

THE DOWNS ROAD ESTATE CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

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DOWN ROAD CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area is a cohesive residential development of early 1960s houses, built by a well-known building company, now called the Wates Group. Their architect, Kenneth Bland RIBA, provided a spacious estate of well detailed houses set around an undulating site which took full advantage of existing tree groups and changes in level. Derek Lovejoy and Partners, a well known landscape design company, was also involved and worked with Bland to create an attractive environment with the houses set back from the road behind open front gardens. Bland provided designs for a number of building types which despite their contemporary appearance, used traditional materials and details, such as the clay pantiles for the roofs and timber casement windows. Handmade clay tiles were also used as tile hanging on some of the front elevations to provide variety.

This document seeks to define and describe the unique character of the Downs Road Estate Conservation Area in a concise and accessible way. It is our duty as Local Planning Authority to ensure, in our decision-making, that this special character is not only preserved but, wherever possible, enhanced. It is vital for those drawing up development proposals to understand the character of a place, and for decision-makers to ensure that proposals are in keeping. It is also important for the local community to understand how those changes which they wish to make to the physical fabric of their properties can significantly affect the visual appearance of the area.

We are confident that this statutory Appraisal document will provide the necessary tool for the positive management of the area by all concerned. It will help to ensure that change does not erode the essential spirit of the place and that positive enhancements are achieved.

Councillor Michael Arthur
Chairman Planning Policy Sub Committee

Mark Berry
Head of Planning

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Part 1 CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of the Downs Road Estate Conservation Area

The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area lies to the south east of Epsom Town Centre, and is one of several roads which connect the historic core of Epsom to the Epsom Downs Racecourse and beyond. The conservation area comprises a quiet residential area, exclusively developed from the late 1950s onwards by a building company called Wates Ltd, which has since become the nationally significant Wates Group and is based in Leatherhead. The estate was designed by their in-house architect, Kenneth Bland RIBA, who worked in close association with Derek Lovejoy and Partners, who were responsible for the landscaping and general layout. Together they produced an area of well detailed houses, set carefully around the undulating roads, which remains almost unaltered from their original concept. The use of traditional materials, such as clay pantiles for the roofs, adds to the interest of the buildings.

The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area was designated in August 1999.

1.2 The implications of conservation area designation

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.3 Conservation area character appraisals and management proposals

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in “*Guidance on conservation area appraisals*” (August 2005) and “*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*” (August 2005). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within “*Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*” (PPG15).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of the “Character Appraisal”);
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the “Management Proposals”).

These documents provide a firm basis on which applications for development within the Downs Road Conservation Area can be assessed. The omission of any feature in either the appraisal or the management proposals does not imply that it is of no interest, and because both will be subject to regular review, it will be possible to amend any future documents accordingly.

1.4 Policy framework

These documents should be read in conjunction with the wider adopted development plan policy framework produced by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, as well as documents produced by Surrey County Council and the South-East Regional Assembly. These documents include:

- *The Epsom and Ewell District-Wide Local Plan* dated May 2000: Chapter 6 addresses the built environment. The management of conservation areas is covered by policies BE2, BE3, BE4 and BE5;
- The Epsom and Ewell Local Development Framework (LDF) contains a Core Strategy which was adopted in July 2007. This document identifies key issues and objectives for the future development of the Borough up to 2022, and a strategy to achieve them;
- The Core Strategy contains Policy CS5 – a broad Policy which emphasises the Council’s commitment to protect and enhance the heritage of the Borough. Item 3.7.8 in the Strategy describes and explains the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans which the Council is undertaking;
- *The South East Plan adopted in 2009*: Provides strategic guidance for the built environment for the period from 2006 to 2026. It provides an overall framework for development in the south-east. Useful guidance is set out in Chapter 12 *Management of the Built Environment*, and is detailed in Policy BE6.

1.5 Key Characteristics of the Downs Road Conservation Area

This character appraisal concludes that the key characteristics of the conservation area are:

- Residential development of the late 1950s and early 1960s by Wates Ltd., using their in-house architect Kenneth Bland RIBA with Derek Lovejoy and Partners as landscape designers;
- The estate was laid out to the east of Downs Road, a historic route connecting Epsom Town Centre to the Epsom Downs;

- The core of the estate is The Ridings, with two roads, Walnut Close and Milburn Walk, leading off;
- Parts of Treadwell Road to the south and Downs Road to the west also contain estate buildings;
- Substantial stands of existing trees, those along Downs Road having been planted in the late 19th century by Lord Rosebery of The Durdans, were respected and the layout of the new buildings carefully designed so they could be retained;
- The houses were laid out with an informal building line which was set back from the street, with undivided front gardens giving the estate a very spacious feel;
- The buildings are mainly detached, with some semi-detached pairs and the occasional small groups of three houses;
- Whilst the overall style of the buildings is definitely of the 1960s, the use of materials such as the clay pantiles for the roofs, refers to local building traditions;
- The estate is relatively unaltered and overall has retained a cohesive character.

1.6 Summary of Issues (from Chapter 6):

The conservation area is generally well preserved and much is achieved by the care and vigilance of the residents themselves. The houses are generally well looked after and many retain their original details and materials. However there are a few minor problems which have been identified as part of this Character Appraisal:

- The control of new development
- Conserving and enhancing the existing buildings
- The control of satellite dishes
- The control of pavements, front boundaries, and grass verges
- The care and protection of the many trees
- Householder guidance and interpreting the history of the area

2 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 Historical development

Until the late 1950s the land on which The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area now stands was downland. Roughly one hundred years earlier, the map of 1867 confirms that at this time, a bridleway called Walnut Tree Road ran along the current route of Downs Road, and a footpath cut diagonally across the northern part of the area. Two features are also noted on the map which probably relate to the use of the area in connection with the training of racehorses – a measured 1,000 yard course and an oval circuit.

By 1895, Downs Road had been laid out over the old bridleway and a large property, Uplands House, built in the north, facing the road. The horse-racing features had gone. By 1913, a new house (No. 17 Downs Road) had been built to the south of Uplands House, and the footpath had been partially widened to provide access to Sunninghill, a large Edwardian house which now lies within the adjoining Burgh Heath Road Conservation Area. Downs Avenue had been laid out and large houses had begun to be built along it.

Insert historic maps: 1867, 1895, 1913, 1932, 1954, and 1960

The map of 1932 confirms that Uplands House remained but had been renamed St Andrew's, otherwise there had been no changes. By 1954 however three further houses (Nos. 19, 21 and 23) had been built to the south of No. 17 Downs Road, and these four properties were retained when plans for the new estate were drawn up in the late 1950s. However, St Andrew's was demolished and its large garden redeveloped, although No. 17 retains a much bigger garden than the other three houses. This incorporates a landscape feature from the much bigger house. It is interesting to note that on the boundary of the conservation area, on the south side of Treadwell Road, Treadwell Stables had been built. Further stables had also been constructed to the east below Down Hall.

The map of the early 1960s shows the estate as completed, with over 110 new houses. This left a row of mature trees along Downs Road which had been planted by Lord Rosebery in the late 19th century. However, the estate was not completely finished until 1963. To preserve the quality and character of the main features of the estate, Wates Ltd attached covenants to the deeds of each house. Even before the completion of the estate, a Residents' Association was set up to involve the owners in the maintenance of the environmental quality which had been so skilfully created.

Today the estate remains relatively unaltered although there have been some issues (see the Management Proposals) with owners wishing to over-extend or unsympathetically alter their buildings. The landscaping has matured and the many large trees in various locations add greatly to the sylvan character of the area. A Residents' Association still exists though it is currently not very active. The care of the roads and public verges has been taken over by Surrey County Council.

3 LOCATION AND SETTING

3.1 Location and setting

The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area lies about one kilometre to the south east of Epsom Town Centre, between the town and Epsom Downs Racecourse. The conservation area sits in a suburban setting, with, to the north, the more commercial town centre, with mainly residential development on all other sides. To the east lies the Burgh Heath Road Conservation Area, with its collection of late 19th and early 20th century houses.

The estate is totally in residential use.

3.2 Topography and geology

The conservation area lies on undulating land which forms the lower slopes of the Epsom Downs, part of the North Downs. The changes in level are gradual but were used by the designers of the estate to produce an attractive layout with pleasant vistas along the gently bending streets. The land rises along The Ridings to the south, then dips down Milburn Walk, levelling out again and then rising up towards Treadwell Road. The land also dips steeply down Walnut Close. All of these changes in level create interesting vistas along each street which terminate in either buildings, trees or in longer views out of the conservation area (Walnut Close only).

