



Halfway Street Conservation Area

Area Appraisal and Management Plan

June 2008

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Location of Conservation Area



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- Halfway Street Conservation Area
- Other Conservation Areas

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Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Halfway Street Conservation Area was designated on the 6th November 1985.
- 1.2 Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, an area designated as a “conservation area” will be an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 1.3 This document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Halfway Street Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement.

2 Planning and policy context

- 2.1 Bexley’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted on 28 April 2004, contains the Council’s policies and proposals for development, regeneration and land use in the borough. Policies which seek the preservation and enhancement of statutorily listed buildings, locally listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeology are also set out in the UDP and the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 2.2 This appraisal should also be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15). It follows advice contained in “Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals” and “Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas”, published by English Heritage and the Planning Advisory Service (August 2005).

3 Summary of the special character and appearance of the conservation area

- 3.1 The special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation of Halfway Street Conservation Area derives from the following features.
 - The area’s historic street pattern, layout, plot sizes and form underpin the organic growth of a village location.
 - The age of the cottages lining this part of Halfway Street and Burnt Oak Lane which includes some of the oldest buildings in the borough.
 - The architectural and historic interest of the area’s buildings, 7 of which are on the Council’s local list of buildings of historic or architectural interest, another 8 of which are statutorily listed. These include a 15th Century timber framed building, a 16th Century hall house on Halfway Street and a terrace of four workers cottages on Burnt Oak Lane.
 - The landmark quality of Holy Trinity Church and the Church Hall that marks the junction of Hurst Road and forms a gateway to the eastern end of the conservation area.
 - The strong presence of trees and particularly those on Halfway Street, in front of Holy Trinity church and vicarage site.
 - The strong visual quality of the parkland entrance to The Glade, which provides a view through to open space beyond and an attractive green edge to the hard urban realities of Halfway Street.



4 Location, setting and boundary description

Location and context

- 4.1 The Halfway Street Conservation Area is to the south west of the London Borough of Bexley which is situated 13 miles south east of central London.
- 4.2 Located to the east, the edge of the conservation area is Holy Trinity Church and the Vicarage. On the north side the boundary is drawn to include those buildings and cottages that are on the southern side of two schools, Burnt Oak Junior School and Holy Trinity Primary School. Northeast of the conservation area is an area of open space known as The Glade which also sits rear of Holy Trinity School.
- 4.3 The conservation area western boundary terminates at a point where Halfway Street forms a junction with Old Farm Road East. The southern most boundary, runs behind the gardens of the old cottages on Halfway Street, and marks the edge of the 15th and 16th Century buildings and the later 18th and 19 Century buildings that complete this composition. At the southwestern point of the area on the junction of Halfway Street and Hurst Road is Lamorbey Church Hall. This is on the opposite side of the road from Holy Trinity Church.

Street pattern and layout

- 4.4 Until the 19th century, the area comprised a major farm and the parklands of two country houses - The Hollies and Lamorbey Park. The farm and cottages were built along the roadway linking Sidcup to Avery Hill, with the junction of Hurst Road providing a meeting of routes. It was at this point the church and school/hall were established. The frontage of Halfway Street is unaltered and provides a link through to The Glade and the former historic Lamorbey Park Estate.

- 4.5 The historic street pattern remains and defines the layout of most of the conservation area. Only the vicarage and adjacent building off Hurst Lane, opposite the Church Hall have been altered in a contemporary style.

Landscape and setting

- 4.6 The buildings and their surroundings still create the rural setting of a small hamlet. On the south side of Halfway Street the character is predominantly individual cottages set close to the road with mature front gardens. The north part of Halfway Street is more diverse with a mixture of old and new housing and a contemporary commercial garage dominating the central area.

- 4.7 To the east the semi rural nature of the landscape is emphasized, as there are views through the open space to the Glade. The terrace of cottages on Burnt Oak Lane was built for workers at the Lamorbey Estate in 1874. There was a bungalow (No. 8 Burnt Oak Lane) built as a schoolhouse in 1841, regrettably this was recently demolished and the site is now earmarked for redevelopment.



10-16 Burnt Oak Lane

- 4.8 The small front gardens between the properties Nos. 21 to 33 Halfway Street provide a soft green barrier and edge to the adjacent narrow public footway, however they also obscure or partially obscure views of the buildings from Halfway Street. Glimpses of trees can be seen through the gaps between the buildings this creates a visual illusion of woodlands beyond. Although there are no street trees, private open space, garden trees and shrubbery, and the trees in the open area at The Glade are important to the character of the conservation area and are therefore worthy of protection.



Designated conservation area boundary

- 4.9 The conservation area's boundary has been defined so as to encompass the old buildings of the hamlet which create the rural village character. The boundary follows property boundaries in order to provide a readily definable area. Beyond the boundary, along Station Road and Halfway Street, the character of the area changes noticeably, becoming more suburban.
- 4.10 The eastern boundary marks the change to open school playgrounds. Within the Glade, the boundary marks the point where the open space visible from the Conservation Area terminates at a boundary which funnels into the narrow open space link to the lake and park beyond.
- 4.11 The townscape analysis Map indicates the designated boundary.

5 Historic development and archaeological potential

5.1 The existence of late medieval buildings on the southern side of Halfway Street suggest that the general settlement pattern has remained relatively unchanged. Some particularly old buildings remain, including Nos 25-27, dating from the 15th century and another pair, Nos 33-35, that incorporate a 16th century “hall house”. The historic sequence is rounded off on this side of street by buildings from the 18th and 19th Centuries that are two story’s high and contain a range of vernacular materials.

5.2 The buildings on the north side are generally later and include an unusual timber framed cottage at No 50 with a Victorian extension. There are also early 20th Century houses and a terrace of cottages on Burnt Oak Lane. By the mid 20th Century the layout of the hamlet had developed very much in the form to be seen today, stretching along Halfway Street and extending northwards partly along Burnt Oak Lane. The Glades, was opened as a public park in 1948.



Entrance to Lamorbey Park

- 5.3 The arrival of the railways in 1866 encouraged expansion of the area but also created a marked division between the north and south side of Halfway Street, with the northern part taking most of the post-railway development. The buildings to the south remain as a reminder of the rural character of the early hamlet.
- 5.4 As the development spread so the religious needs of the community expanded and at the east end of the area the original Trinity Church was built in 1879 in Kentish ragstone. The adjacent church hall, formerly the new National School opened in February 1881, was constructed in a yellow brick. Also, industrial activity grew in relation to the big estates in the area (such as Lamorbey), as witnessed through the building of workers cottages.
- 5.5 With the increased rate of commuting into central London and the electrification of the railways in the 1920’s there was a boom in suburban house building. Most of the land to the immediate south and west of the conservation area has been developed, whilst the north-east is marked by open areas of parkland providing a rural setting to the hamlet.
- 5.6 In the 1920’s, Halfway Street Farm stood where Lamorbey Baths are and the sorting office was then a row of cottages called Church cottages. Burnt Oak Lane too was about to undergo development into a road from a previous narrow lane skirting the edges of fields.
- 5.7 Despite the rural community at Halfway Street becoming surrounded by suburban expansion much of the core of the hamlet remained intact and is now is typified as an unusual survivor of the rural scene.
- 5.8 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the conservation area. Human settlement in dates back to the 14th Century this location. Therefore, although it is not a known archaeological area, given the early development of a rural settlement, it is an important location where there is a high likelihood that archaeological finds may occur.

6 Spatial analysis

Character and interrelationship of spaces

- 6.1 The Conservation area is defined so as to include the old buildings, which comprised the former hamlet, this creates an image of a rural village character. The property boundaries of the old buildings to the south of Halfway Street provide a readily definable area. Development within the southern edge of the area consists of individual properties (Nos 21, 23, 29, 31) and pairings (Nos 25-27, 33-35) fronting the main road. These buildings each have long rear gardens.
- 6.2 On the north side of Halfway Street the built character is more mixed with short rows (Nos 10-16), pairs (Nos 4-6) and individual properties (Nos 50-54). The new housing at Nos 1-3 Chestnut Close adds to the openness of the area and in many ways complements Nos 50-54.
- 6.3 Beyond the boundary, along Station Road and Halfway Street, the character of the area changes noticeably, becoming more suburban. The north eastern boundary marks the change to open school playgrounds.

Key views and vistas

- 6.4 Views out of the conservation area are most fully realised in the sites south of Halfway Street, through the gaps between the old cottages and through to portly standing trees at the back of their gardens, adding to the rural illusion of the area.
- 6.5 The views through the buildings on the north side are plainer, mainly showing the roofs of the houses of Chestnut Avenue. The new houses allows for view to be taken of the back of Nos 50-54 Halfway Street.
- 6.6 Within the Glade, open space is visible from the conservation area out to the lake and park beyond. A key view is just on entering the Glade, with the view of the back of the workers cottages on Burnt Oak Lane. This scene is best captured through two trees that stand in isolation on this edge of the Glade.
- 6.7 Within the Conservation area other key views are found around Holy Trinity Church and the Church Hall area. The approach to the church is signified by the lych gate, which acts as the point by which views are taken into the building. The church has an impressive old bell on its main facade and there is also a water dial in the front garden. The unique tiles of the church hall on the other side of the road provide a bold comparison to the plain skyline of the church. These two buildings provide a visual contrast when standing on the south side of Halfway Street.
- 6.8 Within the Conservation Area there are many views of importance, including those of individual houses and streets. Because a view is not mentioned it is not because it is unimportant but rather that there are so many different views. Some significant views are marked on the attached Townscape Analysis Map.





7 Character analysis

Definition of character areas

- 7.1 The buildings and their surroundings still create the rural setting of a small hamlet. On the south side of Halfway Street, the character is predominantly individual cottages set close to the road with mature front gardens. All are two storeys high and display a range of vernacular materials. The character of the north side of Halfway Street is more diverse. It includes, at no. 50, an unusual 18th Century timber-framed cottage with a Victorian extension. Other development is more recent, including shops (now a garage) and some early 20th Century houses. East of Burnt Oak Lane, the character changes to more open parkland. the frontage to Halfway Street is parkland with many mature trees, providing a link through to The Glade and Lamorbey Park. This merges into the well-wooded site of Holy Trinity Church and vicarage.
- 7.2 Principle characteristics/features of Halfway Street Conservation Area are:
- the landmark building of Holy Trinity Church located at the T-junction of Hurst Road and Halfway Street;
 - the relatively high number of historic buildings including Grade II Listed Buildings in such a small geographic area. These include the cottages at Nos 25-27 and Nos 33-35 Halfway Street, and Nos 10-16 Burnt Oak Lane. In addition the cluster of Local Listed buildings at Nos 21, 23, 29, 31 and 50 Halfway Street, Sidcup;
 - the open aspect to The Glade public open space which creates and adds to the semi-rural ambiance of the conservation area and gives views north east beyond into the historical parkland setting of Lamorbey;
 - mature trees to the rear of properties on Halfway Street and in The Glade open space add significantly to the “rural” atmosphere; and
 - significant historical highway route, road alignment and junction of Halfway Street

and Burnt Oak Lane. Locally evolved street name, which became known as the “halfway” point or street between the settlements of Foots Cray and Eltham.

Activity, prevailing or former uses within the conservation area

- 7.3 Halfway Street Conservation Area is primarily residential use with the small but visually intrusive commercial use as found at the garage located at Nos 10-16 Halfway Street to the north of Halfway Street and west of Burnt Oak Lane. The church and church hall provides for its residential community.

Architectural and historic character

- 7.4 The conservation area has a memorable historic character and appearance deriving from the heritage buildings, built in a mixture of vernacular and architectural styles and local building materials. The plot widths on the south side of Halfway Street are very irregular and there is no uniform building roofline. No’s 25-27 is heavily restored 15th century timber framed building that would have used local wood and earth, whilst the 16th century hall house at No 33-35 is also typified by the use of local stone and clay.
- 7.5 Although the original Holy Trinity Church (1879) was substantially destroyed by fire the design of the “new” church (1909 by Ewan Christian) is built in the local vernacular of Kentish ragstone with gothic-arched windows, substantially rebuilt after the war in the same architectural style.
- 7.6 Local features gives some buildings a distinctive style and identity, such as the yellow brick detail and the steep pitched tiled roof incorporating bands of fish scale tiles, at Lamorbey Church Hall.
- 7.7 The diverse range of buildings on the north side of Halfway Street is typified by the unusual timber framed 18th century cottage with Victorian extension at No 50 Halfway Street.
- 7.8 In general the cottages on the northern side of Halfway Street have more regular plot sizes and roofline, than those on the southern side. The unifying features of the buildings on the north side are the materials of brick and concrete and architectural features such as bay windows and unified back elevations with regular roof proportions. The relationship with the skyline is much clearer on the northern side.
- 7.9 There are eight statutorily listed buildings (Grade II) in the area and an unusual assemblage of ‘Buildings of Local Interest’ i.e. buildings of local importance which are historic and contribute significantly to the townscape of the Borough. These are marked on the attached Townscape Analysis Map.
- 7.10 The small row of four workers cottages at No10-16 Burnt Oak Lane and two pairs of cottages Nos 25-27 and 33-35 on Halfway Street are on the national list. There are examples of 18 and 19th century buildings designed in the local vernacular at nos. 21, 23, 29 and 31, which are all on the local list. No 50 is on the local list, as an unusual timber framed cottage.



50 Halfway Street

Buildings of townscape merit

- 7.11 The Townscape Analysis Map identifies many “buildings of townscape merit”. These buildings will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.
- 7.12 The area has local landmark, statutory listed and locally listed buildings, which are buildings of townscape merit; this helps create the conservation area’s distinctive and interesting historic townscape. As recommended in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, the general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Trees, greenery and green spaces

- 7.13 There are several specimen trees, or groups of trees, which make a positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area, especially those around the church; those at Nos 33-35 Halfway Street and those fronting No 52-55 Halfway Street.

- 7.14 Also, those trees and groups of trees, behind Nos 21 to 35 Halfway Street, which are particularly prominent and make a contribution to the setting of the conservation area. It is also noted that a shield of trees have been planted in front of No 21, blanking out the visual relationship with the street.

- 7.15 There is one significant area of green open space located at The Glade, which functions as a suburban area of green and tranquility. The area adjoins historic Lamorbey Park, which is on the English Heritage Register of Historic and Gardens (Grade II).

- 7.16 Important trees have been identified on the accompanying Townscape Analysis Map. It is not appropriate or practical to identify every important tree that contributes to the character of the area and lack of a specific reference does not imply that a particular tree is not of value.



*33-35 Halfway Street
from Old Farm Avenue*

Assets of Halfway Street Conservation Area (positives)

- 7.17 The positive physical assets of Halfway Street Conservation Area are listed below.
- Architectural and historic interest of the buildings, ranging from 15th to 20th Century; excellent illustration of domestic architectural styles and local building materials.
 - The western part of the area has narrow pavements and curved alignment of the highway, which characterise rural character.
 - Public open spaces of the Glades and Holy Trinity



Church have wide pavements and informal seating areas that offer an attractive recreational area away from the road and traffic.

- The area contains mature tree specimens and shrubbery, which make a positive contribution to the character and setting of the listed buildings and the conservation area.
- Interesting spatial relationship/characteristics between buildings and roadway, which makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the street scene.

The extent of intrusion or damage to the conservation area (negatives)

7.18 The main intrusion or negative features are:

- The commercial uses and garage facility at Nos 10-16 Halfway Street is out of character and detracts from the conservation area. The building style does not make any positive contribution to the area.
- Advertising bolted on to the railings at the garage is unattractive and detrimental to the visual aesthetics of the conservation area.
- The trees and shrubbery, especially on Nos 33-35 and No 21, conceal the majority of the historic buildings, which are set back from the road. The view of property Nos 33-35 is not possible from Halfway Street.
- The high volume of traffic in the area is very intrusive, especially at school opening and closing times when parents drop off/pick up their children. Similarly the pedestrian guard railings in the area are utilitarian and seem to overwhelm the street scene at the junction with Hurst Road.

Problems and pressures

7.19 The Conservation area is blighted by the intrusion of traffic; particularly HGV's, cars at school times, and buses traveling mainly in a north westerly/ south easterly direction.

7.20 Commercial activity connected to the garage such as inappropriate advertising and increased pollution is a potential threat to the setting.

7.21 There have been a number of extensions and changes to the rear of Nos 4-6 Halfway Street. In general terms, there is pressure in the area for further improvements to living quarters and for the addition of conservatories to the rear.

7.22 No 8 Burnt Oak Lane has been subject to many planning applications for conversions and new use as a day nursery or as part of a new build terrace. It now has planning approval and demolition has taken place, redevelopment with replacement dwellings with parking is imminent.

General condition

7.23 Buildings are generally in good condition. Street furniture such as benches, paving and signposts are all in good order. Road surface is satisfactory.



Opportunities for enhancement

- 7.24 Historic building grants should be targeted at householders to restore or reinstate historic features.
- 7.25 There is potential for greater management of the trees/shrubbery to the front of Nos 21-35 Halfway Street, which could offer fuller appreciation to the public of the historic buildings, as well as further privacy to the owner.
- 7.26 Sensitive redevelopment of Nos 10-16 Halfway Street could potentially enhance the conservation area.
- 7.27 Additional tree planting at the Hurst Road/ Station Road Junction offers potential for enhancement. However, any planting needs to ensure it does not obscure the church or church hall. Similarly, there is potential for framing a key view to the back of the workers cottages at Nos 10-16 Burnt Oak Lane.

Potential for new development

- 7.28 Any extensions or new development which backs on to the open parkland area will need to take into account the views to the rear and also the social historic importance of their link to the park.
- 7.29 Any development will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area in line with Government advice and policies.
- 7.30 All future proposals for development will be judged for their effect on the character, appearance and special interest of the conservation area as defined in this appraisal.
- 7.31 As mentioned above, sensitive redevelopment of Nos.10-16 Halfway Street could potentially enhance the conservation area. Any new use to the commercial garage area needs to be subject to conditions limiting hours of use and type of activity on site amongst others. There would be benefits in restricting the current haphazard use of advertising boards on the railings

Townscape Analysis Map



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Part 2: Conservation Area Management Plan

1 Legislative background

- 1.1 The purpose of this Management Plan is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area's special character. The special qualities of the area have been identified as part of the appraisal process and this guidance draws upon that information. Both the Appraisal and the Management Plan will be subject to monitoring and review.
- 1.2 The document reflects government guidance as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) and English Heritage's, "Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas" (August 2005). It is important that the development control process ensures the preservation of the special character of the conservation area and that opportunities are taken to identify and implement enhancements. The key aims of the Management Plan, supported by the Character Appraisal, are to:
- Raise awareness of the importance and value of the local heritage.
 - Identify distinctive built environment character areas within the conservation area; provide guidance; and set out objectives to preserve and enhance buildings, structures and features.
 - Identify distinctive public realm character areas within the conservation area; provide guidance; and establish key actions to preserve and enhance the landscape, open spaces and streets.
 - Provide tailored design guidance and set out actions for the enhancement of the conservation area.
 - Outline the key statutory requirements in respect of development within the conservation area; provide guidance; and set out actions to secure the proper and effective application of these requirements.
 - Propose the implementation of management procedures to co-ordinate the delivery of new works and maintenance of public spaces.
- 1.3 The Management Plan encourages the Local Authority, developers, development professions (e.g. planners, architects, landscape architects, highway engineers) and the local community to engage in the preservation and enhancement of the local historic environment. This will help secure the long-term viability of the conservation area as an important heritage asset.

2 Planning controls and the Council's Development Plan

- 2.1 Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. The local plan policies form the basis for making development control decisions with regard to new development and extensions. Also, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 there are a number of extra controls, which apply to existing buildings in conservation areas. Consent is needed for:
- Demolition of a building (apart from some minor exceptions).
 - Demolition of walls, gates or fences of over a metre next to a highway or over two metres in other locations.

- 2.2 Where a property lies within a conservation area, planning control is extended so that planning permission and conservation area consent will be required, for example:
- A dwelling house enlarged by more than 50 cubic metres or over 10% of the size of the original building, whichever is greater.
 - The construction of a detached building, enclosure or pool of over 10 cubic metres in the grounds of a house.
 - Cladding any part of the exterior of a property in stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
 - Enlargement of a house by additions to or alteration of its roof.
 - The installation of a satellite dish or antenna on a chimney, on a building over 15 metres in height or on a wall or roof slope, which fronts a highway (refer Government publication “A Householder’s Planning Guide for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes”).
 - Notification must be given of felling or lopping of trees.
- 2.3 Conservation Area Consent is required for the full or substantial demolition of buildings within the conservation area. In accordance with the Government Guidance in PPG15 there will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.4 Any application for the demolition of a Statutorily Listed, Locally Listed Buildings and/or a Building of Townscape Merit will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification stating why the building should be demolished. The Council will expect the applicant to demonstrate that:
- The building is beyond economic repair.
 - The building has been offered on the open market at a realistic price.
 - If vacant, that alternative uses have been sought.
- 2.5 Where alterations are proposed, the reinstatement of original detailing and composition will be sought to reinforce the unity and cohesive quality of the townscape. The Council will seek to ensure that new development within the conservation area serves to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area in accordance with the adopted Bexley UDP (April 2004) in particular policies ENV46 - ENV55, Design and Development Control Guidelines, the emerging Local Development Framework, and other published design guidance.
- 2.6 Furthermore, the Council will expect all applications for extensions and alterations to be particularly carefully considered and only well detailed schemes, using the characteristic and appropriate traditional materials, will be approved.
- 3 Listed buildings, landmark buildings, buildings of local architectural or historic interest and buildings of townscape merit.**
- 3.1 Within the Halfway Street Conservation Area there are many fine historic individual buildings of townscape merit. In addition, all properties collectively form a unique townscape composition and are worthy of conservation area status. The principal buildings are shown on the Townscape Analysis Map.
- 3.3 With all local list, buildings of townscape merit and local landmark buildings it is important that any alterations or extensions should be of matching scale, design and/or materials.

4 Erosion of character

- 4.1 Where the quality of an area is being eroded by alterations the Council may make use of what is termed an Article 4 Direction. This may be used to withdraw permitted development rights for a prescribed range of development which materially affect aspects of the external appearance of dwelling houses in conservation areas. This includes the erection, alteration, or removal of a chimney; various kinds of development fronting a highway, or open space, such as the enlargement, improvement, or other alteration of a dwelling house; alterations to windows or doors; the construction of an external porch; and the painting of a dwelling house, or of a building or enclosure within its curtilage. It may also be used to withdraw the permitted development rights to demolish a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, if it is within the curtilage of a dwelling house and fronts a highway or open space.
- 4.2 In general terms, it was identified that the following alterations pose a threat to the special character of the area.
- Loss of timber windows and doors;
 - Alterations to window and door openings.
 - Use of concrete roof tiles, removal of redundant chimney stacks, pots and roof features.
 - Alterations to the roofscape, including the installation of dormers.
 - Unsympathetic side extensions.
 - Removal of front boundaries and loss of gardens, for the provision of car parking spaces.
- 4.3 In determining planning applications the Council will take the above factors into consideration. The Council will oppose those alterations, which pose a threat to the special character of the conservation area.
- 4.4 In addition, as an aid to protecting the character of the area the Council will ensure that unauthorised development is subject to effective enforcement action. This is to protect the special qualities of the area generally and to ensure that detrimental unauthorised alterations throughout the area are rectified where legal powers permit.
- 4.5 The Council may assist with the provision of grant aid for projects, which restore or reinstate the original features of a building and will contribute to achieving higher standards of preservation and enhancement.

5 Trees, landscape and space between buildings

- 5.1 On private land within the conservation area, anyone intending to lop or fell a tree greater than 75mm in diameter at 1.5 meters above the ground must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. This provides the Council with an opportunity to assess the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.2 The small front gardens at the properties No.21 to 33 Halfway Street provide a soft green barrier and edge to the adjacent narrow footway. However, they conceal the majority of the historic properties, which are set back from the road. There seems potential for greater management of these trees/shrubbery, which could offer fuller appreciation to the public of the historic buildings, as well as further privacy to the householder.

- 5.3 Of particular concern is that many gardens have made way for paved forecourts and this is unfortunate. This practice incrementally erodes the character of the conservation area. The Council will resist the loss of trees to facilitate the provision of car parking areas in front gardens.
- 5.4 An important aspect in the conservation area is the gaps between these buildings where glimpses of trees can be seen this creates a visual illusion of woodlands beyond and adds to the “rural” ambiance of the area.
- 5.5 There are no street trees in the area, however private open space, private garden trees and shrubbery, and the trees at The Glade are important to the character of the conservation area and are therefore worthy of protection. Additional tree planting, resources permitting, is possible at the Hurst Road/ Station Road Junction. However, any planting needs to ensure it does not obscure the church or church hall. Similarly, there is potential for framing a key view to the back of the workers cottages at Nos 10-16 Burnt Oak Lane.
- 5.6 The Council will consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders in appropriate circumstances where a tree has significant amenity value and is considered to be under threat. This will include trees both within and outside the area, where these contribute to the setting of the area or views identified in the appraisal. The Council will also seek to maintain the open spaces and views between buildings and breaks in the built environment.

6 Setting and views

- 6.1 The setting of the conservation area is very important and development that adversely affects the immediate setting and longer views, into and from the conservation area, will be resisted. The important views are identified on the Townscape Analysis Map. The Council will seek to ensure that all development serves to respect these important views.

7 The public realm and enhancement

- 7.1 The conservation area has generally been resurfaced using a blacktop paving surface. Lighting is provided by late twentieth century, utilitarian columns. The installation of a more appropriate style of column in keeping with the character of the conservation area could significantly reinforce the identity of the area and the public realm.
- 7.2 In general highway signage, traffic calming measures and other structures can all serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area, and any redundant modern features should be removed. Resources permitting a critical audit of the public realm should be undertaken to identify redundant features and opportunities for enhancement.
- 7.3 In Halfway Street Conservation Area the high volume of traffic in the area is very intrusive, especially at school opening and closing times when parents drop off/pick up their children. Similarly, the installation of pedestrian guard railings in the area is very utilitarian in style and seems to overwhelm the streetscene at the Hurst Road junction. Should opportunities arise a critical review should be undertaken to assess alternative traffic management options, which may prove to be less intrusive and enhance the conservation area.
- 7.4 To enhance the street’s appearance, the Council will encourage property owners to

retain their front gardens rather than paving them over to provide additional vehicle parking.

- 7.5 The Council will seek to ensure that any surviving historic streetscape features are retained, and that any future highway works will bring a positive improvement to the character or appearance of the conservation area. All works should accord with the spirit of English Heritage's 'Streets For All' 2004.

8 New buildings and building extensions

- 8.1 New developments in conservation areas should aspire to a quality of design and execution, related to its context. This will normally involve respecting values established through assessment of the significance of the area.
- 8.2 In Halfway Street Conservation Area the main pressure for future development is likely to take the form of residential extensions, which could have an adverse effect on the harmony of the existing development. Further development might be permissible in some instances, as long as the proposals utilise current enclosed areas at ground floor level to the rear and are designed in a way that is sensitive to scale, detail and materials.
- 8.3 The setting of the houses is frequently enhanced by the presence of large mature trees. Vegetation including especially trees, shrubs and grass, adds significantly to the character of the area and any proposals for alterations or enhancement will need to be considered very carefully in terms of local and wider impact.
- 8.4 The roofscape although varied in detail and materials, is traditional in form, with heights relating mainly to the two-storey scale of the area. Any variations such as dormers or other extensions are likely to adversely affect this established character. In particular, rooflights and dormer windows to the front roof slope will detract from the character and appearance of the area and therefore fail to "preserve or enhance" the conservation area and will generally be unacceptable.
- 8.5 The commercial uses and garage facility at Nos 10-16 Halfway Street were identified, in the Part I: Halfway Street Area Appraisal, as out of character and detracting from the conservation area. Opportunities may arise which will allow for the sensitive redevelopment of this site for a use more in keeping with the conservation area.

9 Solar panels and wind turbines

- 9.1 In general terms, the installation of solar panels and/or wind turbines within or adjacent to a conservation area would introduce alien features and by their inherent design they will be visually intrusive. In terms of the main conservation principle that any proposed development should "preserve or enhance" the character of the conservation area any installations may be problematic. The Council has published guidance, which provides information on the subject. Please refer "Solar Panels and Wind Turbines: A Householder Guide on the Need for Planning Permission and Building Regulations approval" (Jan. 2007).

10 Monitoring change

- 10.1 It is recommended that the physical environment of the conservation area and key sites adjacent to the conservation area is monitored by carrying out detailed surveys, including a dated photographic record, on a regular basis, so as to identify any

unauthorised work and consider whether enforcement action should be taken.

- 10.2 Any previously unreported unauthorised development or work identified by the detailed survey would then be considered by the Planning Control Enforcement Team for action, resources permitting.

11 Boundary definition

- 11.1 The appraisal identified that the existing boundary was generally a good reflection of the area of greatest historic significance and special character and consequently no revisions are suggested to the existing designation.
- 11.2 The Council will maintain the defined boundary of the designated area and periodically review the boundary of the conservation area in accordance with best practice and guidance on management of the historic environment.

12 Community engagement

- 12.1 It is mentioned in recent urban design publications that, “people make places”. Although the Council has planning powers it can exercise over development and may, when funds are available, carry out enhancement works, ultimately the quality of any place depends on all the people who affect the area. In predominately residential areas such as Halfway Street Conservation Area, the owners of property play a key role in affecting how the area looks. Good communication between local residents and the Council is one way of helping owners and the Council to carryout appropriate works and take informed decisions that are of benefit to the area.
- 12.2 To that end the Council will seek to maintain and promote close collaborative working with the local residents and any associations on issues relevant to the management of the area, including proposals for development and enhancement, within and adjoining the conservation area. It will also improve dialogue with the wider community. This may include the production and distribution of information leaflets subject to resources.
- 12.3 The following actions have been taken to ensure that this appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community.
- 12.4 Public consultation - Halfway Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan were subject to public consultation during February to April 2008. As part of the consultation exercise comments were sought from the Conservation Advisory Committee, local amenity/history groups, local partnerships (as appropriate), organisations such as English Heritage, etc., and individual owners/occupiers of all of the properties affected. The document was also placed on the Council’s website, in local libraries and contact centre. A letter advising of these arrangements was delivered to all properties in the area. the results of the consultations were considered by the Cabinet Member, the text was revised and adopted. Copies of this document are available both as printed documents and on the Council’s website.
- 12.5 The Council will seek to improve communication with local residents and where it can help and encourage local residents to engage and assist with pursuing conservation objectives

Appendices

1 General guidance to homeowners on repairs to historic buildings in conservation areas

Note: Before starting any work, property owners are advised to contact the Council.

Roofs

The roof is often an important feature of a historic building and the roofscape can often make a significant contribution to the character of the area. The retention of its original structure, shape, materials and features is important. Historic roof materials and features such as chimneystacks, chimney pots, dormers, roof lights, as well as details such as decorative ridge tiles and finials all form an integral part of the character of the building and the area. The loss or inappropriate alteration of historic materials and features is likely to be harmful to the appearance and character of historic buildings and areas.

The Council encourages the retention and reinstatement of traditional roofing materials. When roofing materials are replaced, it is important that as much as possible of the original material is re-used. When practical, original material should be re-used on visible areas, with matching new materials on other parts.

The addition of modern features, such as roof lights, is likely to be harmful to its character and appearance of the building and area, and should be avoided at all times. When replacement of materials and features becomes necessary, the replacement should respect the design and material of the original and the age and character of the building and/ or the area.

Chimneys

Chimneystacks are both decorative and functional features of the roofscape and can be important indicators of the age of a building and its internal planning, and they should normally be retained, even when no longer required. Chimney pots can sometimes be significant decorative features in their own right and can be important as part of the roofscape, which will be damaged if they are removed or replaced with an inappropriate type.

Dormers

Original dormers should be retained and carefully repaired. If beyond repair they should be reconstructed using traditional materials with all historic features reproduced. Enlargement of existing dormers on principle elevations should be avoided. Any new dormers should respect the symmetry of either an individual building or a terrace. Where new dormers would be inappropriate to the type of building or the proposed position, new recessed 'conservation' roof lights may be acceptable, but not on prominent or generally visible roof slopes.

Fascias

Features such as timber bargeboards and fascias should be preserved and, if replacement becomes necessary, it should wherever possible replicate the design and material of those original to the building. The addition of bargeboards and fascias to buildings that did not

previously have such a feature will normally be resisted, as where they would detract from the character of the building or the area.

Walls

Walls are the main structural fabric of any building. Alterations to the wall surfaces will have a significant impact on the overall appearance of a historic building. Every effort should be made to retain or re-use original facing brickwork and stonework. Alterations or repairs to external walls should respect the original material and endeavour to match it in appearance. Particular care should be paid to re-pointing brick or stonework. Methods should be employed to minimize damage to historic building materials: an appropriate lime mix mortar should be used and should match the appearance of the original pointing. Brick or stonework should not normally be rendered unless the surface was rendered originally. It may be necessary to remove more recently applied render if this is damaging the surface beneath.

Painting and stone cleaning

Painting or re-painting involving a change of colour will affect the character of a historic building. Previously unpainted surfaces should not normally be painted over. In many cases, the colour of the paint may be less important than the first application of an unsuitable covering, which could damage the original fabric and be damaging to remove. Cleaning can have a marked effect on the character of historic buildings and affect the historic fabric. The cleaning of an individual building within a terrace would obviously affect the appearance of the terrace as a whole. All cleaning methods can cause damage if carelessly handled. Cleaning with low-pressure water and non-abrasive brushes is often the preferred method. Other methods including abrasive and chemical cleaning can damage wall surfaces and destroy detail and should generally be avoided. Consideration should be given as to whether such cleaning is either necessary or worthwhile to remove corrosive dirt or to achieve a major improvement in appearance.

Windows and doors

Door and window openings establish the character of an elevation; they should not generally be altered in their proportions or details. The depth to which window frames are recessed within a wall is a varying historical feature of importance and greatly affects the character of a building – this too should be respected.

Windows - The size and shape of window openings, window frame details, arrangement and detail of glazing bars, and the method of opening are important characteristics of a historic building or an area. The traditional material used for windows in most historic buildings is timber, although occasionally the original windows are metal. It can often be difficult to introduce new materials without altering the appearance or character of the area.

Wherever possible, original windows should be retained and repaired. Improved heat and sound insulation can be achieved in unobtrusive ways by draft-proofing and soundproofing measures, rather than replacement of the original window. When necessary, replacement or repaired windows should accurately replicate the size and shape of original timber frames and glazing bars in all respects.

Doors - Doorways form an important element of historic buildings and can add to the character of conservation areas. Together with the door surround, fanlight, steps and original door furniture, doors can provide a significant and prominent feature. In recent years there has been a trend towards the replacement of historic timber front doors with modern doors

of inappropriate materials and design. To preserve the character and appearance of historic buildings and areas, it is important to retain the original front door, door surround, fanlight and other features wherever possible. When necessary, replacement or repaired doors should accurately replicate the original design in all respects.

Window and door materials

In most situations timber should be used for the replacement of historic windows and doors; generally UPVC cannot satisfactorily replicate the historic detailing and character of these features. UPVC windows and doors can degrade and discolour; they are not completely maintenance free and can be difficult to repair. Developments in timber preservation, finishing materials and manufacture can produce timber windows and doors with a significantly longer life than UPVC.

Rainwater goods

Original rainwater goods are an integral part of the design and character of an historic building. They will normally be cast iron, which if properly maintained should last many years longer than replacement plastic goods. Cast iron gutters, down pipes and hopper heads etc. should be retained wherever possible. Where rainwater goods are required to be renewed, the replacement should replicate the original in all respects. Suitably profiled cast aluminium may be an acceptable alternative to cast iron in certain situations. However, plastic rainwater goods should be avoided on buildings where cast iron has been previously used. Additional rainwater goods should be kept to a minimum and should not disturb or break through any decorative architectural features.

Boundary walls and railings

Boundary walls and railings are important architectural and streetscape features. The loss or alteration of these features over time has been detrimental to the overall character of the Borough's historic areas and buildings. Distinctive boundary elements include brick and stone walls, gates, cast iron railings, and stone and brick plinths piers. Historic boundaries should be retained, repaired or reinstated as necessary using appropriate techniques and detailed to match the original. Particular care should be taken to repair or reinstate existing walls using appropriate techniques and materials. Stonework if appropriate should be locally sourced. Special care should be taken to use the correct lime mortar mix and method of pointing in brick or stone walls.

Minor additions

Features such as aerials, satellite dishes, burglar alarms, CCTV cameras, heating system flues and vents should be kept to a minimum, and where necessary should be installed in locations and in a manner that will not harm the appearance or character of the building or area.

2 Contacts

For information on listed buildings and conservation areas in the London Borough of Bexley.

Mr M Nicholls / Mr G Fraser
London Borough of Bexley,
Strategic Planning and Development
Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street,
Bexleyheath, Kent
DA6 7AT

Tel: 020 8303 7777

Email: martyn.nicholls@bexley.gov.uk / gordon.fraser@bexley.gov.uk

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas:

English Heritage (London Region)
3 Bunhill Row
London EC1 8YZ

Tel: 020 7973 3000

Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London E1 6DY

Tel: 020 7377 1644

Email: info@spab.org.uk

If you would like to know more about the services the Council provides, or would like either a translation of this document or the information in a different format, please call our Customer Contact Centre on 020 8303 7777 and press 0, quoting reference:

