



## Character Appraisal

Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019



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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Battle Parish has many characteristics which determine that this is a different, renowned part of the country, with an historical dimension dating back more than a millennium. It is of International as well as National importance, but in common with many rural communities at the present time is required to accommodate expansion at a level which some may find difficult to accept.
- 1.2. In order to ensure that Parish growth is planned in a manner which brings the community on board, a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared. This will focus on housing development, employment, parking, highways, heritage and design. Part of that Plan process is the Character Appraisal which sets out to highlight the essential features and peculiarities that makes this part of the County so different to its counterparts. This Appraisal is in place to encourage discussion and review but will aid to support policies in the Battle Civil Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (BCPNDP)

### **1.3. Defining a Character Appraisal**

- 1.3.1. A character appraisal is an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of a particular place. It can be undertaken at any level of detail and cover a variety of localities. A place, an area, a county, a country have traits which set it apart from its contemporaries. Its oddities and individuality define its ongoing existence and, within an appraisal, depending on the outcome to be achieved, are the areas to be taken into account in defining its distinctiveness.
- 1.3.2. The Appraisal itself is a factual and objective analysis, which seeks to enable an understanding of the wider qualities of distinctiveness of place by defining those physical elements that contribute to its special characteristics. Essentially it identifies those qualities that help to define and make the place unique: such as open space, materials, property type, maintenance, age of the structures.
- 1.3.3. If the outcome was housing it would concentrate on the style, the materials, repairs and maintenance and the mix between the old and new. Then, descriptive assessments on commonality determine what makes the Parish what it is. However, where some things are omitted that does not indicate they have no value, just that other points may provide a better understanding.

## **1.4. What is its value?**

- 1.4.1. Our goal with this appraisal is to provide one of the many bases from which our Neighbourhood Plan can evolve. In each of the studies, identification of the issues which point the way forward in that particular grouping, can be analysed in a more cohesive manner than would be possible where everything is combined.
- 1.4.2. In addition to the above, it could also be used as a development management tool to secure better quality development appropriate to its surroundings. Such a document can be used by residents and developers when preparing a planning application, or for anyone wishing to comment on a current planning application.

## 2. Planning Policy Context

### 2.1. National Policy Guidance

2.2. This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the wider national and local planning policy and guidance. The Government adopted the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012, with an update in July 2018, and minor revisions in February 2019. The key sustainability messages within this policy framework are relevant design coupled with the protection and elevation of our historic surroundings. Anything that undermines those principles should not be considered as adhering to the concept of sustainability.

2.3. The NPPF is the national blueprint in place to ensure that adhering to its principles will provide sustainability long-term. It attempts to balance growth, social, economic and environmental issues in the context of expansive development even in areas where this may appear impractical and unnecessary. However, the framework also recognises the finite nature and value of our built heritage and the natural environment, especially since the parish is wholly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the need for this to be properly assessed and where appropriate protected in a manner commensurate with the sensitivity of the heritage asset and the natural environment.

2.4. Proper and robust assessment is therefore essential to protect the heritage factors within the appraisal which correspond to the safeguards within the NPPF in order to identify and defend. The key points of the NPPF covering historic environment and achieving high quality design are as follows:

*2.4.1. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:*

*a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

*b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*

*c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*

*d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

(NPPF Feb2019, para 185)

- 2.4.2. *When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 186)
- 2.4.3. *When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 193)
- 2.4.4. *Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 200)
- 2.4.5. *Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 201)
- 2.4.6. *The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 124)
- 2.4.7. *Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used)* (NPPF Feb2019, para 130)

2.4.8. *Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 127c)

2.4.9. *The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.*  
(NPPF Feb2019, para 132)

2.5. The right for communities to embody their local characteristics within growth and development plans for their area within a Neighbourhood Plan are set out in the Localism Act 2011.

## 2.6. **Local Plan**

2.6.1. The Local Plan reports on the frameworks which act as an evidence base to underpin the directions set out in Rother District Council's Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

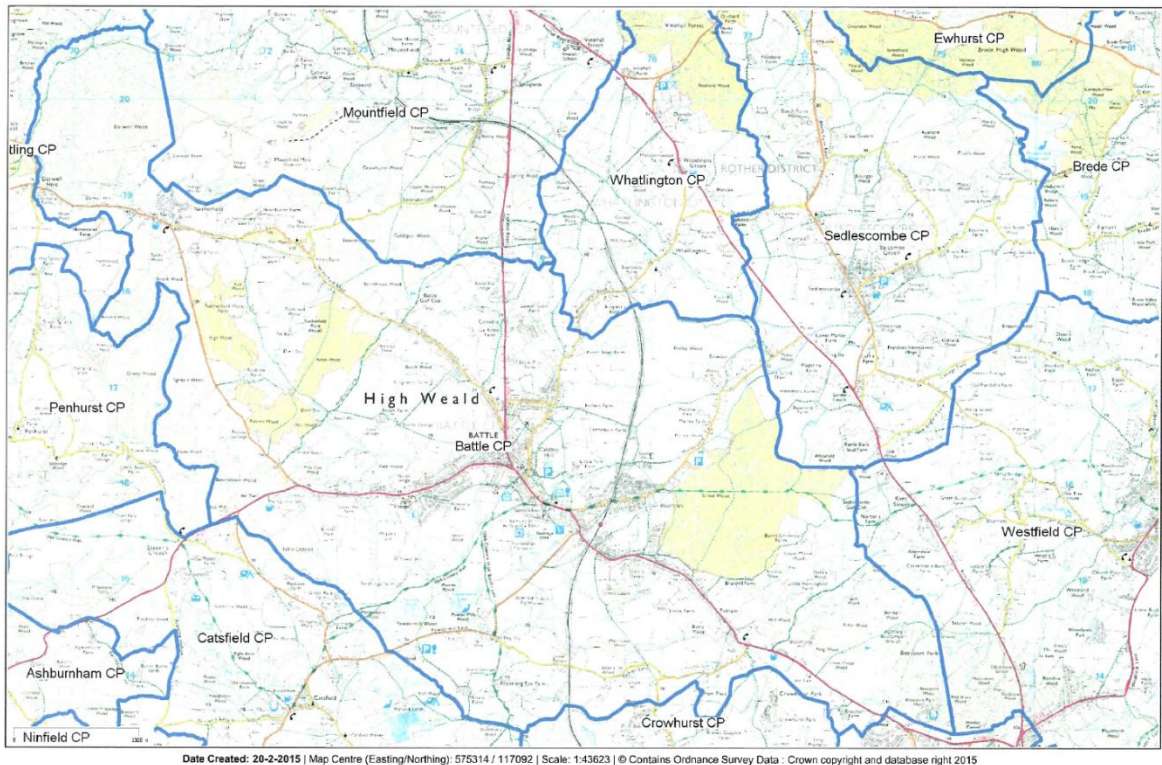
2.6.2. These are further enhanced on individual aspects of the core strategy, such as development sites, by publication of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which identified specific sites in Battle and Netherfield with housing potential.

2.6.3. Whilst not all local settlements were included in the prior discussions on these plans, this in some respects acknowledged the need to maintain a strategic gap between the urban sprawl from neighbouring settlements.



### 3. The Survey Area

- 3.1. The entire Parish of Battle is incorporated within the extent of the appraisal survey, although its main focus centres around the communities of Battle Town and the village of Netherfield.



### 3.2. Structure of the document

The following document is divided into two distinct parts.

**Part 1:** The Character Appraisal, where those local characteristics and identifiers are brought into sharp focus for assessment and debate

**Part 2:** Appendices and Glossary



## **PART 1**

### **3.3. Local Characteristics**

- 3.3.1. The Parish of Battle, which incorporates Telham and Netherfield, is in East Sussex in a northerly direction from the major towns of Bexhill and Hastings. It sits within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 3.3.2. Tourism plays an extremely important part in employment and revenue for the town and its environs. It is reached via the A2100, an offshoot of the main London to Hastings trunk road, the A21, allowing access to Eastbourne and beyond.
- 3.3.3. The Town Centre of Battle is dominated by the Abbey and the various listed properties, which denote its architectural heritage going back over many centuries. It sits on a ridge surrounded by ancient and semi-natural woodland, together with a number of large estates comprising arable and pasture land. To the north are the Rother, Brede and Tillingham woods and to the east the Great Wood dominates the Parish. It has been a designated conservation area since 1970.
- 3.3.4. Battle town is also served by rail allowing access not only to London and beyond but coastwise in both a west and east direction.
- 3.3.5. On the southern extremity of the Parish the small village of Telham is situated at the top of the hill on the A2100. There are few buildings of importance due to its heritage as a farming area. Its semi-isolation characteristics have generally resulted in a healthier resident community which is able to develop on a grander scale than is generally the case in the rest of the Parish.
- 3.3.6. On the north-western boundary of the Parish sits the village of Netherfield. Whilst there has been a small community within its environs since before Domesday Book its expansion in relatively modern times has been in concert with the growth of mining operations in the nearby village of Mountfield to its north. Minerals have been mined in the area since 1876 and tunneling underlies parts of the village; the Darvel Down estate was built in its present form in the 1950s. However, many historic houses still exist within the Netherfield conurbation which stretches from the bottom of Netherfield Hill up to Darwell Hole situated on the B2096 Battle to Heathfield Road.

### **3.4. General Characteristics and Plan Form**

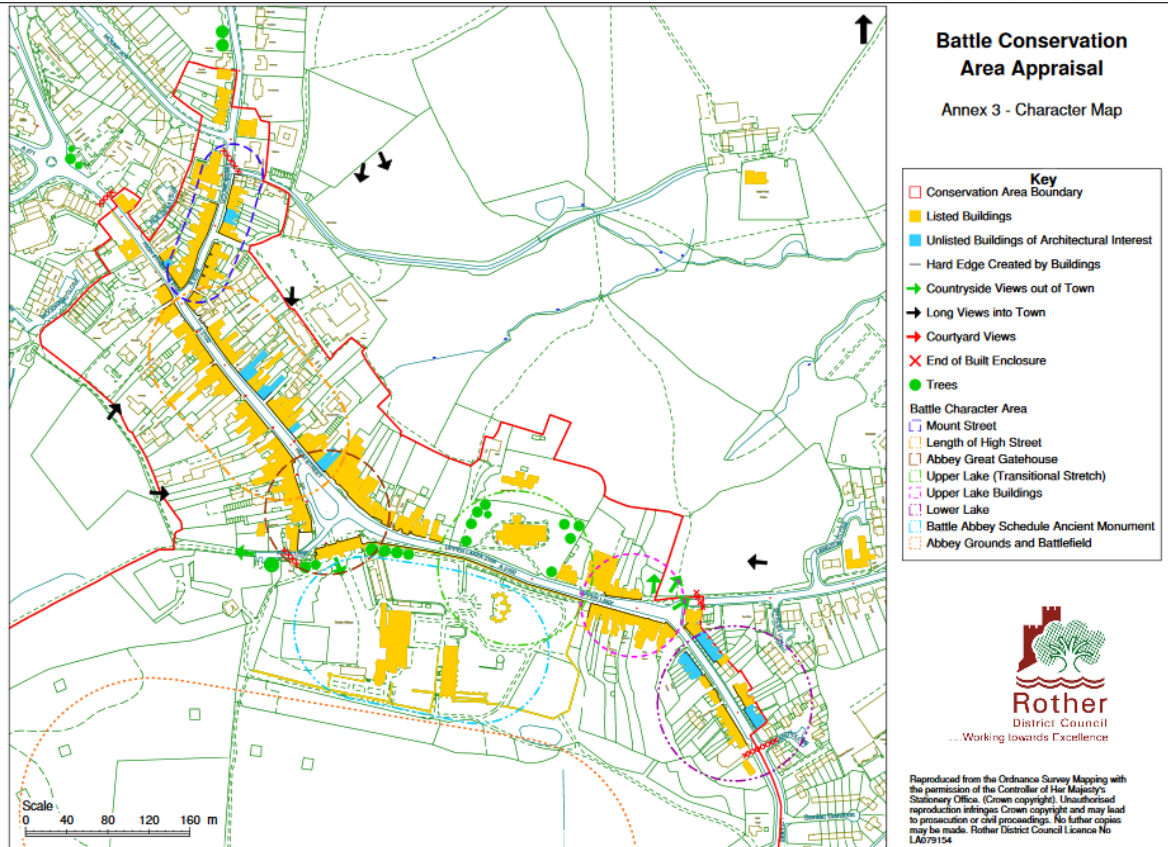
- 3.4.1. Battle has grown in size over many centuries and is the central character within the Parish of Battle. Like most high streets in the area it runs approximately north to south and is the central hub of not only the town that bears its name, but also of Telham and Netherfield. Commercial and residential properties co-exist not only on the High Street but throughout the town. At the northern end a roundabout leads to North Trade Road, which generally supports a single row of properties on each side of the highway as well as the Battle recreation ground and Claverham College. The houses back onto the Beech Estate farmland on one side, together with arable and pasture on the other.
- 3.4.2. At the southern end Battle Hill has a similar residential model as that described on North Trade Road up to and including the village of Telham.
- 3.4.3. A third of the way along the High Street, the road to Whatlington starts along Mount Street, which too has 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Century architectural properties bordering further farming businesses.
- 3.4.4. The existing conservation area covers all these highlighted sections of the community. together with the newer identifiers associated with Telham and Netherfield.

### **3.5. Heritage Designations**

- 3.5.1. Given the importance of the historical aspects on display within the Parish to the continuing revenue streams generated by their promotion, it is disappointing to learn that listed buildings and conservation areas are the only assets covered by statute.
- 3.5.2. Rother has identified the following heritage assets within the Parish of Battle. These include assets at the southern boundary centred around the historic Battlefield site along Powdermill Lane and the Abbey, which is a scheduled ancient monument. It also includes the Historic core of Battle town centre which boasts a multitude of listed buildings dating back many hundreds of years as well as many individual examples dotted about the Parish.
- 3.5.3. Large expanses of ancient woodland also surround the town and pervade the Parish environs. These are a source of value not only to the Parish community but to the financial well-being of the town.

### 3.6. Parish Conservation Area

- 3.7. As can be seen from the map the area is dotted with a multitude of listed buildings in and beyond the conservation area.



- 3.7.1. The town centre forms the historic core, and consists of a long central street, High Street, with the Abbey Gate House at its south-eastern end and the medieval precincts wall beyond it. The High Street is continued to the south-east in Upper Lake and Lower Lake while to the north west end of the High Street there is a Y-fork formed by High Street itself and Mount Street. Almost all the buildings in these four streets date from the eighteenth century or earlier. It is this part of Battle which is contained within the designated Conservation Area. The most northerly section of the Conservation Area is formed by the group of properties No.s 17 to 21 (the Old Court House) together with No. 72 in Mount Street. The boundary then takes the rear line of the properties on the east side of Mount Street to the footpath which runs parallel with the north side of the High Street. St. Mary's Church, Deanery and the Church Hall, together with the properties to the east are then included. The field boundary to the north and the hedge and tree belt to the east are then taken as the boundary, to Marley Lane. At the junction of Marley Lane with Lower

Lake, the property Lake House is included. The boundary then follows a south easterly direction to the immediate rear of No.s 1 to 22 Lower Lake before turning across the road and down to include Lake Cottage. The whole of Abbey Grounds and the Battlefield is then included in the Conservation Area. From the Western edge of the Long Plantation the boundary then runs parallel to the High Street in a north West direction along the existing footpaths as far as Western Avenue. The properties on either side of the High Street as far as No. 37 on the south side and No. 39 on the north side form the north-western boundary of the Conservation area, together with the rear of the properties on Mount Street

The analysis contained in Section 3 of the RDC Appraisal supports that the existing boundary be largely maintained, with minor augmentation to reflect the location of two recent developments which span the boundary line. Annex 2 – Boundary Map of Conservation Area defines the revised designated Conservation Area. The Historic Development of Battle including the conservation area is recorded later in 3.10 of this document.

### 3.7.2. Setting of the Town

The topography of the landscape surrounding Battle is important in creating its setting, with the open valley to the northeast and southwest of the town retained, heightening awareness of the town standing on the higher ridge, with no foreground development to detract.



However, the compactness of development within Battle has resulted in a substantially introverted town centre, with much of the built fabric hidden from many long views across farmland and trees, towards the town. This rural setting, with a lack of encroachment on surrounding countryside is a key characteristic of the town, as is the joy of the ‘reveal’ of finding a town hidden on approach.



Significant views into the town are indicated in Annex 3 to this Appraisal, 'Character Map of Battle Conservation Area' and include that from Marley Lane, looking west, and from the Mount Street car park, looking south.



Approaches to the Town

The primary entrance to the town centre from the north starts with the roundabout junction of the A2100, North Trade Road and Market Road. From here, High Street tightens to the close-knit urban grain which continues for its entire length, and descends slowly southwards, drawing the eye gradually down towards the Abbey Gatehouse





The Mount Street approach to the town centre from the north starts with a steep descent between high vegetation on the western side, and twentieth century development on the eastern side recessed by wide, open gardens. This provides a satisfying transition from the rural character of the outskirts of the town at Caldbec Hill, to the more intensely developed streetscene as High Street is neared.



From the south-east, Lower Lake provides a steep ascent to the town, initiating with development suburban in character, but as the road climbs towards Upper Lake, a long 'wall' of entrance into Battle is formed by the terraces of buildings sited tight on the roadside. The eye is drawn over the brow of the hill next to the church in Upper Lake towards the rich mix of clay tiled roofs and chimney stacks of the buildings of High Street beyond.



From each of these directions, the Conservation Area boundary is defined by the extent of the tight urban grain of the historic core.

### Streetscape & Architectural Character

The historic core of Battle can be defined by a number of 'character areas', indicated in **Annex 3** – Character Map of Battle Conservation Area.



The northern part of High Street contains several historic houses, and although the character is somewhat diluted by later buildings and lack of enclosure, it still forms an attractive entrance to the central area.



Mount Street has a variety of two-storey buildings of domestic scale. The southern portion has an attractive sense of enclosure, with buildings sited tight on the pavement, and the curve in the road is accentuated by the rail and post on the western side. It is a relatively quiet street, with limited commercial activity, but carries an amount of vehicular traffic.



High Street and Abbey Green are arguably the 'centre' of the historic core of Battle. High Street is visually interesting, having a high proportion of buildings of architectural and historic significance, of various ages, heights and styles, and predominantly in commercial use at ground floor level. The varying heights of buildings give a satisfying composition in skyline; an interesting jumble of roof slopes punctuated with mass chimneys. The buildings are mostly three storeys high, often with dormer windows in the roof slopes. However, the predominant height of buildings falls inversely with the topography, so that by the northern end, two storey buildings prevail, which make this end of High Street more intimate in character.

The buildings here are sited tight on the relatively narrow pavements, with

a 'tunnel' effect created by the heights of the buildings in relation to the width of the road. The constricted width of the road and the high levels of vehicular traffic here contribute to a busy, noisy, sometimes oppressive quality of space, only relieved on arrival at Abbey Green. With few exceptions a domestic scale is maintained, and views into the courtyards and glimpses of countryside beyond give the High Street depth in character.



The 'backs' of these buildings provides a strong visual edge, i.e. a defined boundary between the developed High Street and the countryside on either side. This is accentuated by the high wall of mellowed brickwork found at the end of many of the long gardens.



Abbey Green with the Gatehouse at the southern end of the High Street is the focal point of Battle, providing strong visual termination and creating a foreshortening effect on High Street when viewed from the Northern end. The ground level, having fallen gently away down High Street to the South, rises to the Gatehouse itself, emphasising its prominence and adding to its commanding presence. However, here too is an important visual link by way of a glimpse through the open Gatehouse to countryside beyond.



Abbey Green itself is an opening of space which seems wider than it actually is due to the domestic scale of the surrounding buildings. The west side of Abbey Green is fronted by two-storey buildings which have in the main retained their older historic elevations, with clay-tiled roofs sloping down to low eaves, the steep pitches punctuated with small dormer windows. Though in commercial use at ground floor level, advertisements and signage have, with the exception of Boots, been kept appropriately to a minimum, which suits the almost cottage-like character of the buildings.



Meanwhile the east side of Abbey Green is dominated by the relatively grandiose structure of Battle Memorial Halls, which sits alongside a series of rendered, refaced buildings, though still two storeys, their dormer windows obscured from street level view by high parapets. The signage here is generally more vulgar in design and materials, and ill-proportioned.

Upper Lake joins High Street just south of Abbey Green where the massive and imposing surviving section of the original C14 Abbey wall and the high pavement on the south side takes the eye over the slight rise in ground and curve beyond. There is a change of character here to a quieter, more residential area, and of more open space, with views of St Mary's Church. The churchyard itself is a very inward-looking, self-

contained space, peaceful and leafy, enclosed by trees and a number of good historic buildings.



The

eastern part of Upper Lake feels detached, both physically and in character, from the main High Street area of town. The group of buildings here, simple two storey terraces, dating mainly from the 15th to 17th centuries, again provide a sense of enclosure, forming a tight building line to the pavement, before the view terminates with Lake House to the east, and the street reveals the open countryside beyond on the north side



At the junction of Upper Lake and Marley Lane, the main road turns south into Lower Lake, at the Chequers Inn, an important focal point here





Lower Lake is more domestic in scale and the largely residential buildings are of mixed character. This area is of a later period than much of the rest of the town centre, with a number of Victorian and Edwardian cottages and terraces still intact and possessing a high degree of visual and architectural integrity.



The buildings and roofscape fall away to the south with the underlying topography here, creating a satisfying and uninterrupted view down out of the Conservation Area. The high ground level on either side of the road means that front doors are reached up short flights of steps out of low retaining walls. The positioning of the buildings, slightly recessed from the pavement, creates a greater feeling of spaciousness than within other streets in the Conservation Area.

### 3.7.3. Architectural & Historic Value

The architecture of the individual buildings of Battle is a key contributor to the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. Much of the architecture in the Conservation Area itself is medieval in origin, with a substantial amount of Georgian and even Victorian refacing to reflect changing tastes in a prosperous market town, and later shopfronts in many of the High Street buildings.



The main concentration of architectural and historic interest in Battle

occurs in the High Street, Mount Street and Upper Lake including the Abbey. The importance of many of the buildings in this area is recognised by their inclusion in the Statutory Lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Of particular note are the Abbey Gatehouse and Precinct Wall, and the Church of St Mary, all listed Grade I, and No's 1, 17 & 18, High Street, Lewins Croft, Mount Street, and The Deanery, Upper Lake, all listed Grade II\*



Annex 3 to this Appraisal, 'Character Map of Battle Conservation Area' highlights the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area as well as those buildings which it is felt play a particularly strong role in informing the character of the street scene, identified as key un-listed buildings.

(See BATTLE CONSERVATION AREA – CHARACTER APPRAISAL for more details. Battle Conservation Area was designated in June 1971 by East Sussex County Council.

<http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/1404/Conservation-Areas>)

### 3.8. Development from an Historic Perspective



- 3.9. The town of Battle marks the world renowned site of the Battle of Hastings in 1066, which gave the town its name.

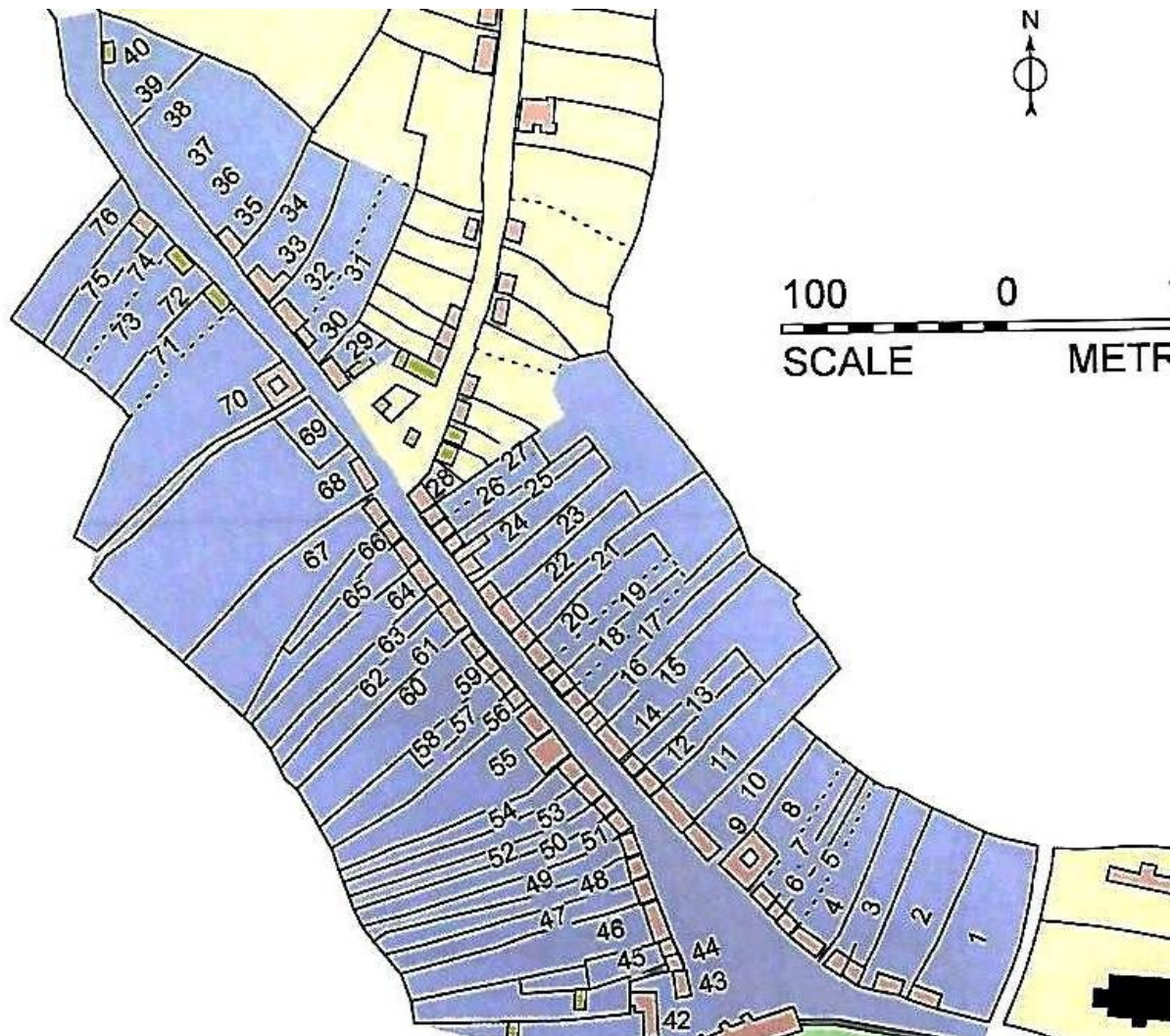


- 3.10. The town began with the erection of the Abbey by the Norman victors as a penance for the dead of the battle and afterwards, and to mark where, the King said, King Harold was killed. The town grew up in the late eleventh century to provide the trades required for the building work: there were over a hundred houses by 1105 and their sites can still be traced. Henry I encouraged the town with grants of licences for fairs and markets, the last of which survived until the 1960s to be replaced by a new library and housing close to the (now) Watch Oak roundabout. St Mary's Church was begun in the early twelfth century for the needs of the local population, a function it still serves. Development of the town, north and south, was along one of the principal High Weald ridges. The 2017 Battle Tapestry on display in St Mary's Church in Battle depicts in historically accurate fashion the creation of the Abbey and the town up to 1115.



- 3.11. Senlac Hill and the area south of the town are protected by English Heritage as a historic battlefield and designated as an Archaeological Sensitive Area. The early history of Battle is evidenced in the mediaeval Battle Abbey Chronicle and in the substantial research work in the late twentieth century of Eleanor Searle.
- 3.12. By 1367 the number of houses in Battle had doubled to 211, with the town eluding the worst long-term effects of the Black Death. The Abbey gatehouse was fortified in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries as armed incursions from France became more frequent.
- 3.13. Until the dissolution of the Abbey in 1538 the parish was a 'royal peculiar' enjoying substantial local autonomy from the Crown to the exclusion of the diocese of Chichester; elements of this status survived until the nineteenth century and today in the title of *Dean* for vicar. It is thought that, arising from this, the pattern of land ownership changed little. As a result, unusually, the structure in the centre of Battle of the mediaeval burgages with accompanying strip plots is largely intact, as the plan shows. So, many of the narrow building plots in the High Street are still recognisably mediaeval in dimension and many shop fronts can still be paced in perches. The town's mediaeval core – High Street, Upper and Lower Lake and Mount Street – has been a designated conservation area since 1970, along with large areas of countryside to the south. In the conservation area virtually all the buildings are listed, and date from the eighteenth century or earlier: 23 predate 1500; 9 are from the sixteenth century; 24 from the seventeenth; and 28 from the

eighteenth century. In all in 2009 there were 118 listed buildings in Battle town centre.



3.14. Long narrow mediaeval plots in Battle. Blue=mediaeval "Middleburgh"

3.15. The landed families owning the Abbey after the dissolution required little from the local community and so the town shrank in size to around 120-130 houses at which it stabilised until the eighteenth century. During this period of three centuries leather working, legal services, iron-making, clock-making, tanning and gunpowder manufacture became local trades at various times, reasonably prosperously. There was little disruption from the Civil War. Eighteenth century façades were often placed on the front of older buildings but as Child of Conquest, Building Battle Town: An Architectural History 1066 – 1750 by David and Barbara Martin and Christopher Whittick (2016) shows, the town centre retains its antique character. The interior of the Almonry and the Pilgrims' Rest, at opposite ends of the High Street, illustrate the timber construction usually hidden under Battle's Georgian and later facades. Brewing was a late nineteenth/early twentieth century phase, and in

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Newbery's was a significant manufacturer of jam and chutney.

- 3.16. In the nineteenth century Battle – then very rural and somewhat isolated by the awful Sussex roads -- acquired a gas works (1838), union workhouse (1840), railway (1852), reservoir (1854), police station and magistrates court (1861) and new cemetery (1862). The Cresy Report of 1850, following an investigation into the poor sanitary conditions in Battle, resulted in many improvements to public health in the town, sustained by a Sanitary Board. The 1840 former workhouse now Frederick Thatcher Place (named after its architect), with its unique architecture – marks the start of rural Sussex to the west of the town.



3.17. *Frederick Thatcher Place, originally the union workhouse, later a hospital, now residential*

- 3.18. In the twentieth century a turning point was the purchase of Battle Abbey by English Heritage in 1976, ushering in an era for the town of greater organised tourism, of which heritage understanding is a key part, promoted by Battle Town Council, Battle Abbey, Battle Museum of Local History and Battle and District Historical Society. An HLF-funded heritage trail is being established and a widely-acclaimed stainless steel sculpture at the north end of the town commemorates in modern style the events of 1066.
- 3.19. There have been introductions of modern housing near to the centre of Battle – restraint has so far been exercised because of the economic value of the town's heritage appearance.



### 3.20. Netherfield and Telham

3.20.1. Netherfield, to the north west of Battle, had 13 households recorded in the Domesday Book of 1087, and a thousand years before that a trackway from the coast used by the Romans may have gone through the area. The village's name *adder* (Old English *naedre*) *field*, reminds us of its strongly rural character that still exists today. But the current appearance of the village also tells of a more recent history. In the early nineteenth century the artist Joseph Turner often stayed with 'Mad Jack' Fuller locally, painting the wonderful rural and panoramic views from Netherfield towards Beachy Head. In 1859 the church of St John the Baptist was built, a gift to the village from Lady Webster in memory of her husband Sir Godfrey Webster of Battle Abbey. In the same year she also gave the schoolhouse, which was to close in 1961. Later, in 1874, came mining of gypsum in the area, which continues as a source of employment today; Netherfield still has a partially filled-in original 'bell pit'. In more recent times, in 1941, a Wellington bomber crashed near the village after being hit during a bombing raid in France, killing three of the Polish crew. There is a memorial to them next to Doctors Farm on the B2096.



3.20.2. Telham (Old English *tulla*, a hill), at the south end of the Neighbourhood Plan area, lies on an ancient ridge pathway; nineteenth century excavations at Black Horse quarry found evidence of much earlier habitation by prehistoric creatures. It may have been at Telham Hill that William, Duke of Normandy, on his way up from the coast, first spotted King Harold's forces on the morning of 14 October 1066. The more recent history of Telham is nineteenth century: the Black Horse pub (formerly the Horse and Groom) was built in the mid-1800s; and the Church of the Ascension was constructed in 1876 at the initiative of Dean Crake of Battle for locals not wishing to walk to St Mary's; local landowner Sir Archibald Lamb donated the plot. On Crake's death in 1909 he left funds in his will for the upkeep of the church.



### 3.21. Archaeology

3.21.1. The modern parish of Battle has a wealth of evidence for past human activity for all periods from Mesolithic to the present day. This is reflected in the fact that there are three scheduled monuments, 172 listed buildings, one conservation area, one registered park/garden and one registered battlefield. The extensive archaeological interest of the parish is represented by 29 archaeological notification areas, 434 recorded non-designated heritage assets (including 78 buildings and 38 historic farmsteads as well as other structures and artefacts) and 120 recorded archaeological surveys, watching briefs or archaeological excavations. Collectively this information provides an insight into the occupation of the area by people over the last c.10,000 years.

3.21.2. Geologically and topographically the area is defined by two main sandstone ridges which intersect at Caldbec Hill; these have historically been the main ways through the parish.

3.21.3. Summary from East Sussex Historic Environment Record (ESHER):

3.21.4. The earliest definite evidence of human activity in the parish is for the presence of Mesolithic hunter-gatherers (10,000 – 4,000BC) who appear to be utilising the margins of River Brede valley and its tributaries. At present there is little evidence for the early farmers and monument builders of the Neolithic, however the area continued to be used for hunting and foraging, with finds of stone axes suggesting some clearance of trees. It is very likely that archaeological evidence for occupation and settlement during the Neolithic will be located in the future through academic research or larger scale modern excavations.

3.21.5. By the Bronze Age period (2,350-700BC) the first hints of a settled habitation are seen, including a possible burial mound, and it is likely that the first significant deforestation of the area begins. There is little evidence so far of early Iron Age activity in the parish but by the end of the Iron Age much of the Weald is being used for the extraction and processing of iron ore. This industry continues into the Roman period, but

came under the control of the Roman Navy (Classis Britannica) who established a major iron production settlement in the east of the parish at Beauport Park, where remains of the bath house (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) can still be seen. These industrial sites would have been supported by agricultural sites and other infrastructure, including a network of roads. Towards the end of the Roman period production appears to go into decline, and after the Roman withdrawal (c. 410AD), it is unclear if the area continued to be used and settled. However, the Domesday Book confirms that by the end of the Saxon period settlements, many of which were in woodland clearings, had been re-established. Netherfield (the adder clearing) is one of these settlements and was owned by Goda, sister of Edward the Confessor.

3.21.6.1066 sees a significant turning point in the parish's history, with the outcome of the Norman invasion being decided at Battle. An abbey was founded in 1070AD on or very near to the site of the battle, and alongside this a market town quickly formed. The development of the town is well documented in *The Extensive Urban Survey of Battle* by Dr R Harris and the more recent book *Child of Conquest, Building Battle Town: An Architectural History 1066 – 1750* by David and Barbara Martin and Christopher Whittick. The mediaeval town developed principally along the High Street, Upper Lake and Mount Street and appears to have been a town planned and laid out in one phase towards the end of the 11th century, but with some possible more "organic development" around Lower Lake. The parish church of St Mary was probably founded in 1107AD. By the 14th century the town had expanded northwards along Mount Street and eastwards along Lower Lake, with specific industries such as tanning and leatherworking becoming important elements of the town's economy. But by the 16th century, possibly as a result of the dissolution of the Abbey, some of these newer areas had been abandoned leaving vacant plots, with no significant new expansion occurring until the 19th century. Battle boasts a significant portfolio of late mediaeval and post-mediaeval secular buildings, over 100 of which are listed, including six of Grade II\*.

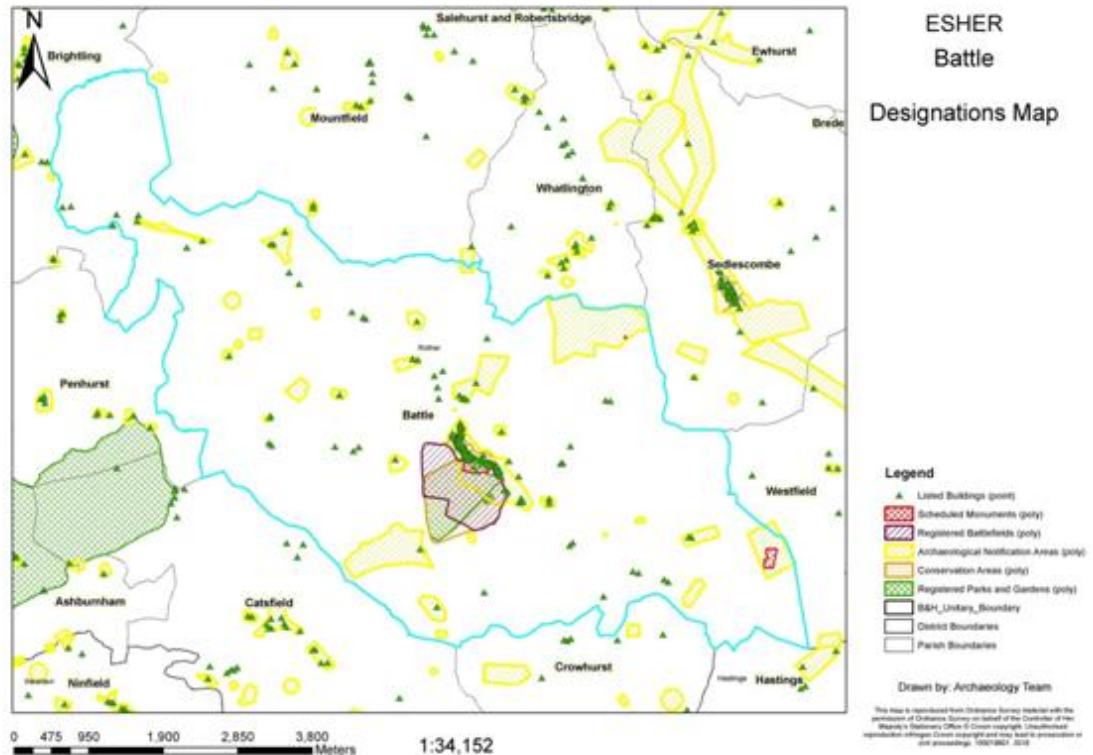
3.21.7. Around the town a scatter of small settlements and farmsteads also developed, many of which still survive such as Hemingfold Farm in the south-eastern side of the parish. By the 16th century an iron production industry had been re-established across the Weald, including furnace sites within the parish such as Wykes Furnace in Ibrook Woods at the north-western end of the parish. Another industry that developed in the parish was the production of gunpowder at sites such as Pepperingegeye and Farthings Mill. The need to transport materials and



goods such as iron ore lead to an upgrading of roads (many using material salvaged from the spoil heaps of the old Roman iron production sites) and the formation of new Toll Roads such as London Road constructed in the early 19th century, shortly followed by the introduction of a railway line linking Hastings to London which included a station at Battle. Military interest once again visited the parish in the early 19th century when a large barracks was constructed near to Whatlington Road as part of the defensive network against invasion by Bonaparte's army. Defences were again established during the 2nd World War, pillboxes and tank traps from which still survive scattered around the fields of the parish.

### 3.22. Battle Conservation Area Appraisal

3.23. The National Heritage Listing for England – Battle CP [as at 26 June 2018] follows. The latest information indicates 174 statutorily Listed Buildings within the Parish.



### 3.24. Listed buildings in Battle

Number or name	Grade		Number or name	Grade
<b>High Street</b>			<b>Park Lane</b>	
1 Pilgrims' Rest	II*		Telephone kiosk	II
2, 3	II		1, 2	II
4	II			
5 The Tudor House	II		<b>Upper Lake</b>	
6, 7, 7A	II			
8	II		1	II
9-10	II		2	II
11 ex-1066 inn	II		3	II
12	II		4, 5 Abbot's Cottage	II
13, 13A	II		6-10	II
14	II		Lake House	II
16 ex-Nat West	II		Chequers Inn	II
17	II*		13-15 Pyke House	II
18	II*		16	II
18A	II		17, 19 White Horse Cottage	II
20	II		20-22 The Monks' Cottage	II
21	II		23	II
22	II			
23 George Inn	II		<b>Lower Lake</b>	
23 former stables of George Inn	II			
24	II		1,2	II
25	II		10	II
26	II		13-16	II

27 Bull Inn	II		27 Lake Cottage	II
28A-29	II		29	II
32, 33	II		30-37	II
34-35A	II		41, 42	II
38 Almonry	II*		43, 44	II
38 Garden wall and gate piers of Almonry	II			

39-40 Manningtons	II		<b>Mount Street</b>	
43	II			
45, 45B	II		1	II
46	II		2-4	II
47	II		5	II
49-51	II		6B, 6A	II
56-58	II		7, 8	II
59-60	II		9	II
61-63	II		10-12	II
66	II		13	II
66A	II		14 Presbytery	II
67, 67A	II		15 Zion Chapel	II
69, 70	II		15-17	II
71, 72	II		18	II
73 Bonneys	II		19, 20	II
76, 77	II		21	II
78	II		26, 26A	II
81 Memorial Halls	II		27, 27A	II*
82-86	II		Lewinscroft	II

87, 88	II		31 Tudor House	II
89, 90	II		35 Slatters	II
91 Senlac House	II		35 Anvil Cottage, behind Slatters	II
92-93	II		36 Peppers and Forge Cottage	II
94	II		37 King's Head	II
St Mary's Church	I		38	II
War memorial	II			
Deanery	II*		<b>Whatlington Road</b>	
<b>Abbey</b>			Gate Farmhouse	
Battle Abbey School	I		<b>Telham Lane</b>	
Gatehouse	I			
Precinct wall	I		Lower Telham Farmhouse	II
Abbey ruins	I		Telham High Farmhouse	II

<b>Caldbec Hill</b>			<b>Powdermill Lane</b>	
Barrack Farmhouse	II		Peppering Eye Farmhouse	II
Mill Cottage, Hamsey, Catslide Cottage	II		Powder Mills Hotel	II
Friars Holt	II			
Old Mill	II		<b>Marley Lane</b>	
Mountview	II			
			Battle Great Barn	II
<b>Battle Hill</b>			Marley House (ex- farm)	II
			Greatwood Cottage	II
Bach Cottage, Cobblers Cottage	II		Blackfriars Oasthouses and	II

			stowage	
Copps Hall Cottage	II		Stuart House and Old Blackfriars	II
Croft Cottage and Hopcroft	II		Ex-Battle and Langton School	II
Lower Fosters, Little Fosters and Gay Whispers	II			
1,2 Grey Cottage	II		<b>London Road</b>	
Ex-Methodist Chapel	II			
1, 3, 4 Lamberts Cottage	II		The Cottage	II
<b>Station Approach</b>			<b>North Trade Road</b>	
Station	II		Frederick Thatcher Place, including perimeter wall	II
			Battle Lodge, gate piers, gates, boundary wall	II
<b>Hastings Road</b>			Beacon Cottage	II
			Lower Almonry Farmhouse	II
Hemingfold Cottage Farmhouse	II		North Lodge	II
Hemingfold Farmhouse	II		Squirrel Farmhouse	II
Hemingfold Oast Cottage	II			
4 Loose Farm Cottage	II		<b>Wattles Wish</b>	
Starrs Green Cottage	II			
Starrs Green House	II		1, 2	II
Yew Tree	II			
Black Horse	II		<b>B2096 [north of Squirrel]</b>	
Winter Hill	II			
			Great Beech, Kane Hythe Road	II
			Great Beech granary and oasthouse	II



<b>Netherfield</b>			<b>Netherfield [continued]</b>	
Netherfield primary school + schoolmasters house	II		Clarendon	II
Ivyland Farmhouse	II		Gaynes	II
Doctors Farmhouse	II		Le Rette Farmhouse	II
Doctors Cottage	II		Le Rette Cottage	II
White Cottage	II		Star Cottage	II
Gun House	II		Stream House	II
Beech Farmhouse	II		The Old Thatch	II
Ashes Lodge	II			
Stonywood Cottage	II			
St John Baptist Church	II*		<b>Scheduling</b>	
1, 2 Darwell Hill Cottages	II			
Darwell Beach	II		Romano-British iron working site, Beauport Park	
Old Rectory, Eatenden Lane	II		Bowl barrow, Petley Wood	
Nethercote	II			
<b>Of importance close to Battle</b>				
<b>Mountfield</b>				
Crowhurst Farm Cottage, Eatenden Lane	II			
Crowhurst Farmhouse, Eatenden Lane	II			
<b>Ashburnham</b>				
Ashburnham Place	II*			

### 3.25. Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.26. Since 1949 historic buildings and structures have received statutory protection where they meet comprehensive criteria by English Heritage. Many historic buildings and structures fall below the national criteria that warrant a level of protection as buildings of local interest.
- 3.27. Over the last few years central government has been putting growing emphasis on the need to promote 'local distinctiveness'. Local communities are increasingly being asked to highlight what they consider to be important within their familiar environments. Intensive development pressures have highlighted the need to maintain and protect the local built environment. There are local buildings which help to define the areas where we live and work. These buildings make a contribution to the character of the areas in which they are located. Further, they contribute to the local scene or are valued for their local historical associations.
- 3.28. Although such buildings may not be nationally designated or even located within the boundaries of a Conservation Area, they may be offered some level of protection by their identification as part of a formally adopted list of local heritage assets.
- 3.29. It should be noted that the NPPF contains policies that apply to heritage assets regardless of whether or not they are locally listed. However, local listing provides a sound, consistent and accountable means of identifying local heritage assets to the benefit of successful planning for the area and to the benefit of owners and developers wishing to fully understand local development opportunities and constraints.
- 3.30. As a result, many authorities identify properties that they consider should receive extra recognition. These properties are identified as Locally Listed and are a 'non-statutory' designation. Buildings on the list will not be subject to new or additional controls; the existing planning controls over changes of use, external alterations, extensions etc. will continue to apply and will remain unchanged.
- 3.31. It should be noted that having a building on a local list means that its conservation as a heritage asset is a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application. Essentially, where permission is required for works, the council will ensure that any proposal respects the building. These properties should not be confused with statutorily Listed Buildings.
- 3.32. Rother District Council has not formally identified any non-designated assets. A separate working group has been formed by Battle Town Council

that has developed a heritage charter which includes the identification of local heritage assets which are not protected by English Heritage listing.

- 3.33. The working group is now identifying local heritage assets which are not protected by English Heritage listing. The list of nominated properties is attached as an appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **4. Future Developments**

- 4.1. Reclassification of A2100 as a C road with restrictions on heavy traffic entering Battle Town
- 4.2. All new developments to include cycle and footpath connectivity
- 4.3. Blackfriars site to include access to Battle Railway station
- 4.4. Implementation of the Battle Heritage Charter
- 4.5. Implementation of identified Local Green Spaces
- 4.6. Implementation of Local Heritage Listing

## **PART 2**

### **Appendix 1 - A Short Glossary of Terms**

#### **Ancient Monument**

“Any scheduled monument and any other monument which in the opinion of the Secretary of State is of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching to it.”

s61(12) Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

#### **Ancient Woodland**

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

#### **Appraisals**

Conservation Area appraisals identify what is special and needs protecting, and help in the area’s management. They can, and should ideally, be carried out with the involvement of the local community, so that the appraisal is owned by the whole Council and the community who live and work in the area. There are various ways to carry out appraisals, depending on the size and scale of the area. An appraisal needs to combine historic records and maps with a visual analysis of the present state of the area. Further guidance is given in English Heritage’s Guidance on Conservation Area appraisals.

#### **Archaeological Interest**

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

#### **Architectural Interest**

“To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (eg buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms.”

Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, DCMS, 2010

### **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: AONB**

"Where it appears to [Natural England] that an area which is in England but not in a National Park is of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that the provisions of this Part relating to areas designated under this section should apply to it, [Natural England] may, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, by order designate the area for the purposes of this Part as an area of outstanding natural beauty."

s82(1) Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

### **Assets of Community Value**

"A local authority must maintain a list of land in its area that is land of community value. The list maintained....by a local authority is to be known as its list of assets of community value."

s87 Localism Act 2011

"...a building or other land in a local authority's area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority:

- (a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and
- (b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community". s88 Localism Act 2011

### **Building**

"'Building' includes any structure or erection, and any part of a building, as so defined, but does not include plant or machinery comprised in a building."

s336 Town and Country Planning Act 1990

### **Character Area**

A character area is a small area within the parish, that has its own characteristics and features unique to it. Character areas are identified by issues such as layout, materials, design, age of the properties and the uses that have historically taken place.

### **Conservation**

- 1) "The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances its significance."

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government 2012

- 2) "The process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations."



p71, Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008

3) "All operations designed to understand a property, know its history and meaning, ensure its material safeguard and, if required, its restoration and enhancement."

The Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS 1994)

### **Conservation Area**

An area "of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"

s69(1)(a) Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

### **Cultural Heritage Site**

"A place, locality, natural landscape, settlement area, architectural complex, archaeological site, or standing structure that is recognized and often legally protected as a place of historical and cultural significance."

ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, ICOMOS, 2008

### **Designated Heritage Asset**

"A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation."

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department of Communities & Local Government, 2012

### **Designation**

"The recognition of particular heritage value(s) of a significant place by giving it formal status under law or policy intended to sustain those values."

p71, Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008

### **Development Management**

Development management is the process through which decisions are made on applications for permissions such as planning permission or Listed Building Consent.

### **Heritage**

1) "All inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility."

Conservation Principles, English Heritage, 2008

2) "Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life. It is a social dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change. The

particular heritage and collective memory of each locality or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for development, both now and into the future.”

### **Heritage Asset**

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

### **Historic Environment**

“All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.”

Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

### **Historic Interest**

"To be of special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing."

p4 Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings, 2010, DCMS

### **Listed Building**

"...means a building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under this section; and for the purposes of this Act -

(a) any object or structure fixed to the building;

(b) any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948,

shall subject to subsection (5A)(a) be treated as part of the building."

s1(5) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

### **Local Green Space**

A green area of particular importance to a local community designated as such through a local plan or neighbourhood development plan. The designation should only be used:

1. where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
2. where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
3. where the green area concerned is local in character and it not an extensive tract of land.

Paragraph 100 National Planning Policy Framework, Department of Communities and Local Government, 2019

## **Local Plan**

The Local Plan is the principal development plan document and sets out the long term spatial vision for the Rother District.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

## **Natural England**

Natural England's general purpose is "to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development."

s2. Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006

## **Permitted Development**

Under planning legislation (General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended in 2008) owners of single dwelling houses have the right to alter them in certain ways without needing planning permission from the Council. For example, a house can have its windows, front door or roof covering changed, its front garden paved over or its front elevation painted in a striking colour without the need for consent. In Conservation Areas, such alterations can be very harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

## **Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Area) Act 1990**

Primary Legislation for the historic environment.

## **Public Open Space**

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

### **Public realm**

Public realm is the term used for the spaces between and within buildings/built up areas that are publicly accessible, including streets, alleys, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces.

### **Site of Special Scientific Interest: SSSI**

A site designated by Natural England as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features.

s28 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

### **Sustainable Development**

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, United Nations 1987