

The Vine

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

PLANNING GUIDANCE



War Memorial Overlooking The Vine Cricket Ground



2009

The Vine

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 May 2009 and adopted as Informal Planning Guidance.

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1 Knole Paddock, Seal Hollow Road (This is an example of a quality Edwardian villa it is an interesting and visually important property.)

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44 St Botolph's Road

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Constitutional Club, Dartford Road

1.00 INTRODUCTION



Footpath linking St Botolph's Road and The Drive from St Botolph's Road

This document replaces the Vine Conservation Area Appraisal which was produced in March 2001 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

Following a detailed survey and review, in September 2007, it was agreed that the Vine Conservation Area should be redesignated to include St Botolph's Road and The Drive.

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 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.



Attractive garage at 1 Knole Paddock, Seal Hollow Road

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

1.3 The Benefits of Being in a Conservation Area

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

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



Poor UPVC windows in flats in St Botolph's Road – these require planning permission.

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 Vine 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 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 Vine Conservation Area Appraisal 2001. 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 the Area.
- Provide guidance and set out objectives to preserve and enhance the buildings, structures and features.
- Identify distinctive public realm character within the conservation area, 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.

Close up of Constitutional Club, Dartford Road

2.00 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. The Regional Spatial Strategy and Kent & Medway Structure Plan policies also provide the general strategic policy context.

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 saved Local Plan policies and any policies that may be saved from the Kent and Medway Structure Plan will continue to have development plan status. 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.



Listed Bandstand

2.3 Local Policies

The Kent and Medway Structure Plan includes a number of policies, which are particularly important in conservation areas. Policy QL 1 indicates that all development should be well designed and of high quality and should respond positively to the scale, layout, pattern and character of local surroundings. Policy QL6 states that the primary planning policy in conservation areas is to preserve or enhance their special character or appearance and QL8 says that listed buildings will be preserved and their architectural and historic integrity and the character of their settings will be protected and enhanced.

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.**



Attractive gap on St Botolph's 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. The 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. Any proposals should always be discussed with the Council at an early stage. Planning permission is likely to be required for the erection of any building or structure within the garden of the house, for example, a workshop, pavilion, greenhouse and so on (where these are larger than 10m³).

Bland modern light standard in Judds Piece by Vine.

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

Other commercial premises and flats

Any extension or alteration to other commercial premises or 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 of intent to cut down, top, lop, uproot or destroy a tree within a conservation Area. The Council will then advise if it wishes to raise an objection. If a response is not received from the Council within 6 weeks of the notice being given, work may go ahead. This requirement does not apply to trees which have a diameter less than 75mm (3") when measured at a height of 1.5m (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 Vine 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.

