

# EAST MALLING VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA



## *Introduction*

The objective of the East Malling Village Conservation Area Appraisal is to analyse and record the special character of the Conservation Area, which was originally designated in 1971 with extensions in 1975 and 1993. The Appraisal also provides further details to assist with the interpretation and use of planning policies. It will help guide the Council in making planning decisions on planning applications and to this end has been adopted for development control purposes.



East Malling Village Conservation Area is one of five Conservation Areas within the Parish of East Malling. Separate appraisals will be carried out for all of them.

It is intended that the appraisal will inform the activities of the Council and other bodies (e.g.. Parish Council, Kent County Council and other statutory agencies), where these impact on the Conservation Area. It will also assist in the identification of any programmes of action that are considered appropriate by these bodies, subject, of course, to financial limitations and other priorities they may have.

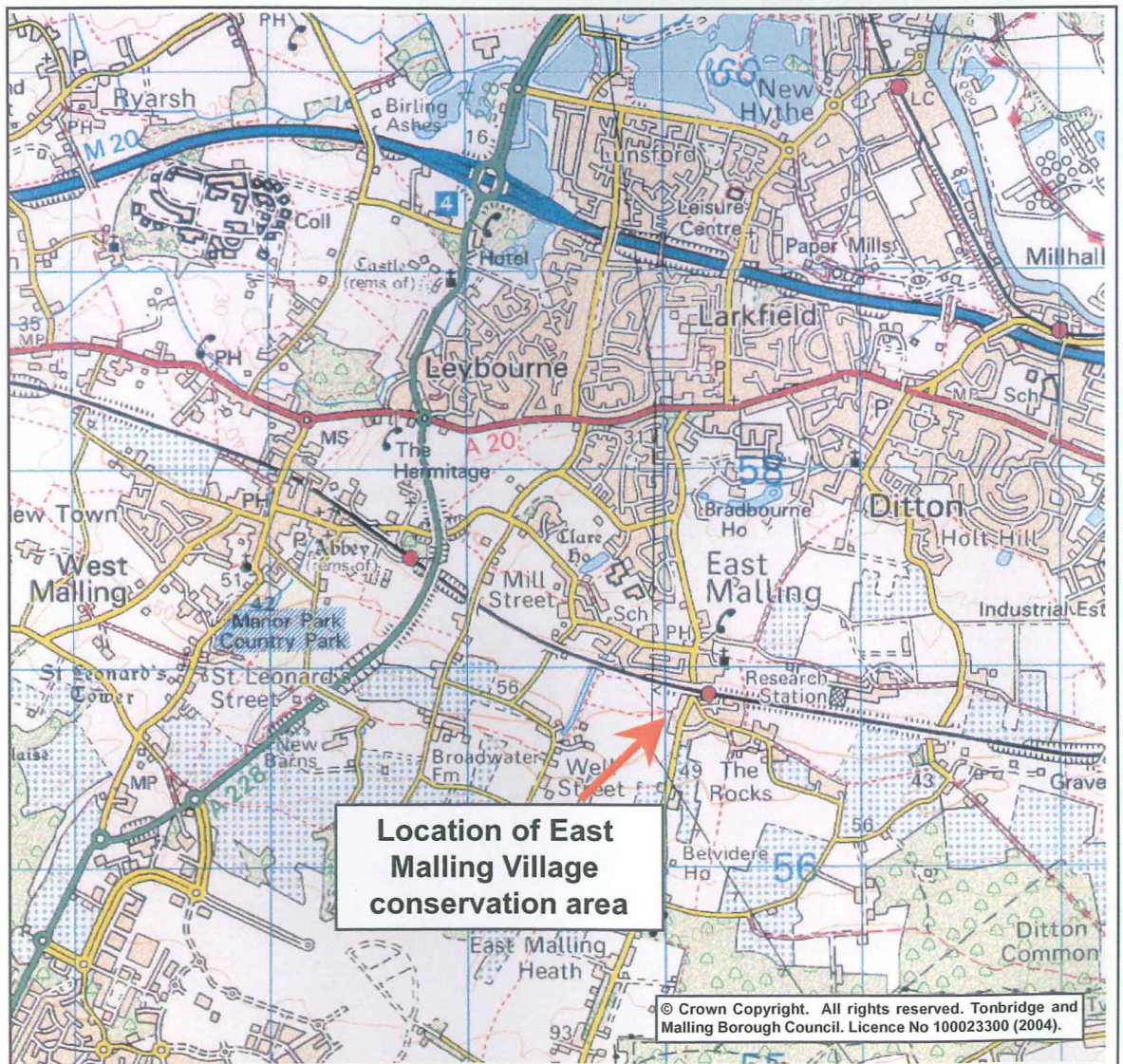
In addition, it is hoped that the appraisal will prove to be of help to residents, businesses and landowners. For anyone proposing new development or changes within the Conservation Area, the Appraisal should be read in conjunction with the Borough Council's Conservation Area Advice Note. This includes guidance with regard to the broad issues to be considered and the special controls that apply in Conservation Areas.



