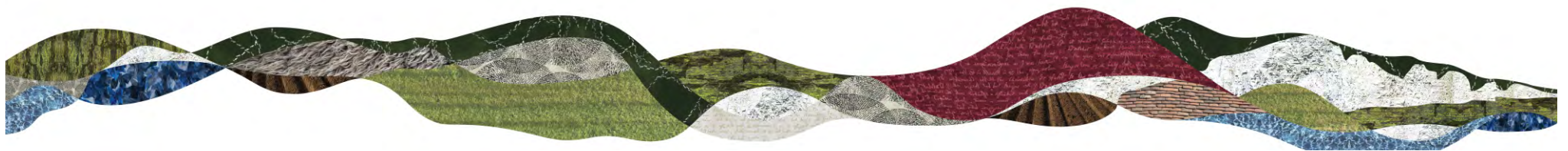




CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PLAN

# KINGSTON-NEAR-LEWES

South Downs National Park Authority - October 2021



# CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION	8
KINGSTON IN THE LANDSCAPE	9
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	12
CHARACTER ANALYSIS	22
Plan Form, Site Layout and Boundaries	
Landmarks, Focal Points & Views	
Open Spaces, Trees and Landscape	
Public Realm	
The Buildings of the Conservation Area	
Building Materials	
ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	40
Quality of New Development	
Loss of Rural Character	
Traffic & Parking	
Extension of the Conservation Area	
Tree Management	
Public Realm Enhancement	
Bio-diversity	
Archaeological Research Opportunities	
MANAGEMENT PLAN	46
ANNEXE: LISTED BUILDINGS	50
CHARACTER APPRAISAL MAP	52



# SUMMARY

## HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Kingston Conservation Area derives its significance from its survival as a typical downland village. The key positive characteristics which contribute to this include:

1. An extremely attractive location on the lower slopes of the South Downs, with the River Ouse valley to the east.
2. A simple, and typical for the locality, linear layout spread along a single street. This links the valley to the top of the downlands and was presumably a drove road in its origin.
3. A range of good historic buildings, including St Pancras Church, dwellings from Manor Houses down to the humblest farm workers' cottages, and agricultural buildings - some still in use as such, which is now relatively unusual. These often sit in spacious plots, many defined by flint walls. 23 buildings in the Conservation Area are listed buildings.
4. The use of a materials palette typical of the downs and drawn from its local environment, giving a distinctive local character. These include brick, flint, weather-boarding, red clay roof-tiles, and black or natural corrugated iron.
5. Overall, a high-quality environment which includes a number of important public and private open green spaces. The former include the

Village Green, St Pancras Green and the churchyard, whilst the latter is particularly true for the land between the church and Juggs Way.

6. Important individual trees and groups of trees.

This significance is enhanced by the availability of high-quality historical research, which permits an understanding of the evolution of the community and the way in which the current physical form of the settlement reflects this.

## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In looking at the Conservation Area, a number of issues and opportunities were identified:

- a. The quality of new development and a lack of regard to the traditional building forms, scale, and materials of construction which characterise the historic village.
- b. Erosion of the historic layout from the 1960s onwards by modern development.
- c. The loss of rural character, including the loss of flint walls and change of use of former farm buildings.
- d. The volume of traffic and parking, including vehicles, horses & walkers, on The Street, which is effectively a dead end.

# SUMMARY (continued)

- e. Better management of trees within the Conservation Area.
- f. Public realm enhancement, including works at the junction of The Street and Ashcombe Lane to create an entry point to the Conservation Area which is visually attractive and which reduces traffic speeds and improves pedestrian safety.
- g. The promotion of biodiversity throughout the Conservation Area.
- h. The opportunity that more detailed archaeological examination of buildings behind their facades presents to better understand the history of the village.

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

A number of aims and objectives emerge from the character appraisal:

- i. An improvement in the quality of new development & protection of the Conservation Area from further infilling development.
- ii. Protection of the rural character of the Conservation Area.
- iii. Protection of important open green spaces, both publically and privately owned, in the Conservation Area.
- iv. Improvements at the junction of The Street with Ashcombe Lane and Wellgreen Lane to reduce traffic speeds, improve pedestrian safety, and create a more attractive entry point to the historic village.

The Management Plan sets out ways in which these aims and objectives can be achieved.

**Action 1** makes clear that the buildings which are identified in the CAAMP as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area will be treated as 'non-designated heritage assets', which means that they have a level of heritage significance which is high enough to merit consideration when planning applications are being considered, whilst not being high enough to justify listing.

**Action 2** seeks to address the poor condition of the village pound, a Grade II listed building.

**Action 3** embeds the Parish Council's Tree Inspection Policy into the CAAMP as a way of protecting the trees within the Conservation Area.

**Action 4** explains how planning and Listed Building Consent applications will be considered and determined to ensure that any new development will respect the special character of the Conservation Area.

This reflects the requirements, placed on Local Planning Authorities by s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area when considering planning applications in a Conservation Area,

Advice is given that promotes the desirability of taking pre-application advice before submission of any planning or Listed Building Consent application.



In determining applications, special attention will be paid to the impact of any proposal on the character of the Conservation Area. Whilst all applications will be determined on their own merits, the Local Planning Authority will generally resist development proposals which involve:

- new buildings which fail to respect the traditional building forms, scale, details, and materials of construction which characterise the historic village.
- the inappropriately-detailed conversion of traditional farm buildings;
- the loss of flint walls;
- the loss of private front- and side-gardens which make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

**Action 5** opens the possibility of creating an Article 4 direction for the Conservation Area if the loss of architectural features and traditional materials through householders' exercise of permitted development rights occurs to an extent that it threatens the special character of the Conservation Area.

**Action 6** seeks to promote the improvement of the Conservation Area with an enhancement scheme at the junction of The Street and Ashcombe Lane; the undergrounding of wires and removal of poles; and the redevelopment of two garages adjacent to Kingston Farm. In delivering these, the National Park Authority would look to work with various partners.









# I. INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Conservation Areas are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Section 69 (1) (a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

1.2 The South Downs National Park Authority has a duty to determine which parts of the Park have that special architectural or historic interest, to designate those parts as Conservation Areas, and to keep the Conservation Areas under review. It is also required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area when performing its planning function in, for example, determining planning applications.

1.3 Kingston was first designated as a Conservation Area by Lewes District Council in 1972. With the creation of the South Downs National Park in April 2011, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) became the Local Planning Authority for the Conservation Area.

1.4 A Character Appraisal was prepared for Lewes District Council by The Conservation Studio and this was adopted by the Council in May 2007. This current document replaces that one.

1.5 This Appraisal seeks to set out what the Local Planning Authority considers are the most significant elements which define the character of the Conservation Area. It has an important role in making informed and sustainable decisions about the future of the area. Whilst comprehensiveness may be sought, however, the omission of any particular feature should not be taken as meaning that it is of no significance.

1.6 It sits within a wider policy context comprising:

- a) The Purposes and Duty of the South Downs National Park.
- b) The National Planning Policy Framework.
- c) The South Downs National Park Local Plan.
- d) English National Parks and the Broads UK Government Vision & Circular 2010.
- e) The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

1.7 In looking at the area, issues which pose a threat to the quality of the area and any possibilities for improvement and enhancement have also been identified.

1.8 A consultation period of eight weeks ran from June 28th 2021 to August 23rd 2021. Consultation letters were also sent directly to residents of the Conservation Area, Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council, and Kingston Parish Council.

1.9 All comments received were considered and the draft document amended as appropriate. It was adopted for the purposes of development management and to inform the wider activities of the SDNPA and its partners on 14th October 2021.

## 2. KINGSTON IN THE LANDSCAPE

2.1 Kingston lies two miles south of Lewes, at a height of 20 to 50 metres OD and in a slight valley on the lower slopes of the South Downs.

2.2 Figure 1 below shows how the old village, recognisable as the Conservation Area highlighted in mauve, sits within the landscape. Like a string of villages to the south, such as Iford and Southease, it was well positioned to exploit a range of ecological resources, including the River Ouse and its wetlands to the east and the downland to the north, west and south. The way in which the single lane of the village runs up the slope of the downs suggests

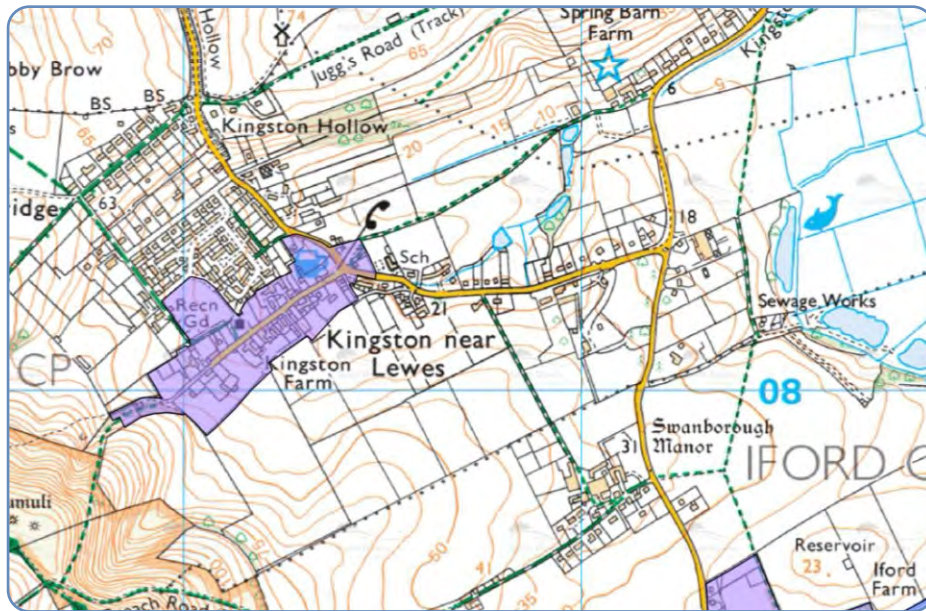


Figure 1: Kingston in its wider landscape context.

its origins as a drove road.

2.3 The valley location produces a strong sense of enclosure within the Conservation Area, with few significant views out into the surrounding countryside. The exception to this is the view straight up The Street, at its southern end at least, to the downs looming over the village. It feels quite remote from the bustle of Lewes and nearby Brighton, and the busy roads which service them, and retains a tranquil rural character.

2.4 Looking back from just above the village on the way to the summit, there are stunning views towards Lewes, the chalk pits of Cliffe, Mount Caburn, and eastwards towards Firle Beacon. Other views towards and from Kingston Ridge and Juggs Way are also important.

2.5 A small stream emanating from a local spring flows down the valley and through the old village (where it is now largely culverted) to emerge just outside the built-up area to the north-east of Kingston. It eventually forms part of the Cockshut, a minor tributary of the River Ouse.

2.6 In terms of geology, Kingston sits on the extensive chalk of the South Downs. This provides lime and flints for building and, where the chalk meets the greensand, water in the form of springs which may have provided the reason for early settlement. The local name 'Old Well Green' for the area around Snednore confirms the availability of water and it is from here that the stream trickles down towards the Cockshut.

2.7 The fields on the lower slopes of the downs are covered in a brown malm soil, well mixed with flint and suitable for arable crops. Open fields are

used mainly for rearing sheep and, when the slopes are less acute, the land is also used for growing crops such as barley and cattle feed on a rotational basis.

2.8 Towards the River Ouse, land, cut by deep drainage ditches, provides water meadows which are suitable for grazing and hay-making. Clay for brick and tile making is available locally, and there is evidence of a former clay pit on Snednore.

