

Berkhamsted Conservation Area



Character Appraisal & Management Proposals



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Built Environment & Management Service Ltd
The Castle
Hertford
Hertfordshire SG14 1HR
Tel: 01992 504331
Fax: 01992 504302
Email: enquiries@beamsltd.org
Website: www.beamsltd.org



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Cover photographs: (Main picture) – *Narrow boats on the Grand Union Canal.*
Images left to right – *St. Peter's Church, Houses on Chapel Street, The Old Court House, View of the houses along Shrublands Avenue (west side).*

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Part 1 Conservation Area Character Appraisal

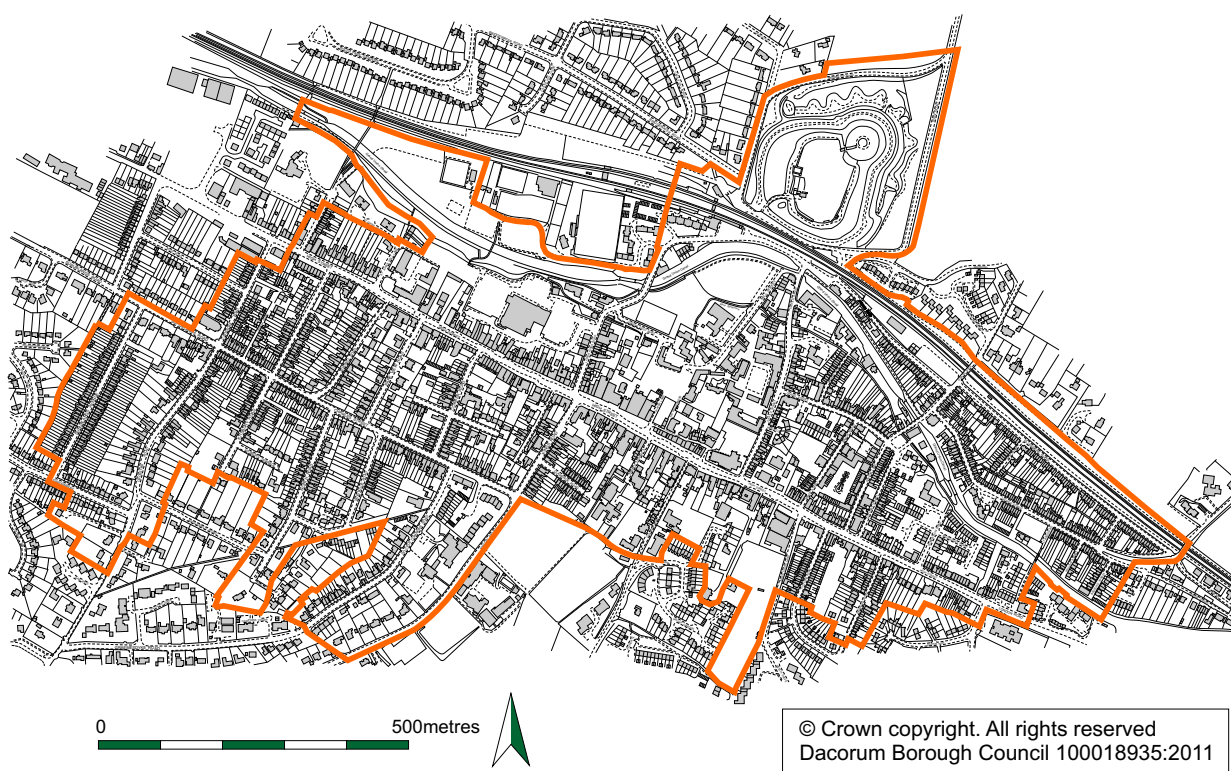
1 Introduction

1.1 Berkhamsted Conservation Area is defined by the linear town settlement of the High Street, which lies south of the railway line (West Coast Main Line), the River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal. North of the railway line stands the historic Berkhamsted Castle that is surrounded by a series of bank and ditch earthworks. Beyond the linear High Street (mainly to the south) are a series of densely terraced residential streets that are bounded by later suburban roads and housing estates.

1.2 Berkhamsted is a viable and prosperous provincial market town in Dacorum Borough. As set out in the Town Centre Strategy for Berkhamsted, the Council's aim is to conserve and enhance the town centre environment with particular reference to retention of its appearance, character and atmosphere as a small county town centre..... [and] to address the problems of the 1990s post-bypass era (Berkhamsted Town Centre Strategy; spatial planning. Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 - 2011).

1.3 The historical development of Berkhamsted has been influenced by the natural valley landscape and the River Bulbourne, together with the impact of human development by way of Berkhamsted Castle, the Grand Union Canal and the railway line. The plan of Berkhamsted town centre is typical of a medieval market settlement; the linear High Street forms the spine of the town (roughly aligned east-west), from which extend medieval burgage plots (to the north and south). At the centre stands the Parish Church (the thirteenth century Church of St. Peter) along with the triangular market-place (the old Market Place, recorded as Le Shopperowe in 1357). The majority of High Street buildings date to between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and are mostly commercial premises (such as shops, restaurants, banks, offices, public houses), places of worship and public buildings with a smaller number of residential properties. Later streets were laid out on the valley sides away from the High Street according to need (a growing population), and were influenced by the existing plots / field systems and the landscape topography. These streets were mainly built

Map 1: Berkhamsted Conservation Area



during the nineteenth century and predominantly lay to the southwest of the High Street, with some lying close to the areas occupied by the Grand Union Canal and the railway line.

1.4 According to a Supplementary Planning Guidance document prepared by Dacorum Borough Council (May 2004), Berkhamsted Conservation Area was divided into three 'Identity Areas' for the purposes of character appraisal of problems and opportunities, subsequent analysis and policy formation...[as] each area has its own distinctive characteristics as part of the overall conservation area: High Street (Area 1 - commercial & residential), Grand Union Canal (Area 2 - industrial and residential) and Charles Street (Area 3 - residential). This appraisal has utilised these three areas, and has further subdivided the 'Identity Areas' for ease of discussion in this report (see Chapter 6: Character Areas).

1.5 Berkhamsted Conservation Area is inevitably subject to pressures. Development opportunities within the boundary are somewhat limited, however the Town Centre Strategy recognises that the market town is experiencing an important period of change.... [where] new out-of-town shopping centres.... offer a serious

challenge to the future of town centre shopping (Berkhamsted Town Centre Strategy; spatial planning. Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 - 2011). Pressures exist for commercial and retail infrastructure development that is in conflict with, and can be out of scale with, the town centre's environmental quality, in particular its small country town character (Berkhamsted Town Centre Strategy; spatial planning. Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 - 2011). Residential use of upper floors of existing retail premises was seen as offering residential accommodation within the town centre; the Government initiative 'Living Over the Shop' aimed to encourage this (Berkhamsted Town Centre Strategy; spatial planning. Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 - 2011). However, recent large-scale residential developments have been built both within and on the edge of the conservation area; flats, terraces and semi-detached houses on former commercial or industrial sites (Stag Lane, Robertson Road). In addition, further large-scale housing schemes are under development (New Lodge at Bank Mill: H36; The South Berkhamsted Concept; Egerton Rothsay / Durrants Lane). Under these proposals the increase in population will bring added pressures for greater amenities and the need for improvements to the existing infrastructure. This



could have a huge impact upon the existing layout of the historic town centre; shopping areas could be at risk of being up-graded and this would impact upon the character and appearance of Berkhamsted Conservation Area.

1.6 In 2007 a 'Concept Statement for Water Lane / High Street Berkhamsted' was commissioned and adopted by Dacorum Borough Council. It was drawn up to guide developers in any proposals for the re-development of land on the north side of the High Street at the centre of the town, and would be used by the Council as a framework for assessing any future planning applications for the site. This includes the area occupied by shops between The Wilderness (160 High Street, Tesco) and 176 High Street (Altered Image / Fitness First), Water Lane car park, and the access road through to Greenfield Road.

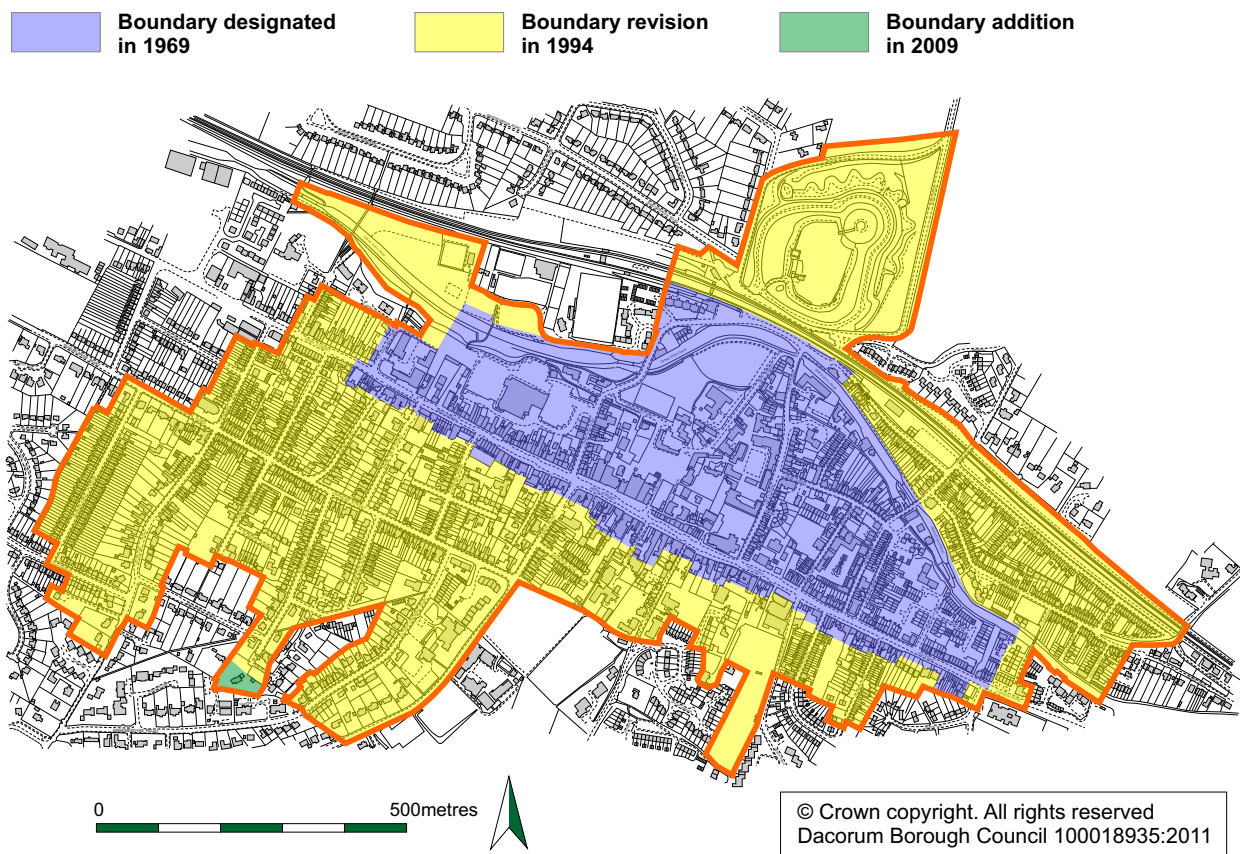
1.7 Berkhamsted Conservation Area was first designated in 1969, and was subsequently revised and extended in 1994 and again in 2009 (Map 2). Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section

69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

1.8 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.9 Although new development and change will always take place in conservation areas, the main purpose of designation is to ensure that any proposals will not have an adverse effect upon the overall character and appearance of an area. Part 1 of this report (The “Appraisal”) highlights the special qualities and features that underpin Berkhamsted's character and justify its designation. Guidelines provided in Part 2

Map 2: Berkhamsted Conservation Area boundary revisions



("Management Proposals") are designated to prevent harm and encourage enhancement. This type of assessment conforms to English Heritage Guidance and to Government Advice (NPPF, paras. 126-141). It also supports and amplifies those policies aimed at protecting the overall character of the conservation area and forming part of Dacorum Borough Council's Local Planning Framework (Pre-Submission Core Strategy):

Policy 120.1 Designation as a conservation area provides the opportunity to preserve or enhance an area of architectural or historic interest by controlling building demolition and the design, scale and proportions of extensions and new development, as well as the type and colour of materials used.

Policy 121.1 There is a need to control inappropriate types of permitted development which would be detrimental to a conservation area.
(Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 – 2011)

1.10 This character appraisal of Berkhamsted Conservation Area is as inclusive and accurate as possible, however it is not exhaustive. Not every building or architectural feature, positive or negative element, urban or green space, commercial / industrial / residential use has been commented upon. Each site is an individual case, but any change will have a wider effect upon the overall character and appearance of the conservation area.

Listed Buildings

1.11 A listed building (or structure) is one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Dacorum Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on the conservation area map (Maps 10 - 18) and are given in Appendix 1. Listed buildings former part of a wider group of nationally protected heritage sites, such as Scheduled Monuments, that are known as 'Designated Heritage Assets'.

Locally Listed Buildings

1.12 These are buildings or structures that have been identified by Dacorum Borough Council as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list. They make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Such buildings and structures of local importance are known as 'Un-designated Heritage Assets'.

1.13 Government guidance in NPPF paras. 126-141 advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining all Heritage Assets (designated and un-designated) which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. Heritage Assets have been positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

1.14 In Berkhamsted there are a number of such un-designated Heritage Assets which have been included on the local list. These are marked on the conservation area map (Maps 10 - 18) and are given in Appendix 2. Information on local listing and the proposed criteria for their inclusion on a local list are also provided (Appendix 3).

1.15 Exclusion from these two lists does not mean that a building is not of sufficient architectural or historic interest. Earlier fabric can often lie concealed behind later alterations. Always contact Dacorum Borough Council, for advice.

Article 4 (2) Directions

1.16 Article 4 (2) Directions are used to withdraw some permitted development rights, such as minor works or alterations to unlisted buildings, in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1.17 Within Berkhamsted Conservation Area there are a number of adopted Article 4 (2) Directions. These are provided in Appendix 5.

1.18 This Appraisal shall also determine if further Article 4 (2) directions are required. Always contact Dacorum Borough Council for advice on designations.

2 Location and Setting

Location

2.1 The historic medieval market town of Berkhamsted lies on the western edge of Hertfordshire, bordering the Chiltern Hills, within the Borough of Dacorum. It is one of three main town centres within the Borough and is bordered by a number of smaller settlements, mostly to the north. Berkhamsted lies approximately five miles west of Hemel Hempstead, the administrative centre of Dacorum, and seven miles southeast of Tring.

2.2 Berkhamsted is linear in shape and follows the Bulbourne river valley along the High Street / London Road. It is situated between the A41 bypass road (to the south) and the Birmingham to London West Coast rail line (to the north). The River Bulbourne runs parallel with the High Street between the town and the railway. The Grand Union Canal lies between the river and the rail line. Over the canal to the northeast stands Berkhamsted Castle.

Boundaries

2.3 The conservation area encompasses the historic centre of the town, the High Street / London Road, extending northward up to the West Coast rail line and a small area on the north side of the line to include Berkhamsted Castle. It stretches roughly as far east as Ivy House Lane and as far west as Cross Oak Road.

2.4 The boundary also incorporates plots lying on the south side of the High Street / London Road and a large residential area to the southwest beyond Kings Road, which includes Charles Street that runs parallel with the High Street. A number of roads leading southwards from Charles Street also lie within the conservation area; Doctor's Commons Road, North Road and Shrublands Avenue.

2.5 The conservation area does not include:

- Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club (BLTSRC) located to the west of the railway station between the canal and rail line
- Greenes Court and Broadwater, a small residential area next to the BLTSRC
- Berkhamsted School situated along the east side of Kings Road
- Anglefield Road (joins North Road to the east and Cross Oak Road to the west)

2.6 This Appraisal studied a series of suggestions for the proposed extension of the current conservation area boundary to include the following new areas:

- **East:** Old Mill Gardens up to Bank Mill Lane. This area should not be included as there had been significant in-fill development along this part of London Road that is out of character with the High Street form. The Mill is a statutory listed building but is included in the proposed extension (see below).
- **East:** The remainder of George Street. The boundary should be extended to include the south side of George Street including Canal Court (see below).
- **South:** Priory Gardens off Chesham Road. Although the modern residential development has an unusual but cohesive design, this area should not be included as its character was separate to that of the High Street and other residential street forms such as Chesham Road. It is also shielded from view by a high wall and trees from the cemetery on Three Close Lane.
- **South:** Berkhamsted School on Kings Road. Part of this site could be included in the conservation area (see below).
- **South:** Parts of Graemes Dyke Road and Anglefield Road (next to Pine Close). The part of Anglefield Road currently outside the conservation area boundary has houses of different character to those inside it and is not considered appropriate to alter the boundary here.

- **South:** 17 Anglefield Road. This substantial two storey house sits in a large garden adjoining the present conservation area boundary. It is accessed via a driveway from outside the conservation area and does not have a frontage to any street within it. The building is not visible from the public realm within the conservation area indeed only its roof is visible from the Anglefield footpath running alongside the house. For these reasons it has not been suggested for inclusion within a revised boundary.
- **North:** Land to the north side of the railway line from Gravel Path to Ivy House Lane (Rosebank, allotments, Sunnyside). These areas of twentieth century development are outside the urban centre of the town and lie beyond the topographical boundary of the railway line. Their character and appearance is not consistent with the special interest of the existing conservation area, but may be reviewed for designation of a separate conservation area.
- **North:** Land to the north side of the railway line between New Road and Gravel Path (White Hill). This area, although with some special interest, lies over the topographical boundary of the railway line. Should the Council decide to create a local list that included buildings of interest outside conservation area boundaries, some of these properties could be assessed for inclusion.
- **North:** Land to the west of the castle from Bridgewater Road and Castle Hill. These areas of twentieth century development (c1935) are outside the urban centre of the town and lie beyond the topographical boundary of the railway line. Their open, green, sub-urban character and appearance are not consistent with the special interest of the existing conservation area, and the location itself feels separate / away from the town centre. However, these sites may be reviewed for designation as a separate conservation area or their buildings assessed for inclusion in a wider ranging local list.

2.7 The study identified a small number of potential areas where the boundary of the conservation area has been extended, following public consultation (see below).

- **West:** The remainder of St. John's Well Court (1 – 12 & 13 – 24) not already within the boundary at the northwest corner of the conservation area (between Areas 1 and 2): the pond, the River Bulbourne and footbridge leading to and including the row of cottages at the north end of St. John's Well Lane (nos. 1 – 4).
- **East:** The extension includes the properties on the north side of London Road from The Old Mill up to and including Bullbeggars Lane, follow along Bullbeggars Lane north towards the railway line, and turn west along the north boundary of the meadows (the south side of the railway line) back towards George Street. It incorporates the larger part of Bank Mill, the River Bulbourne, and the Grand Union Canal, including canal bridge no. 144 and a listed lock-keepers cottage, 102 Bank Mill Lane. It does not include the north side of George Street up to the railway.
- **South:** An extension of the conservation area boundary encompasses Butts Meadow recreation ground and allotments. These are considered open spaces of visual and historic interest for the conservation area.
- **South:** The existing boundary is extended to include four semi-detached houses between North Road and Doctor's Commons Road off Angle Place (path): 29, 29a, and 31 & 33 Montague Road.

Topography

2.8 Berkhamsted lies within the Bulbourne river valley at approximately 115 metres above sea level and is surrounded by the Chilterns, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The valley sides ascend up to approximately 170 metres within less than a mile of the High Street. The High Street is roughly level along its length while the side streets leading southwards from the main road rise steeply (Highfield Road to Kitsbury Road). The side roads leading northwards from the High Street gently descend down towards

the lowest point of the valley; the River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal (Holliday Street to Park Street).

2.9 Approximately three miles beyond the town to the north, the landscape is more open with an extensive area of wooded parkland that forms Berkhamsted Common which, along with Berkhamsted Castle at its southern tip, belongs to Area 119 (Berkhamsted Castle Farmland) of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment (HCC 2003). It is described as open pastoral farmland (predominantly sheep grazing) with arable farmland to the upper slopes, while close to the built edge of Berkhamsted are a number of playing fields (HCC 2003).

2.10 Adjacent to the north side of the common lies Ashridge Park Estate. This also comprises large areas of wooded parkland and forms Area 121 (Ashridge) of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment (HCC 2003). The assessment states that the primary land cover is a mix of extensive areas of woodland, both semi natural and plantation and grassland / pasture, while the land uses are amenity and recreation: walking, rambling, riding and two golf courses (HCC 2003).

2.11 The south side of the town lies within The Ashlyns and Wiggington Plateau; Area 110 of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment (HCC 2003). The area is described as having relatively high woodland cover including a number of plantations (arable to the south and equestrian grazing to the north), while the edge of the Berkhamsted urban fringe includes schools, playing fields and a cemetery (HCC 2003). Beyond the southern limits of the town the land lies within the County of Buckinghamshire. This area is occupied by open fields and small settlements such as Hawridge, Chartridge and Botley, while the nearest town, Chesham, lies five miles south of Berkhamsted.

2.12 To the west of Berkhamsted town centre, out towards and including Cow Roast, is the upper Bulbourne Valley; Area 117 of the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment (HCC 2003). The Grand Union Canal intercepts with the River Bulbourne along the valley floor

and the valley slopes remain predominantly arable and unsettled; there are some urban fringes uses such as sports fields and allotments (HCC 2003).

Geology

2.13 The underlying geology of Berkhamsted is chalk covered with well-drained, fine, silty soils to the valley bottom with more shallow, calcareous, fine, silty soils to the slopes as described in the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment Areas 110, 117, 119 and 121 (HCC 2003). The area is within the Thames Valley drainage system (the River Bulbourne flows into the River Gade, then the River Colne and then into the River Thames).

Archaeology

2.14 Although much of the history of Berkhamsted relates to the Post-Conquest period (after 1066), a number of archaeological finds and landscape features date to the Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods. A small number of late Iron Age cremations and coins along with Neolithic axes and pottery suggest that the valley and its slopes were in-use during the Prehistoric period (up to c100BC). This, along with Neolithic and Bronze Age flints and Iron Age roundhouses, indicates that the valley of the River Bulbourne had probably been continuously settled from the time of the first farmers onwards (Thompson & Bryant 2005).

2.15 Grims Ditch is a bank and ditch earthwork that was constructed in the late Bronze Age (c1200 – 800BC) by farming communities in Bulbourne river valley as possibly a territorial boundary running through Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire (Thompson and Bryant 2005). It runs along the south side of the valley from Bradenham to Berkhamsted, spanning 18 kilometres. Three surviving sections of Grims Ditch lay close to Berkhamsted and all are statutory protected (Scheduled Monuments); a 210 metre ditch within the grounds of Woodcock Hill, between Bells Lane and Durrant's Lane (No. 35349), and two sections close to Wiggington (Nos. 35347 & 35348). While all sections of the ditch lie outside the conservation area boundary, any well-preserved remains of the earthwork are

afforded statutory protection. Evidence of this feature running along the south side of Berkhamsted itself is thought to have been removed by nineteenth century expansion of the town.

2.16 In the late Iron Age and Roman period (c100BC to cAD 400), the Bulbourne Valley developed into a major iron production centre due its strategic location within the Chilterns and to the natural resources: water, timber and iron pan. Iron production led to the settlement of Cow Roast, to the northwest of Berkhamsted, but production appears to have ceased by the end of the Roman period. Roman finds within Berkhamsted are scattered throughout the town, with a concentration along Akeman Street (the High Street). Evidence of roadside occupation (masonry buildings and pottery) has been recorded, including a building and coins in the grounds of Berkhamsted Castle. While it is possible that the medieval earthworks removed part of a larger Roman site, the surviving Roman building has been given statutory protection as a Scheduled Monument (No. HT88). Remains of a Roman villa were discovered close to the river at Northchurch, between Berkhamsted and Cow Roast. Evidence of a Roman settlement at Cow Roast has also been given statutory protection as a Scheduled Monument (No. HT91).

2.17 Settlement of Berkhamsted during the Saxon period is said to lie west of the town at Northchurch. This has been suggested from the Saxon building material found in the south and west walls of St. Mary's Church on Akeman Street (High Street) at Northchurch. The Church of St. Mary was part of a large estate and was probably built by local Saxon lords; this became part of the medieval manor of Berkhamsted after the Norman Conquest but was known as the parish of Berkhamsted St. Mary until the fourteenth century. Evidence of late ninth century human interference with the River Bulbourne near Mill Street suggests that watermills were in existence during the late Saxon period (recorded in the later Domesday Survey of 1086).

2.18 Subsequent to the Extensive Urban Survey report of 2005 by Thompson & Bryant, further assessment of archaeological evidence

suggests that the late Saxon / early Norman town of the eleventh century may have stood east of the original Saxon settlement at Northchurch, somewhere between Chesham Road and St. John's Well Lane. The new town may have been orientated north-south; roughly running from Chesham Road in the south down to and crossing the High Street, before continuing northwards up to the castle (possibly via Water Lane / Mill Street) rather than the later east-west town plan that exists today. Rare early Saxon pottery has been found close to Chesham Road / High Street junction in Berkhamsted.

2.19 The settlement may have moved to this location to be closer to a small church, the Chapel of St. James, which stood near St. John's Well Lane. The Chapel of St. James belonged to a small community of monks, the Brotherhood of St. John the Baptist, who lived during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Once the Norman town had been planned, including the building of St. Peter's Church that began in c1200, the later medieval town of the thirteenth century onwards grew up along an east-west alignment around the church and the old market place on the High Street. Medieval burgrave plots that line the High Street (Akeman Street) are part of the thirteenth century town plan that largely survives today.

2.20 After the Norman Conquest, Berkhamsted Castle was built as a new manorial centre held by Robert, the Count of Mortain and half-brother of William I, east of Northchurch. The Domesday Survey recorded thirty seven households within the town that grew up along the High Street (Akeman Street) away from the castle gate. Berkhamsted Castle is thought to date from the eleventh century and is a Scheduled Monument (No. 20626). It is said to have been dismantled in 1124 and re-built between 1155 and 1165, when it was owned by Thomas a Beckett. Although it was put in good order in 1361 for King John of France, held as a prisoner of war, the castle ceased to be inhabited after 1495; English historian John Leland noted it was 'much in Ruine' in c1540. From the latter part of the sixteenth century it served as a quarry for building materials. The discovery in 2008 of a

possible twelfth to fourteenth century town boundary (artificial bank and ditch) at Victoria Church of England School, Chesham Road suggests that a sizeable defensive structure stood along the boundary of the later Norman settlement in Berkhamsted.

2.21 Much of the conservation area is designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance (no. 21). Developers should refer to (saved) Policy 118 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 and Policy CS27 in Dacorum Borough Council's Adopted Core Strategy.

3 The Historical Development of the Town

11th – 15th Century

3.1 The townscape of present day Berkhamsted is inextricably linked with the importance and development of the medieval castle and of transport links in the form of Akeman Street, a Roman road running between London and Aylesbury that now forms the High Street / London Road. Remains of Roman settlements have been found along the road and also within the grounds of Berkhamsted Castle itself. The layout of the town has also been affected by the building of the Grand Union Canal during the late eighteenth century and the London to Birmingham Railway, which opened in 1838, all of which follow the valley of the River Bulbourne.

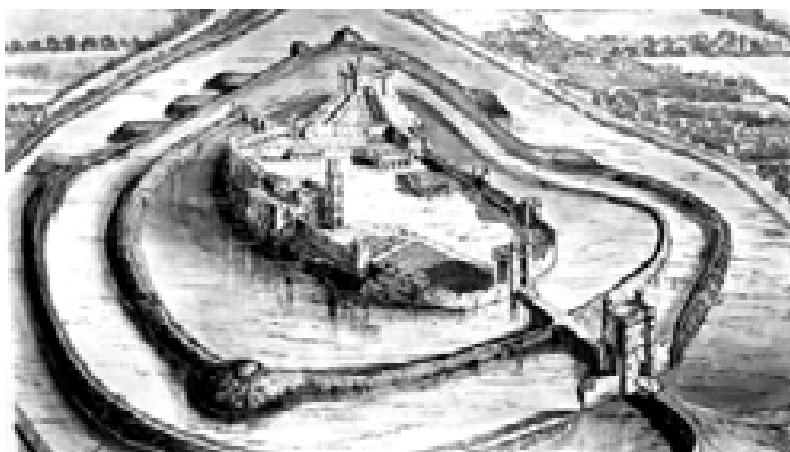
3.2 Berkhamsted, recorded as Beorhhamstede or Berchehamstede during the eleventh century, was held by Edmer Atule, a thegn of King Edward the Confessor before the Conquest. Not much is known of Saxon Berkhamsted, but it is likely that a settlement would have existed west of the current town towards St. Mary's Church in Northchurch; its south and west walls have been dated to the Saxon period (see 2.17 – 2.19 above). Evidence of watermills thought to have stood near Mill Street since at least the ninth century were recorded in Domesday Survey of 1086.

3.3 After the Battle of Hastings in 1066, Norman forces travelled over the Chilterns and camped at Berkhamsted. Shortly before Christmas, Edgar Atheling, Aldred Archbishop of York, and Earls Edwin and Morcar travelled from London to meet William the Conqueror and swore their loyalty to him at Berkhamsted, in return for the promise of just government. William granted Berkhamsted and the surrounding manors to his half brother Robert, Count of Mortain. It was he who commenced work on the motte and bailey of the castle and constructed the first timber buildings.

3.4 The castle became an important centre of power, from which the Count's lands were administered including those that lay within the County of Northamptonshire. The Count's son, William, led a rebellion against Henry I, which led to all his estates being confiscated and the timber castle at Berkhamsted being burned to the ground. Some re-building of the castle occurred in the early twelfth century, including the bailey walls, moat and the Keep (tower). The Barbican, or principal gate, with its drawbridge was probably built at this time and lay along the south side of the castle (roughly opposite what is now Castle Street that leads to the railway station).

3.5 When Thomas a Becket was overlord of the castle between 1155 and 1165, he spent large sums of money on extensive repairs. King Henry II spent considerable time at Berkhamsted Castle, which became his favourite residence, and subsequently awarded the merchants of the town a Royal Charter in 1156 to grant them exemption of taxes, tolls and duties when travelling with their goods in England and Normandy.

3.6 During the fourteenth century, King Edward III ordered an extensive survey followed by a major programme of refurbishment of the castle for his son (Edward, the Black Prince). In its final form Berkhamsted Castle consisted of an impressive complex of buildings and fortifications, but by the end of the fifteenth



Berkhamsted Castle from the time of Edward IV in the fifteenth century (image taken from HALS Photographic Collection)

century became un-inhabited. From the latter part of the sixteenth century it served as a quarry for building materials, most notably for the building of Berkhamsted Place. Its Barbican (principal gate) along the southern ramparts survived until it was demolished to make way for the construction of the railway embankment during the 1830s. Archaeological excavation of the castle during 1905 revealed fourteenth and fifteenth century glazed tiles, and further excavation in the 1960s also revealed evidence of thirteenth century occupation.



RCHME 1909 survey of Berkhamsted Castle showing earthworks, walls and buildings (NMR, Swindon)

3.7 St. Peter's Parish Church stands along the High Street in the middle of the town. Leading down from the east end of the church is Castle Street, formerly Castle Lane. It dates in part to c1200 and is thought to have replaced an earlier small church, the Chapel of St. James, located near St. John's Well Lane. Here during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a small community of monks, the Brotherhood of St. John the Baptist, lived close to an ancient 'holy spring'. The Hospital of St. John the Baptist was founded by Geoffrey Fitzpiers, the Earl of Essex, in c1213 and was probably located close to the Chapel of St. James near St. John's Well Lane. However the

exact location of both sites has never been precisely determined. The hospitals were disbanded in 1516 and their revenues used in the foundation of Berkhamsted School by John Incent, Dean of St. Paul's, London in 1541; the 'Old Hall' was completed in 1544.

3.8 Outside Berkhamsted some distance to the north stood another monastery, Ashridge. Edmund, the Earl of Cornwall who possessed Berkhamsted Castle in the late thirteenth

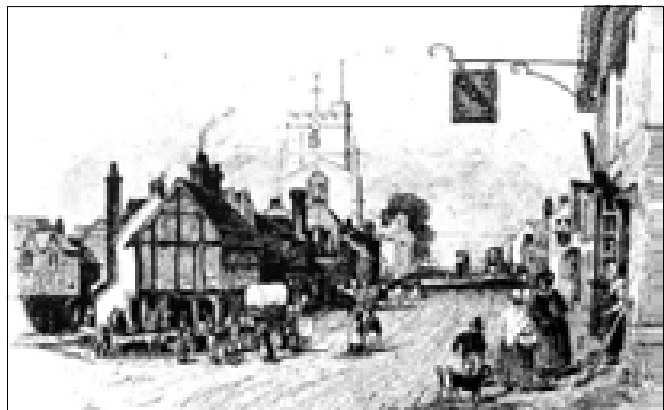


Engraving of Ashridge, published in 1790, before it was re-built by James Wyatt in 1810 (Hastie 1999)

century, ordered a religious house to be built on land at Little Gaddesden in 1275. It too was disbanded in 1539 and became a Royal residence to Henry VIII until it was given over to Thomas Egerton in 1604, Lord Keeper to Elizabeth I and then Lord Chancellor to James I. Berkhamsted Castle had been out of use since the late fifteenth century and so the manorial centre moved to Ashridge. Francis Henry Egerton, the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater, inherited Ashridge in 1747. He had a passion for engineering and canals, building the first true waterway, the Bridgewater Canal, and was later known as 'the Father of Inland Navigation'. Under John Egerton, the 7th Earl of Bridgewater, the grounds at Ashridge were re-modelled by Humphrey Repton and the house re-built by the architect James Wyatt. The later owners, Lord and Lady Brownlow (Adelbert and Adelaide Egerton) hosted parties to which members of the Royal family and leading politicians came during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

This arrangement largely survives today. One of the oldest surviving buildings is 173 High Street, which lies on the south side of the road to the west of the Parish Church and the market area. It dates in part to the late thirteenth century and was probably a service wing to a former aisled hall; no. 173 is thought to be the oldest, jettied, urban building in the country. In addition, the front range of the former Swan public house, no. 139, is thought to have been an open timber hall dating to the fourteenth century and was later extended to the west and east. The Dean Incent's House, opposite St. Peter's Church, dates to the late fifteenth century and is also one of the older High Street properties. Next to the church is the sixteenth century Court House. It stands behind the High Street on the north side and was the first civic centre where the town's Borough Court or Council met. Disputes of local trading and the Court Manor were also heard there; the building was later used as a National School.

3.9 By the fourteenth century, Berkhamsted (recorded as Berchamstede) is reputed to have been one of the best market towns in the country. By the fifteenth century it had become an important medieval Borough and was given a Royal Charter under Edward IV (1442 - 1483), which decreed that no other market town was to be set up within eleven miles. Around 1583 a new market house was erected west of St. Peter's Church at the end of Middle Row (also known as Le Shopperowe in 1357 and later as Graball Row); it was destroyed in a fire in 1854.



Buckler sketch of Berkhamsted High Street in c1835 looking east: the old Market House on the corner of Church Lane and St. Peter's Church beyond (Birtchnell 1975)

3.10 The dominance of the castle over the town's development, along with its power through the feudal system and the building of a new Parish Church of St. Peter's, had a huge impact upon the layout of the town from the thirteenth century onwards; the street pattern is thought to have changed from a north-south alignment during the Saxon period to an east-west alignment. Medieval burgage plots lining the High Street (Akeman Street) are part of this thirteenth century town plan where the core of the town moved to be centred around St. Peter's Church and the old market place.



The same view today of Berkhamsted High Street looking east: the old Market House destroyed by fire in 1854 has been replaced and the tower of St. Peter's Church is now hidden by the taller buildings of 136 - 146 High Street

16th – 18th Century

3.11 In the late sixteenth century, the mansion of Berkhamsted Place was built on the hill to the northwest of Berkhamsted for Sir Edward Carey, the Keeper of the Jewels to Elizabeth I who had been granted the Manor of Berkhamsted in 1580. This substantial estate can be seen on the Dury & Andrews map of 1766 (Map 3). Into its building went faced stone and flints from Berkhamsted Castle, which Sir Edward Carey held for the rent of one red rose from Elizabeth I, payable on the feast of St. John the Baptist. By 1662 the house had become the home of John Sayer, Chief Cook to Charles II. Upon his death in 1681 and under his wishes, Sayer's widow supervised the construction of the almshouse on the High Street in 1684; £1,000 was put in trust for purchasing land for the relief of the poor that led to the building of the almshouse, which consisted of twelve rooms for the use of six poor widows.

3.12 Within the town on the High Street stood another Elizabethan Mansion, Egerton House, which had gardens and orchards that extended up the hillside southwards; it may have been

used as a Dower House for the Ashridge estate, owned by the Earl of Bridgewater. It was sold-off during the 1930s, demolished and replaced by The Rex Cinema (page 58). During the mid-eighteenth century a new substantial property, Ashlyns Hall, was built out on the southern edge of the town with large grounds. It is clearly identified on the Dury and Andrews map of 1766 (Map 3).

3.13 By the mid-late eighteenth century the extent of the town's development can be seen on the Dury and Andrews map (Map 3). The High Street remained a dominant feature with other roads leading away from the town to the north and south; Castle Street (formerly Castle Lane), Water Lane and Ravens Lane leading north, and Cross Oak Road (formerly Gilhams Lane), Kings Road, Chesham Road (formerly Grubbs Lane) and Swing Gate Lane leading south. The church and market place are shown at the centre of Barkhamsted, while a small hamlet, Heath End, lay close to the foot of the castle (near Whitehill) and Ashlyns Hall, with its landscaped grounds, is shown on the outskirts of the town. On the north



Berkhamsted Place c1856 over-looking the town with St. Peter's Church in the distance occupied by John Sayer in the 1660s (TBLH & MS 2005)



Sayer's almshouses on the High Street, built in 1684

Map 3: 1766 Dury & Andrews Map (courtesy of HALS)



side of the market place is a long narrow island of shops, Middle Row (formerly Shopperowe), behind which is a narrow lane (Back Lane, now Church Lane). On the Dury and Andrews map small dots line the street frontages to the west of Middle Row; these are thought to be market stalls.

3.14 Although social conditions remained poor during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the wealthier classes did not seem to suffer. Sometime between mid and late eighteenth century a series of large urban properties were built within the town along the High Street including: Pilkington Manor, Boxwell House, The Red House, The Hall (Berkhamsted Hall) and Highfield House. Pilkington Manor, The Hall and Highfield House occupied large plots with private gardens. Other Georgian town houses for more professional classes also began to appear on the High Street, while others were 'modernised' with brick frontages.



Castle Street in c1860 looking north towards the river and canal beyond (Birtchnell 1975).



The same view of Castle Street today.

3.15 By 1766 the High Street had become a turnpike road under the control of The Sparrows Herne Turnpike Trust. The Trust was formed in 1762 to improve the maintenance of the roads and ease transport from Bushey, through Watford, Berkhamsted and Tring and on to the outskirts of Aylesbury. Some historians say a Toll House once stood at the east end of the High Street, near Bank Mill, to collect payment for using the road.



High Street c1860 looking north. The Swan, the Crown and the King's Arms are on the left side; the horse and cart stand outside the Swan (Birtchnell 1975)

3.16 Stagecoach passenger travel became more common in the eighteenth century and Berkhamsted developed into an important posting town on a main coaching route to London from Aylesbury and the Midlands. There were a number of coach builders in the town along with blacksmiths, saddlers and wheelrights who were able to profit from the regular stream of coaches. Brewing, which had largely been a domestic industry, also became an important feature of Berkhamsted's economy; the Swan Brewery on Chesham Road supplied the Swan Inn, the Brownlow Arms, and the Rose and Crown. Other maltings included those on Chapel Street, and by the end of the nineteenth century the brewing industry was a significant local employer. The largest was Locke and Smith Brewery in Water Lane, which supplied over forty public houses in Berkhamsted and Northchurch until it closed in 1914.



The same view of the High Street today. The former Swan (pink gables), and the Crown and the King's Arms are on the left side. Some two-storey buildings on the right side have been replaced by three-storey properties (136 - 146 High Street)

3.17 The expansion of coach travel and improvements to road maintenance, as a result of the turnpike system, led to the growth of hostelrys, such as the King's Arms on the south side of the High Street, which offered stabling for up to forty horses. A number of other principal coaching inns of the eighteenth century lay close to the market place; on the south side next to the Kings Arms stood the Swan and the Crown, and opposite on the north side, the One Bell. Further along the south side of the High Street was The Five Bells.

3.18 The Grand Junction Canal Company was formed in 1793 to link the Thames with canals in the Midlands. By 1798 the Grand Junction Canal was open from Brentford to Berkhamsted, travelling through the Ashridge Estate just below the castle. The waterway became fully operational in 1805. The route favoured Berkhamsted as it, in effect, bypassed Hemel Hempstead and made the transportation of corn and timber much easier. The new form of transport meant that, for the first time, coal could be brought into the area in large quantities. Also dung, night soil and street sweepings were brought out of London for use on local farms and on the return journey, hay and straw were sent back to London, thus relieving the roads of heavy wagon traffic. Busy canal side wharves near Castle Street and Ravens Lane enabled domestic and industrial supplies to be delivered

by horse-drawn barges or wide-boats (Castle Wharf stood between the river and the canal that are currently occupied by Alsford Wharf and Bridge Court, and at the end of Ravens Lane stands Ravens Wharf). Canal side taverns also prospered such as The Castle, The Crooked Billet, The Boat and the Crystal Palace. A boat building timber yard was established between the coal wharves at Castle Street and Ravens Lane.



Sketch of the Grand Union Canal and the London and Birmingham Railway, c1840. The bridge to Castle Street and the former Castle Inn stand on the right, while the original railway station is seen on the left (TBLH & MS 2005)

3.19 The canal was successful and continued to flourish for many years but, with the advent of the railways in the nineteenth century, was unable to compete. In 1929 the controlling company amalgamated with the Grand Union Canal Company in an attempt to economise, and as a result of this the canal was re-named. Improvements were made to the Grand Union Canal, but decline had set in. In 1948 the waterways were nationalised and twenty years later the Grand Union Canal was classified a 'cruising' canal as opposed to a commercial waterway.

3.20 In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the timber industry flourished around Berkhamsted, famous for the supply of clogs, rafters, bowls, shovels, spoons, tent poles and other equipment. Straw plaiting and lace-making were crafts which had been practised for a considerable period as cottage industries, but in the early nineteenth century, straw plaiting became a significant feature of the local economy and lace-making declined. Castle Street is likely to have been one of the areas where such cottage industries took place. A change in legislation leading to cheap imports and the introduction of basic school education (1870 Education Act) assisted in the decline of straw plaiting. Along the river and canal, conditions favoured the cultivation of watercress beds, evidence of which still exist. The main cress beds ran between Billet Lane and St. John's Well Lane along the north side of the

riverbank. Land on the south of the river between Stag Lane and St. John's Well Lane was occupied by Lane's Nurseries, who were founded in 1777 and grew apples, pears, plums and cherries (Map 5). Milling also played major roles in shaping Berkhamsted; Upper Mill on Mill Street and Lower Mill on London Road / Bank Mill Lane (now The Old Mill House, a grade II listed building). Two mills were mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and by the seventeenth century were named Upper Mill and Lower Mill (corn water-mills). Upper Mill stood opposite The Moor on the east side of Mill Street with its sluice by the bridge over the river (Map 4). The site was re-developed in the 1920s by Berkhamsted School. Castle Mill on Lower Kings Road was built in 1910 (Map 7).

19th Century

3.21 The construction of the Birmingham to London Railway began in 1834; the local contract was given to W. & L. Cubitt who employed 700 labourers at its peak of building works. It can be seen as having been partially mapped on the 1841 Tithe Map, not proceeding past Ravens Lane, through land owned by Lord Brownlow (Adelbert Egerton) of Ashridge (Map 4). The original Elizabethan-style railway station, which had no platforms, was replaced in 1875 by the present station buildings. The London and Birmingham Railway was taken over by The London and North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1846. In 1858 a third line was added and in 1875 a fourth line was constructed along with

extensive sidings, making further expansion of the local economy possible. In 1923 the LNWR became part of the London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) before being nationalised in 1948 (British Railways).

3.22 By 1801, Berkhamsted was still a small town with most of the 1,690 inhabitants of the parish of St. Peter's living in High Street, Castle Street, Mill Street, Water End and the outlying settlement of Frithsden. The town's population began to grow rapidly during the construction of the railway between 1831 and 1841. By 1851, the population had risen to 3,395. There was much overcrowding and few new houses, other than private mansions that had been built to accommodate the expanding population.

3.23 The extent of the town during the mid-nineteenth century can be seen on the 1841 Tithe Map (Map 4); it had changed little in size since the eighteenth century. The focus of settlement remained along the linear High Street with the church and castle being the prominent buildings. Roads to the north side of the High Street

included Ravens Lane, Castle Street, Water Lane joining Mill Street and St. John's Well Lane. Lower Kings Road was built in 1885 by public subscription. Roads to the south side included Swing Gate Lane, Chesham Road, Kings Road and Cross Oak Road. A series of smaller roads are also shown running southwards in 1841: Highfield Road, Rectory Lane, Three Close Lane, Cowper Lane, Park View, Boxwell Road and Kitsbury Road. These often only led to single houses or land to the rear of High Street properties; throughout the twentieth century these small roads have been joined by new streets and are densely built-up areas except for Rectory Lane.

3.24 The larger estates that lay outside Berkhamsted remain (Ashridge, Berkhamsted Place and Ashlyns Hall). Others dating to the eighteenth century that stood within the town also survived; Pilkington Manor, Boxwell House, The Red House, The Hall (Berkhamsted Hall) and Highfield House. Several farming estates also lay on the outskirts of the town; Durrants, Kitsbury and Cross Oak (to the south and

Map 4: 1841 Tithe Map of Berkhamsted (courtesy of HALS)



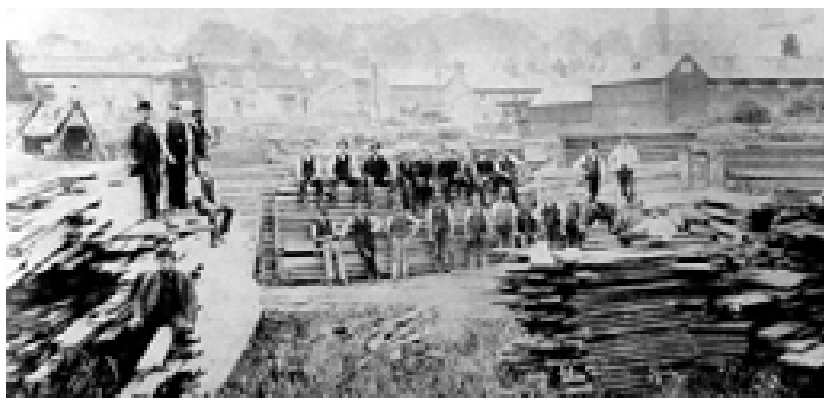
southwest). However, the town's growth in housing numbers was mainly limited to small cottages for industrial workers until the 1840s onwards when some large houses began to sell-off portions of land or break-up entire estates for new housing development; Ashlyns, Pilkington Manor, Boxwell House, The Hall, Highfield House, Durrants, Kitsbury and Cross Oak. Whilst in some cases this may have occurred 'naturally' (no single heirs / high death taxes), the overall impression is that it resulted from local demand for homes for industrial workers, rather than 'natural loss' or economic decline.

3.25 The first large-scale development commenced in 1851; this is seen on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map (Map 5). The Pilkington Manor Estate, east of Castle Street, was sold and the area developed up to the river's edge with streets of terraced cottages running mostly north-south (Bridge Street, Manor Street and Holliday Street) except for Chapel Street; it joined these new roads with older streets, Castle Street and Ravens Lane. The terraced housing constructed from St. Peter's Church to the east end of the town during the mid-late nineteenth century reflected the industrial class that they were built for; land owned by Highfield House was also used to build further terraced housing on Highfield Road and Victoria Road. Pilkington Manor House and rear grounds were however retained into the twentieth century.

3.26 This eastern district began to develop as the industrial area of the town with saw mills and chemical works. Sill's Timber Yard stood east of Holliday Street (now part of the Robertson Road modern housing development). Cooper's world famous sheep dip was

produced at Cooper's Yard between Manor Street and Ravens Lane on land purchased from Pilkingtons in 1852. It expanded and a new factory was built, Lower Works, in 1880 to the east of Sill's Timber Yard and backed onto the canal for loading / unloading (Lower Works is also part of the Robertson Road development). In 1925 Cooper's merged with another company, McDougall and Robertson Ltd, to become Cooper, McDougall and Robertson (road names in the Robertson Road housing development).

3.27 Despite the increase in population, no residential development had taken place on the north side of the town on land belonging to the Ashridge Estate. Following the construction of the canal and railway, the land between remained open until the 1870s when streets with rows of terraced housing first began to appear (Station Road, Ellesmere Road and George Street).



Sill's Timber Yard and saw mill on the High Street c1900, opposite Highfield Road (Hastie 1999)



Cooper's Factory, Lower Work, loading on the canal in 1922 (Hastie 1999)

3.28 Development southwest of the town began after the farming estate of Kitsbury was sold in 1868. First were the lower parts of Kitsbury Road, Gilhams Lane (now Cross Oak Road) and the fields to the east. Consequently, the earliest buildings in this part of the conservation area are to be found on these sections of street, on Middle Road which is between them and on the section of Charles Street which joins them (Map 5).



Upper Mill and houses on Mill Street c1909 looking east from across the millpond. It was purchased by the Berkhamsted School in 1926 and demolished (HALS Photographic Collection)

3.29 The development along Mill Street is more clearly shown on the 1841 Tithe Map (Map 4). In the mid-nineteenth century Upper Mill still stood on the east side of the road and there were a number of other houses to the north and south of the mill. These remained into the late nineteenth century. On the west side of the road in The Moor by the millpond stood further industrial buildings, but these had been demolished by the 1870s. The development of Berkhamsted School between St. Peter's Church and the south side of the river beyond Upper Mill began in 1894 with a large new school chapel, and later the New Hall (Deans Hall), which stood close to the sixteenth century Grammar School building (Old Hall). Once the mill had been purchased in 1926, the school owned land up to the road boundary and began demolishing some of the older buildings and adding new ones, such as The School Gym and neighbouring property with a Dutch-style dormer.



Berkhamsted School from inside the quad c1904 showing the new chapel and Old Hall (HALS Photographic Collection)

3.30 Over the next sixty years, house building, gradually extended across most of the land between Charles Street and the High Street with the development of the Boxwell estate in 1879 and the sale of Steele's Meadow in 1887. New

residential streets were created comprising Cowper Road, Torrington Road, Montague Road and part of Charles Street. Development subsequently spread further up the valley side after the first part of the Kingshill estate (stretching from Kings Road to Cross Oak Road) was sold in 1888 and the sale of further land in 1897 that became Doctor's Commons Road.

3.31 By the late 1890s the population in the Parish of St. Peter's was triple that of the 1801 figure and continued to grow past the turn of the century into the Edwardian period. As the Berkhamsted School grew, and as more and more merchants moved out of London to enjoy country air, development climbed further up the hillside on the south side of town and the proportion of roomy houses with large gardens increased. At the turn of the century a James North, a local auctioneer and valuer, purchased a large amount of North Road and developed it with the terraces we see today to the northern end of the road. In 1902 Shrublands Avenue was

Map 5: Ordnance Survey Map, first edition 1877 (Hastie 1999)



started. There was also development within the wedge of land between the Grand Union Canal and the railway; George Street, Ellesmere Road and Station Road (Map 6).

3.32 The increasing population led to the building, founding or enlargement of many different types of institutions such as new schools, a number of non-conformist churches and chapels, an administrative centre and the installation of public utilities. By the end of the nineteenth century there were five schools in the town: Berkhamsted School (1541; alterations in 1841 and 1888), Berkhamsted High School for Girls (1888), the Board School (the former British School built in 1834, enlarged in 1871, demolished in 1984), the Infants School (1894), and Bourne's School (1727, incorporated with

Berkhamsted and Northchurch National School in 1879). There was a new Town Hall (1859), the Baptist Church (1864), the Quaker Meeting House (1818), the Congregational Chapel (1834; replaced in 1867 and 1974, replaced by William Fiske House), the Primitive Methodist Chapel (1867), the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (1854), Hope Hall for the Plymouth Brethren (1874, rebuilt in 1969) and the Union Workhouse (1834), all of which signal the changing needs of a town expanding. Public services followed;



Charles Street from Cross Oak Road in 1897 (Hastie 1999)



*Berkhamsted Town Hall 1900
(BEAMS Photographic Collection)*



*Berkhamsted High School for Girls c1903
(HALS Photographic Collection)*



*The first Congregational Chapel c1860
(Birtchnell 1975)*



*Berkhamsted Old School House c1960
(TBLH & MS 2005)*

Map 6: Ordnance Survey Map, second edition 1898 (courtesy of HALS)



Berkhamsted Gas Works (1849), Great Berkhamsted Waterworks Company (1864), the North British Electric Company and the National Telephone Company (both in 1898).

3.33 The Old Rectory at the end of Rectory Lane is thought to date to c1840. It occupies land that may have once belonged to Egerton House (part of the Ashridge Estate). To the adjoining cemetery between Three Close Lane and Rectory Lane was created in 1842, also on land belonging to Egerton House. The cemetery was extended further up the hill in 1894 and again in 1924. Two small burial grounds within the town relate to local Non-conformist demands of the nineteenth century: the Quaker Meeting House, High Street and the former Congregational Chapel, Chapel Street (land to the rear of William Fiske House). In addition, there were two small cemeteries marked as burial grounds on the 1878 map. One lay on the east side of The Wilderness between the Gas Works and the Old Hall at Berkhamsted Collegiate School (Map 5); it now lies under grass within the school grounds. Another small cemetery lay at the northwest corner of Water Lane where it meets Mill Street next to the river; it now lies under Berkley Court.

20th – 21st Century

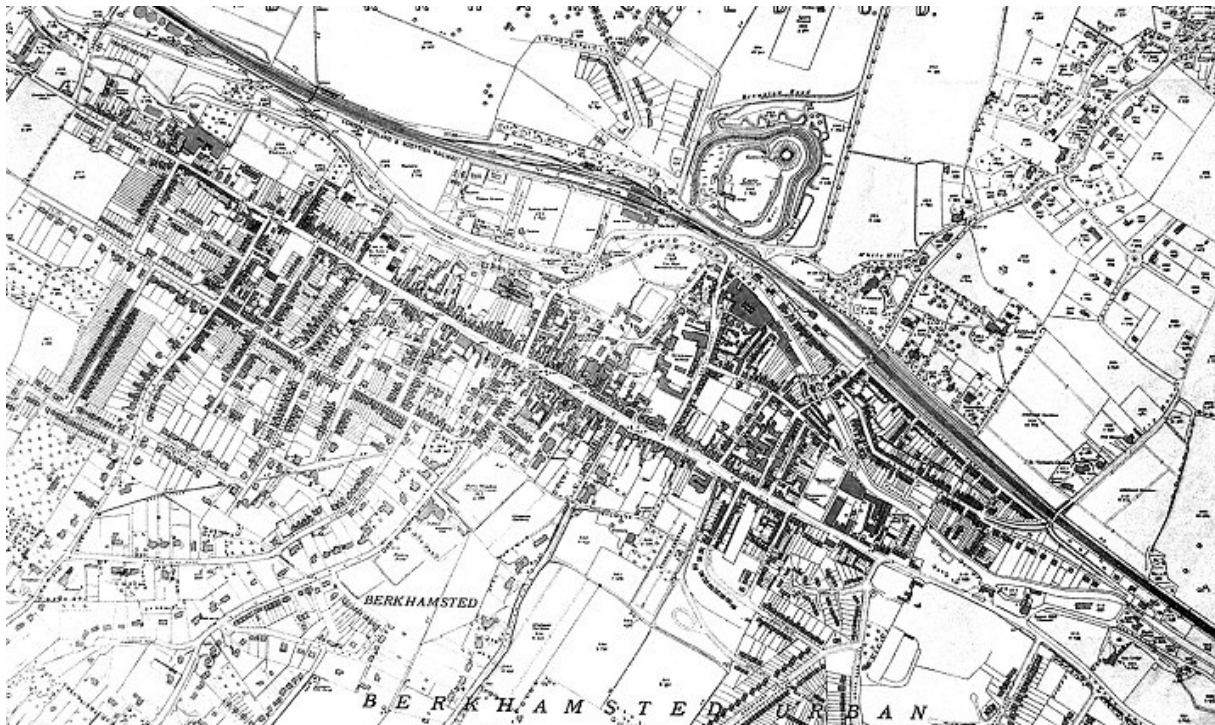
3.34 In 1909, the area of Sunnyside (between Gravel Path and Ivy House Lane) was included within the Urban District Council of Berkhamsted (Map 7). Despite this, the number of houses in the Urban District remained almost static for the first twenty years of this century. After the sparse amount of house building following the First World War, some more houses were built in Shrublands Road during the inter-war period as well as individual houses such as The Pines off North Road. Anglefield Road was also created during this time.

3.35 Most inter-war development within the town occurred through the use of open fields (at the east end) and the demolition of existing properties. As the town expanded, new facilities were built, such as The Rex Cinema on the High Street along with its adjoining flats and shops on the ground floor. It was built in 1938 on land occupied by Egerton House, a former sixteenth century building that was demolished.

Map 7: Ordnance Survey Map, third edition 1925 (courtesy of HALS)



Map 8: Ordnance Survey Map, fourth edition 1938 (courtesy of HALS)



3.36 After the First World War much of the land at The Hall was sold-off for council housing. During the 1930s Londrina Terrace, its canal footbridge and The Hall Walk were constructed at the east end of the High Street on land belonging to The Hall (a plaque on The Hall Walk reads '1934 E.G.' – a reference to Edward Greene). Edward's older brother, Charles Greene, had been housemaster at the boarding house (St. John's) of Berkhamsted School on Chesham Road) and in 1910 was made Headmaster. His third son, Graham, was born at St. John's in 1904. Graham Greene was a leading author, playwright and literary critic of the twentieth century who wrote novels and screenplays, many of which were turned into films or adapted for television, such as 'Brighton Rock', 'The Third Man', and 'The Quiet American'. He died aged 86 in 1991. The Greene family is synonymous with Berkhamsted; roads and buildings have been named after them (Greene Walk, Greene Court). The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust is also based in the town. It is a registered charity that was set up in 1997 by local residents with the support of the Town Council; it hosts the annual Graham Greene Festival and 'The Graham Greene Trail' that is part of the Berkhamsted Heritage Walk.



Postcard showing Egerton House on the High Street; it was demolished and replaced by The Rex Cinema and adjoining flats in 1938. Pilkingtons stands on the right in front of St. Peter's Church (HALS Photographic Collection)



The same view today. The Rex Cinema and adjoining four-storey flats (both recently restored) on the left, and beyond a row of late Georgian, three-storey town houses (103 – 109 High Street)

3.37 In 1935 Northchurch was also included in the Urban District, but another significant increase in population did not occur until the construction of small Council estates during the 1920s and 1930s (Map 7): land to the west of Swing Gate Lane (with Woodlands Avenue), Gossoms End and Highfield (following the demolition of Highfield House). Other inter-war housing was built southeast of the town (Cedar Road / Hall Park: Map 8). After the sale of the Ashridge estate in the 1930s, building also started on the north side of the railway (Castle Hill and Castle Hill Avenue); its development continued into the 1960s and 1970s (Map 8). During the 1950s a further 200 homes were built by the Council on the Durrants estate at Gossoms End.



Inter-war development on the High Street on the corner with Lower Kings Road, taken c1955. Former buildings were demolished and the new row of shops constructed with offices above (TBLH & MS 2005)



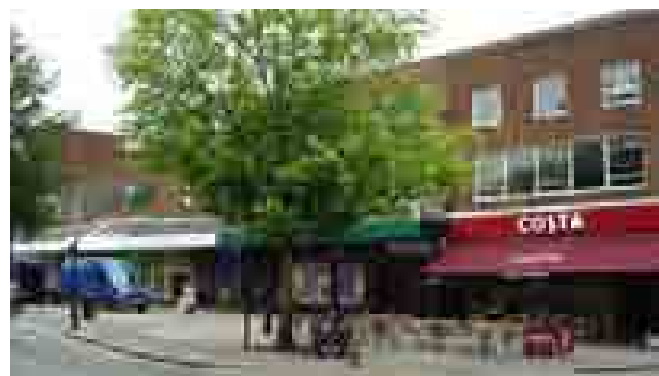
The same view today. Little has changed at these crossroads except for the introduction of traffic lights. The Police Station built in 1972 stands on the right corner (out of view)

3.38 Since the 1950s the population of Berkhamsted has grown steadily, but in more recent years it has slowed down: 10,785 (1951), 15,439 (1971), 15,701 (1991) and 16,243 (2001). Although the expansion of the town has been limited since the designation of Green Belt around it, infilling and the redevelopment of sites within the town centre and residential areas have continued to take place. In addition, retail development along the High Street has occurred along with the demolition and replacement of the Police Station (187 High Street on the corner of Kings Road) in 1972. A number of office buildings have also been built on former rear plots of High Street buildings.



Twentieth century commercial development in the centre of Berkhamsted on the High Street between the Town Hall and Church Lane, taken in 1973. This followed demolition of earlier buildings on the High Street during the 1950s and 1960s (BEAMS Photographic Collection)

3.39 At the core of the commercial High Street, by the old Market Place just beyond Church Lane, large new buildings were built between the 1950s and 1970s to replace earlier smaller structures. It would appear that after Berkhamsted Conservation Area was



The same view today showing that the 1950s buildings remain in use with very little alteration. Between 1973 and 1979 the pavement was widened and trees were planted. The four-storey glass office building, Chiltern House (built in 1978), replaced the three-storey hipped roof property seen on the photograph (right)

designated the four-storey glass office building (Chiltern House) was permitted in 1978, replacing an older three-storey commercial property. This is a highly visible building, whose fabric and design character is of its time and although it was commended for its architecture when built, it has a significant and detrimental impact upon the older character of the conservation area.



Highly visible twentieth century architecture in the centre of Berkhamsted on the High Street taken in 1979 (BEAMS Photographic Collection)

3.40 Development within the town centre of Berkhamsted has continued into the twenty-first century, comprising mostly residential units (flats and houses) that have been built upon sites previously occupied by nineteenth century and twentieth century buildings. Pilkington Manor and the adjacent Dean Fry Court flats are one of the modern developments; it attempts to emulate the former eighteenth century manor house, but lacks a front walled boundary with railings which was an earlier feature of some eighteenth century houses on the High Street (see postcard on page 23 depicting Pilkington Manor).



The same view today. Little has changed since 1973 except for a greater amount of street furniture and a bus stop with a pull-in.

3.41 With the re-emergence of road traffic as the primary method of transportation during the last century, there has been a decline in the use of the railways for the transportation of goods, materials and people. This resulted in a large number of cars and heavy lorries using the High Street, so a new road (the A41) was constructed in 1993 to bypass the centre of the town. While it alleviates some of the congestion and pollution, it has cut Berkhamsted off from the main route that was responsible for its existence.

4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

Summary of Historical Features

4.1 Berkhamsted Conservation Area has an extensive and varied list of historical features / buildings that have survived primarily due to the size and nature of its different character areas along with the ten centuries of growth and development (eleventh to twenty-first century).

- The linear character of the High Street
- St. Peter's Church and adjacent walled burial ground, and the large walled cemetery on Three Close Lane with gate piers
- The War Memorial
- The old Market Place and Court House
- Public houses and old coaching inns
- Berkhamsted School site on Castle Street / Mill Street including former residential blocks (boys and girls) on Chesham Road
- Other historic school buildings (e.g. 12A Chapel Street; Victoria Church of England School, Prince Edward Street; The Bourne School, 222 High Street)
- Victorian non-conformist chapels and churches
- The Old Rectory and its coach house
- Georgian town houses; both detached and rows of properties
- Nineteenth century terraces and semi-detached villa housing
- Long established shops and old shopfronts
- Banks
- Municipal / public buildings (e.g. the old Town Hall, Civic Centre)
- Almshouses
- The Rex Cinema (recently restored, including the flats and restaurant, The Gatsby)
- The Railway Station and railway line
- Berkhamsted Castle and earthworks
- River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal, including canal side housing terraces (e.g. 1 – 4 St. John's Well Lane & Londrina Terrace) and public houses that served the industrial history of canal area
- Canal bridges and footpath bridges (waterways heritage)

- Industrial heritage: e.g. Cooper House, Ravens Lane; Berkeley Gallery, Lower Kings Road; Kings Road Garage, Elm Grove; The Warehouse, Castle Wharf; the former maltings, Chapel Street / Bridge Street; the barn to the rear of 50 / 52 Charles Street
- Locks and lock keepers cottages on the Canal and the historic landscape through which the watercourses pass including their amenity areas
- Telephone boxes and post boxes
- The castle and its surroundings
- The general topographic character with views across the valley
- Front boundary walls, and steps on terraced streets
- Old stone kerbs and paving
- Alleys and paths (e.g. Angle Place path; the alley around Victoria Church of England School; the footpath from Chesham Road to Kings Road across Butts Meadow)
- Narrow paths at the end / between terraces
- Field boundaries (e.g. west of Shrublands Avenue and Charles Street alignment)
- Nineteenth / early twentieth century road layout

Street Pattern and Building Plots

Area 1

4.2 The main route through Berkhamsted Conservation Area, the A251, known as the High Street (Area 1), runs in a southeast to northwest direction. It is a busy route crossed at approximately its half-way point by Lower Kings Road / Kings Road running in roughly north to south creating a staggered crossroad with traffic lights. Lower Kings Road heads south from the railway station / castle (Area 2) becoming Kings Road at the traffic lights and continuing southwest past the turning to Charles Street (Area 3) and onto the A41 bypass road.

4.3 Buildings line along the edge of and face onto the High Street pavements. They occupy narrow medieval burgage plots and post-medieval larger but regularly-sized plots, some of

which have been later joined together to form wider street frontages. In a few cases historic building plot sizes have been removed, re-developed and more modern structures erected. Buildings along Lower Kings Road / Kings Road are similarly laid out as the High Street with the exception of Waitrose supermarket; it lies behind Lower Kings Road and the High Street on back land next to the River Bulbourne and occupies the site of the former Bulbourne (Clothing) Factory. The in-fill buildings of the old Market Place (Middle Row / Graball Row and Back Lane) to the west of St. Peter's Church still mostly retain their late medieval plot sizes and overall triangular shape.

4.4 In most cases the rear plots of High Street properties survive and extend behind the building on the street front following old boundaries. However, it is common for extensions to project into the rear plot thereby reducing the open space / garden area. In some cases later in-fill buildings have been constructed into the rear plots.

4.5 There are five main historic routes that lead off from the High Street. These are quieter than the High Street and are mostly residential streets with pavements: Castle Street, Ravens Lane, Swing Gate Lane, Chesham Road and Cross Oak Road. Castle Street and Ravens Lane head northwards down to and over the River Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal, and continue under / over the railway line onto New Road and Gravel Path respectively, leading northeast to Frithsden and Potten End. Swing Gate Lane ascends directly south towards the A41 bypass road, while Chesham Road and Cross Oak Road ascend southwest towards the bypass. Only Chesham Road joins the A41 while Swing Gate Lane runs over the bypass and Cross Oak Road (Dennys Lane) continues under it. However, Chesham Road is a very narrow route and cannot be used to access the High Street from the A41; there is a no entry sign at the junction with Hilltop Road and so Kings Road provides the main route to the A41 along Kingshill Way.

4.6 A small number of gaps between properties on the High Street are used as pedestrian routes leading through to rear car parks, such as from High Street Central to Water Lane car park and

High Street West to Waitrose car park off Lower Kings Road. A narrow alleyway between adjoining properties is found along the High Street leading through to Church Lane (High Street Central, between 150 & 152 High Street).

4.7 Buildings of Castle Street, Ravens Lane and Chesham Road mostly face onto the street frontage, while those on Cross Oak Road commonly stand back from the roadside behind small front gardens with low brick walls. The multi-period buildings along Castle Street are a mixture of older style properties (houses and shops) dating between the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The school buildings of Berkhamsted School have a different plan form as they face towards St. Peter's Church (the Old Grammar School Hall of 1544) and also face into the centre of the late nineteenth century school yard. Modern developments situated along Ravens Lane (west side) have small front gardens with low brick walls unlike the mid-nineteenth century properties opposite on the east side.

4.8 In most cases the small rear plots of Castle Street (east side) properties survive and extend behind the building on the front following old boundaries. However, it is common for extensions to project into the rear plot thereby reducing the open space / garden area. In some cases later buildings have been constructed on former open ground or where non-residential buildings stood, usually on larger un-divided plots, such as Manor Close, the Fire and Ambulance Station and William Fiske House (site of the former Congregational Church). The Berkhamsted School (west side) has also undergone some in-fill development and demolition / re-development.

4.9 The small rear plots of Ravens Lane (east side) properties survive and extend behind the building on the front following old boundaries. However, it is common for extensions to project into the rear plot thereby reducing the open space / garden area. The rear plots are walled (as seen on Holliday Street), some have original outbuildings attached while others have removed them and timber fencing / new walls erected on the boundary. Most properties on the west side are modern and replace Cooper's

sheep dip powder factory that extended back to Manor Street.

4.10 The layout and size of historic plots along Chesham Road survive, except for St. John's (former boarding house to Berkhamsted School) on the east side; it extended its northern boundary by taking land from the rear plots of High Street properties during the 1960s / 70s. Despite the construction of the modern flats on the west side of Chesham Road, Deans Lawn (new build) and Cavalier Court (demolition and re-development), the boundaries of these plots remain roughly the same size.

4.11 Leading eastwards off Chesham Road is an historic footpath that continues on to Butts Meadow and then Kings Road (shown as a footpath on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map). It forms part of the conservation area boundary and lies between Area 1 and Area 3. Passing through trees it continues along behind the allotments and Victoria Church of England School, before opening out into Butts Meadow (the meadow has now been included in the Conservation Area). A further pedestrian route joins Prince Edward Street with Butts Meadow via a footpath around the plot of Victoria Church of England School.

4.12 There are a series of historic nineteenth century but more minor, and often narrower, residential roads leading away from the High Street that run roughly northeast (north side) and southwest (south side):

South side

- **Highfield Road:** very straight, ascending to edge of boundary meeting Victoria Road / Holly Drive. Mixture of nineteenth and twentieth century housing that mostly face onto the road. Nineteenth century plot sizes remain. Later development has sub-divided large plots.
- **Victoria Road:** very straight, ascending to edge of boundary where it then curves east to meet Holly Drive. Nineteenth century housing remains within original plot sizes and faces the street; houses to the east line the street frontage while those to the west have small front gardens behind low brick walls. The houses to the west side have a rear brick wall boundary and some outbuildings in the rear plots; rear extensions are also common. There is a narrow alley on the west side of Victoria Road leading through to Three Close Lane. It lies beyond a row of three nineteenth century houses with two-storey bays (nos. 34 – 38) along the side wall of no. 38.
- **Three Close Lane:** straight, ascending to edge of boundary where it then curves east to meet Beech Drive. Most of the land lies within the walled cemetery (access also from Rectory Lane) and remains intact. Land fronting the High Street, formerly Egerton House, is entirely occupied by The Rex Cinema (the 1930s cinema, adjoining flats and restaurant, The Gatsby), while there has been modern development within the rear plot of the High Street property opposite.
- **Rectory Lane** (extended in the late twentieth century when Priory Gardens was built upon the Green Lane access): very narrow single lane, straight, ascending to edge of boundary where it meets The Old Rectory (no pavement). Much sub-division of plots for new properties (Cloister Garth), development within High Street rear plots and car parking. Cemetery boundary and walls remain.
- **Prince Edward Street:** narrow, straight, short, gently ascending where it meets Victoria Church of England School. Buildings line the street front, even the modern properties. Many of the old boundaries have been lost / altered through demolition and re-development. The nineteenth-century school has been extended eroding adjacent historic plots.
- **Elm Grove:** very narrow single lane, straight, ascending to meet Grove End. Mixture of housing, but mostly nineteenth century with small front gardens and low walls. New development, Elm Court (west side), has shortened the rear plots of High Street properties. Small re-development of 'St Albans' is in-keeping with the street surroundings. Sub-division of a larger plot at Grove End with new build and electric gates.
- **Cowper Road:** straight, ascending to meet Charles Street. The buildings and plot layout at the High Street end (north of Torrington

Road) has been much altered and re-developed, including alterations to rear plots of High Street properties leading to large open car parking areas. Some nineteenth century housing and a former Wesleyan Methodist Church (1923) survive facing the road with low brick walls and small front gardens. Small re-development of terrace-style housing (east side) has sub-divided a larger plot but is in-keeping with the surroundings.

- **Park View Road:** straight, ascending to meet Charles Street. The modern buildings at the entrance (High Street properties) and developments in their rear plots have both altered their earlier boundary layout. The early twentieth century former RC Chapel (no. 1) and semi-detached villa-style and detached housing (south end, west side) remain along with their boundaries. The demolition of the school and erection of Park View Court and car park set back from the road is uncharacteristic of the street character.
- **Boxwell Road:** straight, ascending to meet Charles Street. Most of the nineteenth and early twentieth century houses towards Charles Street face the street front with small gardens and low walls (east side and part of the west side). Later detached twentieth century houses closer to the High Street (east side) are in larger plots, are more centrally positioned and stand back from the street behind low brick walls. Some of these stand in a former rear plot of a High Street property.
- **Kitsbury Road:** straight, gently ascending to meet Charles Street. Much of the housing is nineteenth and early twentieth century facing the street front behind small gardens and low walls. Some of the later 1930s housing towards the High Street (north) was built on the Poor Law Institution land and open land; these boundaries survive.

North side

- **Londrina Terrace:** pedestrian route between High Street buildings with access over a foot bridge across the Grand Union Canal. A 1930s secluded group of six joined houses at a right angle to the canal and set in the mid-plot position facing east. Modern

development to rear (Londrina Court) and in front on the High Street.

- **Robertson Road:** modern very straight road with a wide aspect leading into a recent housing development comprising a crossroad and curving cul-de-sacs (McDougall Road and Cooper Way). Leads down to the canal. Various building types including short terraces (three or four properties), townhouses (up to eight properties), groups of adjoining semi-detached houses (four properties) and blocks of flats (Augustus Smith House; Thomas Bourne House; Glassmill House). Many parking bays and fore courts throughout the development, some en-block garaging. Most townhouses have integral ground floor garages. There are large open views across the street layout over parking areas. Most properties face onto the street front, apart from those on Coopers Way and also the properties facing towards the canal. All house-types have rear garden plots.
- **Holliday Street:** narrow, straight, descending to meet Chapel Street / Ravens Lane and the River Bulbourne. Mostly nineteenth century terraced houses or semi-detached houses face the street front with rear garden plots of different lengths. Rear of Cooper House (east side) backs directly onto street. Rear plots of Ravens Lane terraced housing have rear brick wall boundaries and outbuildings (west side). At the north end is a modern six block flat development, Waterside, facing the canal over the River Bulbourne with parking bays. A series of older en-block garaging lies to the south. New Provident Place is a modern terraced development facing towards the canal and is accessed between houses (by no. 13 Holliday Street) occupying land with a former industrial use (saw mill).
- **Manor Street:** narrow, straight, descending to meet Chapel Street. A mixture of nineteenth century terraces and detached houses face the street front with very small front gardens and larger rear plots, together with a long row of modern flats with a large interior courtyard for parking. New semi-detached housing faces the street front and road through to main off-street development).

- **Chapel Street:** partially curved street running east to west joining Castle Street to Ravens Lane. Mostly nineteenth century semi-detached and detached houses, some forming a row of four properties face the street front with very small front gardens and larger rear plots (especially those on the north side). The street includes a small industrial unit and attached scout hut (the scout hut is located within a former maltings on the corner of Bridge Street) and a Victorian school, now a house (12A Chapel Street). A modern mews development, Castle Mews, stands in a formerly open rear plot (the garden of a demolished house located off Manor Street). Masons Yard is a small development situated in the rear plots between 4 and 5 Chapel Street. Larger plots line the south side.
- **Bridge Street:** very narrow, straight to the River Bulbourne and Bridge Court new development. Lined by nineteenth century houses mostly in groups of three or four, facing onto the street with rear garden plots. The Scout hut (a former maltings) extends along Bridge Street up to the corner with Chapel Street.
- **Mill Street & Water Lane & The Wilderness:** joins Castle Street to Water Lane car park and comprises mostly school buildings of various periods that stand back from the roadside in a single large plot on each side of the street; most buildings face the street. At its south end lies Adelbert House that faces southwest along the roadside. The modern flats and offices, Berkley Court and Amersham House, form the end of Mill Street and Greenfield Road. A workshop building runs along the south side of Mill Street on the corner plot by The Wilderness into the car park (part of the school site). Beyond is a boundary wall behind which stand other buildings, also belonging to the school. The plots of The Wilderness and car park are now virtually one area, but had formerly been divided up into smaller plots with buildings and gas works. Water Lane is a very narrow lane between buildings leading from the High Street to the car park and led to the water works. Water Lane car park is a wide open space that backs onto modern High Street properties, offices, water works, flats and school buildings. A former burial ground lies to the east of The Wilderness, now within Berkhamsted School (Wilson House).
- **Greenfield Road:** is a 1920s / 30s development to reach the water works. It runs east from Lower Kings Road to Berkley Court and Water Lane car park. On the south side is the River Bulbourne with access to the large plots of the pump house and 'Waterworks Bungalow', and rear plots of properties on Lower Kings Road. The 'Waterworks Bungalow' lies close to the edge of its corner plot, with a garden to the side and rear. A former burial ground lies on the north side of Greenfield Road (now under Berkley Court).
- **St. John's Well Lane:** straight, wide but short road descending to the River Bulbourne and canal before turning to the east into St. Johns' Well Lane a car park and onto the rear of Waitrose supermarket (Lower Kings Road car park). The east side was the site of a former nineteenth century nursery, but is now occupied by two large modern buildings on one large plot; the former Royal Mail Offices, now Marks and Spencers, on the High Street and to the rear the Telephone Exchange. On the west side are the rear gardens on houses on the High Street, the car park of St. John's Veterinary Surgery and St John's Well Court (flats with a surrounding car park). At the end of the road, beyond the existing conservation area boundary, is a footpath that leads to a narrow bridge over the River Bulbourne to a tow path by the canal.
- **Park Street:** straight, descending down to the Sacred Heart Church, the River Bulbourne and the canal. Mostly nineteenth century semi-detached houses that form a row of terraces facing the street front with very small front gardens and larger rear plots (east side). Some new development (modern houses), older style townhouses with integral ground floor garages (possibly 1970s). Small industrial unit / offices (east side) attached to the corner property, 352 High Street.

Area 2

4.13 George Street developed in a long but narrow plot that runs alongside the north bank of the canal downstream from where Ravens Lane / Gravel Path cross the bridge near The Boat public house. This gave rise to the construction of numerous small houses on narrow but long-shaped plots and mainly in terrace rows and predominantly on the north side of the street. As these developments progressed farther to the east, Cambridge Terrace was built as a short street leading off to the north with Little Bridge Road, William Street and Bedford Street also as short streets to the south in the direction of the canal's banks.

4.14 Although the general axis was west-east, the same area of terraces was crossed by short cuts consisting of the path down to the canal near the Rising Sun and its lock as well as another short cut that emerges from between houses mid-way along the length of George Street to allow access to Ellesmere Road and New Street. The permeability of the area is increased due to these alleys that also include private access ways to rear gardens from the street and the rear access to gardens that leads off from Paxton Road.

4.15 Ellesmere Road also grew from west to east to produce terrace housing of the same type but facing north towards the railway and with New Street and Paxton Road as short streets leading off at right-angles. The railway is situated opposite the fronts of the Ellesmere Road properties and the road is therefore built up on one side only. Extensions that have been made at the rear of houses in Ellesmere Road and roof-lights added to rear roof slopes in some properties may be viewed across the rear gardens from Paxton Road and from the end of George Street. Such extensions might give rise to concerns about the development pressures here causing householders to enlarge their properties at a cost to original character.

4.16 Ellesmere Road contains at its far end from New Street onwards the only significant number of front boundaries within this sub-area. They consist of low brick walls or picket fences, hedges or a few instances of railings and there

are no examples of these small front areas being used for car hard-standings.

4.17 Across Gravel Path from Ellesmere Road is another area of mainly terrace housing. Station Road faces on to the railway to give another one-sided street with the exception of one semi-detached red brick house immediately next to the line. The rest of the houses stand on narrow but very long plots that stretch down to the towpath of the canal giving large rear gardens with a pleasant aspect on to the open space of the canal's banks.

4.18 Contrasting with the west-east orientations described above, the central part of Area 2 is characterised by streets laid out on an axis that runs north-south. These routes are believed to be the descendants of historic approaches to the castle as used since the middle ages to join up the parish church and High Street with the feudal castle. When the bridges across the Bulbourne and the canal were constructed these also were placed on a North-South axis. Today, Mill Street and Castle Street join up at their far end from the town centre to cross the canal bridge that is placed near to the station's former and current sites. Only the later bridge, the nineteenth century Lower Kings Road example, varies from this pattern as it crosses the canal at an oblique angle enabling it to align with the road that approaches the central High Street crossing.

4.19 The railway is crossed by bridges at Gravel Path and Ivy House Lane but a tunnel passes beneath the tracks near the station and at the narrower New Road tunnel that leads to the castle perimeter.

4.20 At the western end of Area 2 another route exists in the form of the footpath extension to St. John's Well Lane that crosses the watercress beds and joins up to the canal towpath. The towpath itself is a major route for pedestrians and cyclists interconnecting numerous parts of Area 2. The towpath with its many ramps and steps has immense significance in contributing to the character of the town along its entire length.

Area 3

4.21 This area lies to the south of the High Street from which generally straight residential streets running roughly north-south, ascend the valley side and meet Charles Street which runs parallel to the High Street. Cross Oak Road and Kitsbury Road cross Charles Street and continue uphill. Other roads start at Charles Street. The nineteenth / early twentieth century road layout is a loose grid layout with roads generally at right angles. That it is not entirely regular reflects the fact that parcels of land for development were not all available at the same time. Earlier field boundaries (e.g. west of Shrublands Avenue and Charles Street alignment) provided some structure to the layout.

- **Kings Road** was a route pre-existing the Victorian housing development south of the town (see the 1841 Tithe Map). It follows a curving line away from the High Street with extensive views to the east. Doctor's Commons Road later followed its line. The latter is notably sloping so that houses on the west side are at higher level than buildings on its east side.
- **Charles Street** is the main east-west linking road between the north-south streets. Consequently, it has many junctions and the treatment of each segment in terms of building form is important. It affords extensive views northward across the High Street and onto the valley slope beyond. From some positions the roofs and rears of houses on the streets joining Charles Street are readily visible.
- **Cowper Road** rises to meet Charles Street. Nightingale Lodge disrupts the surrounding earlier housing layout but the corners of the junction with Torrington Road retain period buildings.
- **Montague Road** comprises both consistent terraces and beyond these, individual larger houses. The southern end is cut across by the old Angle Place path.
- **Park View Road.** Park View Court has been built on what was previously garden land. Earlier pairs and detached buildings are retained and inter war houses were erected on plots on the south east side.
- **North Road** was developed with terraces to the northern end of the road and larger single houses to the south as far as The Pines. With the addition of an access road to Pine Close, it retains these buildings and layout and the Angle Place footpath opening.
- **Boxwell Road** curiously features a curve at the southern end with Charles Street. It retains original terraces though at the north eastern end where land remained open for many years several incongruous bungalows have been built.
- **Kitsbury Road** is straight and ascends to cross Charles Street before continuing uphill. 1930s housing towards the High Street was built where earlier, a workhouse stood. The Charles Street junction is marked by an early three storey block with shops (and former Post Office) at ground floor. This is one of the earliest components of the Charles Street area. There are two cul-de-sac unmade roads leading off Kitsbury Road. Hamilton Road on its north side has small-scale garaging and workshops servicing the rears of the Charles Street properties.
- **Middle Road** is also an early feature and was a back road with cottages, stables or stores / workshops. This character remains, some buildings having been converted to dwellings, and with garages to the northern end.
- **Cross Oak Road** formerly Gilhams Lane, was initially (up to the 1898 Ordnance Survey map) only built up on the north eastern side up to about no. 93. Subsequent development was with larger individual and pairs of houses. Rothesay Court at the Charles Street junction has replaced two large houses on Shrublands Road. At the southern end, the pairs of houses either side of the Greenway junction are a gateway feature to this pre-1925 development.
- **Shrublands Avenue** is the straightest and most regular of the streets in this area. Its less regular, western back boundary follows an old lane. There are runs of several designs of two-storey terraced houses whose roofs and chimney scapes provide a strong feature along the skyline.

5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

Analysis

5.1 Berkhamsted Conservation Area covers a large urban area of approximately 98 hectares, the second largest conservation area in the Borough, which includes about half the total area of the town's built environment. The majority of the conservation area comprises the linear High Street that runs in a northwest to southeast direction and originally centred upon the Parish Church of St. Peter and the market place. In addition there are also a significant number of smaller roads running north and south from the High Street leading between the former rear plots of the buildings that line the main road through Berkhamsted; Castle Street, Manor Street, Ravens Lane, Holliday Street, Chesham Road, Kings Road / Lower Kings Road, Boxwell Road and Kitsbury Road.

5.2 Today the High Street is lined on either side by mostly commercial premises (such as shops, restaurants, banks, offices, public houses), places of worship and public buildings. It remains a busy and vibrant town centre with a high proportion of surviving historic properties with significant local and national heritage value. There are a small number of residential properties dotted along the High Street, mostly at the east and west ends where commercial use is less dominant. In more recent years there has been a move towards the re-development of some sites at the east end of the High Street into residential use from their former commercial use, such as the houses on Robertson Road / Cooper Way / McDougal Road and a row of flats located on a prominent site near the Parish Church between Castle Street and Manor Street; Pilkington Manor.

5.3 The built environment of the High Street dates back to the thirteenth century when St. Peter's Church was constructed; the stone church is a grade II* listed building and stands within the central core of the conservation area by the old Market Place. A significant proportion of neighbouring surrounding properties on the

High Street and Castle Street are also statutory listed and, as a result, their historic character has been retained and this has had a positive impact upon the conservation area. Listed buildings also extend east and west to the boundary limits of the conservation area. Most date to between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Court House (Church Lane), 129 High Street (Dean Incent's House) and 125 High Street were built in the sixteenth century and are timber framed. However, 173 High Street, which is also timber framed, has been scientifically dated to the thirteenth century. It is grade II* listed and is thought to be a service wing to a former aisled hall. In addition, the front range of the former Swan public house, no. 139, is thought to have been an open timber hall dating to the fourteenth century and was later extended to the west and east.

5.4 The High Street is also well known for its coaching inns and public houses dating between the sixteenth and nineteenth century; some are still in use as public houses today (The Bull, The Crown, The Kings Arms, The Lamb and The George) while others have been converted to restaurants or residential use (The Swan and The Black Horse). It is not clear if The Swan was built as an inn, but was used as such from the seventeenth century onwards; it began to run its own coach to London in c1800.

5.5 The significance of the High Street continued into the nineteenth and twentieth century when new buildings were constructed in red or yellow brick: The Old Town Hall, the Baptist Church, the Civic Centre, The Rex Cinema (adjoining flats and restaurant, The Gatsby). Some modern developments have respected the older character of the High Street, while others are less sympathetic (taller and out-of-scale; whether civic, commercial or residential) with the surviving historic built environment. Flats have become more common from their use in large modern residential

developments, and not just on the High Street. While their materials blend in with the surrounding buildings and have some interesting design features, the overall scale and massing has begun to impact upon the local character.

5.6 The settlement of the High Street is both defined and enhanced by its linear plan and the surviving regular plots within the urban landscape. This regular pattern is also seen within the later building plots of Castle Street, Ravens Lane, Holliday Street, Highfield Road, Victoria Road, Bridge Street, Lower Kings Road and Park Street. However, some larger buildings of the twentieth century have eroded the earlier plot widths on the High Street, such as The Rex Cinema (including the adjoining flats), and a row of shops on the north side of the street between Water Lane and Lower Kings Road (162 – 192 High Street). The large plot to the rear of the Parish Church on Castle Street is occupied by a large number of buildings belonging to Berkhamsted School, part of which dates back to 1544 when the first structure was erected and is now a grade I listed building. Later buildings were added to form a four-sided courtyard on Castle Street and it is the largest school within the conservation area; it later branched out to Chesham Road and Kings Road.

5.7 Residential streets leading away from the High Street have an overall common character as urban development began to expand rapidly from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Small terrace groups and semi-detached properties (single or adjoining groups) tend to lie close to the town centre and the railway serving the needs of the working class, while larger villa-style houses and detached houses of the professional classes are found to the southwest of the town (Charles Street and Shrublands Avenue etc). While few buildings on these streets are statutory listed (47 Highfield Road and All Saints Church, Shrublands Road), the surviving character of the built environment has significant local heritage value. In many cases it is not just individual buildings that are of local importance, but the nature of group value (such as the consistency of design, features and materials used) that gives them their special character. The danger is that unsympathetic alterations, developments within sub-divided

plots / gardens, removal of boundary walls, raising of rooflines and removal of chimney stacks will begin to erode their character, which will impact upon the group value as a whole.

5.8 To the north of the High Street lies the River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal, the railway line and the remains of the twelfth century Berkhamsted Castle. To the east of the railway station and southeast of the castle are a series of residential roads lined with terraced housing.

5.9 As the Grand Union Canal and River Bulbourne pass through the conservation area the character of their immediate surroundings changes. In the western half (upstream from the vicinity of the station) they flow through meadows of considerable width and with only a small number of buildings encroaching upon their banks. The points where Mill Street and Castle Street meet to cross the two watercourses signal a change. From here downstream and moving East through the conservation area a good deal of development has taken place.

5.10 Such development may be categorised as, firstly, former industrial sites now converted or re-developed for residential use or, secondly, as nineteenth century housing areas developed close to the banks of the canal or within a short distance from the banks. A number of more recent in-fills have introduced additional housing into this overall pattern.

5.11 A number of sites that stand close to the banks of the canal are separated from the water by their rear gardens and the future of the canal's setting would be affected to a high degree by any potential development in these areas. Similarly, two rows of garages may be found (close to the George Street Playground and at the lower end of Bedford Street) situated at points immediately next to the towpath. These garages are currently of poor quality (being "neutral" in their architectural contribution) and their sites are worthy of improvement.

5.12 Land use north of the town along the railway line (Area 2) is mostly occupied by its walls and embankments. In visual terms the railway areas (with the exception of the station

and its immediate environs) may be termed as “neutral” but at the same time devoid of many potential sites for development. A builder's yard stands in Station Road on a narrow wedge-shaped site immediately next to the tracks but this location does not appear likely to attract future development. One other railway site requires notice: it stands at the farthest eastern end of Ellesmere Road after the last house and it is just within the conservation area boundary. Partly occupied by a domestic garden, by rough ground and by the road and railway embankments near to the bridge which crosses the tracks at this point, the openness of the site is currently its greatest positive quality and development here would be of possible detriment to this.

5.13 To the southwest of the High Street is a predominantly residential area (Area 3). It comprises the Victorian / Edwardian spread of the town to the southwest of the High Street. Compared to earlier nineteenth century development at the eastern end of the town for instance, which included industrial / commercial development, this area of the town was developed for more middle class residents. This explains why it is almost entirely housing with little by way of workshops, stores, yards or corner shops (and no Public House) such as are often found in mid-late nineteenth century areas. Exceptionally, there are a few shops on Charles Street at Kitsbury Road (including a former corner shop at 56 Charles Street) and a few small former workshops / stores on Middle Road.

5.14 Berkhamsted Conservation Area is divided into three main character areas, each with its own very distinct and diverse identity; the resulting overall character of the town is therefore much greater than the sum of its individual parts.

Summary of Townscape Features

- Medieval origins; a town plan and its burgage plots, particularly the High Street that centres around the medieval core and old Market Place next to the Parish Church. Burgage plots extending away from the core to the eastern boundary limits (as far as Robertson Road) and to the west (up to Park View Road).

- The dominance of the commercial High Street linear plan and the adjoining straight residential side streets.
- The views along the High Street, up and down the side streets, towards the River Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal, and across the Bulbourne Valley.
- Diversity of building types across the whole conservation area: commercial, industrial, public, educational, religious and residential. These building types form the backbone of the three individual character areas.
- Surviving shops, public houses, religious buildings and civic buildings that retain their original function, along with the re-use of some older buildings to new commercial uses.
- Construction materials are varied across the conservation area and relate to the type of common materials used within a set build period: the majority are built from red or yellow brick or, particularly along the High Street, have a timber frame encased in brick / render. Others have an exposed old timber frame, while only the Parish Church is built in stone. Some properties have flint, stone or terracotta tile decoration.
- Properties throughout the conservation area are commonly two-storey or two and a half storeys with tiled or slate covered roofs. Most twentieth century properties are three or four storeys (typically along the High Street) and have varying roof coverings. Old chimney stacks survive and are common features.
- Buildings generally face directly onto street frontages; side street properties often stand a short distance from the roadside with very small front gardens with low boundary walls.
- Views of the rear of properties are uncommon; they are generally restricted by the medieval burgage plot layout or from nineteenth century terracing (including adjoining groups of two and three). Views across rear plots can be seen in very few locations; Charles Street (looking north over adjoining streets), Mill Street (east and west sides), Holliday Street (west side - rear of Ravens Lane properties), Robertson Road (most of the estate and adjoining streets) and Water Lane car park (the backs of High Street buildings). The rear view of High

Street properties beyond the junction of Lower Kings Road are seen from within the two other public car parks (St. John's Well Lane and Lower Kings Road).

- Residential buildings range from small terrace groups, semi-detached properties (single or adjoining groups) to larger villa-style houses and detached houses. Flats have become more common from their use in large modern residential developments.
- Canal bridges and locks provide vital focal points in the parts of the conservation area where they stand. Listed fabric in the shape of the lock keepers' cottages and various buildings being proposed for local listing, such as the canal-side pubs, provide further significant features. The banks of the canal have undergone alterations in the aftermath of the change from being previous industrial sites and now park-like scenery characterises the canal banks with play areas for children and other leisure amenities. Housing development (usually as blocks of flats) has replaced the former warehouses etc. and previously empty sites have sometimes also been developed in a few parts of the canal's banks.
- Railway scenery remains essentially unchanged since the 1830s although modernisation has come to the station and to the bridges with the line here highly used over a continuous period. The walls and embankments of the railway provide strong local landmarks together with other surviving nineteenth century buildings and the layout of the town remains highly affected by the presence of these features.
- With its status as a Scheduled Monument, Berkhamsted Castle enjoys the highest degree of planning protection and its role as a major historic and landscape feature of large dimensions is secure. Due to the fact that the canal and railway separate the castle's site from the rest of the town to the south diminishes the extent to which views of the castle may be enjoyed from nearly any point in the town centre across the canal. The presence of the castle has acted as a restraint on development in this area on the far side of the railway and presumably it will continue to do so.

Current activities and uses

5.15 As a busy and vibrant town centre, Berkhamsted displays many of the characteristics of an historic medieval market town that has continued to prosper and grow while retaining key public facilities: a variety of small local shops and larger chain stores including supermarkets, banks, pharmacies, post office, estate agents, a railway station, a garden centre, a cinema (The Rex Cinema), a civic centre, several schools and religious centres, a garage, a library, a fire and ambulance station, many public houses, cafes and restaurants, sports facilities, and a local heritage museum store.

5.16 As a commercial centre, the diversity of facilities brings visitors into the town. Some commute into town for the railway, while others work in the shops, banks and offices. All these add to the traffic congestion and the pressure on parking facilities within Berkhamsted, especially during the working week and on Saturdays. The sports facilities, Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis and Squash Rackets Club, and Cricket Club lie outside the conservation area, and like the railway, have their own car parking facilities. Although the Bowls Club is located next to Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis and Squash Rackets Club, it lies within the conservation area boundary.

Focal points, views and vistas

5.17 Partly because of its size, and partly because of the topography, no single place provides a comprehensive view of the whole of Berkhamsted Conservation Area. Nevertheless, views and vistas out, within and across the conservation area are abundant and varied (Areas 1, 2 and 3).

5.18 It is recognised that views along the High Street (Area 1) are an important feature of its linear character. However, due to its length and tree cover, it cannot be viewed as a whole from end to end. For example, the view from the east end by Swing Gate Lane reaches comfortably as far as the Baptist Church by Ravens Lane / Holliday Street, and then from there to The Rex Cinema, then to the Parish Church of St. Peter, then on to the crossroads with Kings Road etc,

namely large recognisable structures or sites that the eye is drawn to as a full stop.

5.19 Views to and from the High Street along adjoining streets are also important (Chesham Road), as well as along shorter streets (Bridge Street) and longer streets (Charles Street, Lower Kings Road). Views between buildings or small open areas are also part of the character of the High Street: the High Street / Church Lane area where The Court House and War Memorial can be seen; the wider pavement on the north side of the High Street between Water Lane and Lower Kings Road; the High Street cross roads at Lower Kings Street / Kings Road; the gap between 208 and 210 High Street to Park View Cottage; Sevens Close (between 69 and 71 High Street). In some cases narrow footpaths open out into areas that provide a surprise view such as the narrow footpath between 280 and 284 High Street.

5.20 However, there a number of vistas that play a significant role within the wider town centre and are taken from high vantage points within the conservation area boundary (Areas 1, 2 and 3). These relate to stunning snapshot vistas across the Bulbourne river valley as seen from the south side of the town, such as Highfield Road, Victoria Road and Kings Road (Area 1), and roads that cross Charles Street such as Cowper Road, Park View Road, Kitsbury Road, Cross Oak Road, and from the southern end of Shrublands Avenue (Area 3).

5.21 The Grand Union Canal has a number of views and vistas that are important, particularly from road bridges and foot bridges; Lower Kings Road, Castle Street, and Ravens Lane (Area 2).

5.22 The castle, like most surviving and important sites of this type, was surrounded by an area deliberately left without development (known as a glacis) for defensive reasons (Area 2). However, the continuance of this area being left empty has resulted in the surroundings of the castle as far as the station being a green and highly picturesque part of the outskirts of the town thus preserving here a wealth of views and vistas.

5.23 From the Victorian / Edwardian housing area southwest of the High Street there are vistas

not only up and down the streets on this hillside but also over the High Street and to the trees and buildings on the northern side of the valley. Such views feature for instance, from junctions of Charles Street with the various north-south streets. Equally, new development visible in views from the northern valley slope back towards these terraced streets, would potentially affect perceptions of the conservation area.

Open spaces, landscape and trees

5.24 Due to the urban nature of Berkhamsted, there is little open space to be noted within the town centre itself, other than the hard standing surfaces of Water Lane car park and Lower Kings Road / St. John's Well Lane car park (Area 1). However, on the edge of the conservation area boundary lies the largest principal open area, Berkhamsted Castle, which is also a significant historical landscape feature and a Scheduled Monument (Area 2).

5.25 Throughout the conservation area are pockets of open space, considered to be semi-public spaces, which are visible and have an attractive quality. These are:

- a small area of open space on land at end of Ravens Lane / Chapel Street / Holliday Street with a single mature tree at the centre (Area 1)
- the graveyard to the rear of St. Peter's Church, viewed from the High Street and Castle Street (Area 1). Most of the site has been cleared of headstones and so its character is very open with a few mature trees, as such it is visually the most openly green space close to the High Street
- the semi-open space within the larger cemetery by Three Close Lane / Rectory Lane (Area 1). Whilst hidden from view by its walls along Three Close Lane, it occupies a significant portion of land and has heavy tree coverage
- 'The Moor' (recreation ground) on Mill Street, between the River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal (Area 2)
- the tennis courts on Greenfield Road / Lower Kings Road (Area 2)
- land alongside the Bowling Green by the Grand Union Canal (Area 2)
- the playground on George Street (Area 2)

5.26 Private gardens are relatively small within the urban setting, especially those closest to the town centre (Areas 1, 2 and 3). Nevertheless, there are still a small handful of properties that lie within the boundary that have retained their larger plot size, such as those at the southern end of Kitsbury Road and Cross Oak Road.

5.27 Limited but important open spaces can also be found within private properties of organisations such as the courtyard of Berkhamsted School, Castle Street, St. John's on Chesham Road and land by the former Royal Mail Offices, on the corner of the High Street and St. John's Well Lane that is planted with mature trees (Area 1).

5.28 Area 2 contains an abundance of open spaces due to the fact that the canal, the railway and the castle sites are all situated within its boundaries. In future, the railway and the castle sites are not likely to undergo significant development or alteration (for reasons that are obvious) and thus little further comment is required here.

5.29 The future of the canal as an area of open space running through the length of the conservation area is also presumed to be mainly secure but a number of points need to be made with regard to its setting. At various places along its length the canal is flanked by open areas or by existing structures that might become the focus of attention as sites considered for future development, for extensions to existing buildings or for re-development intensifying use. A good deal of encroachment has already taken place in parts of the downstream area below the station area and any further building here requires careful consideration if the open spaces that are currently provided due to the canal are to be preserved. The open areas upstream from Mill Street and the station require vigilance if the current leisure uses are to be preserved and the overall setting maintained and enhanced.

5.30 The George Street Playground is another leisure area sited a short distance from the canal. It consists of a walled area on the remains of a former coal yard and it stands within the conservation area. It is regularly used by local families as a play area for young children due to

the secure boundary provided by the brick wall that completely encloses it and by the shelter from the nearby houses that gives rise to a micro-climate. The location is ideal as it stands in the midst of the two-storey houses of the district and it can also be reached from other areas via the towpath's traffic-free access routes. The playground's great popularity is well known but the conservation area status should also provide useful tools for the future preservation and improvement of this well-frequented amenity.

5.31 At many points along its course downstream from Castle Street and the station area the canal is flanked by privately-owned open spaces. These areas consist of the gardens belonging to individual houses, of communal areas attached to nearby housing developments and of the outdoor drinking areas attached to pubs. In addition to the three pubs located inside the boundaries of the conservation area there is also the Old Mill (listed grade II but just outside the conservation area). This establishment has gardens and car parking sufficiently close to the canal's banks as to make a contribution to the canal's amenity. Most significantly, the north bank of the canal is flanked by private open space (i.e. gardens attached to houses) all the way from the Crystal Palace pub to the area where the conservation area currently terminates in the east near the end of Bedford Street. The long sloping gardens behind the houses in Station Road that run down to the towpath give a particularly good example of how private green spaces provide a pleasant setting for the canal. The effect here is quite different from the public open spaces that characterise the banks of the canal in the upstream areas of the conservation area with their broad meadow scenery in communal ownership and used for public leisure. The private gardens next to the canal, however, reflect individual tastes in their planting and boundary hedges and with garden sheds sometimes adding to the scene. The preservation of a high degree of openness and a green setting for the canal will make a vital contribution to the future of the conservation area in all parts of Area 2.

5.32 Butts Meadow recreation ground off Kings Road is a significant open space which together with the adjoining allotments, figure strongly in the topography and character of that part of the

conservation area (Area 3). There are views over the meadow and, back down to the High Street and to woodland beyond from Kings Road.

5.33 Throughout the conservation area trees play a role in defining the character, whether they are single trees, clusters or larger groups and can be found in private, semi-public and public spaces. This is especially true of those that lie along the Grand Union Canal (between Castle Street and Park Street) and also the High Street (roughly between Highfield Road and Cowper Road), as both have a significant visual impact on the local character and on views along the canal bank and pavements (Areas 1 and 2). The High Street is lined on both sides with semi-mature trees that were planted as part of a twentieth century initiative to soften the urban character of Berkhamsted. The trees along the canal can be viewed not just by travelling along the canal but also from the road bridges, footbridges, towpaths and gaps with views down to the canal, such as along Robertson Road.

5.34 Trees lying within gardens of private houses that can be seen from public roads and footpaths also provide character to the conservation area. Those of special note are on land behind the flats at Waterside, the foreground of the former Congregational Church, now Alexander House on Chapel Street, houses on the north side of Chapel Street whose rear gardens back onto the canal side, Berkhamsted School behind St. Peter's Church, and the gardens of the semi-detached Victorian villas at 320 – 338 High Street (Area 1). Coverage along the footpath to the footbridge over the canal by Londrina Terrace off the High Street, coupled with those in the private front gardens of the cottages that front the footpath, has a pleasant 'green' character more in-keeping with the canal side than the urban High Street (Area 1).

5.35 A number of other types of sites (public and semi-public spaces) also have significant tree coverage. Some of these are particularly old trees and are thought to be those depicted on late nineteenth century maps. Those that seem to appear on the 1878 Ordnance Survey map and survive today are at Berkhamsted Castle, the rear churchyard at St. Peter's Church, Castle Street, the cemetery by Three Close Lane /

Rectory Lane, land to the rear of St. John's on Chesham Road, and land by the former Royal Mail Offices on the corner of the High Street and St. John's Well Lane (Area 1). Other well established trees that stand upon land at the rear of the flats at Deans Lawn, Chesham Road and the boundaries of 'The Moor' (recreation ground), including Mill Street are thought to be shown on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map (Areas 1 and 2).

5.36 Other groups of significant, but more modern, trees in public / semi-public spaces include those around the tennis courts on Greenfield Road / Lower Kings Road, the group on the west side of Lower Kings Road by the road bridge, and the trees planted along the pavement on Mill Street (west side) outside the Berkhamsted School (Areas 1 and 2).

5.37 Trees provide a backdrop of green as one looks from central areas of the town towards the north and in the direction of the rising land beyond the railway (Area 2). These trees form an important element in the local scenery. The future preservation of this screen of greenery, against which the tops of the buildings are seen in silhouette, should be a high priority for all who value the natural setting of the town.

5.38 Trees and hedges line much of the canal near to its banks in a variety of sites both public and private (Area 2). Many private domestic gardens flank the towpaths. Rows of trees flank the water at points such as where lime trees stand in a row near to the Crystal Palace pub or willows grow on the banks near the Park Street pedestrian bridge. Photographic evidence from the past shows how the canal now passes through a more generally green corridor than it previously did as recently as the 1960s. The canal's transformation in the course of recent decades from industrial to leisure uses accounts for this change despite the partial encroachment of domestic development. At present the canal can be described as being a linear urban park with an abundance of trees for most of its passage through the conservation area. In fine weather the canal is intensely used for recreation on the water, along the towpaths and in the adjoining areas on the banks. Open spaces, trees and buildings act in combination to provide the canal corridor with a pleasing and balanced

environment. Such a balance will only be preserved in future if due care is exercised in maintaining and improving the quality of the green spaces and by ensuring that development does not endanger the openness of the canal's bankside areas.

5.39 In areas to the west (in the upstream direction from Mill Street and the Station) the canal is flanked by open spaces and many trees as far as the boundary of the conservation area slightly beyond the Park Street pedestrian bridge (Area 2). This part of the area contains three significant public leisure spaces and their trees etc.

- Mill Street is flanked by a children's playground area with grass and with large trees along its boundaries. It occupies the drained former lake along the course of the Bulbourne and the timber yard which once stood here next to the canal. The creation of this small park has produced an amenity area of great value and visual quality. Its beauty and well-defined boundaries make it highly attractive to younger children who play here in family groups.
- On the opposite bank, social club buildings and the town's sports ground are found a little further upstream. This area makes little positive contribution to the scenery through which the canal passes at this point and it remains outside the conservation area boundary. Although outside, the site is close enough to the conservation area boundary so as to affect the visual quality of the canal's setting.
- The remaining area upstream on the north bank consists of further open green spaces in mixed public leisure use. The canal is flanked by these open spaces with their trees and the public car park that services them. As far as the pedestrian bridge which virtually marks the western limit of the conservation area this open leisure area provides equally a setting for the canal and a principal location for the canal's enjoyment along the banks by locals and visitors. A line of large willows that require lopping if they are not to collapse into the water stand at the water's edge at this point. The quality of the car park's visual setting is not good and scope exists to improve this part of the

canal's immediate environment. The area where the cars park is treeless and some form of perimeter screening with hedges could be an improvement.

- Trees in the residential area Victorian / Edwardian area southwest of the High Street are predominantly garden trees and are important across virtually all of Area 3. Specimen trees outside of gardens are relatively scarce and therefore significant. All Saints church has three tall pines, which are a significant feature of the locality.

Public Realm: floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

5.40 Roads throughout the conservation area are generally laid in with a metalled road surface (tarmacadam). The exceptions to this are:

- **Church Lane (Area 1: High Street Central):** a brick cobbled surface along its length and its surface up to the entrance with the High Street.
- **Middle Road (Area 3):** unmade-up road reflecting its original nature as an access road and now a distinctive feature.
- **Hamilton Road (Area 3):** unmade-up road and has an informal character.

5.41 Along the High Street (Area 1) speed controls are in place that include raised brick laid road bumps signifying crossing areas, some with additional lighted bollards and islands. In addition, a few of the centrally located side streets are paved with brick laid surfaces at their entrances where they join the main High Street (Castle Street, Chesham Road, Prince Edward Street and Water Lane). In general, painted signs on the road have been kept to a minimum.

5.42 In Area 3 various stretches of street are still edged with the original stone kerbing (see character area descriptions for examples). In places, where patches of the modern road surface have come away, old cobble stones can be seen beneath.

5.43 The two main public car parks in the conservation area lie within Area 1 (High Street) and comprise Water Lane car park and the Lower Kings Road / St. John's Well Lane car park. Both are laid with a metalled road surface and have also been planted with small numbers

of trees to try to soften their urban character. Lower Kings Road / St. John's Well Lane car park is shielded from the River Bulbourne and the canal beyond by tree cover along its northern boundary. Water Lane car park has a more urban character and is surrounded by many different types of buildings (commercial, residential, educational and industrial).

5.44 Parking on the High Street (Area 1) has several forms:

- short, delineated, roadside, parking bays (west of the entrance to Holliday Street and outside the Royal Mail Offices)
- off-street parking on sloping pavements with a tarmacadam surface (Highfield Road to roughly Victoria Road, rather awkward-looking and possibly a former grassed bank)
- parking bays set into former pavement areas with brick cobbled surfaces (Manor Street to Park View Road)
- brick cobbled surface on pavements (loading bays only)

5.45 A third public car park, Canal Fields / Broadwater, lies on the north side of the canal in Area 2, opposite the St. John's Well Lane car park. It is also laid with a metalled road surface and is partly shielded from the canal by trees to its southern boundary. A footbridge provides access over the canal from Canal Fields / Broadwater to St. John's Well car park. The area could be visually improved by making the parking area greener and more visually pleasing than it currently is (see 5.39 above). The remaining car park in Area 2 is found principally in front of the Station. The Station car park and taxi rank are relatively small and they have only a minimal impact on the visual presentation of the nearby buildings.

5.46 Most other roads away from the High Street (Area 1) have some form of on street parking, and a few have delineated parking bays. There are some parking controls within the conservation area using both single and double yellow lines; a few streets do not allow any parking such as Church Lane. Car parks to the rear lots of the High Street (mostly business use) are also hard surfaced as are those associated with public buildings, such as schools.

5.47 In other parts of the residential areas within Area 2 parking remains a difficult problem. The nineteenth century streets were laid out well before the era of the motor car and parking in the on-street locations is difficult at most points. Few houses have their own garages and a number of garages in rows exist at various locations. Two examples of these off-street garages may be found in the conservation area close to the canal near the George Street playground and at the end of Bedford Street and both of these sites fail to contribute positively to the architectural quality locally.

5.48 Within Area 3, given the nature of the terraced streets, much parking is on-street though larger houses may have garages. Where later garages have been built in gaps along a street frontage they can appear incongruous and result in visually disruptive features in the street. Flatted developments generally include car parking and views into car parks from the street and poorly handled car park entrances are one of the major detractors in this part of the conservation area as they tend to "puncture" street frontages.

5.49 Most roads in the conservation area have some form of pavement, in varying widths and materials, but there are a few exceptions such as Rectory Lane and Church Lane that are so narrow they have no room for pavements (Area 1). In general, pavement coverings throughout the conservation area laid are mostly in tarmacadam, except for the High Street, which has a mixture of stone paving and areas of brick laid cobbling. The type of 'conservation', grey / rose coloured, square stone paving is consistent along most of the commercial length of the High Street (Area 1). However, it stops abruptly at the Manor Street / Three Close Lane junction and the Park View Road junction where the pavement cover reverts to tarmacadam. In addition, the shorter pavement on the north side of the High Street between Ravens Lane and Manor Street has a red / buff coloured brick laid surface. This means that while the majority of the paving in the High Street is consistent, the treatment towards each end of the High Street conservation area is poor.

5.50 Other variants in Area 1 to the tarmacadam pavement covering are found on Bridge Street and Mill Street. Bridge Street has broad slab

stones that extend to the full width of the pavement area and run on each side of the street in front of the terraced houses. This is the only surviving pavement cover of this kind in the conservation area, and while it is broken in places and uneven, it is very distinctive and an essential part of the character of this street.

Along Mill Street (west side) outside the Berkhamsted School from 'Newcroft' to The Moor the pavement is laid with modern, square paving slabs.

5.51 With the exception of Area 3, most of the curbstones in the conservation area are generally standard, narrow, granite, elongated blocks or pre-cast concrete narrow forms. In the High Street (Area 1) some curbstones have been laid with wider granite forms, contemporary with the 'conservation' stone paving and brick cobbled parking bays. Those on Bridge Street comprise short, broad, older blocks of granite curbstones (Area 1).

5.52 There are several different styles of lamp posts within the whole conservation area providing street lighting;

- modern, very tall posts with plain lights, some with single and some with double lights (High Street and car parks: Area 1)
- modern, shorter posts with plain lights (residential streets: Area 1)
- some converted modern lamp posts with 'conservation style' lights (on the High Street from St. John's Well Lane to Manor Street: Area 1)

5.53 Other types of street lighting include old Victorian style lamps attached to buildings (Castle Street) and free-standing, short, Victorian High Gothic style lampposts outside St. Peter's Church on the High Street by Church Lane and by the Old Town Hall (Area 1).

5.54 In Area 2 there is only one significant item that comes into this category; the street lighting that mainly runs between the carriageway and the banks of the canal opposite the station. The street lights comprise ornamental ironwork lamp standards with (recently restored) globes. The wall appears to be late-nineteenth century in date and has coping brickwork along its top edge. Further fragments of the same wall may be found near the canal bridge and on the far bank

near to the (former) Castle public house, a grade II listed building. This wall, along with its ornamental ironwork lamp standards, forms an attractive boundary and has much period character. It should therefore should be retained and preserved for the future.

5.55 Recent shorter lamp posts in bare metal with plain lights are generally found throughout the Area 3. Torrington Road and Hamilton Road have one column each (on Hamilton Road it is a type with a lantern – again of recent period). Smaller roads such as Middle Road and Kitsbury Terrace do not have street lighting columns and this suits their character.

5.56 Street furniture in Berkhamsted is a mixture of traditional and modern. In some places there is an over proliferation of many different types of street furniture and inconsistency in their design. Traditional street furniture such as red telephone boxes and post boxes (wall and pillar styles) are not prevalent in the conservation area, but where they do survive they offer a pleasant and easily recognisable positive character feature. One telephone box lies opposite St. Peter's Church on the High Street outside no. 129, Dean Incents House, and is statutory listed (Area 1). Two modern, double, red pillar post boxes stand on the north side of the High Street; one by the entrance to Church Lane and one outside 222 High Street, The Bourne School (Britannia Building Society). An older single post box stands outside 13 High Street (near Swing Gate Lane: Area 1) with another on Charles Street (George V) on the corner of Kitsbury Road and Charles Street (Area 3). This corner post box stands outside the former Post Office, now a newsagent shop, and a red telephone once accompanied it, but has since been removed. There is another post box in the front garden of 18 Gravel Path ('The Old Post Office': Area 2).

5.57 Signage such as road signs, street names signs and directing signposts (finger posts) are more prolific in the High Street (Area 1) than in other locations within the conservation area. They are a mixture of modern and more traditional styles and materials. Black and gold painted metal, more traditional style finger posts appear on the High Street and on Lower Kings Road. The timber town sign on the High Street by the Civic Centre has a traditional design.

Although some modern, free-standing, road name signs are present in the side streets off the High Street, some older style, more traditional (metal) road name signs attached to walls and properties tend to better survive away from the town centre.

5.58 Refuse bins on the High Street are, on the whole, black and gold painted to complement the character of the fingerposts. Commercial refuse bins are not readily seen on the High Street and are kept to the rear of premises, only being visible from open areas such as Water Lane car park. Commercial bins however are particularly 'on view' along Church Lane, which detracts from the character of the narrow, brick cobbled street. Private refuse bins are generally kept away from the street and front gardens in Area 1. However there are some exceptions, such as the bins of 35 / 36 Castle Street that stand by the entrance to the Fire and Ambulance Station.

5.59 Covered bus stops are a rare feature in Berkhamsted Conservation Area, except for one modern-style perspex bus stop with a domed roof and seating in the central High Street outside no. 178 - 180 (WH Smiths). There is another bus shelter outside 199 High Street (NatWest Bank), but this has a more traditional low-key design.

5.60 Not a lot of public seating has been provided within the town centre, but there are one or two timber benches on the High Street at the central core, between Castle Street and Lower Kings Road. There are several punched metal bench seats found in the cemetery on Three Close Lane / Rectory Lane (Area 1). However, café-style (bistro) seating has begun to emerge along the High Street often under traditional flat awnings, which adds a vibrancy to the commercial centre and means that public seating may not be as much used. Larger areas of bistro seating have begun to occupy wider pavements and includes colourful advertising, barriers and umbrellas often in less traditional styles. While these larger areas of seating add to the street scene and town centre as a whole, over-proliferation of seating / advertising / umbrellas would be detrimental to the character of the conservation area.

5.61 Metal railings and, particularly, metal and plastic bollards, are found along the High Street and on some of the adjoining side roads. Bollards have different styles and are mostly used to prevent parking on the pavements. Timber bicycle parking mounts are positioned on the pavements of the High Street. Circular metal railings have been placed around the tree trunks of the trees planted on the High Street.

5.62 Traffic lights have been kept to a minimum on the High Street and are not intrusive upon the character of area.

5.63 On the whole, shopfronts have been treated well on the High Street and Lower Kings Road (Area 1) in terms of their design and restrained signage / advertising, and form a considerable part of the character of the conservation area. Many of these are statutory listed buildings and so their character and materials have been retained and kept to a minimum. Modern shopfronts do appear, sometimes in older properties but more often as part of earlier modern build. These shopfronts often comprise large aluminium shop windows and doors that tend to have a 'flat-looking' appearance compared to more traditional forms.

5.64 Efforts have been made to try to keep the signage on shop fascias on the High Street and Lower Kings Road to the width of a single property, even if the shop extends into two or more buildings (Area 1). Some shops occupied by larger chains have adapted their signage to the size of the property and so it is more in-keeping with the character of the conservation area. The one or two that have not adapted their signage are therefore more strikingly obvious and as such jar with the street scene. Problems associated with some shopfronts are given in Chapter 7; most of these relate to commercial properties in High Street West (beyond the Lower Kings Road / Kings Road junction).

5.65 Traditional pub signs are an important feature, as are the names of the public houses / inns and give people a sense of place, history and local identity. On the High Street (Area 1) they include timber hanging signs with motifs or coats of arms, and low-key lettering or timber fascias with lettering. These have been more or

less retained on public houses along the High Street; 'sports bar' style signage has not been introduced to any great degree. The retention of the decorative bracket for the sign of the former Gardeners Arms on Castle Street is a noted feature.

5.66 Outside the main High Street within Area 2, shop signage is restricted to the butcher's premises in Gravel Path and the three public houses standing on the banks of the canal. All of these commercial premises have acceptable signage and the traditional advertising style of the Rising Sun pub near the canal lock here deserves praise and preservation in particular.

The Berkhamsted Heritage Walk, the local 'Blue Plaque' scheme, information boards and desk stones

5.67 The Berkhamsted Heritage Walk is a leaflet published by Berkhamsted Town Council that sets out a short guide walking tour around the Berkhamsted by way of explaining 32 interesting / historic buildings and structures of local and national significance. Most of these properties have a circular 'blue plaque' attached, such as Dean Incent's House, The Dower House and the Kings Arms Hotel, with brief details about the building. It also includes St. John's on Chesham Road, the birthplace of Graham Greene. The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust hosts the annual Graham Greene Festival and 'The Graham Greene Trail' that is part of the Berkhamsted Heritage Walk.

5.68 There are a few information boards within Berkhamsted Conservation Area, mainly within Areas 1 and 2. Those relating to the river / canal are clear and interactive, such as a series of desk stones for brass rubbing ('Berkhamsted Hub of Transport', and 'The Canal and River Berkhamsted' by Berkhamsted Community Partnership / Canal and Riverside Partnership, and Action for Market Towns). There is also information regarding the nature of the canal fields.

5.69 There are also two information boards within Waitrose car park ('Historic Berkhamsted') that identify historic buildings in the town. These are informative, if a little basic, and could be improved.

5.70 There is also an information board between 1 – 4 St. John's Well Lane and the canal; although currently outside the conservation area it forms part of the proposed extension to the Berkhamsted Conservation Area boundary.

5.71 There are also low-key information boards at Berkhamsted Castle, which are managed by English Heritage.

6 Character Areas

Identification of character areas

6.1 Berkhamsted Conservation Area has previously been divided into three 'Identity Areas' by the Borough Council (Supplementary Planning Guidance May 2004). This Appraisal has utilised these three main areas as they have distinctive characteristics that relate to differences in their built form, historic development and also landscape appearance.

These are:

- High Street (Area 1 – commercial & residential)
- Grand Union Canal (Area 2 – industrial & residential)
- Charles Street (Area 3 - residential)

6.2 However, there has been a need to further sub-divide these three 'Identity Areas' for ease of discussion in this report, especially with regard to the large area occupied by the High Street (Area 1) where there are significant differences with character in both the built form and street layout.

These are:

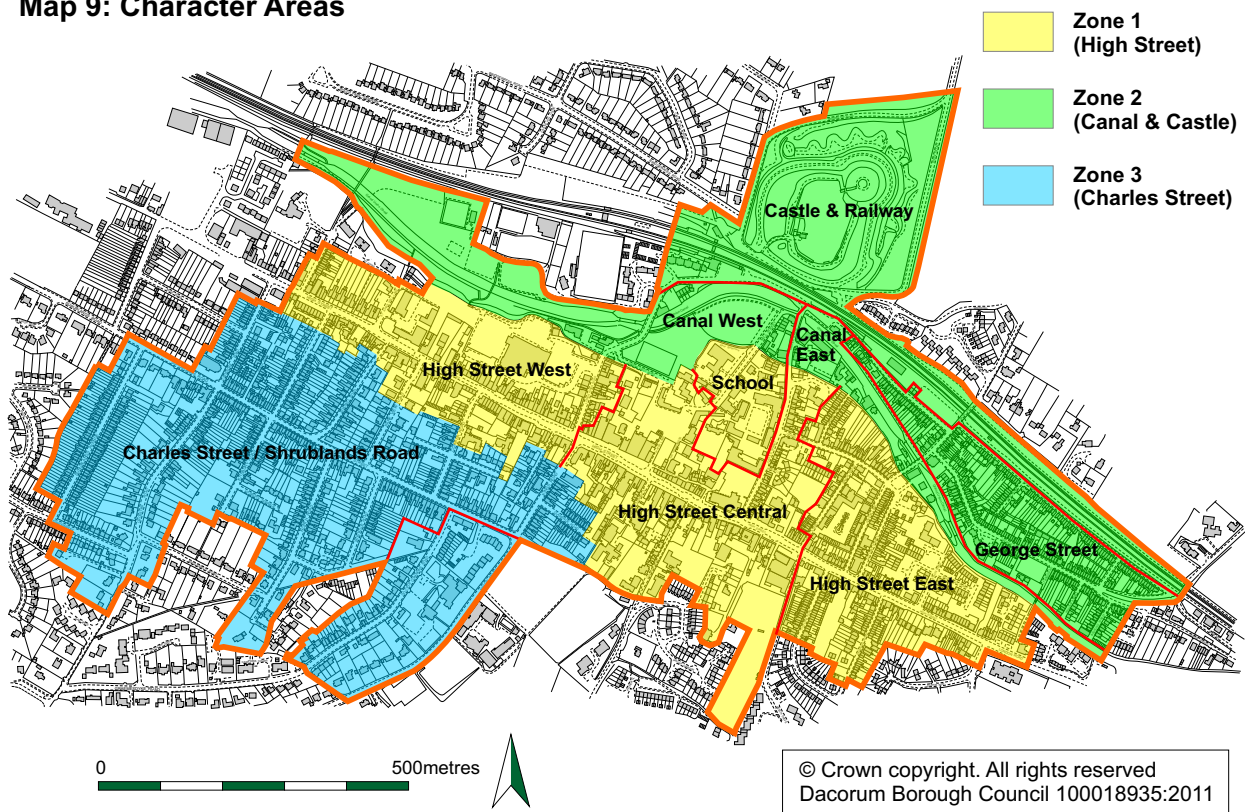
- High Street East (Swing Gate Lane / London Road to Manor Street)
- High Street Central (Manor Street to Lower Kings Road)
- High Street West (Lower Kings Road to Park Street)
- Collegiate (Berkhamsted School; Castle Street & Mill Street)

6.3 Area 2 has been sub-divided as it included distinct differences in type of built form, use and landscape appearance. These are:

- Castle and Railway
- The Canal (East and West, including the River Bulbourne)
- George Street (housing district including Ellesmere Road, Station Road, Bedford Street etc)

6.4 Area 3 has been sub-divided into two parts due to the differing nature of the plot layout / street pattern, age and architectural style of the

Map 9: Character Areas



buildings. These are:

- Charles Street / Shrublands Road (to include the greater set of residential side streets that adjoin Charles Street as far as Kings Road and Doctor's Commons Road)
- Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road (including housing plots and the Berkhamsted School / Preparatory School)

6.5 These three character areas and their respective sub-divided areas are represented on the following map (Map 9). Individual detailed maps for each of the sub-divided areas are presented throughout Chapter 6 where they are discussed (Maps 10 – 18).

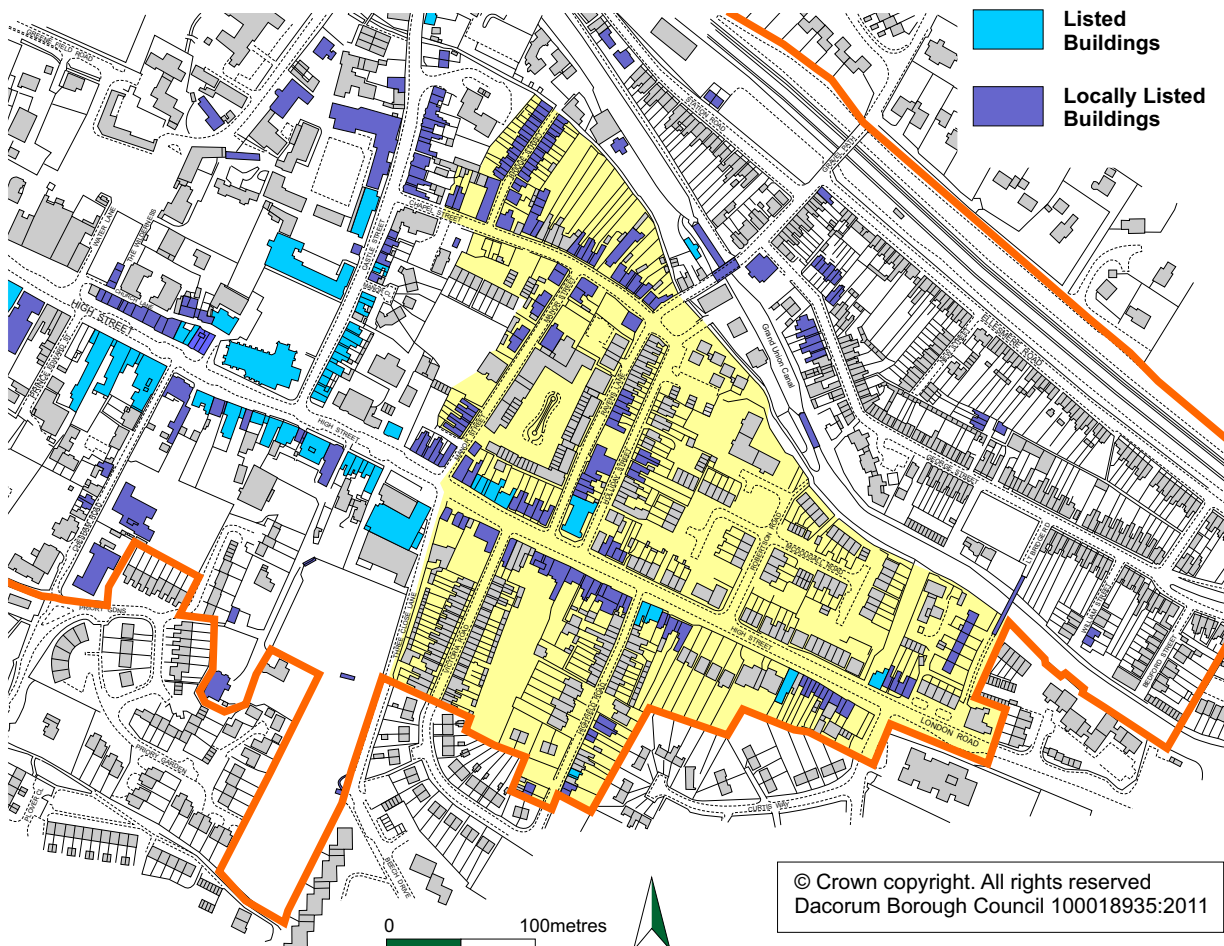
Area 1: High Street East, Central and West, and Collegiate High Street East

6.6 This is an urban area incorporating the east end of the High Street and adjoining side

roads that predominantly comprise rows of adjoining two storey, nineteenth century housing built in red or yellow brick with slate or tile roofs and surviving chimney stacks. There are also a small number of low-key, commercial premises, mostly located on the High Street, which have often been converted from residential use several decades past and have an older style shopfront. As such they have a more traditional character in-keeping with the over-all character of the east end of the High Street whilst retaining some of their original identity. The most common architectural features in residential properties include sash windows with brick or stone lintels above, and panelled front doors (some with panels of glazing).

6.7 Eleven properties standing within High Street East are statutory listed buildings; five date from the seventeenth century with the remainder being nineteenth century. A large number of other buildings are considered to be of local importance and appear on a Berkhamsted Local List (see Introduction, 1.12 – 1.15, and Appendix 2).

Map 10: Area 1: High Street East, Central and West, and School



London Road & Little Bridge Road

6.8 The first buildings at the gateway into the conservation area when approached from the east lie on the north side of the road. These are a pair of extended nineteenth century two-storey cottages (11 – 15 London Road) and a large part residential part commercial block, 'The Hall Walk' (1 – 9 London Road, dated 1934). The cottages are built in brick, now rendered, with a part hipped part gabled tile roof and a large central chimney stack. The cottage on the west side (no. 13) has been significantly extended to the west to create no. 11; both 11 and 13 form the Taj Mahal Restaurant. 13 and 15 London Road each have a small canted bay window and a door on the ground floor, and a window on the first floor. No. 11 incorporates larger doorways and windows for the restaurant. No. 15 has a small side extension (c1910) and retains more of its overall character, while no. 13 has been much extended to the side and the rear. 'The Hall Walk' is a purpose-built row of shops with flats above in rendered brick with hipped green pantile roofs and chimney stacks. It is set back from the roadside with hard standing parking to the fore behind a low brick bed (with low level planting). The ground floor has five shopfronts (two probably retain their original shopfronts) and doorways to the flats above on the first floor and attic level. Due to its age, scale and design, its appearance is different to the overall character of the High Street. There is a red plaque on the building (EG 1934) alluding to its former owner, Edward Greene of Berkhamsted Hall, and its construction date.

6.9 Behind 'The Hall Walk' hidden away from the High Street and west of Little Bridge Road lies a row of 1930s cottages, Londrina Terrace. Contemporary with 'The Hall Walk', the cottages have a different unique character compared to other rows of urban houses throughout High Street East. They face east towards a path (Little Bridge Road) that leads to a footbridge over the canal and have equally sized front and rear gardens. Built in yellow brick, rendered and painted white, they have green pantile roofs with rendered plain chimney stacks and exposed window sills. Only one house has retained its original metal framed (Crittall) windows and two have the original small outbuildings with green pantiled roofs. Opposite is a row of modern



11 - 13 and 15 London Road



Londrina Terrace, London Road

garages, rendered with green pantile roofs (behind 2- 8 High Street). Beyond on the edge of the canal is a late twentieth century, small, two-storey development that faces onto the canal side with some soft landscaping, Londrina Court (nos. 1 - 6 & 7 - 10). Built in red brick, part rendered, with a concrete tile gabled roof it is a relatively low-key group of flats. Whilst not imposing in its massing and design, it shares little character with its built surroundings (the 1930s Londrina Terrace and the modern Robertson Road development).

High Street

6.10 The neighbouring group, 2 – 8 High Street, comprise a row of four attractive, mid-nineteenth century, red brick properties with gabled tile roof with chimney stacks, some of which have also been white-washed. The red tile roof has a pattern with bands of plain and scalloped edge tiles; nos. 2 – 4 have recently replaced their roof tiles. The casement windows and doors have drip moulding; no. 2 on the end has been converted into a shop with a nineteenth century style

shopfront on the ground floor. Three have retained small front gardens (no. 2 has lost its garden to hard standing for parking). Attached is 10 High Street, The Bull Public House, a grade II listed, seventeenth century, formerly jettied, timber framed building with a gabled tile roof, prominent chimney stacks and casement windows. It retains a traditional style of pub signage (low-key name sign, hanging pictorial sign and chalk board) and forms part of a historic group close to the beginning of the conservation area; its historic windows are in need of up-keep, especially the bow window to the front. To the side of The Bull is a driveway to the parking area and beer garden that is open to the canal edge; it is the first view of the canal from the High Street.



2 – 8 High Street and The Bull PH

6.11 Opposite The Bull on the south side of the High Street by the junction with Swing Gate Lane stands a row of two-storey, red brick houses (9 – 27 High Street), some of which have been white-washed. Most date to the nineteenth century and have gabled slate roofs and chimney stacks, however nos. 9 and 11 are possibly much older; no. 9 has been converted into commercial use (Berkhamsted Tool Hire). Several have small front gardens separated from the pavement by narrow gothic-style metal railings, and one property has double doors later inserted (no. 21). The style of windows varies from wooden sash or casement to uPVC sash or casement. No. 19 has double timber doors leading through the property to the rear, and no. 13 has large ground floor window that may also have once been a carriageway through to workshops at the rear. No. 29, the former Black Horse Public House, is attached to and forms the end property of this group. A grade II listed building dating to the early nineteenth century with attractive features, it has undergone significant extension at the rear and has recently been converted into a restaurant (The Curry Garden) with low-key signage. The view over the rear yards of 9 – 27 High Street can be seen from Swing Gate Lane over Swing Gate Cars and adjoining car-wash (Prestige Hand Car Wash) that houses a small cabin and a red brick garage with a corrugated iron roof. There are metal gates over the hard standing forecourt area and the front boundary also has metal railings.



9 – 27 High Street and the former Black Horse PH (The Curry Garden)

6.12 Beyond The Bull Public House on the north side of the road are the houses built along the High Street as part of the Robertson Road development. They share some of the common characteristics of the High Street East, especially the rows of two-storey yellow brick houses with architectural detailing and sash-style windows, such as the attractive surviving row of neighbouring nineteenth century cottages, 22 – 28 High Street. These older cottages have recently been up-dated and have identical sash windows, panelled doors and heavy stone headers. The row also has a new slate roof (the old chimney stacks have been retained) and its brickwork has been cleaned. However, the houses and flats of the new development lack chimney stacks, which are a common feature of High Street East, and the three-storey flats are taller in scale than the surrounding housing and therefore are more imposing upon the general streetscape.

6.13 Opposite Robertson Road on the south side stands Callaghan Court (flats), also a new residential development in the High Street. It is set back from the roadside, between 27 High Street and a row of typical 1930s detached properties, comprising a group of four attached buildings with a driveway through to the rear. Callaghan Court has an attractive design that is a mixture of different character elements which work together; two and three storey nineteenth century style housing and three storey industrial-style buildings, which stand behind low brick walls with gothic-style railings and planted front gardens. As a whole, this group fits into the general streetscape set between neighbouring properties and does not impose upon the more common form of nineteenth century terraces opposite. The 1930s houses and bungalows, 35 – 43 High Street, are set back from roadside behind attractive tree cover along their front boundaries. They have front gardens with a mixture of planting and hard standing parking; no. 35 has lost its entire front garden wall and has brick paved its garden.



69 High Street

6.14 Further along the High Street on the south side beyond the 1930s detached brick houses and bungalows (nos. 35 – 43), the nineteenth century buildings start to develop more of a town-house character with adjoining groups of two or three properties, beginning with 45 – 49 High Street and extending up to Three Close Lane. Built in yellow brick with slate roofs and chimney stacks, many are approached with steps up to the front door, some having doorcases and cornices over. Several properties have bay windows and some have cellars. There are a few grander, adjoining, larger Victorian town-houses between Highfield Road and Victoria Road, such as 69 and 71 High Street. Amongst these is an older, surviving, grade II listed building, 51 & 53 High Street, part of which had been used as a public house (The Queens Arms). A significant two-storey building with an exposed frame and prominent chimney stack, it holds an important corner position with Highfield Road.



45 – 53 High Street
(no. 53 had been The Queens Arms PH)

6.15 Behind 69 and 71 High Street just before Victoria Road lies Sevens Close, a new development that is mostly hidden from view of the High Street. It is accessed by a new, narrow,

block paved lane between 75 and 77 High Street. Sevens Close comprises a terrace of seven adjoining two-storey houses (fourteen flats) running southwards up the inclining ground level that is also block paved. To the east is a new brick wall contemporary with the Close forming the new rear wall of the houses on the High Street and a parking area for Sevens Close. To the west side is a nineteenth century yellow brick boundary wall of 3 – 45 Victoria Road, over which the slate roofs of brick garden outbuildings can be seen. The houses of Sevens Close are built in red brick with architectural features consistent with the common style of High Street East; sash-style windows, stone sills and other details, headers above openings, recessed doors, slate roofs with prominent chimney stacks, and small front gardens with low walls. At the north end is a row of new small outbuildings associated with the new houses. The re-building of 77 High Street probably occurred at this time, and also shares common

architectural features that correspond with the character of the area. However, the development of Sevens Close and its access lane has led to a change in the continuous street form that formerly existed between Highfield Road and Victoria Road; nos. 77, 79 & 81 High Street now form a small separate end group. Nos. 79 & 81 both have attractive blue and red chequered brickwork, which continues around the corner at 1 Victoria Road. While no. 79 has been somewhat altered by the insertion of a modern aluminium shopfront and the use of modern concrete roof tile, no. 81 has retained more of its original features. Some elements of its more traditional style shopfront have been retained, along with the sash window on the first floor. 1 Victoria Road is particularly attractive and has retained most of its sash windows, red brick dressings, slate roof, pilastered doorcase and panelled door.

6.16 Beyond Victoria Road lies the last of the three public houses in High Street East, The Goat (no. 83), a detached building in yellow brick with a hipped slate roof and sash windows that also dates to the nineteenth century. Beyond are two further detached buildings at the end of High Street East by Three Close Lane, a pair of attractive red brick properties dating to 1865 with many gables, gothic-style doorways, Tudor-style decorative studwork to the upper floors and features such as first floor oriel windows (nos. 85 and 87, and 89).

6.17 Past the new development of Robertson Road / McDougall Road along the High Street, by the corner of Holliday Street stand a row of nineteenth century, two-storey, red brick houses with mostly wooden sash windows and concrete tile roofs (52 – 58 High Street). The ground floor of no. 58 has been converted into a shop (currently vacant) this abuts no. 60 and an early twentieth century single storey shop with an old shopfront (Worktop Warehouse). On the following corner is the gothic-revival, grade II listed Berkhamsted Baptist Church. Built in 1864 in yellow-grey stock brick with red brick banding and limestone ashlar for dressings and the spire, it stands on the High Street occupying a plot between the corners of Ravens Lane and Holliday Street. Its bell tower is highly visible and is a prominent feature of High Street East.



Sibdon Place (66 – 74 High Street) and the Baptist Chapel



76 – 86 High Street

6.18 Beyond the Chapel to the west lies Sibdon Place. It stands on the corner of the High Street and Ravens Lane (nos. 66 – 74), and is an attractive small group of terraced houses built in red brick with terracotta decorative detailing and yellow brick banding / headers. Common features include bay windows, sash windows with segmental heads, projecting stone sills, doorcases, panelled doors, fanlights and finials. They are set slightly back from the pavement with low brick front walls and small planted gardens, however the original metal railings that stood on the wall have been removed. The adjoining red brick Victorian property with prominent chimney stacks, whose gable is dated 1863 in blue brick (nos. 76 and 78 High Street), is the tallest commercial building at the east end of the High Street and marks the beginning of the town centre that extends at a pace from Manor Street onwards. Its shopfront extends the width of the building and dates to the twentieth century; it replaced an earlier shopfront under the tall gable (west) with a door and three gothic

windows to the east side. Beyond it lies 82 – 86 High Street, an older group dating to at least the seventeenth century with nineteenth century shopfronts. Nos. 76 – 86 are grade II listed buildings. Adjoining them are two nineteenth century shops at the corner of Manor Street that form the end of High Street East. Built in brick but of differing designs, both have retained some remnants of older shopfronts. No. 88 has canted first floor windows while no. 90 (c1860) is entirely rendered with stucco used for features around its arch-headed windows, cornices, shop fascia, and there is a large dormer to the roof with a similar arch-headed window.

6.19 It is clear that the buildings along High Street East commonly face onto the road and there is very little green space, other than the grass bank on the south side of the road outside 37 High Street up to the corner of Highfield Road (by 53 High Street). This bank runs westwards up to the corner of Victoria Road (by 81 High Street), but is now covered with tarmac. Beyond the corner, the pavement on this side of the road widens up to Three Close Lane and, despite the dotted line of tree coverage, makes this end of the conservation area appear more open. The bank next to the roadside is an important feature of the south side of High Street East and is occupied by surviving historic structures; the semi-circular metal and studded structure outside 47 High Street and the two horse troughs in front of The Goat public house (planted but slightly damaged).

6.20 Few of the older buildings on the High Street have front gardens, but those that do have them tend to make the most of them, which brings some green character to the urban area. However, the houses on the south side of the High Street (nos. 9 – 27) could be encouraged to make the most of the front area they have behind the gothic-style metal railings particularly as they stand at the gateway into the conservation area.

Side roads leading off from the east end of the High Street

6.21 The side roads leading off from the east end of the High Street include Highfield Road, Victoria Road and Three Close Lane to the south side, and Holliday Street, Ravens Lane and



The semi-circular metal and studded structure outside 47 High Street



Two horse troughs in front of The Goat public house, now planted

Manor Street to the north side. Additional roads away from the High Street to the north are Chapel Street and Bridge Street. They are predominantly residential with only one or two commercial premises dotted throughout, such as the offices at Brownlow House (a converted public house, The Brownlow Arms) on the corner of Ravens Lane and Chapel Street, and the garage / Scout Hut in the former maltings buildings on the corner of Chapel Street and Bridge Street. The majority of the plots along these side roads were developed during the mid and late nineteenth century as land from large estates began to be sold-off, such as Pilkington Manor (c1851) and Highfield House.

6.22 Most of the buildings on the side roads have a similar layout and design to those on the High Street, facing the street with little green space. The streets comprise mostly rows of adjoining two-storey, nineteenth century housing

built in red or yellow brick with slate or tile roofs and surviving chimney stacks. Some have been painted or rendered, but most are exposed brick. Access to rear gardens is often provided by a covered alleyway between groups of houses where their upper floor sails over; some have doors while others are open to the street. Some of the houses on Highfield Road have openings through the front walls into their rear plots.



Manor Street

6.23 While two-storey terraced houses are the predominant form, there are a few three-storey houses on Highfield Road as well as a few larger semi-detached or detached houses on Manor Street and Chapel Street. 37 Highfield Road is a recent three-storey development of two houses built on land that lay to the side of nos. 35 & 39. It adjoins 33 & 35 Highfield Road, two semi-detached nineteenth century houses that are also three storeys in height, and no. 39 (39 Highfield Road is part of a row of two-storey terraced houses that extends up to no. 51). The design and scale of 37 Highfield Road works well within the streetscape. The nineteenth century semi detached / detached houses include nos. 1 & 2, 4, 13 – 18 and 22 & 23 Chapel Street, and 10 – 13 and 16 Manor Street.

6.24 The most common architectural features in residential properties include sash windows with brick or stone lintels above, and panelled front doors (some with panels of glazing). However, while the nineteenth century streets in High Street East have many common characteristics in their plan, building materials and architectural features, each street has its own individual character. For example, the terraced houses on Highfield Road have the classic Victorian form while some of those on Victoria Road have more decorative features such as pilastered timber doorcases, stone lintels and window surrounds, and dentilled cornices. The houses in Bridge Street are of a simple uniform appearance with a more 'cottage style', while some of those on

neighbouring Chapel Street, Holliday Street and Manor Street are adorned with stone features such as pilastered doorcases, stone lintels and window surrounds, or cornices resting on corbels over windows / window sills with corbels under. Examples of retained styles of fenestration, stone detailing and doorcases are shown below. Several of the late nineteenth century houses on Chapel Street have canted bay windows on the ground floor (nos. 5 – 8), while nos. 15 & 16 have arch headed sash windows on the ground floor. Groups of nineteenth century houses on the same street can



Chapel Street



Victoria Road



Bridge Street

also differ in appearance. The row of houses on the east side of Ravens Lane form two distinctive groups; the classic form (nos. 11 – 21) and the more adorned form (nos. 5 - 10). Two-storey canted bay windows are more rare, but examples are found on grander homes such as the three Edwardian houses at the south end of Victoria Road (nos. 34, 36 & 38) and 14 Manor Street, a Victorian property that joins 21 Chapel Street on the corner.

6.25 The houses on the corners of Manor Street / Chapel Street, and Bridge Street / Chapel Street are a good contemporary group that all share a common feature; a doorway on the chamfered corner. Although one has recently had its shop window and doorway removed (20 Chapel Street), it has been sympathetically achieved with sash windows while the shop fascia and door pilasters remain.

6.26 Single small cottages are rare in the urban setting of High Street East, but there is one located on the boundary at the end of Highfield Road; 'Chaffcutters' (no. 58). It dates to the early nineteenth century, and was one of a few cottages built on Highfield Road that still survives. Evidence of a former shop survives at 3 Victoria Road where part of the shopfront has been retained, and although the nineteenth century chapel at 29 & 31 Highfield Road (Prospect Place Chapel) was converted into residential use in 1874, it has retained features such as bay windows and doorcases from that period. A former nineteenth

century infants' school on Chapel Street has been converted into residential use and retains its architectural gothic appearance from its windows, door and railings.



'Chaffcutters', 58 Highfield Road



29 & 31 Highfield Road (former Prospect Place Chapel)

6.27 Alterations and extensions have occurred to the nineteenth century houses on the side streets of High Street East with mixed results. Most extensions are cited at the rear and are more or less hidden from the front, however some rear elevations can be seen over boundary walls from the neighbouring streets. While pitched roofs are more dominant, less attractive single and two-storey flat roofed rear extensions have been built. Houses on some side streets have replaced their original timber windows and doors; a few have altered the width of the original vertical sash opening. Older slate roofs have also been replaced with non-traditional concrete tile. However, the houses on Bridge Street have retained a more uniform character than seen in other streets, especially with regards to windows and door styles. While not a traditional feature of nineteenth century urban housing, small brick-built front porches have been added to some houses on the side streets of High Street East such as on Victoria Road. A mixture of different styles are apparent, ranging from open to part glazed to enclosed with flat, sloping or gabled roofs. While some porches blend into the overall character, others are less attractive.

6.28 A large proportion of High Street East was formerly occupied by an industrial area on the north side with chemical works and saw mills, including the buildings between Manor Street and Ravens Lane where Cooper's world famous sheep dip was produced. This factory was extended in 1880 into new premises at Lower Works by the canal on open land behind small terraced houses on the High Street. The buildings were demolished and new houses now occupy this entire former industrial area: Ravens Lane / Manor Street, Robertson Road / McDougall Road, along with the flats of Waterside and Glass Mill House. One of the largest older properties found on the side roads is Cooper House, Ravens Lane; it is the only surviving building that was once part of the Cooper factory and has since been converted into flats. Built in c1900 in yellow brick with architectural detailing, it extends back onto Holliday Street (now white washed). Its size and scale is imposing when compared to the neighbouring terrace houses at the north and south end of the street. The new build opposite Cooper House (west side) occupies almost the

entire length of the west side of Ravens Lane and continues over onto Manor Street occupying land between nos. 16 and 17. It lies on the large industrial site of the former sheep dip factory and comprises Clunbury Court (the former Counting House), nos. 28 & 29, and 1 – 6 Bartrum Villas. Clunbury Court has three driveways through to a large, but secluded, block-paved courtyard (one from Ravens Lane and two from Manor Court), which serves the whole development; some properties have ground floor integral garages facing into the courtyard. Clunbury Court has used complementary mass and scaling (two, three and three and a half storey forms) with architectural features such as red brick detailing on yellow brick, modern sash-style windows, projecting sills and keystones. The smaller properties on Ravens Lane (nos. 28 & 29, and 1 – 6 Bartrum Villas) also share similar build characteristics, but are on a scale more in tune with neighbouring older properties.

6.29 Holliday Street comprises rows of adjoining groups of two or three houses (east side) that have much in common with the typical character of the nineteenth century housing within High Street East, while on the west side lie mostly the rear yellow / red brick walls and single storey outbuildings of the terraces on Ravens Lane; two storey extensions to these houses are also highly visible. At the north end next to the River Bulbourne is a modern flat development, Waterside, which faces northeast at an angle towards the river. The six red brick blocks are grouped in two sets comprising three blocks joined by a semi-circular stair tower rear with part-open bridge walkways. Each block is tile-hung on the first and second floors, and the windows have three or four different styles and sizes. Built as three-storeys, it stands as high as most flat developments in High Street East. However, its appearance shares little with more recent flat developments such as Glassmill House (the three-storey flats of the Robertson Road / McDougall Road development that are clearly visible to the southeast) or with the surrounding built character (particularly the neighbouring flats, Ravens Wharf in Area 2 that lie to the north between the river and canal, which have a more industrial character). To the south side of Waterside are a number of parking bays that face into an area of en-block garages and hard surfacing.

6.30 Behind 9 – 13 Holliday Street is a small, new, in-fill, terrace development, 1 – 4 New Provident Place. It stands at right angles to the layout of the houses fronting on Holliday Street, but is in-line with 5 – 9 Coopers Way (part of the Robertson Road / McDougall Road development). The four two-storey houses at New Provident Place are built in yellow brick with orange brick dressings and a gabled slate roof. They have sash-style, modern, uPVC casement windows and doorhoods over front doors. While the driveway and parking area is block paved, the houses have small, open, front gardens as well as rear gardens. A recently constructed small housing development on Manor Street (New Manor Croft) comprises two and two and a half storey houses in groups of two and three built in yellow brick with orange brick dressings, sash-style windows, recessed doorways, gabled slate roof with chimney stacks, and defined roadside boundaries. The design of the houses fronting onto Manor Street have more in common with nos. 1 - 6, while those within the centre of the development, although slightly different, are complementary.

6.31 Three Close Lane (east side) mostly comprises the tall rear boundary wall of the houses on Victoria Road and their outbuildings. As with Holliday Street where the rear of Ravens Lane houses can be viewed, the back elevations of the properties on Victoria Road can be seen along with any rear extensions. The new office development on the rear plot of 87 and 89 High Street, whose design shares few characteristics with High Street East, forms part of the boundary along Three Close Lane.

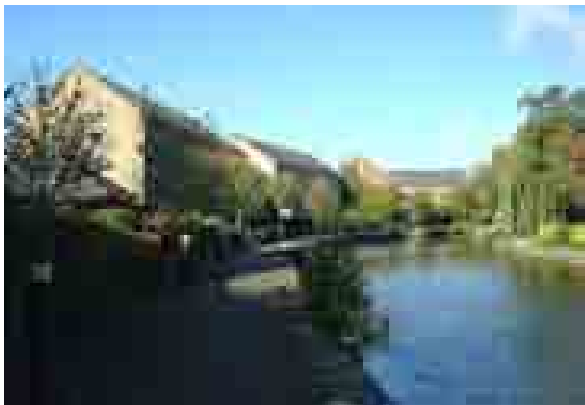
6.32 Most buildings on the side roads in High Street East commonly face onto the road and there is very little green space, which makes the roads appear very narrow and built-up. Those houses on Bridge Street, Highfield Road, Victoria Road (east side) and Ravens Lane (east side) directly abut the pavement. Small front gardens do appear in certain areas such as more modern developments on Highfield Road (west side) and Ravens Lane (west side). Nineteenth century semi-detached properties on Holliday Street, Manor Street and Victoria Road (west side) also have small front gardens, often behind low brick walls, as do larger houses such as the former Prospect Place Chapel (Highfield Road) and

Cooper House (Ravens Lane). In general, more could be made of these private front gardens to bring some green character to the urban area, as seen from the front gardens of houses on Chapel Street (north side). The rear gardens of houses on the north side of Chapel Street back onto the River Bulbourne; most have a nineteenth century, yellow brick boundary wall. The rear elevations of these houses cannot be seen from the canal as they are shielded from view by tree cover and other buildings along the canal side.

6.33 At the west end of Chapel Street on the south side between Alexander House (former chapel) and Manor Street there is a greater feeling of green space from the surviving trees, particularly along the boundary of Castle Mews. The Mews are a modern housing development set far back from the roadside beyond en-block garaging; to the fore by the fence and large opening is a prominent hard standing surface that is uncharacteristic of the street character as a whole. Large front gardens are rare in the urban setting, but 'Chaffcutters' (58 Highfield Road) has retained more of a rural character with its 'cottage garden'.

Robertson Road / McDougall Road

6.34 The Robertson Road / McDougall Road development is the largest new housing scheme within the conservation area comprising small two-storey terraces, and three-storey townhouses and flats. Some of the properties lining the High Street stand between / opposite older houses and respect their overall older form (standing almost straight onto the pavement with small front gardens, and have larger rear gardens). However, the general layout of the new roads with their individual plots is very different to the layout of the surrounding nineteenth century streets (not back to back). This leaves much more open space within the centre of the development. The buildings lying along the High Street, and even some of those within the development, share some of the common general characteristics of the High Street East, such as short rows of two-storey yellow or red brick houses with slate roofs and architectural features (red / yellow brick detailing, sash-style windows, bay windows and panelled doors). However, they all lack chimney stacks, which are a common feature of High Street East.



1 – 10 Costins Walk and Glass Mill House from along the canal



5 – 9 Cooper Way

6.35 While some of the new houses respect the height and form of neighbouring homes, others, such as the three-storey blocks of townhouses towards the east end, have less in common with the surrounding built environment. The flats on the corner of Robertson Road and the High Street (Augustus Smith House and Thomas Bourne House) stand opposite the 1930s detached properties (35 – 43 High Street), but tend to have more in common with the Robertson Road houses located away from the High Street than some of the other large blocks of flats / townhouses nearer the canal. The views across the rear aspects of these new properties are also distinctly different when compared to views across the older High Street houses; the rear elevations of new properties appear flat unlike the projecting rendered rear wings of 22 – 28 High Street.

6.36 Glass Mill House is a three-storey building at the rear of the development and lies close to the canal. It has a mixture of residential / industrial character with vertical brick banding

and Juliet balconies. Other three-storey properties close to the canal also have a mixed character. 1 – 10 Costins Walk shares similar features with the High Street townhouses yet have first floor Juliet balconies and rear garages / parking spaces, while the townhouses of 1 – 8 McDougall Road have integral garages to the ground floor unlike the High Street townhouses.

Negative features:

- Some poor quality in-filling (mostly residential, but also some commercial)
- Destruction of the uniformity of terraces and adjoining groups: loss of traditional windows and doors, the addition of front porches, render or paint, and replacement of predominantly traditional slate with concrete tile roof tiles
- Addition / position of satellite dishes to front elevations and the growing number of roof lights
- Different boundary treatments or replacement with non-traditional fencing, and the insertion of hard landscaping to front gardens

High Street Central

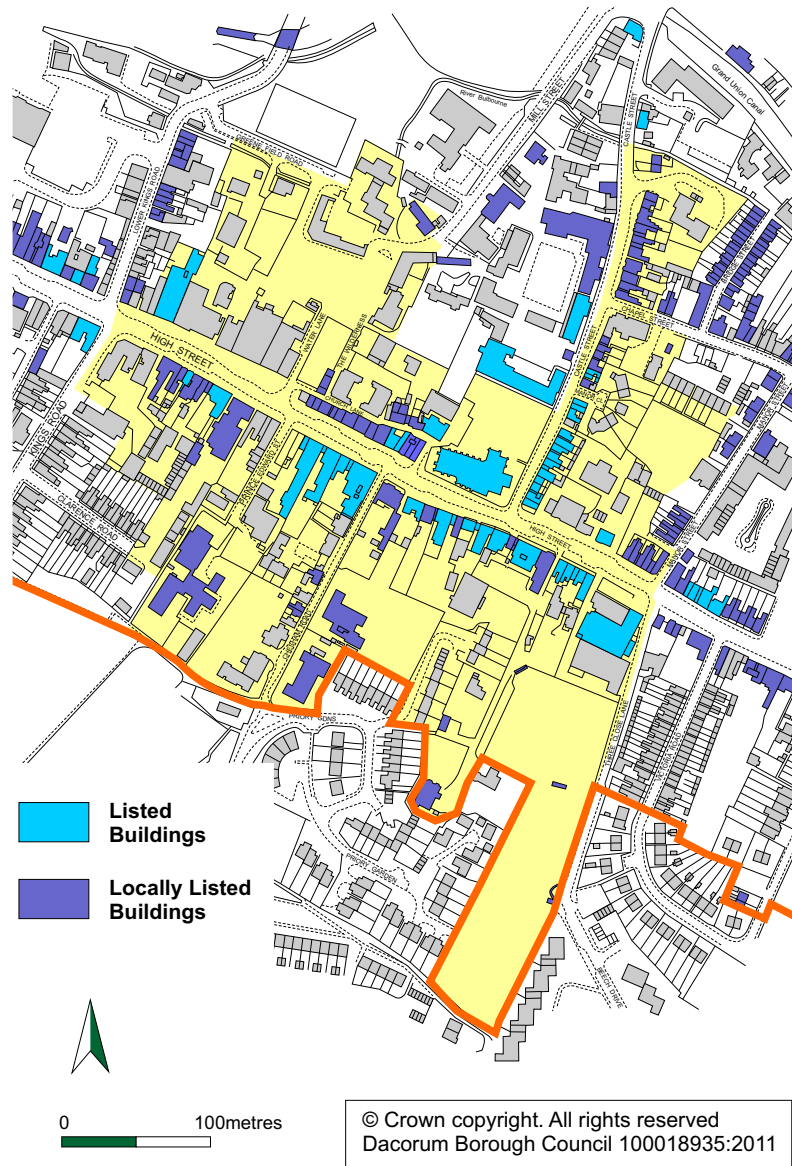
6.37 This is the main urban area of Berkhamsted incorporating the central core of the High Street and adjoining side roads from Manor Street / Three Close Lane up to the crossroads at Kings Street / Lower King Street, but not including Mill Street / part of Castle Street as this forms the School area discussed below. High Street Central has a complex character and history with a mixture of building types and building styles, which makes analysis of a common type or shared features very difficult. There are mostly properties in commercial use with some residential, civic, religious and educational buildings as would be expected from a town centre. The historic centre of Berkhamsted revolves around High Street Central and incorporates buildings that line the High Street, the parish church of St. Peter and the old market place, Church Lane, and Castle Street. The High Street itself comprises rows of adjoining two and three storey properties, mostly in commercial use with some residential, civic and religious buildings that date between the thirteenth and twenty-first century.

6.38 The majority of Berkhamsted Conservation Area's statutory listed buildings lie within High Street Central, almost exclusively along the High Street and Castle Street, and date to between the thirteenth and twentieth centuries. A large number of other buildings are considered to be of local importance and appear on the Berkhamsted Local List (see Introduction, 1.12 – 1.15, and Appendix 2).

6.39 At the east end of High Street Central by Manor Street / Three Close Lane, the character of the built environment changes from that in High Street East comprising two, prominent, High Street properties that stand on each side of the road, The Rex Cinema and the adjoining flats and 96 – 104 High Street. The Rex Cinema is a substantial, grade II listed, Art Deco building on the south side of the High Street that was built in 1938; it has recently been restored and extended to the rear. The fore area is brick paved for seating outside the associated ground floor restaurant, The Gatsby. Attached to the right is a contemporary four storey, rendered, residential block, in front of which lies a walled garden with piers, railings, and a paved area with planted beds. It has recently been re-developed with another floor being added, and has been significantly extended to the rear. Due to the age, scale and design, the appearance of The Rex Cinema and the attached flats are different to the overall character of the High Street; this is also due to the fact that they replaced a large single property, Egerton House, which was demolished in 1938.

6.40 Opposite The Rex Cinema is 96 – 104 High Street. Built in the late nineteenth century, it is a two and a half storey mock-

Map 11: Area 1: High Street Central



Tudor row of shops with dormers and prominent chimney stacks. At the rear of 102, behind a red brick wall facing the High Street, is a large parking area and garages with access from Manor Street; between 102 and 108 High Street is an old brick boundary wall. Attached to no. 96 is a smaller property, 94 High Street (K-C-S Computers), which is a late nineteenth century two storey building with a ground floor shopfront that continues around onto Manor Street.

6.41 Up to the corner with Castle Street and the thirteenth century parish church, the Georgian character of the High Street becomes prevalent; red or yellow brick houses of two or two and a



The Rex Cinema, restaurant (The Gatsby) and adjoining flats



96 – 104 High Street

half storey, with a hipped or gabled roof of slate or tile, chimney stacks, sash windows, panelled doors, pediments, doorcases or columned porches, and low brick front walls with metal railings (gothic-style). Many of these buildings have a series of stone steps leading from the pavement up to their front doors, a feature that continues along most of the south side of the High Street up to no. 133 on the corner of Chesham Road.

6.42 This group begins with a row of four, three-storey, yellow brick, late Georgian, grade II listed, detached town-houses at 103 – 109 High Street (south side). It has a slate roof, chimney stacks, sash windows and panelled doors approached by steps over a basement and a central arched carriageway to the rear plot. To the fore is a low brick wall with metal railings. Neighbouring properties include a mid-nineteenth century, yellow brick house with a two-storey bay (111 High Street) that adjoins an eighteenth century

red brick house with a pediment above the first floor, The Red House (113 High Street). It is a large property of two and a half storeys with sash windows, a central Ionic porch (pillar and pediment) and four dormer windows. The low brick wall and metal railings to the front extend around both properties, and each now has a commercial use as offices.



111 and 113 High Street



115 – 121 High Street

6.43 Opposite the three-storey late Georgian town-houses on the north side is 108 High Street (Dower House), a further late Georgian detached stuccoed red brick house of two storeys with a wide central pediment above the first floor, sash windows, a bow shop window and a semi-circular hood on consoles and slender columns; unlike this group of Georgian houses on the High Street, it has no boundary wall and railings as these have unfortunately been removed for parking. On the corner of Castle Street is 120 High Street with features characteristic of the Georgian period such as sash windows,

doorcase, slate hipped roof and boundary wall with metal railings; it has the appearance of an extended Georgian rectory, since covered in roughcast, and is located next to the parish church.

6.44 Between 108 and 120 is Pilkington Manor and the adjacent Dean Fry Court, a modern development (flats) of two and three storeys, built in yellow brick with Juliet balconies, an off-centre columned doorcase and a mixture of hipped and gabled slate roofs. It replaced a mid-twentieth century building that stood on the site of Pilkingtons, a three-storey yellow brick Georgian house with a brick boundary wall and metal railings. The new development has a low brick wall with railings, however the original boundary once projected further forward in line with that of the Dower House and no. 120; this is now depicted by a row of modern metal bollards. Behind The Dower House (no. 108) in its former rear garden stands Dower Mews, a recent commercial development comprising three red brick buildings of three-storeys with gabled slate effect roofs, orange brick banding, arch-headed Palladian windows with Juliet balconies and porch hoods (Felden House, Aldbury and Buckland House, c1989). Dower Mews is accessed from the east side of no. 108, while to the west between Dower House and Dean Fry Court is a driveway with metal gates leading to a further contemporary development of three-storey flats. These share similar characteristics with Dean Fry Court and replace the earlier squash courts; like Dower Mews, it too stands within hard surface landscaping.



120 High Street with its original front boundary



Pilkington Manor / Dean Fry Court and the Dower House (108 High Street)



The Old Court House



St. Peter's Church

6.45 Beyond Castle Street on the corner with the High Street stands St. Peters Church, a prominent and significant thirteenth century building of flint with stone dressings, much

restored in the nineteenth century by Butterfield. It has a low brick wall that extends down Castle Street along the churchyard to the east. By the west doorway stand two late nineteenth century candy-twist lampposts in a Victorian style. To the west is a brick cobbled street that leads past the west door of the church down to the Old Court House and Church Lane, and that houses the War Memorial (dedicated in 1920, but moved to its current position in the 1950s). The sixteenth century Old Court House is a jettied, half-timbered building, built as a Borough Court, then became a school and now is occupied the parish office to St. Peters. Behind the Court House is a flint wall, a former boundary wall of the churchyard (northwest corner) dividing it from the Old School Building on Castle Street. Church Lane runs along the back or properties that front onto the High Street and occupy the site of the old market place (124 – 158 High Street).

6.46 124 – 158 High Street are the later in-fill buildings of the old market place to the west of St. Peters Church, mostly dating to between the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, except for nos. 130 – 132 that are earlier in date. They occupy the classic triangular shape of ground associated with market places in medieval towns, where stalls were erected outside the church to obtain God's blessing; its origins could pre-date St. Peters Church as it is located on the High Street close to the junction with Castle Street that leads up to the seat of power at Berkhamsted Castle. They form an adjoining row of shops and cafes of mostly two storey and three storeys, with the central three adjoining properties being taller at three and a half and four storeys (134 – 140 High Street). The oldest surviving buildings in this group are 130 – 132 and comprise two shopfronts, three first floor sash windows and two small dormer windows to the roof. It has an eighteenth century brick front but may have been built in the seventeenth century. The remainder of the row were

built in the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century and probably replaced earlier properties. All are built in brick, some exposed while others have been rendered or white-washed, and comprise a mixture of styles and architectural features. Most have more traditional double fronted shopfronts with a central doorway to the ground floor, sash windows to upper floors with stone sills, and slate or tile roofs and chimney stacks. Some have added details to upper floor windows; segmental heads, keystones, hoods with consoles, panels of decorative studwork and double sashes. Signage is kept to a minimum and one or two shops have traditional flat awnings.



146 – 158 High Street



Church Lane from the east

6.47 Church Lane is mostly hidden from direct view of the High Street, except for the half-timbered, sixteenth century Court House. It has its own individual character with a very narrow street abutted by two, three and four storey buildings. On the south side are the early nineteenth to early twentieth century red brick buildings of 124 – 158 High Street. Drain pipes, rainwater drains, external metal fire escape stairs and windows with security bars are all common features of the rear elevations. There is also a narrow passageway through



Court House Cottage and Badger's Drift / Candlemaker's Cottage, Church lane

to the High Street between nos. 150 and 152. A small outbuilding / workshop stands at the east end of Church Lane behind 124 High Street (now occupied by a small shop). It has doors to the ground floor and small windows to the upper floor and is one of three surviving, similar, small, nineteenth century industrial structures on Church Lane; the other two stand on the north side. The buildings on the north side comprise two-storey, red or yellow brick buildings. Adjoining the Old Court is no. 6, Court House Cottage (a former school master's house and now parish office) with transom and mullion windows, projecting doorhood, a large stepped ornamental chimney and decorative timber framing to the gables. Next to no. 6 is Badger's Drift / Candlemaker's Cottage, two semi-detached houses converted from a workshop (extended to the rear) with sash windows, a door each and a former first floor hatch opening. Beyond the large, modern, red brick, three-storey, double office block (Church Gates, The Wilderness) is another small former workshop, now in commercial use as a hairdressers. On the boundary of the car park is a small, two-storey, yellow brick former outbuilding with a slate roof and weatherboarded gable end; it stands behind Badger's Drift and could date to the seventeenth / eighteenth century.



Workshop, now Trilbys and Tiaras, Church Lane

and Chesham Road, and date from the sixteenth to nineteenth century (nos. 115 – 133). They form a row of adjoining properties with one or two carriageways through to rear plots, except for 131 - 133 High Street on the corner of Chesham Road (Overton House, now part of the Berkhamsted School). As a semi-detached property, it stands in a single plot and has a distinctive Victorian character over two and a half storeys with stone colonnaded bay windows, 1-over-1 sash windows, tall gables with attic windows, a bell tower, basements, steps up to the two front doors with hoods over and decorative metal railings. It was extended to the rear with a complementary building in the later nineteenth century.

6.48 Historic buildings survive along the south side of the High Street between Castle Street



137 – 151 High Street
(The Swan, The Crown and The Kings Arms)



164 – 184 High Street

6.49 Most of the other brick buildings along this row are two storeys with hipped or gabled tile or slate roofs and chimney stacks, with one Georgian town-house being three storeys (121 High Street; its roof is hidden behind a parapet and it has an attractive oval fanlight above the central door). Some are timber framed later encased in brick (125 High Street; it incorporates a medieval hall-house), while others have exposed framing (129 High Street, Dean Incents House, is jettied). The Georgian / Victorian character of this row survives with sash windows, doorcases, columned porches, low brick boundary walls with metal railings (gothic-style). Three properties have shopfronts; two date to the nineteenth century (115 and 123 High Street), while the third is a double fronted twentieth century shopfront (125 High Street). Two were inserted into existing houses (123 and 125 High Street) while 115 High Street was probably built as a small shop. This shows the changing nature of this group of buildings set within the core of the High Street opposite the church, from residential to commercial use expanding out from the old market place. Several buildings within this row (nos. 119 – 133) have been extended to the rear, especially nos. 119, 121, 123 and 125, with the remainder being used for car parking. A nineteenth century building with a hipped slate roof attached to the rear of 119 High Street has been significantly altered to allow wider access into the rear plot; a portion of the ground floor has been totally removed and the upper floor supported by joists that rest on the wall of the neighbouring property. Many of these buildings have a series of stone steps leading from the pavement up to their front



The Town Hall



200 – 206 High Street

doors, a feature of the south side of the High Street that continues from the properties to the east. Outside no. 129 lies the grade II listed, 1930s, cast iron telephone kiosk, the only kiosk on the High Street.

6.50 The buildings opposite the old market place on the south side of the High Street, between Chesham Road and Prince Edward Street (nos. 137 – 151) form an adjoining group. 137 – 147

High Street all date from the sixteenth to eighteenth century; three of these were coaching inns or public houses each with carriageways through to rear plots: The Swan (nos. 137 and 139), The Crown (no. 145) and The Kings Arms (no. 147). However, the front range of the former Swan public house, no. 139, is thought to have been an open timber hall dating to the fourteenth century and was later extended to the west and east. Most are two storeys with a timber frame under later brick encasing or stucco. The roofs are mostly gabled with tile or slate and chimney stacks; The Crown has exposed decorative circular timberwork to its half-hipped front gable, which stands out as an architectural feature within the row. The Swan is a particularly prominent building due to it being painted pink and from its double gable facing the street. The Kings Arms is now three storeys, all with red and blue chequer brickwork (originally only two storeys), and has nineteenth century oriel windows on the first floor. There are a mixture of window styles (sash, casements and bays) and doorcases. Signage has been kept to a minimum and the public houses have retained low-key traditional hanging pub signs. 149 and 151 High Street, on the corner of Prince Edward Street, adjoin The Kings Arms to the east and probably dates to the mid-nineteenth century. Although slightly taller than The Kings Arms, it is three storeys with a gable / hipped slate roof, chimney stacks, decorative brickwork and banding (continues to west side), and stone hoods with consoles above the windows of the first and second floors. Originally with one continuous shopfront, it now has two modern shop windows.

6.51 On the north side of the High Street from Church Lane to Lower Kings Road are a row of shops and offices broken by two narrow streets, The Wilderness and Water Lane. The buildings from Tescos (no. 160) to Boots (no. 194) date between the mid and late twentieth century and comprise mostly three-storey, red brick buildings with large ground floor windows and rows of smaller windows to the upper floors typical of 1950s and 1960s design. The prominent four-storey red brick building, Chiltern House (no. 184), was built in 1978 with three ground floor shopfronts and rows of large office windows on the upper floors. Next to Boots is the Town Hall which was erected in 1859. This prominent, Victorian, gothic style building by the architect Edward Buckton Lamb is constructed in red and yellow brick with blue brick detailing, has an octagonal turret and oriel window, stone dressings, gothic tracery and four pointed arch doorways. 198 – 204 High Street are a row of more low-key single and two-storey buildings built in brick (probably late nineteenth century) but later altered with modern shop windows. Beyond is the corner with Lower Kings Road, occupied by no. 206 (Petal Flowershop). It may date to the early nineteenth century and is built in brick, now rendered, with an old slate roof, projecting eaves and gable with wavy barge boards facing the High Street. On the ground floor are large shop windows and doorways while on the upper floor are older style casement windows that continue as an unbroken row along the west side, probably indicating a former workshop on the first floor.



Older outbuildings, including the former fire station, at the rear of the Civic Centre on the High Street accessed from Clarence Road

6.52 Opposite along the south side of High Street Central from no. 153 (Boltons) by Prince Edward Street to no. 187 (Police Station) on the corner of Kings Road stands an almost unbroken row of shops, offices, restaurants, banks and Berkhamsted's Civic Centre. Ranging in date from the late thirteenth century (no. 173, a timber framed building) to the late twentieth century (no. 187 Police Station, built in 1972) they comprise a mixture of building styles and materials. Standing mostly as two, two and a half and three storey properties the majority are built in red brick; some have applied render (smooth or roughcast) to their front elevations. All but one property in this row has a tiled roof. Some roofs are gabled, while others are hipped, and a few have decorative gables facing the street (nos. 175 & 177) or dormer windows. All have older-style shopfronts with low-key fascias and signage except for the Civic Centre; a large Georgian-style prominent building built c1928, it has sash windows to both floors and broken pediment over a first floor double door with a Juliet balcony. The Civic Centre has been much extended to the rear and occupies the plot of an earlier building, demolished in the 1920s. Its long rear yard is accessed from Clarence Road, and is occupied by a series of red and yellow brick outbuildings (single and two storeys) as well as a number of garages all mostly dating from c1900 onwards. At the north end on the west side stands a two-storey, yellow brick building with a slate roof that probably dates to the early nineteenth century. It was later used as a fire station and is now occupied by the Dacorum Heritage Trust as their Museum Store; it is heavily secured and has external extractors.

6.53 The styles of windows to the upper floors of 153 – 187 High Street range from casements to sash and single oriels. There is a carriageway under no. 167 (Proffit and Holt) leading to a rear yard of garages and outbuildings, serving 163 – 167 High Street. Behind the neighbouring Civic Centre is another large rear yard also with parking spaces. As well as the Civic Centre, other prominent buildings in this row include two three-storey properties, no. 179 (Betfred) and no. 187 (Police Station).



167 – 179 High Street



187 High Street (Police Station) - (now demolished)

6.54 It is clear that the buildings along the High Street Central commonly face onto the road and there is no green space. Softening of the urban character has been achieved by the use of the trees that line each side of the pavement, which predominantly lie from The Rex Cinema to just past the Lower Kings Road / Kings Road junction, along with planters attached to lamp posts.

Side roads leading off from the central core of the High Street

6.55 The side roads leading off from the central core of the High Street include Castle Street, Water Lane and The Wilderness, Three Close Lane (west side), Rectory Lane, Chesham Road and Prince Edward Street. High Street Central also comprises the rear plots on the north side of the High Street from Water Lane to Lower Kings Road (mostly occupied by Water Lane Car Park). Greenfield Road leads into Water Lane Car Park from Lower Kings Road along with Water Lane

(from the High Street) and Mill Street (from Castle Street). Their use, whether residential, commercial, industrial, religious or educational, is varied due to their position within the centre of the town. In addition some roads have mixed use, such as Prince Edward Street (commercial and educational), Three Close Lane (commercial and religious), Castle Street (commercial and residential), and Greenfield Road (industrial, commercial and residential).



Castle Street from the south end

6.56 Castle Street leads northwards past St. Peters Church and its open walled raised churchyard with established trees and Smith-Dorrien Monument, over which the sixteenth century timber framed Court House is seen along with the neighbouring modern brick and tile-hung building, Chesham House. Beyond is Berkhamsted School; the remainder of Castle Street (west side) lies within The School sub-area. The properties on the east side, nos. 1 to 31, lie along the street front and comprise adjoining single buildings, semi-detached pairs, or groups of up to three properties. They are of either two or three stories and date from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the exception being the four-storey flats (William Fiske House) built in 1978 on the corner of Chapel Street. Just behind William Fiske House is Alexander House (formerly the Congregational Church) built in the 1970s when the earlier Congregational Church was demolished. It retains mature trees, and a low brick wall and gateway into the former graveyard. The tomb of Thomas Read and family still stands.



Castle Street from the north end

6.57 1 – 31 Castle Street share many common features and are built in red brick (some since rendered or white-washed) with slate roofs and chimney stacks. Many have pilastered doorcases with hoods or pediments over, and sash windows of various styles with flat or segmental heads. A number of properties have carriages through to rear plots (nos. 5, 25 and 27) and several have gates to front elevations for rear access to gardens. While some properties

are still in commercial use as shops and retain older-style fascias and shopfronts, some have been altered into residential use. Some of these have kept the character and features of the shopfront window, such as no. 8. The appearance of bay windows is more common in buildings located north of the Chapel Street junction (nos. 21, 23, 24, 27 and 28), especially in those buildings that are double-fronted with a central doorway. Prominent buildings include two three-storey properties such as nos. 12 / 13 and 14 on the corners of Manor Close, a 1950s housing development in the form of a cul-de-sac. Nos. 12 and 13 has two old-style shopfronts, arch-headed windows to upper floors and rusticated ground floor and quoins, while no. 14

has a rusticated ground floor, quoins, and stone lintels with keystones to windows on the upper floors. Nos. 21 and 22 Castle Street are also prominent three-storey buildings; no. 21 was the former Gardener's Arms alehouse and has a decorative metal bracket for its earlier pub sign attached to its corner on the second floor. It still retains an example of old cobbling laying across the pavement from the road, which probably led to a cellar opening under the later bay window.

6.58 At the north end of Castle Street next to the river lies the modern Ambulance and Fire Station and beyond are two semi-detached brick cottages (nos. 35 and 36). Part of no. 36 is tile hung indicating some of the building may be timber framed, and has added a porch to the front elevation. No. 35 has a tile roof (replacing a slate roof) and a modern bay front window. Both stand back from the roadside with front gardens. No. 35 has a timber, corrugated roofed, shed used as a garage with access from the corner of the driveway into the Ambulance and Fire Station. This northern end of Castle Street, like that by the church at the south end, has a softer appearance from the tree cover and cottage gardens.

6.59 Water Lane is a narrow road through to Water Lane Car Park with modern three storey buildings on each side, Tescos (160 High Street) and Costa Coffee (162 High Street). The Wilderness runs between 1 Church Lane and Church Gates, past Tescos where it opens out into Water Lane Car Park. On the east side is a



Water Lane car park: view towards rear of High Street buildings

tall brick wall with two gateways into properties associated with Berkhamsted School (The Bungalow and Cox's House); this wall abuts the old workshop, a nineteenth century brick L-shaped building on the corner of Mill Street with part felt / part corrugated iron roof. In front of the Bungalow is a two-storey brick building, painted white, with a high wall. It has a gabled red pantile roof, a series of small windows, and both ground and first floor access; a 1920s / 30s former industrial building it is now a children's book publisher, 'Make Believe Ideas'.

6.60 Water Lane Car Park comprises hard standing surface with some mature trees, a small modern public toilet and a number of other buildings such as the two-storey, red brick Amersham House and the Royal British Legion (182 High Street) at the rear of Chiltern House. The Legion is part two and three storey with a slate roof dating from the nineteenth century with later additions. To the northwest corner are two red brick buildings with slate roofs associated with the waterworks (engine and pump houses) and a 1930s bungalow set in its own gardens. All three buildings lie close to the River Bulbourne on Greenfield Road, which is lined with mature trees and a hedge. At the east end of Greenfield Road is Berkley Court, modern development of flats comprising two and three-storey red brick buildings with concrete tile roofs that shares similar characteristics with its neighbour, Amersham House. The car park has removed the former street layout of The Wilderness and Water Lane that both joined in a loop with the



Three Close Lane: view of the cemetery wall, earlier gate piers and trees

south end of Mill Street to the east of Amersham House. Beyond Berkley Court to the east is Adelbert House. It stands at the south end of Mill Street and is a yellow brick, two-storey house of the mid-nineteenth century with red brick dressings and banding, and a slate gabled roof and chimney stacks. Adelbert House has retained its sash windows and attached outbuildings and greenhouse behind a yellow brick wall / fence. It is thought to have been built for the Manager of the Gas Works that formerly stood close by.



Chesham Road from the High Street

6.61 Three Close Lane (west side) comprises the east side of The Rex Cinema that stands on the High Street, beyond which abuts the tall red / yellow brick wall of the cemetery and the remains of an old metal railing. Lined with mature trees, the cemetery is mostly hidden from view until the entrance with the old metal gates; this entrance lies beyond a semi-circular wall with piers and stone coping (possibly a former entrance) in front of which stands a modern utility building. Behind the wall is a small red brick cemetery building with a replacement corrugated iron roof and chimney stack (now dis-used). At the northwest corner is the original entrance from Rectory Lane; it has grander, classical, octagonal, brick piers with stone coping and decorative metal gates. The cemetery contains a number of gravestones, funerary monuments and plaques that might be considered to be of local importance, such as the large brick decorative arch that lies where the original cemetery meets the later southern extension. The cemetery is also heavily occupied throughout by mature trees, especially along its boundaries.



St. John's, Chesham Road

park behind 125 High Street. Beyond the gates to the cemetery the road narrows further and is tree-lined. It continues up past The Rectory (a 1950s / 60s house) on the west side and Cowper's Well on the east side and up to The Old Rectory beyond. The Old Rectory is a two-storey, yellow brick house with a parapet and tall Tudor-style red brick chimneys, double height bay transom and mullion windows and an added gothic-style red brick entrance porch. It probably dates to c1840 and there is an old coach house and stable of yellow brick with a hipped slate roof to the north.

6.62 Rectory Lane is a very narrow road between 109 and 111 High Street. It leads past the rear plots of the High Street buildings, various hard standing car parks, and two low-key, red / yellow brick modern offices with hipped slate roofs (Redwood House behind 119 High Street and 105a High Street). Although Redwood House is fairly low-key as seen from Rectory Lane and is not seen from the High Street, it has a larger impact from within the car

6.63 Chesham Road is accessed between 133 and 137 High Street. It is a narrow road lined with two-storey brick properties associated with The Swan (former coaching inn) to the west and Overton House, a three and a half storey yellow

brick Victorian property (now part of the Berkhamsted School) to the east with a red brick wall around a rear yard. Beyond Overton House on the east side are St. John's and Incents, three and four storey boarding houses for pupils of Berkhamsted School, both with tall brick boundary walls softened by planting and mature trees to the rear plots. Built in c1880, St. John's has a more typical Victorian institutional character with gables, canted bays, sash windows and tall chimney stacks. Incents (probably built in c1910) has a different style with canted bays, transom and mullion windows, dormers, tall chimney stacks and a part tile hung upper floor. On the west side adjacent to The Swan are two pairs of semi-detached two-storey red brick houses with slate roofs (Haven and Sunnymede). Each has arched stone headers to the doorways with a mixture of casement windows on both floors. Beyond is a modern two / two and a half-storey development (Cavalier Court) built in red brick, partly rendered, with tiled roofs and dormers. It has a wide brick-paved carriageway leading to a courtyard with further properties. Next to this is 2 Chesham Road, a detached, early nineteenth century, two-storey, yellow brick house with a slate roof, sash windows and panelled door and metal railings around a small front garden; it has been extended sympathetically to the rear. The neighbouring property is Elvyne Hall, a single storey brick property, partially rendered, with a concrete tile roof. 3, 4 and 5 Chesham Road lie to the south of Elvyne Hall; nos. 3 and 4 are semi-detached nineteenth century cottages in yellow brick with slate roofs with sash / casement windows and side entrances and no. 5 is a detached red brick house in a similar style. Beyond is Deans Lawn, another modern housing development. It comprises three groups of red brick buildings, two of which face the road (nos. 1 – 4 and 5 - 10) with a driveway through to a large, rear, brick-paved car park. 1 – 4 Deans Lawn has the appearance of a two-storey house, while nos. 5 – 10 and 11 – 17 are three storeys townhouses with integral ground floor garages at the rear. Each has a mixture of features that include gable and hipped roofs, tile hung walls,



Victoria Church of England School, Prince Edward Street



'The Gable' and Gable Hall, Prince Edward Street

door hoods and gabled porches, canted bays, dormer windows, and have boundary walls with planted beds.

6.64 Prince Edward Street lies between 151 and 153 High Street. It is a narrow road lined with two-storey / two and a half storey brick properties that abut the High Street buildings and are used as offices; each has sash windows of differing styles with doorways onto the street, red brick detailing above windows and doors, tiled roofs and chimney stacks. The building behind no. 151 has a row of five gabled dormers, while some modern shopfronts have been inserted into 1 – 3 Prince Edward Street. Behind no. 3 is an unattractive open yard and hard standing car park; the later unattractive extensions to the Civic Centre can be seen across this car park. Beyond is The Gable, a yellow brick, detached, late

door hoods and gabled porches, canted bays, dormer windows, and have boundary walls with planted beds.

6.64 Prince Edward Street lies between 151 and 153 High Street. It is a narrow road lined with two-storey / two and a half storey brick properties that abut the High Street buildings and are used as offices; each has sash windows of differing styles with doorways onto the street, red brick detailing above windows and doors, tiled roofs and chimney stacks. The building behind no. 151 has a row of five gabled dormers, while some modern shopfronts have been inserted into 1 – 3 Prince Edward Street. Behind no. 3 is an unattractive open yard and hard standing car park; the later unattractive extensions to the Civic Centre can be seen across this car park. Beyond is The Gable, a yellow brick, detached, late

nineteenth century house with a red brick front, slate roof, large chimney stack and an oriel window to the front first floor. Next to this is Gable Hall, a brick (now rendered) public building with an asbestos covered roof dating to the mid twentieth century (possibly closed). Opposite are two new commercial buildings, The Bays, of one and a half and two-storeys in red brick facing the street front with large gables. At the end of Prince Edward Street behind security gates stands the Victoria Church of England School. Built in 1897 in red brick with orange brick dressings and a tiled roof, it has typical characteristics of a Victorian school, such as multiple gables with decorative studwork, a spire bell tower, long multi-glazed windows, and gabled entrances. It was extended in 1903 and again during the later twentieth century.

