

## **Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Conservation Area**

The Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Conservation Area was designated in 1978 with a view to preserving and enhancing the area's semi-rural character and its integral historic qualities. Much of the area's character has developed from the layout of vernacular agricultural buildings and Tudor style estate properties. The essence of the area is also derived from open landscapes, which provide long views out over Harrow and as such help to create a popular outdoor retreat, easily accessible from London.

The conservation area is made up of two distinct character areas – Grimsdyke Estate and Brookshill Drive. However, the two are inherently linked by a setting of natural beauty, a similar countryside feel, and limited modern development. They are historically divided by Old Redding, which today passes through the two character areas linking Oxhey Lane with Brookshill High Road.

### **Map 1. Showing Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Conservation Area Character Areas**

The purpose of this appraisal is to provide a clear analysis of the architectural importance, character and appearance of the area, which will help form the basis for making sustainable decisions about the future of the area. The appraisal is linked to the Management Strategy for the conservation area, which identifies opportunities for enhancement along with policies to protect the area's character. Due to the geographical and characteristic differences of each area, for the purpose of this document, the Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Estate areas will be looked at in two separate character areas as shown on the map above.

### **Planning Policy Context**

This appraisal and management strategy are set within the broader context of conservation area policy guidance for Harrow contained within the Harrow UDP, the emerging LDF and the forthcoming Harrow Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document. It is also set within national policy guidance provided by – PPG15 and the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. It is important to note that no appraisal can be completely comprehensive and that the omission of a particular building, feature or open space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

### **Character Analysis Of The Conservation Area**

The Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Conservation Area lies within a diagonally shaped boundary. The northern area of Grimsdyke is sandwiched between Harrow Weald Common land and the southern area is largely bounded by fields and a small portion, to the south-west, is bounded by 20<sup>th</sup> century development.

### **Grimsdyke Estate**

The key characteristics which help to form the Grimsdyke Estate area are: the planned form of the estate's integral buildings; the relationship and architectural qualities of these; and the intimate character derived from the lush landscaping and neighbouring woodland.

Grimsdyke Estate backs onto open fields and is surrounded by woodland. A secluded atmosphere within dense landscaped and wooded environs attracts many visitors. Visitors are guided through undulating pathways, which curve throughout Harrow Weald Common's forest floor, some of which deliberately follow the linear earthwork, Grim's Ditch. This Scheduled Ancient Monument, known as *Grim's Ditch* or *Grim's Dyke* bounds the north eastern part of the Grimsdyke Estate area, framing this section of the conservation area.

Set in extensive grounds, the Grimsdyke Estate takes its name from the ancient earthwork and was developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has suffered little change with very few new developments, which has helped the continuation of an intimate and hidden atmosphere. Tree clearings and spaces between clusters of estate buildings provide surprising glimpses of views out over Harrow, which offer a pleasant contrast to the feeling of enclosure. Narrow winding tarmac roads create routes between occasional dwellings, most of which were built to serve the grand estate house, which is now a hotel. The hotel is popular with visitors interested in Gilbert and Sullivan, and for special days such as wedding fairs.

South Lodge abuts Old Redding and marks the estate entrance; through an elaborately decorated cast iron gate with brick piers framing either side, this is suggestive of the intended grandeur when the estate was first laid out. The single road leading to the principal house is famously lined with rhododendrons, which create a tunnelling effect. The estate road curves up to a fork, giving way to a road leading to Grimsdyke House and another, which leads to a cluster of ancillary buildings. The planned lay out of estate buildings is important to the character of the area and as such those buildings, which are historically part of the original estate plan, are considered to be curtilage-listed as shown on the map below. The integral estate buildings are all built in a Tudor style, although these are subservient in scale and detail to the main house.

Map 2. Listed Buildings, Locally Listed Buildings and those considered as Curtilage-Listed Buildings
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### **Brookshill Drive**

The key characteristics of the Brookshill Drive character area are: the rural vernacular, agricultural buildings and their context within a farmyard layout, the spaces between these, as well as the feeling of openness and the area's semi-rural atmosphere.



Surrounding Views

Situated atop a 400ft contour, the Brookshill Drive area is characterised by surrounding fields and woodland. The land lies to the south and east of Harrow Weald Common. *Weald* meaning wood (Saxon) indicates the nature of the Common, which was thickly treed. The immediate area offers clear views, looking south over Harrow and west towards London. Pleasant vistas are created in the spaces between clusters of agricultural buildings or through archways built into the vernacular architecture. Cope Farm can be reached by a single track, leading south from Old Redding. The road was originally a field boundary and today narrows and turns corners to provide groups of viewpoints and glimpses of barns and cottages. The single road is rough and potholed, and provides a thoroughfare between two fields bounded by timber fencing on either side. Grass verges covered in brambles furnish a particularly rural feel.

### Map 3. Area Views and Vistas

There are changing levels of topography throughout the area, each level providing its own interesting aspect. The land falls away on approach to the farm providing uninterrupted views. The limited housing within the Brookshill Drive area importantly helps to protect this sense of openness.

The area's historic architectural character is largely derived from vernacular agricultural buildings and domestic Victorian dwellings within a farmyard context. There are two 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings incorporated within the conservation area, which are noticeably modern in comparison, and are therefore considered to be of neutral character.

Brookshill Drive marks the original field boundary to the south, as does the hedgerow of 4 Brookshill Cottages and the northern part of The Hollies' garden wall. The Hollies'

garden wall, in part, forms the western boundary of Portman Hall. The red brick wall, which is approximately 2-2.5 metres in height, includes an interestingly angled gothic style gateway with stone surround and a panelled wooden door. Research indicates that the wall formed part of the garden to 'Brookshill', a large, early Victorian house built by Thomas Blackwell, which was located on the site of Portman Hall, and as such this stretch is included within the conservation area for historic interest.

## **History and Development - Brookshill Drive area**

The conservation area lies on land historically belonging to the Lord of the Manor. Those with farming rights were able to lease acres from his estate. From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Weald woodlands were heavily coppiced by Sir Edward North (the Lord at this time) for fuel and timber. Areas of full-scale clearance also took place from the 17<sup>th</sup> century in order to provide land on which to graze livestock. The area began to develop from woodland into a more arable and livestock economy as a result. Copse Farm, originally Weald Copse Farm, dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and was developed as a result of cleared coppiced woodland, hence its name.

The farm at Brookshill, which sat next to Copse Farm, developed later during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when farming began to intensify within the area. A number of the buildings sited in this location were built from local resources. Clays can be found in the north of the area and were used in the making of bricks from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards and as such the site is also historically linked to brick making. The owners of Brookshill were also in possession of Brick Kilns, which were sited to the north of Copse Farm, and were initially built and run by the Bodimeade family in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but taken over and developed by the Blackwell family during later 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

During the Blackwell's ownership, both father and son, Samuel and Charles, made an impact on the landscape with new architecture. A collection of small semi-detached cottages were built for brick factory workers in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, which became known collectively as the 'City' and was to refer to all cottages on both sides of Old Redding, formally Wealdwood Road. By 1831 there were fourteen cottages inhabited by 120 people, however by the mid 1960s, the majority of the City Cottages had been demolished, leaving only numbers 1&2, 3&4, 8,9&10 and the City Cottage on the south side of Old Redding. Numbers 1&2 and 8,9&10 have since been demolished and 3&4 have amalgamated into one house. Charles Blackwell later built a number of decorative buildings, including Farm Cottage, Dairy Cottage, and Bridle Cottages to surround Copse Farm in c1890, all of which remain.

Old photograph of the City

The neighbouring farms tended to be linked by a common owner, and leased as separate concerns, and as such did not amalgamate fully until 1939, when they were taken over and run by Suzanne's Riding Stables. A number of structures were built at this time to enable the schooling of horses and to provide additional stabling and tack facilities. Some of the buildings are large and industrial in style for indoor schooling. As

recent agricultural buildings, they are characteristic to the area, however as they detract from the historic layout there is opportunity for enhancement here.

The farms were run as riding stables and livery until they recently shut down and have since been unoccupied. Many of these buildings have become ramshackle and have fallen into disrepair whilst awaiting an appropriate new use.

### **The Architectural Character Of Brookshill Drive and Copse Farm**

The historically and architecturally significant buildings relate directly to the agricultural industry. Many of these are either locally or statutorily listed as shown on the previous map. Bridle Cottages were originally built as two cottages to serve Copse Farm, and are now one house and grade II listed. Copse Farmhouse and Copse Farm Barn (and adjoining stables) are both locally listed and are the oldest buildings within the conservation area. Dairy Cottage, Farm Cottage and the adjoining and surrounding stables are locally listed as a group. The spaces created between the buildings are as important as the buildings themselves and as such the group value is significant.

Built to house farm labourers and brick kiln workers, the buildings have a visual and social relationship with the farmsteads. The courtyard and horseshoe shape layout of the buildings are integral to the area. The clusters of well-constructed vernacular buildings are similar in scale, style and materials, which gives the area a cohesive character. The detailing is characteristic of Victorian domestic architecture, particularly in terms of the chimney-stacks and barge-boarding. Small paned windows, pitched tiled roofs and timber doors are also typical features.



Brookshill Farm Buildings

On entering the farm from Old Redding, the road slowly meanders round to reveal four two-storey semi-detached late 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages, **Brookshill Cottages**. The first two houses have been rendered white giving them quite a different appearance on first glance to that of the neighbouring plain brick. However, much of the remaining detailing is very similar. The red brick houses are in an Arts and Crafts style with brick decorative banding, and brick edge detailing surrounding windows and doors. Roofscape glimpses of pitched roofs, interestingly hip-bevelled features on gabled elevations and tall chimney-stacks can be seen throughout the area. Many of the facades are concealed behind high hedgerows, which help to provide an intimate character.



The roofscape of Brookshill Drive

Brookshill Cottages are situated opposite **Copse Farmhouse**. The building has developed from early 18<sup>th</sup> century origins and was re-faced in brick during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and given Victorian domestic detailing at this time. It is a key building within the conservation area. It was designed as the principal house within the farmstead, facing in towards the courtyard and as such any future development of the site should respect this historic detail and be subservient in scale and detailing.



Copse Farmhouse

The farmyard also contains **Copse Farm Barn**, which is an 18<sup>th</sup> century three bay timber-framed barn, with queen posts and strutted tie beam. Its function was originally one of storing and threshing grain. The grain was threshed in the central bay with the use of wooden flails, which would eliminate unwanted chaff. The doors at either side of the barn could be opened to create a through draft to sweep any remaining chaff away. Like other threshing barns of this kind, Copse Farm Barn is positioned in the direction of the prevailing wind and as such the building faces a south-westerly direction and is adjacent to the road. The barn is unoccupied and is falling into poor repair. Any new uses should respect the agricultural usage of the building and therefore limit any intervention which may endanger its agricultural form or open space within.



Copse Farm Barn

Both the Farmhouse and Copse Farm Barn are set within a grouping of agricultural buildings, which began as farmyard spaces, and then were developed in response to the needs of the industry. Although the additional 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings and lean-to structures are of no particular architectural merit, their ramshackle appearance does add to the area's character. Any demolition or infilling of the site would disrupt the harmony and relationship between buildings and therefore should not be permitted unless special circumstances arise and can be appropriately justified.

Aspects of the farmyard at Brookshill can be seen as the road turns the corner. Brookshill Farm and Weald Copse Farm were historically both very small and run by tenant farmers. A small number of buildings are incorporated within each farm layout and have remained virtually unchanged since they were built. Those at Brookshill have been designed in a horseshoe shape, which is a common feature of farmsteads throughout the UK. The surrounding land is of great scenic importance and provides the farmstead with a rural context and as such the open character of the area is a treasured feature. Vistas are created through archways within the stable architecture, and via gaps in the formation of buildings. Wide views are provided over Harrow as the land falls away, and long views can be seen over the stable roofs at Brookshill.

Brookshill Farm includes the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, **Dairy Cottage and Farm Cottage**. The semi-detached dwelling was built in a Victorian rural vernacular style, which complements the smaller Bridle Cottages sited opposite and dates from a similar period, and was built by the same family. Dairy Cottage sits on the corner of the farmstead and as such its significant location and locally historic value makes it a fundamental part of the conservation area.



Samuel John Blackwell built **Bridle Cottages** in 1890. Constructed from Blackwell Kiln brick, the cottages were built by local bricklayers apprentices, as a testing ground for their techniques. Therefore, unusual examples of tuck pointing, face bedded bricks and alternate bands of yellow and red stock brick can be seen to decorate. The use of decorative and coloured tiles has also been incorporated into the roof design.



