

Granville Road and Eardley Road

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

PLANNING GUIDANCE



Attractive historic door in Granville Road



Granville Road and Eardley Road

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

The historic environment is a social asset of immense value and one of the keys to the continuing prosperity of Sevenoaks District. Conservation Area Appraisals are part of 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 and streets all contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the District's conservation areas.

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

It is intended that this appraisal and management plan will inform the activities of the Council, the public and other bodies where these affect the conservation area. This Appraisal was approved by the District Council in October 2009 - and adopted as Informal Planning Guidance.

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Good curve looking south from outside Community Hall, Argyle Rd

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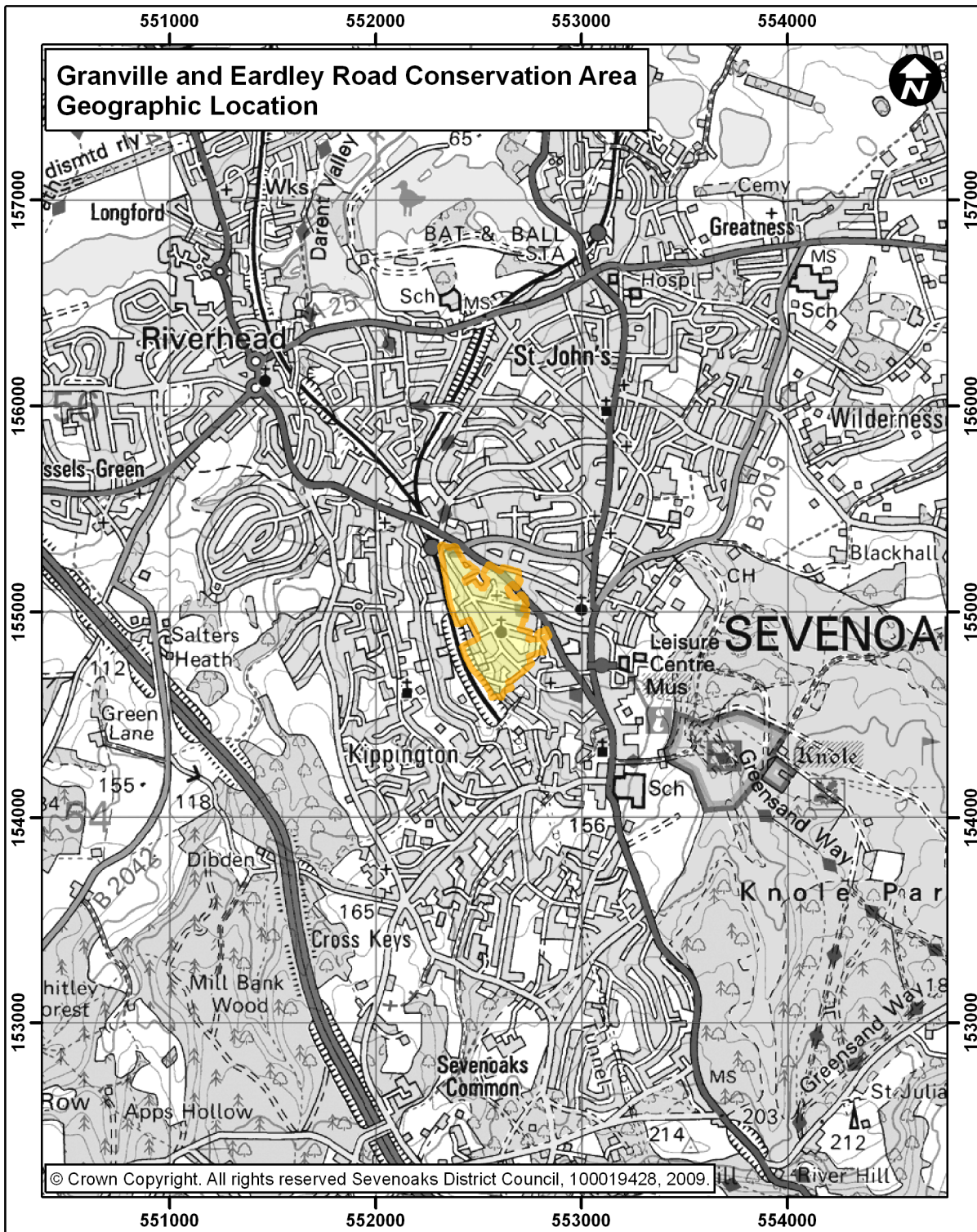
Lynch House

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1.00 INTRODUCTION



Characteristic view of excellent topography looking from London Road up towards the Conservation Area

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

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

1.1 Conservation Area Boundary Review

In 2007, minor changes were made on Tubbs Hill/London Road and the west end of The Drive. A number of properties in Argyle Road, south of the Council Offices were included.

1.2 Definition and Purpose of Conservation Areas

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

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

It has been recognised that designation, because of the responsibilities and obligations it places on both owners and the local authority should only be imposed on



Fine Listed houses on London Road

areas that are demonstrably suitable. Where the criteria have been met, the area should then benefit from the additional control and protection that designation confers, and from official recognition of the special architectural and historic character of the locality.

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

1.3 The Benefits of Being in a Conservation Area

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

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



Notable wall off South Park

1.4 Purpose of Appraisals and Management Plans

As their number grows, it has become even more important for local authorities to include a well-defined and considered policy for designated conservation areas in their development plans. Development pressures are such that any designation is likely to be subjected to detailed scrutiny and must be readily and demonstrably defensible against adverse criticism. The criteria for designation should be kept as uniform as possible and the public 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 appraisals in 1997 and more detailed guidance on both appraisals and management plans in 2006. This guidance outlines the preferred approach to these plans and gives examples of the type of content that it would be useful to include.

The principal purpose of this Appraisal is to provide a firm basis upon which proposals for development within the Granville and Eardley Road Conservation Area can be assessed, through defining those key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character and which should be preserved. Saved policies contained in the Local Plan and the emerging LDF Core Strategy and should be read in conjunction with the Plan. The plan will be a key document in maintaining character and promoting appropriate, sensitive proposals in the Conservation Area.

The appraisal and management plan 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 management suggestions for future policies and improvements based on a clear understanding of the special architectural and historic qualities that highlight the area and give it its local distinctiveness. These plans can also be used to assess the impact of planning policies and the implementation of enhancement measures.

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

1.5 The key purpose of this Plan is to:

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

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



Looking from Argyle Road into Victoria Road

2.0 GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

2.1 National and Regional Guidance

Government advice concerning conservation areas and historic buildings is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, Planning and the Historic Environment. Further advice about conservation areas including the production of management proposals, was produced by English Heritage in 2006.

2.2 The Development Plan

The government has introduced a new type of development plan known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will set out the strategy, policies and proposals for the future shape of Sevenoaks and will be produced over the next 2-3 years. In the meantime the adopted Local Plan of March 2000 and the South East Plan, 2009 will retain development plan status until parts of the new system are adopted. As an adopted planning document the Appraisal and Management Plan will be a key material consideration in the determination of development proposals during this transitional period.



Good glimpse between 2 and 4 South Park

2.3 Local Policies

The South East Plan includes **Policy BE6** which says that:

- **When developing and implementing plans and strategies, local authorities and other bodies will adopt policies and support proposals which protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment and the contribution it makes to local and regional distinctiveness and sense of place. The region's internationally and nationally designated historic assets should receive the highest level of protection. Proposals that make sensitive use of historic assets through regeneration, particularly where these bring redundant or under-used buildings and areas into appropriate use should be encouraged.**

The Sevenoaks District Local Plan (adopted March 2000) lists the following policy relating to conservation areas. This policy has been saved:

- **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.**



7 Granville Road

2.4 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. Important areas of greenspace within the built confines are safeguarded under policy EN9.

2.5 Buildings Contributing to Character

Buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area are identified on the character appraisal plan at the end of this document. These criteria can be viewed at the end of this report.

2.6 Conservation and Enhancement

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 state that the Local Planning Authority should undertake detailed assessments of conservation areas and prepare proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Development proposals will be judged against their overall contribution to the enhancement of the character and appearance of the area as set out in any plan which may have been prepared. This assessment and the detailed analysis of the area contained in the report are intended to fulfil this requirement and provide the background for development and enhancement schemes.

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

There is a richness, variety, quality and history of townscape within this area that is special and a need to maintain and enhance the best of this quality is crucial. Context and quality design is vitally important in reinforcing the character of this area and this character must not be lost through undue pressure for poorly designed infill development or redevelopment of an unacceptable nature.

2.7 Special Controls in the Conservation Area

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



most people who live and work in conservation areas as being worth the additional restrictions.

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

Houses and their alteration

The size of an extension that may be built without the need to apply for planning permission is more restricted within a conservation area.

Fine porch in need of refurbishment

Along with the normal limits relating to extensions which can be carried out without planning permission, any extension will normally require planning permission where it would extend to the front of a dwelling, beyond the side wall of the original dwelling or would have more than one storey in height at the rear of the dwelling. Planning permission is required if alterations involve the cladding of any part of the exterior with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles.

Any enlargement of a house by way of alteration or additions to the roof, e.g. a dormer window, will require a planning application to be made.

Along with the normal restrictions on outbuildings and swimming pools, planning permission would be required where the structure would be between the side of the dwelling and the site boundary.

A planning application is needed for a satellite antenna where it is to be installed on a chimney; or on a building over 15m in height; or on a wall or roof slope which fronts a highway.

Planning permission may not be required for certain other minor developments, such as hard surfacing, rooflights or porches. You are advised to check with the Council when planning any works as special restrictions may apply.

Other commercial premises and flats

Additional restrictions on commercial premises is not relevant in this Conservation Area, however, any extension or alteration to residential flats, which materially affects the external appearance of the building, will require a planning application to be made. This is particularly important within conservation areas, where even small alterations can materially affect the character and appearance of the area. For instance, such alterations can include rendering brickwork, replacement of slates with concrete tiles, and replacement windows. The advice of the relevant development control team should be sought before carrying out any changes.

Demolition

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

- any building with a total cubic content not exceeding 115m³ or any substantial part of such building.
- any wall of fence (or substantial part) less than 1m high fronting onto the street or less than 2m high elsewhere.
- any building subject to a formal order requiring demolition.

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

Trees

6 weeks notice must be given to the Council before any work to a tree within a conservation area is carried out. The Council will then advise if it wishes to raise an objection. If a response is not received from the Council within 6 weeks of the notice being given, work may go ahead. This requirement does not apply to trees which have a diameter less than 75mm (3") when measured at a height of 1.5m (4'11") above the ground and trees already covered by a Tree Preservation Order, in which case any works will require consent.

Unauthorised Works and development

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

Maintenance and Repairs

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

The character of conservation areas can be altered or lost through the use of inappropriate materials, not only on the buildings themselves but also on the ground, roads, and along boundaries. The introduction of features, such as street furniture, signs, lights, and hard surfacing, can change an area's character. In the conservation area few of the buildings are isolated. Even if they are detached they are part of a wider street scene, often of buildings of similar style and size. Altering the appearance, form or size of any one building can affect not only that building, but the whole street. Unsympathetic replacement windows (particularly where the size of the openings are changed or inappropriate materials used) can alter the appearance of a building considerably. Where a number of different designs are used along a street, the rhythm and unity of its original appearance can be spoilt.

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

Boundary treatments

Boundary treatment, especially to the street, is an essential feature of any property. Original boundaries, whether a brick or ragstone wall, railings, fencing or hedges, should be retained wherever possible and every effort made to reinstate missing boundary treatments with a sympathetic replacement. The particular design and the materials used should take account of the character of the property and the surrounding area. There are many mature hedges and attractive walls around The Granville and Eardley Road Conservation Area and these are an integral part of character.

Listed Buildings

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

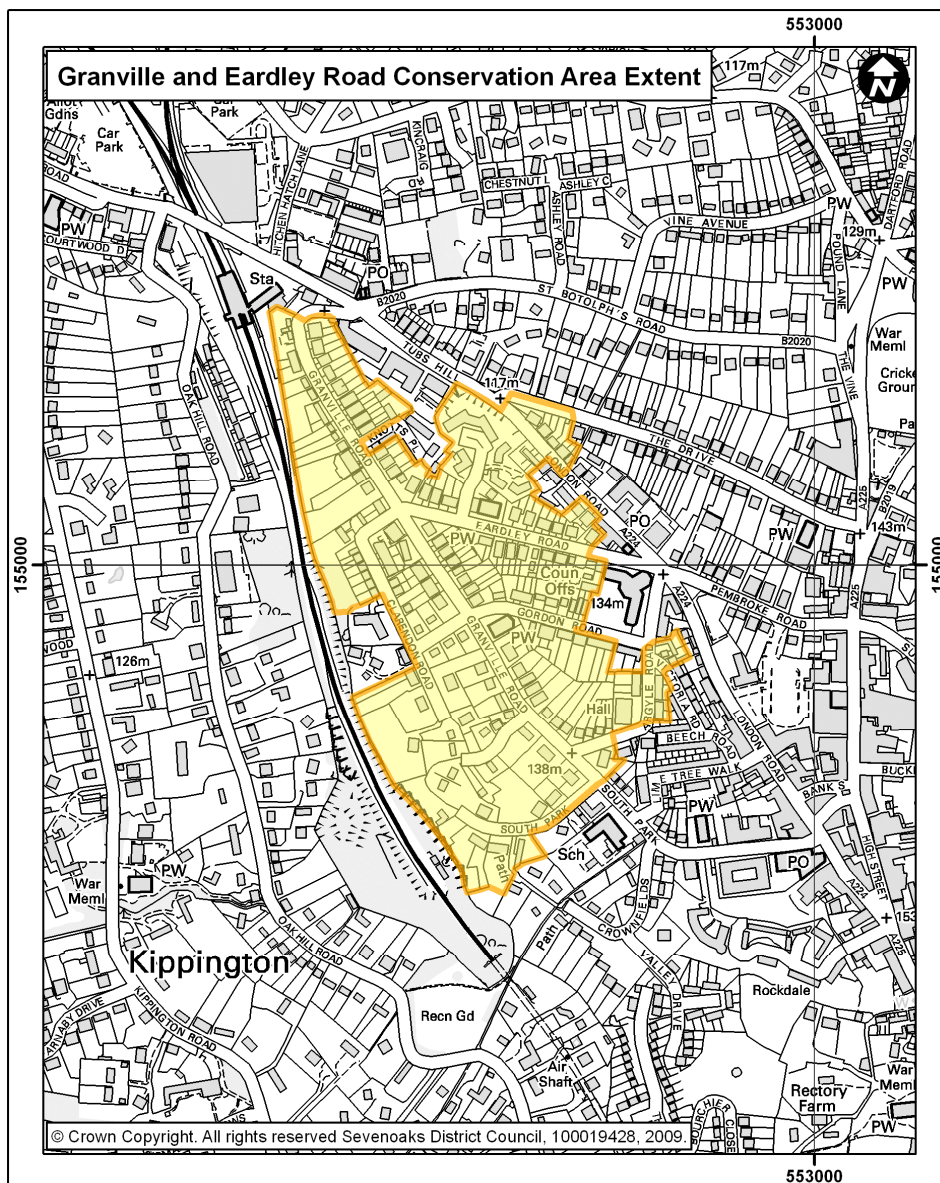
If you live in or occupy a listed building, further guidance on the controls that apply is available from the relevant development control team. When a building is listed, this

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

New gates, fences, walls, railings or other means of enclosure surrounding a listed building will require planning permission. Similarly most sheds, garages and greenhouses and other outbuildings will also require planning permission. The design of these should harmonise with the existing building and its setting.

3.0 CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 General Description



The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area was first designated in 1989 and lies on the west side of Sevenoaks. It forms a triangle at whose apex is the station at Tubs Hill. It is bounded by the railway to the west, London Road and Tubs Hill to the east and runs up to South Park, Argyle Road and the District Council offices on the third side. It covers around 17 hectares and contains four listed buildings..

The area is primarily residential. The older properties are detached or semidetached houses dating from the second half of the 19th Century when the first commuter belt expansion of the town took place. On the west side of Granville Road particularly towards the northern end, a substantial number of the Victorian and Edwardian houses have been replaced with more modern counterparts while the larger detached properties in the south have had their gardens divided to provide infill building plots.



Typical semi-detached Houses in Granville Road

The area has an abundance of trees, some of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The gardens often have hedged boundaries and many show an interesting display of planting and shrubs. The proximity of the houses gives an urban atmosphere, although the countryside of the North Downs can be seen from much of the Conservation Area.

3.2 Location and Geographical Context

Sevenoaks is a prosperous market town of approximately 19,000 people, situated on the north slope of the Greensand ridge to the south of the North Downs from which it is separated by the Vale of Holmesdale. It is served by good road and rail links to London and the west, and has an easy connection to the A21, which bypasses the town and runs to the south coast. The town lies to the south of the M26 motorway and there is a single direction westbound interchange, which gives access to the M25.

The A21 bypass continues northwards round the west of the town and interconnects with the M25 to the Dartford crossing and with the A20 and A2 westbound to central London and east to the channel ports. Sevenoaks has easy access to major road transport routes without having the inconvenience of a major artery running through the town.



It is the rail network however, with its frequent services to London, that has allowed the growth of Sevenoaks and its surrounding villages as a commuter town and at present some 2 million passenger journeys per year use this link to the capital, and Tonbridge to the south. Sevenoaks Station at Tubs Hill is the fifth busiest in Kent.

Historic door in Eardley Road

Sevenoaks has a relatively successful town centre but does not have the size and range of retail outlets offered by larger centres in the area such as Tunbridge Wells and the out of town development at Bluewater, which are both within easy reach by car

Sevenoaks is a prosperous town, with 85% of its population classified as professional, managerial, technical or skilled. 16% of the working population travel to work by rail, compared to a 6% national average. Car ownership is high with 80% of householders owning one and 50% owning two or more vehicles; 75% of children are taken to school by car. Bus services in the area are generally considered poor. The high level of car ownership and use is contributing to congestion and poor air quality. Traffic congestion can be heavy at peak times, despite the relief provided by the A21 bypass.



