



# STAR HILL TO SUN PIER CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

## Overview

Although the character of the Conservation Area owes to centuries of development, its current form is also a reflection of the changes and attitudes to town planning that have happened. It is highly probable that this evolution in the form of the townscape will continue for the foreseeable future, and so a careful approach to management of the area is important so not to erode or destroy the special characteristics of the Conservation Area. More lenient development control in the past has resulted in the construction of some poor-quality buildings or unsympathetic design approaches, such as Anchorage House and Empire Reach which now have a detrimental impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.

In addition, individual properties which have been subjected to a range of poor quality and inappropriate modern interventions or additions are also a source of concern. These small changes can adversely impact upon the overall character and significantly reduced the heritage value of the wider Conservation Area.

The ambition of the Conservation Area Management Plan is therefore to ensure that the historic character of the Conservation Area is to be preserved and where possible enhanced, so it can be readily enjoyed by future generations. The Plan will aim to build on the strengths of the characteristics of the Conservation Area in order to ensure that the opportunities for its future are fully appreciated, and that any changes that affect its character are appropriately managed.



View of the Conservation Area from Medway City Estate.

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## SWOT Analysis

To better understand the Conservation Area, an analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats has been undertaken.

### Strengths

- The range of important historic buildings and townscapes.
- The cluster of historic buildings at its centre around the Chatham Memorial Synagogue and 351 High Street, Rochester.
- The historic associations with Chatham Dockyard.
- The connection to the river.
- A characterful hinterland to the river.
- Its strong and diverse community.
- A well-established High Street.
- An exciting creative arts community.
- The consistent integrated quality of the heritage environment.
- Important and striking views into, out of, and through the Conservation Area.

### Weaknesses

- Economic conditions that can stifle local shops and businesses.
- Poor quality repairs and lack of maintenance.
- Lack of local awareness of the heritage significance.
- Lack of local knowledge about conservation repairs.
- Poor quality materials and detailing in alterations to buildings.
- Poor environmental quality at 'gateways' to the Conservation Area – particularly the Star Hill junction, Manor Road/Medway Street, and to a lesser extent Doust Way.
- The layout, design and scale of some modern developments.
- Lack of signage and connection to other areas.
- Lack of public green spaces or other open spaces.
- Poor quality public realm.

## Opportunities

- Potential for increased tourism and visitors.
- Improved building maintenance and management.
- More appropriate planning and design controls and guidance.
- Additional interpretation and marketing of historic buildings.
- Traffic and parking management to reduce adverse impact.
- Reuse of underused and vacant buildings.
- Improved linkages with major tourism attractions.
- Educational opportunities to better understand the area.
- Niche businesses that attract visitors.
- An increase in the population of the area.
- Enhancement of the presence of creative industries in the area.
- Community-led heritage regeneration.
- Repair of the historic townscape character.
- Improved governance.

## Threats

- Poor-quality development.
- Gentrification of the area.
- Increasing traffic movement and parking impact.
- Continued economic difficulties for shops and businesses.
- Disused buildings leading to sense of neglect and decline.
- Lack of appropriate planning controls.
- Unauthorised extensions and alterations to buildings.
- The character of the Conservation Area being eroded.
- Loss of important features, architectural details, and buildings.
- Important visual links within, in to, and out of the Conservation Area being lost or eroded.
- Inappropriate development impacting the important historic visual connections between the historic fortifications (such as Fort Pitt and Fort Amherst), the river, and Chatham Dockyard.

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## Responding to the SWOT Analysis

The findings of the SWOT analysis can be broken down into a series of categories for which Conservation Area Management Plan responses have then been prepared:

1. Maintenance and repair of historic buildings.
2. Alterations and extensions to buildings.
3. New buildings.
4. Bringing vacant buildings back into use.
5. Unauthorised works.
6. Encouraging the redevelopment or reuse of vacant plots.
7. Maximising redevelopment opportunities.
8. Encourage diversity in businesses to support vitality and vibrancy.
9. Increasing economic activity.
10. Improved gateways into the area.
11. Increasing visitor footfall and tourism.
12. Wayfinding through the area.
13. Environmental enhancements (green spaces, open spaces, footpaths, trees, and planting).
14. Events and festivals.
15. Identifying and protecting important views.
16. Parking and traffic management.
17. Supporting the existing businesses, creative industries, and the local community.
18. Community involvement in management and change within the Conservation Area.
19. Education and knowledge about the area.

The remit of the Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan is limited and so cannot include all the proposals, but it can encourage and support other projects, proposals, and plans created by other teams in the council that would help secure the desired outcome.



Featherstone House

Image courtesy of Rikard Osterlund.



Heritage construction skills training in October 2023

## 1. Maintenance and repair of historic buildings

The council promote the use of traditional conservation repair techniques, and its Conservation Officers trained to provide advice and guidance on such matters.

Further information on approaches to conservation repairs and maintenance are available through the following webpages:

- [Historic England](#)
- [The Institute of Historic Building Conservation \(IHBC\)](#)
- [The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings \(SPAB\)](#)
- [Building Conservation](#)

Regular and timely building maintenance is particularly important in historic buildings as it helps delay the inevitable deterioration of a buildings' fabric over time, and if undertaken correctly and at appropriate intervals can save the need for unnecessary and expensive repairs.

The IHBC and SPAB have produced a free publication entitled '[A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your property makes sense and saves money](#)' that covers many aspects of regular maintenance required on a historic building.

