

Clay Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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prepared by

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Clay Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal

SUMMARY OF 2013 REVIEW

The Clay Hill Conservation Area character appraisal was originally adopted and published in 2006. It was reviewed and updated during February and March 2013 by the Drury McPherson Partnership. The appraisal now contains updated and corrected text and new photographs taken in early 2013. The original maps have been amended. The appraisal should be read in conjunction with the revised Clay Hill Conservation Area Management Proposals (in part 2 of this document), which contain management recommendations that flow from the revised appraisal.

There have been relatively few physical changes in the Conservation Area since 2006. Of the key objectives of the 2007 management proposals, the amendment to the boundary at the southern edge of the area was made in 2009. The wall at (locally listed) Kingswood Lodge identified as being at risk of collapse in 2007 has been repaired. However, the adjacent gate lodge, understood to be in the same ownership, remains in a parlous condition and its repair is an urgent priority. A section of wall in Clay Hill between Kingswood and the Fallow Buck is also in need of repair.

There have been no major developments or planning applications. The concern about infill development, highlighted in 2006, appears to have receded. There have been no recent applications for this type of development, although this does not preclude the possibility that they will be submitted in the future. There are no substantial new issues arising from the appraisal, but the concerns about management of the public realm and the loss of architectural detail remains.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conservation areas

- 1.1.1 Conservation areas are areas of ‘special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’¹ and were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area². In fulfilling this duty, the Council does not seek to stop all development, but to manage change in a sensitive way, to ensure that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced rather than eroded.
- 1.1.2 Conservation area designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and the lopping or felling of trees above a certain size. However, it does not control all forms of development. Some changes to family houses (known as “permitted development”) do not normally require planning permission. These include minor alterations such as the replacement of windows and doors, or the alteration of boundary walls. Where such changes would harm local amenity or the proper planning of the area (for example, by damaging the historic environment), the Council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4 directions, that withdraw particular permitted development rights³. The result is that planning permission is required for these changes.

1.2 The purpose of a conservation area appraisal

- 1.2.1 A conservation area character appraisal aims to define the qualities that make an area special. This involves understanding the history and development of the place and analysing its current appearance and character - including describing significant features in the landscape and identifying important buildings and spaces. It also involves recording, where appropriate, intangible qualities such as the sights, sounds and smells that contribute to making the area distinctive, as well as its historic associations with people and events.
- 1.2.2 An appraisal is not a complete audit of every building or feature, but rather aims to give an overall flavour of the area. It provides a benchmark of understanding against which the effects of proposals for change can be assessed, and the future of the area managed. It also identifies problems

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 s.69

² *ibid*, Section 72

³ Replacement Appendix D to Department of Environment Circular 9/95 (November 2010), DCLG

that detract from the character of the area and potential threats to this character.

- 1.2.3 This appraisal of the Clay Hill Conservation Area (hereafter referred to as the Conservation Area) supports Enfield Council's commitment in its Local Plan (Core Strategy adopted 2010), and its duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to consult the public about the proposals. The assessment in the appraisal of the contribution made by unlisted buildings and other elements to the character of the Conservation Area is based on the criteria suggested in English Heritage's guidance *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011), reproduced at the end of this document.

1.3 Conservation in Enfield

- 1.3.1 Since the 1870s, Enfield has developed from a modest market town surrounded by open country and small villages to a pattern of suburbs on the edge of London. This transformation was triggered by the advent of suburban railways and took place in a piecemeal manner, with former villages being developed into local shopping centres and industries being developed along the Lea Valley. Conservation areas in Enfield reflect this pattern of development, including old town and village centres, rural areas centred on the remains of former country estates, examples of the best suburban estates and distinctive industrial sites. Some of the smaller designated areas are concentrated on particular groups of buildings of local importance.
- 1.3.2 Clay Hill is a predominately rural area centred on a small, scattered, linear settlement with origins in the medieval period. It was designated as a conservation area in 1983, and extended southwards, to include Hilly Fields Park in 2008.

1.4 Planning policy framework

- 1.4.1 The legal basis for conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. National policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012, which among other things, requires local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The Enfield Local Plan sets out a basic framework of conservation policies (Core Strategy: Core Policy 31) for all areas. This conservation area character appraisal will be used to support the conservation policies that form part of the Core Strategy.

2 APPRAISAL OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.1 Location and setting

2.1.1 The Clay Hill Conservation Area is located on the northern fringe of the Borough of Enfield, approximately 1½ miles (2km) from the town centre. It is predominately rural in character: most of the land is given over to public open space, or the keeping of horses and there are only sixty dwellings within the Conservation Area. The Forty Hill Conservation Area lies to the east of and very close to Clay Hill: together, they form a combined area of interesting and distinct landscape, historical and architectural character. The Clay Hill Conservation Area encompasses some parts of the former Forty Hall estate.

