

Chiddingstone

Conservation Area Appraisal



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE



December 2003

Chiddingstone

Conservation Area Appraisal

The historic environment is a social asset of immense value and one of the keys to the continuing prosperity of Sevenoaks District. Conservation Area Appraisals are part of the process of ensuring 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, 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 will inform the activities of the Council, the public and other bodies where these impact on the conservation area. The appraisal was approved by the District Council in December 2003 and adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Sevenoaks District Council is not liable for any loss or damage, however sustained, by others arising from reliance on the contents of this document.

This document must not be reproduced in whole or in part without the prior written permission from the Council.

© Sevenoaks District Council, December 2003

Published by Sevenoaks District Council
Strategic Services Department
Policy & Environment Section
Council Offices
Argyle Road
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 1HG

Tel: 01732 227000

Fax: 01732 451332

Website: www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Email: policy.environment@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Contents	Page
1.00 Introduction	
<i>1.1 Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>1.2 Purpose of Appraisals</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>1.3 Local Conservation Area Policies</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>1.4 Other Local Plan Policies</i>	<i>4</i>
2.00 Description of Conservation Area	
<i>2.1 General Description</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>2.2 Location and Geographical Context</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>2.3 Historical Development</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>2.4 Architectural Description</i>	<i>13</i>
3.00 Character Appraisal	
<i>3.1 Setting of the Area and Spatial Relationships</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>3.2 The impact of Individual Elements/Features/Groups of Buildings</i>	<i>26</i>
4.00 Future Trends	
<i>4.1 Current and Future Pressures on the Area</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>4.2 Potential for Enhancement and Future Policy Recommendations</i>	<i>29</i>

Bibliography

Maps

Map 1 Geographical Location

Map 2 Historic Map of Kent 1769

Map 3 Mudge's Map of 1801

Map 4 Old Series Ordnance Survey Map of England and Wales 1816 – 1819

Map 5 Extent of Conservation Area

Map 6 Character appraisal

Map 7 Recommendations for Future Policy Change

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas

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

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 recognises that there are particular areas of 'architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and charges planning authorities with a duty to designate any such locations within their jurisdiction as Conservation Areas. This designation then empowers the local authority to pay particular attention to planning considerations and development within them and gives greater control over such matters as 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 a vital 'grass roots' starting point from which to safeguard the continuing care of our environment.

1.2 Purpose of Appraisals

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 Local 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.

These appraisals can also be used as a valuable means by which the impact of planning policies and the implementation of enhancement measures can be assessed.

1.3 Local Conservation Area Policies

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan (adopted March 2000) lists the following policies which relate to conservation areas:

EN21 In the designation and review of conservation areas the Local Planning Authority will assess all the following matters:

- 1) **The special architectural or historic interest of the area.**
- 2) **The cohesive character and integrity of the area including spaces round buildings their settings and trees.**
- 3) **The desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.**
- 4) **The pressures for change which may encourage piecemeal development which would threaten the character of the area.**
- 5) **The need to promote economic prosperity, through schemes of environmental enhancement, to overcome vacancy, neglect, decay or dereliction.**

EN22 Proposals to demolish buildings which contribute to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted in the absence of overriding justification. Preference will be given to conversion and/or refurbishment as opposed to outright demolition of a building. Proposals to demolish extensions to original buildings or outbuildings will be judged on their contribution to the overall character of the area.

EN23 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.

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.

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan also states that the Local Planning Authority will undertake detailed assessments of designated Conservation Areas and will prepare proposals for their preservation. 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 scheme which may have been prepared.

This assessment and the detailed analysis of the area contained in the report is intended to fulfil this commitment and provide the background for enhancement schemes.

1.4 Other Local Plan Policies

The Local Plan also identifies specific policies designed to protect the natural environment and historic buildings.

Policy EN6 places restrictions on development within the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and EN7 gives priority to the enhancement of natural beauty, landscape, open space, geographical features and wildlife over other planning considerations within the North Downs and Greensand Ridge Special Landscape Areas. Other Areas of Local Landscape Importance where development may be restricted are noted in policy EN8.

Landscape features and wildlife habitats beyond the confines of the urban areas, towns and villages are also protected by policy EN11.

Important areas of green space within the built confines are safeguarded under policy EN9 and EN10 protects important areas of urban fringe.

Listed building policy is defined in sections EN18 and EN19 and the re-use rather than the demolition of unlisted buildings of local interest is promoted by policy EN20.

Trees over a certain size are automatically protected within Conservation Areas, with any proposed work to them having to be notified to the local authority in writing six weeks in advance.

Transport strategy for the District is summarised by the following section.

T1 A co-ordinated transport strategy will be implemented including:

- 1) Encouragement of the provision of appropriate public transport services and facilities.**
- 2) Use of traffic management to achieve a safer and more efficient use of existing roads.**
- 3) An integrated car parking strategy involving residents' parking, local enforcement and consideration of the need for park and ride facilities.**
- 4) New highway construction and improvements to the existing network.**
- 5) Encouragement of walking and cycling.**

2.00 DESCRIPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 General Description

Chiddingstone Conservation Area covers some 24 hectares and contains 16 Listed Buildings. Other notable features include the vault of the Streatfield family, who are still resident in the village, and stone walls associated with the castle, Church and cemetery. The designation was made in 1970 and has not been re-appraised since then.

Whilst the Conservation Area is relatively compact the Parish of Chiddingstone encompasses Bough Beech Reservoir to the north, Chiddingstone Hoath to the south and it borders with Penshurst CP and Hever CP to the east and west.

Chiddingstone is located 4 miles south-east of Edenbridge and 6 miles west of Tonbridge, where the River Eden runs through the Wealden Vale. To the north lies the Eden Valley and beyond the Bough Beech Reservoir and Sevenoaks Weald. The village is only accessible by narrow lanes branching off class B roads and is midway between Hever Castle, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, and Penshurst Place.

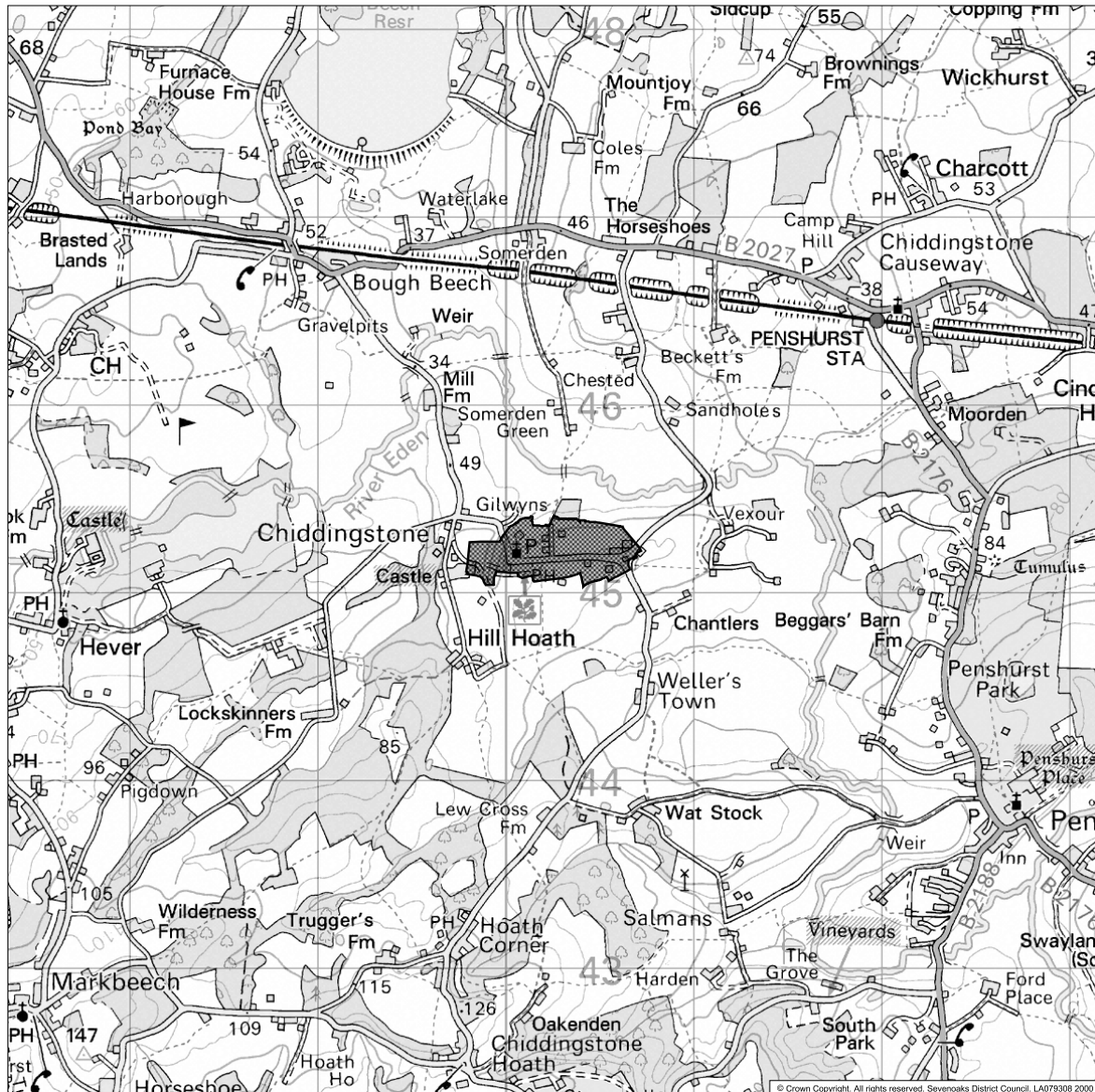
Chiddingstone and the surrounding countryside are designated Green Belt and form part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Additionally, within the boundaries of the Parish, the Eden Valley has been identified as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and part of the 280 acres occupied by the Bough Beech Reservoir is a designated nature reserve.

The village of Chiddingstone comprises a short street with a row of timber-framed and tile-hung houses perfectly preserved from the 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries on the south side and a 14th Century Church on the north. To the west are the private grounds of Chiddingstone Castle.

Numerous footpaths, bridle paths and tracks lead from the village into the surrounding countryside. One leads to the Chiding Stone itself, which is owned by the National Trust.

2.2 Location and Geographical Context

Chiddingstone is directly accessible from lanes that branch off the B2027 to the north, at Bough Beech and between Somerden and Chiddingstone Causeway. Access from the B2026 to the west and the B2188 to the east however is via several narrow lanes. The nearest main A roads are, to the east, the A21 from Tonbridge to the M25, the A26 from Tunbridge Wells to Tonbridge, and to the south the A264 from Tunbridge Wells to East Grinstead.



Map 1 Geographical location of Chiddingstone

The nearest railway station is Penshurst station, approximately a mile and a half north east of Chiddingstone accessible via the B2027 just east of Chiddingstone Causeway.

The nearest towns are Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge, the former having greater shopping and entertainment facilities.

Amenities within the village include a primary school with recreational and sport facilities, an antique shop, a Post Office and a public house. The Post Office doubles as an arts and craft shop and work has been undertaken to the rear of the property to prepare for the sale of groceries.

2.3 Historical Development

It is probable that the village takes its name from the Chiding Stone, a huge mass of sandstone which stands in the park to the south of the High Street and is supposed to have been used by the druids prior to the Roman invasion of Britain.

The village was mentioned in the Saxon charters of the 9th and 10th Centuries, with some references to dens or pig pastures and early village names indicative of land use are apparent e.g. Bore Place.



Fig 1 Bore Place drawn by Howard Gaye 1877

The Domesday Book in 1086 referred to the village and a church, although other records only date a church on site from 1287. By the 12th Century, six Manors were built around Chiddingstone, the oldest being Rendesley Manor at Hoath. Peter de Chiddingstone owned Rendesley Manor and upon his death, prior to 1300, left the Manor to his two daughters. They divided the Manor between them and the two halves of the Manor were then renamed Chiddingstone Burghesh and Chiddingstone Cobham respectively.

Sir Bartholomew Burghesh rebuilt the Church in the 14th Century and in 1516, Sir Robert Rede added the North Chapel. The original roof was lowered in Tudor times.

In early 1500s, Sir Thomas Boleyn, father of Anne Boleyn and owner of Hever Castle at that time, bought the house which is now the village shop.

The Burghesh family settled in the village and built a manor house surrounded by a moat close to Weller's Town, but it became neglected and in 1591 records state that the house fell down.

Many timber-framed houses were already in existence prior to the 1600s, and some have been dated from the mid to late 15th Century. Iron founding was well established by the end of the 16th Century and demand for iron in the Elizabethan wars created much wealth for the founders and those who supplied the timber for fuel. Richard Streatfield was one of the master iron founders towards the end of the 16th Century. In addition to the iron foundry the Streatfield family were important wool dealers and as their wealth grew they acquired more land and altered the whole structure of agriculture within the region.

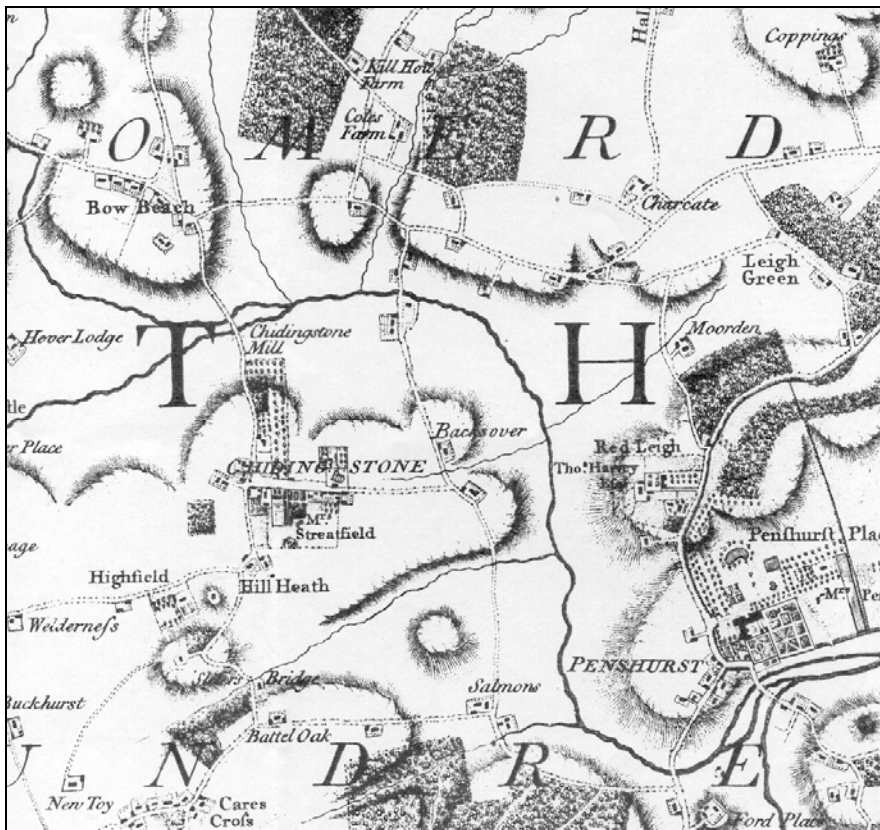
In 1601, in accordance with Elizabethan Poor Laws, the village built a workhouse, believed to be one of the earliest in the country, located at Somerden Green.



Fig 2 Chiddingstone Workhouse dated 1601

In 1624 the Church was struck by lightning and consequently caught fire causing so much damage that five years of extensive repair ensued and the Church was re-consecrated in 1629.

At the end of the 17th Century, Henry Streatfield demolished the old red brick manor house, which had been in his family's possession since the mid 1500s, and in its place constructed a Carolean Mansion surrounded by formal gardens.



Map 2 Historical Map of 1769

At this time the main industry in the village was agriculture, growing hops and crops with grazing land for cattle and sheep and many villagers were in the employment of the wealthy landowners, the Streatfields and Meade-Waldo. The village was self sufficient with its own tailors, weavers, brick and tile makers and bakers.



Map 3 Mudge's Map of Kent 1801

In 1805 the appearance of the village was greatly altered by the Gothicisation of High Street House, renamed Chiddingstone Castle, by the architect William Atkinson. It took the form of a sandstone castellated mansion with symmetrically placed Tudor Gothic windows with hood moulds, an embattled parapet, a central projecting entrance tower to the north side and scattered towers elsewhere. The main high street, which originally passed the front of the Streatfield family home, was diverted and several homes were demolished to make way for the ponds and formal gardens associated with the Castle today.



Map 4 Old Series Ordnance Survey Map of England and Wales 1816 - 1819

The village school was built in 1841 and in 1842 the railway arrived at Bough Beech and radically changed the village's way of life. The hop picking was mechanised and gradually industry disappeared. This caused the break up of large estates and oast houses and barns began to be converted to residential properties.



Fig 3 Chiddingstone Street view from the east drawn by Howard Gay 1867



Fig 4 Chiddingstone Street view from the west drawn by Howard Gaye 1867

The Village Hall was built in 1907 and in 1939 the street was bought with a bequest by the National Trust.

Many artists have visited and worked in the village including David Cox, Dendy Sadler and Sir John Millais, but most significant was Charles Rennie Mackintosh whose sketches and water colours illustrated the buildings in the village.

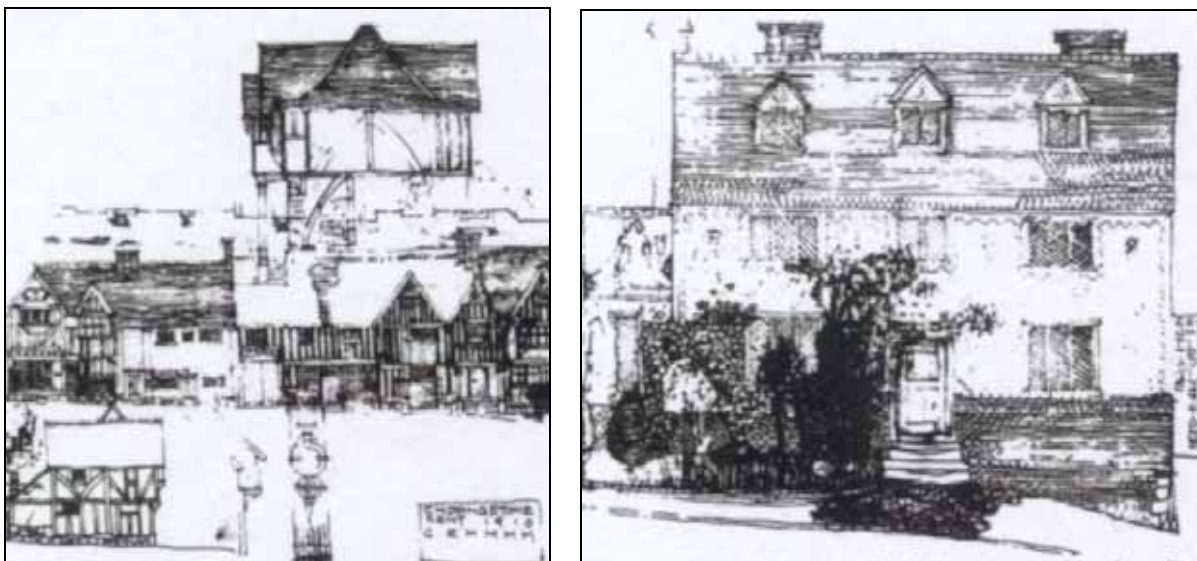


Fig 5 No 1, 2, 3 (Skinners House & Porch House) & No 4 drawn by Charles Rennie Mackintosh 1910

In 1955, the late Dennis Eyre Bower bought Chiddingstone Castle, and opened the building to the public in 1956. It was his request that upon his death in 1977 the Castle and his collection of Japanese and Egyptian antiques should go to the National Trust. The National Trust were unable to accept the gift and the Castle is now run as an independent charity in accordance with the will.

2.4 Architectural Description

Chiddingstone Conservation Area is very much concentrated on the vernacular buildings along the High Street.

When entering the village from the east there are a group of buildings separated from the main timber-framed buildings of the high street. These are the historic farm buildings probably associated with the cultivation of hops, all of which are now private residences.



Fig 6 Triangle Oast & Larkin's Farm

The two oast houses are constructed of brick to the ground floor and roundels and either tile hanging or weather boarding to the first floor. Although both have had openings formed in the roundels, they are good examples of domestic conversions, recognised in their listed building status.

Triangle Oast sits on an island in the middle of a road junction. Fortunately the building does not appear to have suffered damage as a result of its position.



Fig 7 Triangle Oast situated in middle of road junction

Five Oast is of unusual design with a large hipped gable at one end supported on timber posts providing a covered area to the north end of the building. This has been left open and it would seem was previously utilized for the storage of the crop.



Fig 8 Five Oast north elevation

The three storey Larkin's Farmhouse is also constructed of brick and tile hanging, with Kent peg roof tiles, an oversailing gable to the first and second floors above the front door, and leaded lights to the windows. The building is a good example of Kentish vernacular architecture with simple but effective detail achieved by the use of different shaped tiles to the first floor.



Fig 9 Larkin's Farm front elevation

The associated outbuildings to the farmhouse have largely been converted into private residences. The conversions have been sympathetic, with no apparent alteration to the scale of the building and only minor adaptation of the elevations.



Fig 10 Converted barn adjacent to Larkin's Farm



Fig 11 Larkin's farm buildings

There is still a working farm and small brewery at Larkins; the mix of buildings and uses emphasise the continuing importance of agriculture to the local economy.

To the west, there is a pair of relatively modern brick semi-detached bungalows on the south side of the road, with a hipped clay tiled roof and georgian pattern casement windows. Their simple design and relatively small scale sit comfortably in the landscape.



Fig 12 Eden View Cottages

Travelling further west, the cemetery, with its stone rubble low wall and lychgate is situated on the northern side of the road with the valley beyond. To the south is a hedgerow with glimpses of the pavilion in playing fields.

Adjacent to the cemetery is Glebe House, which is surrounded by tall fences and hedges concealing it from the road.

Coachmans is situated to the north of Glebe House and although accessed from the main road it remains obscured from view. The house has a three ridge Kent peg tiled roof, tile hanging to the first floor and red brick to the ground floor. There is a small white painted brick extension to the side elevation and at first floor level, a door with associated ironmongery has been retained.



Fig 13 Coachmans with door at first floor level clearly visible

The school building is very distinctive, with its steep gabled ends and large dormer windows inserted above a covered veranda. The brickwork detail above the window openings at ground floor level is rather unusual.



Fig 14 Chiddingstone Primary School front elevation

The Rectory, located south of the school, is a new building that does not afford any distinctive architectural expression. Its position at the southern extremity of the Conservation Area ensures that it does not impede the visual qualities of the High Street.



Fig 15 The Rectory

To the side of the school an access road leads to a timber-framed building with a combination of coursed rubble walling and plastered panels to the ground floor which continues up to the first floor. The porch associated with the front entrance also displays brick infills between the timber panels and the front gable depicts the date 1907.



Fig 16 The refurbished Village Hall (former parish room dated 1907)

The full impact of the range of close studded houses with prominent jetties and gables is revealed when overlooked from the grounds of the Church.



Fig 17 Photograph of The Street taken 1902

The buildings in the centre of the village represent good examples of timber-framed construction through the 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries with no apparent modern alterations. The National Trust now own these properties and their future is secure.

Generally the roofs are covered with clay tiles hung on pegs or nibs. The degree of the roof pitches varies and the contrasting heights of the ridge lines often lend variety and interest to the street scene. ‘Cat slide’ roofs, which sweep down from the ridge to the ground floor ceiling level, have long been a popular way of covering a single storey extension to the side or rear of a building.



Fig. 18 Side elevation Cobham Manor



Fig. 19 View looking north west showing Parish Room and the church

The timber-framed buildings, although in several guises, are the dominant construction. The majority are close studded giving the traditional black and white appearance.



Fig. 20 atte-Wood House



Fig. 21 atte-Wood House and Chiddingstone Burghesh Manor

Skinner's House (atte-Wood House) is a late 15th Century hall house with rear aisle and jettied cross wing displays coursed brick infill to the ground floor. The shop, formerly known as Chiddingstone Manor Burghesh and built in the period 1440-1470 although timber-framed, has a brick plinth detail. It was originally a Wealden house, but has since been obscured by lavish additions and a most unusual upper end.



Fig. 22 Chiddingstone Post Office and Shop



Fig. 23 Chiddingstone Burghesh Manor

Adjacent to Skinner's House, part of the original property known as atte-Wood has been clad in 18th Century red and blue brickwork with brick arches above the windows to the ground floor.

The Manor of Chiddingstone Cobham is a 14th Century property, which was converted into two properties in 1717. When Charles Rennie Mackintosh drew it in 1910 it was linked to the Castle Inn.

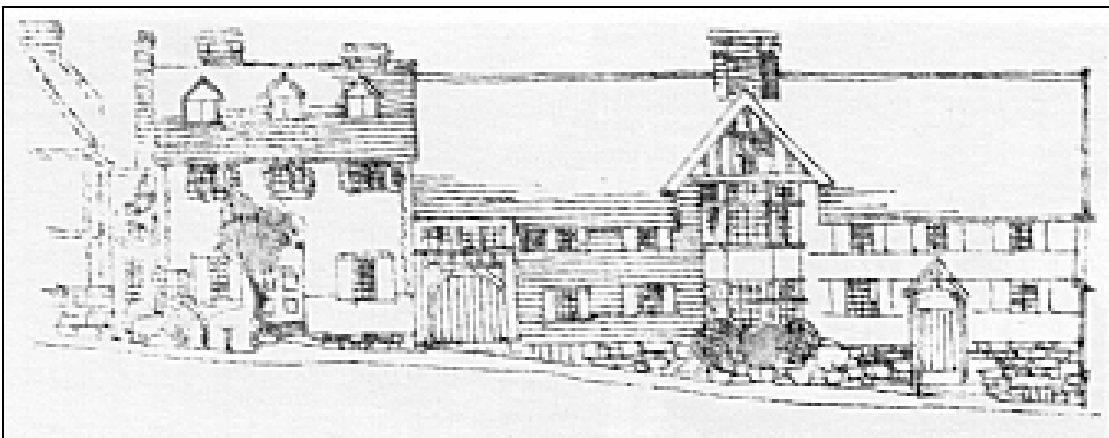


Fig. 24 Chiddingstone Cobham Manor and Castle Inn, drawn by Charles Rennie Mackintosh 1910

The property has a symmetrical white plastered front with evidence of pargeting that includes a panel with serrated edges, filled with upturned hearts or rings bearing the date 1697. Three dormers constructed within the roof void provide light to attic spaces, which can then be used as additional accommodation.



Fig. 25 Chiddingstone Cobham Manor

The Castle Inn (formerly known as Waterslip House) has been dated by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England between 1480 and 1520. It is a timber-framed house of 6 bays and a central gable with decorative bargeboards, panels of wattle and daub at second floor level and a brick and timber bay to the first and ground floors. The front elevation is tile-hung with a coursed rubble plinth while the side elevations are the more traditional timber-framed construction with infill of coursed brick.



Fig. 26 Castle Inn

St. Mary's Church with its large perpendicular west tower and crocketed pinnacles, is visible from all directions. It is constructed of coursed stonework with Kent peg tiles to the gable ended roofs.



Fig. 27 St. Mary's Church



Fig. 28 The Streatfield Family Vault

In the grounds of the church lies the vault of the Streatfield family, which is listed in its own right.

The church and beautifully treescaped grounds are partly enclosed by a stone rubble wall and lychgate, similar in appearance to the walling and lychgate associated with the cemetery.



Fig. 29 Lychgate to Cemetery



Fig. 30 Boundary wall and lychgate to Cemetery.

The use of local stone adds another variation in colour to the preponderance of timber-framed buildings in the centre of the designated area. To the north of the Church is the Old Rectory, a framed house with a large hipped roof that was modernized in the 1730's when it was tile-hung, given a symmetrical front with regularly placed sash windows on each storey and a pedimented centre.



Fig. 31 The Old Rectory

Chiddingstone Castle is clad in sandstone with turrets projecting beyond the roof line. It can be clearly seen from nearby vantage points and is open to the public over the summer months. Adjacent to the house is a small cottage with Kent peg roof tiles and brick walls. The grounds in which these buildings are set provide a very impressive view from the bridge that spans the private lake of the property.



Fig. 32 Chiddingstone Castle (picture from the National Trust Gallery)

Generally the windows to the properties along The Street are timber casements with leaded lights, and have been retained in most instances, with the exception of Coachmans. The lack of access to Glebe house prevented close inspection. The major modern day adaptation appears to be rooflights to secondary elevations of the more prominent buildings. The insertion of rooflights to the outbuildings located to the rear of the timber-framed properties has been less subtle. The number of rooflights, which are visible from the High Street, detracts from the overall impression of the main buildings.



Fig. 33 Rear elevation of Chiddingstone Burghesh Manor



Fig 34 Outbuilding associated with Chiddingstone Burghesh Manor

3.00 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

3.1 Setting of the Area and Spatial Relationships

Throughout the whole of Chiddingstone Parish there is an abundance of natural and man-made ponds and lakes, which enhance the area further by creating natural havens for native water birds and amphibians. Within the boundaries of the Conservation Area there are five ponds of varying sizes, the largest within the grounds of Chiddingstone Castle.



Fig. 35 View overlooking pond located south east of Triangle Oast

When approaching the village from the east the first important view is that of Triangle Oast, in the centre of a road junction, which obscures the view of the other buildings in this grouping as well as the remainder of the road.

Just south of the junction there is a fine view across the Weald with isolated farmstead groups and on the horizon the grounds of Penshurst Park.



Fig. 36 Views looking south east from Triangle Oast

As the road continues there is nothing to suggest the quality of buildings contained within the village; where development does exist, it is largely unobserved due to the good views to the north, across the Eden Valley, which is marred only by the siting of electrical pylons.



Fig. 37 Views looking north across Eden Valley

Looking west the Church tower surrounded by trees dominates the horizon and the main village is concealed by a series of hedgerows along the road.



Fig. 38 Main road into Chiddingstone from the east

Once in the heart of the village, the road runs the built up area, with the main concentration of housing on the southern side of the road and the Church, with its associated buildings (i.e. The Old Rectory and the cemetery) on the northern side.

The buildings on the south side are placed close together and are built directly onto a slightly raised cobbled pedestrian walkway. There are several alleyways that entice the eye towards a second row of buildings consisting of mainly converted outbuildings.

Whilst the area is compact and the buildings on the main street are generally three storeys in height, the area maintains a rural feel.

The Church, whilst being a large structure accentuated by its elevated position, does not dominate either the landscape beyond or the surrounding buildings and thus retains a feeling of space.

The sharp bend in the road at the end of the row of timber-framed houses forms a physical barrier that encourages pedestrians to stop and look through the iron gates into the grounds of Chiddingstone Castle. Looking to the north, the bridge acts as a second point to admire the view across the lake to Chiddingstone Castle and then a final glimpse of the Castle Inn. At this point the road leaves the built environs of the village and leads out into the countryside beyond.



Fig. 39 Main High Street looking south from the bridge. **Fig. 40 View across lake to Chiddingstone Castle.**

The recreation grounds are located outside the Conservation Area, behind private paddocks screened from the road by hedgerows, although they remain visible due to their elevated position in relation to the approach road into the village. They are accessed from the road by an unmade track of sufficient width for vehicular traffic.



Fig. 41 Land adjacent to Recreation Ground

The setting is very rural with large areas of grass and well-established trees that soften the horizon. The most picturesque views are those facing north across the Eden Valley.

Where boundary walls exist, they are generally low level and of stone rubble. The majority of boundary walls are associated with the Church and Cemetery.

Other features that contribute to the character of the area include short timber posts to restrict parking outside the school and traditional signboards. Where they are kept in isolation the signboards do add to the character of the village. However, on some elevations, the detail of the wall construction is lost under a plethora of signs which can adversely affect the visual impact.

3.2 The Impact of Individual Elements/Features/Groups of Buildings

Unlike most villages, domestic and agricultural architecture have remained segregated with little modern intervention to confuse the development of the village.

The designated area has two very distinct types of building construction contained within its boundaries. The first, as previously discussed, is that of the medieval buildings located along the main high street which includes all the associated barns and outbuildings.



Fig.42 View looking east from gates of Chiddingstone Castle

Whilst some building development has taken place adjacent to this significant row of buildings, private access roads maintain a sense of detachment.

The second is the farm buildings located to the east which are of a later period when the cultivation of hops became the main industry within the area.



Fig 43 Triangle Oast, Five Oast & Larkin's Farm

Chiddingstone Castle does not have any real association to either grouping due to the redesign of the facade. The cottage attached to the Castle is of similar construction to Coachmans but due to its location, is overshadowed by the main house.

The remaining properties, whilst they are an important feature of the area showing the progression of vernacular architecture, remain isolated and largely concealed from view.

To the north east, there are a group of buildings that are associated with the modern farm. However, whilst these modern buildings are functional and generally well-maintained, the associated rubble and mechanical debris that can be seen around the easternmost building and silo, immediately north of Triangle Oast, detracts from the area.



Fig 44 Modern farm building on north east boundary of designated area

Both the conservation area and the adjoining developed sites have a great variety of well-established trees which are fundamental to the character of the area as a whole. Those contained within the designated area are concentrated on the Chiddingstone Castle Estate and the northern side of the road and are protected under conservation area legislation. Outside the area, further consideration may warrant preservation orders being placed on others tree to secure their future.



Fig 45 Examples of some of the established trees outside the Conservation Area.

4.00 FUTURE TRENDS

4.1 Current and Future Pressures on the Area

The need to find residential development sites in this popular region within easy reach of London puts any attractive village under pressure in the search for suitable building land. Whilst new development within a conservation area is not necessarily unwelcome, the impact that this can have on the traditional form of the village has to be carefully considered before consent is granted. Chiddingstone has been afforded a very stable future with a large proportion of the village under the safe keeping of the National Trust. The Castle, whilst not under the care of the National Trust, is owned by a registered charity whose primary objectives are to preserve the building intact. It would appear therefore that the areas most at risk from change are outside the Conservation area.

Chiddingstone has retained the historic shop, which currently sells art and craft products, although the present occupiers will be selling groceries for the villagers in the near future, and the school that has been extended with further additions including portacabin classrooms and swimming pool.

Roadside parking does have a negative impact especially in front of the timber-framed properties, but much of the traffic and parking is from the many visitors attracted to the village.

4.2 Potential for Enhancement and Future Policy Recommendations

It is important to note that the vast majority of the buildings within the Conservation Area are owned by the National Trust and therefore have a relatively safe future. Whilst the properties are leased the external elevations remain the responsibility of the National Trust. Although the Castle is in separate ownership, its future is also secure for the present.

There are important buildings outside the curtilage of the Conservation Area that might benefit from inclusion.

Old Gilwys and Gilwys are two listed properties with close mutual associations. Old Gilwys (1440-1480) is a timber-framed unjetted house with first floor tile hanging, brickwork to the ground floor and a 16th Century chimney added as later adaptations. Gilwys was constructed as a kitchen addition to Old Gilwys and it too has been clad with vertical tile-hanging and brickwork.



Fig. 46 Old Gilwys



Fig. 47 Old Gilwys and Gilwys

South of Old Gilwys a no-through road continues down the side of Chiddingstone Castle grounds which contains a great variety of buildings of vernacular construction some of which are individually listed.



Fig. 48 Forge Cottage



Fig. 49 Tyehurst

The proposal would be to continue to extend the boundaries of the designated area to include the remaining grounds of Chiddingstone Castle currently outside the curtilage, the road and associated buildings as well as the houses located along the sides of the road and majority located at Hill Hoath.



Fig. 50 Gazebo and grounds of Chiddingstone Castle



Fig. 51 Chiddingstone Castle Gazebo

By extending the boundaries tighter controls could ensure that the original details on unlisted properties are retained and adaptations are sympathetic to the historic surroundings.

The Wealden House of medieval (14th Century) origin demonstrates typical jettied end construction and although listed individually the house and its setting would be further protected if included.



Fig. 52 Wealden House at Hill Hoath



Fig. 53 Side Elevation of Wealden House

Whilst the land associated with the farm is agricultural and the outbuildings appear to be of little architectural merit, the group of tile hung and brick houses and cottages associated with Hill Hoath Farm are an important grouping and worthy of inclusion.



Fig. 54 Hill Hoath House



Fig. 55 House Opposite Hill Hoath House



Fig. 56 Hill Hoath Farm Cottages

Mole End and Keepers Cottage are of similar construction to the properties associated with Hill Hoath farm, with clay peg-tiled roofs, vertical tile-hanging to the first floor and red brick to the ground floor. Mole End has retained all of its original features including sliding sash windows whilst only some of the original windows remain in Keepers Cottages. Both would benefit from inclusion within the Conservation Area to preserve their remaining detail.



Fig. 57 Mole End



Fig. 58 Keepers Cottages

The shiplap-boarded outbuilding opposite the grounds of Forge Cottage is very individual, demonstrates a variety of features and would benefit from inclusion. Adjacent to this building is a bland detached garage, although it may be worth considering if it would provide additional protection to the willow tree within the ground.



Fig. 59 Timber shiplap outbuilding with Kent peg-tile roof

It may be considered that whilst the existing modern semi-detached houses are detracting from the overall visual quality, their inclusion could prevent further developments encroaching on Moor Wood.



Fig. 60 New houses at Hill Hoath

Some outbuildings are in a state of neglect and would benefit from the legal requirements associated with the maintenance of buildings contained within a Conservation Area, while other buildings are so overgrown that they are almost lost in the undergrowth.



Figs. 61 and 62 Outbuildings adjacent to Tyehurst Cottage



Fig. 63 Building associated with Guardian Cottage



Fig. 64 Telegraph pole adjacent to Wealden House



Fig. 65 Telegraph pole at Hill Hoath Farm

If inclusion is to be considered for this road alternative provision should be considered to replace or reposition the telegraph poles and cables at Hill Hoath.

Acknowledgements:

The draft document was prepared by Donald Insall Associates Ltd.

Bibliography:

Sevenoaks District Local Plan (Adopted Plan) March 2000	Sevenoaks District Council
Development in the Historic Environment	English Heritage 1995
Conservation Area Appraisals	English Heritage 1997
Conservation Area Practice Planning Policy Guidance: 15	English Heritage 1995
Planning and the Historic Environment	D. o E. & D.N.H 1994
Topographical Map of the County of Kent 1769	Andrews, Drury & Herbert
History & Topographical Survey of the County of Kent Vol iii 1797	Edward Hasted
The Buildings of England West Kent and The Weald (1997)	John Newman
Salmon's Guide to Sevenoaks 1901	J. Salmon
Salmon's Guide to Sevenoaks 1905	J. Salmon
The History of Sevenoaks and District	P. Clucas
Sevenoaks Past with the Villages of Holmesdale	C. Rayner
Sevenoaks Memories	G. Anckorn
Sevenoaks Recollections	E. Thompson
The Pleasant Town of Sevenoaks a History	Sir John Dunlop
Kelly's Directory of Kent 1891	
Sevenoaks Rural District Guide 1960	
Sevenoaks Rural District Guide 1972-1974	
Sevenoaks Rural District Guide 1978	



MAP 5 Chiddingstone Conservation Area

Designations

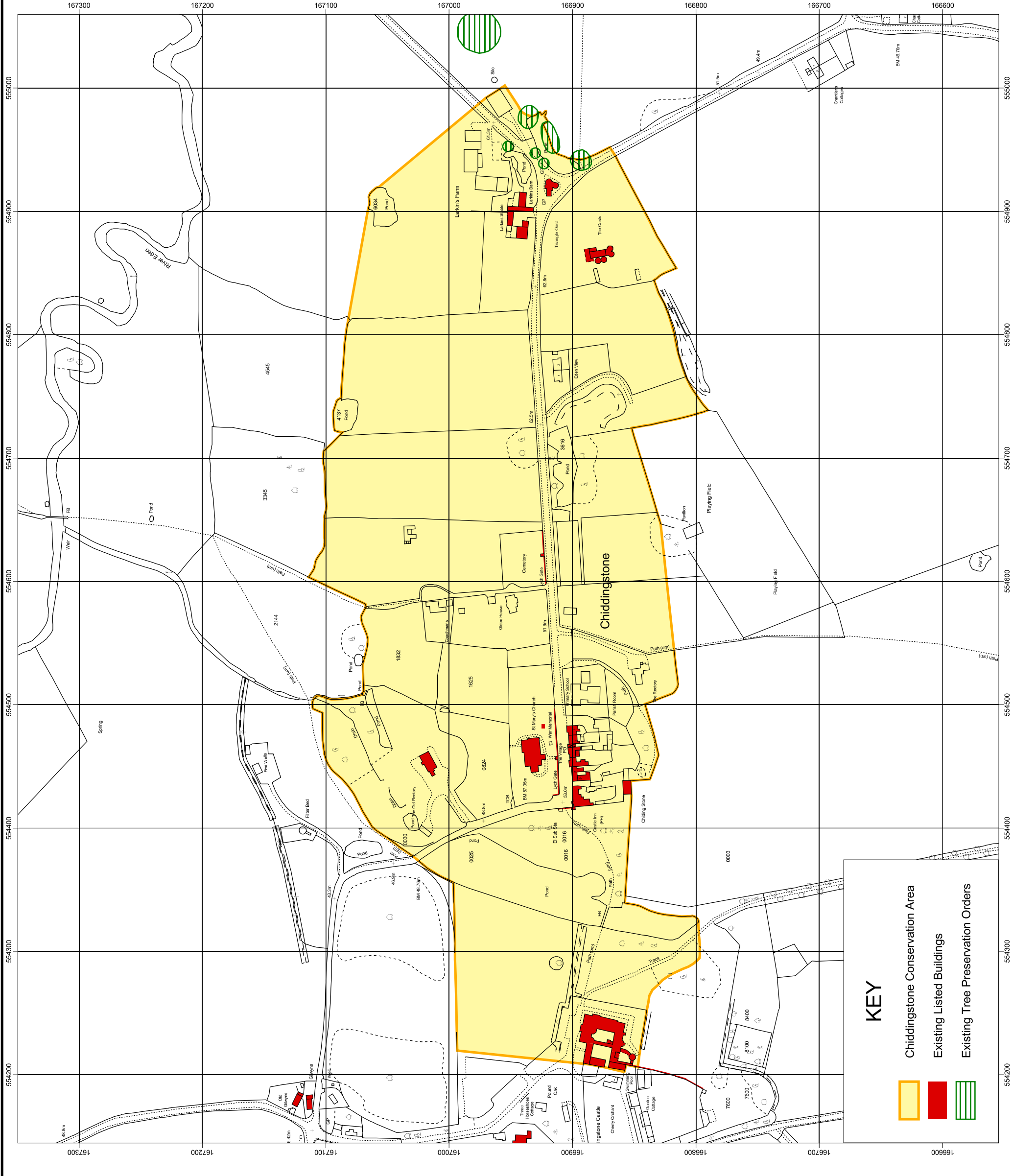
Scale 1:3500

Drawn By SNM




Date March 2003



CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map
with the sanction of The Controller Of
H.M. Stationery Office
O.S. Licence No 079308



KEY

-  Chiddingstone Conservation Area
-  Existing Listed Buildings
-  Existing Tree Preservation Orders



MAP 6 Chiddingstone Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

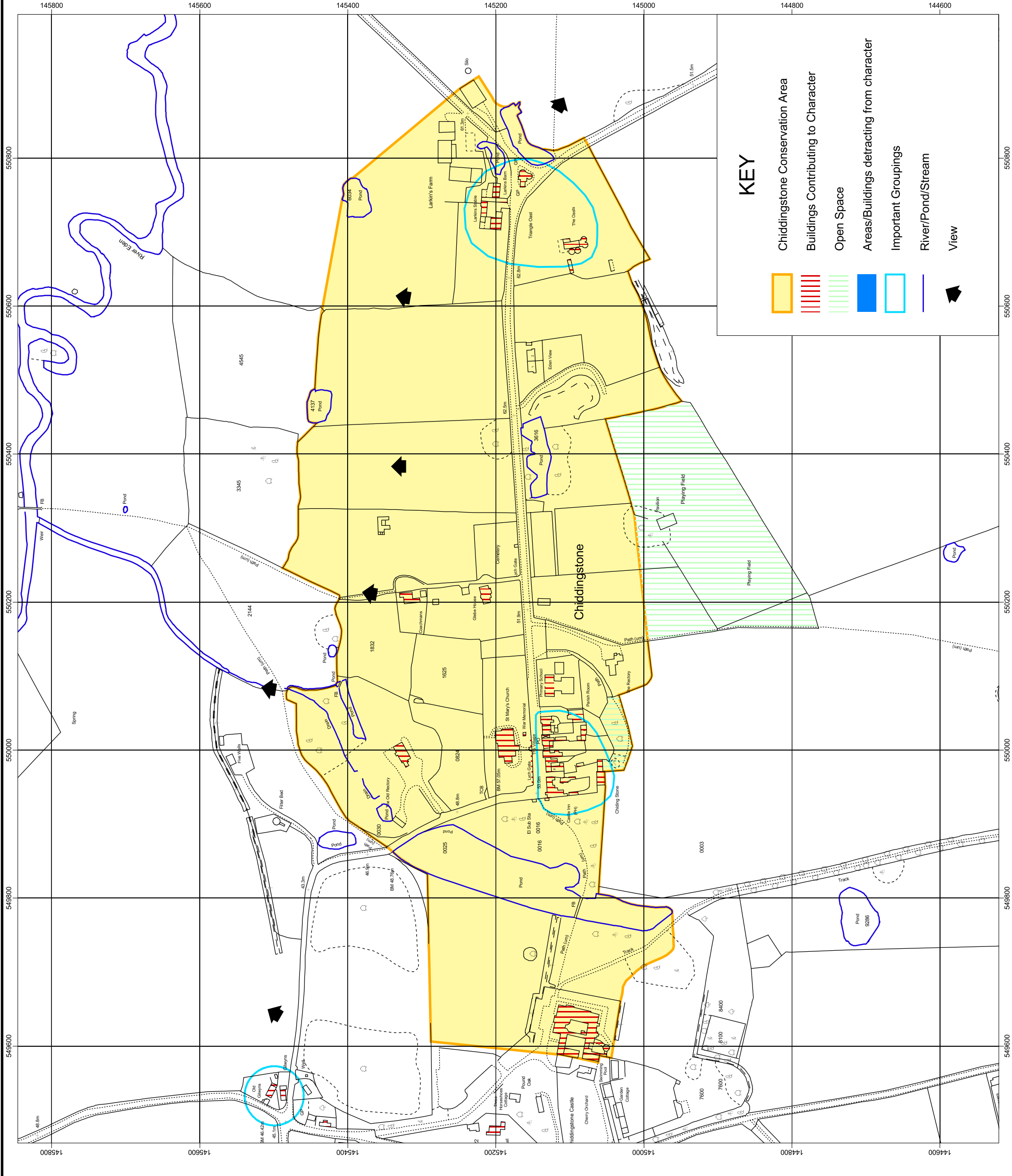
Scale 1:3500

Drawn By CW-T

Date March 2003



CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map
with the sanction of The Controller Of
H.M. Stationery Office
O.S. Licence No 079308



KEY

- Chiddingstone Conservation Area
- Buildings Contributing to Character
- Open Space
- Areas/Buildings detracting from character
- Important Groupings
- River/Pond/Stream
- View



MAP 7
Chiddingstone
Conservation Area
Recommendations for
Future Policy Changes

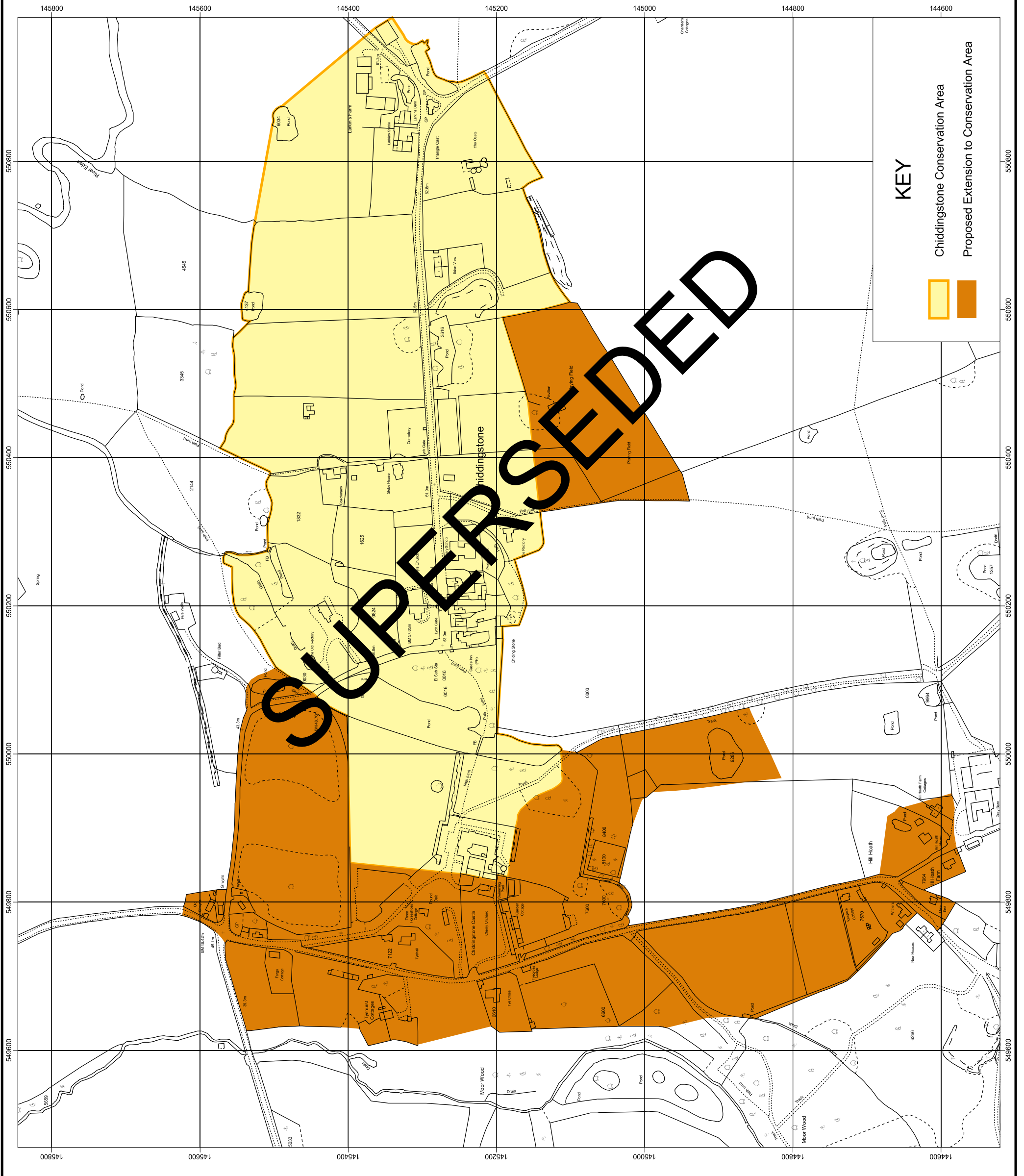
Scale 1:4000

Drawn By SNM

Date March 2003



CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map
with the sanction of The Controller Of
H.M. Stationery Office
O.S. Licence No 079308



Map superseded. Please refer to Chiddingstone Appraisal map, PDF dated June 2019