The council will endeavour to produce additional specific guidance where and when it is considered necessary and investigate opportunities to organise training events with conservation specialists and contractors where possible.

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## 2. Alterations and extensions to historic buildings

When considering the design of alterations and extensions to a building in the Conservation Area, it is usually best to appoint contractors that have experience of working on historic buildings. Architects that specialise in conservation and works to historic buildings are also advisable as they will have a better understanding of appropriate approaches to works and the necessary consents required.

Most dwellinghouses within the Conservation Area are subject to an Article 4 Direction which means that most alterations to the exterior of the building can often require planning permission. There is more information about the Article 4 Direction, what works it covers, and which properties it relates to on the [council webpage](#).

Most shops and other commercial premises have very limited permitted development rights and so most alterations to the exterior (including signage) or changes of use can often require consent from the council planning department.

Listed Buildings have a separate set of requirements where any changes that alter the character of a Listed Building can require Listed Building Consent. The parts of the building covered by a requirement for Listed Building Consent usually includes its interior, exterior, and curtilage (pre-1948 structures in land attached to the Listed Building). More information is available on the [Historic England website](#). If in any doubt, please contact the council Design and Conservation Team for more advice by email at: [design.conservation@medway.gov.uk](mailto:design.conservation@medway.gov.uk).

Any new development proposals that have the potential to impact the character of the Conservation Area will need to take account of the advice and guidance contained within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

It is strongly recommended that proposals for new development should make use of the council's pre-application process to engage with the Design and Conservation Team at an early stage. Where appropriate (usually where there is possible impact on a Scheduled Monument, Grade I or Grade II\* Listed Building) Historic England should also be engaged through their own pre-application advice service.

Further information on the pre-application advice services is available on the [Medway Council](#) and [Historic England](#) pre-application websites.

Further information about the appropriate design of alterations in the Conservation Area can be found in the Design Guidance section of this document.



The award-winning 2016 'Command of the Oceans' extension and conversion of the Mast House and Mould Loft at the Chatham Historic Dockyard

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## 3. New buildings and larger development proposals

The design of new buildings is particularly important in the Conservation Area as its character can be sensitive to change. New buildings should consider their context and any impact of their development on the historic environment as this will need to be demonstrated and considered through a planning application. To provide enhanced guidance on the development of new buildings on the Conservation Area, the council will be publishing the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework alongside the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

It is strongly recommended that proposals for new development should make use of the council's pre-application process to engage with the Design and Conservation Team at an early stage. Where appropriate (usually where there is possible impact on a Scheduled Monument, Grade I or Grade II\* Listed Building) Historic England should also be engaged through their own pre-application advice service.

Further information on the pre-application advice services is available on the [Medway Council](#) and [Historic England](#) pre-application websites, and advice about the design of alterations can be found in the Conservation Area can be found in the Design Guidance section of this document.

## 4. Bringing vacant buildings back into use

Vacant and derelict buildings can have a considerable impact on a Conservation Area that can lead to a sense of neglect and decline. Through the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ), the council worked with partner organisations and property owners to help match suitable occupants to vacant buildings.

As part of the legacy programme for the HSHAZ, the council will endeavour to continue to assist in finding suitable uses for disused buildings.



The Grade II Listed Building 286 St Margaret's Banks with sympathetic adjoining late-20<sup>th</sup> century development

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## 5. Unauthorised works

Sometimes development is carried out without the required planning permission or without following the details and conditions given by the council. Planning enforcement will be considered for:

- Unauthorised display of advertisements.
- Unauthorised work on protected trees.
- Unauthorised work on Listed Buildings.
- Unauthorised demolition of some buildings within a Conservation Area.
- Unauthorised storage of hazardous materials.
- Removal of protected hedgerows.
- Allowing land to fall into such poor condition that it harms the quality of the area.
- Harm to a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Breaches of planning can be reported to Medway Council by email through [planning.representations@medway.gov.uk](mailto:planning.representations@medway.gov.uk).

## 6. Encouraging the redevelopment or reuse of vacant plots

A series of development opportunity sites have been identified through the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework which will provide guidance on appropriate approaches to development in these locations.

## 7. Maximising redevelopment opportunities

The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework provides an ambitious approach to redevelopment opportunities in the Conservation Area through identifying appropriate sites and setting a vision for the future of the area that fully takes account of the character of the Conservation Area.

## 8. Encouraging diversity in the types of businesses to support vitality and vibrancy

In instances where planning permission is required for the change of use of a commercial premises on the High Street, the Medway Council Local Plan 2003 includes policies to help promote vitality and vibrancy through a diversity in the range of businesses and uses.

A new Local Plan is currently being produced and will look to include similar specific policies.

## 9. Increasing economic activity

New development in the area will lead to a growth in the local population and in-turn an increase the use of local services and businesses in the Conservation Area.

Through the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework and emerging Medway Local Plan measures to manage the right type of development and encourage new businesses to locate to the area will help create an attractive destination and increase local economic activity.

## 10. Improving gateways into the area

Existing physical and psychological barriers (such as the Star Hill junction, incomplete river walk, and the Manor Road/Medway Street junction) can act as a deterrent to potential visitors from venturing into the Conservation Area.

The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework will provide ambitions for how the council intends to address these important gateway locations.

