

EAST GRINSTEAD

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT JULY 2006

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PAGE 2

01 PAGE 4

INTRODUCTION

02 PAGE 10

CONTEXT: EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN CENTRE

03 PAGE 22

STRATEGIC PROPOSALS

04 PAGE 70

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

APPENDICES PAGE 81

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the revitalisation and redevelopment of East Grinstead town centre. It provides additional guidance to supplement Mid Sussex District Council statutory planning policies as set out in their Local Plan and it will be used to help assess planning applications within the town centre.

This SPD is the result of a collaborative process between Mid Sussex District Council, East Grinstead Town Council, West Sussex County Council, Thornfield Properties plc and the local community. Thornfield Properties plc are the District Council's appointed development partner.

To ensure that the proposals contained within this SPD for the regeneration of the town centre were firmly based within the community and responded to local issues and concerns a Visioning process was undertaken. This involved local stakeholders taking part in workshops to explore what was good, bad and needed to be changed in East Grinstead to allow the town to continue to evolve and attract new families and businesses. The outputs from these workshops were then used to inform the development of the master plans and this resultant SPD.

This SPD sets out the policy context, background information on the town, a vision for how the town should develop over the next 20 years and seven objectives that new development should accord with to meet this vision.

The overall vision is encapsulated in the following:

LIVING LIFE WELL

“A reinvigorated town centre that is proud of its heritage and builds sensitively upon its special character by integrating the best contemporary development to create a vibrant and successful place for the 21st century and beyond.”

This vision will be delivered through the following seven strategic objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a robust structure to the town centre that ensures that future development complements and integrates with the unique character of the town.

OBJECTIVE 2

To improve levels of accessibility and permeability within the town centre by providing safe, direct and attractive routes that encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.

OBJECTIVE 3

To create opportunities for new retail and associated parking within the town centre that dramatically improves the quality and offer of the shopping experience.

OBJECTIVE 4

To provide a greater mix of uses and residential accommodation, including affordable housing, within the town centre to increase and diversify its resident, visitor and workplace populations and which gives family orientated evening vitality.

OBJECTIVE 5

To enhance the public realm and create a new town square

OBJECTIVE 6

To ensure new development respects and builds on East Grinstead's special identity and character.

OBJECTIVE 7

To create a sustainable town.

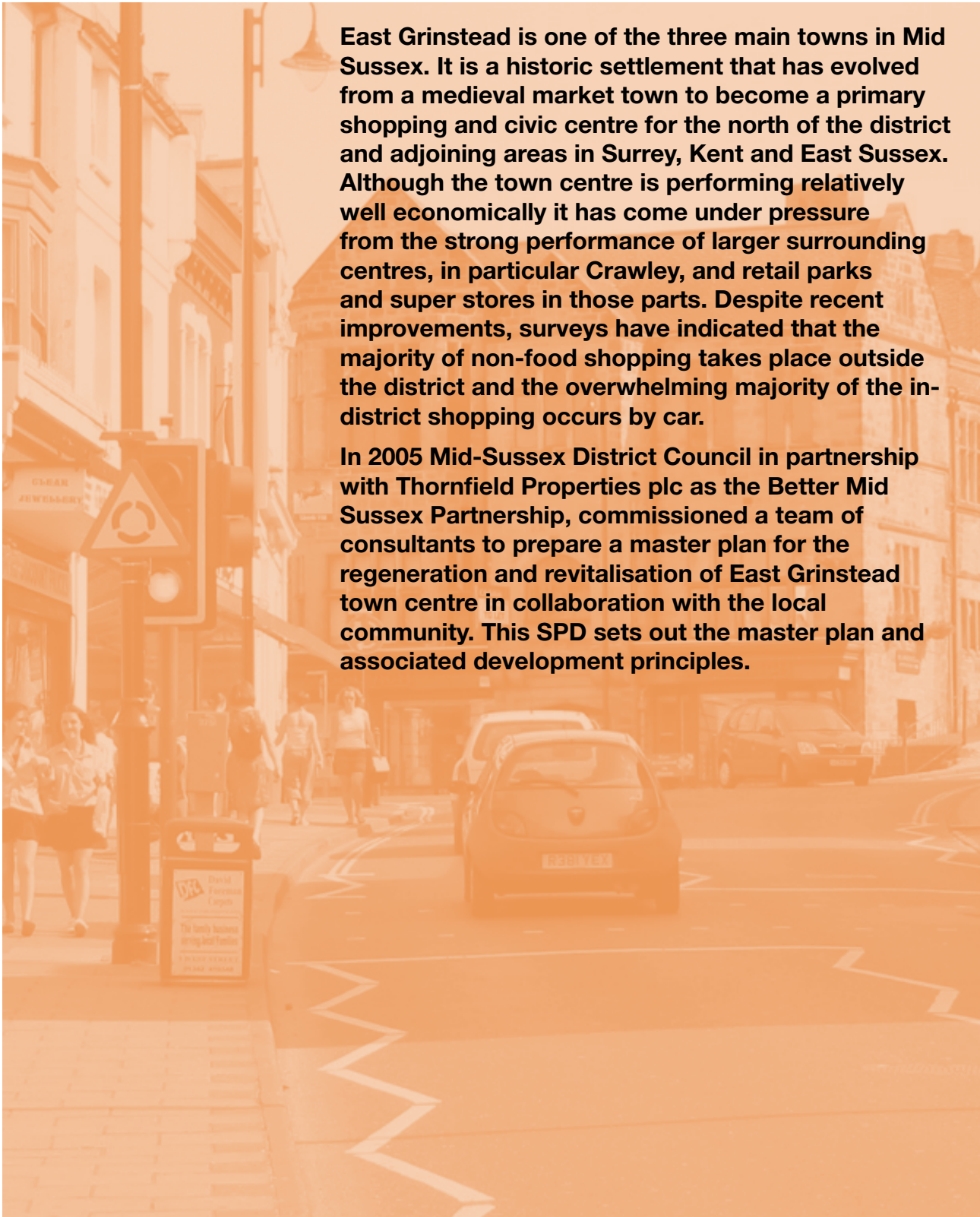
Information is also set out on phasing of development and planning obligations. A glossary provides definitions of planning and design terminology.

01

INTRODUCTION

East Grinstead is one of the three main towns in Mid Sussex. It is a historic settlement that has evolved from a medieval market town to become a primary shopping and civic centre for the north of the district and adjoining areas in Surrey, Kent and East Sussex. Although the town centre is performing relatively well economically it has come under pressure from the strong performance of larger surrounding centres, in particular Crawley, and retail parks and super stores in those parts. Despite recent improvements, surveys have indicated that the majority of non-food shopping takes place outside the district and the overwhelming majority of the in-district shopping occurs by car.

In 2005 Mid-Sussex District Council in partnership with Thornfield Properties plc as the Better Mid Sussex Partnership, commissioned a team of consultants to prepare a master plan for the regeneration and revitalisation of East Grinstead town centre in collaboration with the local community. This SPD sets out the master plan and associated development principles.



PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.1 This SPD provides additional guidance for East Grinstead town centre and will be used to supplement relevant policies within the adopted Mid Sussex District Local Plan. In particular this SPD will supplement policies B1, B9, B11, H2, S1, S2, T4,T5, R14 and the East Grinstead chapter.

1.2 This document will set out the key spatial planning and design issues, principles and recommendations that Mid Sussex District Council will use to help determine planning applications in the East Grinstead town centre master plan area as shown in the Figure 1 Study Area.

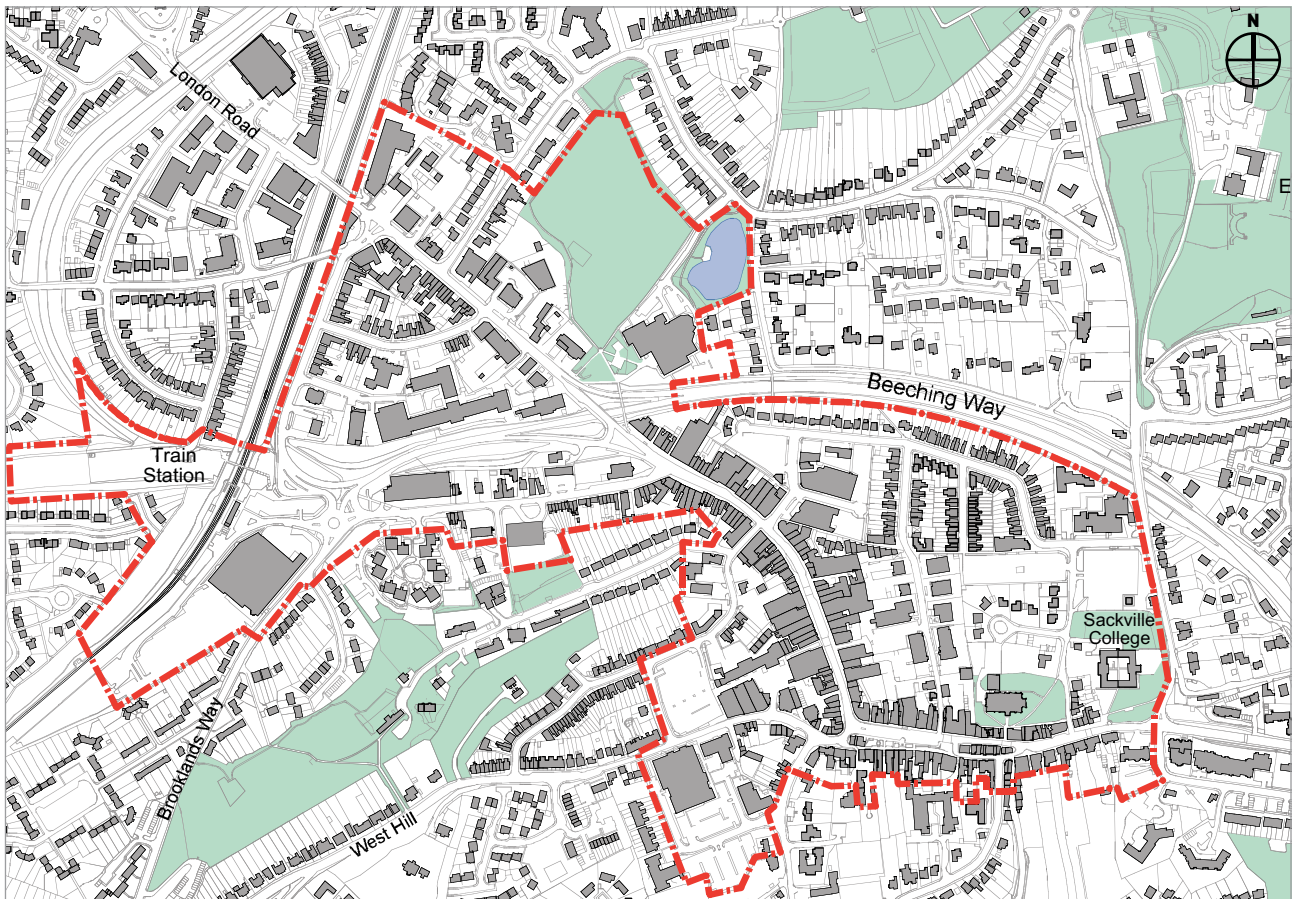


FIGURE 1: Study Area

THE NEED FOR REGENERATION AND REVITALISATION

1.2 Mid Sussex District Council recognise the importance of East Grinstead in its Local Plan, and this is articulated through its East Grinstead chapter, which whilst acknowledging the need for restraint arising from environmental and infrastructure restrictions, sets out a series of policy aims.

1.3 Key aims, which the SPD has sought to provide further guidance on are:

- the provision of new housing and business development,
- improving the quality of environment and traffic conditions;
- the maintenance and increase of shopping facilities and ensuring the town centre is an attractive location for shopping, leisure, recreation and other activities and as a place to live and work;
- to improve the attractiveness of High Street and London Road by minimising the impact of traffic and reducing danger to pedestrians;
- to safeguard and enhance the character of the town;
- to improve car parking and to maintain and enhance the provision of community facilities including open space.

1.4 Regional policy also emphasises the importance of vibrant and attractive town centres, which contain a mix of uses to ensure sustainable development and to make them multi-use nodes, so cutting down on the number of journeys people need to make. Fundamental to this is the role of retail and leisure. Mid Sussex District Council commissioned a Retail Study in January 2005 (updated June 2006), to inform and guide retail planning in the district. The conclusions highlighted that it is critical for Mid Sussex town centres to improve their retail offer in light of growing competition in the wider sub-region. Where smaller centres have been unable to diversify their offer or create niche markets they have suffered.

1.5 At present Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead retain only 37% of total comparison goods expenditure within the survey area, leaving 63% to leak to competing shopping destinations including Crawley, Brighton and Royal Tunbridge Wells. These centres all have proposals in the pipeline to considerably enhance their retail offer, thereby increasing the level of trade leakage from Mid Sussex District, and East Grinstead town centre.

1.6 Within the town centre there has been a lack of major development for some considerable time and this lack of investment has caused the town to suffer. The Retail Study identifies that the town has a number of weaknesses and areas of opportunity/improvement for the period to 2016 and beyond, including a below average representation of clothing/fashion retailers, key attractors and falling retailer demand. Furthermore, the main town centre foodstore (Waitrose) is poorly integrated into the primary shopping frontages, and the centre is failing to attract the full potential of AB/C1 higher income earners in the catchment area.

STUDY PROCESS

1.7 This SPD is the result of a collaborative process between Mid Sussex District Council, East Grinstead Town Council, West Sussex County Council, Thornfield Properties plc and the local community. Thornfield Properties plc are the District Council's appointed development partner.

1.8 The process began with visioning work carried out with key stakeholders in 2004. This identified problems, opportunities and aspirations from a community's perspective. A master planning exercise was then undertaken to respond to these issues through the creation of a physical framework. The master planning exercise involved further workshops with key stakeholders to explore the emerging master planning proposals.

1.12 This SPD builds on existing policies in the Mid Sussex Local Plan and the West Sussex Structure Plan. Other information sources include:

- Draft Area Action Plan for the East Grinstead Strategic Development
- North Mid Sussex Area Transport Plan
- Extensive Urban Survey

- Small Scale Housing Allocations Preferred Options Report
- Mid Sussex Community Strategy
- Mid Sussex Retail Study
- Railway Approach Development Brief

1.9 The master plan was then incorporated into a SPD and public consultation undertaken. Comments arising from the consultation were then considered with amendments to the master plan made accordingly.

1.10 As part of the SPD process a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was carried out. This is to ensure that the proposals put forward in the SPD are fully considered in regard to how they contribute to sustainable development. The SA is a document that is subject to the same consultation process as the SPD and is available to the public.

1.11 Once adopted, the SPD and SA will be regularly monitored and reviewed against base line objectives to ensure that objectives are being met, the guidance remains relevant and that sustainable development is being delivered.

POLICY CONTEXT

1.12 A full summary of national, regional and local policy is set out in Appendix B. Set out below is a short policy context overview.

National and Regional Policy

1.13 Guidance at the national level through Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) inform the overarching policy context. PPS6 Planning for Town Centres was published in March 2005 and replaces PPG6: Town Centres and Retail Developments. The statement outlines the Government's key objectives of promoting vital and viable town centres, focusing on retail, leisure, commercial and arts and cultural uses as well as housing in mixed-use developments. This is to be achieved through applying the sequential approach, as set out in paragraph 2.4 of PPS6, which seeks to prioritise growth and development of existing centres rather than edge or out of town locations.

1.14 National guidance is interpreted at the regional level through the South East Regional Plan, published as Regional Planning Guidance 9 (2001-2016). This sets out key development principles for the region including increasing the attractiveness of urban areas, intensifying and strengthening existing towns and encouraging economic development. These policies are broadly reiterated in the draft South East Plan which covers the period up to 2026. Within this framework, the West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 emphasises the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the existing town centres in policies NE9 and NE10.

Local Policy

1.15 The Mid Sussex Local Plan sets out the aims and policies to guide development in East Grinstead town centre. The plan identifies East Grinstead as the main shopping centre for its catchment areas and aims to 'improve the quality of the environment and traffic conditions (and) to maintain and increase existing shopping facilities and enhance the attractiveness of the town centre as a location for shopping, leisure, recreation and other activities, and as a place to live and work' (p198). Policy S1 of the Local Plan supports development that maintains and enhances the range, quality and vitality of existing shopping areas in the town centre and resists out-of-town development which erodes the countryside. It supports redevelopment of the Queens Walk shopping area to provide for new retail floor space.

1.16 The Local Plan defines a series of key projects in and around the town centre. This will help to coordinate and integrate these proposals within a comprehensive framework for town. These projects are:

- Significant Development Opportunity at the King Street Area for a mixed-used development including shopping, leisure, offices and housing uses and improvement of existing facilities (EG10-11 and EG21);
- Redevelopment of Queens Walk for additional shopping and car parking (EG13-14); and
- Redevelopment of the railway station to improve facilities and allow for the extension of the Bluebell railway (EG23).

