HIGHER GREEN CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

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This document has been written by:

The Conservation Studio,
1 Querns Lane,
Cirencester,
Glos GL7 1RL.
Tel: 01285 642428
Email: info@theconservationstudio.co.uk

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of the Higher Green Conservation Area

The Higher Green Conservation Area lies to the north-east of Epsom town centre, to the west of the A240 which connects Reigate to Kingston. Ewell village is less than a mile to the north. The conservation area comprises a quiet residential suburb, almost exclusively developed from the late 1920s onwards by a local builder, Ernest Harwood, who chose a pleasing vernacular style for his new houses. The houses retain elements taken from the historic buildings of Surrey with steeply pitched tiled roofs, tiled and timber-framed decoration, leaded light windows, and a variety of front doors and porches.

The houses were laid out along two roads, Longdown Lane North and Higher Green, the former an historic lane once serving to connect local farms with Ewell, via the main Reigate Road. The latter encloses an attractive open space now notable for its many mature trees. A common building line, and a cohesion of architectural motives (although each house is different), provide the conservation area with a strong architectural character which has not, as yet, been distilled by modern infilling. A well supported Residents' Association maintains a watchful eye on new development and over the whole area generally. The adjoining streets, The Green and Ewell Downs Road, were developed in a similar way and have been designated as a separate conservation area.

The Higher Green Conservation Area was designated in 2000 by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

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 Higher Green 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.

- Detailed Policies will be dealt with in later documents, but meanwhile the Core Strategy has saved a number of the Policies in the Local Plan (as described above). It also 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 Adopted Surrey Structure Plan 2004*: Provides strategic guidance for the built environment for the period to 2016;

- *The South East Plan Core Document March 2006*: Provides an overall framework for development in the south-east. Useful guidance is set out in Chapter 8 *Management of the Historic Environment,* and is detailed in Policy BE7.

1.5 Article 4(2) Direction

An Article 4(2) Direction was served on all residential properties in the conservation area in 2000. This brings under planning control various alterations which would otherwise by allowed under Permitted Development rights, as follows:

- All extensions of whatever size including porches on the front* of the building;
- Changing roof materials and the insertion of rooflights on the front-facing* roofslope;
- Replacing windows or doors on the front* elevation;
- The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilage of the house;
- The erection of a wall, gate, or other means of enclosure facing the front*;
- The demolition of a wall, fence or gate facing the front*.

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

The implications of this Article 4 (2) Direction are discussed in greater detail in the Management Proposals.

1.6 Key Characteristics of the Higher Green Conservation Area

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

- Residential development of the 1920s and 1930s by local builder Ernest Harwood, laid out across former fields;
- Two adjoining streets of houses in Higher Green create a triangular-shaped conservation area;
- The very similar houses in Higher Green surround a small 'village green' with mature trees and grass;
- Longdown Lane North is a busier road with more varied buildings;
- Detached houses set in regular reasonably wide plots with a common building line;
- The buildings are generally 'Tudorbethan' style in Higher Green and on the west side of Longdown Lane North, representing the original development, with later development of a more piecemeal character on the eastern side;
- The design of the houses incorporate details associated with the Surrey vernacular;
- Steeply pitched tiled roofs, varied gables, false timber framing, and leaded light windows all add a picturesque quality.

1.7 Summary of Issues

The conservation area is carefully monitored by a Residents' Association and 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:

- The care and protection of the many trees;
- The control of the pavements, front boundaries and grass verges;
- The protection of existing historic street lights;
- Conserving and enhancement of the existing buildings;
- The control of new development;
- Interpreting the history of the area;

- The control of satellite dishes.

The principal negative features and issues of the conservation area are described in greater detail in Chapter 6 *Character Areas.*

2 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

2.1 Historical development

Ewell derives its name from the Old English for 'river spring', and the history of a settlement at Ewell can be traced to at least the Saxon period. Of interest is the discovery of early burials dating to this time to the west of Epsom Road in the 1930s when the Ewell Downs Road area was being developed. Ewell is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as falling within Copthorne's Hundred, then owned by the King.

Royal ownership of land in the vicinity of Ewell continued into the 16th century when Henry VIII started building the vast residence of Nonsuch Palace, just to the east of Ewell, in 1538. The nearby settlement of Cuddington was destroyed to provide adequate space for the new palace, and Ewell's old route to London absorbed within the royal grounds. The present London Road was subsequently created between the Little and Great Parks.