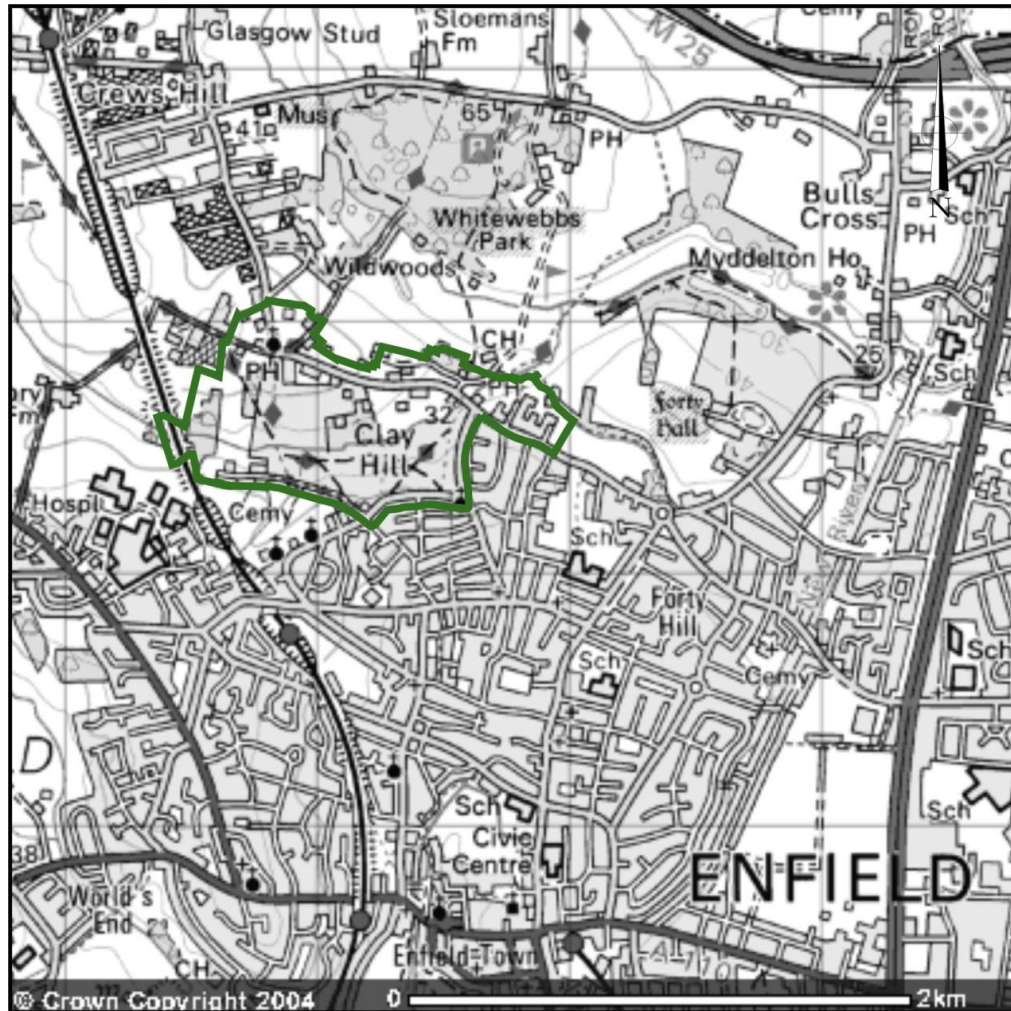
2.1.2 The Conservation Area marks the southern limit of a rural landscape that stretches north to Goffs Oak and Cheshunt in Hertfordshire. This landscape consists of gently rolling hills formed of ridges running from east to west, interspersed by shallow valleys drained by small streams flowing eastwards into the River Lea. It is divided into small fields and patches of woodland concentrated around the streams and on hill tops.



Figure 1: View north from Fallow Buck Inn

2.1.3 The topography of the Conservation Area consists of a ridge, with Clay Hill running along its spine, from which the land falls gradually into a shallow valley drained by the Cuffley Brook to the north, and a rather deeper valley, drained by the Turkey Brook, to the south. To the east, the

land again falls gradually to where Clay Hill crosses the Turkey Brook, after which it rises steeply. To the west, the ground rises gradually to a plateau around St. John's church and the Fallow Buck Inn. Despite its place name, the geology of the area consists of alluvium rather than clay.



Clay Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal map 1: location map

— Conservation area boundary

Figure 2: Location map

2.2 Historical development

- 2.2.1 The settlement of Clay Hill has its origins in the early medieval period. The first firm reference is to Cleyein in a document of 1214⁴. An earlier reference in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 1016 to Claeighangra may refer to this area, or to Clay Hill Farm in Tottenham⁵. 'Claeig' is thought to refer to a person, rather than to clay⁶. During the medieval and early modern

⁴ Greater London SMR (HER?) ref no: 080668/00/00 - LO25604

⁵ Gelling M. and Cole A. *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Shaun Tyas, Stamford 2000) p.232

⁶ Baker T (ed) *Victoria County History of Middlesex V.* (OUP 1976) p.216

period, the dominant feature in the area was Enfield Chase, a royal park, which had been emparked by 1140⁷. The eastern boundary of the chase ran along Flash Lane, with a gate at the junction between Clay Hill and Theobalds Park Road (*map 2*).

- 2.2.2 By 1572, Clay Hill is described as a small settlement⁸. Early maps⁹ indicate that this settlement was scattered thinly to the east of the Chase along the spine road (which was originally known as Bread Street and then Bridge Street, before becoming Clay Hill¹⁰) and consisted principally of small cottages. A significant early development was the building, between 1609 and 1612, of the New River, an artificial watercourse intended to supply London with clean drinking water. The original course of this river lies to the north of the Conservation Area, following the 100ft (30m) contour line on the southern side of the valley drained by the Cuffley Brook (*map 2*), and the name 'Flash Lane' refers to a flash, or timber trough, in which the New River was carried over the top of the Cuffley Brook¹¹. Such an aqueduct, dating to the early part of the 19th century (and a scheduled ancient monument), still exists in Flash Lane, adjacent to the Conservation Area.¹² The New River was re-routed in the mid 19th century, but part of the original course survives as a stream.
- 2.2.3 This phase of the development of Clay Hill is clearly illustrated by the earliest surviving buildings. The oldest, the Rose and Crown and the Fallow Buck Inns, are simple structures in the vernacular tradition dating from the 16th and 17th centuries respectively (*map 2*). Both were trading as roadside inns by the mid 18th century¹³, illustrating the area's early role as a transport link. Little Pipers is of a similar vintage: records show the original building, with Great Pipers, being a tenement in 1572.¹⁴ The cellar and main structure remain.
- 2.2.4 During the 18th century, Clay Hill started to become a desirable area for the middle and upper classes. From the mid 18th century, large houses with formal, classically proportioned façades begin to appear. At first these properties were set close to the road, and were intended to be highly visible status symbols. Bramley House (1750) and The Firs (early 19th century) are the only surviving examples of this phase of development (*map 2*).