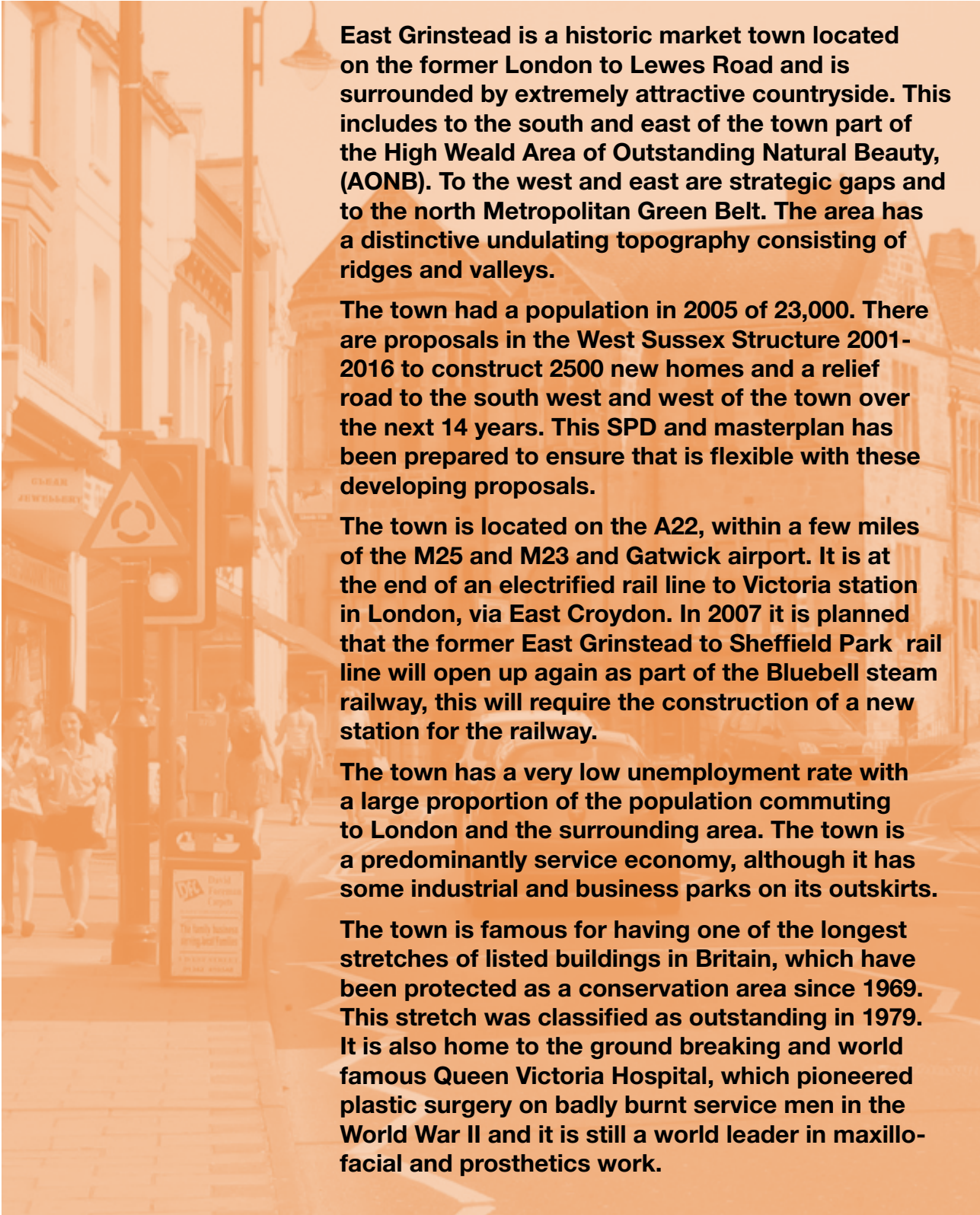
1.17 The Local Transport Plan for East Grinstead recognises the problems of increasing growth in traffic and the poor interface between the railway station and other transport modes in the town centre.



East Grinstead Aerial View

02

CONTEXT: EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN CENTRE



East Grinstead is a historic market town located on the former London to Lewes Road and is surrounded by extremely attractive countryside. This includes to the south and east of the town part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (AONB). To the west and east are strategic gaps and to the north Metropolitan Green Belt. The area has a distinctive undulating topography consisting of ridges and valleys.

The town had a population in 2005 of 23,000. There are proposals in the West Sussex Structure 2001-2016 to construct 2500 new homes and a relief road to the south west and west of the town over the next 14 years. This SPD and masterplan has been prepared to ensure that is flexible with these developing proposals.

The town is located on the A22, within a few miles of the M25 and M23 and Gatwick airport. It is at the end of an electrified rail line to Victoria station in London, via East Croydon. In 2007 it is planned that the former East Grinstead to Sheffield Park rail line will open up again as part of the Bluebell steam railway, this will require the construction of a new station for the railway.

The town has a very low unemployment rate with a large proportion of the population commuting to London and the surrounding area. The town is a predominantly service economy, although it has some industrial and business parks on its outskirts.

The town is famous for having one of the longest stretches of listed buildings in Britain, which have been protected as a conservation area since 1969. This stretch was classified as outstanding in 1979. It is also home to the ground breaking and world famous Queen Victoria Hospital, which pioneered plastic surgery on badly burnt service men in the World War II and it is still a world leader in maxillo-facial and prosthetics work.



East Grinstead displays a variety of architecture, some dating from medieval times.

HISTORY

2.1 Grinstead is derived from the Old English of *grenestede*, meaning green place. The Domesday Book in 1086, first records the place name of Grinstead, with the prefix of East, in usage from the late 13th century added to differentiate the town from West Grinstead.

2.2 Although human occupation is traceable to Mesolithic times, the original town was laid out in the early 13th century with some of the houses built at that time still occupied today. The street layout within the core of the town has remained little changed, with the western end of the High Street still today part of the main shopping area. In 1235 the town received borough status with a weekly market and four annual fairs. In 1300 the town was important enough to send representatives to Parliament and the town grew steadily, although probably, due to its relative isolation and a more minor role in the production of the key export of timber, it did not grow as dramatically as towns such as Horsham, Battle and Cuckfield. During the following centuries, the town continued to flourish as an important staging post on the London to Brighton road. This is evidenced by the proliferation of inns within the town, and in a survey in 1686, East Grinstead had the most guest beds within the county at 103. This importance was further reflected through the turnpiking of the London to East Grinstead road in 1717, which was the first in the county.

2.3 Further fairs and a cattle market were added and the range of trades and industries within the town grew, including leather working and Wealden iron production, which had been a major part of the town's economy from medieval times. The first English blast furnace was established in 1496 in the Ashdown Forest 8km from the town. During the 16th century this industry rapidly expanded, but by the 18th century, it had almost died out.

2.4 In 1785 the church tower collapsed after many years of neglect and in 1789 the remaining church was demolished and St Swithun's constructed to designs by James Wyatt. During the building works services were held in Sackville College, which was built between 1609 and 1620 as a college/hospital or almshouse with private accommodation for the Sackville family. Since the 19th century, East Grinstead has become associated with Nonconformism and has accommodated many religious orders, denominations and splinter groups. The Zion Chapel on West Street, is one such evidence of this, with other groups the Puseyites and Scientologists.

2.5 By the late 18th century, the town began to decline due to the growth of Brighton and its more direct road through Cuckfield. In 1841 the London to Brighton railway opened, which initially isolated the town further, but the opening of a branch from Three Bridges in 1855 greatly revived the town with considerable development following over the next 60 years. In particular, this caused the rapid expansion of the north-western side of town on London Road, West Street and the newly created Glen Vue Road, Queens Road and Moat Road. As testament to this growth, a new burial ground was needed and in 1869, the cemetery off Queens Road opened to cope with the overfilled churchyard. In 1884 a more direct railway line was opened to London and this initiated the introduction of commuting and the building of larger houses.

2.6 After the first world war, significant Local Authority housing was constructed and housing development continued during the remainder of the 20th century, including much private housing. Jubilee Court (1935) were the town's first purpose built flats. During the 1950s and 60s, the town lost considerable railway services and in 1987, the single remaining line was electrified.



Rear of High Street.



St. Swithun's Church.



Zion Chapel West Street.

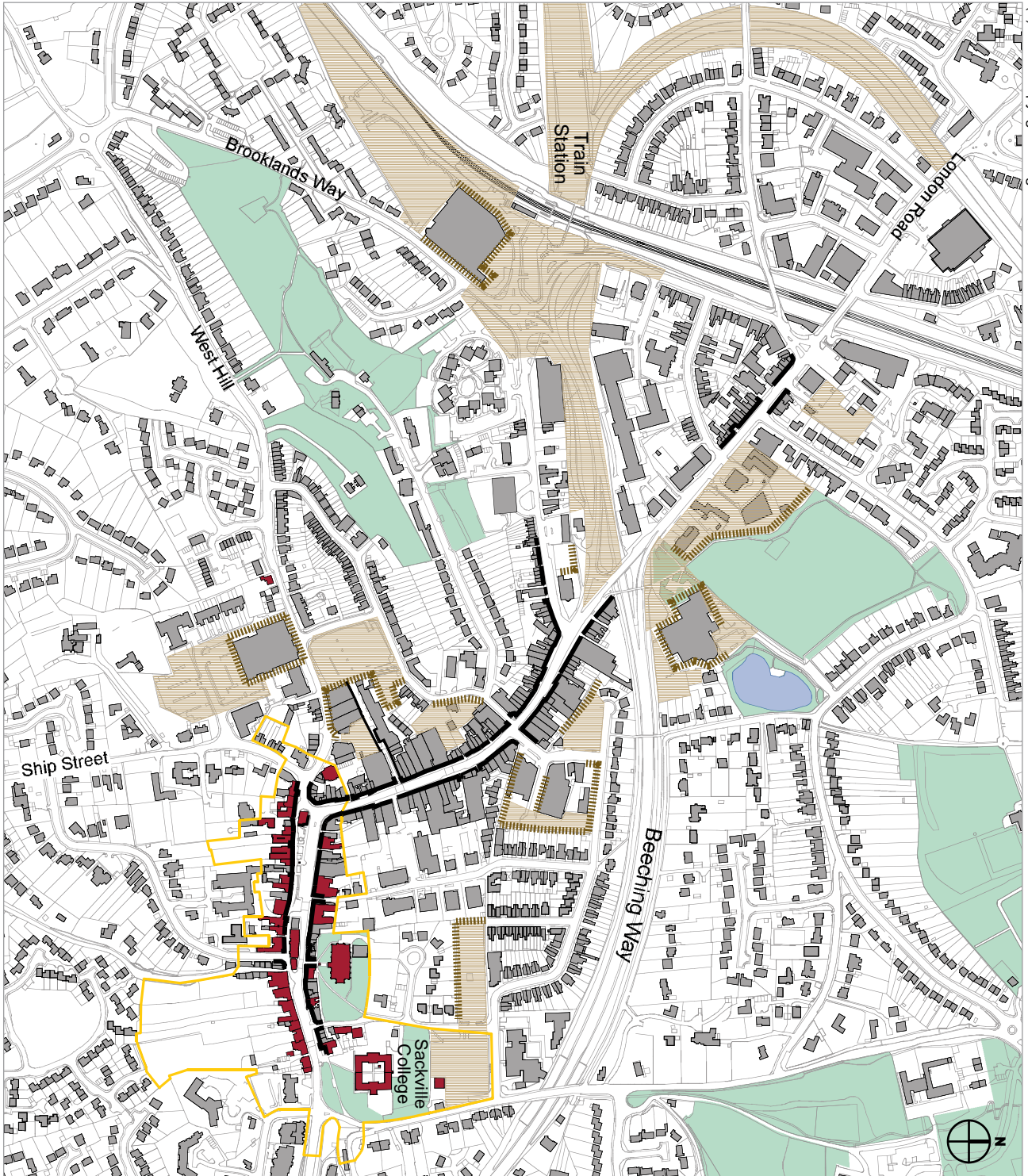
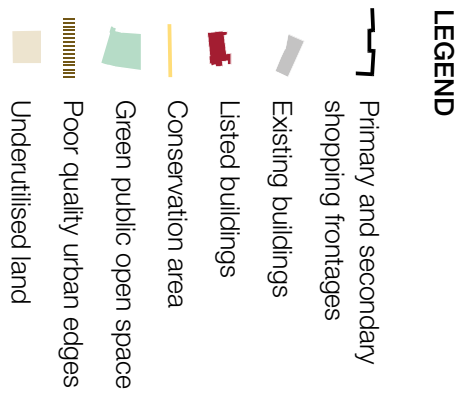


FIGURE 2: Townscape Analysis



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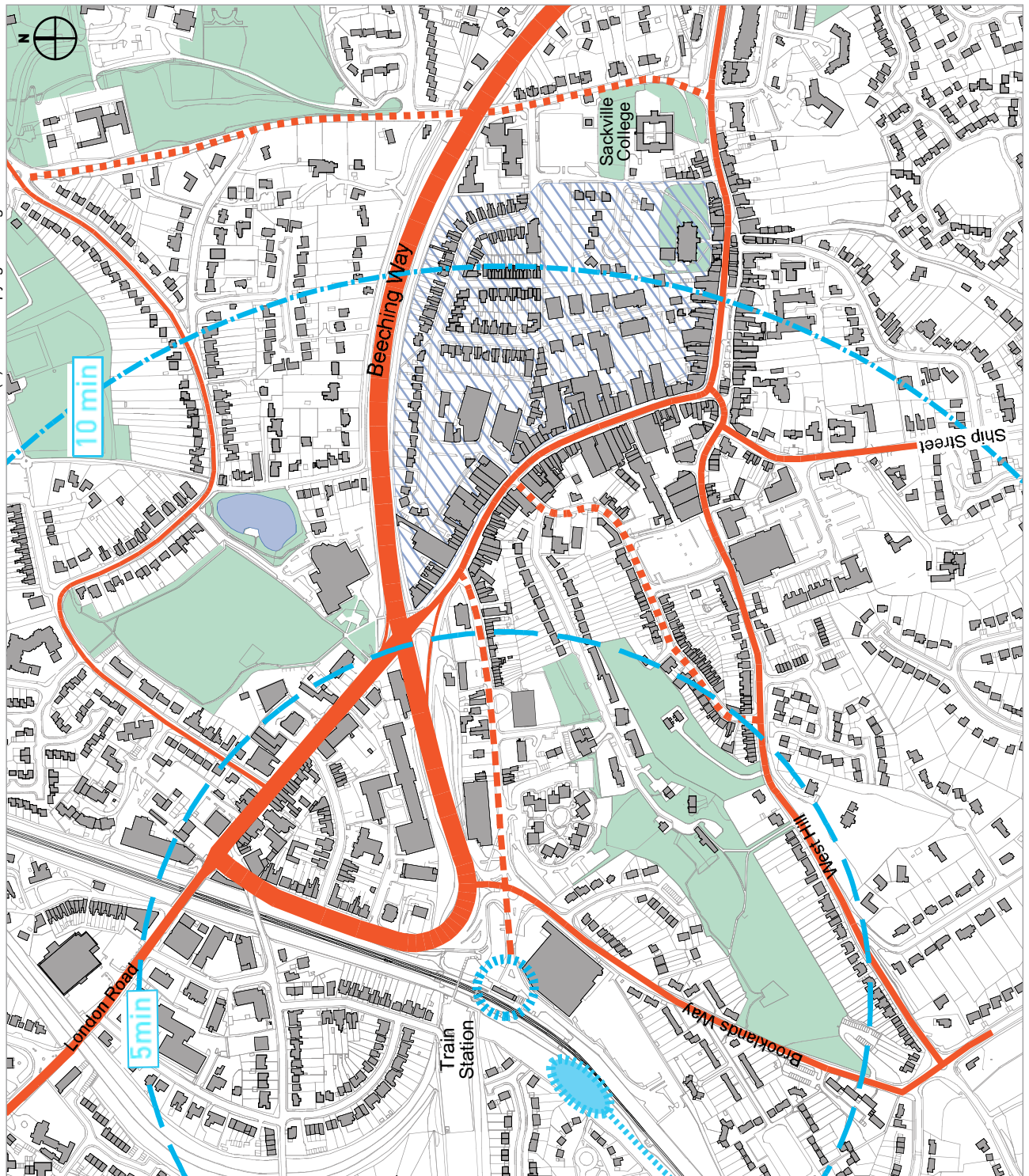


FIGURE 3: Movement Analysis

- LEGEND**
- Primary structuring routes
 - - - Train station, 5 min and 10 min minimum walkbands
 - ⚙ Proposed Bluebell Railway Station
 - Existing buildings
 - ⋯ Largely impermeable urban fabric

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

2.7 Development potential has been assessed through a visual examination of buildings and structures. This considered the age, condition, conservation or listed status, business or economic use, surrounding context, contribution to townscape quality, (character, continuity and enclosure, ease of movement, legibility, quality of the public realm, adaptability, and diversity) and a broad classification given denoting the potential for development. Within East Grinstead, the large number of listed buildings along High Street and the many viable, fine grain buildings along London Road, which positively contribute to East Grinstead's market town character, create a strong core of buildings to be retained, however, this does not preclude development, with sympathetic alterations, renovations, additions and changes of use, which are all possible, subject to urban design, conservation and listed buildings policy.



The High Street has low or zero development potential.



Queens Walk is identified as high development potential.



Railway Approach has a range of development potentials.



FIGURE 4: Development Potential

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

CHARACTER

A place with its own identity.

2.8 East Grinstead has a unique character and identity that has at its heart the historic medieval High Street, containing a wealth of listed buildings, including examples dating back to 1350s. Both the buildings and burgage plots of High Street are amongst the very best survivals of late medieval and early post-medieval Sussex and this is particularly remarkable in view of the town's rapid expansion in the 18th and 19th centuries. Buildings line the High Street with continual frontage, and along the southern side there is a nearly unbroken run of 14th, 15th and 16th century town houses. Building materials vary with older buildings timber framed with excellent examples provided by Cromwell House and Clarendon House. Early stone buildings include The Old Stone House and Porch House. Sackville College provides a stunning example of Jacobean design in sandstone, (Grade 1 listed). This material is echoed in the 18th century St Swithun's church and the much later (1914) water tower in the corner of Chequer Mead car park.

2.9 Post 1700, buildings have been generally constructed in brick. Roofing is by clay tiles, of which there are several different types, a particular important one being Horsham stone roofs, (a flaggy type of sandstone.)

2.10 The burgage (Portlands) plots are evident of both sides of the street and are particularly well preserved to the east of Hermitage Lane where they survive at their original c. 180m length as set out in the 13th century. North of the High Street, burgage plots are not a feature, however, historic boundaries still exist.

2.11 The adjacent London Road, whilst not of such high historic or architectural quality, is a lively market town street with a good variety of shops and services. Built form encloses the street well and particular fine 20th century buildings are the Art Deco buildings of Whitehall (first built as a cinema) and Caffyns Garage on King Street. The Royal Mail sorting office is also of note, an attractive red brick building marking the corner of Queens Road. Christopher Road and De La Warr Road provide attractive early 20th century detached and semi detached housing. Queens Road lies just to the west of the 13th-century town, and largely represents the Victorian expansion of the town towards the railway station after the arrival of the railway. Attractive terraces are a feature here, with the land steeply undulating. Between Queens Road and London Road lies the 1970s development of Queens Walk. This is a highly unattractive retail development, extremely unsympathetic to the surrounding context in respect of architectural design, with blank frontages, exposed backs and clumsy interfaces with level changes. A large surface car park adds nothing to townscape quality.

