

Boundary wall repairs at Sackville College .

Design Access and Heritage Statement.

August 2024

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01 Introduction.



Introduction

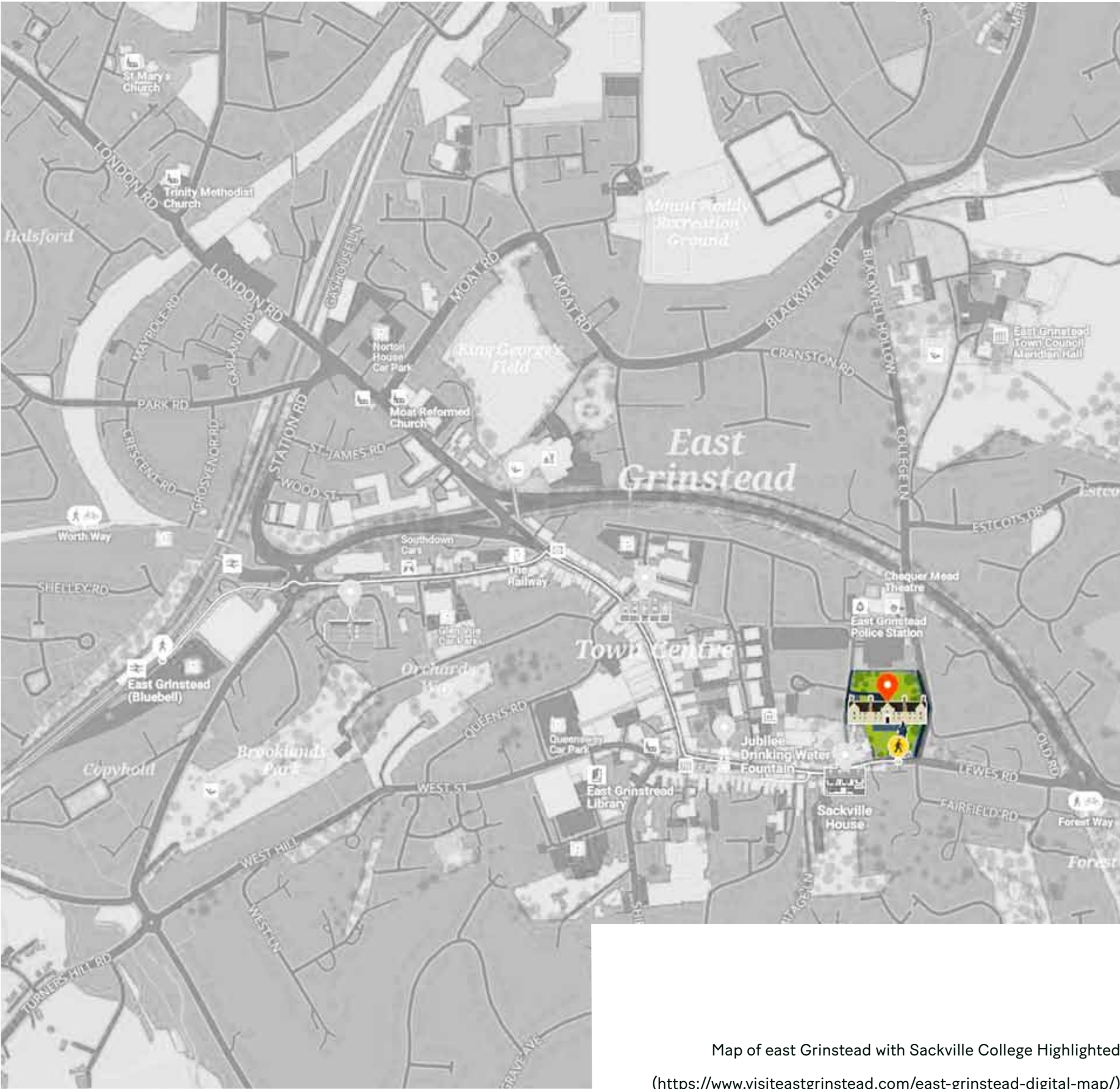
This report has been prepared in support of a Listed Building application for urgent repairs to the boundary wall at Sackville College. The boundary wall is adjacent to Sackville College, located in the historic village of East Grinstead, West Sussex. Sackville College itself is a Grade I listed building, highlighting its significant historical and architectural importance

Report Authors

This Design and Access with Heritage Statement has been prepared by members of the Heritage Team at LEP: Charlotte Pryke RIBA BAHons MArch, a Heritage Architect; overseen by Nicholas A Lee Evans BSc MSc DipArch RIBA SCA, a RIBA-Accredited Conservation Specialist Architect.

Background and Planning Context

The site sits in a Conservation Area, nestled between several significant Listed Buildings.



Map of east Grinstead with Sackville College Highlighted
(<https://www.visiteastgrinstead.com/east-grinstead-digital-map/>)

Structure of the Report

Site Description:
Describing the site and its context.