⁷ Pam, D. A *History of Enfield I*. (Butler and Tanner, Frome 1990) p.6

⁸ Greater London SMR ref no 080668/00/00

⁹ eg the enclosure map of Enfield Parish dated 1803

¹⁰ Information provided by Councillor Annette Dreblow, February 2005

¹¹ Pam (1990) *op cit* p.102-104

¹² Information provided by the Forty Hill & Bulls Cross Study Group, February 2005

¹³ DoE List of Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest Enfield

¹⁴ Pam, D. *Elizabethan Enfield 1572* (Edmonton Hundred Historical Society 1975)



Figure 3: Clay Hill in 1867 (from 25" OS map)

2.2.5 The enclosure (division of common land into individual landholdings) of Enfield Chase in 1777 and of the rest of Enfield Parish in 1803 brought a marked change in the area as it promoted the development of country villas set in extensive grounds. Three dominated the centre of this area. The largest, the Whitewebbs Park, stood to the north of the area, with only the southern tip included within the Conservation Area boundary. On the north side of the spine road was Claysmore House, a large Georgian building on the site now occupied by Brayside Farm. To the south was Woodbury, built in 1853, now converted into a nursing home and known as Woodbury Manor. These villas were supported by cottages and lodges, often in a distinctive gothic style, which now form a significant part of the building stock of the area.

2.2.6 The owners of these estates clearly influenced life in Clay Hill during the mid 19th century. This can be seen in the Church of St. John, which stands on the corner of Clay Hill and Theobalds Park Roads, the building of which was in part financed by the owner of Claysmore House, Mr J. W. Bosanquet. A retired banker with a reputation as a writer on Biblical and Assyrian chronology, Bosanquet was also the founder of the Protestant Association. This was established to counter the Oxford Movement, a group of clergy keen on re-introducing Catholic rituals into worship in the Church of England. Bosanquet had already built a small school and chapel for local people in Flash Lane (now The Cot). The church was built in 1857 to the design of Piers St. Aubyn and was fitted out by the Vicar of Enfield, a keen supporter of the Oxford movement, in a rich Anglo-Catholic style. Bosanquet was incensed, seeing the fittings as incompatible with proper protestant worship. Matters came to a head when Bosanquet

tried to remove the altar furnishings before a service, an act which ended in a brawl with the assistant curate. The Bishop of London intervened and the church was temporarily closed in 1859. Further scuffles between Bosanquet and the Vicar erupted over Christmas 1859 and New Year 1860. These struggles were part of ongoing clashes between the Vicar of Enfield, John Moore Heath, and prominent parishioners over the introduction of Catholic ritual that dogged his time as vicar¹⁵. Despite these confrontations, worship in the Anglo-Catholic tradition continues in the church to this day.

2.2.7 Another prominent member of the community was Sir Roland Macdonald Stephenson, who lived at Hill Lodge, on the south side of Clay Hill near the Fallow Buck, a site now occupied by 220-224 Clay Hill. This eminent engineer specialised in sewerage and water supplies and championed a progressive approach to sewage and drinking water facilities in Enfield¹⁶. During the later 19th and early 20th centuries, the area became more densely settled with middle class and artisan housing. The earliest examples are in St. John's Terrace, a group of two humble terraces of classic late Victorian small houses erected between 1867 and 1896. The hitherto undeveloped rural landscape at the western end of the Conservation Area was significantly altered by the building of the Great Northern Railway loop line to Stevenage between 1902 and 1910¹⁷, involving the construction of the impressive Rendlesham viaduct. Part of Park Farm, to the south of the Turkey Brook, was purchased by Enfield District Council in 1909 to create Hilly Fields Park.

2.2.8 Suburban development reached Clay Hill during the interwar years, with the building of the Park Nook estate to the south of the area and various detached suburban houses along Clay Hill itself. Meanwhile, many of the older houses, including Claysmore, were demolished. The creation of the Metropolitan Green Belt after the Second World War curtailed further suburban development and ensured the preservation of Clay Hill as an essentially rural area. Development since has been limited to the demolition and replacement of existing buildings, often larger houses, including Hill Lodge (in the early 1960s), a practice that has ended with designation as a Conservation Area. Another important development during the 20th century has been the change in land use from arable agriculture and private grounds to paddocks for horses and public open space.

¹⁵ Pam D. *A History of Enfield II* (Enfield Preservation Society, Enfield 1992) p.290-4

¹⁶ *ibid* p.202

¹⁷ *ibid* p.63

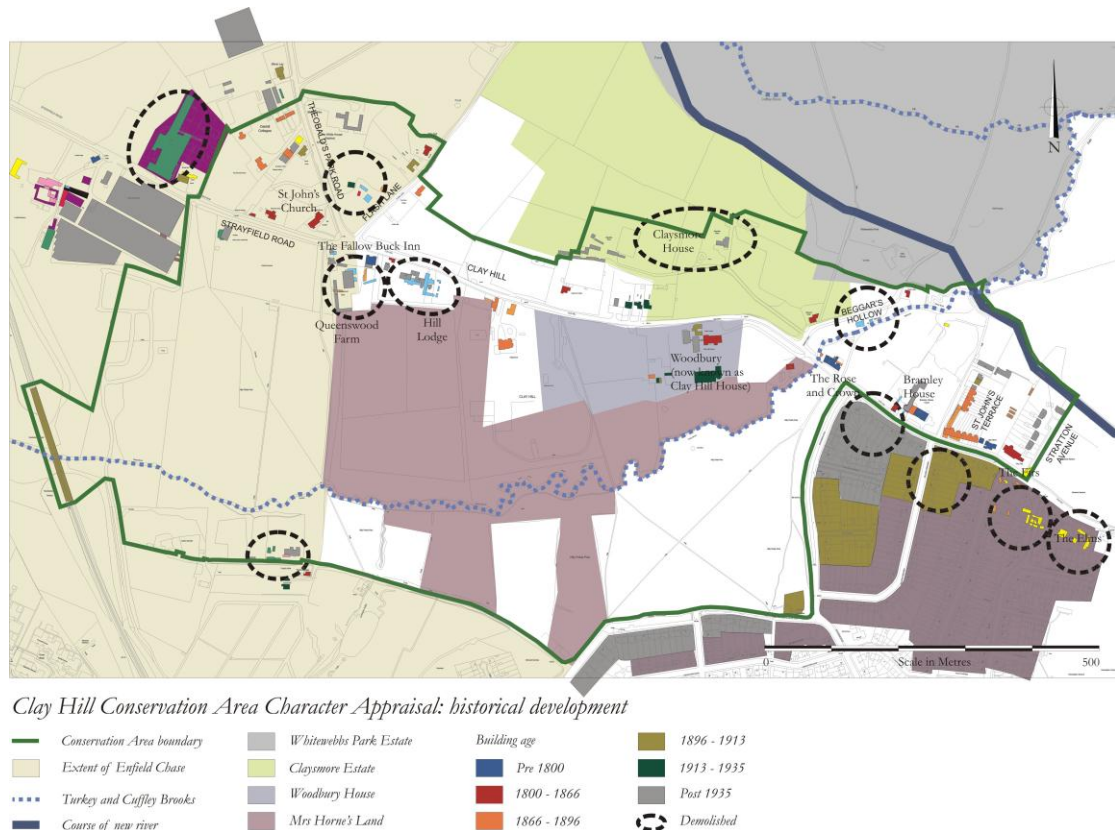


Figure 4: Map 2: historical development

2.3 Archaeology

2.3.1 Like much of the Lea Valley, the Clay Hill area has a history of intensive land use stretching back into prehistory. While no major occupation sites are yet known, there have been several prehistoric finds in the surrounding area including a Bronze Age burnt mound found in Hilly Fields Park¹⁸. There is a strong possibility that other archaeological remains have yet to be discovered. Part is identified as an Area of Archaeological Importance.

2.4 Spatial analysis

2.4.1 The settlement pattern is largely dictated by the land form and is concentrated on the principal road, Clay Hill, an important through-route, connecting Enfield to Enfield Chase and Crews Hill since medieval times. Wherever possible this road follows the crest of the ridge, forming a long, sinuous curve, and only deviating where it dips down, at the Rose and Crown public house, to cross the Turkey Brook.

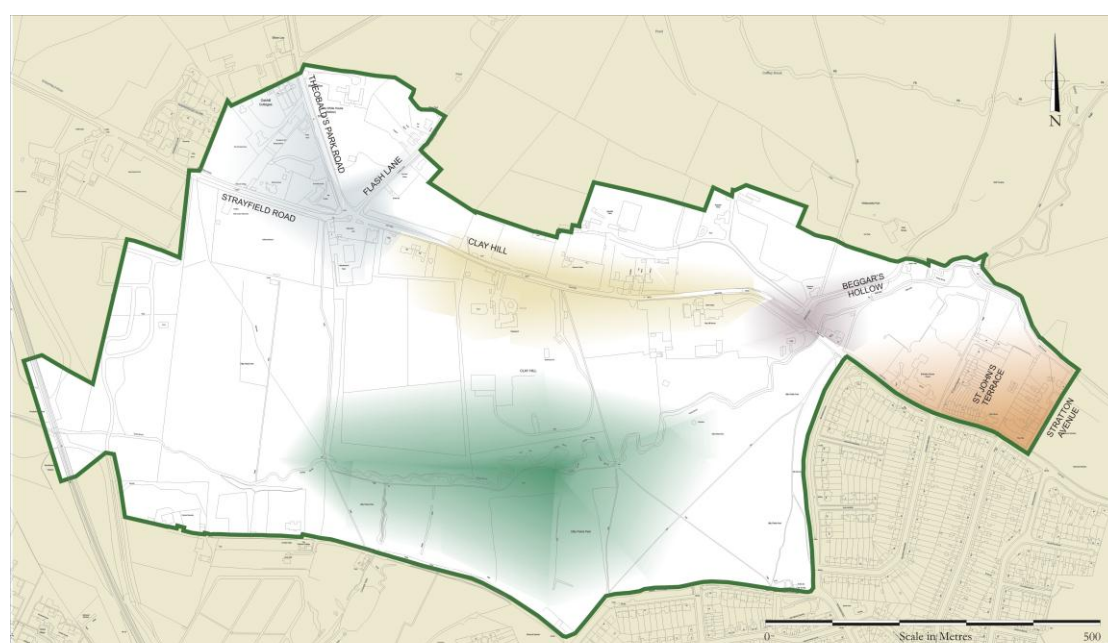
2.4.2 Houses are scattered thinly along the road and generally set in reasonably large, square plots interspersed with small fields. Some buildings are set at right angles to the road and several of the larger properties are completely

¹⁸ Greater London SMR ref no: 81966/01/00

hidden at the end of private drives. The sparse settlement, with properties located well back from the road, and no regular building or eaves lines, give the area an informal and spacious feel that reflects its unplanned development.

2.4.3 Away from the road, the landscape becomes wholly rural in character, with long narrow fields, divided by hedgerows, stretching down from the central spine to the Turkey and Cuffley Brooks.

2.4.4 The road known as Clay Hill is the dominant element of the Conservation Area, forming an east-west spine. Indeed, it is the only aspect that many visitors experience, since the high walls and hedgerows that line the road effectively enclose it, excluding views of the countryside and buildings beyond. Weathered stock brick walls complement the thickly planted hedgerows and give the road a rural character that is enhanced by a simple ground surface of tarmac and a single narrow pavement on the south side. Minimal street furniture, with occasional streetlights and a welcome lack of road signage and markings, reinforce the rural ambience.



Clay Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal: character areas

— Conservation Area boundary

A: The urban fringe
 B: The Rose and Crown & Beggar's Hollow
 C: Central Clay Hill
 D: Fallow Buck Inn
 E: Turkey Brook & Hillyfields

Figure 5: Character areas

2.5 Identification of character areas

2.5.1 The Conservation Area is large and varied in terms of topography and density of development. It is experienced in two principal ways: along the Clay Hill road and in the open land around the Turkey Brook and the Hilly

Fields Park. The first of these two broad divisions can be further subdivided into four sub- areas as the character of Clay Hill subtly changes along its length and can most easily be described by reference to an east-west sequence of character areas: the Urban Fringe on the 'plateau' to the east; the Rose and Crown and Beggars Hollow; Central Clay Hill on the road as it rises from the hollow; and Clay Hill West where the road joins or becomes Strayfield Road and Theobald's Park Road. The Turkey Brook and Hilly Fields, south of the spine of Clay Hill Road, form another, essentially rural character area, and a similar undeveloped character is found in the northern fringe of the conservation area.

2.6 Character Area A

The urban fringe

- 2.6.1 The east end of the road is markedly different from the rest, being more formal and urban in its nature. The settlement pattern is denser, consisting of smaller, more closely packed properties, often terraced, set nearer to the street and with a relatively constant building line and eaves height. Boundaries tend to be of an urban nature, principally brick walls ranging from around 0.75m to 1.5m high, but also low picket fences. There is less greenery in the front gardens than elsewhere in the Conservation Area.



Figure 6: The urban fringe

The Firs

- 2.6.2 The low front boundaries and relatively small front gardens allow the buildings to make a strong visual impact. At the eastern entrance to the Conservation Area, a prominent group is formed by The Firs and Little Pipers, two externally Georgian houses with quirky classical and gothic detailing and striking black and white painted facades (the core of Little Pipers is older: the extension and Georgian orné were probably added in the 19th century). Their rendered and painted boundary walls are decorated

in similar style. Bramley House, with its grand red brick classical façade, is another attractive and prominent building, enhanced by a well detailed red brick boundary wall.



Figure 7: The Firs



Figure 8: 13-21 St John's Terrace

- 2.6.3 The relatively humble artisan cottages of St. John's Terrace also make an important contribution to the area. These are typical late Victorian terraces arranged in an L-shape, partly facing Clay Hill and partly facing a rough, unmade side road, built of an attractive local stock brick; their façades are enlivened by an unusual rhythm set up by two alternating bay widths. Unfortunately, many of the houses facing the road have suffered modern alterations that have reduced their attractiveness. The properties on the side road (13-21) are less visible, but better preserved, retaining original

windows and doors. They form a more attractive group, enhanced by neat picket fences and low hedges.

2.6.4 The south frontage of Clay Hill falls outside the boundary of the Conservation Area and is lined with rows of 1930s semi-detached houses of the Park Nook estate. These are of limited interest in themselves, but their presence makes a strong contribution to the urban flavour of the area.

2.6.5 Stratton Avenue, in the north-west corner of the urban fringe, is an area of post-war housing that is visually separated from the rest of the area and of little inherent interest. It appears to have been included in the Conservation Area simply as a result of adopting the former course of the New River as the north-west boundary.

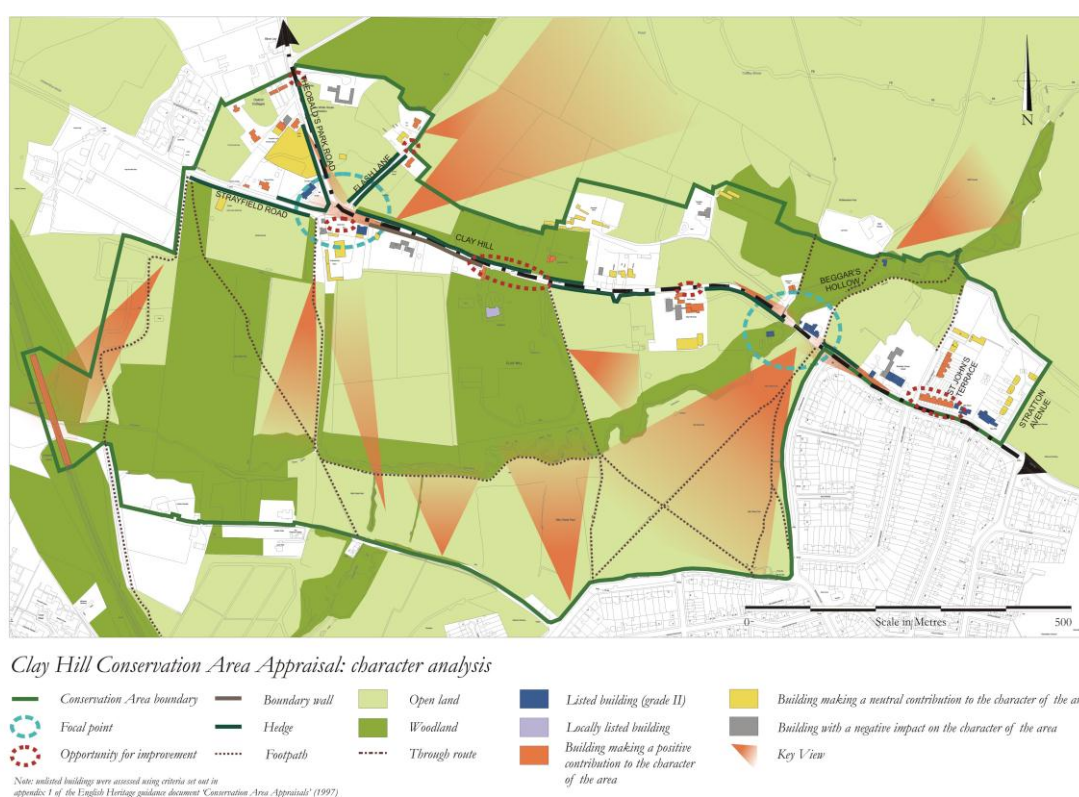


Figure 9: Character analysis

2.7 Character Area B

The Rose and Crown and Beggars Hollow

2.7.1 Immediately west of the urban fringe, the tightly packed settlement pattern gives way to woodland interspersed with small patches of open ground. The focal point of this area is the Rose and Crown public house (the building appears to be under-used and requires maintenance), which is dramatically sited in a hollow, at the point where Clay Hill crosses the Turkey Brook: the steeply falling ground accentuates the prominence of the building. The valley formed by the brook opens out to the south, with

a good view across Hilly Fields Park (*map 3*). Dense woodland prevents similar views out to the north until the northern boundary of the Conservation Area is reached at South Lodge. Here, tree cover falls away around the Whitewebbs Park golf course, giving good views of the rural landscape to the north.



Figure 10: The Rose and Crown

- 2.7.2 One of the key elements of this area is a series of lodges that originally guarded the entrances to Woodbury Manor and Claysmore houses and the Whitewebbs Park estate. These are small, simple buildings in a mix of classical and gothic styles, characterised by rendered and painted walls. The best is South Lodge. This is sited well back from the road and is distinguished by light-hearted gothic detailing, including elaborate barge boards and a decorative chimney stack in the *cottage orneé* style. Its setting, partially hidden in dense woodland, enhances its picturesque charm.



