street benefits from larger plots sizes and more substantial typically two storey detached homes with sea views. These houses have landscaped frontages and large spaces between buildings though which views of the sea are glimpsed. The properties on the

southern side of the street tend to be smaller detached bungalows and houses or semidetached pairs of two storey houses in a similar style to those on the northern side but on smaller plots. More infill and back land development has taken place on the south side of the road.

### Roofs

The buildings have mainly hipped roofs with a few gable roofs. Roofing materials are clay tiles or slate. Rooflines are generally simple in form with front gable and gablet features on many of the hipped roofed houses. Some of the more substantial houses have large chimneys. The roofs of the dormers, porches and garages generally reflect the style of the house although sometimes they have swept eaves.



### Dormer Windows

Small dormer windows with hipped and gable roofs are a feature of many single storey properties. The dormers are generally clad to match the house with similar roofing materials used. A few of the two storey buildings have windows in the gable ends.



### Exterior walls

The exterior walls are finished in a mixture of brick or render. The render colours are generally muted whites, creams and pastel yellows, pinks and browns. The bricks are mainly red with some yellow. A small number of buildings have weatherboard, flint or tile cladding second floor features and some have mock Tudor dark stained wood detailing.



## Windows

All of the properties have windows facing the street at all levels, giving an active street frontage. Two storey bay or bow windows, and simple ground floor bay windows are very common. The windows are predominately side opening casements often with top lights. Some of the properties have sash windows and other forms of casements windows. Many of the ground floor windows are also accentuated through the use of small verandas.



The windows would have originally been wooden or in some properties steel, however, these have often and regrettably been replaced with PVC framed windows.

A feature particular to the street is the use of porthole windows, which reflects the coastal location of the settlement and some of the shipping and smuggling history of the area.



## Doors

A predominate characteristic of buildings is the front door. These are generally made into a feature with built-in porches with decorative surrounds or are covered by a small veranda, which is made into an attribute of the frontage. The doors are generally solid wood or have a top third glazed and are often flanked by panel windows.

## Curtilages and Gardens

Although the original houses would have had substantial gardens and generous spaces between houses these spaces are being quietly eroded by in fill development in particular back land developments. However, the majority of properties still have relatively substantial curtilages. Traditionally front gardens would have been landscaped and planted with trees and hedgerows to provide a frame to the house from the street, many of which remain. Retention of substantial gardens for family use and established trees, hedges and soft landscaping is important to the retention of the character of the street.



## Trees

Another distinctive feature of this road is the contribution to the character of the street made by mature trees and hedges located close to the front boundaries of most properties.



## Boundary treatments

All of the properties have some manner of front boundary treatment predominately low brick walls or timber fences (approx 1m) with hedges behind or sometimes just hedges which are usually a little higher 1.6m. This defines the street edge but retains the open feel of the area. It is noted that properties between 4 Borstal Hill and 8 Joy Lane have low flint walls.



## Other unique details

There are other unique features of the street that stand out. Firstly is the use of Victorian cast iron street lampposts, which have been adapted for domestic electric lighting and placed in people's front gardens. Second, is the use of replica Victorian lights attached to house walls. Another is the street furniture in particular seats it is assumed that these are associated with the number of public footpaths that come off the street to the areas of protected open space along the seafront.



## Parking and Refuse Disposal

All of the properties have a vehicle access way and many of the houses have attached or integral garages. In some instances limited car parking is provided to the front of the houses, this is generally screened from the





street by trees hedges or fences except in some unfortunate instances where it dominates the view of the front garden. The front hardstanding areas are generally finished in aggregate, stone or brick paving. It is also noted that all rubbish and recycling storage is located out of view of the street.

### Building line

A feature of the street is the building setbacks. Although the distance of the setback is not consistent all of the properties do have significant front and side curtilages/gardens. The front setbacks, the spaces between buildings along with the associated trees and gardens are main features of the street scene.



There is not a consistent front building line. The distance that properties are located back from the road varies between 4 and 34 metres with most properties on the southern side of the street being set back 8-11 metres from the road edge and on the northern side of the street being generally set back 15-18 metres.



An important feature of the street is the side set backs, which create visual gaps between buildings. These vary with the size of the buildings, larger properties having greater gaps between adjacent buildings and smaller properties being closer together. These visual gaps give opportunities for glimpses of the sea and Sheppy Island and give the area the feel of an open pleasant environment.