Scope of work
Describing the scheme

Historic Development:
Providing a summary of the historic development of the village, site, and context, concentrating on the areas of proposed change.

Access considerations
Summarising impact on access to the site during and after works

Environmental Considerations
Outlining the proposed works and their impact on trees, bats etc

Location and Context

Sackville College sits in grounds covering 0.9 hectares of central East Grinstead. The College is accessed from either Church Lane or via a gated entrance off the High Street. The College is one of the most notable buildings in the historic heart of town and is located close to Parish church of St Swithun's.

The College sits on the top of a ridge with the land dropping gently to the south to the High Street. To the eastern side there is a steep cliff like drop between the edge of the College grounds and the B2110 College Road. It is along this eastern boundary where the repairs are proposed which need Listed Building Consent.



02 Existing Condition.



02 Existing Site | Site Photographs



Photograph 1 of Boundary Wall to High Street, Photograph 2 & 3 of the Wall to be repaired to College Lane.



4-6 Photographs of Sackville College



7 Photograph of internal courtyard area at Sackville college

02 Existing Site | Site Description

The Site

The project involves repairing a section of hazardous masonry on a retaining boundary wall located on the eastern side of Sackville College, adjacent to the B2110, College Lane, in central East Grinstead. College Lane, a narrow but busy roadway, lies approximately 4 meters below the level of Sackville College’s grounds.

The Boundary Wall

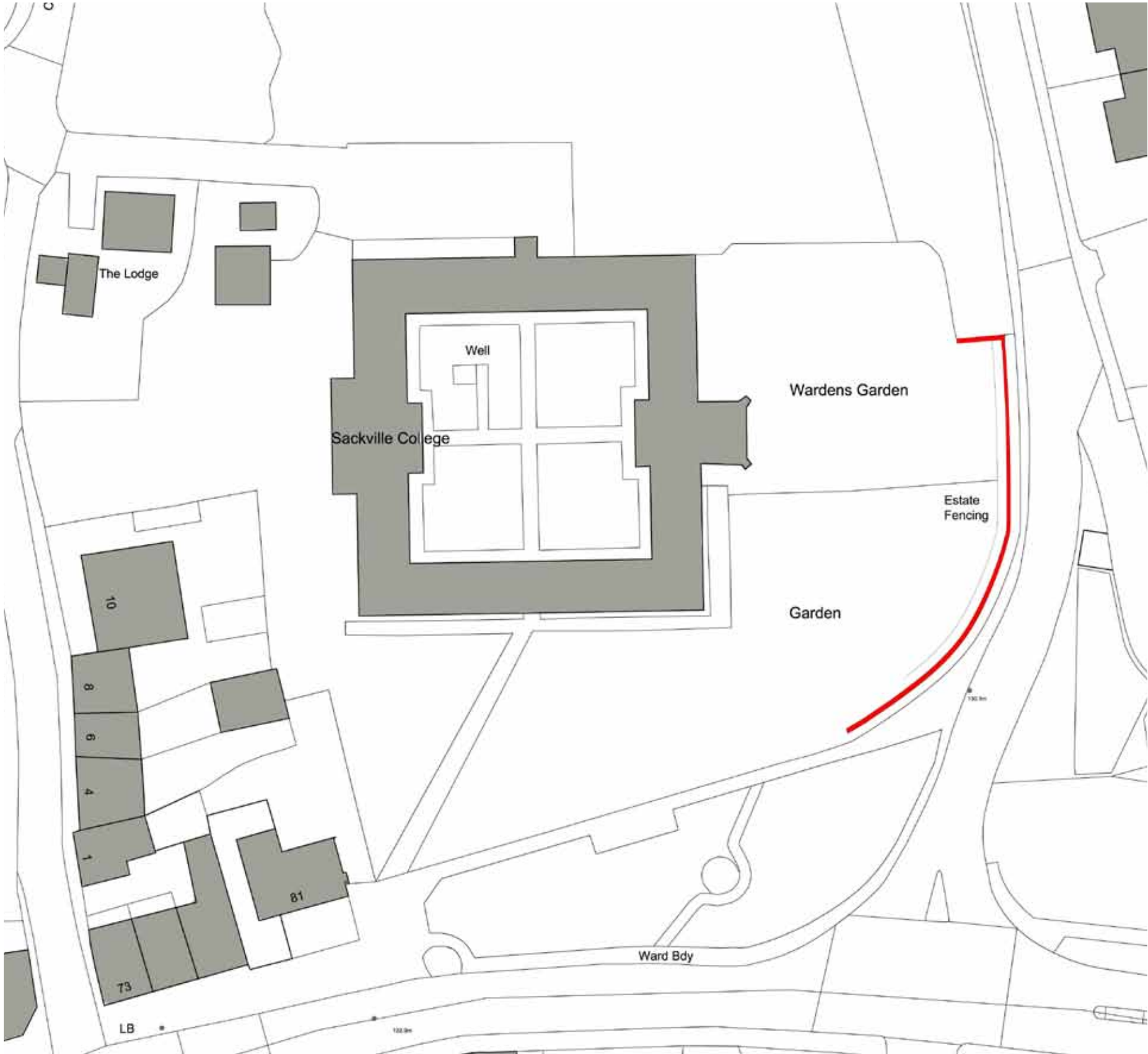
The retaining boundary wall, is thought to have been constructed by filling gaps in the bedrock with stone and brick,. There is an old iron estate fence at the top of the wall. Until recently, trees grew along the fence line, but these have been cut down to stumps just above ground level with consent.

Several urgent areas require immediate attention. One particularly concerning area involves a large capping stone on the retaining wall, which is currently supported by an unstable set of bricks. Additionally, several other capping stones appear to be slipping forward. The primary objective of this project is to stabilize these areas and make it safe for pedestrians using the footpath below the wall.

To carry out the repairs, the contractor will need to obtain permission from the Highways Authority to close a section of the B2110 carriageway. The repair process will involve erecting scaffolding.

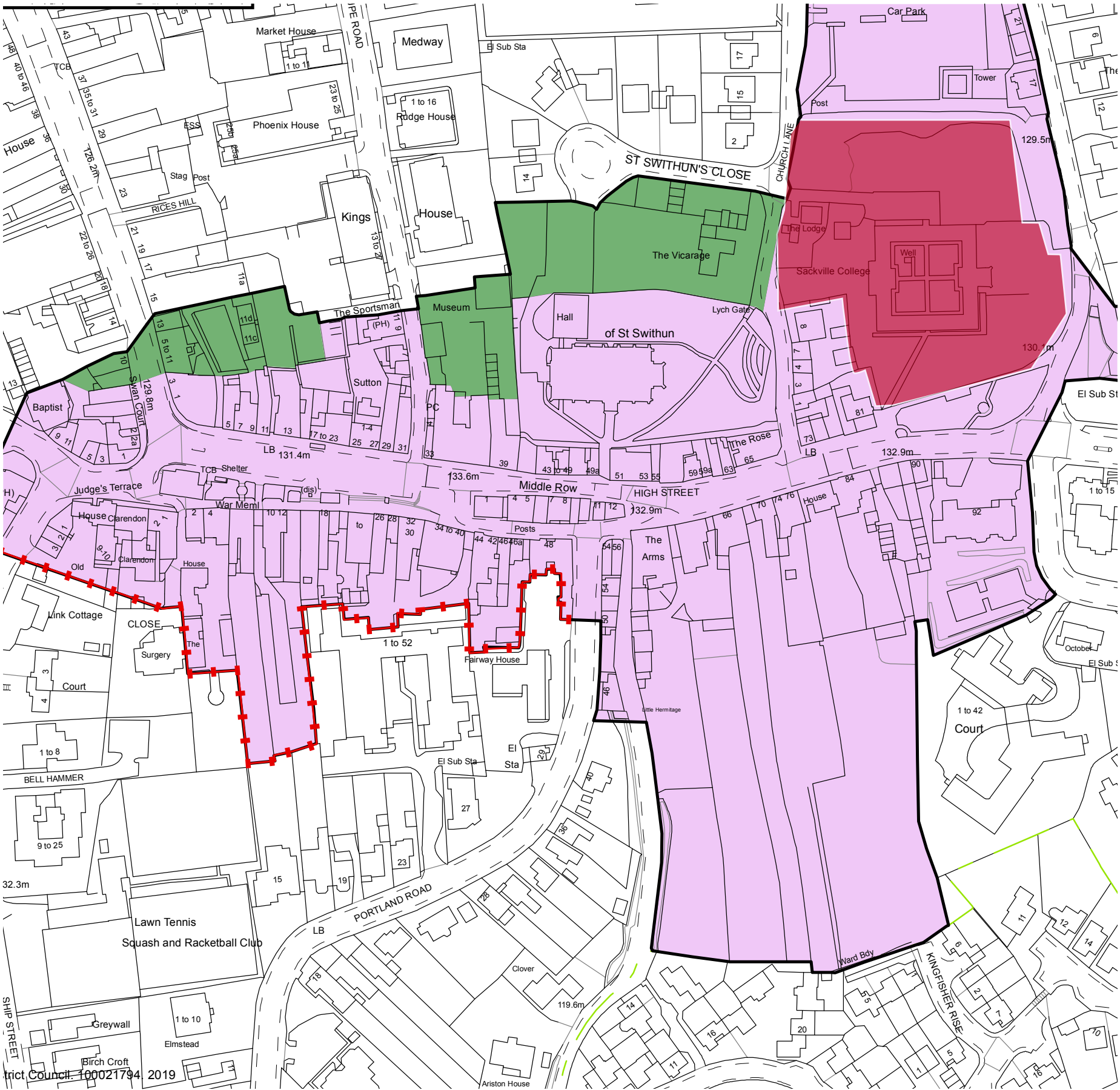


Photograph of wall



Site Plan with Wall Highlighted in Red

02 Existing Site | Map of Heritage Designations



Conservation Area

The East Grinstead Conservation Area is a designated zone within the historic town of East Grinstead, located in West Sussex, England. This area is recognized for its architectural and historic significance.

The Conservation Area encompasses the town’s medieval core, which features a high concentration of timber-framed buildings dating back to the 14th and 15th centuries. East Grinstead has a long history as a market town, with its market charter originating in the 13th century.

The historic street pattern of the town, has evolved over centuries, is preserved within the conservation area. This includes narrow lanes and alleyways that contribute to the area’s distinctive charm. The area also includes significant public spaces like the old market square, now known as East Grinstead’s High Street, which remains a focal point of the town. Sackville college is a prominent landmark at the Eastern edge of the Conservation Area. The boundary wall to be repaired as well as the road beyond are just within the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area was officially designated to protect the historic character of East Grinstead and to prevent inappropriate development that could harm its appearance. The local planning authority enforces guidelines and regulations to ensure that any new developments or modifications within the conservation area are in keeping with its historic character.

- Statutory confirmation of boundary
- ▬ New East Grinstead Conservation Area Boundary
- Area to be added to the Conservation Area
- Existing Conservation Area
- Proposal site

02 Existing Site | Heritage Designations

Statutorily Listed Heritage Assets

When considering whether to grant Listed building consent for development which affects a listed building or its setting, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The following listed building descriptions are provided by the National Heritage List for England (NHLE).

SACKVILLE COLLEGE

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1248768
Date first listed: 128-Jan-1948
County: West Sussex
District: Mid Sussex
Parish: East Grinstead
National Grid Reference: TQ3975438037

Almshouses founded in 1617 by the 2nd Earl of Dorset. Building commenced as a private dwelling in 1609. Completed as almshouses in 1619. Restored by Butterfield in C19. A four square range of Sussex and Ardingly sandstone buildings with quadrangle upon high ground prominently visible from Lewes Road and tile west end of High Street.

Main frontage is to the south. Stone, 2 storey, 11 windows. 3 gables. Small mullioned windows, band, central doorway. 2 massive brick chimney between gables, horsham slabs. Sun Dial on centre gable. Arched doorway with pilasters and architrave leads to spacious quadrangle. Each side has a mid accent with gable. To right and east the chapel with a 4 light window with transom and arched lights.

Opposite to west refectory and common room same motif repeated to maintain symmetry. The Dining Hall in northern range called Dorset

Lodgings and constituting the original house. Dorset coat of arms in panel over entrance. To left and right 2 full height mullioned windows with transoms.

Hall has minstrels gallery, hammerbeam roof (restored) and fireplace with inscription “I pray God bless my Lord of Dorset and my Ladies and all their Prostentie. Anno d 1619” (probably originally in chapel).

Also much contemporary furniture and chairs stamps with initial R S Chapel restored 1846-1866 by Butterfield under direction Rev Dr Neale (Tractarran, hymologist then warden of the college, in early C14 style. Important for role played in renaissance of Anglo Catholicism.