2.9 The historic village is connected by a network of historic routes into the surrounding countryside. Figure 2 shows the public rights-of-way spreading across the landscape. Footpaths and restricted byways connect Kingston to Lewes past Spring Barn Farm or along Kingston Ridge. The Street leads directly up the downs, connecting to the South Downs Way and Juggs Way, an ancient footpath connecting Lewes to Brighton.

2.10 There are also a number of significant roads fairly close to the village, though outside the Conservation Area. To the east is the C7, a minor but busy road which runs down the right bank of the Ouse to Newhaven, linking the villages which sit just above the edge of the traditional floodplain of the river.

2.11 To the north, and running broadly east-west, is the A27, a trunk road of national significance carrying large volumes of traffic. Fortunately the topography is such that the road, which is in a dip and therefore generally out of both visual and hearing range, has little sensory impact on the Conservation Area.

2.12 Rather less fortunate is the way that Ashcombe Lane functions as a connection between the C7 and A27, resulting in large numbers of vehicles using it at peak times. Ashcombe Lane is just outside the Conservation Area but the impact of the traffic, and the various measures put in place to slow it down, have a negative impact on its setting.

2.13 Figure 3 shows the landscape setting of the village as it appeared in the earlier 20th century.

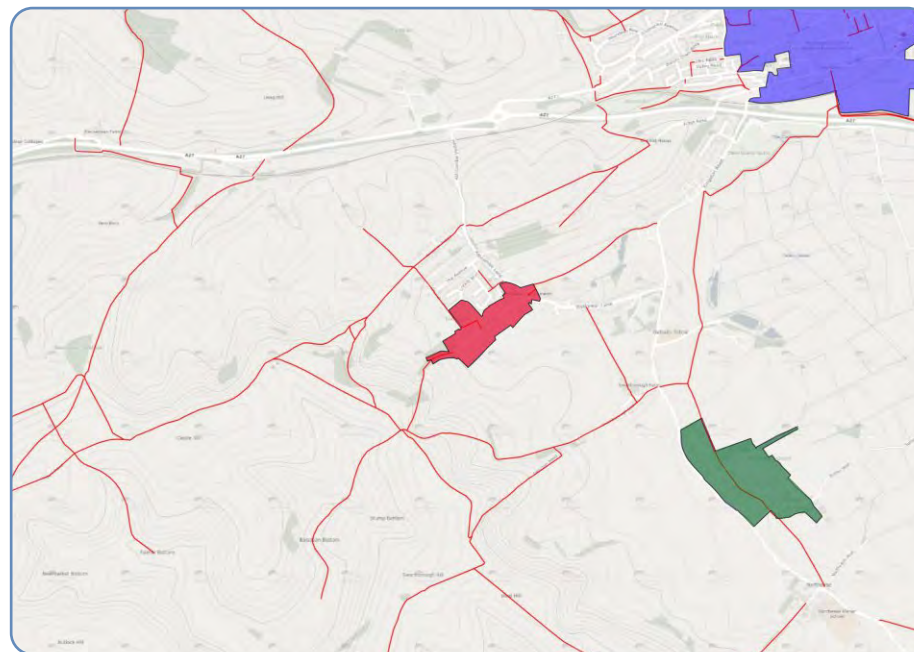


Figure 2: Historic routes connecting Kingston (in red) with Lewes (blue), Iford (green), and the surrounding landscape.





Figure 3: Kingston as seen within the wider landscape context in the early 20th century.



### 3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Kingston has been very well served by its historians and two publications are of particular note. As will be apparent to readers, this brief historical background rests heavily on both. Thanks are also due to Tim Ambrose, archaeologist and long-time resident, who provided much useful information.

3.2 *A Village in Sussex. The History of Kingston-near-Lewes* was written by Charles Cooper, an internationally eminent development economist and resident of the village, and published in 2006. It examines in forensic detail the documentary record for the village from the Saxon period through to the 19th century and, in doing so, provides a deep understanding of the way in which a village in southern England functioned at all levels of society.

3.3 The second piece of research is equally detailed in its treatment but more focussed in its subject. *An Account of the Manor of Hyde* was published privately by its author, Margaret Thorburn in 2001.

3.4 The name “Kingston” is formed from two Old English words, *cyning* meaning a King and *tun*, which indicates an estate farmstead or village, giving us “Kings Village” and indicating Saxon origins for the village.

3.5 At this time the lower Ouse valley would have been a tidal estuary with areas of easily worked fertile soil on its edges, and the Saxons seem to have created a number of settlements at roughly half-a-mile intervals along the river. These include the established villages of Kingston, Swanborough, Norton and Sutton at Iford, Northease, Rodmell, Southease, and Piddinghoe, plus Deans, Harpingden (now lost), Orleswick (now absorbed), and Meeching, the predecessor of Newhaven.

3.6 As shown in Figure 4 below, the parish boundaries in the valley reflect the desire to give access to the various resources - downland for grazing of sheep, land on the lower slope for arable laines, and brooklands for hay meadows and cattle-grazing. Access to the river also provided the ability to fish and make salt. As a result, and following the topography, the parishes are linear and stretch broadly north east - south west.

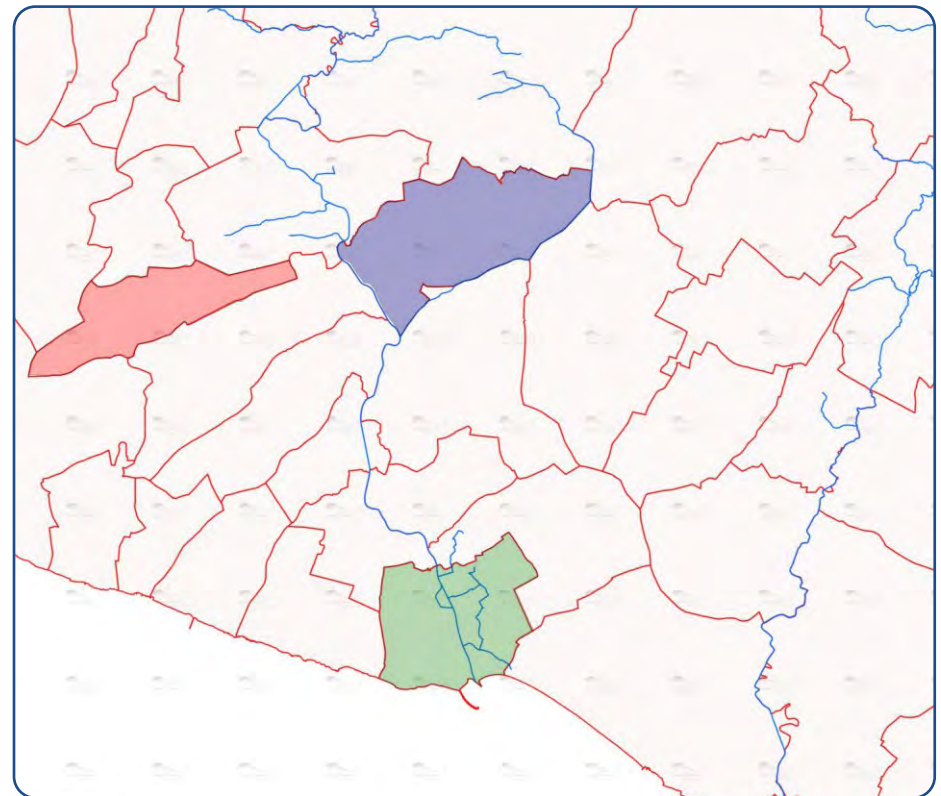


Figure 4: Parish boundaries in the Ouse valley. Kingston is shaded in red, Lewes in blue and Newhaven in Green

3.7 The village does not appear explicitly in the Domesday Survey but forms part of the entry for Iford, or *niworde* as it is called.

3.8 There is no evidence of a Saxon church in Kingston, although a Saxon burial ground has been found not far away on the outskirts of Lewes. However, it is known that that in 1091 William de Warenne gave some of his lands in Kingston to the monks of St Pancras, including one acre on which to build a church. This was not the current structure though, which was not finished until soon after 1300.

3.9 The arrival of the Normans resulted in a more rigorous and systematic imposition of the manorial system, a system of land holding, land management, and social organisation, on England and this included Kingston. A manor comprised land held by the Lord of the Manor, who received the land from a greater Lord (the Tenant in Chief) in return for providing military and civil services. Some of this land was directly farmed by the Lord and this was called the *demesne*.

3.10 The villagers were ranked into a number of groups. *Villeins* had some land of their own but also had obligations to work on the Lord's demesne in return. *Freemen* held their land freely, without any need to work on the demesne, but did have to pay rents or provide military service. *Cottars* (also called *Bordars*) had a small amount of land around their dwelling but also had to work for wages, perhaps taken in kind, and right at the bottom were *serfs*, unfree, landless and explicitly owned by the Lords.

3.11 It is not necessarily the case that the land of a manor was concentrated in one village nor, therefore, that there was only one manor holding land in a village exclusively. Manors could and did hold land in various villages and Kingston is a good example of this.

3.12 In fact, five different manors held land in Kingston. The largest holding was that of the manor of Swanborough, based on the Grange of Lewes Priory. Others holding land in Kingston were Kingston, Hyde, Iford and Houndean manors. However, only the first two held demesne land within the village fields; in the cases of Iford and Houndean, the land was an outlier to the main manor. Figure 5 below shows the various holdings of the manors on The Street.



Figure 5: Manorial land holdings within the village (based on Cooper, 2006, Figure 2.4).

3.13 The village's agricultural land was physically divided into three large open fields which had their origins in Saxon times. These large areas of arable land on the lower lying land, known as *laines* in Sussex vernacular, were West Laine, Swanborough Laine, and Mill Laine (Figure 6).



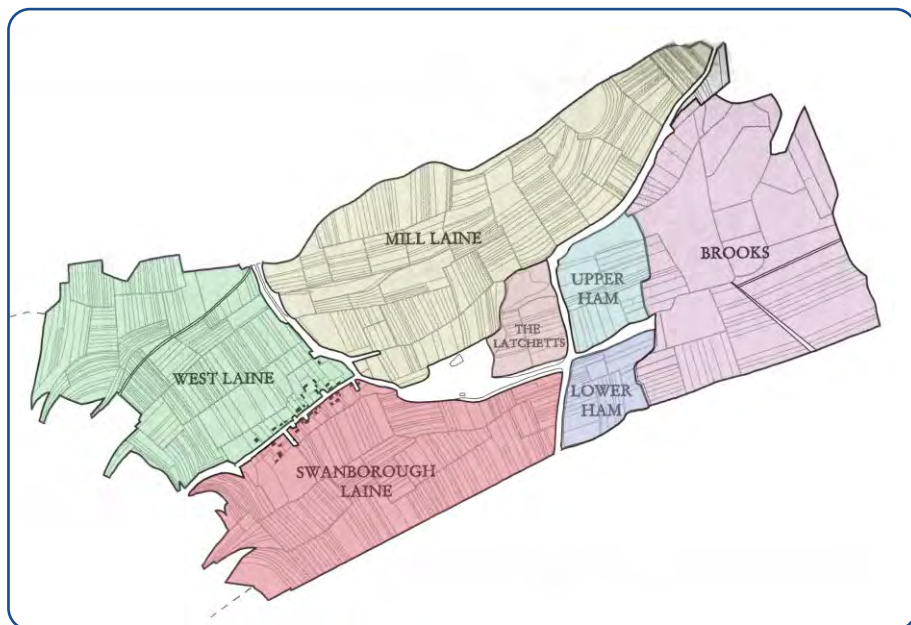


Figure 6: The division of agricultural land around the village.

