

SALTHOUSE CONSERVATION AREA:
FORM AND CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

(Designated 11/6/74)

- 1.0** The outline of the Salthouse Conservation Area for the most part follows the plot boundaries of the built-up village, however over to the northwest a narrow strip of open countryside has been included together with the central area between the two principal streets. These protect the setting of the village at its most vulnerable points.
- 1.1** The village is situated on rising ground immediately behind the Salthouse Marshes and is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Conservation Area boundary follows the inland bank of Catchwater Drain which is a substantial stream running along the edge of the marsh roughly parallel with the coast road. The inland side of the coast road is built up for the entire width of the village forming a serpentine edge. At the western end of the village, beside the coast road, is the village green, triangular in shape, which is the focal point of the village although not at its centre. To the west of the green is the historic public house, the Dun Cow, and behind the green to the south is the village store and post office. On the southern edge of the green is a bus shelter which, although built in brick and flint, has an incongruous flat roof. Running inland from the green is a street that is part of a loop road which, after forming part of a crossroads to the south, returns back northwards to rejoin the coast road some way to the east of the green.
- 1.2** Continuing up the western street there is at once a strong feeling of enclosure created by high cobbled walls to the listed Salthouse Hall to the west and to the farmyard opposite, a feeling heightened by the absence of footpaths. The built-up frontage is continued on the east side by some fine barns, one buttressed, and all hard up to the edge of the road. However the feeling of enclosure is lost at this point by a huge setback on the west side. Here some Council houses were built in terraced form in the early fifties in response to an emergency caused by flooding. These are of an unsympathetic design being in colour-washed blockwork and concrete tiles, but the most significant feature is perhaps the large grassed area and access road in front of them. Beyond this the enclosed feeling returns with a cottage built hard up to the edge of the road and further cottages with good brick and cobble frontage walls reflecting the barns and the cobbled walls opposite them. Further to the south the road divides, with the loop road sweeping off to the east. The continuation of the street is known as Bard Hill which carries on for a short distance to the south before rising more steeply up to the heathland beyond. Bard Hill has an impressive historic house immediately on its eastern side. This has, unusually, one dutch gable and one parapeted gable. A high cobbled frontage wall marks its boundary back to the road junction. Opposite this house the development is somewhat undistinguished with some semi-detached houses built probably in the fifties, which have made little attempt to relate to vernacular buildings and which again are set back with a service road in front. Returning to the loop road or Market Lane as this section is called an excellent view of the church and sea beyond can be seen before arriving at the crossroads. The road then runs downhill between steep banks into Cross Street. Here on the east side is a small development built in the mid 70s that has been well integrated into the village. The frontage houses have been only slightly set back for visibility purposes and the entrance is discreet and unobtrusive. The houses are in a neo-vernacular style, the only shortcoming being the use of concrete pantiles. These have now weathered into an unfortunate dark brown colour which is quite intrusive, particularly when viewed from the high ground to the south. On the west side of the street some traditional houses and cottages are built hard up to the edge of the road, some gable on. These are followed by some brick and cobble frontage walls on the west side but the enclosure is

again broken down by excessive set backs on the east side. Two large pairs of semi-detached houses have been sited well back from the street with long front gardens and the provision of a parking bay and footpaths on the frontage result in a further loss of traditional enclosed character. Some attempt has been made to reinstate the original frontage by a vernacular style cottage on the next plot but with little prospect of support this looks stranded and rather incongruous. The frontage has suffered further on the east side with a solitary barn and low cobbled wall doing little to conceal a rather untidy farmyard complete with ageing sectional buildings. Immediately opposite and in striking contrast is Manor House and its adjoining cottage. Although of no great historic interest the house uses traditional forms and materials to good effect and although it is set back a considerable distance from the road the intervening space has traditional walls and outbuildings with well maintained gravelled drives and verges. Rising impressively behind Manor House is the 16th century church. Before joining the coast road Cross Street achieves a further short stretch of good enclosure with cottages, outbuildings and frontage walls hard up to the edge of the road.

- 1.3** That part of the village which overlooks the coast road and the marshes varies in form and lacks cohesion almost until the green at its west end is reached. At the east end the frontage begins quite firmly with cottages close up behind a grass verge but it then begins to become loose knit with buildings sited at varying distances from the road and with substantial gaps between. Frontages are defined by low hedgerows, cobbled walls and, in one case, cast iron railings. The haphazard nature of this part of the village is nevertheless an essential part of its overall character.
- 1.4** One feature of particular interest along this frontage road is where Catchwater Drain widens to form an extensive duck pond. As well as many different species of ducks, geese and swans all the year round, this also attracts visitors and their cars which unfortunately leads to untidy parking and wear and tear on banks and verges. The coast road and its cottages also of course have uninterrupted views over Salthouse marshes. These marshes attract a wide variety of bird life and are designated a nature conservation site of national and international importance.
- 1.5** At a point almost exactly halfway along the coast road frontage a narrow lane leads up to Salthouse church, magnificently sited at a central point in the village with commanding views out over the marshes to the sea. The lane is tightly enclosed by a few cottages and their outbuildings and its winding nature prevents any view of the church until it is actually reached.
- 1.6** Materials found in Salthouse are red brick and beach cobbles with some whitewashed buildings to the east of the green. Tiles are mainly red clay pantiles.

(Approved by Development and Conservation Committee 18/7/96)