03 Scope of Work.

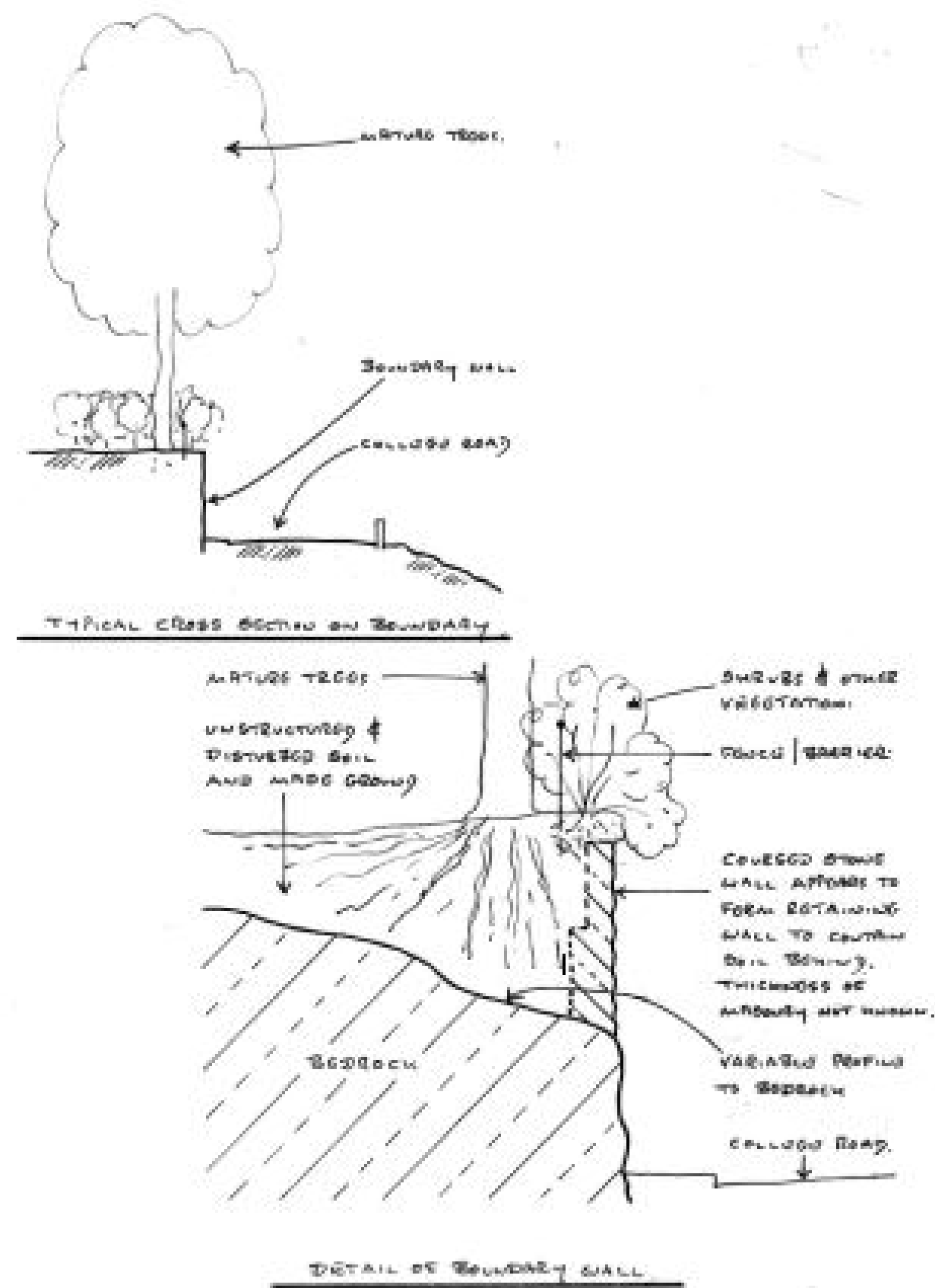


Image taken from Structural engineer report

Proposals

The proposals for this scheme involve stabilizing and repairing the long stretch of boundary wall along the eastern perimeter of the Sackville College site.

The wall appears to have been formed out of the bedrock, given the significant level difference between the site and the road and pavement below. Where gaps existed in the bedrock, they have been filled with various types of stone and brick, capped with a row of capping stones along the top edge.

A ground-level survey of the wall has been conducted, and together with Andrew Turner (conservation accredited structural engineer) a scheme has been developed for the necessary repairs. The work will begin with the erection of scaffolding to allow for a closer inspection and a full survey of any loose or missing stones.

The specification also includes the removal of roots that have grown into the wall, as well as the eradication of vegetation and weeds that are contributing to the structure’s instability.

Materials and Construction Methods

De-vegetation

De-vegetation is to include the careful removal of all weeds, saplings, etc. on the walls, and treatment with approved weed killer. De-vegetation will involve the removal of any saplings which are growing out of the top of the wall and the removal of surface ivy.

Where there are tree stump cut bark to a rill girdle and pack with ammonium sulphamate crystals.

Repointing and Repairing

The project requires the use of lime mortar for repointing, with materials supplied by Chalk Down Lime Ltd or an approved equivalent. Loose mortar will be raked out to a minimum depth of 25mm, and joints will be thoroughly wetted before repointing. Three mortar mix and joint finish samples must be approved by the architect. Pointing will involve ramming mortar into joints in layers, with the finish varying depending on the restoration needs. Upon completion, joints will be brushed to expose the aggregate, with watering specified as needed. Mortar mixes will be selected based on the specific conditions of the site.

New Stonework

For the project, Course Hand Split Wealden Sussex Sandstone (CHS) will be used, sourced , ensuring it matches the existing stonework and is free from defects. Samples must be approved by the architect.

Replacement stones will be cut, worked, and finished to match the existing structure, with no sawn finishes allowed. Stones are to be laid on the natural bed, with alternative bedding requiring the architect’s approval. Wider joints are allowed when inserting new stone, and piecing in must follow existing joint patterns. Qualified masons will prepare and lay the stone, keeping it clean and replacing any damaged pieces.



Photograph of an area of brickwork infill in the bedrock.

Visual Impact and Aesthetic Considerations

The visual impact of the wall repairs at Sackville College would likely be minimal and largely positive. The restoration work aims to stabilise and preserve the existing boundary wall, which is part of the historic character of the site. By repairing the wall, including repositioning capping stones, removing invasive vegetation, and ensuring structural integrity, the overall appearance of the wall will be enhanced, maintaining its historic aesthetic.

While scaffolding and construction activities during the repair process may temporarily alter the appearance of the site, the long-term visual impact will be a more stable and visually cohesive boundary wall that blends with the surrounding historic environment. The careful selection of materials and attention to matching the existing stonework will ensure that the repairs are in keeping with the character of Sackville College, ultimately contributing to the preservation of the site’s historic appeal.

04 Historical Assessment.

03 Historical Assessment | Historical Development

Sackville College in East Grinstead is a historically significant almshouse with a history dating back over 400 years. It stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of the Sackville family and their commitment to charity. The College is a Grade I listed building, recognized for its exceptional architectural and historical importance.

Founding and Construction

Sackville College was founded in 1609, following the will of Robert Sackville, the Second Earl of Dorset (1560-1609), who stipulated in his 1608 will that £1,000 be used for purchasing land and constructing the college. An additional £330 was set aside for its annual upkeep, intended to house 21 single men and 10 unmarried women from the area.

The College was built in a collegiate style, echoing the design of other almshouses from the period, notably those at Emanuel College, Westminster, commissioned by the Earl’s aunt, Lady Anne Dacre, in 1594. The construction utilised repurposed stone from the Sackville family’s manor, Buckhurst Place at Withyham.

The boundary wall that we are concerned about in this report has a date stone of 1775. It forms the end of the college site along College Lane which forms an important route into the town. The boundary wall is believed to have been constructed around the same time as the College itself in the early 17th century. The wall was intended to delineate the college grounds, providing security and privacy for the residents of the almshouse. The construction used local materials, li, which are common in the area.

Architectural Features

The College’s design is characterised by its traditional collegiate quadrangle layout, with residential buildings surrounding a central courtyard. The main buildings, including the Chapel, feature sandstone construction with red-brick dressings, steeply pitched tiled roofs, and prominent stone mullioned windows. The Chapel is a particularly significant



Wall Date Stone

feature, containing a five-light east window with Perpendicular tracery, 17th-century wood panelling, and a hammer beam roof.

A notable addition to the original structure is a wing added by Edward Sackville, the Fourth Earl of Dorset (1590-1652), which provided accommodations for the Dorset family and their retinue during their travels. This wing, now used as the Warden’s apartments, reflects the continued use and adaptation of the building over centuries.

Historical Significance and Notable Wardens

Since its foundation, Sackville College has been managed by 32 Wardens, who have overseen the well-being and spiritual care of the residents. One of the most influential Wardens was John Mason Neale (1818-1866), who served in the 19th century. Neale was a key figure in the Oxford Movement, which sought to bring the Church of England closer to its medieval roots. Despite controversy, Neale made significant contributions to the College, including collaborating with the architect William Butterfield to design and build the well house and refurbish the Chapel in a 14th-century Gothic style.

Preservation and Modern Role

The preservation of Sackville College as a Grade I listed building ensures that its architectural and historical significance is recognised and protected. The building has been well-maintained and continues to serve its original purpose as an almshouse, providing housing for people “of limited means, fit for independent living, and between 60 and 80 years of age at the time of applying.”

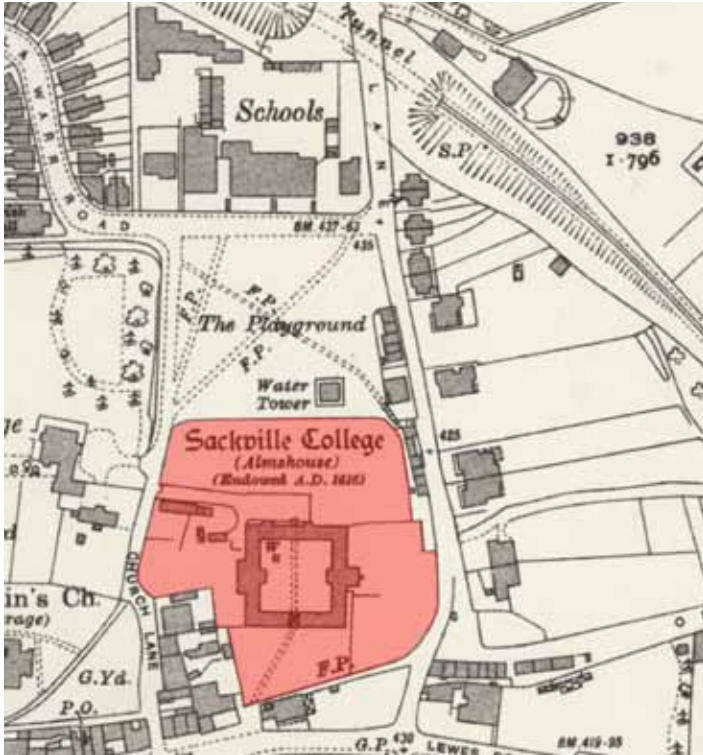
Today, Sackville College remains an integral part of East Grinstead, showcasing the Sackville family’s lasting influence and the College’s continuous service to those in need, as outlined in Robert Sackville’s original 1608 will. The college operates as a charity under a 1624 Act of Parliament and a 1631 Royal Charter, with ongoing patronage from the 11th Earl De La Warr, William Sackville (b. 1948).



Date Stone in location



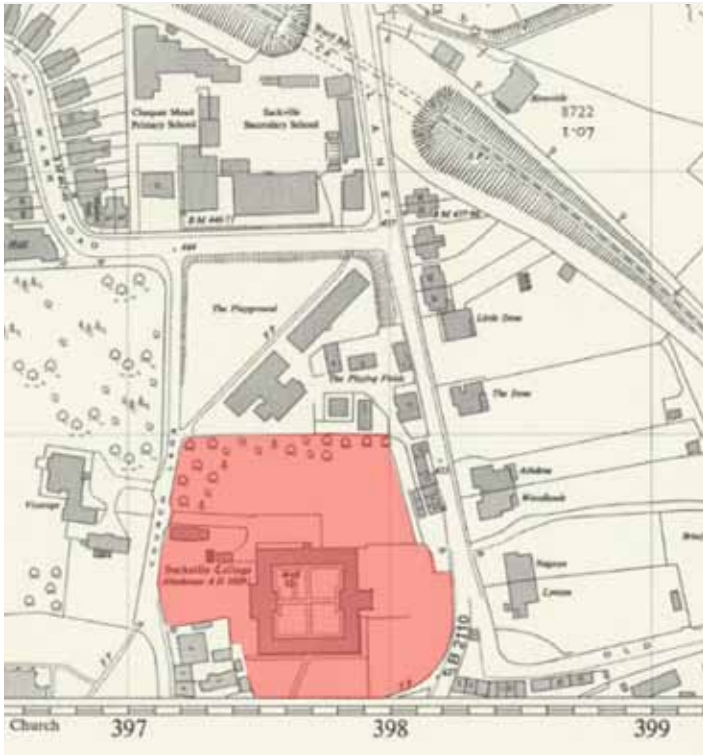
1872 OS Map



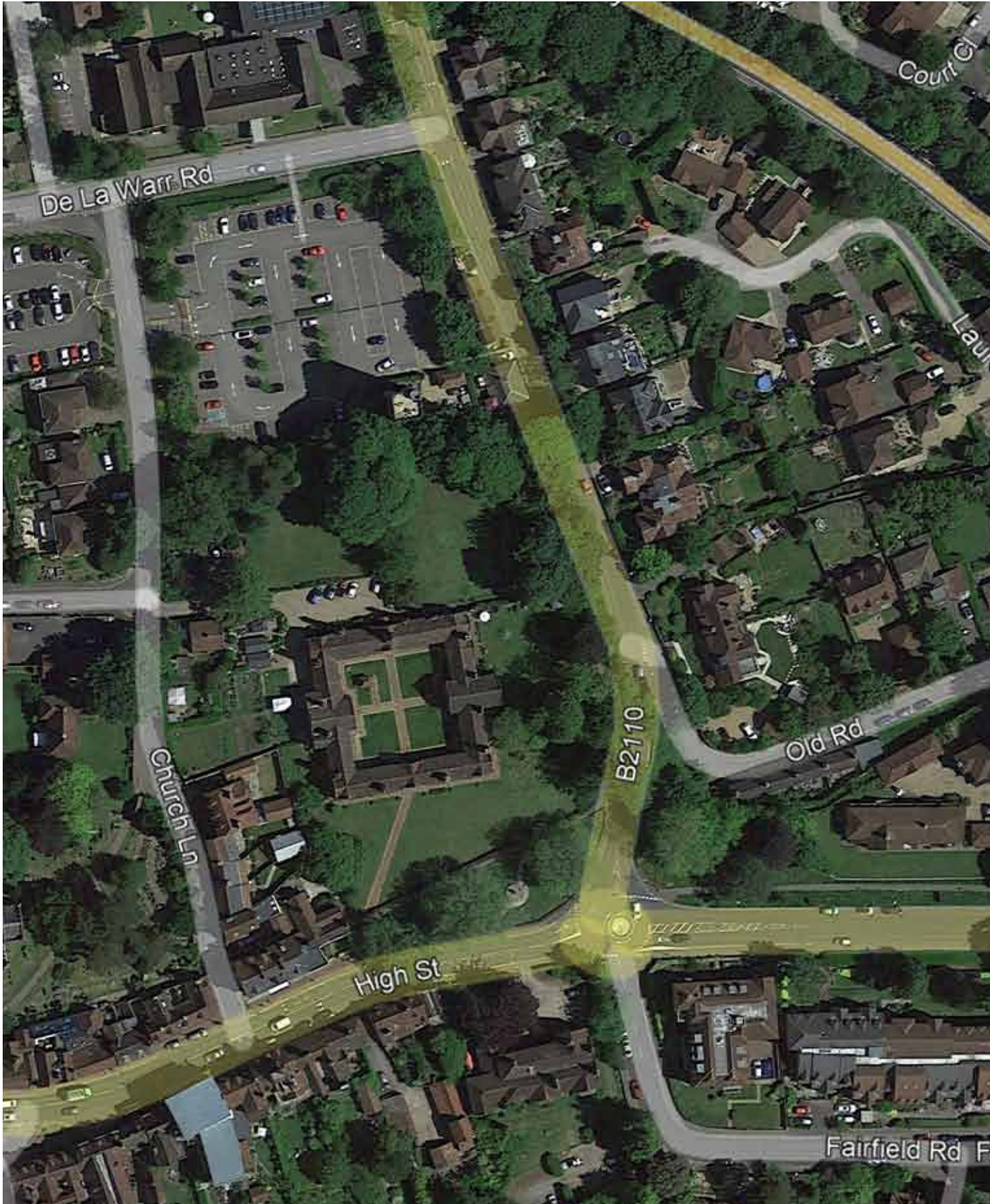
1939 OS Map



1950 OS Map



1961 OS Map



Current Aerial Photograph (Google Earth)

04 Historical Assessment

1775 Date Stone

The Date stone found within the wall is inscribed with 1775 , although due to the big change in levels between the college site and the road we would pressure that the age of the wall predates the date stone and would have been constructed around the time of the College's construction.

1872 Map

The 1872 map shows Sackville College situated quite a rural and open environment. The College is clearly marked as an almshouse, and the surrounding land, including the area labelled “The Rocks,” appears to be relatively undeveloped. As the wall follows the line of the road we can presume that it was constructed as it is today following the same line.

Current

The current aerial photograph of the area surrounding Sackville College highlights over a century of urban development in East Grinstead. Key roads such as Chequer Road, Church Lane, and Upper Road are now integral parts of the town’s infrastructure, with the college located near the heart of East Grinstead’s town center. The area around the College is primarily residential, with modern amenities and public services, including Sackville Secondary School, easily accessible. While the wall around the college retains its original line and form, it has seen some infills with more modern bricks over time. Despite these changes, Sackville College remains a significant landmark, maintaining its historical role within the community.

Key Observations

Over the decades, Sackville College has transitioned from being a relatively isolated building in a rural setting to becoming an integral part of a more populated urban environment. The maps illustrate the gradual urbanisation and development of East Grinstead around the college however the lien of the road and therefore the wall have remained the same.

In summary the historical maps show the development of the area around Sackville College in East Grinstead. Despite these changes, Sackville College remained a prominent and integral part of the community, reflecting its enduring



East Grinstead: Sackville College, 1906 The Hall at Sackville College, West Sussex Record Office, Ref. PH 26115/9 - Media ID 9361655

05 Access Considerations .



Photograph showing tight corner of wall where road closure will begin

Access

Highways Licence and Temporary Road Closure

In order to close the footpath and close part of the highway The Contractor will need to install a 3-way traffic light system from a competent Traffic Management Company in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Schedule 3 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 or agree a full road closure with the Highways Authority.

The site area will be the area of closed public highway and the immediate area above the retaining wall needed to carry out the works.

Road Closure and Licences

There will be the need to obtain a road or partial road closure and footpath closure from the Highways Authority before works start.

Traffic Control Measures

Install Highways Authority Control Measures as per Licence from the Highways Authority. This probably includes traffic lights, signage and barriers.

06 Environmental Considerations .

06 Environmental Considerations



Bats

While we do not currently have evidence to suggest the presence of bats at the site, we are committed to ensuring that all necessary precautions are taken. As such, we will conduct the appropriate surveys prior to undertaking the repairs to confirm the absence of bats and comply with relevant environmental regulations.

Conducting a survey ensures that any potential impacts on bats are identified and mitigated, preventing harm to these species. Additionally, a survey demonstrates a commitment to environmental and biodiversity conservation. By pro actively assessing the site, we ensure that all necessary precautions are taken to protect wildlife at Sackville College and its surroundings.



Trees

The trees contribute significantly to the historical character and aesthetic value of the site. They also provide ecological benefits, supporting local wildlife and contributing to the area’s environmental health. By balancing necessary tree removal with preservation, the project demonstrates a commitment to sustainability, ensuring the protection of the site’s natural and historical elements.

As part of the project, several trees identified as the primary cause of damage have already been removed by a qualified professional to prevent further deterioration of the site. No additional tree removals are proposed; instead, the focus will be on treating and removing the remaining stumps and vegetation within the walls to maintain the structural integrity of Sackville College’s boundary wall.

07 Conclusions



The Design and Access Heritage Report for Sackville College highlights significance of this historic site. As an architectural and cultural landmark, Sackville College embodies a rich tapestry of historical and aesthetic values that contribute to its unique character.

The report emphasises the critical balance between preserving the site’s historical essence and addressing urgent repairs to ensure public safety and prevent further damage.

Recommendations stress the need for sensitive interventions that respect the original materials.

Ensuring that these repairs align with established heritage conservation principles and are carried out by qualified and experienced professionals is crucial for preserving the college’s historical and cultural significance.

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