

Slinfold Parish Design Statement



FINAL DRAFT

**Version 1.2
March 2006**

DOCUMENT CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Design Statements are produced to provide guidance for any development proposals and to influence local planning. They provide a way of ensuring that any new development is designed and located to reflect the characteristics that people value in their surroundings.

Without a Design Statement, local residents usually only hear about a development proposal once the design is complete. There is thus little opportunity to give positive input, and often all that can be done is to protest or react.

This Design Statement was produced by Slinfold residents, with the support of Slinfold Parish Council and Horsham District Council. It was produced as part of Slinfold Action Plan activities, which included public meetings, surveys and questionnaires – and a lot of hard work by all.

This Statement is a static assessment of an area's visual character and distinctiveness, and describes how it can be protected and enhanced. It complements, rather than **supersedes** the Slinfold Conservation Area Guidelines and, once agreed, will be formally adopted by the local District Planning Authority as supplementary planning guidance. Anyone then applying for any type of planning permission in Slinfold parish will have to show that they have complied with the principles and guidelines in this Design Statement.

The character of an area is influenced not only by the erection of new buildings, but also by alterations to anything existing – such as buildings, gardens, walls and hedges. This Design Statement provides guidance to anyone considering development or changes in Slinfold parish. It will be used both proactively and reactively as an objective checklist for any proposed developments or extensions and intended for use by Slinfold residents, developers and local and national statutory bodies.

The format of this Design Statement follows the recommendations of the Countryside Agency and contains sections on Parish Context and History, Landscape, Development Patterns, Building Characteristics, Open Spaces, Roads and Footpaths, and finally Principles and Guidelines.

CONTEXT AND HISTORY

Slinfold parish lies to the west of Horsham, in the heart of the **Low Weald**. It is relatively circular in shape and is divided into four parts by **Roman Stane Street** running south-west/north-east and the old London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, which runs east/west and now forms part of the long distance **Downs Link** bridleway.



Stane Street from Random Hall



Hayes Lane Downs Link Crossing

It is very important to understand Slinfold's history when considering its future, as every period from its past is still evident in the different parts of the village and parish. There is a rich diversity of heritage that must be protected.

The seeds of Slinfold's development were sown in the fifth and sixth centuries when groups of Saxon settlers on the coast used areas of the Weald to provide them with resources. With the beginnings of the manorial system in late Saxon times, these *outliers* were considered to be an integral part of the parent manor and were not named separately in the Domesday Book. So although Slinfold is not specifically mentioned in Domesday, it is certain that there were people living in the area by 1086. This system of outliers explains why there were at least ten different manors within the parish of Slinfold, each with farms surrounded by their own separately enclosed fields and connected by a network of footpaths.

In many Wealden areas large tracts of land remained as commonly-held wood pasture, or *commons*. However, by the time the Slinfold church was built in the 12th century, there was only a small area of common land left open. Two roads came into this area, the present **Park Street** from the west and **Lyons Road** from the east. There was a third track coming from the north, **Clapgate Lane**. This opened out into a funnel-shaped piece of land, where the **church** was built.

The building of the church encouraged development over the next few centuries on the remaining common land to its south. By 1500 the area round the church consisted of one large farm and three small ones, two artisan's dwellings, the rectory and a church house on the edge of the churchyard.

At this time most of the land to the west of Stane Street was owned by the manor of Dedisham. There was a corn mill just to the west of the moated manor house, and two hunting parks - although these had been converted to farms by the late 16th century.

The area round the church and along the Street was gradually developed through the 16th and 17th centuries but the former common land area within the curve of The Street, now part of the village's **central fields**, remained as open farm land. The village then remained remarkably static until the mid-18th century when population growth led to the subdivision of many existing houses, and a rise in cereal prices meant landowners were able to embark on building projects and the engrossment of farms.



Village Centre - Red Lyon

Roman Stane Street, with its posting station near Romangate, had long been in existence. Until the early 19th century the route from Billingshurst to Horsham was **through** Slinfold. Then two turnpikes (now the A264 and the A281) were built, and the village was effectively bypassed.

There was a rapid expansion in the 19th century and Slinfold gained a railway line and station. The village houses increased from 18 to 27 and a number of cottages were built throughout the parish. Towards the end of the century several farmhouses were rebuilt or refurbished to become gentry houses. Hayes Lane started to be developed around the turn of the century too.

Between the two world wars there was virtually no development in Slinfold, but during the last half of the 20th century the village dramatically expanded beyond its original confines, increasing almost ten-fold in size. **Hayes Lane** now has a number of side roads: **Park Road**, the **Lowfield Green Estate** which was begun in 1949, **West Way** and, more recently, **Six Acres**. **Lyons Road** has housing extending as far as The Limes, with **Lyons Close** and **Mitche ll Gardens** to the south. The development along **Park Street** was triggered by the sale of **Old House Farm** in 1953, and a small new estate, **Tannery Close**, was built on land belonging to Hall Land. Through it all the village's central fields have remained, and are regarded (along with the Conservation Area) as part of what makes Slinfold so special.



Coppicing

For centuries the people of Slinfold were engaged in agriculture and exploitation of the woodland. A few craftsmen such as cobblers, tailors and carpenters supported them. There was no industry within the parish, although in the late 16th/early 17th century Dedisham ironworks were across the Arun in Rudgwick.

The first Slinfold-based industry was the tanyard at Collyers in the mid-18th century. A timber yard was at first located in the Street and then moved to Stane Street when the railway arrived. The brickyard on Hayes Lane was started in 1895 and this too had its own railway siding. The sites of both the brickyard and the timber yard have grown out of all recognition in recent years, the brickyard now being occupied by **XSYS (formerly BASF)** and **Schenectady Europe**, while the timber yard has become a business park known as **Spring Copse**. Small-scale business units now occupy the farm buildings belonging to Lyons Farm at the far end of Lyons Road.



Village from Hill House

Although much of Slinfold land is still agricultural, relatively few people in Slinfold are now engaged in farming. Many of the farmhouses have been ‘divorced’ from their land and some former areas of farmland are now given over to leisure pursuits, such as the golf club and shooting grounds in the former South Park once belonging to Dedisham.

The parish of Slinfold is rich in evidence of its past history, and all changes and developments need to take this into account.

LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY

Slinfold Parish covers over 17km², and within that area has a diversity that is not always recognised, even by locals. It is bisected by the valley of the Arun, from the north-western edge at its junction with the Downs Link to the crossing of the A29 and on to Newbridge where it leaves the parish. The land to the north-east rises from the valley as a wooded hillside that reaches a height of 86m above sea level at Rowhook. To the south and south west of the valley the land rises to 79m above sea level but is undulating due to the many small valleys that have been formed by the streams that feed the Arun. The land to the west of the A29 and to the south of the Downs Link has the highest percentage of woodland coverage whereas to north and east it is predominantly arable or permanent pasture. Slinfold village is situated to the east of the A29 almost at the centre of the parish, in a flat area 35m above sea level.

Geologically, Slinfold lies in the Low Weald area of Sussex, noted for its pastures and woodlands that thrive on the Wealden clay. The outcrops of lighter soil, mainly found on the higher ground, tend to be used for arable farming. The Horsham Stone found in the Lower Weald Clay in the Slinfold Stream and Quarry locality contains the only example of *Equisetites* found in Wealden Clay and has been granted SSSI status. It also records the earliest known incursion of Cornubian materials, such as high K feldspar and tourmaline, garnet, into the Weald.

Agricultural land still forms a major part of the parish with some farms having permanent pasture for grazing of sheep and cattle, others being planted with a variety of arable crops. Some farms have tracts of land set aside for conservation and development of local flora and fauna. Many farms now practise mixed farming, poultry rearing, or horticulture with several riding or horse-breeding establishments and some have diversified utilising redundant farm buildings as small workshops, industrial units or as offices. The biodiversity of the area has improved as a result of these various habitats.

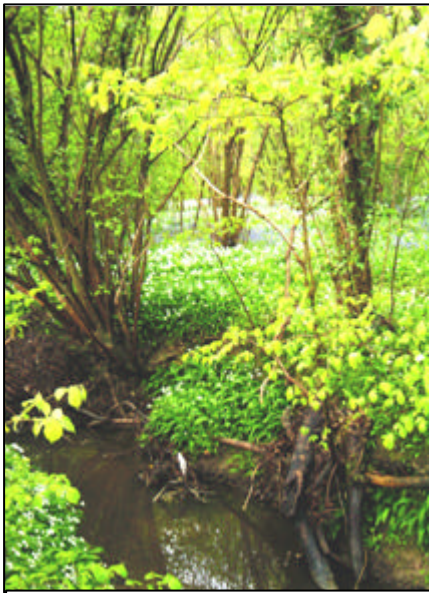


Slinfold has tracts of mainly untouched ancient **woodland**, wooded shaws or rewes, old coppiced woods and specie-rich hedgerows throughout the parish. The predominant trees are oak, ash, sycamore, field maple, horse chestnut, hornbeam and hazel. The hornbeam has an historical connection to the Roman Iron-working that took place to the north of the parish near the furnace ponds. The wooded shaws and high hedgerows along many field boundaries are often dominated by oak.



Bluebells at Nowhurst

Bluebells are a distinctive woodland feature in spring, along with dogs' mercury and patches of white wood anemones, while in wetter areas the distinct odour and white flowers of wild garlic abound. Foxgloves, primroses, and cowslips may be seen upon the field and hedgerow banks. A recent flower survey north of the village identified seventy-two different varieties of wild flowers within a small area.



Garlic Copse

The **River Arun** has large floodplains at Roman Gate and Dedisham Manor, and throughout Slinfold Parish it is bordered by floodplain pastureland which is used for grazing when the weather permits. Numerous small feeder streams give rise to areas of wet woodland. The trees bordering these streams are mainly alder, willow, hazel and ash. As well as common species of plant, the Arun has some more notable plants such as the European 'cut grass' (*leerisia oryzoides*), four types of rare sedge together with two rare bulrushes (*Scirpus carinatus and triqueter*) that are only found on the Arun and the Thames. The river quality at this point has improved and is classed as 'moderate to good' - which means the river has a healthy mixture of wildlife both along the banks and within the water.

Fifty-two kilometres of footpaths and bridleways cross the parish, the most notable being a section of the Downs Link. Some of the footpaths can be historically linked to ancient boundaries and traced to Saxon times when a strip of woodland separated the fields as they were cut from the

wildwoods. From these boundaries many specie-rich ancient hedgerows developed and are retained today together with examples of double 'hedge and ditch' boundaries and ancient roadways.

Small mammals such as the weasel, shrews, hedgehogs, and squirrels inhabit the woodlands and hedgerows, plus the larger animals such as the fox, badger and deer. Walks around Slinfold offer a wide variety of wild flowers along the verges and footpaths, which attract a variety of insects, the most notable of which is the glow-worm. Butterflies of many types are seen along the footpaths, in the open glades and also in gardens.

Many gardens have brightly coloured finches, tits, blackbirds, thrushes, and robins. In the fields, woods, and hedgerows there are pheasants, woodpeckers, herons, sparrow-hawks and kestrels. At dusk the Pipistrelle bats forage the numerous species of moths and insects, whilst little owls and barn owls hunt for larger prey out across the countryside.



Hedgehog in Garden

AREA CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGNS

Conservation Area and the West of the Village

Slinfold village centre is one of the most attractive in the Sussex Weald and contains all that is quintessential to a true English village. The church, shop, pub, school, village hall, and houses of different dates, styles and materials all blend together in one harmonious whole. The curving shape of **The Street** creates a constantly changing panorama as one passes through the village. The open area within the curve of The Street forms part of the village's central fields.



The Street by the Village Hall

The Street contains buildings from every century from the 15th to the 20th and has examples of the whole range of building materials found throughout the parish. Its earlier houses used local materials: timber framing infilled with wattle and daub for the walls and Horsham Stone for the roof. Later, some of its framed buildings used brick infill. By the end of the 18th century its houses were constructed entirely of brick, some having attractive patterned brickwork. The roofs

were heeled with tile, and the walls of the older timber-framed buildings were clad with tile-hanging. Slate roofs were then used from around 1830 till the end of the century. Weatherboarding was originally used predominantly for outbuildings, but several of the **interesting** modern-**designed** houses in The Street are also partly weatherboarded.

The whole of **Clappgate Lane** up to Hill House is rural in character, with a cluster of old houses within the Conservation Area.

Park Street is a continuation of The Street from the end of Spring Lane through to Stane Street. A little hamlet developed around Park Street Corner from the 16th century onwards but there was no further development of Park Street until 1953 when Old House Farm was sold and individual bungalows were erected on plots of the former farmland. These bungalows are set back from the road, and their lack of height gives a feeling of space on entering the village.



Park Street

Tannery Close is a small development at the west end of the Street land that belonged to Hall Land. The houses are large and faced with a variety of materials in addition to brick.

Some have flint facings, although widespread use of this style should be used only in a Downland or coastal situation, not in the Weald.

Spring Lane gives access to the popular Downs Link long distance bridleway. Walkers, cyclists and horse-riders frequently use the lane. Its tranquility is much valued by the village. It was little more than a farm track until the railway arrived in 1865. A group of buildings connected with the railway, including a pub, appeared near the station at the end of the lane. When the railway was closed, the station building was demolished and the station area turned into a small caravan site. Two sizeable houses dating to the early 1900s are at The Street end of the lane.

Hayes Lane and the South of the Village

South of the Downs Link (towards the A29) **Hayes Lane** had very little development prior to the 20th century. Less than a dozen small cottages existed, the majority of them on long, narrow plots enclosed from the roadside wasteland. The brickyard began operating in 1895, on the site now occupied by **XSYS (formerly BASF)**. Nos. 1 to 24 Hayes Lane were constructed of local brick in front of the yard in the early 1900s. The road to the north of the railway bridge was known as Hayes Road, which explains the apparent anomaly of No. 1 Hayes Lane being half way up the present Lane. Four new houses have recently been developed here in a sympathetic manner.



Further up the hill, during the 20th century there has been scattered development, especially to the west of the road. These houses are extremely varied in style and size. Lydwicke, once a farm, is now a small community with the farmhouse itself divided into flats, and the outbuildings converted or rebuilt as dwellings.

North of the Downs Link (towards the village) on Hayes Lane there were just three buildings by the end of the 19th century, one now replaced by sheltered accommodation known as The Cobblers. In the early 1900s the west side of Hayes Lane from the stream south to the railway was developed. The plots generally had sizeable brick dwellings erected on them, each with an attractive string course of decorated bricks, but the southernmost plot next the railway contained a group of cottages known as Gatefield Cottages. In the last 40 years or so the character of this area has been completely altered as some of the large plots have been divided and new houses built. Recently, some individual backfilling has taken place.

The east side of Hayes Lane remained undeveloped until after the war. South of the Lowfield Green estate are a number of individual bungalows, and two pairs of semi-detached houses next to the railway line.

Park Road was first laid out prior to 1910. Houses of a variety of ages, styles and sizes have been erected along both sides. There has already been some backfilling and there is not much scope for further building.

West Way dates to the 1960s and contains mainly bungalows with a few houses. Although they are all individual, there is a unity of style, being built of brick with some weatherboarding.

The recent **Six Acres** development has mainly detached houses with 3, 4 or 5 bedrooms all on small plots. They are roofed with either pantiles or heavy, square tiles. Although the properties are of subtly varying designs in several types of brick, from a distance they do have an overwhelming

'estate' uniformity of appearance. On the west side of the estate, there is a small group of terraced starter homes and two-storey flats in a similar style.

The **Lowfield Green** estate is deceptively large with several distinct roads and areas. And the 'Green' at the junction of Streetfield Road and Hayes Lane is an important visual, and actual, amenity for the village.



Streetfield and Lowfield Roads were begun in 1949 as a council estate. There is a good mix of terraced bungalows, terraced houses, semi-detached houses and blocks of flats, none with more than three bedrooms. Although the estate was built over a number of years, the brick construction affords a certain pleasing unity of style typical of the sturdy local authority housing of the time.

Greenfield Road was a part of the original estate and is comprised of pairs of brick semi-detached houses. There is access from this road to the Scout Hut and the King George V Recreation Area. **The Grattons** is a collection of two-storey flats set apart from each other.

There was a vacant area between the end of Streetfield and Lowfield Roads. The north side was infilled with starter housing in the 1980s – in a style different from the original estate. To the south a development called **Cloverfield** contains a mixture of terraced housing and flats. **Pipers End** to the south-east of Streetfield Road is a group of self-built houses. These are individually designed four/five bedroom detached properties.

Lyons Road and East of the village

Lyons Road leads out of the village towards Horsham. It retains its character of a rural lane and acts as an important buffer between Slinfold and Broadbridge Heath/Horsham. There are a few older houses, including a couple of timber-framed former farmhouses and a building that was built as a terrace of four almshouses in the 1830s. However the majority of the houses, many of them at the village end of the road, were built in the second half of the 20th century. At the other end of the road, the farm buildings opposite Lyons Farm have been converted into a small development of business units, but retain a certain character.



Cricket Pitch from Lyons Road

Lyons Close was built c. 1950 around three sides of a square. Across the back is a terrace of houses with flats at either end; bungalows form the sides. The style is very similar to the Lowfield Green estate. Numbers 1-4 Lyons Road, to either side of the Close, were also built in this style.

Mitchell Gardens was created in the mid-1990s by demolishing a house in Lyons Road and backfilling in the gardens of several neighbouring houses. The detached houses are all sizeable,

but on small plots of land. Each is individual, with a variety of finishes, some faced with flint/stone. Some are heeled with pantiles others with dark ordinary tiles.

There are a number of **lanes leading off Lyons Road**. The lane past the 18th century Theale Cottages is the old way to Theale Farm. There is now a modern access to Theale, and opposite is another modern lane leading to two properties towards the old railway line. **Pinkhurst Lane** is an old lane giving access to Pinkhurst Manor House. This lane also has a variety of older and newer houses.

Outer Parish

Five Oaks Road (A264) is used by all northbound traffic on the A29 going to Horsham. It is very busy and has been rather accident-prone in recent years. Along the road there is a widely spaced scatter of dwellings of different ages and styles. The only timber-framed building is Ranfold Farmhouse and in recent years some farm buildings have been converted to dwellings, forming a small community here. Slinfold Manor was earlier a farm known as Hayes.

Billingshurst Road within the parish is a track that runs beside the Arun from the Five Oaks Road to the remains of Slinfold Mill. There are three modern properties here. Near the mill is the stone-built Mill Cottage and the 17th century timber-framed Mill House. Lower Broadbridge Farm, now near the Broadbridge Heath bypass, is an attractive timber-framed building of medieval origin.

There were a number of farms to the south of **Guildford Road (A281)**, some of which have had small communities grow up around their changed uses. There are also a number of large older houses strung out along the road to Broadbridge Heath.

The area around **Nowhurst Lane** was extensively used for quarrying Horsham Stone in the past. The dwellings include the timber-framed Nowhurst Farmhouse and several other dwellings, including two further timber-framed buildings. The character of this rural lane had been rather spoilt in recent years by the commercial traffic connected with F.L. Gamble and Marshalls. Fortunately, separate access has been created via a roundabout on the Guildford Road.

The three parishes of Slinfold, Rudgwick and Warnham all meet at Rowhook. Within Slinfold Parish there are a few dwellings, some older buildings on the old disused section of Stane Street, and some fairly modern and individual set back and mostly well hidden from Rowhook Road. The area is well wooded.

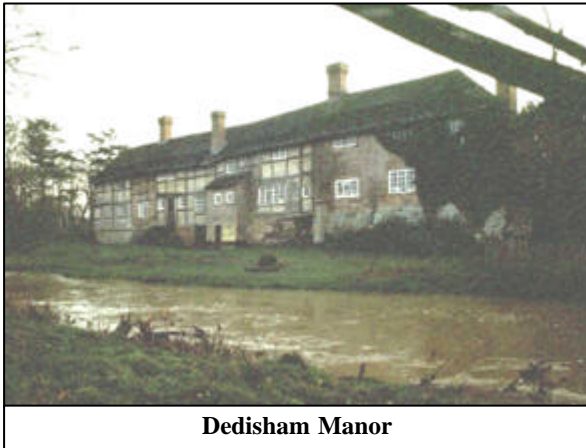
Around the A281 from **Clemsfold** to **Roman Gate** is an area of unspoilt farmland traversed by the Arun and North River. To the west of the Clemsfold roundabout is a group of mixed residential and business buildings, including a nursing home, a garage and a woodyard. There are a few individual houses set well back from the road, especially in Townhouse Copse to the north. The east side of Stane Street from Roman Gate roundabout to Park Street is virtually devoid of habitation, and the view from Stane Street over the fields to the church is valuable **to the village**.



Slinfold Parish from Rowhook

The land to the **east of Stane Street** was formerly occupied by a number of small farms belonging to the manor of Wiggonholt. Some have remained, others have been replaced. Only half a dozen other dwellings have sprung up along this stretch of road in the past 150 years but the lack of a footpath alongside Stane Street **can lead to a sense of isolation despite the relative proximity of properties.**

Off Stane Street, Spring Copse Business Park occupies the site of an old woodyard; Schenectady and **XSYS (formerly BASF)**, a comparatively large industrial development, occupies the site of the old brickyard. **XSYS** does cause substantial light pollution to the night sky which can be seen from all over the parish, but other than that it has surprisingly little adverse impact on Slinfold.



West of Stane Street is a particularly unspoilt area of the parish – it was virtually all held by the manor of Dedisham – and contains several sites of special interest.

To the west of the once-moated **manor house** is the site of an early **corn mill**, and further south are the sites of two of Dedisham's three hunting parks, the Middle Park and the **South Park** – which is now occupied by a golf course and shooting grounds. Several of the old farmhouses have found new commercial uses.

To the north, at Roman Gate, is the site of the **Roman Posting Station**. Very little modern development has taken place. There is a cluster of modern houses round Park Street Lane, a few new dwellings along the Lane itself, and some of the old buildings have been replaced by new dwellings. There is also a gypsy settlement on The Haven road at Cousins Copse.

CURRENT DESIGNS

Overall Design

No one **period**, style or design is dominant in Slinfold but there are variations on, or sporadic repetitions of, several local themes. This lack of uniformity is part of what gives Slinfold its charm.

Apart from a few large old houses, all housing in Slinfold is either one- or two-storey. Outside of the Conservation Area and the Lowfield Green estate, most buildings incorporate one type of gabling or another.



Throughout Slinfold, precise 'Building Lines' do not tend to exist, but approximate ones have been established and followed.

Developmental Patterns

Over the past 50 years, a variety of trends or developments have happened which have fundamentally impacted the structure of Slinfold, mostly adversely.

There has been a **recent** tendency to segregate types and sizes of housing (eg. in Six Acres the **very** smallest/affordable housing is **bunched together** in one corner). On occasions, Slinfold has had a very large number of houses imposed in a very short space of time. In these cases this produced an unacceptable uniformity of design, and the challenges associated with assimilating so many new residents at once. The size of the original Lowfield Green estate compared to the size of the rest of the village means that fifty years later, the rented percentage of property stock in the village is 42% - twice the district average.

There are now very few 'small' properties in Slinfold. Market forces have led developers to concentrate on building 4 or 5-bedroomed ones, and where smaller properties did once exist, most have now been extended to larger ones. This can hinder older people from staying in the village and younger people from getting a foot on the property ladder locally.

There have been differing examples of 'backfilling' development. Mitchell Gardens is a coordinated and coherent development, with just one entrance on to Lyons Road. However on Hayes Lane there are some uncoordinated and isolated 'backfills' with individual entrances onto the main road.

Where new development has taken place in Slinfold, open/rural views have been replaced by views of new houses, unlike some developments elsewhere which have had to have buffer zones at their edges.

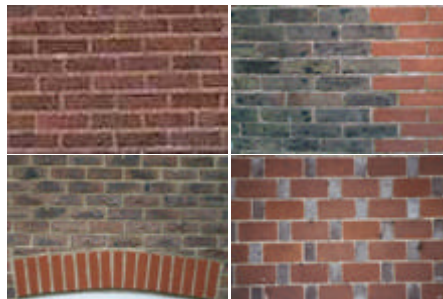
Finally, the imposition of a planning ruling that extensions must appear subordinate to the main building has resulted in some piecemeal add-ons instead of coherently whole buildings.

Building Materials

Walls

The main building material in Slinfold is brick, with a sizeable number of timber-framed buildings and a few stone-built ones. Additionally many have extra features such as Boarding, Stucco or Tile Hanging.

Predominantly Slinfold **brick** walls are of red-brown stock brick (dull, rough surfaced), sometimes with red stock brick frontages, and often with red stock brick edged corners and soldier courses (vertical lines of bricks above windows and doors). In the conservation area, patterned brickwork is formed with hard-burned blue brick headers between red stretchers. Painted brickwork is mostly white although a few buildings are painted in pastel colours. In the Lowfield Green estate the original houses use a slightly redder brick, whereas the newer housing, such as the Grattons, use a variety of lighter bricks.



Generally **timber-framed** walls are in-filled with wattle-and-daub or rendered panels and painted, though there is some oak framing infilled with patterned brickwork.

Stone walls are usually local yellow-brown stone, not dressed, though a few older houses are built with locally-quarried Horsham Stone. Some older houses have decorative flint inlays but a small number of newer houses have 'show' walls of flint – of the type common in the South Downs.



There is substantial amount of **Tile Hanging** in Slinfold - usually of red-brown tiles. Older buildings have plain or ornamental hand-made tiles, or plain tiling incorporating bands of ornamental tiles. Newer buildings tend to use machine-made tiles, both plain and ornamental.

Stucco walls are generally white-painted, and cover either entire buildings or parts of otherwise brick-faced buildings

Boarding is used functionally on older buildings, and also decoratively on many newer buildings – especially bungalows. The older buildings have Waney edged boards, tarred or coated with black paint. The newer buildings are covered with cedar boarding, either horizontal shiplap or vertical tongued and grooved.

Windows

Most older buildings have wooden windows, either with double-hung sliding sashes or casements. Glass is divided into large or small rectangular panes by timber glazing bars. There are also leaded lights

A variety of material has been used in newer buildings for window framing, including wood, steel, aluminium and upvc, however even on newer houses the style is usually for small rectangular panes.



Roofs

Most of the older buildings have red, hand-made **tiles**. There are a few examples of ornamental tile banding.

Many of the newer buildings have machine-made tiles. Generally ridges are covered with half-round tiles but there are a few examples of ornamental ridges, hips are covered with either half-round or bonnet tiles. **Horsham stone** has been used to roof quite a number of the older buildings.

Slate roofs are generally made of Blue-grey Welsh slates mostly with half-round ridge and hip tiles. There are a few examples of ornamental tile ridges and of lead-covered ridges and hips. Reclaimed or hand-made slates blend in well, but perfectly-edged machine-made slates look slightly out-of-place.

Steel sheeting and **corrugated 'asbestos'** generally only used for agricultural and industrial buildings and for domestic garages and outbuildings

There are very few **flat-roofed** buildings in Slinfold, except for small domestic garages and a few extensions.

Non-Domestic Buildings

By and large care has been taken to ensure that office and industrial buildings blend in with their surroundings. Where buildings are visible from roads and footpaths they tend to conform to the building styles and materials detailed earlier. Buildings that are 'hidden' within industrial estates tend to use standard 'industrial' styles and materials.

The Public and Community buildings within Slinfold (Church, Chapel, School, Village Hall, Hotel, Pub, Shop) are generally old and full of character – though with the odd sympathetic modern extension.

Boundary Walls, Fences and Hedges

Generally front garden borders are either wall and hedging, or just hedging. Hedging is often tall and high walls with no visible planting tend to look out of place. There is no uniformity of boundary wall design or material, but the walls mostly match the stone and the brick of the houses around the area. Fencing is generally of the rustic post and rail variety. Where close-boarded fencing is used onto the road, it also tends to look out of place.

The overall appearance of open-plan front gardens is not in tune with the general Slinfold street-scene.

Surfaces

Loose covered driveways (eg. pea-shingle or gravel) tend to be the norm but there is no uniformity of colour or size of materials used. Newer properties often have tarmac drives. The occasional brick drive blends in well, but a large number together gives an urban feel, and smooth-surfaced driveways and hard-standing can contribute to flooding problems.

Pathways tend to be dark tarmac-style, some with inlays of scattered pebbles. Within the Conservation Area there is some old paving stone.

Road surfaces are standard inlaid tarmac on the trunk roads with orange anti-skid surfacing at the major junctions, and grit-covered tarmac on the rest of the roads with deep-red brick-style surfacing at the major junctions on Hayes Lane.

OPEN SPACES, VIEWS AND FOOTPATHS

Open Spaces and Views

Within the village, there are few open spaces apart from the central fields, the cricket pitch and Lowfield Green. Slinfold village is basically 'fully developed' and could not now take any further development without ruining it forever by either extending beyond its historical boundaries or building on those few remaining spaces that are part of what makes Slinfold what it is today.

The area bounded by the Red Lyon, Stanford House, Slinfold House, the Old Bakery and the old **Post Office** formed a **village green** which was once used for all kinds of communal activities and was the site of the annual fair. Over the years this 'village green' has been encroached upon and the land has been taken into private ownership.



Village Centre - Old Village Green

However to date this has not prevented village events, such as the annual Village Day, from taking place there and it remains relatively 'open'.

At the centre of the village are several fields – bounded by The Downs Link, Spring Lane and the

rear of the houses on Hayes Lane and The Street - that at one time were common land. These **central fields** 'frame' many views to and from the village centre. They are vital to Slinfold, and are regarded as sacrosanct by virtually all residents. One of these fields, known as the 'pub field' is both a visual and actual amenity – it provides views from the Red Lyon beer garden across to Spring Lane, and it is the site for some pub/village activities such as the annual fireworks display



Lowfield Green

The tree-covered 'Lowfield Green' at the junction of Streetfield Road and Hayes Lane is an important visual, and actual, amenity. It provides a feeling of space on what is the

most built-up road in the village and provides an informal meeting and recreation area for local children and youths

Recreation Areas

Slinfold Cricket Club on Lyons Road has been in existence since 1775. The cricket field has a beautiful line of scotch pine trees on its border with Lyons Road and provides open views out of the village to its rear. Its pavilion/club house is a simple corrugated-iron structure built many years ago

The Football and Tennis clubs are based at a recreation ground between Hayes Lane and the XSYS factory. The land is owned by XSYS, but it is a vital village asset.

Slinfold does not have easily accessible public playground facilities. There is a children's recreation area at the King George V field, situated between The Grattons and Mitchell Gardens and there are some further childrens' play areas within the Six Acres estate.

Farmland & Fields

Slinfold parish is still rural and is substantially comprised of farmland and fields. Of special interest are the fields to the east of the parish that form the ends of three narrow ‘Manorial Strips’ running down to West Chiltington.

Across the country, farming is no longer as commercially viable as it once was, and in Slinfold the high number of retained and intact hedgerows exacerbates this. Thus alternative uses have been found for some land (eg. horses, golf course, shooting grounds), and advantage has been taken of government grants and regulations to set aside fields. Whilst some residents actually prefer these set-aside fields there is concern that those in or around the village might be vulnerable to development. The overall effect is to erode the working rural nature of the parish.



Central Fields from Spring Lane

Views

The relatively flat nature of the village itself means that most views within the village do not occur as a result of the lie of the land, and so have to be mindfully protected. The conservation area leaflet sets out several views of the village that should remain unspoilt – these and others are marked on the maps in this document. Of particular note are: towards the church over the fields from the Random Hall Hotel – and back the other way, towards the church over the fields from the Downs Link, over the cricket field and beyond from Lyons Road.

Roads and Footpaths

The three main roads through the parish, the A264 Five Oaks Road, A29 Stane Street and A281 Guildford Road are all single carriageway roads, but are well-used and fast. Apart from an obvious impact of the traffic levels on the houses alongside the roads, these roads are not substantially detrimental to the parish. However, the A281 is always mentioned when rumours sporadically surface about a South-East orbital trunk route or motorway. This would obviously be ruinous to much of the north of the parish should the rumours ever prove founded.



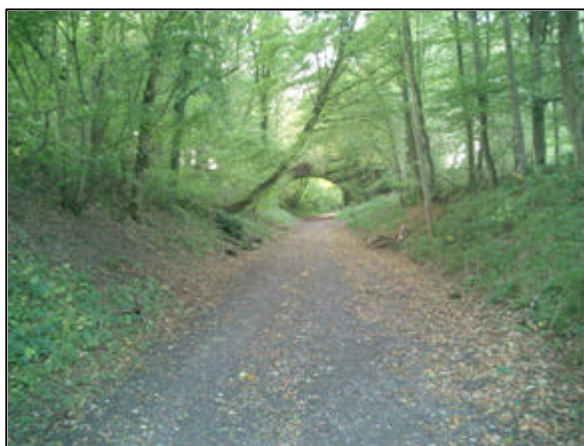
Spring Lane

Within the area bounded by the three main roads, the roads and lanes retain a rural feel, though one roundabout has to-date been imposed on Hayes Lane, giving an unwelcome urban ‘feel’ to part of the village. Where footways exist they are generally on one side of the road only. However, Six Acres and most of the Lowfield Green estate have footways on both sides of the road, again giving an urban or estate ‘feel’.

Spring Lane gives access to the popular Downs Link long-distance bridleway and walkers, cyclists and horse-riders are virtually the only traffic. There is no footpath along the lane and it retains the side-ditch that all the roads and lanes in Slinfold once had. It provides views across the central fields to the village centre. Any increase in traffic or alteration to the lane’s rural feel would be severely detrimental

The three entrances to Slinfold village - Lyons Road, Upper Hayes Lane and Park Street - are generally appealing. Even the roadside boundary of the industrial and retail units at Lyons Farm has a pleasing rural feel to it. Lyons Road is now 40mph for its entire length outside the village, and Upper Hayes Lane is planned to be the same.

The **Downs Link**, running through the heart of the parish, is used by many residents as part of a circular walk that includes Spring Lane and the village centre. The view from the Downs Link viewpoint by **XSYS (formerly BASF)** is very important and shows the unique setting of Slinfold. Despite XSYS and Six Acres development, the Downs Link retains a rural outlook through Slinfold, and WSCC is proactively returning its **banks** to a natural habitat.



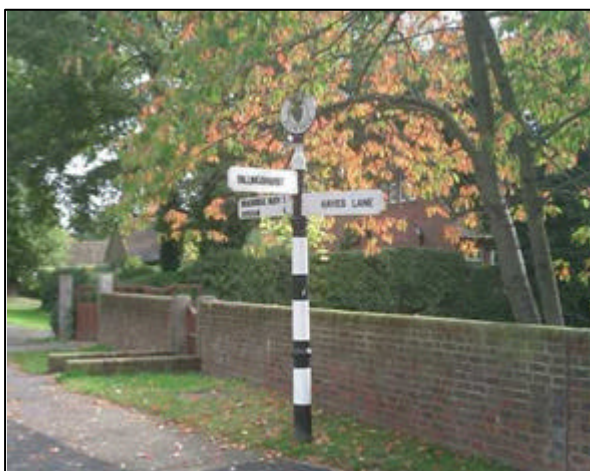
Downs Link near Huntingrove

The rich heritage of footpaths linking the individual farms with each other and with the church, make for a substantial network of paths and bridleways within the parish. Much use is made of these, however many of the footpaths have unstable old stiles which are difficult for the elderly and those with children or dogs. The underlying Wealden clay and the historical topography of a path being worn through the surrounding land means that most paths become very muddy after a relatively small amount of rain.

Lighting & Street Furniture

Slinfold village traditionally has been lit by ‘footpath lights’, not ‘street lights’. This means rural low-brightness white lantern lights, as opposed to urban high-brightness orange strip lights. Some of the newer roads and estates have had the ‘urban’ style of lighting installed, but the wish of the residents is for the rural style to prevail.

Historically there has been little uniformity of lamp-posts in the village with many of the lights being mounted on telephone or electricity poles. Only the newest of the developments in Slinfold have had underground electricity cabling, so for the most part Slinfold has a preponderance of wooden poles along the sides of the roads, carrying lights and electricity and telephone cables.



Lyons Road / Hayes Lane Way Marker

Within the village there are comparatively few signs – although the refurbished black-and-white finger-post way marker at the junction of The Street, Hayes Lane and Lyons Road is notable, and the Duck warning signs at the ‘Duck Bends’ on Lyons Road add a certain charm to the road.

There are several seats sited around the parish, alongside roads, footpaths and bridleways.

Within Slinfold parish there are four public phone boxes, the one in the conservation area is a traditional red phone box, the others are of a modern design.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Slinfold remains a small and integrated village within a large rural parish. Its history is still evident throughout, from its Conservation Area through to its field patterns and footpaths.

It is not 'inevitable' that all villages will eventually grow beyond all proportion and identity. Slinfold must not ever become simply a large development or Horsham-satellite that just happens to have a conservation area in its centre.

There is little space left within the village of Slinfold where any further development could take place without ruining the village forever. However any development that does take place should be harnessed to the best effect of the community, and these principles and guidelines should be applied, where appropriate, to all planned development **including publicly visible non-domestic buildings**, not just to the development of new 'estates'.

Developmental Patterns

Impact

- ✍ The overriding consideration is that the rural village feel of Slinfold should be retained and maintained. No development should increase the actual or perceived feel of urbanisation.
- ✍ Any development that does occur must respect the historic form and layout of the village **and the defined 'built-up area' boundaries**.
- ✍ Any increase to the size of the Village should be incremental and in proportion to the existing size. Furthermore any large development **(eg. over 25 properties)** should consider phased **or staged development**
- ✍ The night sky should be a feature of the countryside, so there should be no increase in 'light pollution', and a decrease should be seen as a planning gain **– especially around the industrial areas**.
- ✍ **Any development should ensure that its impact on plant and wildlife is minimised.**
- ✍ **Any development should not permanently** increase traffic through the centre of the village.

New Houses

- ✍ Any development in back gardens must be sympathetic to the character and community of the road from which it is accessed.
- ✍ The existing 'approximate' building lines should be respected, eg. 'frontfilling', should not take place.
- ✍ Existing housing density variations should be respected and maintained.

New Developments

If a new 'estate' were to be developed in Slinfold then these extra conditions should be adhered to;

- ✍ There should be a diversity of styles – both between neighbouring properties and between different areas of the development.
- ✍ There should be no **segregation of housing – eg. 'Affordable Housing'** should not just be bunched **together** in a corner.

Architectural Features

- ✍ The current blend of variations on a few main styles and materials should be continued.

Building Materials

- ✍ Preferably red-brown stock brick (dull, rough surfaced), with red stock bricks for frontages, soldier courses and corner-edging.
- ✍ Faced common bricks (shiny, smooth surfaced) should not be used, except where needed to match existing brickwork.
- ✍ Occasional use of white - or pastel-painted brickwork.
- ✍ Flint should only be used as a minor decorative feature.
- ✍ New roofs should normally use standard tiles, not pantiles, heavy tiles or new slate.

Size

- ✍ Within the village boundaries new-built houses should be predominantly three-bedroomed or smaller, with special consideration given to one-bedroomed properties. Large properties (eg. five or more bedrooms) should not generally be built in the village.

Designs

- ✍ Buildings should generally blend in with neighbouring properties.
- ✍ New buildings should normally be two-storeys – bungalows do not make best use of scarce land.
- ✍ Houses should generally present some type of gable rather than a simple box-shape.
- ✍ Extensions should not always be forced to be obviously different or subordinate.
- ✍ Windows should generally give the appearance of small panes rather than large picture-windows, and should be appropriate to the design of the property.

Open Spaces and Views

Slinfold village has comparatively few open spaces, and the area's topography means that the remaining spaces and views are very important.

- ✍ The fields at the centre of village (bordered by The Street, Spring Lane, the Downs Link and Hayes Lane) must be retained.
- ✍ Sight lines and views, as detailed in this document and in the Conservation Area leaflet, must be retained, and born in mind when considering planning proposals.
- ✍ Every effort should be made to retain the arable or livestock usage of Slinfold's fields, and the overall or incremental impact of set-asides should be considered.
- ✍ What remains of the three Manorial Strips should be preserved.
- ✍ Hedgerows, many of them ancient, must be protected – and regenerated if possible.
- ✍ Loss of trees should be limited, but where existing trees do have to be felled, whether for safety, subsidence or developmental reasons, new ones should be planted in their place.
- ✍ A buffer zone – preferably of new or existing trees - should exist between any new development and existing gardens.
- ✍ Any new developments should be suitably landscaped to break-up any uniformity and open-plan 'estate' views.
- ✍ What remains of the 'Village Green', in front of the old Post Office, must be protected both as a visual and actual amenity.

Roads and Footways

Slinfold's roads and lanes should retain their green and rural feel.

- ✍ The three trunk roads through the parish should remain as single-carriageway routes.
- ✍ There should be no more roundabouts in the village, nor excessive traffic signage.
- ✍ Any multi-house developments must not impinge on the existing 'Street Scene'.
- ✍ Any new development – whether residential or commercial – should minimise impact on the traffic-flow through the village centre.
- ✍ There should be a uniformity of street-light or footway-light design whether on wooden or metal poles.
- ✍ Roads and their footways should be on a small, meandering, village scale - not of an open-plan estate-style design.
- ✍ Footways should normally be on one side of the road only and should be surfaced in black, if not paved in Horsham stone.
- ✍ Road-facing walls or close-boarded fences more than 3ft-high should have associated planting.
- ✍ Driveways and hard-standing should predominantly be surfaced in gravel or pea-shingle. Tarmac, and especially brick-surfacing, should only be used 'sparingly'.

Footpaths and Bridleways

Slinfold's rich network of footpaths and bridleways is an important feature to be cherished.

- ✍ The main village walks (circular via Downs Link, and behind the cricket field and the church) should be maintained, and retained in character.
- ✍ No urbanisation or enclosure of the Downs Link through Slinfold. It must not become an 'urban path' in-between houses and factories.
- ✍ Footpaths should be better engineered for the elderly and those with children or dogs (eg. 'kissing gates' instead of stiles).
- ✍ New or re-laid footpaths and bridleways should be laid slightly higher than the surrounding ground, so as to allow drainage.

Specific Area Considerations

In addition to the general principles and guidelines there are some that are specific to various areas of the parish;

Conservation Area

- ✍ The Conservation Area is already covered by a specific HDC pamphlet, but it is important that the impact on the Conservation Area (views, traffic, etc.) is considered when looking at Slinfold as a whole. It is not enough that building design within the Conservation Area is adhered to.
- ✍ Slinfold must remain a 'living' village; owners of the publicly-used buildings (eg. the church, school, pub, village hall) should be given every encouragement to enhance their facilities in keeping with the Conservation Area.

