



Parkhurst Conservation Area

Area Appraisal and Management Plan

October 2009

Listening to you, working for you



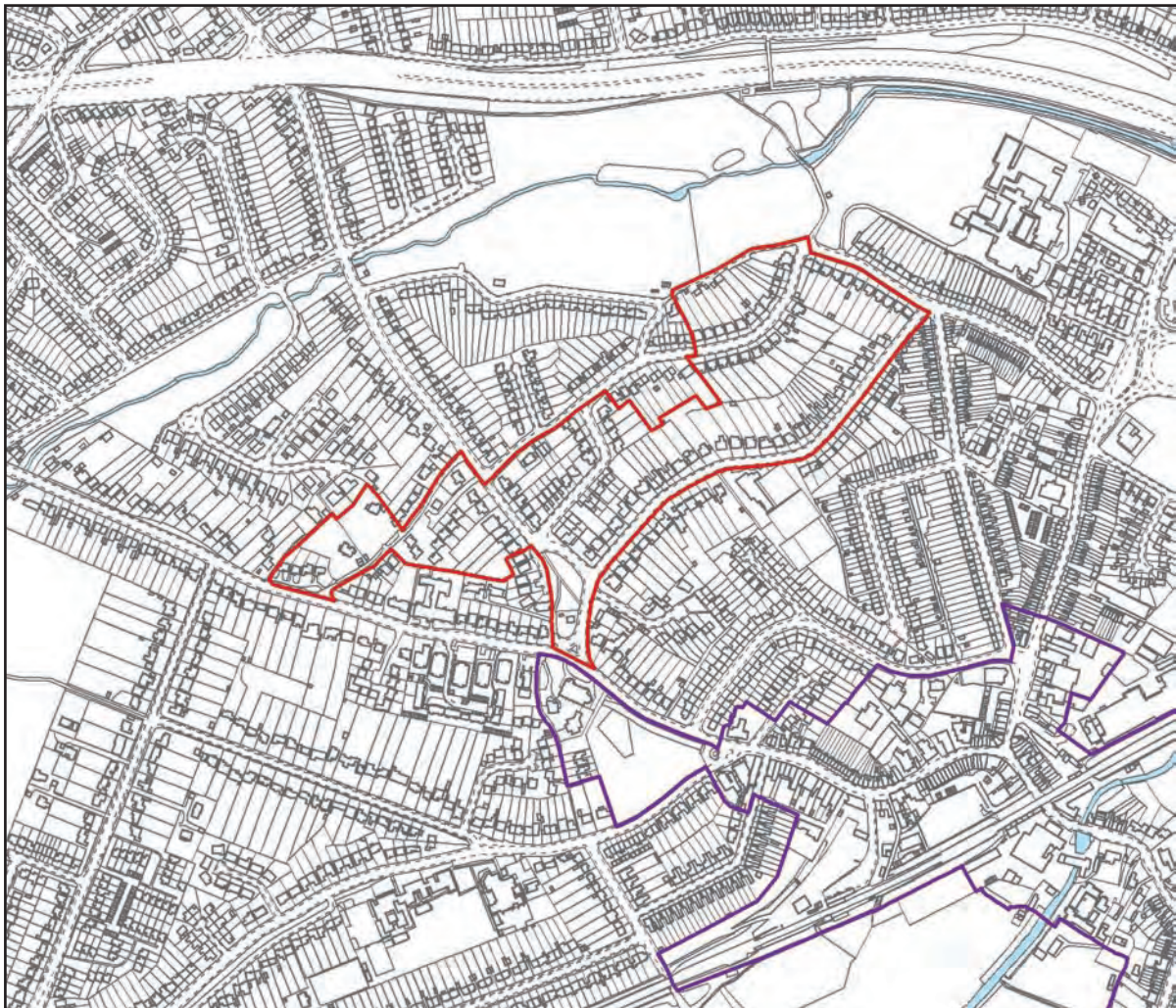
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Location of Conservation Area



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- Parkhurst Conservation Area
- Old Bexley conservation Area

Contents

Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal

1	Introduction	2
2	Planning and policy context	2
3	Summary of the special character and appearance of the conservation area	2
4	Location, setting and boundary description	3
5	Historic development and archaeological potential	5
6	Spatial analysis	5
7	Character analysis	6
	Townscape Analysis Map	12

Part 2: Conservation Area Management Plan

1	Legislative background	13
2	Planning controls and the Council's Development Plan	13
3	Listed buildings, landmark buildings, buildings of local architectural or historic interest and buildings of townscape merit.	14
4	Erosion of character	15
5	Trees, landscape and space between buildings	16
6	Setting and views	16
7	The public realm and enhancement	16
8	New buildings and building extensions	17
9	Solar panels and wind turbines	18
10	Monitoring change	18
11	Boundary definition	18
12	Community engagement	18

Appendices

1	General guidance to homeowners on repairs to historic buildings in conservation areas	20
2	Bexley Historic Buildings Fund - helping to restore your heritage	23
3	Contacts	24

Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Parkhurst Conservation Area was designated on the 18th May 1988.
- 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 Parkhurst Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement.

2 Planning and policy context

- 2.1 Bexley’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) contains the policies (saved policies, Sept. 2007) 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 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 Parkhurst Conservation Area derives from the following features:

- The conservation area represents an early example of suburban development related to the expansion of the London commuter rail network, built between 1869 and circa 1885 for the more affluent London commuters.
- The area contains a good variety of period properties of exceptional quality in terms of scale, proportions, architectural details and provides a fine example of the use of traditional building materials and techniques of the Victorian era.
- The estate is laid out with spacious curved roads, bounded by properties with relatively large front gardens, trees and broad plots. These characteristics, combined with open views and the public open space at Parkhurst Gardens convey a spacious urban character.
- Strong visual quality of the roofline, uniformity of spaces between buildings and the rhythmic architectural pattern provides a homogenous and attractive built environment.





4 Location, setting and boundary description

Location and context

- 4.1 Parkhurst Conservation Area is located in the London Borough of Bexley, 13 miles to the south-east of central London. It lies just south of the A2 trunk road to the north-west of Bexley Village, on a ridge between the Cray and Shuttle valleys. The conservation area abuts the Old Bexley Conservation Area at St John's Church on Parkhill Road.
- 4.2 The Parkhurst area was originally developed as an early London commuter suburb, due to its proximity to Bexley railway station (opened 1st September 1866). This location, combined with the high quality residential environment, means that it continues to be a popular area for commuting into central London today.

Street pattern and layout

- 4.3 Typical of an affluent Victorian commuting suburb, the street pattern and layout of the area is characterised by wide curving roads. Properties conform to a relatively disciplined building line with long rear gardens and generous spaces between buildings. Building plot sizes reduce towards the north of the area and further from the railway station.
- 4.4 Parkhurst Gardens is an open planned, landscaped park that recalls the original rural character of the area. The open space provides good views of the imposing St. John's Church.
- 4.5 Cross Lane, running between Upton Road South and Parkhill Road, remains an idyllic leafy backwater, a remnant of a rural past, which still retains a historic pastoral character.



Landscape and setting

4.6 This area was originally characterised by low hills and river valleys, which is reflected in the gently undulating and variable topography. Fragments of this earlier landscape survive to the north of the conservation area, between Love Lane and the A2. Here the open landscape comprises playing fields and allotments in the River Shuttle valley. The undulation west along Parkhill Road, towards the river valley and Bexley Woods, hints at the vistas across this former country landscape.

4.7 Spaces between properties, with views of greenery and trees beyond are an important characteristic of the conservation area that contribute significantly to the open character and streetscape. The public open space and mature and manicured front gardens further enhance the setting.

4.8 The narrow and densely wooded Cross Lane, with high hedges and mature trees, together with the large imposing detached properties of Little Bridgen and Aysgarth, both set within generous plots with lawns and mature landscaping, contribute significantly to the rural character of this part of the conservation area.



Designated conservation area boundary

4.9 The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn tightly to include the areas of special architectural and historic character. Some small pockets of later infill development have been included to provide a cohesive and logical boundary.

4.10 The area between Parkhurst Road, Knoll Road/Back Lane and Hartford Road forms a core of historic development. The surviving older buildings on the north side of Knoll Road (Nos. 2-26 even) and the remains of the historic Love Lane form part of the northern boundary. An area in the centre of Knoll Road, where later development lines both sides of the road, is excluded from the conservation area. The frontage to Hartford Road contains many large Victorian houses, setting the limit to the Parkhurst Estate with the same scale and character, but less original detailing.

