



"Iona", South Road

**CHORLEYWOOD STATION ESTATE CONSERVATION AREA  
THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

**NOVEMBER 2005**

## CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
2.0	PLANNING HISTORY	6
3.0	HISTORY	8
4.0	CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA	10
	Shire Lane	13
	Haddon Road	13
	Hillside Road	13
	South Road	13
	Berks Hill	14
	Quickley Lane	14
5.0	AUDIT	15
	Listed buildings	15
	Locally Listed Buildings	15
	Elements of streetscape interest and views	15
	Detractors	15
	Opportunity Sites	16
6.0	CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW	17
7.0	SUMMARY	17
8.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	18

## HISTORIC MAPS

- Map 1: Extract from 1864 Ordnance Survey Map
- Map 3: Extract from 1894-96 Ordnance Survey Map
- Map 4: Extract from 1915 Ordnance Survey Map
- Map 5: Extract from 1935 Ordnance Survey Map
- Map 6: Extract from 1955 Ordnance Survey Map

Appendix 1, Architectural Survey

Appendix 2, List Descriptions



Fine view towards Haddon Road from Hillside Road across rooftops



## 1.0 Introduction and Executive Summary

### Executive summary

1.1 Overall the important character in the conservation area is described later in the text and in the Architectural Building Survey. For the purposes of this summary the important characteristics may be noted as following:

- long, steeply pitched roofs;
- “Crows Feet” on the eaves;
- rendered walls with windows set high under eaves;
- occasional mirror decoration on the walls;
- bold chimneys;
- cottage doors with wrought-iron latches;
- decorations with famous Voysey heart motif;
- Porthole windows;
- widespread use of traditional materials including brick, clay, natural slate, cast-iron and timber;
- many detached houses set back behind attractive trees and substantial hedges;
- outstanding topography with houses arranged up and down steep hills;
- many attractive open spaces around detached houses with spectacular views to other parts of the conservation area.



Attractive gap in Haddon Road



- 1.2 Three Rivers District Council has a duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act) to designate as conservation areas any “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” The designation of a conservation area brings additional protection of trees, control over demolition and development as well as a requirement for a decision-maker, in exercising planning powers, to pay “special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area”.
- 1.3 This is reflected in the Three Rivers District Council Local Plan 1996-2011, which reaffirms the tests and considerations set out in PPG 15. Policies C1 relates to development within conservation areas, and C6 relates to demolition in conservation areas.
- 1.4 The Council is additionally required by The 1990 Act to keep conservation areas under review and to formulate and publish from time to time proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

### **Purpose of the Statement**

- 1.5 Government policy guidance, provided in ‘PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment’ (PPG15, 1994) expresses the need for local authorities to assess the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas to assist in setting out planning policy and to inform development control. English Heritage has published guidance on undertaking Conservation Area Assessments (1997) and this appraisal of the Chorleywood Station Estate Conservation Area (“The Area”) has been undertaken in accordance with their advocated approach.
- 1.6 PPG15 sets out a presumption in favour of preserving buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas. In addition the guidance recognises the contribution of traditional surfacing and street furniture to the character of an area.
- 1.7 The aims of this appraisal are therefore to:
  - set out the special architectural and historic interest of the “The Area” and to describe the special character and appearance that it is desirable to preserve or enhance;
  - identify through an audit of the built heritage of the area, buildings and other elements that positively contribute to the character;
  - identify elements and buildings that detract from the character of the area and any sites where an opportunity to enhance the character of an area may exist;
  - examine the existing boundaries of “The Area” and consider the potential for other areas to be included and, if appropriate, where existing areas should be excluded; and
  - identify areas subject to pressure for change that would be adverse to the character and appearance of “The Area” as a result of permitted development and identify any areas where the removal of permitted

development rights would safeguard the essential character and appearance of the area.

- 1.8 It should be noted that the appraisal does not represent an exhaustive record of every building, feature or space within “The Area” and an omission should not be taken to imply that an element is of no interest

## **2.0 Planning History**

- 2.1 The initial designation of the Chorleywood Station Estate Conservation Area was made in 1990.
- 2.2 During a meeting of the District Plan Working Party on the 18th of April 1990 the meeting noted the proposal of Chorleywood Station Estate Conservation Group of local residents that the Station Estate Area be designated as a conservation area. The Working Party invited representatives from that group, the Chiltern Society and the Victorian Society to attend a meeting to discuss the proposal.
- 2.3 The Working party considered this proposal again in their meeting on the 4th of July 1990 and it was agreed.
- 2.4 On the 26th of September 1990, the same Working Party met once more and reported that on the 4th of July, it was agreed that the station estate area of Chorleywood should be designated as a conservation area.



Corner of Shire Lane

2.5 The proposal to designate this area as a conservation area was supported by both the Chiltern society and the Victorian society. Both societies acknowledged the special character and architectural interest of the area. The local ward member, Councillor Trevett supported the proposal to give conservation area status to the area.

2.6 A Letter from the Victorian Society dated 21st of December 1987, says:

*“this is an excellent example of early surviving Hertfordshire Metroland which has retained much of its original character and appearance, despite increasing threats of the insensitive development. Its development at the turn of the century is typified by a variety of good solid houses many of which retain interesting original features..... The area is given a particular significance by the proximity of C. A. Voysey’s own home, Orchard House (1899) and there are echoes of his influence in many of the buildings on the Estate This is exactly the sort of homogeneous, relatively intact suburban area which conservation areas seek to protect, and we trust that you will agree that it merits inclusion within the conservation area.”*



**Haddon Road – view looking south-east towards the back of Elmhurst**



### 3.0 History



Plaque to James Beckley outside the Baptist church

- 3.1 The land that comprises the Chorleywood Station Estate conservation area was bought by James Beckley in 1894. Mr Beckley then divided the land into plots and sold it to local builders. Voysey who lived locally in Orchard House, acted as a consultant to the builders' architects. Arts and Crafts design seen in Voysey houses was undoubtedly an influence and there are many Arts and Crafts features in the individual houses such as steep gables, protruding rafter feet, stained glass and round windows. This fact is noted and commented on later.
- 3.2 Station estate was so called following the advent of the steam railway when steam trains passed through Chorleywood. James Beckley, with considerable foresight, realised the potential of a good quality housing estate adjacent to Chorleywood Railway Station, when the Metropolitan Railway was built in the late 1880s. He was conscious of the fact that many ordinary people who lived and worked in London, might prefer to live in a semi rural environment and commute daily into the City.
- 3.3 The area is bounded on the north by the back of properties in Lower Road. Hole Farm to the west was developed during the Second World War, Quickley Lane to the east and Blacketts Wood to the South. Blacketts Farm is the oldest known Holding in the area dating back to 1239 and was developed in the Sixties as Dove Park. All these different estates are typical of their era and have their own characteristics, but the Chorleywood Station Estate is the oldest and most homogeneous.
- 3.4 19th Century Ordnance Survey maps show that this area was undeveloped until it was bought by James Beckley in 1894.

3.5 Station Estate comprises of 203 houses, only 40 of which have been added at a later date. This means that 80 percent are Victorian/Edwardian houses and therefore worthy of retention.

3.6 Each original house on the estate has a detailed restrictive covenant. The covenant begins by saying:

*“Each purchaser shall when required forthwith make and shall afterwards maintain in good repair substantial close-boarded fences on the land purchased by him next to Road or roads on which the same fronts hand and also at the backs and sides thereof where marked “T” within the boundary on a plan annexed to the particulars of a height of not less than five feet and not exceeding 6 feet at the sides and back and not to exceed 4 feet six inches in front and of such material and design as the vendor’s surveyors shall approve.*

*The line of frontage to the building on the respective lots shall not approach nearer to the respective roads than the line marked “building line” upon the plan except bay windows porches and architectural dressings.....*

*.....All houses to be erected are to be of attractive elevation and are to be substantially built..... Only one detached or semi detached house shall be erected on any one plot and no house to be erected shall be used for or let in tenements or as a flat flats.*

*No building on any plot shall be erected for or used as a shop and no operative machinery shall be fixed or placed on any plot and only private dwelling houses with usual offices and outbuildings shall be erected. The trade of an innkeeper victualler or retailer of wines spirits beer is not be carried out on any plot. No temporary erection or shed of any kind whatever shall be erected or placed upon any plot except temporary sheds or workshops to be used only for the works incidental to and during the erection of some messuage or messuages to be erected on such plot will.”*

3.7 This covenant has been reproduced in full in the appendix. It is an important and very interesting document.

3.8 The Area is well preserved. Most of the original houses have survived.

3.9 The Victorian and Edwardian houses with their large rear gardens give the Estate its unique character.

3.10 Beckley believed in community, and he gave land to the Baptist Movement to enable them to build a church sited centrally in the Station Estate. The design of this Church was influenced by Voysey, who lived locally.