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## 11. Increasing visitor footfall and tourism

The charming and unique character of the Conservation Area and the range of diverse businesses and creative industries provides the clear opportunity to establish an exciting and unique new destination in Medway. Emerging strategies such as the Wayfinding Strategy and Cultural Strategy will help put the Conservation Area on the map.

## 12. Wayfinding through the area

The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework and Wayfinding Strategy provide guidance on approaches that the council will take to help guide visitors from both Chatham and Rochester railway stations to and through the Conservation Area.

## 13. Environmental enhancements

As noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal, there is currently a limited provision of green and open spaces within the area. The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework will provide ambitions for how the council intends to create new spaces and how they can be integrated into any new development.

## 14. Events and festivals

Even with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, throughout the HSHAZ programme the Conservation Area has hosted some excellent and well-attended outdoor events and festivals, such as The Chatham Reach Festival, Intrafest, Heritage Open Days, Medway Light Nights, Medway Pride, as well as numerous smaller events such as the Chatham Intra Arts Market and Boot Fair, and guided tours by local historians.

The council wish to continue to support these important events, and through the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework identify potential suitable spaces for future events and festivals.



Sir John Hawkins Hospital open as part of the annual Heritage Open Days

Image courtesy of Rikard Osterlund.

## 15. Identifying and protecting important views

The Conservation Area Appraisal provides an assessment of a series of important views identified through the preparation of the document. These views (and any others identified through the Planning process) and any impacts upon them will need to be considered and discussed in any planning proposals. Additional guidance (such as through Design Codes) will be published in due course.

Further relevant guidance is currently provided in the adopted [A Building Heights Policy for Medway](#), and Chatham Dockyard and its [Defences Planning Policy Document](#).

## 16. Parking and Traffic Management

Parking and traffic management can be a particularly emotive matter with opposing views as to what is appropriate as it can impact everyday life. The Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework will provide ambitions for how the council intends to address parking and traffic management in the Conservation Area.

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## 17. Supporting the existing businesses, creative industries, and the local community

Through the proposed engagement mechanisms beyond the High Street Heritage Action Zone, further opportunities will likely arise for council support to the existing businesses, creative industries, and the local community due to a better understanding of local issues and opportunities.

As part of the legacy programme for the High Street Heritage Action Zone, the council will endeavour to identify means of providing continued support.

## 18. Community involvement in management and change within the Conservation Area

Through the High Street Heritage Action Zone, the Cultural Consortium was established and provided an invaluable opportunity for discussion and the sharing of information of ideas between the council, the community, stakeholders, and local businesses. Alongside this is the established Intra PACT, a group of residents and stakeholders that meet with the council and Police Officers to discuss local matters.

Members of both groups have been invaluable in the production of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan through attending events and providing support and feedback at various stages of its preparation.

As part of the legacy programme for the High Street Heritage Action Zone, the council will endeavour to engage with the Cultural Consortium and attend the Intra PACT meetings. Furthermore, it is recommended that future management of the Conservation Area and engagement on planning and conservation matters could be continued and formalised through the creation of a Conservation Area Consultative Committee.

## 19. Research, education, and knowledge

The proposed engagement mechanisms also provide the opportunity for the sharing of knowledge and skills on conservation matters, both in terms of learning about the rich history of the Conservation Area, and 'how-to' information for basic repairs and maintenance.

Alongside the invaluable knowledge of local residents, historians, researchers, and organisations, a range of resources have been used as part of the background research to this document. Many of these resources are continually being updated and are often available online, enriching our knowledge and understanding of the Conservation Area, such as:

- [Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre](#)
- [Kent Archives](#)
- [Kent Archaeological Society](#)
- [The Kent Historic Environment Record](#)
- [The National Archives](#)
- [Historic England photographic archive](#)
- [Historic England research reports](#)
- [The British Library](#)

The council will also endeavour to produce additional specific guidance where and when it is considered necessary and investigate opportunities to organise training events with conservation specialists and contractors where possible. Some resources for more information about building conservation can be found on the following webpages:

- [Historic England](#)
- [The Institute of Historic Building Conservation \(IHBC\)](#)
- [The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings \(SPAB\)](#)
- [Building Conservation](#)

## Design Guidance

The cumulative impact of relatively small-scale alterations to historic buildings can over time have a significant detrimental impact upon the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, and so inappropriate interventions should be avoided whenever possible. In some instances where works have been undertaken without the necessary consents, the council may decide to pursue Planning Enforcement action.

Typical alterations to buildings are covered within this section. The guidance is intended just to provide some outline principles for the approaches to design, and so any nuances and particular characteristics of a building must be taken account of alongside this guidance. Before undertaking any works, we strongly recommend discussing any requirements for consent with the Design and Conservation Team at Medway Council: [Design.conservation@medway.gov.uk](mailto:Design.conservation@medway.gov.uk).

## Replacement shopfronts

The removal of historic shopfronts can cause harm to the character of the Conservation Area, and so wherever shopfronts of merit survive they should be retained. Where the replacement of a modern shopfront is proposed, the replacement should replicate the historic form as closely as possible and comply with the adopted guidance on shopfront design on all occasions. There is more information available in the adopted [Guide to Good Practice in Shopfront Design](#).

## Traditional projecting signs

Often these were hung from visually discrete brackets without illumination. Where they are well designed and predominately pictorial, they can enliven the street scene. Modern internally illuminated plastic signs generally detract from the streetscape and are unlikely to be considered acceptable. There is more information available in the adopted [Guide to Shopfront Advertising for Historic Buildings](#).



Traditional-style hanging signs at 354-356 High Street, Rochester

Image courtesy of Rikard Osterlund.

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## Shutters and other shopfront security

Often businesses wish to install security measures such as roller shutters as a means of preventing vandalism and theft. The use of these types of measures can in fact have the reverse effect, creating a seemingly hostile environment where people feel unsafe, thus discouraging them from going there at night. The lack of natural surveillance then makes the area an easy target for vandals and thieves. If thieves do break in, the shutters will hide them from passers-by. For these reasons the Council's policy is against the fitting of solid roller shutters to shopfronts. The best protection from vandalism and crime in a commercial area comes from having a mixture of commercial and residential accommodation and for there to be people using the streets during the day and at night - this provides an area with `natural surveillance`.

It is recognised that some shops may need added security measures because of the nature of their business. However, a balance must be struck between the need for security and the quality of the environment. There is more information available in the adopted [guidance on Shopfront Security](#).

## Replacement windows and doors

Windows, doors, and decorative joinery are important features of a building, and so should only be replaced on an exact like-for-like basis when in a state that is beyond repair. The use of modern materials (such as UPVC and aluminium) as a replacement will only be considered acceptable where they replace windows and doors of an inferior design, or form part of a modern building. In all instances they must be of the same function (such as a sliding sash, not hinged type) and installed in the correct position within their openings. Other types of windows (such as steel-framed) should be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the Design and Conservation Team at Medway Council.



79 High Street, Chatham awaiting sensitive refurbishment and reuse

Image courtesy of Rikard Osterlund.

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## Satellite dishes, alarm boxes, etc

Whilst such items as satellite dishes and alarm boxes are often considered modern-day necessities, finding a discrete location for them is important to conserve the historic character of the area, and so they should not be positioned on the principal elevation of a building.

## Reroofing

Throughout the lifetime of a building, its roof will likely need to be replaced. Many traditional roof coverings were replaced with inferior concrete tiles in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and are now coming to the end of their lives. Replacement roofs should be in a traditional material that would have been used originally, such as slate or clay tiles (often Kent Peg tiles), depending on the age and style of the building. Welsh, Canadian, or high-quality Spanish slate is generally recommended for reroofing slate roofs.

## Dormers and rooflights

Dormers are quite a common feature throughout the Conservation Area, and so well-designed dormers that conform to traditional proportions may be considered acceptable in some instances. Dormers should not dominate the roof. Sometimes it may be more appropriate to position them on a less visible rear roof plane, such as to the rear of the building.

Rooflights are a more recent feature that allow for the conversion of a roof space to a room. Like dormers, their design and discrete positioning is an important determining factor in making their installation acceptable. Usually 'conservation style' rooflights are preferred.

## Extensions to buildings

Extending a building provides means of creating additional space but can dramatically alter the character or appearance of a building.

Extensions should relate to the original building and usually use similar or complimentary materials. Fenestration and the elevational treatment should reflect those on the original building. The scale of an extension should not dominate the original building.

## Photovoltaics (solar panels)

Addressing climate change is critical, and finding means of appropriately retrofitting older buildings to adapt to make them more energy efficient can be challenging. Installing photovoltaic panels is one way of reducing a building's reliance on non-renewable energy but can come with planning restrictions in their use in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings due to their impact on the character of the building or area. However, technology has made solar panels much more efficient and more discrete in their appearance, and so there may be means of identifying suitable means for their use on historic buildings – this is usually on roof planes that do not face public spaces, within roof valleys, on top of flat roofs, or within discrete location within the grounds of a property.

Historic England have produced some [guidance on the installation of photovoltaics](#), and we would suggest consulting the Design and Conservation at Medway Council in all instances.

## Other retrofitting options to improve energy efficiency

There are a range of other means to improve the energy efficiency of a historic building, such as wall, roof, or floor insulation, glazing, draught-proofing, and ground and air source heat pumps.

A 'whole house' approach should be taken when considering any such works, which considers the interrelationship between the occupants, the building fabric, and the services of individual buildings.

More information and resources are available on the dedicated [Historic England webpage on retrofitting historic buildings](#).

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Anchorage House dominating the historic Pier Chambers

Image courtesy of Rikard Osterlund.

## Large-scale development

There are several potential large scale development sites within or around the Conservation Area which may be considered to have the potential to both bring significant benefits but also to cause harm to the character of the Conservation Area.

Where new development is proposed it is important that it is guided by sound principles of urban design, as well as sympathetic detailing in relation to its historic context. Typically, all forms of new development within the Conservation Area should:

- Preserve and reinforce the distinctive pattern of historic development, including street patterns, open spaces, plot boundaries & boundary treatments. In this respect it is considered that the lanes between High Street and the river are of special interest.

- Have regard for existing building lines and the orientation of existing development.
- Reinforce the distinctive architectural character of each Character Zone and the wider Conservation Area through an informed understanding of its building forms, styles, details, and materials.
- Respect the scale and massing of surrounding buildings. It is essential that new development is not out of scale with existing buildings by way of its height, floor levels, size of windows and doors, the overall massing, and the roofscape.
- Maintain key views and vistas within, into, and out of the Conservation Area.
- Maintain key views across the Conservation Area, especially in respect of the important interrelationship between the river, Dockyard, and surrounding historic fortifications.
- Where possible, minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles and the provision of parking areas on the streetscape and landscape setting of historic buildings.
- Ensure that new road layouts and parking arrangements have a limited impact on the streetscape qualities of the locality.
- Sensitive surfacing and landscape design approaches.
- Limit rooftop aerials and satellite dishes and ensure that electricity and telephone service links are provided underground where possible so to avoid unsightly new wirescapes.
- Ensure an appropriate mix of uses at street level is maintained, often including an 'active' frontage to the High Street.