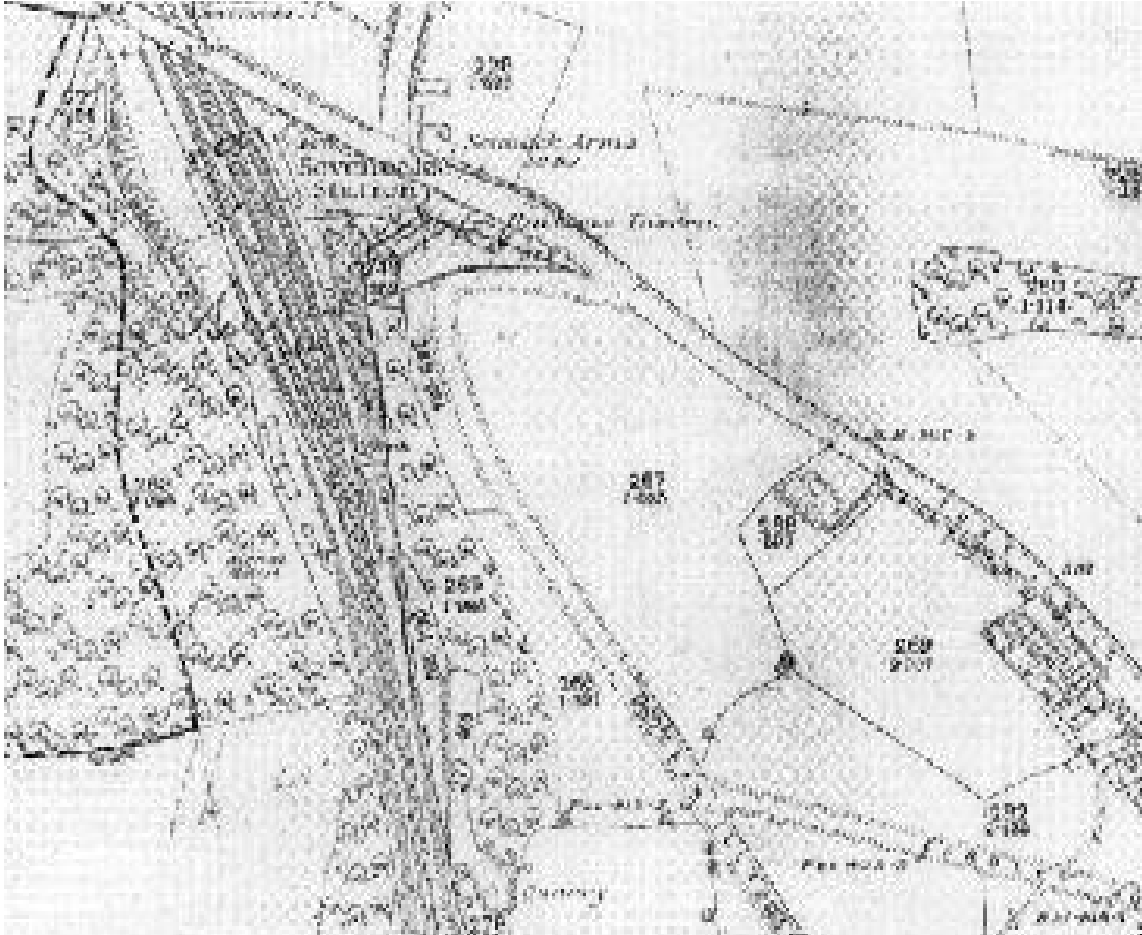
Good door in Granville Road



Good open space in front of Hall in Argyle Road

3.3 Historical Development

It was the coming of the railway that effected the most significant change in the development of Sevenoaks from its early beginnings as a small market town. For hundreds of years Sevenoaks remained constricted to its hill top site surrounded by a number of country estates - Knole, Kippington, Montreal, Bradbourne, Greatness, Wildernesse, Beechmont and Sevenoaks Park.



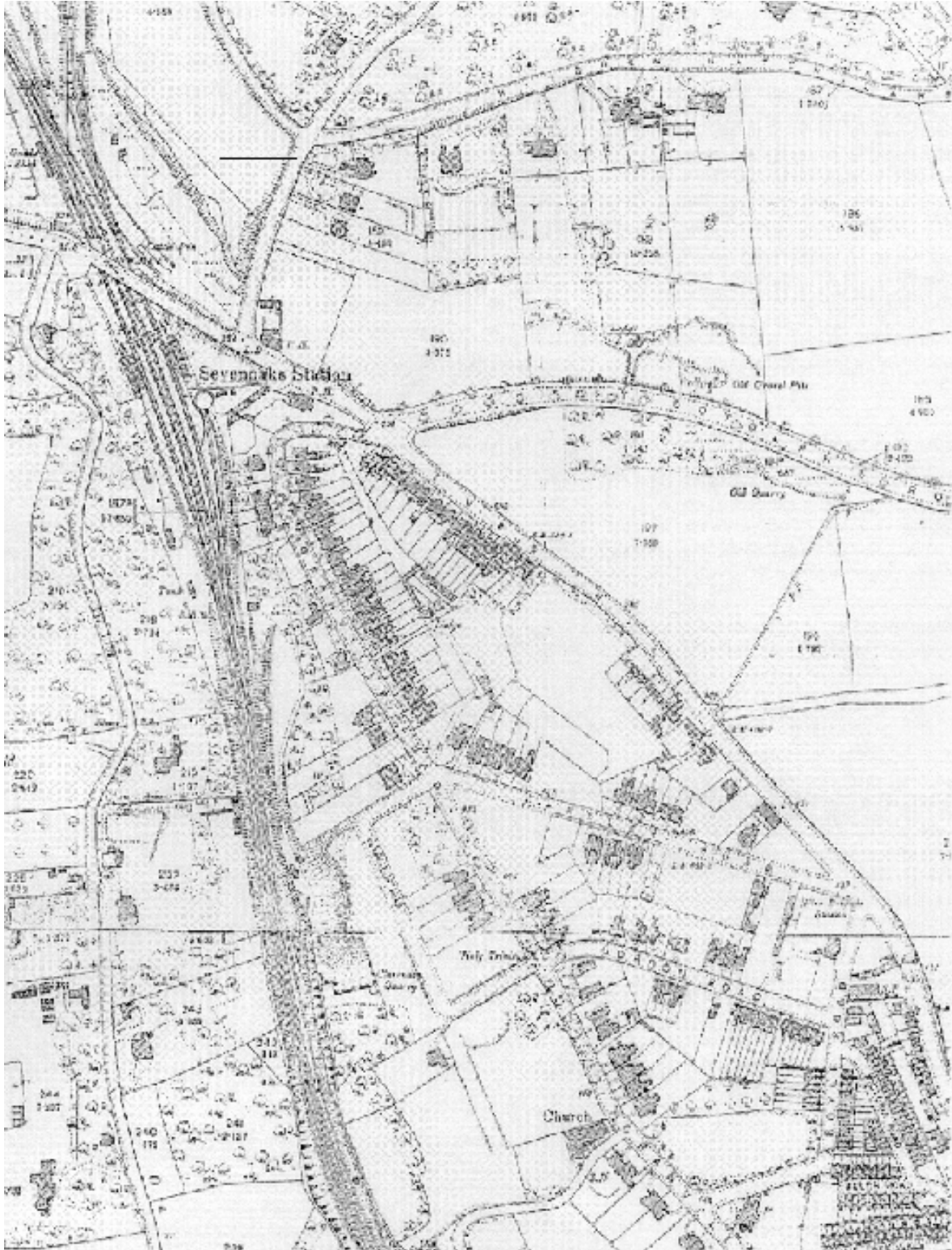
Granville Road in 1869

The first station opened at Bat and Ball in 1862 and the station at Tubs Hill followed in 1868 and Sevenoaks began its expansion into a base for workers who commute to London. This second, and more important, railway line was laid according to topographical limitations along the deep valley between the town and the Kippington estate, and from this time onwards new development began to stretch northwards from the historic town centre.