Bridle Cottages

The properties, which do not relate to the farms, tend to be small-scale 20<sup>th</sup> century residential buildings. These are laid out in a linear pattern on either side of Brookshill Drive and as such significantly differ in layout. Although these are sited in a more urban formation, the architectural qualities of the buildings tend to reinforce the semi-rural nature of the area. Although no uniform architecture exists, they are largely of an Arts and Crafts style and thus helps to define the area's character. The dwellings tend to be one and a half to two-storeys in height, with simple angles, steep pitched roofs and brick edging.

There are nine 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings on Brookshill Drive, the earliest of which were built during the 1930's including, Four Winds, Eastcliff and View. Red Corners, Brookslee, Newlands and Weald are all later post war infill development. Only The Hollies and Dukes are incorporated within the conservation area, and are included because they replace Liberty Hall, a former Victorian building built by the Blackwell family and demolished in the 1980s. Although this infill development is of no greater architectural merit than the remaining 20<sup>th</sup> century development on Brookshill Drive, these are included because they were built after the conservation area boundary was decided, and as such are to be considered as neutral in terms of character.

#### Map 4. Map showing Building Dates

Due to the conservation area's semi-rural nature, the remaining houses are spread out. **The City Cottages** link the northern part of the conservation area with the southern part: The City sits to the south of Old Redding, and the once semi-detached numbers 3&4 sit almost diagonally opposite to the north of Old Redding.

Number 3&4 are set back from Old Redding within extensive mature gardens that contribute to the semi-rural character of the conservation area. 'T' shaped, with a moulded brick stringcourse, decorative bargeboards and large prominent chimneystacks to the front and east elevations, these are constructed in red brick, with a timber framed pitched roof and covered with clay tiles. There is pedestrian access to the front of the properties through the woodland trail, and as such a new vehicular access from Grimsdyke Estate Road was granted planning permission in 1986 and is neatly tucked away behind South Lodge, helping to preserve the area's countryside character.

**The Case Is Altered Public House** was originally a cottage and sits on Old Redding. It is a simple vernacular building, which is one of three Public Houses within the West Middlesex area that share the same obscure name. The pub originally catered for the rural population and the City brick workers, but now caters for the many walkers and day-trippers to this part of Harrow. Although many theories exist over the name, it is thought this could be a corruption of the Spanish term *casa alta*, meaning the high house or *Casa del Saltar*, the dancing house. The ground falls away from the garden at the property's rear, giving way to fabulous views out over Harrow.



The Case Is Altered Public House

#### Boundary Treatment and Front Gardens

Central to the character of the conservation area, the farmyards provide a semi-rural essence and countryside feel. The ground covering of each courtyard is a mixture of semi-hard and soft landscaping, with lush field boundaries.

Some of the 20<sup>th</sup> century properties on Brookshill Drive have hardstanding driveways, which are not only too harsh for the semi-rural location but are also detrimental to the built fabric and help cause erosion of the brick, and as such should be avoided. Gravel is a good alternative and allows water to percolate freely through the ground rather than being absorbed into the built fabric. Therefore, ideally hard surfaces would be replaced with either soft landscaping or gravel drives, which is more fitting to the character of the area and allows the natural materials to breathe appropriately.

Many houses are fronted by mature hedgerows and bounded by gates. These tend to be 5 bar timber gates, the natural material and design of which preserves the character of the area.

### **Activity and Uses**

The farmyard architecture and built structures at Brookshill and Copse Farm have developed in response to the changing needs of the agriculture industry. The site's form and structure were added to, to provide accommodation for horses as well as a schooling indoor and outdoor arena for Riding Stables. Although Dairy Cottage and Copse Farmhouse are occupied, since the former Riding Stables closed, the redundant stable buildings have fallen into disrepair and require an appropriate new use. The best use is the use they were designed for, such as agricultural storage. It is important that they are reused in a sympathetic way, which retains their integral qualities and protects their future as valuable heritage assets.

The redundant buildings within Suzanne's Riding Stables are an acknowledged problem within the conservation area and there is already pressure for residential use of the site. Agricultural uses are considered the most appropriate uses for the farmyard groups, as they reflect the original purpose of the buildings and character of the area. The area is within Green Belt, where agricultural and outdoor recreation uses are considered appropriate and so the semi rural character of the conservation area and the Green Belt requirements for appropriate rural uses reinforce each other. New owners would need to demonstrate that a rural use of the entire site is not viable, following thorough marketing and realistic pricing of the site, given its constraints. If this was successfully proven, then a mix of rural and non rural uses would be better than a wholly residential development perhaps with limited amounts of housing providing financial viability for the agricultural uses. The housing, would need to be the minimum necessary to secure the site's viability and located in the least sensitive parts of the site. English Heritage's advice in "Enabling Development and the Conservation of Heritage Assets" would be used to assess the proposals. It would of course be critical that any enabling development did not harm the historic character, which it was seeking to safeguard.

Due to the redundant nature of the farms there is predominance of residential usage within the area, which creates unwanted pressure on the area for alterations and extensions. There are concerns over extensions in this location as additions may impact on cherished views.

### **Streetscape character**

The streetscape character is noticeably semi-rural in terms of road surfacing and boundary treatment.

The area is bounded with grass verges and hedgerows, with the exception of Old Redding, which has limited pavements running alongside. The road leading to Copse Farm is not bound and is still very much a farm track, which emphasises the areas integral agricultural character. This continues until it meets Brookshill Drive where it becomes more solid and finally becomes tarmac after the houses. There are no kerbs bounding the road, which emphasises the soft landscaping and countryside appearance.

The rough potholed single road is bordered with grass and bramble covered verges, adding to the semi rural feel. The lack of road signs and markings contribute to the preservation of the countryside atmosphere. Where repairs to the road may be necessary, in doing so the existing character should be retained.

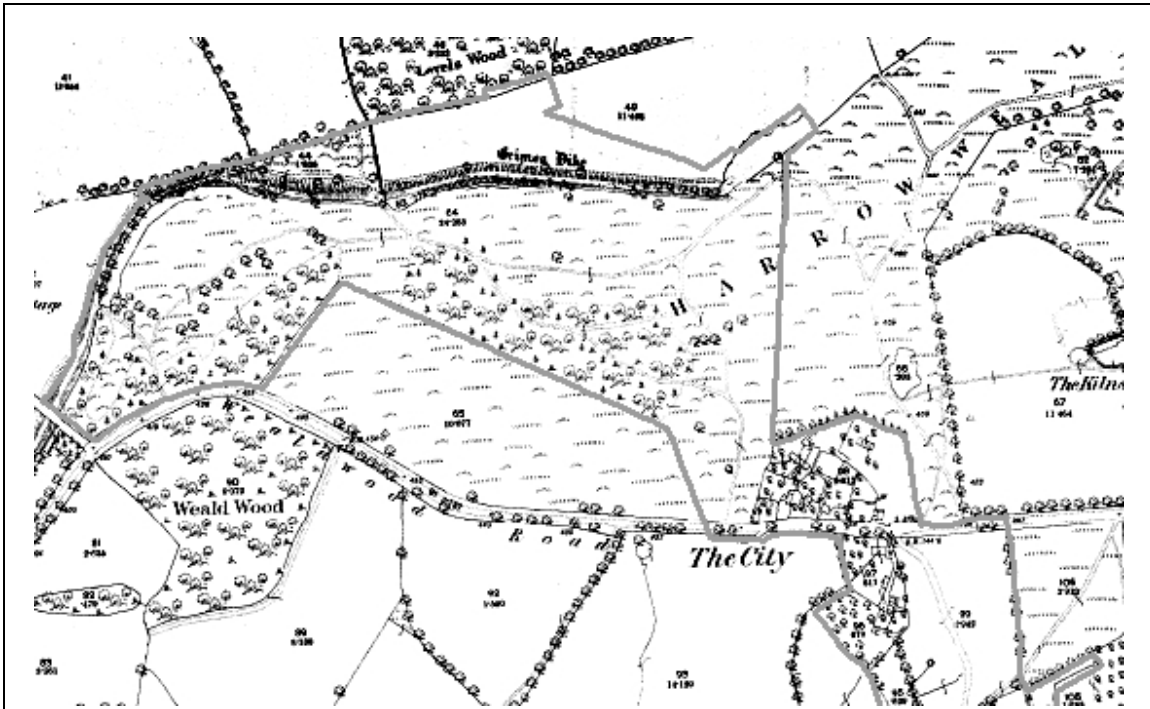
### **Street furniture**

With the exception of Old Redding, the area is quiet with limited traffic, and due to the rough terrain, what traffic there is tends to be very slow and therefore considerate to the character of the area. This encourages walkers and joggers to utilise the routes without fear of cars. The farm road is private and as such is free from street clutter like signage. The few municipal street lamps and telegraph poles with overhead wiring do not significantly intrude on the character of the area, keeping street clutter to a minimum. The wooden telegraph posts are relatively discreet and as such preserve the character of the area. However, other telecommunications equipment, which would clutter the area, would not be appropriate.

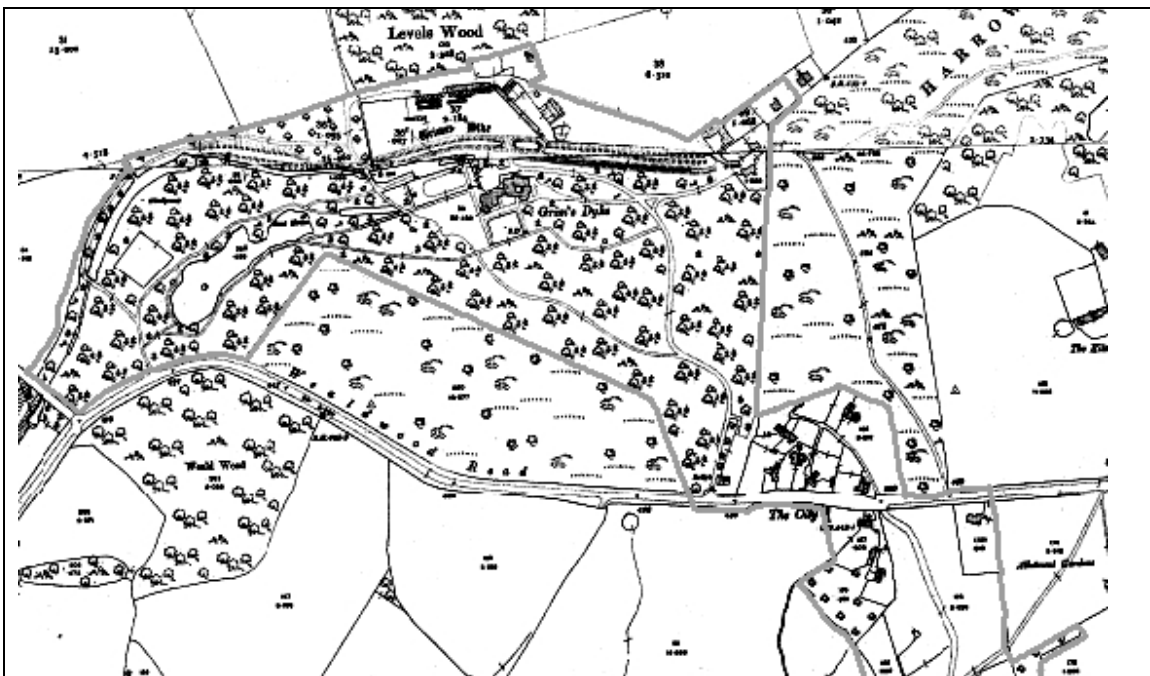
There is a car park adjoining the conservation area from which there are good views of Copse Farm. The car park attracts a great number of visitors for the open views out over Harrow. The car park itself is not particularly attractive and as such there is potential for some enhancement here. Visitors take the opportunity to eat and drink in the neighbouring Case Is Altered. The public house is advertised by wooden standing signage in the front garden. The signage is relatively sympathetic to the area but should be kept to a sympathetic size and style, and limited illumination.

## **History and Development Grimsdyke Estate**

Prior to the development of Grimsdyke Estate, the north of the conservation area was formally covered in woodland. The soils of the area supported gravels and sands, which overlay clay. The extraction of these resources produced gravel pits from which materials were taken for the construction and surfacing of local roads, and to near by Brick Kilns for the production of bricks. The ancient linear earthwork of Grim's Ditch is still a major archaeological feature of the area, although only the westerly section survives intact. This Scheduled Ancient Monument frames the northern part of the estate, whilst the remainder is sandwiched between Harrow Weald Common land.



Historical Map of 1864-1868, with the conservation area outlined in grey



Historical Map of 1913-1914, with the conservation area outlined in grey

Until the Grimsdyke Estate was built, the area was undeveloped. Grimsdyke Estate was planned around a principal house, which is now statutorily listed grade II\*. The rest of the estate layout was carefully planned and as such those buildings, which are historically contextual, are considered as curtilage-listed buildings, due to their integral relationship with the house and its setting.

Grimsdyke House was built in 1872 for the painter Frederik Goodall. He envisaged building his home earlier, however due to a previous lease taken out on the land he was unable to build at such time. As such, during the sixteen years between buying the land and building Grimsdyke House, Goodall spent this time landscaping the area with trees and shrubs. He left the area adjacent to the Grim's Ditch linear earthwork unplanted to allow for the house and landscaped gardens to be built at a later stage. The landscaped area, which he created, has now been included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of interest.

Goodall commissioned an architect who was popular for his organic and modern version of the Tudor style. The architect, Richard Norman Shaw designed a grand, irregular and rambling house to fill the site, chosen to nestle amongst landscaped gardens. It was built in red brick and limestone, with timber framed gables and a tiled roof. The gravel pits to the north of the estate were reused as small lakes, and a moat was constructed along the line of Grim's Ditch.

Norman Shaw also designed the grade II listed South Lodge, which forms the gatehouse to the estate and was built at the same time as the main house. He almost certainly also built the stable block which now provides staff accommodation. It has always been an ancillary building to the main house and is therefore curtilage-listed. This building was developed as part of a group of three, with two other buildings -The Bothy and North Lodge - which provided staff accommodation. As such they are also an integral part of the historical layout of the site and are therefore also considered to be curtilage-listed.

In 1890, William Schwenck Gilbert, of Gilbert and Sullivan fame bought the house. Gilbert made a number of changes to both the house and the estate by planting additional trees and by introducing a number of rhododendrons, which still line the driveway. The farm and stables, a kitchen garden, orchard and vinery were developed. His wife, Lady Gilbert, cultivated a sunken rose garden. The larger lake was excavated to create a central island on which to site a private boathouse. Gilbert enjoyed many hours swimming in the lake, and it was here on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 1911 that he lost his life whilst trying to save a local girl from drowning. Lady Gilbert continued to live in the house until her death in 1936.

The house was purchased a year later by the London Borough of Harrow to be used as a hospital in which to house patients suffering from tuberculosis. Since this time, the house has been used on many occasions as a film set. It was later converted into a hotel after undergoing extensive restoration and refurbishment and continues to occupy this use.

## **The Architectural Character Of Grimsdyke Estate**

The layout of estate buildings defines the area's architectural character and context. The buildings were designed to be read as one estate, with an imposing principal house surrounded by formal gardens and ancillary service buildings and stables. The Estate

architecture was carefully planned in a Tudor style with the smaller ancillary buildings imitating the design of the main house.

Each building had a role to play within the estate and as such there is a strong architectural, social and historical relationship between each one. The most important estate building is **Grimsdyke House**, the principal house to the estate and significantly larger and grander than any of its ancillary buildings. The house is large and irregular of two and three storeys in a modified Tudor style. It is built in red brick and stone with timber-framed gables and pitched tiled roofs. The tall prominent chimneys foreshadow its Arts and Crafts style.



Grimsdyke House

The gatehouse is a small lodge, which marks the entrance into the estate. Although it has lost its original purpose of meeting and greeting, it has survived well and still acts as an introduction to the grandeur of the main house and indicates the point of entry into the estate. **South Lodge** is two storeys, in red brick similar to that of the main house. It is a much smaller building, indicating its subservient status but mimics the detailing of the big house, demonstrating the unity within the estate. The lodge has tile-hung gables and stone dressings, a tile pitched roof and crested ridge. It also has a prominent chimneystack which, like the other elements of its design, imitates the style of the main house. The mullioned windows and door beneath a pointed arch, under the sweep of the main roof also echo the detailing of the main house.



South Lodge

Grimsdyke House is centrally situated within extensive gardens and landscaping. A cluster of ancillary buildings is sited about 200 meters to the east. These tend to reflect their original functions as small domestic buildings to house staff and horses.

The **Stable Block** originally housed horses. The different brick bonding provides clues as to where the arches have been in filled to provide accommodation space. The 'L' shaped building now houses hotel staff. The stables were built in a red brick with a decorative tile-hung second floor and leaded casement windows. The Stables form an integral part of the estate's portfolio of buildings, thus making a positive contribution to the conservation area. However, some timber windows have been unsympathetically replaced with aluminium and as such there is opportunity for enhancements here, which is considered in the management plan section.





The Stableblock

Like the Stableblock, **North Lodge** and **The Bothy** are part of the originally planned layout for Grimsdyke Estate and built around 1874. They were built in a similar architectural style to that of Grimsdyke House and as such have historical and architectural importance. The two are roughly the same scale and are both two-storey partially timber framed domestic houses, with red brick on the ground floor and timber framing on the second. The Mock Tudor style mullioned windows, and heavy front doors complement the style of the main house, as well as contributing to the rural feel of the area.

**Grim's Dyke Cottages** and **New Lodge** are a later addition to the original grouping but because they match the architectural qualities of those initially laid out and as such blend in harmoniously with their neighbours. Open fields providing pleasant contrasting surroundings bound the cluster of buildings on one side, while Harrow Weald Common bounds the other. The houses are situated at the end of a single un-laid track, which is reminiscent of the gravel roads of the past and is indicative of the past uses of the area.

Gilbert built a model farm of which the walled compound still stands. The wall is in relatively good condition and should be retained, because there are very few remnants otherwise. What still exists tends to be light-weight, simple lean to structures of no particular architectural merit, which look out over open farmland that provides good views to the north but the agricultural grouping does contribute to the semi rural character of the area.

Behind the model farm wall is a car park to cater for a later modern infill development to serve as additional accommodation to the hotel. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century Grim's Dyke Lodge sits to the north of the hotel. The building's design has attempted to assimilate the characteristics of the integral estate buildings with some success, although it is still noticeably modern in design and is therefore considered as a neutral development within the estate.

## **Activity and Uses**

Where Harrow Weald Common abuts Old Redding there is a sign to indicate which pathways to take through the woodland. The woodland entrance is very close to the City Cottages and is sited opposite the Case Is Altered Public House and is marked by a five bar gate. Walkers enjoy discovering pathways through the tree-covered area, which is part of Harrow Weald Common. The forest's interesting undulating floor is an important characteristic of the area and is a result of gravel extracting and tree clearance. The footpaths run past Grim's Ditch, an ancient defensive earthwork and Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The conservation area is well known, as it is easily accessible and is much loved by locals and visitors alike. Tourism generates a large part of the area's income, as the hotel and its environs are attractive to a great number of visitors. Similarly, the Case Is Altered caters for those who utilise the major walking routes through this part of the Borough. The impact of walkers on the area may take its toll on natural and archaeological treasures and as such a management plan for the area linked with the potential for tourism may be of benefit. This could include the enhancement of other surrounding features such as the car park off Old Redding.

Where there is open land to the north and south east which is Council owned and maintained, there is potential to enhance and promote routes through this area for additional recreational usage.

## **Boundary Treatment and Front Gardens**

The gardens and boundary treatments complement the open landscapes and woodland surroundings. The similarity of boundary treatment helps to tie the estate together. There is little in the way of drives in terms of the cluster of buildings at the edge of the scheduled monument. Cars tend to sit on the planned gravel roads or in small drives to the side of houses. North Lodge has a ramshackle looking lean to garage, which there is opportunity to enhance. Similarly there is opportunity to enhance the entrance into the Stable block, which could be enhanced with some soft landscaping and more appropriate surfaces.

To the side of Grimsdyke House there is a tarmac car park, which is not particularly attractive, and is also damaging to the base of the built fabric. There is already evidence of brick erosion caused by the impervious material.

The car park at Grim's Dyke Lodge is a neutral feature since it does not significantly affect the character of the post war development. However the hard surfaced pavements which surround it would be much better as a pathway through a grass verge to retain the countryside character of the area. Similarly, timber would be more in keeping with the semi-rural character of the area than metal bollards.

## **Streetscape Character**

There is limited street lighting leading to Grimsdyke House and its ancillary buildings. Due to the woodland surroundings and the tunnel effect of the rhododendrons and trees,

the area is rather dark after nightfall, which contributes to its rural hidden enclave character.

Although there are no pavements alongside the roads throughout the estate, kerbs or road signage, the roads are tarmac and as such are much more formal than those in the south of the conservation area. There is opportunity for enhancement here. The softening of these would be much more in context with the lush woodland surrounding. A possible alternative of bound gravel on a solid base would be less harsh and would be historically suggestive of what the initial estate roads would have looked like.

The original style road surfacing does exist surrounding the cluster of ancillary buildings at the edge of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

### **Street Furniture**

There is limited street furniture throughout the area. Much is as a result of signage to indicate which path to take through the woodland. There are also large signs on the entrance gates indicating what forthcoming events the hotel is hosting. These tend to be timber with a sympathetic font size and style and as such preserve the character of the area.

The entrance gate piers are in need of repair, as are the lamps that adorn them. Similarly, the decorative entrance gates would benefit from restoration.



Entrance Gate Detail

There is one gate pier left at the entrance to the field, which adjoins the Stableblock. This gate pier is locally listed in conjunction with the property and restoration of this would be welcomed.

The streetlights and telegraph poles are not overly obtrusive and do not visually clutter the area.

## Biodiversity and Landscape within the Conservation Area

Map 6. Map to show TPOs and significant tree groups in Conservation Area



Harrow Weald Common

With its areas of open land, formal planting and significant trees, the area has much biodiversity and landscape value. The word *weald* is thought to derive from the Old English for forest, indicating that this area was once covered with woodland. The undulating terrain, which is a feature throughout the Common, is a constant reminder of the history of gravel extraction here. The ridges and hollows, that this extraction has helped to create, have somewhat increased the habitat diversity of the site since operations ceased at the turn of the century. Much of Harrow Weald Common is covered with Oak Birch woodland, although Aspen, Beech and Rowan also occur. Typical woodland birds include redpolls, bullfinches and goldfinches, as well as three species of woodpecker, among a number of others. Mammals include the grey squirrel, foxes, and

hedgehogs. Weasels are also likely to be seen. Harrow Weald Common is Council owned and is freely accessible to the public, however the grounds to Grimsdyke House are private.

The Grimsdyke Estate is included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Opportunities exist to repair and reinstate elements of the original designed landscape, such as Gilbert's lake. The lake at Grimsdyke Estate is silted up and is therefore derelict. There have been proposals to reinstate this and as such there is possibility for enhancement here. Gilbert reputedly planted many of the plants growing in and around the lake, such as the great spearwort.

Some of the great rhododendrons have been cleared from surrounding Grim's Ditch because the roots were thought to be disturbing the archaeological remains. In consultation with English Heritage, the earthwork was opened up and flooded to help to preserve the site, whilst providing a niche for species preferring wet conditions, such as rushes and sedges.

### **Archaeology within the Conservation Area**

Running throughout the area is an interesting linear earthwork and Scheduled Ancient Monument known as, Grim's Ditch. Within the conservation area, it is visible in parts of the Grimsdyke Estate and appears as a large wooded ditch, which is often muddy or full of water. A public footpath has been created to allow the earthwork to be followed where this is possible. *Grim* is the Saxon word for devil and the name Grim's Ditch was used for various linear earthworks of this type, probably as a means of explaining the origins of features for which they had little understanding, and for which they thought the devil must have been responsible.

The original purpose of the ditch is unknown, as is its precise age. Archaeological excavations undertaken in 1979 dated a fire hearth to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Found in the large earth bank, it is thought that those undertaking the ditch's construction probably used this. This theory would date the ditch to the Roman Period in England. At this time, the rebel Catuvellauni Tribe, whose capital was at Varulamium (St Albans) were expanding their territory. They opposed Roman rule and fought against Emperor Claudius and as such the tribe may have used Grim's Ditch as a boundary marker or a defensible area. Further archaeological excavations may help to uncover more evidence of this.

### **Potential to extend the Conservation Area boundary at both Brookshill Drive and Grimsdyke Estate**

#### **Map 7. Proposed Extension of the Conservation Area Boundary**

The Council propose to extend the conservation area boundary at Grimsdyke Estate to include Grim's Dyke Cottages, which would help to preserve the character of the area. A potential Article 4 Direction to withdraw some permitted development rights could then be adopted. The Article 4 Direction would control alterations to the façade and the boundary treatment of a property, to limit unsympathetic changes.

With regards the Brookshill Drive area it is also proposed to extend the boundary to include the remaining 20<sup>th</sup> century properties as shown on the map above. In extending the area, an Article 4 Direction could be introduced to control permitted development rights in terms of satellite dishes, boundary treatment and alterations to facades, to limit unsympathetic development.

Through the withdrawal of permitted development rights, it is hoped that soft landscaped driveways can be retained, which are important for the area's character. The protection of timber windows, which are more attractive than and do not damage the built fabric in the way that plastic windows do would also be valuable for the conservation area.

## Management Plan

<b>Problems, pressures, negative features to effect:</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Copse Farm</b>		
Redundant Agricultural Buildings: their poor repair and pressure for residential uses		A number of vacant agricultural buildings exist which are in need of a relevant new use and repair. These buildings have a strong architectural presence and layout, and as such form much of the area's character. Due to the redundant nature of a number of buildings, these are falling into disrepair with little maintenance.
Security equipment		As a result of fly tipping there are pressures from CCTV and security fencing to surround the farm
Fly tipping		Fly tipping is unwelcome in the area, as it can be visually cluttering and can often be dangerously sited, blocking the way for emergency vehicles
Pressure for new development/residential use		Any new development is potentially harmful to open views both out of and into the area, and is also contrary to Green Belt policy. The redundant farm buildings have never been residential dwellings and as such a residential use is not appropriate
Pressure for demolition, especially where this may affect locally listed buildings		Demolition may be acceptable if views are unaffected. However, in terms of historic buildings and locally listed buildings, demolition would not secure the future of these heritage assets, and is unlikely to be considered unacceptable
<b>Grimsdyke Estate</b>		
Grimsdyke House car park/estate roads		The tarmac has a deadening effect and detracts from the character of the area. It also prevents water from draining naturally through the ground and as such there is evidence of erosion to base level bricks of Grimsdyke House. Finding a suitable soft landscaped alternative would make a significant difference. The estate roads are tarmac, without pavements, but look too harsh for the soft surrounding landscaping
Pressure for additional space		Since losing the right to retain a marquee as a permanent structure, the hotel may look towards additional conference facilities. Identifying an appropriate location is an important objective
Loss of planned		The landscaping of the estate is as integral as the buildings which

landscape	were planned for it, and as such the retention and restoration of this would be an important objective	
<b>Other</b>		
Pressure for lighting and signage	The Case Is Altered Public House	Signage tends to be prominently displayed, however, should there be too much of this it will be visually cluttering and as such should remain sympathetic
Motorbikes	Harrow Weald Common	Small motorbikes are taking advantage of the pathways throughout the woodland, which disturbs the soil and endangers the linear earthwork and its archaeological properties
Potential pressure from telecommunications masts	Open space within the conservation area	Due to the height and openness of the land, forthcoming pressures may derive from telecommunications masts for mobile communication
Views of the Radio Mast from the conservation area	101 Old Redding	Although surrounded by mature trees, the 110 ft tall transmitter tower can be viewed from the gardens of Grimsdyke House. It also borders Grim's Ditch so is therefore obtrusive in this location. The tower is built on a concrete plinth and has a single storey out building
Car park adjacent to the conservation area, overlooking Harrow	Adjacent to the Case Is Altered Public House	Although the car park is not incorporated within the conservation area, it does have some bearing on the area in terms of allowing visitors to park and then explore at their leisure. Clear uninterrupted views look out over Harrow and as such the viewpoint is a popular spot. The ground is potholed and the entrance is restricted to prevent travellers camping on the site. There is opportunity for enhancement in this location
Pressure for extensions to properties	This affects all buildings where open views may be jeopardised, or local vernacular may be affected	Extensions and alterations to buildings may affect the area's open character. To make alterations may change the vernacular appearance of many of the buildings, again detracting from the character of the area
<b>Neutral Features</b>		
Dukes Cottage	Brookshill Drive	20 <sup>th</sup> century design which neither detracts from, nor enhances the conservation area
The Hollies	Brookshill Drive	20 <sup>th</sup> century design which neither detracts from, nor enhances the conservation area
Grim's Dyke Lodge	Grimsdyke Estate	20 <sup>th</sup> century design which neither detracts from, nor enhances the conservation area

## Brookshill and Grimsdyke Conservation Area Management Strategy

## Purpose of the Strategy

The preceding Conservation Area Appraisal provides an analysis of the character and appearance of the conservation area to identify what makes it special. It also sets out problems and pressures that are affecting the area. This Management Strategy develops these issues looking at how best to protect the special character, through specific policies and controls. It also sets out opportunities for change, improvement or enhancement. Each section of the strategy is linked to the relevant policy guidance, which provides the framework for the future management and enhancement of the conservation area. The following proposal statement provides a list of actions, related to those features identified as 'negative'.

## Enhancement Opportunities

This section sets out opportunities to enhance the area, through resolving acknowledged problems, as identified in the appraisal.