## STYLE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

It is considered that any new housing development, redevelopment or extension needs to be in keeping with the varying range of vernacular styles of development in the street. Designs should complement the character of the area and should incorporate the following elements:

- Any development should have a visual understanding of the residential vernacular tradition and style of the buildings, the seaside location and the history of the area.
- Intensive housing or apartment style developments should be avoided in this area unless they are very modest in scale and any replacement buildings have a similar foot print and massing to those which they replace.
- Extensions should be subservient to the existing building but in a manner that allows them to tie in with the style, form and design of the existing building.
- New development should respect plot identity and should resist plot amalgamation.
- Significant front and rear gardens should be retained.
- Back land development will only be allowed in limited circumstances where it does not affect the amenities of surrounding properties, where all resulting properties retain substantial curtilages and shall be limited to 1 additional dwelling per existing plot.
- Extensions, new developments or buildings should be set back from the road frontage to respect the adjacent building line and general character of the immediate area.
- Side boundary separations of at least 2 to 5 metres (depending on the location) should be retained at all levels. A substantial visual gap shall be retained between buildings on adjacent plots.
- All new buildings and extensions fronting Joy Lane shall face the street and have an active street frontage.
- Buildings fronting Joy Lane should be between 1 and 2 storeys high, with the potential for living space in the roof cavity. The scale and height of new developments should be in keeping with the scale of adjacent buildings.
- Any permitted new back land development should have a maximum height of 1.5 stories.



- Exterior walls should generally be finished in render and/or red or yellow brick with the potential for small amounts of timber and flint detailing.
- Roofs shall be pitched either gabled or hipped and consideration should be given to incorporation of front gables and gablets. Roofs should be tiled with plain clay plain tiles or slates.
- Small gable or hipped roofed front, rear and side facing dormer windows and eaves windows would be an acceptable, in keeping way of providing additional living space without increasing the scale of buildings.

- **Windows should have the appearance of wooden casement or sash style windows. Consideration should be given to the use of round porthole windows as feature elements.**
- **Inclusion of bay or bow windows at ground and first floor levels would act to tie new developments in with surrounding properties.**
- **Main entrance doors should be located on the front in porches or under verandas. Front doors should be made into a feature through the use of surrounding detailing and decoration.**
- **Existing chimney stacks on larger properties should be retained.**
- **Inclusion of novel features such as Victorian lamp standards, street furniture, and low wooden pedestrian gates.**
- **Where possible new telecommunications and power lines should be located underground within development sites.**
- **The front boundary of the site should be defined by either a low wall finished to match the house, timber fencing and/or hedges.**
- **Front gardens should be provided with lawns, tree planting, hedges and only small areas of hard surfacing either aggregate or paving. Where hard-surfacing for car parking in front gardens is necessary it should be screened from view of the street by trees and hedge plantings.**
- **Retention of all trees and hedgerows especially along property boundaries is vital. If trees and hedges do need to be removed, they should be replaced within the site.**
- **The character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the protection of the trees within the Conservation Area must be respected.**
- **Sufficient parking shall be provided on site. A limited quantity of parking could be provided to the front of buildings and shall be landscaped and designed in such a manner that it does not dominate the front garden nor impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties.**
- **Any garaging required by developments should either be incorporated into the buildings at ground floor level or provided in detached buildings. Under building or basement parking would not be suitable in this area.**
- **Access to any permitted back land developments on the northern side of Joy Lane should utilise existing accesses. The design of entranceways and driveways shall be agreed by and construction shall be to the satisfaction of Kent County Council and Canterbury City Council.**
- **Access ways and driveways to developments shall be designed and landscaped to be informal and have a minimal impact. Driveways should be soft (not overly engineered with kerbs and hard surfacing), well landscaped, have a width of 2.75 metres and boundary hedgerows and plantings should be retained and/or provided.**
- **Sufficient refuse and recycling storage should be provided to the rear of buildings. Discrete out of sight secure storage with easy access to the road frontage will be required to accommodate a 240 litre wheeled bin and up to six recycling sacks.**
- **New development will not be allowed to impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties anymore than present buildings on the site. This is particularly critical with respect to visual amenity and access to light and solar energy.**
- **Design statements to be submitted with planning applications to show how proposals conform to this Design Guide.**