*West Laine, Mill Laine and Swanborough Laine were the original Anglo-Saxon open fields. The Latchetts, Upper and Lower Ham and Brooks were brought into use later in the middle ages.  
(based on Cooper, 2006, Figure 2.1).*

3.14 The laines themselves were divided into furlongs and strips which were allocated to the different manors, villeins and freeholders in such a way as to ensure a fair distribution of land of equal quality. A *yardland* was the typical holding of a full villein and was made up of strips scattered about the village fields. Each would have had a natural focus in the village and these were the origins of some later farmsteads.

3.15 The origins of the two manors that held demesne land in Kingston are complicated. Charles Cooper's conclusion is as robust as any and is followed here.

3.16 After the Conquest, the de Warennes were given the demesne lands in Kingston that had belonged before 1066 to Queen Eddid. This was the origin of Kingston manor.

3.17 At some point in time, the Earls installed a steward to look after them and other family lands in the vicinity. The steward was the most immediate representative of the Earls and, as such, a person of great significance in the village. Cooper suggested that one of the stewards was *enfeoffed* by the Earls, which is to say that he was given land in exchange for a pledge of service; land which must have been carved out of the demesne and which amounted to about two *hides* (a unit of land originally intended to represent the amount of land sufficient to support a household).

3.18 Cooper's hypothesis further sees the steward's land forming the basis of a *Knight's Fee* (a landholding of sufficient size to support a knight in performing his feudal duties) which is known to have been held by the de Kyngeston family in the 1240s before later passing into the hands of other local families. These include de la Hydes, who gave their name to what eventually became known as Hyde Manor.

3.19 In the later years of the 11th century and into the 12th century the

de Warennes were making gifts of land in Kingston to St Pancras Priory in Lewes and the monks were recorded as holding the manor in 1316.

3.20 The feudal system continued in the centuries after the Norman Conquest but was subject to slow and progressive change which was probably hardly noticeable to the successive generation of villagers. These changes were complex but perhaps the greatest evolution was in the relationship between the land and those who worked it, particularly the villeins.

3.21 The growth in “commutation”, where villeins’ obligations to work on land were commuted to monetary payments, gave some families of freemen and villeins the opportunity to prosper and acquire more land, resulting in a growing middle rank in society. This process was widespread and certainly not unique to Kingston, but some of the Kingston families who benefited include the Martyns and the Fysch’s. As a result, the village of villeins at the Conquest evolved into a village of small individual landholders working their own land by the Tudor period.

3.22 One national event that did have a particular effect in Kingston was the dissolution of the monasteries, given both its physical proximity to Lewes Priory and the role of Swanborough Grange as an important landholder in the life of the village over the centuries.

3.23 The monks of St Pancras had continued to hold the manor until it was dissolved in 1537. At this point the King gave the Priory and its land to Thomas Cromwell, who demolished many of the Priory buildings in 1541. Stone, including worked stone, from the Priory was taken to Kingston and re-used in a number of the buildings, most notably Kingston Manor.

3.24 Following Cromwell’s fall from favour and execution in 1541, the land reverted to the King who in turn passed it on to William, Earl of Arundel.

3.25 The open field system survived until relatively late in Kingston, with other land being drawn into productive use as The Latchetts, Upper Ham, Lower Ham, and Brooks. The high downs were used for pasture in common use and there was no great pressure to enclose land to create pastures as occurred to some degree elsewhere in Sussex and to a significant degree in the English Midlands. As a result, Kingston retained its ‘medieval shape’ for rather longer than some of the nearby villages.

3.26 What did affect Kingston was *engrossment*, the concentration of land within a smaller number of larger land-holdings, albeit still within the open field system, and fewer tenants. The story of the village until the 19th century was that of a series of engrossments undertaken by prominent families which rose and declined in turn, thereby making way for their successors.

3.27 The Newton family, for example, were early engrossers, merging six yardlands previously in two separate ownerships to form one larger farm and the Eversfields likewise merged 12 yardlands. However, the greatest of the early engrossers was the Sackville family.

3.28 Thomas Sackville was created Lord Buckhurst in 1567 and the Earl of Dorset in 1604. Beginning with the purchase of land at Swanborough in 1584, the Sackville family started to take an interest in the land around Kingston. They installed the Vinall family as tenants on that land and they seem to have made a considerable success of farming it.

3.29 Ten years after his first purchase, Sackville bought Kingston Manor, with its fifteen yardlands, to which he added a further 15 Kingston yardlands within a few years. All of this land was tenanted by the Vinall family, which became a prominent family in the village for the next 120 years, eventually buying Kingston Manor in 1634 and acquiring a coat-of-arms soon after.

3.30 As a result of engrossment, by the very end of the 16th century, about

two-thirds of Kingston land was farmed in parcels of more than eight yardlands, and only three or four families controlled this two-thirds.

3.31 A written survey of Hyde Manor was made in 1567 and of Kingston Manor in c 1773, the latter by Thomas Marchant for the manor's owner. It was subsequently redrawn by William Figg for the Duke of Dorset in 1799 (Figure 7). This shows Kingston still surrounded by its medieval common fields divided into strips.

3.32 The 18th century saw the emergence of the Rogers family as significant landholders in Kingston. The family's origin was as Men of Kent, being from the village of Cranbrook in that county. Thomas Rogers, the first in a succession so named, became the Vicar of Iford in 1632. Unusually, his son, the second



Figure 7: A survey of Kingston Manor made in 1799 by William Figg and based on an original plan by Thomas Marchant in 1773.  
(Courtesy of East Sussex County Record Office).

Thomas Rogers, did not follow him into the church but stayed in Iford and slowly built up his landholdings until he was able to secure the tenancy of Swanborough, initially in partnership with William Attree and ultimately in his own right. By that time he had married William Attree's daughter, Mary, and the family lived at Swanborough Manor.

3.33 Thomas II bought land in Kingston for his son, Thomas III. He moved into the village with his wife, Elizabeth Ade, from 1699 to a cottage opposite the church, then known as "Bayley's before Howells". To this simple 17th-century timber-framed Sussex cottage, he added a more polite brick-built facade that survives to this day. Parlour extensions were also added and the brick facade extended to give the whole elevation a consistency of architectural treatment and making it a house of some distinction (Figure 22).

3.34 Thomas III started in the village with the six freehold yardlands of Swanborough Manor, bought for him by his father. Over the years he added more freehold land and tenancies, eventually having access to at least eighteen yardlands. This was the basis for the future advancement of the Rogers' family, with Thomases IV and V both extending the family holdings within the village.

3.35 Part of this acquisitive streak was the purchase of the demesne lands of the much reduced 'Hyde Manor' by Thomas IV in 1782. Although undoubtedly attracted by the land, Thomas was also interested in its manorial status, however dubious, and it was probably at this time that the name Hyde Manor became attached to the current house bearing the name. The house was extended at the same time.

3.36 The other great engrossers in the village in the 18th century were the Maitland family of Kingston Manor. Taken together, the efforts of both families had produced two large farms, Kingston Manor Farm and Hyde Manor Farm, within the village.



3.37 Only in the early 19th century was the land enclosed, when a total of 2,405 acres in the parishes of Kingston and Iford were enclosed by an Inclosure Act of 1830. By far the largest apportionments were those of the Rogers and Maitland families.

3.38 In the 1830s, the Rogers, now fallen on harder times, and the Maitlands sold Hyde Manor and Kingston Manor respectively to the Goring family of Wiston. Purchased in November 1832, Kingston Manor was bought for £17,020 and Hyde Manor followed in October 1833. This consolidation of established farms into large estates was an important feature of land ownership in the 19th century.

3.39 The Gorings retained ownership of much of the land around Kingston until 1908, when they sold the farmland and the farmhouse which is now called Hyde Manor. The house was in turn sold on in the 1920s when the owner decided to build himself a new house on the west side of the farmyard. (Figure 23).

3.40 By the middle of the 19th century it was Hyde Manor that had become the principal farmhouse in the village, employing 24 men and 10 boys on some 1,300 acres where sheep rearing and the corn industry provided, until the agricultural depression in the latter part of the century, a profitable business.

3.41 The growth of the village in the 19th century is reflected in the building of a new school for both Iford and Kingston children, in Iford, in 1872. The tithe map of 1842 shows a linear village and a scattering of farm buildings and cottages (Figure 9) and the same arrangement can still be seen in 1879 and in 1908 as shown on Ordnance Survey maps (Figure 10).

3.42 A Village Hall was built in 1915 (Figure 8) and remains well used and the centre of village life.



Figure 8: The Village Hall was built in 1915 and remains an important community asset.



Figure 9: Tithe Map of 1842  
(courtesy of East Sussex HER).

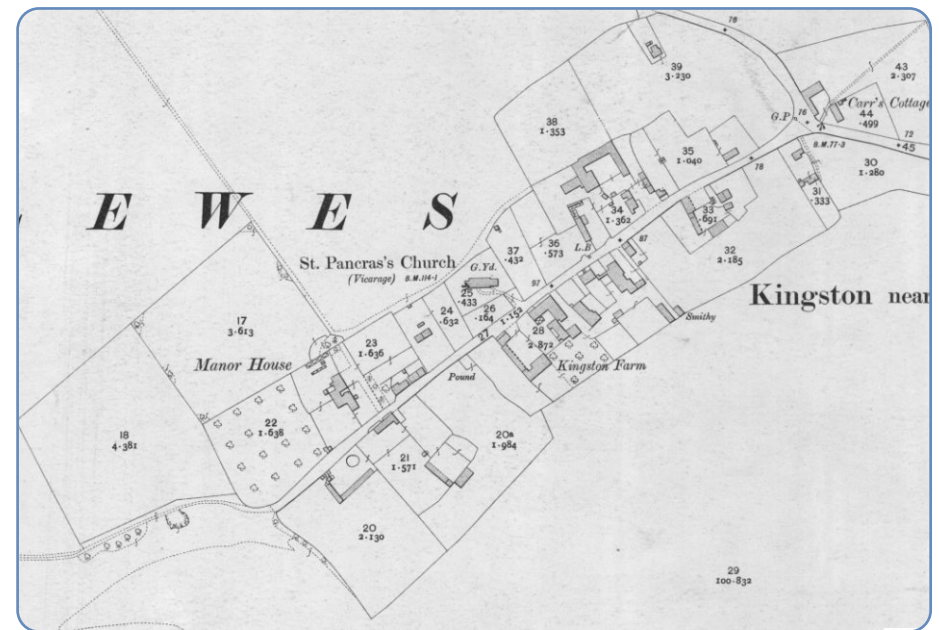


Figure 10: Kingston as mapped by the  
Ordnance Survey in 1879 (above right)  
and 1908 (below right).



3.43 After the land reform acts of the early 20th century, the Gorings sold their holdings and ownership fragmented. In the 1920s new detached houses and bungalows were built along Kingston Ridge as homes for officers from the war (Figure 11) and a small group of cottages was provided at the same time off Wellgreen Lane, with some land, for returning soldiers (The Holdings).

3.44 At the same time there was also more scattered development of new detached houses along Wellgreen Lane towards Lewes. The rising population



Figure 11: Early examples of residential incursions into the land along Kingston ridge, which began after the First World War, can be seen in this early photograph.

in the 1920s also meant that there was a greater demand for burial space in the churchyard and a thatched barn, which had stood in front of St Pancras Church, was demolished to accommodate this.

3.45 In 1955 the Juggs Public House opened in a small cottage at the eastern end of The Street. The success of the pub has seen significant extensions to the original modest cottage.