2.12 Railway Approach, linking the station to London Road, is a mixture of styles and uses. It exhibits some Victorian development, including the former station building, but much has been redeveloped, and is now a mish-mash of styles with much of the building line lost on the southern side and no coherent building line on the northern side. Architectural quality is generally indifferent and the station and surroundings poor, creating no welcome or identifiable route to the town centre.



East Grinstead’s character derives from not only its historic, listed buildings but also the fine grained London Road, the variety of independent shops, Victorian housing and St. Swithun’s Church.



CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE

A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished.

2.13 Whilst continuity and enclosure are good within the historic town centre, with built form facing on to streets and defining space, this breaks down with more recent development and is exacerbated by poor quality building edges. This is particularly evident of the town's surface car parks, stretches of Railway Approach and all of Queens Walk, where blank facades front onto the street and service yards open directly onto West Street and Queens Road. The end result of this is a town with an untidy and uncared for appearance.



EASE OF MOVEMENT

A place that is easy to get to and move through.

2.14 The town's historical development, built along a main street and with its undulating topography, has made some areas of the town less permeable to vehicles and pedestrians. London Road (A22) and the High Street form the most legible route through the town, although the London Road/Station Road gyratory and the eastbound approach to the town on the A22 suffer from regular congestion. Pedestrian movement is assisted by a network of narrow lanes that twist their way through the larger urban blocks, but many of these linkages have been lost and those that survive do not provide easy access for all. Bus service provision is poor, with no single route running at better than an hourly frequency. The railway station, which is at the end of the line, provides a half-hourly service to London via East Croydon, but is poorly linked to the rest of the town.



LEGIBILITY

A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand.

2.14 The town centre benefits from the clear gateway from the east at Sackville College, however gateways from the north and west are less well defined with the town centre, potentially missed all together from the A264. The station gateway and legibility of Railway Approach is also particularly poor, with no visual cues of the route between the rail station and town centre.



QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC REALM

A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.

2.15 The quality of the public realm within East Grinstead is variable. The public realm in High Street has recently been improved and is of a high standard and this complements the adjacent medieval buildings. However as one moves away from the High Street the quality of the public realm deteriorates rapidly with narrow and uneven sidewalks along both London Road and Railway Approach. The town has no major public space for gatherings and events.



ADAPTABILITY

A place that can change easily.

2.16 Some of the strong characteristics of the town – its historic fabric and unique topography, are limitations for change and adaptability and only a few locations within the town have the potential for change or new development. These locations include: Queens Walk area, King Street and the northern edge of Railway Approach.



DIVERSITY

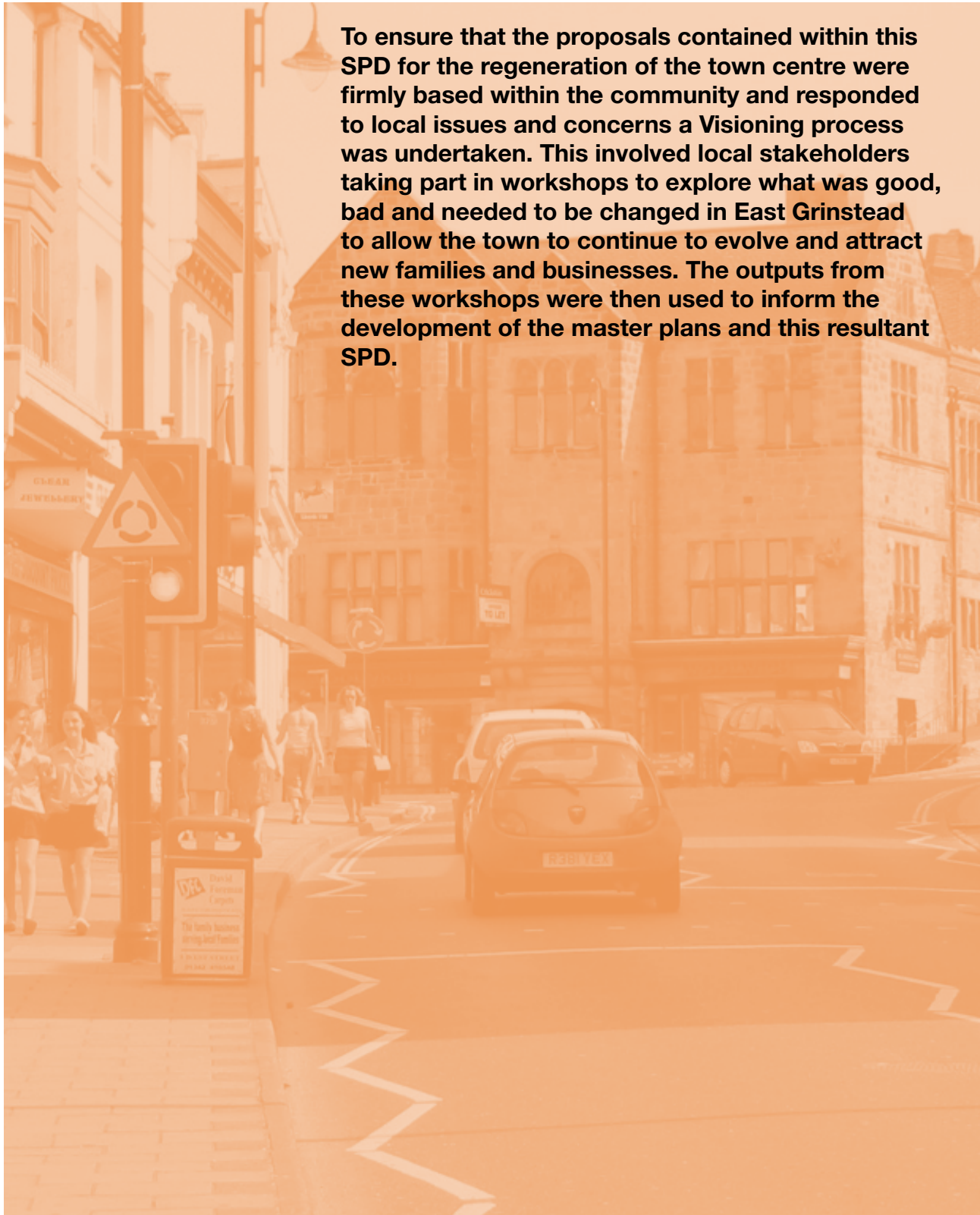
A place with variety and choice.

2.17 East Grinstead has some variety within its public spaces, shops and services, however, this could be greatly improved upon, particularly in terms of quality. High Street and London Road are good streets, with a fair variety of shops and built form, but there is a lack of larger retail units particularly of the type that would be attractive to larger national and regional retailers. There is also a lack of accommodation for community organisations and there is little affordable housing. Much of the commercial space is now second-class in terms of quality with high vacancy rates. Several office blocks have recently been converted to residential uses.

03

STRATEGIC PROPOSALS

To ensure that the proposals contained within this SPD for the regeneration of the town centre were firmly based within the community and responded to local issues and concerns a Visioning process was undertaken. This involved local stakeholders taking part in workshops to explore what was good, bad and needed to be changed in East Grinstead to allow the town to continue to evolve and attract new families and businesses. The outputs from these workshops were then used to inform the development of the master plans and this resultant SPD.



The Visioning process established a clear vision for East Grinstead's town centre:

LIVING LIFE WELL

“A reinvigorated town centre that is proud of its heritage and builds sensitively upon its special character by integrating the best contemporary development to create a vibrant and successful place for the 21st century and beyond.”

To guide and deliver this vision a strategy has been developed consisting of the following seven key development objectives. These development objectives are based on Local Plan policies, the visioning process carried out by the local community and government policy as set out 'By Design Urban Design in the planning system; towards better practice' (DTLR 2000). These objectives will apply to any application for development within the SPD area.

This vision will be delivered through the following seven strategic objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a robust structure to the town centre that ensures that future development complements and integrates with the unique character of the town.

OBJECTIVE 2

To improve levels of accessibility and permeability within the town centre by providing safe, direct and attractive routes that encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.

OBJECTIVE 3

To create opportunities for new retail and associated parking within the town centre that dramatically improve the quality and offer of the shopping experience.

OBJECTIVE 4

To provide a greater mix of uses and residential accommodation, including affordable housing, within the town centre to increase and diversify its resident, visitor and workplace populations and which gives family orientated evening vitality.

OBJECTIVE 5

To enhance the public realm and create a new town square

OBJECTIVE 6

To ensure new development respects and builds on East Grinstead's special identity and character.

OBJECTIVE 7












To create a sustainable town.

MASTERPLAN

East Grinstead Indicative Town Centre Master Plan



LEGEND

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Study area boundary | 1. | New station buildings to serve Bluebell and National Rail | 8. | New town square associated to Queens Walk redevelopment |
|  | Town centre boundary | 2. | Renovated Sainsburys | 9. | New retail with residential apartments above |
|  | Conservation area | 3. | Potential new buildings subject to closure of slip road | 10. | New Library - subject to relocation in the expansion of Waitrose |
|  | Listed buildings | 4. | Structured public parking beneath development | 11. | Expanded Waitrose |
|  | Existing buildings | 5. | Opportunities to integrate future development with the Atrium | 12. | New residential development subject to repositioning of parking |
|  | Public green open space | 6. | Renovation of Caffyns Building with ground floor retail and residential apartments above and onto Institute Walk | 13. | Potential widening of Railway Approach with new cycle lanes, new tree planting and public realm improvements |
|  | Proposed new buildings | 7. | The redevelopment of Queens Walk - Ground floor retail, residential apartments above | | |
|  | Active Frontages | | | | |
|  | Pedestrianised public realm | | | | |
|  | Resurfacing of carriageway | | | | |
|  | New tree planting | | | | |

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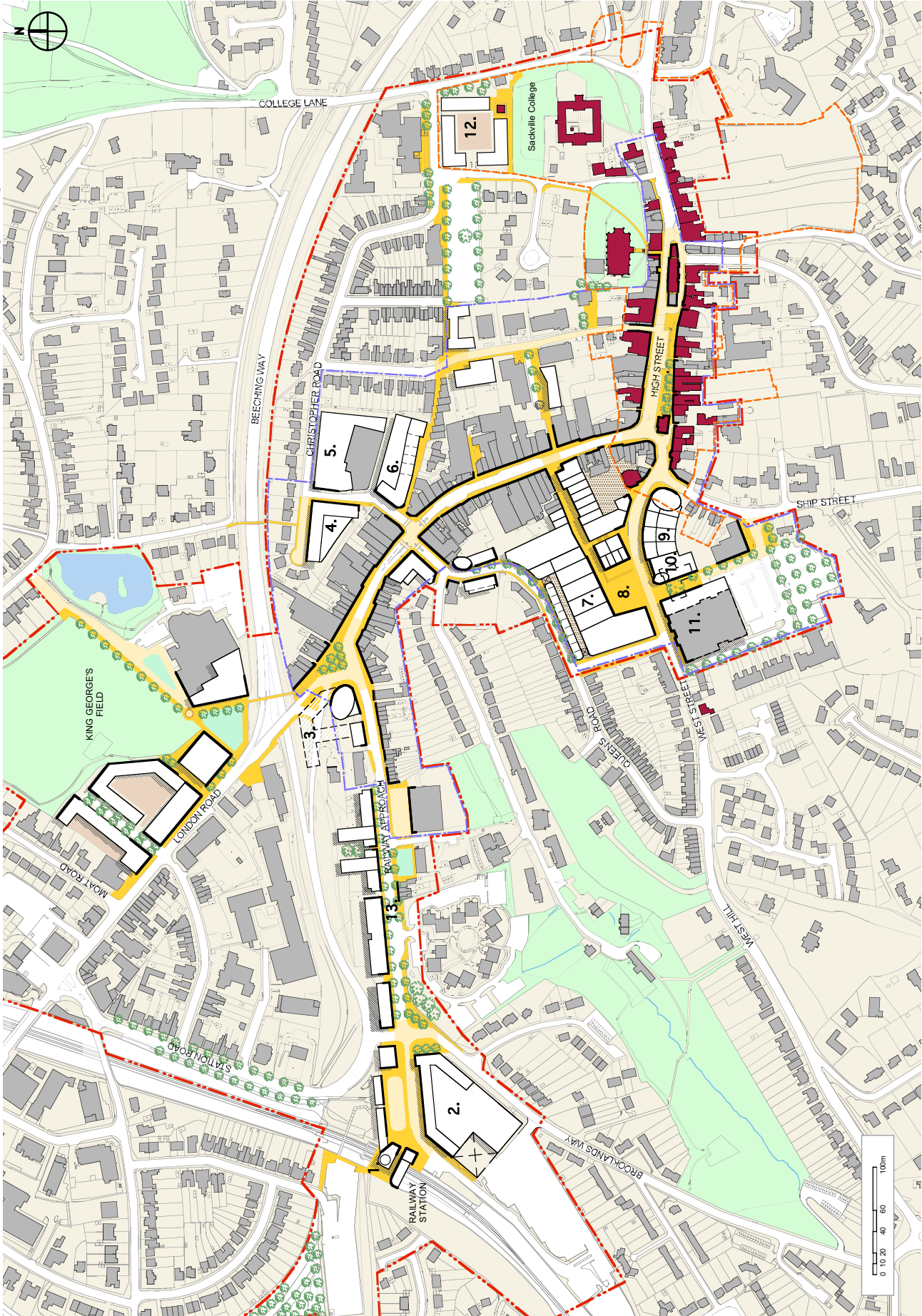


FIGURE 5: East Grinstead Indicative Town Centre Master Plan.

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a robust structure to the town centre that ensures that future development complements and integrates with the unique character of the town.

ISSUES

Strategic Development

3.1 The West Sussex Structure Plan includes allocations of 10,175 new homes in Mid Sussex for the period 2001-2016. The emerging South East Plan is likely to include a requirement for a further 7000 new homes in Mid Sussex for the period 2016-2026. To accommodate part of this new development a residential-led mixed-use Strategic Development incorporating 2500 new homes is proposed for the west and south west of East Grinstead. Construction of these new homes is likely to take place between 2011 and 2020. This development is dependent on a comprehensive package of transport measures which will accommodate the demands generated by the development and provide relief to congestion in the town. The package would include the construction of a relief road, and also envisages improvements to the town's transport interchange and the provision of high quality passenger transport links to Crawley and Gatwick and from the development into the town. A draft East Grinstead Area Action Plan was published for consultation in May 2006.

3.2 Over the period up to 2026 it is likely that further homes will also be developed in and around the town, many of these through redevelopment opportunities. The town centre master plan has been developed having regard to this potential development.

3.3 With this in mind, the town centre master plan needs to be developed in close association with the AAP. The overriding need to revitalise the town centre and address current weaknesses requires the adoption of a clear planning framework by way of a master plan as soon as is practically possible. This would result in the town centre master plan being adopted prior to adoption of any Strategic Development AAP. In that respect, it is important that the town centre plan is flexible enough to accommodate the outcome of uncertainties concerning the form and timing of the Strategic Development and in particular the form and alignment of the new relief road. This also includes the master plan's ability to address all the various relief road options which are the subject of consultation.

GATEWAYS

3.4 Currently the town centre has five gateways, which announce the point of arrival and departure. These are important elements in creating legibility. These are illustrated on Figure 6 Gateways.

3.5 Sackville College and the large green in front of it create a splendid gateway from the south east to the High Street. This should be retained and enhanced.

London Road Gateway

3.6 From the north is the London Road gateway, formed by its junction with Railway Approach and the Broadway public house. This is an under exploited asset with the pub providing poor enclosure to the street and the space inefficiently used. Surrounding cafes and restaurants have tried to colonise the edges with tables and chairs, but the full gateway potential of this space is unrealised through congestion and clutter. This junction could be reconfigured to change the primacy of London Road as a movement route and deflect movement and activity into Railway Approach and towards the station. The reconfiguration should also consider the redevelopment of the Broadway public house. This will allow this gateway to provide a positive, more pedestrian friendly space.



Sackville College Gateway.



Broadway Pub, London Road.



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FIGURE 6: Gateways



London Road Gateway.



FIGURE 7: Masterplan detail: London Road Gateway.

LEGEND

-  Existing buildings
-  Public green open space
-  Proposed new buildings
-  Active Frontages
-  Pedestrianised public realm
-  Resurfacing of carriageway
-  New tree planting



Station Gateway.

West Street and Ship Street Gateways

3.7 The West Street gateway formed by the West Street car park and Waitrose store and the Ship Street gateway formed by its junction with West Street are important parts of the town centre in urban design terms. The redevelopment of the Queens Walk area should respond to these gateways through the design of appropriate high quality landmark features/buildings. Landmarks do not necessarily have to be tall buildings, but they must be of particularly high quality design. The creation of a new town square at the West Street gateway as set out in Objective 5 should be part of the gateway with a landmark building located on the corner on Ship Street and West Street to help draw activity and people from the High Street into the new town square. This landmark building may involve a refurbishment and integration of the existing Ship Inn, or a complete redevelopment of this corner, however the key issue will be the need to provide a high quality architectural solution.

Station Gateway

3.8 Currently, the station provides a low quality gateway and arrival experience, consisting of a small non-descript station building with few facilities, that fronts on to a vehicle drop off/pick up point. This space is poorly laid out with an expanse of car parking to one side and the blank wall of Sainsbury's and its service yard directly opposite. Onward pedestrian links to the town centre are very poor, with the walk routes across the roundabout junction of Brooklands Way with Railway Approach being indirect, uncontrolled and clearly subservient to the movements of vehicles.

3.9 The station forecourt is also the gateway to the town to the many cyclists who use the Worth Way National Cycle Route, although the link over the railway corridor is currently only possible via a flight of steps. Further impetus for redevelopment of the station gateway comes from the proposed construction of a station for the northern extension of the recreational Bluebell Line, which could see an additional 60,000 passengers a year travelling to and from the station.