More comprehensive guidance can be found in the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area Significance-led Development Framework. It is strongly recommended that proposals for new development should make use of the council's pre-application process to engage with the Design and Conservation Team at an early stage.

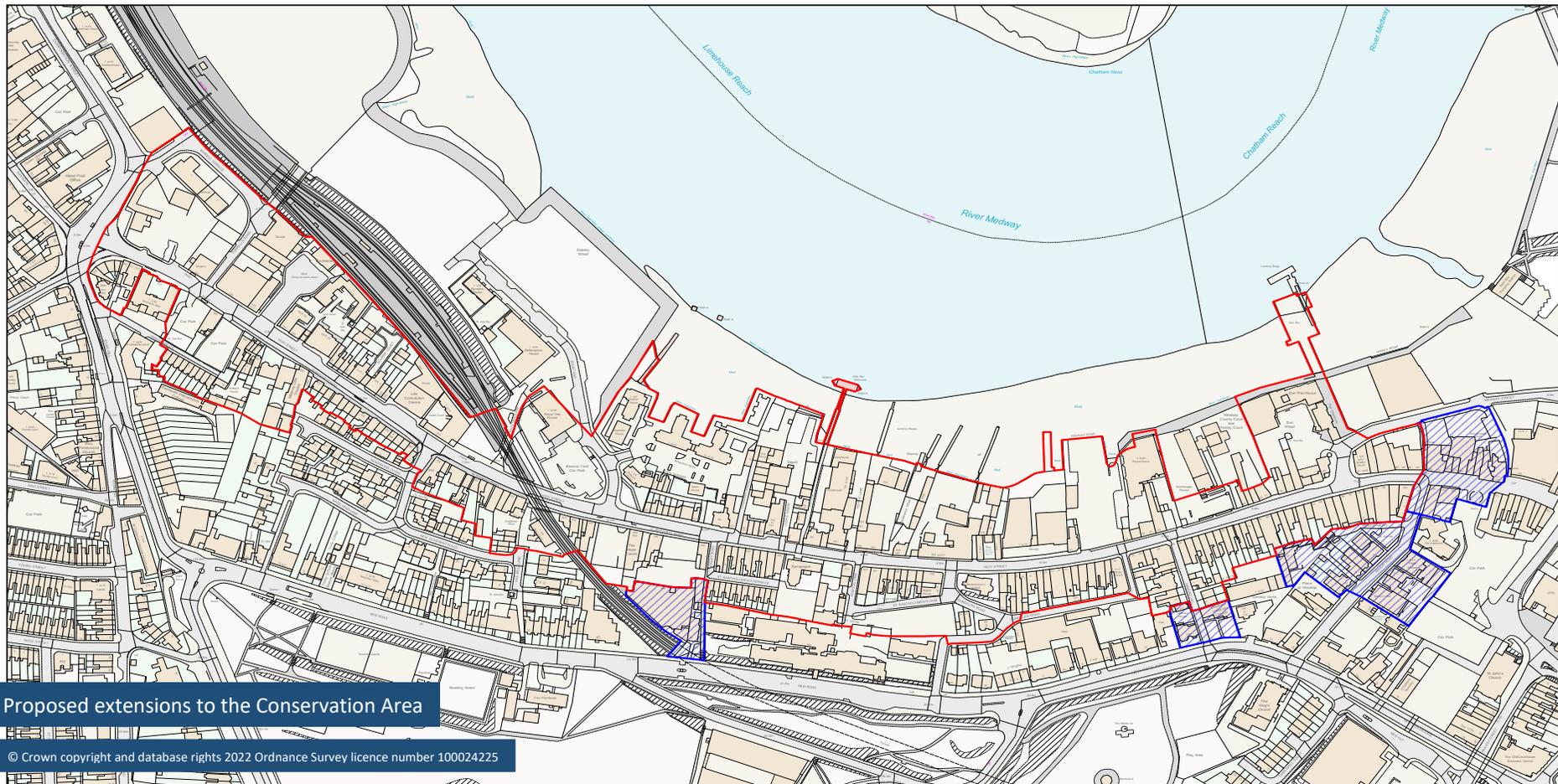
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## Revisions to the Conservation Area Boundary

There have been considerable changes to the Conservation Area since it was designated in 1994, and it is therefore considered that the existing boundaries need revising. The extensions allow for a greater appreciation of the significance of the Conservation Area, bringing in areas that have shared characteristics and contribute to its overall character.

