

LANGHAM CONSERVATION AREA:
FORM AND CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

(Designated 6/12/74)

- 1.0** Langham is set in open gently undulating countryside some two miles inland from the north coast. The village is cruciform in its layout with the Church occupying the central and focal position at the crossroads. To the eastern end of Holt Road - the dominant east to west street - the houses form a loose-knit pattern. Short terraces and individual houses are well spaced and with considerable variation in their distance from the road. Some are set hard up to the edge of the highway, others are set back to give an irregular indeterminate frontage. Towards the village centre, around the Bluebell Public House, is a tighter cluster of houses. At the central crossroads, the character of the village changes quite dramatically with cobbled walls up to 3 metres high becoming the dominant feature. These walls provide a clearly defined frontage and a strong feeling of enclosure. This effect is accentuated by the absence of footpaths allowing the walls to form a sharp clear angle with the highway. At this point in the street the houses are almost completely concealed, being set back from the street and heavily screened by the high walls and overhanging frontage trees in a manner characteristic of a village. However, the magnificent Church of fine perpendicular style with its extremely high tower, maintains a strong and striking presence at the crossroads.
- 1.1** To the west of the crossroads and the Post Office is a quite successful residential conversion of a large barn standing hard up to the edge of the highway. The Conservation Area ends before the road passes some modern development on its way to open countryside.
- 1.2** Perhaps the most enduring and striking feature of Langham is its historic walls. These walls of beach cobble sometimes laid in courses, have generally been well maintained, however, some of those at the east end of Holt Road and to a lesser extent in North Street have suffered, probably in the late 60's, from some careless demolition for access purposes and illustrate how easily the character of a street can be changed when such demolition occurs.
- 1.3** Several individual houses and a row of cottages on Holt Road are Listed Buildings, possible the most attractive of these being the Bluebell Public House and Rowan Cottage at the junction with Hollow Lane. These are of typical vernacular style with wedge- type dormers. Towards the village centre, the Vicarage and Langham Hall are also listed, but because of their secluded siting behind high walls, make little contribution to the street scene. North Street is dominated by the listed range of barns relating to Langham Hall and there is also a listed 16th Century cottage on the west side. On the Field Dalling Road is Keys, a house built hard upon the street.
- 1.4** Running north from the junction is North Street, unusually wide for a village street and having the only footpath in the village centre. Presumably for the benefit of the school which is located to the east towards the northern end of the street. Here too cobbled walls and the buildings themselves maintain a firm and consistent demarcation of the frontages. The dominant feature on the east side of the street is a group of historic barns, formerly part of the Langham Hall complex, some of which are hard against the footpath; an imposing group, which has been simply and effectively converted to a glass works and visitor centre. Opposite the barns the low cobbled wall allows the only view out of the village over an open expanse of grazing land. This space and the one to the south-east of the old village form valuable buffers between the Conservation Area and quite recent estate development.

- 1.5** Further along North Street some newer houses mingle quite effectively with a cluster of old cottages and the school, and a further group of barns to the east completes the street scene.
- 1.6** South of the crossroads the Field Dalling Road makes its way between the barns and outbuildings of Keys, a listed country house and the Churchyard, where a line of mature Horsechestnut trees keeps the road well shaded. Before running out into open countryside the road passes two more impressive listed country houses, The Manor House and Orchard House, the former with an attendant group of barns. Orchard House, a 16th Century listed house presents massive cobbled walls, hard up to the edge of the highway in Hollow Lane.
- 1.7** As far as materials are concerned, Langham is very much a typical North Norfolk coastal village with cobbles from the beaches and red brick dressings with mainly red clay pantiles being dominant; only Langham Hall with its gault bricks breaks the mould.

(Approved by Development and Conservation Committee 4/1/96)