4.11 The southern end of Upton Road South is the most historic with Island House and Parkhurst Gardens marking the entrance to the area. Recognition has been given to the close relationship between this residential district and the setting of the Grade II Listed, St. John's Church, completed in 1882 and situated within the Old Bexley Conservation Area.

4.12 The Cross Lane area is very important by virtue of its rural scenic quality. For that reason, the land and the remaining large houses are included, but the post-war houses on the northern side, beyond the green verge, have been excluded.

4.13 Nos. 98-104 (even) Parkhill Road form the southern boundary of the conservation area. However, redevelopment along Parkhill Road has disrupted the affinity that Parkhill Road once had with the rest of the estate and the more modern properties are excluded from the conservation area. These new buildings have a bulk and horizontal emphasis which convey a quite different architectural character. Most of the surrounding area consists of inter-war or post-war housing and has no distinct or appreciable architectural qualities.

4.14 See Townscape Analysis Map for boundary.

5 Historic development and archaeological potential

5.1 Prior to suburban development, the land was mostly farmland with associated rural buildings, crossed by two roads, Parkhill Road leading towards Eltham and Upton Road leading to the hamlet of Upton and linking to Watling Street. Within three years of the railway arriving at Bexley in 1866, suburban development commenced with the first houses completed on Upton Road South and Parkhill Road. Several examples of these early houses remain on Upton Road South.

5.2 Development of the Parkhurst Estate, an estate of villas for the well-to-do Victorian commuter, extended to the north-east of Upton Road South in 1876 and it was almost complete within a decade. Some semi-detached villas were included in the later phases and plots were generally less spacious. On the perimeter of the estate, some houses were constructed in Cross Lane on extensive sites of which two remain, Little Bridgen and Aysgarth. During the 20th Century, there has been some limited infill development within the area, at a time when much of the surrounding area was being developed with typical interwar suburban housing. University Gardens is a late 20th Century development on the site of a former school.



Upton Road South

5.3 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the conservation area. Whilst this location is not a known important archaeological area, it is possible that finds may occur.



Little Bridgen from Cross lane

6 Spatial analysis

Character and interrelationship of spaces

6.1 The various parts of the conservation area present a historic townscape that illustrate how Bexley village developed relatively rapidly through the Victorian age. The conservation area represents an exemplar of affluent suburban development related to the expansion of the London rail network. This expansion of the rapid public transport network gave rise to the commuter phenomenon, city working with country living, an aspiration which still remains as strong today.

6.2 The wide roads, mature front gardens and spaces between buildings presents a high quality and spacious suburban character. The Victorian character and sense of place is further enhanced by individual open areas and soft landscaping at Parkhurst Gardens, University Gardens and the River Shuttle valley. Openness is a key characteristic which can also be discerned at Cross Lane, with two large original detached properties being set well back from the road and within significant landscaped grounds.

Key views and vistas

6.3 Views of St John's Church present a legible link between Parkhurst and Bexley Village for the reason that it is visible from parts of both areas. It can be seen from the north of Parkhurst Road and only becomes obscured, as the road turns right, further south. It is visible from parts of Upton Road South and Knoll Road and from Parkhurst Gardens and the approach to the conservation area from Parkhill Road.

6.4 Upton Road South rises to provide a good long view towards the horizon from Parkhurst Gardens, with buildings visible to either side of the road and the vestiges of open countryside beyond in the distance.



*Parkhurst Gardens to
Upton Road South*

6.5 Parkhurst Road and Knoll Road have unfolding views where the group value of buildings is enhanced by curves in the road, this helps to provide distinctiveness to the different styles of buildings.

6.6 Views to the north along Knoll Road are terminated by trees and the rear of properties on Hartford Road. Similar views are also observable from Parkhurst Road. The rear of Nos. 48-54 (even) Knoll Road are visible and also form an important part of the street scene.

6.7 Looking north from the conservation area are long views towards trees and hills that lie beyond. Views across the River Shuttle valley recall the earlier open rural landscape. Although these views are significantly disrupted by high metal security fences and the A2.

6.8 Views between buildings are a particularly significant attribute of the conservation area, helping to create and enhance the spaciousness and leafy suburban character.

6.9 Because a view is not mentioned it is not because it is unimportant but rather that there are so many different views. Significant views are marked on the attached Townscape Appraisal Map.

7 Character analysis

Activity, prevailing or former uses within the conservation area

7.1 The Parkhurst Conservation Area is primarily residential in character. Parkhurst Gardens provides for passive recreation.

Architectural and historic character

7.2 The Parkhurst conservation area was designed as a superior Victorian commuter suburb. It is characterised by wide roads and elegant detached and semi-



Parkhurst road

detached houses with mature trees in long rear gardens. Parkhurst Road retains many particularly fine detached houses on the northern side and their value as a group is emphasised by the curve of the road. The houses of Knoll Road and Hartford Road continue the late Victorian architectural theme and retain their scale and character, even in instances where they have been altered.

7.3 Examples of the earliest houses survive in Upton Road South with a variety of interesting styles, including castellation on the main facade of No. 240, Laurel House. The latter, together with some properties in Parkhurst Road of better architectural character, are included on the Council's Register of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest.

7.4 These local list buildings comprise, The Laurels - No. 240 Upton Road South; Nos. 32 to 42 (even), 60 and 68 Parkhurst Road. These properties are all within the earlier core part of the conservation area. They are exceptional examples of the Victorian building style that characterise other period buildings within these streets, including Hartford Road and Knoll Road. The buildings share similar features however do vary in specific design, because they developed in groups over a prolonged period, with the suburban development generally working its way north from Upton Road South.

7.5 The approach to the conservation area from Bexley Village is distinguished by an unusual Grade II Listed Victorian "Penfold" hexagonal pillar box circa 1872-79; Island House with its castellated bay and ornate bargeboards; and a small public open space, Parkhurst Gardens, with lawns and ornamental shrubs and trees.

7.6 The frontage to Hartford Road contains many large Victorian houses, setting the limit to the Parkhurst Estate with the same scale and character, but less architectural decoration.



Island House

7.7 In general, the traditional scale and proportions of windows and doorways make an important contribution to the character of the area. Windows are predominantly vertically-sliding sashes (some having arched-heads) set regularly in brick reveals. Patterned brickwork often picks up the geometry of the window openings and emphasises the separation of properties by attractive quoin detail. Central recessed porches and prominent bay windows are important features of many houses and many original decorative features survive.

7.8 Chimney stacks and gabled dormers make an important contribution to the skyline of this area. Finials, chimney pots and pierced balustrades (above several bay windows) add charm and finesse to many main elevations. Ridge lines of the roofs, all once slated, generally follow the line of the street, reinforcing the established building line.



7.9 Cross Lane retains the character of a traditional country lane, narrow in width with fine mature trees and hedges, particularly the unbroken hedgerow along the north-western boundary of the University Gardens development, which all make a significant contribution to the scale and character of the conservation area. Just off Cross Lane

are Little Bridgen and Aysgarth, both substantial detached residential properties with a wealth of architectural detailing. They differ significantly from the other buildings in Parkhurst. Both these properties are set within substantial landscaped gardens with mature trees which act as a green barrier and help maintain the rural characteristic and setting of Cross Lane.

Buildings of townscape merit

7.10 These buildings vary, but are generally good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provide the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.



7.11 The area contains 9 locally listed buildings and a statutorily listed, Victorian post box. Statutorily and locally listed buildings help 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 that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Trees, greenery and green spaces

7.12 As set out above, greenery and green spaces form a significant feature in the conservation area. In the residential areas this primarily comprises front gardens, with trees and soft landscaping, road side trees and hedgerows in Cross Lane, and the space between buildings allowing glimpses through to trees and private open space beyond.



7.13 Trees in and around Little Bridgen and Aysgarth, when viewed from Shuttlemead and the west of the conservation area, form a significant landscape feature along the ridge of the hill.

7.14 There is one significant area of public green open space in the conservation area. Parkhurst Gardens functions as a green suburban area for informal recreation, relaxation and tranquillity. It contains a number of designed paths and footways, trees, seasonal planting, adding colour and variety, and bench seats.

7.15 Trees, in particular, add significantly to the setting and character of the conservation area and any proposals for development, additions or alterations will need to be considered very carefully in terms of the local and wider impact.

Assets of Parkhurst Conservation Area (positives)

7.16 The positive physical assets of Parkhurst Conservation Area are:

- Front building elevations are characterised by decorative brickwork, with designs that emphasise façade proportions and openings.

- Windows are predominantly vertically sliding timber sashes with slender timber profiles, some with gothic arched-heads, set regularly in brick reveals. Patterned brickwork often picks up the geometry of the window openings and emphasises the separation of properties by attractive quoin detail. Prominent bay windows are important features of many houses.
- Central recessed porches add interest and some retain original timber doors and stained glass.
- A number of buildings have gabled dormers, which make an important contribution to the skyline.
- Finials, decorative bargeboards, chimney pots and pierced balustrades (above several bay windows) add charm and finesse to many main elevations. Ridgelines of the roofs, all once slated with decorative ridge tiles, generally follow the line of the street, reinforcing the established building line.
- Front gardens were once bordered with simple wooden fencing characterised by soft landscaping and planting.



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

7.17 The main intrusion or negative features are:

- Replacement windows that have not followed the original slender timber profiles; or method of opening; and use inappropriate materials, that include aluminium or UPVC. Replacement front doors tend not to replicate the original timber detailing and stained glass windows.
- 
- A photograph of a two-story brick building. The building has several windows, including a bay window on the ground floor. The windows are white-framed, which contrasts with the traditional style mentioned in the text. The building is made of brick and has a dark roof.
- A significant number of properties have been rendered to the front, side or both. This has severely degraded the special interest of the properties by hiding the unique texture and design of the clay bricks, which serve to emphasise façade proportions, openings and relationships between buildings. The use of cement render and pointing also tends to damage traditional clay bricks.
 - Many roofs have been re-roofed, resulting in the loss of slates, decorative ridge tiles and finials.
 - The majority of original timber front boundary treatments have been lost, reducing the homogeneous character of the estate. Front gardens have been replaced by hard surfacing and car parking. This has created a harsh setting for some of the Victorian buildings.
 - The River Shuttle valley and open landscape surroundings is damaged by the visual and sound intrusion from the nearby A2 dual carriageway. Similarly, high metal security fences despoil the view.
 - The part of Love Lane to the rear of Nos. 2-26 (even) Knoll Road is poorly maintained and the private property boundary treatment to the Shuttle valley is detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Problems and pressures

7.18 The main problems and pressures are as follows:

- The main pressure for development generally takes the form of residential extensions, roof extensions, garages and infill or back-land development, which can have an adverse effect on the unity and harmony of the existing development.
- Increasing pressure from owners to make changes to the fenestration of their buildings causes a minor yet cumulative impact on the appearance of the building and the conservation area.
- In some areas the lack of a common front boundary treatment for groups of related buildings and the street as a whole detracts from the strong character and appearance of the area, as does the loss of front gardens and boundary treatments, for the installation of hard standing and car parking in front gardens.
- There could in future be pressure to redevelop sites and insert development into gardens but in most cases such developments are likely to be detrimental to the character of the area, and would be resisted.

General condition

7.19 Most buildings are generally well maintained but a number suffer from loss of details or inappropriate alterations.

Opportunities for enhancement

7.20 The area has some potential for enhancement. The settings of some houses could be enhanced by further tree and shrub planting, particularly where a front garden is used for car parking.

7.21 Some properties have potential for refurbishment and the reinstatement of original features, for example, timber sashes or consistent roadside boundaries.

7.22 Where original slates need replacement, roofing materials of similar colour, shape and profile are recommended. Discordant tiling on semi-detached properties is particularly unsightly and can lead to water penetrating the roof space or attic.

7.23 There is potential for enhancing and unifying the paving and vehicle crossover treatments, and possibly installing a more sympathetic style of street lighting.

7.24 The safeguarding and replanting of trees is an important part of the maintenance programme for the conservation area.

Potential for new development

7.25 Any new building contemplated in this established residential area will need to show particular respect in terms of bulk, siting and external detailing for the adjacent older Victorian buildings. Landscape treatment, including front boundary treatment, must show regard for the general streetscene and areas for parking or refuse storage should, wherever possible, be hidden from public view.

7.26 Any alterations to buildings will be expected to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in line with Government advice and planning policies. Any plans for alterations or extensions will need to be considered in the context of existing materials, as the external materials of the extension should be in harmony with the materials of the existing building and character of the area.

- 7.27 Like many conservation areas, this area contains a few incongruous buildings built prior to declaration, where redevelopment to provide a building of more suitable character might be appropriate. Replacements will need to echo the characteristics of the existing buildings and must also respect the general low density of development, gabled roof pattern and established building-lines.
- 7.28 Further subdivision of the large plots to provide backland or infill developments would generally be inappropriate, eroding the traditional layout and plot sizes. Many Victorian buildings here are outstanding in their own right and redevelopment of those properties would be unlikely to benefit the area. There is a presumption to preserve any original properties which contribute to the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.29 Uncontrolled new development would harm the traditional form, Victorian character and the spaciousness of the area. No new dormers should be visible from the street either at the front or to the side and careful consideration is required for rear extensions. Additional development to the side or at first floor level should not normally be permitted due to closing the space between building.
- 7.30 In determining the impact of any proposal the Council will take into account the overall form, shape and proportions of the extension; massing and day lighting issues, as well as roof type, layout of doors, design and style of windows. The doors and windows of the extension should generally repeat the proportions, design, alignment and materials of the openings in the original dwelling.

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 within 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; and
 - 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 Some works which would not need planning permission outside a Conservation Area, but do require consent when one has been designated are given below.

- Where a dwellinghouse is enlarged and would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwelling house or the enlarged part of the dwellinghouse would have more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwellinghouse.
- The construction of a building or enclosure, swimming or other pool, or a container used for domestic heating purposes within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, if any part of the building, enclosure, pool or container would be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation of the dwellinghouse and the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- Cladding of any part of the exterior of the dwellinghouse with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles.
- Enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition to or an alteration to 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 and is visible from 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 Building or 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; and
- 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 planning policies, the emerging Local Development Framework and other published 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 There are no statutorily listed buildings in the conservation area, however there are 9 local list buildings and a Grade II statutorily listed Victorian post box. These buildings

together with the other Victorian properties form a unique suburban townscape composition and are worthy of conservation area status. The principal buildings are shown on the Townscape Analysis Map

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 a similar manner, the context of the original roofscapes is an important feature, which adds rhythm and continuity to the street scene and the conservation area. Roof extensions, dormers or roof lights to the front or side can be particularly disruptive when visible from the street or from public open space. It is critically important to protect and retain the original roofscapes.
- 4.3 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/door openings including infilling open porches;
 - Use of alien roof materials, removal of redundant chimney stacks, pots and roof features;
 - Alterations to the roofscape, including the installation of dormers and roof lights;
 - Loss of front gardens for hard-standing for car parking;
 - Additions to front boundaries including walls and fences are eroding openness characteristic;
 - Side extensions which infill the gap between buildings closing off the space and views.
- 4.4 Such alterations would require planning permission in most cases. 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 area.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 The Council may assist with the provision of grant aid for projects, which restore or reinstate the original features of the building and will contribute to achieving higher standards of preservation and enhancement.

5 Trees, landscape and space between buildings

5.1 Within the conservation areas, anyone intending to lop or fell a tree greater than 75mm in diameter at 1.5 metres 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, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served.

5.2 It is also essential to maintain the juxtaposition of the building types. The space between these building blocks offers significant views to trees and greenery beyond. It is important to retain this continuity and maintain these open views as breaks in the urban built form. In addition, trees and open space provide a welcome break in the suburban environment and make a significant contribution to the conservation area. The Council will seek to maintain and enhance these natural features.

5.3 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.



Mature trees in Cross Lane

6 Setting and views

6.1 The setting of the conservation area is very important and development that impacts in a detrimental way upon 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 in the character appraisal.

6.2 The Council will ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the conservation area, as identified in the appraisal. The Council will ensure that these remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and that due regard is paid to these views in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes in accordance with adopted UDP and other guidance.

7 The public realm and enhancement

7.1 The conservation area has generally been surfaced using modern paving materials, there is some potential for enhancing and unifying the paving and crossover treatments. Lighting is provided by late twentieth century, utilitarian columns. In general highway signage and other structures can all serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area, therefore any redundant modern features should be removed. The reinstatement of traditional public realm elements and replica

lighting could significantly reinforce the identity of the area. A critical audit of the public realm should be undertaken to identify redundant features and opportunities for enhancement, subject to resources.

7.2 It is recommended that any highway works need to take into account the sensitive location and seek to “preserve and enhance” the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.3 As an adjunct to the public realm the Council will encourage property owners to keep their front gardens rather than paving over to provide additional vehicle parking. In addition, there may be merit in managing any further development of front boundary walls, to further enhance appreciation of the area.



7.4 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 Only developments, which respect the special interrelationship of spaces, built form, detailing and materials of the existing buildings, are likely to be appropriate. Additional developments to the side or at first floor level should not normally be permitted due to closing the space between buildings.

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 Parkhurst Conservation Area the main pressure for future development might generally take the form of residential extensions, which could have an adverse affect 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. Dormers or roof lights would be unacceptable on roof slopes apparent from public viewpoints as they detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.3 Like many conservation areas, this area contains a few incongruous buildings built prior to declaration, where redevelopment to provide a building of more suitable character might be appropriate. Replacements will need to echo the characteristics of the existing buildings and must also respect the general low density of development, gabled roof pattern and established building-lines. Further subdivision of the large plots to provide backland or infill developments would generally be inappropriate, eroding the traditional layout and plot sizes. Many Victorian buildings here are outstanding in their own right and redevelopment of those properties would be unlikely to benefit the area. There is a presumption to preserve any original properties which contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

8.4 The area has some potential for enhancement. The setting of some houses could be enhanced by further tree and shrub planting, particularly where a front garden is used

for car parking. Some properties have potential for refurbishment and the reinstatement of original features, for example, timber sashes or consistent roadside boundaries. Where original slates need replacement, roofing materials of similar colour, shape and profile are recommended. Discordant tiling on semi-detached properties is particularly unsightly.

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 Since designation, the boundary has proven to be robust and generally a good reflection of the area of greatest historic significance and special character. The Council will maintain the defined boundary of the designated area and periodically review the boundary of the conservation area as part of future reviews 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 Parkhurst 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 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 local 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 - The Parkhurst Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was subject to public consultation over a 6 week period between April and July 2009. As part of the consultation, 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.
- 12.5 The draft document was also on the Council's website, bexley.gov.uk, and a copy was available for reference at: the Contact Centre, Civic Offices; the Central Library in Bexleyheath; local libraries; and Council Offices, Wyncham House, Sidcup. A letter advising of these arrangements was delivered to all properties in the area. Views were also sought from all Council Directorates. The text was then revised and approved by the Council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing. This document is available on the Council's website and as printed copies.
- 12.6 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.

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, 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, 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 minimise damage to historic building materials: an appropriate lime mortar mix 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 and 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 Bexley Historic Buildings Fund - helping to restore your heritage

The London Borough of Bexley is fortunate in having a fine heritage of notable old buildings and historic areas. These, besides being of importance in their own right, help make the borough a pleasant and attractive place to live and work.

The Bexley Historic Buildings Fund can offer grants to assist with the additional costs associated with restoration works which arise from the need to preserve, enhance or restore the buildings special character.

Grant aided schemes may be for the restoration of complete buildings or alternatively small scale projects to restore original features such as timber sash windows, decorative stonework, etc. Grant aided works should normally be visible to the public. Normal building maintenance, alterations or building new extensions are not eligible.

Any applications for grant aid must be made before work commences. Detailed notes for the guidance of applicants are available on request from:

London Borough of Bexley
The Bexley Historic Buildings Fund
Strategic Planning & Development
Wyncham House
207 Longlands Road
Sidcup
Kent DA15 7JH

Alternatively call 020 8308 7789 or email gordon.fraser@bexley.gov.uk.

Donations to the Fund are welcome.

3 Contacts

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

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: 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

www.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

www.spab.org.uk

For more information on Bexley's local history and archives:

Bexley Local Studies and Archive Centre
Townley Road
Bexleyheath
Kent DA6 7JH

Tel: 020 8836 7369

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:

