

Draft East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal

Consultation Period: Monday 17 June - Monday 29 July

What is a Conservation Area?

A Conservation Area is defined in legislation as an area of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Once a Conservation Area is designated the Council is required to preserve or enhance the character of the area and development proposals have to be considered in light of this requirement. Local authorities are required to review the extent of designation and to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas.

Draft East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal

Mid Sussex District Council has carried out an appraisal of the East Grinstead Conservation Area. The first part of the Draft East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal document clearly defines the special architectural and historic interest that justifies its designation. The second part of the document sets out a series of Management Proposals which are measures to address the issues affecting the special interest of the Conservation Area and to preserve and enhance its character. These include proposed boundary changes.

Public Consultation

A public consultation on the Draft East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal is to take place from Monday 17 June until Monday 29 July. The consultation closes at midnight on Monday 29 July 2019.

Additionally, a public meeting will be held on Monday 1 July from 5.30 – 7.30 pm in the Community Meeting Room at East Grinstead Library, where Mid Sussex District Council Officers will be available to answer any questions you may have.

Mid Sussex District Council would like to hear your views on the East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal, on the Management Proposals, and on the proposed changes to the boundaries of the Conservation Area. Responses to the consultation will be taken into account in the production of the final document.

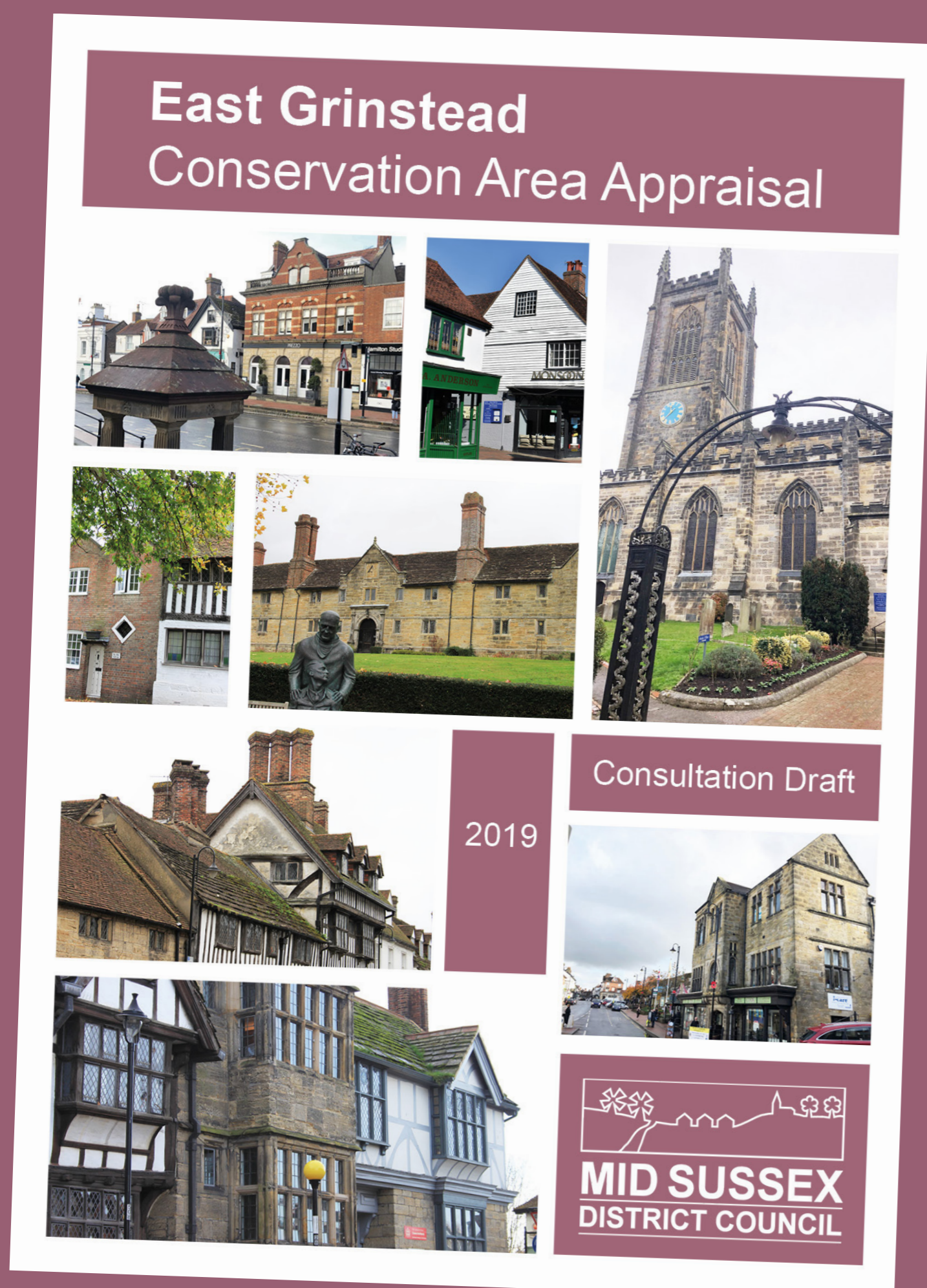
Viewing the Document and Responding to the Consultation

The document can be viewed and the Consultation Response Form completed online at: <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planningbuilding/conservation-areas>

There are also hard copies of the document, available to view at East Grinstead Library Help Desk and Mid Sussex District Council Offices, Haywards Heath, together with Consultation Response Forms. These can be returned by dropping them into a deposit box at the help desk, or by:

Post to: Planning Policy, Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS.

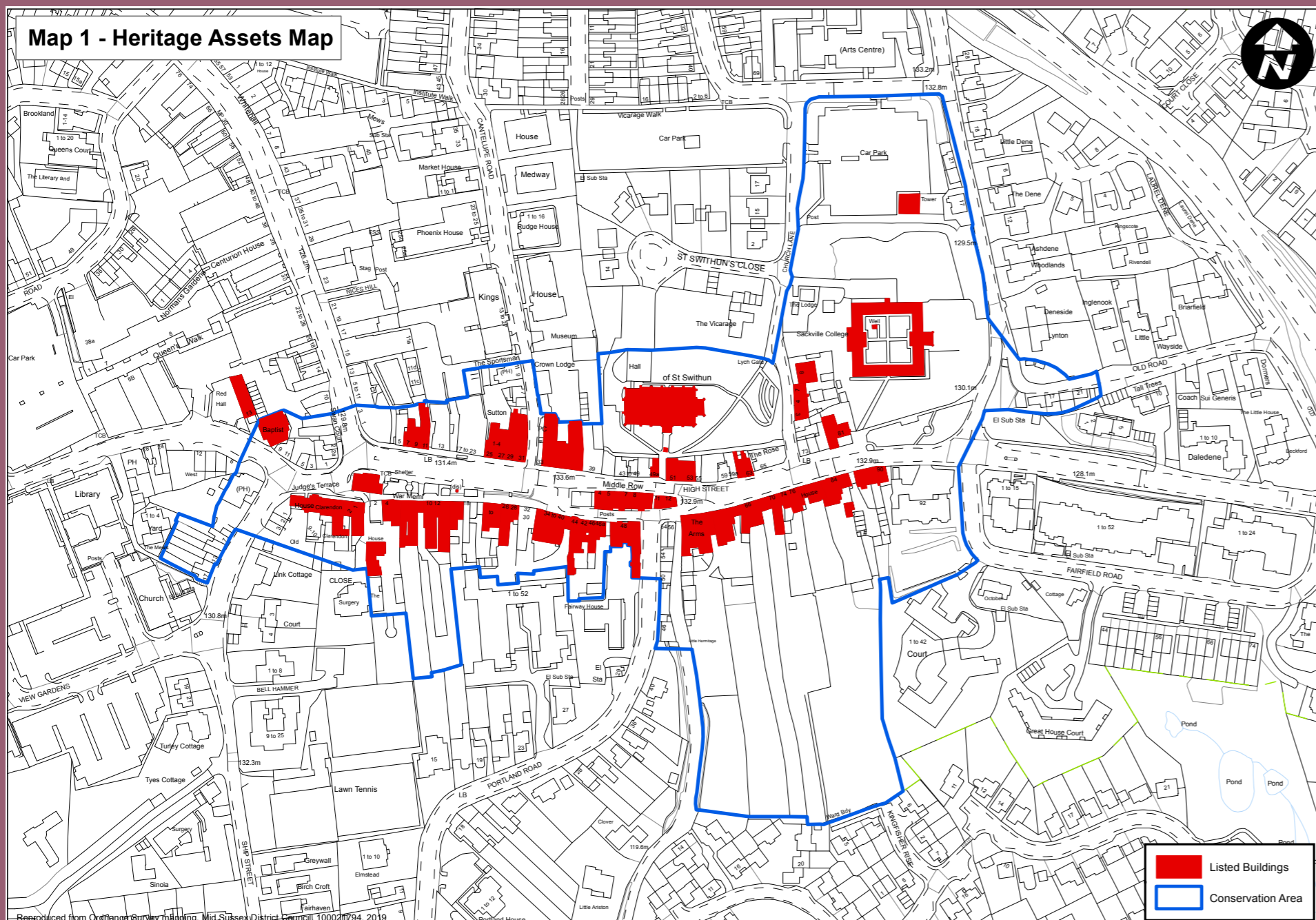
E-mail to: ldfconsultation@midsussex.gov.uk



East Grinstead Conservation Area: Special Interest

East Grinstead is one of the best surviving medieval market towns in Sussex, famous for its timber framed buildings and its ridgeline setting within the High Weald landscape.

Remarkably, much of its medieval town plan is still evident today. The wide High Street running east-west, is lined by regular burgage plots, with long thin Portlands running behind these at right angles to the street. The section to the rear of numbers 58-84 High Street represents the only surviving block of whole and undeveloped medieval Portlands within the town and, as such, is an important surviving feature of the early urban landscape.



The Conservation Area contains a high number of listed buildings, many originally built as houses and now converted into shops or offices, that form long rows either side of the streets. In particular, the southern side of the High Street features the longest run of timber-framed buildings in England.

Particularly notable buildings include St Swithun's Church, a key landmark around the town and Sackville College, the pre-eminent building, founded in 1617 and Grade I listed. Both these buildings are set in spacious, verdant grounds in contrast to the tight urban grain of the

rest of the Conservation Area. Another delightful characteristic found along the High Street is the island of free standing buildings of Middle Row, with its double frontage.

The appearance and character of the Conservation Area owes much to the traditional shopfronts, the rich variety of architectural forms, styles and visibility and attractiveness of the materials represented in its

buildings.

These reflect the influence of successive historical

periods, as buildings have been adapted to meet changing economic circumstances and includes timber framing, brick, sandstone, tile hanging, timber cladding and Horsham stone and tiled roofs.



Part A: Character Areas

Part A of the document forms the appraisal of the Conservation Area. It identifies the elements that contribute the special historic and architectural character of the Conservation Area.

The predominant character of the Conservation Area is largely derived from the survival of the original medieval street pattern and the historic buildings that line these. However, within the overall Conservation Area there are four distinct areas that can be identified.

The Church, Sackville College, the Water Tower and cottages along Church Lane

This character area forms the north eastern part of the conservation area. Its coherence is largely defined by three large landmark buildings of St Swithun's Church, Sackville College and the Water Tower, set in spacious grounds, as opposed to the tight urban grain and sense of enclosure of the High Street Character Area. This character area comprises irregular land plots that were not part of the original formal town plan, but were later assimilated into it. It includes a number of cottages that line Church Lane which were originally typical medieval encroachments at the commercial heart of the town and which have historical association with the church and Sackville College.



The High Street



This character area gives the Conservation Area its distinctive and dominant character and appearance. Its main characteristics are covered in detail in the first sections of the Appraisal. It covers the area of the original medieval town plan and forms part of the commercial centre of East Grinstead. The cohesiveness of this character area is derived from: the long lines of historic buildings and burgage plots located either side of the High Street that provide continuity and enclosure; the rich architectural detailing and the visibility and attractiveness of the

historic fabric; and the lively and vibrant character created by the independent shops, cafes and pubs with their ornamented traditional shopfronts.

Western Area



This character area forms the north western edge of the conservation area containing mostly a fine grain townscape of rows of tightly grouped buildings on the prominent corners and intersection of London Road, West Street and Ship Street. The buildings are a variety of styles and ages comprising parades of two and three storey shops, pub and church, and a terrace of Victorian properties.

Old Road

This is a small distinct character area at the eastern edge of the Conservation Area set down in the valley below College and Lewes Roads. It comprises a terrace of four late 17th/early 18th century uniform cottages on the southern side of Old Road.



Negative Features

The following negative features were noted during the survey work for the Appraisal:

There is some evidence of unsympathetic changes to buildings in the Conservation Area such as the use of UPVC windows and overly large dormers.



There are some shops in the Conservation Area that have modern shopfronts with an uniform appearance, overly large fascia boards, and heavy glazing bars.

Some of the rear service yards at the western end of the Conservation Area are rundown in appearance. There is a general lack of repairs and a proliferation of extractor and air conditioning units along with unsightly commercial wastebins and external storage of materials.



There is a proliferation of wastebins on the southern side of Middle Row and in the pedestrian lane where the properties on the northern side of the High Street back onto the churchyard.

Vans and lorries parked up on pavements making service deliveries.



The amount of traffic passing through the Conservation Area.

The new development at Queens Walk dominates some of the views on the western approach to the Conservation Area.



Cromwell House is currently vacant and has a general lack of maintenance. There are also some other properties that are in need of maintenance and repair.

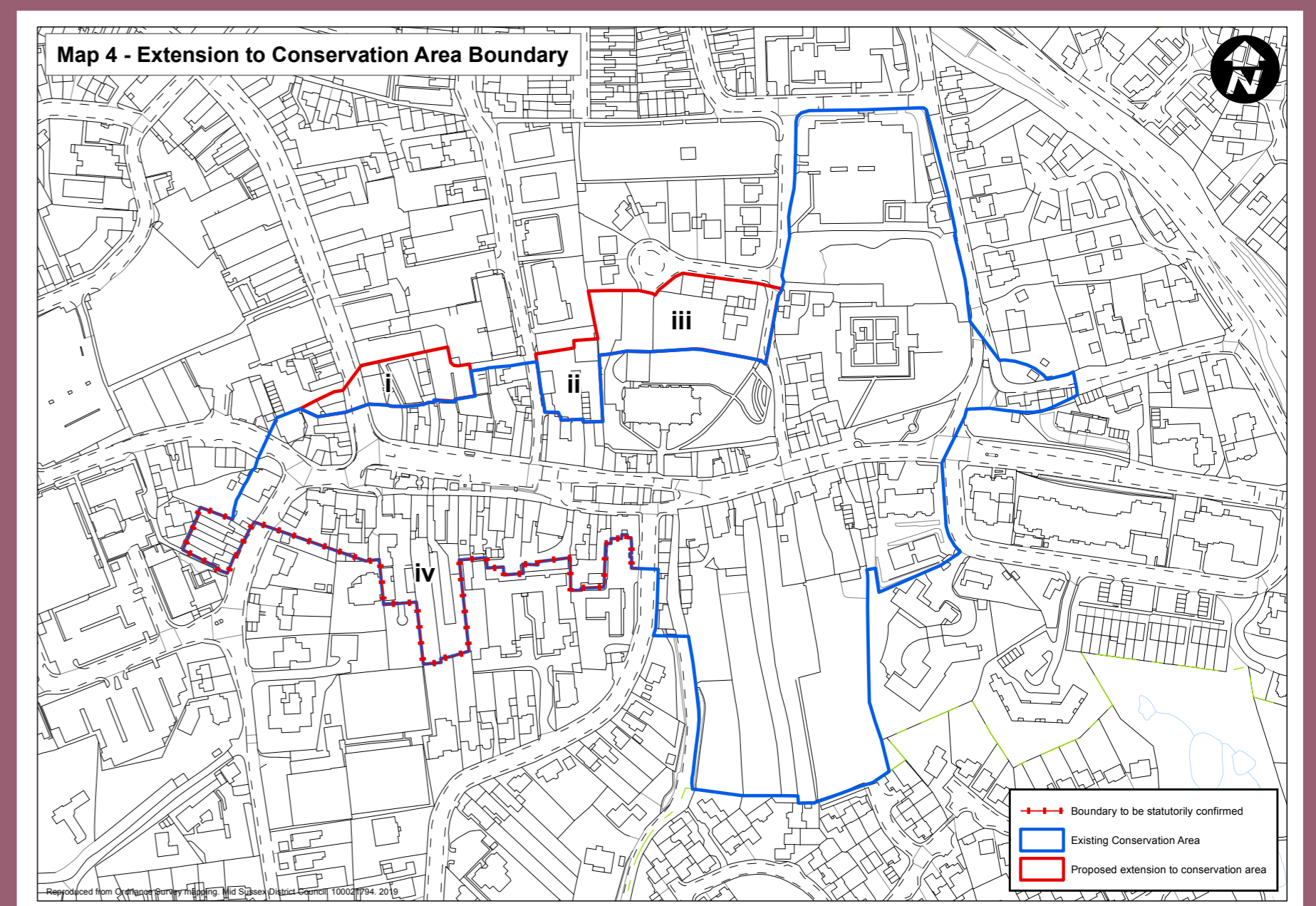
Part B: East Grinstead Conservation Area Management Proposals