The conservation area is built on the chalk of the North Downs although clay can be found on nearby Epsom Common which from the late 17th century onwards was used to make bricks.

4.1 Street pattern and building plots

The conservation area encompasses the historic route of Downs Road, shown as a bridleway on the 1867 map. Treadwell Road was also shown as not much more than a footpath, otherwise the roads in the estate (The Ridings, Walnut Close, and Milburn Walk) are all of the late 1950s design. Kenneth Bland and Derek Lovejoy and Partners worked together to design the layout, which utilised the changes in level and the existing stands of trees facing Downs Road, Treadwell Road and along the northern boundary of the present conservation area. To protect the canopy of mature trees along Downs Road and the open green space beneath them, twelve of the houses were set back following the 'Radburn' principle with vehicular access including garages from the rear facing Milburn Walk. This left the frontages to Downs Road uninterrupted by driveways or parking areas, a concept which is still maintained and provides that part of Downs Road with a particularly pleasant character. This separation of pedestrians and vehicles was later to be espoused by other volume house builders, such as the Span estates of the mid 1960s.

Elsewhere in the estate, the designers followed open plan principles, without any dividing walls or front boundaries, the houses set back from the road with a 'soft' building line which varied slightly. The buildings were laid out with a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, with an occasional row of three. Altogether, there are nine types of property with variations to suit site conditions, all carefully juxtaposed to produce an outstanding architectural composition. Each plot is roughly the same size, with the buildings being relatively close together but each having a front and a good-size back garden. The visual linkage of houses was created by brick walls, wooden fences and garden gates with a unifying colour scheme throughout.

4.2 Open spaces, landscape and trees

There are no formal open spaces in the conservation area although wide grass verges in three parts of The Ridings provide some variation to the street scene, the first verge which lies further north being notable for its mature trees. Otherwise trees lie behind the buildings facing the north side of The Ridings, along Downs Road (where the trees planted by Lord Rosebery at the end of the 19th century form a double row in places), and facing Treadwell Road. Most of these appear to be beeches, but there are also a large number of silver birches. Individual trees can also be glimpsed in back gardens.

The principal trees and tree groups in or on the edges of the conservation area have been marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, but their location is indicative only and the omission of any particular tree does not mean that it is of no significance.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

The consistent building form (plots and buildings) in the conservation area means that no one building stands out, and the character of the conservation area is enhanced by this cohesiveness. However, the estate was carefully laid out to make maximum use of the changes in gradient and the existing mature trees, so there are several long vistas along the principal streets which provide a pleasing mix of buildings and landscape.

These are:

- In both directions along Downs Road, taking in the mature trees which lie both within and on the edges of the conservation area;
- Along Treadwell Road, looking both east and west, and taking in the mansard estate houses on the north side of the road, set back from the street with mature trees in front of them;
- At the eastern and western ends of The Ridings and close to its junction with Milburn Walk, looking back along the road and taking in the carefully composed groups of buildings, grass verges, trees and changes in level;
- Down the incline along Walnut Close, taking in the 'mansard' houses and longer views out of the conservation area to the east.

4.4 Boundaries

The original estate layout of the late 1950s specified that the front gardens would be undivided by any form of fencing or walls, although inevitably planting and some trees have grown up which do provide some of the property frontages with more definition. However, this is controlled by a covenant which appears to be largely adhered to. The principal feature of the front gardens is that most of them contain driveways, leading to integral or detached garages, which are used for car parking.

Along Downs Road, the layout of the buildings along the southern end of the road (Nos. 25-43 odd) means that they are approached by foot from Downs Road through open front gardens, which make the maximum use of the avenue of trees which date to before the estate was built. Rear access and garages are provided from Milburn Walk. However, the use of the same yellow brick boundary wall, the repetitive design of the flat roofed garages, and the retention of existing mature trees, does help to reduce the impact of what would otherwise be rather weak streetscape.

The side boundaries of the properties, which link garages and houses together in places, are mainly provided by yellow brick walls about 1.8 metres in height with side gates being built of horizontally slatted timber and painted white. Because of the relative closeness of the buildings these hardly impinge at all.