By the 18th century Ewell had begun to accommodate the country residences of wealthy families, attracted by the proximity of London and the neighbouring spa town of Epsom. With the improvement of the turnpike road in 1834 and the opening of railway connections from East Ewell Station and West Ewell Station in 1847 and 1859 respectively, the feasibility of regular travel into the capital was to be greatly increased. The rural community consequently witnessed a period of growth; the population is recorded to have risen from a total of 1,780 in 1851 to 2,210 in 1871. In 1848 the new parish church dedicated to St Mary to the north of the village centre was completed.

However, in the opinion of Cloudesley Willis, writing of Ewell in 1931, such changes had been slight when contrasted with those of the current time. He confirmed that the layout of the farms had been little altered since the General Enclosure and the streets had remained those of a Georgian village 'with its roots in the Middle Ages'. On the other hand, with the electrification of the railways in the 1920s and the increase in the ownership of motor cars, Willis declared the last ten years to have 'converted the outskirts of this agricultural parish into Greater London'.[1]

For the new inhabitants, this very combination of town and country was to be of the greatest importance, linking the changing modern world of the post-First World War era to England's rural past. Created during the late 1920s and early 1930s on a site previously occupied by wheat fields, the housing in Longdown Lane North and Higher Green forms one such example of Ewell's expansion into the adjoining countryside.

Insert historic maps:

1897 Second Edition OS
1934 Third Edition OS

The estate, along with adjoining The Green and Ewell Downs Road (a separate conservation area), was developed by local builder Ernest Harwood to a fairly standard plot size and size using details and materials which referred back to the Surrey

[1] Cloudesley S. Willis (1931), *A Short History of Ewell and Nonsuch*, p. vii.

vernacular style. These houses appealed to a generation which desired rustic escapism but who also wanted to be within easy reach of bus and train services to London. 'Stockbroker Tudor' was the name wryly afforded to such creations by Osbert Lancaster in 1938. 'Nearly all Englishmen are at heart country gentlemen', as J.B. Priestly had written in *The Beauty of Britain*, three years previously. 'The suburban villa enables the salesman or the clerk, out of hours, to be a country gentleman'.[2]

Insert: copy of original drawings/photos

The houses in the conservation area are therefore notable for their gables, half-timbered façades and details which copied Surrey vernacular buildings, and are linked by low front boundary walls made from brick, stone or flint, often combined together in a pleasing mixture. Some houses were placed on double plots to provide more spacious gardens, but incrementally these have all been infilled.

2.2 Archaeology

Ewell is located at the foot of the gentle slope of the North Downs where the chalk dips beneath the London clay, creating abundant natural springs which would have attracted early settlement in the area. The availability of flints from the chalk for tools and weapons was another feature. There is a small amount of evidence of Palaeolithic people having been in Ewell, but there have been numerous finds from the Mesolithic and the Neolithic periods, as well as a number of Bronze Ages and Iron Age artefacts, providing evidence of three Iron Age settlements in the Ewell area.

Later, Ewell was a Roman settlement, possibly a posting station and located on Stane Street, the Roman road from London to Chichester. Stane Street does not follow the line of any of the village centre streets but does coincide with London Road on its approach to Ewell from the north-east. The road was arranged to take advantage of the springs, the source of the River Hogsmill. Even without the Springs the route would have been a good one, making use of the gap in the North Downs created by the valley of the river Mole. Although Ewell was clearly a sizeable Roman settlement, so far the foundations of only eight buildings have been discovered and there is no clear idea of the layout. However, Roman coins, possibly votive offerings, have been found around the spring, suggesting the area may have been used for religious purposes. Following the retreat of the Romans in the 4th century AD, Stane Street does not appear to have had an effect on the layout of the later Saxon settlement.

There are no Scheduled Monuments in the conservation area.

[2] Quoted Andrew Saint, ed. (1999), *London Suburbs*, pp. 114 and 117.

