



CHURCH STREET CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

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The Church Street Conservation Area is one of the Borough's most important conservation areas and is notable for its prestigious houses, some of them listed grade II*, which were built when Epsom developed as a spa town in the late 17th century. It also contains Epsom's oldest building, the parish church of St Martin of Tours, which retains a remodelled mid-15th century tower.

Church Street is an ancient lane which connects the town centre with Epsom Downs and is mainly lined with large historic buildings including the church. Areas of well detailed but more modestly sized 19th century houses can also be found in Grove Road, Church Road, Heathcote Road and Laburnum Road. Narrow alleyways, typical of Epsom, cross diagonally through parts of the conservation area. The church and its churchyard with its many trees are an attractive centrepiece to the area, and of note is the high brick wall, dating to the 18th century, along its south eastern boundary. This once formed part of Pitt Place which was demolished in the 1970s and replaced with a block of flats, although its icehouse (now listed grade II) remains.

This document seeks to define and describe the various elements which gives the Church Street Conservation Area its unique character (the Character Appraisal), and provides recommendations (the Management Proposals) which will ensure its future protection and enhancement. 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.



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Chairman Planning Policy Sub-Committee



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1.1 Description of Church Street Conservation Area

The Church Street Conservation Area is a reasonably compact area taking in the historic core of old Epsom around the late medieval church of St Martin's. Over twenty of the buildings are listed, and there are also nine locally listed buildings, mostly dating to the mid to late 19th century. Close to the church are six prestigious listed houses, two of them listed at grade II*, which were built in the late 17th or early 18th century when Epsom developed as a spa town. Most of these sit on the south side of the street with large back gardens stretching back to Downside. Two of these buildings have been extensively extended (Ebbisham House and Richmond House) and all are in commercial uses apart from The Cedars (no. 14 Church Street), which has recently been converted into flats. Pitt Place was built in the 17th century on the site of an old chalk pit next to the church, and was demolished in the 1970s and replaced with a large block of flats (also called Pitt Place). This large modern building does at least sit back from the road and is partially screened by the brick wall and many mature trees which surround it. The Old King's Head Public House, another grade II listed building, sits opposite the church and provides a useful local facility. Although Church Street is a fairly busy main road, the speed of the traffic is reduced by the narrowness of the street outside the entrance to the church, where there is a definite 'pinch point', and by the gently winding course of the road.



View along Church Street

The peripheral streets contain mainly mid to late 19th century residential development, with a further public house, the Rising Sun, in Heathcote Road. This is locally listed along with a number of similarly dated cottages, of which Nos. 32 and 34 The Parade are probably the most appealing, with their weather-boarded elevations and pleasantly old fashioned cottage-style front gardens. Hidden along a narrow alleyway, No. 18 The Parade is an 18th century red brick house with carved brickwork and a steeply pitched tiled roof, set in a very private garden and surrounded by trees, walls and planting. The overall character is pleasantly suburban, with well detailed 19th century houses, often with generous gardens.

The proximity of the town centre and the Epsom University for the Creative Arts (UCA) means that one of the major issues in the conservation area is the control of on-street car parking. Other issues include the protection of the unlisted residential buildings from unsympathetic alterations, and the enhancement of the churchyard and public realm generally. These are all discussed in greater detail in the Management Proposals.



St Martin's Church

The conservation area was designated on 12 June 1973 by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. The Management Proposals include a recommendation that Grove House, and some of the adjoining properties in The Grove, are included in the conservation area.

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 Church Street 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 Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPS5).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Church Street 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 Church Street 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

The Epsom and Ewell Local Development Framework contains a Core Strategy which was submitted in June 2006. This document identifies key issues and objectives for the future development of the Borough up to 2022, and a strategy to achieve them. Detailed Policies will be dealt with in later documents.

In addition, the following development plan policy frameworks have been produced and adopted by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, by Surrey County Council and by the South-East Regional Assembly:

- *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 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 Church Street Conservation Area

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

- Location to the immediate south east of Epsom Town centre;
- Modestly sized conservation area centred on the late medieval church of St Martin which is listed grade II*;
- Six adjoining listed buildings, mainly built as prestigious family houses in the late 17th or early 18th centuries when Epsom was developing as an important spa town;



No.18 Church Street

- Church House is also listed and dates to the 18th century when it was used as a brewery;
- Two historic public houses in the conservation area, the Old King's Head and the Rising Sun;
- A good variety of mid to late-19th century cottages and houses in the back streets, several of them locally listed;



Rosebery Cottage

- The churchyard is the principal open space, and is notable for its many fine monuments and mature trees;
- Of note are the long straight alleys which cut across parts of the conservation area
- Use of brick, painted weather-boarding, slate or handmade clay tiles;
- The smaller scale of the 19th century cottages and houses contrasts with the much grander and more prestigious houses facing Church Street;
- Commercial uses facing Church Street, with mainly residential uses in the back streets.



Ebbisham House

There are three areas of distinct character within the Conservation Area:

- Area 1: Grove Road and Church Road
- Area 2: Church Street
- Area 3: The Parade, Worple Road, Heathcote Road, and Laburnum Road

These areas and their issues are described in further detail in Chapter 6: *Character Areas*.

1.6 Summary of Issues

These are set out in Chapter 7 but briefly comprise:

Spatial Issues

- Busy traffic along Church Street and demand for on-street parking
- The preservation of the historic street lights
- The poor condition of the pavements and alleys
- The continued preservation and enhancement of the trees
- The protection of the many historic walls in the conservation area

Buildings

- The poor quality of some of the modern garages
- The need to control minor alterations to unlisted family dwellings, possibly through the imposition of an Article 4 Direction
- The loss of front boundaries and the creation of car parking
- Unauthorised and visible satellite dishes

Conservation area boundary review

- Add Grove House and some of the properties in The Grove

Education and publicity

- Produce a new Conservation Area leaflet including information about the history of the area

2.0 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 Historical development

The name of Epsom derives from 'Ebba's ham', meaning Ebba's farmstead or settlement, Ebba being the name of the Saxon founder or landowner. By 933 AD the ownership had passed to the Abbey of Chertsey, where a charter confirmed by King Athelstan refers to it as 'Ebbisham'. In the Domesday Book of 1086, it is called 'Evesham' and has 38 households, grouped around St Martin's Church.



St Martin's Church and churchyard

At some stage Chertsey Abbey laid out a new settlement further west, which subsequently developed into today's High Street. This had a large egg-shaped pond, dug partly to drain the land on which the surrounding houses were built, and partly to provide water for cattle. Surrounding the pond were some 60 long narrow plots, fronted by a single row of farmhouses and cottages, backed by meadows. This settlement was largely agricultural, though brick making, based on local clays, began after the late 16th century.

The year 1618 proved decisive in Epsom's history when it was observed that cattle avoided drinking from a particular spring. The water proved to be rich in magnesium sulphate and had a mildly laxative and diuretic effect when drunk and when used for bathing it also had the effect of soothing mild aches and promoting the healing of wounds. This spring led to Epsom developing rapidly developed as a spa town in an age that also saw the development of more distant Tunbridge Wells and Bath. Being only 18 miles from the capital, Epsom became a popular weekend resort for Londoners and William Schellinks, a Dutch visitor, recorded in *The Journal of William Schellinks' Travels in England 1661-1663* that Epsom was 'a very famous and much visited place'. Samuel Pepys visited in July 1667 with his wife and observed the Epsom Wells ritual of drinking copious amounts of the spring water before retiring to the many inns or taverns in the town.

Some would stay overnight, and the farmhouses and cottages on either side of today's High Street initially took in lodgers and were later redeveloped as taverns and hotels, giving a further boost to the local brick industry, which, based on the surrounding commons, expanded from 1663 to meet the demand for building materials. Some of the buildings erected in the High Street during Epsom's heyday as a spa still survive, including the Assembly Room of 1690; the Albion Inn, built as John Livingstone's New Wells spa; Nos. 127-9 High Street, with an original 18th-century bow windowed shop front; and the Spread Eagle Inn of 1700, named after the eagle from the Hapsburg coat of arms.



Ebbisham House

However, wealthier visitors to Epsom preferred the privacy of their own homes, and from about the same date began to build themselves substantial houses slightly away from the town centre, including along Church Street (to be near the medieval church) and also to the south of the town towards the Tudor mansion of Woodcote Park along what is now Chalk Lane – Westgate House was built in 1684 and Woodcote Grove in 1686. In Church Street, The Hermitage, Cedars Cottage, No. 18 Church Street, and Ebbisham House, all date to this period of expansion during the late 17th or early 18th century. To serve the new comers, many of whom were Non-Conformists, a new Meeting House was built in Church Street.

The Cedars was in fact a farmhouse until about 1720, when it was acquired by Antonio Lopes Suasso, Baron of Avernas le Gras, who came from an old Portuguese Sephardic family. He converted the existing house to create a more elegant layout with two tall rooms either side of a central doorway, with a symmetrical front of red and yellow bricks. He sold this building to John Myster, a Lord Mayor of London of German extraction, who added a number of embellishments, such as the Myster cote of arms above the front door – this appears to have come from another building, possibly in London, as the unicorn's horn has been broken off to fit the available space. Myster lived at The Cedars until his death in 1763.



The Cedars

Pitt Place was built in a chalk pit next to St Martin's Church by William Belchier after his grand house at Durdans in Chalk Lane was burnt down in 1755. The house, which is shown on historic maps as being located directly onto the frontage with Church Street, contained an orangery, a vinery, terraces (presumably marking the line of the former chalk Pitt), and a pond with the first goldfish to be seen in Epsom. The house was later lived in by the 'vain, elegant and profligate' Thomas, Lord Lyttleton, and later by Mr Fitzherbert, whose widow became the morganatic wife of George IV.



Pitt Place Historical Image © Bourne Hall Museum

By 1730, Epsom's popularity as a spa resort was already being eclipsed by the growing fame of Bath, and despite the establishment of a popular racecourse on the nearby Epsom Downs, its significance as a spa abated. Production of Epsom Salts continued however, made by boiling mineral waters to produce magnesium sulphate in powder form, which was sold for use as bath salts or could be drunk in water as a purgative.

From the mid 19th century onwards, the present town began to take shape, with the rebuilding of much of St Martin's Church in 1824, and the construction of a sewerage system from 1850. At this point the town pond was filled in, and the present clock tower was constructed on the site of the stocks and an earlier Watch House. The late 19th century saw the development of the north-eastern corner of the High Street, with the construction of the Post Office (1897), and the premises of the London and County Bank and of William Dorset, agricultural and garden merchant.

Between the 1870s and 1900 new houses and cottages were built to the north and south of Church Street, gradually filling-in the fields which are still shown on the 1867 map. A large greensand extension to St Martin's Church was added in around 1908. Even more changes took place in the 1920s and 1930s, including the development of the gardens to The Grove, a large 18th century house which lies to the north of St Martin's Church, just outside the current conservation area.



Greensand extension to St Martin's Church

There was a further spate of changes to the conservation area between the 1960s and the 1980s. Pitt Place, a large 17th century house located next to the church, was demolished in the 1970s and replaced with a large block of flats (Pitt Place), fortunately retaining many of the mature trees in the garden. Other sites were infilled with detached houses, such as the 1960s house in the garden to No. 18 Church Street, and the block of 1960s flats on the adjoining site facing Downside. No. 28 Church Street is a very large L-shaped infill building between the public house and Ebbisham House, possibly dating to the 1970s. At some stage substantial extensions have been added to both Ebbisham House and Richmond House, the first to provide more office space and the second to provide additional bedrooms for the care home. A housing development was built in the garden of The Cedars in the 1990s.

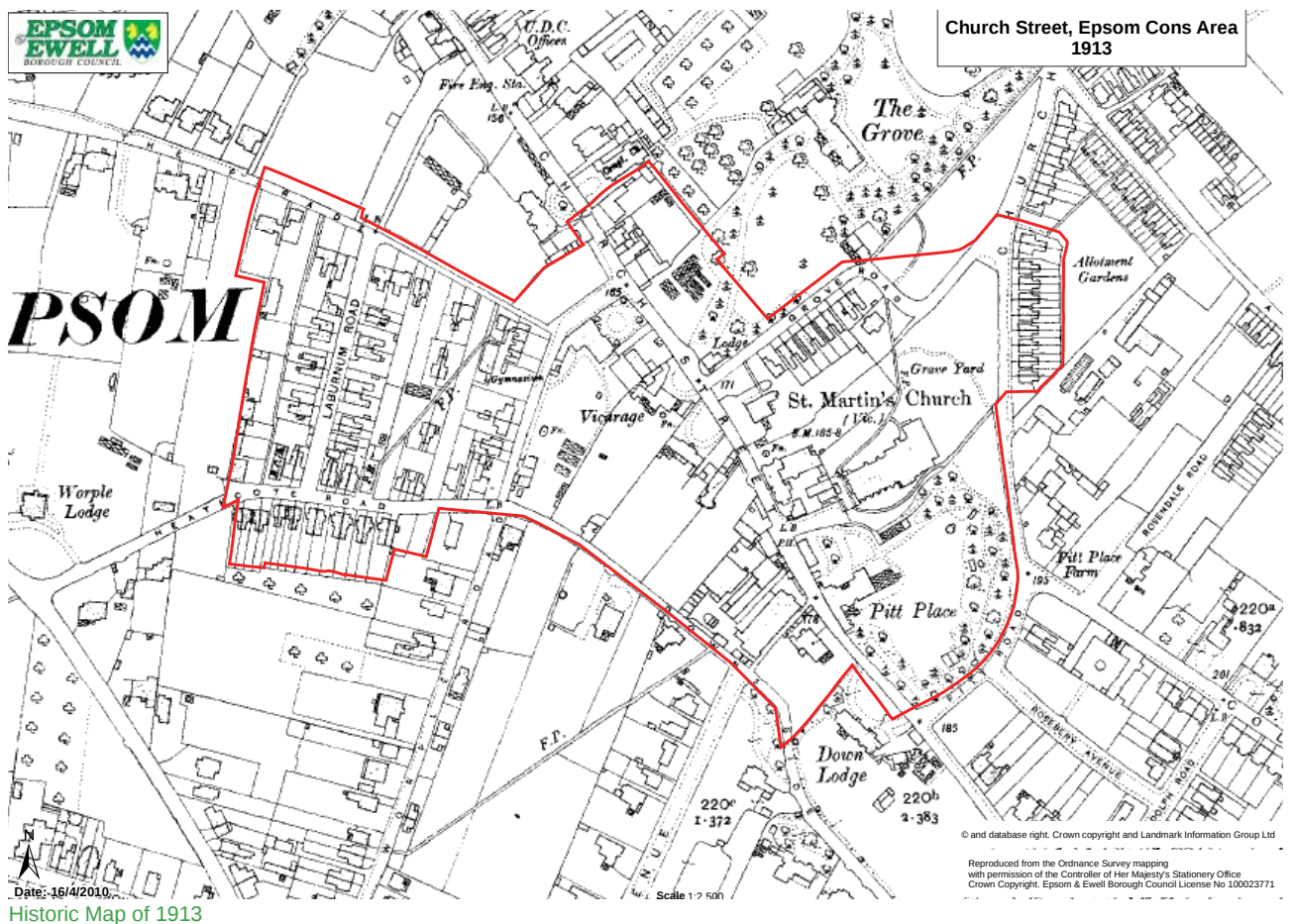
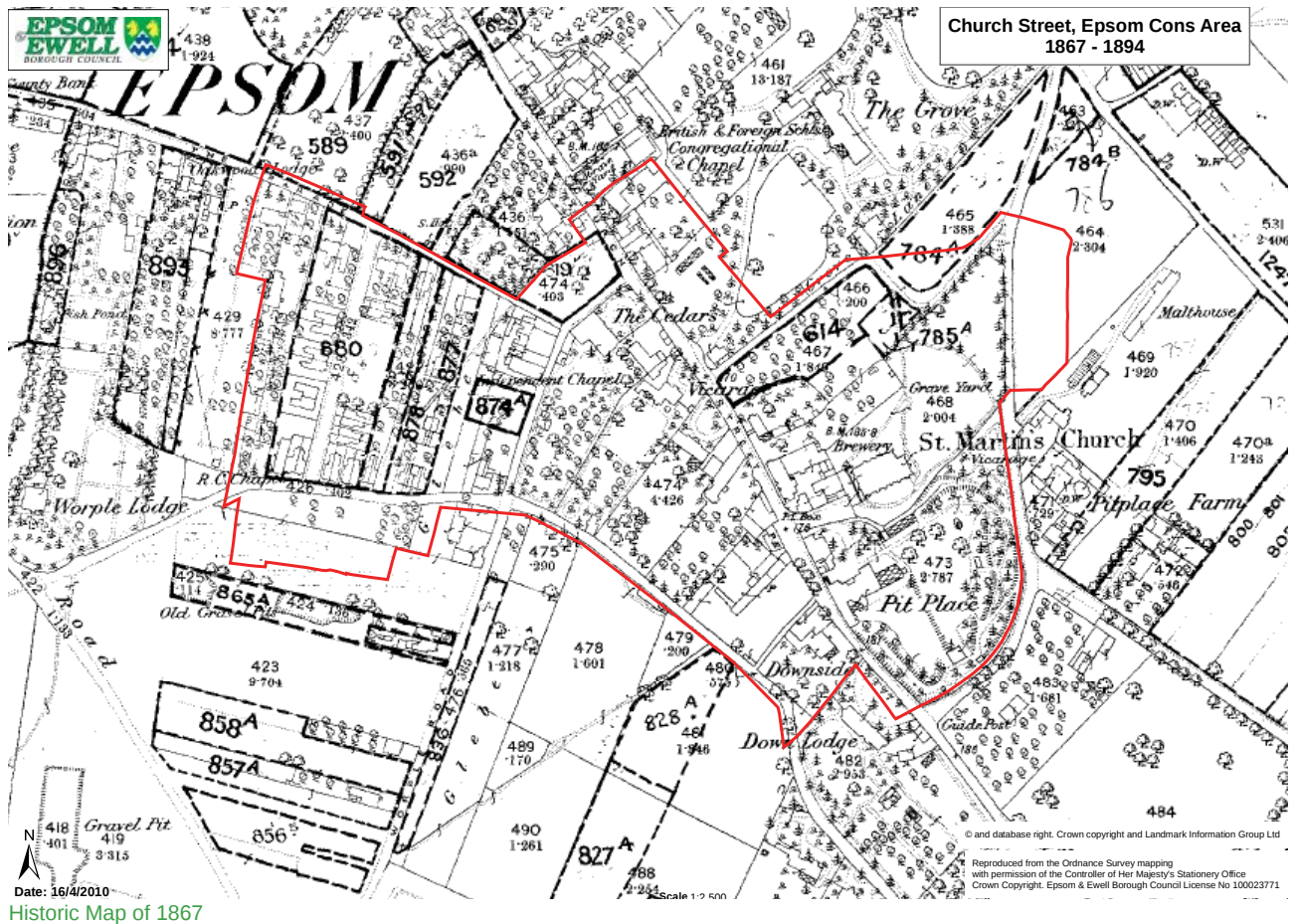


View along Church Street, Pitt Place was on the left

In the town centre, the late 20th century has seen further major developments, including the construction of the Ashley Centre, with its covered shopping malls, multi-storey parking and civic theatre. The Spread Eagle Inn and its former stables is now a shopping precinct.

2.2 Archaeology

Prehistoric and Roman settlers were attracted to the area by the springs that occur where the North Downs chalk meets the impervious London clay, though there is no evidence of pre-medieval archaeology within the conservation area itself. The only find of any significance is a 7th century brooch, probably from a burial, now in the British Museum.



3.0 LOCATION, ACTIVITIES AND SETTING

3.1 Location and boundaries

Epsom is located at the foot of the North Downs which rise very gently to the south of the town, most notably along the line of the Epsom Downs to the south west, where Epsom Racecourse is located. To the west of the town centre, the wooded undulations of Epsom Common are a significant feature. The town sits on the junction of the north-south A24 (Roman Stane Street), which connects Chichester to London, and the east-west A2022. Church Street continues southwards into Burgh Heath Road which leads (eventually) across this downland to Reigate. Epsom railway station (connecting London's Victoria and Waterloo stations to Guildford), lies immediately to the north of the junction of Church Street and High Street, just outside the conservation area.

The immediate setting of the conservation area is provided by residential streets and the campus of the University for the Creative Arts (UCA), which faces Ashley Road. On most sides of the area are further historic streets which are also designated conservation area – the streets to the south and south east forming the Burgh Heath Road and the College Road Conservation Areas, and the streets to the north east forming the Pikes Hill Conservation Area. Immediately adjacent to the Church Street Conservation Area (Downside forms part of the boundary) is the Worple Road Conservation Area. The Epsom Town Centre Conservation Area, as recently extended, lies immediately to the north and north west.



The Parade

3.2 Uses and activities

The conservation area is very mixed in terms of uses although there are no shops, perhaps because of the close proximity of the facilities of the town centre. Commercial uses are concentrated along Church Street with several of the large historic buildings being used as offices. The Cedars has recently been converted into flats, and there are more flats on the opposite side of the road (Church Close). Richmond House is now an old persons' care home. Close to the church, Church House has been created out of the 18th century brewery buildings and is used as for meetings, as a nursery, and for other functions. There are two public houses, the Old King's Head in Church Street and the Rising Sun in Heathcote Road. In the back streets, residential uses dominate with nearly all of the buildings being used as family houses rather than as flats.



Church House

3.3 Topography and landscape setting

This part of Epsom lies on flattish land at around 50 metres above sea level. There is very little sense of a surrounding landscape, as buildings or trees prevent views out of the conservation area.

3.4 Geology

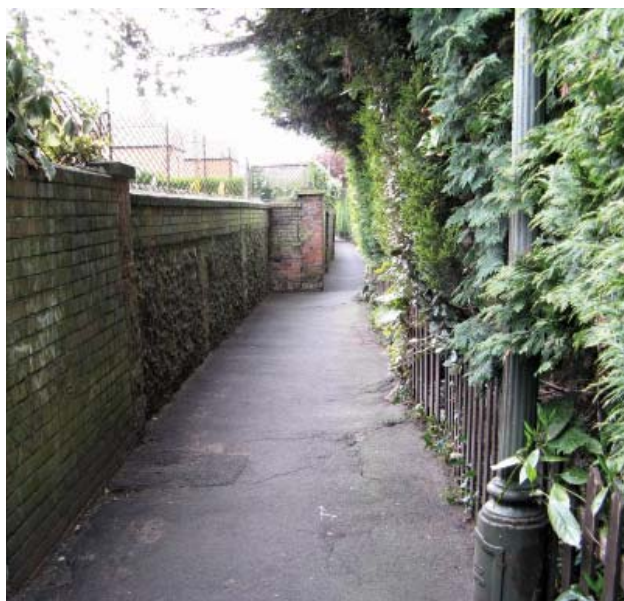
Epsom lies on a spring line where the porous Upper Chalk of the North Downs meets the impervious London Clay. It was the exploitation of the clay for bricks, and the springs and wells for water (latterly as a spa), that provided the impetus for Epsom's early development and prosperity.

4.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Street pattern and building plots

The conservation area is based along Church Street, the medieval street which once formed the centre of the older settlement around the parish church of St Martin. Church Street continues into Burgh Heath Road, which leads southwards towards the Epsom Downs. This is a major route out of the modern town, and is correspondingly busy with traffic.

The Parade, Heathcote Road and Downside are all shown on the 1867 map where they define field boundaries which lie at right angles to these streets. Of note are the two straight alleys which cut across these fields between The Parade and Heathcote Road, both of which remain. These are typical of the Epsom area, and several more lie to the south within the adjoining Worple Road Conservation Area. Whilst some of these appear to relate to 18th century development, others appear to pre-date the creation of fields from the downland and may mark the line of ancient footpaths leading towards the medieval church.



Narrow alleyways cross the conservation area

Pitt Road and Church Road wrap around the former garden to the original Pitt Place and St Martin's churchyard and lead northwards in a gentle curve to the mainly 19th century residential suburbs. Grove Road, which connects Church Street to Church Road, is a 1920s re-alignment of the road shown on the 19th century maps which was carried out when the gardens to Grove House were developed for housing, and The Grove was created.



Church Road wraps around the former site of Pitt Place and St Martin's Church

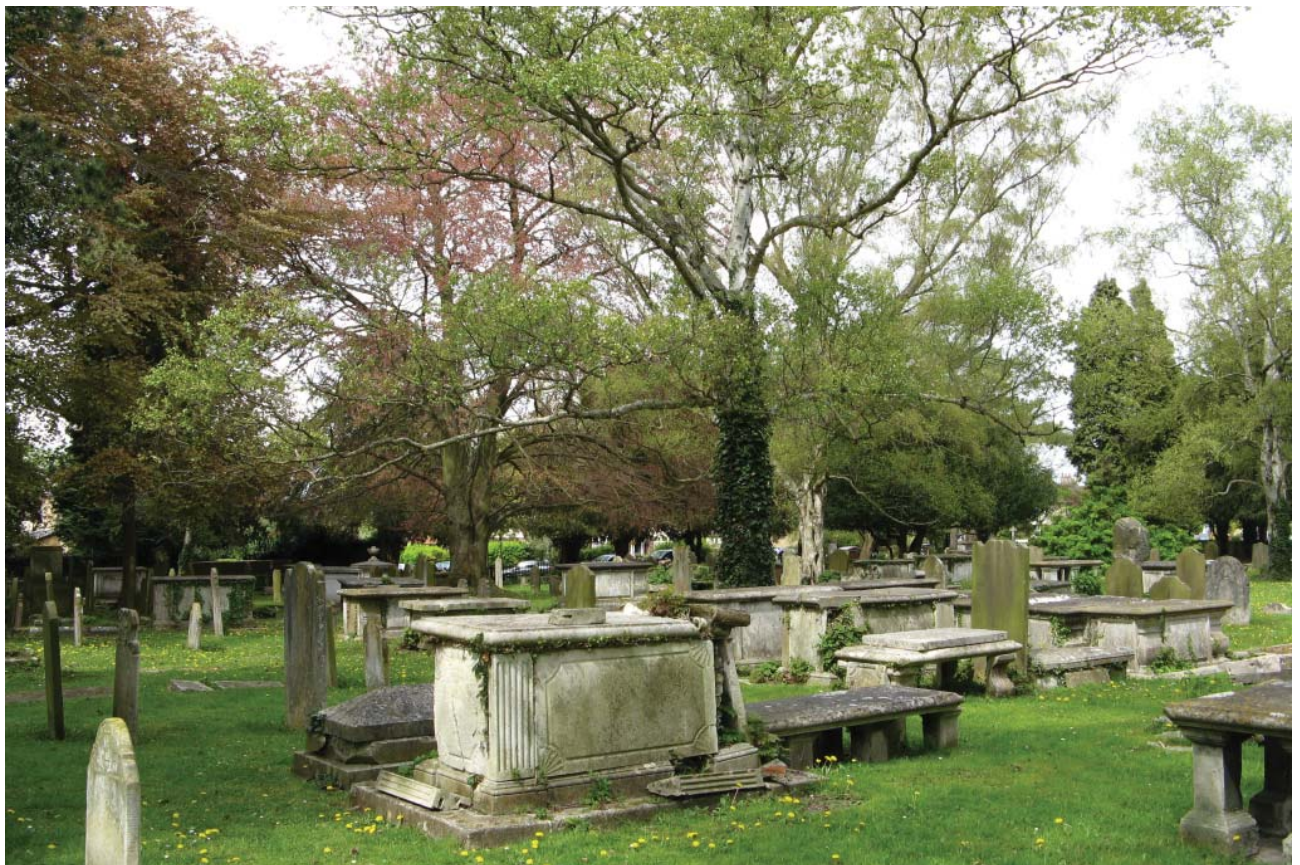
The building plots within the conservation area are surprisingly regular with boundaries at right angles to the road, reflecting a degree of planned development between the late 17th and the late 19th centuries, as the former downland was initially sub-divided into fields then, mainly from the mid-19th century onwards, divided into building plots. The surprisingly regular plots widths of the listed buildings facing Church Street may reflect how these prestigious new houses were added in the late 17th century, all wanting to overlook the church. The size of these plots contrasts markedly with the much smaller gardens of the 19th century houses. 18th century development, as indicated by the alley and the position of No. 18 The Parade, appears to mirror the layout of the then field boundaries, again at right angles to the road, and this is also reflected in the orientation of Laburnum Road, shown on the 1867 as partly developed.

Along Church Street, the houses are set back from the road with generous front and back gardens, originally enclosed by high brick walls, some of which remain. In the back streets, the houses also have a common building line but very modest front gardens, some of which (where space permits) have been converted into parking spaces.

Of note is the eastern section of The Parade which is a pedestrian-only thoroughfare. This is a pleasant, relatively quiet space which contrasts with the busy streets in the immediate vicinity. This space also contains some attractive front gardens and is enclosed to the north by a high brick wall which shields it from the modern development on the other side.

4.2 Open spaces, landscape and trees

The residential uses within the conservation area, and the way in which it has developed, do not provide any planned public open space such as a town square or village green. However, the churchyard around St Martin's Church is a valuable local amenity, particularly as it is visible from Church Road and Grove Road. The churchyard contains a large number of mature trees as well as a number of historic monuments and graves. The very fine brick wall between the churchyard and the Pitt Place flats is listed grade II and was once the boundary to the original Pitt Place. St Martin's Church sits back from Church Street with an area of tarmacadam in front of it, leading up to steps. This is currently used for informal car parking. Church House forms the northern boundary to this space, and retains a small forecourt. This whole area is in need of enhancement.



St Martin's Churchyard

Close by, a small triangle of land in Grove Road (representing the road re-alignment scheme of the 1920s) is grassed and contains a few trees, although its contribution to the streetscape is severely compromised by the indiscriminate car parking which surrounds it. Otherwise, there are no other public spaces apart from the alleys and streets within the conservation area. Although it lies outside the conservation area, an area of grass and trees on the north side of The Parade is an attractive feature, recently named Dullshot Green.

Trees are particularly important around Pitt Place and in the churchyard. These trees are all of special merit and their continued protection and enhancement is an issue which is discussed further in the Management Proposals.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

The most important focal point in the conservation area is St Martin's Church and its churchyard, particularly as viewed from Church Street. The church, Church House, the two listed buildings on the north side of the road (Stone House and No. 59 Church Street), the Old King's Head Public House, and Nos. 24a and 24b Church Street all form a group where the road narrows to create a 'pinch point' – further north and south the road has been widened and its historic character reduced. The Cedars and Ebbisham House, at either end of the line of prestigious listed buildings, are also 'focal' buildings due to their size and location.



No.59 and Stone House

Elsewhere, there are no particular focal points in the conservation area, due to the residential uses and the layout of the houses, with several groups of mainly 19th century buildings of very similar size and design. Pitt Place is a very large 1970s building but is set well back from the road and heavily screened by the surrounding trees. The large extension to Richmond House is dominant when viewed from Downside, as are several other modern buildings, but they have a negative rather than a positive focal impact.

Views within the conservation area are limited due to the flat topography, so what views exist are largely contained by the buildings, trees, and boundaries within the area. The view of St Martin's Church from Church Street is the most significant vista, which is heavily compromised by the poor quality setting. Views from the surrounding streets across the churchyard, often contained by the trees or the church itself, are also of note. Further contained views along the long, thin alleys are a local feature, and there are also glimpsed views into private gardens in many places, sometimes only visible when front gates are left open. Finally, longer views along Church Street tend to terminate in the 'pinch point' described above.

4.4 Boundaries

Historically, the boundaries within the conservation area were provided by high brick walls, such as the wall along Worple Road which once formed the garden boundary to The Cedars. Another fine brick wall can be seen at the back of Richmond House facing Downside, and later brick walls can also be seen along the alleyway off The Parade, where they form the rear boundaries to the houses in Laburnum Road. A notable red brick wall completely encloses Pitt Place but only the northern section, facing the churchyard, appears to be historic. Flint boundary walling, usually only 1.75 metres high, can also be seen in various locations, the most notable being along the northern boundary of the churchyard. Some of the cottages, such as Nos. 32 and 34 The Parade, have timber palisade fencing, either left natural or painted white, which are in keeping with the local vernacular tradition. All of the metal railings which can be seen in places appear to be modern. Otherwise, there are many 'natural' boundaries created by thick hedging or trees, sometimes sitting immediately behind walls or fencing, such as the carefully clipped yew hedge in front of the 1930s flats in Church Street (Church Close).



Palisade fencing in The Parade

Less appealing are the great variety of modern boundaries, including timber fencing or metal railings of various heights and design. In many places, the original brick boundary walls have been removed to create car parking in front gardens. This erodes the character of the conservation area and is discussed in greater detail in the Management Proposals.

4.5 Public realm

The “public realm” covers street lighting, street furniture, paving, road surfaces, and other features of interest within the streets which make up the conservation area, as follows:

Street lighting:

Modern street lights can be seen throughout the conservation area, usually black steel lamps with “hockey stick” curved lanterns. However, one of the most notable features of the conservation area is the survival of historic street lights, still in use, which can be found in various locations and are noted on the Townscape Appraisal Map. These add to the interest of the area and were probably added in the 1920s. Ideally these should be retained. Street lighting is the responsibility of Surrey County Council, although the Borough Council can contribute to their costs where improvements are required.



Historic street light in alleyway off The Parade

Street furniture:

There is no street furniture apart from a well detailed traditional wooden seat in front of St Martin's Church, inscribed 'St Martin's Epsom Mother's Union'. A bright red cast iron post box can be seen in Heathcote Road.



Wooden seat in front of St Martin's Church (historic wall to the former Pitt Place behind)

Pavements and roads

There are no examples of historic paving in the conservation area part from some yellow clay stable paviors which mark the entrances into Church House and lengths of stone or granite kerbing, 100 mm or sometimes 300 mm wide, which can be seen in several locations within the conservation area. There is an area of rather damaged Yorkstone paving immediately in front of the main entrance into St Martin's Church. Otherwise, the pavements and public roads are covered in black tarmac and in many places these pavements are in poor condition and have been disturbed by trench-digging.



Paving in front of St Martin's Church

Street name plates

There are some examples of traditional cast iron name plates, such as the 'Church Road' sign on the wall around Pitt Place, the 'Heathcote Road' sign on the wall of No. 2 Heathcote Road, and the 'Laburnum Road' sign on No. 28 The Parade. These should be retained. Otherwise, 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.

Traffic management

Frequent and fast moving traffic along Church Street is a notable detractor to the peace and tranquillity of the conservation area, despite a 30 mph speed limit.

5.0 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Building types

There are two principle types of building within the conservation area, firstly the listed mainly 17th or 18th century buildings which face Church Street, which were originally built as prestigious family houses although they are now in commercial uses, and secondly, the varied mid to late-19th century houses and cottages which can be found in the back streets. These are usually arranged in terraces or as semi-detached pairs, often clearly built by the same builder in a cohesive manner with similar materials and details. The best preserved are in Church Road and Laburnum Road. Some of these are also locally listed.



Parkhurst, Church Street

5.2 Listed buildings

The conservation area contains 20 listed buildings, three of which are listed at grade II*: St Martin's Church, The Cedars and Ebbisham House. The listed buildings include the church, a number of substantial late 17th, 18th or early 19th century brick houses, and some modest late 18th or early 19th century timber-framed and boarded cottages.



No.59 Church Street and Stone House



Houses in Laburnam Road

There is also a certain amount of 20th century development, usually provided by modestly sized houses which preserve the original building line and scale of the surrounding buildings. Less appropriate in townscape terms are the larger developments associated with commercial uses, namely the very large extension to Richmond House and the vast bulk of No. 28 Church Street, a neo-Georgian office building which is currently being refurbished.

The highest concentration of listed buildings is close to the church, commencing with The Cedars in the north. This was purchased in the 18th century by John Mysters, a former Lord Mayor of London, who already had a house in Charterhouse Square and who had his new house lavishly decorated with ornate plasterwork, timber panelling and marble floors. Next door, Cedars Cottage is a wide, rather low but symmetrical house, seven bays wide, with a central chimney stack. The two over two sash windows are entirely late 19th century, but the house appears to have been built in the late 17th century. Adjoining this property is No. 18 Church Street, which retains a well detailed, symmetrical front with 18th century details including sash windows and a wood modillion eaves cornice. Again, it originally dates to the late 17th century. A mid-19th century outhouse is separately listed grade II. Richmond House (Nos. 20 and 22 Church Street) is later than these three buildings (early 19th century) with a simple stuccoed frontage, also symmetrically arranged. This building has been substantially extended in connection with its use as the Epsom Beaumont Care Home, and wraps around the next listed building, No. 24 Church Street, called Parkhurst. Unusually this sits well back from the road at right angles to it and dates to the early 18th century. It has a simple Georgian brick façade, three storeys high, with a mansard roof. Matching three storey stuccoed bays have been added to the original brick building, probably in the mid 19th century. The setting of this building has been compromised by the use of the most of the front garden for car parking.

The next few listed buildings are smaller and date to the 18th century. Nos. 24a and 24b Church Street are one house, two storeys high with large sash windows and a hipped tiled roof. This building also sits well back from the road. Next door, the Old King's Head Public House is a double pile 18th century brick building which sits forward facing the entrance to the church on the opposite side of the road. Its location and positioning suggests that it may have been purpose-built as an inn – it is first recorded as trading as an inn in 1777.

The final listed building on the west side of Church Street is Ebbisham House, a five bay early Georgian brick house, three storeys high. This has been extended with 'matching' three bay wings to either side and, at the back, the ground level has been reduced to create additional accommodation. The back garden is now a car park.

On the north side of Church Street, the principal listed building is St Martin's Church, which was substantially rebuilt in 1824 by Mr Hatchard of Pimlico when the flint tower was encased in new stone. A greensand extension was added in 1908 by Sir Charles Nicholson which appears to have anticipated the rebuilding of the whole of the nave and possibly the tower, as on both sides of the building there are unfinished raw edges to the brickwork. Next to the church, Church House is an 18th century brick former brewery building which has been converted into church rooms with modern mullioned and transomed windows and a very deep pitched hipped roof and coved eaves detail. Between Church House and the road, No. 59 Church Street is a two storey stuccoed house with sash windows and a parapet hiding a pitched tiled roof, suggesting an early 19th century refronting of an earlier building. It adjoins Stone House, similarly faced in stucco with sash windows and a steeply pitched tiled roof which is again almost hidden by a parapet. Local residents report that there are remnants of timber framing in both properties.



Stone House, Church Street

Other listed buildings in Church Street include the former ice house to Pitt Place, now in the back garden of the flats, the mainly 18th century brick wall between the church and Pitt Place flats, and The Hermitage, which lies closer to the town centre almost opposite The Cedars. The list description suggests that it may also be late 17th century but it may be earlier as the roughcast finish suggests that it might originally have been timber-framed – more information would be helpful.

Other buildings in the conservation area provide even greater variety. No. 18 The Parade is set down the narrow alley off The Parade and is almost hidden by trees. Dating to the 18th century, it is built from a plum coloured brick with a clay tiled roof and two pretty 19th century trellis porches. Further along the same alley, and similarly hidden from view, Melrose Cottage (No. 22 The Parade) is also 18th century and is covered in painted roughcast with sash windows and a late 19th century porch with deeply projecting eaves. Close by, two further listed buildings facing The Parade are more vernacular in their detailing: Ashley Cottages, Nos. 32 and 34 The Parade, are early 19th century timber-framed and weather-boarded cottage, and Rosebery Cottage, No. 14 The Parade, was built in around 1766 by John Greenwood, joiner, and contains a 'Chinese Chippendale' staircase.



No.18 The Parade



Nos. 32 and 34 The Parade

Slightly isolated from all of these listed buildings, and located on the junction of Heathcote Road and Worple Road, No. 2 Heathcote Road is another 18th century house, again quite low, with 19th century sash windows and a central entrance defined by a 19th century trellis porch.



No.2 Heathcote Road

5.3 Locally listed buildings

There are nine locally listed building in the conservation area, mostly dating to the early or mid 19th century and relatively modest in scale. Facing The Parade, Nos. 36 and 38 are two storeys high and built from red brick with original sash windows and a shallow pitched, slated roof. No. 38 is wider, with an elegant open porch supported on iron columns with iron fretwork detailing below a lead canopy. No. 52 The Parade is built from brown London stock bricks, with red brick dressings to the sash windows and a (later) timber porch. It has decorative barge boards to the gable which faces the street, and appears to (possibly) form part of a larger property, the second half of which faced Worple Road.



Nos. 36 and 38 The Parade



No.52 The Parade

In Heathcote Road there are several locally listed buildings – the Rising Sun Public House, a weather-boarded early 19th century pair of cottages, extended in the late 19th century, and Nos. 6-12 (even) Heathcote Road, a row of matching stuccoed one bay wide cottages with a shallow pitched slate roof. Whilst Nos. 6, 8 and 10 retain their original eight over eight sash windows, No. 12 has been refenestrated in uPVC.

A final locally listed building can be found in Church Street at the entrance to the 1930s flats in Church Close. This two storey red brick building appears to have been built as a stable to The Hermitage and may date originally to the 18th century but since the 1930s has been converted into garaging and storage, with a flat above which is lit by two 1930s dormer windows. The steeply pitched roof is still however covered in handmade clay tiles.

There are currently about 80 buildings or structures on the Borough-wide list that have been drawn up by the Borough Council and Surrey County Council. 'Locally Important Buildings' are valued for their contribution to the local scene, or for their local historic associations, but are not considered to be of national importance, so they are not eligible for statutory listing. Policies to control them are included in the Local Plan (Policy BE15).

5.4 Positive buildings

The Townscape Analysis Map identifies a large number of unlisted historic buildings, mainly dating to between the mid 19th century and 1900, as being *positive*. Later buildings, or those which have been heavily altered or indeed rebuilt, have been omitted. The identified buildings are considered to make this *positive* contribution to the special interest of the conservation area due to their architectural quality, the consistently high quality of their materials, and the survival of their original details.



Locally listed building next to Church Close flats

English Heritage guidance 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. The guidance note states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. The demolition of non-positive buildings may be allowed, but any redevelopment of the site will have to closely conform to existing Council policies, particularly in terms of site density, scale, materials and details.



Well preserved unlisted but 'positive' cottages in Heathcote Road

The unlisted but *positive* buildings in the conservation area can mainly be found in Heathcote Road, where they include a variety of semi-detached late 19th century brick cottages (St Joseph's Cottages are dated 1890), and in Laburnum Road, where they include the more substantial but also semi-detached houses. Church Road retains a long row of semi-detached cottages, relatively unaltered, although similar houses in The Grove have suffered more from modern 'improvements'. No. 12 Church Street (Heath House), which sits on the junction of Worple Road and Church Street, is two storey brick building with sash windows and a very steeply pitched tiled peg-tiled roof with an impressive doorcase to the front door. Currently used as a dentists' surgery, it must date to the 1930s (it is not shown on the 1932 map) although stylistically it could well be c1910.



'Positive' cottages in Church Road

5.5 Materials and details

Throughout the conservation area, the use of red or brown stock brick is noticeable, with no examples of blue headers. This material is used for the 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings although there is also some use of 'light-weight' timber framing, using pine rather than a hardwood such as oak. These are faced in pine weather-boarding, in this conservation area always painted white. The Hermitage, Stone House and its neighbour, No.59 Church Street, all appear to contain earlier timber framing (and possibly the Old King's Head). Handmade clay peg tiles can also be found on many of the listed buildings, this material being replaced by Welsh slate from the mid-19th century onwards when slate was brought in by the railway. The steeply pitched tiled roofs, often enlivened by substantial brick chimney stacks, are a special feature of the listed buildings in the conservation area. Some of the unlisted cottages in Heathcote Road have ground floor canted bays, with red brick elevations relieved by grey brick string courses and corner quoins.



The Hermitage, Church Street



Handmade clay tiles on the roof of Cedars Cottage, No.16 Church Street

Whilst there are many examples of original 18th and 19th century sash windows, there are no obvious examples of earlier iron casements or leaded lights, unless these can be seen on back elevations of the older properties. A few mostly 18th or 19th century porches can also be seen, on both the listed and the unlisted buildings, containing a variety of mainly four or six panelled front doors. The grandest doorcase can be seen at The Cedars, an elegant pediment supported on giant console brackets above a door with six raised and fielded panels. Another doorcase to Ebbisham House is more severely classical and also retains a six panelled front door.

6.0 CHARACTER AREAS

There are three areas of distinct character within the Conservation Area:

- Area 1: Grove Road and Church Road
- Area 2: Church Street
- Area 3: The Parade, Worple Road, Heathcote Road, and Laburnum Road

6.1 Area 1: Grove Road and Church Road

This is a relatively quiet residential area which although based on an historic route which wraps around St Martin's Churchyard, contains mainly late 19th century semi-detached properties. Grove Road was re-aligned in the 1920s when the adjoining garden to Grove House was developed for housing. An alley, lined with high brick walls, leads off Grove Road into the adjoining conservation area. Views into the churchyard and its many trees are of note. Nos. 61-91 (odd) Church Road are eight almost identical pairs of two storey cottages, built from brown London stock brick with red brick string courses. The buildings are one bay wide each, with a central chimney stack set in a slate roof which faces the street. Margin light sash windows and canted bay windows, with scalloped slate coverings, enliven the front facades. The small front gardens are mainly defined by unpainted timber palisade fences. Nos. 57 and 59 are slightly larger, and are dated 1892.

Around the corner in Grove Road are further paired properties (Nos. 4-18), this time faced in painted stucco and slightly larger, each house being two windows wide. The shallow hipped slate roofs and canted ground floor bays have sometimes been altered, as have the windows, with the original sashes being replaced in uPVC. Many of the front gardens have also been paved over to create car parking spaces. Grove Villas is a well preserved detached house which sits close to the footpaths which connect through to the churchyard and is dated 1895.



Church Road



Nos. 57 and 59 Church Road



Grove Road

Negative features/Issues

Buildings:

- Many of the slate roofs are in poor condition and will need to be replaced soon;
- Some replacement using concrete roof tiles has already occurred;
- Poor quality modern garages (e.g. next to 20 Grove Road).

Spatial:

- The retention of the historic street lights;
- Repairs are needed to the wall surrounding the Pitt Place flats;
- Loss of front gardens for car parking;
- Varied front boundaries including modern timber fencing;
- Very poor quality pavements and the white lines for the car parking bays need to be repainted;
- Indiscriminate car parking around the grassed area in Grove Road;
- St Martin's Avenue (outside the conservation area) is frequently blocked by service vehicles.

6.2 Area 2: Church Street

This represents the historic core of the conservation area and contains the most listed buildings (15 out of a total of 20), including three which are listed grade II*. St Martin's Church and its churchyard are the focal point, with other historic buildings along either side of Church Street. The churchyard, with its historic monuments and many mature trees, provides a pleasantly green ambience to this part of Epsom, and the adjoining public house, the Old King's Head, provides a useful facility. Most of the listed buildings to the south of Church Street are in commercial uses and retain large gardens which stretch back to Downside, which forms their back boundary. To the north-east there are more properties in residential uses, including two large blocks of 20th century flats (Church Close and Pitt Place).



Many of the historic properties in Church Street are concealed by high brick walls



The Old King's Head Public House is a key focal building in the conservation area



View from Church Street to St Martin's Church

Negative features/Issues

Buildings:

- Some very over-extended listed buildings;
- Visible satellite dishes on the Old King's Head Public House.