- 3.11 The building has subsequently been listed. The church was opened in 1905. In later years Voysey designed an extension to the Catholic Church in Shire Lane which was also subsequently listed. (see appendix for list description)

#### **4.0 Character and Appearance of the Area**

- 4.1 The character and appearance of an area depends on a variety of factors. Whilst the appearance of an area derives from its physical and visual characteristics (i.e. materials, heights of buildings, types and relationship of built form), character includes other less tangible effects relating to the experience of an area. This may include levels, types of activity and patterns of prevailing land uses. The character of an area may also differ according to the day of the week or time of day.
- 4.2 The assessment of the character and appearance of the area is based on the present day situation. Interest in an area may consequently derive from the combined effect of subsequent developments that replaced the earlier fabric as well from the original remaining buildings and street pattern and open spaces.
- 4.3 There is a presumption to retain buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Buildings considered to be good examples of design have also been judged as making a positive contribution to the character of the area. Detractors are elements of the townscape that are considered to be so significantly out of scale or character with their surroundings that their replacement, with something of a more appropriate scale and massing or detailed architectural treatment would benefit the character and appearance of the area.



Shire Lane, Hill Cottage (part a grade II listed Voysey-designed chapel)



Detractors may also include unsightly gaps in frontages that disrupt the prevailing street pattern. Elements that are neutral broadly conform with the overriding scale, form, materials and elevational characteristics of their context. The integrity and nature of the context are consequently influential in making this judgement.

- 4.4 “The Area” is very hilly and undulating. Topographical features of note include splendid views all round the area and particularly across to Chorleywood Common and the Station. From within “The Area” there are many attractive views across rooftops and along small valleys between neighbouring roads.
- 4.5 “The Area” is characterised by a quite splendid and pleasant mix of both Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Many of these buildings display very attractive original features as outlined in paragraph 4.8. “The Area” is mainly residential with many large and detached houses dominant. This is an intrinsic part of its character.
- 4.6 Except for the 2 buildings already listed, it is unlikely that any others would be added to the List. However, the Station Estate as a whole is a very good example of the Victorian/Edwardian era planned development. No two houses are alike and are rich in features of the time including timber vertically sliding sash windows, stained-glass windows and other architectural decoration.
- 4.7 This is, of course, archetypal “Betjeman country” and his eulogies on Metro land and its rolling hills, leafy streets, etc. are clear.
- 4.8 As was mentioned earlier Voysey designed and lived in Orchard House. This provided some design inspiration for other houses in Chorleywood Station Estate:
- long, steeply pitched roofs;
  - “Crows Feet” on the eaves;
  - rendered walls with windows set high under eaves;
  - occasional mirror decoration on the walls;
  - bold chimneys;
  - cottage doors with wrought-iron latches;
  - decorations with famous Voysey heart motif;
  - Porthole windows;
  - widespread use of traditional materials including clay, cast-iron and timber.
- 4.9 There are also many open spaces and gaps of great importance throughout “The Area”. Many of these important open spaces and gaps are discussed below and shown on photographs. Many gaps and open spaces are also highlighted on the map. Paragraph 1.8 should be noted.

## **Sub-Areas**

- 4.10 Roads within “The Area” have been examined individually and carefully.

4.12 The following sub-areas have been identified and are shown on Plan 5: Sub-Areas. Their character and appearance are defined in detail in the subsequent text. The sub-areas are:

1. 'Shire Lane';
2. 'Haddon Road';
3. 'Hillside Road';
4. 'South Road';
5. 'Berks Hill'.
6. 'Quickley Lane'



Trees the along Shire Lane (part of the extended Bounary as of November 2005)

### **Sub-Area 1: Shire Lane:**

- 4.13 Standing on the corner by The Rest, the various elements that characterise the Conservation Area are clear. The prominent railway and many important views can be seen.
- 4.14 Both up and down Shire Lane one is aware of substantial planting and this is very much part of the character of this part of the conservation area. Please see photographs of this for evidence.
- 4.15 Shire Lane is a busy road on the boundary of the Conservation Area and it this does reflect that character. The importance of topography spoken about earlier is very clear as one walks up and down Shire Lane.
- 4.16 An examination of individual houses along Shire Lane appears in Appendix 1.

### **Sub-Area 2: Haddon Road**

- 4.17 Overall Haddon Road has a magnificent spacious impression.
- 4.18 An examination of individual houses along Haddon Road appears in Appendix 1.

### **Sub-Area 3: Hillside Road**

- 4.19 Hillside Road is made up of a number of particularly fine open spaces. Notable amongst these include areas of open space around the Hensolls, Corner Cottage and Wincott.
- 4.20 Along Hillside Road there are many splendid views across rooftops.
- 4.21 The sloping nature of the conservation area is clearly seen along Hillside Road.
- 4.22 There are some splendid views across towards Haddon Road.
- 4.23 For a detailed description of each building see Appendix 1.

### **Sub-Area 4: South Road**

- 4.24 As with Berks Hill, South Road runs up a steep gradient.
- 4.25 There are many original large and detached houses along South Road. Many of these are set in substantial plots and behind substantial planting
- 4.29 For descriptions of individual houses please see appendix 1.

### **Sub-Area 5: Berks Hill**

- 4.30 Overall, Berks Hill has some very fine views down towards Chorleywood Station and across to Chorleywood Common. The houses are again, in the main detached and set on large plots. There are many attractive fences and other established boundary features fronting the Road. As with the other roads in the conservation area the steep hills and the views that emerge from them are integral to the special-interest.
- 4.31 Important traditional materials in this road include: clay tiles, natural slate tiles, applied timber framing, rough-cast, timber windows, prominent chimneys, some Bull-eyes windows and some tile-hanging and other Arts and Crafts details.
- 4.32 The houses are examined individually in appendix 1.



## Sub-Area 6: Quickley Lane

- 4.33 Quickley Lane borders the East boundary of conservation area. There are many fine views north west over towards Berks Hill.
- 4.34 There are also many fine trees along the south side of Quickley Lane. It is suggested that the boundary of the conservation area is amended to include these trees (see paragraph 6.17).
- 4.35 Quickley Lane has many fine houses and these have been individually in examined in the Architectural Building Survey.
- 4.36 Quickley Lane also contains many fine open spaces and gaps and especially towards the Lower Road end has a very rural feel of a small lane bounded by a steep bank.



Hillside Free Church And Hall, Hillside Road

## 5.0 Audit

- 5.1 An audit of the fabric of the Chorleywood Station Estate Conservation Area has been undertaken to identify listed buildings, unlisted buildings that contribute to the area's character and appearance, elements of streetscape interest and buildings and other elements that detract from its character and appearance.
- 5.2 2 buildings in the Conservation Area are on the **Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.**
- 5.3 **Hillside Free Church And Hall, Hillside Road.** This building dates from 1905 and was extended in 1934. For a full list description please consult the appendix. It is grade II listed.

- 5.4 **Roman Catholic Church of St. John Fisher, Shire Lane.** This house and Chapel dates to 1890. It was extended in c.1905 by Voysey. For a full list description please consult the appendix. It is grade II listed.
- 5.5 **Locally Listed Buildings.** In addition to the buildings that are on the statutory list, there are a large number of individual buildings and groups of buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst some of these buildings may have experienced minor alterations over the years, they contribute as part of a group. The assessment of whether a building makes a positive contribution to the special architectural and historic interest of a conservation area is based on guidance provided in English Heritage's publication 'Conservation Area Appraisals'. Buildings worthy of being included on a "local list" have been identified in appendix 1.
- 5.6 **Elements of streetscape interest and important views.** The character and the appearance of the Conservation Area are not solely a function of its buildings. There are many important views throughout the conservation area.
- 5.7 Elements within the public realm, such as original pavement materials, boundary walls, signage and vegetation contribute greatly to the area's quality, character and appearance. The following elements of the area's streetscape are considered to be of interest:
- mature hedges in front of many houses;
  - attractive Victorian and Edwardian architectural details such as walls
- 5.8 Important views include looking north along Shire Lane and on the boundary with Shire Lane and Lower Road looking east.
- 5.9 **The Detractors.** Inevitably there are buildings that detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This may be due to a building's scale, materials, relationship to the street or due to the impact of alterations and extensions. There are also structures and elements of streetscape (e.g. visual clutter from excessive signage or advertisements) that impinge on the character and quality of the Conservation Area.
- 5.10 **Buildings which do not contribute to the character of the conservation area** have been considered in the Architectural Survey.
- 5.11 **Yellow lines and overly large parking signs also detract.**
- 5.12 **Opportunity Sites.** There are a number of modern buildings which might benefit from redevelopment. This information has been indicated in the architectural survey.
- 5.13 On the whole, all open spaces contribute positively to the conservation area. There is however a rather large public car park, known as "The Ferry Car Park", just off Lower Road which does contain a large area of fairly unattractive tarmac. This car park also contains graffiti and some rather unattractive lights and ugly motorway-style crash barriers which delineate the

changing levels. A sense of open space in this car park is important to maintain as a source of public open space.



“The Ferry Car Park” off Lower Road

- 5.13 The primary cause of change to the character and appearance of residential streets has been incremental changes to domestic properties. Much of the development that has occurred does not, however, fall within the remit of planning control. The main issues are set out below. An “Article 4(2) Direction has therefore been applied to this Conservation Area. Please see additional notes for details.
- 5.14 **Original features:** There is evidence across the Conservation Area of the loss of original and traditional features.
- 5.15 **Painting:** The rendering and painting of brickwork has occurred in a number of areas within the Conservation Area. This has had a detrimental effect on the integrity and consistency of frontages in a number of locations.
- 5.16 **Hardstandings:** The introduction of hardstanding within the front gardens of properties to enable parking (where space allows) has led to the loss of front garden walls and a reduction in the amount of vegetation on the frontage in a number of locations. On the whole, this is unacceptable. The effect is to disrupt the visual continuity and enclosure of the frontage. This erodes the character and appearance of the street. This now requires planning permission under The Article 4 (2).

## 6.0 Conservation Area Boundary review.

6.1 There are two areas which might be considered for a boundary review and inclusion within the conservation area:

- i. **Firstly**, is the substantial bank of trees that runs along the middle of Shire Lane (see photograph). It has been mentioned above that this bank of trees and shrubs contribute positively to the special character and appearance of the conservation area and might therefore be included within "The Area".
- ii. **Secondly**, in the same vein, the substantial bank of trees that runs along the South side of Quickly Lane.

6.2 I have included these options on the enclosed map.

## 7.0 Summary

7.1 The Station Estate Conservaion Area is an important planned development. Of the original houses many remain.

7.2 The fact that the 19th Century Ordnance Survey maps show that this area was undeveloped until it was bought by James Beckley in 1894 is of great importance as it underlines that this was a planned estate on completely undeveloped land.

7.3 The interesting topographical nature of this Conservation Area is very interesting and important and does mean that seemingly quite insignificant views can be very important in this Area.

7.4 There is a widespread and overwhelming use of traditional and high quality materials and this is important.

7.5 All open gaps and spaces whether mentioned or not are important.

7.6 Many of the houses are large and detached, set on large plots and often behind substantial hedges and planting. Density of dwellings per hectare is low.

7.7 There are many important views throughout the Conservation Area which at the time of writing could not, for technical reasons, be put on the digital map. Please refer to views in any Development Control decisions.



## 8.0 Bibliography

D.O.E. (1994) 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment', London: HMSO.  
English Heritage (1995) 'Conservation Area Practice', London: English Heritage  
English Heritage (1997) 'Conservation Area Appraisals', London: English Heritage

### Statutory Instruments

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, London: HMSO.  
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, Statutory Instrument 1995 No. 418, London: HMSO.  
The Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 Statutory Instrument 1988 No. 1813, London: HMSO.