3 LOCATION, ACTIVITIES AND SETTING

3.1 Location and boundaries

The Higher Green Conservation Area lies to the north-east of Epsom, and approximately one kilometre to the south of the village of Ewell. The north-eastern boundary of the conservation area is created by the busy A240, which connects Reigate to Kingston. Beyond the road lies playing fields and open spaces, some connected with North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT) which lies on the eastern side of the main road. To the north-west, the railway line between Cheam and Epsom creates a strong boundary. Whilst the immediate setting is therefore largely suburban, there are many green open spaces close by including Nonsuch Park, Epsom Downs and the fields and woodland around North Looe. A railway line runs close to the north-western boundary of the conservation area, at the far end of the adjoining The Green, though its impact is very limited.

3.2 Uses and activities

The conservation area is entirely residential, with all of the buildings being used as family houses, rather than flats. This may be because most of the houses are modestly sized (three or four bedrooms was the normal size when built) and despite some extensions they have remained more suitable for their original use. Gates have been installed at the northern end of Higher Green which prevent through traffic into The Green. This contributes to the overall character of Higher Green as a peaceful backwater. Longdown Lane North is a much busier thoroughfare, used to connect the residential suburbs to the south with the A240, where speeding traffic can be a problem despite the 30 mph speed limit. The close proximity of Wallace Fields Infants' School also generates traffic in Higher Green at certain times of the day.

3.3 Topography and landscape setting

The conservation area lies on slightly undulating land, which provides little opportunity for views apart from vistas along each street. Large banks of mature trees provide the focal stops in these views, and are particularly noticeable around Higher Green and, to the north, at the junction with The Green. This leads to the adjoining conservation area of Ewell Downs Road.

3.4 Geology

The conservation area is some eight miles north of the ridge of the North Downs, where Upper Chalk and the London Clay are separated by Reading and Thanet Beds. The latter are particularly porous and provide the line of springs and wells that became the centres of primary settlements that developed into numerous Surrey villages, such as Sutton, Cuddington, Ewell and Epsom. The London Clay is impermeable and so the water that collects in aquifers in the chalk comes out between the chalk and clay. Until recent times the water could be seen gushing up in the Dipping Place at the London Road/Spring Street junction in the centre of Ewell. These springs, and the suitability of the local Thanet Beds for agriculture, provided the main reasons for early settlement from 4000 BC onwards.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Street pattern and building plots

The roughly triangular-shaped conservation area is based around two adjoining roads. The first of these, Longdown Lane North, is an historic lane shown on historic maps which appears to have connected local farms with Ewell village via the main Reigate Road, the A240. Longdown Lane North curves gently to the right as it nears this larger road; the conservation area ceases two houses prior to the junction. An historic track leads away from Longdown Lane North between houses nos. 3 and 5, but has become overgrown with bushes, brambles and mature trees.

Laid out from the late 1920s across land formerly occupied by fields, Higher Green is a long road which bends to form the greater part of the triangular shaped conservation area. As reached from Longdown Lane North, the initial section of the road is characterised by grass verges and pavements which add to the sense of spaciousness. The second section, by comparison, divides to encompass the rounded triangle of the 'village green', an open area of ground integral to the suburban ideals of the 1920s estate. The perimeter roads around this space are narrow, and again there are grass verges between the road and the pavement. Beyond the 'village green' the street of Wallace Fields leads off to the west. A gate placed across the road prevents vehicles from rejoining Longdown Lane North via the adjacent development of The Green.

Along Higher Green and the western side of Longdown Lane North, the plots are regularly laid out in strips of virtually the same size and each house is set back from the road behind a common building line. The 1934 map confirms that houses had by this time been built in these locations, leaving odd pockets of vacant land including several on the east side of Longdown Lane North, where the plots are more varied and generally more spacious. Some of these were 'double' plots which have since been infilled. Despite differences in style, the prevailing character of detached two storey homes that share a common building line has been maintained by the later development.

These two streets provide slightly different character areas which are described in detail in Chapter 6 *Character Areas*, including their key negative features.

4.2 Open spaces, landscape and trees

The principal open space is the grassed area which forms a triangular 'village green' in Higher Green. This area of grass and trees provides an attractive setting for the houses and links with other more informally shaped areas of grass and trees at the northern end, where it turns into The Green, part of a similar but separate conservation area. The spacious qualities of these green spaces and the many trees, both street trees and in private gardens, all add together to provide an attractive environment. The northern end of Higher Green is sealed by a white painted timber gate which prevents additional through traffic and provides a more peaceful environment.

In both streets the many mature trees are extremely important, although their impact is greater in Higher Green, because of the grassed area which creates an extremely attractive environment. This area of grass is simply mown and includes some shrubbery, but the principal decoration is provided by the tall trees of different species including copper beech, beech, horse chestnut, and sycamore. The group of trees

marking the junction between Higher Green and Longdown Lane North – in particular the substantially sized pine tree – is also of importance. The principal trees and tree groups 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. As intended by the layout of the 1920s-1930s development, the area of grass in Higher Green does however act as a focal point.

Views in the conservation area are informal and terminate in trees or the actual buildings. The most appealing views are across and along the open grassed area in Higher Green, taking in the picturesque houses with their dominant gables. The straighter, southern part of Higher Green and the whole of Longdown Lane North benefits from long vistas of houses pleasingly interspersed with trees and hedges. The junction between the latter and the main Reigate Road is partially screened by the curving form of the street and further concealed by mature banks of trees. Views through the buildings to mature trees which form the back boundaries of the properties are also important in maintaining the sylvan character. Overall, the contribution made by the many mature trees to the attractive views from within and into the conservation area cannot be stressed enough.

4.4 Boundaries

Because the two streets were laid out as part of a planned development on open fields, the front boundaries have been carefully considered and a number remain relatively unaltered to this day. The overall aim was clearly to add to the character of the area by a range of designs and the use of a variety of materials, mainly red-orange brick, sandstone, flint or clunch (chalk block). Many of the front boundary walls use an attractive mix of some or all of these materials. Generally these are no higher than about 750 mm and they are often backed up by planting such as shrubbery of flowers, all adding to the character of the area. An unusual boundary is the high (about two metres) flint and chalk wall along the north side of Higher Green which marks the rear boundary to no. 48 Longdown Lane North. Another boundary of note is the brick wall outside no. no. 26 Longdown Lane North which uses herringbone patterns, circular motifs and pieces of chalk to create interesting patterns. Neatly clipped or natural hedging, usually in beech, is another popular boundary, particularly in Longdown Lane North. In places, the front boundary has been completely replaced by shrubs or plants, continuing the sense of spaciousness created by the grass verges.

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. The conservation area is notable for its wide grass verges and the many mature trees, located in the verges, greens and private gardens. Simple tarmacadam pavements with narrow concrete kerbs continue the informal, rural character. Several older cast iron

drain covers remain, one in Higher Green marked 'J Every Lewes' – the product of one of several iron foundries in Lewes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In Longdown Lane North and Higher Green the roads, pavements, grass verges and the main green itself are managed by Surrey County Council who delegate certain maintenance functions (such as grass cutting) to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. Some concern over the condition of the surface to the road in Higher Green has been expressed by local residents.

One of the most notable features of the conservation area is the survival of historic street lights, still in use, in various locations. These add to the interest of the area and relate to the original building of the houses in the late 1920s/1930s. Street lighting is also the responsibility of Surrey County Council, although the Borough Council can contribute to their costs where improvements are required.

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

The Higher Green Conservation Area is comprised of modestly-sized detached family houses and garages, chiefly created during the development of the late 1920s to the 1930s. The buildings sit on plots with a common building line and share a Tudorbethan style which draws from a shared vocabulary of materials and details. Beyond this, the pleasing variations between individual properties reflect the tastes of their original owners who probably had the opportunity of choosing the materials and details for their new house as they wished. However, whilst some of the houses are similar to those in the adjoining The Green and Ewell Downs Road, which was also built by Ernest Harwood, the buildings are generally larger and plainer, with less decoration.

More recent development in Higher Green has been built to generally accord with this Tudorbethan style. A greater amount of modern development has also been carried out along the eastern side of Longdown Lane North, where larger spaces had been left between Harwood's houses of the early 20th century. Close to the junction with Reigate Road are a number of houses created during the 1960s. Further south is an example of a neo-Georgian property and a house dating from the 1970s-80s. Most recently, and controversially, work has commenced to replace no. 14 Longdown Lane North with two modern four-to-five bedroom family homes.

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

5.2 Positive buildings

The Townscape Analysis Map identifies those historic buildings which appear to have been built as part of the original building period in the late 1920s and 1930s. Later buildings, or those which have been heavily altered or indeed rebuilt, have been omitted. The identified buildings are considered to make a *positive* contribution to the special interest of the conservation area due to their use of vernacular forms and the consistently high quality of their materials and details.

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. The demolition of non positive buildings may be allowed, but any redevelopment of the site will have to conform to existing Council policies, particularly in terms of site density, scale, materials and details.

5.3 Architectural styles, materials and detailing

The buildings in the conservation area are notable for their use of traditional building forms, materials and details, all of which provide references to the Surrey vernacular tradition.

Facing the green, the houses in Higher Green are fairly substantial family dwellings of two storeys with pitched roof covered in handmade tiles, often now replaced with machine made clay tiles. The buildings often have projecting front bays, either on the left or right, sometimes continued to ground level to create catslide roof. The front elevations are rarely symmetrical and as has been previously described, each house is slightly different. White render is usually used for the side and rear elevations with the front bays being decorated with tile hanging or false timber framing. The contrast of white chimney stacks against the deep red tiled roofs is a notable feature when these properties are viewed across the green. Leaded lights, set in casement or mullioned and transomed windows, add interest, along with the occasional oriel window.

In Longdown Lane North, the design of the properties is far more varied, although the southern side is far more cohesive than the north, where empty plots shown on the 1934 map were incrementally filled in. The use of white painted render, pitched tiled roofs, gables, and very varied building forms, is notable. False timber framing in several locations adds interest. Overall, however, these rather disparate buildings are linked by their general form and use of materials, their front gardens and planting, and the cohesive building line.

Each house was also usually provided with a single garage, located next to the house but set slightly back. These had pitched tiled roofs and double timber boarded doors with glazed upper lights set below a false timber framed gable. The height of these garages is low by current standards, as they were designed for a time when cars were somewhat smaller in height and width. Many of these garages have been replaced with larger versions.

Today, many of the houses have been extended to the back and side and the original garages either subsumed within side extensions or rebuilt. However the additional control exercised by the Article 4 (2) Direction has helped to prevent the widespread loss of original materials and other features.

CHARACTER AREAS AND ISSUES

There are two areas of distinct character within the conservation area:

Area 1: Longdown Lane North;
Area 2: Higher Green.

6.1 Area 1: : Longdown Lane North

Longdown lane North is an attractive residential street with large, detached houses set back from the road behind a common building line. There has been some modern infill, mainly on the east side where plots are shown empty on the 1934 map. This street is therefore less consistent in its architectural form than Higher Green, which has very few more modern buildings. The long straight road is softened by the grass verges and many street trees and other planting in private gardens. The road curves gently, with buildings to either side being generally located on similarly sized plots behind a common building line. The buildings retain many elements of the Tudorbethan style and are quite generously sized.

6.2 Area 2: Higher Green

Higher Green is also an attractive residential area which was developed in a comprehensive way in the late 1920s or early 1930s. The buildings are mainly faced in white render with brick ground floors and steeply pitched tiled roofs, again referring to the Tudorbethan style. Projecting gables ads particular interest in views along the street. A common building line is a notable feature, although this is softened by the planting and trees.

6.3 Negative features/Issues

The conservation area is well managed by its Residents' Association and by the care and vigilance of the residents themselves. The houses are generally well maintained and many retain their original details and materials. However there are a few minor problems which have been identified:

1 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.

2 Pavements and verges

The pavements and verges are privately owned in Higher Green and are cared for by the Management Company. They are generally covered in tarmacadam or are grassed. Similar pavements and verges, the responsibility of Surrey County Council, can be seen in Longdown Lane North. The careful upkeep of these spaces, including the maintenance of the historic property boundaries, is important.

3 Street lights

The existing historic street lights need to be protected and maintained, because they relate to the original development of the area and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4 Buildings

The houses in the conservation area are protected by the existing Article 4 (2) Direction which means that planning permission is required for a variety of changes, such as the installation of new windows or front doors, or a change in the roof materials. In the years before 2000, many of the houses lost their original handmade clay tiles and had them replaced by machine made tiles which lack the pleasing variety of the original material. Some of the original leaded light windows also remain and these need to be identified and retained.

5 New development

There are few opportunities for new development in the conservation area and the Residents' Association takes an active interest in any applications for new houses or for extensions. Any new houses have to maintain the existing building line and existing density. Because of the narrow plots, extensions tend to be located at the back of the buildings, and can sometimes appear to be dominating.