Figure 11: Claysmore Lodge

2.8 Character Area C

Central Clay Hill

- 2.8.1 To the west along Clay Hill, the enclosed nature of the road re-asserts itself (*map 3*). This is interrupted by a group of inter-war detached houses on the north side, their suburban style forming an odd juxtaposition with the semi-rural surroundings. Behind the high walls and hedges lining the road, glimpses can be caught of houses and cottages. The most significant buildings in this part of the Conservation Area are the two largest surviving 19th century country villas. Woodbury Manor (formerly Clay Hill House) is an Italianate structure on the south side of the road just west of the Rose and Crown. Only the rear elevation can be seen, since the principal façade faces the Turkey Brook, but its imposing private drive, lined with Wellingtonias, forms a strong feature visible from the road. Kingswood House, a little farther west on the south side of the road, is of architectural interest in itself (reflected by its local listing), but is concealed by trees and a high wall and cannot at present be seen from outside its grounds. It therefore has little direct impact on public perceptions of the area.



Figure 12: Rear of Woodbury manor

2.9 Character Area D

The Fallow Buck Inn

2.9.1 Clay Hill reaches a plateau at the junction with Theobalds Park Road, Flash Lane and Strayfield Road, where again the landscape opens out. To the north, walls and hedges are replaced by post and rail fences and individual trees, including a fine row of evergreen oaks opposite the Fallow Buck, which allow views over the rolling countryside to the north. To the south, glimpses of tower blocks on the northern fringe of Enfield town provide a reminder of the proximity of Greater London.

2.9.2 A strong focal point is provided by the Fallow Buck Inn (the freehold was for sale in February 2013), which is vernacular in style, with a steeply pitched, clay tile roof with prominent gables and weather-boarded walls, and the Church of St. John (*cover illustration*), a fine Victorian gothic building, with yellow and red polychromatic brickwork and stone tracery windows under a steeply pitched, tiled roof crowned with a tall bellcote. The setting of the church is enhanced by a thick hedge, a well-planted churchyard containing fine mature trees and a timber lych gate. Behind (to the north-west of) the church, and only glimpsed from Theobalds Park Road, is a well-designed, recently-constructed parish room, built of matching materials.



Figure 13: The Fallow Buck Inn

- 2.9.3 The settlement pattern here becomes more diffuse, with houses scattered along all the roads, rather than being concentrated on Clay Hill. These properties tend not to be prominent, but several are both of historic interest and attractive in their own right. An example is The Cot, on Flash Lane, a simple mid 19th century cottage with gothic detailing and three tall lancet windows that are the only remaining traces of its origins as Bosanquet's original chapel and school house. Also of interest is Glenwood House, on Strayfield Road. This was built as the parsonage for St. John's church. It is by the same architect, St. Aubyn, and is in a similar style, with yellow and red polychromatic brickwork, though rather more domestic in character. Oakhill House, off Theobalds Park Road, is an attractive, medium-sized Edwardian house, built in finely executed red brickwork, enriched with a triple-arched entrance porch. The house forms the centrepiece of a handsome group that includes a coach house and two pairs of estate cottages, all set along a private drive.



Figure 14: Glenwood House

- 2.9.4 Interspersed between these fine buildings are several modern structures. The most prominent is a group of detached houses and bungalows to the west of the Fallow Buck Inn and the White House, a stables complex on Theobalds Park Road. These are fairly bland in terms of design and massing and detract from the appearance of the area, as does the car park of the Fallow Buck Inn, with its large expanse of tarmac and little by way of tree or hedge screening. The visual impact of some of the modern buildings, most notably St John's Mobile Home Park and Queenswood Farm, is largely neutralised by high walls and hedges.

2.10 Character Area E

The Turkey Brook and Hilly Fields area

- 2.10.1 Away from the spine road, the Conservation Area becomes principally rural in character. To the south, the Turkey Brook is the dominant feature. This slow, meandering watercourse runs through a narrow flood plain thickly planted with trees. The dominant species here is beech, but ash, sycamore, holly, larch and pines are also common. Away from the flood plain, the ground rises sharply before levelling out to become a gently sloping hill that reaches its summit at Clay Hill. This area is a mix of former park land, characterised by untended grassland interspersed with widely spaced, mature specimen trees, mainly oaks; dense woodland with a similar mix of species to that found around Turkey Brook; and open land used for recreation, which is generally neatly kept with closely trimmed grass.
- 2.10.2 Large pines dominate the land around Kingswood House. Old field boundaries consisting of hedges (mainly a mixture of beech, ash and sycamore), sometimes supplemented with iron fencing and railings, divide

the area; and, with the mass of trees around the Turkey Brook, restrict views to short prospects from paths down the hill to the brook. However, good views are to be had looking south across the valley from the footpath connecting St. John's Church and the Turkey Brook towards the trees of the Lavender Hill cemetery. Good views are also to be had from the southern uphill parts of the Hilly Fields, looking back to St John's Church and over the attractive valley of the Turkey Brook. The area to the south east has many fine, mature deciduous trees including tall oaks. Much of this open land in the area is in public ownership, allowing easy access to and appreciation of the landscape.

- 2.10.3 The only structure inside the area is an ornate bandstand in Hilly Fields Park. Standing close to the southern side of the Turkey Brook, and surrounded by neatly trimmed lawns, it forms the principal landmark in the park. There are, however, three buildings on Cook's Hill Road which forms the western half of the southern boundary of the area. Two houses at the west end are of no architectural or historic interest – one has photo-voltaic equipment installed on a side roof. (Opposite, but outside the Conservation area, is a charming thatched cottage.) At the east end of the road is a works depot, built of brick under a tiled roof. The building makes a contribution to the area but its security fence and health and safety signs are inappropriate and obtrusive.



Figure 15: Turkey Brook



Figure 16: View to bandstand



Figure 17: Trees in south east corner of Hilly Fields

- 2.10.4 The character of this part of the area changes dramatically at its extreme western end, where it is dominated by the Rendlesham viaduct (built between 1906 and 1910), carrying the railway line to Stevenage over the Turkey Brook. The viaduct is a robust structure of fourteen arches constructed in blue engineering brick. On the north side of the brook, a piece of open land has recently been transformed into a cemetery. In contrast to the surrounding area, the cemetery is overwhelmingly formal in its character, with straight tarmac access roads and tightly packed graves in regular rows marching up the hillside, set in neatly trimmed grass. Most gravestones are simple slabs of highly polished black marble.

The northern fringe

- 2.10.5 A wholly rural landscape is to be found to the north of Clay Hill, where a patchwork of fields, interspersed with a belt of woodland around South Lodge, occupies the gradually falling terrain.

Problems and pressures

- 2.10.6 Overall, the designated area retains evidence of many layers of historic evolution. Most buildings are in good condition, retaining many of their original features, and the rural nature of the area remains largely unspoilt.
- 2.10.7 Unfortunately, over the course of the later 20th century, there has been a gradual trend towards in-fill development and suburbanisation that is now beginning to erode the character of the area. The principal manifestations of this are:
- i) The building of additional dwellings in existing gardens and the introduction of suburban building types – Several recent semi-detached houses and bungalows that do not relate well to the surrounding countryside and inappropriately-designed extensions are harming the character of the area.
 - ii) The changing pattern of land use – The decline of agriculture in the area has inevitably diminished its rural character. Alternative uses, including paddocks for horses and playing fields, preserve the openness of the land. However, some development associated with these uses, particularly inappropriately designed or sited stables, most notably the White House, are damaging to the area's rural atmosphere.
 - iii) The introduction of suburban-style boundaries - Various owners have replaced the high walls, hedges and fences that make such a strong contribution to the appearance of the area with walls of poor quality modern brickwork, or rendered walls surmounted with railings of thin gauge steel. This is most noticeable in front of Kingswood House, where the brightly coloured rendered and tile-capped boundary wall is out of keeping with the muted colours and textures of the adjoining walls and hedges.

- iv) A small redbrick gate lodge adjacent to Kingswood House is in a derelict condition and action needs to be taken very soon to secure its future.
- v) A section of wall in Clay Hill between Kingswood and the Fallow Buck has collapsed and is in need of repair.
- vi) The replacement of front gardens with hard-standing for cars - Several, generally more modern, houses set in smaller plots have had a large part, or all, of their front gardens converted into driveways. Additionally, large areas of the curtilage of several older properties in commercial use, particularly Bramley House and the Fallow Buck Inn, have been converted into car parks. Neither type of development complements the rural character of the area.
- vii) The loss of architectural details - Most properties retain a large proportion of their original features and remain attractive buildings. However, a significant number have lost at least one key feature, including original timber sash and casement windows, panelled doors, and clay tile and slate roof coverings. Burglar alarms and satellite dishes have been fixed to the elevations of a number of the properties. Whilst these changes do not wholly negate the contribution that these buildings make to the character of the area, it does damage their appearance and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character. This is particularly noticeably at 1-12 St. John's Terrace, which contrast poorly with nos.13-21, better preserved houses of identical design.
- viii) The painting, rendering and cladding of façades - High quality brickwork is a characteristic of many of the buildings in the Conservation Area. However, some exteriors (mainly in St John's Terrace) originally intended to be in exposed brickwork have been painted, rendered or covered in cladding. This obscures architectural details, sometimes compromising the unified appearance of a group of properties.
- ix) There is a risk that the two public houses, which are the only commercial 'facilities' in the area, might not remain in business and could be converted into residential use, possibly with adjoining development. Public houses may be regarded as "community facilities" under Draft DMD DM17 and thus protected from change to a non-community use.

2.10.8 Many of these negative changes are not necessarily permanent. The appearance of several sites would be significantly enhanced by relatively simple measures, such as the reinstatement of original details and the introduction of more sympathetic boundary treatments.

2.11 The public realm

2.11.1 The public realm makes an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, often reinforcing its rural nature. The key elements can be summarised as follows:

- Roads and footways – Tarmac is generally used for road surfacing apart from Flash Lane and St. Johns Terrace, which are surfaced in gravel. Outside the urban fringe, footways are confined to Theobalds Park Road and Clay Hill, where they are surfaced in tarmac and limited to the south side of the carriageway. Within the urban fringe, footways line both sides of the road and are surfaced with concrete paviers. Curbs are of granite.
- A new facility – the ‘Hilly Fields Park Greenway’ – was begun in January 2013. It will convert existing tarmac-covered paths to a bound gravel finish and will provide a "shared use" cycle track and pedestrian way. While this should encourage greater use of the park and the gravel will be more pleasing to the eye than tarmac, it means that the park will have two types of surface treatment, that the upgraded paths will be twice the width of the existing and that an entirely new stretch of hard surface will be formed alongside the brook in the eastern half of the park.
- Signage and road markings – These are both kept to a minimum. Road markings are limited to carriageway markings in Clay Hill and junction markings. Signage is minimal and follows standard patterns.
- Street furniture – In the main, this is simple and utilitarian, consisting of steel lamp standards and telegraph poles. A number of individual elements enliven the street scene. These are grouped in two clusters; the first, around the Fallow Buck Inn, which includes a memorial stone drinking trough outside St. John’s Church¹⁹ and a prominent traditional pub sign. The second, in the urban fringe, includes a listed K6 telephone call box at the junction of Browning Road and Clay Hill and a traditional pillar box at the junction of Morley Hill and Clay Hill.
- Street greenery – All the principal roads outside the urban fringe are lined with high hedges, interspersed with trees. Common species include sycamore, beech, holly, laurel, elm and hawthorn. These are generally planted on private land bordering the road.

¹⁹ Donated to the Drinking Fountain Association in 1992 in memory of Mr and Mrs Leslie Everett by their family.



Figure 18: Lych gate and memorial drinking fountain, St John's Church

3 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1.1 The five key factors that give the Clay Hill Conservation Area its special character can be summarised as follows:

- *The landform and setting* – The distinctive land form, especially the marked ridge running along the centre of the Conservation Area and the valley formed by the Turkey Brook, define both the settlement pattern and the principal views in and out of the area.

- *The historic landscape* – The former mixture of royal and private parkland and scattered road-side settlement continues to influence the modern-day settlement pattern, and underlies much of the current layout and appearance of the area.
- *The largely rural nature of the area* - The dispersed buildings, large amount of open land and attractive boundary and highway treatments are key factors that contribute to the rural character of the area. This is reinforced by the glimpses out that link the Conservation Area with the wider rural landscape to the north.
- *A large number of high quality buildings* – The area contains good examples of buildings ranging from the 17th to the 19th centuries, all of which are attractive structures in their own right. They also illustrate the development of the area over four hundred years, as well as changing architectural fashions and the changing pattern of land use, from roadside inns in the early 18th century to country villas and their ancillary buildings in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and artisan housing in the late 19th century.
- *Good clusters of buildings or landmark buildings that form important elements in the landscape* – The group formed by St. John's Church and the Fallow Buck Inn and the Rose and Crown are particularly important in providing focal points that add interest to the rural landscape. The strong frontage formed by Little Pipers and The Firs at the eastern entrance to the Conservation Area provides a strong gateway, with a marked change in character from the surrounding area.

4 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

4.1.1 In general, the area is in good physical condition, with current designations and policies ensuring that many aspects of rural character of the area are protected. However, as already described, several issues appear to threaten the character of the area, or will need future consideration:

- *The introduction of suburban-style boundary treatments* - This tends to suburbanise the appearance of these properties and is at odds with the character of the area.
- *Loss of original details* – This has damaged the appearance of several properties and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character.
- *The painting or rendering of façades* – Again, this has damaged the appearance of several properties, to the detriment of the area as a whole.
- *The need for the care and management of trees* – As the distinctive character of the Conservation Area depends so greatly on the presence of established greenery, this will need careful management. It will be essential to ensure that woodland and hedgerows are allowed to thrive and regenerate and that specimen trees are replaced with an appropriate

species before the end of their lives. The Council has adopted a Borough-wide tree management strategy which takes into account the important role played by specific species and specimens that make a positive contribution to the character of individual areas.

- *The need for appropriate highways maintenance* – At present, the area benefits from appropriate surfacing on highways and footpaths, sympathetic road signage and the absence of street clutter. This combination of factors makes a significant contribution to the rural appearance of the Conservation Area and it is important that the future management and maintenance of the public realm takes into account the special character of the area.
- *Pressure for infill development* – The building of additional houses in existing gardens is especially harmful to the character of the area.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND CONTACT DETAILS

5.1 Bibliography

The following reference works were used in the preparation of this appraisal:

Baker T (ed) *Victoria County History of Middlesex V*. (OUP 1976)

Pam, D. *A History of Enfield I*. (Butler and Tanner, Frome 1990)

Pam, D. *A History of Enfield II*. (Enfield Preservation Society 1992)

Pevsner N & Cherry B *The Buildings of England, London 4: North*, (Penguin, London 1998)

Reference is also made to the following legislation and national and local policy guidance:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Replacement Appendix D to Department of Environment Circular 9/95 (November 2010)

English Heritage PPS 5 Practice Guide (2010)

English Heritage *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation Appraisal and Management* (2011)

The Enfield Plan: Core Strategy (adopted 2010)

The Enfield Plan: Draft Development Management Document (2012)

Enfield Unitary Development Plan (1994) (saved policies to be replaced when DMD is adopted)

5.2 Contact details:

Enfield Council
Strategic Planning & Design,
Regeneration and Environment,

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Enfield
EN1 3XE

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Listed buildings

Clay Hill, north side:

The Firs	Grade II (GV)
Little Pipers	Grade II (GV)
Bramley House	Grade II

The Rose and Crown public house	Grade II
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Clay Hill, south side:

K6 telephone box <i>at junction with Browning Road</i>	Grade II
Clay Hill Lodge	Grade II
The Fallow Buck Inn	Grade II
Church of St John the Baptist	Grade II

Beggars Hollow

South Lodge (Whitewebbs Park)	Grade II
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6.2 Locally listed buildings

Forecourt wall to Bramley House and
attached stable building to west
Kingswood

6.3 Sites of nature conservation importance

The following designations are included in the LBE *Enfield Sites Importance for Nature Conservation* Citations (March 2013)

Hilly Fields Country Park

Grade: Metropolitan Reference: M141

Grid reference: 531990, 198570

Size: 34.4 hectares

Access: Free public access to the majority of the site

Main habitats: Broadleaved woodland, acid grassland, lowland meadow, rivers and stream, veteran trees, native hedgerows

Citation

Hilly Fields is a large Country Park, and has historically been farmland used for grazing. The largest area of woodland within the Country Park is well-structured and undisturbed with a diverse ground flora such as lady-fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), soft shield-fern (*Polystichum setiferum*), heath groundsel (*Senecio sylvestris*) and creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*), all of which are notable in London. Where it passes through the site, the Turkey Brook is lined by old pedunculate oaks (*Quercus robur*) and other trees. Large areas of unimproved grassland and acid grassland occur, divided by native hedgerows. These meadows contain a good range of plants including heath woodrush (*Luzula multiflora*), devil's-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), musk-mallow (*Malva moschata*) and harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), which are uncommon in London, along with cuckoo flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), sheep's-sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*), pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*). The last three of these are scarce in Enfield. Clay Hill Pasture is part of a horse-grazed field containing typical unimproved London Clay grassland. The rich meadow community includes substantial populations of devil's-bit scabious, harebell, betony (*Stachys officinalis*), musk-mallow and pepper-saxifrage (*Silene silaus*). The invertebrate fauna includes the small heath and common blue butterflies.

6.4 Criteria for assessing unlisted elements

(From English Heritage's guidance *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011))

'Check list to identify elements in a conservation area which may contribute to the special interest.

A positive response to one or more of the following may indicate that a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution provided that its historic form and values have not been eroded.

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?

- Is it associated with a designed landscape eg a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

Appraisal review undertaken by James Edgar; maps prepared by Richard Peats