

Lindfield buildings overview

Introduction.

Section 5 of the Lindfield Village Design Statement provides an informative introduction to the buildings of Lindfield.

“All of the buildings in Lindfield contribute, each in their own way, to the character of the village. But it is the historic and architecturally important buildings that stand either side of High Street, which extends from Black Hill at the southern end for 1km in a generally north easterly direction to the top of Buxshalls Hill at the northern end, and in Compton Road and Lewes Road, that are the village’s architectural and historic treasures and from which the essential character and sense of place flow. The Lindfield Conservation Area was designated in 1969, in recognition of the importance of these buildings and the area around the Common. The area was extended in 1989 to include properties in Black Hill and again in 1998 to include Compton Road. Two western approaches to the High Street via Hickmans Lane and Denmans Lane have their own characters, acknowledged by their formal designations as Areas of Townscape Character, a designation also applying to the approaches from Haywards Heath along West Common and Sunte Avenue.”

It is now considered that in addition to the existing two Areas of Townscape Character, two additional areas of Lindfield should also be accorded that status and protection:

The Welkin.



Photo: A line of terraced houses in the centre of The Welkin.

The original Welkin was built as a Vicarage about 1839 for Reverend Francis Sewell and became a private school for boys in 1948 on being derequisitioned by the Army after the Second World War. It was demolished in 1961 and the whole site released for redevelopment as housing. An initial suggestion that 200 flats in five eight-storey blocks caused local uproar and led to the formation of the Lindfield Preservation Society. The Society employed an architect to suggest alternative means for accommodating a comparable number of people on the site and The Welkin, as we know it today, was conceived.

After a proposal to develop Green Meadows in 1961 was refused by the then Cuckfield and District Council, K.G. Holman & Sons on behalf of The Welkin Property Ltd proposed a

design by Gordon Jeeves Chartered Architects of 61 Catherine Place London SW1 for 30 bungalows and garages on part of the site. This was to be just the first phase of a number of phases of development at The Welkin that eventually resulted in 120 homes being built during the 1960s.

They provide a wide mix of attractive dwellings from low-rise apartments through terraced houses to bungalows and sheltered housing with harmonious architectural themes. They are all built of the local Freshfield Lane bricks and share many common features such as; bow front windows, pointed front door porches, white front doors, windows, drainpipes etc.



Photo: Entrance to The Welkin from Hickmans Lane.

The open landscaped developments of The Welkin, where good use has been made of the natural lie of the land and existing and new trees had been incorporated, have been particularly successful. Landscape features include the use of dwarf stone rendered retaining walls with shrub planting that is fronted by risings grass banks at each side of the entrance, large grass verges and squares throughout the estate with an abundance of shrubs and mature trees throughout the managed open areas.

By comparison with some other 1960s developments, the Welkin development has demonstrated the value of combining good layout, landscaping and detailed design. Recent infill developments within the Welkin of a small number of additional bungalows and of a second block of flats have respected the design, style and materials used in the 1960s buildings. However to ensure that this delightful part of Lindfield retains its character for future generations, it deserves to be accorded the additional protection of an Area of Townscape Character.



Photo: A view across a grassed square towards a terrace of houses at rear the rear of The Welkin.

The Wilderness.



Photo: Entrance to the Wilderness.

The Wilderness was developed by Holman & Sons using Ralph Knight of Haywards Heath as their architect between 1958 and the early 1960s. This was a time when other developments such as Dukes Road, Finches Park Road and Savill Road were also being built.

There are six large detached houses each in a plot of about half an acre located on each side of the meandering Wilderness roadway. Although each house is slightly different there is a very distinctive set of common characteristics running through all of them. The houses are built of locally sourced bricks and some of the common distinctive design features include windows with leaded lights, multiple roof shapes and front door porches. All the houses are well set back from the road which is edged with large grass verges and the houses are also shielded now by high well trimmed hedges and other shrubbery.

This group of 1960's built houses have matured into one of the finest examples of late 20th Century small developments in Lindfield and deserve to be accorded the additional protection afforded by becoming an Area of Townscape Character.



Photo: Inside the Wilderness.

Written to support a policy within The Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan 2013.

Cllr Alan Gomme, Lindfield Parish Council.

September 2013.

Sources: Lindfield Village Design Statement, Lindfield Within Living Memory by Gwyn Mansfield & Claudia Gaukroger (1995), Lindfield Remembered by Peter Duncan, Gwyn Mansfield & Brian Tester (2002) and Mid Sussex District Council's microfiche records.

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