4.5 Public realm

The "public realm" covers street lighting, street furniture, paving, road surfaces, and other features of interest within the public areas which surround private property. Whilst the conservation area is notable for its wide grass verges and the many mature trees, many of which date back to when the estate was built, there are no other features of any special interest. Street lighting is provided by short steel standards with a glass and steel shade, and the pavements are covered in black tarmac with concrete kerbs.

For the street name plates, the Borough Council has adopted a standard form with black letters on a white background, made from metal and fixed to a black timber plate fixed in turn to buildings or to low timber posts. These are simple and well detailed and fit in with the character of the conservation area.

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Building types and details

All of the properties in the conservation area were built as family houses rather than apartments. There were nine different designs, some merely a variation of the same type. The buildings were laid out with a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, sometimes arranged as a group of three. Of note is the specification of high quality, traditional buildings materials, which were nevertheless used on building forms which were very much of the 1960s. Some of the details were decidedly unusual, such as the double front doors with ten small squares of glazing in each, which would not look out of place in a modern development. Many of these front doors still remain today. All of the windows are side-hung or fixed light casements, the original windows being white painted timber. However, most of the windows have been replaced in white uPVC, utilising existing openings and generally replicating the original window pattern. One of the few examples of original windows can be seen at No. 22 The Ridings. In all of the original estate buildings, the use of a consistent handmade clay pantile for the roof provides the conservation area with one of its most attractive features, which is enhanced by the areas of red or brown handmade clay tile hanging on front and side elevations. Each house has a brick chimney which serves the fireplace in the living room.

There are no 'No. 13' houses in any of the streets.

There are four principal house types as follows:

Type 1 - Gabled or "Dormy" houses

These are the smallest buildings on the estate and are sometimes provided in pairs to break up the longer runs of larger two storey houses. One and a half storeys high, and detached, they can mainly be seen at the northern end of The Ridings and to the south of the junction of The Ridings with Walnut Close. The gables face the street with handmade clay tile hanging to the upper floors. Garages are linked to the side of the building, often with a double front door. The ground floors are built from brickwork (red/blue, or yellow) with the steeply pitched roofs being covered in clay pantiles. Bedrooms are provided in these roof spaces. Garages can also be detached.

Examples include many of the houses in Walnut Close, Nos. 21 and 23 The Ridings and Nos. 37-45 odd The Ridings.

Type 2 – Detached two storey houses

This is the prevalent building type and can be seen along Downs Road, the north and east side of Milburn Walk, and in different parts of The Ridings. There are variations within this group but basically they usually are more substantial buildings, two storeys high, with a gable facing the street with the adjoining pitched roof dropping to ground floor ceiling level. These contain a roof dormer to the bedroom behind. The garages are integral to the main building apart from Nos. 31-43 odd Downs Road, where they are detached and accessed from Milburn Walk. The ground floors are faced in yellow brick, with handmade red clay tiles used as tile hanging to the upper floors and side gable. Some of the houses facing Downs Road, such as No. 15, have white weatherboarding to their gables.

Examples include Nos. 11-15 odd The Ridings, Nos. 12-16 even The Riding and Nos. 7-25 odd Milburn Walk.

Type 3 – Pairs or groups of three Type 2 two storey houses

These buildings are similar to Type 2 but are arranged in pairs (Nos. 34 and 36, and 51 and 53 The Ridings with unusual two storey front extensions) or short groups of three (Nos. 9-15 off The Ridings, Nos. 27-29 odd The Ridings, Nos. 20-24 even The Ridings, and Nos. 9-15 Milburn Walk).

Type 4 – “Mansard” houses

These can only be seen along the south side of Walnut Close (Nos. 17-21 consec.) and facing Treadwell Road (Nos. 12-26 even). Two storeys high, they have single storey ground floor extensions in which is located a single garage and a flat canopied porch made out of timber, which defines the front doors. The first floor is a mansard and is covered in clay pantiles in a building form which is perhaps more redolent of the 1930s than the late 1950s. The flank walls are covered at first floor level by dark rd/brown hand-made clay tiles. It appears that the original front doors were different from the rest of the estate, and in most cases they have in any case been replaced in uPVC, as have most of the windows.

5.2 Positive buildings

All of the buildings within the conservation area, including those which were built before the late 1950s or early 1960s, are considered to make a *positive* contribution to the special interest of the conservation area due to their consistent design details and high quality materials. Of the buildings which were already erected prior to the late 1950s, No. 17 Downs Road is considered to be of particular architectural value with its high quality Edwardian details. The other three, Nos. 19, 21 and 23 probably date to the Inter-War period and are of lesser value.

Government guidance in PPG15 '*Planning and the historic environment*' advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area (paragraph 4.27). The guidance note states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. Where redevelopment does take place, it will have to conform to existing Council policies, particularly in terms of site density, scale, materials and details.

There are no Listed or Locally Listed buildings in the conservation area.

6 NEGATIVE FEATURES AND ISSUES

6.1 Negative features

A number of negative features were noted during the survey work for this Character Appraisal. These all relate to unsympathetic alterations which have been carried out by householders to their properties:

- Velux roof lights have been inserted into the front roof slopes of some properties (e.g. No. 22 The Ridings);
- Some original front doors have been changed or porches added (e.g. No. 9 The Ridings);
- In some cases, the original very simple horizontally 'planked' metal garage doors, painted white, have been replaced with modern designs, such as the neo-Georgian door on Nos. 17 and 18 The Ridings, and No. 1 Milburn Walk;
- No. 29 The Ridings has a facing of what appears to be either artificial stone or badly matched light yellow and white brick around the garage entrance;
- A very large and also a smaller satellite dish are located on the side elevation of No. 12 Milburn Walk, facing the road.

The changes detailed above have mainly been carried out under a house owner's 'permitted development' rights, which means that planning permission is not required

6.2 Issues

- There is pressure for new development in the conservation area, mainly for roof and back extensions;
- The existing buildings need to be conserved and enhanced;
- The control of satellite dishes;
- The open spaces in public and private ownership need to be carefully maintained;
- The sylvan character of the conservation area needs to be protected and enhanced;
- New householder guidance to advice home owners on how to look after their properties, and what is important about the conservation area, would be welcome.

Part 2 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

7 INTRODUCTION

7.1 Format of the Management Proposals

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Downs Road Conservation Area which make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals*, builds upon the negative features and issues which have also been identified, to provide a series of Recommendations for improvement and change, most of which are the responsibility of the Borough Council or Surrey County Council.

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis, as set out in Chapter 9.

8 PROPOSED ACTIONS

8.1 Recommendations

Based on the Negative Features and Issues in Chapter 6, the following actions are proposed, most of which will be the responsibility of the Borough Council or County Council.

8.1.1 The control of new development

There are few opportunities for new development in the conservation area other than modest extensions, which might include the addition of new conservatories or the possible infilling of space between properties and their detached garages. However, it is interesting to note that very few householders have extended their buildings in this way, and existing covenants also prevent extensions into the front gardens.

Conservation area designation automatically brings tighter controls over small extensions but as the rules are complex it is always advisable to contact the Borough Council before work commences to see if permission is needed (See Appendix 3 for the contact details).

In order that the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area is protected, the Borough Council will need to continue to be especially vigilant when considering applications for new development.

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will continue to monitor applications for change within The Downs Road Estate Conservation Area in relation to advice about new development within conservation areas, as set out in Policy Guidance 15: "Planning and the Historic Environment" (PPG15) and in saved policies contained within the Epsom and Ewell District-Wide Local Plan (particularly Chapter 8 Management of the Historic Environment, Policy BE7) dated May 2000;; the South East Plan 2009; and the emerging Local Development Framework and Adopted Core Strategy 2007-2022.*

8.1.2 Preserving and enhancing the existing buildings

Most of the original estate buildings retain a high proportion of their original materials and details. The most important of these, which it is considered need to be preserved, are:

- The clay pantiled roofs
- The handmade clay tile hanging on the flank and front elevations
- The front doors
- The front elevations generally including porches
- The open front gardens

At the moment, changes to these elements can be undertaken by a home owner without planning permission. This is because unlisted family houses usually retain a number of

permitted development rights which allow their owners to change the appearance of their property quite drastically without the need for permission from the Borough Council, even in conservation areas. For other uses, such as buildings in use as flats, commercial properties or institutions, stricter controls already exist.

However, the Borough Council can remove the permitted development rights to unlisted family dwellings through the use of an Article 4(2) Direction, which aims to preserve traditional materials and details, and encourage sensitive extensions and alterations. The Article 4(2) Direction can also be used to control front gardens, including boundaries.

Article 4 (2) Directions have already been served in several of the Borough Council's other conservation areas, including the Ewell Downs Road and The Green Conservation Area and the Higher Green Conservation Area, both of which are 20th century residential estates like the Downs Road Estate Conservation Area. They have also been served in the Stamford Green Conservation Area and the Ewell Village Conservation Area. Generally these Directions have worked well, and are understood and appreciated by the local residents which are affected. All planning applications submitted under an Article 4 (2) Direction are free.

An Article 4(2) Direction for the Downs Road Estate Conservation Area would bring under planning control the following:

- (i) All extensions of whatever size including porches on the front* of the building
- (ii) Changing roof materials and the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslopes
- (iii) Changes to the tile hanging on the front elevations (or on flank elevations where they face a highway)
- (iv) Replacing the front doors and garage doors on the front* elevation
- (v) The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house
- (vi) The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*

(**Front* means facing a public highway, private road or waterway.)

The Borough Council has published detailed guidance on the existing Article 4(2) Directions which can be viewed on their website: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk Copies of their leaflet *Advisory notes to residents* can be obtained from the Environmental Design team, but for information a summary, altered to be of relevance to the Downs Road Conservation Area, is included at Appendix 1.

Small grants may be available from Surrey County Council to householders within all of the Borough's conservation areas to help with the additional cost of using traditional materials and details. More details can be obtained from the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust (contact: Martin Higgins 01483 518758).

Recommendations:

- *The Borough Council will consider serving an Article 4(2) Direction in the Downs Road Conservation Area.*
- *The Borough Council will provide a publicity leaflet for the Article 4(2) Direction once it is in place.*
- *The Borough Council will produce a full photographic survey of the buildings in the conservation area, on a building-by-building basis, taken when the Article 4 (2) Direction is served, to aid future enforcement.*
- *In conjunction with the new Article 4 (2) Direction, the Borough Council will continue to monitor the quality of applications for change to unlisted buildings within the conservation area and will ensure that only applications of the highest quality are approved.*
- *The Borough Council will take enforcement action against individuals or commercial companies where breaches of planning consent in the conservation area occur.*

8.1.3 Satellite dishes

Despite being in the conservation area, at least one resident has erected satellite dishes which are visible from the street. These are detrimental to the overall character of the conservation area and householder guidance and possible enforcement action should be considered if these were erected after 2000.

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will consider taking enforcement action against owners of buildings where satellite dishes have been erected without planning permission and where negotiation has failed to achieve a satisfactory result.*

8.1.4 Maintenance of the streets and open green spaces

Surrey County Council is responsible for the upkeep of the roads, pavements, street lighting and verges in the conservation area. This includes some important mature trees (see below).

Recommendation:

- *Surrey Council will continue to ensure that these open spaces and features are carefully maintained and that the character of the conservation area is protected.*

8.1.5 Protection of the sylvan character of the conservation area

Trees are extremely important within the conservation area and some may have individual Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them. The trees need to be protected from felling, unsuitable lopping, or from disease. Occasionally, trees have caused damage to pavements or front boundaries, so, subject to Council approval, their removal might be justified.

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council, particularly its Tree Officer and Planning Staff, will continue to monitor the condition of trees within the conservation area and offer free advice to residents about the care of their trees.*
- *Planning applications which propose the removal of mature or semi-mature trees which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area should not be approve.*

8.1.6 Householder guidance

The existing Downs Road Conservation Area leaflet is a useful document but is now somewhat out of date. The publication of new guidance, in association with the recommendation to serve the new Article 4 (2) Direction, would be welcome. This could also include some information about the interesting historical development of the estate.

Recommendation:

- *Subject to funding, the Borough Council could consider the preparation of a new Conservation Area leaflet for residents of the conservation area to provide guidance on the following:*
 - *The new Article 4 (2) Direction*
 - *New development, including infill and replacement dwellings*
 - *Extensions*
 - *The use of traditional materials and details*
 - *The use of colour*
 - *Control of front gardens, front boundaries, and grass verges*
 - *Satellite dishes*

8.2 Conservation area boundary review

The existing boundary of the conservation area was reviewed as part of the survey work for this document and no changes are proposed as the boundary encompasses the area of original development satisfactorily.