Park Street

- ✍ Redevelopment of any of the bungalows would adversely impact the entrance to the village. There is one area of undeveloped land on the south side of Park Street, between the bungalows and the earlier hamlet, but this is part of the street scene of Park Street.

Spring Lane

- ✍ Spring Lane must be retained as a 'lane', both in character and in tranquility.

Lyons Road & Towards Broadbridge Heath

- ✍ The character of the Lyons Road industrial estate should be retained, and enhanced if possible.
- ✍ There should be no infilling or ribbon-development down Lyons Road – this would extend the village and leaves the way open for the fields behind to be developed.
- ✍ Slinfold and Broadbridge Heath must remain distinct villages with no coalescence.

Hayes Lane and Six Acres

- ✍ North of the Downs Link (towards the village centre) there seems to be very little scope for further development, apart from replacing existing houses. If any more of the relatively small bungalows were to be demolished for development, they should be replaced by, say, two 2-bed semis rather than by single large 4-bed detacheds, so as to avoid further depleting the stock of smaller houses in the village.
- ✍ Any infilling of plots towards the south-western (A29) end of Hayes Lane must not lead to 'ribbon development' - neither towards the village nor towards the A29.

Nowhurst Lane

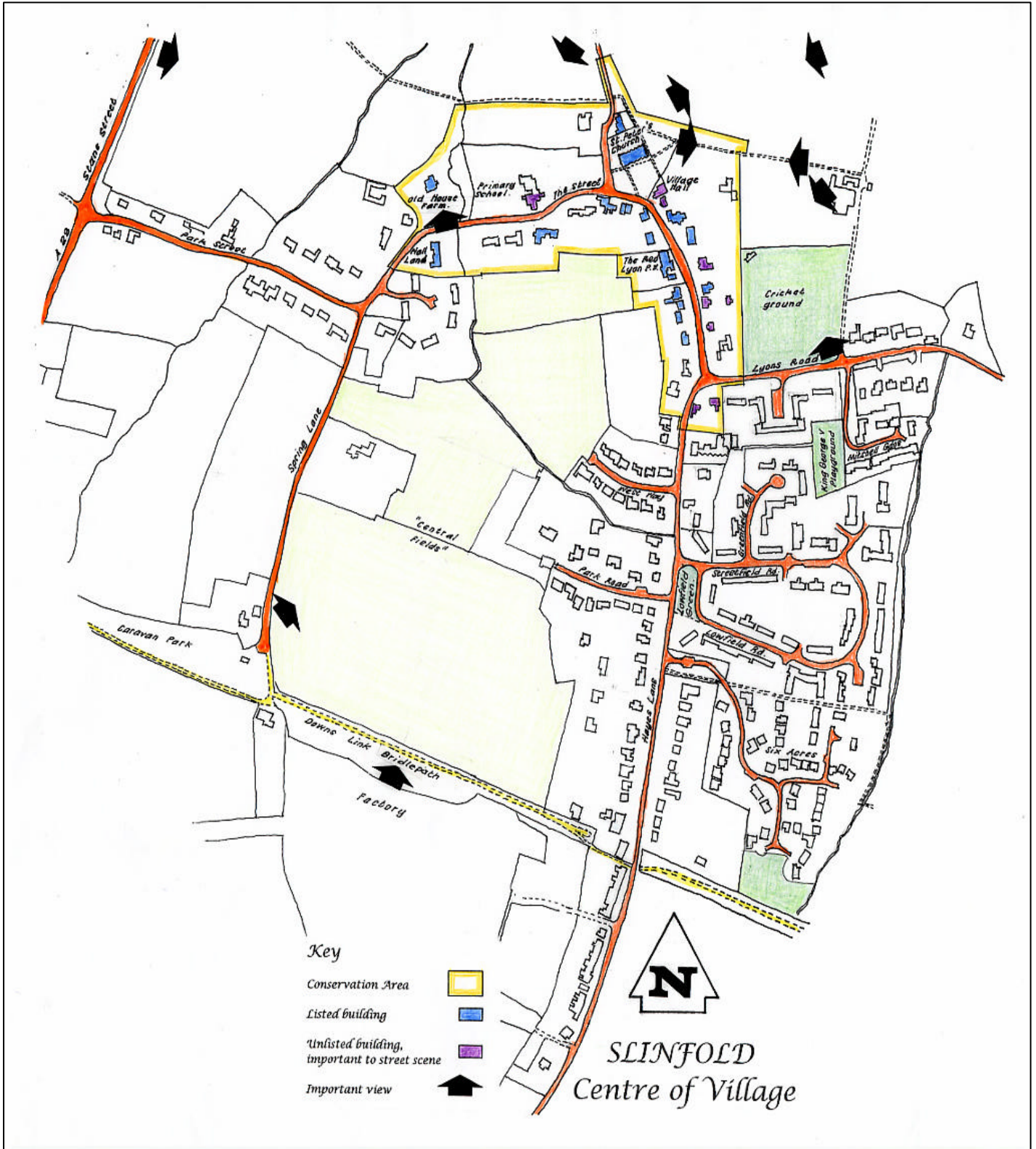
- ✍ Any development in this area would further erode the character of Nowhurst Lane. All commercial traffic should use the separate access already provided off the Guildford Road.

West of Five Oaks Road

- ✍ Development or expansion of any future urban sprawl from south-west Horsham should not encroach west of Five Oaks Road. This road provides a suitable boundary for the parish.

West of Stane Street

- ✍ It is important to ensure that no damage is done to the historic sites of Dedisham Manor House, the corn mill, or the embankment round the South Park - much of which is still visible on the ground. What remains of the Roman Posting Station near Roman Gate must be preserved.





Words – Linda Ashman, Diana Chatwin, Denis Ingleby, Neil Peachey. With thanks also to Jeremy Atkinson, Carla Ross, Gillian Toyt

Photos, Maps and Pictures – Jeremy Atkinson, Linda Ashman, Frank Catlow, Paul Collins-Howgill, Diana Chatwin, Denis Ingleby, Neil Peachey, Pete Ross and the children of Slinfold Primary School

All Content - Copyright 2006 – Slinfold Parish Council