

# 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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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Conservation Areas – What are they?**

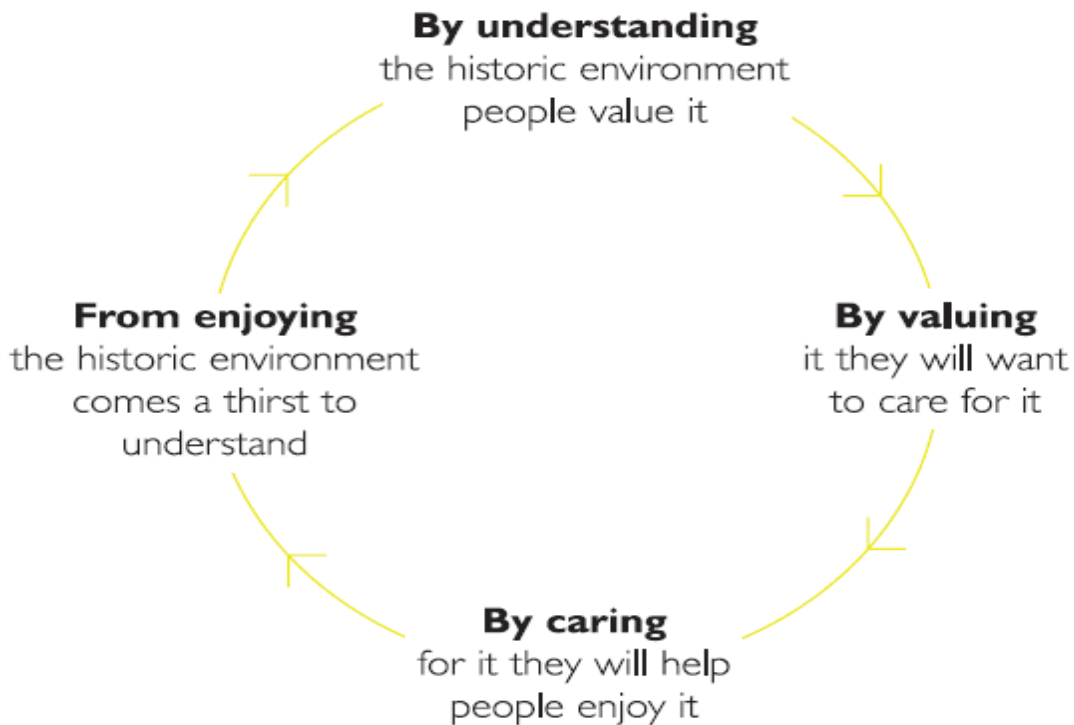
Conservation Areas first came into being as a result of the 1967 Civic Amenities Act and are intended to identify any valuable architectural or historic characteristics in a locality that may need protection and enhancement.

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

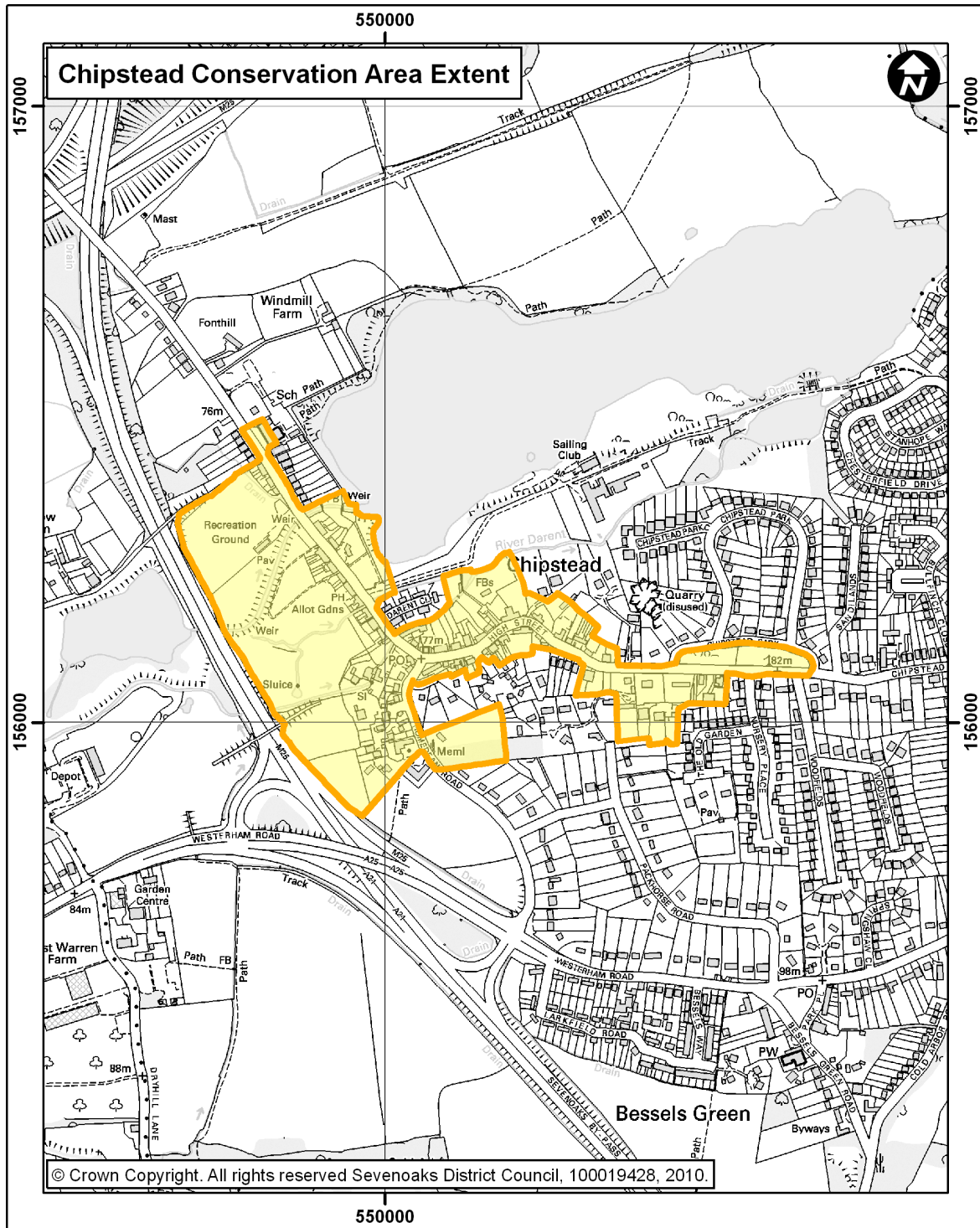
#### 3.1 General description

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.

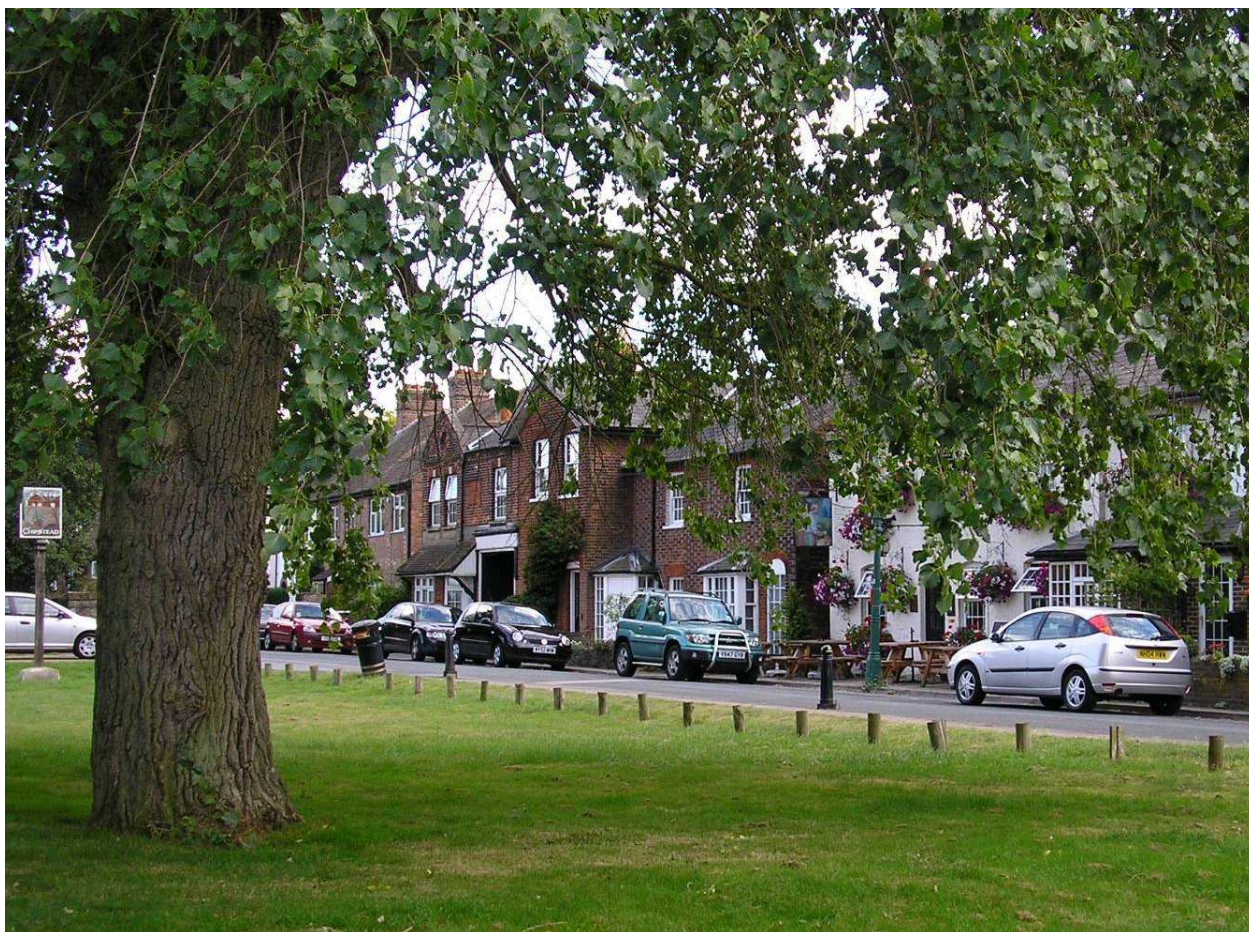


Map 1: Chipstead Conservation Area



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.



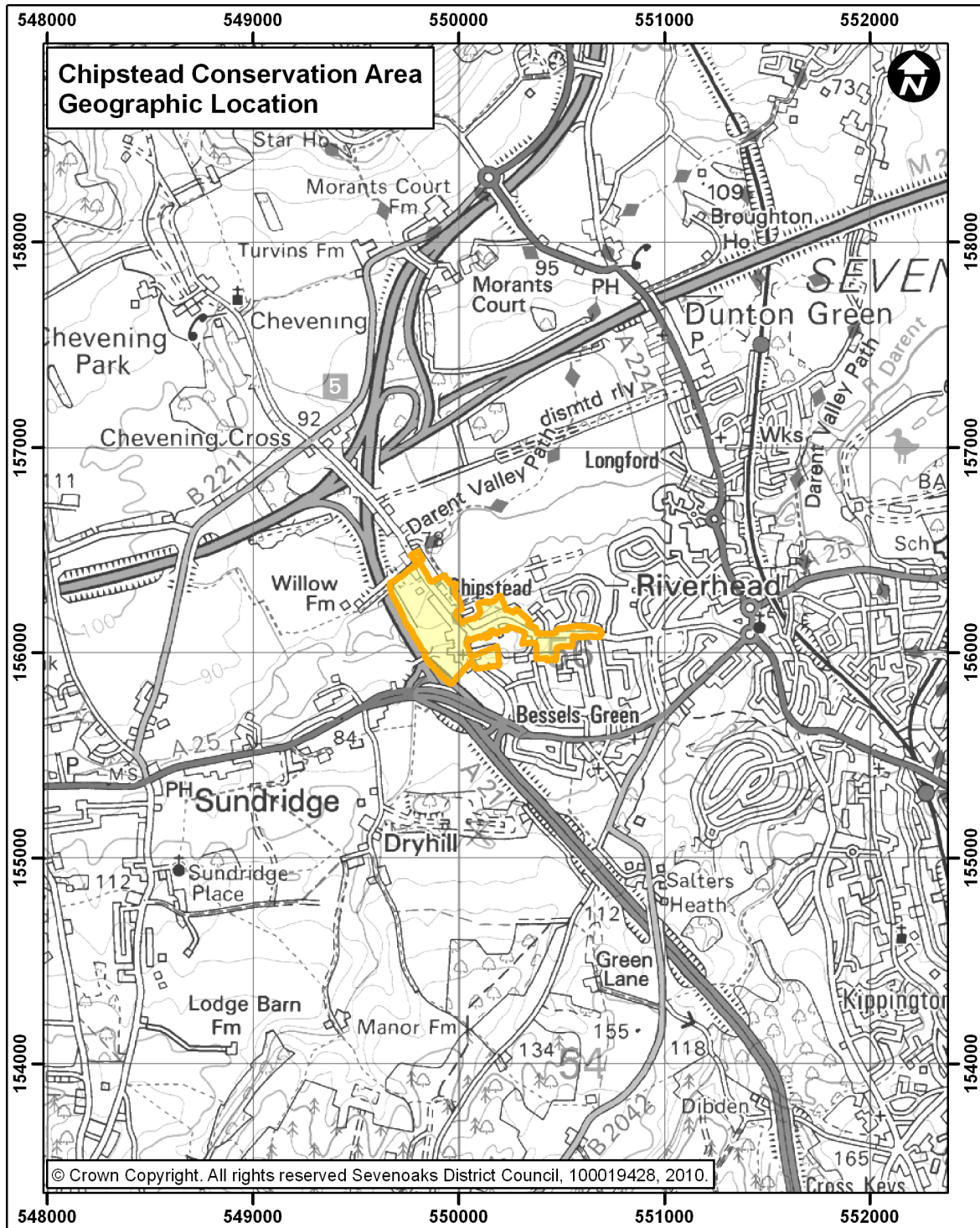
Chevening Road - open space at the Green



### **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.

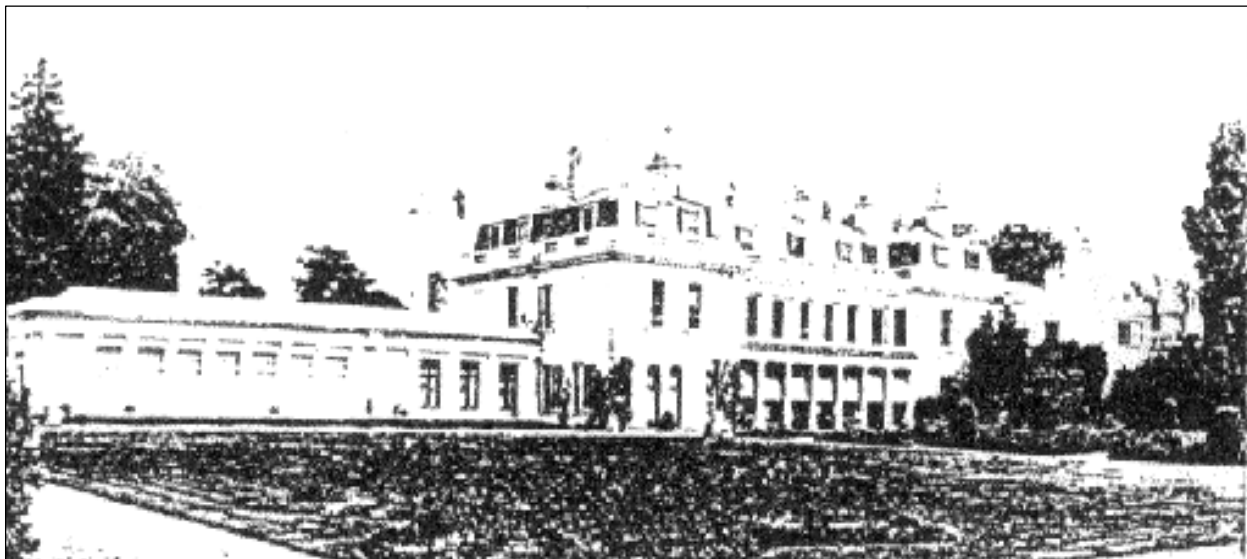


The converted corn mill

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.

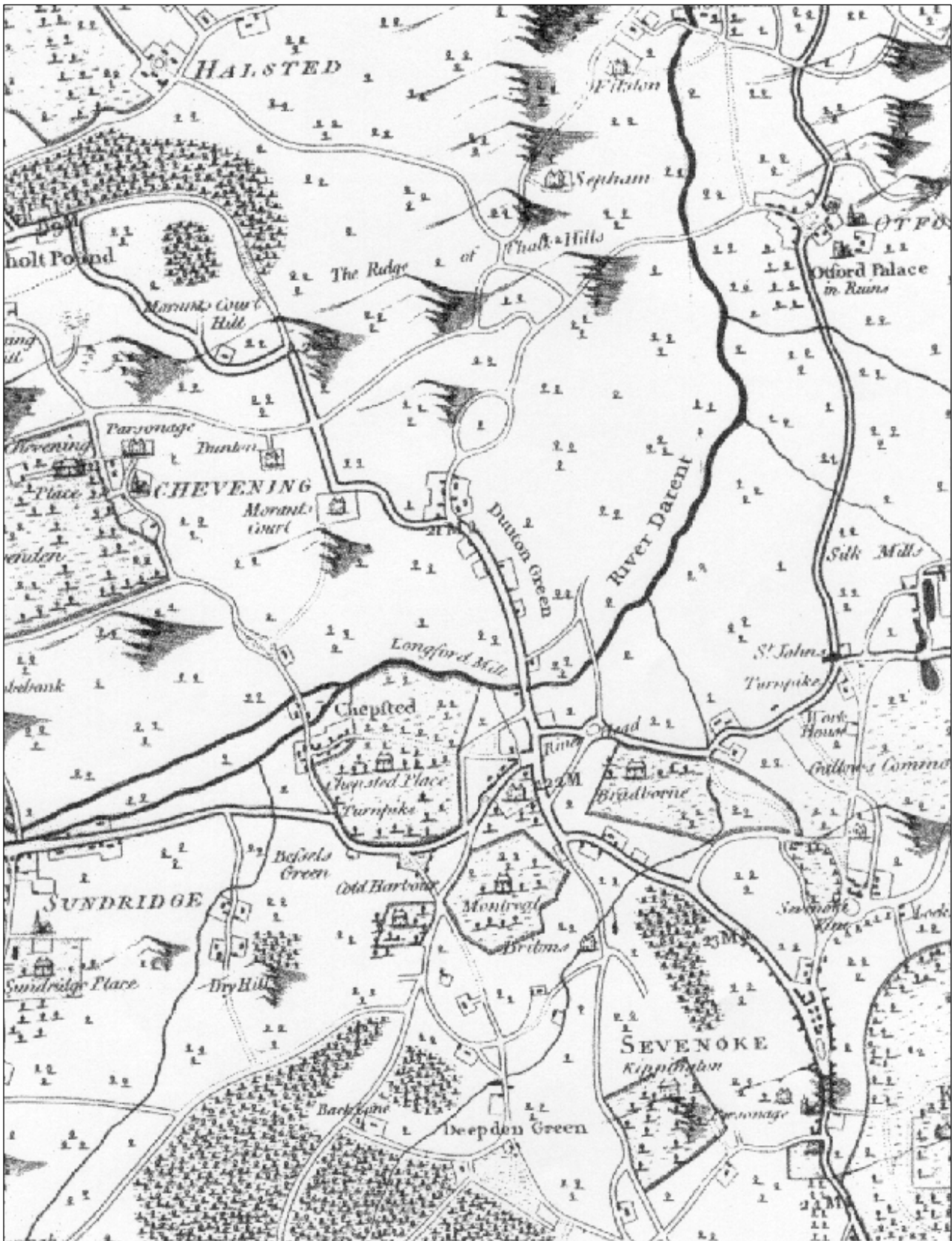
The corn mill adjacent to Moat Farm lay on a man made watercourse dug from the Darent across the farm. This mill leat powered the wheel situated between the mill building and Mill House. The old mill building is now converted into offices but retains some of the character of the original building. It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



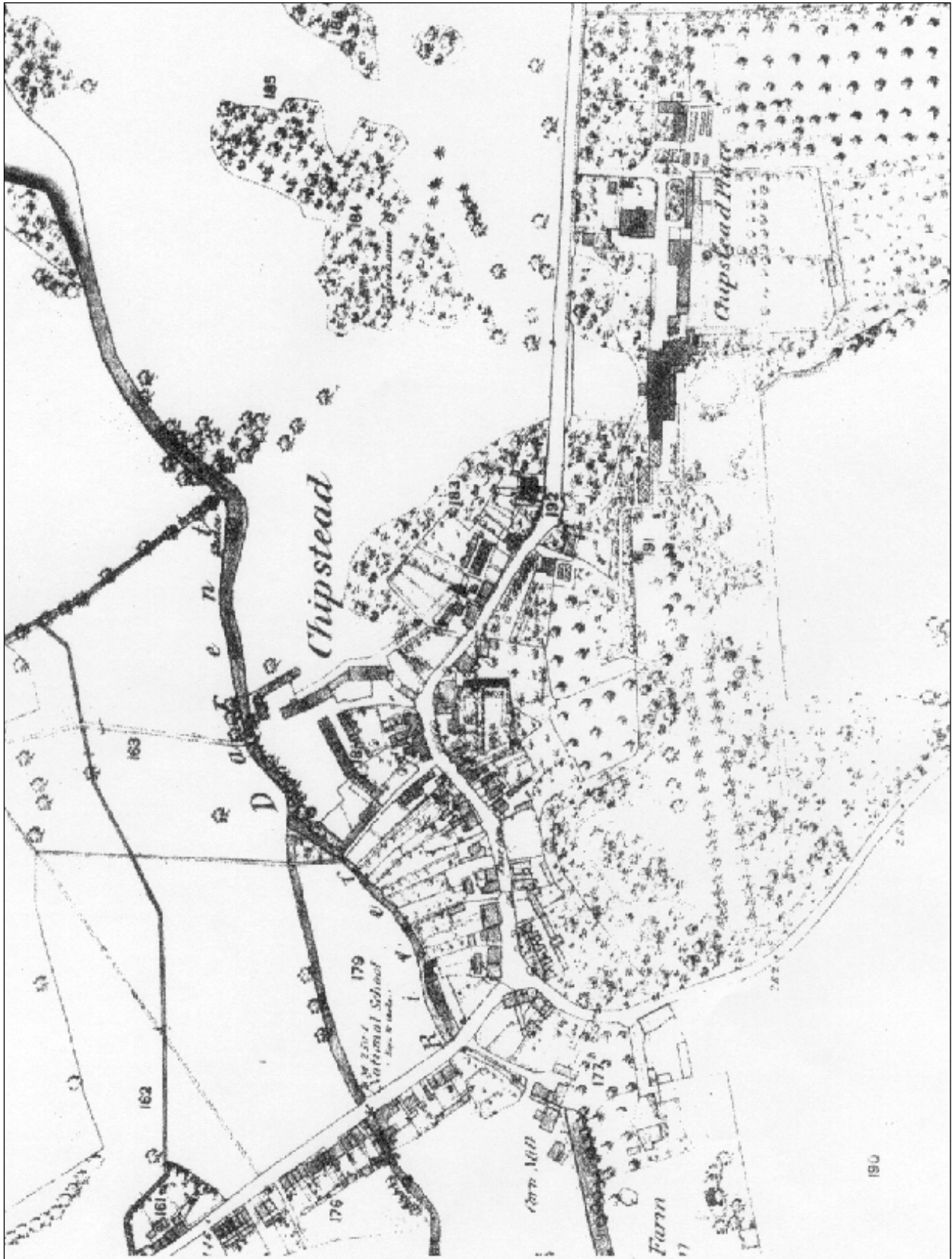
Chipstead Place in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

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





Map 4 Dated 1869

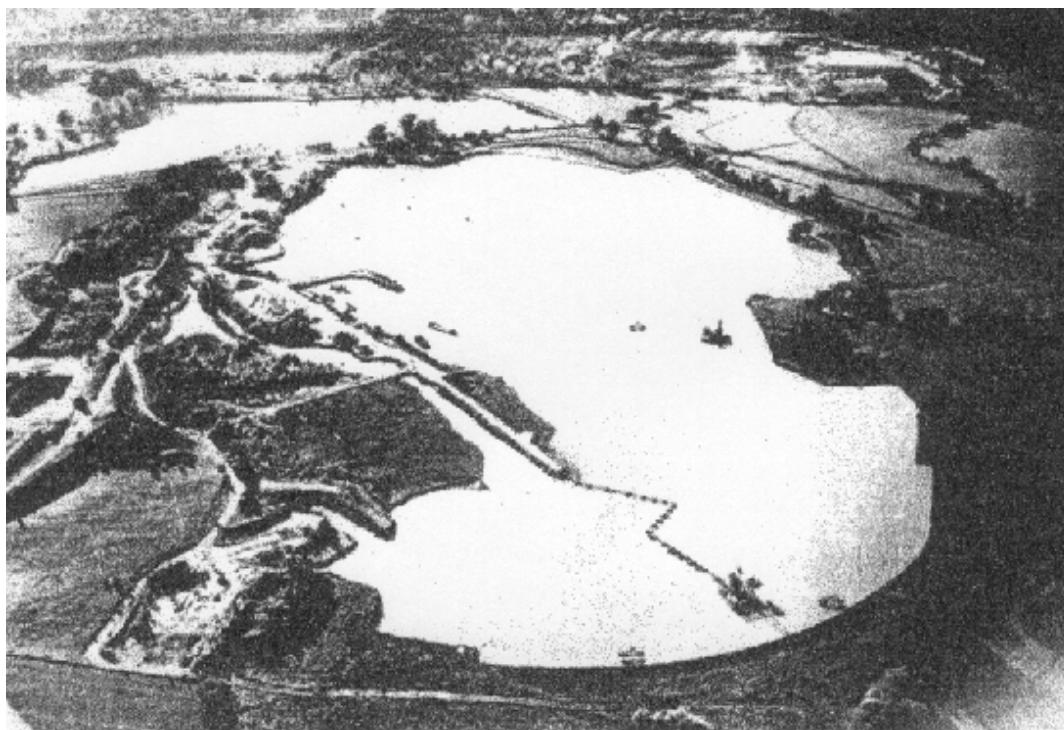
The main house itself was mostly demolished in 1932 leaving only the Ballroom and servants quarters and an extensive walled garden with glasshouses. The ballroom and its attached Vinery were converted into a dwelling and the surrounding land sold off for building plots. A house was built on half of the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



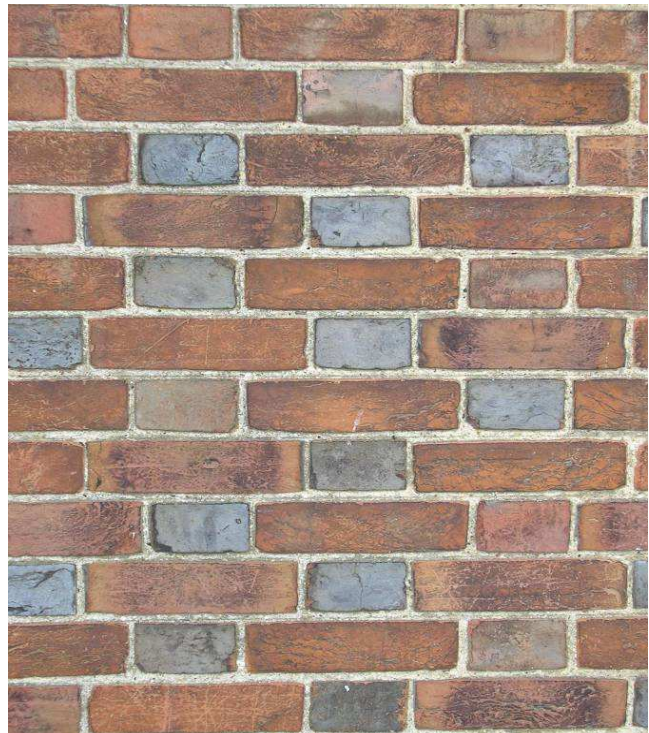


**Decorative clay tile hanging**

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



Bank House and The George & Dragon PH

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.



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.



**A simple modern conversion retaining original character**

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.

### *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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