*As the purpose of this appraisal is to describe the **character** of the area, it does not include a detailed description of every feature or building. Omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken, therefore, to imply that it is not of interest or similarly that there are no opportunities to improve the character of the area.*

## Location and Physical Setting

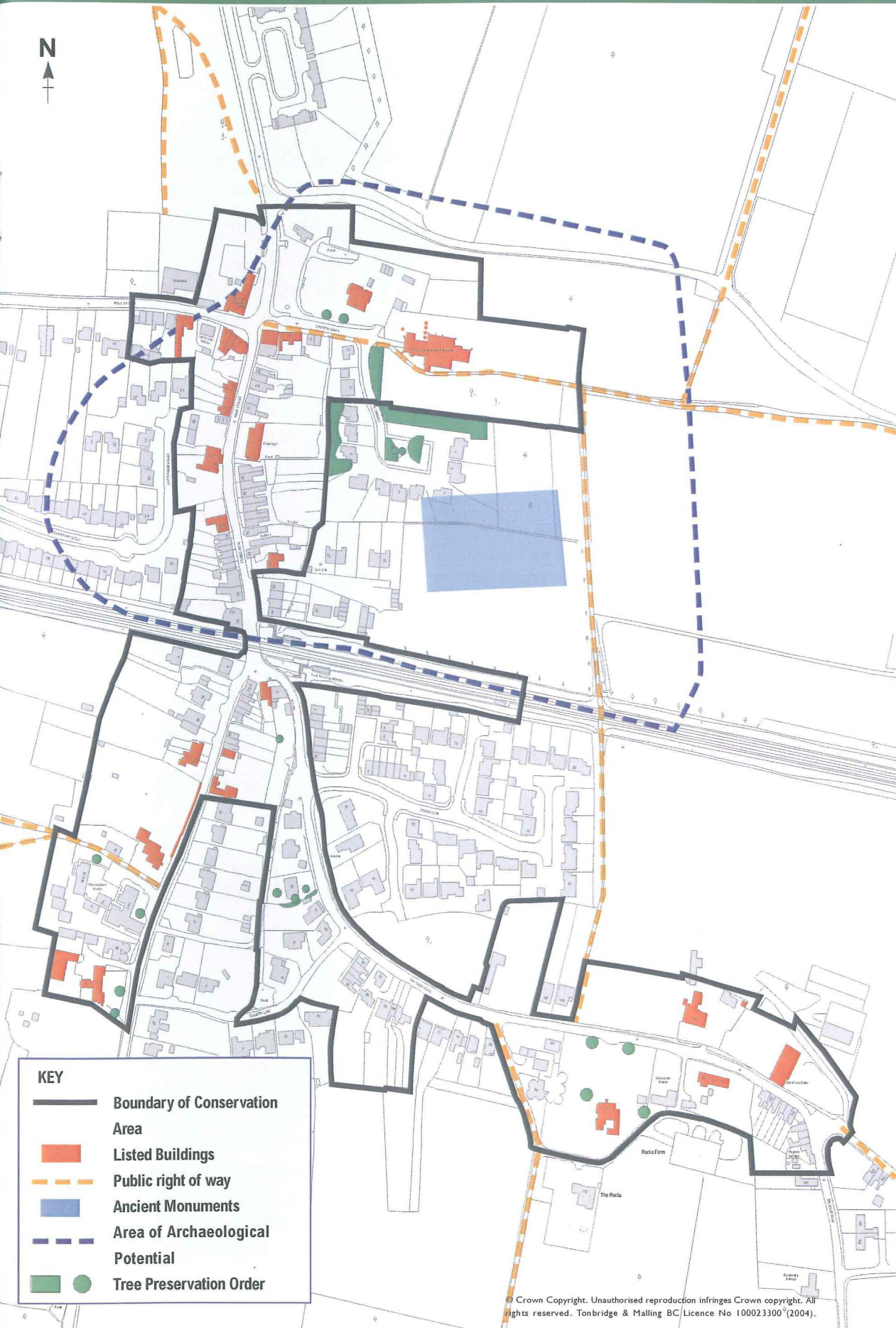
East Malling is a small village situated to the south of Larkfield and the main A20 London Road. The village lies on the lower greensand ridge and in places looks north towards the Medway Valley and North Downs. The original historic village centre has merged with the Mill Street hamlet to the west. Open spaces to the north ensure the village is seen as distinctly separate from the modern housing estate to the north which has extended out from Larkfield. The village of Watringbury is 2 miles to the south.









The Conservation Area covers the historic parts of the village including the areas close to the main junction formed by Mill Street, Church Walk, High Street and New Road. Whilst this is the main focus for the village it is actually very close to the northern boundary of the Conservation area. The area extends southwards beyond the railway in a linear manner to include Chapel Street and The Rocks Road which lie towards the outer fringes of the village.

Plan 1, opposite, shows the extent of the Conservation Area.

# EAST MALLING VILLAGE



KEY	
	Boundary of Conservation Area
	Listed Buildings
	Public right of way
	Ancient Monuments
	Area of Archaeological Potential
	Tree Preservation Order

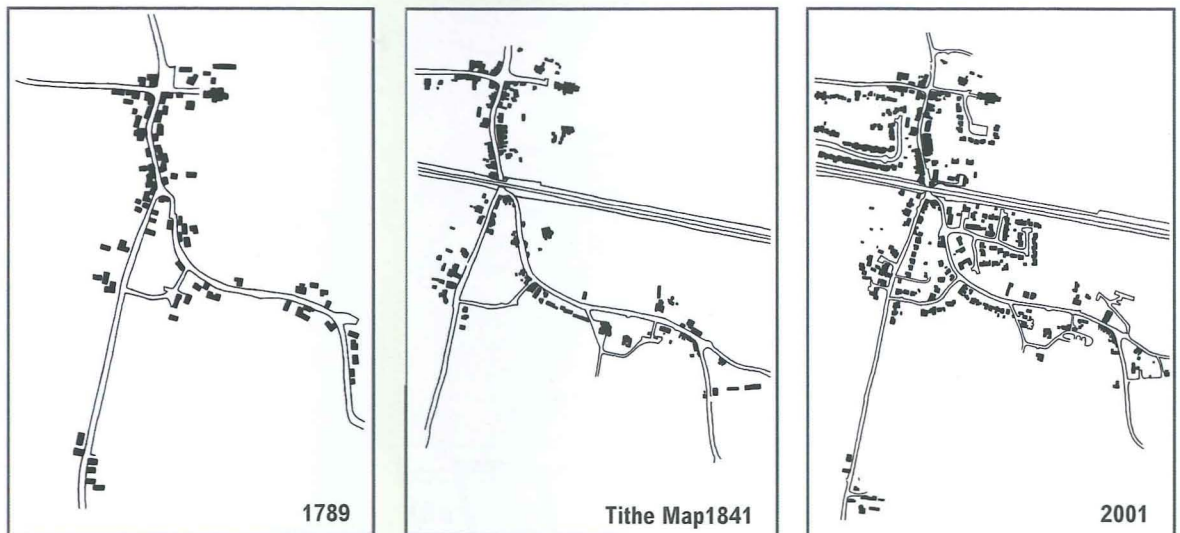
CONSERVATION INFORMATION

## *Origins and Development of the Settlement*

The origin of the name East Malling is unclear. The early Saxon tribes which settled in the area were known as 'Mallengas' which is associated with the term Meolling meaning the rising of spring water.

The origins and development of the Conservation Area are related to a number of geographical and economic factors. The site is likely to have been chosen by the Romans and later by early Saxon settlers because the soil quality is good and because of the stream which offered a supply of fresh clean water.

There is clear evidence of Pre Roman occupation. Farming was one of the earliest reasons for settling here and corn was one of the earliest crops grown. Later arable, fruit and hop growing became dominant, evidence of which can still be seen today. With the creation of local droveways and trackways which converged in the area, it became a natural position for settlers. The Norman church was built to serve the early farm settlers and became a real focus. Over time, wealthier farmsteads began to evolve with larger country houses being built by the landowners. Smaller cottages were built for farm labourers.



Changing Built form of East Malling Village Conservation Area.

Although East Malling was a successful agricultural area for many centuries, industrial mills were formed nearby in Mill Street, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. They existed for several centuries and have shaped the character of the village. They were at their economic peak in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when there were six active Mills in the local area. Corn milling, fulling and papermaking mills were the principal industries. Many terraced houses were built in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries which transformed the appearance of the rural hamlet to a working industrial village and led to the formation of the built up High Street. Substantial properties were built for the owners on large plots slightly away from the terraced houses.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the North Kent railway was constructed through the village although a station was not introduced until 1917. Terraced houses were built for railway construction workers and employees. The village as we know it today owes its later development to the industrial revolution. With the proximity of the old London Road and the river Medway the village continued to prosper and grow. The small hamlet expanded significantly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century as can be seen on the plans opposite.

With this population growth shops became established in the High Street. Many of these commercial premises existed until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century since when there has been a steady decline. Many of these have now been converted to residential use although some small businesses remain and now rely on a combination of passing and local trade.



By 1900 the population had grown significantly. The plans show how the village High Street grew denser and how the spaces were built on between the originally isolated rural dwellings and peripheral farmsteads particularly to the south. Apart from some small infill buildings little further growth occurred in the village until the 1960's when planned growth took place, although predominantly outside of the Conservation Area. This caused the buildings of East Malling and Mill Street to merge into a combined settlement.

The area now is predominantly residential. The easy access to London and Maidstone by car and rail has encouraged commuters to settle in the village. Local through traffic is a noticeable feature also.



The village as we know it today results from the retention of many of the structures and buildings built as a result of the area's past industrial and agricultural wealth. Large country houses, workers cottages and agricultural buildings generally remain intact.



Buildings of note within the Conservation Area that are worth mentioning, because their presence reminds us of the historic evolution of the area include St James Church, Court Lodge, The King & Queen Public House, Paris House, Ivy House Farm, the Old Vicarage, The Rocks and 4 Church Walk.



## *Special Character*

The Conservation Area is now mainly residential but also includes a shop, offices, a public house and agricultural buildings as well as the parish church and railway station. The nearby Horticultural Research Centre and extensive open grounds lies on the physical eastern fringes of the Conservation Area.



The surrounding landscape is distinctive, giving the Conservation Area a unique character. PLAN 2 (pages 10-11) shows the key features of the Conservation Area and forms part of the townscape and landscape analysis. It should be looked at in conjunction with this text.

## *General Character Analysis*

The topography of the landscape dictates the general layout of buildings in the village. One of the earliest remaining group of buildings was built in the flattest areas close to St James Church and dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards the village rapidly expanded with many terraced properties filling in gaps between the older rural properties along the High Street. In the outer rural parts distinctive farmsteads developed on higher areas on the flatter crest of the hillsides. However subsequently some houses have filled in most of the spaces between the farmsteads. This has resulted in an interesting mixture of styles, sizes and ages of buildings.

