



## HIGHER CARDEN

### CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL JANUARY 2008



*Chester  
City Council*

Maps can be seen on the following link: [www.chester.gov.uk/conservationareareview](http://www.chester.gov.uk/conservationareareview)

# HIGHER CARDEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL - JANUARY 2008

## DESIGNATIONS

<b>Conservation Area</b>	First designated in 1996
<b>Listed Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Carden Green (II), Carden Green (south side)</i></li> <li>• <i>Farm building at Bank Farm (II), Carden Green (south side)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Scheduled Monuments</b>	None
<b>Registered Parks and Gardens</b>	None
<b>Archaeological Priority</b>	None
<b>SSSI</b>	None
<b>Article 4 directions</b>	None
<b>Regulation 7 directions</b>	None
<b>Any other designations</b>	None
<b>Area of Special County Value (ASCV)</b>	None
<b>Site of Biological Interest (SBI)</b>	None
<b>Site of Nature Conservation Value (SNCV)</b>	None
<b>Area of Nature Conservation Value (ANCV)</b>	None
<b>Other</b>	None

## HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Carden would mean “enclosure at a rock” in old English, the rock from which the place is named appears in two “scars” on the west side of the nearby Carden Cliff Hill. Initially spelt *Kauerthin*(1230), *Caurthyn* (1307), *Cardeyn* (1511) and *Carden* (1527)<sup>1</sup>.

Carden is a small farming hamlet of medieval origin that did not appear in the Domesday survey, most probably included within that of Tilston. Post Norman Conquest, a family which assumed the local name, was settled here. In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, Carden was divided into *Lower* and *Over Carden* and possessed by two other distinctive families<sup>2</sup>.

Map evidence<sup>3</sup> shows us that Higher Carden has mainly evolved around a important triangular green which possibly was used as a



View up Carden Lane to the north-west

drove route for cattle, its fortune closely bound to its agricultural use with the majority of the land owned formerly by Carden estate.

The development of Higher Carden into the recognisable character of today occurred during the period from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>1</sup> J.Mc.N. Dodgson, *The place names of Cheshire*, part IV, p. 54, University Press, Cambridge, 1972.

<sup>2</sup> *The History of County Palatine of Chester*, J. H. Hanshall, p. 355, Chester, 1817.

<sup>3</sup> Burdett Map (1777), Tithe Map (1842), Ordnance Survey Map (1875, 1910, 1970), Cheshire Record Office, 9 Duke Street, Chester

## KEY FEATURES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

<b>General:</b>	strong rural influence
<b>Topography:</b>	built on a sloping sandstone ridge 70 metres above the general level
<b>Streetscape:</b>	two main roads: one north-south, i.e. Carden Lane, one east west, i.e. Higher Carden Lane
<b>Settlement layout:</b>	built around Higher Carden's green and Carden Lane
<b>Built environment re: residential units:</b>	Detached and semi detached houses two storey high, pitched slated roofs, timber framed construction and brick built dating from 17 <sup>th</sup> century until 20 <sup>th</sup> century
<b>Building setting:</b>	Detached and semi detached houses, mostly cottages, varied set backs
<b>Boundary treatment:</b>	significant low to medium height dry sandstone walls
<b>Trees and hedgerows:</b>	High hedgerows bordering lower part of Carden Lane and fronting some properties, distinctive pine trees on the northern part of the conservation area due to Carden Hill's forest proximity
<b>Historic floor surface:</b>	none
<b>Open spaces:</b>	large sloping triangular green
<b>Other distinctive feature:</b>	presence of sandstone outcrop within the conservation area
<b>Change of conservation area boundaries:</b>	none



## CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Higher Carden is a hamlet built on a sloping elevated site, below the southern edge of wooded Carden cliff hill, a setting of outstanding landscape value within the District. It is located 13 miles south of Chester and enjoys a rural character supported by its buildings and activities.

The hamlet is mainly clustered around a triangular sloping green bound by dry sandstone walls, and along Carden lane. However the built environment is fairly dispersed, the substantial green with its boundary treatment and small property setbacks, contribute to the compact and unified character of this place. Almost all the houses are detached, with generous grounds. They are two storeys high, generally brick built with slated pitched roofs, enjoying a mixture of vernacular styles dating from 17<sup>th</sup> century to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Higher Carden conservation area stretches mainly along both sides of the triangular green, each section enjoying a particular character:

- The lower southern part, more compact than the higher section, is the oldest, with two 17<sup>th</sup> century listed farmstead, one thatched. These houses are set back behind a narrow verge, low dry sandstone walls and some mature trees. This group with its domestic scale, well weathered and snugly sited, contrasts pleasantly with the adjacent imposing green.
- The upper northern part is more recent with two pairs of Victorian cottages. This part seems to be of a more open form, with similar boundary treatment as the lower part, yet properties a little elevated and with no mature trees fronting them. To some extent, they belong more to the pine wooded backdrop, a distinctive feature of the conservation area.

The rest of the conservation area lies between its two extremities along Carden Lane:

- At the foot of Carden Hill and at the highest point of the area, two dispersed cottages define the northern entry of the conservation area. They are set back behind medium height dry sandstone walls, hedgerows and mature trees, well tucked into the wooded hillside.
- At the lowest point of the conservation area, along Carden Lane's high hedgerows and mature trees, Bank house, a 19<sup>th</sup> century estate cottage set back behind a timber fence and a generous lawn, defines the southern entrance of the conservation area.



Higher Carden Lane - eastern tip of green looking west

Around the conservation area, open fields bordered by hedgerows and mature trees set the rural backdrop on the southern and eastern side, the western side adjoins Carden golf club and the northern part borders Carden Hill's distinctive woodland.

## **POSITIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA**

### **Listed Buildings**

The listed elements within the conservation area form the key features of its overall character. These include two 17<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads, Carden Green and Bank Farm. The former, sandstone and brick built, graced by a reed thatch roof, the latter featuring a 17<sup>th</sup> century timber framed rear wing and a late 18<sup>th</sup> century brick built main block. Their distinctive architectural qualities as well as their grounds and position within the conservation area confer on them special importance, adding much to Higher Carden's distinctive layout.

### **Unlisted buildings of merit**

Like the listed buildings, unlisted buildings of merit are varied in their detailing, use of materials and overall form. Most of them seem to date from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When special circumstances arise and for more effective built environment protection in conservation areas, it may be appropriate to consider the provision of article 4 directions and making use of a local list for Higher Carden's unlisted buildings of merit.

### **Local views**

There are a number of local views that are considered important and which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is essential that full consideration be given to the impact of development proposals upon these views. Important local views include those listed below:

- From Higher Carden Lane, fine views east towards fields
- From Carden Lane, fine views south west towards the Welsh mountains.

### **Topography, townscape and landscape details**

The relationships between topography, local townscape and landscape details often contribute to the sense of local distinctiveness and are often unique to a particular



**Bank Farm, Higher Carden Lane**

conservation area. They can range from specific building detailing, characteristic building elements and boundary treatments, to the quality of the streetscape. Individually and collectively they contribute to the overall quality of Higher Carden as well as enhancing individual areas of character within the settlement.

### *Topography*

Higher Carden is located on a sloping elevated site 70 metres above sea level, built along the Carden Cliff sandstone ridge.

### *Townscape details*

Local townscape details contribute to the sense of local distinctiveness and may be unique to a particular conservation area.

Higher Carden's conservation area has no typical townscape details but more an eclectic mix of architectural styles of the village's older buildings. Nevertheless the following factors contribute strongly to the overall local distinctiveness:

- The prevailing walling material in the village is brick with some significant timber framed building - i.e. Bank farm.
- All roofs are pitched and slated, at the exception of Carden Green thatched roof

### *Landscape and streetscape details*

Landscape and streetscape details have a significant impact upon the setting of properties, the coherence of a group and the overall character of a conservation area. Traditional and appropriate treatments will preserve or enhance the appearance of the conservation area. They range from boundary treatments, hedgerows, trees, private driveways, historic floor surface.

### *Sandstone ridge*

As mentioned previously, Higher Carden is located on a sandstone ridge, a significant feature of the area. We find sandstone outcrops along Hillcrest and Carden Cliff frontage.

### *Boundary treatments, hedgerows and trees*

Boundary treatment is a significant and distinctive feature of Higher Carden conservation area.

Built on a sandstone ridge, most of Higher Carden's fronting houses enjoy weathered low to medium height (0.5 to 1.2 metre)



Carden Green Cottage & Welsh View



dry sandstone walls. This distinctive streetscape features along side with the slope unifies and enhances the built environment and its grounds within the conservation area.

Medium height hedgerows and mature trees complement often Higher Carden's boundary treatment. The northern part of the conservation area enjoys the pine trees of the nearby Carden Hill forest, adding to the character and appearance of the area.

#### *Historic floor surface*

There is no significant historic floor surface

### **Open Spaces**

Higher Carden enjoys an important triangular sloping green, almost disproportionate to the size of the hamlet, forming a natural centre of the settlement. Its dimensions, geometry, topography, situation - i.e. facing Welsh Hills - and flora - i.e. absence trees - combine to give an almost surreal atmosphere and character to the area.

### **General layout, buildings and their setting in the landscape**

Mainly built around its green and the 2 extremities of the conservation area, most of the houses are detached, two storeys high, fairly dispersed with varying set backs.

Higher Carden's general character owes a lot to the balance between its relative compactness and open surrounding areas, sloping topography, the green, unique sandstone boundary treatment, varying setbacks and the bordering Carden Hill forest.

Any further development should seriously take into consideration those substantial key features.

### **Boundaries**

The boundaries have been reviewed and no changes have been proposed.



**Carden Green & Hillcrest, Carden Lane**

## **NEUTRAL OR NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Neutral elements represent features within the conservation area that offer no strong positive or negative influence upon the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, negative features detract from the special character of an area and present the opportunity for change, which will enhance the character and appearance of an area. Those elements considered neutral or negative features and those elements that represent enhancement opportunities within the conservation area are listed below.

### **Negative elements**

- Wooden fence fronting Bank House as seen from Carden Lane
- Single garage fronting Welsh View as seen from Higher Carden Lane

### **Enhancement opportunities- landscape**

#### *Bank house fencing*

Replacement of wooden fencing along Bank house as seen from Carden Lane with more appropriate hedging would be desirable.

#### *Welsh view single garage*

A hedgerow along Welsh View's garage, to screen this outbuilding, would be desirable.

As a result of those proposals, it is hoped that funding mechanisms to achieve them may be explored within the Community.

**NB:** These are suggestions for improvement, but owners should note that the Planning Authority has no powers to implement those recommendations.

## **MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

In order to maintain the character and appearance of conservation areas, Chester City Council will use the appropriate pieces of legislation relevant for this task:

- Urgent Work Notice.  
This notice relates to a building which is in a very serious state of disrepair and needs basically to be water safe. It should be confirmed by the Secretary of State.
- Tidy Land Provision Notice, section 214 of the Planning Act 1990.  
This notice relates to a building and its curtilage that is poorly maintained. It requires a tidy up of the property.
- Dilapidated Building Notice, section 16 of the 1984 Building Act.  
This Notice refers to a building that is in a poor state. It implies either repairing the building or removal of the building. In a Conservation Area, such demolition would need a Conservation Area Consent.



## **THREAT**

Increasing car traffic - mainly due to commuting - with its side effects such as street widening, road signs, tree cutting, poorly designed garages and drive ways, inappropriate traffic calming measures, etc. often seriously and irreversibly affects the character of a conservation area.

It is therefore important to foresee and manage very carefully the design and material impact of traffic on new developments, in order to maintain the essential features that make a conservation area special, in accordance with the latest guidance on streets published by the Department for Transport (Manual for Streets, March 2007, [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).

## **SURROUNDINGS OF A CONSERVATION AREA**

Developments on properties located in the surrounding of a conservation area should also be considered with great care, in order to maintain the essential features that make an area special.

## **APPENDICES**

- Map of the conservation area as existing, scale 1:2,500

## **FURTHER READING**

Chester City Council - 1997 *Living in a Conservation Area - A Guide to Householders*  
Chester City Council - November 2006 *Chester District Local Plan*

### **Relevant Local Plan Policies**

- ENV21 Protection of trees and woodland
- ENV24 Preservation of key features within the landscape and its overall character
- ENV37 Preservation or enhancement of conservation areas
- ENV38 Protection of local views
- ENV45 Preservation of the special interest of listed buildings
- ENV46 Appropriate changes of use to listed buildings
- ENV47 Protection of unlisted buildings of merit