

BACTON CONSERVATION AREA: (Designated 6/12/74)
FORM AND CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

- 1.0** The village of Bacton is on the north-east coast of the District approximately 6 kilometres north-east of North Walsham and roughly equidistant between Mundesley and Happisburgh. The village straddles the coast road and is linear in form, however it is set well back from the beach and sea wall and there are no direct views of the sea from the main road within the village other than from the bend on its northern edge. The Conservation Area is in fact two areas in the heart of the village, one area being considerably larger than the other, mainly due to the fact that it embraces the site and ruins of St Andrew's Priory which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Abbey Farm house and barns which adjoin the ruins is also included. The ruins of the Abbey are listed Grade I and the north Gatehouse, together with the wall which runs for the full length of Back Lane, is listed Grade II*. Also listed on the Abbey site are South Gatehouse Grade II and the West Gatehouse, also Grade II.
- 1.1** At the centre of the built up part of the western area is a cross-roads formed by the intersection of Abbey Street and Watch House Lane with the Coast Road. Abbey Street is built up on its east side but the other side, with the exception of Abbey bungalow next to the Abbey gates, is flanked only by a cobbled wall beyond which is open countryside. The built up side is made up of a short terrace to the south and of semi-detached or single properties, all of which make up a most attractive and virtually continuous frontage. Most properties are in brick and cobble but a pair of cottages at the north end are colourwashed white. There is some variation in eaves height but all have windows which have vertical emphasis. At one point a quite recent infill has been most successfully achieved with an archway giving access to the rear. On the western side of the road the shoulder height cobbled wall has at its north end a listed K6 telephone kiosk and a 'bus shelter. The latter is in brick and cobbles with a pyramidal pantiled roof.
- 1.2** Moving west from the junction one is faced by the disused and dilapidated King's Arms on the corner of Watch House Lane. Despite its present state this Edwardian public house with its plaintiled and dormered roof and half timbered first floor establishes a strong and important presence on the road frontage in the Conservation Area and its rehabilitation is eagerly awaited. To the west, but part of the same group, are two cottages whose traditional character has been largely retained in spite of extensions and a change of windows. Moving further west a wide junction flanked by good quality brick and cobble walls is formed by the emergence of a track which gives access, via footpaths, down to the sea wall. It also gives access to Watch House Lane via a branch track that swings round behind the King's Arms. To the west of this access, fronting the Coast Road, is Trinity Cottage whose long facade suggests perhaps an earlier terrace of three. Next to this is Broomholm which, together with Garden Cottage to the rear, forms an L-shaped building of considerable charm and character. Having a thatched roof with a colourwashed facade facing the road it is listed Grade II. The Conservation Area boundary, having taken in some outbuildings, then swings round to the north to take in a parcel of land which includes Meadow Lodge, a vernacular style bungalow. The parcel of land opposite Meadow Lodge on the east side of the lane is used as a Caravan and Camping Club site.
- 1.3** To the east of the Watch House Lane junction is Pilgrim House, another Grade II listed building which also has an L-shaped plan, thatched roofs and a colourwashed facade. A further listed building, a fine thatched barn, stands behind Pilgrim House in a yard with

several good quality single storey farm buildings, one of which has been converted for holiday use. An excellent brick and cobble wall and the gable of one of the outbuildings fronts the Coast Road. The Conservation Area ends at this point but the boundary crosses the road to take in a terrace of three vernacular style modern cottages on the south side of the Coast Road.

- 1.4** The second element in the Bacton Conservation Area lies approximately 200 metres along the Coast Road to the east. It takes in a single group of houses opposite the junction with Priory Road and adjacent to a Y-junction with Keswick Road where the Coast Road swings south-east. The entire group is fronted by a good quality brick and cobble wall of varying height and with a coping of half-round bricks. First in the group when approached from the west is Danecote, a large Edwardian house with a pair of two-storey splay bay windows and with red terracotta finials and ridge tiles to a black pantiled roof. Immediately adjoining is a pair of houses of similar age but in strong contrast with a plain facade in brick and cobbles. A gap in the frontage follows, giving access to an indifferent modern house at the rear. Next on the frontage is a pair of attractive alms bungalows having a plain tiled roof with decorative ridge tiles. Following a narrow gap is a Grade II listed building comprising four houses. An early 18th Century building with thatched roof and cobbled front, it has great charm and character although arguably somewhat out of keeping in this particular setting. Next to and set forward of the thatched house is a rather plain house of square proportions and colourwashed in white. There is a small single-storey cobbled and pantiled building, perhaps once a shop, immediately next to the house and this is the last building in the group contained in the Conservation Area.
- 1.5** There are virtually no trees of any significance within the Bacton Conservation Area other than those which line the access drive to Abbey Farm within the Scheduled Ancient Monument site.
- 1.6** Materials within the Conservation Area are more varied than those usually found in coastal villages. Whilst there is a substantial array of brick and beach cobbles with clay pantiles there is a quite high proportion of colourwashed rendering with thatch and some use of red plain tiles.

(Approved by Development and Conservation Committee 22/5/97)