3.21 The station is unsuccessful as a transport interchange and in particular for commuters changing between buses and trains. Bus service frequencies are poor and do not co-ordinate with train services, whilst the buses themselves are accommodated in a lay-by area to the north of the station, off Station Road. The visual connection between the train station and the bus stops is poor and the waiting area itself is a very harsh and unattractive place that discourages public transport use. The bus stops' location requires buses to enter into the London Road-Station Road gyratory in order to travel east to the town, when a route via Railway Approach would be more direct, quicker and more legible for passengers.

3.10 New development should create a much enhanced gateway for the town through a new station square surrounded by built form that facilitates public transport, including the Bluebell proposals and provides for a bus interchange, as well as improving pedestrian connections. The blank frontage and service area of Sainsbury's which currently faces the station, should be reviewed to create an active frontage including a shop entrance.

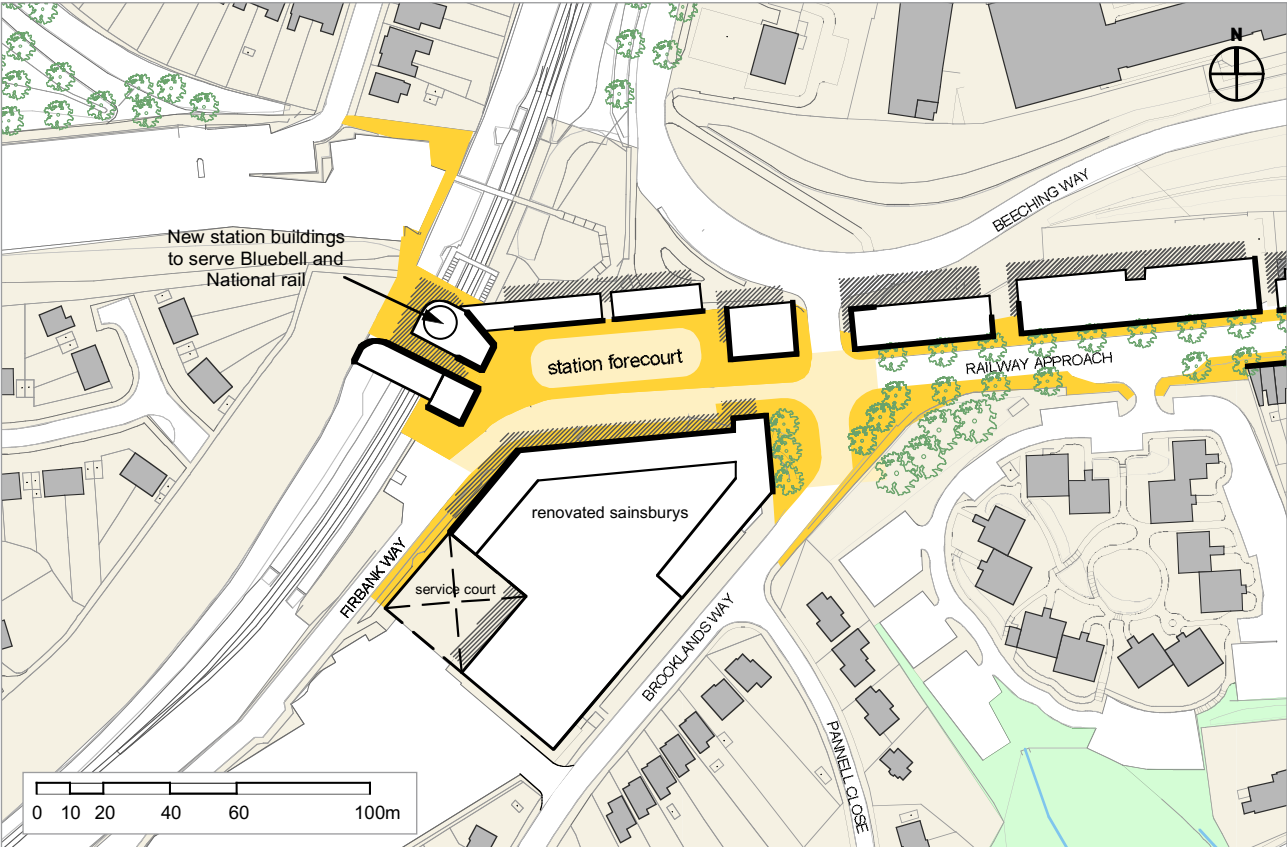


FIGURE 8: Masterplan detail: Station Gateway.

- LEGEND**
- Existing buildings
 - Public green open space
 - Proposed new buildings
 - Active Frontages
 - Pedestrianised public realm
 - Resurfacing of carriageway
 - New tree planting

TOWN CENTRE STRUCTURE

3.11 The town centre has developed in a linear fashion along the old London to Lewes road (London Road) and the medieval High Street with the majority of retail and activity concentrated along these two routes. Much of the older development has a good relationship with these streets consisting of street, blocks and plots and a common building line. This clearly differentiates public and private space. Figure 9 Existing Town Structure clearly illustrates this relationship.

London Road

3.12 London Road has a busy 'High Street' character between its junction with the High Street and Railway Approach, with good frontage and a varied, but generally, fine urban grain. Immediately north of Beeching Way, however, this positive building form breaks down with course grain development set further back from the road. Beyond this, and on the facing side, is a cluster of restaurants and cafes. However, these restaurants, along with King George's Field and the Sports Centre, are isolated from the town centre core and are not optimised. New development should aim therefore to reconnect London Road, north of Beeching Way, back into the town centre through enhanced and legible pedestrian links with uses such as retail (Use Classes A1-A4) and residential. New built form should create a positive relationship to the street.

High Street

3.13 The medieval nature of the High Street is apparent in the generally narrow plots, with some remaining examples of burgage plots found on the southern side of the street. Middle Row, consisting of an island of buildings in the High Street, is a further example of the town's heritage and a delightful characteristic, which could be reinterpreted with contemporary development.

3.14 Traffic levels along the High Street are much lower than London Road and this makes the street quiet, to the extent it feels isolated from the bustle of the town. Towards the end of the High Street, furthest from the town centre, some of the historic buildings appear empty and slightly neglected. New development should aim to increase vitality along this street and connect it more strongly to the main town centre core. Junction improvements, which could include signalisation, would be required. Figure 10 Town Square Extension illustrates this concept.



Existing view down West Street.



London Road.

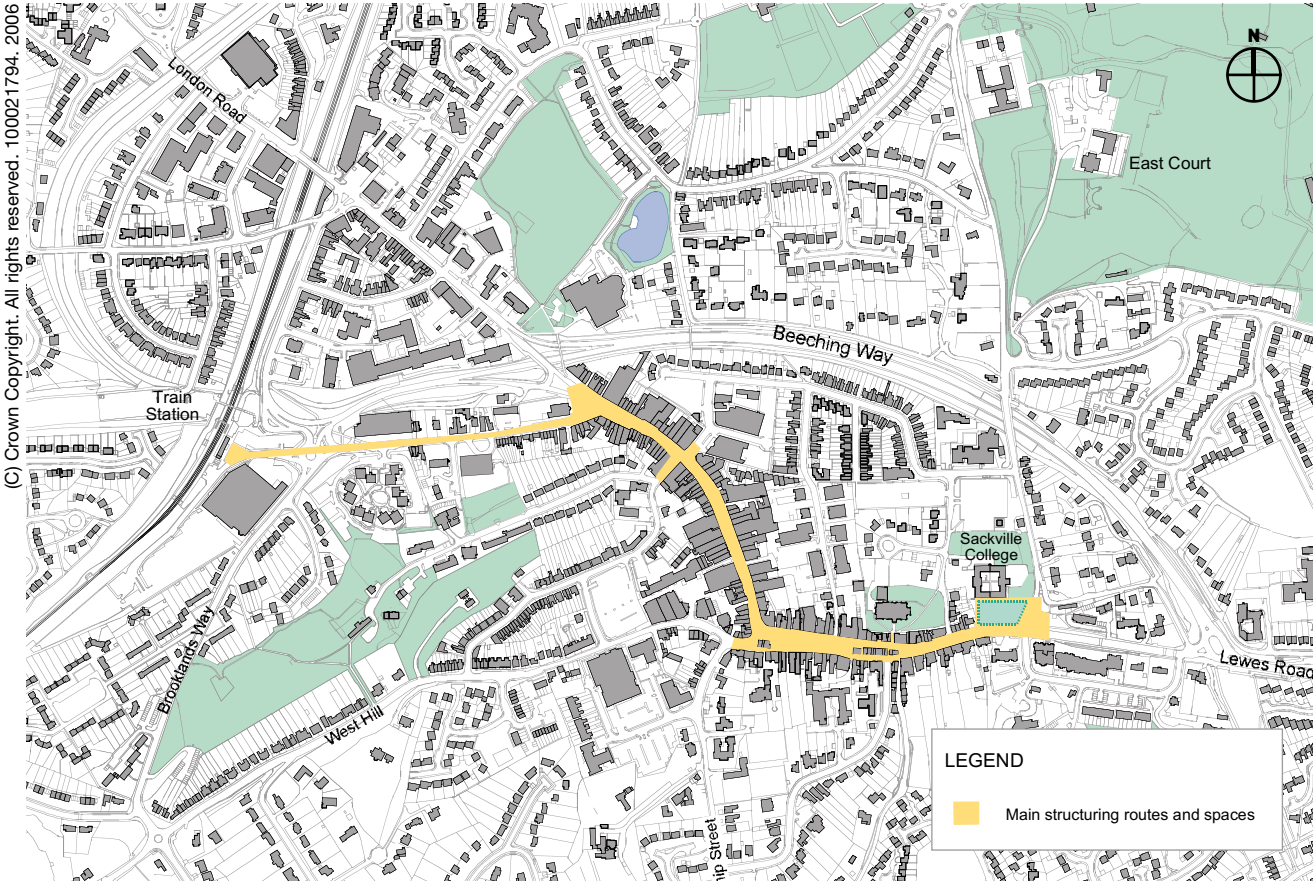


FIGURE 9: Existing Town Structure

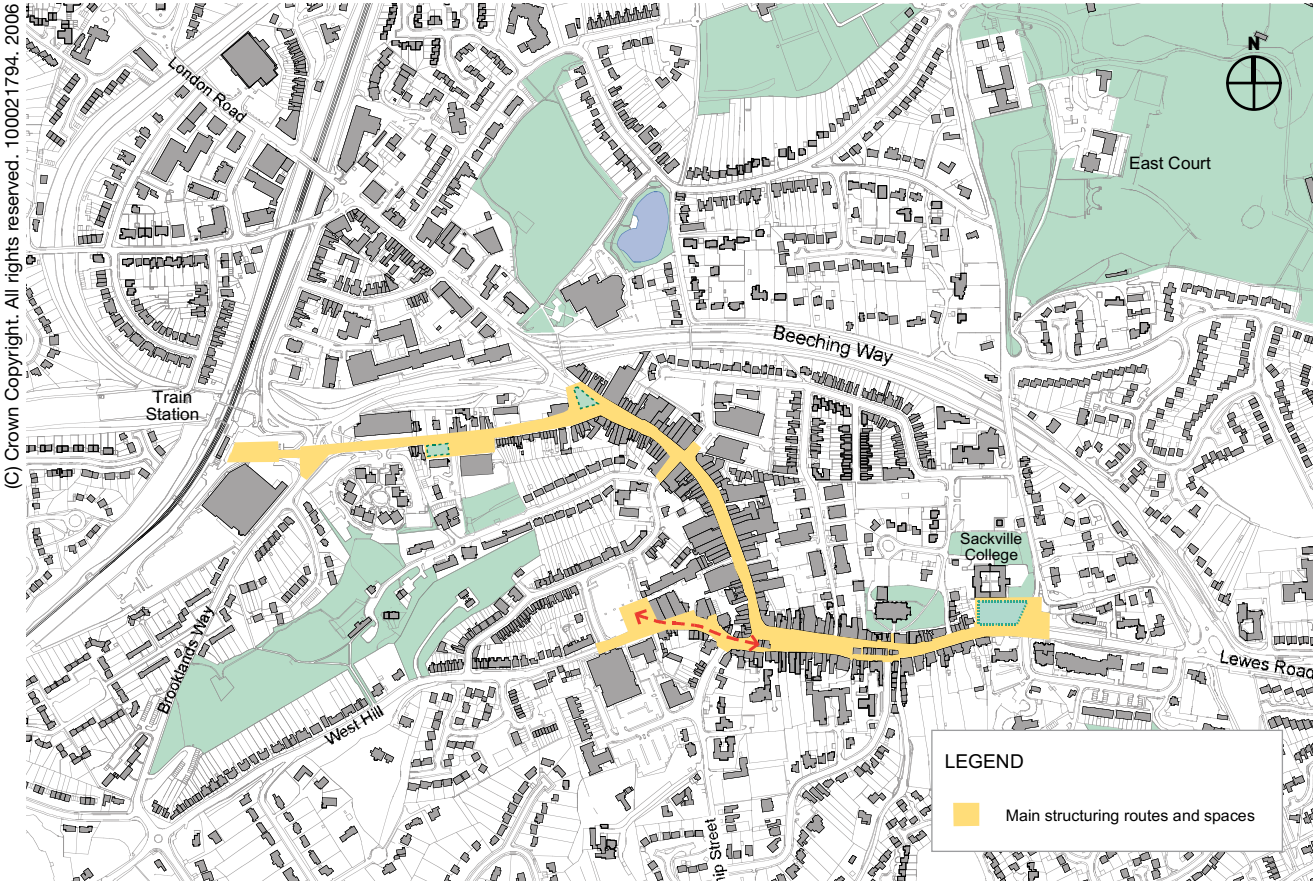


FIGURE 10: Town Square Extension



Railway Approach.



ABOVE & RIGHT:
The rear of Queen's Walk has a poor interface with West Street.

Railway Approach

3.15 Railway Approach is a relatively quiet route, with the station isolated from the main activity of the town and the street experiencing less demand for development than London Road. Overall it offers a weak environment, which accommodates a mix of uses including secondary retail, a timber merchant and car show rooms. It is neither an attractive nor legible route to the town centre, with a large roundabout at the junction of Brooklands Way obstructing visual links to the town centre and creating a pedestrian unfriendly environment. The reconnection of the station back into the town centre and the revitalisation of Railway Approach are required to better exploit the asset of the station and to encourage a higher quality and much denser pattern of development along Railway Approach. Good quality development and a higher quality environment will also help to alter the perception of the distance between the station and the town centre, thus encouraging greater pedestrian, cycle and public transport usage. The roundabout at Brooklands Way should be replaced and a new junction layout introduced, to provide for all modes of transport including pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

West Street and Queens Walk

3.16 The West Street and Queens Walk area of retail and parking to the west of London Road is an important focus of activity with the key attractors of the library, Waitrose and West Street car park fuelling high levels of footfall. It is however, an unattractive area of town with service yards and backs of buildings clearly visible from the main streets and the built form appearing tired and in need of redevelopment and / or enhancement. The interface with West Street is especially poor, with blank frontages along its stretch, and this undermines the views from the High Street.

3.17 The redevelopment of this area should enable a sensitive integration of new development with the surrounding urban fabric that resolves issues relating to the front and backs of buildings and establish a much more positive and legible relationship with Queens Road, High Street, West Street and Ship Street. This will also help to reactivate West Street and integrate it better with High Street.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- The retention and enhancement of the Sackville College gateway.
- The enhancement of the London Road gateway to create a positive, more friendly space and the redevelopment of The Broadway public house and re-alignment of the Railway Approach junction.
- The enhancement of the West Street gateway formed by the West Street car park and Waitrose store and the Ship Street gateway formed by its junction with West Street, through the design of appropriate high quality landmark features/buildings. The creation of a new town square at the West Street gateway as set out in Objective 5 should be part of the gateway with a landmark building located on the corner on Ship Street and West Street to help draw activity and people from the High Street into the new town square.
- The enhancement of the station gateway by the creation of new station buildings on an axis with Railway Approach that could accommodate both Network Rail and Bluebell activities. The new stations to have a generous forecourt that facilitates public transport and pick and drop off activities. This space should be fronted with active station related activities such as small-scale convenience retail and cafes. The blank frontage and service area of Sainsbury's, which currently faces the station, should be reviewed to create a much more positive front.
- New development should create a strong street / block relationship. Blocks should be edged with a continuous, common building line.
- New development should aim to reconnect London Road, north of Beeching Way, to the town centre through enhanced and legible pedestrian links with uses such as retail (Use Classes A1-A4) and residential. New built form should create a positive relationship to the street.
- New development along High Street and its junction with West Street and Ship Street should aim to increase vitality along High Street and connect it more strongly to the main town centre core. Junction improvements, which could include signalisation, may be required.
- The station should be reconnected into the town centre and Railway Approach revitalised to exploit the asset of the station and to encourage a higher quality and density of development along Railway Approach. The roundabout should be replaced with a signalised junction.
- The redevelopment of West Street and Queens Walk should enable a sensitive integration of new development with the surrounding urban fabric that resolves issues relating to the front and backs of buildings and establish a much more positive and legible relationship with Queens Road, High Street, West Street and Ship Street.

OBJECTIVE 2

To improve levels of accessibility and permeability within the town centre by providing safe, direct and attractive routes that encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.

ISSUES

3.18 The provision of transport infrastructure over the last two centuries has seen the dislocation of the northern part of the town from the town centre. Beeching Way runs along a dismantled railway cutting and separates the town centre from the Wood Street Triangle (the heart of commercial office provision of the town), the leisure facilities provided by the Kings Centre and King Georges Field, and the residential suburbs to the north of the town.

3.19 London Road and College Lane provide the only vehicular crossings in this area with a number of small pedestrian footbridges across Beeching Way. To the west, the topography, open space and railway limit connectivity and permeability.

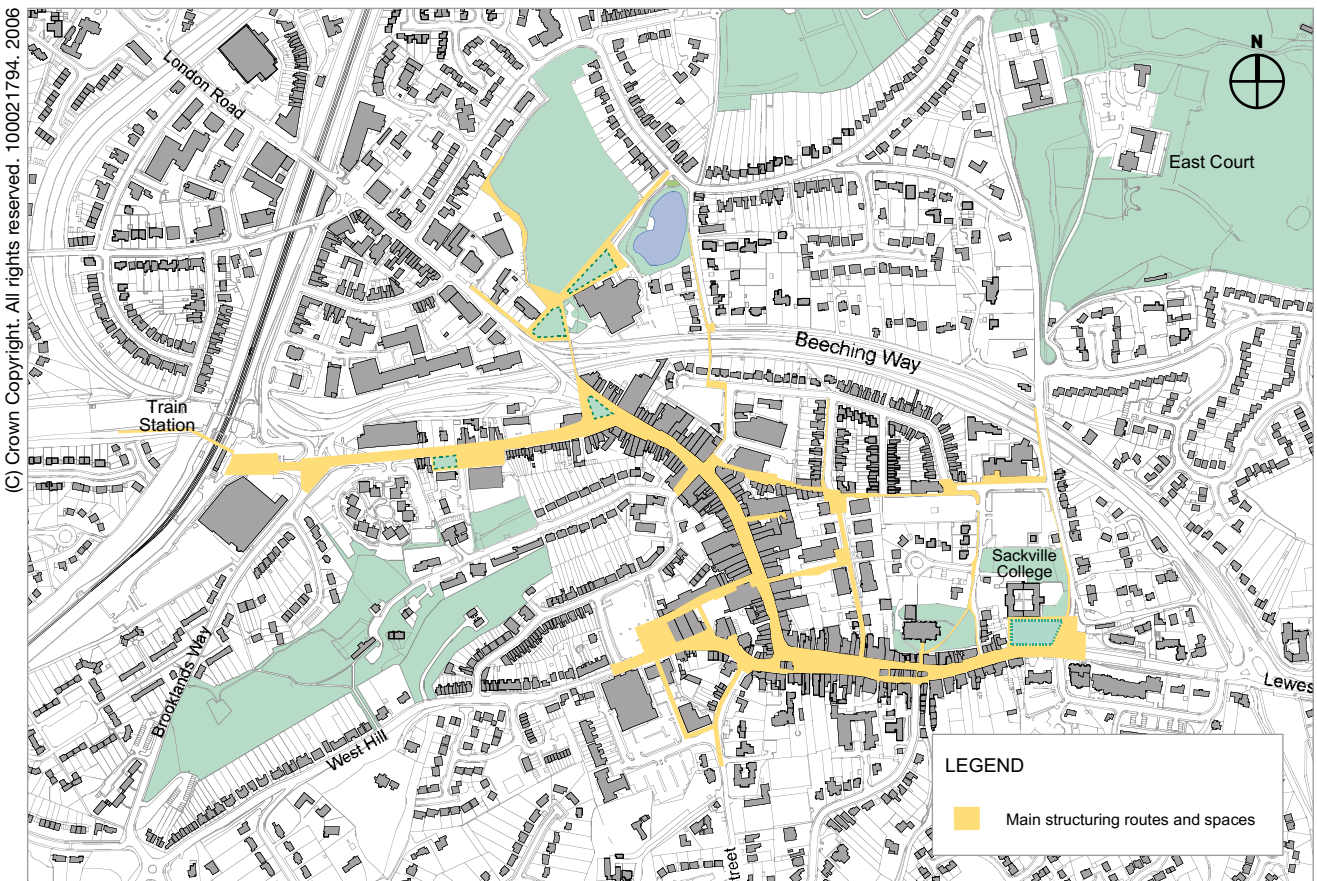


FIGURE 11: Improved Pedestrian Links

ACCESS

3.20 Providing access for all is fundamental to creating a successful place. This means designing streets and spaces for all members of society, including those with disabilities, the elderly and parents with small children. East Grinstead has Access Groups who represent these users and Mid Sussex District Council will seek their early involvement in consultation on planning applications.

Network of Lanes

3.21 The impermeability of the town has isolated large areas from London Road preventing them from playing active and supporting roles to the functioning of the town. These areas includes the under used facilities of the Vicarage and Chequer Mead surface car parks, which suffer also from their relatively hidden location and poor connections to London Road.

3.22 However, the town benefits from an existing network of pedestrian lanes and these should be improved both in the quality and scope of their linkages. This would enhance permeability throughout the town centre and link up key activity generators such as the railway station, car parks, the Chequer Mead arts centre, town museum and the retail core. Figure 11 Improved pedestrian links illustrates this concept.

3.23 Five possible initiatives have been identified:

Rices Hill - This existing route between London Road and Cantelupe Road is of poor quality with a stretch running through a private car park with a significant gradient. This lane should be enhanced so that it works as a uniform and clear route.



East Grinstead benefits from a network of lanes.



The existing railway crossing on East Grinstead Station is not step free.

Vicarage Walk – The site on the corner of Vicarage Walk and Cantelupe Road should be redeveloped for commercial led mixed-use accommodation to improve levels of passive surveillance of this route and to allow the creation of a more legible connection to the Vicarage and Chequer Mead car parks.

Institute Walk – This lane provides a valuable link between King Street, Cantelupe Road and the Vicarage and Chequer Mead car parks. Whilst the southern edge of Institute Walk is of a good quality with active frontages and high levels of surveillance the northern edge is poor with blank facades. The redevelopment of the Caffyns garage site with active frontage along this route would enable better surveillance.

Queens Walk – The redevelopment of the Queens Walk area should include the upgrading of this route with active retail frontage to provide a high quality link between London Road and the new town square.

Brooklands Park Walk - The development of a direct route between the railway station and the town centre through the Brooklands Park and Queens Road cemetery.



The existing bus station at East Grinstead Station is very poor quality.

Cycling

3.24 Worth Way is a traffic free cycle route along the bed of a former railway line which runs from East Grinstead train station to Crawley and is part of the National Cycle network (NCR21). Although not currently open, St. Margaret's Loop is a 1km section of a former railway line between East Grinstead car park and Hackenden Lane to the north of the town. However, the crossing for these routes at East Grinstead railway station (via a footbridge) is poor for cyclists. This is exacerbated by the confusing layout outside the station and the illegible route for cyclists along Railway Approach. These routes are currently incorporated as one of the relief road options subject to consultation. However, if the Worth Way option is not taken forward as the preferred relief road alignment, improvements to the cycle routes are sought. This would include the opening up of St Margaret's Loop to cyclists and pedestrians, a much enhanced step free crossing of the railway line, a more legible and higher quality cycle route to the town centre and beyond to connect into Forest Way and the provision of cycle route information together with quality cycle parking. Also, a decision by the Council not to progress the Worth Way Relief Road option would enable the promoters of the competition winning development scheme for St Margarets Loop ('The Loop Hotel' submitted by Ash Sakula Architects in 2004), to bring forward their scheme for development. Throughout the town centre quality cycle parking in well surveilled and well lit areas, located adjacent to main routes, should be provided.

Public Transport

3.25 East Grinstead is in real need of improved bus service provision. A number of regular bus routes run to and through the town, but the frequency of most of these services is currently no better than one bus per hour per direction. This level of service discourages use and especially transfer to bus from other modes (e.g. cars). In order to improve the level of bus service provision and thereby patronage, significant change is required and this will require greater levels of funding, supporting development and commitment from the relevant bodies.

3.26 One key proposal is that the bus stops at the railway station, which are also the terminus for some routes, should be redesigned and relocated to allow all bus routes that travel west along Railway Approach to return east along the same street (rather than via Station Road). This will make services much more usable for passengers, cut 'lost mileage' and will not mean that any existing stops are no longer served.

3.27 Better co-ordination of bus and rail timetables would also greatly enhance the attractiveness of buses as a feeder mode for rail commuters, while better shelter and waiting facilities would also increase the likelihood of modal transfer.

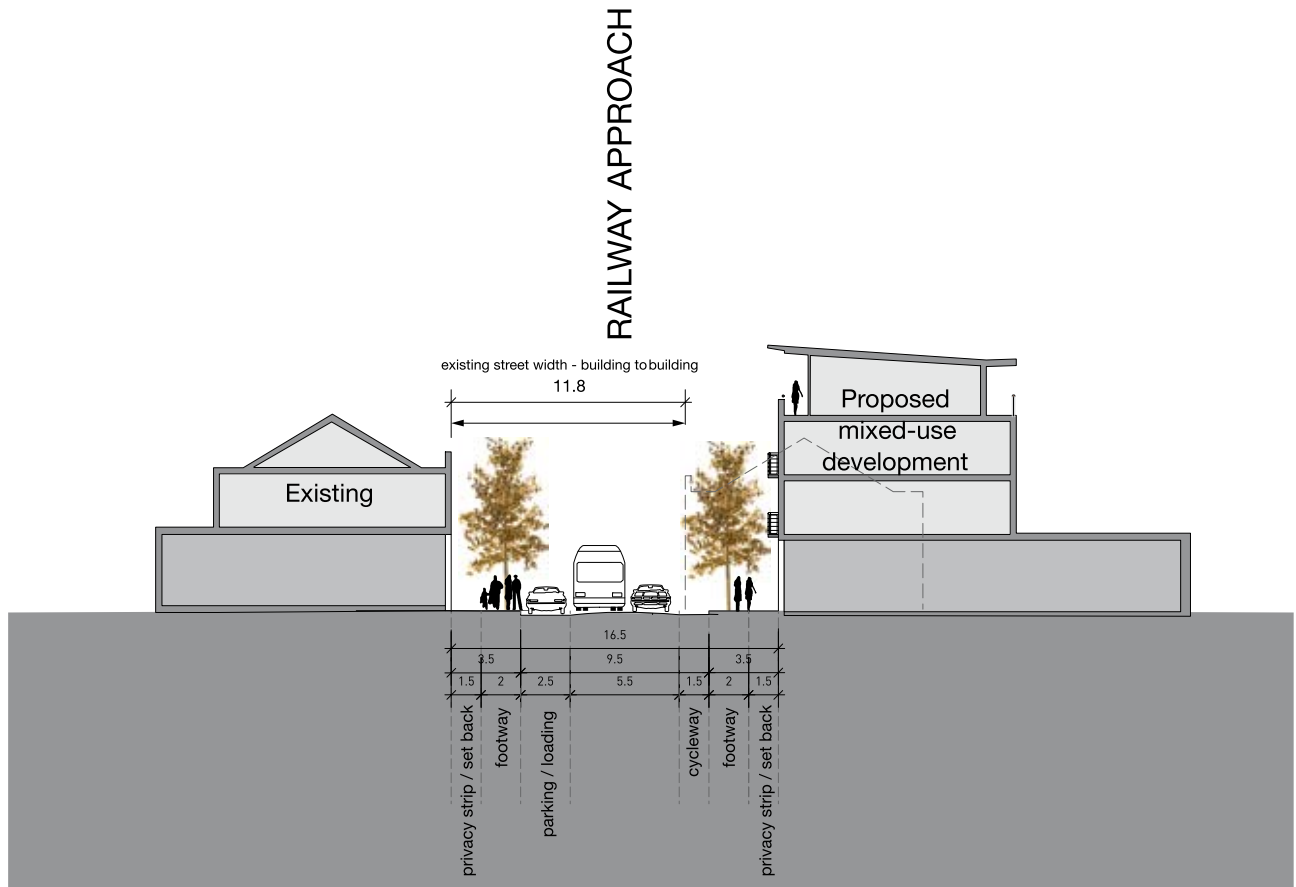


FIGURE 12: Proposed Railway Approach Section.

3.28 The frequency and reliability of rail services are currently good, although better station facilities, including a shop/café open into the evening, would be likely to have a positive impact on patronage and, again, on the likelihood of buses being used as a feeder mode in place of cars.

3.29 Within the town centre, better bus stop facilities in the High Street (which is also a terminus location), such as real time service information, should also be provided.

3.30 Parking for tourist coaches should be improved, with a possible suitable location being within the Chequer Mead car park.

Highway Improvements

3.31 To emphasise the importance of Railway Approach and provide space for enhanced cycle facilities, a road-widening scheme is proposed that would maintain the southern alignment of the road and footway, whilst widening the northern side. The carriageway should accommodate one lane in each direction with on-street parking on one side of the road as well as a cycle lane as part of the Worth Way. The road widening should increase pavement widths to a minimum of 2m (3.5m widths are preferable which includes a 1.5m privacy strip). The footway should be of a high standard and have tree planting along its length where possible. Figure 12 Proposed Railway Approach Section illustrates this concept.

3.32 The road-widening scheme should be supplemented by promoting the redevelopment of properties on the northern side of Railway Approach. This, together with public realm improvements, would improve the conditions and improve surveillance of the street which would encourage the use of the street as a connecting route between the town centre and the station for pedestrians and cyclists. It is suggested that these buildings be mixed use with a higher proportion of residential accommodation.

3.33 To improve east-west pedestrian movement between the town centre and the railway station, the Railway Approach/Brooklands Way/Station Road junction complex should be signalised and the roundabout removed, this should include bus priority and advance stop lane for cyclists. This proposal would also create potential development land on Railway Approach to the west of the existing timber yard.

3.34 The improvements to Railway Approach are part of a wider scheme to extend the effective 'high street' of East Grinstead to comprise High Street-London Road-Railway Approach-Station. This would entail the reconfiguration of the existing London Road/Railway Approach junction to make London Road (north) the minor arm of a new T-junction.

3.35 In order to provide direct access to new public parking at the proposed redeveloped Queen's Walk shopping area, it is proposed that London Road, immediately north of its junction with King Street, be widened to permit the right turn into Queen's Road. This measure is also proposed to limit the volume of traffic needing to travel via the narrow, double-mini-roundabout complex at the junction of High Street, West Street and Ship Street.

3.36 Detailed information on servicing will be required as part of planning applications.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- The existing network of pedestrian lanes should be improved both in quality and scope of linkages.
- Five possible initiatives have been identified.
 - **Rices Hill** this lane should be enhanced so that it reads as a uniform and clear route.
 - **Vicarage Walk**, the site on the corner of Vicarage Walk and Cantelupe Road could be redeveloped for commercial led mixed-use accommodation to improve levels of passive surveillance and to allow the creation of a more legible route to the Vicarage and Chequer Mead car parks.
 - **Institute Walk**, this lane to be enhanced through the redevelopment of the Caffyns garage site with active frontage along this route to create better surveillance.
 - **Queens Walk**, the redevelopment of the Queens Walk area should include the upgrading of this route with active retail frontage to provide a high quality link between London Road to the new town square.
 - The development of a direct route between the railway station and the town centre through Brooklands Park.
- The creation of enhanced cycle facilities to include a step free crossing of the railway line, a more legible cycle route to the town centre, the provision of cycle route information and quality cycle parking at the station.
- The provision of quality cycle parking in well surveilled and well lit areas, located adjacent to main routes.
- Bus stops at the railway station should be redesigned and relocated to allow all bus routes that travel west along Railway Approach to return east along the same street.
- New bus stop waiting and shelter facilities at the railway station.
- Better co-ordination of bus and rail timetables and real time service information.
- Within the town centre, better bus stop facilities in the High Street.
- Parking for tourist coaches should be improved, with a possible suitable location being within the Chequer Mead car park.
- To emphasise the importance of Railway Approach with enhanced cycle facilities, a road-widening scheme for Railway Approach should be undertaken that would maintain the southern alignment of the road and footway, whilst widening the northern side and redeveloping existing poor quality properties.
- Reconfigured Brooklands Way/Railway Approach roundabout to a signalised junction to include bus priority and advance stop lane for cyclists.
- Reconfigured London Road/Railway Approach junction.
- To provide direct access to new public parking at the proposed redeveloped Queen's Walk shopping area, London Road, immediately north of its junction with King Street, should be widened to permit the right turn into Queen's Road.
- Development proposals to take into account the access requirements of all sections of the community, including the disabled, the elderly and the very young.

OBJECTIVE 3

To create opportunities for new retail and associated parking within the town centre that improves the quality and offer of the shopping experience.

ISSUES

New Retail

3.37 East Grinstead suffers from a significant proportion of expenditure generated by its catchment area being spent in outlying towns such as Brighton, Crawley and Tunbridge Wells. A major factor behind this is relatively weak offer that the town centre provides for shopping. In order to address this, Mid Sussex District Council commissioned a Retail Study in 2005, to help inform its LDF process, including the East Grinstead SPD. The key findings in respect of East Grinstead are set out below.

Convenience Goods

3.38 At present foodstore provision in East Grinstead accounts for 91% of total available convenience goods expenditure in the core catchment area, however convenience goods provision in the town centre is weak with a below average representation in every category including bakers, butchers and greengrocers and Waitrose occupies a constrained site with little opportunity for expansion. To ensure the attraction and consequent health of the town centre it is therefore important to retain Waitrose, or an alternative town centre food store anchor. It is also considered that the town centre could further enhance its market share through a new additional quality food store operator or a range of quality independents.

3.39 Further out-of-centre foodstore development would be strongly resisted as it is considered that it would have serious implications for the vitality and viability of the town centre, as would the extension of existing out of centre stores for non food purposes. Such development would divert trade away from the town centre and prevent the opportunity for linked trips with retailers elsewhere in the town centre.



Queens Walk is not an attractive retail environment.



There is significant development potential in the Queens Walk area.

Comparison Shopping

3.40 Driven by a strong forecast growth in retail expenditure, identified qualitative deficiencies and growing competition in the wider sub-region, there is a need to increase, improve and consolidate comparison goods retail floorspace in East Grinstead town centre. Key to this will be the ability of the town centre to claw back the higher income AB/C1 socio-economic groups currently travelling to higher order competing centres.

3.41 The town centre needs to improve the range of key attractors and clothing/fashion retailers, and it is considered that the strong, affluent and growing catchment area is ideal to support a small-scale department store operator. Such a development should build on the existing quality of retailers, and would have to be particularly sensitive to the rural setting and scale of the existing built environment.

3.42 Despite falling retailer demand within East Grinstead, it is considered that proposals for circa 125,000 sq ft of new quality comparison goods floorspace will trigger a renewed interest in the town centre, consolidating its position in the shadow of improving competing centres in the sub-region and allow it to take advantage of its affluent catchment area. It will be crucial however, that the development proposals are of sufficient scale and quality to attract modern, larger space retailers that are capable of clawing back shoppers currently travelling to higher order centres such as Crawley and Royal Tunbridge Wells.

3.43 To achieve this objective would require the implementation of appropriate schemes to improve the range of retailers, but it will also be necessary to maintain the quality of retail provision within schemes in keeping with the historic environment and scale of the centre. A key anchor retailer, perhaps in the form of a small scale department store operator, could establish a new development pulling in key quality retailers to enhance the choice and mix of key clothing/fashion attractors, thus meeting the demands of the catchment population and reducing their need to travel further afield. The town centre should also focus on enhancing the range and quality of A3 restaurant and cafés.