At the turn of the century there was a marked increase in house building and a number of spacious houses appeared in the North of the town and in the Kippington area. A series of large properties were erected in the Wildernesse area after the estate was sold in 1924, and after the First World War, municipal housing projects were begun in Greatness and Hillingdon.

Granville and Eardley Road were once part of the Kippington estate and their development began soon after the station opened. The Ordnance Survey map of 1896 (above) shows the west side of Granville Road already fairly well developed with a

number of more widely spaced houses on the east side. The old windmill that had stood in the grounds of what is now 25 Eardley Road had been demolished by this time and two churches had been built. Clarendon Road had been laid out but the row of terraced cottages that perched on the rim of the old quarry had not yet been constructed.



Granville Road in 1896

3.4 Views, setting and topography and landscape

Views, setting and topography are crucially important in the Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area.



The North Downs (top) along Granville Road, topography in South Park (left) and Clarendon Road (above)

3.5 Archaeology

The entry from the Sites and Monuments record can be obtained from the Council and contains detailed information on all historic sites.



Characteristic curve in Gordon Road

3.6 Trees and Natural Features

Trees contribute strongly to the special character of Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area. The trees throughout the Conservation Area are integral to the special interest.

Retaining mature trees and hedges is fundamental to preserving character. Trees in conservation areas are protected and their removal will only be permitted where a clear case exists. New trees should add to the quality and local distinctiveness of the area. Contact the Council's Arboriculture officer for further advice.



Mature trees and bushes in Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area. add character.

3.7 Architectural Description

The predominant style of the buildings is of neat Italianate villas, interspersed with the occasional acknowledgement of the Arts and Crafts movement.



One of the Larger Villas



Materials are similar to those found in other areas of the town - red brick, clay-tiled first floors and roofs with stucco and slate as occasional relief. Pebbledash has been used on the turn of the century pair of houses by Niven & Wigglesworth in Granville Road and on the first floor of some of the larger detached properties.

One of the Niven and Wigglesworth Properties

Timber is used to good effect in bargeboards, gable ends, verandas and cornices. There are plenty of exuberant and cheerful details that individualise the properties and



Historic chimneys in South Park

houses of identical plan form have their elevations treated in a variety of ways. The houses are typical Victorian suburban villas, middle class and respectable, each set in their well tended gardens. The properties have all been built since the middle of the 19th century as a direct result of the increase in demand for housing to serve the commuting population. They vary in size but the majority are semi-detached villas in Eardley Road, Gordon Road and to the east side of Granville Road, whilst there are larger detached properties round the crescent of South Park and Clarendon Road. The only exceptions to the residential Properties are the two churches and the Emily Jackson House complex. The buildings' relationship to the topography is often dramatic and appropriate and this is crucial.



St Luke's Church, Eardley Road (above left), grand front door (above right) in Eardley Road and St Thomas' Church, Gordon Road (below)



In the South Park area, where the road forms a loop down towards the railway, the houses are more substantial and set in larger plots. Once again there is an abundance of mature trees and the road does not suffer from on-street parking as do Granville and Eardley Roads.

Clarendon Road is similar in character to South Park and there is another listed building by Niven & Wigglesworth - Lynch House - built in an adoption of the Queen Anne style with decorative curved gables, substantial chimneys and moulded brick detailing.



Emily Jackson Hospital

The Emily Jackson hospital is an unusual design with a butterfly shaped plan and steeply pitched slate roof. The elevations are rendered with decorative red brick quoins to the windows with banding of red brick between ground and first floors.

St Thomas' Church, designed by the prolific Roman Catholic Church architect Frederick Walters, was built in 1896 to replace an earlier corrugated iron structure. The Church was sympathetically extended in the 1980's and the clean lines and careful detailing of the porch addition contribute to the character of the area.

4.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Argyle Road

This road runs past the Council Offices. This road contains many characteristic Victorian and Edwardian dwellings and the views out of the road to other roads are excellent. The topography is notable.

There is an especially characteristic view from outside 58 Victoria Road looking north-west. There are also good views of the backs and rear roofs of the houses along Argyle Road from Victoria Road.

Most of the buildings along Argyle Road have been highlighted as contributing to character.

The fine Victorian Hall on the curve of Argyle Road is notable with its fine brickwork, including many individually made bricks.



Junction of Argyle Road and Victoria Road

Clarendon Road

Clarendon Road is partially un-made and this does influence its character. The entire road has a pleasant low-key and informal character with grass verges and low or no pavements. This informal character should be respected. The south end of Clarendon Road has a very low-key character as buildings become informally arranged.

Some unsightly parking and hard-standing at 27 is unfortunate.

There is good topography visible around Clarendon Place and some good views north-east to Granville Road.



Clarendon Rd looking North East

Eardley Road

Eardley Road has some fine and well-preserved Victorian housing. There are many fine grand painted Victorian front doors. Fine red and yellow brick walls are prevalent throughout the area.

The eastern end of Eardley Road, has quite an urban and built up character. The road is dominated by the tarmac road-way and all the thick yellow lines and clutter which accompanies this. This dominant highway diminishes any special character, which the road might have.

The western end of Eardley Road has a more spacious and historic feel.



Good wall in Eardley Road

Emily Jackson Close

Emily Jackson Close is directly off Eardley Road and has a more open and special feel. The Close is dominated by the fine and listed Emily Jackson House.



Visually low-key bungalows in Emily Jackson Hospital

Gordon Road

Gordon Road is dominated by St Thomas's Church. St Thomas' Church, designed by the prolific Roman Catholic Church architect Frederick Walters.

Looking south-west between 36 and St Thomas' Church, there is a good gap and one can see the backs of the houses along Granville Road.

Gordon Road has some fine curves in the road and these are characteristic of a pre-planned Estate layout.



Gordon Road attractive older style sign.

Granville Road and South Park

Granville Road is a long road running south-east to north-west through the middle of the Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area.

The character of the Conservation Area is partly defined by ordered rows of mainly semi-detached houses down Granville Road towards the railway station. There is a distinct change from the southern end of the area, where the houses are well maintained and largely unmodified, to the north where there are gaps in the continuity of the 19th Century buildings, and newer and less distinguished infill has replaced the original. The spaciouly sited villas in the landscaped setting of South Park contrast sharply in character with the ordered rows on the east side of Granville Road and with the more modest and closely spaced houses in Gordon Road and parts of Eardley Road.

From the new block of flats on the west side to the sharp bend in the road above the empty site where the Railway and Bicycle Public House was located, there is little left of the original development, and the older houses are often in a poor state of repair. On the opposite side of the road the once elegant villas have been converted into offices or sub-divided into flats, and once again are often in need of refurbishment.

There are many mature trees and areas of high landscape quality along Granville Road.



South Park

Tubs Hill and London Road

This road has a characteristic of a busy and urban road. This is unsurprising as this is a major road running down a steep hill to Sevenoaks Rail Station. There are many noteworthy buildings along this road. 2 areas were added to the Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area along this road.

Fine topography is visible along London Road looking up south towards Emily Jackson House. The lush green slope just east of the new development on Tubs Hill is particularly noteworthy.

There is also a fine view to an open triangle of land just to the west of 136 London Road.

125 London Road is a particularly fine early nineteenth century brick house.

141-151 London Road includes the stone retaining wall.

There is some interest along this road and the road should not be allowed to dominate the surrounding historic environment.



125 London Road

4.1 Negative Features

In contrast to those examples that enhance the character of the Conservation Area, there are some parts where the potential has not been realised, or where the buildings or details positively detract from the atmosphere.

There is much untidy signage and a general lack of maintenance throughout Conservation Area.

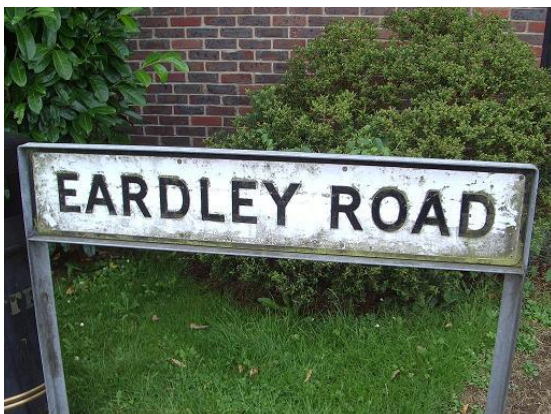
Much of the existing signage including street signs are just standard units that display no special status for use in historic areas. This is poor. There are good examples from elsewhere of the use of special and individual street furniture, road signage and yellow restricted parking lines in historic Conservation Areas.



Unnecessary badly painted thick yellow lines in Granville Road.

In Conservation Areas special regulations apply under The Traffic Management Act to double yellow lines, which allow them to be painted in narrow primrose lines. It should be implemented throughout the entire Conservation Area as budgets allow and renewal work takes place.

This lack of uniqueness also applies to other street furniture such as benches and also to street lighting.



Bland and standard road-sign

Parking is definitely a pressure, which impacts negatively on the Conservation Area.

The presence of cars can be integrated and softened using planting and other methods. The use of good quality materials is also important.

The presence of numerous parking bays adds clutter to the street scene and the recent installation of countless black poles adds inappropriate repetition and visual uniformity and formality to an area, which must retain some informal qualities.



Unightly parking in Clarendon Road



Unightly car clutter in South Park

The Railway and Bicycle Public House and the Farmer's Arms opposite were mentioned in the 2000 Appraisal as sites worthy of possible inclusion into the Conservation Area. Unfortunately, they have both now been demolished and the sites are currently vacant. This is a regrettable situation as these are very prominent sites. Permission has been granted for redevelopment and the sites should be regularly reviewed.

4.2 Key Issues

This Appraisal concludes that the most important issues which affect the special architectural and historic interest of The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area are:

- Parking pressure and associated clutter;
- Maintenance and replacement of inappropriate standard features;
- Loss of characteristic houses on large plots and their replacement with smaller uncharacteristic smaller houses or flats;
- Loss of traditional details;
- Presence of cheap low-quality replacement materials. This is perhaps less prevalent than it has been in previous years, although landlords and house owners wanting to make spurious savings on maintenance and increases to thermal efficiency still insist on these inappropriate changes;



UPVC windows in Argyle Road

- Inappropriate change of use from single family house to flats or low-key commercial uses such as nursing homes and so forth. There are different planning rules relating to flats and commercial properties which should be noted. Flat conversions provide a means to increase the supply of smaller more affordable homes which are currently under-represented in Sevenoaks and through the draft Core Strategy we are seeking to encourage a greater proportion of small units in new developments. There have been cases where flat conversions have had adverse impacts on the Conservation Area and there will be cases in the future where we will need to refuse permission because of adverse impact, however, flat conversions are not inappropriate in principle in the Conservation Area. Poor quality flat conversions have had a damaging impact in the past and any future flat conversion proposals need to be designed to respond to the distinctive features of the Conservation Area and avoid harmful impact, such as adding to the visual impact of parking.
- A lack of maintenance in the public realm extends to the private arena. Houses must be regularly maintained and painted. The use of modern materials should be discouraged.



Lack of maintenance and UPVC windows in Granville Road house

5.0 MANAGEMENT

Historic buildings and places are a built environment resource in which everyone has an interest. Changes are inevitable but it is important to understand and then seek to sustain or enhance areas.

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

The built and natural heritage should be conserved and any new development should protect and enhance cherished assets of local architectural, cultural, and conservation importance and the character of the surrounding landscape. Local distinctiveness is an important part of character to be assessed both in the context of the whole conservation area, and the site and its immediate surroundings, when putting together any development proposal.



Historic railings in Argyle Road

5.1 Current and Future Pressures on the Area

Significant development pressure from developers and house owners/builders could lead to very detrimental changes (which appear at times very minor). Given the high degree of historic assets surviving within the conservation area any development is likely to impact on the character and appearance of the area. Very careful consideration of the fine grain and scale of the area is needed in any interventions. A thorough understanding of even small areas of potential development is essential in order to maintain the overall quality and authenticity of the historic core. This information should be provided by any developer.

Increasing the strength of the linkages between The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area and the adjoining countryside would be positive. Low-key information boards could be developed which encourage pedestrians to use footpaths. Reducing the degree of intrusion of vehicular traffic would also increase the attractiveness of the area, but this needs to be balanced against accessibility and provision of vehicle parking facilities.