Four key areas for potential extensions to the existing boundary have been identified:

1. The Bethel Chapel
2. Chatham High Street
3. Manor Road
4. Hamond Hill.

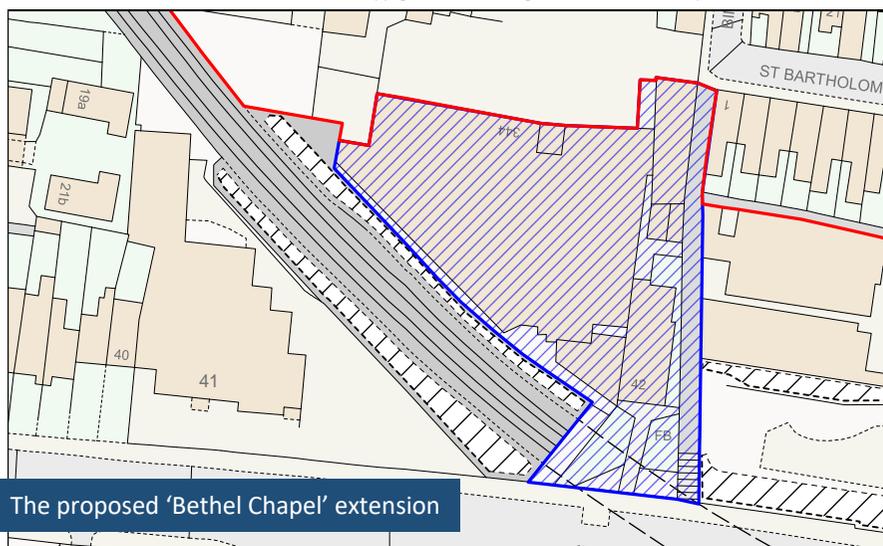


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## The Bethel Chapel

This area encompasses the site of the former Wesleyan Bethel Chapel and includes the remains of the historic chapel within the existing buildings, the open space to the front, the historic structures on the east boundary and associated lane, and the land that rises over the railway line to New Road.

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## Historical Analysis

The Bethel Chapel was one of several places of worship that catered for the spiritual needs of the local population, and one of only three that have survived above ground. Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century mapping shows that the chapel had a prominent graveyard that extended from north to St Margaret's Banks. This part of the site remains open and undeveloped.

The general pattern of the townscape in this area in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was small-scale fronting St Margaret's Banks, with narrow alleyways and under crofts to provide access to the gardens and land to the south. Upon the arrival of the East Kent Railway in the 1850s, this section of St

Margaret's Banks was bisected by the railway line, with New Road to its south and the High Street and St Margaret's Banks to its north. With the development of St Bartholomew's Terrace in 1887, Bingley Road came into existence and land is taken from St Bartholomew's Hospital to create the existing north-south alleyway access to New Road.

The existence of the alleyway to New Road has some heritage value. This value is enhanced by the remaining building along the eastern boundary of the site where it adjoins the alleyway. The brickwork of these may suggest that these are fragments of the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. In addition, a considerable amount of the chapel and the later Sunday school potentially remains within the current structures on the site. The tunnel mouth itself appears to be the original East Kent Railway structure of around 1859.

## Positive attributes

- The remains of Bethel Chapel.
- The open space in front of the chapel.
- The range of buildings to the east of the site.
- The historic alleyway to New Road.
- The railway and tunnel.

## Negative aspects

- The poor quality late-20<sup>th</sup> century alterations and extensions enclosing the former chapel that compromise its character.
- Poor quality late-20<sup>th</sup> century buildings within the site.
- Poor maintenance of the site.

## Summary

This area retains historic components from the former use of the site that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area and so should be included within its boundary.

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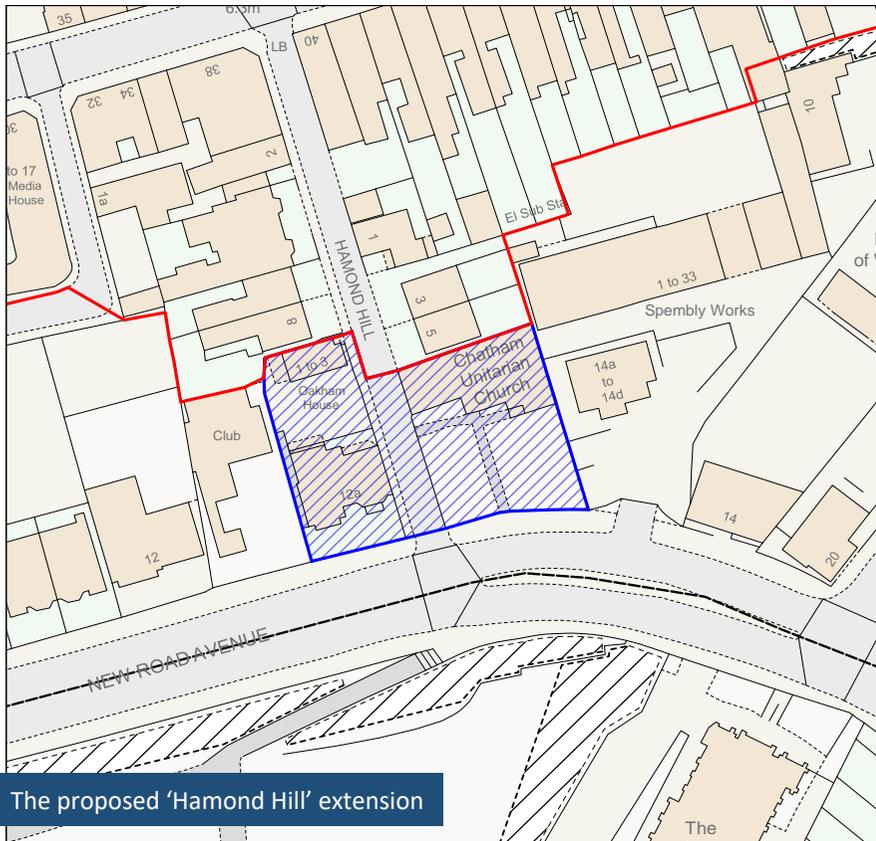
The proposed 'Bethel Chapel' extension on St Margaret's Banks

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## Hamond Hill

The Conservation Area currently terminates three quarters of the way up Hamond Hill along the northern edge of the Unitarian Church, leaving two residential buildings and the church outside of the Conservation Area.