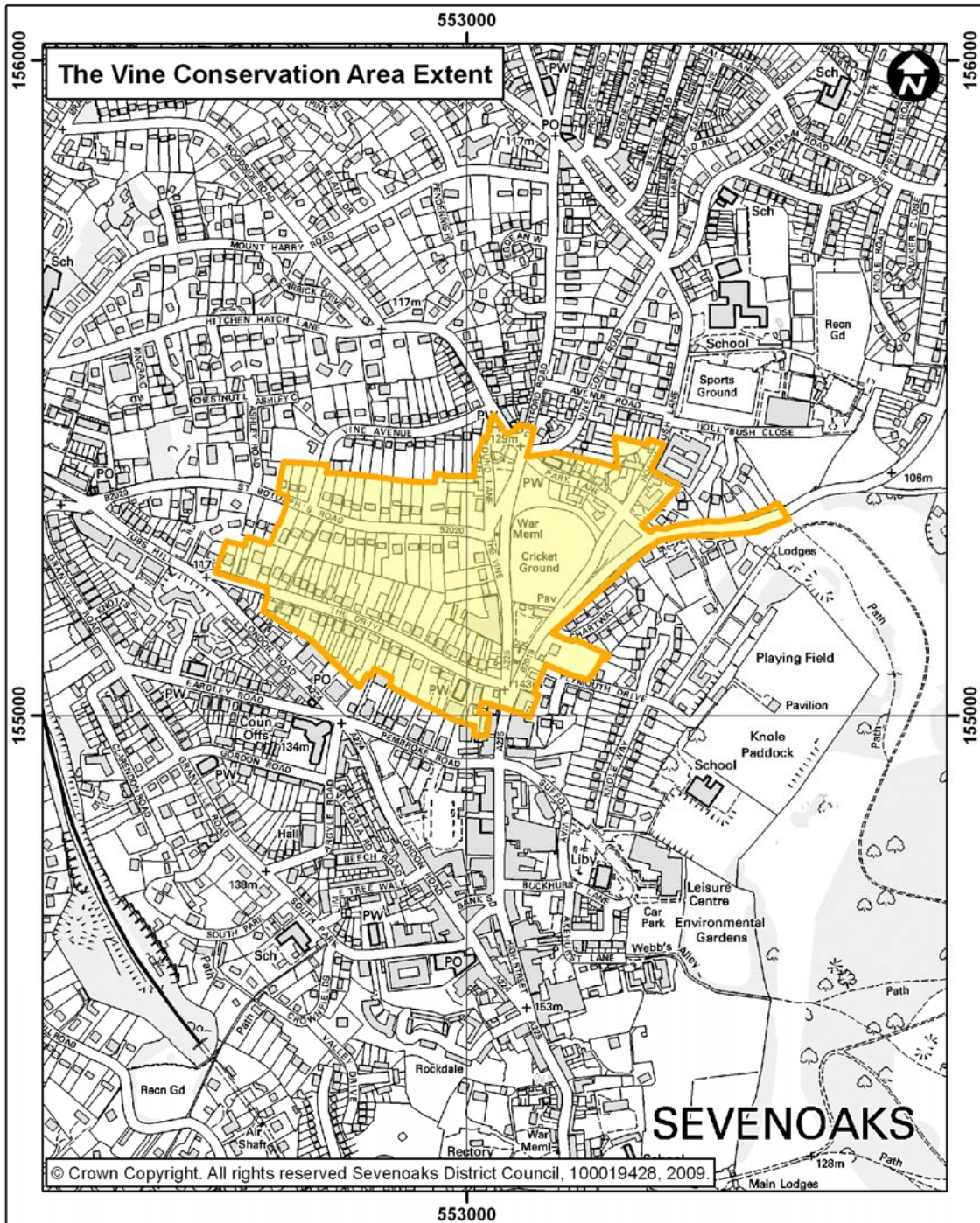
If you live in or occupy a listed building, further guidance on the controls that apply is available from the relevant development control team. When a building is listed, this covers the building both internally and externally and also any object or structure fixed to it. In addition any object or structure 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.



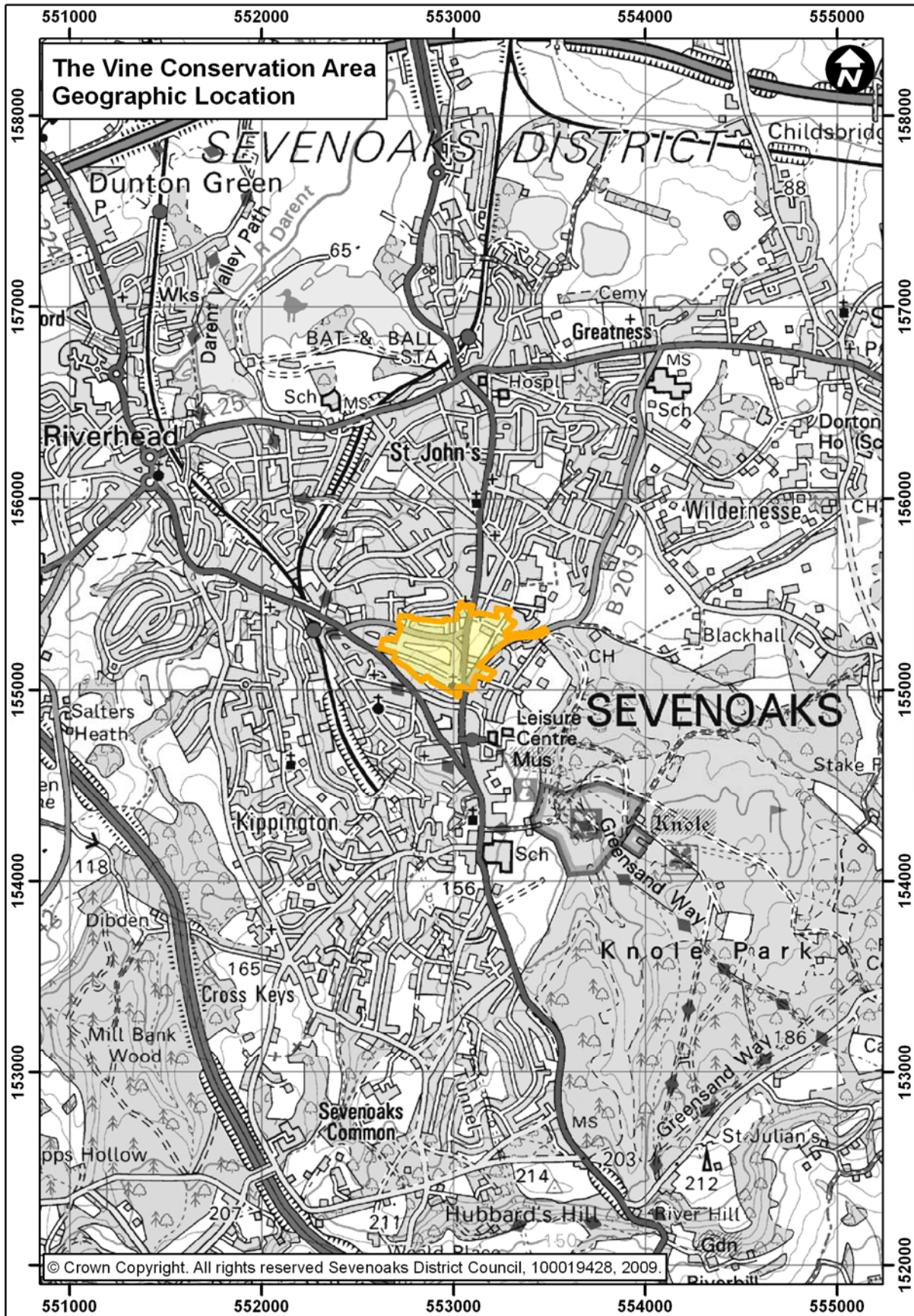
Attractive green space in Hollybush Lane near the Vine cricket ground. See also Management Plan.



3.00 CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 General Description

Vine Conservation Area covers 18.95 hectares immediately to the north of the High Street. It includes the historic Cricket Ground and the roads which immediately surround this. It also includes two quiet and leafy residential roads to the west and a spur along Seal Hollow Road to the east. The northern end has a significant number of important trees that are protected with preservation orders.