Spatial:

- The listed walls between Pitt Place and the church are in urgent need of repair and consolidation;
- Other brick walls would also benefit from repair, such as the wall outside Nos. 24a and 2b Church Street;
- The loss of garden space to many of the listed buildings for car parking;
- The entrance to St Martin's Church is cluttered with cars and does not provide an appropriate setting to the grade II* listed building – improvements to this area in general are needed;
- Busy and fast moving traffic;
- A plethora of signage, most of it the responsibility of the Highways Authority;
- The retention of historic granite or stone kerbing;
- The protection and enhancement of the trees in the churchyard and in the garden to Pitt Place;
- The entrance and to the car parking for No. 28 Church Street, next to the Old King's Head, and the adjoining pavement area, would both benefit from improvements.

6.3 Area 3: The Parade, Worple Road, Heathcote Road, and Laburnum Road

The buildings in these mainly residential streets provide a good example of a mainly late 19th century suburb of relatively modest houses and cottages built from brick with slated roofs. Many of these buildings are extremely well preserved with their original windows, doors and roofing materials. There are a few listed buildings dating to the 18th century and several 19th century locally listed buildings. Smallish plots, with short front gardens, are common. Some 20th century development has occurred, but largely in keeping. The two very narrow alleyways contrast with the wider streets to which they connect, and The Parade provides yet another type of street, being a narrow pedestrian-only thoroughfare which connects Worple Road to the town centre.



The Parade



'Positive' historic buildings in Worple Road



Alley to west side of Laburnam Road

Negative features/Issues

Buildings:

- Use of modern materials on the unlisted but positive properties, including uPVC windows and doors, and concrete roof tiles;
- Some poor quality modern garages, with badly detailed parking areas, such as the group of three next to No. 1 Heathcote Road;
- Satellite dishes on the front elevations of some of the buildings;

Spatial:

- Pressure for on-street parking;
- Poor quality front boundaries;
- Loss of front gardens to car parking;
- Preservation of the historic street lights;
- Repairs are needed to the former boundary wall to The Cedars, facing Worple Road;
- Some flint or brick boundary walls in need of repair in the alleys;
- Graffiti in one of the alleys;
- Overhead telephone wires and prominent telegraph poles.

7.0 SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES

7.1 Spatial Issues

7.1.1 Traffic and car parking

Despite the 30 mph speed limit through the conservation area busy and fast moving traffic is a notable detrimental feature, particularly during the morning and evening rush hours. Due to the close proximity of the town centre and the University, there is a high demand for on-street parking. Overall, residents also complain about the large amount of street signage, most of it the responsibility of the Highways Authority.

7.1.2 Open spaces, alleyways and pavements

The surface treatments in many of the alleys and pavements are in need of improvement. The existing granite kerbs must be retained in any future work. The area in front of St Martin's Church would benefit from improvements.

7.1.3 Street lights

A number of early 20th century street lights remain in the conservation area which add character to the streetscape. Some of these appear to be somewhat neglected. Their continued preservation would be of benefit to the surrounding area.

7.1.4 Trees

St Martin's Churchyard and the garden to Pitt Place retain a large number of mature trees which make a major contribution to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. All of the trees in the conservation area are already protected by conservation area designation, but in addition, some of the trees have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them, which identify them as being of particular importance. All trees in the conservation area need to be protected from inappropriate lopping or felling, and where they are diseased, new trees should be planted to replace them, following advice from the Tree Officer.

7.1.5 Historic walls

This part of Epsom contains a large number of brick walls, some of them dating to the 18th century. Some of them are in poor condition.

7.2 Buildings

7.2.1 Garages

During the survey work for this Character Appraisal, it was noticed that a number of particularly ugly modern garages are evident in the conservation area, adversely affecting the street scene.

7.2.2 Alterations to unlisted buildings

A high proportion of the unlisted but positive buildings in the conservation area retain their original joinery details, roof materials and boundary treatments. However, at the moment, householders can make minor alterations to these elements without planning permission, and in parts of the conservation area, such changes have already been carried out, for instance the plastic windows in houses in Heathcote Road.

7.2.3 Loss of front boundaries and the creation of car parking

It has been noted that many of the properties in the conservation area have removed their front boundaries (usually brick walls) to create car parking in their front gardens. Whilst in some cases (good examples can be seen in Heathcote Road) this has been done quite sensitively, in other cases this has resulted in large areas of paving and the loss of boundaries and planting. All of these are detrimental to the character of the conservation area. The loss of green space for car parking is an issue which some local residents feel very strongly about. It is noted that some of the pressure for on-street car parking is emanating from students from Epsom University for the Creative Arts (UCA), and some residents have expressed the need for a Residents' Parking Scheme to help counter this.

7.2.4 Satellite dishes

A number of satellite dishes were noted on the front walls or roof slopes of buildings in the conservation area which have presumably been erected without planning permission. These are detrimental to the overall character of the conservation area and householder guidance and possible enforcement action should be considered, if they were erected after 2000.

7.3 Conservation area boundary review

7.3.1 Conservation Area boundary review

As part of the survey work for the Character Appraisal, the existing boundaries of the conservation area were inspected. Generally, it is considered that the designated boundary accurately reflects the area of 'special architectural or historic interest', and given that the conservation area is already largely surrounded by other designated conservation areas, only one change is recommended, the addition of Grove House (listed grade II) and adjoining properties of merit in The Grove.

7.4 Education and publicity

7.4.1 Conservation Area leaflet

The existing Church Street Conservation Area leaflet is a useful document but is now somewhat out of date. The publication of new guidance, in association with the recommendations included in the Management Proposals, would be welcome. This could include information about the historical development of the area.

8.1 Format of the Management Proposals

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Church Street 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.

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.

9.0 PROPOSED ACTIONS

Based on the Negative features/Issues in Chapter 6, the following actions are proposed, most of which will be the responsibility of the Borough Council or Surrey County Council:

9.1 Spatial Issues

9.1.1 Traffic and car parking

Church Street is a principal route out of Epsom Town Centre towards the Epsom Downs and Reigate. It is always busy and crossing the road can be hazardous at times despite the provision of a belisha beacon crossing outside The Cedars. The provision of a further controlled crossing further south along Church Street, possibly outside Downs Lodge Court, would be welcome.



Church Street is a major route across Epsom

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council and Surrey County Council will work in partnership to reduce traffic speeds in the conservation area and ensure that pedestrians are protected and their safety ensured.*

There is great pressure for on-street car parking in the residential streets close to the university. The provision of a Residents' Parking Scheme could be considered, following full public consultation.



Untidy car parking in Grove Road

Recommendation:

- *The Highways Authority will continue to enforce existing parking restrictions;*
- *A Residents' Parking Scheme could be considered if there was sufficient local support and the necessary funding.*

Street signage is another issue which has been raised by local residents, who would like to see it both reduced and simplified.

Recommendation:

- *The Highways Authority will consider ways of reducing the amount of street signage in the conservation area.*

9.1.2 Open spaces and the public realm

Some of the pavements are in poor condition, and repairs or improvements would be welcome, using simple black tarmacadam to match existing surfaces. The further use of granite or stone kerbing, to match existing features (rather than concrete) would enhance the conservation area and should be specified for any future work.



Pavement in Church Street - poor quality surface, but historic stone kerbing has been retained

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council and the County Council will work together to improve the street surfaces in the conservation area, including the possible installation of granite kerbs.*

Surrey County Council has recently entered into partnership with an outside contractor to replace all of the street lights in the Borough with a modern street light of standard design. No special funds have been set aside to repair and re-use the existing historic street lights, which can be found throughout the Borough but which make a very special contribution in conservation areas such as Church Street. It has been agreed that where historic street lights exist, they can be retained but only if the Borough Council pays for the cost of repairing them. Alternatively they can be replaced with a 'heritage' reproduction Victorian street light at a minimum cost of £800 per lamp, which the Borough Council may again have to pay for.

The retention of the existing historic street lights in the Church Street Conservation Area is therefore dependent on funding being made available, but as the Council currently does not have any allocation for work of this kind, the retention of the historic street lights will only be achieved if local residents or businesses are prepared to fund their upkeep.

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council and the County Council need to discuss the future of the street lights in the conservation area to see if a viable scheme can be agreed to either retain or replace them with a more suitable lamp.*

The forecourt to St Martin's Church is in need of improvement, including new paving and the possible removal or better control of parked cars.



The forecourt to St Martin's Church is often clogged with parked cars

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will explore ways of improving this area with the Church authorities*

9.1.3 Trees

Trees are extremely important within the conservation area and some have individual Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them. The trees need to be protected from felling, unsuitable lopping, or from disease. Whilst the Council can provide free professional advice, the cost of looking after these trees falls on local residents or businesses.

Whilst there are trees throughout the conservation area, the two most important groups are in St Martin's Churchyard and in the garden to Pitt Place. The churchyard is maintained by the Borough Council. The gardens to Pitt Place are maintained by a management company on behalf of the residents of the flats, and work has been undertaken in the past to record the species and condition of the trees and provide an outline Management Plan, although this has not been completed.



Trees in Pitt Place

During the public consultation on this document, some residents expressed concern that there was no local Tree Warden which meant that the health and condition of the existing trees, in both private and public ownership, was not being monitored.

Recommendations:

- *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 approved unless there are benefits to the character of the Conservation Area which outweigh the harm so caused;*

- *The Borough Council could consider undertaking an audit of the trees in St Martin's Churchyard, identifying those trees where action might be needed in the future and providing a long term Tree Management Plan for maintenance and appropriate replacement;*
- *The Borough Council will encourage the residents of Pitt Place to complete the work already commenced on the trees in their garden;*
- *Where trees are removed due to disease, they should be replaced promptly, following the advice of the Tree Officer.*

9.1.4 Historic walls

There are a large number of brick walls in the conservation area, some of them dating back to the 18th century. Not all of them are listed and many, such as the former boundary wall to The Cedars facing Worple Road, are in very poor condition. The Borough Council will encourage the owners of these walls to undertake any necessary repairs and may be able to assist with grant aid, subject to funds being available.



The listed wall in Worple Road to what was once the back garden to The Cedars is in poor condition



The rear boundary wall to Richmond House faces Downside and is in poor condition

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will encourage the owners of any notable walls in the conservation area which are considered to be 'at risk' to undertake careful conservation-based repairs using the appropriate lime mortar. Grant aid may be available in a limited number of cases.*

9.2 Buildings

9.2.1 Garages

A number of modern garages are evident in the conservation area, adversely affecting the streetscene. Many of the garages sit awkwardly in their sites, with flat roofs and metal up and over doors.

Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will continue to carefully assess all applications for new garages in the conservation area, and will insist that they are carefully designed, usually with pitched roofs, to fit in with their historic surroundings.*

9.2.2 Alterations to unlisted buildings

Most of the unlisted but positive buildings in the conservation area retain their original wall finishes, joinery details, and roof materials. However, at the moment, householders can make minor alterations to these elements without planning permission under their 'Permitted Development' rights, and in parts of the conservation area such changes have already been carried out, for instance to No. 2 Laburnum Road. The removal of front boundaries to create car parking is another major issue in the conservation area and can usually be carried out without the need for planning permission.



Protect these unlisted houses in Laburnam Road by an Article 4 Direction



These locally listed properties in Heathcote Road would benefit from an Article 4 Direction (Nos. 10 and 12)

However, the Borough Council can remove these permitted development rights to unlisted family dwellings through the use of an Article 4 Direction, which aims to preserve traditional materials and details, and encourage sensitive extensions and alterations. It also brings under control the creation of a vehicular hardstanding in front gardens and the demolition or alteration of existing front boundaries, where this is not already controlled by existing legislation.

This has already been done in several of the Borough Council's other conservation areas, including the Ewell Downs Road and The Green Conservation Area, the Higher Green Conservation Area, 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 Direction are free.

An Article 4 Direction for the Church Street 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, the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslope, and the full or partial demolition of a chimney stack;*
- (iii) *Replacing windows or doors on the front* elevation;*
- (iv) *The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house;*
- (v) *The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*;*
- (vi) *The demolition of a wall, fence or gate 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 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 Church Street Conservation Area, is included at Appendix 2.

Small grants may be available from the Borough Council and also 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 Borough Council's conservation officer and the Surrey Historic Buildings Trust (contact: Martin Higgins 01483 518758).

Recommendations:

- *The Borough Council will consider serving an Article 4 Direction in the Church Street Conservation Area;*
- *The Borough Council will provide a publicity leaflet for the Article 4 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 Direction is served, to aid future enforcement;*
- *In conjunction with the new Article 4 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.*

9.2.3 Satellite dishes

Satellite dishes have been noted on the front walls or roof slopes of buildings in the conservation area, presumably erected without planning permission. These are detrimental to the overall character of the conservation area and householder guidance and possible enforcement action should be considered. The provision of a building-by-building photographic survey, in connection with the proposed Article 4 Direction, will help the Borough Council decide whether enforcement action is appropriate.



Satellite dish on Heathcote Road property

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.*

9.3 Conservation area boundary review

A thorough survey of the existing boundaries to the conservation area has been undertaken and generally it is considered that the present boundary correctly identifies the area of special architectural and historic interest. The addition of Swail House and its listed boundary wall was considered, but as the building is already protected to a degree by being a locally listed building, and the listed wall which provides its front boundary has full statutory protection, it was decided that it should remain outside the present boundary. However, one small addition is recommended, to include Grove House and adjoining Inter-War houses of merit, all in The Grove. These buildings lie only just outside the present conservation area boundary and although the historic setting to Grove House has largely been lost, due to Inter-War development, the building retains a pleasant setting to the front and a rear garden. It is also located next to a number of well detailed and carefully scaled two storey family houses which appear to date to the 1920s or 1930s and which sit in spacious plots with mature planting.



Swail House, Ashley Road



The Grove

Recommendation:

- *Add Grove House (listed grade II) and adjoining properties of merit in The Grove to the conservation area.*

9.4 Education and publicity

9.4.1 Guidance leaflet

The existing Church Street Conservation Area leaflet is a useful document but is now somewhat out of date. The publication of new guidance for residents of the conservation area to provide information on the control of trees, satellite dishes, new development, the (possible) new Article 4 Direction, and details of the historical development of the conservation would also be helpful.

Recommendation:

- *Subject to funding, the Borough Council could consider the preparation of a new Church Street Conservation Area leaflet.*

10.0 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 community 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: MAPS

Map 1: Townscape Appraisal Map
Map 2: Character Area Map

APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION FOR THE CHURCH STREET CONSERVATION AREA

APPENDIX 3: FURTHER READING AND INFORMATION

APPENDIX 1: MAPS

Map 1: Townscape Appraisal Map

Map 2: Character Area Map

APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

The Article 4 Direction for the Church Street 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 Directions are made under the General Permitted Development Order 1995, (as amended). Each Direction is accompanied by a Schedule that specifies the various changes to family dwellings, which will now require planning permission. For the Church Street 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, the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslope, and the full or partial demolition of chimneys;*
- (iii) *Replacing windows or doors on the front* elevation;*
- (iv) *The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house;*
- (v) *The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*;*
- (vi) *The demolition of a wall, fence or gate 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 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 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 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 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. 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. Traditional materials such as clay tiles or slate, sympathetic with existing roof coverings should be used in preference to concrete tiles or reconstituted alternatives. Rooflights of traditional appearance, designed specifically for Conservation Areas, are preferred.

REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND DOORS – Replacement of existing windows and doors which front a highway, private road or open space require planning consent. Original windows and doors should be renovated and retained where at all possible. New windows and doors should be of traditional construction, design and materials, similar to that originally used and sympathetic to the building as a whole. The use of uPVC and aluminium is generally out of character and therefore inappropriate.

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 3: FURTHER READING AND CONTACTS

Further reading:

Epsom: a history and celebration, Jeremy Harte,
Francis Frith Collection, 2005

Epsom Past, Charles Abdy, Philimore, 2001

Epsom, Martin Andrew, Black Horse Books, 2001

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