

# East Hoathly Conservation Area

## Designation Report

East Hoathly Village Shop  
and Post Office



Wealden District Council has designated part of East Hoathly village as a Conservation Area - an area of special architectural and historic interest - so that its character and appearance may be preserved and enhanced.

This leaflet explains why the designation has been made and what it implies for residents and landowners in the area.

## Introduction

The village of East Hoathly lies within the gently sloping agricultural landscape between the High Weald and the South Downs. The slight elevation of the village affords wide-ranging and attractive views southwards to the South Downs.

The village has expanded southwards along the High Street/South Street and there has been a significant amount of in-depth post-war development to either side of the road. The East Hoathly Bypass has removed heavy through traffic from the village centre and subsequent traffic calming and environmental improvements have been introduced to enhance its appearance and improve road safety.

## History

The village of East Hoathly dates back to Anglo Saxon times when it was known as "Aist Hoadlye". In the Domesday Book it was entered as "Estothingham". The village, which is now basically linear in form, originally centred around the former village green and pond, which is now the site of the Chapel built at the turn of the century. The houses on Cider House Walk and on the west of the High Street would have fronted onto the village green.

The diarist Thomas Turner occupied a house in the village between 1750 and 1787 and his diaries, written over a period of 11 years, are an invaluable historic account of 18th Century village life. A commemorative plaque was placed on the building in 1972 by the East Hoathly Preservation Society.

Of particular local interest is the use of very large stone bricks in some of the older garden walls. These bricks, which are thought to have been made in response to a tax on bricks, are reputed to have been made locally but apparently were so heavy that local craftsmen refused to use them on buildings and went on strike to protest against their impracticality. The walls surrounding The Kings Head Public House are particularly fine examples of the use of these bricks.

## Appraisal

In order to determine the boundary of the Conservation Area, a study was made of the features which contribute to the special character of the village:-

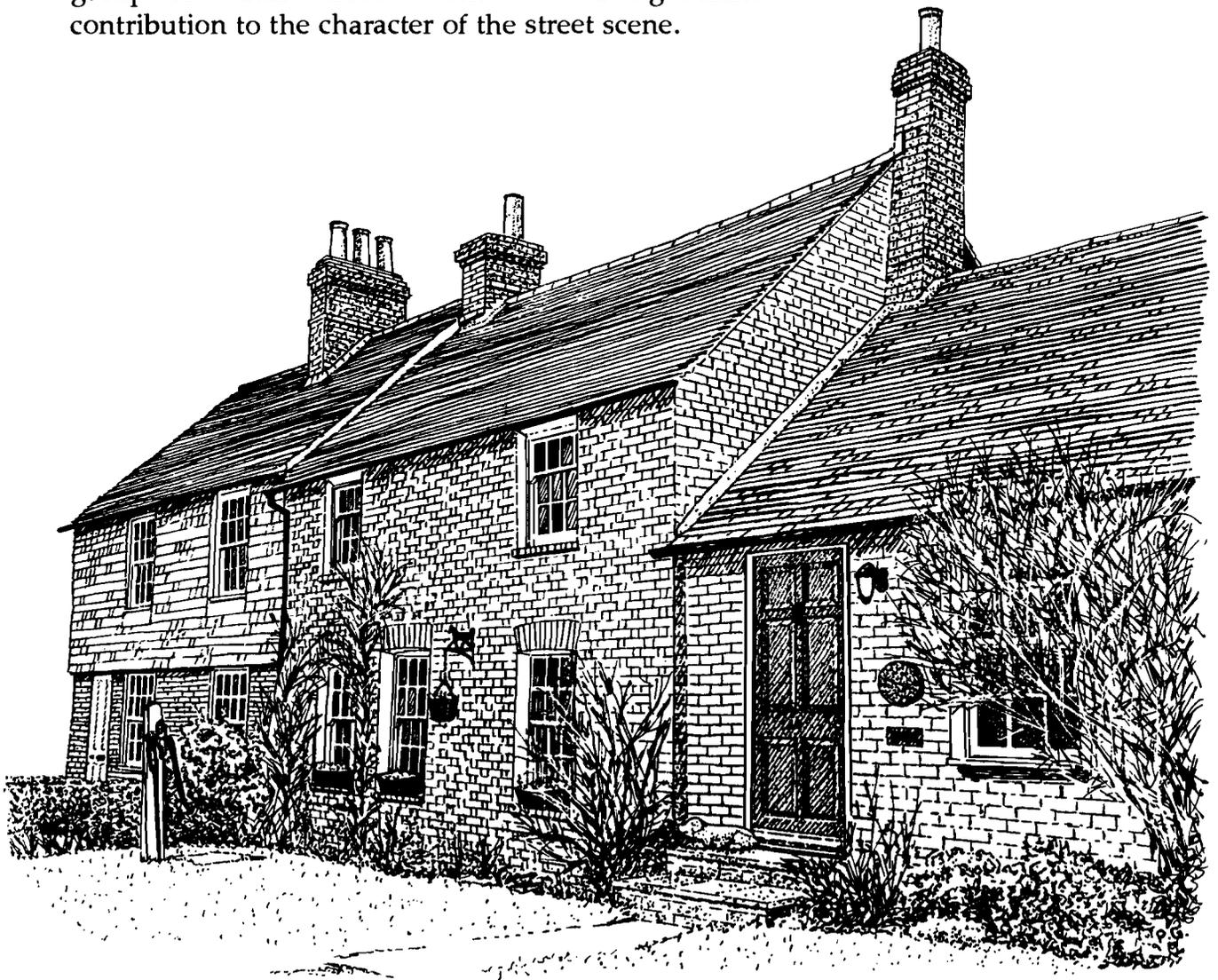
1. **Listed Buildings:** The village contains some thirty buildings listed as being of architectural or historic interest. The majority of these buildings are listed Grade II, although the Parish Church is listed Grade II\*, primarily because of its 15th Century tower. The historic core is concentrated around the junction of the old A22 and Waldron Road where the buildings principally date from the 18th and 19th Centuries. Within the historic core, the buildings form a tight-knit street frontage.