Map 2 Geographical Location

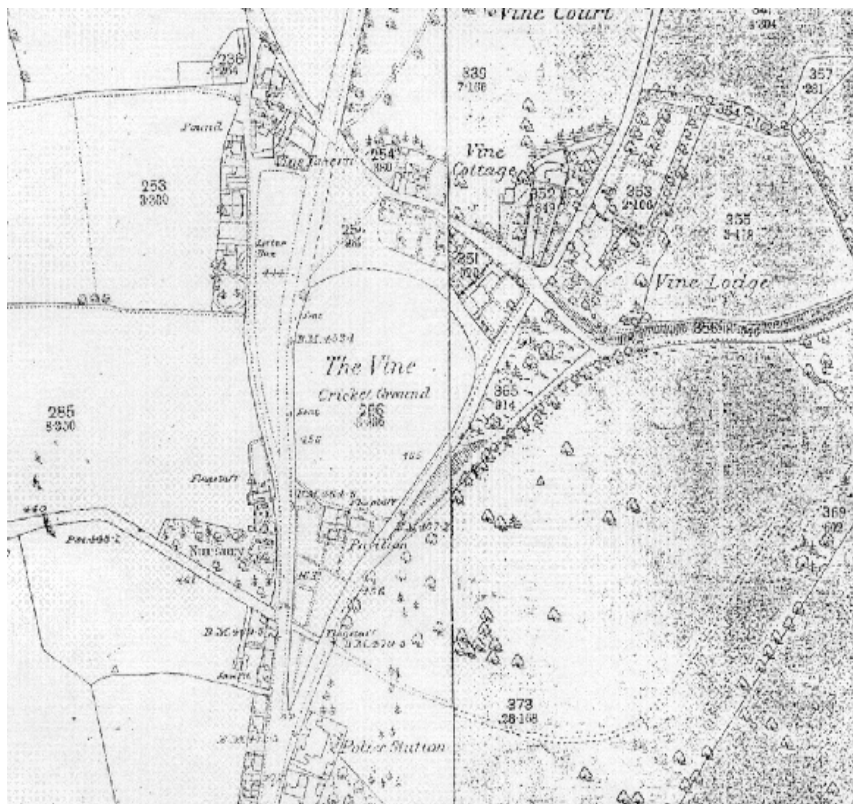
3.2 Location and Geographical Context

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.

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.



The Vine in 1869

3.3 Historical Development

The Vine cricket ground, which is one of the oldest in existence, was given to the town in perpetuity by the 3rd Duke of Dorset in about 1778. He was at this time the owner of Knole, and the town's main landowner. The first fully reported match between Kent and Sussex took place here in 1734.

The cricket theme has a link with the Bat and Ball area reputedly named after a cricket bat factory, which was for some time a thriving local industry.

The name of the area is attributed to the location of a small vineyard kept by the bailiff to the Archbishop of Canterbury to provide his Grace with wine. Vine House to the west of the green was built in 1731 but the remaining houses date from the early 19th Century or later apart from Mount Herman (No. 2 Park Lane), which is dated 18th Century. The pavilion was erected in 1850 and the bandstand in 1894. The adjoining band practice room is also from the turn of the century.

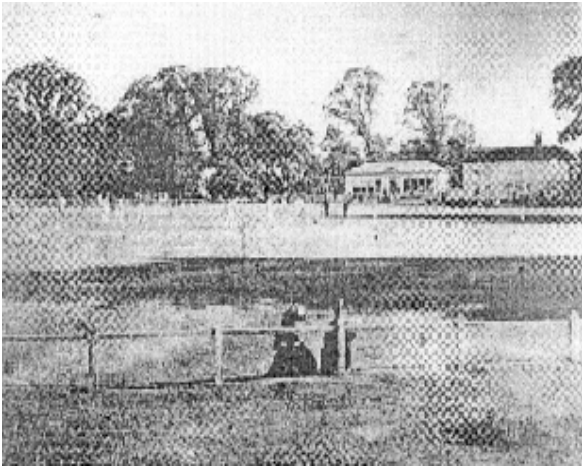
Before the pavilion was erected, the 'Cricketing House' was used by the Cricket Club. This was later turned into two cottages before it was demolished to make way for the bandstand.

The Club Hall which adjoined the Constitutional Club, built in 1890, where the pond is now situated, was a popular centre for dances and other entertainments until it was destroyed by a bomb during the second world war.

Seven oak trees representing the name of the town were planted at the North end of the cricket ground in 1902 to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII. Six of these trees were uprooted by the 1987 hurricane but replacements have since been planted.



The Cricketing House (Before the pavilion was erected the 'Cricketing House' was used by the Cricket Club. This was later turned into two cottages before it was demolished to make way for the current bandstand.)



Early Photograph Of The Cricket Pitch

The 1895 Ordnance Survey Map shows fields and woods where St Botolph's Road and The Drive is situated today. By 1901, St Botolph's Road and The Drive had been laid out.

There were strong regulations as how the houses were to be laid out. Buildings were to be erected at least 20 feet from the road and they should only be used for dwelling purposes. Each plot should have a fence next to the road. Exceptions were made for the plots next to Tubs Hill where dwelling houses with shops were allowed.



St Botolph's Road

3.4 Landscape

Landscape is crucially important in the Vine Conservation Area. The Cricket Pitch itself is a superb piece of landscaped open space. The uninterrupted views out of the Area to the North Downs and across the Cricket Pitch are very important and crucial.

The landscape impact is also notable along Seal Hollow Lane where the rise in the land on the Cricket Pitch edge is prominent.(see photos below)



3.5 Trees and Natural Features

Trees and open space contribute strongly to the special character of The Vine Conservation Area. The trees along St Botolph's and The Drive are integral to the special interest of this part of The Conservation Area.

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

3.6 Architectural Description

Although the majority of the Conservation Area is open space, the surrounding buildings illustrate several eras of the town's history from the 18th Century Vine House and Mount Harmon, through to the modern extension to 165 High Street. There is an interesting variety of architectural styles and use of materials.



Vine House

Neo classical styling predominates among the earlier buildings and brick stucco and slated roofs are much in evidence. The pavilion is weather boarded as is No. 3 Pound Lane and the two Churches, (Methodist and Baptist Chapel), and Vine Lodge are built in local ragstone.



165 High Street and important junction between Seal Hollow Road and the Dartford Road.



The Old Library (left – converted to offices) and the Constitutional Club are red brick with decorative brick and stone detailing below slate roofs. The club has an hexagonal turret surmounted by a timber lantern and the library has a lead dome and cupola.

The Police Station, (below), successfully converted to flats similar to so many in this part of Kent, is a neat, restrained little building which, like the library, has a somewhat unexpected cupola.



The only modern buildings included within the area are the garage and new block of retirement flats adjacent to them. Although of no great architectural merit, these buildings are relatively unassuming and do not detract from the character of the area. This site is due to be redeveloped soon (2009).



The buildings devoted to the enjoyment of the open spaces - pavilion, bandstand and shelter, together with the little thatched kiosk on the Northern side, are cheerful and decorative without being over exuberant.

The pleasure gardens have a rustic feel with a timber bridge and pergola that supports a magnificent wisteria, but these are somewhat at odds with the style of the bedding planting which has a distinctly municipal flavour!



The low timber fence to the Cricket Pitch and the Traditional park seating are appropriate in scale and have not changed in style since the early photograph taken in 1905. In other areas metal railings predominate and contribute to the general open feeling of the area.



The architecture of **St Botolph's Road and The Drive** is dominated by the wide tree lined streets and the abundance of fine Victorian and 1920s and 1930s architecture. Many of the houses are set back and this adds to architectural appeal.



Architecturally attractive houses and groupings on St Botolph's Road and The Drive.

The stunning topography of St Botolph's Road and The Drive is notable and enhances the architecture. Architectural groupings are important and enhance the landscape.



St Botolph's Road from the Vine

4.00 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

4.1 Character Areas

It is relevant to consider The Vine Conservation Area in 2 separate areas. The Vine Cricket Ground and surrounding roads and St Botolph's Road and The Drive. Each has a crucial character and detailed part to play in the overall character of The Vine Conservation Area.

4.2 The Vine Cricket Ground and surrounding roads

Standing on the Vine Cricket Ground one is immediately aware of the setting of Sevenoaks on top of the hill with far reaching views to the Downs in the North. It is somewhat of a surprise to come upon this area of open space almost in the centre of a busy market town, and the ambience of the area is markedly different from that of the High Street and London Road.



The houses around the ground are set well apart and the feeling of spaciousness is reinforced by the number of mature trees that have had room to develop without constriction.



The trees around the Vine Tavern and Baptist Church are particularly important in defining the boundary of the Conservation Area and framing the view northwards to the Downs.

The predominant impression within the Conservation Area is of openness with interesting views across and beyond the cricket pitch. The generous spacing between the properties highlights their own individual characters framed by the trees and the wide expanse of sky above.



Long views out towards the North Downs are important to the character of this space. Cricket on The Vine is historically important and is also a crucial part of character.

This area is dominated by fine views and topography and this is a crucial part of the character.



4.3 St Botolph's Road and The Drive

St. Botolph's Road and The Drive are defining landmarks of Sevenoaks. These roads help to give the town its distinctive identity. As visitors turn up the hill towards The Vine and town centre, they cannot fail to be struck by the wide expanse of the road, bordered by its avenues of mature chestnut trees and visually pleasing houses

St. Botolph's Road is lined on both sides with mature chestnut trees and detached properties of good proportions that are further set back from the road and screened by a combination of materials denoting boundaries - iron railings, fencing, shrubs / hedges, brick walls and stone walls. The properties to the south side of the road are generally placed higher than the level of the road, while those to the northern side are set at a lower level and partially obscured at pavement level.

The Drive occupies a pronounced gradient and this is an integral part of its character.

The Drive's Methodist Church (below) stands out as a prominent and very attractive landmark. It dates to the turn of the nineteenth century and displays a superb façade.



4.4 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 CA.



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 primrose yellow restricted parking lines in historic conservation areas.

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

Poor and inappropriate yellow lines. In conservation areas special regulations apply to double yellow lines which allow them to be painted in narrow primrose lines. This has been done haphazardly around Walthamstow School where the lines and parking bays have recently been repainted. It should be implemented throughout the entire Conservation Area.

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



Unnecessary thick and thin yellow lines.

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.

4.5 Key Issues

This Appraisal concludes that the most important issues which affect the special architectural and historic interest of The Vine 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 UPVC double glazed windows. 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;



Unnecessary clutter, poor signage, untidy yellow lines. Attractive and characteristic eighteenth century brick wall and unusual large and chunky traditional stone kerbs.

- Inappropriate change of use from single family house to flats. There are different planning rules relating to flats and commercial properties which should be noted. At least one property in St Botolph's Road was noted with PVCU windows. This does require planning permission as this house is being used as flats. UPVC is inappropriate and original timber windows should always be repaired.
- A lack of maintenance in the public realm extends to the private arena. Houses must be regularly maintained and painted. The use of inappropriate materials should be discouraged.



The Pound

5.00 MANAGEMENT

5.1 Conservation Area Management

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

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. 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 alley linking The Drive and St. Botolph's Road (The surfacing and general maintenance of this historic alley should be an issue requiring attention). Some special signage and railings could be considered.

5.2 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. A thorough understanding of even small areas of potential development is essential.

Increasing the strength of the linkages between The Vine Conservation Area and the adjoining countryside would be positive.

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.

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

5.3 The need for contextual design

All development in the conservation area, must respond to its immediate environment and context, in terms of scale, density, form, materials and detailing. Applicants for planning permission must provide a "Design and Access Statement", to justify the design decisions that have been made as the scheme was developed and to show how proposed alterations relate to their context. 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 Vine 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

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 Vine Conservation Area, make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Windows should normally be white painted.



Historic alley linking The Drive and St. Botolph's Road (The surfacing and general maintenance of this historic alley should be an issue requiring attention)

5.4 General Improvements

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

5.5 Traffic and Streetscape

A regular liaison meeting between traffic engineers and conservation could be scheduled. This would inform Highways of any conservation issues and provide a useful forum.

Streetscape and Public Realm

The relationship between buildings and public realm in The Vine 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.



Historic Landmark Post in St Botolph's Road

5.6 Streetscape Design Principles

Best practice principals to be adopted as part of the design process for streetscape works within The Vine 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.



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 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;
- Maintain cast iron columns.

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.

5.7 Paving Treatments and historic kerbs

Particularly unusual and distinctive features of the streetscape are the small areas of historic paving that survive. The historic, archaeological and aesthetic importance of much of this paving should be valued for its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Attractive house overlooking The Vine Cricket Pitch

5.8 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 double 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.

5.9 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 Vine 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 Vine 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.

Acknowledgements:

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 Quatrefoil Consulting Ltd.

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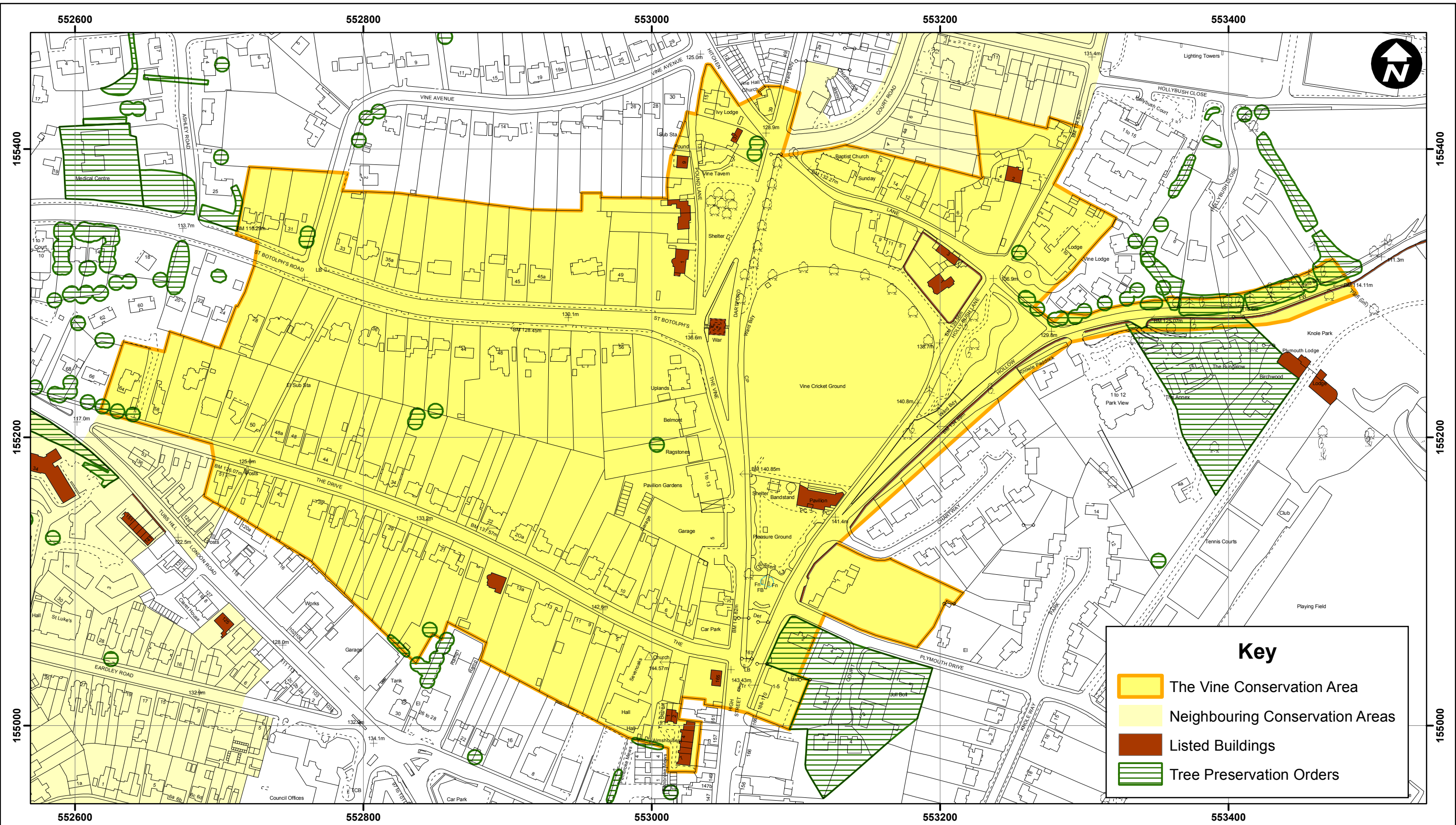
English Heritage guidance - Unlisted buildings in a conservation area

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?
- 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.

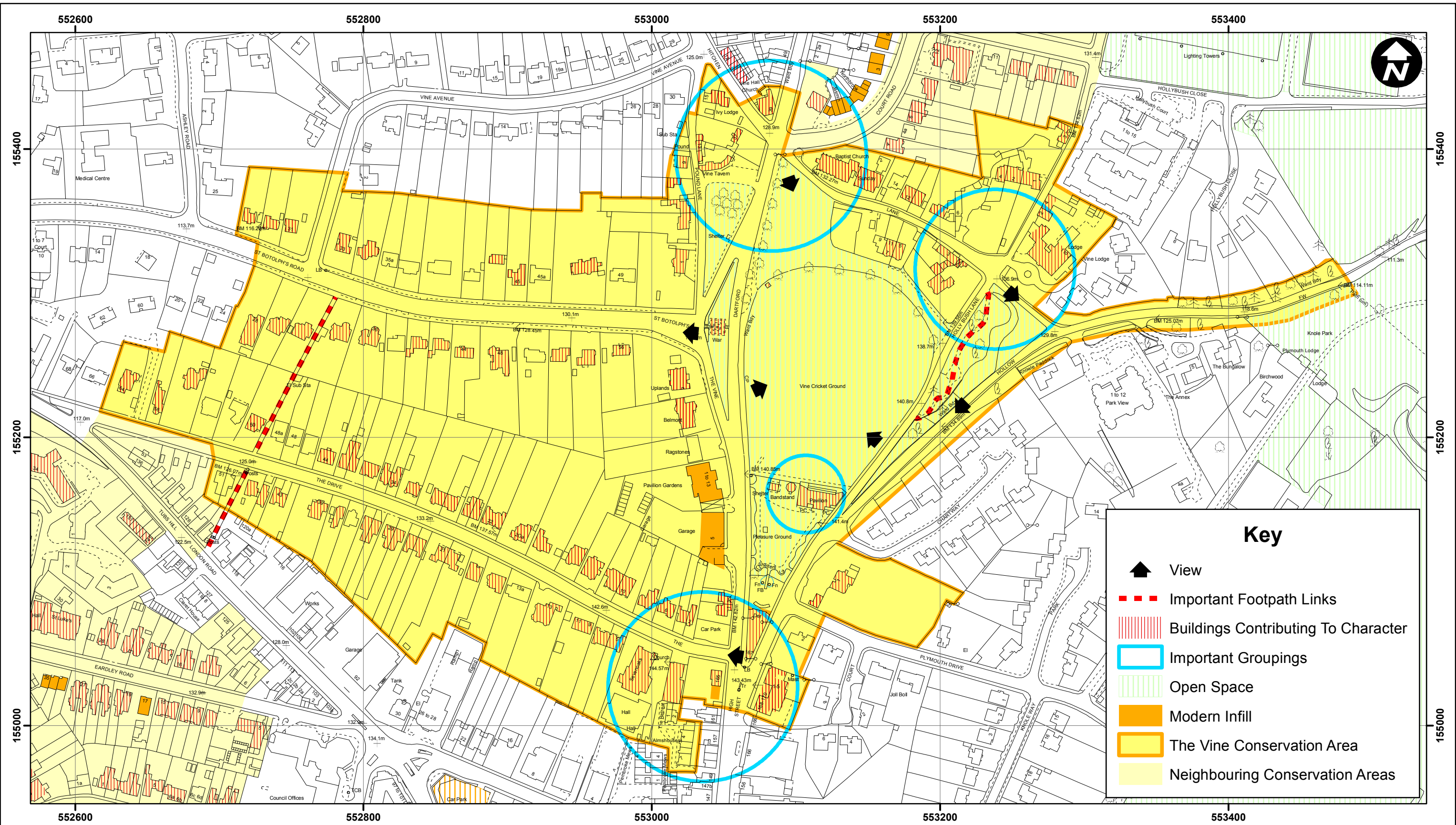
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Map 4 The Vine Conservation Area Designations

Scale 1:2,500
Date 26/09/2008
Drawn By FMcG



Key

- View
- Important Footpath Links
- Buildings Contributing To Character
- Important Groupings
- Open Space
- Modern Infill
- The Vine Conservation Area
- Neighbouring Conservation Areas



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Map 5 The Vine Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Scale 1:2,500
Date 26/09/2008
Drawn By FMcG