Identified Negative Feature	Site Address	Proposed Actions?
<b>Copse Farm</b>		
Redundant agricultural buildings		Where former agricultural buildings become redundant, residential use is only considered appropriate when this can be mixed with a rural usage to continue the historic identity of the area. Proposals for such a site should ideally be submitted alongside a comprehensive planning brief, which appropriately considers the historic nature of each building, and its significance in relation to the site. It should also provide justification as to why the proposals reached in the conclusion are of benefit to the area. Should the search for a rural use be exhausted without success, only then would sole residential use be considered acceptable
Lack of maintenance- Copse Farm Barn		Every effort should be made to encourage the owner to maintain the buildings to ensure their future where there is opportunity to do so. A management plan addressing these issues and offering sensitive solutions would be of benefit to the site. Any conversion should respect the character of each building and as such use a rural use, so as not to intervene with the buildings interior layout. The barn's internal space is important and must not be subdivided. Alterations to the roadside façade will not be found acceptable
Fly tipping		Work with the New Harrow Project Area Manager to develop a strategy in response to this
Security equipment		Limit security equipment in terms of lighting, CCTV and fencing which may disturb a building or area's character



<p>Pressure from new development/demolition and residential use</p>	<p>Every effort should be made to retain existing internal planned divisions of agricultural buildings where this is possible to ensure limited intervention is carried out. The integral layout of the farmyards must be retained, as must the open spaces between these. Copse Farm House must retain its status within the farmyard as the principal building and as such any new development will be subservient to this in scale and detailing. The heightening of existing rooflines will not be considered acceptable, as this will detract from the open character of the area</p> <p>Retention of the historic fabric should be a principal concern for any redevelopment to affect the area. Any proposals, which do not appear to fully respect the building's integral character, appearance and historic layout, will be unsuccessful. Similarly any demolition for new development which will affect views will be unsuccessful</p> <p>Every agricultural/rural option must be exhausted before sole residential use may be considered. Any proposal should include a planning brief which identifies all possible uses, and appropriately considers the historic nature of each building, and its significance in relation to the site layout</p>	
<p><b>Grimsdyke Estate</b></p>		
<p><b>Grimsdyke Hotel</b></p>	<p>Work with the hotel management to develop an overall strategy for the area to include new development, alterations and landscaping particularly with regards to:</p> <p>Car parks, pressure for additional accommodation, loss of the originally planned landscape, estate roads, restoration of the glass house, entrance gates and piers, appropriate maintenance of ancillary buildings</p>	
<p><b>Other</b></p>		
<p>Views of the Radio Mast from the conservation area.</p>	<p>101 Old Redding</p>	<p>Encourage further landscaping/tree planting to conceal the radio mast where there is opportunity to do so</p>
<p>Car park adjacent to the conservation area, overlooking Harrow</p>	<p>Adjacent to the Case Is Altered Public House</p>	<p>A bound gravel surface on a solid base would enhance the space, which could be divided up with soft landscaping to try to mitigate the large visual expanse of hard surfacing</p>
<p>Extension to the boundary/Pressure for extensions to properties</p>	<p>Grim's Dyke Cottages</p>	<p>The implementation of an Article 4 Direction to limit permitted development rights would provide stricter control over problem areas, which for Grimsdyke would cover:</p> <p>Boundary treatment to include paving and hard surfacing– to limit hard surfaced driveways Alterations to the roof and façade – to limit intervention to the chimneys, tile roofs and prevent the replacement of timber windows or doors to plastic</p>
<p>Extension to the</p>	<p>Hill View,</p>	<p>The implementation of an Article 4 Direction to limit</p>

boundary/Pressure for extensions to properties	East Cliff, Weald, Newlands, Brookslee and Red Corners	permitted development rights would provide stricter control over problem areas, which for Copse Farm and Brookshill Drive are:  Boundary treatment to include paving and hard surfacing– to limit hard surfaced driveways Alterations to the roof and façade – to limit intervention of the chimneys, tile roofs and prevent the unsympathetic replacement of windows or doors Satellite Dishes
Pressure for more lighting and signage	The Case Is Altered Public House	Signage should be in timber and avoid overly large lettering, and any illumination will be found unacceptable
Motorbikes	Harrow Weald Common	The Council will continue to work with the Metropolitan Police in relation to “Safer Neighbourhood Teams”
Potential pressure from telecommunications masts	Open space within the conservation area	Proposals from telecommunications masts will not be considered within the conservation area
The restoration of signposts to strengthen right of ways/bridal ways	Throughout the conservation area/Harrow Weald Common	There is an enhancement opportunity to upgrade routes by providing clearer signage
The restoration of the road leading to Copse Farm	Road leading to Copse Farm from Old Redding	The road leading to Copse Farm is pot holed and as such enhancements could be made to ensure a rural personality is kept whilst strengthening the road. By providing a solid base and retaining an un-laid overlay would make an enhancement in this area
Municipal street lamps	Brookshill Drive	There is opportunity to paint these black to be less obtrusive
Protection of natural and archaeological treasures from the impact from tourism/ Enhancement of Harrow open land	Harrow Weald Common/Surrounding open land	Encourage the possibility of a Management Plan to address the impact of tourism on the area and its effect on natural and archaeological resources
Garage at North Lodge	Grimsdyke Estate	Should opportunity arise for the alteration of this structure, every effort should be taken to find a sympathetic alternative which enhances the area’s character

### Protective Measures – policies and controls

1. The Council will require that all development respects the character, intrinsic buildings and layout of the area
2. The Council will seek to protect the cohesive quality of, and important spaces created by, building groups of historic importance
3. There will be a presumption against the demolition of buildings within the conservation area
4. To ensure that the character of the conservation area is both preserved and enhanced, proposals for development should:
  - a) Respect existing properties and areas of open space in terms of bulk, scale and siting
  - b) Not impede significant views, diminish the gap between buildings or intrude into areas of open space as defined on map 3
  - c) Respect the existing layout and historical form of the settlement and estate
  - d) Respect and complement the existing buildings in terms of design, detailing, scale and materials in any proposals for extensions or alterations
  - e) Applications for development should demonstrate in sufficient detail how they comply with the above criteria. In the absence of such detail, applications will not be considered
5. Trees and groups of trees will continue to be protected by tree preservation orders
6. Development adversely affecting significant trees will be refused
9. The Council will resist the removal of original design features such as windows and doors. Where replacement is necessary traditional materials should be used. Aluminium and UPVC replacement units will not be considered acceptable
10. Alterations to buildings that result in a detrimental impact on the appearance of elevations that face a highway, including alterations to chimneys and rooflines, will be resisted
11. The Council will resist the removal of grass verges
12. The Council will encourage the retention and improvement of both public and private green spaces
13. The Council will encourage the utility companies to install the minimum amount of new street furniture and to locate any furniture sensitively
14. Where in Council control, new street furniture will be required to be well sited and designed. Redundant and unsightly street furniture will be removed where opportunities occur

15. The retention of visually important walls which are characteristic of the area will be required
16. The Council recognises the archaeological importance of the area, and where necessary will ensure that appropriate action or works, such as an excavation or building recording, can be carried out before development commences
17. Proposals for telecommunications equipment which detrimentally effects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be refused