Until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Hamond Hill was known as Heavysides Lane and was later renamed with the development of Hamond Place on the High Street, named after Sir Andrew Snape Hamond, Baronet and Controller of the Navy, and Supervisor of the Chatham Chest estates, on whose land Hamond Place was constructed.



The proposed 'Hamond Hill' extension

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## Historical analysis

The Unitarian Church is a locally important historic and cultural landmark and institution located on the corner of New Road Avenue and Hamond Hill. The current church was constructed in 1889, however there is evidence of previous buildings on the site, with an earlier chapel dating from 1802, replacing a 1703 meeting house located nearer the High Street.

Burntwick House was designed by George Edward Bond and constructed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century on the extensive gardens to 6 and 8 Hamond Hill. Its design is typical of the Arts and Crafts style that was often used for higher status dwellings in this period. Such a high status building indicates the sociological mix and prosperity within the area at the time.

Immediately north of Burntwick House is Oakham House, an early 21<sup>st</sup> century residential block designed to complement its adjoining neighbour at 8 Hamond Hill.

## Positive attributes

- Burntwick House.
- The Unitarian Church.
- The historic connection between Hamond Hill and the High Street.

## Negative aspects

- The modern development of Oakham House which has eroded the remaining historic garden space between Burntwick House and 8 Hamond Hill.

## Summary

Both Burntwick House and the Unitarian Church are high quality buildings which reflect key aspects of the cultural heritage and architecture of the Conservation Area and so should be included within its boundary.

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The Unitarian Church within proposed 'Hamond Hill' extension

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## Manor Road

Manor Road is a predominantly high-status residential area with some civic facilities, such as the Masonic Hall on the east side and Victoria Nurses Institute on the west, both of which were designed by George Edward Bond and constructed in 1903. It is functionally connected to the Conservation Area and was probably built for the prosperous business owners nearby.



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## Historical Analysis

Manor Road was established on the site of the former Best brewery in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, likely around 1902 when Chatham House (the brewery mansion) was demolished. Nothing of the brewery buildings are known to remain above ground, however vaults built into the retaining wall on Manor Mews are likely to originate from the brewery use of the site.

The first buildings to be constructed were the Masonic Hall and Victoria Nurses Institute, both with date stones of 1903, three pairs of large red

brick semi-detached houses along the western side of the road, and three smaller dwellings (now altered and in use as a veterinary surgery) to the west of Manor Road behind the Nurses Institute and accessed by a lane between the houses. It is possible that these were constructed at the same time and as part of the development of the Nurses Institute, possibly as accommodation. The southern-most house of the three pairs has since been demolished in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced with a much larger commercial building. Soon after came a pair of semi-detached houses and Reliance House in 1930 (originally a Building Society branch and offices), and which is now Grade II Listed.

The development of Manor Road demonstrates the prosperity and desirability of the area at the time, with its construction immediately following on from the demolition of the brewery and being replaced with prominent civic buildings and large houses.

## Positive attributes

- Reliance House (Grade II Listed).
- The Masonic Hall.
- The Victoria Nurses Institute.
- 6, 8, 10 (the veterinary surgery), 12 and 14 Manor Road.

## Negative aspects

- Danielson Court.
- The extension adjacent to No 18 Manor Road.
- Parking and traffic management on Manor Road.

## Summary

Manor Road demonstrates the prosperous evolution of the Conservation Area into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the redevelopment of the Best brewery, the area remained functionally part of the Conservation Area beyond this time and so should be included within its boundary.

# STAR HILL TO SUN PIER CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN



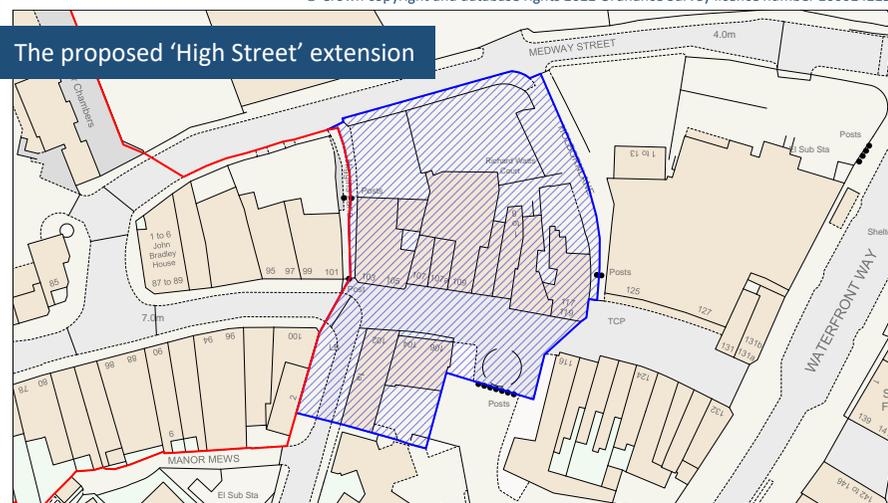
The proposed 'Manor Road' extension

# STAR HILL TO SUN PIER CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

## High Street, Chatham

The retail core of High Street, Chatham continues as far east as Luton Arches, and includes the principal shopping area of Medway. The western end of the High Street from Manor Road to Sir John Hawkins Way contains buildings of a similar character and scale to the adjoining part of the Conservation Area, albeit separated by a break between 106 and 116 High Street, and through the development of the large retail unit at 125-127 High Street.

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## Historical Analysis

The area forms part of the historic town centre of Chatham. By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the area is relatively developed with many of the roads laid out in the current form, including Holborn Lane and Higgins Lane that originally led down to the riverfront.

The late-19<sup>th</sup> century saw the establishment of Barnard's Palace of Varieties (at 107-109 High Street) and later the Theatre Royal (designed by George Edward Bond), which forms part of the important local entertainment industry that flourished in the Conservation Area through

the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nearby were also a range of other public houses and hotels. Barnard's Palace of Varieties burned down in 1934, and the current frontage dates from this period. The Theatre Royal was subject to a period of decay in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and now only the front of the building remains. The Theatre Royal is Grade II Listed, along with the adjoining former bank, both of which are now in residential use.

Medway Street was laid out in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when land was reclaimed from the river. A terrace of 9 houses previously fronted Medway Street but these were demolished in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced with the existing car sales yard. The area altered again in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century when entertainment venues closed, and the area became more retail-orientated in character. A mix of uses now fills this section of the High Street but much of the character remains in the historic street pattern and form of the buildings.

## Positive attributes

- The Theatre Royal (Grade II Listed).
- The former bank at 104-106 High Street (Grade II Listed).
- 103 – 119 High Street.
- Higgins Lane and Holborn Lane.

## Negative aspects

- The loss of the historic buildings – all or in part.
- The loss of the houses on Medway Street.
- Poor quality alterations to some of the buildings.

## Summary

The area demonstrates the evolution of the Conservation Area into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the alterations and loss of some buildings the area retains a similar character to that of the Conservation Area and retains a functional link as part of the High Street, and so should be included within the Conservation Area boundary.

# STAR HILL TO SUN PIER CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN



The proposed 'High Street' extension

## Article 4 Directions

The replacement of windows, doors, roof coverings etc, on dwellinghouses is usually considered to be 'permitted development rights', however in the Conservation Area many of these rights have been removed through an Article 4 Direction.

Development for which planning permission is required under the Article 4 Direction includes the following where they front a highway, footpath, waterway, or open space:

- Altering roofs and chimneys.
- Altering windows, doors, and other openings.
- Works to porches and porticos.
- Changing external wall materials (such as stone, brick, or render).
- Painting, rendering, or pebble dashing the walls of a building (excluding the painting of doors, windows, and joinery).
- Changing rainwater goods.
- Constructing extensions, outbuildings, or swimming pools.
- Erecting, altering, or removing boundary gates, fences, or walls.
- Laying or relaying paths, driveways, or other hardstanding.
- Installing a satellite dish.

The above list is just a summary, and a full list of works requiring planning permission under the Article 4 Direction can be provide on request from the Design and Conservation Team.

An up-to-date list of the properties to which the Article 4 Direction applies can be found the [Medway Council website](#).

It is considered that the current Article 4 Directions make a significant contribution towards preserving and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area and that they should be retained.

Article 4 Directions principally apply to properties in use as dwellinghouses. Flats and commercial buildings do not have the same permitted development rights as residential property and are therefore less at risk from inappropriate changes. However, commercial properties do currently have some permitted development rights to alter their use class from Use Class E to Residential, subject to certain requirements being met. It is considered that allowing such conversions at ground floor level could cause considerable harm to both the historical character and the overall vibrancy and economic viability of the Conservation Area, and therefore an Article 4 Direction should be imposed to remove this permitted development right in the Conservation Area.

Should this option be pursued, a public consultation exercise will consider these issues and identify the additional responsibilities and benefits for owners and occupiers of properties within the Conservation Area.

### Dwellings with Article 4 Directions

Article 4 Directions currently apply to all residential dwellinghouses:

- In Orange Terrace, Rochester.
- Between 200 to 392 (evens), and 209 to 379 (odds) High Street, Rochester.
- In Hamond Hill, Chatham.
- In Gundulph Road, Rochester.
- In St Bartholomew's Terrace, Rochester.
- Numbers 2, 10, and 12 Nags Head Lane.
- In Bourne Court, High Street, Rochester.

Should the proposed extensions to the Conservation Area be included, a review of the Article 4 Directions will likely be required to ensure that they remain relevant and that any additional dwellings suitable for inclusion are covered by the provisions of the Article 4 Direction to help preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

## Acknowledgements

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## Contact Information

For advice on planning issues please contact the Medway Council Planning Department on: [planning.representations@medway.gov.uk](mailto:planning.representations@medway.gov.uk).

For advice on matters relating to Listed Buildings or buildings in a Conservation Area, please contact a Conservation Officer at Medway Council on: [design.conservation@medway.gov.uk](mailto:design.conservation@medway.gov.uk).

More information is available on the [Medway Council website](#).