3.44 Currently the core of the retail activity within East Grinstead is concentrated in London Road and Queens Walk, where there is a mixture of multiples and independents. Along High Street and Railway Approach the majority of stores are operated by local independent businesses. Whilst many of the independents provide specialist and high quality services and products that help create East Grinstead's unique character, many of the multiples are small and are under represented by high end retailers.

3.45 The success of a town centre will depend upon being able to offer a strong mix of local and regional independent stores, that offer distinctiveness and character, with a collection of national multiple shops, that offer popular appeal and wide ranges.



West Street presents blank walls.

3.46 A major restriction to being able to increase the retail provision in the town centre is the shortage of buildings with appropriate floor plates which are capable of attracting the larger stores together with the lack of quality car parking spaces, both in terms of design and in numbers. Opportunities to address this in the town centre are limited, but the West Street and Queens Walk area offers significant potential for regeneration. The currently tired and unattractive collection of buildings in this location could be redeveloped to create a new shopping quarter providing space for a mixture of multiples and independent shops, connecting into London Road and High Street and strengthening the retail circuit. A new high quality, town square in this location would act as a focus and create a step change in the image and perception of the town. Any redevelopment of this area would require the re-provision on site of existing uses such as the library; a well used facility which currently requires additional space.

3.47 The existing Waitrose to the south west of Queens Road presents a blank wall to West Street, with its front entrance facing onto a large car park accessed off Ship Street. The store is popular and there may be pressure from the operator for expansion in the future. Redevelopment/refurbishment or extension of this store should seek to create a new front entrance orientated to face West Street.

3.48 West Street currently comprises a range of uses, including two public houses, a church, community facilities and some residential accommodation. To create a stronger connection between the shopping facilities on the High Street and the West Street and Queens Walk area, redevelopment of the eastern end of West Street is proposed. This should create medium to large stores with a landmark building to be located on the corner with Ship Street. In view of the historical importance of the Ship Inn, consideration should be given to its' retention and integration within any redevelopment scheme for a landmark building.

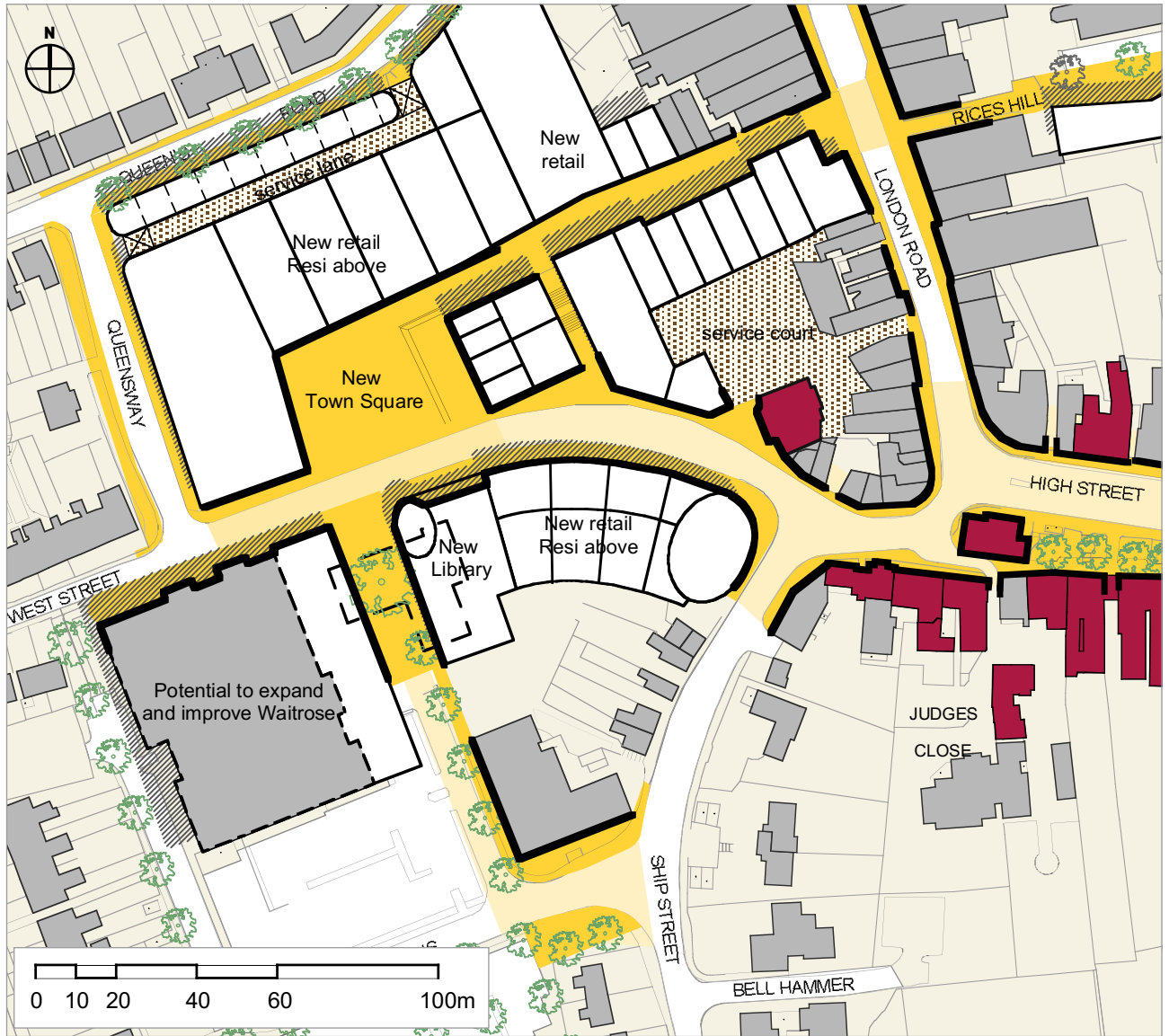


FIGURE 13: Masterplan detail: Queens Walk redevelopment area.

LEGEND

- Listed buildings
- Existing buildings
- Public green open space
- Proposed new buildings
- Active Frontages
- Pedestrianised public realm
- Resurfacing of carriageway
- New tree planting

3.49 Railway Approach currently accommodates a small amount of secondary retail units, with many in need of investment. Redevelopment of certain blocks, along with the general upgrading along this route as set out in Objective 2, would help create a more viable commercial environment. New development should include ground floor retail and showroom uses with upper floors being suitable for commercial and residential.

Independent Shops

3.50 East Grinstead's character is shaped by the many high quality successful independent shops found in High Street and London Road.

3.51 The retention and expansion of these shops in East Grinstead is critical in ensuring the town's competitiveness through providing a distinctive offer that is very different to that found in surrounding towns and helps to inspire strong customer loyalty.

3.52 A successful town centre requires a good mix of local independent stores with the larger regional and national multiples.

3.53 The provision of additional larger stores will draw trade back into the town centre; trade that is currently being lost to outlying towns. This offers an economic opportunity for existing traders to benefit from spin off investment. In order to maximise the benefit of new investment to existing retailers, an active town centre management programme should be created with the appointment of a dedicated manager. The management programme would include measures to improve the promotion and marketing of the town centre as part of a pro-active approach to encouraging visitors and shoppers.



East Grinstead has many good independent shops.

Market

3.54 East Grinstead has a very successful Farmers Market held twice monthly in the High Street, on the upper level. The District and Town Councils support this market and would like to see it expanded in size and frequency. Once the new Town Square is created there is potential for the market to expand along the High Street to this space. Other markets, including themed markets may also be considered for this space, as they can bring life and vitality and provide shopping choice for people including those on lower incomes. Possible markets include French and German markets, organic, flea, antique, plants and flower markets.

Parking

3.55 The delivery of redevelopment opportunities in the town centre will require an increased number of car parking spaces. Any redevelopment of the town centre will require the re-provision of existing parking and additional parking in accordance with the prevailing car parking standards. This has to be balanced with the need to improve accessibility for all modes of transport. New parking provision needs to be provided in safe, secure and well managed environments.

3.56 Well designed structured car parks can deliver significant parking using less land than surface car parks. New structured car parks should be designed following key urban design principles set down in this document including the provision of active frontages where appropriate.

3.57 Proposed new development should be attended by the provision of new publicly-available off-street parking, which should, if possible, be provided within structure and wrapped by/embedded within new development. The numbers of new spaces to be provided should be calculated on the basis of the quantum of new development of different types of uses and the associated predictions of the new car trips generated.



Canterbury has successfully regenerated its shopping centre with an attractive range of multiples and independents and residential development on upper floors.



Farnham exhibits a quality shopping environment in a historic setting.

3.58 These calculations should fully consider the opportunities for improving the accessibility of new development and the town centre as a whole by non-car modes. Further guidance is provided in the Mid Sussex Local Plan and the Council's parking standards.

3.59 The West Street surface car park is an inefficient use of space and there is poor integration between the commercial and surrounding residential area. The topography of the Queens Walk area consists of a fall of between 2m to 6m south to north. The current development addresses this in a very clumsy manner, with blank retaining walls. However, new development should seek to use the change in level creatively and innovatively to address access and servicing issues. The possibility of using this fall to accommodate significant underground car parking should also be investigated.

3.60 The existing King Street surface car park is an inefficient use of space, although it is located in an appropriate location. Redevelopment of this site as a mixed use development could be undertaken to provide a new structured car park which would include additional new car parking spaces alongside uses such as residential apartments wrapped around the structure and commercial/retail space on the ground floor.

3.61 On street parking is proposed along London Road, Railway Approach and Queens Road. This should be short stay to support passing trade to adjacent stores and service outlets.



The West Street car park is an inefficient use of space.

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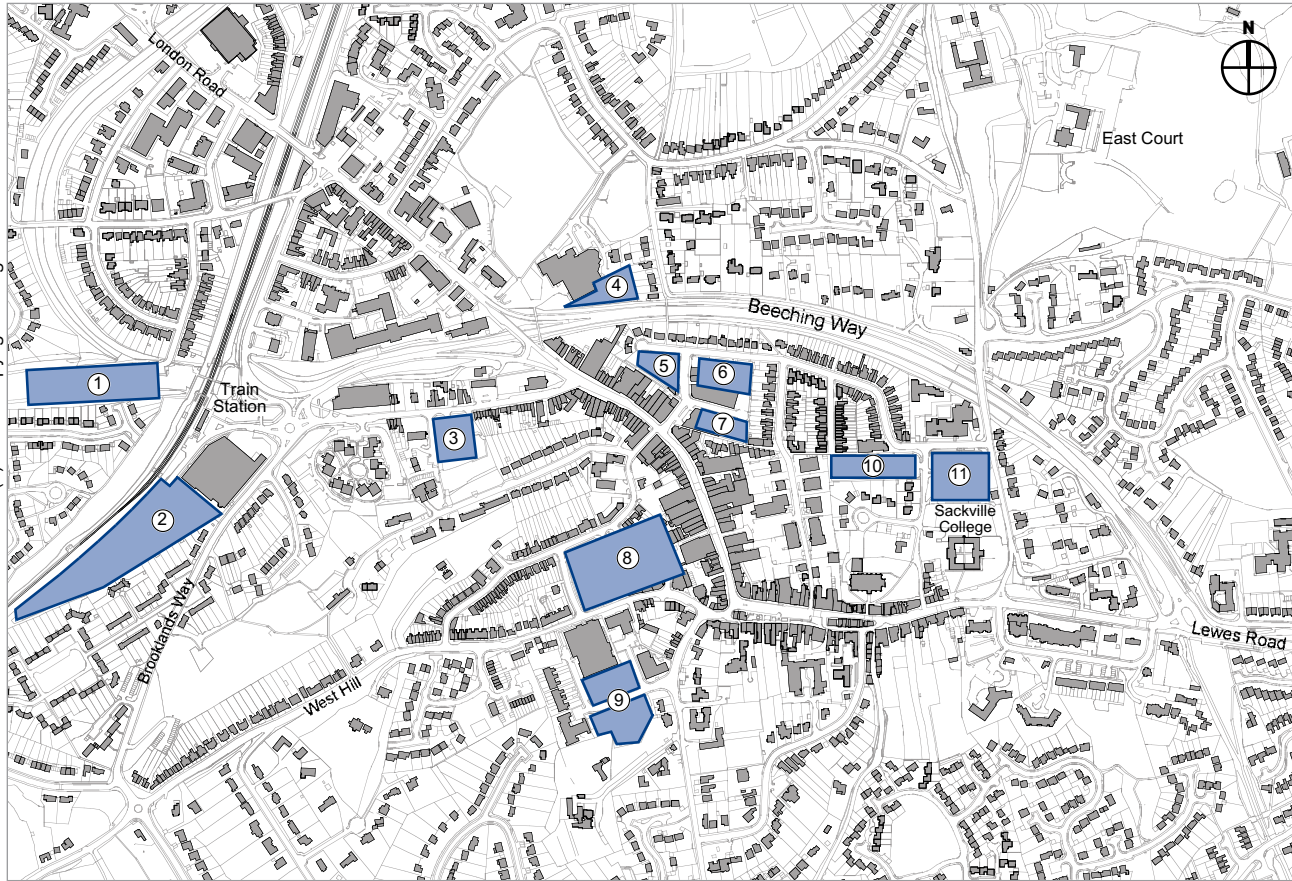


FIGURE 13: Indicative Parking Locations.

LEGEND

Strategic locations for car parking

- ① Network Rail car park
- ② Sainsbury's car park
- ③ Glenvue Centre car park
- ④ Kings Centre car park
- ⑤ King Street car park
- Beneath proposed development
- ⑥ New Atrium car park
- integrated with the renovation of the Atrium
- ⑦ Potential new car park
- associated to renovated Caffyns development
- ⑧ New Queens Walk Basement car park
- ⑨ Waitrose car parks
- ⑩ Vicarage Walk car park
- ⑪ Chequer Mead car park
- Potential redevelopment subject to adequate parking provision

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- An additional quality food store operator or a range of quality independents, will be encouraged within East Grinstead town centre.
- Further out-of-centre foodstore development, would be strongly resisted.
- Proposals for circa 125,000 sq ft of new quality comparison goods floorspace could be accommodated in East Grinstead town centre.
- Redevelopment of West Street and Queens Walk area to create a new shopping quarter to connect into London Road and High Street and strengthen the town centre retail circuit. The development to include a mixture of accommodation to address the requirements of multiple store operators and independent shops, with a mixture of sizes including large units and a new high quality, town square. Any redevelopment of this area would require the reprovion on site of existing uses such as the library.
- Redevelopment/ refurbishment or extension of the Waitrose store should seek to create a new front entrance orientated to face the West Street.
- The redevelopment of the eastern end of West Street to create medium to large sized plates stores with a landmark building on the corner with Ship Street.
- The redevelopment of Railway Approach as set out in Objective 2 to include some ground floor retail uses. Upper floor uses could be commercial and residential.
- Support to independent shops through an active town centre management programme.
- The expansion in size and frequency of market activities. Consideration should be given to its accommodation within the proposed town square.
- Any redevelopment of the town centre will require the reprovion of existing parking and additional parking in accordance with prevailing car parking standards. New parking provision needs to be provided in safe, secure and well managed environments.
- Proposed new development should be attended by the provision of new publicly-available off-street parking, which should, if possible, be provided within structure and wrapped by/embedded within new development. The numbers of new spaces to be provided should be worked out on the basis of the quantum of new development of different types and the associated predictions of the new car trips generated. These calculations should fully consider the opportunities for improving the accessibility of new development and the town centre as a whole by non-car modes.
- New development should seek to use changes in level creatively and innovatively to address access and servicing issues. Underground car parking should also be investigated.
- The redevelopment of the King Street surface car park as a mixed use development to provide a new structured car park to include additional new car parking spaces with indicative uses such as residential apartments wrapped around the structure and commercial/retail space on the ground floor.
- On street parking is proposed along London Road, Railway Approach and Queens Road.

OBJECTIVE 4

To provide a greater mix of uses and residential accommodation, including affordable housing, within the town centre to increase and diversify its resident, visitor and workplace populations and which gives family orientated evening vitality.

ISSUES

Residential

3.62 East Grinstead has a very small town centre population with most of the residential accommodation for the town located in its suburbs. This means that the town centre lacks activity after normal shopping hours, with a resultant lack of safety and security which would have been provided by natural surveillance.

3.63 There is very little variety in terms of different types of residential accommodation in the town and due to the high property prices many young families and first time property buyers are unable to find affordable accommodation. This is creating problems of recruitment for local businesses and can make it difficult for local people to live within the town. It is also important that accommodation is appropriate for people at all stages of their lives and that it is fully accessible including for those with disabilities, the elderly and parents with small children. East Grinstead has an Access Group who represent these users and Mid Sussex District Council will seek their early involvement in consultation on planning applications.

3.64 New residential development is encouraged in the town centre at these suggested locations;

- apartments on the upper floors of a redeveloped West Street and Queens Road area,
- town houses facing onto Queens Road, apartments facing onto London Road and King Georges Field,
- apartments in redeveloped and refurbished sites on Cantelupe Road,
- apartments as part of mixed use development on the Atrium and King Street car park sites.

3.65 Affordable housing will be required in accordance with Mid Sussex Local Plan policy. In view of the town centre location, amenity space standards maybe relaxed if and as appropriate.

3.67 The types and mix of new housing will be informed by the Housing Requirements Study 2004. This indicated a need for:

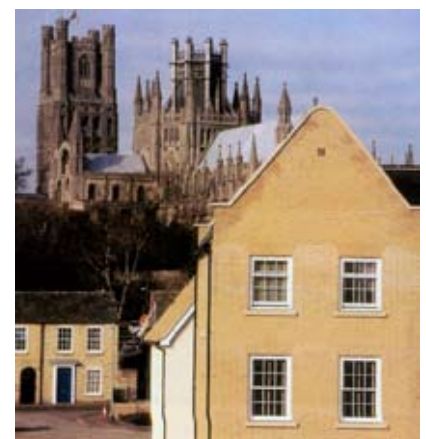
- More one, two and four bedroom open market properties in East Grinstead
- More affordable housing of all sizes, and recommended that within the affordable housing provision a tenure balance of 75% affordable rented to 25% intermediate tenure, such as shared ownership, should be achieved. The exact tenure balance and mix will be considered on a site by site basis.
- More accommodation for younger newly forming households and for older people and people with disabilities. A proportion of affordable homes should be suitable for a wheelchair user on suitable sites.

3.68 All affordable housing should meet the Housing Corporation's requirements and the Council's own standards as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document 'Development and Infrastructure' (2006).



ABOVE: New town centre residential development is proposed.

BELOW: New residential development in a historic context.



Commercial

3.69 The majority of East Grinstead's town centre office accommodation is located within the Wood Street triangle and Cantelupe Road. However much of this stock is out of date and unpopular with many office buildings unlet or with leases due to expire shortly. Several blocks have recently been converted into residential apartments. It is considered unlikely, in the short term, that East Grinstead will regain its attraction as a major corporate location, however, the District and Town Council's would like to maintain commercial activity to help ensure the town's sustainability and to ensure that commercial space for the local, domestic market is met. This is supported by the success of a recent development of small business units along Institute Walk that have proved popular.

3.70 To address this need, both the District and Town Council will encourage the development of new or refurbished, affordable and attractive office and commercial accommodation in a range of sizes 100 sq.m. to 900 sq.m. in the suggested locations of Railway Approach and as part of the King Street and Atrium mixed-use sites.

Leisure

3.71 The Kings Centre and King George's Field provide sports and recreational facilities including a swimming pool. These facilities are now tired and dated and need major reinvestment and this, coupled with changing leisure demands and an increasing population, has led Mid Sussex District Council to undertake a review of leisure and recreational needs in East Grinstead. Subject to the conclusions of the leisure review, there is the potential for the reprovision of the Kings Centre facilities on another site and the reuse of the Kings Centre site, possibly as a mix of uses including residential and leisure. In 2005 the evening economy of the town is largely dominated by pubs and the Atrium night club. This has led to problems of anti-social and criminal behaviour, with some sectors of the community reluctant to visit the town of an evening.

3.72 A leisure offer that is more orientated to families and older persons is required that consists of a broader range of restaurants, cafes and cultural/recreational activities and increase the attractiveness of the town centre to a wider range of the town's population.

3.73 Restaurants and cafes are focused generally around High Street and the London Road/ Railway Approach junction with a stretch along London Road on the far side of Beeching Way. A varied mix of food and drink establishments should be encouraged to promote town centre vitality, although the safeguarding of residential amenity will be an important development control consideration. Outdoor tables and chairs can help to bring activity out on to the streets and the redevelopment of the London Gateway on the junction of London Road and Railway Approach offers the opportunity to create a greatly enhanced space in which outdoor dining can take place. The redevelopment of the Broadway pub offers the potential to create this type of space and considerably upgrade the character and leisure offer in this area.

3.74 East Grinstead is a tourist destination and the Council supports proposals to enhance tourist facilities. A permanent tourist information office is required and appropriate locations could be the station or the new town square in the West Street/Queens Road development. Currently hotel accommodation in East Grinstead is extremely limited and therefore a new hotel within the town centre is encouraged, with possible locations identified as Railway Approach or the station.

3.75 The Chequer Mead Arts Centre is an important cultural facility, providing East Grinstead with a theatre, exhibition space and a restaurant. The Town Museum is a new cultural facility that will open in late spring/early summer 2006. The District and Town Council support these facilities, which bring benefits for both residents and tourists. Enhanced pedestrian links and signage from London Road are therefore encouraged.

3.76 The Atrium currently provides a range of leisure uses incorporating a cinema, amusements and a night club. The facilities require upgrading to provide larger and additional cinema screens and a more family orientated leisure offer. Redevelopment and or partial refurbishment of the site along with the adjacent car show room/car repair garage could be undertaken to provide a leisure led mixed-use development with additional new on site public parking. The retention of the art deco façade of the garage and incorporation into the new development is strongly encouraged.

Community

3.77 East Grinstead benefits from an extremely well used and popular library, within which several community groups and the 'Help Point' are accommodated. However, the library needs additional space to expand to meet the demands of new technology and these community groups will be moving out in March 2006. Even with this reclaimed space the library is still expected to have a shortfall in the light of future population growth. To meet the required floor space standards, it is estimated that a library of 1500sq m would be required. This could be provided through redevelopment or refurbishment and extension of the existing accommodation. Any redevelopment proposal would have to have regard to the need for temporary accommodation within the town centre during construction works.

3.78 Age Concern suffers from inappropriate accommodation in Queens Road and is in need of new premises, as does the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) which is currently located in Cantelupe Road. New community facilities are also required to house uses displaced from the library. Possible new locations for these groups could be at East Court, where the Town Council owns land, although improved accessibility by public transport would be required.



East Grinstead would benefit from a new hotel.



The Atrium could be up graded.

3.79 Another possible location for community facilities could be adjacent to the King Centre fronting on to London Road. This would build upon the existing uses of the Kings Centre and would be easily accessible by public transport.

3.80 New public toilets with disabled and baby changing facilities are required within the town centre. Possible locations are at the new town square within the West Street/ Queens Road development site, the Station and the King Street and Atrium development sites.

Provision for Youth and Younger children

3.81 Currently the town has limited dedicated facilities for young people (other than Nightclubs and pubs) – the Wallis Centre is the town's Youth Centre and provides facilities for outdoor court sports, indoor activities and drop in advice session, in addition there are informal outdoor areas such as the skatepark on King Georges field which are limited in number.

3.82 Recent research work undertaken identifies the following issues and needs facing young people around the town, although any solution will need to be developed in consultation with the young people:

- More facilities for drop in advice in a setting, which is informal in nature such as a café and/or meeting facility.
- A designed outdoor area to allow young people, in the 13 –18 age range, to “hang out” and perhaps practise various sports or movement skills. The area should include a ball court, a skateboard area and shelters. These areas should be situated to ensure a degree of surveillance can be maintained.



Doncaster has an excellent arts centre developed as a contemporary addition to a listed building.



A new arts facility in Whitstable reflects vernacular architecture in a contemporary interpretation.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- New residential development is encouraged in the town centre.
- The types and mix will be informed by Housing Requirements Study
- Affordable housing will be required in accordance with Mid Sussex Local Plan policy.
- Accommodation will need to be appropriate for people at all stages of their lives and that it is fully accessible including for those with disabilities, the elderly and parents with small children.
- Amenity space standards may be relaxed if and as appropriate.
- New or refurbished affordable and attractive office and commercial accommodation in range of sizes 100 sq.m to 900 sq.m. in the suggested locations of Railway Approach and as part of the King Street and Atrium mixed-use sites will be encouraged.
- New leisure facilities will be informed by the 2005 review of leisure provision being undertaken by Mid Sussex District Council.
- A more family orientated leisure offer is required that could consist of restaurants, cafes and cultural facilities.
- A varied mix of food and drink establishments is required and the redevelopment of the Broadway pub should be an opportunity to upgrade the character and leisure offer.
- A new permanent tourist information office is required, suggested locations are the railway station or as part of a West Street/Queens Road redevelopment.
- A new hotel/s is/are required, suggested locations include Railway Approach and the Station.
- Enhanced pedestrian links and signage from London Road to Chequer Mead and the new town museum are encouraged.
- Additional library accommodation is required. This could be provided through redevelopment or refurbishment and extension of the existing accommodation.
- The provision of new accommodation for Age Concern, the CAB and other voluntary and community groups is required. New facilities must be well served by public transport. Suggested locations include East Court and adjacent to the Kings Centre on London Road.
- The provision of new public toilets with separate disabled and baby changing facilities with suggested locations at the West Street and Queens Road redevelopment, the Station, King Street and the Atrium.
- The provision of facilities for drop in advice for young people.
- The provision of an outdoor area with a ball court, skateboard area and shelter for young people.

OBJECTIVE 5

To enhance the public realm and create a new town square.



As part of Canterbury's redevelopment of its shopping area, public spaces were refurbished or created.

ISSUES

3.83 The historic built form of East Grinstead generally demonstrates good enclosure of public space with buildings fronting on to streets and servicing and other private uses accessed at the backs. In newer development, such as in the Queens Walk area, Railway Approach, parts of the Wood Street triangle and London Road north this breaks down with buildings set back from the street and private 'back' activities are on show. Pieces of left over space are also prevalent. The public realm needs to be properly enclosed by continuous built form, with a common building line that provides active frontage and minimal blank walls to ensure good surveillance and security.

3.84 East Grinstead currently lacks a town square or civic space, which would be a focus of activity within the town and in which members of the community can undertake communal activities such as gatherings, the celebration of events, socialising and trade.



Existing view from the High Street to West Street.



View from Ship Street / West Street junction.

3.85 The redevelopment of the West Street and Queens Road area provides a prime opportunity to create a new contemporary public space, which would act as a 'knuckle' to the routes of High Street and London Road tying these retail areas together. Figure 10 Town Square Extension illustrates this concept. The square should be surrounded by active ground floor uses with the library providing a key civic/community presence. The square should be lined on one side by West Street to ensure a high level of activity and surveillance and to maintain views to the High Street.

3.86 The space should be constructed of high quality natural materials with the topography of the area carefully and creatively integrated into the design to ensure access for all and an exciting multi purpose space. Public art should be integral to its design, with consideration given to the celebration of the 'Guinea Pigs' or a water feature. Plentiful seating should be provided, including informal seating through the use of steps and walls. Street furniture should be minimal, although adequate provision of litter bins should be made.

3.87 Throughout the town the public realm requires enhancement with the use of appropriate materials in a quality commensurate to location. This may require the use of stone or quality concrete pavers with stone aggregates. Materials used at the proposed London Road Gateway should resist staining and be appropriate for use in dining and drinking areas. In locations with changes in gradient, alternatives to steps should be provided.

3.88 Improvements to green open space such as King George's Field and Brooklands Park should also be undertaken in consultation with user groups and young people. This could include new sports and play facilities and seating.

3.89 There is a particular need to provide play facilities for younger children and these could be integrated within the public realm, as informal play opportunities. Examples of how this integration is achieved, include the 'play fountains' of Somerset House in London or the play areas in squares in french towns.



Public realm in London Road.

3.90 Where possible and particularly along pedestrian lanes, street lighting should be wall hung due to the narrow widths available. Paving should be smooth and easily cleanable with dropped kerbs and efforts should be made to reduce street clutter through the minimisation of guard railing, street furniture, sign poles and road markings.

3.91 East Grinstead town centre has little tree coverage and street tree planting should be encouraged to provide seasonal interest, shelter and shade, benefits to wildlife and to cool and cleanse the environment. Care is required in the location of trees so that they do not obscure CCTV cameras and sightlines and species selection will be important. Railway Approach would particularly benefit from avenue tree planting using species of a sufficient scale to complement the proposed new development. Grid tree planting is also encouraged for the car park of Waitrose, to enhance its appearance. Further information on tree planting can be obtained from the Council's Tree and Landscape Officer.

A place that is safe and resistant to crime

3.92 New development should be designed following guidance as set out in 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention'. Buildings will front onto the public realm providing natural surveillance of streets and public spaces. Street frontages will be continuous and especial attention will be given to corners of blocks to ensure that these provide a positive contribution to the streetscape rather than offering a blank façade. New planting and the treatment to the edges of open spaces will ensure good visibility. Lighting will both contribute to the streetscape and to place making and ensure that streets and public spaces feel safe.



Public realm should be high quality natural materials to include access for all, plentiful seating, public art, good lighting and tree planting.



DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- The public realm needs to be properly enclosed by continuous built form, with a common building line that provides active frontage and minimal blank walls to ensure good surveillance and security.
- The creation of a new town square in the redevelopment of West Street and Queens Road, lined with active ground floor uses.
- The location of the town square to allow visual connections with the High Street.
- The town square to be of a high quality contemporary design using quality materials and the inclusion of public art or a water feature.
- The enhancement of public realm throughout the town centre to give smooth flat and easily cleanable surfaces using appropriate quality materials.
- The provision of play facilities for younger children incorporated into the public realm.
- The reduction of street clutter and the use of wall hung lighting where possible for pedestrian lanes and the town square.
- The planting of street trees using appropriate species.
- New development should be designed following guidance as set out in "Safer Place: The Planning System and Crime Prevention."

OBJECTIVE 6

To ensure new development respects and builds on East Grinstead's special character and that responds to existing heights and scale.

ISSUES

3.93 East Grinstead has evolved over many centuries and has a fine collection of buildings with examples from most centuries, many of which are listed. New development should respect this heritage, reflect local character and be of a quality that has the potential to become the listed buildings of the future.

3.94 Particularly strong characteristics that should be considered in the design of new development are the fine grain and vertical rhythm of the built form along High Street and London Road. This fine grain creates structured variety and encourages activity through plentiful doors and openings. A fine grain built form also gives greater robustness and thus sustainability by allowing more selective redevelopment opportunities than that provided by larger grained development.

3.95 Where large floor areas are required, such as for larger shops and structured car parking, fine grain development should be incorporated into the around these structures.

3.96 A delightful characteristic found along the High Street is the free standing buildings of Middle Row, with its double frontage. A contemporary reinterpretation of this, for selective buildings particularly in the West Street and Queens Road development area, could create a quite special piece of architecture with the potential to create a compelling landmark feature. Reference should be made to East Grinstead Historic Character Assessment Report Extensive Urban Survey, in particular the analysis of vulnerability in respect of each Historic Urban Character Area.



East Grinstead has a special character which should be respected.

BUILDING SCALE

3.97 The height of buildings within the town centre is generally two to four storeys. The apartments adjacent to St Leonard's Park are eight storeys, but these are located at the bottom of a considerable slope and do not rise above the surrounding roofscape. East Grinstead is not considered an appropriate location for tall buildings (as defined as a building that is significantly taller than the surrounding buildings). Redevelopment proposals should consider the scale, height and massing of existing and retained development and streets, with consideration given to the framing of views and vistas so that new buildings integrate with and enhance the townscape. The varied skyline of the town is an important characteristic that should be cherished with new development sympathetic to existing roof lines and topography. It will be important that views of St Swithun's church, particularly distant ones from the south, are protected. New built form should generally remain in the height range of two to four storeys although there may be scope to rise to five storeys for landmark buildings or where the topography allows buildings to sit lower than surrounding from.

3.98 The tallest buildings should be carefully located to optimise their potential as landmarks, gateways, to identify key nodes or to terminate vistas and be of the highest quality of design. Tall buildings, however, must not compete with the church. Where new development is higher, it should increase incrementally from existing heights to integrate with existing and retained development. Upper storey set backs can help to integrate taller buildings into the townscape and create visually distinctive and attractive massing. Figure 15 Indicative Building Heights illustrates proposed heights.

3.99 In creating new development it will be important that a varied roofscape is created that steps up and down responding to cues such as a building's form and function and the layout, marking intersections, junctions and nodes. This helps to create character and identity and helps make a place legible.

3.100 New development should respect residential amenity including daylight, sunlight, and overlooking, including for surrounding existing residents with proposals demonstrating that privacy and a lack of overlooking have been fully addressed for all habitable rooms.



Existing building heights are generally two - four stories.

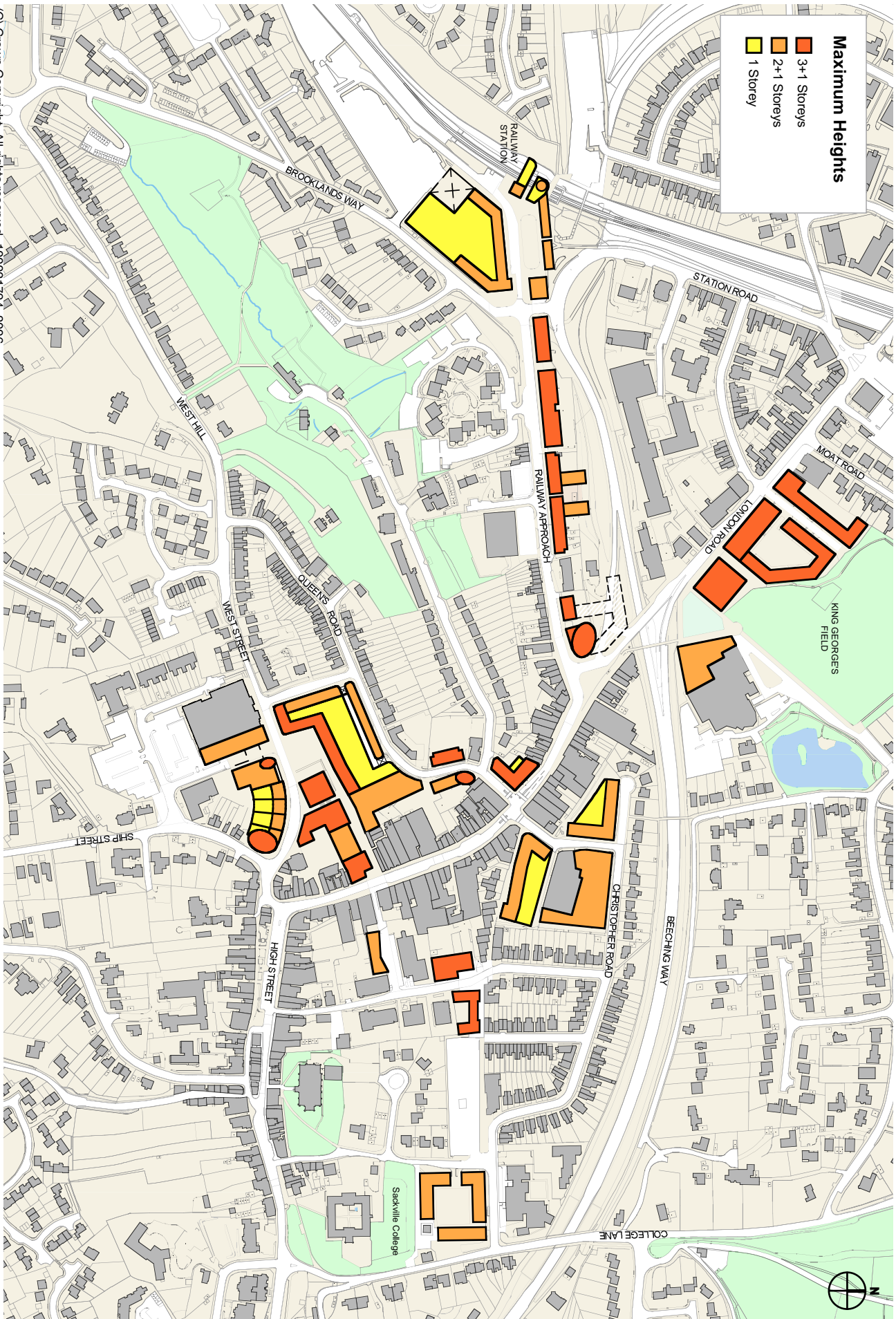


FIGURE 15: Indicative Building Heights.

OBJECTIVE 7

To create a sustainable town.



Sustainable development is about getting a better quality of life for everyone

ISSUES

3.101 Sustainable development at its most simple is about creating a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The Bruntland Commission drew up the most widely used definition on Sustainable Development in 1987: 'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' Sustainable development is a broad concept, which in its entirety needs to be considered from a strategic land use, planning and urban design level down to detailed design, construction and use.

3.102 East Grinstead as a town with a variety of uses, which include employment, shopping and leisure with a train station and bus service, already demonstrates some fundamental principles of sustainability. However, it is important that new development builds upon this strong basis and improves those elements of East Grinstead that do not at present contribute to sustainable development. This needs to be considered at the design and layout scale by using the principles of urban design as set out in Objectives 1-7. In particular far more could be done to improve sustainability by reducing the need to travel and by encouraging the use of public transport and sustainable modes such as cycling and walking as well as planning for retail provision across the whole range of retail services. The construction of new and affordable housing in a range of types within the town centre would also reduce the need to travel and help social cohesion through maintaining communities.

3.103 In addition to the urban design and planning of the town, the architectural design and construction of the new development can make a major contribution to the creation of a more sustainable environment. In both new build and refurbishment, current, (and incoming) building regulations will provide the minimum requirement for energy efficiency and significant improvements can easily be made over and above these regulations. Consideration should also be given to the maximum use of renewable energy sources whilst minimising energy demands and ensuring the minimisation of waste, in line with Mid Sussex Local Plan policies.

3.104 It is also important that developers work in partnership with the key stakeholders (including the local community and the planning authority) to avoid confrontation and to achieve a mutually consensual approach. Adequate resources must also be provided to ensure high design standards - this will include the use of skilled design professionals throughout the design and construction process who can undertake comprehensive analysis and promote design that responds to a site's context.

3.105 Further information is set out in the Council's Sustainable Construction SPD adopted 2006.

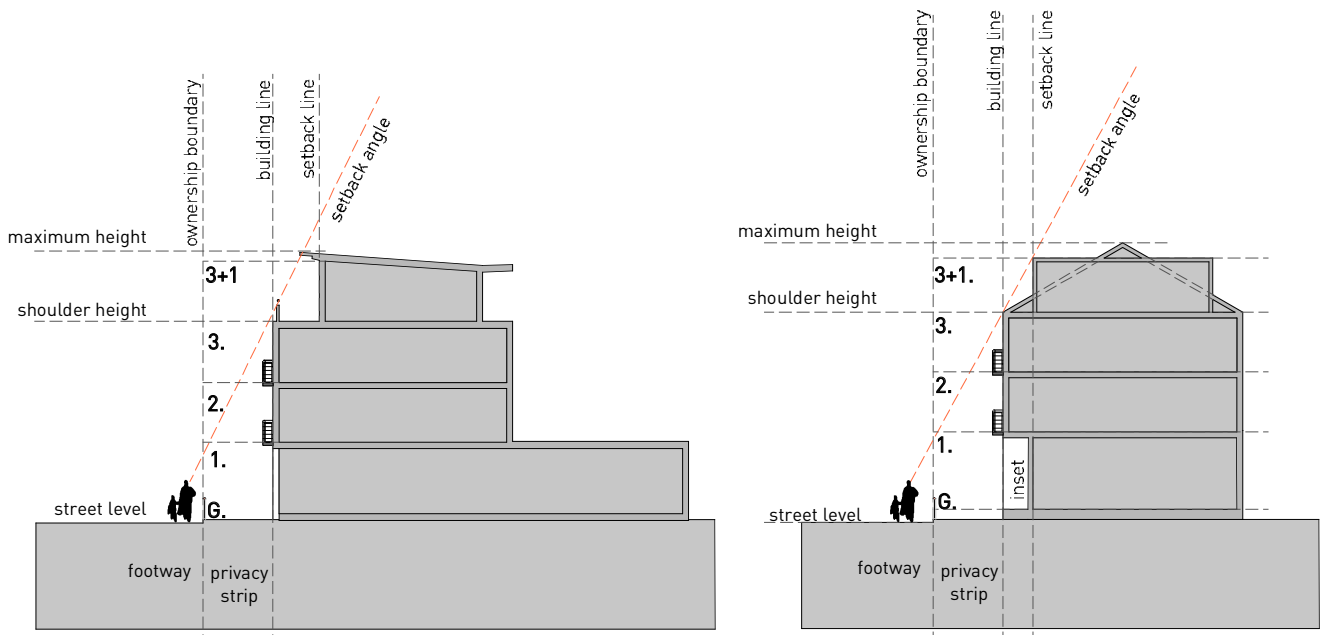


FIGURE 16: Section illustrating 3+1 set back roofs.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- New development should seek to provide high quality, contemporary design that could help forge a new physical identity that reflects the strong community pride found in the town and the wish for the town to be forward thinking, fresh and innovative.
- New development should respond to the characteristics of fine grain and a strong vertical rhythm.
- Where large floor plates are required, such as for larger shops and structured car parking fine grain development should be wrapped around these structures.
- Building heights should generally range from three to four storeys with potential for some landmark buildings rising to five storeys.
- The tallest buildings should be located to optimise their potential as landmarks, gateways, to identify key nodes or terminate vistas.
- Tall buildings must not compete with the church.
- Where new development is higher, it should increase incrementally from existing heights to integrate with existing and retained development.
- A varied roofscape shall be required.
- Proposals will need to demonstrate that they respect residential amenity, including daylight, sunlight and overlooking.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- **Design and construct to recognized standards.**

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, in partnership with the House Builders Federation and the Civic Trust, are promoting an initiative entitled 'Building for Life' to encourage quality house development. English Partnerships have developed Millennium Community Standards to promote sustainable development and construction and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) have created BREEAM (the BRE Environmental Assessment Method) this measures environmental performance for buildings. EcoHomes is the residential version of this for new and renovated homes, and must be applied as a condition of housing association development to a minimum of 'Good' at present and 'Very Good' by the spring of 2006.

- **Minimising the need for artificial light and optimising solar gain**

A block depth of between 9 to 13m provides a naturally lit and ventilated space and the buildings should be orientated to benefit from the natural path of the sun, although this should not prejudice good urban design principles.

- **Minimising running costs and utilising solar power**

Photovoltaic (pv) cells convert solar radiation directly into electricity. This system does not emit greenhouse gases and can lower running costs, either for individual homes or for the landlord where blocks are concerned.

Solar thermal technology delivers hot water, rather than electricity, with a short payback period. Careful and early consideration needs to be made if planning to use both solar thermal and with combined heat and power systems.

- **Collect, store and use rain water**

Retained rainwater could be used for landscape watering and non-potable water uses, e.g. flushing of toilets. This minimises mains water usage and can help cut down on surface drainage and pipe work infrastructure.

Sustainable urban drainage is essential. Such measures should include porous surface products, including paving, car parking areas etc. and where geological conditions permit, soakaways (natural depressions in the landscaping).

- **Ground source heat**

Underground energy sources could be used for heating and cooling systems. The underground temperatures at a depth of 10 metres are approximately 14 degrees Celsius. Heat pumps can exploit this difference for both heating and cooling purposes.

- **Wind**

The potential of wind can be harnessed to naturally ventilate buildings and to used as a possible energy source. Buildings should be designed and positioned to minimize funnelling and to respond to microclimates. Roof top wind turbines can also generate electricity.

- **Minimise waste**

Developers should seek to reuse building materials in construction, including the reuse of recycled and secondary aggregates, including those generated on site. Prefabricated elements can also help to reduce construction waste and costs. Building design should also include for deconstruction as well as change in use, guided by Lifetime Homes standards. Consideration can also be given to community gardening, the associated inclusion of organic composting systems and wormeries within the development and the provision and integration of recycling bin areas in new developments.

- **Maximise locally sourced renewable materials**

Locally sourced materials minimise the impact of transport and support the local **economy**.

- **Specify appropriate materials**

Materials should be prioritised which have low embodied energy, are non-hazardous in manufacture and use and which have a reduced environmental footprint, including in terms of pollution (such as volatile organic compounds [VoCs], chlorofluoro-carbons [CFCs] etc).

All timber should be Forestry Stewardship Council accredited, with full Chain of Custody where possible. Materials with a high-recycled content and low embodied energy should be considered.

04

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

It is considered that it could take approximately 20 years to achieve in full the vision set out in Section 3 and to complete the redevelopment of East Grinstead town centre. Within this timescale, a series of projects can be brought forward which are deliverable within the short (1 to 5 years), medium (5 to 10 years) and long term (10 years plus).⁷ These projects would be brought forward in the context of the overall master plan to ensure that they respect, and adhere, to the overall vision. The projects will also be brought forward with full regard to the emerging and final AAP for East Grinstead strategic development in terms of its implications for East Grinstead town centre. The SPD will provide guidance which allows for development that responds to changing social, technological, and economic conditions while maintaining a clear vision of the area's future scale and form. The timescales of projects will be influenced by the ownership and availability of sites and the financial viability of their development.

Successful implementation of proposals will require a partnership approach between Mid Sussex District Council, developers, landowners and the community. This will facilitate high quality, appropriate and timely development and will be absolutely critical for projects that cross ownership boundaries, involve aspirations such as highway alterations, the creation of new routes and the construction of infrastructure such as structured car parks and a new station. To assist such partnership working, Mid Sussex District Council welcomes pre-application discussions.

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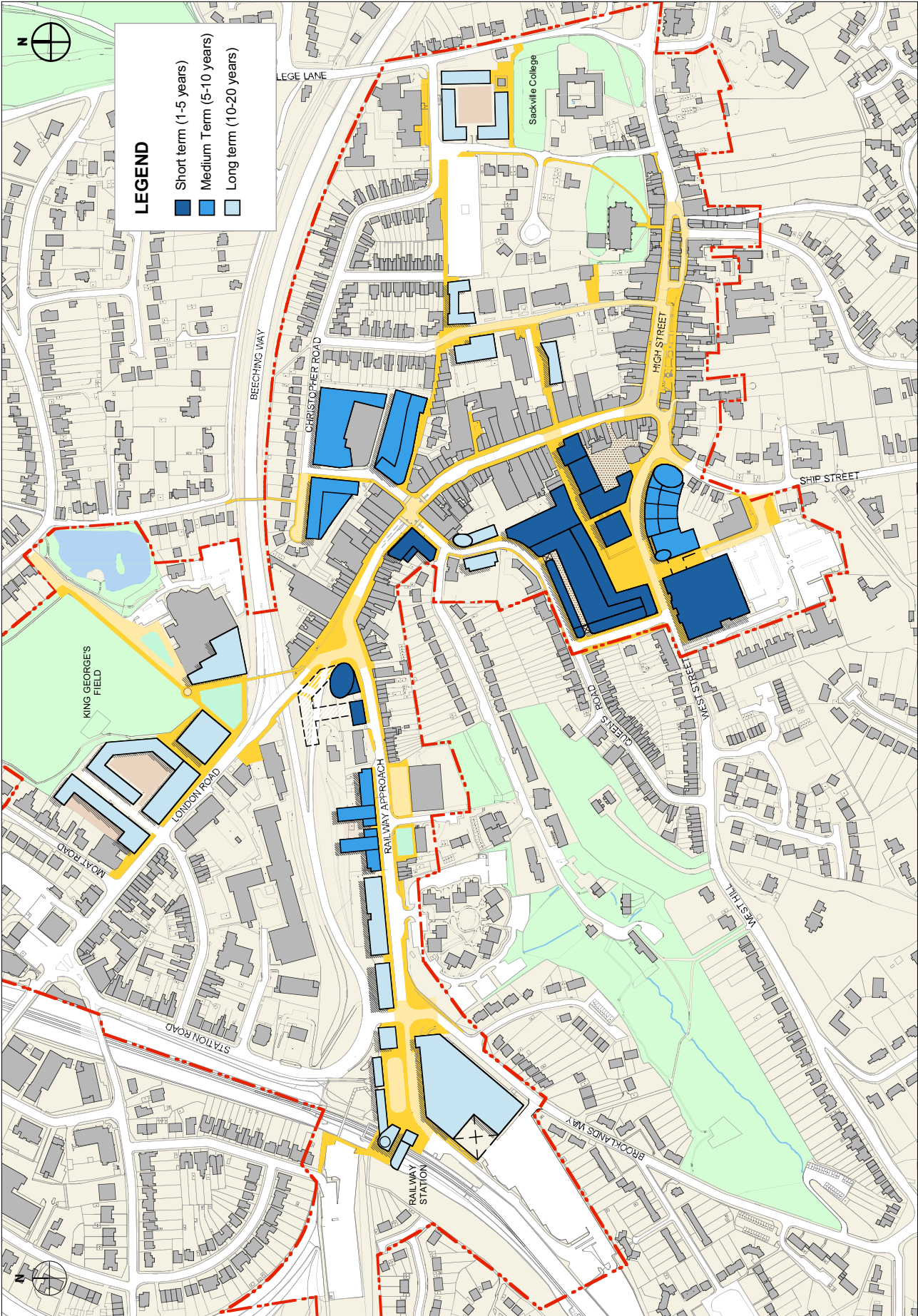


FIGURE 17: Indicative Phasing Plan.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

4.1 Major planning applications submitted for development within East Grinstead town centre will be expected to include the following information;

- Planning Statement
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) if and as appropriate subject to screening procedures.
- Transport Assessment, including a parking survey, and as assessment of the traffic related effects.
- Travel Plan
- Design and Access Statement
- Landscape Plan, Tree Survey and Tree Schedule
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Ground Investigation Report
- Statement of Community Consultation

4.2 Applicants should also provide comprehensive and detailed information including plans, drawings, photomontages, artist impressions and models (if appropriate) to enable the planning application to be easily understood by officers, members and the public.

Planning Obligations

4.3 Planning obligations will be sought for development in East Grinstead town centre to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and facilities are provided at the time of development. Obligations will also be negotiated with the aim of reducing the negative impacts of development on the local community. Mid Sussex District Council considers that planning obligations are an important tool in achieving positive planning. The approach to Planning Obligations will be:

a) A clear understanding of what is required at each phase of development in terms of planning obligations and community benefits.

b) The adoption of a review mechanism on increased viability, linked to individual phases of the development for an increase in affordable housing and/or other community benefit provision.

Further information is set out the in Planning Obligations SPD adopted 2006.

Monitoring and Review

4.4 To ensure that this SPD is, and remains a positive planning tool that effectively helps to guide development, in accordance with the vision and objectives set out within it over the next 20 years, it will be important that the document is regularly monitored and reviewed. This will be undertaken by Mid Sussex District Council approximately every three years.

PHASING

The following schedules set out the indicative programme of the major development opportunities included within the master plan.

Short 1-5 Years
 Medium 5-10 Years
 Long 10-20 Years

GENERAL TOWN CENTRE

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Short	Commission detailed parking study and develop a parking strategy to be intergrated with new development	MSDC / PRI-SEC				To be prepared as part of Town Centre Scheme
	Develop public transport strategy - consult in detail with service providers	PRI-SEC/ MSDC/ WSCC				To be prepared as part of Town Centre Scheme

WEST STREET/QUEENS WALK

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Short	Review potential expansion with Waitrose and parking provision	PRI-SEC/ MSDC/ Waitrose				
	Traffic Modelling and design of new highways layout - Queen Street /London Road Junction	PRI-SEC/ MSDC/ WSCC				To be prepared as part of Town Centre Scheme proposals
	Commission detailed design and submit planning applications	PRI-SEC				
			New junction arrangements	PRI-SEC/ MSDC/ WSCC	Promote a weekly farmers market in the town new square	EGTC/ MSDC
			Commence development of new West Street/ Queens Walk scheme	PRI-SEC/ MSDC / WSCC		
			Develop / enhance civic facilities buildings around new town square	MSDC / PRI-SEC		

LONDON ROAD

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Short	Commision design work		Public Realm improvements to London Road	MSDC/WSCC		Works limited to Town Centre Scheme
			Implement new layout at the London Road/ Railway Approach junction	MSDC/WSCC		Works limited to Town Centre Scheme
			Redevelopment of the Broadway pub	MSDC/PRI-SEC		

THE STATION AREA

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Short			Construc-tion of new station building for Bluebell and adjacent station related development	NWrk Rail/ Blue Bell		
Long		Sainsburys	Sainsburys alterations to frontage			

RAILWAY APPROACH

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Medium	Design and model a new signalised junction at the Brooklands Way / Railway Approach round about.	MSDC/ WSCC				
			Implement new signalised layout at the Brooklands Way / Railway Approach round about.	MSDC/ WSCC		
			Carry out street widening of Railway Approach and accompanying development	MSDC/ WSCC/ PRI-SEC		

KING STREET

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Short	Investigate the potential for a integrated development with the Atrium centre	PRI-SEC / MSDC/ Private Sector				
Medium			Carry out integrated development including the Atrium Centre/Caffyns	PRI-SEC/ MSDC/ Private Sector		
			Delivery of the King Street car park	PRI-SEC/ MSDC		

KING GEORGES FIELD

Time Scale	Studies	Lead Agents	Works	Lead Agents	Initiatives	Comments
Medium	Feasibility study and strategy for developing the sites adjacent to King Georges Field for residential-led mixed use development	MSDC/ PRI-SEC				
	Feasibility study on relocation of proposed community centre adjacent to or on the Kings Centre site					
Long			Commission and develop residential-led mixed use development to the west of King Georges Fields.			