Both road approaches from the south, along The Rocks Road and Chapel Street, to the northern end of the High Street have an interesting form. They run along natural ridges which gently wind their way northwards down the hillside. On either side of these roads the land falls away in varying degrees of steepness. This has resulted historically in many buildings being built closely to the road in a linear arrangement with rear curtilages sloping away from the buildings. The buildings are staggered down the hillside thereby causing interesting variations in ridgelines. This undulating topography combined with the staggered arrangements of the buildings enables many interesting views of the roofscape of the village. From the lower areas the silhouettes of the roofscape, including several distinctive buildings and mature trees, add particular interest to the skyline.

The dense built up parts of the High Street and Chapel Street, and to a lesser extent the small adjoining sections of Mill Street and Church Walk, contrast with the rural character of approaches along The Rocks Road and Chapel Street.

The character of the Conservation Area can be therefore be divided into 2 distinct parts for the purpose of this appraisal;

***Northern Section A - High Street, Church Walk, Mill Street, New Road and part of Chapel Street.***

***Southern Section B - The Rocks Road, Gilletts Lane, and parts of Chapel Street.***

**The map on page 10-11** identifies the location of the two parts of the Conservation Area where noticeable differences in the general character can be observed. However, many recurring features relating to the physical fabric of the Conservation Area as a whole can be identified and these are described on **page 13**.

## *Townscape Analysis; Section A:- High Street, Church Walk, Chapel Street, Mill Street and New Road.*

The high density and close urban form is an important part of the character of the northern part of the Conservation Area.

St James Church is an important visual landmark in the village although it only acts as a focal point when seen from the approach along Mill Street. The church creates a clear sense of place.

The substantial railway embankment bisects the village. Few views are therefore available within the village from one side of the railway line to the other except from the more elevated areas to the south. Views southwards along the High street and northwards along Chapel Street of clusters of buildings are framed by the bridge opening.

The main high street has a strong urban character brought about largely by the terraced properties. There are relatively few trees and greenery however some larger dwellings have green front garden spaces and some trees which attractively overhang boundary walls to provide a contrast with the hard frontages of the streetscape. Planted window boxes and pots add some greenery. Mature trees contained in rear curtilages form an interesting backdrop to views.

There are few open spaces in this part of the Conservation Area. The grass verge at the village centre acts as small village green with the war memorial and seating. The rear gardens of properties form important green spaces featuring many plants and shrubs.

Along the northern approach to the village the open spaces and wide roads contrast with the suddenness of arriving at the closely knit built form of the village centre. The close juxtaposition of these buildings acts as an important gateway and reveals interesting partially concealed views of the townscape features beyond.

There are two main road junctions at either end of the High Street. One of the key characteristics in this area is the sense of enclosure created by buildings fronting onto both sides of the road. In some places a lack of footways and kerbstones combined with properties opening directly onto the street adds to the closeness and enclosure of the streetscene. The ragstone walls and overhanging trees also add to the sense of containment. Narrow pinch points are created by buildings at frequent intervals and are important to the character of this part of the Conservation Area.

Generally the buildings in the area have a mixed character. The most dominant though are the red brick terraces set on the back edge of the pavement. The rhythm created by the terraces is important even though there are many different styles, detailing and ages of terracing. Most properties have pitched roofs with ridge lines running parallel to the road. However in prominent positions close to bends in the road white rendered gable elevations front directly onto the street. These properties are interspersed with the rows of red brick terraced dwellings and this striking visual contrast is an important characteristic in the Conservation Area.

The larger detached and semi detached houses are of various ages. Many of these larger houses predate the terraced properties with some dating from the 15th Century. They are of a more traditional rural style made from locally sourced natural materials. However some standard modern infill dwellings exist. These larger buildings are set back varying distances from the edge of the street in wider more generous sized plots and have stuccoed or painted brick frontages many now finished in white. Their green front gardens create a strong visual character distinct from that of the frontages of the terraced properties.

Due to its strong linear pattern, there are few distant views from this part of the Conservation Area. Instead, the winding roads provide visual interest by creating sequential views, linked by several landmark buildings. Where some breaks in the building lines exist, glimpses are offered of trees or the small enclaves enclosed by the arrangement of various extensions, outbuildings, and walled curtilages. Many of these sheltered and peaceful courtyards enjoy their own micro-climates.

The open rear gardens and the enclosed forecourts are particularly important to the character of the area. In places, open ragstone culverts channel the flow of the stream, which is an interesting detail of value to the character of the Conservation Area. Where the stream emerges through a garden wall into Church Walk, and also The Rocks Road, culverts form visually important features. The evocative sound of flowing water is clear in many private rear gardens of properties on the eastern side of the High Street and in Church Walk.

### *Unifying Features*

- Linear arrangement of buildings in close proximity to one another.
- Regular focal points, and pinch points along the street scene where some breaks in building line occur or where the building line is staggered.
- Repetitive detailing and rhythm within small groups of small-scale red-brick terraced houses.
- Larger detached and semi-detached buildings with white rendered frontages and prominent gable ends contrasting with red brick terracing.
- Visual interest arising from detailing contained in prominent side elevations.
- Mix of good quality traditional materials including a chequered red and burnt blue stock brickwork, ragstone feature buildings, white finished stuccoed or rendered frontages and small ragstone plinths.
- Kent peg tiled, steeply pitched, gable and hipped roofs parallel to the road with prominent chimney detailing.
- Variations of ridge and eaves heights reflecting sloping topography of area.
- White painted timber sash windows and casement windows with some interesting projecting bay and dormer windows.
- Small ragstone and red brick front boundary walls enclosing small front gardens.
- Large ragstone and brick walls to enclose large front and rear curtilages.
- Views of mature trees contained in rear curtilages.



## *Townscape Analysis; Section B:- The Rocks Road, Wateringbury Road and part of Gilletts Lane*

The density of buildings relaxes towards the southern fringes of the village. The layout consists of small clusters of farm buildings mixed with a more recent linear pattern of development along the two approach roads into the village

The village has grown from a series of distinct farmsteads with clusters of associated agricultural buildings and workers cottages. These farmsteads are located in elevated positions on the crests of the hills and ridges where access was good, land was relatively flat and the soil drained well. Each farm originally had the farmhouse as the focus with smaller buildings, some agricultural others residential, disposed around them at varying angles to create small semi-enclosed forecourts and farmyard areas.

These building groups are the characteristic pattern of development of this part of the conservation area. The orientation of each building is important, as they are arranged at varying angles to one another in a random manner. The buildings consist of a variety of designs, materials and sizes. Over the years the buildings have been added to and modified to satisfy the requirements of the time.



Some of the open spaces remain between the farmsteads allowing their distinct identities to be retained. The retention of these important open spaces, not just as visual breaks, but as a record of the historic development of the village, is essential as they are as important to the character of the Conservation Area as the buildings themselves.

Buildings between the former farmsteads are arranged linearly to front the road and are much less enclosed than the High Street since the buildings are set back from the road with larger front gardens. Generally the larger houses are set in larger plots with the larger farmhouses retaining their private walled gardens. Smaller terraced rural cottages have narrow rear curtilages with low boundary divisions.



The buildings consist of a complex mix of traditional rural styles and forms. Most roofs are steeply pitched. There are several additions to some older properties resulting in varying roof forms and ridgelines, particularly on corner plots. Canopies above doorways, catslide extensions and open bay overhangs reflect the interesting historic rural style and add distinctive interest.

One of the main unifying features is the small front boundary walls consisting of ragstone with red brick coping. Some side boundary ragstone walls remain. Others feature neat hedges and some small white picket fences. Some have been removed to enable vehicle parking thereby destroying the continuity.

# EAST MALLING VILLAGE TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS



**Character Area - Northern Section A**  
Includes High Street, Church Walk and parts of Mill Street, New Road and Chapel Street

**Character Area - Southern Section B**  
Includes approaches along The Rocks Road and part of Chapel Street as well as part of Gilletts Lane.

Land falls away gently to north.

Downs to north enclose views.

Approach road runs along ridge.

Original farmstead with irregular cluster of buildings.

Important space.

Original group of farm buildings.

Land slopes gently away to shallow valley before rising again.

Important space between buildings.

Important space.

Modern infill.

Good views southwards of rural landscape with orchards in valley and wooded hills beyond.

Church set in formal grounds containing many mature native and specimen trees.

Extensive views of roofscape, Church and North Downs.

modern infill

Original cluster of Farm buildings.

Evidence of original attractive paving materials.

modern wall

Attractive rear gardens and courtyards enclosed by ragstone walls and feature interesting sounds of stream.

Terraces are an important unifying feature.

Important space created by the village green and semi enclosed cluster of focal buildings.

Small narrow plots.

Interesting valley containing pleasant green gardens.

Lack of enclosure at car park entrance.

Buildings set close to road.

Buildings set back slightly from road in generous plots.

Important space.

Approach road runs along ridge.

Buildings in High Street set close to road.

High Street and approach roads run along ridge.

Land slopes away gently to west.

Large prominent trees.

Distinctive farmstead with important cluster of farm buildings.

- Natural, physical or visual barrier
- Focal point
- Views/vista
- Visual hinge
- Lack of enclosure
- Important visual space
- Visually linked space
- Visual pinch point
- Rhythm - group of buildings with similar proportion or details
- Visual intrusion
- Buildings/structures which make a positive contribution
- Important trees - acting as focal points etc.
- Important hedges
- Boundary treatment contributing to special character

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Trees and hedgerows are much more prominent in the front gardens and along the rural approach roads to the Conservation Area. Attractive traditional five-bar timber gates still serve the accesses to some properties and farms.

Informal road edges are a strong feature of the area. In Rocks Road informal grass verges are evident and in places, footpaths run along raised embankments to give the road a sunken appearance.



From elevated vantage points the North Downs enclose the views northwards of the roofscape of the village, the railway line and church spire. Rural views to the south are less from the road but to the rear of the buildings the strong sense of enclosure created by the tree lined slopes of the Greensand ridge is enhanced by the long straight rows of orchard trees that sweep across the landscape.

A valley lies between The Rocks Road and Chapel Street approaches to the village providing interesting glimpses of views between the groups of buildings and roofscapes that line each approach. The Oast buildings of the distinctive farmstead clusters, as well as some mature tree lines, stand out on the skyline and act as key landmark features. Rocks House also acts as a strong visual focal point.



The pond in Gilletts Lane and emerging stream runs along the bottom of the small valley and divides the rear boundaries of curtilages. The stream emerges into Rocks Road and is diverted through a ragstone channel along the immediate edge of the road. The sound of the water is distinctive and visually the stream is important to the character to the conservation area.

### *Unifying Features*

- Some relaxation of density of buildings towards southern fringes.
- Mix of small terraced cottages and larger detached dwellings.
- Original distinctive farmsteads featuring clusters of buildings set around a farmyard area.
- Important open spaces remaining between some farms.
- Linear development set back from the road.
- Mix of mainly red brick or painted rendered dwellings.
- Simple rural character of farm buildings built in traditional rural materials.
- Sense of enclosure created by ragstone with red brick coping boundary walls.
- Informal grass verges and lack of kerbstones along edges of roads.
- Interesting views of focal buildings enclosed by distant hillsides.
- Mature specimen and indigenous trees in gardens and fields act as a backdrop to views.

## *Physical Fabric*

The buildings in the Conservation Area date mainly from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries but several properties pre date the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Buildings in the Conservation Area are predominantly 2 storey with most agricultural storage buildings and domestic outbuildings being single storey.

Apart from the limewashed render and the older timber framed buildings that are scattered throughout the Conservation Area, most buildings are built with red brick. It is a strong characteristic of East Malling for buildings to also feature chequered brickwork patterns consisting of alternating good quality red stock and burnt blue header bricks. Ragstone is another important building material used on larger prominent buildings including the church and former school. Many terraced dwellings have small ragstone plinths and many farm buildings also feature this local material. Yellow stock bricks are used sparingly in places.

On many side elevations several differing types of traditional materials appear which contrast with the main frontage. These include various combinations of ragstone, ironstone, red or yellow bricks, dark weatherboarding, tile hanging and render. Sometimes up to 3 different materials can be found in any one elevation and are of particular visual interest where clearly seen from the road. Some side elevations also contain windows and details or original working openings such as hay lofts. Vertical tile hanging is also used for detailing. Many outbuildings and rural structures forming enclaves consist of a mix of typically rural materials including ragstone, red brick and dark weatherboarding traditionally coated with creosote or tar. Kent Peg and plain clay tiles are the predominant roofing material although slate can be found sporadically. Some decorative tile arrangements exist on roofs.

Many of the simple cottage style terraced buildings in the Conservation Area retain their original features and the overall unity of these terraces therefore remains unspoilt, contributing to the special character of the area. However some terraced properties are more elaborate in style containing attractive bay windows, decorative paired recessed porches with brick arched entrances and original chequered flooring tile patterns. Such strong detailing creates rhythm and interest to the street scene. Unfortunately, a small number of terraced properties have been altered by covering up the original brickwork with render or paint.

There is a mix of original styles of mainly timber windows remaining, including sashes and casements. White, cream or black painted windows are a common feature. Glazing bars are simple and sleek and give a vertical emphasis. Windows generally become slightly squatter at first floor level and are arranged neatly either vertically in line above one another or centrally to its frontage. Decorative brick arches and stone cills are evident. There are several bay windows and even a first floor projecting bay window.

The red brick and ragstone saddle coping on boundary walls is a typical detail of the Conservation Area. Several small front gardens to terraced dwellings have walls topped by wrought iron railings and give character and interest to the area. The enclosure of the street has been lost in places by the removal of trees, front boundary walls and railings for parking requirements

Appropriate floorscape materials include shingle and gravel driveways, and original stone steps and pockets of stone paving and cobbles exist close to some properties. The informal edges and lack of kerbstones where buildings open directly onto the street and along the edges of the grass verges is a valuable characteristic.

## *Features affecting the character of the Conservation Area*

In understanding what is special about a Conservation Area and what serves to unify it, it is useful to note those features that are out of character with the Area. This not only emphasises the importance of the remaining special features of the area but also allows potential improvements to be identified.



- The loss of trees, front boundary walls and the introduction of poor quality surfacing to front garden areas in order to improve access and hardstandings for vehicles results in a loss of enclosure and detracts from the attractiveness of the Conservation Area.



- A number of poorly designed garages, constructed from inexpensive non-traditional materials, exist in some very prominent positions

- The inappropriate replacement of traditional materials with unsympathetic modern materials and styles has particularly affected the rhythm and unity of the rows of terraced properties. Concrete tiles, painted brickwork, plastic windows, badly sited domestic paraphernalia and suburban style fencing are evident. Such changes can incrementally have a significant visual impact and can harm the overall character and appearance of the area.

- Some inappropriate species of trees feature in several domestic gardens.
- Several of the original shopfronts and signs in the High Street require urgent repair works. Some also feature non-traditional modern materials which are unsatisfactory for this location



- The siting and design of many road signs, bollards and other street furniture could be improved.

- The poor quality and condition of surfacing to many of the roads and footways following various repairs and works is visually harmful.



- Overhead wires throughout the Area detract from the attractiveness of the Conservation Area and intrude on views.
- The size, location and colour of utility boxes for statutory undertakers do not respect the character of the Conservation Area and could be improved.



## *Opportunities for preservation and enhancement*

It is intended that this appraisal will be used as a tool where change is proposed in the Conservation Area. It is hoped that as well as preservation of the character of the Area, opportunities will be taken for enhancement. The following, therefore, is a list of suggestions for preservation and enhancement to be considered when opportunities arise, such as a proposal for new development or when a building is being renovated. Some of these suggestions are for the Council to take on board, some are for other agencies and some for private individuals to consider. Free advice is also available from the Council's Conservation Officer. For contact details see back page.

- Further improvements to the main crossroad junction in East Malling together with the nearby small village green and war memorial could make this important public space more pedestrian friendly. The properties at the crossroads are particularly prominent and form the entrance to the village and the Conservation Area for many people. Consideration could be given to reducing clutter and widening verges and pavements, using traditional paving materials, landscaping and, where there is space, improved seating areas, especially outside the public house and entrance to Church Walk. The profile of this important space and entrance to the village would be raised and would encourage people to linger and admire the scene whilst making a greater contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
- The open entrance to the King and Queen car park results in a loss of enclosure to the streetscene. Enhancements that would improve the sense of enclosure would include the erection of a new ragstone boundary wall and suitable tree planting along the front boundary.
- The important historic setting of the Church and other buildings in Church Walk could be enhanced through the introduction of sympathetic traditional floorscape materials including cobbles where appropriate.
- The rear walled garden to the restaurant at number 1 High Street would benefit from improvements. The attractive stream could be given an improved emphasis by careful planting and landscaping. The creation of an outdoor seating area for customers could create a pleasant sheltered space. Improvements to the appearance of the building's rear elevations overlooking this space would be essential. The amenities of adjoining residential properties would need to be carefully considered.
- The protective rails surrounding the small stream culverts in The Rocks Road and Church Walk could be replaced with an appropriately designed sleek and simple style of railing
- The railway embankments, steps and platform show clear signs of neglect. Litter is evident and the embankment is overgrown. It has an unsafe and unwelcoming appearance, the steps are very steep and are poorly lit at night. Encouragement will be given to improvements that address these and other problems at the station.

- In some private rear courtyards the stream has been tarmaced over. Consideration should be given to designing vehicle requirements to keep as much of the stream open to view as possible.
- Regular maintenance of buildings helps to preserve the appearance of the Conservation Area. Many properties would benefit from repainting woodwork and render, the removal or neat clipping back of untidy cables and removal of unwanted brackets. Where traditional features and materials exist, which need to be replaced and cannot be repaired, they should be replaced with matching traditional materials and styles with the exact same colour and proportions as the originals. (Further advice is contained in the Council's Conservation Areas Advice Note.)
- Wherever possible, efforts should be made to locate domestic paraphernalia, such as satellite dishes, tv aerials, alarm boxes, extractor fans and flues so that they are not visible from public areas.
- In rural areas the removal of kerb stones, where not required for drainage reasons, and the reintroduction of informal grass verge edges would benefit the character of the area.
- Where hedgerows have been removed and trees are nearing the end of their natural life the area would benefit from replacement planting.
- On-street parking in the village serves to act as a traffic calming measure and should be retained, but carefully controlled.
- Lamp posts within the Conservation Area particularly along the High Street have varying lantern styles. Replacement of the lanterns to create uniformity would contribute to the sense of place. Good quality contemporary designs would be acceptable. In the southern more rural part of the Conservation Area illumination of the streets should be kept to a minimum.



- Depending on the period of the building it may be appropriate to apply pale, subtle earth coloured tones to the frontages of certain already rendered properties. This would be particularly effective where buildings act as focal points. Historically, bright white coloured frontages did not exist.
- Low level, low intensity lighting of individual focal buildings and important features in the High Street and Church Walk would significantly enhance the sense of place at night. Advice on lighting should be sought from the Council's Conservation Section.
- Where feasible, opportunities for softening the visual impact of modern buildings in the village should be taken. This could be achieved by planting appropriate species of trees and providing appropriate traditional front boundary enclosures in keeping with the surroundings.
- If the opportunity arises, the areas where the overhead cables are particularly noticeable should be rationalised or ideally be located underground.

## Key Design Guidelines

Whilst the opportunities for new building in the centre of the village are limited, any new development should respect the existing scale, massing, density and layout of buildings and should respect the hierarchy of the village's built form. Where the built form is more closely knit any new buildings should be terraced and small in scale and should be tightly arranged close to the road or alternatively have small front garden spaces that are neatly enclosed with ragstone walls. Frontages should be narrow and uniform with a clear vertical emphasis and should be two storey and parallel to the road. Occasional detached dwellings set back slightly within their plots but still retaining a strong relationship to the road should fill a main proportion of the width of their plots and could have more of a horizontal emphasis. On certain sites, where bends in the road mean these detached properties will be more prominent, it may be appropriate for properties to be sited much closer to the front of the plot with a gable end fronting directly onto the street with high ragstone boundary walls to enclose the curtilage and to follow the curve of the road.



On certain sites, where bends in the road mean these detached properties will be more prominent, it may be appropriate for properties to be sited much closer to the front of the plot with a gable end fronting directly onto the street with high ragstone boundary walls to enclose the curtilage and to follow the curve of the road.

- In the more rural areas the spaces between buildings arranged linearly along the streets must be retained. New development is only likely to be suitable amongst the existing clusters of farm buildings where they fall within the village confines. The scale, massing, and design should reflect the styles of the existing structures and must be subservient to the main farmhouse building. Generally, the clusters are disposed around the farmhouse and farmyards at varying angles, sizes and orientations in close proximity to one another. Regular spacing and repetitive placing of buildings would be unacceptable.

- For some properties there is scope for further small single storey outbuildings to be set in some of the rear curtilages to form small enclaves and courtyards. New dwellings will rarely be appropriate.



- All new buildings should be of high quality design. They must respect the overall scale and form of the street scene and should be aware of enhancing the townscape qualities. Contemporary sustainable building designs should respect the context of the historic environment.





- Simple roof styles should be used, i.e. hipped, half hipped, or gable end. The variety of the roofscape should be maintained by ensuring there are variations in ridge and eaves heights. The roof styles should have a steep form and should consist of peg or plain clay tiles or possibly even natural slate. Concrete tiles should not be used.



- Terraced buildings should be constructed in an appropriate good quality red stock brick or which can be mixed with burnt blue headers in a chequered pattern. Detached dwellings or farm buildings could be constructed in either ragstone or finished with a limewashed render, painted timber feather-edged weatherboarding or red stock brick with clay or slate tiles. In some situations end elevations could include a combination of the materials to that contrast with the front elevation. Prominent feature buildings should be constructed of ragstone. Outbuildings and agricultural structures should be constructed of a mix of some of the traditional rural materials identified above as well as feather-edged weatherboarding coated with a modern dark finish to create a similar effect to tar or creosote.



- Extensions should be well designed to the same quality as frontages. Such alterations could feature steep roof pitches and perhaps include decorative chimneys, catslide roofs, canopies over doorways or small dormer windows to add to the appealing visual combination of roofscapes. Any such additions should be of a smaller overall size, scale and form than the main frontage buildings.

- Views of the rear groups of buildings are important. For corner buildings and properties with prominent gable ends careful attention to the design of these side elevations will be necessary.

- Front boundaries should be of low brick walls topped by railings with a pattern that matches others in the street scene. Ragstone walls with red brick coping are suitable throughout the conservation area although their size should relate to adjacent wall heights.



- New timber sash windows should be designed to respect the proportions and details of existing windows. The size of windows is usually smaller at first floor level. A contrast between the colours of window frames and casements may be appropriate. Black, white and cream combinations are typical of East Malling. Where inappropriate modern windows are to be replaced, the opportunity should be taken to put back the original style. New doors should have simple square proportioned detailing and their size should relate to the scale of the property.



- Careful consideration should be paid to ensuring all good quality traditional detailing on buildings is retained, e.g., barge boards, eaves and soffits, brick detailing, brick bonding, decorative chimneys and canopies above entrance doors. Where such items have been removed, efforts should be made to restore them.



- Outside the dense built-up part of the High Street, where the buildings are sited further apart, important spaces between buildings should be retained. The opportunity for further landscaping of these areas is considerable.



- Any landscaping should include the planting of trees and shrubs indigenous to the area. Ash, Yew, Holly, Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Wild Cherry and Hazel, Oak, Lime, and Horse Chestnut are suitable. Plane is also fine as there are lots of them around but they are not strictly native. Cherries and Crab Apple are acceptable in moderation. Specimen trees may be suitable in domestic curtilages close to front boundary walls. Further advice is available from the Council's Landscape Officer. (see back page for details)

- Existing views to the hills of the Downs and surrounding rural landscape and other the key focal points in the townscape should be maintained.

- Where original features cannot be repaired, they should be replaced in the same style and proportion as the original. Where inappropriate modern features are to be replaced, the opportunity should be taken to put back original features.



- Alterations to shopfronts should respect the scale, period, design and detail of the individual building of which it forms part.

- Where informal road and footway edges currently exist, the installation of kerbstones should be avoided but, if considered essential, conservation standard materials should be used wherever possible to protect this historic character.

- The removal of existing front boundary walls, railings and hedges to create new vehicular accesses and parking in front garden areas should be avoided.

- The Conservation Area is tightly drawn. Buildings immediately outside the boundary can have a significant impact in many different ways, which should be taken into account when new development is proposed in these locations.



## *Local Plan Policy*

The appraisal will help in the interpretation of Policies P4/4 and P4/5 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan 1998. Policy P4/4 requires proposals for development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of each Conservation Area. Policy P4/5 seeks to retain buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.



East Malling Conservation Area is largely situated within the defined rural settlement confines of East Malling Village. In this part of the village residential development will normally be restricted to minor development or redevelopment.

The open land to the west of the Conservation Area is designated as an Area of Local Landscape Importance. Policy P2/7 aims to protect its important rural landscape character.

## *Further Information*

If you would like more advice on East Malling Conservation Area, historic building repair and restoration, please telephone 01732 876218.

For advice on new development, including works to Listed Buildings, alterations to properties, the need for planning permission and works to or affecting trees, please telephone 01732 876 234.

If you would like to discuss alleged unauthorised development, please telephone 01732 876302.

Alternatively you can write to:

**Planning and Engineering Services  
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council  
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive  
Kings Hill  
West Malling  
Kent ME19 4LZ**

Or email:

[planning.services@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.services@tmbc.gov.uk)