3.46 In the 1960s and 1970s new housing estates were added immediately to the north-west of the original village and in 1965 a new primary school was built in Wellgreen Lane. The former farm buildings behind Hollowdown Cottages were converted, rather insensitively by current standards, at about this time, including some new development (Figure 21). The expansion of the village coincided with the development of Sussex University and many of the new residents were associated with the academic world.

3.47 The existence of two large public open spaces, St Pancras Green and The Village Green, has provided a useful buffer between the historic part of the settlement and more modern development, as has the retention of a stand of large trees behind St Pancras Church. Both are designated as 'Village Greens', i.e. an area which developed under customary law as areas of land where local people indulged in lawful sports and pastimes including ad-hoc games, picnics, fetes and similar activities.

3.48 Whilst most of the post-war residential development is outside the Conservation Area, there are quite a few examples within it and these are mapped on Figure 36. The general standard of design in relation to the prevailing characteristics of the village is mediocre. There is also a danger that the cumulative effect of any further new development will start to over dilute the historic character of the area and the insertion of any new dwellings on The Street would require both an exceptionally high standard of design and



very convincing justification.

3.49 Kingston has always been a village made up of working people who rarely had any impact beyond their own small pool. One possible exception to this, although he never actually lived in the village, was the poet and dramatist John Delap, who combined his literary activities with the role of vicar of Iford with Kingston from 1765 to 1812. One notable contribution to village life that he did make was the gift of 50 guineas to the poor of the parish provided for in his will.

3.50 Kingston Farm remains the centre of a family-run business although the more modern agricultural buildings behind Holdings Old Farmhouse, which form Kingsbrook Farm, appear to be less intensively used and mainly for storage.

3.51 The historic village was designated as a Conservation Area in 1972 by Lewes District Council. In 2011, it became part of the new South Downs National Park, which took on the role of local planning authority for the village.

## 4. CHARACTER ANALYSIS

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4.1 The elements that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area are described in this section and mapped on Figure 36 which can be found at the back of this document.

### PLAN FORM, SITE LAYOUT & BOUNDARIES

4.2 The historic village is notable for its linear form, with informal groups of houses, cottages, and farmsteads, a few remaining in agricultural use, others converted into dwellings, lining The Street. Many are listed buildings.

4.3 Although agriculture now has less importance as a primary activity, the survival of the Kingston Farm buildings, around a working farmyard, is important in maintaining the rural qualities of the Conservation Area (Figure 24). This is reinforced by the large flint and brick barn next to Lattens, now used for storage (Figure 20).

4.4 Kingston was never a true estate village and the dwellings do not exhibit the degree of uniformity that one finds in such places. They do though present a range of forms which are quite typical of Sussex and which are given a degree of unity by use of a fairly tight palette of materials and a modest domestic scale. A fairly close relationship with The Street, perhaps with a flint boundary wall, hedge or fence is also quite common but few are located right at the back of the highway. The flint walls make a particularly important contribution to the village-scape.

4.5 Garden sizes vary but are generally quite generous. Some are totally concealed by high walls or by the buildings themselves, whilst others are more open and visible. The gardens and trees combine to beautify the village-scape

and there is rather more now than in comparison to the early 20th century, when photographs show a much more open streetscape (Figure 12).

4.6 Boundaries are significant elements in the village-scape, both as physical elements in their own right and as evidence of historic land divisions. Flint walls are prominent features in the old village and make an important contribution to its historic character. It is difficult to date them with any precision but they certainly appear very well established in old photographs of the village (Figure 12). The earliest example to which a date can be ascribed is the garden wall at Kingston Manor, which is 18th century, and it is probable that many of the surviving walls will be that old or perhaps even earlier.

4.7 As well as the flint walls, a nice set of 19th century spear-headed cast iron railings fronts Hyde Manor. There is also some use of timber fencing, mostly simple post and rail, and simple timber gates, both appropriate to the rural setting.

### LANDMARKS, FOCAL POINTS & VIEWS

4.8 The linear nature of the historic village means that it has no obvious “centre” and it does not lend itself to ‘landmark’ buildings; St Pancras Church is the only one that might truly merit the term.

4.9 The linear nature also tends to guide views up and down The Street, with some glimpsed sideways views between buildings. Views of the downs after Kingston farm is reached are of note, as are those from the churchyard (Figure 13).

4.10 The Juggs Public House (Figure 27) is more dominant at the eastern entrance to the Conservation Area, due to the many extensions and also the inevitable activity associated with the commercial use. On the opposite side of the road, Carrs Cottage (Figure 33) is notable in views down The Street. The barn to the south-east of Kingston Farm is another prominent building.

4.11 For the energetic, a walk up the steep hill provides wonderful views over Kingston towards Lewes and the River Ouse valley, with Mount Caburn in the distance (Figure 14).

## OPEN SPACES, TREES & LANDSCAPE

4.12 The Village Green and St Pancras Green provide notable public open spaces which are well used, particularly the playground in the Village Green. In addition, there are other privately owned green spaces (fields and gardens) within the Conservation Area which make a special contribution to its rural qualities and which should, therefore, be protected from any new development. These are marked on the Character Appraisal Map (Figure 36).

4.13 The Churchyard is another important and accessible green space within the village. It helps to maintain biodiversity, provides a lot of historical information relevant to the village, and contains a series of monuments that illustrate an evolution in taste and design. As such it forms an important educational resource as well as a peaceful spot for quiet enjoyment. It is important that the monuments and other grave markers are properly maintained.

4.14 Trees are particularly important at the south-western end of The Street, closer to the downs. Within the more built-up part of the Conservation Area, there are fewer mature trees, apart from the ones behind St Pancras Church and around St Pancras Green. Figure 34 shows the trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the Conservation Area.

The most important groups are also marked on the Character Appraisal Map.

4.15 The village lies within the South Downs National Park and, as such, is surrounded by beautiful landscape, best appreciated from half way or even at the top of the hill above the village. Throughout much of the year this is occupied by sheep and cattle, which graze on the lower slopes of the downs. In the spring and early summer, the area is enlivened by the sound of lambs and ewes calling to each other.

## PUBLIC REALM

4.16 Pavements, where they exist, are covered in black tarmac, with generally modern concrete 100mm kerbing, although there are some sections of stone setts and flint cobbles.

4.17 There is no street lighting in the Conservation Area but there are a number of timber telegraph poles in The Street, with some unsightly wires.

4.18 At the junction of Ashcombe Road, Wellgreen Lane and The Street are a number of unsightly modern features: a green plastic litter bin, a “No Through Road” street sign, requiring repair or replacement; a modern telephone kiosk, and a street sign “The Street”, made from cast aluminium with black letters on a white background, fixed to a low timber rail on posts. (Figure 15). More in keeping is the traditional finger post on the opposite side of the road, made from timber with black lettering (Figure 16).





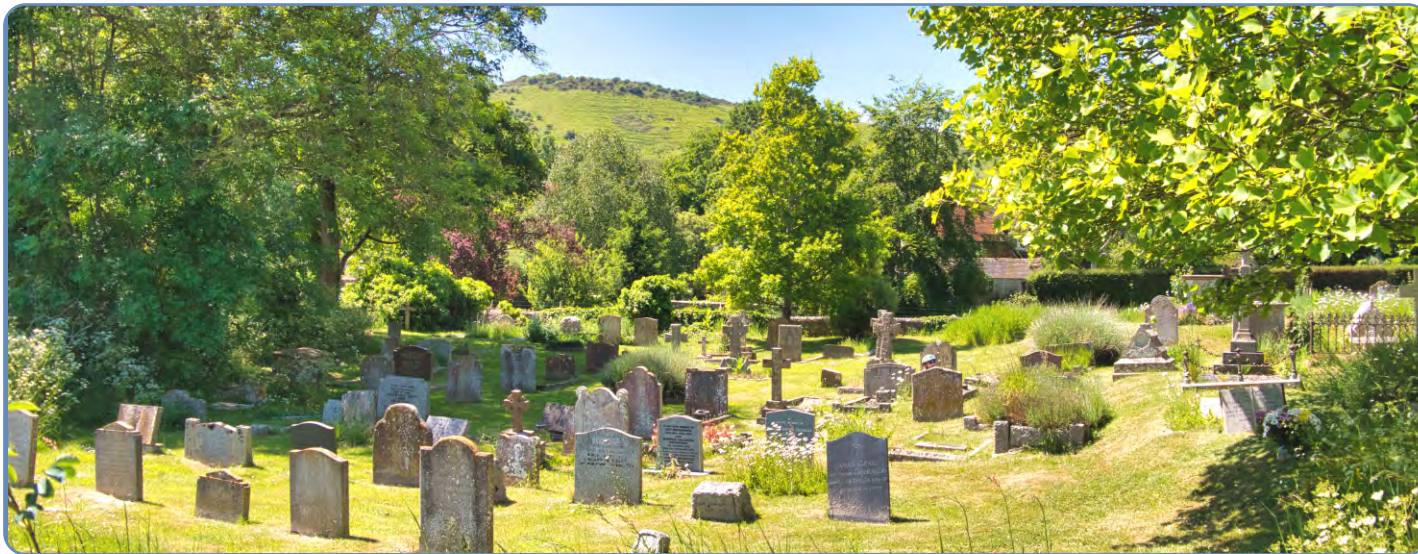
Figure 12: Early photographs of the village show the very rural and agricultural character of the village before the War. In particular, the informal and unmade nature of the lane, little more than a dirt track, contrasts starkly with the modern road surface.







Figure 13: The Churchyard allows some fine views of the downs rising above the village. It is also forms an important and accessible green space within the village, helps to maintain biodiversity, and contains a series of monuments that illustrate an evolution in taste and design. It forms an important educational and leisure amenity but monuments and other grave markers do need to be properly maintained.







**Figure 14: The view over Kingston towards Lewes from the downs above the village.**





Figure 15: Street clutter.

Figure 16: A more traditional direction sign.



## THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

4.19 There are 23 listed entries within the historic village, plus other buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and which can be recognised as non-designated heritage assets for the purposes of planning.

4.20 Like all villages of medieval origin, Kingston was an agricultural settlement dedicated to the production of food, to be consumed by the villagers and by their social superiors, and to sell to bring in money to pay rents and dues.

4.21 The social organisation that underpinned this agricultural activity was explored in Section 3. It is also true that it greatly influenced the physical and spatial organisation of the village, and this influence can still be discerned today.

4.22 Christianity was an all-pervading aspect of medieval life and is represented in the village by the Church of St Pancras, a dedication which it shared with the Priory in Lewes. The church stands in a slightly elevated position on the north-west side of The Street. It is the oldest building in the village and listed at Grade II\*.

4.23 It is a small, aisleless church with chancel, western tower, and southern porch almost completely in the Decorated Gothic style and dating to the early-14th century (Figure 17). Only the tower, which Nikolaus Pevsner, in the Sussex volume of *The Buildings of England*, described as 'curiously tall and slender', may be a little earlier. Restoration works were undertaken in 1865, following a lightning strike, and again in 1874.

4.24 Of particular interest is the tapsel gate at the eastern entrance to the churchyard (Figure 17), which takes the form of a wide gate which pivots on a





Figure 17: The Parish Church of St Pancras.  
*The church is a Grade II\* listed building. Also of interest is the tapsel gate at the entrance to the churchyard (below).*







Figure 18: Kingston Manor,  
as seen from The Street (upper) and the garden (left).

