

DARENTH ROAD, DARENTH HILL AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER APPRAISAL



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

September 2000

Statement of Publicity

This Area of Special Character Appraisal has been the subject of formal public consultation (carried out between 30 March and 12 May 2000) and the views of interested parties have been taken into account in its preparation. A copy of the Cabinet report, which considered the responses received, is available for inspection during office hours at the Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford. This Appraisal was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 21 September 2000.

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Designation Criteria

The following criteria will be taken into account to designate new ASCs or review the boundaries of existing ASCs:

The prime consideration will be the quality and interest of the area, rather than that of individual buildings. The following criteria will be taken into account:

- Origins and development of topographical features such as medieval road pattern, formal layouts and the relationship of buildings to open spaces.
- Archaeological significance and potential, including any scheduled ancient monuments.
- Architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the buildings, both listed and unlisted, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area.
- Character and hierarchy of spaces and townscape quality.
- Current mix of uses within the area and the influence of these on the plan form and building types.
- Range of traditional materials prevalent in the area, particularly those which are characteristic of local vernacular styles.
- Contribution made by greens or green spaces, trees, hedgerows and other natural or cultivated elements to the character of the area.
- Relationship of the built environment to the landscape or open countryside, including significant landmarks, vistas or panoramas, both with and out of the area.
- Scale and detailing of contemporary buildings.
- Quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces.
- Features which detract from the special character of the area, such as traffic intrusion and its constraints on pedestrian movement.
- Neutral features which neither enhance or detract from the character or appearance of the area.

This Area of Special Character is very much defined by Darenth Hill, which bisects the two halves of the Area. In the southerly section lies the listed grade I Church of St. Margaret (Figure 3) and the listed grade II Darenth Court (Figure 4). The extensive graveyard and the grounds of Darenth Court provide appropriate settings for these fine buildings, tucked away



Figure 3- St. Margaret's Church

from the often busy Darenth Hill. The adjacent fruit distribution depot detracts in the immediate vicinity, but being well set back from the road, only the wide concrete access is apparent.



Figure 4- Darenth Court



Figure 1- Court Cottages

Unfortunately any historical link these buildings had with the riverside has been lost due to the depot. Court Cottages provide a contribution to the road frontage (Figure 1).



Figure 2- Darenth Road

In comparison to the southern side of Darenth Hill, Darenth Road is a narrow space squeezed between the wall Rose and Gordon Cottages. The trees along Darenth Road provide a real



Figure 5- Mill House

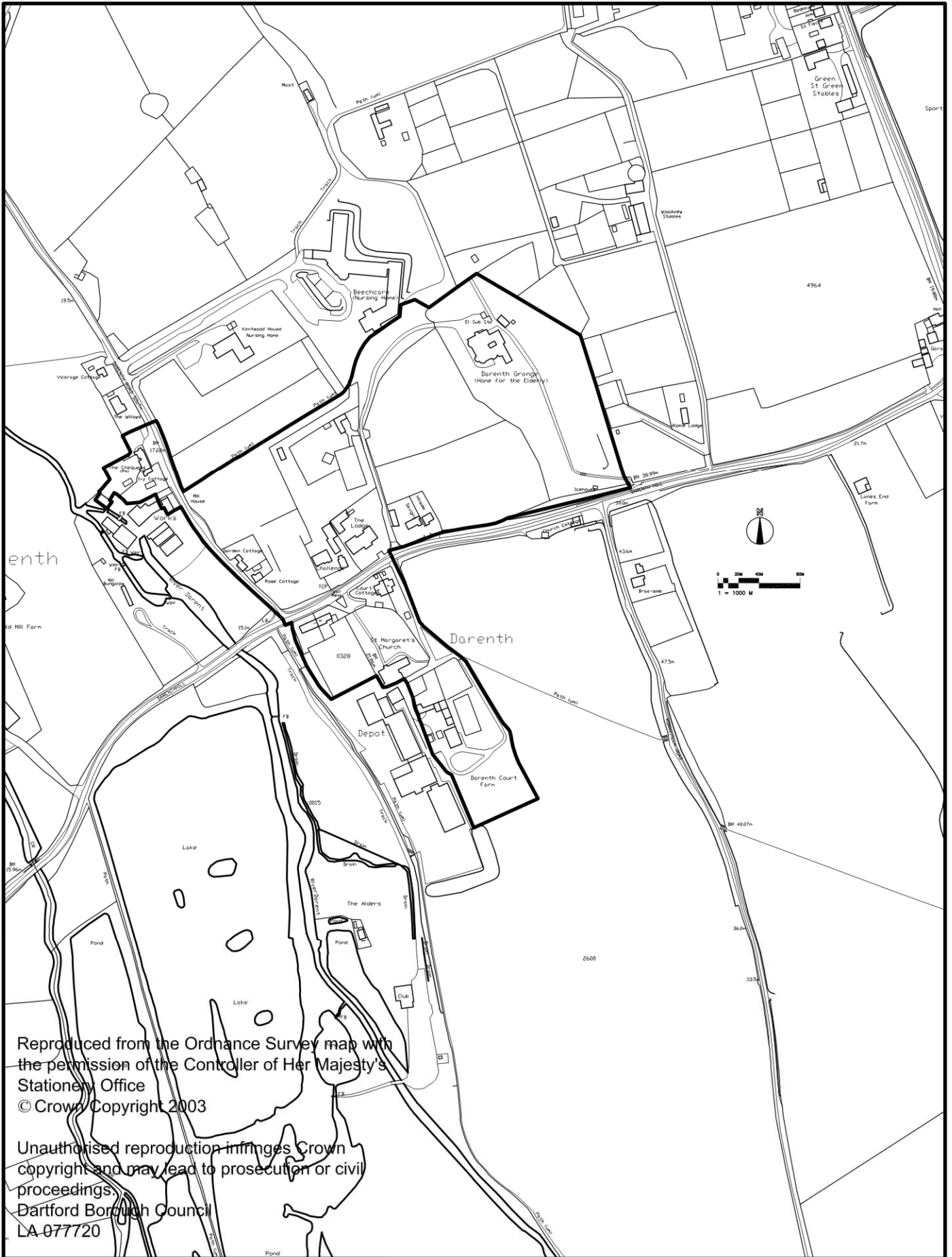


Figure 6- The Chequers

contribution (Figure 2), which leads to the grade II listed Mill House (Figure 5) and the Chequers public house (Figure 6). Mill House has been encroached upon by works buildings, but the Chequers has a garden at the rear which gives some of the sense of the historic landscape overlooking the Darent valley.

Darenth Grange is also an important building in the vicinity, sitting near the top of Darenth Hill, complete with its own grade II listed icehouse and extensively protected trees. Its original land includes the unoccupied tract between Rose Cottage and 'Challenge'. Whilst the modern ownership boundaries do not reflect the historic ones, the area of land mentioned contains the

remains of the glasshouses associated with the main house. There is a core of large historic houses in the area- Darenth Court, Darenth Grange, and the grounds of Sutton Court. The Borough Local Plan Review proposes to extend the boundary to include Darenth Grange and the land associated with the house to provide some recognition of the historic core to the Area.



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Scale 1:5000

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Title **DARENTH HILL**
AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER