

# HARRIETSHAM EAST STREET CONSERVATION AREA

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

August 2021

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# CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The Definition, Purpose and Effect of Conservation Areas

1.1.1. The concept of conservation areas was first brought into being by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, but the relevant legislation now is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. This act places a duty on local authorities to designate conservation areas where appropriate and defines a conservation area as “an area of architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

1.1.2. Designation as a conservation area makes additional controls available to the local authority. Briefly these include the control of demolition of unlisted buildings, more restricted permitted development rights for single dwelling houses and protection of trees.

1.1.3. In addition to these enhanced powers, the local authority is also required when dealing with applications for planning permission to have special regard to the question of whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area. (Section 72.1 of the Act) There is a presumption that developments which would not preserve or enhance this special character should be refused planning permission.



The Alms Houses

### 1.2. Background to the Appraisal

1.2.1. Local authorities are required, by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to carry out reviews of conservation area boundaries (Section 69.2 of the Act). This is



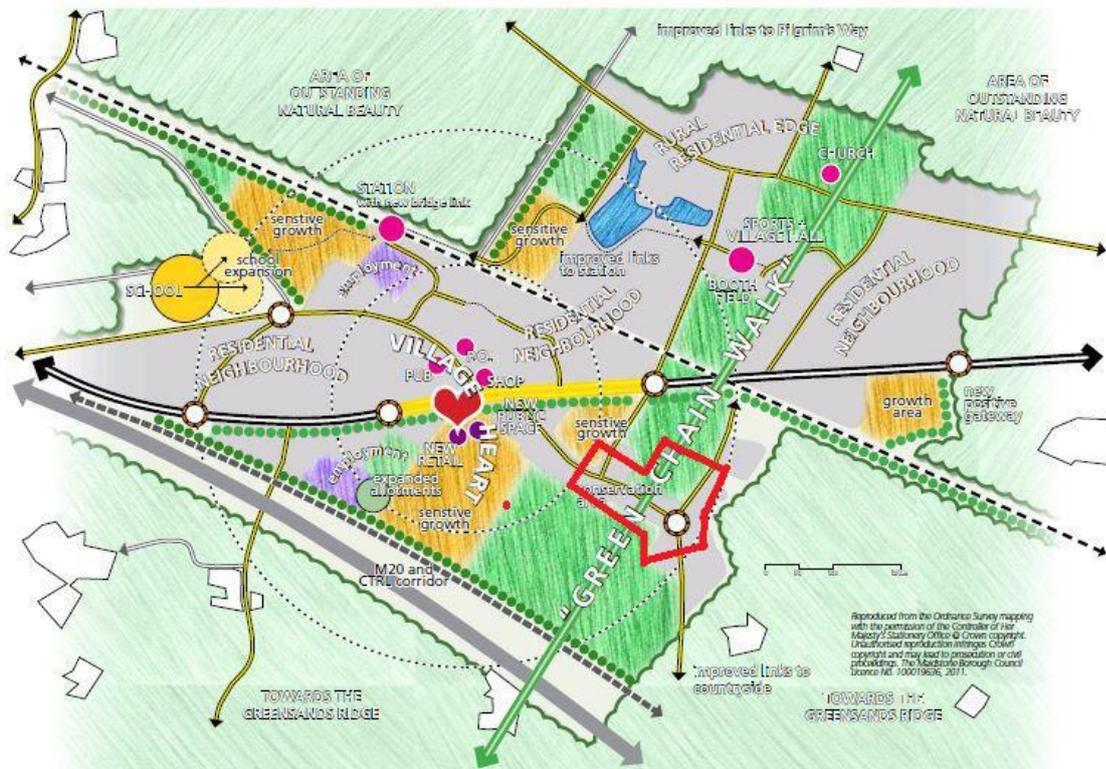
with farming. It is certainly a very green part of the village with several large gardens filling gaps between buildings with well established trees and shrubs. Along with the rural feel there is a definite sense that that the conservation area is discrete, almost cut off from the rest of the village. This is due largely to the physical and psychological separation deriving from the way in which the A20, very busy although no longer a trunk road, cuts the connection of this part of the village to the larger part. This would have been even more pronounced before the recent development of housing by Crest Nicholson on East Street immediately to the west of the conservation area before which fields came right up to the road.

- 3.1.2. The properties are arranged generally in small groups or on discrete plots and are for the most part single or two storey dwellings. As East Street is quite wide here there is a feeling of openness which is quite different to West Street which has a significantly more urban feel – tightly packed properties rising from the back edge of the pavements and much less greenery.
- 3.1.3. There is an eclectic mix of building types and ages represented in East Street and Rectory Lane within the conservation area although there is a limited range of materials used in their construction. Most notable are brick facades and clay plain tile roofs but other materials used are render and weather boarding. Despite the long period of its development this part of Harrietsham presents an unperturbable and elegant Georgian feel since most of the properties even where not of 18<sup>th</sup> century provenance have been to some degree ‘Georgianised’.
- 3.1.4. The wealth generated in this part of Kent has enabled villages to grow larger than their counterparts further north and to support the substantial houses that are found in conservation area. The same wealth has allowed the owners of properties to ‘upgrade’ them in line with the fashion of the times and it is notable how many of the late mediaeval houses have been to a greater or lesser extent Georgianised or replaced entirely.



**A typical grouping of properties**

#### 4. LOCATION AND SETTING



**Key plan of Harrietsham – see below**

- 4.1.1. Harrietsham is a village and civil parish within the Borough of Maidstone. It was a civil parish in Hollingbourne Rural District from 1894 until 1974. It lies in the Hollingbourne Vale approximately 7 miles from the centre of Maidstone. The river Len passes Harrietsham to the south finding its course through the band of Gault clay which runs broadly east to west but the village itself stands on a band of fertile soil forming a transition zone between the scarp of the North Downs to the north and the clay to the south. The good quality of the soil is the basis of the comparative wealth of this part of Kent and it still has an economy based on agriculture. It is an area largely given over to arable crops and over the years many of the field boundaries have been grubbed up (with the occasional tree marking their position) and it has become an open landscape of large fields interspersed with small area of woodland.
- 4.1.2. The plan above is taken from the draft Neighbourhood Plan which was being produced by the Parish Council. The plan sets down the views of the Parish Council of how the village should develop over the next 10 years or so and what it will look like at the end of that period. The plan shows very clearly the impact of the strategic road and rail network on the village and at the same time the will of the council to diminish that effect. It shows very clearly how the village centre is focussed well to the west of the conservation area and how the conservation area is part of a plan to retain a bucolic character on the eastern fringe of the village.
- 4.1.3. The village is hemmed in by the main line railway racing past to the north and the M20 motorway which pushed its way through Kent on its way from London to Ashford and

Folkestone. It is also neatly dissected by the A20 still a busy road despite the construction of the M20 which bypasses the village.

## **5. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1.1. The name of the village is derived from the Old English word Hamm which can mean land hemmed in by water, a water meadow or a marshy area. This is combined with the name of the local lord in Mediaeval times – Heregeard to mean Heregeard's land hemmed in by water. It is referred to in the Domesday Book as Hariardesham.
- 5.1.2. Little is known of the origins of the settlement but in recent years a prehistoric henge some 50m in diameter has been discovered at Court Lodge Farm – an unusual occurrence in the south east of England. Also three burial mounds were found, around 1930, close to Harrietsham with artefacts that date them to around 2,000 BCE.
- 5.1.3. There is significant evidence of a Roman presence here with the discovery during investigations carried out in the 1980's and 1990's of the remains of a villa on slightly elevated ground during the construction of the new vicarage. Remains were found in a wide area including the vicarage garden, the lakes area and Court Lodge Farm.
- 5.1.4. The village lies close to an ancient route known as the Pilgrims Way (though there was probably a trackway here long before it became part of the pilgrimage network) running from London and Winchester to Canterbury. It is likely that a combination of access to water from the springs which rise at the foot of the escarpment to the north and the fertile soils made this a convenient place to settle.
- 5.1.5. Certainly by the time of the Norman invasion of 1066 there was an established settlement at the present site which was given by William 1 to his half-brother Odo Bishop of Bayeux and owner of extensive lands in Kent.
- 5.1.6. In the time following the demise of Odo the land passed through many different hands eventually becoming part of the bailiwick of the monastery of Chiltern Langley. There it remained until the dissolution when Henry 8th passed it onto the Bishop of Dover.
- 5.1.7. There appears to have been a healthy local economy through the Middle Ages and beyond based the fertile soils and good growing conditions in and around Harrietsham. The village remained with little change until the coming of the turnpike road in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but more particularly with the coming of the railways although Harrietsham didn't have a station until 1884.
- 5.1.8. The opening up to the outside world continued through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the village witnessed a growing population which more than doubled over the century. In the last few years with Harrietsham being identified as a rural service centre that growth has increased in pace – and that growth is set to continue providing much needed housing and local services. This has been at a time of shrinking local employment so much of the working population travel to Maidstone, Ashford or further afield to work.

## 6. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

- 6.1.1. Historically East Street was one of the principal thoroughfares in the village, connected the settlement with Maidstone and Ashford and had very much the character of a high street with a mix of dwellings, trades and commercial buildings all heavily based around the key economic driver which was agriculture. Today the street is cut off from the main part of Harrietsham by the A20 and is a relatively quiet essentially residential road on the fringes of Harrietsham.
- 6.1.2. There is a sense of generous space despite some buildings rising from the back edge of the pavement. Generally, there is an ample margin in front of the properties particularly at the eastern end of East Street within the conservation area. It seems possible that the set back of the alms houses is the memory of a significant widening of the street to allow for public events like market or fair. Even in Rectory Lane which is in parts very narrow with properties and garden walls placed very close to the roadway (there is no pavement just a minimal verge) there is sufficient space between buildings to break up any sense of enclosure or claustrophobia. Throughout the conservation area the buildings are organised into short terraces or individual plots often with green spaces dividing them.
- 6.1.3. The buildings are an interesting mix of grand mainly Georgian or Georgianised edifices, humble cottages and clearly agricultural buildings. This is a reflection of the economy of the village where substantial wealth was derived from fertile soil and growing conditions. That wealth remained largely with the landowners who built themselves large and gracious dwellings while the working poor had to be content with small and simple cottages and retirement to an alms house. It is noticeable that the number of large houses here is greater than in villages in other parts of the borough.



A Georgian vista

- 6.1.4. Most of the properties were constructed in the Georgian era (or if earlier have been Georgianised). There are some notable houses from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and one survivor – Red Barn – from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.1.5. There is an interesting mix of construction methods.. Red brick, however, is the predominant facing material but there is also traditional timber frame and render, both black and white weatherboarding, tile hanging, white render, Rag stone and painted masonry. Roofs are almost universally red plain tiles – almost because there are three examples of slate roofs but all are relatively modern buildings.
- 6.1.6. Windows are generally Georgian sash windows most often with 6 lights per sash – some Victorian style with larger panes of glass. Even where there are casements they are almost always multi-paned to emulate their Georgian neighbours. There is no common standard for main doors. Only in the alms houses is there a consistent series of six panel Georgian doors – elsewhere there is a mix of mainly modern replacement doors.
- 6.1.7. Roofs are almost universally of plain clay tile and steeply pitched hipped or half hipped roofs. One or two buildings have gables - most notably the alms houses
- 6.1.8. Chimney stacks are formed in fairly plain brickwork the only decoration generally is brick corbelling – located on the end or party walls even at Red Barn Cottage. Brick stacks to Old House and the Malt House are located at the end of one of the hall bays.
- 6.1.9. There are some very fine houses within the conservation area – notably Bell Farm House (listed as The Old House), Cherry Tree Farm, Malt House and Red Barn. Even the alms houses are given certain grandeur with their continuous roof and parapet line and pedimented central bay.
- 6.1.10. There was until the last century a certain number of commercial of buildings used for commercial activity. There was a post office, an inn, a malt house, a doctor and at least one working farm. All these buildings are now private homes and there are no commercial buildings in the conservation area.
- 6.1.11. A significant number of the properties are discretely placed apart from their neighbours with large gaps between buildings. These gaps are usually filled by gardens or at least green space giving the effect shown in the image below.



**Aerial view of part of the conservation area**

- 6.1.12. There is a variety of types of enclosure to these spaces – the best examples have Ragstone walls but there is also brick (laid in both Flemish and English bond), metal railings and hedges. There are also examples where there is no boundary enclosure and there is open access. One disappointing example is immediately adjacent to Bell Farm House where a modern blockwork wall has been erected and is over high and out of place.
- 6.1.13. In the case of Rectory Lane where the buildings are more individualistic and spaced more closely together there are still green gaps and a visual break where the Catholic church sets back from the road
- 6.1.14. The principal external space in the public realm of the conservation area is East Street itself. It is quite wide where it passes through the conservation area and visually it is at its widest at the junction with Rectory Lane where there is a small triangle of land dividing the road and there is also the landscaped frontage to the alms houses. It is unfortunate that the triangle is home only to a couple of bollards, some road signs and a litter bin. There are attempts to make it more attractive with planting and bunting but the space doesn't really have a purpose. It would seem to be possible to reconfigure the junction to allow the green space to extend to the alms house boundary wall and then it could become a real focal point for the conservation area.
- 6.1.15. Beyond Cherry Tree Farm House the road narrows markedly and becomes by nature a country lane. It also narrows to the west of Church Road but not so noticeably.
- 6.1.16. Trees play an important role both combining with shrubs and other planting in the foreground of the spaces between and around buildings and as a backdrop to the views along and across the conservation area. Trees are given protection by virtue of their being within a conservation area. Trees and the green landscaping are fundamental to the

character of the conservation area and contribute to the distinctiveness of this part of Harrietsham.



#### **The wide space at the junction of East Street and Rectory Lane and the importance of trees**

- 6.1.17. There is a wide grassed verge to much of the north side of East Street and a continuous pavement on the south side. The pavement is finished with a grey tarmac that doesn't distinguish it from the roadway which is a similar grey tarmac – the two separated by a thin concrete kerb. There is a surviving Rag stone pavement which runs along the face of the alms houses and in front of Chumleigh and Anglesey. Rectory Lane also has a tarmac surface to the roadway but no pavement and not even a continuous verge on the east side. There is a grass verge on the west side running up to the boundary wall of the alms houses gardens.
- 6.1.18. There is happily very little in the way of street furniture – no signage, no street lights and no bus stops. There is, however, an abundance of telegraph poles. The wirescape that these poles support is probably the most intrusive element in the public realm as the cables loop along and across the street.
- 6.1.19. East Street is a reasonably quiet street partly because there is no commercial activity going on but also it only connects to Sandway in the east. Rectory Lane is a long cul de sac with very few properties along its length. The amount of traffic it generates is therefore very low. Beyond the entrance to Church House the lane becomes little more than a track and is undeveloped.
- 6.1.20. Parking is something of a problem however in East Street. It seems that there is a bye law applied to the new Crest Nicholson housing development to the north and west of the conservation area which limits access by commercial vehicles. Owners of commercial

vehicles who live on the estate and service vehicles are therefore often found parked on both sides of East Street causing an obstruction. It is also obvious that if there is a byelaw imposed on the development it is frequently ignored in the name of convenience.

6.1.21. The fundamental characteristics of the East Street conservation area are spacious Georgian elegance; the surprise of finding this urban statement remote from the village and its retained contact with the countryside. These last two aspects are in danger of being swept away as housing developments begin to wrap around the conservation area. It is hugely important to its character that the conservation area retains its remaining agricultural buildings and its direct connection to open farmland.

## 7. AUDIT OF ASSETS

7.1.1. A detailed description of the significant buildings and sites within the conservation area follows. These descriptions are based on examination from the street and historic map analysis. Buildings have not been examined internally or from non-public viewpoints.

7.1.2. Buildings and structures have been assessed according to their value to the character of the conservation area. They have been graded as follows:

- Essential - buildings/sites which, because of their high architectural or historic interest or townscape function, must be retained.
- Positive - buildings/sites which contribute positively to the character and interest of the conservation area and whose retention should be encouraged wherever possible. Some buildings in this grade may have suffered from unsympathetic alteration but could be restored to their original appearance relatively easily
- Neutral - buildings/sites which do not harm the character of the area but whose retention is not necessary.
- Negative - buildings/sites which harm the area's character where re-development would be advantageous.

NAME/ADDRESS	GRADE LINK	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
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<b>Malthouse East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1336313</a>	Built as a farmhouse in mid C16 the building has also been used as a Malthouse – there is evidence of grain bins in the attic. Steeply pitched plain tile roof with gablets. Timber framed superstructure with jetty to the rear. Front elevation renewed and rendered early C20. Jetty removed probably at that time and bay windows added. Building is unoccupied and largely unmaintained	Essential
<b>Corner Cottage East</b>	Unlisted	Probably a C19 remodelling of an earlier timber	Positive

<b>St ME17 1HJ</b>		framed cottage. 2 Storeys – ground floor rendered upper floor fish scale tile hanging. Victorian sash windows	
<b>Autumn Cottage East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086183</a>	Early C19 two storey cottage. Timber framed and weatherboarded. Georgian style	Essential
<b>Dial House and Cottage East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1185178</a>	Mid C18 loose Georgian style (rear ranges earlier) 2 storey Brick built house and attached cottage. Unusual header brick construction to house – both upper storeys tile hung	Essential
<b>Bell House Barn East St. ME17 1HU</b>	Unlisted	Extensive modern conversion to domestic use of (probably) C19 ancillary accommodation to Bell House (then Bell Inn) Single storey brick built Flemish bond with dark grey inserted cladding and fenestration. Slate roof covering	Positive
<b>Bell House East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086144</a>	Formerly The Bell Inn. Largely early C18 2 storey Inn. Largely white painted stone ground storey and painted brick to first floor. Heavy Georgian moulded canopy to entrance and six pane sash windows throughout	Essential
<b>Anglesey Cottage East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1336293</a>	Mid C18 house Flemish bond brick ground storey on Rag stone plinth. Tile hanging to upper storey. Third storey in steeply pitched hipped roof. Rag stone pavement to front and stone steps up to main entrance	Essential
<b>Chulmleigh East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1336293</a>	Mid C18 house built with Anglesey but with mathematical tiles to first floor. 6 pane Georgian sash windows throughout front elevation. Formerly post office	Essential
<b>Alms Houses East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1185186</a>	Row of twelve single storey alms houses from 1770 built in red brick with Flemish bond. Continuous roof and parapet line with Pedimented central bay. Rebuilt from earlier dwellings from 1642	Essential
<b>Bell Farm East St ME17 1HJ</b>	Grade I <a href="#">1086145</a>	Farmhouse Very early C16. Good example of a Wealden house with close studded timber frame and render infill. Modern windows detract somewhat from overall appearance. Inserted brick chimney stack on line of screens passage. Retains original main door, three door screens passage and staircase	Essential
<b>Barn south of Bell Farmhouse East St ME17 1HL</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086146</a>	Timber framed early C16 barn. Weatherboarding on brick plinth. Plain tiled roof but some fish scale tiles to the rear. Stands at right angle to the road. Internally doors and much of the frame survive	Essential
<b>Borden Cottages East St ME17 1HL</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086147</a>	Timber framed two story cottages early C17 substantial alterations in mid C19. Red brick to front elevation and some tile hanging to rear. There are a number of blocked windows and doors	Essential
<b>The Gables East St ME17 1HL</b>	Unlisted	Early to mid C20 bungalow. Brick faced with rough render and a slate roof	Neutral
<b>Red Barn/Red Barn Cottage East St</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086148</a>	Timber framed C15 Wealden house. Ground floor faced with painted brick on painted Rag stone	Essential

<b>ME17 1HL</b>		plinth. Render to first floor. Steeply pitched and hipped plain tile roof. Partly rebuilt in C18. All fenestration modern	
<b>Cherry Tree Farm East St ME17 1HL</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1086143</a>	Built as a farm housemaid C18 perhaps around older core. Two storeys and attic in red brick – Flemish bond. Half hipped plain tiled roof. Central door under typical Georgian hood	Essential
<b>Brenchleys/Little Brenchleys Rectory Lane ME17 1HP</b>	Grade II <a href="#">1336277</a>	Built as one large house C17 Georgianised early C18 now divided onto 2 properties. Two storeys with attic. Likely to be timber framed with painted brick facing and hipped plain tiled roof	Positive
<b>3 Rectory Lane ME17 1HP</b>	Unlisted	Probably mid C19 brick built two storey cottage. Brick now painted. Low pitched and hipped plain tile roof	Positive
<b>4 Rectory Lane ME17 1HP</b>	Unlisted	Probably mid C19 single storey cottage in Rag stone and brick under a half hipped plain tiled roof	Positive
<b>Church of the Good Shepherd Rectory Lane ME17 1HS</b>	Unlisted	Timber framed and weather boarding clad mission church of 1880's and built to serve the railway workers of the London to Dover line	Positive
<b>6 Rectory Lane ME17 1HS</b>	Unlisted	C19 reworking of possibly older house. Red brick and Rag stone to lower storey and tiles hanging generally to first floor. Steeply pitched and hipped plain tiled roof	Positive



The approach to the conservation from the west – Malthouse is in the distance

## 8. APPROACHES AND VIEWS

8.1.1. The principal approach to the conservation area is from the west entering East Street from the A20 (Ashford Road). There is a definite sense of turning away from Harrietsham which

was particularly the case until the recent Crest Nicholson development which has swept away the fields which previously stopped up against the north side of East Street. Now the view along the first part of East Street is more in the nature of a town suburb and one which could be any town. That is until the road turns gently to the north and the vista opens up with Malthouse in the foreground and Anglesey and Chulmleigh closing it in the distance. From this viewpoint the buildings appear relatively closely knitted together to form a typical Georgian urban scene. Only on arriving in the conservation area does the true nature of the street become apparent with its characteristic green gaps between buildings which show this to be a rather different piecemeal sort of development - far from the image of 18<sup>th</sup> century London Squares.

- 8.1.2. Approaching the village from the east is a markedly different experience. This is a country road, sometimes more of a country lane, which winds continuously throughout its approach to the village. It is mostly tree lined and often has high banks so views out across the open countryside are rare. Once the village is reached the road widens significantly. The alms houses and Bell Farm provide a gateway into the conservation area. Again from this viewpoint it is possible to take in the full length of the conservation area.

## **9. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

### **9.1.1. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

- 9.1.2. The character of conservation areas can suffer significantly from the cumulative impact of 'minor alterations' which can be carried out to single dwelling houses as permitted development under the General Permitted Development Order without the need for planning permission. Such alterations can include replacement windows and doors and re-roofing using inappropriate non-traditional materials.

- 9.1.3. The Local Authority can seek to bring such minor alterations under planning control by the use of Directions under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order. Article 4 directions can increase the public protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. They are not necessary for works to listed buildings and scheduled monuments as listed building consent and scheduled monument consent would cover all potentially harmful works that would otherwise be permitted development under the planning regime. However, article 4 directions might assist in the protection of all other heritage assets (particularly conservation areas) and help the protection of the setting of all heritage assets, including listed buildings

- 9.1.4. There are no Article 4 Directions currently in force in the Harrietsham East conservation area.

## **10. PLANS FOR FURTHER ACTION AND GUIDANCE**

- 10.1.1. The Harrietsham East Street conservation area is an interesting example of a Kentish village. It has retained a high proportion of its historic development with many listed buildings. It is given its particular character by its apparent homogeneity and as a function of being located on an area of rich agricultural soil. Listed and unlisted buildings make important positive contributions to the character of the conservation areas and in many cases are

essential to it. Within the conservation area modern developments and redevelopments have not resulted in any serious loss of character, most being discretely sited or of inoffensive design and largely built of appropriate materials. The major agent of character loss has not been redevelopment but the cumulative impact of individual relatively minor alterations such as replacement windows and doors and works carried out to the boundary treatments with little strategic focus and a lack of awareness of heritage integrity and value.

- 10.1.2. East Street conservation area is, despite the comments made above, generally a well cared for village and problems of dereliction; dilapidation and disuse are very rare. The detailed analysis carried out in Sections 5 and 6 of this appraisal provides a basis for considering future proposals for works and development for which the scope appears to be very limited. Those buildings or sites which are assessed as 'essential' or 'positive' will not normally be considered appropriate for demolition or redevelopment. Proposals for the redevelopment of 'neutral' sites will be required to match or to enhance the existing condition. No sites have been assessed as having a negative impact, so there are not many where redevelopment will be actively encouraged. There is little scope for new development on undeveloped land or as infill which would not upset the essential spatial characteristics of, and view lines across, the conservation area. The design style of any replacement building is not predetermined. In this conservation area with a mix of building types and styles the focus will be on a high quality response to the existing context rather than there being a requirement for a particular appearance.
- 10.1.3. The character of the conservation area is in part set by the consistent use of a limited range of materials. It is important that any future proposals for development or works should respect this. There are a few single storey buildings – even fewer with three storeys and accordingly developments of less or more than two storeys will generally be considered to be inappropriate while there will be a base line of high quality and contextually positive design. Conversion/extension of single storey ancillary buildings may be considered acceptable.
- 10.1.4. The loss of character if it happens is likely to come about through lack of maintenance or inappropriate repairs or replaced components rather than through any larger scale of intervention for which there is little scope. It is in the public domain that attention is most needed. Further erosion of the quality of the streetscape needs to be avoided and opportunities taken to reverse some of the harmful practices that have taken place in the past. The focus needs to be on surface materials and street furniture to unify the former and using a more suitable material and reducing the clutter.
- 10.1.5. Malthouse is currently an eyesore at the very entrance to the conservation area from the west. It is currently a vacant building and has in the past been vandalised and has also been the subject of enquiries by the planning enforcement team regarding its safety and security.
- 10.1.6. There is an issue with parking on East Street and it appears to derive in the main from a covenant or byelaw placed on the Crest Nicholson development that limits parking of commercial on any of the estate roads. With so many self employed workers now this means that many who have vans park them just outside the development and a significant

number on East Street. It may be an unforeseen consequence of a sensible policy that could be adjusted to recognise the current reality.

- 10.1.7. The current boundary of the conservation area would still seem to be valid in terms of the area and assets it encompasses. There is some validity in a proposal to increase the area of protection to include all of Rectory Way including that part which is currently undeveloped. On balance this report cannot recommend such an action. Firstly conservation areas are a means of protecting properties and built structures which would argue against enclosing the undeveloped section of Rectory Lane. As for the buildings beyond No.6 while they have something in common with those currently within the boundary in terms of their spatial arrangement they do not as a group share the design, style, homogeneity or historical context of the existing conservation area and would result in a significant dilution of its character.



**Glebe Cottage**

- 10.1.8. There might be some value in tidying up the edges of the conservation area to align with property boundaries, geographical features or the reality on the ground but this is perhaps not a high priority need. Also it would be appropriate to incorporate Glebe Cottage into the conservation area. The extent of the adjustment is shown on the plan below.
- 10.1.9. The small area taken up within the Crest Nicholson development of new housing should be removed from the conservation area.
- 10.1.10. Currently West St is not protected through having a conservation area and, although outside the scope of this report consideration should be given about the best way to maintain the character of West St.



# CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

## 11. INTRODUCTION

- 11.1.1. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Section 69 of the 1990 Act also imposes the duty on the local authority to determine from time to time whether any further parts of the borough should be included within a conservation area.
- 11.1.2. Recent guidance from Historic England (Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management – 2019) suggests that proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas should take the form of a mid- to long-term strategy setting objectives for addressing issues and recommendations for action arising from a previously published conservation area appraisal and identifying any further or more detailed work needed for their implementation. Such a strategy is generally given the title of a conservation area management plan.
- 11.1.3. It is important to note that a conservation area management plan cannot introduce entirely new planning objectives. Instead it will need to refer to the original legislation; to government guidance (mainly National Planning Policy Framework for heritage assets); to the adopted local plan policies; and to the emerging Local Development Framework. It can interpret established legislative provisions and planning policies and explain how they will be applied within the conservation area to ensure its preservation and/or enhancement. If any particular issues are identified which do require new policies to be drawn up, the management plan can indicate these and set a programme for their development as part of the Local Development Framework process.
- 11.1.4. This Management Plan for the Harrietsham East Street conservation area sets out the means proposed for addressing the issues identified in Section 9.0 of the above Conservation Area Appraisal, and outlines any proposals for boundary changes as also may be suggested by the Appraisal

## 12. POLICY CONTEXT

### 12.1. National Policy

- 12.1.1. National policy and advice regarding conservation area matters is given in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is available to at the link given below ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)).
- 12.1.2. Paragraph 186 of the NPPF points out that the quality and interest of areas rather than individual buildings is the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas . Paragraph 185 sets out the benefits that accrue from preserving the historic environment whether it be the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental advantages, the desirability of new development to make a positive contribution or the opportunities arising from an understanding of the intrinsic character of a place

- 12.1.3. The Historic England guidance document ([Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management – 2016](#)) refers to the importance of keeping the boundaries of existing conservation areas under periodic review to ascertain whether any changes are required.
- 12.1.4. The document suggests that designation of a conservation area in itself is unlikely to be effective without the formulation of specific policy guidance, and reminds local planning authorities of the duty imposed on them by Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and for these to be submitted to a ‘public meeting’ in the area. Paragraph 4.16 points out that such proposals cannot realistically seek to prevent all new development and should instead concentrate on the controlled and positive management of change; indeed, it is suggested that there may be instances where redevelopment will be a means of enhancing character.



**Brenchleys and Little Brenchleys Rectory Road**

## **12.2. Local Policy**

- 12.2.1. Maidstone Borough Council published its Local Plan in 2017. (<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/planning-and-building/primary-areas/local-plan-information>) A supplementary planning document to cover conservation areas has not yet been produced but there will be specific reference to heritage assets in the reviewed Local Plan due to be published in 2022. While this Management Plan indicates how national and local policies will be applied in the on-going management of the conservation area, it is not in itself a planning policy document but Local Plan policy DM4 refers to conservation area appraisals and management plans as supporting documents so they are material to planning considerations

## **13. PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES**

- 13.1.1. The Appraisal above records that the conservation area boundary is still relevant in the most part as it draws a clear line around the appropriate area which is compact and

contained. There is some benefit in adjusting the boundary slightly to align better with property boundaries and to recognise the current situation.



The view from Rectory Lane where part of the green space (the Green Chain) has been developed for housing

## **14. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

### **14.1. Planning Considerations**

- 14.1.1. Sensitive and responsive management of development pressure is required in order that new developments do not spoil the character and appearance of the conservation areas. To this end, the Council will adopt the following principles when dealing with planning applications within the conservation area or on sites affecting its setting.
- 14.1.2. The Council will apply the principles, guidance and regulations set out by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the further guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework and any subsequent revisions, additions or replacement government guidance.
- 14.1.3. The Council will apply the relevant policies from the Maidstone Local Plan 2017 until such time as these policies are replaced by a future Local Plan or by policies in the emerging Local Development Framework.

- 14.1.4. The Council will require all planning applications and applications for listed building consent to be supported by a Design and Access Statement. This should be a brief but thorough document setting out the reasons for the development, explaining how the design has been evolved and showing how it will preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area; it should also cover any access issues which exist. There is guidance on preparing a Design and Access Statement produced by CABE (CABE was merged with the Design Council in 2011) (<https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/resources/guide/design-and-access-statements-how-write-read-and-use-them> ). In some cases a separate Heritage Statement will also be required. Historic England have published guidance on this aspect in 2019 (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/>). The Maidstone web site gives advice on the content of a planning application – see [validations checklist](#).
- 14.1.5. Applications must be accompanied by clear and accurate drawings showing the proposed development in detail and illustrating how it fits in to its context. Drawings should clearly indicate materials to be used in producing the external finish and architectural details of proposed buildings. Site plans should accurately depict the positions of trees on or adjacent to the site and show clearly those which will need to be removed and those which will be retained. Where trees are affected by the proposals the application should include a survey by a professional arboriculturist to comply with current British Standard BS5837, ‘Trees in Relation to Construction – Recommendations’. It should also include details of any proposed works to, and methods for protecting, any retained tree. Photographs and other illustrative media are encouraged. Any applications which fail to provide adequate detail will not be registered.
- 14.1.6. Outline planning applications will not be accepted for proposals within the conservation area or on sites affecting its setting



**Dial House and Cottage and (inset) unusual header coursing of brickwork**

- 14.1.7. The Council will make use of technically experienced and qualified officers in guiding the assessment and determination of all applications within the conservation area or affecting its setting.
- 14.1.8. The overriding consideration in dealing with any proposal for development will be whether or not it would either preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area. Any proposal which fails to do so will be refused. The Council will not insist on any particular architectural style for new building works, but the quality of the design and its execution will be paramount. The Council encourages the use of high quality contemporary design, subject to proposals being appropriate to their context in terms of scale and use of materials; however, there may be instances where a traditional approach is appropriate – in such case, designs should be high in quality and well-researched, resulting in a scheme which accurately reflects the design, scale, massing, detail and materials of local tradition. The council encourages the use of the pre-application process which ensures that planning officers are aware of a proposal at an early stage and can give advice to ensure the appropriateness and quality of any design. See [pre application guidance](#).
- 14.1.9. In dealing with applications for the redevelopment of existing buildings, the Council will have regard to the detailed building assessments as set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal and in this Management Plan. Except in the most exceptional circumstances, planning consent will not be granted for the demolition of buildings identified as being ‘essential’ to the character of the conservation area, and is unlikely to be granted for those rated as ‘positive’; buildings cited as ‘neutral’ may be considered appropriate for redevelopment, subject to the quality of any replacement scheme constituting an improvement over current circumstances; the redevelopment of sites and buildings judged to be ‘negative’ will usually be encouraged so long as any scheme is appropriate to its context. Conservation Area Consent will not normally be granted to demolish buildings in the absence of an approved scheme of redevelopment.



**Bell House (formerly The Bell Inn)**

14.1.10. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017 states that the conservation area is appropriate for minor residential development as set out in Policy H27 – normally this would be restricted to proposals for one or two houses. It will be necessary for any new housing development proposals to illustrate that it is appropriate within the context of the conservation area and will not harm its special character. It is considered that the scope for new developments within the conservation area is very limited, but in dealing with any proposals the Council will have regard to the following considerations in addition to those set out in point 13.1.8.

14.1.11. New developments should utilise building materials appropriate to the conservation area – these include:-

- Red stock bricks
- Ragstone
- White lime render
- Clay plain Kent peg tiles for roofs or tile-hanging
- Painted timber windows
- White or black stained weather boarding
- Black cast metal rainwater goods and pipework



14.1.12. In the case of red stock bricks and tiles it will be important for them to be made of Wealden clays or clays of similar geological formation. Any material selected will be required to be demonstrably used widely on nearby buildings.

- 14.1.13. Buildings should respect the predominant scale, which is modest. Buildings should not generally exceed 2 storeys in height (although attic accommodation is likely to be acceptable).
- 14.1.14. Developments should preserve trees which are healthy and make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area, whether or not they are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. All trees within the conservation area are protected and a notice must be served prior to any works to a tree of the prescribed size.
- 14.1.15. The Council will seek to protect the attractive peaceful environment of the conservation area.



**Bell Farm House**

- 14.1.16. In dealing with proposals for extensions and other alterations to existing buildings, the Council will have regard to the following considerations:-
- 14.1.17. Extensions should normally be of sympathetic materials, design and detailing to the host building, and should be subservient in scale. See [Extensions SPD](#).
- 14.1.18. Dormer windows may be acceptable, depending on their position, number, scale and design. No more than one or two dormers per elevation will normally be considered appropriate and as a general rule a dormer should not occupy more than about one third of the overall height of the roof. Depending on circumstances, dormers should either be covered by a pitched clay tiled roof or, in the case of smaller or shallower roofs, a flat lead roof above a traditionally-detailed cornice. They should not appear crowded together or be located too close to hip or gable lines. Large 'box' dormers will not be considered appropriate; neither will dormers which extend above the existing ridge height.

- 14.1.19. Roof lights may be considered acceptable and will be subject to the same provisos as dormers in relation to numbers, position and scale. 'Conservation' roof lights which sit close to the roof slope should be used.
- 14.1.20. Satellite dishes will only be considered acceptable when they cannot be readily seen from the streets or other public spaces.
- 14.1.21. Boundary enclosures can have a significant effect on the character of the conservation area. The most appropriate forms are considered to be Ragstone walls, hedging, low brick walls or metal railings. Close-boarded fences or similar will not be considered appropriate in any situation.

## **14.2. Enforcement Strategy**

- 14.2.1. Unauthorised development may seriously harm the character of the Conservation Area as well as causing other problems. The Council is therefore fully committed to using its powers under Section 172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to serve enforcement notices, where expedient, to allay breaches of planning control. [Section 9](#) of the Act sets out the relevant offences. Parallel powers to serve listed building enforcement notices regarding unauthorised works to listed buildings also exist by virtue of Section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and these too will be used to their full. In suitable cases the Council may also exercise the legal provision to seek a prosecution for unauthorised works to a listed building or the unauthorised demolition of an unlisted building.



**Malthouse**

## **15. ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS**

### **15.1. Buildings in Disrepair**

- 15.1.1. This is currently not a significant issue in the East Street Conservation Area with one possible exception. However the owners of Malthouse have to date complied with the Council's requirement that the property be made safe and secure and there has been no breach of the regulations relating to listed buildings.
- 15.1.2. There are a number of powers which the Council can and will use should any building fall into a state of disrepair serious enough for it to adversely affect the character of the Conservation Area or to endanger the future of a listed building. These powers are:
- 15.1.3. Urgent Works Notices (Section 54 and 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Such notices can be served in respect of any vacant building or, with the prior approval of the Secretary of State, a vacant unlisted building whose preservation is considered important to the maintenance of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Works specified can only be the minimum necessary to make the building wind and weathertight and are thus essentially temporary in nature. The owner must be given at least seven day's notice, after which the Council may carry out the specified works and reclaim the costs from the owner.
- 15.1.4. Listed Building Repairs Notices (Section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. These can only be served in respect of listed buildings. Full and permanent repairs can be specified. If an owner fails to commence work on the specified works within 2 months of the service of a Repairs Notice, the Council may start compulsory purchase proceedings in relation to the building; no other recourse is made available by the legislation.
- 15.1.5. 'Untidy Site' Notices (Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Such a notice can be served in respect of any land (including a building) which the Council considers to adversely affect the amenity of the surroundings. The necessary steps to remedy the condition of the land and building need to be set out in the Notice and at least 28 days given for compliance. Failure to comply is deemed an offence and is punishable by a fine.

### **15.2. Trees**

- 15.2.1. Trees are identified as important contributors to the character of the Conservation Area. All trees in a Conservation Area with a stem diameter generally above 75mm at 1.5 metres above ground level are protected under Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and six weeks formal prior notice to the Council is required for any proposal to cut down or carry out other work to such trees (a Section 211 Notice). Anyone who carries out unauthorised work to protected trees is likely to be guilty of an offence punishable by a fine. There may also be a duty to plant a replacement tree of appropriate size and species in the same place as soon as can reasonably be done. This duty may also apply if the tree has been removed because it was dead or dangerous.

### **15.3. Traffic Management**

15.3.1. The impact of traffic within the conservation area can be, and in most conservation area is, a critical factor and a problem. In this location there is little issue with the volume of traffic which is generally light but there is problem with parking.

15.3.2. Parking should not be a problem in East Street or Rectory Lane but an issue has developed following the completion of the Crest Nicholson housing development which butts up to the northern and west western boundaries. There is, it is understood, a restriction on the parking of commercial vehicles on the estate roads. This has resulted in large numbers of vans using East Street as a convenient place to park. This is not only unsightly it also causes difficulties for residents in finding a parking place close to their homes and it does cause a blockage in the road which disrupts the traffic flow. It might be a popular move even within the new develop to remove this restriction.

### **15.4. Reinstatement of Original Features**

15.4.1. There are examples, though thankfully not too many in the conservation area of damage caused to the character of the conservation area caused by injudicious alterations to properties. Such alterations include use of inappropriate materials; replacement windows and doors of inappropriate design or materials and discordant surface finishes. The Council would like to see a process of reversal where this has happened. This can only be by persuasion as there are no provisions to enforce reinstatement where the alterations are covered by permitted development. Nevertheless the Council will encourage property owners to reinstate traditional forms and materials as part of ongoing maintenance.



### **15.5. Public Realm Improvements**

15.5.1. The biggest impact that can be made to improve the appearance and functionality of the conservation area would to carry some upgrading of the public realm. The possibilities are

- Higher quality and more consistent road signage
- Removal of overhead cables and telegraph poles

- Upgrade pavements using a traditional materials
- Renovate and extend areas of Rag stone paving
- Reverse process of inappropriate modifications to buildings and boundary treatments
- Reduce level of commercial vehicle parking
- Reconfigure junction of Rectory Lane and East Street to provide a landscaped open space extending out from the alms houses boundary

## 15.6. Article 4 Directions

15.6.1. The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) enables local planning authorities to make directions to withdraw permitted development rights. The individual permitted development rights which can be removed are limited to specific classes of development. Government guidance on the use of Article 4 Directions is given in Department of the Environment Circular 9/95, which states that permitted development rights should only be withdrawn where firm evidence exists that damage to the character and appearance of a conservation area is likely to take place or is already taking place because of the exercise of such rights. The additional level of control that an Article 4 direction would bring to the Yalding conservation area is minimal as non residential building have very limited permitted development rights and most of the residential buildings are in any case listed and therefore subject to more stringent controls.

15.6.2. There are currently no Article 4 Directions in place in Harrietsham

## 16. ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

ISSUE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Street Furniture	Improve quality and consistency Remove any redundant signage or bollards	Maidstone Borough Council Harrietsham Parish Council KCC Highways
Traffic	Work to reduce level of commercial vehicle parking in East Street	Maidstone Borough Council Yalding Parish Council Crest Nicholson
Wirescape	Redirect overhead cables and remove telegraph poles	Maidstone Borough Council Yalding Parish Council Utility Companies
High Street landscaping	Address quality of highway pavements	Maidstone Borough Council Yalding Parish Council KCC Highways

Inappropriate modifications	Take steps to encourage reversal of inappropriate modifications carried out to buildings and frontages	Maidstone Borough Council Yalding Parish Council
Ragstone Footpaths	Renovate existing and extend where appropriate areas of Ragstone paving	Maidstone Borough Council Yalding Parish Council

**17. REVIEW AND PRACTICE PROCEDURES**

17.1.1. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be reviewed after an appropriate period of not less than five years and any required amendments will be incorporated.



## Harrietsham CAAMP Bibliography 2021

Author	Publication Date	Title	Volume No	Editor
Kent Past		History of Harrietsham		
James Hailes		Harrietsham Then		
Newman, John	2012	The Buildings of England Kent: West and the Weald	-	-
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Dr. Brian Philip	2014	Discoveries and Excavations Across Kent 1970 -2014		
Hasted, Edward	1798	The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent	V5	
VillageNet	1998	Harrietsham in Kent	-	-
KCC		Kent Historic Environment Record <a href="https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx">https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx</a>		
Dr Harris	1724	A History of Kent	-	-
Harrietsham History Society	2013	Harrietsham in Old Photographs and Postcards		

### USEFUL CONTACTS

Historic England Cannon Bridge House 25 Dowgate Hill London EC4R 2YA  
[customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:customers@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

Kent County Council (Heritage Conservation Group) Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14

Email: [heritageconservation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:heritageconservation@kent.gov.uk)

Maidstone Borough Council (Heritage, Landscape & Design), Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6JQ.

Email: [PSTechnical@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:PSTechnical@maidstone.gov.uk)

### Professional Bodies

The Arboricultural Association, The Malthouse, Stroud Green, Standish, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire GL10 3DL T: +44(0)1242 522152 Email: [admin@trees.org.uk](mailto:admin@trees.org.uk)

Institute for Archaeologists, Miller Building, University of Reading, Reading RG6

6AB. T: 0118 378 6446 Email: [admin@archaeologists.net](mailto:admin@archaeologists.net)

Landscape Institute 33 Great Portland Street, London W1W 8QG T: +44 (0)20

7299 4500 Email: [mailto:mail@landscapeinstitute.org](mailto:mailto:mail@landscapeinstitute.org)

Royal Institute of British Architects 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD T: +44 (0)20 7580 5533  
 Email: [mailto:info@inst.riba.org](mailto:mailto:info@inst.riba.org)

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, RICS Contact Centre, Surveyor Court, Westwood Way,  
Coventry CV4 8JE T: +44 (0)870 333 1600

Email: <mailto:contactrics@rics.org>

The Institution of Structural Engineers, International HQ, 47-58 Bastwick Street, London, EC1V 3PS,  
United Kingdom Tel: +44 (0)20 7235 4535

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) South East branch [SEBranch-Secretary@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:SEBranch-Secretary@ihbc.org.uk)

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) 37 Spital Square  
London E1 6DY [info@spab.org.uk](mailto:info@spab.org.uk)

Sutton Valence Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Parish Office, Sutton Valence Village Hall, North  
Street Sutton Valence ME17 3HS [steeringgroup@suttonvalenceplan.org](mailto:steeringgroup@suttonvalenceplan.org)

Design and Access Statements

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