*The house evolved over a number of phases. The south-east wing is 16th century and incorporated materials taken from St Pancras Priory in Lewes following its dissolution in 1538. It was re-fronted in the 18th century with tile hanging, the western-most bay stuccoed.*

*There is a prominent ashlar chimney breast visible from The Street.*

*The southwest wing is an 18th century addition, built of knapped flints with red-brick window dressings and quoins. The roof is covered in Horsham Stone slabs.*

*The north wing is 19th century. The house is listed at Grade II.*





centre post. The width of the opening allows easy passage whilst being easier to open and close than a normal gate of the same width; the latter would require an opening arc double that of the tapse gate. Six examples are known of such gates in Sussex but that at Kingston is the first for which there is any documentary evidence, being mentioned in a document of 1729.

4.25 Spread along The Street were a number of farmsteads, combining a farmhouse and working buildings, and the holdings of several manors. Of these two, Kingston Manor and Hyde Manor, held demesene land in the village.

4.26 Kingston Manor (Figure 18) was the most important and largest of the original farmhouses. It has a T-shaped plan and is of 2 storeys. The south-east wing is 16th century in date and incorporates buildings materials taken from St Pancras Priory, Lewes following its suppression in 1538. It was re-fronted in the 18th century with tile-hanging, and the westernmost bay was stuccoed. An ashlar chimney breast behind is an important early feature.

4.27 By contrast the south-west wing is 18th century and faced with knapped flints with red brick window dressings and quoins and a roof covered with Horsham Stone slabs. This wing contains a contemporary staircase. The north wing is 19th-century.

4.28 The grounds of the Manor House are screened from The Street by an 18th century garden wall which is terminated by a gazebo of the same date (Figure 19). Both are individually listed at Grade II.

4.29 The nearby Manor Barn (now converted into a dwelling) and the field barn to its south-east (Figure 20) were once part of the farmstead linked to the Manor House, as were some of the nearby cottages.

4.30 The other manor to hold demesne land in Kingston was Hyde Manor.



Figure 19: Grade II listed garden wall & gazebo at the Manor House

Figure 20: Field barn linked to Kingston Manor



The original farmstead of Hyde Manor is now known as Hollowdown Cottages, which stands on the other side of The Street and a little to the north-east (Figure 21), and comprises three dwellings. The north end is the earliest section, timber-framed and tile-hung, and may have been built originally as a new buttery and parlour for the lost medieval hall. The south-east end is a 19th century addition, faced with flints which are now painted.

4.31 Whilst Hyde Manor was still part of a working farm, Rest Harrow (Figure 29) was occupied by the farm bailiff.

4.32 The associated farm buildings were the subject of a relatively early conversion scheme - at some time in the 1960s - and are now known as Barn Close (Figure 21). This scheme retained a single-storey farm building, roofed in pantiles which are relatively unusual in Sussex, plus half of a threshing barn; it is not known why only half was retained nor what happened to the other half. Some quite detailed photographs survive of the farmbuildings in their redundant state and a comparison with modern pictures of the same view give some indication of the impact that residential conversion can have.

4.33 In the 18th century, Hyde Manor moved its centre of gravity up The Street. The name became attached to a 16th century building, which was remodelled in the 18th century into something akin to its present form. The north-east front, which faces onto The Street, is faced with grey headers with red brick dressings and quoins (Figure 22). It is prominent in views along The Street and from parts of the churchyard.

4.34 The two sizeable 18th century barns plus other working buildings (Figure 24), which form the core of the modern Kingston Farm, were originally part of this 'new' Hyde Manor farmstead, as were Barn Hall, Juggs Barn, and Kingston Lodge (Figure 24).

4.35 The development of the 'new' Hyde Manor into the main

farmhouse in the village is testimony to the emergence of the Rogers family.

4.36 Holdings Old Farmhouse, with its associated outbuildings, is a third farmstead. The main house is 17th century in origin, with alterations made in the 19th century and, unusually for Kingston, it is three storeys in height with a cellar in the southern range. A single-storey outbuilding to the west has now been converted into a dwelling, whilst a group of mostly modern buildings to the rear now form a smallholding called Kingsbrook Farm (Figure 25).

4.37 Only one other house in the village demonstrates evidence of a higher social status, that being Juggs Way (Figure 26).

4.38 Most of the remaining dwellings were modest and simple cottages, without any architectural pretensions, and provided accommodation for farm workers and the occasional farm owner or tenant. They range in date from the 16th- to the 19th centuries and include the Juggs PH (Figure 27); the former Post Office and Rest Harrow (Figures 28 and 29 respectively); Nos 8 and 9 The Street (Figure 30); Friars Cottage (Figure 31); and Nos 6 and 7 The Street (Figure 32). All are Grade II listed buildings.

4.39 A number of the dwellings had wells and cellars, some of the latter being marked on the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1878 (Figure 10). Wells are known to survive at Friars Cottage, Holdings Old Farmhouse, The Juggs, no. 9 The Street, and Hyde Manor, whilst there are extant cellars at Holdings Old Farmhouse, Friars Cottage, Kingston Manor, Hyde Manor East and Kingston Lodge.





Figure 21: Hollowdown and Barn Close.



*Hollowdown (above) was the original farmstead of Hyde Manor. Now split into three dwellings, the north end incorporates the buttery and parlour of the original medieval hall. The building is listed at Grade II.*

*The farm buildings associated with Hollowdown represent a relatively early (1950s) example of redundant farm buildings being converted into residential use. They originally included a large threshing barn and a single-storey range roofed, fairly unusually for Sussex, with pantiles. The whole has a utilitarian and work-a-day character befitting their use.*

*Although conversion probably prevented the complete loss of the buildings, it introduced a series of domestic elements - chimneys, porches and large dormers - which undermined their historic, agricultural character. More recent schemes of this sort aim to accommodate the new use with less harm to the historic character of the buildings.*







Figure 22: The farmhouse now known as Hyde Manor.

*Originally a simple 17th century timber-framed Sussex cottage known as "Bayley's before Howells", the house came into the ownership of a prominent village family, the Rogers, when the third Thomas Rogers moved into the village with his wife, Elizabeth Ade, in 1699.*

*To this simple building, he added a more polite brick-built facade that survives to this day. Parlour extensions were also added and the brick facade extended to give the whole elevation a consistency of architectural treatment and making it a house of some distinction.*

*There is an extensive cellar range, constructed of chalk blocks, surviving below the part now known as Hyde Manor East.*



Figure 23: The present Kingston Farm replaced Hyde Manor as the base of the working farm in the 1920s.





Figure 24: Buildings that were associated with Hyde Manor.

*Kingston Lodge (above). Archaeological examination of this building suggest it may be as early as the last two decades of the 17th century, with the Georgian front being added in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. It contains several witches marks. The house is Grade II listed.*

*Two large Grade II listed 18th century barns at Kingston Farm (above right);*

*Juggs Barn, also listed at Grade II (right)*



Figure 25: Holdings Old Farmhouse.

*Holdings is a third farmstead. The main house is 17th century in origin, with alterations made in the 19th century and, unusually for Kingston, it is three storeys in height. A cellar survives below the southern range. Grade II listed.*

*The adjacent 18th century barn was first converted into stables and latterly into a house, which is named Holdings Barn. There is a date stone above the front door. It too is Grade II listed.*

*A group of mostly modern buildings to the rear now form a smallholding called Kingsbrook Farm.*







Figure 26: Juggs Way.

*As the building now stands, it appears to be a 17th century or earlier timber-framed building refaced with flint with red brick dressings and quoins*

*However, detailed examination of the surviving structure (above ground) shows it to have been originally of early 15th century date. Behind the later flint and brick cladding, lies a timber-framed, medieval hall house originally of 4 bays with a single aisle to the rear, much of which survives.*

*In a second phase, probably around 1600, the hall was subsequently floored over to create a chamber at first floor level and a hall at ground floor level, at the same time as a double hearth with ovens and flues were inserted in the area of the cross passage.*

*The flint cladding may have been added during the eighteenth century when the building seems to have been converted to two dwellings, a situation lasting until 1954, when the owners of the Manor sold the tenanted property and it was converted for a single owner/occupier through the addition of an extension on the northern side.*

*A number of documentary references suggest that Juggs Way was originally the Kingston vicarage. If this is correct, then the occupation of this site could be taken back to 1190, when the endowment of a perpetual vicarage included “a messuage and 2 acres of land less 1 rood...adjoining to the cemetery and meadow of the Church”.*





Figure 27: The Juggs Public House.

*A Grade II listed building, this 17th century or earlier timber-framed cottage was turned into a pub in 1955. Subsequent years have seen significant extensions.*

Figure 28 (below left): The Village Shop and Post Office.

*Originally a farm granary before being converted into a shop/post office and dwelling. Probably 17th century and Grade II listed.*

Figure 29 (below right): Rest Harrow.

*An 18th century or earlier cottage which is listed at Grade II.*







Figure 30: Nos 8 and No 9 The Street.

*Timber-framed cottages which originally housed farm workers, these 17th century or earlier grade II listed buildings were re-faced with brick and flint at a later date.*



Figure 31: Friar's Cottage.

*This is one example, amongst a number in the village, of an earlier timber-framed structure being later re-faced with flint and brick, and in so doing obscuring its earlier origins when viewed from The Street. The house is Grade II listed.*

*These buildings are three examples of earlier buildings being re-faced at a later date, a change which seems to be quite prevalent within the village. An archaeological survey of the standing buildings would provide a much better understanding of the village's development and could form a popular community project.*





Figure 32: Nos 6 and 7 The Street.

*Although attributed to the 18th century in the list description, the cement rendering at ground floor and tile hanging at first floor may hide an earlier structure. Grade II listed.*



Figure 33: Carrs Cottage.

*This Grade II house dates to the early 19th century.*



## BUILDING MATERIALS

4.40 Construction materials found in the Conservation Area are generally those which are typical in most of Sussex. Flint is characteristic, being used for both buildings and boundary walls, and its use provides a strong unifying character to a range of buildings.

4.41 It appears usually as knapped flint, with brick, or sometimes stone, used to form corners and to edge window and door openings, reflecting the fact that it is very difficult to form corners using flint alone.

4.42 A more unusual use of flint can be seen at Juggs Barn, where flint panels have been placed in between the original timber framing. It is not clear how long ago this was done, however.

4.43 The small amount of stone is, for the most part, restricted to high status buildings such as the church and Kingston Manor. Some of it was undoubtedly salvaged from the buildings of Lewes Priory, including examples of Caen stone.

4.44 A number of the buildings are timber-framed in construction and it is quite likely that more timber frames survive, concealed behind later facing materials.

4.45 The use of brickwork beyond dressings to flintwork is relatively rare among the historic buildings of the village. The same is true, rather surprisingly given its proximity to Lewes, of mathematical tiles, with the only example being Hyde Manor. Part of Hyde Manor combines dark bricks (laid in header courses) with red brick dressings, a distinctive combination which can be found across Sussex and Hampshire.

4.46 Timber weather-boarding, covering 17th- or 18th century timber-framing, is a well used local building material, particularly in East Sussex. It can be seen on the former Post Office, where it is painted white, Friars Cottage, and on Kingston Farm barns, where it is blackened.

4.47 Other walling materials include render and hanging tiles, the latter being a particularly distinctive element in the Sussex vernacular building tradition.

4.48 Thatch was presumably the common roofing material in the Middle Ages, but no examples survive and there is now an almost universal use of hand-made, red-orange, clay plain tiles, which produce a vibrant and well-textured finish. There are Horsham stone slates on Kingston Manor and slate appears on the gazebo.

4.49 This palette of building materials plays an important role in defining the character of the Conservation Area and its use in new buildings would help them better reflect this historic character.

