

Clare Park and Blacklands Conservation Area, East Malling, Kent

Clare House is an 18th Century country house built for John Larking, set in substantial landscaped parkland which contains fine specimen trees, a lake, and stable block. Much of the former parkland character still remains including many feature trees and substantial boundary tree screening. The Mill Stream and lake form a link with the small farm complex and 19th Century buildings at Blacklands including the imposing stuccoed building of Blacklands House and its attractive red brick boundary wall. The farm buildings at the junction of Blacklands and Clare Lane are listed and date from the 18th Century. These combine with buildings on the south side of Clare Lane, which date from the 18th Century and are listed, to form an interesting group around the junction.

The Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council carried out detailed assessments of the Conservation Areas at the time of their designation, and now have a programme of publishing formal Conservation Area Appraisals. These will set out clearly the special character of each area as well as providing a sound basis for the control of development, it is hoped that they will give guidance to property owners with regard to appropriate development and how the character of a Conservation Area can be preserved and enhanced.

There are 59 designated Conservation Areas in the Borough, the Parish of East Malling and Larkfield contain the following:

- East Malling Village
- Mill Street
- Bradbourne
- Clare Park and Blacklands
- New Barns and Broadwater Farm

To date East Malling Village and Mill Street are the only Conservation Areas with published Assessments.

The following documents can be obtained from TMBC:

- Listed Building Advice Note
- Conservation Areas Advice Note
- Conservation Area Designations
- Conservation Area Assessments

General guidance notes published by the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

What is a "Conservation Area"?

A Conservation Area is an area which has a special architectural or historic character worthy of protection and enhancement. A Conservation Area may be the historic centre of a town or village, an older unspoilt residential area, or an important country house in large landscaped grounds. Conservation Areas are "designated" by the Local Authority to recognise the area's special character and to protect part of our Heritage.

What does this mean to residents in practical terms?

Conservation Area designation aims to ensure that the special architectural or historic character of the area is properly maintained and enhanced. Buildings, paved areas, trees, hedges, walls, open spaces and other landscape and architectural features can all contribute to the character of an area. Designation of a Conservation Area does not mean that changes cannot occur, but rather that any change should enhance and preserve the features which make up its special character.

Are there any special restrictions or controls?

There are special controls over development within Conservation Areas. The more significant are summarised below. This is for general information only and in specific cases you are advised to contact the Borough Council for advice:

- Consent must be obtained from the Local Planning Authority for the demolition of any building within the Conservation Area (with some minor exceptions), even if it is not a listed building. Consent may also be required to demolish gates, walls, fences or railings.
- "Permitted Development" rights to alter and extend properties without the need to submit a planning application are less extensive within a Conservation Area. These affect such things as the size of an extension or outbuilding and precludes the addition of any form of external cladding to the exterior of a building.
- No trees may be felled or lopped without first giving the Local Planning Authority 6 weeks notice. This gives the Local Authority time to decide whether the trees are of sufficient importance to warrant the making of a Tree Preservation Order.
- Outline applications for development are not normally accepted and a high architectural design standard is expected which respects the character and quality of the area. Special attention is also paid to any development adjoining a Conservation Area to ensure there will be no harmful effects on the Conservation Area itself.

Are there any benefits?

Protecting the special character of the area will be of benefit to residents and visitors alike. The Borough Council is committed to the environmental improvement of its Conservation Areas. A rolling programme of schemes is carried out and priorities are reviewed regularly to concentrate funds on the areas of greatest need and to avoid inconsistencies and piecemeal measures.

Schemes are specifically designed to be appropriate to the historic character and scale of each area and may incorporate such measures as traditional paving treatment, street furniture improvement, landscaping and the removal of wirescapes.

In very special cases, English Heritage in partnership with the Borough Council may be prepared to give grant aid for the structural repair of specific buildings which add to the special character of a Conservation Area.

Where can I obtain further information?

This leaflet provides a summary of the meaning and effects of the designation of a Conservation Area. More detailed information can be obtained by contacting:

The Conservation Officer
Development Control
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
West Malling Air Station
West Malling
Kent ME 19 6LZ
Phone 01732 876265

Clare Park and Blacklands Conservation Area, East Malling, Kent



EMCG has produced this diagrammatic image for reference only. Further details are available from The Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.

Legend: -

- Roads
- Footpaths
- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings
- Water