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action
- Publicity and advertising

It is possible that this review could be carried out by volunteers from the local Residents' Association under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the Borough Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED DOWNS ROAD CONSERVATION AREA ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTION

The Article 4(2) Direction for the Downs Road Conservation Area came into force in (fill in date). It removes permitted development rights for family dwellings, requiring

applications for planning permission for a range of alterations and minor extensions which would normally be uncontrolled. Different legislation exists for flats, commercial properties, institutions, listed buildings and scheduled monuments, where stricter controls already apply.

Article 4(2) Directions are made under the General Permitted Development Order 1995. Each Direction is accompanied by a Schedule that specifies the various changes to family dwellings, which will now require planning permission. For the Downs Road Conservation Area, the Borough Council have now brought under planning control the following:

- (i) All extensions of whatever size including porches on the front* of the building
- (ii) Changing roof materials and the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslope
- (iii) Changes to the tile hanging on the front elevations (or on flank elevations where they face a highway)
- (iv) Replacing the front doors and garage doors on the front* elevation;
- (v) The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house;
- (vi) The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*;

(*Front means facing a public highway, private road or waterway.)

A copy of the detailed "Schedule", the legal document which accompanies the Article 4(2) Direction, can be obtained from the Environmental Design Team (contact: Anthony Evans 01372 732394).

A transcript of the accompanying guidance leaflet, "Advisory notes to residents" is included below.

ARTICLE 4 (2) DIRECTIONS Advisory Notes to Residents

The Borough Council has a statutory duty to preserve and enhance the special character of its designated Conservation Areas. Planning legislation allows owners of unlisted houses the right to carry out various types of development, including alterations, without the need to apply for planning permission. This is known as "permitted development". In the case of Conservation Areas, the cumulative effect of such "permitted development" may have a damaging effect upon the character and historical interest of the area. The effect of an Article 4(2) Direction means that certain alterations, which previously have been undertaken under "permitted development" now require planning permission.

GENERAL – The restrictions as to what can and cannot be built are complex and should always be referred to the Local Planning Authority. Alterations, improvements and extensions to buildings and to the setting of buildings within the Conservation Area should respect the character and historical context of the property and surroundings through the use of traditional materials and historically correct design. In addition to the constraints placed upon householder development by Conservation Area status, the following constraints outlined below apply to areas covered by an Article 4(2) Direction.

HOUSE EXTENSIONS – The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house including entrance porches, any part of which fronts a highway, private road or open space, shall require planning permission. This will include new or replacement tiling to the front elevation or to a side elevation where it faces a public highway. Permission is not required for the painting of a dwelling house.

ROOFS – A planning application is required for alterations to a roof slope which fronts a highway, private road or open space, including a change in the roof materials and the insertion of roof lights. Dormer windows require planning permission under separate legislation. In the Downs Road Conservation Area, the traditional material is a clay pantile and these must be preserved or replicated if roofing works are required. Applications for new rooflights on front roof slopes will generally be refused..

REPLACEMENT FRONT & GARAGE DOORS – Replacement of existing doors which front a highway, private road or open space require planning consent. Original front doors & garage doors should be renovated and retained where at all possible, or replaced in replica.

HARDSTANDING – The provision within a dwelling house of a hard surface for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling house such as parking hardstanding shall require planning permission.

GATES AND FENCES – The erection, construction, improvement or alteration of a gate, wall or other means of enclosure, fronting a highway, private road or open space, shall require planning permission. Demolition of the whole or any part of a gate, wall or other means of enclosure shall also require consent.

APPENDIX 2 TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL MAP

APPENDIX 3 FURTHER READING AND CONTACTS

Further reading:

Charles Abdy (2000), *Ewell Past*

Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeological Society (2004) *Ewell: A Surrey Village that became a town*

Andrew Saint, ed. (1999), *London Suburbs*

Cloudesley S. Willis (1931), *A Short History of Ewell and Nonsuch*

For further information regarding all planning and conservation related matters:

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council,
Town Hall,
The Parade,
Epsom KT18 5BY.
Tel: 01372 732000
www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

For further information regarding local history:

Jeremy Harte,
Bourne Hall Local History Museum,
Spring Street,
Ewell,
Surrey KT17 1UF.
Tel: 020 8394 1734
Email: JHarte@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas:

English Heritage South-East Region,
Eastgate Court,
195-205 High Street,
Guildford,
Surrey GU1 3EH.

General enquiries: 01483 252000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

For technical guidance:

The Victorian Society,
1 Priory Gardens,
Bedford Park, London W4 1TT.
Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

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

Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk