



Star Hill Conservation Area

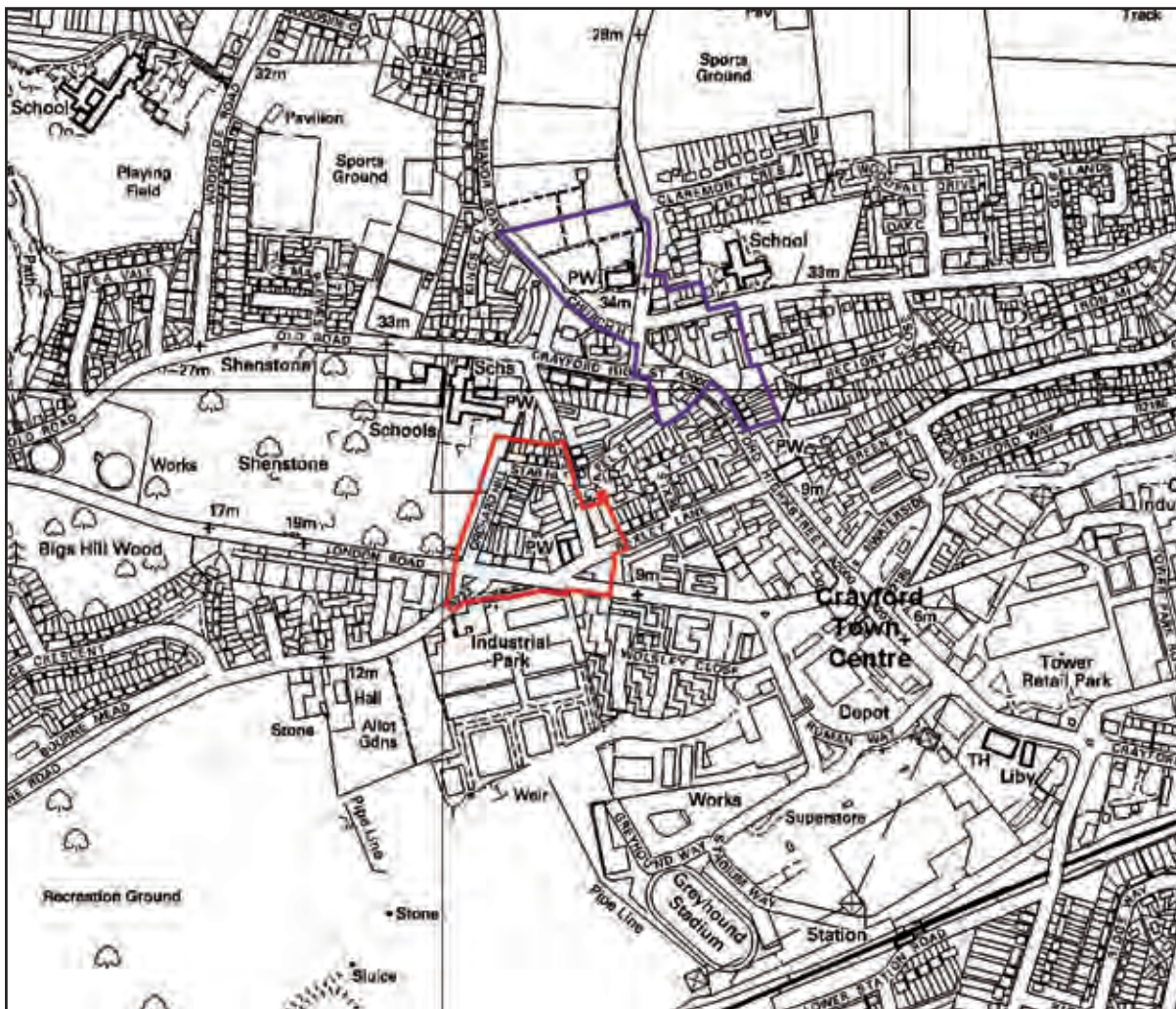
Area Appraisal and Management Plan
June 2008

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Location of Conservation Area



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- Star Hill Conservation Area
- Other Conservation Areas

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Part 1: Conservation Area Appraisal

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Star Hill Conservation Area was designated on the 19th February 1992.
- 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 Star Hill Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement.

2 Planning and policy context

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

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

- 3.1 The special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation of Star Hill Conservation Area derives from the following features:
 - The street pattern and layout of a well preserved group of Victorian cottages set into a steep hillside.
 - Historic plot sizes and form reflecting the organic growth of the area.
 - Varied architectural and historic interest of the area’s buildings, 5 of which are statutorily listed.
 - The landmark quality of Baptist Chapel, the Sunday School and Public House that mark the south eastern corner of the conservation area.
 - The junction of Bexley Lane and London Road form an impressive gateway to the eastern end of the conservation area.
 - The strong presence of trees and particularly those at Shenstone Park, which provide a dynamic backdrop to the conservation area.
 - The strong visual quality of the parkland area provides an attractive and dynamic open space.



4 Location, setting and boundary description

Location and context

- 4.1 The Star Hill Conservation Area is to the north east of the London Borough of Bexley and is situated 13 miles south east of central London.
- 4.2 The area lies mainly north of London Road the A207 on a steep hillside the core area of 19th Century Victorian terraced housing is well defined.

Street pattern and layout

- 4.3 The layout of the conservation area is defined by its hillside location. Orchard Hill and Chapel Hill are laid out to provide a means for climbing the steep hillside and are joined at the top by Star Hill. Even the roads have a distinct character. Star Hill is so steep that the pavements are stepped, and Orchard Hill is surfaced with rough stones set in concrete, giving a better grip surface and the appearance of a stone road.
- 4.4 The main area of residential development in Crayford in the mid 19th century was on this hillside which lay to the south of the historic St. Paulinus' Church, leading down towards the printing works in Bourne Road and London Road, which is the area on the southern boundary. London Road was designed to cut across and bisect at a junction where there is now the public house and church.



Landscape and setting

- 4.5 The setting of the houses reflects the topography, which creates a unique and interesting streetscape, where the buildings are staggered and are of a non-uniform height. Consequently the roof levels are discontinuous and the streetscape has a stepped motion. All the terraced houses are a regular short distance from the roadside.
- 4.6 The streetscape from London Road is dominated by the large building of the Baptist Chapel on the corner of Bexley Lane and London Road. The setting is enhanced and given balance by the earlier Duke of Wellington public House (1853) that stands in the angle between these two roads, with canted bay fronting the junction.
- 4.7 To the south, the road junction is fronted by the flank wall and pantiled roof of the 18th century David Evans Long Shed. The Long Shed and the landmark Duke of Wellington public house enclose the southern area.
- 4.8 There are few street trees within the conservation area although at London Road, trees have been placed in timber planters. Similarly the triangular open space at the Bourne Road/London Road provides a welcome green open space, albeit at a busy road junction. Shenstone Park and its mature trees provide a significant backdrop to the historic hillside terraces and the conservation area.



Designated conservation area boundary

- 4.9 The core area of 19th Century terraced housing is well defined. The western boundary is set by Shenstone Park. The trees on the edge of the park provide a very significant backdrop to the houses and are therefore included in the Conservation Area. The northern boundary is defined by the start of new housing. The eastern boundary is set by Chapel Hill, beyond which most of the development is of a later date and lesser character. However, the listed properties on Bexley Lane relate visually and historically to the development of the area, and have therefore been included. In the south, the open area is clearly defined by the listed 'Long Shed', the boundary wall to the industrial estate, and the landmark Duke of Wellington public house, which enclose the area. The boundary is still appropriate in defining the most historic area of development.
- 4.10 The Townscape Analysis Map indicates the designated boundary.

5 Historic development and archaeological potential

- 5.1 The early and mid 19th Century saw major growth in the industries in Crayford and in particular fabric dyeing and printing (e.g. companies such as Applegath, Swaisland and David Evans). As these industries grew, so did the need for suitable housing for their workforce.
- 5.2 The first wave of housing development took place along the main roads, such as Bexley Lane, which was then a major route from Bexley through to Crayford High Street. Only later did London Road become the main traffic route. There is a row of Georgian houses that still remain at Nos 56-64 (even) Bexley Lane, which provide

testimony to this initial phase of development at the end of the 18th Century. The main 19th Century development was in the form of terrace houses along existing roads and on newly created side streets.

- 5.3 The earliest evidence of buildings in the Star Hill area were those of Upton's Building (demolished) together with some on London Road. As development proceeded, houses lined most of Star Hill, Orchard Hill and Chapel Hill by the end of the 19th Century, with all gaps being infilled by 1910. The Star Public House (1868) stood on the southern corner of Star Hill and Chapel Hill. It appears to have closed by the early 1960s. To the north of the conservation area is modern housing on the site of the former Upton's Building and to the east is an area of 20th Century infill development.
- 5.4 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the conservation area. However the conservation area falls within a larger zone identified in the Council's UDP as "An Area of Archaeological Search".

6 Spatial analysis

Character and interrelationship of spaces

- 6.1 The hillside area represents an excellent example of mid 19th Century development in Crayford, which has survived with little 20th Century intrusions. It is mainly characterised by the steep narrow streets lined by small terraced houses, together with a public house of a similar domestic scale.
- 6.2 The terraced dwellings line the roads in such a way as to create an open hillside of gardens in the centre. The open nature of this central part is very important to the character of the whole area. The absence of intrusive tall buildings helps maintain the harmonious character of the area. The Baptists Chapel is the only building on a larger scale, its size is appropriate for a landmark religious building and it sits comfortably within the area, being located on a spacious site on the lowest land.