The property that houses the Post Office is an early 19th Century building which has a round-headed doorway with a semicircular fanlight and a 19th Century shop window. Nos. 6, 8 and 10 High Street were originally occupied as a single residence by Thomas

Thomas Turner, diarist, schoolmaster and general store dealer.

The 18th Century Kings Head Public House and adjoining buildings are prominent in the centre of the village and of particular interest is the mathematical tiling on the public house, and a trellised iron porch with a tent-shaped canopy at No.5 High Street. Two further listed properties of particular note are the Old Post Office Cottage, a 17th Century or earlier two-storey timber-framed building which, although on the edge of the historic core, is visible from the High Street, and further south along the High Street, outside of the designated area, "Sellens Cottages" (Nos. 7, 9 and 11 South Street), a 17th Century or earlier small hall house which has recently undergone substantial renovations.

In contrast to the tight-knit historic core, "Rosemount", an early 19th Century property, is set in spacious grounds and, together with adjoining property, includes a very prominent group of mature trees which make a significant contribution to the character of the street scene.



Jasmine Cottages, Mill Lane

**Other Notable Buildings:** There are several other notable buildings which, whilst not listed, do make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the village by virtue of their vernacular architecture and prominence in the street scene. Examples include the craft workshop on the High Street, which was previously a Methodist Chapel, the small cottages in Cider House Walk, a tight-knit group of brick and weatherboarded cottages with a particularly notable group value, and "Lydfords" which is set in spacious grounds with mature tree cover, adjoining "Rosemount".





2. **Trees and Hedges:** The character of the village is enhanced by a number of mature tree belts. On approaching the village centre from the south, the trees in the grounds of "Rosemount" and "Lydfords" and south of The Mews are particularly prominent in the landscape. Along the northern edge of the village, the trees within the grounds of "Hesmonds" provide a prominent backcloth to the historic core. Within the core of the village, there is little vegetation due to the relatively tight-knit street frontage; however, there is a fine Purple Leaf Plum tree on the corner of Mill Lane and Waldron Road.
3. **Views:** The principal views within the village are along the main roads into the village and focus on the junction of the former A22 and Waldron Road, which has now been enhanced by the introduction of improvements to create a focal point within the village.



Cider House Walk

4. **Open Spaces:** The environmental improvements to the village centre have created an attractive paved area outside The Kings Head Public House which forms a focal point in the centre of the village. This area incorporates a wrought iron village sign and cast iron seats with wooden slats, and is defined by a raised kerb and black cast iron gunner style bollards. The tight knit, compact nature of the built form around this junction further defines this central public space.

5. **Other Features:** Whilst recent environmental improvements have been introduced into the village core, there are relatively few traditional features. However, of particular note is the old brick paving of Cider House Walk and the high brick wall in Mill Lane. The village also has an original red telephone box at the junction of Waldron Road and Mill Lane, and a wall plaque on No.10 High Street commemorates the association of the diarist Thomas Turner with the village.

## The Conservation Area

On the basis of the "Visual Appraisal", the District Council considers that the Conservation Area should encompass:

1. the listed and notable buildings which front the High Street around the junction of the former A22 and Waldron Road;

2. the properties "Rosemount" and "Lydfords" and the mature tree groups within their grounds;
3. the group of cottages at Cider House Walk together with the Old Post Office Cottage in Buttsfield Lane;
4. the prominent belt of mature trees along the northern edge of the village within the grounds of "Hesmonds".

These principal elements, as a whole, contribute to the special historic character of East Hoathly and form the basis of the designated Conservation Area.

The Parish Church, "Sellens Cottages" and "Yew Tree Cottage" have not been included in the Conservation Area as they are separated from the historic core of the village by more modern development. Whilst their value to the street scene and their importance to the village is recognised, the protection afforded by their Listed Building status is sufficient to conserve the buildings and their setting.

The setting of the Conservation Area is equally as important as the elements contained within it and particular regard will be paid to the relationship of adjacent areas to the character of the Conservation Area.

### **Protection of Buildings and Trees**

Within a Conservation Area, the following controls apply in addition to normal planning controls:-

1. Conservation Area Consent is normally required from the District Council for the demolition (or partial demolition) of buildings in a Conservation Area. The demolition of a Listed Building requires Listed Building Consent.
2. Six weeks' notice must normally be given to the District Council of any intention to top, lop, cut down or uproot any trees in a Conservation Area. During this time it is open to the Council to serve a Tree Preservation Order.
3. Planning applications which, in the opinion of the Council, would affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area must be advertised and opportunity must be given for public comment.

### **Enhancement**

The immediate aim of the District Council in designating a Conservation Area is to afford protection under current legislation to areas, and specifically buildings, of special architectural or historic interest. However, following designation, consideration will be given to schemes for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area. Any such proposals would be subject to prior public consultation.

The village has recently benefited from a programme of environmental improvements, following removal of the heavy traffic, although further enhancements may be appropriate. Such enhancements are primarily small scale and could include further tree planting and the possible removal of telegraph poles and related wires.

## **Planning Policies**

The District Council has approved a number of policies to help in the determination of planning applications within Conservation Areas. There is a presumption against development proposals which would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of such areas. Any development proposals should respect the historic settlement pattern as well as the layout, character and setting of existing buildings. Accordingly, particular regard will be paid to the scale, height, form, grouping, density, materials and detailing, including boundary treatment, of proposals.

Even within a Conservation Area, many small alterations and extensions do not require planning permission, although works to Listed Buildings may well still require Listed Building Consent. Owners are advised to contact the Planning Department to ascertain whether their proposals require statutory approval.

Householders and builders are encouraged to take special care to ensure that their proposals are in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. Advice on the design of proposals is available from the Planning Department.

## **Further Information**

For further information and advice, please contact:-

District Planning Officer,  
Wealden District Council,  
Pine Grove,  
Crowborough,  
East Sussex.  
TN6 1DH

Telephone: (01892) 653311

## **Acknowledgements**

- (1) Kind assistance of Mr E Gould.
- (2) Drawings of Village Stores and Cider House Walk by Marietta Van Dyck, local artist.

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