Any new development should encourage high quality and innovative design that reflects local identity and distinctiveness and promotes healthy, safe and secure living and working environments. The design and layout must be informed by the wider context, having regard not just to the immediate neighbouring buildings but the townscape and landscape of the whole area. The pattern and pedestrian scale of existing local streets and spaces should help determine the character and identity of the new development. Pedestrian linkage and flow should be carefully considered in relation to existing patterns.

The dominance of cars, both moving and parked, is an issue in the Conservation Area.

5.2 The need for contextual design.

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

The following are general principles that should be adopted for all development within the conservation area.

Scale.

Scale is the combination of a building's design, height and bulk when related to its surroundings. Most of the buildings in The Conservation Area are two storeys and are of an attractive late Victorian or early twentieth century character. Proposals for new or replacement buildings must show how the new structure will relate to its context.

Extensions to existing buildings.

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

Repairs

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

Windows



Parking pressure in Argyle Road

The commonest window types within the conservation area are single glazed white painted timber windows, in the form of vertical sliding sashes or simple casement windows.

Listed Building Consent is always required to alter the form of fenestration in listed buildings. Windows of traditional design, which are in keeping with the building they belong to and respect the historic nature of The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area, make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Windows should normally be white painted

5.3 General Improvements

Several of the buildings, would benefit from redecoration: new, more traditional windows; repairs and improvements to their exterior

5.4 Traffic and Streetscape

The dominance of vehicles both moving and parked is an issue in The Conservation Area (see above and page 37). Despite the A21 bypass to the west of Sevenoaks, The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area is busy at most times of the day and this does create a poor environment for pedestrians.

Clear guidelines for Street works in conservation areas should be prepared.

Streetscape and Public Realm

The relationship between buildings and public realm in The Conservation Area is very important. There is a clear hierarchy of spaces informed by pedestrian routes, the character of the street, that is to say the width of the road, its surfacing material, positions of buildings relative to the carriageway and footway where these exist, and the functions and uses of the buildings in the town centre.



Example of poor highway maintenance South Park - note stone kerbs, concrete kerbs, granite setts and blacktop

5.5 Streetscape Design Principles

Best practice principals to be adopted as part of the design process for streetscape works within Sevenoaks conservation area include the following:

Surface Materials

Surface materials form the foreground of the street scene. Quality in the design and construction of footways and street surfaces is vital to the character of the area.

- Relate ground surfaces to the local context.
- Keep paving simple and avoid discordant colours.
- Maintain and restore historic paving and detail such as kerbs and gulleys.



Historic Setts in Clarendon Road

Street furniture

The finest historic streetscapes often have the minimum amount of street furniture sited carefully to reinforce an underlying sense of visual order.

Therefore:

- Retain historic street furniture which reinforces local character; identify and remove superfluous or redundant items.

- Minimise signage and locate signs on existing bollards, lamp posts or walls and buildings at the back edge of the pavement.
- Use a unifying dark colour for all street furniture items.
- Reduce guard rails to a minimum and use simple designs that relate to local character
- Avoid standardised lighting and choose the design and light source most appropriate for the area.



Standard lamppost in Eardley Road

Traffic management

- If traffic calming measures are required, they should be fitted sensitively into the street-scene as though they were part of the original character of the area.
- Adopt a minimalist approach. Any works should involve minimal visual interference with the established streetscape and respect the historic street layout.
- Limit road markings to those essential for highway safety.



Good wall outside No 5 South Park



Good wall in South Park

5.6 Sustainable design

To encourage sustainable development, all new buildings should use products with a low environmental impact, including the use of locally sourced materials from sustainable resources. Where appropriate in a conservation area, new buildings should also include provisions for waste reduction, the re-use of materials and should be energy efficient, including the use of renewable energy systems.

Energy efficiency for the existing buildings within the conservation area could be improved by such measures as loft insulation and the provision of secondary glazing, subject to the views of the Council's conservation and building control officers.

The Council will seek to ensure that existing local facilities are retained and their viability maintained by facilitating further environmental improvements and high quality new development.

5.7 Pride and Identity

The suburban area is a quintessential part of the traditional image of rural England and a vital part of the English rural economy. The Granville Road and Eardley Road Conservation Area faces a wide range of challenges including the economic, social and physical impact, the adverse effects of traffic on the area and erosion of environmental quality. In common with surrounding countryside, The Conservation Area will always change. This area's long history and rich historic fabric are assets which, if wisely used, can help to produce an agreeable and interesting built environment, economic prosperity and a sense of pride and identity.



Good brickwork on army cadet building in Argyle Road

Acknowledgements:

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Clarendon Rd - view west over Clarendon Place, note uncharacteristic fence on boundary with Clarendon Place. Topography means Clarendon Place is virtually hidden from view.

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Robert Rummey

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Street Improvements in Historic Area

English Heritage
Guidance Note 1993



Restrained, discreet and good entrance to South Park



Discreet bungalow and good view in South Park

English Heritage guidance - Unlisted buildings in a conservation area

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

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?



Good new railings on Eardley Road

- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?