Key views and vistas

- 6.3 Views within the conservation area are based on the open central area of the hillside, with sightlines running across in an east-west direction (and vice-versa) available at all points on Chapel Hill and Orchard Hill. The rear end and side of the Baptist Chapel at the south of the area forms a visual focus for many of these vistas.
- 6.4 Additionally, the views between the rear yards of Nos1-27 Orchard Hill and Nos 2-4 Star Hill (Nos 11-14 and 15-17) allow for impressive panoramas across the central area and through to the valley of the River Cray. This expansive view is also available from the top of Chapel Hill and Orchard Hill. Within the Conservation area other key views are afforded from the Chapel and public house looking northwards into the centre of the residential area. Indeed, the setting of the chapel is defined by the wide open spaces either side of the building, encouraging expansive views across and up the hillside.



6.5 There are a number of minor views within the conservation area that suggest the intimacy and character of a village. For example, views can be taken from the middle of Orchard Hill of a walkway to the side of Star Hill, where the Victorian cottages are visible on the right side and the trees of the park to the left.

6.6 The southern part of the conservation area is characterised by views taken around the old oblique road junction at Bourne Road, fronted by historic buildings at Nos 110-122 London Road. From the south side of London Road the church approach is signified by the old railings and the visual contrast of the public house opposite.

6.7 Within the conservation area there are many views of importance, including those of individual houses and streets. Because a view is not mentioned it is not because it is unimportant but rather that there are so many different views. Some significant views are marked on the attached Townscape Analysis Map.



Orchard Hill

7 Character analysis

Definition of the character of the area

7.1 The area has an open character to the south (Bourne Road and London Road) but entering the residential area on the hillside reveals a more intimate character with almost a “village” ambiance, this gives a degree of residential privacy amongst the surrounding industrial and modern building stock. Principle features of Star Hill Conservation Area:

- A conserved group of small mainly Victorian terraced cottage properties lining steep urban streets providing open and partial views across the River Cray valley.
- The contrast and backdrop of open parkland with mature trees on the western fringe of the conservation area.
- The area provides a good illustration of the historical development of Crayford and in particular of typical worker’s housing in the 19th Century.
- Nationally important buildings Grade II Listed at Nos 56-64 Bexley Lane.
- Landmark gateway entrance to the conservation area at Bexley Lane with the location and setting of the Baptist Church and the Public House.

Activity, prevailing or former uses within the conservation area

7.2 Star Hill Conservation Area is primarily residential use with some small but significant commercial/retail use as found at the Indian restaurant (No 108) and the office building (No 94) on London Road.

7.3 The sequence of settlements describes the evolution of the area over time, with the 18th Century buildings linked to the establishment of local industries and the next sequence equating with the 19th Century (workers housing) closely associated with

growing industrialisation and improved access to transport.

Architectural and historic character

7.4 The Conservation area has a memorable historic character and appearance deriving from the diversity of some of the buildings and use of a palette of local building materials.



114-110 London road

7.5 There is a variety of building materials and types on London Road. The buildings at No 110-114 London Road are built of brick and rendered, with basic decoration around the window openings. They all have a common plot widths and have a small front garden with simple railings laid on a brick base.

7.6 Whereas at Nos 116-122 London Road, the houses have weathered yellow stock-brick walls with basic mouldings above the windows. Most of the houses retain their original pattern of openings and most retain sliding sash single-pane windows. Fanlights remain also above the doors.



122-116 London Road

7.7 To complete the sequence of building types on London Road, Nos 96-106 suggest the stepped movement that is a familiar part of the streetscape on entering the hillside roads. The design of these buildings is much simpler and in keeping with Victorian taste, rendered in white pebble dash and the presence of round finishing to the doors.

7.8 In contrast, Orchard Hill is a steep, narrow road with a surface of stones set in concrete. The tall trees of Shenstone Park are on one side and the terraced houses built in 1866-67 on the other. The plot widths are very regular and the roofline is staggered reflecting the movement of the hill. There are a number of unifying architectural features in the buildings, such as yellow walls with red brick banding and fanlights above the doors.

7.9 At the southern end of Orchard Terrace is a short row of three two/three-story terraced houses (Nos 23-27). These properties share a hipped roof that is concrete tiled. Whilst No 23 is pebble dashed and has UPVC windows, Nos. 25 and 27 are rendered and have timber windows and a concrete tile roof. There are brick stacks between the houses.



Windbourne Terrace

7.10 Windbourne Terrace (Nos 7-19) is a terrace of seven two/three-storey houses. The terrace has a hipped roof at either end and the eaves step down as the terrace proceeds downhill. The ground floor window and door openings have rounded heads

with gauged red brick detailing. There are sash windows with rounded top sash on all of these houses, apart from No 11, which has modern windows. Upper floor window openings have almost float segmental arched heads tucked under the eaves. The terrace is set back behind narrow gardens. There is a plaque above No 17 which reads "Windbourne Terrace 1867". Apart from Nos. 9, 17 and 19, which are concrete tiled, the roofs are uniformly slated.

7.11 Yew Tree Cottages at Nos 1 and 2 Orchard Hill, occupy a corner location at the top of the hill. The two storey yellow brick building consists of a hipped slate roof, two windows at ground floor and two windows above. Ground floor windows have a moulded canopy on scrolled brackets and there are timber sliding sash windows. There is a plaque between first floor windows announcing "Yew Tree Cottages 1866".



Yew Tree Cottages

7.12 The steep neighbouring streets of Chapel Hill (built 1865-75) and Star Hill are similar in character. Together with the houses along the north side of London Road, they form a mid 19th century enclave. The north side of Star Hill is probably c1860 or possibly earlier 1840s; its pavement consists of a series of steps and the plots widths of the houses are consistently uniform.



Chapel Hill

7.13 The houses on Bexley Lane (Nos 56-64) best represent the historic development of the area. These three storey buildings from the 18th Century are listed because of their use of traditional materials and proportions. They are noted for their fine door hoods and generally relate well to the other buildings in the conservation area.

7.14 The Baptist Chapel is a landmark building with some features that give it a distinctive style and identity, such as the imposing classical frontage and round-headed windows along the sides. Behind is the Sunday school, a smaller building of 1858, which had been an earlier Baptist Chapel.

7.15 The yellow stock brick Chapel was built in 1867, with stucco decoration and slate roofs, presenting a gabled end to the road. On the ground floor is a forward porch extension with doubled gabled roof. Below each gable is a round arched door, having projecting stucco cornice and arch details. In each side of this extension is a decorated arch iron window with three windows set above in recessed archers. The arches have projecting stucco cornice and details with prominent keystones. In the gabled end is a recessed triangular panel containing scroll decoration around a circular vent. The sides of the building have five windows in recessed brick arches.



Baptist Chapel

7.16 The Duke of Wellington is a two storey yellow brick public house of 1853, with a canted projection to the west, which was the original entrance. The front entrance has a large projecting five-sided bay, which has an entrance in the main face with stucco pilasters and a heavily moulded cornice. The pub name is above the doorway in a moulded surround and the canted faces of the bay have one sash window to each floor. The wings have further entrances with an inn sign over the right hand one in a moulded surround. The end elevations have two windows per floor and all windows have segmented headed arches and original sashes with glazing bars. The building has modern hipped tiled roofs and extensions to the rear.



Duke of Wellington Public House

7.17 The hillside terraces were previously subject to a GIA (General Improvement Area) and many of the houses have been improved and upgraded. The design of the buildings reflects the steepness of the hill, with features such as doors, windows and roofs staggered in a gradual way. It is not just the buildings that add architectural character to the area, as the roads too have a particular design ascribed to them. Star Hill has a stepped pavements and Orchard Hill is surfaced with rough stones cast in concrete, giving a better grip surface and the appearance of a stone road.

7.18 There is a variety of private and public boundary markings around the area, with the Chapel and Nos 110-122 London Road providing a good example of old Victorian railings. Nos 96-106 London Road is most representative of the type of front walling in the area, as it has low brick wall with wooden fencing above it. The listed buildings at Bexley Lane have large brick walls (1.5 m high), which are in keeping with their authenticity.



64-56 Bexley Lane (Grade ii Listed)

7.19 The Listed Grade II Long Shed on London Road is a former agricultural building subsequently adapted as part of the silk printing works. The shed is quite clearly of local importance from a social and historical point of view and is a major reminder of the type of work carried out in the area in Victorian England. To add weight to the value of the structure there is a small item of street furniture, a post box, which has strong local historic interest. It is a reed wall mounted box in brick pillar attached to the wall at the east end of Long Shed with the crest ER VII embossed on it, dating from around 1905.



The Long Shed

7.20 The Baptist Church Hall is an impressive example of a mid 19th Century non-conformist chapel with considerable local architectural interest and strong community importance. The church, walls, gates and adjacent hall form a significant historic group at the foot of the hillside and are an important feature of the conservation area. Additionally, the Duke of Wellington forms a strong relationship to the front of the historic cottages on the corner of Bexley Lane.



Baptist Church Hall

Buildings of townscape merit

7.21 Buildings of townscape merit make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area. These buildings vary in character, but commonly are good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where the style, detailing and building materials provide the streetscape with interest and variety.



Orchard Hill towards London Road

7.22 Windbourne Terrace (Nos 7-19) and Nos 23-27 Orchard Hill provide a good example of a 19th Century terrace and Yew Tree Cottages is a good local example of a 19th century semi-detached houses. They all provide examples of design qualities and building materials, which are typical of the local area and make a positive contribution to the varied townscape in the Borough.

7.23 Statutorily listed, locally listed and landmark buildings help create the conservation area's distinctive and interesting historic townscape. As recommended in PPG15: Planning and the Historic environment, the general presumption should be in favor of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.



Trees, greenery and green spaces

7.24 Shenstone Park is a public open space with large mature trees that provide an edge and a fine backdrop to the conservation area. The triangular open space at the Bourne Road/London Road also provides a welcome green open space albeit at a busy road junction. Similarly, the trees and shrubs in the planters adjacent to the Long Shed, contribute to the landscape of the conservation area.

7.25 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.

Assets of Star Hill Conservation Area (positives)

- 7.26 The positive physical assets of Star Hill Conservation Area are listed below:
- Architectural, historic and visual interest of Victorian terraced housing on two hillside roads.
 - The area provides a good illustration of the historical development of Crayford and in particular of typical worker's housing in the 19th Century.
 - Striking views across the conservation area and beyond to River Cray valley.
 - Rural characteristics defined by tall mature trees and proximity to parkland open space and use of traditional building materials. Streetscape is enhanced by unusual surface treatment of footpaths.
 - Some houses have been well restored and are generally well maintained.
 - The houses generally retain the essential scale and proportions which ensure a continued contribution to the historic character of the area.

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

- 7.27 The main intrusion or negative features are:
- Restaurant (No 108) and the office building (No 94) on London Road detract from the homogeneity and attractiveness of the buildings in the area.
 - Some properties have had modern windows inserted or roof tiles used to replace slate roofs. Only No. 5 Orchard Hill, which is modern, breaks the pattern of the Victorian terraces.
 - Satellite dishes on prominent front elevations detract from the historical integrity of individual properties and the area.

Problems and pressures

- 7.28 Due to housing improvements that have been made previously under the General Improvement Area (GIA) status, it is not envisaged that there will be any major pressure for significant development of these houses. New developments have been minor such as a new pitched roof to a single storey rear extension at No 110 London Road.
- 7.29 Only No 56 Bexley Lane has made repeated applications for rear extensions at ground level, which due to the sensitivity of this building on the national list, have been refused permission (2000 and 2004). The Duke of Wellington was permitted consent for the extension for guest bedrooms, which have been sensitively developed using existing materials and employing the same proportions and details as the original building.
- 7.30 The large gaps and open spaces in the area might attract speculative developers, but these areas are to the rear of the Baptist chapel and sides of Orchard Hill/Chapel Hill and are key to the unity and relationship between buildings and open space. Indeed, applications for the development of a first floor conservatory over a ground floor extension at No 9 Orchard Hill, were refused on grounds of unsuitable siting.
- 7.31 No 108 and No 94 London Road provide a precedence of poorly conceived design and

its impact on the uniformity of shape and design. No 94 London Road goes further and breaks up the setting and context of the Chapel to its right. There is pressure from No 108 for projecting advertisement boards and canopy's.

- 7.32 Within the conservation area, traffic levels are very light on the three minor roads, whilst London Road is prone to medium/high flows of traffic, especially at peak times.

General condition

- 7.33 The area consists of individual small and well maintained houses. Many have been given an extended life by improvements when the area was a GIA. Buildings are generally in good condition. Features such as railings and paving are in satisfactory order. Road surface is satisfactory.

Opportunities for enhancement

- 7.34 The only incongruous building is No 94 London Road, a 20th Century commercial building, which possibly incorporates parts of earlier structure. Development of this site could feasibly take place and a carefully designed building of the correct scale and character could enhance this part of the area. The redesign of this buildings frontage offers the potential for improving the view to the side of the chapel and front of the pub.



- 7.35 In view of the visual prominence of the open central area, development of this land would have to be exceptional due to its visual impact on the now open and sensitive character as the area.
- 7.36 The area has already seen some minor environmental improvements on the open area to the south of London Road with low-growing shrubs and trees. There is some potential for utilising the Bourne Road junction for planting, which will help frame the approach to Nos 110-122 London Road.
- 7.37 Any shop signs or projecting canopy outside the two commercial premises on the north side of London Road are an intrusion into the street scene and will need to be carefully monitored.
- 7.38 Minor changes to houses can have a cumulative effect resulting in a decline in the overall character of the area. Therefore any further building alterations should be achieved by encouraging the use of appropriate traditional materials.
- 7.39 Council ownership of the paving area fronting the Long Shed offers potential for enhancement.

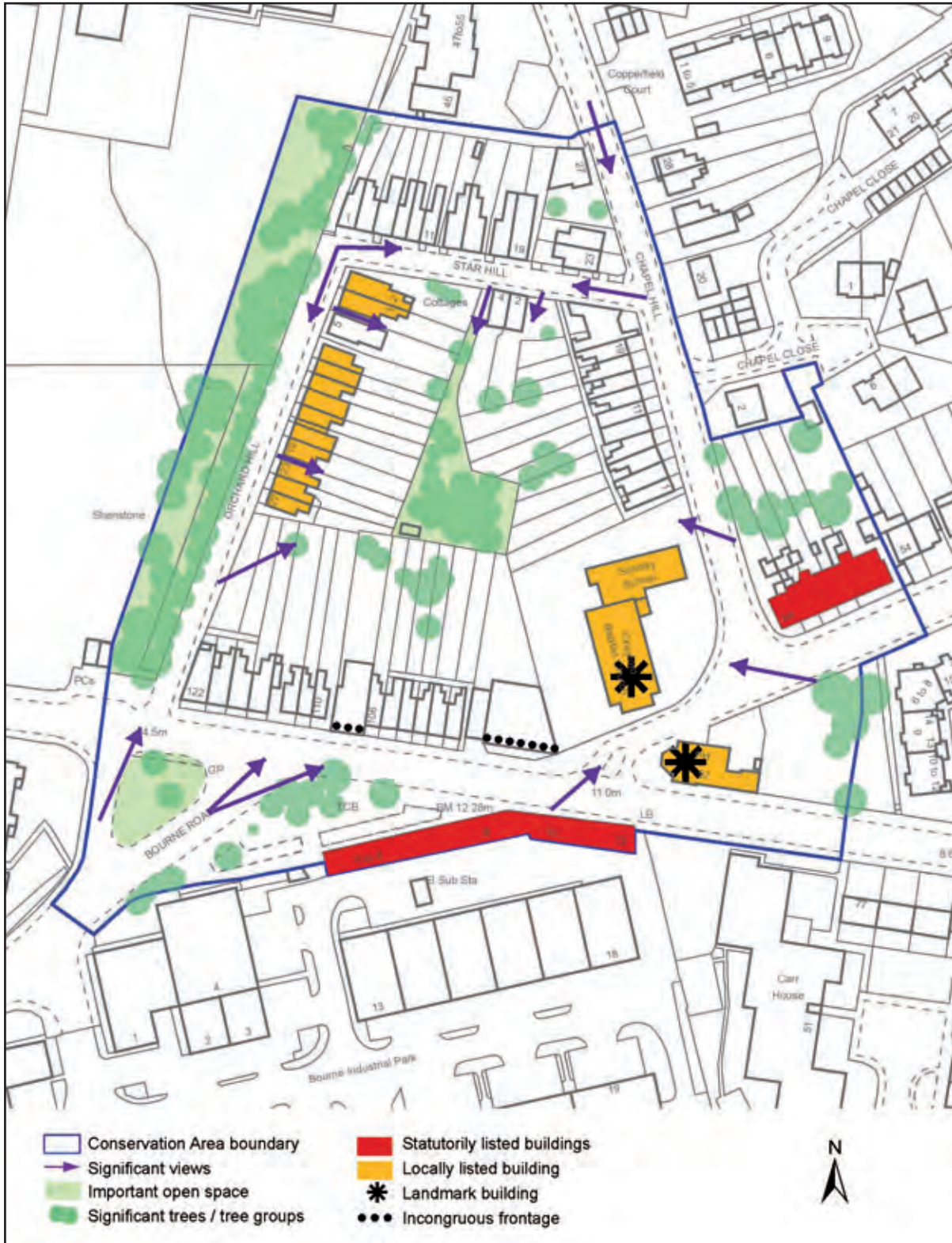
Potential for new development

- 7.40 As mentioned above, the property at No 94 London Road detracts from the homogeneity and attractiveness of the existing buildings and the setting of the conservation area. Therefore redevelopment of the site could feasibly take place and a carefully designed building of the correct scale and character could enhance this part of the area. The redesign of this building's frontage offers the potential for improving the view to the side of the chapel and front of the pub. In addition, in this respect it

should be noted that the rear of this building is partially visible from Orchard Hill, so any redevelopment would need to be carefully designed to take this into account.

- 7.41 Any development will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area in line with Government advice, Council planning policies and the emerging Local Development Framework.
- 7.42 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 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.
- 7.43 Any future proposals for development will be judged for their effect on the character, appearance and special interest of the conservation area as defined in this appraisal.

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 guidance, "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 to development within the conservation area; provide guidance; and set out actions to secure the proper and effective application of these requirements.
 - Propose the implementation of management procedures to co-ordinate the delivery of new works and maintenance of public spaces.
- 1.3 The Management Plan encourages the Local Authority, developers, development professions (e.g. planners, architects, landscape architects, highway engineers) and the local community to engage in the preservation and enhancement of the local historic environment. This will help secure the long-term viability of the conservation area as an important heritage asset.

2 Planning controls and the Council's Development Plan

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

- 2.2 Where a property lies within a conservation area, planning control is extended so that planning permission and conservation area consent will be required, for example:
- A dwelling house enlarged by more than 50 cubic metres or over 10% of the size of the original building, whichever is greater.
 - The construction of a detached building, enclosure or pool of over 10 cubic metres in the grounds of a house.
 - Cladding any part of the exterior of a property in stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
 - Enlargement of a house by additions to or alteration of its roof.
 - The installation of a satellite dish or antenna on a chimney, on a building over 15 metres in height or on a wall or roof slope, which fronts a highway (refer Government publication “A Householder’s Planning Guide for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes”).
 - Notification must be given of felling or lopping of trees.
- 2.3 Conservation Area Consent is required for the full or substantial demolition of buildings within the conservation area. In accordance with the Government Guidance in PPG15 there will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.4 Any application for the demolition of a Statutorily Listed, Locally Listed Building or a Building of Townscape Merit will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification stating why the building should be demolished. The Council will expect the applicant to demonstrate that:
- The building is beyond economic repair.
 - The building has been offered on the open market at a realistic price.
 - If vacant, that alternative uses have been sought.
- 2.5 Where alterations are proposed, the reinstatement of original detailing and composition will be sought to reinforce the unity and cohesive quality of the townscape. The Council will seek to ensure that new development within the conservation area serves to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area in accordance with the adopted 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 Within the Star Hill Conservation Area there are many fine historic individual buildings of townscape merit. In addition, all properties collectively form a unique 19th Century suburban townscape composition and are worthy of conservation area status. The principal buildings of merit are shown on the Townscape Analysis Map.
- 3.2 With all locally listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit and local landmark buildings it is important that any alterations or extensions should be of matching scale, design and/or materials

4 Erosion of character

4.1 Where the quality of an area is being eroded by alterations the Council may make use of what is termed an Article 4 Direction. This may be used to withdraw permitted development rights for a prescribed range of development which materially affect aspects of the external appearance of dwelling houses in conservation areas. This includes the erection, alteration, or removal of a chimney; various kinds of development fronting a highway, or open space, such as the enlargement, improvement, or other alteration of a dwelling house; alterations to windows or doors; the construction of an external porch; and the painting of a dwelling house, or of a building or enclosure within its curtilage. It may also be used to withdraw the permitted development rights to demolish a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, if it is within the curtilage of a dwelling house and fronts a highway or open space.

4.2 In general terms, Star Hill Conservation Area has a substantial number of good relatively unaltered Victorian buildings and these contribute to and maintain the architectural and historic value and characteristics of the locale, make the area special, and worthy of conservation area status. However, it was identified that the following alterations pose a threat to the special character of the area:

- Loss of timber windows and doors.
- Alterations to window and door openings.
- Use of concrete roof tiles, removal of redundant chimney stacks, pots and roof features.
- Alterations to the roofscape, including the installation of dormers.
- Installation of satellite dishes on prominent front elevations/chimney stacks.

4.3 In determining planning applications the Council will take the above factors into consideration. The Council will oppose those alterations, which pose a threat to the special character of the conservation area.

4.4 In addition, as an aid to protecting the character of the area the Council will ensure that unauthorised development is subject to effective enforcement action. This is to protect the special qualities of the area generally and to ensure that detrimental unauthorised alterations throughout the area are rectified where legal powers permit.

4.5 The Council may assist with the provision of grant aid for projects, which restore or reinstate the original features of a building and will contribute to achieving higher standards of preservation and enhancement.



5 Trees, landscape and space between buildings

5.1 On private land within the conservation area, anyone intending to lop or fell a tree greater than 75mm in diameter at 1.5 meters above the ground must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. This provides the Council with an opportunity to assess the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served.

- 5.2 Shenstone Park and its mature trees make a major contribution to the setting of the conservation area, although the existing concrete panel boundary fence on Orchard Hill could be replaced by a more appropriate form of boundary treatment. Continued maintenance and management of the park trees provide the opportunity to bring the buildings into harmony with the landscape and setting.
- 5.3 Of particular concern is the significant contribution made by rear gardens and the central open vacant area of land, bounded by the residential properties and roads. The trees and other landscaping in these areas contribute to the “rural” ambiance of the locale and is viewed from many different vantage points, with the best views from an elevated position along Star Hill. It is recommended that that these “green” characteristics are protected from inappropriate development.
- 5.4 The open area to the south of London Road has already seen some minor environmental improvements with the planting of low-growing shrubs and trees. There is some potential for utilising the Bourne Road junction for more landscape works, which will help frame the approach to Nos 110-122 London Road.
- 5.5 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 trees contribute to the setting of the area or views identified in the appraisal. The Council will also seek to maintain the open spaces and views between buildings and breaks in the built environment.

6 Setting and views

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

7 The public realm and enhancement

- 7.1 The conservation area has generally been resurfaced using materials appropriate to its setting. The character and identity of the conservation area has been enhanced and reinforced with the installation of replica period street lamps and columns.
- 7.2 In general, highway signage, traffic calming measures and other structures can all serve to detract from the quality of the public realm and character of the area, and any redundant modern features should be removed. For example at the entrance/exit from Bexley Lane onto London Road there are many signs and barriers/bollards/highways furniture, etc all which detract from the setting of the conservation area at this important “gateway”. Resources permitting



a critical audit of the public realm should be undertaken to identify redundant features and opportunities for enhancement.

- 7.3 In Star Hill Conservation Area, the high volume of traffic along London Road/Bourne Road junction is visually very intrusive. Should opportunities arise a critical review should be undertaken to assess alternative traffic management options, which may prove to be less intrusive and enhance the conservation area.
- 7.4 The Council will seek to ensure that any surviving historic streetscape features are retained, and that any future highway works will bring a positive improvement to the character or appearance of the conservation area. All works should accord with the spirit of English Heritage's 'Streets For All' 2004.

8 New buildings and building extensions

- 8.1 New developments in conservation areas should aspire to a quality of design and execution, related to its context. This will normally involve respecting values established through assessment of the significance of the area.
- 8.2 In Star Hill 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.
- 8.3 The setting of the houses is frequently enhanced by the presence of large mature trees. Vegetation including especially trees, shrubs and grass, adds significantly to the character of the area and any proposals for alterations or enhancement will need to be considered very carefully in terms of local and wider impact.
- 8.4 The roofscape is traditional in form, with heights relating mainly to the two/three-storey scale of buildings in the area. Any variations such as dormers or other extensions are likely to adversely affect this established character. In particular, rooflights and dormer windows to the front roof slope will detract from the character and appearance of the area and therefore fail to "preserve or enhance" the conservation area and will generally be unacceptable.
- 8.5 Recently the central vacant open space has been subject to considerable interest for residential development. As mentioned above this green vacant open area makes a considerable contribution to the setting of the conservation area. Therefore, any proposed development will need to address this issue and ensure that this key characteristic is preserved or enhanced.
- 8.6 The business uses at No 94 London Road are located in an incongruous 20th Century commercial building, completely out of character with the area, although the building possibly incorporates parts of an earlier structure. Development of this site could feasibly take place and a carefully designed building of the correct scale and character could enhance this part of the area. The redesign of this buildings frontage offers the potential for improving the view to the side of the Baptist chapel and front of the pub.
- 8.7 The frontage to the restaurant at No 108 London Road also displays a lack of understanding or consideration for the key characteristics of the conservation area. There is pressure for projecting advertisement boards, signs and canopy's. It is the Council's view that any signs or projecting canopy outside commercial/business

premises on the north side of London Road can be an intrusive element into the street scene and will need to be carefully monitored and controlled.

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 identifying any unauthorised work and consider whether enforcement action should be taken.
- 10.2 Any previously unreported unauthorised development or work identified by the detailed survey would then be considered by the Planning Control Enforcement Team for action, resources permitting

11 Boundary definition

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

12 Community engagement

- 12.1 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 Star Hill 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 - Star Hill Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan were subject to public consultation during February to April 2008. As part of the consultation exercise comments were sought from the Conservation Advisory Committee, local amenity/history groups, local partnerships (as appropriate), organisations such as English Heritage, etc., and individual owners/occupiers of all of the properties affected. The document was also placed on the Council's website, in local libraries and contact centre. A letter advising of these arrangements was delivered to all properties in the area. The results of the consultations were considered by the Cabinet Member, the text was revised and adopted. Copies of this document are available both as printed documents and on the Council's website.
- 12.5 The Council will seek to improve communication with local residents and where it can help and encourage local residents to engage and assist with pursuing conservation objectives.

Appendices

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

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

Roofs

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

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

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

Chimneys

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

Dormers

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

Fascias

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

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

Walls

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

Painting and stone cleaning

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

Windows and doors

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

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

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

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

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

Window and door materials

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

Rainwater goods

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

Boundary walls and railings

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

Minor additions

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

2 Contacts

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

Mr M Nicholls / Mr G Fraser

London Borough of Bexley,
Strategic Planning and Development
Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street,
Bexleyheath, Kent
DA6 7AT.

Tel: 020 8303 7777

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

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas:

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

Tel: 020 7973 3000

Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets:

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

Tel: 020 7377 1644

Email: info@spab.org.uk

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

