



# *Red House Lane Conservation Area*

**Area Appraisal and Management Plan**  
February 2008

This document was produced by the  
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and approved by the Cabinet Member on . . . . .

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### Location of Conservation Area



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 Red House Lane Conservation Area

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# *Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal*

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Red House Lane Conservation Area was designated on the 25th July 1973.
- 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 Red House Lane 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 staurorily listed buildings, locally listed buildings, conservation areas and archaeology are also set out in the UDP and the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 2.3 This appraisal should also be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) - Planning and the Historic Environment. 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 special character and appearance of the conservation area**

- 3.1 The special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation of the Red House Lane Conservation Area derives from the following features:
  - the unspoilt special character and appearance deriving from relatively little development and no significant change;
  - Hogs Hole Cottages are set back from the road behind picket fences and open gardens, they exhibit the character of early farm workers cottages in an open rural setting;
  - the dominant presence of the high brick wall around Red House and the substantial nature of the simple gate piers;
  - the curving nature of Red House Lane itself
  - the location of Red House in its own substantial grounds;
  - the important presence of many trees and greenery, which soften the area.

## **4 Location, setting and boundary description**

### Location and context

- 4.1 Red House Lane Conservation Area is in the Upton area to the west of Bexleyheath town centre.
- 4.2 The Area lies just off the A207. It lies to the south of Red House Lane, and includes



a small part of Upton Road. It is made up of one large detached house, another detached house and a row of six cottages.

#### Street pattern and layout

- 4.3 Old maps indicate that the Red House Lane area is situated on formerly open farmland with the exception of a few sporadically placed Georgian cottages, and this is key to its character. Red House Lane has now been subsumed by 1930s suburban development, although its origins are still clear to be seen.
- 4.4 The historic street pattern remains and defines the layout of today's conservation area. A small un-tarred lane of undoubted Victorian origins still exists on the east side of Upton Road opposite Red House Lane.

#### Landscape and setting

- 4.5 Trees and hedges were always integral to the character of this area and this is seen clearly on old maps and is evident from the photographs.
- 4.6 There are many splendid trees and hedges all over the conservation area and these add to the special qualities of the area.
- 4.7 The landscape qualities of Red House Lane Conservation Area are of huge significance. The open and generous landscaping features add greatly to the special architectural character of the area by enhancing the architectural clean lines and enhancing the overall sense of space.
- 4.8 To the west end of Red House grounds there is a substantial bank of trees and other greenery bounding the orchard area. This view has a positive influence on the approach to the conservation area.

#### Designated conservation area boundary

- 4.9 The boundary of this conservation area was drawn tightly when the area was

designated in 1973, encompassing Red House, Hogs Hole Cottages and the house in between. This boundary is still appropriate in defining the most historic area of development. See Townscape Analysis Map for boundary.

## **5 Historic development and archaeological potential**

- 5.1 This area of Bexleyheath was rural farmland until the mid 19th Century, within the small hamlet of Upton. Small cottages of late 19th Century origin still survive at Hogs Hole Cottages 1-9 Red House Lane and 44 Upton Road.
- 5.2 The conservation area centres on Red House, designed for William Morris, the famous poet and artist, by his architect friend Philip Webb in 1859. It is a seminal Arts and Crafts building of enormous international significance in the history of domestic architecture and garden design. The building is constructed of warm red brick, under a steep red-tiled roof, with an emphasis on natural materials and a strong Gothic influence. The garden was designed to surround the house with a series of subdivided areas which still clearly exist, together with the adjoining orchard which now forms part of the garden. Inside, the house retains many of the original features and fixed items of furniture designed by Morris and Webb, as well as wall paintings and stained glass by Edward Burne-Jones.
- 5.3 William Morris built the house within a rural setting when he was about to marry, and saw this as an opportunity to make the building and decorating of it play a role in setting up a fraternity of artists, designers and craftsmen. The result can still be seen to this day as the house is run by the National Trust. It represents a memorial to a man of vision and artistic talent whose influence on modern and contemporary arts cannot be over-estimated.
- 5.4 Red House is a Grade I Listed Building. The street wall and gateway on Red House Lane are Grade II. On the north side with the entrance drive swinging past it is the old stables and coach house in the north east corner of the site. Grade II Listed. The well-head to the south east of Red House is a Grade I Listed structure.
- 5.5 In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, development spread along Upton Road and all was engulfed by the tide of suburban development in the 1920s and 1930s.
- 5.6 There are no Scheduled Monuments within this conservation area. Whilst this is not a known important archaeological area, it is possible that finds may occur.

## **6 Spatial analysis**

Character and interrelationship of spaces

- 6.1 Development within the conservation area consists of detached and terraced houses placed along quite wide and curved streets. The visual impact of the motor car is kept to a minimum apart from some hard standings in front of Hogs Hole Cottages which detract from their setting. Any additional hard-standings should be resisted.

Key views and vistas

- 6.2 Good views out of the conservation area include looking:
  - West along Red House Lane towards Askern Close;
  - East along Red House Lane;
  - Along Upton Road.



- 6.3 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 Townscape Analysis Map.

## 7 Character analysis

Activity and prevailing or former uses within the conservation area

- 7.1 Red House Lane Conservation Area is essentially now a residential area which began as an isolated settlement amid farmland but now sits within the spread of 20th Century suburbia. It retains a more natural form of residential layout still appropriate to modern residential use. The fact that this area was formerly an open area of fields and trees is highly significant in its evolution, as referred to above. Red House is now owned and managed by the National Trust.
- 7.2 The influence of the motor car is apparent in the conservation area with wider roads and parking, although the impact of traffic is not unduly negative. Generally, the area appears to be fairly quiet.

Architectural and historic character

- 7.3 The conservation area has a memorable historic character and appearance derived from a varied collection of historic buildings built with good quality traditional materials, including clay tiles and good quality hand made bricks at Red House, contrasting with render and slate at Hogs Hole Cottages.
- 7.4 Detached and terraced properties are the characteristic building form. The way that the terrace of Hogs Hole Cottages sits at an angle to the road adjacent to a junction, makes this terrace visually very significant and makes the ends prominent in the townscape. Over the years the terrace has been extended at each end in a manner sympathetic to the character and appropriately terminating the terrace.
- 7.5 Red House is the most historically significant building in the area but it is hidden in

secluded grounds. as a result its prominent brick front boundary wall plays a more significant role in the character of the streetscape.



*Hogs Hole cottages*

#### Buildings of townscape merit

- 7.6 The Townscape Analysis Map also identifies “Buildings of Townscape Merit”. These buildings in general will vary but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing, building materials and relationship to the street provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.
- 7.7 Statutorily listed, locally listed buildings and landmark 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

- 7.8 As has already been mentioned above in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.8, trees are of immense importance to this conservation area. 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.
- 7.9 The landscaped garden area around Red House, its orchard area and wooded frontage and the more open frontage around Hogs Hole Cottages all contribute to the character of the area and are key to the setting and composition of the conservation area and therefore worthy of protection.

#### Assets of Red House Lane Conservation Area (positives)

- 7.10 The main assets of the Red House Conservation Area are given below:
- Architectural, cultural and historic interest of the area’s buildings.
  - High concentration of historic buildings.
  - Excellent landscape qualities with beautiful majestic trees and landscaping.



- Interesting curving nature of Red House Lane, emphasised by the red brick boundary wall.
- Good interesting views along Upton Road.

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

7.11 The extent of intrusion is illustrated by:

- The impact of parking and traffic control management, including double yellow lines roadside lines and speed bumps.
- The risk of uncharacteristic plastic doors and UPVC windows and double-glazing throughout conservation areas. To control unsympathetic small scale alterations and development the Council introduced an Article 4 Direction on Hogs Hole Cottages in the early 1980s.

General condition

7.12 Generally the conservation area appears to be in fairly good condition with the obvious caveats mentioned previously.

Opportunities for enhancement

7.13 The Management Plan identifies some areas appropriate for enhancement. This includes lessening the impact of cars parked in front of Hogs Hole Cottages, tidying up boundaries, more appropriate street furniture, lessening the visual impact of traffic controls, etc. Historic building grants should be targeted at householders to restore or reinstate historic features.

7.14 As trees mature or landscaping dies it should be replaced and there may be potential for further planting to enhance the area.

Potential for new development

7.15 There are no vacant sites in this area and except for possible minor extensions there is no potential for large-scale development.

7.16 Any development will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area in line with Government advice and policies.

7.17 All future proposals for development shall be judged for their effect on the character, appearance and special interest of the conservation area as defined in this appraisal.



# 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 dwellinghouse 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 adopted planning policies, 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 conservation area, Red House is a Grade I Listed Building. The street wall and gateway on Red House Lane are Grade II. The old stables and coach house in the north east corner of the site is also Grade II Listed. The well-head to the south east of Red House is a Grade I Listed structure. Hogs Hole Cottages are locally listed buildings and are considered, within the conservation area, to be Buildings of Townscape Merit.

## **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. An Article 4 Direction has been made to cover Red House Lane Conservation Area (see Appendix 1).
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The Council may assist with the provision of grant aid for projects, which restore or reinstate the original features of historic buildings 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.
- 5.2 Although there is little scope for street tree planting in Red House Lane conservation area, the contribution made by trees in private grounds to the leafy character of the area and overhanging the road should not be under-estimated. The Council will seek to protect this characteristic using the necessary planning powers.
- 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.

## **6 Setting and views**

- 7.1 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 footpaths in the conservation area have been resurfaced using small element red block paving materials. An admirable attempt has been made to replicate the character of the era by the use of a heritage style of lighting column and head rather than traditional street lights, albeit rather taller than traditional street lights. In general traffic calming measures and other structures can all serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area. This has in part been done with the introduction of speed humps and associated road markings along the carriageway. A critical audit of the public realm should be undertaken to identify redundant features and opportunities for enhancement, subject to resources. This may include less prominent yellow road lines.
- 7.2 To enhance the street's appearance, the Council will encourage property owners to retain their front gardens rather than paving them to provide additional vehicle parking. In addition, there may be merit in managing any further development of front boundary treatment in front of Hogs Hole cottages, to further enhance appreciation of the area.
- 7.3 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 the highest 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 Red House Lane 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. Rooflights and dormer windows to the front roof slope detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area and would fail to "preserve or enhance" the conservation area, and will therefore generally be unacceptable.

## **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).

## **10.0 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 existing boundary of the designated area and will 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 Red House Lane 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 carry out 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 - Red House Lane Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan were subject to public consultation in 2007. 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

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## 1 Article 4 Directions

The following properties covered by this Direction within the Red House Lane Conservation Area and identified on the Townscape Analysis Map are:

Nos. 1-9 (odd) Red House Lane and No. 44 Upton Road, Bexleyheath.

The Direction brings within Council control:

- Improvements or alterations involving pebble-dashing or rendering or affecting windows, door or roofing materials on: - the front or side elevations of 44 Upton Road; the front or side elevations of 9 Red House Lane; or the front elevation of Nos.1, 3, 5 or 7 Red House Lane; and
- The construction of porches at the front of a property, the erection of gates, fences or walls in front of a property, or the painting of an exterior façade of a dwelling house.

More detailed guidance is available from Bexley Council.

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## 2 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, 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 endeavor 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; 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.

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### 3 Contacts

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

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](mailto:martyn.nicholls@bexley.gov.uk) / [gordon.fraser@bexley.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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:

