

Introduction

- 22.1 The hamlet of Clayton lies at the foot of the South Downs about one and a half miles to the south of Keymer and Hassocks. It has an attractive rural setting within the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and enjoys magnificent views of the South Downs. To the south of the Hamlet is the Clayton to Offham Site of Special Scientific Interest. The famous Clayton (Jack and Jill) Windmills, which attract thousands of visitors each year, overlook the hamlet from the rising downland to the south. Jack is in private ownership but Jill is in the ownership of Mid Sussex District Council and is managed as a tourist attraction by the Jill Windmill Society.
- 22.2 The hamlet itself is divided into two main parts separated by land which forms part of Clayton Court Farm. The original settlement forms the western part and is centred around the fine Saxon Parish Church of St John the Baptist, a Grade I listed building.
- 22.3 Due to the size and character of this settlement the Council does not wish to encourage any further development in or around Clayton. A positive decision has been made not to define a built-up area boundary around the settlement. This means that the Countryside Area of Development Restraint policies will be applied within, as well as around, Clayton.

Policies and Proposals

Conservation Area

- 22.4 In October 1984 the District Council designated both the western and eastern parts of the hamlet as a Conservation Area. In September 1999 an extension to the Conservation Area was designated to join the two parts together.
- 22.5 The following features, in particular, contribute to the character of the Conservation Area:
- the rural setting with the Downs rising steeply to the south;
 - the rural character of Underhill Lane with its attractive walls and hedgerows;
 - the use of flint as a building material; and
 - the sense of enclosure created by the narrow sunken lane.

