

Stratton St. Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



- Conservation area designated on 14th September 1992
- Appraisal and management plan adopted 10th February 2009

This appraisal, management plan and the accompanying map has been prepared in collaboration with Stratton St Margaret Parish Council. Swindon Borough Council's Planning Committee approved the document on 10 February 2009.

At the same time, the Committee authorised the Director of Planning and Transport authorised to use the document for planning and development control purposes.



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1 Summary of the Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area

The special interest that justifies designation of Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area derives from a number of architectural, historic and environmental factors including:

- Good example of a mid/late 19th century brewery complex that expanded with Swindon's post-railway growth;
- Grade II listed 'brewery house' capped by belvedere and weathervane;
- Robust industrial architecture within an intact original layout;
- Prevalent use of stone, red brick and slate;
- Tall, landmark brick chimney built in the 1930s;
- Victorian public house (The Kingsdown) connected with the brewery;
- Stone built row of brewery workers' cottages (nos. 1-9 (odd) Hyde Road);
- Small-scale roadside cottages in Hyde Road contrasting with the massive brewery buildings;
- Nos. 3/5 Kingsdown Road, a well-preserved example of a pair of artisans' cottages;
- Typical late-19th century lodge;
- Trees within the grounds of a demolished Victorian mansion;

1.1 Introduction

Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area was designated by Thamesdown Borough Council on 14th September 1992.

This document defines and records the special architectural or historic interest that warrants designation of Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area and identifies elements that contribute to its special character and appearance. Swindon Borough Council's Planning Committee approved this document on 10th February 2009.

1.2 Purpose of the appraisal and management plan

The *conservation area appraisal*, in defining the special interest, character and appearance of the conservation area, provides a sound basis for development control decisions. It will help planning officers, developers, designers and the public at large assess whether a proposed development affecting a conservation area would, or would not, preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that area.

Development proposals which affect the conservation area will be judged for their effect on the area's character and appearance as identified in this conservation area appraisal.

The *conservation area management plan* (Section 6 of this document) identifies how the conservation area could be enhanced or improved with the support of the local authority, residents and other agencies.

1.3 Conservation policy

A conservation area is "an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

When considering applications for development which affect a conservation area “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.” (Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with policies contained in the current Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 and with national planning policy guidance, especially Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning.

The information contained in this appraisal was originally collected during the year 2000/2001. The area was revisited and the document revised and updated in October 2008. To be concise and readable, it does not record all features. The omission of any feature from the text or accompanying maps does not, therefore, mean that it must not be of interest or value.

2 Background

2.1 Location and setting

The conservation area is situated on level ground on the north west side of a rectilinear crossroads about 2 miles north east of Swindon town centre. The area is surrounded by 20th century houses and, to the east, the buildings and playing fields of two schools.

2.2 Boundaries

The conservation area has been designated specifically to preserve the special historic character and appearance of a mid-Victorian brewery and its environs. The conservation area principally covers the Arkells Brewery complex and the associated Kingsdown Public House. It also includes some of the grounds of Beechcroft House (now demolished) and a small number of 19th century, and earlier, roadside cottages on either side of Hyde Road.

Swindon Borough Council approved an exclusion from the boundary of the Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area on 10th February 2009. The revised boundary excludes an area mostly covered by recent built development and parking including the site of the demolished Beechcroft House. The reasoned justification for removal was as follows: “The area to be excluded covers part of the Edmont Joinery manufacturing works, compound and car park which have little conservation value, some of which was in existence prior to the conservation area being established. It is therefore reasonable to remove this small area from the conservation area thereby re-inforcing the high quality of the remainder (greater part) of the conservation area”.

2.3 Origins and history of the settlement

Stratton derives its name from the Latin strata (a street) after the Roman road, Ermin Street, which passes through the parish. Hyde Road follows the course of the old Roman road.

Arkell’s Brewery was first established in Swindon Road in 1843 as an offshoot to

the farming pursuits of John Arkell. His decision to start brewing was well timed for Brunel had just chosen land between Stratton and nearby Swindon as the site for the Great Western Railway's main locomotives and carriage works. 'New Swindon' soon grew into a sizeable town around the railway works and the new residents' demand for beer soon outstripped the capacity of Arkell's Swindon Road plant. In 1861 a new steam brewery was built beside a cross-roads. Even the 1861 steam brewery was not enough to cope with the growing demand and it was extended in 1867. Today's Kingsdown Inn was built across the road from a former pub and the original pub was turned into the brewery offices. A large maltings was erected in 1877. The expansion of the brewery was accompanied by the acquisition of several Swindon pubs and by 1900 Arkells owned more than a quarter of the pubs in the Swindon area.

By 1900 Kingsdown was a hamlet consisting of the brewery, the Kingsdown Inn, Beechcroft (a late Victorian house designed in the Elizabethan style), and a growing number of roadside cottages¹ which had grown up beside the cross-roads. The hamlet had a pastoral setting and was surrounded on all sides by open land.

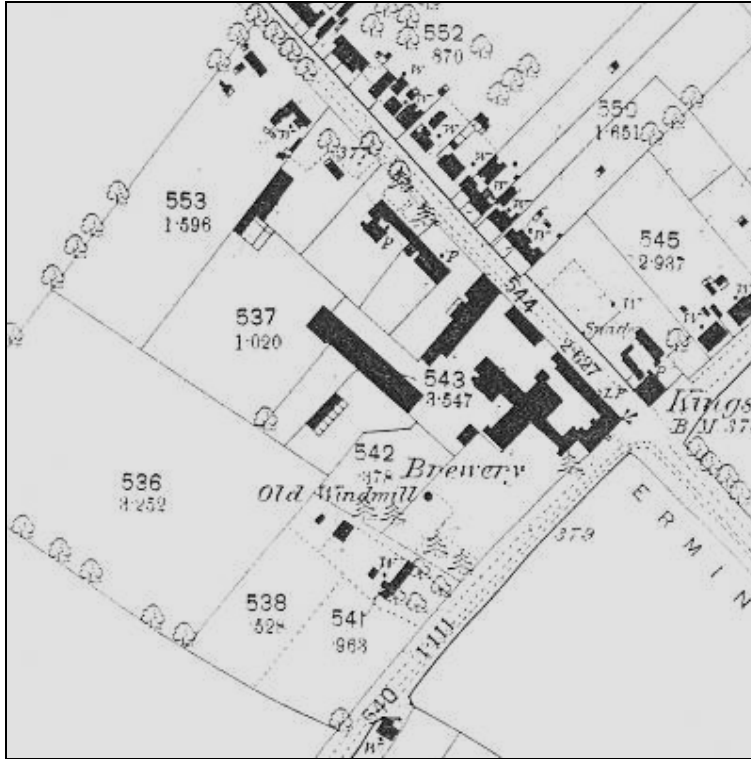
The 1930s saw the closure of the maltings and the opening of a bottling plant (closed in 1983 and replaced in 1997). The new brewery chimney was added to the Stratton skyline in 1937. The brewery business continues to operate successfully today.

2.4 Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area today

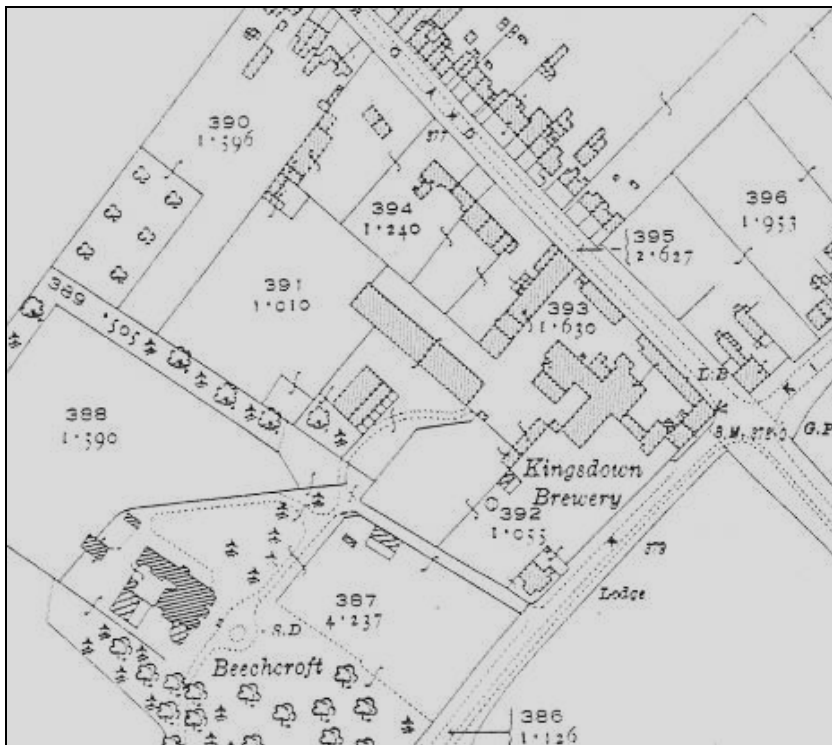
The conservation area contains a mix of residential and industrial (brewing) uses. It is dominated by Arkells Brewery and the Kingsdown Inn and contains about 20 roadside dwellings. The cross-roads is controlled by traffic lights. Beechcroft Road carries a high level of east-west traffic into and out of Swindon.

¹O.S. map of 1900.

Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



Ordnance Survey Map, 1886



Ordnance Survey Map, 1923

3 The special interest of the conservation area

3.1 General character and appearance

This conservation area is especially notable because it contains a relatively unaltered collection of buildings and land related to a single industry, in this instance brewing. As such, it is comparable (though at a much smaller scale) to the Swindon Railway Works Conservation Area². The tall brick chimney is a local landmark.

3.2 Architectural and historic character

The brewery site contains a mix of old and new building. The site's earliest buildings have a robust industrial appearance with a prevalent use of stone and red brick walling under slate roofs. Interconnecting long rectangular buildings with ridged roofs with gable ends are the norm, some rising to three storeys. As the brewery changed and developed during 150 years, buildings have been extended and altered but most buildings show at least some of their original building materials. The 19th century layout of the site remains relatively intact although the floorscape is modern.

'Arkells Brewery House', Hyde Road is grade II listed. Dated 1861, it is a tall square three-storey building with chamfered quoins and slate roof capped by belvedere and weathervane. A large panel in the centre of the façade reads: "Kingsdown Steam Brewery 1861".

No 181 Beechcroft Road, a brewery building beside the cross-roads has a contrasting domestic scale and appearance. On the opposite side of the road The Kingsdown Inn has a larger scale and a steeply pitched tiled roof which is much taller than its neighbours. It was built as part of the 1860s expansion of the brewery. To the north, nos. 3/5 Kingsdown Road is a good example of a pair of vernacular urban cottages with characteristic small multi-paned timber casement windows, stone-built with red brick quoins and dressings.

²The converted buildings of Woodham Mill in Wroughton are similar but have been much altered.

The conservation area also contains a typical late Victorian stone lodge (No. 179 Beechcroft Road) and an assortment of 19th century and earlier cottages of which Nos. 1-9 (odd) Hyde Road are the most notable. Many cottages in Hyde Road have been much altered and only just retain historic character. However, all these small-scale cottages make a significant contribution to the setting and environs of the brewery, help to shape the area's character and provide a good foil to the industrial scale of the brewery buildings.

3.3 Buildings of local interest³

In addition to Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown)'s single listed building there are a number of other buildings which make a strong contribution to the architectural and historic interest of the area. The most notable are nos. 1-9 (odd) Hyde Road, nos. 8, 10, 12 Hyde Road and nos. 3/5 Kingsdown Road. These are the best examples of the area's small cottages. Of equal note are The Kingsdown, no. 179 Beechcroft Road (former lodge to Beechcroft House) and all of the 19th and early 20th century buildings of the brewery (some of these may be considered to be statutorily listed as they stand within the curtilage of a listed building).

3.4 Trees

Although the brewery site is almost devoid of trees, trees add significantly to the interest of the area especially within the grounds of the demolished Beechcroft House. There are other notable trees and greenery beside no. 179 Beechcroft Road, to the rear of The Kingsdown and a large yew to the rear of no. 9 Hyde Road.

3.5 Local details and features

There are a number of local details which form part of the special interest of the area. It is highly desirable that these historic features which add to the area's distinct identity, are retained, e.g. the road sign beside no. 179 Beechcroft Road (see photograph) and old stone boundary walls.

³See Swindon Borough Local Plan SPG: 'Buildings, Structures and Facades of Local Importance'.

4 Opportunities for enhancement

4.1 Negative features and scope for improvement

- Some of the domestic buildings are suffering from an incremental loss of architectural detail through the replacement of traditional building materials with inappropriate modern materials.
- Long term tree management and planting need careful consideration especially in the grounds of the former Beechcroft House.

5 Public Consultation

Residents of the Conservation Area, including Arkell's Brewery and Edmont Joinery, were consulted by letter and questionnaire on 15th December 2009 and asked to express their views by email, letter or phone. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council and local ward members were consulted in September and December of 2008. The draft was available for viewing or download on the Council's website and at Premier House and the Stratton and Swindon Libraries.

6 Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area Management Plan

6.1 Introduction

The following management plan lists how the conservation area could be enhanced or improved with the support of the local authority, residents and other agencies. It should be seen as a working document that:

- Encourages future planning applications to respect and promote what is special about the conservation area;
- Seeks to ameliorate or, if possible, remove negative elements;
- Encourage a degree of 'ownership' of the area by residents (and where applicable Parish Councils);
- Promote closer cooperation between all relevant parties including utilities, local authority departments, Parish Council and the local community.

In line with advice⁴ it is proposed that this management strategy together with the conservation area appraisal be reviewed and updated regularly (five years is recommended).

⁴ Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas - English Heritage and PAS (2006)

STRATTON ST MARGARET (KINGSDOWN) CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN			
MANAGEMENT ISSUE		STRATEGY	PARTNERS
Inappropriate alterations and additions to buildings	Incremental changes to buildings e.g. external alterations, conversions and refurbishment of properties have sometimes resulted in loss of architectural interest.	Where planning permission is required, ensure future development proposals are strictly controlled in terms of design and materials. Consider preparation of an information leaflet on good practice for minor alterations including works that do not require planning permission.	Swindon Borough Council/Residents.
Signage & street furniture	Road sign beside 179 Beechcroft Road has local interest.	Ensure that all existing signage and street furniture is maintained in good order. Items of historic interest should be retained.	Swindon Borough Council.
Buildings of local importance	There are a number of unlisted buildings that have been judged as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.	Ensure that development is in accord with Swindon Borough Local Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance: 'Buildings, Structures and Facades of Local Importance'.	Swindon Borough Council.

STRATTON ST MARGARET (KINGSDOWN) CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN			
<i>MANAGEMENT ISSUE</i>		<i>STRATEGY</i>	<i>PARTNERS</i>
Potential decline and loss of trees	Trees make a vital contribution to the rural ambience of the conservation area and the setting of its listed buildings.	Trees within a conservation area are afforded protection. Anyone wishing to undertake works or remove a tree must give the Council six weeks notice.	Swindon Borough Council.

7 Useful publications

- *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.*
- *Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011.*
- *Buildings of Significant Local Interest – Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Good Design: House Extensions - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Conservation Areas - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Listed Buildings - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Backland and Infill Development - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2007)*
- *Archaeology - Supplementary Planning Guidance (Swindon Borough Council 2004)*
- *Planning Policy Guidance 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment.*
- *Planning Policy Guidance 16 - Planning and Archaeology*
- *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage, 2005.*
- *Guidance on the management of conservation areas, English Heritage, 2005*
- *Stratton St Margaret* Rev F W T Fuller
- *A History of Swindon to 1965* Crittall et al. (Wilts. Library Service 1983)
- *Arkells Brewery website* www.arkells.com
- *Parish Council website* www.strattonstmargaret.gov.uk
- *Stratton Remembered* Stratton Parish Council

Appendix 1 Photographs

Fig 1: Characteristic features of Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area



No. 179 Beechcroft Road, a lodge to the demolished Beechcroft House.



The brewery's tall brick chimney is a local landmark.



Trees and greenery to the rear of The Kingsdown.



Grade II listed brewery building.



The brewery was founded in 1843 and expanded in 1861.



Nos. 6-10 (even) Hyde Road.

Fig 2: Characteristic features of Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area

	
<p>Stone and brick are the prevalent building materials in the area.</p>	<p>Cottages in Hyde Road have been much altered.</p>
	
<p>Large ash tree on the edge of the conservation area.</p>	<p>Small scale cottages opposite the large buildings of the brewery.</p>
	
<p>Access to the brewery site.</p>	<p>Nos. 1-9 (odd) Hyde Road.</p>

Fig 3: Characteristic features of Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area



Roadside stone wall.



Victorian brewery building with a domestic scale (no. 181 Beechcroft Road).



The Kingsdown dates from the 1860s.



This building and The Kingsdown (opposite) form a gateway to Hyde Road.

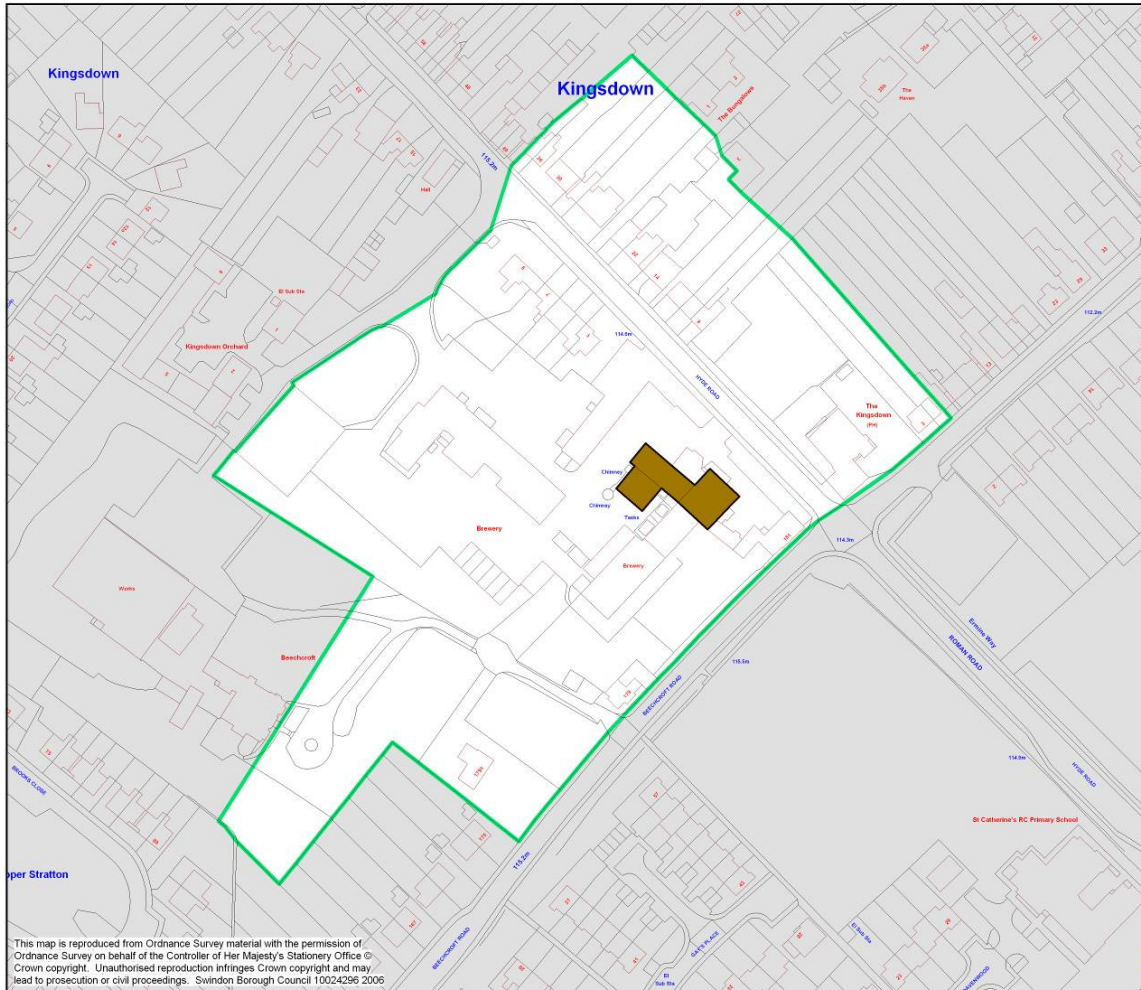


Road sign in Beechcroft Road.



Nos. 3/5 Kingsdown Road, a good example of a pair of 19th century workers' cottages.

Stratton St Margaret (Kingsdown) Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan





**Kingsdown
Conservation Area**



Key to map

Given the complexity of the area, the omission of any feature from this map should not be interpreted as evidence that it is not of interest or value.

-  Boundary of conservation area
 -  Listed building
- Adjacent brewery buildings may be listed.
Check with Conservation Officer.

February 2009