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

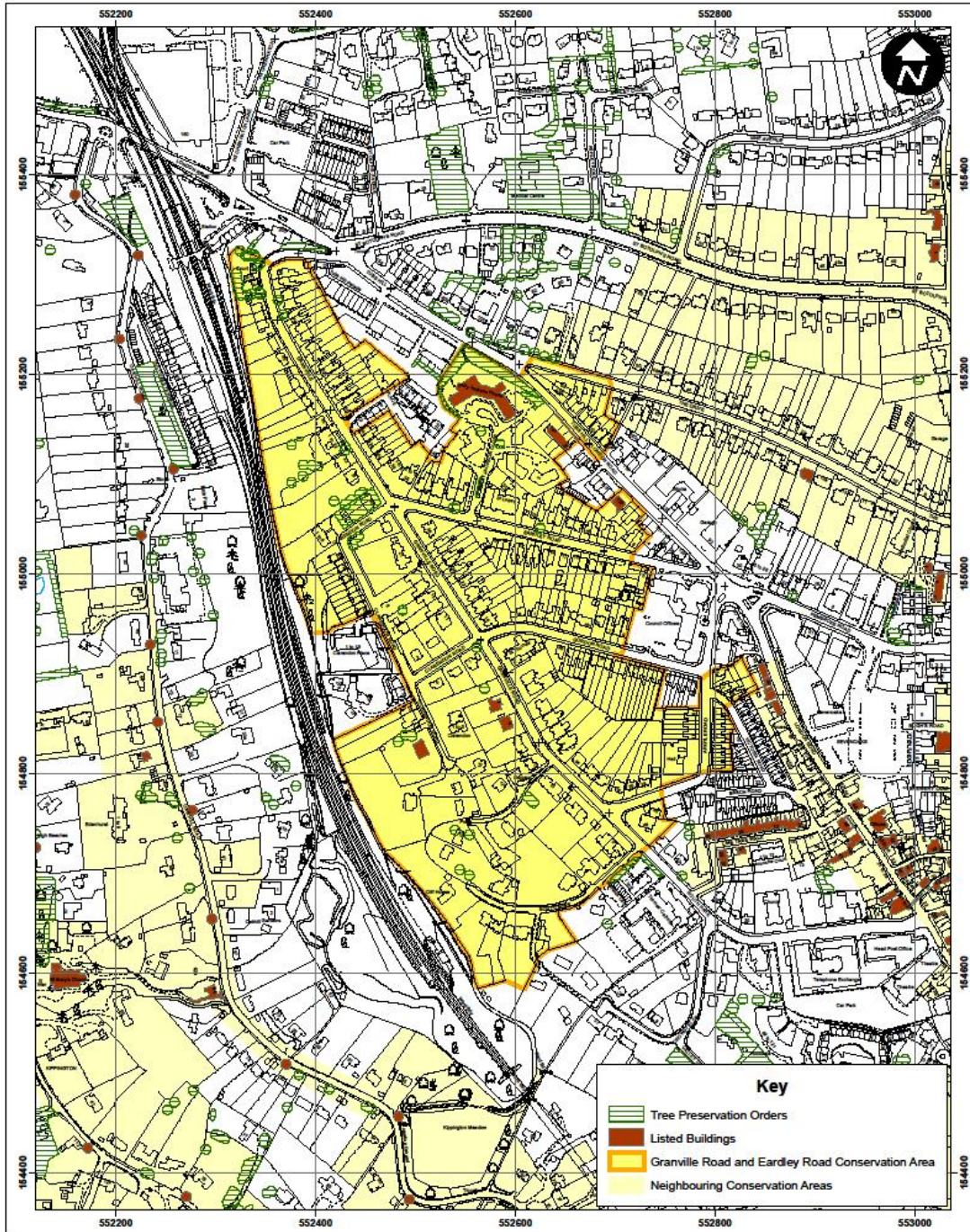
Guidance on conservation area appraisals – August 2005



Good wall in Victoria Rd



Good view towards Downs, South Park

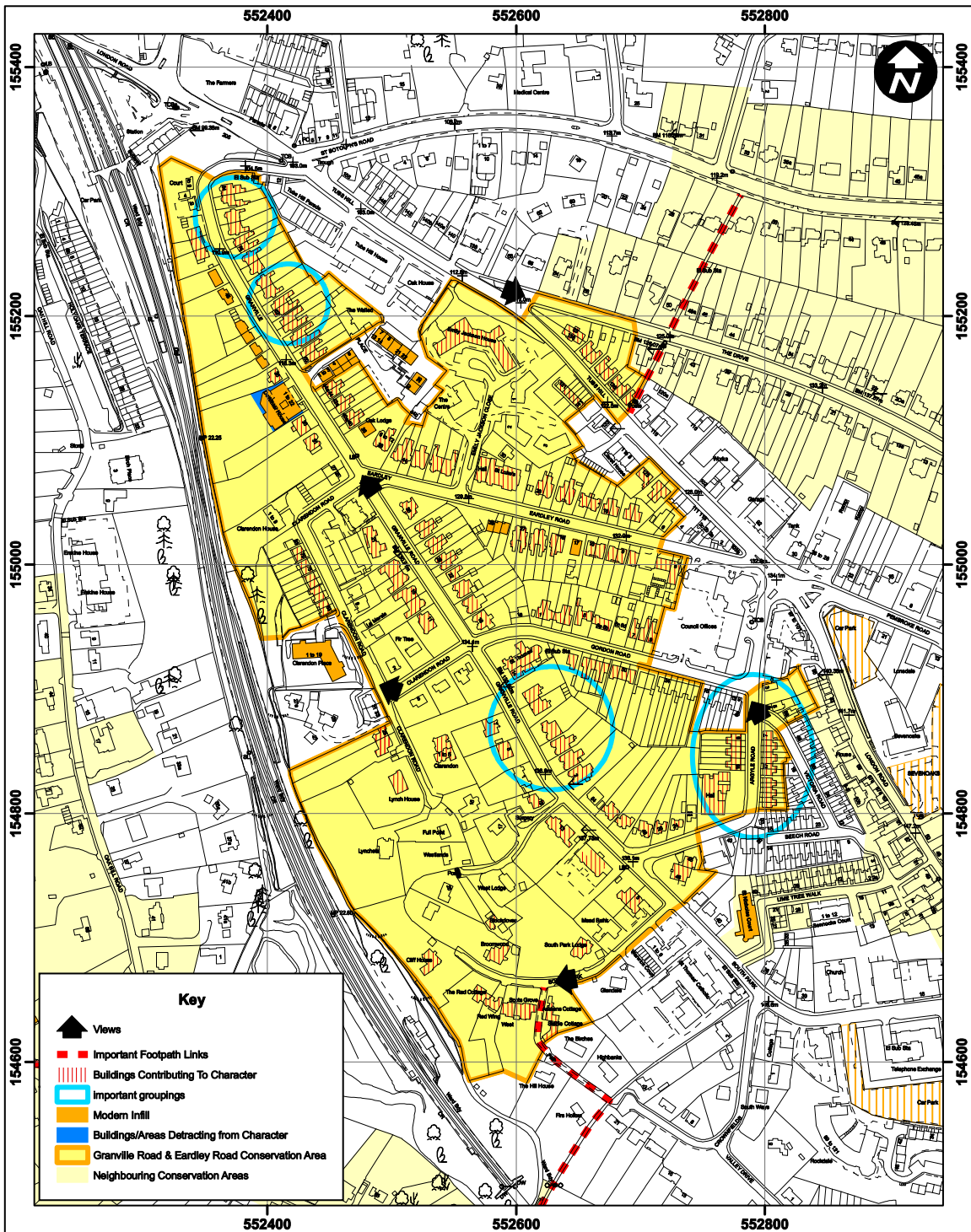


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Map 4
Granville Road and
Eardley Road
Conservation Area
Designations

Scale 1:3,500
Date 20/02/2009
Drawn By FMcG

Produced by the Information Systems Team, Sevenoaks District Council



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Map 5
Granville Road and
Eardley Road
Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Scale 1:4,000
 Date 01/05/2009
 Drawn By FMcG

Produced by the Information Systems Team, Sevenoaks District Council