



## **ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**

**06 September 2011 at 7.00 pm**

*Conference Room - Council Office*

### **AGENDA**

#### **Membership:**

Chairman: Cllr. I Bosley

Vice-Chairman Cllr. J Grint

Cllr. L Abraham, Cllr. L Ayres, Cllr. K S Bayley, Cllr M Butler, Cllr. Ms I Chetram,  
Cllr. P Cooke, Cllr. C Dibsall, Cllr. J Edwards-Winser, Cllr. A Eyre, Cllr. J London,  
Cllr. K Maskell, Cllr. Mrs E Purves, Cllr. G Ryan, Cllr. Mrs J Sargeant, Cllr. J Scholey,  
Cllr. T Searles and Cllr. G Williamson

Apologies for absence

1. **Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 June 2011** (Pages 1 - 4)
2. **Declarations of interest**
3. **Formal Response from the Cabinet following matters referred by the Committee and/or requests from the Performance and Governance Committee (please refer to the minutes as indicated):** (Pages 5 - 6)
  - a) Conservation Area Appraisals – Hartslands, Sevenoaks (Cabinet – 23.06.11)
  - b) Policy for On-street Disabled Parking Bays (Cabinet – 23.06.11)
4. **Actions from previous meeting**

None
5. **Future Business, the Work Plan 2011/12 (attached) and the Forward Plan.** (Pages 7 - 8)

Members will develop a schedule of work over the year to reflect the terms of reference of the Committee focussing on the Council's priorities for policy development. This includes opportunities to invite other organisations who provide services in the District to provide information to the Committee and discuss issues of

importance to the Community.

6. **Winter Maintenance** *Richard Wilson*
7. **Business Support** **(Pages 9 - 14)**  
*Lesley Bowles*
8. **Local Development Framework Briefing**   
*Alan Dyer*  
  
*(Presentation)*
9. **Kent Bus Network Review** **(Pages 15 - 22)**  
*Alan Dyer*
10. **Conservation Area Appraisals - Chipstead Village and Brittain's Farm** **(Pages 23 - 122)**  
*Jim Kehoe*

### **EXEMPT ITEMS**

(At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Director or Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

**The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)**

**ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Select Committee  
held on 7 July 2011 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. I Bosley (Chairman)  
Cllr. J Grint (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. L Ayres, Cllr. K S Bayley, Cllr M Butler, Cllr. Ms I Chetram,  
Cllr. P Cooke, Cllr. C Dibsall, Cllr. J Edwards-Winser, Cllr. A Eyre,  
Cllr. J London, Cllr. K Maskell, Cllr. Mrs E Purves, Cllr. G Ryan and  
Cllr. T Searles

Apologies for absence: Cllr. L Abraham, Cllr. Mrs J Sargeant and  
Cllr. J Scholey

Cllr. Mrs B Ayres, Cllr. Mrs A Hunter and Cllr. Miss L Stack were also  
present

**1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 APRIL**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment Select Committee held on 12 April 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest on any matter discussed at the meeting.

**3. COMMITTEE'S TERM OF REFERENCE - FOR INFORMATION**

The Committee noted it's Terms of Reference as set out in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution.

**4. FORMAL RESPONSE OR CONSULTATION REQUESTS FROM THE PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The Chairman noted that this was a standing item on all agendas for the Committee. However, there were no responses to consider at this meeting.

**5. FORMAL RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET FOLLOWING MATTERS REFERRED BY THE COMMITTEE**

There were no matters reported.

**6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

**7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRAINING**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that a formal Scrutiny training session had taken place on 1 June 2011 and had been very well received by Members. Members then watched a DVD which outlined the general process and key aims of Scrutiny.

The Head of Housing and Communications informed Members that in 2008 the Services Select Committee had undertaken an in-depth scrutiny exercise which had focused on Empty Homes. Democratic Services had created a Guide to In-depth Scrutiny which was distributed to Members. It was explained that a sub-group had been formed to consider the issues. Housing Officers had provided the sub-group with case studies to consider and relevant information which included funding and information about landlords. The sub-group had decided to set up a Panel of experts, which had included the Manager of the Kent County Council's "No Use Empty Scheme", the Director of West Kent Housing Association and the Chair of the Landlords' Association as well as other relevant Officers and interested parties. The sub-group had devised questions to ask the Panel and had carried out a question and answer session at a meeting of the Committee.

The Head of Housing and Communications informed Members that, at the time, there had been 600 empty properties in the District with ten properties per year being brought back into use. She noted that the question and answer session had generated a good discussion of the issues and led to an Action Plan being produced at the meeting. An Empty Homes Officer had been created within the Housing team and an amount of funding had been secured. A new target had been set to bring 20 properties per year back into use and the Head of Housing and Communications felt that Members had successfully supported Officers in achieving this target.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services drew Members' attention to Part 5 of the Council's Constitution which outlined the Overview and Scrutiny Function of the Council and included the Committee's Terms of Reference. She noted paragraph 5.10, the Councillor Call for Action, which explained how Councillors could add items to committee agendas. She also noted that the new Localism Bill would allow the Council's to decide whether to return to the old Committee System which gave decision making powers to each Committee rather than the Cabinet. However, this could not take place until 2015. Through the Localism Bill Members might also be asked by the County Council to sit on Police and Health Boards.

When considering items for scrutiny, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services noted that it was important that the Committee kept strictly within its terms of reference and that Members were realistic and only take forward a few in-depth scrutiny exercises per year where there was a high chance of achieving a successful outcome.

Members were then split into three groups to complete a scrutiny exercise. They were given a case study relating to Redditch Borough Council and the promotion of the town and Council and were asked to consider how they would scrutinise this issue. Following the exercise they reported their ideas

back to the Committee. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services commended Members for their full and detailed answers and advised that, should they wish to view further case studies, they were available on the Centre for Public Scrutiny website.

The Chairman noted the Councillor Call for Action and felt it was important for Members to keep this in mind.

**8. CHARGING REGIME FOR THE PROVISION OF ON-STREET DISABLED PARKING PLACES**

The Parking and Amenity Manager explained that following a policy review by Kent County Council (KCC), Kent district and borough council's were asked to decide whether a charge should be made for providing on-street disabled parking bays. He noted that legal advice to KCC was that charging for the processing of applications was illegal in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act but that a charge could be made for the provision of a disabled parking bay. The current procedure when an application was received was to provide an interim parking bay which was advisory only as it did not include a sign and did not have a Traffic Regulation Order, and was, therefore, unenforceable. Should problems occur with non blue badge holders parking in these bays and a request be received for the bay to be made enforceable, then a formal process would be undertaken to make a Traffic Regulation Order. Members were asked to consider whether a charge should be made for the formal process. KCC had suggested that any charge should not exceed £250 per application. The Parking and Amenity Manager noted that applicants for this type of parking bay would usually have no parking provision outside their homes and would be in receipt of disability allowances. He also noted that five council's in Kent had decided not to charge, one to charge £50, two to charge the full amount of £250 and two were still undecided.

In response to some queries, the Parking and Amenity Manager confirmed that there were usually no more than 15-20 applications for on-street disabled parking bays per year, with no requests for formal enforceable bays having been received in the past two years. It was also clarified that provision of disabled bays in car parks and town and village centres was separate from the application process for on-street disabled parking bays provided for residents in residential areas.

Members discussed this issue in detail. They were concerned that a charge could be seen as discriminating against disabled persons and that it might lead applicants to believe the bay was for their sole use, which would not be the case. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed:

Resolved: That, subject to this matter being reviewed in 12 months time, it be recommended to Cabinet that the implementation of interim and enforceable on-street disabled parking places be at no cost to applicants and that they be funded from the on-street parking account.

9. **FUTURE BUSINESS, THE WORK PLAN 2010/1 AND THE FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee discussed the contents of the Work Plan and the following comments were made:

- A briefing on the Local Development Framework and the implications of the Localism Bill with regard to Planning issues would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.
- The Head of Environmental and Operational Services advised that he had been unable to confirm attendance of a Kent Highways (KHS) Officer to discuss winter maintenance issues. He would try to get someone to attend the September meeting of the Committee but noted that KHS was currently undergoing a reorganisation.
- The Annual Review of Parking Charges would be reported to a future meeting.
- As in previous years, the Bus and Rail companies would be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee.
- Budget proposals would be reported to the January 2012 meeting.
- Aviation issues would be considered once the consultation papers had been received from Gatwick. Cllr Ryan was requested to collate responses from the lobby groups and forward them to the Head of Environmental and Operational Services for consideration with this item.
- Some Members were concerned regarding street furniture. It was noted that the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Group was due to discuss this matter at its meeting on 15 June 2011. However, this issue would be included in the Committee's Work Plan for January/March 2012.

The Vice-Chairman requested that where possible, relevant Portfolio Holders attend meetings of the Committee to answer policy questions.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.36 pm

Chairman

Environment Select Committee – 6 September 2011

**FORMAL RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET FOLLOWING MATTERS REFERRED  
BY THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE AND/OR REQUESTS  
FROM THE PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

a) Conservation Area Appraisals – Hartslands, Sevenoaks (*Cabinet 23.06.11*)

The Cabinet considered the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the Hartslands, Sevenoaks Area. The report by the Head of Development Services explained that there was a duty on local authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Clear and concise appraisals of the character of conservation areas provided a sound basis for their designation and management, informed local development documents and provided a framework for the control of development. The CAMP had been prepared in collaboration with District Councillors, Sevenoaks Town Council and local amenity groups (the Hartslands Group, the Hollybush Residents Association and the Sevenoaks Society). There had also been considerable consultation which had included writing to every household and business in the area and a local exhibition. As a result of consultation amendments had been incorporated in the CAMP in relation to the proposed boundary and Character Appraisal Map. The response to consultation had shown strong support from local residents for the area to become a designated Conservation Area. If agreed, the CAMP would help the local community, developers, local authorities and development professions engage in the conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and secure the preservation of the character of the conservation area as an important heritage asset.

The Environment Select Committee had considered the CAMP at its meeting on 12 April 2011 and recommended the designation of Hartslands as a Conservation Area and that additional guidance should also be provided to residents in relation to the type of replacement doors, windows and roof materials suitable within Conservation Areas.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the many local residents and local Ward Members who had attended the Cabinet for this item which he felt was a testament to the vital role that they had played in the development of the CAMP. Councillors Walshe and Mrs Purves spoke strongly in support of the designation of the CAMP and emphasised the special character of the Hartsland area and the participation of local people and organisations.

The Cabinet expressed its thanks to the Director of Community and Planning Services and her staff for the excellent work that had been carried out in preparing the CAMP and thanked the consultant, Tony Fulford, for his work on this project.

Resolved: That the designation of the Hartsland Conservation Area be approved and the Hartsland Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (attached at Appendix A to the report) be adopted as informal planning guidance and a material consideration in the determination of development proposals.

## Agenda Item 3

Environment Select Committee – 6 September 2011

### b) Policy For On-Street Disabled Parking Bays (*Cabinet 23.06.11*)

The Cabinet was requested to consider whether it should charge for the provision of on-street disabled parking bays taking account of legal advice from Kent County Council which questioned the legality of such charges on grounds of disability discrimination. Historically KCC and the District Council's had charged an administration charge of £30 for the consideration of on-street disabled parking bays, far less than the actual cost of providing one. The report distinguished between the provision of interim "advisory disabled parking bays" which cost much less to provide but which could not be enforced and permanent enforceable bays which required a Traffic Regulation Order to be made. It was noted that there was a statutory power which allowed for charging for the actual provision of parking bays and the question was whether the Council wished to make such a charge and if so at what level. Whilst the new procedures recommended by KCC for processing applications for on-street disabled parking bays had been adopted the issue of charging was a matter for each District Council to determine, although KCC had recommended that where a charge was made it should be capped at a maximum of £250 per application.

The Portfolio Holder for the Cleaner and Greener Environment advised the Cabinet that this matter had been discussed at the Environment Services Select Committee meeting on 7 June 2011. The Committee had had regard to the relatively small number of applications and the fact that if a charge was to be levied for a parking bay there was no right of exclusivity by the person making the payment and had therefore recommended that the status quo should prevail. The Parking and Amenities Manager informed Cabinet that, so far, 5 other Kent Districts had decided not to make a charge and that 2 other Districts were currently undecided. The Cabinet felt that no charge should be made given the current level of applications but reserved the right to look at this again if the number of applications increased significantly.

Resolved: (a) That the implementation of interim disabled parking places be at no cost to applicants and that they be funded from the on-street parking account;

(b) That the provision of enforceable on-street disabled parking places requiring a traffic regulation order be at no cost to applicants and funded from the on-street parking account; and

(c) That the issue of whether to charge for the provision of On-street Disabled Parking Places should be reviewed in 12 months time.



**Environment Select Committee Work Plan 2011/12**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>6 September 2011</b>	<b>25 October 2011</b>	<b>17 January 2012</b>	<b>20 March 2012</b>	<b>May 2012</b>
<b>Planning Policy</b> (Alan Dyer)	LDF Briefing (including implications of the Localism Bill)		Development Management DPD		
<b>Development Control</b> (Jim Kehoe)	Conservation Area Appraisals - Brittain's Farm Conservation Area Appraisals - Chipstead				
<b>Building Control</b> (Richard Wilson)					
<b>Street Scene &amp; Air Quality</b> (Richard Wilson)	KCC Winter Maintenance		Annual Review of Parking Charges		
<b>Transport (including parking)</b> (Richard Wilson)	Kent Bus Network Review			Railways and Trains (Southern and South-Eastern operators)	

Topic	6 September 2011	25 October 2011	17 January 2012	20 March 2012	May 2012
<b>Economic Development and Tourism</b> (Lesley Bowles)	Business Support				
<b>Budget</b> (Tricia Marshall)			Review of Budget Proposals 2012/13		
<b>Other</b>					

**Possible items to be considered in the future** (for items not yet timetabled in):

- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans (Ad hoc items)  
*Edenbridge CAMP*
- Aviation issues affecting the District – consultation document from Gatwick awaited
- Sustainability of supply of energy sources (including renewable energy)
- Local Listing Update
- Rail companies
- Bus companies
- Street furniture (Possibly Jan/March 2012)

**ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE – 6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

**TITLE OF REPORT – BUSINESS SUPPORT**

Report of the: Corporate Resources Director

Status: For information

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**Executive Summary:** This report updates Members on work relating to business support.

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**This report supports the Dynamic Economy priority in the Community Plan.**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllrs. Mrs Clark and Mrs. Davison

**Head of Service** Head of Community Development – Lesley Bowles

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**Recommendation:** It be RESOLVED that: this report be NOTED

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**Background**

1 Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2010 indicates that Sevenoaks District has a very high percentage of small businesses. 78% of businesses in the District have fewer than 5 employees, 90% of businesses have fewer than 10 employees and 98% of businesses have fewer than 50 employees.

2 The biggest sectors within the District are as follows:

Professional, scientific and technical 19%

(However, this may change following the loss of GlaxoSmithKline and news that DSTL at Fort Halstead will be relocating over the next five years.)

Construction 15%

Business administration and support 8%

Wholesale 8%

Retail and Arts, Entertainment & Recreation at 7% each are the next two biggest sectors in the District. The ONS data does not include tourism as a sector. However, tourism is a major contributor to the local economy and is likely be a combination of Accommodation & Food Services (4%)' and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Other Services (7%).

### Introduction

- 3 The Council's Community Development team, under the direction of the Director for Corporate Resources, co-ordinates work on economic development and support for businesses. Whilst Officer resources are limited, a programme of activity is maintained and this report updates Members on current work.

The main focus of work is currently:

- Support for businesses;
- Working with other organisations to ensure that the District's economic needs are addressed;
- Improving information for businesses about the Council's services; and
- Raising the profile of opportunities to improve broadband and, where possible, assisting communities and businesses to access these.

- 4 The following information updates Members on these four areas of work.

### Support for businesses

- 5 Business Link, the government-funded provider of **business advice**, announced that the Business Link South East service will close on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2011. At the start of April 2011 the Business Link website became the Government's comprehensive online resource for businesses. Alongside this is a network of private mentoring organisations from which businesses can seek help.
- 6 Through the Kent Economic Development Officers' Group, the provision of **local assistance** for businesses is being sought through Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, who are applying for external funding and through a local mentoring agency included on the Government website. The outcome of these plans is awaited.
- 7 Business Link South East have provided in 2011, two **business start up** workshops in the District called 'Is it for Me?', helping people who are thinking of starting their own business. The first of these took place in March 2011 in Swanley and was fully booked with 20 participants, all of whom gave positive feedback about the workshop. A second workshop took place in Edenbridge in July 2011 and was well-attended by 13 participants. Feedback from participants was that they would like further networking opportunities. Younger participants commented that they particularly appreciated the opportunity to meet business colleagues with greater business experience and make local connections.
- 8 In 2010/11 the Council organised 3 **business breakfasts** which enabled local businesses to meet the Economic Development Portfolio Holders and the Leader of the Council and to take part in a short training session. As part of the event, training was provided by Business Link South East on 'funding

opportunities' and 'marketing'. Workshops in Swanley and Edenbridge were well-attended with positive feedback from participants. The workshop scheduled for Sevenoaks was under-subscribed and was cancelled. This may have been due to the very successful networking opportunities provided in Sevenoaks town by the Town Council.

- 9 Discussions with K College are taking place regarding further **workshops** once the Business Link South East service ends in November. K College is keen to make contact with local businesses and will provide expert speakers at low or no cost. The District Council will use these sessions to provide further networking opportunities. The events will be held in Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and Swanley and the following topics have been agreed with K College:
- Excellent customer services
  - Business marketing (possibly combined with social media)
  - Boost Your Profits
- 10 Information about support for businesses, the economy and other issues relevant to businesses is regularly disseminated through **Twitter which already has more than 200 followers.**
- 11 Work has taken place to identify owners of **empty shops** with a view to getting permission to put local community information into shop windows or to open up shops for community groups. There has been a good response from community groups who would like to advertise or use empty shops. Unfortunately, the response from owners and agents has been very poor.
- 12 Tourism businesses are supported through Visit Kent, with whom the District Council has a service agreement.

**Work with other organisations to ensure that the District's economic needs are addressed**

- 13 The District Council is a member of the **West Kent Partnership**, made up of Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils. The current focus of the Partnership's work is to deliver the West Kent Investment Strategy, to make representations about the A21 and form links with other authorities along the A21 corridor, to represent West Kent views at the Local Enterprise Partnership, to strengthen business engagement, and to seek European funding to help achieve these priorities.
- 14 The **West Kent Investment Strategy** identifies local priorities such as promoting West Kent as an area in which to do business, supporting apprenticeships, nurturing graduates into the West Kent economy, developing the value of the rural economy and tourism.
- 15 As a member of the Local Strategic Partnership, the need to improve **employment and training prospects** of young people leaving school and

university has been highlighted as a priority for the Community Plan Delivery Fund, through which small pots of external funding are available to help deliver Community Plan priorities.

- 16 The team has worked with Voluntary Action Within Kent (VAWK) to offer to volunteer **internships** to newly qualified graduates. This project enables local businesses and other agencies to benefit from the skills and enthusiasm of newly-qualified graduates resident in the District. At the same time local young people benefit from training and mentoring opportunities with senior managers and the local economy retains the knowledge of local graduates.
- 17 Following the announcement concerning the relocation of DSTL from **Fort Halstead**, an approach was made by the Leader of the Council and local MPs to the Minister at MoD asking for assistance to deal with the immediate impact of the relocation on the local community and local economy and to work towards a long-term solution regarding the site. Further meetings are taking place between the landowners and their agents with the Leader and Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources. Contact has also been made with Job Centre Plus, Locate in Kent, Kent County Council and DSTL.

### **Improving information about the Council's services**

- 18 In an attempt to improve local businesses' access to Council services, a new business pack is being developed, to be included in the Economic Development pages of the Council's website. The pack will give concise information about the services that the Council provides that are relevant to businesses. As part of this work, a library of photographs suitable for promoting business in the District will also be compiled. The services covered will include:
  - Advertising in In Shape
  - Apprenticeships and graduate recruitment information
  - Business rates
  - Business support
  - Building Control advice
  - Business parking permits
  - Corporate health and fitness membership of leisure centres
  - Crime reduction advice, Pubwatch and Shopsafe
  - Licensing
  - Local searches
  - Markets
  - Pest control
  - Pre-application planning advice
  - Private landlord accreditation scheme
  - Procurement and the prompt payment code
  - Sustainable business (climate change)
  - Support for tourism businesses
  - Trade waste and recycling
  - Volunteering opportunities for staff

### **Broadband**

- 19 Officers are raising the profile of opportunities to improve broadband and, where possible, assisting communities and businesses to access these. Currently, there are two opportunities:
- 20 Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK)
- The first round of the BDUK winners were announced on the 27<sup>th</sup> May.
  - The successful projects were awarded to Norfolk, Wiltshire and Devon and Somerset who will now share a £50 million fund to improve their rural broadband. KCC had made a £42 million bid which was unsuccessful.
  - Early indications are that the KCC bid did not match the BDUK assessment of the need in Kent. KCC have been allocated funds but at the moment are still awaiting details of the amount.
- 21 Kent County Council Superfast Broadband Pilot
- The results of the first round of the Superfast Broadband Pilots were announced by KCC on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011. Each successful bidder was given up to £100,000 to improve broadband in their area. None of the parishes in Sevenoaks District made a bid for this fund in the first round.
  - We have been told that the next round of funding will start in August 2011 with bids having to be submitted at some point in September. We will be looking to support and assist any of our parishes who are interested in bidding. However, it is absolutely clear that successful bids are most likely to come from communities where considerable local effort has been made in identifying need and it is therefore essential that any bids are supported by enthusiastic communities who have the time to compile evidence.
  - The following parishes may make a bid in the next round: Seal, Weald, Hever, Cowden, Eynsford, Chiddingstone, Sundridge and Ide Hill and Edenbridge.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

- 22 Work on economic development and business support is funded from existing budgets. In addition, external funding is sought wherever possible to support new pieces of work or projects.

#### Legal, Human Rights etc.

- 23 There are no legal or human rights issues associated with this report.

Resource (non-financial)

- 24 Staff time available to devote to business support is limited to half of the Community Planning and Project Officer’s time and a graduate intern post. In addition, a corporate working group of officers whose work impacts on economic development meets regularly.

**Risk Assessment Statement**

Risk	Mitigation
Resources to deliver this work are limited	A network of colleagues and organisations who are able assist in the delivery of business support is maintained. The Corporate Resources Director chairs a corporate working group which co-ordinates input to economic development from other teams in the Council. This includes, for example, planning, the use of the Council’s own property, tourism, leisure, the Hero project, the Leader project, business rates.

**Sources of Information:** Department from Business Innovation at Skills  
 “Bigger Better Business: Helping small firms, start-up, grow and prosper” (BIS, 2011)

West Kent Investment Strategy

**Contact Officer(s):** Lesley Bowles, ext 7335,  
 lesley.bowles@sevenoaks.gov.uk

**Dr. Pav Ramewal**  
**Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources**



**ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE – 6 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**SDC RESPONSE TO KCC'S PUBLIC BUS SERVICES IN KENT CONSULTATION:  
WITHDRAWAL OF THE 409 IN HEXTABLE, SWANLEY AND CROCKENHILL**

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

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**Executive Summary:** KCC is proposing to withdraw the 409 commuter service between Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill from 1 January 2012. KCC considers that the 409 commuter service scores poorly against the criteria that it has set for continuing support. In particular, the 409 duplicates part of the route provided by the 477, which operates on approximately a one bus per 30 minutes schedule throughout the day. A proposed response to KCC's consultation is set out in Appendix A. This suggests that:

- KCC and Arriva consider whether it is necessary, and whether opportunities exist, to amend the 477 timetable so that it is integrated with the timetable of the most frequently used trains at Swanley Station;
- KCC formally confirm with Arriva that they have no intentions to materially change the 477 service and continue to keep this issue under review;
- KCC continue to subsidise any commercially-marginal early morning and evening routes of the 477; and
- KCC and Arriva consider whether additional 477 services could be provided in the morning and evening peak periods.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of keeping Sevenoaks District Moving from the Sustainable Community Action Plan 2010-13.**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Mrs Davison

**Head of Service** Head of Development Services – Mr Jim Kehoe

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**Recommendation:** That the draft response is agreed with the Portfolio Holder and sent to KCC as Sevenoaks District Council's representations on the proposed withdrawal of the 409 in Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill.

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**Reason for recommendation:** The response seeks to ensure that residents of Crockenhill, Hextable and the three Swanley wards do not suffer a significant reduction in their ability to access jobs, shops, services and other forms of public transport as a result of KCC's withdrawal of financial support for the 409 bus.

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### Background

- 1 Following a reduction in its budget for supported bus services, KCC is proposing to withdraw part or all of 14 bus services that it supports from 1 January 2012. The only service affected by these proposals in Sevenoaks District is the 409 commuter service between Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill, which the County Council proposes to fully withdraw. The 409 commuter service operates in the morning (6-8am) and evening (5-7pm) peaks. The buses affected are the 10 that run daily between Swanley and Hextable, with 4 starting at Crockenhill, and the 9 buses that run between Hextable and Swanley, with 4 continuing to Crockenhill. The 409 school services are not affected by this proposal.
- 2 KCC considers that the 409 commuter service scores poorly against the criteria that it has set for continuing support. The analysis in the 'Bus Service Withdrawals' document for the 409 (appendix B) states that the subsidy per passenger is currently £9.07, greatly in excess of KCC's maximum target of £3 per passenger journey. The 409 also duplicates part of the route provided by the 477, which operates on approximately a one bus per 30 minutes schedule throughout the day. The 477 is primarily a commercially run service, operated by Arriva with a number of KCC supported services operating in the early morning and late evening. Following discussions with Arriva, it is understood that the 477 is operating on a sound commercial basis and there are no current plans to alter the service.
- 3 District Council Members in Hextable, Crockenhill and the three Swanley wards have been consulted on these proposals (between 12<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2011). Whilst one objection to the principle of cuts in bus budgets was received, no objections specifically referring to a need to retain the 409 service were received. Some Members commented that the bus is rarely used but that KCC should commit to continuing to support the early morning and evening services of the 477 that it currently subsidises. It was also suggested that the 477 timetable be integrated with Southeastern's train timetable at Swanley Station. These comments have been taken into account in the draft response.

### Proposed Response

- 4 A proposed response to Kent County Council is set out in Appendix A. The key points are considered to be:
  - KCC and Arriva should consider whether it is necessary, and whether opportunities exist, to amend the 477 timetable so that it is integrated with the timetable of frequently used trains at Swanley Station;

- If they have not already done so, KCC formally confirm with Arriva that they have no intentions to materially change the 477 service and continue to keep this issue under review;
- KCC continue to subsidise any commercially-marginal early morning and evening routes of the 477 to provide communities in this area with accessibility to jobs, shops, services and other public transport links; and
- KCC and Arriva consider whether additional 477 services could be provided, either operated commercially by Arriva or supported by KCC, in the morning and evening peak periods.

#### **Other Options Considered and/or Rejected**

- 5 The Council could object to the withdrawal of the 409 bus. This option has been rejected because the bus appears to be little used and duplicates another bus service. From the comments of local Members and the figures presented by KCC on existing usage, there appears to be little local support for the retention of the bus. It is possible that if this bus is not withdrawn then KCC will need to withdraw another bus in Sevenoaks District to balance their budget. This could have a greater impact on local communities, if alternatives do not exist.
- 6 The Council could choose not to respond to the consultation. This option has been rejected because it is felt that the consultation represents an opportunity to press for actions that would limit any impact of the withdrawal.

#### **Key Implications**

##### Financial

- 7 There are no financial implications for Sevenoaks District Council.

##### Community Impact and Outcomes

- 8 The draft response aims to ensure that the impact on local communities, in terms of access to jobs, shops, services and other public transport, is minimised.

##### Legal, Human Rights etc.

- 9 No legal issues identified for Sevenoaks District Council.

#### **Conclusions**

- 10 It is recommended that the draft response is agreed with the Portfolio Holder and sent to KCC as Sevenoaks District Council's representations on the proposed withdrawal of the 409 in Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill.

#### **Risk Assessment Statement**

- 11 No risks identified.

## Agenda Item 9

Environment Select Committee – 6 September 2011

### **Attached Documents**

Appendix A – Draft Response

Appendix B – 409 Withdrawal Document (KCC)

### **Contact Officer(s):**

Steve Craddock (7315)

Alan Dyer (7440)

**Mrs Kristen Paterson**  
**Community and Planning Services Director**

**Item No. 9 - Appendix A**

Transport Integration,  
Commercial Services,  
Gibson Drive,  
Kings Hill,  
West Malling,  
Kent ME19 4QG

Direct line: (01732) 227315  
Ask for: Steve Craddock  
My ref:  
Your ref:  
Email: [steve.craddock@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:steve.craddock@sevenoaks.gov.uk)  
Date:

Dear Sir / Madam,

**PUBLIC BUS SERVICES IN KENT – PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF 409 BUS**

I write in response to your consultation on changes to the supported bus services in Kent. Sevenoaks District Council note that the only supported service affected by these proposals in Sevenoaks District is the 409 commuter service between Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill, which the County Council proposes to withdraw. It is understood that the 409 school services are not affected by this proposal.

It is noted that the 409 service does not score well against the criteria that KCC have set for continuing support. In particular, it is noted that the service duplicates the 477, which operates on approximately a one bus per 30 minutes schedule throughout the day. The 477 is primarily a commercially run service, operated by Arriva, with a number of KCC supported services operating in the early morning and late evening.

The loss of the 409 would reduce the frequency of bus services, in particular between Hextable and Swanley Station, in the morning and evening peaks. This may lead to more people driving to Swanley Station. SDC suggest that consideration is given to whether any additional 477 buses could be operated over this section during the morning and evening peaks, either operated commercially by Arriva or with some support by KCC. In addition, it is suggested that KCC and Arriva consider whether it is necessary, and whether opportunities exist, to amend the 477 timetable so that it is integrated with the timetable of the most frequently used trains at Swanley Station.

A key justification for the County Council proposing to withdraw the 409 service is that it duplicates the 477 service, operated, predominately on a commercial basis, by Arriva. This is also likely to be a key factor in the relatively low patronage and high cost of supporting the 409. However, it is vital that if the 409 is withdrawn then communities are not left without bus services by any changes to the 477. SDC understand that Arriva

**Item No. 9 - Appendix A**

have no plans to materially change the 477 service at present. It is suggested, however, that KCC seek formal confirmation of this and keep the issue under review. It is also important that KCC continue to subsidise any commercially-marginal early morning and evening routes of the 477 to provide communities in this area with accessibility to jobs, shops, service and other public transport links.

Yours sincerely

Steve Craddock  
Senior Planning Officer



### Kent County Council Bus Service Withdrawals

Following the decision at Full Council on 17 February 2011 to reduce the budget for socially necessary bus services, it has proved necessary to identify a number of services for withdrawal in order to remain within budget. The following service and the journeys shown have been identified for withdrawal in accordance with Kent County Council's policy for supporting bus services. These journeys will cease to operate from the end of December 2011.

**Service 409:** Hextable - Crockenhill      **Days of operation:** M-F

**Annual Cost:** £28,216.91      **Average number of journeys per day:** 13

**Subsidy per passenger journey:** £9.07

**Member Wards:**      Swanley (Robert Brookbank)

Comments: Rail link between Hextable, Crockenhill and Swanley Station. Service duplicates Arriva commercial service 477, operating 7 days per week. Some commuters may face slightly less convenient connection times but all can complete current journeys.

#### Hextable - Crockenhill 409

**Mondays to Fridays**

<b>Hextable</b> , Furness School (opp)	0609	0631	0647	0711	1715	1735	1755	1815	1840
<b>Swanley</b> , Railway Station Azalea Drive (o/s)	0616	0638	0654	0718	1722	1742	1802	1822	1847
<b>Crockenhill</b> , Stones Cross Road (adj)	0619	-	0657	-	-	-	-	1825	1850

#### Crockenhill - Hextable 409

**Mondays to Fridays**

<b>Crockenhill</b> , Stones Cross Road (adj)	0620	-	0700	-	-	-	-	-	1827	1852
<b>Swanley</b> , Railway Station Azalea Drive (adj)	0623	0639	0703	0720	1703	1725	1745	1805	1830	1855
<b>Hextable</b> , Furness School (adj)	0630	0646	0710	0728	1710	1732	1752	1812	1837	1902

If you wish to comment on the changes set out in this document, or indeed represent an organisation which would be in a position to provide replacement transport, you can contact KCC in writing at;

By email to: [transport.integration@kent.gov.uk](mailto:transport.integration@kent.gov.uk)

By post to : Transport Integration, Kent County Council, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4QG

Please make sure that your comments reach KCC by Friday 2 September.





**ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE – 6 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS – CHIPSTEAD VILLAGE, AND BRITAINS FARM ( SEVENOAKS)**

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director

Also considered by: Cabinet

Status: For Decision

---

**Executive Summary: To review Conservation Area and Management Plans for Chipstead village Conservation Area and Britains Farm, Sevenoaks Conservation Area.**

---

**This report supports the Key Aim** of the Green and Healthy Environment theme of the Community Plan

---

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Mrs. J. Davison

---

**Head of Service** Head of Development Services, Jim Kehoe

---

**Recommendation:** That the Environment Select Committee comment on Chipstead Village and Britains Farm draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans attached as Appendices B and C of this report, and recommend to Cabinet that the plans be adopted as informal planning guidance.

---

**Background**

- 1 This report seeks Members support for new Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans for Chipstead village and Britains Farm These new plans have been prepared to meet our local Best Value performance requirements and as part of background work which will contribute to the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 2 Large scale maps of these areas will be displayed in the Committee Room before the meeting.
- 3 People in the District place a high value on the quality of its landscape, historic character and open spaces according to the Sevenoaks District Sustainable Community Plan. The views expressed through consultations on the Plans are influencing the emerging policies in the Local Development Framework and the

Community Plan themes to maintain and enhance a high quality landscape and built environment.

- 4 Two of the priorities for the next three years are to protect the historic character of towns and villages and encourage quality design that respects the scale and design of existing developments. These new plans will help to achieve these priorities. Sevenoaks is the only District in Kent to have all forty of its conservation areas covered by Appraisals although some are now more than five years old. These are being updated over the coming years to take account of revised boundaries and policy and developmental changes.

### **Introduction**

- 5 The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Clear and concise appraisals of the character of conservation areas provide a sound basis for their designation and management and will inform local development documents (LDDs), and provide a framework for the control of development. Management proposals can be used to inform future policy and guide all involved in the planning, design and development of specific conservation areas.
- 6 The Council adopted and published our first tranche of conservation area appraisals from 2000 to 2003. They assessed character and made some suggestions about future policy, including revised conservation area boundaries. These appraisals have been used by development control officers and included in land charge searches since that time. These new documents will replace the Chipstead and Brittain's Farm Conservation Area Appraisals. Relevant parts of the original appraisals are retained in the new conservation plans.

### **Conservation Area Boundary Review**

- 7 A review of the boundary for Chipstead village was undertaken in 2006 when it was extended. No further extension is considered appropriate as part of this study.
- 8 No extension to the Brittain's Farm boundary is considered appropriate.

### **Conservation Area Management**

- 9 The management of the historic environment depends on three things:
  - sound core principles;

### Environment Select Committee – 6 September 2011

- clear adopted policies, based on those principles;
  - the quality of decisions and actions that stem from these policies.
- 10 The key aims of the draft Appraisal and Management Plans are to: -
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of the local heritage;
  - Identify distinctive built form character areas within the conservation area; including buildings, structures and features;
  - Identify distinctive public realm character within the conservation area and provide guidance and establish key actions to preserve and enhance the public realm;
  - Outline the key statutory requirements in respect of development within the conservation area and provide guidance and set out actions to secure the proper and effective application of these requirements;
  - Propose the implementation of management procedures to co-ordinate the delivery of new works and maintenance works within the public realm.
- 11 When adopted as informal planning guidance these Appraisal and Management Plans will be a material consideration in the determination of development proposals.

#### **Procedure**

- 12 There is no statutory duty to consult when preparing appraisals or management plans but consultation has been carried out with the Residents and the Parish and County Council in order to comply with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Local Conservation Groups, local Members and English Heritage have also been consulted. The plan has been amended in response to these consultations. The results of the consultation are attached at Appendix A..

#### **Options**

- 13 The Council has a statutory duty to both designate and review conservation areas and to produce appraisals and management plans.

#### **Key Implications**

## Agenda Item 10

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### Financial

- 14 The production of these appraisals and management is accommodated within existing budgets.
- 15 the cost of printing and map production has been allowed for in existing budgets.

### Legal, Human Rights

- 16 The council has a statutory duty under the provisions of section 69 of the Planning ( Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate and review conservation areas and is now required to produce appraisals and management plans for each area.

### Resource (non-financial)

- 17 No specific resource implications arising from the content of this report.
- 18 When reviewing conservation area appraisals or producing management plans it is important that the implications are fully understood. There are implications for owners of buildings and land in conservation areas, and for local authorities who must take their resource limitations into account when designating boundaries and producing plans.

### Sustainability

- 19 The LDF will be subject to a statutory Sustainability Appraisal.

### Risk Assessment Statement

- 20 Conservation areas are a statutory land designation, which will be identified in the emerging LDF. Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the documents should be up to date and sound. It is considered that the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will satisfy the test for soundness required under the Act.

### **Conclusions**

- 21 The Council has a statutory duty under the provisions of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate and review conservation areas and is now required to produce appraisals and management plans for each of our areas. This plan will help the local community, developers, local authorities and development professions engage in the

Environment Select Committee – 6 September 2011

conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and secure the long term viability of this conservation area as an important heritage asset.

**Sources of Information:**

Conservation Principles – English Heritage  
2008

Guidance on the Management of  
Conservation Areas – English Heritage 2006

Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals -  
English Heritage 2006

Sevenoaks District Local Plan - Sevenoaks  
District Council 2000

Conservation Area Appraisals - English  
Heritage 1997

“Planning for People” Statement of  
Community Involvement

Development in the Historic Environment  
(1995)

**Contact Officer(s):**

Aaron Hill/ Nicole Twort

**Kristen Paterson  
Community and Planning Services Director**

**Chipstead Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan -  
Consultation Results**

<b>Response received from:</b>	<b>Object:</b>	<b>Support:</b>	<b>Comment:</b>
Cllr Davison			Various comments incorporated
Chevening Parish Council			No comments made
DC Chair and Vice-Chair and Local Members: Cllrs London, Bosley, Mrs Dawson and Piper			No comments made
Aaron Hill, internal DC			Comments incorporated
Richard Wilson, internal, Head of Environmental & Operational Services			No comments made
Kristen Patterson, internal, Community & Planning Services Director			Comments incorporated
Alan Dyer, internal policy manager			Comments incorporated
Tony Cresswell –local resident	No	Yes	Comments incorporated

**Brittains Farm Conservation Area Boundary Review**  
**Consultation Results**

<b>Response received from:</b>	<b>Object:</b>	<b>Support:</b>	<b>Comment:</b>
DC Chair and Vice Chair and local members: Cllrs Bosley, Mrs Dawson, Mrs Broomby, Mrs Hunter			No comments made
Sevenoaks Town Council			No comments made
Kristen Paterson, internal Community and Planning Services Director			No comments made
Mr Hedley Jeune local resident	No	Yes	
Sevenoaks Society	No	Yes	No comments made
Alan Dyer, internal			Made appropriate changes
Aaron Hill, internal DC			Suggested changes made
Cllr Davison			

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# Chipstead Village

**DRAFT**

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



**PLANNING GUIDANCE**



**2011**



# Chipstead Village

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

The historic environment is a social asset of immense value and one of the keys to the continuing prosperity of Sevenoaks District. Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans are part of a process to ensure that we make the best use of our historic environment. They are tools for the positive management of change, not a means of preventing development. Conservation is focused on the entire historic environment, not just listed buildings. Trees, open spaces, landscape, buildings, uses, roads and streets all contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the District's conservation areas.

The man-made environment of our conservation areas has used energy and materials moulded by people both past and present. The District Council will creatively manage the fabric of these areas in a sustainable way as a legacy for future generations.

It is intended that this Appraisal and Management Plan will inform the activities of the Council, the public and other bodies where they affect the conservation area. The Plan was approved by the District Council in \*\*\*\*\*2011 and adopted as informal planning guidance.

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English Heritage Guidance on Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Conservation Areas – What are they?

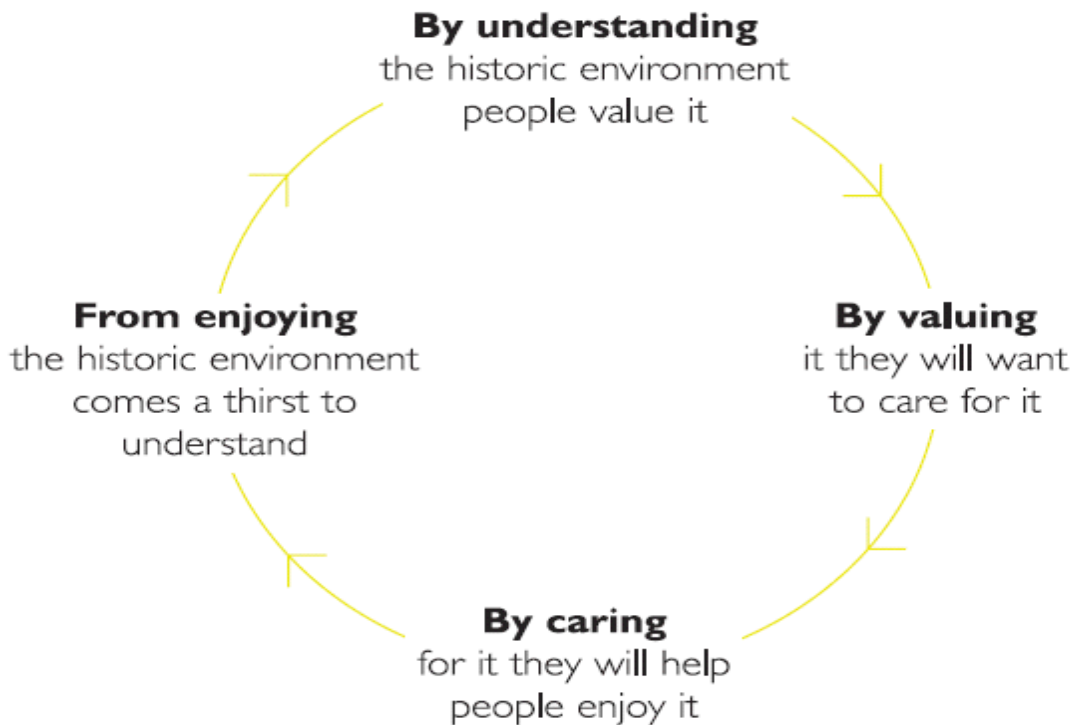
Conservation Areas first came into being as a result of the 1967 Civic Amenities Act and are intended to identify any valuable architectural or historic characteristics in a locality that may need protection and enhancement.

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 recognises that there are particular areas of ‘architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’ and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as conservation areas. This designation then empowers the local authority to pay particular attention to planning considerations and development within them and gives greater control over such matters as demolitions, landscaping and trees, and the display of advertisements.

Designation also raises the awareness of local residents and businesses to the quality of their surroundings and is intended to encourage an active interest in the care and maintenance of their properties and surrounding land, thereby fostering a sense of communal pride.

It has been recognised that designation, because of the responsibilities and obligations it places on both owners and the local authority, should only be imposed on areas that are demonstrably suitable. Where the criteria have been met, the area should then benefit from the additional control and protection that designation confers, and from official recognition of the special architectural and historic character of the locality.

The management of our national cultural and historic inheritance is of paramount importance and conservation areas are vital grass roots starting points from which to safeguard the continuing care of our environment. Historic areas and buildings are now recognised not only as historic assets worthy of protection but are increasingly being valued as important tourism, economic, educational and cultural assets. These new roles demand positive management of historic areas.



## 1.2 The Benefits of Being in a Conservation Area

The historic environment is of particular importance for tourism and leisure. In addition, maintaining the appearance of a conservation area and the character of the groups of buildings within it can often sustain or enhance the value of individual properties. Conservation can also play a key part in promoting economic prosperity by ensuring that an area offers attractive living and working conditions which will encourage further investment.

The principles of conservation management planning, that managing any historic place should be based on understanding it and assessing its significance and values, are now accepted as applying to historic areas as much as to historic buildings.



### 1.3 Purpose of Appraisals and Management Plans

As their number grows, it has become even more important for local authorities to include a well-defined and considered policy for their designated conservation areas in their development plans. Development pressures are such that any designation is likely to be subjected to detailed scrutiny and must be readily and demonstrably defensible against adverse criticism. The criteria for designation should be kept as consistent as possible and the public involved in any proposed changes in their area.

The 1990 Act charges local authorities with the responsibility of undertaking a review of their conservation areas from time to time, both to consider the possibility of revising their extent, and to identify any past changes or future pressures which may affect the original reasons for their designation. English Heritage published an advisory leaflet on appraisals in 1997 and more detailed guidance on both appraisals and management plans in 2006.

Appraisals and Management Plans define the key elements which together give the areas their character, and shows how they interact to enhance their individual impact. Future policies and improvements can be based on a clear understanding of the special architectural and historic qualities of the area and give it its local distinctiveness. These plans can also be used to assess the impact of planning policies and the implementation of enhancement measures. The Plans will assist the District Council, development professions (planners, architects, landscape architects, highway engineers etc) and the local community engage in the conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and help secure the long term viability of Conservation Areas as important heritage assets.

This new Appraisal and Management Plan for Chipstead Village has been developed from the Chipstead Conservation Area Appraisal 1999. The Plan sets objectives for the protection and enhancement of the conservation area, addresses areas identified in the first appraisal and brings forward opportunities to enhance the area.

The key purposes of this Plan are to:

- Raise awareness of the importance and value of the local heritage.
- Identify distinctive built form character within the conservation area;
- Provide guidance and set out objectives to preserve and enhance the buildings, structures and features.
- Identify distinctive public realm character within the conservation area and provide guidance and establish key actions to preserve and enhance the public realm.
- Outline the key statutory requirements in respect of development within the conservation area; provide guidance and set out actions to secure the proper and effective application of these requirements.
- Propose the implementation of management procedures to co-ordinate the delivery of new works and maintenance works within the public realm.

As an adopted planning document, the plan will be a material consideration in the determination of development proposals.



Chipstead from the old Mill with the North Downs beyond.

#### 1.4 Conservation Area Management

The management of the historic environment depends on three things:

- sound core principles
- clear adopted policies, based on these principles
- the quality of decisions and actions that stem from these policies.

Clearly in a village possessing the important historical qualities of Chipstead the overriding policy should be to preserve and enhance those qualities. Change is inevitable in most conservation areas; the challenge is to manage change in ways that maintain and reinforce the area's special qualities. The character of conservation areas is rarely static and is susceptible to incremental, as well as dramatic, change. Some areas are in a state of relative social decline but more often, the qualities that make conservation areas appealing also help to encourage residential over-investment and pressure for new housing. Positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which tends to alter the very character that made the areas attractive in the first place, is to be limited.

### **1.5 What are management plans for?**

Historic areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established. By suggesting continuity and stability, such areas provide points of reference in a rapidly changing world: they represent the familiar and cherished local scene. As their number grows, it has become even more important for local authorities to include a well-defined and considered policy for their designated conservation areas in their Development Plans.

Planning pressures are such that any designation is likely to be subjected to detailed scrutiny and must be readily and demonstrably defensible against adverse criticism. The criteria for designation should be kept as uniform as possible and the public should be kept fully aware of the reasons for any proposed changes in their area. The 1990 Act charges local authorities with the responsibility of undertaking a review of their Conservation Areas from time to time, both to consider the possibility of revising their extent, and to identify any past changes or future pressures which may affect the original reasons for their designation.

English Heritage published an advisory leaflet on the subject in March 1997, which outlines the preferred approach to these appraisals and gives examples of the type of content that it would be useful to include. The appraisals should define the key elements that together give the area its character, and objectively analyse how they interact to enhance their individual impact. They can then provide suggestions for future policies and improvements based on a clear understanding of the special architectural and historic qualities that highlight the area and give it its local distinctiveness. Further guidance has been issued more recently –see Bibliography.

### **1.6 Conservation Area Boundary Review**

A thorough review of the existing boundary was undertaken in 2006 as part of the preliminary survey work associated with this appraisal. The boundary, which was originally designated in 1971, was redesignated on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2006. The conservation area now includes all the remaining historic mill buildings, Moat Farmhouse and farmstead (a listed building and one of the early manors), the village hall and an area of open land which provides the setting for the village on the western side. Also included were a number of houses in Chevening Road and the historically interesting earlier parts of the village school. The boundary was also been rationalised to include areas providing a setting to the village conservation area and to exclude areas of new housing developed after the original designation in 1971.

## 2.0 GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

### 2.1 National Guidance

Government advice concerning Conservation Areas and historic buildings is set out in Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment and the related Planning Practice Guide. Further advice about conservation areas including the production of management proposals, has been produced by English Heritage (2006).

### 2.2 The Development Plan

The government has introduced a new type of development plan known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will set out the strategy, policies and proposals for the future shape of Sevenoaks. The Core Strategy of the LDF was adopted by the council in February 2011. In the meantime the adopted Local Plan of March 2000 will retain development plan status until parts of the new system are adopted. As an adopted planning document the Appraisal and Management Plan will be a key material consideration in the determination of development proposals during this transitional period.

### 2.3 Policies

Chipstead Village Conservation Area falls largely within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is designated for its high quality landscape. Part of the conservation area is within the urban confines of Chipstead and the remainder within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development will not be approved except in very special circumstances. It is for the applicant to prove that very special circumstances exist.

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan (adopted March 2000) lists the following policy EN 23 relating to conservation areas. :

- **Proposals for development or redevelopment within or affecting conservation areas should be of positive architectural benefit by paying special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area and of its setting. The design of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings should respect local character, whilst the treatment of external spaces including hard and soft landscaping, boundary walls, street furniture and signs should be compatible with and enhance the appearance of the area.**

## 2.4 Buildings Contributing to Character

Buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area are identified on the character appraisal plan at the end of this document. English Heritage national guidance on conservation areas sets out the criteria used to identify these buildings and is set out in the Appendix.

## 2.5 Conservation and Enhancement

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 state that the Local Planning Authority should undertake detailed assessments of conservation areas and prepare proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Development proposals will be judged against their overall contribution to the enhancement of the character and appearance of the area as set out in any plan which may have been prepared. This assessment and the detailed analysis of the area contained in this report are intended to fulfil this requirement and provide the background for development and enhancement schemes. Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment 2010 gives detailed guidance.

Chipstead has a vibrant village character and an environment of high quality. This appraisal aims to ensure that this rich context is respected so that only high quality design is introduced, allowing the village to maintain its character as one of the more attractive and vibrant historic villages in the area.

There is a richness, variety, quality and history in Chipstead that makes the village special. Context sensitive quality design is vitally important in reinforcing the character of Chipstead Village and this character must not be lost through undue pressure for poorly designed infill development or redevelopment.

## 2.6 Special Controls in the Conservation Area

Designation of a Conservation Area does not mean that changes cannot occur, but rather that any change should preserve or enhance the features which make up its special character. Controls are imposed which are additional to normal planning restrictions, in order to maintain the character and appearance of the area. The benefits of this and the maintenance of a high quality environment are perceived by most people who live and work in conservation areas as being worth the additional restrictions.

Additional controls within Conservation Areas are outlined here for information. However, other planning controls may still apply and are not altered by conservation area status.

### *Houses and their alteration*

The size of an extension that may be built without the need to apply for planning permission is more restricted within a conservation area. It is recommended that proposals be discussed with the Council's planning team at an early stage.

Cladding of the exterior of a residential property with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles will require submission of a planning application. Any enlargement of a house by way of alteration or additions to the roof, e.g. a dormer window, will require a planning application to be made. A planning application is needed for a satellite antenna where it is to be installed on a chimney; or on a building over 15 metres in height; or on a wall or roof slope which fronts a highway. Again, it is advisable to check with the planning team.

## *Demolition*

Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of any building within a conservation area, except the following:

- any building with a total cubic content not exceeding 115 cubic metres or any part of such building.
- any wall or fence less than 1metre high fronting onto the street or less than 2 metres high elsewhere.
- any building subject to a formal order requiring demolition.

Planning officers are happy to give advice on whether planning permission is required for work within a conservation area. Please contact the Council's relevant development control area team.

## **2.7 Trees and Hedges**

Six weeks notice must be given to the Council of intent to cut down, prune, uproot or destroy any tree within a conservation area. The Council will then advise if it wishes to raise an objection. If a response is not received from the Council within 6 weeks of the notice being given, work may go ahead. This requirement does not apply to trees which have a diameter less than 75mm (3") when measured at a height of 1.5 metres (4'11") above the ground. Works to trees already covered by a Tree Preservation Order will also require consent. When assessing new development in Chipstead the Council will give special attention to the retention of trees and hedges.

## **2.8 Unauthorised Works and development**

Sometimes, landowners and others carry out works without first obtaining any necessary consent from the District Council. The Council does have certain legal powers to deal with such situations, but can only take enforcement action once it is aware of any alleged unauthorised works and after detailed investigation.

## **2.9 Maintenance and Repairs**

The Council has a duty to pay special attention to the character or appearance of conservation areas, in exercising its planning powers. However, these powers are limited. The principal guardians of the character and appearance of the area are the residents and

business people who live and work in the conservation area and who are responsible for maintaining the buildings. The character of conservation areas can be altered or lost through the use of inappropriate materials, not only on the buildings themselves but also on the ground, including paving and along boundaries. Unsympathetic replacement windows (particularly where the size of the openings are changed or inappropriate materials used) can alter the appearance of a building considerably. Any change to a window or doorway should be carefully designed to respect the character and materials of the original building.

Painting or rendering over original brickwork is can dramatically change a property's appearance and irreparably damage the street scene. As well as covering up attractive brickwork, it can obscure original architectural and brick detailing and requires regular redecoration to maintain an attractive appearance. In older buildings paint or render can also trap moisture which may cause damage to walls. Many alterations to older properties using modern materials can upset the balance within these properties and can cause more costly problems, such as cracks, damp, or rot. Care should be taken with any alteration to an older building.

## 2.10 Boundary treatments

Boundary treatment, especially to the street, is an essential feature of any property. Original boundaries, whether a brick or ragstone wall, railings or hedges, should be retained wherever possible and every effort made to reinstate missing boundary treatments with a sympathetic replacement. The particular design and the materials used should take account of the character of the property and the surrounding area. In Chipstead Village ragstone and brick walls are characteristic of the area. Ragstone spall paving is also a particular characteristic of the village. There are many mature trees, hedges and attractive walls around the conservation area and these are an integral part of the area's character.



An important feature of Homedean Road is the planting and this long coursed ragstone wall.

## 2.11 Listed Buildings



Many historic buildings are listed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport because of their architectural and historic interest. The main purpose of listing a building is to ensure that care will be taken over decisions affecting its future, that alterations respect the particular character and interest of the building, and that the case for its preservation is taken fully into account in considering the merits of any development proposals.

If you live in or occupy a listed building, further guidance on the controls that apply is available from the relevant development control team. When a building is listed, this covers the building both internally and externally and also any object or structure fixed to it. In addition any object or structure within the grounds or garden of the building which was there before 1948 is also listed. Listed Building Consent is required for the demolition, extension or alteration of listed buildings in any way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, internally as well as externally. You must get this consent from the District Council before any work is started. You may also require planning permission for the proposed works. The Development Control Area Team or Conservation Officer will be able to advise you on this.

New gates, fences, walls, railings or other means of enclosure surrounding a listed building will require planning permission. Any shed, garage, greenhouse or any other outbuilding, along with a pool, enclosure or container would also require the submission of a planning application. The design of these should harmonise with the existing building and its setting.

## **2.12 Security**

Household security and the security of parked cars is important to the Council. Residents should ensure that their house and any vehicles are secure. However, a conservation area is an historic area and this should be taken into account. Standard types of security measures may not always be appropriate and a standard burglar alarm box may be inappropriate in a highly visible location on an historic building. Compromise can always be reached. For advice and guidance on this matter contact the Council's development control team and the Crime Reduction Officer for Sevenoaks through the Community Safety team at the Council Offices. Planning permission or listed building consent may be required for any security work.

### 3.0 CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 General description

Chipstead Conservation Area was first designated in 1971 and then reviewed and redesignated in 2006. Designation is focussed on the large group of listed buildings that line the southern end of Chevening Road, Chipstead Square and the High Street and for the variety and charm of the houses on either side of these roads that wind up the hill through the village. Although the settlement has now spread out beyond the spine of the original road that crossed the river Darent and the track that led to Chipstead Place, the village remains unspoilt and attractive.

The Conservation Area falls largely within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is designated for its high quality landscape. Part of the conservation area is within the urban confines of Chipstead and the remainder within the Metropolitan Green Belt.



Chipstead Square and Estate cottages.



The conservation area covers 21 hectares and contains 36 listed buildings and structures, which include some boundary walls. Other than the boundary walls to listed buildings, which are deemed to be listed, the Chipstead village conservation area also has a number of walls which are listed in their own right. Most of the listed buildings are privately owned residential properties, although some have been converted from their original agricultural or commercial uses. Any development adjacent to these open areas must be carefully considered as that could have a significant impact upon the character and openness of the conservation area.

The area contains other older buildings which, although not so historically important as those that are listed, nevertheless contribute to the visual continuity of the High Street, Holmsdale and Chevening Road. The eastern side of Chevening Road is bounded by a village green which opens out over Chipstead Lake, and there are walks along footpaths to the north side of the River Darent. These open areas show that Chipstead is essentially a country village, bounded by a protected landscape, and that these boundaries must be protected to maintain the village's sense of place. Any development adjacent to these open areas must be carefully considered as it could have a significant impact upon the character and openness of the conservation area.

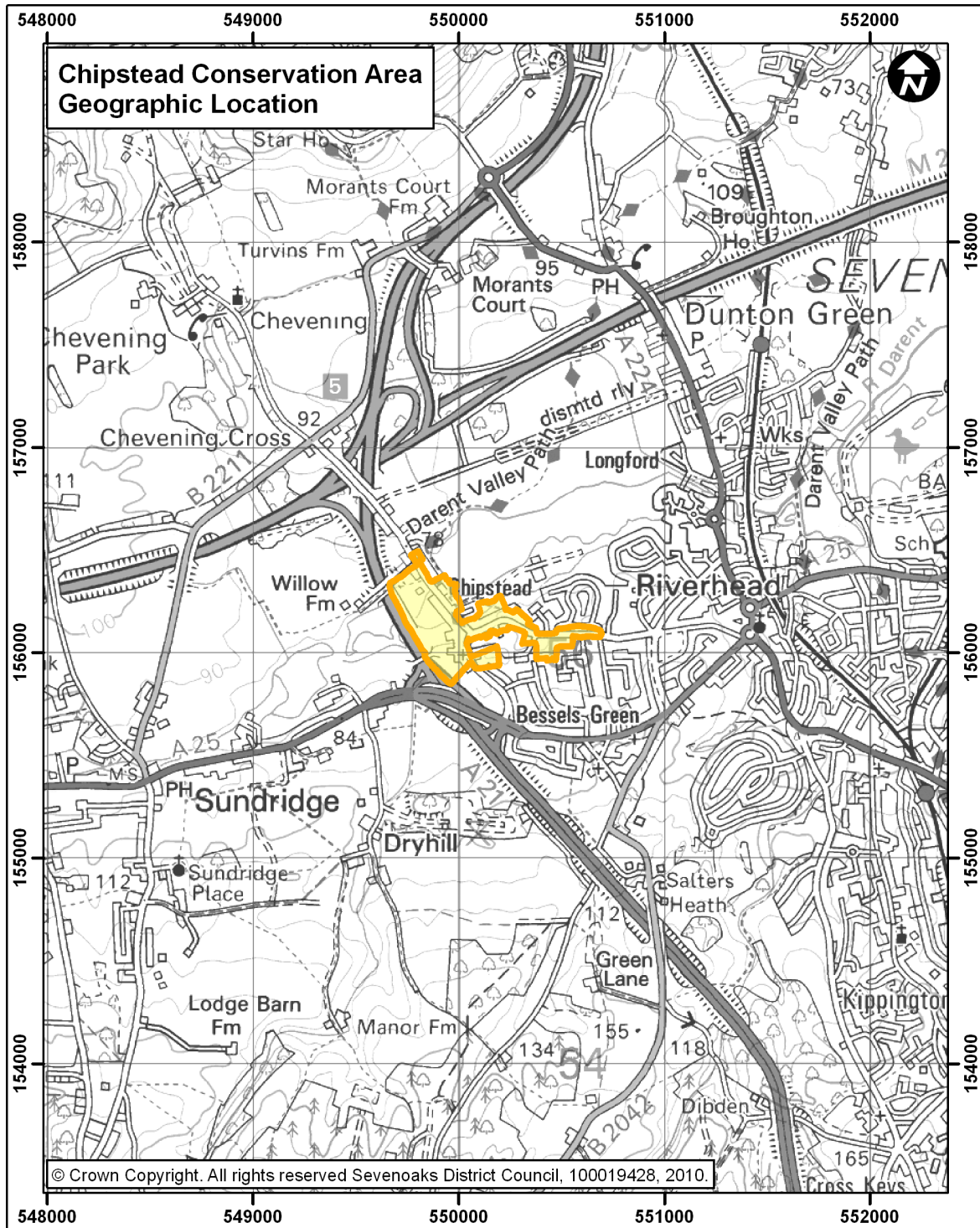


Chevening Road - open space at the Green

### **3.2 Location and Geographical Context**

Chipstead village lies in the Darenth valley, to the south of the river on the Greensand belt at the foot of the North Downs. It is situated to the north west of the town of Sevenoaks and to the west of Riverhead. It is one of a series of similar sized villages following the east/west line of the A25, although Chipstead is more fortunate than some in that this major trunk road does not bisect the village.

Since the construction of the M25 motorway, Chipstead has been completely surrounded by major road networks. The M25/M26 runs east west to the north of the village, the M25/A21 bounds the western side, the A25 is to the south and the old London Road, the A224, is to the east. There are major intersections between the arteries and the traffic volume using these roads is increasing steadily.



Map 2: Chipstead - Geographical Location

The River Darent flows along the northern boundary of the Conservation Area and the ground rises southward away from the river where there are crossing points at Chipstead bridge on the Chevening Road for vehicles and for pedestrians at the end of Stairfoot

Lane. The surrounding land is predominantly agricultural and Chipstead Lake, formed from an excavated sandpit and flooded by the Darent, provides a popular recreational water sports centre. Chipstead is the starting point for one of the southernmost legs of the Darent Valley Path which runs to Dartford via the villages of Otford, Shoreham, Eynsford and South Darent.

Chipstead is part of the Parish of Chevening. It is linked to Chevening village by a bridge over the M25. It has approximately 850 voters registered on the Electoral Roll of which just over half are in the heart of the village. There is a village hall although the nearest Church is at Chevening. A bus route still serves the village but the private car is now the preferred means of transport for the majority of residents.



**Chipstead lake, formed from an excavated sandpit and flooded by the river Darent, adds to the distinctive character of Chipstead.**

### 3.3 Historical Development

There are indications that there may have been a settlement at Chipstead from Saxon times. The name 'Chepsted' as recorded on old maps means 'market' and the site is one of the original staging posts on the pack horse road from Rye and Winchelsea along which fish and other goods were transported to London. Chipstead was one of the main crossing points of the river Darent particularly before a bridge was built at Longford (now on the A224) in 1561. The parishes of Sevenoaks, Otford and Chevening built the present bridge in 1636.



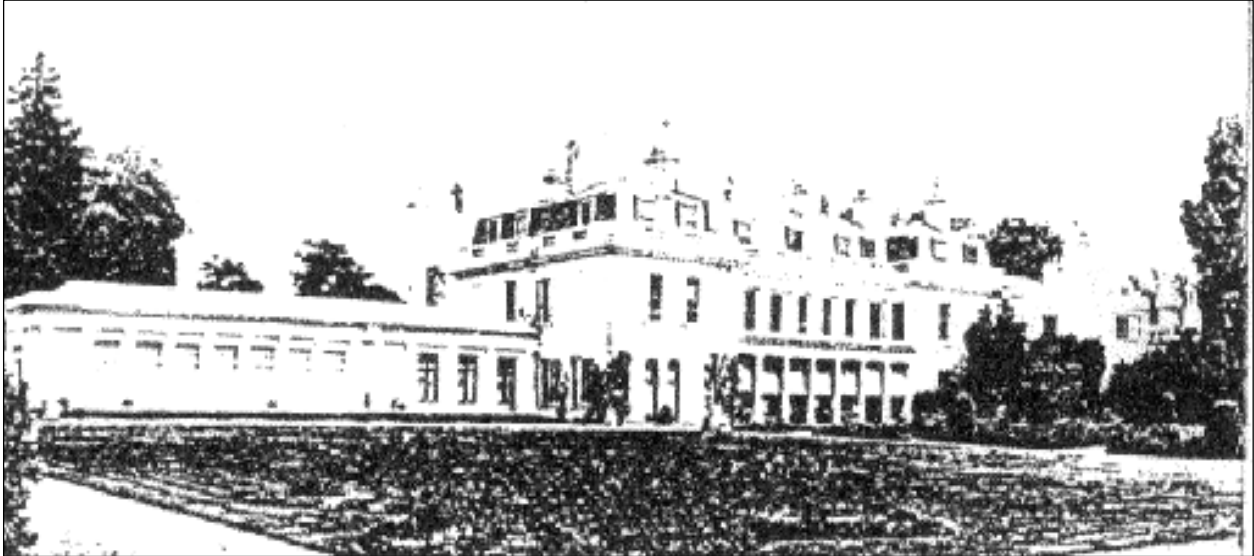
The converted corn mill

The hamlet formed part of the Hundred of Codsheath and the original manor house of Chipstead was at Moat Farm. This is reputed to date from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century although the present house is dated 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The manor of Chipstead became the manor of Chipstead alias Wilkes after a marriage.

The corn mill adjacent to Moat Farm lay on a man made watercourse dug from the Darent across the farm. This mill leat powered the wheel situated between the mill building and Mill House. The old mill building is now converted into offices but retains some of the character of the original building. It is a substantial building which provides visual contrast to the predominantly residential character of the village.

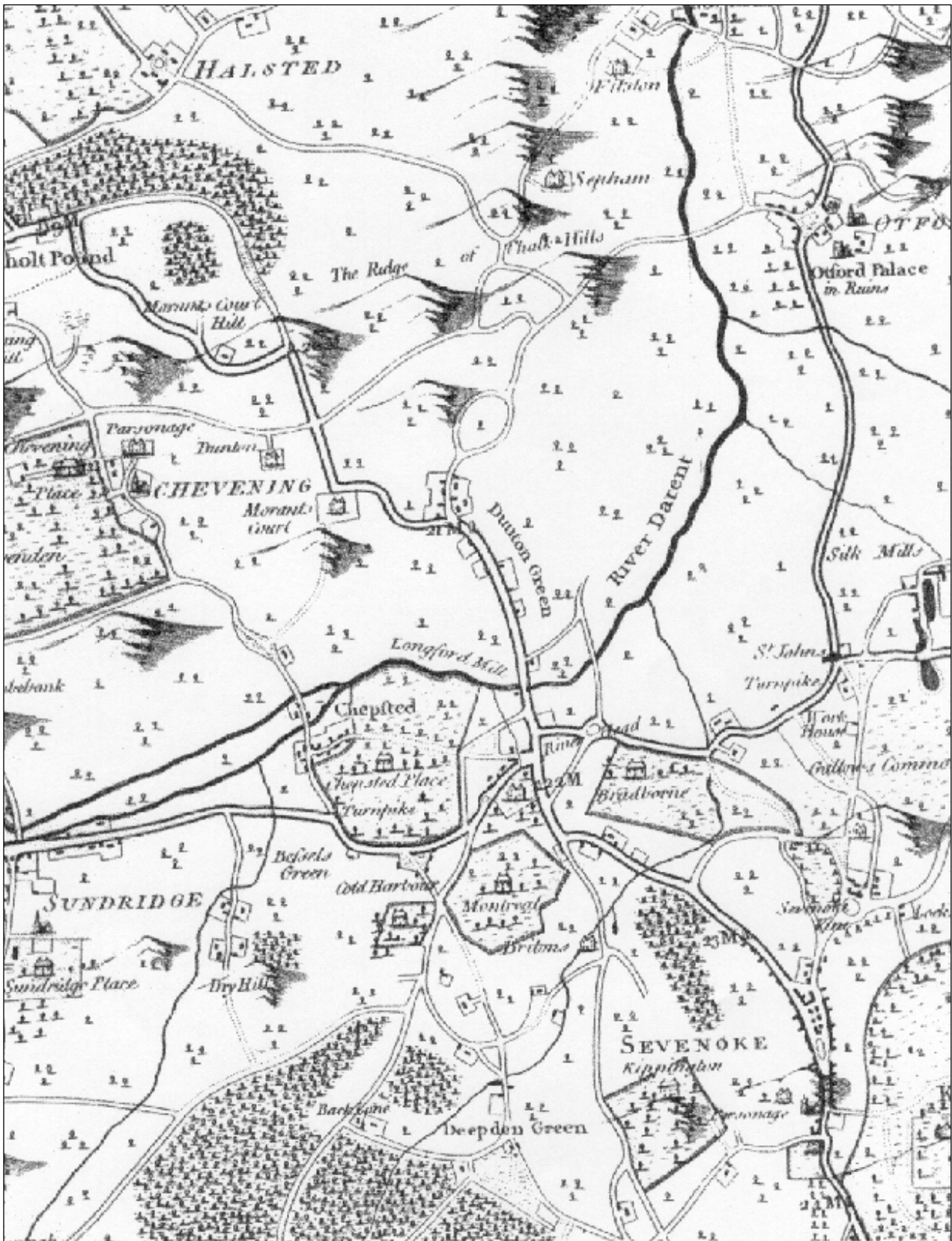


In Elizabethan times Robert Cranmer built a large house to the south east of the main settlement which became Chipstead Place. The house passed down via various families and was demolished and rebuilt in the early 1700s by the incumbent at the time.



Chipstead Place in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Chipstead Place was the major house of the area with extensive lands bounded by what are now Witches Lane and Westerham Road and stretching down to the river. Chipstead Place was rebuilt in 1693 by William Emerton, who was the then owner. Chipstead Lane was the private drive to the house to which White Lodge, West Lodge and another lodge at Bessels Green belonged. The gatehouse at Percy Lodge, now at the corner of Chipstead Lane and Witches Lane, housed a gatekeeper who operated a pole gate. The main drive leads to the big house and then continued as a series of steps to Stairfoot Lane which accounts for the differing levels of the George and Dragon restaurant and bar and Bank House. The owners of Chipstead Place were landowners of virtually the whole of Chipstead.



Map 3 Dated 1797



The main house itself was mostly demolished in 1932 leaving only the Ballroom and servants quarters and an extensive walled garden with glasshouses. The ballroom and its attached Vinery were converted into a dwelling and the surrounding land sold off for building plots. A house was built on half of the Vinery, the drive of which is now The Old Carriageway, and the glasshouses became the building plots of The Old Garden.

The river was dammed at some time to form an ornamental lake for Chipstead Place but it was not until the area was being excavated for sand and gravel in the late nineteenth Century that the lake we see today began to be formed. The sand pits flooded and had to be excavated with dredgers and eventually grew to become what was for a time the largest 'man dug' lake in England.

The sand and gravel were used for building purposes and supplied the concrete tile manufacturing works at Dunton Green. There was a brick works on the road to Chevening that supplied the bricks for most of the contemporary local buildings.

A single track branch line railway ran from Westerham to Dunton Green and called at nearby Chevening Halt, serving the area from 1881 until its closure in 1961.

The village contained the expected trades and facilities of blacksmith, farrier, miller, local shops, post office and public houses until relatively recently. Now, although two public houses remain and attract a clientele from outside the area, all the shops have closed and the only commercial enterprises are the Pottery, and a small office complex at the Mill.



**Chipstead Lake**

### 3.4 Buildings and Materials

The scale of the Chipstead Conservation Area is primarily domestic and the vernacular styles are an eclectic blend of typical Kentish materials and detailing.



High Street looking east

There is a wide range of house sizes, including small terraced cottages and a number of substantial and important residences some of which have been created by the amalgamation of two or more original dwellings.

Buildings are generally two storied and do not vary enormously in height although a contrast of scale is provided by their siting on the steadily rising ground along the main thoroughfare.

Many houses make good use of their attic space and dormer windows abound adding to an interesting roofscape. Brick chimney stacks with a variety of pots break the skyline, particularly on the former almshouses at the east and west ends of the High Street. Roofs are covered with plain clay tiles, with the occasional use of slate, and gable ends often have intricately detailed bargeboards.

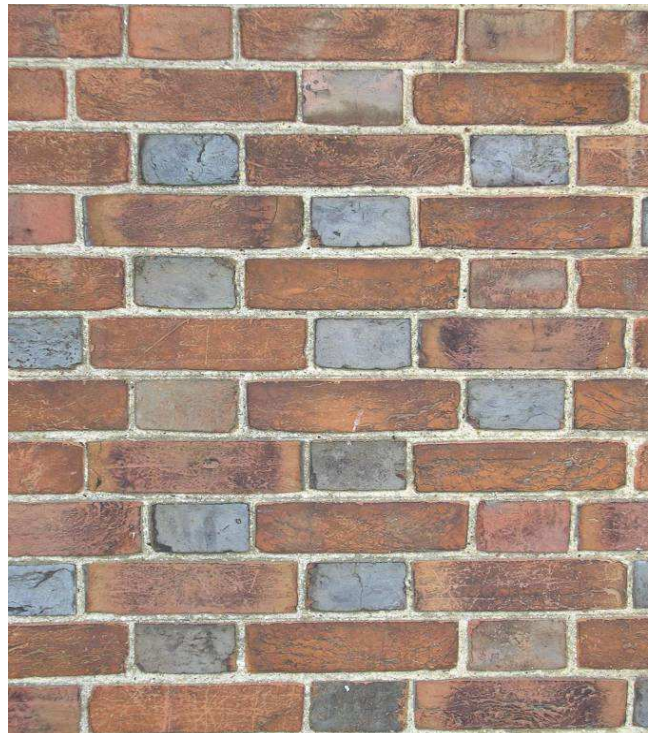


**Decorative clay tile hanging**

Timber framing is seen at first floor level on some of the older buildings and also applied on later infill development. Vertical clay tile hanging to first floors and gable ends is common. The use of similar decorative patterns on a variety of buildings of different ages and ownerships suggests a former local source for these tiles.

Brick is the predominant local building material, laid with lime mortar and sometimes with decorative patterns using blue headers. Tuck pointing is also used. Random and coursed ragstone is also much in evidence with stone galleting adding strength and interest to the mortar joints. This variety of materials and patterns adds richness to the character of the conservation area and provides a pleasing contrast, particularly when materials are used adjacent to each other on the same building.

Further contrast is provided by the occasional departure from brick into painted render or stucco. These buildings act as visual stops to the eye amongst the general tones of reddish brown bricks and green soft landscaping



**Handmade red clay bricks with blue headers**



**Chipstead Square with a mix of stucco and ragstone. The Kent peg tile roofs help to visually unify the buildings**

Rather surprisingly there is little use of weatherboarding - a material generally much in evidence in rural Kent. Some can be glimpsed on the western end gable of Bank House in the High Street and the outbuildings in the stable yard of Rock House are clad in tarred weatherboarding.

Windows feature prominently on the two ranges of former estate workers cottages which both have carefully detailed casements. There are many properties with traditional sash windows of varying dates and timber casements are found in dormer windows and in some of the early timber-framed houses.



Former estate workers cottages, Chipstead Square

The ages of buildings in the Conservation Area span several centuries and there is evidence of continuing adaptation and modification over the years as economic requirements and fashions changed. Crown House was formerly an inn but is now converted to a private house which makes an important contribution to the character of The Square. This 18<sup>th</sup> Century red brick building with a moulded brick eaves cornice is different from and contrasts with adjoining buildings in differing architectural styles. Throughout the conservation area it is this variation in design and materials which adds to the overall interest and character of the conservation area. Buildings originally constructed with a timber frame have had a brick facade added or have been refaced with the contemporary details of the time.





**An harmonious mix of building styles including Crown House, formerly an inn.**

New building on infill sites in the Conservation Area has generally been carefully detailed and carried out sympathetically. It adds to the townscape, respects local traditions and blends pleasantly with the neighbouring properties. The contribution of modern development provides a reminder that the village has been subject to continuing growth and alteration and it is this that has provided the variety which we now find so attractive.

## 4.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

### 4.1 Setting of the Area and Spatial Relationships

The topography of Chipstead village is one of the key contributors to the interest and character of the main village street. The slope of the land going downwards from east to west dictates the layout of the road and thus the juxtaposition of buildings. The double curve as the road falls away adds to the subtle interrelationship between buildings and public space. Chipstead retains the intimate small-scale charm of a typical Kentish village and provides a continuing series of changing vistas along the High Street. Most buildings are set close to the street and there is generally a pavement to one side only. This narrow grouping of built elements reinforces the feeling of intimacy. All these elements contribute positively to the character and appearance of the village.

A walk down the hill provides views to the open countryside and the Downs beyond that are glimpsed in the breaks between buildings. The changes in level and the longer views add interest to the character and setting of the conservation area.



The listed C18 Home Farmhouse beautifully turns the corner into the heart of the village.

Most of the residential properties have well tended and well stocked gardens, which provide them with a pleasant backdrop and in places the building outlines are softened with climbing plants.

Boundaries are generally defined with mature stone and brick walls fronting the street and hedging between properties although there are a few properties with iron railings or open picket style fences. In general the divisions are low and the buildings are not hidden behind their separations. This again fosters the intimate scale of the village.

The scale of the buildings varies progressing from the village green in Chevening Road, up through the High Street to Chipstead Lane but it never exceeds the expectations of what may be found in a small traditional Kentish village.

*Chevening Road and the Green*

The cottages adjacent to the Bricklayers Arms Public House are simple and low key and enjoy an open view out across the green and beyond to the lake. Often they have been modified from the original by the addition of projecting bays and porches, external window shutters and the like, and the Bricklayers Arms has had several modifications over the years.



**The Bricklayers Arms and adjacent cottages in Chevening Road**

The white painted stuccoed villa at the end of the series beyond the pub is a contrast to the adjacent row of listed timber-framed cottages (nos 15-21) and this side of Chevening Road is brought to a visual stop by the green painted Pottery on the corner of Mill Lane.

The ragstone road bridge over the river has a series of steps leading down to the water and there is a footpath along the northern bank close to the fringes of the lake. The sound of

the running water is a recurrent theme at this end of the village and as one approaches the drive up to Mill House. The pink painted stucco of this building is glimpsed from the road and invites a walk along the path by the water where the sound of the mill race grows louder. The house itself is now divided into several residences but retains its picturesque charm.



**Historic ragstone bridge**

*Chipstead Square*

At the Square the tall pair of ragstone houses and the Old Post Office define the focal point of the junction with Homedean Road, with the opposite boundary delineated by the range of lower but visually imposing estate cottages. These were formerly cottages built in 1841 by the then owner of Chipstead Place, Fredrick Perkins, on the site of an old public house called The White Hart.



Chipstead Square from the west

The view into the village from the southern approach is channelled into the Square past a simple but pleasant trio of red brick cottages on the west side Homedean Road and the low stone wall and raised lawns of the estate cottages on the east. At this point a close of newer houses has been built just outside the Conservation Area boundary and the road to them rises steeply behind the cottages to which the mature trees and gardens provide a natural backdrop.

Next to the Edwardian gables and red brick of Old Post Office is the painted brickwork and slated roof of the Old Bakery which provides a visual break before the restrained elegance of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Crown House, with its regular sash windows and mansard roof. On the opposite side of the road, the modern house on the infill site next to the estate cottages is simple and of a scale that is complementary to its neighbours.

Shops are an important aspect of the character and social life of a village and should be retained where possible. Chipstead, however, has lost its shops, but traces of them remain in shop fronts now converted to rooms in dwellings and in adverts painted on walls. These should be kept wherever possible.



Chipstead Square looking east with a modern house sitting comfortably in this diverse setting.

*The lower High Street*

The gables and dormers of nos. 9-13 and nos. 22-26 High Street increase the vertical scale at this point and provide a visual narrowing of the vista as the road bends round before ascending the hill. These buildings facing each other across the street have an abundance of features that invite closer inspection before continuing around the corner for the next view along the road.



Nos. 22-26 High Street



The red brick Edwardian villa with a flat roofed stone castellated porch, although not of marked historic interest, adds to the variety of colour and texture between the two white painted houses on the north side of the road.

High Street from Martins' Shaw

Opposite here, in Martin's Shaw, is a small development of modern houses, whose sloping gardens provide a backdrop to the lower properties fronting the High Street. This is outside the Conservation Area, but any development here can affect its setting. On the east corner of the close a pair of 18<sup>th</sup> Century cottages contrast with their 20<sup>th</sup> Century equivalent on the opposite side. Next to them, a later copy of the ragstone, timber-framed plaster panels and fretted bargeboards found lower down the street at nos. 22-26, present a charming pair

of cottages set back a little from the road, widening the streetscape before it is closed again by the former chapel as it steps forward on the south side of the High Street.

The juxtaposition of the contrasting colours and textures around the Square and along this lower section of the High Street is both attractive and visually satisfying. Stucco buildings contrast with brick and ragstone topped by plain clay peg tiled roofs. Each building is different but all form an harmonious whole to create an area of special architectural and historic interest.



High Street looking west. Ragstone houses enclosing the view.

As the hill starts its ascent, the row of cottages on the north side again lead the eye up to the Chapel and the similarly styled but more imposing houses at nos. 29 & 31 and The Home Farmhouse. Opposite the Chapel, the cottages at nos. 23 & 25 are set back from the pavement and are not seen until one passes Vine Cottage, providing a pleasant visual surprise and some soft landscaping in their front gardens. The single storey former shop projects forward, enclosing the garden and once again narrowing the vista.





The converted Chapel and former stores enclose the space and contribute to the visual diversity of the area.



**West Lodge and its gates give an indication of the high quality of the now demolished Chipstead Place**

*Stairfoot Lane*



**Historic cottages in Stairfoot Lane**

On the next bend in the road the narrow alley of Stairfoot Lane leads down to the river. There is a sudden change of scale from the High Street and a sense of enclosure and quiet charm. The Lane is bounded on one side by a long ragstone wall and on the other by a row of terraced historic cottages built in red brick with blue headers and first floor tile hanging. The fine detail of the ragstone spall paving adds to the richness of this quiet backwater. This type of paving also appears in the High Street where it was restored by the Council some years ago as part of an environmental enhancement scheme.



Closer to the river the Lane narrows into a tree lined footpath leading to a narrow stone footbridge over the Darent. The transition from urban to rural adds to the character of the area.

*The Upper High Street*

Opposite the entrance to Stairfoot Lane, in marked contrast of scale, the Rock House stands directly on the road at an angle to the bend. The house is imposing and forms an impressive group with its stable range, courtyard and boundary wall. At this point in the road the buildings have become grander and their impact is increased by the rising ground, culminating in Bank House which towers over the next bend at the top of the High Street.

There is another focal point on this bend provided by the George and Dragon, from whose car park there is a splendid view across the Darent and the lake to the North Downs beyond. There is then the pleasant surprise of the attractive row of former estate cottages set back from the road on the brow of the hill, behind the 19<sup>th</sup> Century red brick and tile hung village house of no. 41.



**The top of the High Street**

At the eastern end of the village the picturesque pair of cottages at 59 & 61 High Street to the north and West Lodge to the south give an indication of the architectural diversity in Chipstead Village.



**59 & 61 High Street**

*Chipstead Lane*

The road continues out of the village centre towards Chipstead Common and Riverhead. This area is dominated by a continuation of the old ragstone wall to the grounds of the former Chipstead Place. Several tall cypress trees which escaped the ravages of the 1987 hurricane punctuate the route and draw the eye along the road out of the village. Although the ragstone wall has been altered in places it still forms an important historical feature of the area. Trees on the north side of Chipstead Lane also make a positive contribution to the character of this area.



Chipstead Lane looking east

## 4.2 The Impact of Individual Elements, Features and Groups

With such a wealth of listed buildings concentrated into such a small area the individual impact of buildings is generally overridden by the group value of the streetscape. The number and juxtaposition of its historic buildings define the charm of Chipstead. It is also important to point out that the village has a number of buildings of character which, although not listed, make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. There are no grand set-piece views but rather a series of vistas throughout the Conservation Area from a variety of standpoints and directions.

Some buildings have an immediately impact that is worth noting. The estate cottages and ragstone houses on the Square are an important group that are seen from the three separate entrances to the village, and set the scene for the character of the Conservation Area



Similarly, at the top of the High Street, Bank House, the George and Dragon and The Rock House provide the visitor with an impression of what is to come.

Bank House and The George & Dragon PH

These former estate cottages at the top of the High Street are not listed at present, and may well be worth such designation for their architectural and historic interest and significant contribution to the conservation area's character.



**Former estate cottages, 43-53 High Street**

In Chevening Road, the setting of the cottages on the Green form an important grouping as do nos. 9-13 and 22-26 High Street.

**5.0 MANAGEMENT**

**5.1 Conservation Area Management**

Historic buildings and places are a built environment resource in which everyone has an interest. Changes are inevitable but it is important to understand and then seek to sustain or enhance areas. English Heritage good practice encourages local authorities to prepare a management plan addressing the issues arising from the Conservation Area Appraisal and set out recommendations for action. Some of these actions will be applied generally to conservation areas in the District, and others are specific to the Chipstead Village Conservation Area.



**Locally distinctive details at the former Estate cottages**

Clearly in a group of buildings possessing the important historical and architectural qualities of Chipstead Village the overriding policy should be to preserve and enhance those qualities. However conservation area status is not intended to imply prohibition of development.

Conservation area management is therefore largely the management of change, to ensure that local distinctiveness and the special character of place are respected and responded to in a positive manner. The challenge is to manage change in ways that maintain and reinforce the conservation area’s special qualities.

The established character of Chipstead Conservation Area must be protected in order to maintain its special architectural and historic interest. Any alteration or extension of existing buildings in the village should be carefully designed to take account of the established character and appearance of the conservation area.



There are few sites within the conservation area which could accommodate substantial new development and the surrounding rural area is protected by the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald AONB. Infilling existing open space within the conservation area could adversely affect the historic and locally distinctive form of the village. Some improvement or enlargement of existing buildings may be possible subject to quality design.

## 5.2 Current and Future Pressures on the Area

Chipstead Village has a high quality character recognised in its designation as a conservation area. There are a large number of listed buildings and high density of development in the historic core which means that opportunities for redevelopments or infill development are limited.

On the periphery of the original settlement and beyond the boundaries of the conservation area so much new development has taken place in previous years that Chipstead is becoming a suburb of Sevenoaks and Riverhead. Much of this development is infill behind the original core of the village. There is a strong demand for housing in areas on the fringe of urban areas. On the western edge of the conservation area a housing development at Moat Farm has been built in the former farmstead and incorporates some converted original agricultural buildings. The design of the properties is sympathetic to the area but is an example of continuing pressure for new development.



Modern housing at Moat Farm incorporating former agricultural building as garaging.

The number of households owning more than one car is above average and this will increase pressure on roads in the village, even if cars can be parked off the road.

The increase in car ownership puts particular pressures on settlements whose roads were designed only for the horse and cart. Parking is limited and while public areas can sometimes be made available, the problem of residential on-street parking remains. The George and Dragon has a large car park and patrons of the Bricklayers Arms can use the car park by the lake. Chevening Road is often lined with parked vehicles which can reduce it to a single track road, affecting the character and causing congestion. On the other hand, this effectively acts as a method of traffic calming.



Historic cottages in Chevening Road

### 5.3 Applying Planning Policy

The District Council will consistently apply existing and future planning policy to ensure high quality design which protects and enhances the character and appearance of the Chipstead Conservation Area. This will be applied to all development requiring planning or listed building consent including new or replacement buildings, small scale alterations and extensions and boundary treatment. This approach will be followed for proposals both within the conservation area and those outside the designated area which affect its setting or impact on its character.

The built and natural heritage of Chipstead will be conserved and any change should protect and enhance these cherished assets of local architectural, cultural, historical and conservation importance and the character of the surrounding landscape. Local distinctiveness is an important aspect of character to be assessed both in the context of the whole conservation area and its immediate surroundings, when designing any development proposal.



Locally distinctive allotment shed.

## 5.4 New Development

The following general principles should be adopted for all development and change in the conservation area:

### *Grain of the Village*

Chipstead has a distinct grain, or built form, of historic development. This gives the village great individuality, characterised by the pattern of historic buildings following ancient footpaths and highways and by the compact nature of the village. This “grain” is an important part of the character of the conservation area and should be protected.



Planning applications for development must include a detailed analysis (Design and Access Statement) of the locality and demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local streetscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building form, materials and plot ratios.

**A simple modern conversion retaining original character**

### *Contextual design*

All new development in the conservation area, should respond to its immediate environment and context, in terms of scale, density, form, materials and detailing. Areas on the edge of the village have an open rural character and long views of and from the site must be taken into account. It is also vital to respect the agricultural and parkland character of the surrounding area

### *Scale*

Scale is the combination of a building's design, height and bulk when related to its surroundings. Most of the buildings in Chipstead are two storeys and are of a modest character. Proposals for new or replacement buildings, such as garages or out buildings, must have drawings showing adjacent buildings and how the new structure will relate to them. House extensions must take into account the scale of the existing building, and must not dominate or overwhelm adjacent buildings.

*Appearance, Materials and Detailing*

The emphasis in any proposed alteration, new or replacement building must always be on the need to provide high quality design. There may be scope for innovative modern design, however a dramatic contemporary statement would probably be inappropriate in this conservation area and a more traditional design is likely to be more suitable. Good contemporary design can be used to create positive change in historic settlements and may be appropriate in listed buildings provided it respects their scale, form and character.

*Extensions to existing buildings*

Extensions should respect the form and character of the original building and its locality and use high quality materials and detailing. For listed buildings this is particularly important. Design should be of high quality, whether modern or traditional. Roof lines, roof shape, eaves details, verge details and the creation of new chimneys are all important considerations. Extensions should not overlook neighbouring properties, lead to an unacceptable loss of garden space, or result in the loss of historic plot boundaries. Extensions should not dominate the original building.

*Windows*

The commonest window types within the conservation area are single glazed, white painted timber windows, in the form of side hung casements on many of the older and more modest dwellings. Listed Building Consent is always required to alter windows in listed buildings. Windows of traditional design which are in keeping with the building they belong to and respect the historic nature of the village make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

*Repairs*

Repairs to existing historic structures must be undertaken sensitively to ensure that the appearance and condition of their fabric is not harmed. The regular maintenance of historic buildings can help to avoid the costly repair work required to rescue a building from dereliction. It is especially important to ensure that historic buildings are kept weather and water tight to prevent deterioration and roofs should be kept in a good state of repair.

**5.5 Buildings Making a Positive Contribution to Character.**

As recommended by government advice in Planning Policy Statement 5, buildings of merit, which have been judged to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area have been identified as part of the appraisal process and are<sup>47</sup>

marked on the character map for the conservation area. Any application to demolish an identified building will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification similar to that required for a listed building. Permission will only be given for demolition if the applicant can provide proof that the building is beyond economic repair. Similarly, all applications for alterations and extensions will be very carefully controlled

In the conservation area, where the quality of the general environment is already very high, the community expects the Council to insist on good quality design which responds positively to the historic setting, this extends to garages, extensions and ancillary buildings.

## 5.6 Tree Protection

The conservation area is generally focused on listed buildings and other important built features but the landscape surrounding it and trees within it contribute significantly to appearance. The open areas and trees which provide the setting to the Chipstead Village Conservation Area can be as important as the buildings or historic features themselves in retaining character. Trees, gardens and open space help to improve the quality and amenity of the area.



Chipstead's historic rooftops glimpsed through trees

Trees make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the Council is committed to their protection and improvement. Poorly considered works to trees may not only lead to the loss of the tree but also spoil the appearance of the area surrounding them and adversely affect the setting of any buildings nearby. All trees in a conservation area over a certain size are automatically protected by law. Additionally, some may already be specifically covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), which means that formal permission is required from the Council to fell or lop

them. Failure to comply with the legislation can result in prosecution. Anyone wishing to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area which is not already protected by a TPO must give notice of their intentions to the Council and the Council has six weeks in which to decide whether or not to serve a TPO on that tree. The decision will be based on the contribution the tree makes to the character or appearance of the conservation area, the type of species and the health of the tree. If a TPO is served, a formal application will be required for any tree work.

The following trees are exempt from control:

- Trees which are dead, dying, or dangerous.
- Trees with a trunk diameter which is less than 75 mm (3 inches) at any point, or less than 100 mm (4 inches) diameter at 1500 mm (5 foot) about ground level.
- Where the removal of the tree would be to the benefit of other neighbouring trees.
- Trees subject to a forestry dedication.
- Where the tree has to be felled in connection with a development for which planning permission has already been given.

Recent changes in the legislation mean that fruit trees are no longer exempt. It is always advisable to check with the Council's Tree Officer before starting work. Where the loss of a tree is unavoidable, the Council will encourage and may require in certain circumstances, the replanting of a new tree with a species which is native or traditional to the area.

## **5.7 Sustainable design**

To encourage sustainable development, all buildings should where possible use products with a low environmental impact, including the use of locally sourced materials from sustainable resources. Where appropriate in a conservation area, new buildings should also include provision for waste reduction, the re-use of materials and should be energy efficient. Energy efficiency for existing buildings within the conservation area could be improved by such measures as loft insulation and the provision of secondary double glazing, subject to the views of the Council's conservation and building control officers.

## **5.8 Potential for Enhancement**

At present telegraph wires clutter the street scene and in particular there is a very unattractive metal post on the corner of Martins Shaw. As part of a programme of environmental improvements the District Council has re-laid the footway in traditional ragstone spalls and ironstone setts to enhance the village centre. It is important to maintain this traditional paving to a high standard.



Road signs, although vital, need to be thoughtfully positioned to avoid detracting from the character of the area. It should be possible to review the siting, design and maintenance of the existing signs and street furniture to explore ways in which this could be improved and possibly also to remove unnecessary signs.

**A clutter of poorly maintained signage at the heart of the village**

In a few circumstances there are some details on listed buildings which could be altered to enhance their appearance. For instance the running of soil pipes across one of the main public elevations of Bank House is unfortunate and unattractive.



**Soil pipe on Bank House**

### 5.9 Building Regulations

The District Council will continue to apply Building and Fire Regulations sensitively in Conservation Areas and to listed buildings and ensure that there is no conflict with the preservation of the character of the area or historic buildings.



**5.10 Pride and Identity**

The historic village is a quintessential part of the traditional image of England and a vital part of the local economy. Chipstead faces a wide range of challenges including the economic, social and physical impact of change, the adverse effects of parked cars and through traffic on the area and erosion of environmental quality. In common with the surrounding countryside, villages have always changed, and will continue to do so. Chipstead’s long history and rich historic fabric in the conservation area are assets which, wisely used, can help to produce an agreeable and interesting built environment, a pleasant place to live, economic prosperity and a sense of civic pride and identity.



**Attractive stream and planting along Chevening Road**

## APPENDIX

### English Heritage Guidance -- Unlisted buildings in conservation areas

*When considering the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area, the following questions might be asked:*

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure is associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?

In English Heritage's view, any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

*Guidance on conservation area appraisals – August 2005*

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# Agenda Item 10

# Brittain's Farm Sevenoaks

**DRAFT**

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



**PLANNING GUIDANCE - 2011**



# Brittain's Farm Sevenoaks

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

The historic environment is a social asset of immense value and one of the keys to the continuing prosperity of Sevenoaks District. Conservation Area Appraisals are part of a process which helps us make the best use of our historic environment. They are tools for the positive management of change, not a means of preventing development. Conservation is focused on the entire historic environment, not just listed buildings. Trees, open spaces, buildings, uses and streets all contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the District's conservation areas.

The built environment of our conservation areas has used energy and materials moulded by people both past and present. The District Council will creatively manage the fabric of these areas in a sustainable way as a legacy for future generations.

It is intended that this appraisal and management plan will inform the activities of the Council, the public and other bodies where these affect the conservation area. This Appraisal was approved by the District Council in 2011 and adopted as Informal Planning Guidance.

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Brittain's Farm Sevenoaks drawn by Charles Essenhigh Corke 1900

## **1.00 INTRODUCTION**

This document replaces the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area Appraisal which was produced in July 2000 by Sevenoaks District Council in partnership with Sevenoaks Town Council and local amenity groups. Local authorities are required by law to preserve or enhance their conservation areas and part of that process is to regularly review their conservation areas and produce Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans. These explain what is important about the area and what improvements are needed.

This Appraisal and Management Plan follows the broad format suggested by English Heritage in the 2006 document Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans. This Appraisal draws heavily on the original document, but the conservation area has recently been re-surveyed and the boundary reviewed. During this process, photographs were taken and both positive and negative elements recorded. However, the omission of any particular feature or building does not imply that it is of no significance.

### **1.1 Conservation Area Boundary Review**

A review of the boundary was undertaken as part of the preliminary survey work associated with this Appraisal. The boundary, which was reviewed in September 2007, accurately reflected the overall extent of the area of special architectural or historic interest and no changes were made.

### **1.2 Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas**

Conservation Areas first came into being as a result of the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and are intended to identify any valuable visual or historic characteristics in a locality that may warrant special measures in order to protect and conserve them.

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 recognises that there are particular areas of 'architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as conservation areas. This designation then empowers the local authority to pay particular attention to planning considerations and development within them and gives greater control over such matters as demolition, landscaping and trees, and the display of advertisements.

Designation also raises the awareness of local residents and businesses to the quality of their surroundings and is intended to encourage an active interest in the care and maintenance of their properties and surrounding land, thereby fostering a sense of communal pride.

It has been recognised that designation, because of the responsibilities and obligations it places on both owners and the local authority should only be imposed on areas that are demonstrably suitable. Where the criteria have been met, the area should then benefit from the additional control and protection that designation confers, and from official recognition of the special architectural and historic character of the locality.

The management of our national cultural and historic inheritance is of paramount importance and conservation areas are vital grass roots starting points from which to safeguard the continuing care of our environment.

### **1.3 The Benefits of Being in a Conservation Area**

The historic environment is of particular economic importance for tourism and leisure. In addition, maintaining the appearance of a conservation area and the character of the groups of buildings and the public areas within it will sustain or enhance the value of individual properties. Conservation can also play a key part in promoting economic prosperity by ensuring that an area offers attractive living and working conditions which encourage further investment.

The principles of conservation management planning, that managing any historic place should be based on understanding it and assessing its significance and values, are now accepted as applying to historic areas as much as to historic buildings.

### **1.4 Purpose of Appraisals and Management Plans**

As their number grows, it has become even more important for local authorities to include a well-defined and considered policy for designated conservation areas in their development plans. Development pressures are such that any designation is likely to be subjected to detailed scrutiny and must be readily and demonstrably defensible against adverse criticism. The criteria for designation should be kept as uniform as possible and the public kept fully aware of the reasons for any proposed changes in their area.

The 1990 Act charges local authorities with the responsibility of undertaking a review of their conservation areas from time to time, both to consider the possibility of revising their extent, and to identify any past changes or future pressures which may affect the original reasons for their designation.

English Heritage published an advisory leaflet on appraisals in 1997 and more detailed guidance on both appraisals and management plans in 2006. This guidance outlines the preferred approach to these plans and gives examples of the type of content that it would be useful to include.

The principal purpose of this Appraisal is to provide a firm basis upon which proposals for development within the Brittain's Farm Sevenoaks Conservation Area can be assessed. It defines those key elements in the area that contribute to the special historic and architectural character and which should be conserved or enhanced. It supplements and provides clarity to policies contained in the Development Plan, primarily those relating to demolition and development within conservation areas, and should be read in conjunction with the Plan. It will therefore be a key document in maintaining character and promoting appropriate, sensitive proposals in the Conservation Area.

The appraisal and management plan defines the key elements that together give the area its character and objectively analyses how they interact to enhance their individual impact. The plan can then provide management suggestions for future policies and improvements based on a clear understanding of the special architectural and historic

qualities that highlight the area and give it its local distinctiveness. These plans can also be used to assess the impact of planning policies and the implementation of enhancement measures.

The plan will help the District Council, development professions (planners, architects, landscape architects, highway engineers etc) and the local community engage in the conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and help secure the long term viability of the Conservation Area as an important heritage asset. This new Appraisal and Management Plan is based on the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area Appraisal 2000 and sets objectives for the protection and enhancement of the conservation area, addresses areas identified in the first appraisal and brings forward opportunities to enhance the area.

### **1.5 The key purpose of this Plan is to:**

- Define the key characteristics and features which contribute to the conservation area's special character or appearance and should be preserved or enhanced.
- Provide a basis for making sustainable community based planning decisions about the future of the conservation area.
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of the local heritage.
- Record those principal elements that detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- Identify distinctive built form character within the conservation area.
- Identify opportunities for enhancement to be delivered through management plans or other initiatives.
- Inform key agencies, societies and residents whose activities impact on the conservation area and maximise the investment in the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area to the benefit of the social and economic quality of life in Sevenoaks.
- Provide guidance and set out objectives to preserve and enhance the buildings, structures and features.
- Outline the key statutory requirements in respect of development within the conservation area; provide guidance and set out actions to secure the proper and effective application of these requirements.
- Propose the implementation of management procedures to co-ordinate the delivery of new works and maintenance works within the public realm.

As an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan , the plan will be a material consideration in the determination of development proposals.

## 2.0 GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

### 2.1 National and Regional Guidance

Government advice concerning conservation areas, historic buildings and other heritage assets is set out in Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment 2010 and the accompanying Planning Practice Guide. Other advice about conservation areas including the production of management proposals, was produced by English Heritage in 2006.

### 2.2 The Development Plan

The government has introduced a new type of development plan known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will set out the strategy, policies and proposals for the future shape of Sevenoaks District and will be produced over the next few years. The Core Strategy was adopted by Sevenoaks District Council in February 2011. Policy SP 1 of this document is relevant to conservation.

In the meantime the saved policies of the Local Plan of March 2000 is the development plan until parts of the new system are adopted. As an adopted planning document the Appraisal and Management Plan will be a key material consideration in the determination of development proposals.



Listed historic barn

### 2.3 Local Policies

Brittains Farm is within the Metropolitan Green Belt where the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but

there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development will not be approved except in very special circumstances. It is for the applicant to prove that very special circumstances exist.

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan (adopted March 2000) lists the following policy EN 23 relating to conservation areas. :

- **Proposals for development or redevelopment within or affecting Conservation Areas should be of positive architectural benefit by paying special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area and of its setting. The design of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings should respect local character, whilst the treatment of external spaces including hard and soft landscaping, boundary walls, street furniture and signs should be compatible with and enhance the appearance of the area.**



**Black tarred boarding and slate roof forming a simple vernacular building**

## **2.4 Buildings Contributing to Character**

Buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area are identified on the character appraisal plan at the end of this document. English Heritage national guidance on conservation areas sets out the criteria used to identify these buildings.

## **2.5 Conservation and Enhancement**

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 states that local planning authorities should undertake detailed assessments of conservation areas and prepare proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Development proposals will be judged against their overall contribution to the enhancement of the character and appearance of the area as set out in any plan which may have been prepared. This assessment and the detailed analysis of the area contained in the report are intended to fulfil this requirement and provide the background for development and enhancement schemes.

Sevenoaks has a rich townscape and an environment of high quality. This appraisal aims to ensure that this rich context is respected so that only high quality design is introduced, allowing the town to maintain its character and status as one of the most desirable places in the south east.

There is a richness, variety, quality and history of townscape within Sevenoaks that makes the town special. Within individual character areas there is a need to maintain and enhance the best of these townscape qualities to maintain the town's vitality. Context sensitive quality design is vitally important in reinforcing the character of Sevenoaks and this character must not be lost through undue pressure for poorly designed infill development or redevelopment.

## 2.6 Special Controls in the Conservation Area

Designation of a Conservation Area does not mean that changes cannot occur, but rather that any change should preserve or enhance the features which make up its special character. Controls are imposed which are additional to normal planning restrictions, in order to maintain the character and appearance of the area. The benefits of this and the maintenance of a high quality environment are perceived by most people who live and work in conservation areas as being worth the additional restrictions.

Additional controls within Conservation Areas are outlined here for information. However, other planning controls may still apply and are not altered by conservation area status.

### *Houses and their alteration*

The size of an extension that may be built without the need to apply for planning permission is more restricted within a conservation area. Any proposals should always be discussed with the Council at an early stage.

Cladding of the exterior of a residential property with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles will require submission of a planning application. Any enlargement of a house by way of alteration or additions to the roof, e.g. a dormer window, will require a planning application to be made. A planning application is needed for a satellite antenna where it is to be installed on a chimney; or on a building over 15 metres in height; or on a wall or roof slope which fronts a highway.

### *Demolition*

Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of any building within a conservation area, except the following:

- any building with a total cubic content not exceeding 115 cubic metres or any part of such building.
- any wall of fence less than 1 metre high fronting onto the street or less than 2 metres high elsewhere.
- any building subject to a formal order requiring demolition.

Planning officers are happy to give advice on whether planning permission is required for work within a conservation area. Please contact the Council's relevant development control area team.



### *Trees*

Six weeks notice must be given to the Council of intent to cut down, prune, uproot or destroy any tree within a conservation area. The Council will then advise if it wishes to raise an objection. If a response is not received from the Council within 6 weeks of the notice being given, work may go ahead. This requirement does not apply to trees which have a diameter less than 75mm (3") when measured at a height of 1.5metres (4'11") above the ground. Works to trees already covered by a Tree Preservation Order will also require consent.

### *Unauthorised Works and development*

Sometimes, landowners and others carry out works without first obtaining any necessary consent from the District Council. The Council does have certain legal powers to deal with such situations, but can only take enforcement action once it is aware of any alleged unauthorised works and after detailed investigation.

### *Maintenance and Repairs*

The Council has a duty to pay special attention to the character or appearance of conservation areas, in exercising its planning powers. However, these powers are limited. The principal guardians of the character and appearance of the area are the residents and business people who live and work in the conservation area and who are responsible for maintaining the buildings.



Black timber boarding and a 19<sup>th</sup> century white lattice window.

The character of conservation areas can be altered or lost through the use of inappropriate materials, not only on the buildings themselves but also on the ground, including paving and along boundaries. Unsympathetic replacement windows (particularly where the size of the openings are changed or inappropriate materials used) can alter the appearance of a building considerably. Any change to a window or doorway should be carefully designed to respect the character and materials of the original building.

Painting or rendering over original brickwork is another alteration which could dramatically change a property's appearance and irreparably damage the character of the group. As well as covering up attractive brickwork, it can obscure original architectural and brick detailing and requires regular redecoration to maintain an attractive appearance. In older buildings paint or render can also trap moisture which may cause damage to walls. Many alterations to older properties using modern materials can upset the balance within these properties and can cause more costly problems, such as cracks, damp, or rot. Care should be taken with any alteration to an older building.

#### *Boundary treatments*

Boundary treatment, especially to the street, is an essential feature of any property. Original boundaries, whether a brick or ragstone wall, railings or hedges, should be retained wherever possible and every effort made to reinstate missing boundary treatments with a sympathetic replacement. The particular design and the materials used should take account of the character of the property and the surrounding area. At Brittain's Farm ragstone and brick walls are characteristic of the area.

#### *Listed Buildings*

Many historic buildings are listed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport because of their architectural and historic interest. The main purpose of listing a building is to ensure that care will be taken over decisions affecting its future, that alterations respect the particular character and interest of the building, and that the case for its preservation is taken fully into account in considering the merits of any development proposals.

If you live in or occupy a listed building, further guidance on the controls that apply is available from the relevant development control team. When a building is listed, this covers the building both internally and externally and also any object or structure fixed to it. In addition any object or structure within the grounds or garden of the building which was there before 1948 is also listed. Listed Building Consent is required for the demolition, extension or alteration of listed buildings in any way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, internally as well as externally. You must get this consent from the District Council before any work is started. You may also require planning permission for the proposed works. The Development Control Area Team will be able to advise you on this.

New gates, fences, walls, railings or other means of enclosure surrounding a listed building will require planning permission. Any shed, garage, greenhouse or any other outbuilding, along with a pool, enclosure or container would also require the submission

of a planning application. The design of these should harmonise with the existing building and its setting.

## **2.7 Security**

Household security and the security of parked cars is important to the Council. Residents should ensure that their house and any vehicles are secure. However, a conservation area is an historic area and this should be taken into account. Standard types of security measures may not always be appropriate and a standard burglar alarm box may be inappropriate in a highly visible location on an historic building. Compromise can usually be reached. For advice and guidance on this matter contact the Council's development control team and the Crime Reduction Officer for Sevenoaks through the Community Safety team at the Council Offices . Planning permission or Listed Building Consent may be required for any security work.

### 3.00 CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Location and Geographical Context

Sevenoaks is a prosperous market town with a population of approximately 22,000 people ( 22,667 in the Census of 2001), situated on the north slope of the Greensand ridge to the south of the North Downs from which it is separated by the Vale of Holmesdale. It is served by good road and rail links to London and the west, and has an easy connection to the A21, which bypasses the town and runs to the south coast. The rail network with its frequent services to London, has facilitated the growth of Sevenoaks and its surrounding villages as a commuter area.

The coming of the railway initiated the most significant change in the town's development. For hundreds of years Sevenoaks remained constricted to its hill top site surrounded by a number of country estates such as Knole, Kippington, Montreal, Bradbourne, Greatness and Wildernesse. The first station opened at Bat and Ball in 1862 and the station at Tubs Hill followed in 1868. Sevenoaks then began its expansion into a base for commuting workers to London.



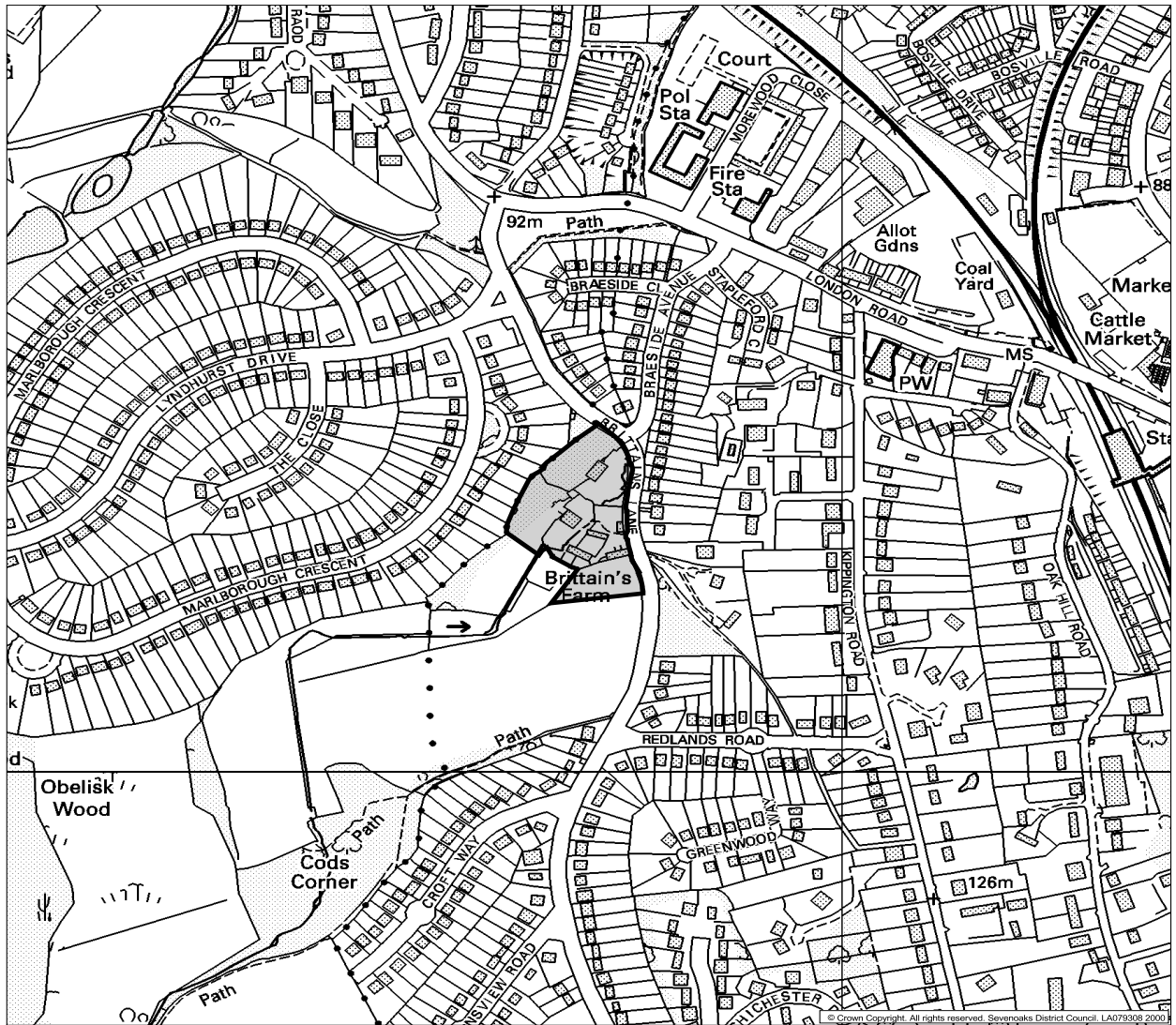
Map 1 General Location

Brittain's Farm is situated between Sevenoaks and Riverhead in Brittain's Lane, opposite the junction with Braeside Avenue. It is on the edge of the built up area but close to the train station.

Open countryside to the south west of the conservation area extends to the A21. The conservation area lies within the Green Belt, sandwiched between the housing estates on Montreal Park and Croft Way and contains a farmstead that was once part of the historic Montreal Estate.



Ragstone and brick wall adds to the character of this farmstead group



Map 2 Boundary and position of the Conservation Area



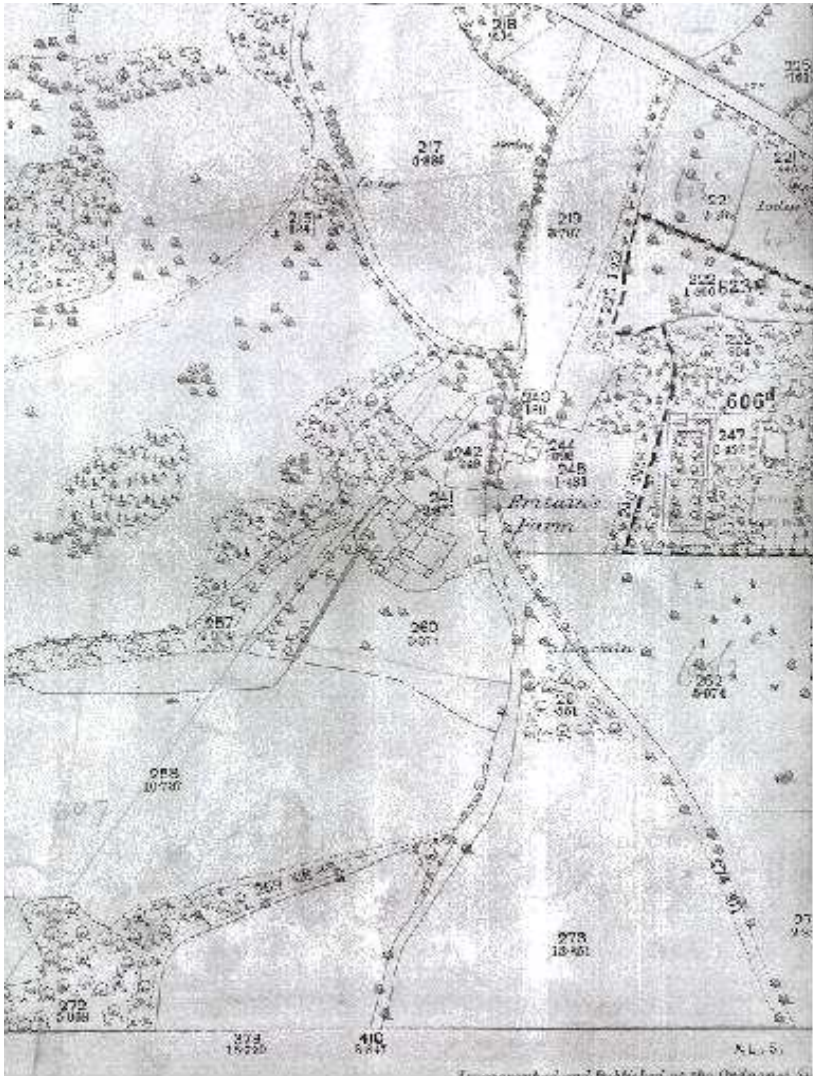
Weatherboarded stables

The conservation area covers 1.5 hectares originally designated in 1974 and was reviewed and redesignated in 2007. It contains five listed buildings and most of the mature trees within the conservation area are covered by tree preservation orders.

A stream flows through the site before disappearing underground below Brittain's Lane and north to the Sevenoaks wildlife reserve and the River Darent.

### 3.2 Historic Development

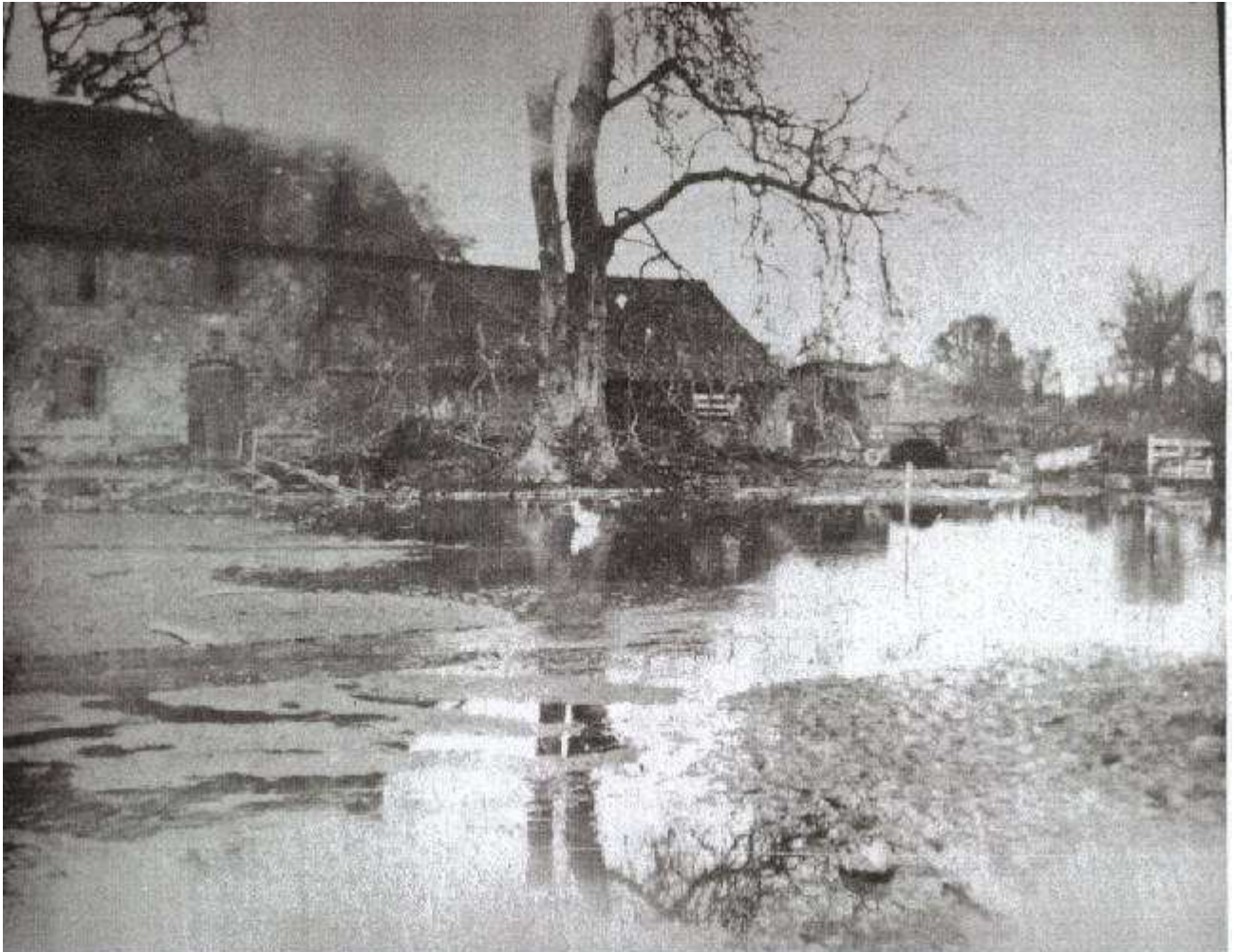
Brittains Farm was probably first established in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century as one of a ring of farms around the original Sevenoaks settlement. The incumbent would have paid his dues to the Lord of the Manor or the Archbishop.



Map 3 Britain's Farm In 1869

Of the buildings that survive today, the large barn to the south of Britain's farmhouse is reputed to date from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, but the house itself and the oast were built in 1752 and 1751 respectively, by Thomas Farnaby. He was the second baronet and a member of the family that owned the Kippington Estate. It is likely that the farm was included in the parcel of land purchased with the Kippington estate by Thomas Farnaby in 1630. Before this purchase and from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century the Kippington Estate is recorded as being owned by a series of textile manufacturers - clothiers, dyers, and cloth workers based on the wool trade in Kent.

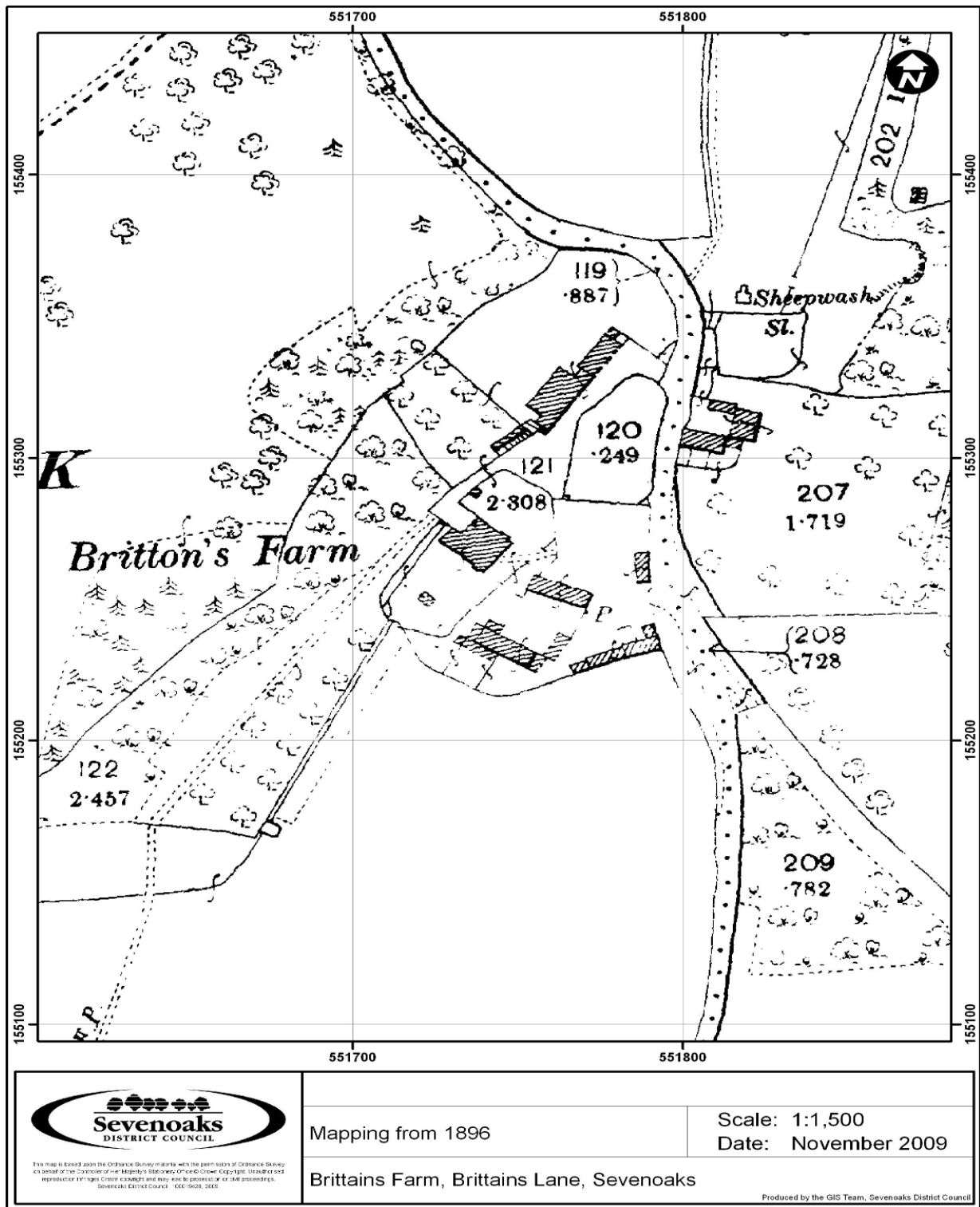
The Kippington Estate, and presumably Brittain's farm, was sold in 1796 to Francis Motley Austen, uncle of Jane Austen, who moved there from the Red House in Sevenoaks High Street. The main house at Montreal was built after 1760 by Field Marshall Jeffery Amherst ( 1717- 1797) to celebrate his victory at Montreal in Canada. He was Commander in Chief of the British Army and then became Lord Amherst. The Fourth and last Earl Amherst died in 1925, the family moved away from the area and the Estate was sold to Mr J Runge of Kippington Court. Montreal House was demolished in 1936 to make way for the Montreal housing estate but fortunately Brittain's farmstead remained.



Brittain's Farm oast in the 1930's

Brittain's farmstead remained largely unchanged until the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, as seen in this photograph taken in the 1930's. After this some of the agricultural buildings were converted into the properties we see today. This occurred sometime after the Montreal Estate was sold and the building of the new housing at Marlborough Crescent and Lyndhurst Drive began.





**Map 4 Brittain's Farm in 1896**

This map shows the agricultural buildings and sheepwash to the east of Brittain's Lane which have been lost to more recent housing. Although the spelling has changed slightly, the general form of the farmstead to the west of Brittain's Lane remains intact today.

## 4.00 CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Landscape Setting and Trees

The landscape setting is small to medium scale with an undulating to steeply sloping rural landscape to the west of Brittain's Farm. This includes farmland with hedgerow networks and scattered dense woodland and shaws. Brittain's Lane was historically a narrow, winding hedge lined lane and some elements of this remain. There are occasional long views but generally a moderate range of enclosed views. To the north and south suburban housing provides a contrast to the historic farmstead group. Trees, historic agricultural buildings and open areas contribute strongly to the special character of Brittain's Farm. Retaining mature trees and hedges is fundamental to preserving this character. Trees in conservation areas are protected and their removal is only permitted where a clear case exists. New trees should be native species that will add to the quality and local distinctiveness of the area. Contact the Council's tree officer for further advice.

### 4.2 Architectural Description

Vernacular materials of Kentish type including clay peg roofing tiles, tile-hanging, ragstone, weatherboarding and deep orange and red brickwork with some vitrified or blue headers can be seen in this group of historic farmstead buildings. The advent of the railway contributed to the use of natural Welsh slate roofs on some buildings.



Simple vernacular detailing.

Galletted ragstone, red brick quoins and blue header bricks used in a decorative pattern, all contribute to the character of this agricultural building. Unusually the roof material is clay pantiles which adds to the variety and overall interest in this vernacular building group.

Brittains Farmhouse is built of ragstone with a clay-tiled roof and wrought iron framed leaded light casement windows. There is a chimney stack at each end and a central doorway. It is a simple but attractive historic building contrasting with the dark weatherboarding of the barn and other outbuildings.



**Brittains Farm House**

The former oast house is also built in ragstone with a tiled roof. The conversion has incorporated a garage and added a front porch. The windows are simple timber casements with rectangular panes.



**Brittains Farm Oast**

Brittains Farm is an extremely attractive group of buildings screened from the road by a substantial ragstone wall and mature hedging. The farmstead group has retained its informal historic character and the subtle interplay between building form and open space creates views and visual enclosure which reinforces the character of the farmstead. A limited palette of vernacular building materials and the retention of historic walls adds to the integrity of the group.

Although there is little trace of how it must have appeared as a working farm, as a residential property it occupies a secluded and intimate setting. The surrounding gardens, including the stream and pond, add interest and the grounds are full of mature planting, carefully tended. It is a pleasant surprise to find this enclave of historic tranquillity so close to the built fringes of the town.

### 4.3 Current and Future Pressures on the Area

Whilst the land remains in its present ownership there does not appear to be any pressure on it in terms of subdivision or redevelopment. However the outbuildings could, in the future, be the subject of applications to convert into additional residential accommodation.

The Metropolitan Green Belt status of the area means that new build development is highly likely to be inappropriate development in this location, and the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area is safe from unacceptable forms of development for the foreseeable future.



A limited palette of hand made vernacular materials adds to the character of this building.

This outbuilding is partly weatherboard with red brick walls and both clay tiled and slated roofs. It is simple, well maintained and unconverted.

#### 4.4 Individual Features & Groups of Buildings

Small details combine to enhance the area; the planting of a tree, the retention of historic walls and vernacular materials in the buildings together with the variety of hard and soft landscaping surfaces,. Conversely, any lack of attention to these details or paving can quickly detract from the character and interest of the conservation area.

#### 4.5 Key Issues

This Appraisal concludes that the most important issues which can affect the special architectural and historic interest of the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area are:

- Maintenance of views to open countryside
- Retention of traditional materials and details
- Improvements needed to some buildings



These early oast kilns form part of the building unlike later oasthouses which tend to have separate kilns and storage areas.

## 5:00 MANAGEMENT

### 5.1 Conservation Area Management

Historic buildings and places are a built environment resource in which everyone has an interest. Changes are inevitable but it is important to understand and then seek to sustain or enhance areas. English Heritage good practice encourages local authorities to prepare a management plan addressing the issues arising from the Conservation Area Appraisal and set out recommendations for action. Some of these actions will be applied generally to conservation areas in the District, and others are specific to the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area.

Clearly in a group of buildings possessing the important historical and architectural qualities of Brittain's Farm the overriding policy should be to preserve and enhance those qualities. However conservation area status is not intended to imply prohibition of development. Conservation area management is therefore largely the management of change, to ensure that local distinctiveness and the special character of place are respected and responded to in a positive manner. Change is inevitable. The challenge is to manage change in ways that maintain and reinforce the conservation area's special qualities.



The subtle mix of materials and retention of informal building groups adds to the character of Brittain's farmstead.

## 5.2 Applying Planning Policy

The District Council will consistently apply existing and future planning policy to ensure high quality design which protects and enhances the character and appearance of the Brittain's Farm Conservation Area. This will be applied to all development requiring planning or listed building consent including new or replacement buildings, small scale alterations and extensions and boundary treatment. This approach will be followed for proposals both within the conservation area and those outside the designated area which affect its setting or impact on its character.

The built and natural heritage of Brittain's Farm will be conserved and any change should protect and enhance these cherished assets of local architectural, cultural historical and conservation importance and the character of the surrounding landscape. Local distinctiveness is an important aspect of character to be assessed both in the context of the whole conservation area and the site and its immediate surroundings, when designing any development proposal.

## 5.3 The need for contextual design.

All development in the conservation area must respond to its immediate environment and context, in terms of scale, density, form, materials and detailing. Applicants for planning permission must provide a ' Design and Access Statement ' to justify the design decisions that have been made as the scheme was developed and to show how proposed alterations relate to their context. Proposals which fail to respect the local contextual framework or the scale, height, proportion and materials of the local area will not normally be permitted.

The following general principles should be adopted for all development within the conservation area :--

### *Scale.*

Scale is the combination of a building's design, height and bulk when related to its surroundings. Most of the buildings in Brittain's Farm conservation area are one or two storeys with pitched roofs and are of a modest agricultural character. Proposals for new or replacement buildings should reflect this context and include drawings showing the proposals in the context of adjacent buildings.

### *Extensions to existing buildings.*

Proposed extensions must take into account the scale of the existing building and must not dominate or overwhelm the original. Extensions should respect the form and character of the original building and its locality and use high quality materials and detailing. For listed buildings this is particularly important. Design should be of high quality, whether modern or traditional. Roof lines, roof shape, eave and verge details and external materials are important considerations. Extensions should not dominate neighbouring properties or lead to an unacceptable loss of open space.

### *Repairs*

Repairs to existing historic structures must be undertaken sensitively to ensure that the appearance and condition of their fabric is not harmed. The regular maintenance of historic buildings can help to avoid the costly repair work required to rescue a building from dereliction. It is especially important to ensure that historic buildings are kept weather and water tight to prevent further deterioration and for this reason it is necessary to keep roofs in particular in a good state of repair.

### *Windows*

The commonest window types within the conservation area are white painted timber casement windows or 19<sup>th</sup> Century lattice casements. Simple black frames are used on a few buildings. Listed Building Consent is always required to alter the form of fenestration in listed buildings. Windows of traditional design, which are in keeping with the building they belong to and respect the historic nature of this farmstead group make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and should be retained or repaired where possible.

## **5.4 Sustainable design**

To encourage sustainable development, all buildings should where possible use products with a low environmental impact, including the use of locally sourced materials from sustainable resources. Where appropriate in a conservation area, new buildings should also include provision for waste reduction, the re-use of materials and should be energy efficient. Energy efficiency for existing buildings within the conservation area could be improved by such measures as loft insulation and the provision of secondary double glazing, subject to the views of the Council's conservation and building control officers.

## **5.5 Building Regulations**

The District Council will continue to apply Building and Fire Regulations sensitively in conservation areas and to listed buildings to ensure that there is no conflict with the preservation of the character of the area or historic buildings.

## **5.6 Trees in the Conservation Area**

The conservation area is generally focused on listed buildings and other important built features but the landscape surrounding it and trees within it contribute significantly to appearance. The open areas and trees which provide the setting to the Brittain's Farm conservation area can be as important as the buildings or historic features themselves in retaining character. Trees, gardens and open space help to improve the quality and amenity of the area .





The symmetrical elevation and 19<sup>th</sup> Century lattice windows indicate a considered design for this former agricultural building perhaps reflecting its origins as an Estate building

### **5.7 Promotion of Cultural Heritage**

To increase the public's awareness and to encourage economic growth and tourism, the Council will actively seek to promote all conservation areas and their cultural heritage. To facilitate this the appraisal and plan will be publicised, placed on our website and distributed to local conservation bodies, amenity groups, the Town and County Councils and other interested parties.

### **5.8 Pride and Identity**

The farm and ancillary buildings in the landscape is a quintessential part of the traditional image of rural England and a part of the English rural economy. Brittain's Farm is a quiet backwater of Sevenoaks but its conservation adds to the character of the area. The town faces a wide range of challenges including the economic, social and physical impact of change, competition from out of town shopping, the adverse effects of traffic on the area and erosion of environmental quality. In common with their surrounding countryside, market towns have always changed, and will continue to do so. Sevenoaks' long history and rich historic fabric in all its conservation areas are assets which, wisely used, can help to produce an agreeable and interesting built environment, economic prosperity and a sense of civic pride and identity.

## Appendix A

**UNLISTED BUILDINGS IN A CONSERVATION AREA****English Heritage Guidance**

*When considering the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area, the following questions might be asked:*

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building; is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?

In English Heritage's view, any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

Extract from English Heritage Guidance on conservation area appraisals – August 2005

**Acknowledgements:**

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