The Management Proposals set out a number of measures to address the issues identified and to preserve or enhance the special character of the Conservation Area. These include proposed boundary changes, ideas for enhancement and development opportunities.

The measures that have been identified from the appraisal process and consultation with stakeholders are a series of recommendations for future action through a partnership of the respective Town, District and West Sussex County Councils. Following consultation on the Appraisal Document with the wider community, other actions may also be identified which will be considered for inclusion in the final document. Some of the proposals will depend on additional funding being made available and it is hoped that through a partnership between various interested parties that improvements and enhancements can be achieved.

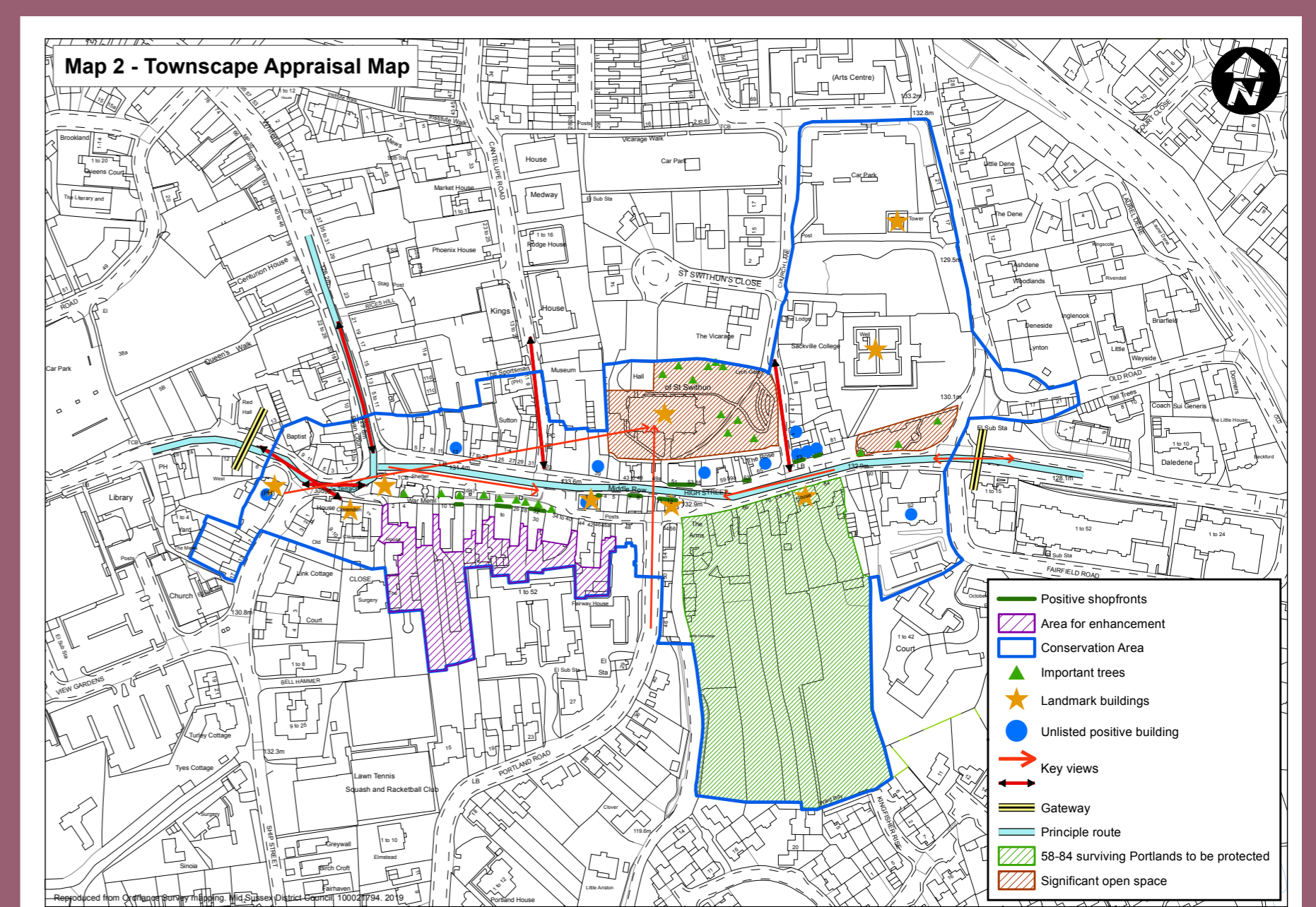
RECOMMENDED ACTION 1

Designate the four additional areas identified on Map 4 - Proposed changes to the Conservation Area Boundary as part of the East Grinstead Conservation Area.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 2

The buildings identified on Map 2 - Townscape Appraisal Map as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area should be added to the MSDC list of Local Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest if one is prepared.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 3



MSDC will ensure that new development in the Conservation Area and within its setting reflects the design advice contained in Appendix 1 of this Appraisal (Appendix 1 to the Appraisal provides more detailed guidance that seeks to address specific design issues in the Conservation Area).

RECOMMENDED ACTION 4

MSDC will ensure that any proposals for changes to windows and doors are carried out in a sympathetic manner, using traditional materials and detailing and any breaches of Planning control are enforced against.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 5

MSDC will ensure that: traditional shop fronts are retained; breaches of Planning Control or Advertisement Consent are enforced again; and that any proposals for changes to shopfronts reflect the advice contained in the forthcoming MSDC Shopfront guidance SPD.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 6

MSDC will ensure that any new development proposals in the rear service yards reflects the design advice contained in Appendix 1 of this Appraisal; enforce against any breaches of planning control; and encourage owners to ensure these areas are kept tidy and free from clutter.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 7

MSDC will work with the owner of Cromwell House to address why this building remains vacant. As a Grade 2* Listed building consideration may need to be given to proposing to Historic England that it is put on their Buildings At Risk Register. Should buildings as a result of being left vacant or for other reasons fall into disrepair the Council will consider serving an Urgent Works or Repairs Notice on the owners where necessary.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 8

MSDC to explore options with the Town Council and the Highway Authority regarding how the waste bins can be accommodated sympathetically in the High Street. MSDC will ensure that any applications for new residential or commercial development in these areas makes appropriate provision for the suitable storage of wastebins.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 9

MSDC to explore the possibility of the potential to create a Business Improvement District (BID) in East Grinstead Town Centre to help maintain and improve its vitality and viability. This will involve exploring an appropriate boundary for the improvement area, and the opportunities to implement a BID.



RECOMMENDED ACTION 10

MSDC to explore with the Town Council and West Sussex County Council the potential for further improvements to: reduce the impact of traffic in the High Street; and to investigate the potential for additional pedestrian crossing points.

MSDC to investigate with the Town Council and West Sussex County Council options for managing service delivery in the High Street.