4.50 Joinery is quite typical for the area. Windows are either sashes for the higher status buildings or casements for the more modest ones, the latter being flush with the frame, with slim glazing bars. There are also a few examples of sash windows where the sash slides sideways rather than up-and-down. Although sometimes called 'Sussex Sashes', these are actually far more common in the north and midlands, where they are called 'Yorkshire sashes', than in Sussex. Doors are either panelled or ledged-and-braced, the distinction again being linked with the status of the building. All domestic joinery will have had a paint finish originally and this is largely still true.

## 5. ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 So far this Appraisal has largely been concerned with exploring the elements which make up the special quality of the Conservation Area. Now we turn to the issues and problems that the Conservation Area faces and the opportunities they may present to improve and enhance it.

5.2 The 2007 Appraisal identified a number of issues and concerns, so we do have a certain time-depth to help us.

5.3 Many of the concerns described in 2007 related to the quality of new development, including the inappropriate scale and form of new buildings, the use of inappropriate modern materials, and the loss of undeveloped space creating an in-filling of the historic pattern of settlement. Flat-roofed garage buildings were singled out for particular criticism.

5.4 Some extensions to old buildings were likewise identified as being out-of- scale; the Juggs public house was particularly mentioned in this context.

5.5 Loss of historic character was a second broad area of concern. This included the loss of flint boundary walls, which are so characteristic of the village, and more subtly a decline in the rural, agricultural 'feel' of the village caused by loss of farm buildings to other, usually residential, uses.

5.6 Notwithstanding that The Street is effectively a dead end for vehicles, serving only those properties along it, traffic issues were also identified. This seems to stem from two main sources. The use of Wellgreen Lane and Ashcombe Road as a link from the C7 through to the A27 and the success of The Juggs in attracting custom from outside the village.

5.7 The location of Iford and Kingston Primary school along Wellgreen Lane compounded the issue, both by drawing in traffic and parking at certain times of the day, but also by placing the children in a higher risk environment as a result.

5.8 More specific concerns were (1) the condition of the cricket pavilion, (2) the signage and other public realm clutter at the junction of The Street with Ashcombe Road and Wellgreen Lane, (3) management of trees and open spaces in and around the Conservation Area, and (4) the exclusion of The Holdings from the Conservation Area.

5.9 We are now some years on from 2007. Two issues identified then have unequivocally been addressed in the intervening years. One is that of the condition of the cricket pavilion, which was replaced by the new Community Pavilion in 2010, a quite contemporary building in design which incorporates a green roof (below). The other has been the adoption by the Parish Council of a Tree Management Plan (see paragraph 5.31 below).





## THE QUALITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

5.10 It is very difficult to do anything about the quality of existing modern development in the Conservation Area other than try to learn lessons from previous mistakes. Only in the fairly unlikely event of those sites coming for re-development would an opportunity arise to revisit earlier decisions.

5.11 The opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area are now very limited. Indeed the open undeveloped nature of some parts of the Conservation Area is integral to their contribution to the Area's special character. These areas are identified on the Character Appraisal map .

5.12 In this context, particular attention is drawn to the great sensitivity of the open land that lies between the Church and Juggs Way, Grade II\* and II listed buildings respectively, which may form part of the *messuage and 2 acres of land less 1 rood...adjoining to the cemetery and meadow of the Church* referred to in 1190. Any development of this land would be extremely harmful to the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.

5.13 Should any such proposal for new development be made to the local planning authority, it remains the case that primary legislation places a duty on it to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area when performing its planning function. (i.e. when determining that application). Moreover, this has been emphasised by a number of legal cases which have established that the balance to be struck is a weighted one. The extensive listing of buildings in the village should also help.

5.14 Other material changes to the planning system which affect Kingston include, notably, its inclusion within the South Downs National Park, but also the creation of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.15 Both these developments should empower the Local Planning Authority to seek the highest standards of quality in new development in Kingston. It is important for architects, designers, and potential developers, as well as the Local Planning Authority, to ensure that future proposals for development (both completely new buildings and extensions to existing ones) are properly designed to ensure that they are of high quality and reflect the character of the Conservation Area in terms of scale, design, and materials. This may well require a degree of consideration for the wider good beyond the personal requirements or desires of the developer or householder.

5.16 Good development is always based on a sound understanding of the area and the buildings affected. An important element in achieving this is the Heritage Statement, which must accompany all applications within the Conservation Area and the wider Archaeological Notification Area. The National Park Authority has published guidance on how to write a heritage statement, which can be found on its website at <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/landscape-design-conservation/heritage-statements/>

## THE LOSS OF RURAL CHARACTER

5.17 In 2007, this impact was attributed to the loss of flint boundary walls and the conversion of former farm buildings to other uses, notably residential.

5.18 The surviving flint walls are mapped on the Character Appraisal map. In many cases, as the walls form part of the curtilage of a listed building, they will be covered and protected by that listing, with Listed Building Consent (LBC) being required for their alteration or demolition.

5.19 In all cases where the works fall within the ambit of the planning authority, the aim of retaining the flint wall in its entirety should be given great

weight and its loss resisted.

5.20 Traditional farm buildings do provide a continuous link to the agricultural past of the settlement and their continued use is to be welcomed and encouraged. However, many are unsuitable in form to perform a useful function in modern farming systems and, therefore, risk redundancy. In these cases, an appropriate and well-designed conversion to another use represents the only solution to the complete loss of the building, with all the negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area that would arise from it.

## TRAFFIC & PARKING

5.21 Two propositions inform this issue. Firstly, the car cannot be 'un-invented' and, secondly, the south-east is a heavily populated part of the country where there are many vehicles. In all likelihood, neither will change in the next fifty years.

5.22 The large volume of traffic along Wellgreen Lane and Ashcombe Road is unlikely to reduce in the foreseeable future and the impact of this traffic, which is largely on the setting of the Conservation Area, will not reduce. An attempt to slow traffic down by the school, in the form of road humps and/or chicanes, is justified in that particular location which is outside the Conservation Area. However, its further extension in the same manner, which is very much a highway-led design, would create more harm to the small part of the road in the Conservation Area and its wider setting.

5.23 Within The Street, vehicle movements are associated with the dwellings and farm which stand on it. Overflow parking from the already-sizeable car park at The Juggs also occurs at peak times. These are not going to go away. The Street is also used by walkers and horseriders going up on to

the downs.

5.24 The specific issue of signage and other clutter at the road junction remains. This junction is within the Conservation Area and a well-designed traffic calming scheme could result in a number of benefits, including reduction in the speed of vehicles, improvements in pedestrian safety, creation of an attractive entrance point to the old village, and the removal of the cluttering elements. The National Park Authority has a guidance note relating to such types of work, *Roads in the South Downs*, which can be found on the Authority's website at <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/landscape-design-conservation/guidance/roads-in-the-south-downs/>

5.25 What is important is that The Street retains the aspect of a rural lane. At present, there is no street-lighting and only limited pavements. The introduction of the former and extension of the latter would both cause unacceptable harm to the character of the Conservation Area.

## EXTENSION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.26 The 2007 Appraisal recommended two extensions to the Conservation Area boundary, one to incorporate The Holdings and the other a minor tidying of the boundary to better reflect reality on the ground in the area behind Barn Close.

5.27 Neither of these recommendations has been acted upon since 2007 and a reappraisal of both in the course of preparing this document has resulted in a decision to re-affirm the existing boundaries of the Conservation Area and delete the previous recommendations.



## TREE MANAGEMENT

5.28 A number of the trees in and around the Conservation Area are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) as mapped on Figure 34. This provides those trees with a significant degree of protection.

5.29 Trees within Conservation Areas not covered by a separate TPO do have a degree of protection insofar as the owner is required to give six weeks notice in writing to the Local Planning Authority of their intention to do work to a tree(s). This period is to allow the Local Planning Authority to make a TPO if it feels that it is necessary.

5.30 Some of the trees will be owned by public bodies whilst others are privately owned. The distinction makes no difference in terms of the protection measures described above, but it does mean that any idea of managing the trees more proactively will require the support and co-operation of the private owners of trees.

5.31 The 2007 Appraisal suggested that a Tree Management Plan for the whole Conservation Area was desirable. This was subsequently prepared by the Parish Council and adopted by it on 13 May 2020. It has been embedded in this document by Action 3.

## PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENTS

5.32 There are a number of opportunities where proactive works could improve and enhance the Conservation Area. These suggestions are aspirational, with no funds currently identified, and are included here as a marker should the possibility of implementing them arise in the future.

5.33 The possibilities around the junction of The Street with Ashcombe Road have already been mentioned in paragraph 5.24 and this area is marked on the character appraisal map. Other possibilities include the placing underground of the telephone wires and removal of the poles.

## BIODIVERSITY

5.34 Although Conservation Areas have traditionally been seen as cultural and heritage assets, some elements of the natural environment, notably trees, have always been recognized for their contribution to the character of the area. However, in recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the significance of the relationship between the built and the natural environments, not the least by Historic England.

5.35 Conservation Areas have the potential to enhance biodiversity by helping to protect the existing natural capital within them and encouraging the development and enhancement of 'green infrastructure' within the village. This is fully in accord with the objectives of the adopted South Downs National Park Local Plan and various national policies and guidance.

5.36 In villages like Kingston, it is probably the domestic gardens and the churchyard which offer the best opportunities for supporting biodiversity of various kinds, both floral and faunal. It is important to recognise this significance of gardens and particularly of a cluster of gardens in a village like Kingston.

5.37 Kingston as a community has taken a particular interest in this issue and is working to increase the biodiversity of some of the public spaces, verges and footpaths.

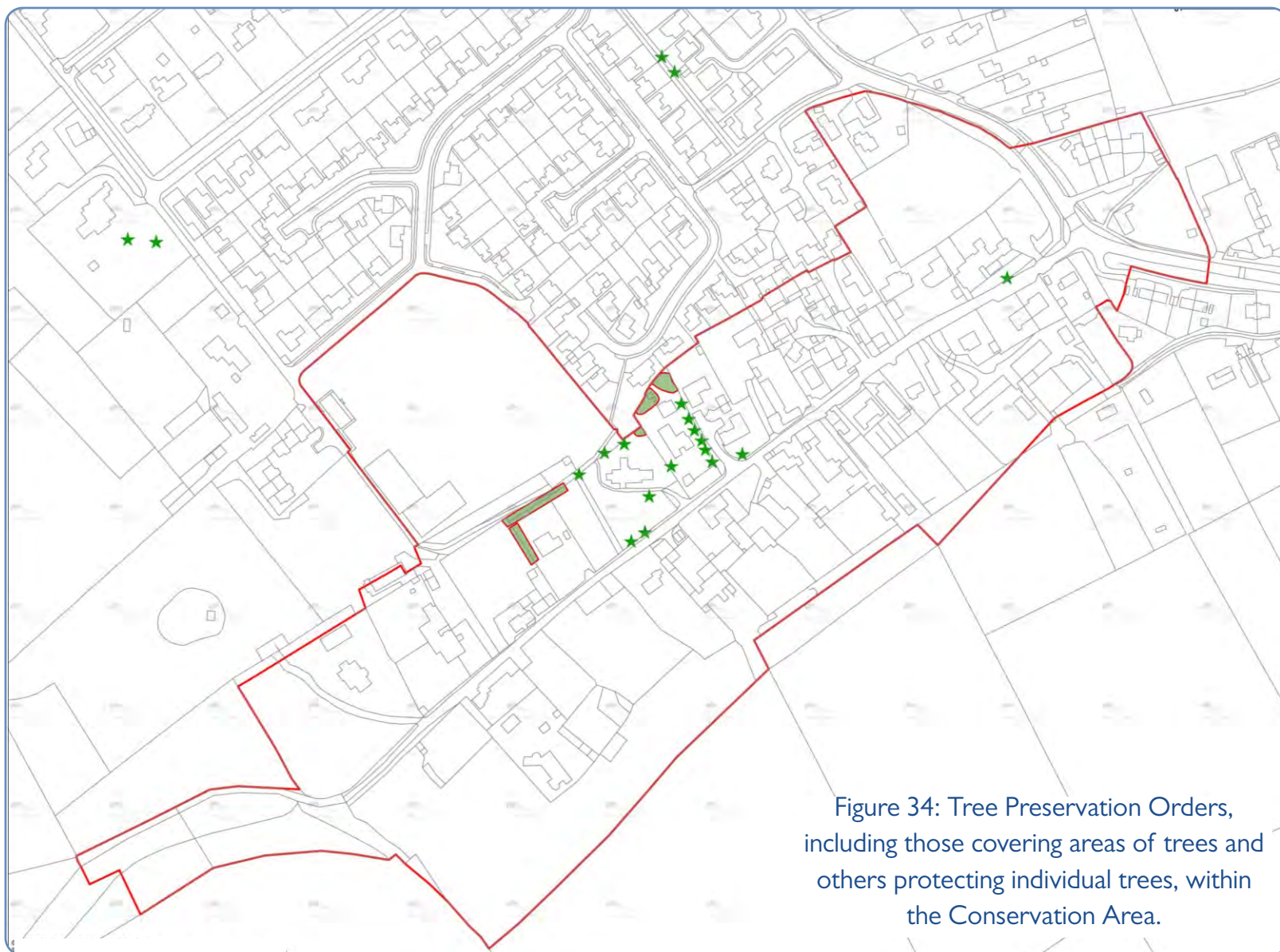


Figure 34: Tree Preservation Orders, including those covering areas of trees and others protecting individual trees, within the Conservation Area.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

5.38 As a village of early medieval origins, Kingston is an archaeological heritage asset and is identified in the County Historic Environment Record (HER) as an Archaeological Notification Area. The extent of this area is shown in Figure 35. Its effect is to flag up to the planning authority that development may have implications for the archaeological record and to trigger a consultation with the Authority's archaeological advisors. This is of course a purely reactive process.

5.39 Standing buildings are as much archaeological assets as sub-surface remains. The extent of the listings through The Street demonstrates a high degree of survival of the old buildings. In some cases we know that the existing elevations hide earlier buildings and development and this is probably true for others.

5.40 Heritage Statements have already been mentioned and where any proposal relates to an existing old building, a historic building survey will be required as part of the Heritage Statement. The National Park Authority has published guidance on the preparation of Heritage Statements which can be found on its website at:  
<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/landscape-design-conservation/heritage-statements/>

5.41 However, a community project which sought, with the assistance of a professional historic buildings archaeologist, to undertake a village-wide historic building survey would help to reveal this previously untapped source of knowledge about the village and represent a very worthwhile achievement.

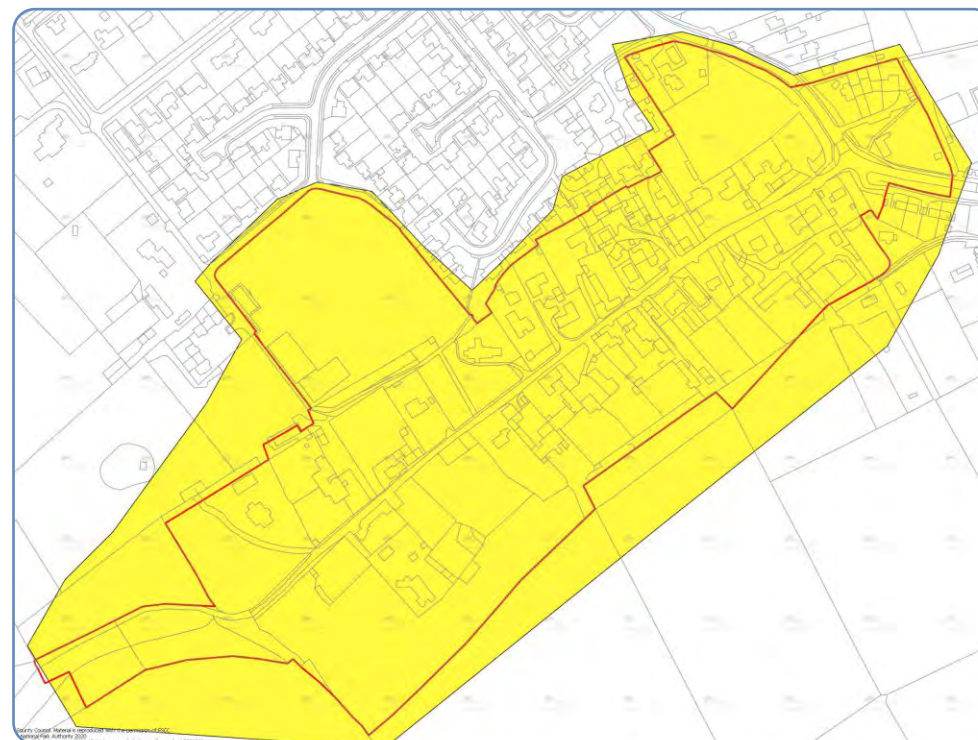


Figure 35: The Extent of the Archaeological Notification Area, as defined by East Sussex County Council HER.

## 6. MANAGEMENT PLAN

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6.1 At the beginning of this document the legal definition of Conservation Area as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” was acknowledged.

6.2 Taking this definition as a starting point, it follows that the proper management of a Conservation Area will have as its objective both the protection of its existing qualities and its enhancement in ways that build upon its special interest.

Four broad aims can be defined:

- To ensure that the Heritage Assets (the Conservation Area and its constituent buildings and other historic features) are properly and effectively designated;
- To ensure that the Heritage Assets are in good condition;
- To secure the conservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Heritage Assets,
- To secure the enhancement of the spaces within and around the Heritage Assets.

### PROPER DESIGNATION OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

6.3 In addressing this objective, it is necessary to consider whether:

- i.) There are any areas outside the Conservation Area boundary which should be brought into it;
- ii) There are any areas within the current Conservation Area boundary which have seen inappropriate changes erode their quality to the extent that they

should be removed from the Conservation Area;

- iii) There are any buildings which should be added to the Statutory List of Buildings of special architectural or historic interest; and
- iv) There are any buildings which should be added to a Local List of Historic Buildings.

6.4 In undertaking this review of the Conservation Area, two potential changes to the existing Conservation Area boundary which have previously been suggested have been re-appraised and discounted, with the validity of the existing Conservation Area boundaries being reaffirmed.

6.5 The key buildings within the Conservation Area are listed buildings and identified as such on the Character Appraisal Map (Figure 36). The listing is quite extensive and there are no obvious candidates for listing that have not been listed already.

6.6 A number of other buildings and structures which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area are also identified on the Appraisal Map. These will be treated as ‘non-designated heritage assets’, which means that they have a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

6.7 The general conclusion, therefore, is that the Heritage Assets in Kingston have been properly recognised and designated as appropriate.

**ACTION 1: that the existing boundaries of Kingston Conservation Area be re-affirmed and that those unlisted buildings identified as making a particular contribution to the character of the Conservation Area be treated as non-designated heritage assets.**



## CONDITION OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

6.8 The buildings within the Conservation Area are, for the most part, in reasonable or good condition. When a Buildings at Risk survey was undertaken by the National Park Authority in 2012-3, none of the buildings within the village were found to be "At Risk" and only one, the walls of the village pound, were thought to be "Vulnerable". This is still the case.

**ACTION 2 - That the National Park Authority work with the owners of the village pound to undertake any works required to secure its future.**

6.9 The significance of trees to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area have been recognised in the Appraisal, as has the need for their proper management and protection. The Parish Council has developed a Tree Inspection Policy for the whole parish, including the Conservation Area, which it adopted on 13 May 2020.

**ACTION 3 - That the National Park Authority supports the work of the Parish Council in managing the trees in the Conservation Area through its adopted Tree Inspection Policy.**

## CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT OF THE CHARACTER & APPEARANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

6.10 Protection of the existing quality of the Conservation Area will be achieved through careful application of the planning system in general and the Development Management process in particular. The 'Issues and Opportunities' section of the Appraisal identifies a number of ways in which this has not always happened in the past and lessons should be learned and inform future decisions.

6.11 One way in which this can be facilitated is by the provision of pre-application advice to householders, architects and developers to achieve a high quality of appropriate design. The National Park Authority has a system for the provision of such advice, which is explained on its website.

6.12 As a historic settlement, Kingston has archaeological interest and the potential for below ground archaeological remains as well as historic buildings and structures. Archaeological remains, whether above-ground structures, earthworks, or buried deposits, often contribute directly to the sense of place evident in the present day-area. They also represent a potentially rich resource for future research, interpretation and education. The extent of the Archaeological Notification Area can be seen on Figure 35. For further information, the County Archaeologist can be contacted on <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/archaeology/her/>

**ADVICE – that anyone considering development of any form which affects Kingston Conservation Area or its setting should seek pre-application advice from Lewes District Council or the National Park Authority, as appropriate, before submitting an application and, ideally, before starting any design work.**

**ADVICE – that anyone considering development of any form which affects Kingston Conservation Area or the wider Archaeological Notification Area should seek pre-application advice from the National Park Authority's archaeological advisor, East Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) before submitting an application and, ideally, before starting any design work.**

6.13 Once an application has been received, it will be assessed against a range of national and local planning policies. At present these include the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (and in particular s.72 of that Act), the National Planning Policy Framework, the Purposes and Duty of the National Park, the South Downs Local Plan, and conservation best practice (including this document).

6.14 In determining applications, special attention will be paid to the impact of any proposal on the character of the Conservation Area. Whilst all applications will be determined on their own merits, the Local Planning Authority will generally resist development proposals which involve:

- new buildings which fail to respect the traditional building forms, scale, and materials of construction which characterise the historic village.
- the inappropriately-detailed conversion of traditional farm buildings;
- the loss of flint walls;
- the loss of private front- and side-gardens which make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

6.15 Whilst discussing proposals with applicants, both at pre-application stage and in the course of determination, opportunities may arise to achieve improvements both to the proposal itself and its contribution to the wider character of the Conservation Area. These may not originally form part of the proposal. The Local Planning Authority will seek to maximise these opportunities as far as possible.

**ACTION 4 – that Planning and Listed Building Consent applications be determined in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance, with any opportunities to secure improvements during that process being secured as far as possible.**

6.16 The special character of any Conservation Area can be degraded through the loss of architectural features and traditional materials, particularly roofing materials, which fall outside any control. Individually, these changes may be relatively minor but taken collectively they can represent a real threat to the special character.

6.17 This problem can be addressed in two ways. One would be to bring those minor works within the ambit of the planning system using a measure

called an Article 4 Direction, which removes ‘permitted development rights’ from specific domestic properties. The other, complementary, way would be to encourage the reinstatement of architectural features and traditional materials with a grant scheme targeted at such works.

6.18 At present there does not appear to be a significant problem of this nature in Kingston. It must also be acknowledged that the provision of a grant budget is unlikely in the current circumstances and for the foreseeable future. Both factors inform the Action below. Nevertheless, it is important that the historic building stock should be monitored so that an appearance of an emerging problem is identified at an early stage. In reality, this means that everyone, National Park and District Authority officers and members, Parish Councillors and the community, should keep an eye on gradual changes affecting the character of the village.

**ACTION 5 – that the loss of architectural features and traditional materials be monitored by all parties and for the National Park Authority to consider making an Article 4 Direction, in consultation with the community, should it emerge as a problem adversely affecting the special character of Kingston Conservation Area.**

## ENHANCEMENT OF THE SPACES IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

6.19 Conservation Area designation is a response to the qualities of the settlement as a whole and it is important to recognise that the spaces between the buildings are a significant component in this.

6.20 Nevertheless, significant improvements to that quality can be achieved by pro-active work in the public realm. Although it remains difficult to secure finance for such projects, it is by no means impossible to put



together a funding package from a number of sources.

6.21 The most significant of these opportunities would be at the junction of The Street with Ashcombe Lane, but other worthwhile improvements would be the undergrounding of the overhead cables through the Conservation Area and the sympathetic redevelopment of the old garage building shown below.

**ACTION 6 – that the National Park Authority supports, in principle and in association with other partners, the enhancement of the Conservation Area by any or all of the following:**

- A scheme in the highway at the junction of The Street and Ashcombe Lane with the aims of reducing traffic speeds and improving pedestrian safety on that section of the road and creating a more obvious and attractive entrance to the historic village.
- The undergrounding of wires and removal of redundant poles.
- The redevelopment of the old garage site (below).



## RESPONSIBLE CONSERVATION IS A PARTNERSHIP

6.22 This document has been prepared by the National Park Authority as the Local Planning Authority for Kingston. However, it is very important to stress, and for other parties to understand, that effective management of any Conservation Area is the responsibility of all organisations and all parties who undertake works which affect the character of the area.

6.23 Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 sets out a wide range of bodies to which the National Park duties apply.

6.24 At a local level, this includes the residents of the village and the Parish Council. Slightly more removed, it means Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council as the Local Highway Authority and in its other activities, and all those Statutory Undertakers which undertake works in the public realm.

# ANNEX - LISTED BUILDINGS

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## THE STREET (North-west side)

### 1. Juggs Arms Public House

Grade II

C17 or earlier timber-framed building refaced with brick now painted on ground floor and tile-hung above. Hipped tiled roof with pentice on north-east and south-west sides. Casement windows. Two storeys. Four windows.

### 2. Rest Harrow

Grade II. GV.

C18 or earlier cottage. Two storeys. Three windows. Faced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Hipped tiled roof. Casement windows.

### 3. The Village Shop and Post Office

Grade II. GV.

This is a farm granary converted into a shop and dwelling. Probably C17. Two storeys. Two windows. Faced with weather-boarding. Concrete tile roof. Original staircase of brick (painted) now inside the building. Included for group value.

### 4. Hollowdown Cottages, 1, 2, & 3 The Street

Grade II. GV.

Originally a farmhouse, converted into 3 dwellings. The north end is a C17 or

earlier timber-framed building, now tile-hung. The south-east end is a C19 addition, faced with flints, now painted. Tiled roof. Horizontally-sliding sash windows. Two storeys. Four windows.

### 5. The Parish Church of St Pancras

Grade II\*

Church of England. Chancel, nave and small west tower. Early C14, restored in 1874.

### 6. Juggs Way

Grade II

C17 or earlier timber-framed building refaced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Tiled roof. Horizontally sliding sash windows. Two storeys and attic. Five windows. One gabled dormer.

### 7. Nos. 8 & 9 (Kingston)

Grade II. GV.

C17 or earlier timber-framed building refaced, No 8 with flints having red brick dressings and quoins, No 9 wholly with brick. Tiled roof. Casement windows. Two storeys and attic. Three windows. Three gabled dormers. Included for group value.



## **8. Friars Cottage**

Grade II. GV.

C17 or earlier timber-framed building refaced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Tiled roof. Horizontally-sliding sash windows. Two storeys. Three windows.

## **9. Kingston Manor (formerly listed as Manor House)**

Grade II.

T-shaped house of 2 storeys. The south-east wing is C16 and was built with materials taken from St Pancras's Priory, Lewes (destroyed in 1538). It has been refronted in the C18 with tile-hanging, the westernmost bay stuccoed. Ashlar chimney breast behind. Hipped tiled roof. Two small bays with horizontally sliding sash windows on first floor and one casement window between these. Ordinary sash windows on ground floor with vertical glazing bars intact. Modern porch below the casement window. The south-west wing is C18. Three windows. Faced with knapped flints with red brick window dressings and quoins. Horsham slab roof. Sash windows with glazing bars intact. This wing contains a contemporary staircase. The north wing is C19.

## **10. Gazebo to south west of Kingston Manor**

Grade II.

Small square C18 building. Two storeys. One window to each front. Faced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Hipped slate roof. Glazing bars intact.

## **11. Garden Wall of Gazebo**

Grade II.

Contemporary (C18) flint wall along the road to the north-east of the Gazebo.

## **THE STREET (south-east side)**

### **12. Manor Barn**

Grade II. GV.

Originally a barn, now converted into a dwelling. C18. Two storeys. Three windows. Faced with flints with horizontal courses of red brick. Sprocket eaves. Tiled roof.

### **13. Barn in the field to south-east of Manor Barn**

Grade II

C19. Faced with flints with red brick dressings, quoins and horizontal courses. Half-hipped tiled roof. Tiny triangular-headed windows.

### **14. The Walls of the Village Pound**

Grade II.

C19. Flint walls with red brick coping forming a small rectangle.

### **15. Barn, Cattle Shed, & Granary at Kingston Farm**

Grade II.

Large C18 barn faced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Half-hipped tiled roof with pentice to three-quarters of the west front. At right angles to this on the right (north-west side) is a flint cattle-shed which joins the barn to a timber-framed granary faced with flints and weatherboarding.

### **16. Hyde Manor**

Grade II

L-shaped building. C18 front to a timber-framed building. Two storeys. Four windows facing north-west, five windows facing north-east. Red brick. Parapet. Tiled roof. Two-storeyed bay at each end of the front. Glazing bars missing.

Doorway with pediment-shaped hood over on brackets and door of 6 moulded and fielded panels. C19 bay with gable over added to south-west. The north-east front is faced with grey headers with red brick dressings and quoins.

### **17. Kingston Lodge**

Grade II.

C18. Two storeys and attic. Three windows. Two dormers. Faced with cement. Tiled roof. Glazing bars intact on first floor only. Two bays below.

### **18. Barn Cottage**

Grade II

Originally a barn converted into a dwelling. C18, restored and modernised. Two storeys. Four windows. Faced with flints and red brick but some timbering exposed. Tiled roof with pentice on south-west side.

### **19. Nos. 6 & 7**

Grade II

C18 or earlier building, refaced with cement on ground floor and tile-hung above. Tiled roof. Horizontally-sliding sash windows. Two storeys. Four windows.

### **20. Stables to the North East of Quince Cottage**

Grade II.

Small barn converted into stables. C18. Faced with flints, the north-east wall weatherboarded. Hipped tiled roof.

### **21. Holdings Farmhouse**

Grade II.

C17 altered in C19. Three storeys. Two windows. Faced with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Two gables above, now tile-hung. Tiled roof. Horizontally-sliding sash windows. Chimney breast on north wall, now faced with cement. First floor of south front tile-hung.

### **22. Rough Down**

Grade II.

C18. Two storeys. Two windows. Ground floor red brick, above stuccoed. Hipped tiled roof. Horizontally-sliding sash windows.

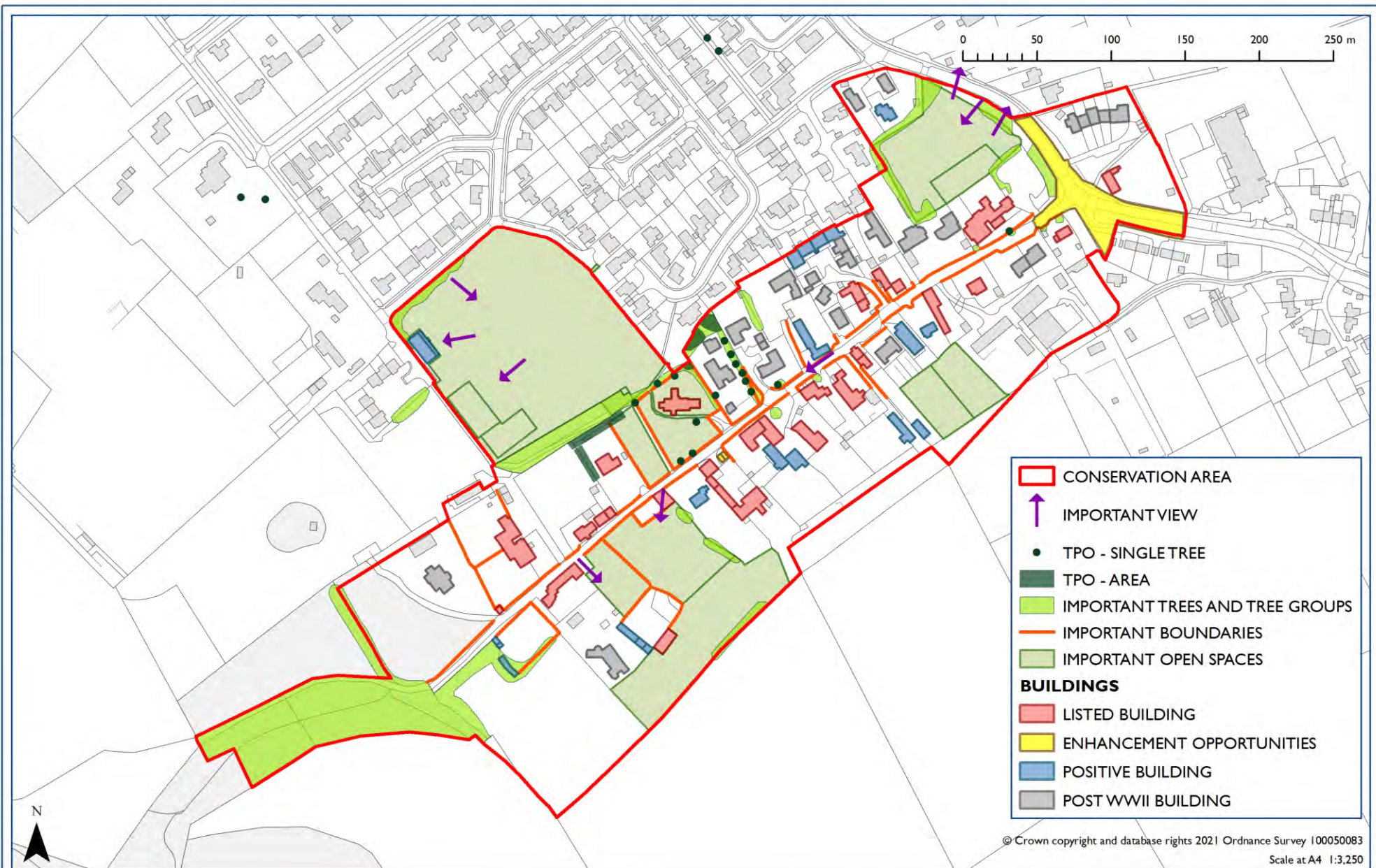
## **WELLGREEN LANE**

### **23. Carrs**

Grade II.

Originally called Carr's Cottage. Early C19. Two storeys. Three windows. Stuccoed. Tiled roof with pentice portion at each end of front. Glazing bars missing. Doorway with thin pilasters and pediment.





## CONTACTS

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