6 Preserving the history

The conservation area has a short but interesting history allied to Post-War enthusiasm for traditional building forms and materials. The builder provided each house with a pallet of materials, details, and boundaries, each one slightly different but united by some common themes. The preservation and enhancement of this cohesiveness is very important.

7 Satellite dishes

Despite being in the conservation area, some residents have 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 although this may have occurred prior to 2000.

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 Higher Green 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.

8 PROPOSED ACTIONS

8.1 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, Surrey County Council or the local Residents' Association:

1 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.

8.1.1 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 approved;*
- *The Residents' Association could consider undertaking an audit of the trees in the conservation area, identifying those trees where action might be needed in the future and providing a long term Management Plan for maintenance and appropriate replacement;*
- *Where trees are removed due to disease, they should be replaced promptly.*

2 Pavements and verges

The pavements and verges are the responsibility of Surrey County Council, in partnership with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. These need to be maintained in their present state and not spoilt by inappropriate changes such as the use of poor quality modern paving materials. Overall, it is desirable to maintain the informal, rustic appearance of the conservation area.

8.1.2 Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council will enforce the existing Article 4[2] Direction, which controls the loss of front gardens, front boundaries, and the creation of hardstandings, by ensuring that all such changes are the subject of a planning application and that owners adhere to any conditions relating to the use of materials, new landscaping etc.*

3 Street lights

The existing historic street lights need to be protected and maintained, because they relate to the original development of the area and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, the County Council is investigating entering into a partnership with a private company to replace all of the street lights in the Borough with modern lights of a consistent design, not necessarily

appropriate in conservation areas. It has been agreed in principle that where historic street lights exist, they can be retained but only if the Borough Council takes on the additional costs of repairing them. Alternatively, they could be replaced with a 'heritage' reproduction Victorian street light at a cost of £800 per lamp. This cost would have to be borne by the Borough Council, and no agreement has yet been reached to do so.

8.1.3 Recommendation:

- *The Borough Council, County Council and Residents' Association 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.*

4 Buildings

The houses in the conservation area are protected by the existing Article 4 (2) Direction which means that planning permission is required for a variety of changes, such as the installation of new windows or front doors, or a change in the roof materials. Many of the houses have, over the years, lost their original handmade clay tiles and had them replaced by machine made tiles which lack the pleasing variety of the original material. Some of the original leaded light windows also remain and these need to be identified and retained.

8.1.4 Recommendation:

- *Subject to funding, the Borough Council could consider the preparation of a Design Guide for residents of the conservation area to provide guidance on the following:*
    - *New development, including infill and replacement dwellings;*
    - *Extensions;*
    - *Use of traditional materials and details;*
    - *The use of colour;*
    - *Control of front gardens, front boundaries, and grass verges*
    - *Satellite dishes.*

5 New development

There are few opportunities for new development in the conservation area and the Residents' Association takes an active interest in any applications for new houses or for extensions. Any new houses have to maintain the existing building line and existing density. Because of the plots are not particularly wide, extensions tend to be located at the back of the buildings, and can sometimes be considered too dominating.

8.1.5 Recommendation: See 8.1.4 above

6 Preserving the history

The conservation area has a short but interesting history allied to Post-War enthusiasm for traditional building forms and materials. The builder provided each house with a pallet of materials, details, and boundaries, each one slightly different but united by

some common themes. The preservation and enhancement of this cohesiveness is important.

8.1.6 Recommendation:

The Borough Council in partnership with the Residents' Association could consider the preparation of a short booklet about the history of the area, including historic maps and copies of the original drawings included in this document. This could be given to new residents and would, with the Design Guidance above, help to 'preserve and enhance' the conservation area.

7 Satellite dishes

Despite being in the conservation area, some residents have 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.

8.1.7 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.*

8.2 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 two streets, with their cohesive late 1920's/1930s 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 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 HIGHER GREEN CONSERVATION AREA ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTION

The Article 4(2) Direction for the Higher Green Conservation Area came into force on the 2000. 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., although this is not relevant to this conservation area.

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 Higher Green 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) Replacing windows or doors on the front* elevation;
(iv) The provision of a hardstanding (i.e. a parking area) within the curtilege 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(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. 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 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