

Thanington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation February 2023

Comments from KCC Heritage Conservation

B2 Historical sites

The text states that Thanington has 8 listed buildings and sites of historical interest. The NP area does indeed have 8 listed buildings but it has several other sites of heritage significance. It would be helpful to those using the NP if the parish's heritage could be reviewed at the start of this section rather than in an Appendix as it is central to understanding the purposes of policies B.2.1, B.2.2 and B.2.3. I have summarised the main points below.

Although Thanington lies well outside the historic core of Canterbury it nonetheless has a diverse heritage with several sites and buildings of significance recorded on the Kent Historic Environment Record and, no doubt, more to be added. The northern part of the NP area lies in an area of terrace gravels and head brickearth deposits from which five palaeolithic handaxes have been recovered, including from Milton Bridge and Cockering Hill. Elsewhere these deposits have produced very abundant flint finds and mammal fossils and it is possible further discoveries may remain to be found in the NP area itself. Recently, archaeological work adjacent to Cockering Farm has discovered a range of prehistoric evidence including a possible mesolithic flint working site, neolithic occupation, a bronze age barrow and a possible bronze age settlement. Other finds have been made including a bronze age razor and several iron age coins south of Cockering Road. As might be imagined given the proximity to Canterbury, there have been numerous Roman finds from the NP area. Two Roman roads run through Thanington – Stone Street which linked Canterbury to Portus Lemanis (Lympne) and a road that led to the Weald via the Ashford area. This latter road was seen in the recent excavations adjacent to Cockering Farm. Roman urns and a skeleton are reputed to have been found in the area in the 19th century. Possible Roman features were found on Thanington Road in 2010. Most of the Roman discoveries are coins and other metal artefacts including rings, brooches and cosmetic implements. More than 80 such finds are recorded from the NP area. There have been a small number of Anglo-Saxon finds from the area but there has been one significant discovery – an Anglo-Saxon grave containing a bead was found to the west of Martyrs Field. In addition to the medieval listed buildings already identified in the text, evidence of medieval land-use was found at cockering Farm and almost 100 metal items have been recovered by metal detecting in the fields south of Cockering Road. These include coins, brooches, animal harness fittings, buckles and keys. The evidence suggests that there is good potential for further archaeological discoveries.

Used well, Thanington's heritage can play a constructive role in life in the parish in the future. For example, it would be possible to bring the two Roman roads to greater prominence as landscape features or for community activities to study the parish's heritage further. It would be helpful if this can be highlighted in the text.

Policy B.2.1

I was pleased to see the setting of the heritage assets included in the draft policy. I would suggest, though, that this policy be re-worded somewhat for clarity
“Development proposals will be supported where they conserve and enhance any heritage assets and their settings that may be impacted by the proposals.”

Policy B.2.2

To provide more information for those preparing development proposals I would suggest this policy be rephrased thus:

Development proposals affecting heritage assets with an archaeological interest must be accompanied by a desk-based assessment, and if necessary by archaeological fieldwork, that :

- *Characterises the nature, extent and condition of the archaeological deposits in the development area*
- *Assesses the significance of the deposits and the contribution made by their setting*
- *Describes and assesses the impact of the development proposals on the archaeological deposits, their significance, and their setting*
- *Describes how the archaeological deposits will be protected during development. Where this is not possible the assessment should clearly justify why this is not possible and should describe the proposals for mitigating any impacts*

Policy B.2.3

Despite best efforts it is not always possible to prevent heritage assets from being harmed by development. I would suggest that a more pragmatic policy might be written thus:

Where development proposals affect non-designated heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the Parish Council would expect the archaeological deposits to be preserved in-situ. Where this is not possible clear justification will be required. Where the justification is accepted a programme of archaeological recording may be required to be carried out