Negative features:

- Some poor quality in-filling (both residential and commercial)
- Out of scale commercial or office development, particularly in the High Street core area, Water Lane Car Park, and on the prominent corners of adjoining side streets
- Destruction of the uniformity of similar property types and adjoining groups: loss of traditional windows and doors, the addition of front porches, render or paint, and replacement of traditional slate with concrete tile roof tiles
- Different boundary treatments and the loss of small front gardens and particularly traditional railings to Georgian houses on the High Street
- Potential loss of traditional shopfronts, especially away from the High Street
- The insertion of hard landscaping to front gardens and also rear plots of High Street properties for parking
- Some smaller side streets and areas seem to have been generally 'forgotten' (such as Prince Edward Street and the cemetery on Rectory Lane / Three Close Lane)

High Street West

6.65 This is an urban area incorporating the west end of the High Street and adjoining side roads that predominantly comprise Lower Kings Road, St. John's Well Road and Park Street on

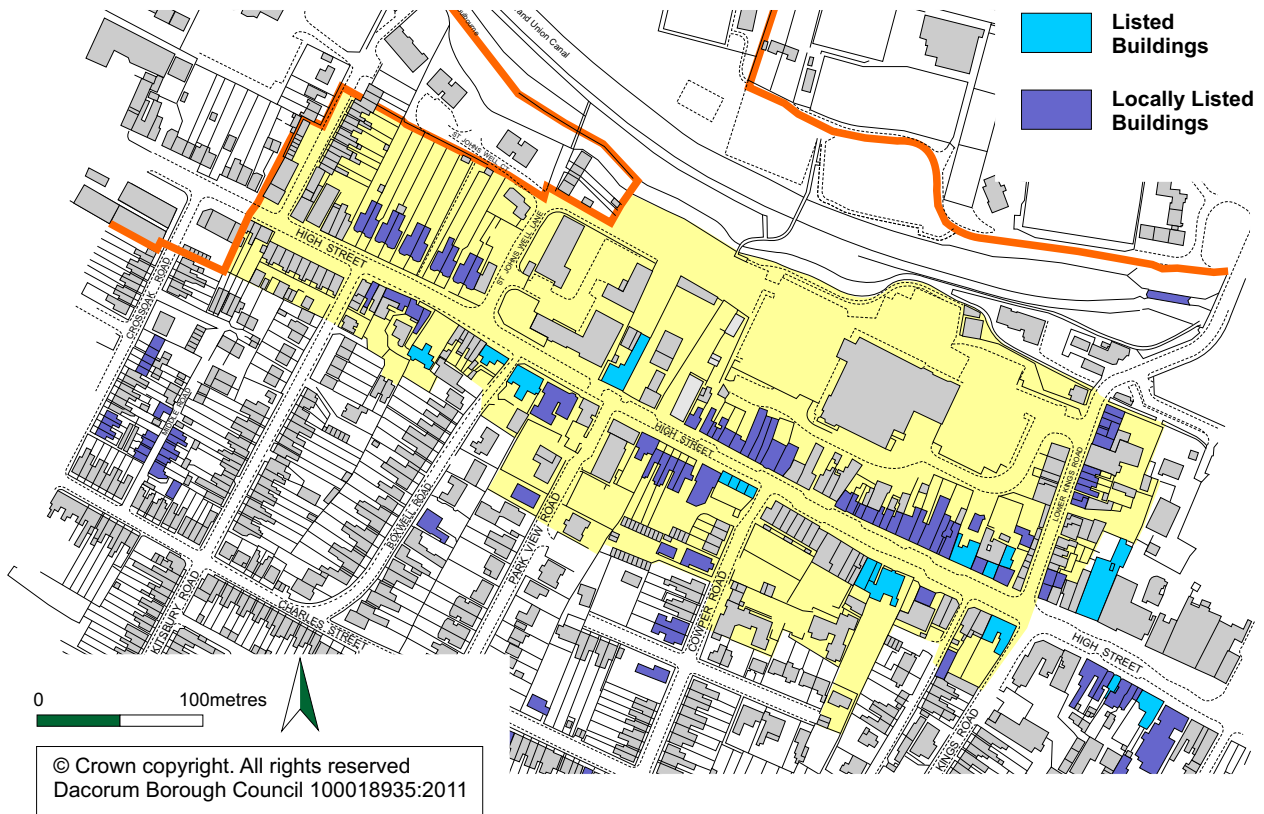
the north side, and on the south side the lower ends of Kings Road, Elm Grove, Cowper Road, Park View Road, Boxwell Road and Kitsbury Road. It also includes the largest area of car parking in the centre of town, Waitrose (Lower Kings Road) and St. John's Well Lane that runs almost continually behind the High Street along the edge of the River Bulbourne and canal. Like High Street East and Central, High Street West has a complex character and history with a mixture of building types and building styles, which makes analysis of a common type or shared features very difficult. There are mostly commercial properties with some residential, civic and religious use as would be expected from a town centre. The High Street itself comprises rows of adjoining, semi-detached and detached properties of between one and four stories, but mostly two and three storeys. The majority are in commercial use with some residential (especially rows and also above businesses) and religious buildings that date between the fifteenth and twenty-first century.

6.66 Sixteen properties standing within High Street West are statutory listed buildings, dating from between the late fifteenth century and the mid-nineteenth century. A large number of other buildings are considered to be of local importance and appear on the Berkhamsted Local List (see Introduction, 1.12 – 1.15, and Appendix 2).

6.67 The east end of the High Street meets the high traffic point at the open crossroad with Lower Kings Road and Kings Road. Here all four corner plots are easily viewed; 183 (Police Station), 189 (Barclays Bank), 206 (Petals flower shop) and 208 (Scoops coffee shop). Small-scale traffic lights do not intrude upon the street character as do the existing low-key road signage and pedestrian crossing points. The tree coverage here is much reduced for traffic safety. Nos. 183 and 206 form part of High Street Central, but 189 and 208 form part of a row of buildings on each side of the High Street.

6.68 Barclays Bank (no. 189) to Saxon House (nos. 223 – 233) on the corner of Cowper Road form the south side of the High Street. Barclays is an eighteenth century, chequered red and blue brick, two-storey building with a hipped tile roof, sash windows and several doorcases with

Map 12: Area 1: High Street West



pediments that extends to the rear along Kings Road. Adjoining is a two and a half storey, red brick building of the late nineteenth century with a tile roof and chimney stacks, and a modern glazed aluminium shopfront (Eyecare), two first floor oriel windows (with pediments) and a large dormer above with deep bargeboards. Next to that on the corner of Elm Grove is the site of a recently collapsed building, Birchneells now rebuilt.

6.69 Across the way is the Nationwide Building Society / Ash hairdressers, a 1960s / 70s building of three storeys (nos. 197 & 197b) with a modern shopfront and rows of domestic glazing to the upper floors (all with aluminium frames). The neighbouring detached single storey building, NatWest Bank (no. 199), probably dates to the early twentieth century. Built in red brick with brick quoins, it has arch headed windows, a central doorway with a broken stone pediment



189 – 195 High Street (before the collapse of Birchneells)



Lloyds TSB, 203 and 205 High Street

and a parapet above broken through with stone balustrading; to the side is a boundary wall. Beyond is a substantial detached two-storey house, now Lloyds TSB (nos. 203 and 205), of the early-mid nineteenth century. Built in red brick with a hipped slate roof, a small dormer window and chimney stacks, it has stucco to the ground floor, sash windows (including two tripartite ground floor windows) and a central door with a columnated open porch and steps. It retains part of the front boundary wall with modern railings commonly associated with grander eighteenth century houses in High Street Central (all completely re-built for the access ramp). The driveway to the side leads into a long rear plot and a hard surface car park. At the end of the plot, a section has been divided and built upon (Orchard End, c1960s / 70s) which is accessed from Torrington Road.



Saxon House formerly Outspan House, 223 – 233 High Street

6.70 Adjacent to Lloyds TSB is a fifteenth century timber framed house, now shops, encased in modern brick and render with a slate roof and tall chimney stack (nos. 207 – 209; the Red Cross). It has three first floor oriel windows and modern shopfront with a recessed doorway and a carriageway to the east side leading through to a rear yard (the ceiling of the carriageway comprises large exposed timbers). The yard has been developed with a series of buildings, each the width of the plot, which adjoin the rear of 207 – 209 High Street. The remaining buildings on the south side of the High Street up to Cowper Road comprise a 1930s two-storey row of shops (nos. 211 – 219) in red brick with four modern ground floor shop windows (mostly of aluminium) and ten Georgian-style first floor sash windows under a hipped pantile roof, a single storey shop (no. 221, 'b smart' dry cleaners) with a full-width glazed aluminium shop window and slate roof, and a four-storey row of 1970s shops with offices / flats above, Saxon House formerly Outspan House (nos. 223 - 233). Built in red brick with six modern ground floor shop windows, six oriel first floor windows and two upper floors (all with aluminium frames), Saxon House is the tallest building along High Street West and holds a prominent corner position. Its scale is even greater emphasised by the contrasting single storey, grade II listed, seventeenth century dark red and grey brick almshouses (235 – 241 High Street) that stand



Almshouses, 247 – 249 High Street

on the opposite corner of Cowper Road and the two-storey nineteenth century properties on the north side of the High Street (nos. 254 – 260). On its roof are utility towers and aerials that are prominent features of the High Street skyline; these can also be seen from the rear along Cowper Road and from the Waitrose car park on Lower Kings Road. The rear elevations of 211 – 233 High Street on the south side of the High Street can be seen across the large open rear car parks of Saxon House and the adjoining property, along with the new build in the rear plot of the fifteenth century building, nos. 207 – 209 (the Red Cross) and the flats of Nightingale Lodge, Cowper Road.

6.71 At the west corner of Cowper Road stands 235 – 241 High Street which are four, grade II listed, almshouses dated to 1684 on a cartouche within a curved central pediment. They have a

continuous hipped tile roof and prominent chimney stacks, and communal rear gardens. To the front are six windows, two arched semicircular empty niches, and steps up to the six front doors with wrought iron railings. Beyond the almshouses is 247 – 249 High Street, a detached, two-storey, red brick former house, now a restaurant (Ask), with a tiled hipped roof, two dormers and six sash first floor windows. Built in the early twentieth century, it has two modern bay windows on the ground floor and two doorways in the centre that lead out to a walled (rendered) front garden with ramp access. Standing back from the roadside are 251 – 259 High Street (Camilla Terrace), a row of yellow brick, early Victorian houses with red brick dressings, canted ground floor bay windows, with steps up to panel front doors, tri-partite first floor sash windows, and low-pitched slate roofs with chimney stacks. Gardens lie to the fore, most with low boundary walls (no. 259 has installed a car standing surface for parking and removed the boundary wall).



Boxwell House, High Street

6.72 Next to Camilla Terrace is The George, a late eighteenth century public house, built in brick now rendered with quoins. It has two-storey canted bay windows, a low-pitch slate roof with chimney stacks and pairs of dentils to the eaves. The right side canted bay window is a hardly detectable alteration of a former carriage entrance that lead through to the rear under the tri-partite first floor sash window. Next to The George on the corner of Park View Road is a modern, red brick, two-storey 1970s / 1980s building, Salter House, with six recessed doorways or windows under a false jetty with a half-hipped artificial slate roof with rooflights (nos. 263 – 265), whose larger rear portion with a mansard roof and more rooflights continues onto Park View Road and includes a tower. While the design of the front section of the building is less imposing than some other modern High Street developments, the rear portion is much more out of character with the area.

6.73 Across the road on the opposite corner lies 269 High Street (Jelmac House), a three-storey

office block in red brick with yellow brick banding and a mansard grey coloured roof with rooflights. While it has sash-style windows, there is no front door and like its contemporary, Salter House, Jelmac House is not in-keeping with the general character of the High Street. The neighbouring two-storey property is semi-detached in stuccoed brick with a hipped slate roof, sash windows and a two-storey bay (nos. 271 and 273). Built in the early nineteenth century, it stands back from the roadside behind a low brick wall with ornate cast iron railings and brick piers, and there are steps up to the front door leading past a small front garden. Next to this is Boxwell House on the corner of Boxwell Road, a detached late seventeenth or early eighteenth century house with a symmetrical design typical of the period in rendered brickwork with a hipped slate roof and chimney stacks. There are also quoins and a large central pediment along with a pedimented Ionic doorcase on the ground floor and Georgian-style sash windows throughout. Like its neighbour, Boxwell House stands back from the roadside behind a low brick wall with railings with a small garden to the fore, typical of the grander eighteenth century houses located in High Street Central. It continues along Boxwell Road with slate roofed outshuts and has an old brick garden wall. To the rear is a large gabled extension with wavy bargeboard and a twentieth century flat roof extension that has uPVC windows, which although rendered, is not in-keeping with the overall character of the house.



The Lamb PH, High Street

6.74 Beyond Boxwell Road is The Lamb public house, a seventeenth century timber framed, brick encased (now painted) building with a gabled tile roof and a single dormer. It has a series of small wooden windows and three doors, and there are a series of small-scale rear extensions. Its boundary wall continues along Boxwell Road and the yard is accessed through gates. As with The George, signage has been kept to a minimum and both public houses have retained low-key traditional hanging pub signs. As it stands slightly back from the pavement edge, outdoor seating (benches and tables) has been provided. Attached are two late eighteenth century properties, 279 – 283 and 287 High Street, built in brown brick with red brick detailing, part slate and part tile gabled roofs with three dormers (nos. 279, 281, 283); there are also roof lights to no. 287. This group has a mixture of window types, some timber and some uPVC. No. 279 has a modern shopfront while



Friend's Meeting House, High Street

no. 283 has a more traditional fascia. No. 281 has retained earlier transom and mullion windows on the ground and first floors and a door with pedimented doorcase. No. 287 also has a carriageway through to the rear, sash-style windows and a first floor oriel window with a gable over, and appears to recently have had its brickwork re-pointed. A yellow brick boundary wall belonging to the Friend's Meeting House abuts no. 287 and extends onto no. 291. It has piers and recessed panels and there is a central pathway leading up to the single storey Meeting House itself, which stands far back from the roadside having the largest front garden to any property on the High Street West with a lawn, trees and shrubs. Erected in 1818 and built in yellow brick, it has a hipped slate roof, arch-headed sash windows and a later added enclosed porch with a hipped slate roof.



291 – 299 High Street

6.75 Nos. 291 – 305 form an attached group of nineteenth century properties of mostly two storeys (except for no. 303 which is three storeys) with slate roofs, some hipped and some gabled with a few surviving chimney stacks. Nos. 291 – 293 are built in yellow brick with red brick dressings, and have sash windows, a bay window, three gables, and a hood over the door. Part of the house has a low brick wall with railings with a small front garden. Attached is a former shop, built in brown brick with a traditional-style shopfront extending its entire length with large multi-paned windows that have base panels below with slate-effect tiling, a central door with side lights in the same style (also with

slate-effect tiled panels under) and five sash windows over (nos. 295 – 299, Sumner & Tabor Solicitors). Nos. 301 – 305 are partly occupied (a dentist and a café) with various shop windows; the more traditional being no. 303. Dating to the late nineteenth century, they are a mixture of exposed brick, painted brick and render, and have a series of sash windows and bay windows on the ground and first floors, some with added external shutters. No. 303 has prominent chimney stack and a second floor dormer while no. 305 (Berkos Café) has a basement that is accessed from the High Street and larger modern glazed windows along the wall extending along Kitsbury Road.

6.76 Beyond Kitsbury Road lies 307 – 323 High Street, which stands on the site of the former Union Workhouse. A purpose-built row of nine shops erected in the 1950s Tudor-style with a first floor and attic level under a gabled tile roof with short chimney stacks. It has modern shopfronts with exposed herringbone laid brickwork on the first floor and applied studwork with rendered panels. There are first floor bays with hipped roofs, transom and mullion windows and various hipped dormer windows. The building stands back from the roadside with a paved area often used for parking. The neighbouring property, nos. 325 – 329, forms the west end of the High Street conservation area and unlike many other rows, has undergone several changes to its original more uniform character. Built in the mid-nineteenth century in red brick, now rendered, it has a gabled slate roof and chimney stacks. It has a mixture of sash windows and part of a former old shopfront window, and two have retained their doorcases. One property has added external shutters while another has added security bars.

6.77 It is clear that in general the buildings along the south side of High Street West commonly face onto the road and there is very little green space, other than the private front gardens of Camilla Terrace (nos. 251 – 259), Boxwell House, the Friend's Meeting

House and 291 – 293 High Street. Any further loss of their front gardens should be discouraged as this affects their attractive character, especially to Camilla Terrace where encouragement could be given to re-install the lost garden. Other small front gardens that may have once existed have been lost following their change of use, such as at Lloyds TSB (nos. 203 and 205) and Ask (nos. 247 – 249). Softening of the urban character has been achieved by the use of the trees that are randomly dotted along the south side of High Street West, although significantly less densely than have been planted within High Street Central. This is also true of the somewhat minimal use of planters attached to lamp posts.

6.78 The buildings along the north side of the High Street from the crossroads with Lower Kings Road / Kings Road begin with no. 208, which is a 1950s red brick two-storey building that stretches along a significant portion of Lower Kings Road. Holding a prominent corner plot, its modern design houses several shops (only one facing the High Street, Scoops) and above is a clock tower and cupola. Behind, accessed through a narrow alley way and hidden from the commercial High Street, is Park View Cottage, an early nineteenth century, two-storey, plum brick cottage with red brick dressings, a tile roof, sash windows with a canted bay and a pilastered doorcase.

7.79 212 – 248 High Street form an attached group of commercial premises comprising mostly two or three storey properties; only one building



216 – 220 High Street



224 – 234 High Street

stands three and a half storeys, no. 230 (Santander), a brown brick building with red brick dressings that is built in the Georgian-style but dates to the early twentieth century. All the remaining properties are built in red or yellow brick, some painted and some rendered, and date to the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, although no. 236A and 238 (Muse / Abbey jewellers) may be timber framed with a later brick front. Three properties are grade II listed, nos. 216 / 216A (M&Co.) and 222 (the former Bourne School with its bell tower, now the Britannia Building Society). A fourth listed building lies behind no. 214 and is a seventeenth century weatherboarded outbuilding.

6.80 All but one building (no. 222 Britannia Building Society) has a shopfront on the ground floor, some continue over more than one property which can interrupt the building line such as 236 – 238 (David Paul / Abbey jewellers / Muse). This particularly affects nos. 212 – 220 (M&Co.) whose bold signage and long modern shopfronts run over three separate properties. In addition some commercial buildings have been split into two separate premises; nos. 242 – 246 (Mary Brooks and Boots Opticians), and nos. 236A and 238 (Abbey jewellers / Muse). The majority have however retained more traditional shopfront styles with fascias and recessed doors; good examples include no. 238 (Muse), no. 224 (Dickmans) and no. 232 (Wine Rack). Dickmans (no. 224) is a particularly good example of a traditional, but more elaborate, shopfront. The

door into the shop is set within a recessed porch that has a tiled floor. There is a further doorway in stone up to 'Linden House' on the first floor; its door has decorative stained glass. Several properties have less attractive modern replacement shopfronts such as nos. 212 – 220 (M&Co.), no. 240 (Colton Footwear), no. 242 (Boots Opticians) and no. 248 (Aegis Locks, now Banhams). Nos. 240, 242 and 248 all have modern aluminium shop windows; no. 248 also has faux marble base panels.

6.81 Where rooflines are not hidden behind brick parapets of properties on

the north side of High Street West, they are usually gabled inline with the road and in slate or tile with chimney stacks; one building has a Dutch-style gable no. 232 (Wine Rack). The common features of 212 – 248 High Street include a variety of windows to the upper floors, but are commonly sash windows (1-over-1, 2-over-2, 3-over-3, 6-over-6 or 6-over-9) with a small number of small dormers (box or gabled). Others include dentils under eaves, bay windows and pediments over windows. Retractable awnings are also more traditional in their design along this side of High Street West.

6.82 Standing back from the pavement lies 250 and 250 b, c and d High Street, a modern row of three shops with modern aluminium shopfronts and awnings (some with metal security shutters) and a gabled concrete tile roof typical of the 1950s (Cancer Research, Berkhamsted Sports, Peter John). Two further floors lie above and are used as flats and have their original metal-framed windows. Along the side of 250 High Street is a pathway to Waitrose car park (Lower Kings Road).

6.83 254 – 280 High Street form an attached group of commercial premises along with no. 284, a detached property. They comprise mostly two storey properties dating from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century with slate gabled or hipped roofs inline with the road and chimney stacks. All properties are built in brick and are mostly painted or rendered; only two are exposed brick, nos. 256 (Acorn Pharmacy), and



250 – 264 High Street



266 – 278 High Street

258 - 260. All buildings have a shopfront on the ground floor, except for nos. 254 and 284, which are in office use (Robert Martell & Partners, Surveyors, and Malcolm Jones and Metcalfe, Funeral Directors). Most shopfronts occupy one property, but on occasion one premises has two separate shopfronts (nos. 270 – 272 the Olive Tree, and no. 262 (Brasserie Blanc). Many have retained more traditional small shopfront styles with fascias and doors to the side; good examples include no. 266 (Elle Collections) and no. 280 (The Forge Boutique).

6.84 There are a number of less attractive styles along this row such as those with large undivided glazed windows or modern alterations; no. 256 (Acorn pharmacy) that has been built-out on the ground floor and has bold signage, while no. 268 (Way Inn Christian Centre) has almost full-width glazing on the ground and first floors. The common features of 254 - 280 High Street include a variety of windows to the upper floors, from sash to casement to transom and mullion.

Others include deep bargeboards and first floor bay windows. Between 280 and 284 High Street is a pathway through to St. John's Well car park and the canal. No. 254 has a modern low front wall with railings and a paved front garden. Between 280 and 284 High Street is a second pathway through to Waitrose car park (Lower Kings Road).

6.85 The rear aspect of the buildings facing onto the north side of the High Street (nos. 212 – 284) can be seen from within Waitrose car park (Lower Kings Road). The rear plots are used as parking spaces, some of which are walled, and lead directly into the Waitrose car park. At its east end also stands Park View Cottage (early nineteenth century) and Tower House (c1888), a two-storey yellow brick building with red brick dressings, a gabled tile roof, transom and mullion windows, and at its northeast corner a four-sided crenellated tower. Tower House was a rear extension to the former Bourne Girls School founded in 1822 at 222 High Street (now the Britannia Building Society).



Rear of 254 High Street

6.86 The rear elevations of other High Street buildings can be seen along with rear extensions. Although these are generally brick-built one and two storey extensions that cannot be seen from the High Street, they take many different forms, some are modern with gabled or flat roofs while others are older (often with slate roofs). Surviving older examples include the two-storey, nineteenth century, rendered brick addition behind 254 High Street with sash windows. Late



Rear of 270 – 280 High Street

twentieth century examples that do not follow the overall character include the flat roofed extension to 230 High Street (Santander); it has a square brick tower and highly visible metal stair fire escape. However, a recent low-key addition behind 262 High Street (Brasserie Blanc), has a pleasant mixture of rendered brick, timber frame and weatherboarded extensions with gabled slate roofs at varying heights. At the west end behind 270 – 280 High Street there are very few extensions, only single storey additions; the rear elevations are more clearly visible including the horizontal surviving sliding sash windows: 278 & 278A High Street (Home & Abroad Rentals). The large modern workshop at the rear of 286 High Street (Kwik-Fit) creates a full-stop of the view along the rear of 212 – 284 High Street.

6.87 286 – 290 High Street is a recently built garage (Kwik-Fit) with a two-storey office in brown brick with large windows and an attached taller workshop behind. To the fore is a modern low brick wall with planting, and to the side a wide drive leading into a hard surfaced rear yard. Beyond are two detached properties, nos. 292 – 294 and no. 296. 292 – 294 High Street is a nineteenth century, a two and a half storey, yellow brick house with red brick dressings, now Woods Garden Centre, with modern shopfront to the ground floor, and sash windows and dormers above. Its rear plot is filled with outbuildings and greenhouses, which can be seen from the roadside along with the modern side conservatory (left), as the side yard is enclosed with a metal railing fence. To the right side is a single storey shop, also in use by Woods. There are planters to the front of the building, modern

awnings to all windows, flags and signage to the painted side elevations. This over-shadows its neighbour, no. 296 - 298 (Café Rouge), formerly three two-storey properties that incorporates a seventeenth century building within an eighteenth century brick building (now rendered) under a part gabled / part hipped tile roof. The west end of the property houses a former shop window and there are several different style of sash window throughout. At the rear in its former garden is a large modern building (Pennyfarthing Hotel), which can barely be seen from the High Street.

6.88 Between Café Rouge and St. John's Well Lane stands the modern, two-storey, former Royal Mail Offices, 300 High Street. Built in red brick and standing back from the roadside, it has a paved area to the fore and occupies one of the largest High Street frontages in the conservation area, comparable in size only to St. Peters Church. While its character has nothing in common with other High Street buildings, the western edge of the property is covered with established tree cover. This is the main 'green space' in High Street West other than the front garden to the Friend's Meeting House, which stands almost opposite the St. John's Well Lane junction.

6.89 The rear aspect of the buildings facing onto the north side of the High Street (nos. 286 – 300) can be seen from within St. John's Well Lane car park. In general, these rear plots are more open and hold larger buildings and car parks than those behind 212 – 284 High Street. Along the rear boundary of 292 – 294 (Woods Garden



The rear of 286 - 300 High Street from St. John's Well Lane car park



The Pennyfarthing Hotel behind 296 - 298 High Street (Café Rouge)

Centre) is a modern, weatherboarded, barn-style building with a slate roof. Pennyfarthing Hotel behind 296 - 298 High Street (Café Rouge), is a modern two-storey brick and weather-boarded series of buildings with walled car park leading into the St. John's Well Lane car park. Next to this are various late twentieth century one and two storey red brick buildings with flat or gabled roofs belonging to the former Royal Mail Offices and the Telephone Exchange (300 High Street). Partly walled or bounded by a metal link fence, they are accessed from St. John's Well Lane.

6.90 Beyond St. John's Well Lane is a row of attractive, large, semi-detached, two and a half storey Victorian villa houses, 320 – 338 High Street, set back from the roadside with gabled slate roofs and prominent chimney stacks. Built in yellow and red brick, they have two-storey bay windows with gables above (and wavy



320 – 338 High Street

bargeboards), sash windows of varying styles, and stone or brick lintels. Some have retained their front gardens with low brick walls while others have lost them to hard standing parking. Most have inserted rooflights into the roof facing the street. Their rear elevations can be seen from St. John's Well Lane. A recent addition has been St. John's Veterinary Surgery on the side of no. 320, a single / two-storey premise built in red brick with Victorian features similar to the neighbouring villas.

6.91 340 – 350 High Street form a group of nineteenth century properties, a group of three and two detached, built in brick (now rendered) with hipped or gabled slate roofs and chimney stacks. Three have retained older style shopfronts (nos. 342, 344 and 350). No. 346 (Dominos) has been significantly altered, while no. 350 (Pizza Express) continues round to the Park Street elevation with a corner doorway and double doors. All properties have replaced the upper floor windows, except for no. 350 that has retained its sash windows. On the opposite corner, 352 High Street forms the west end of the High Street conservation area on the north side. Occupied by National Car Care, built in brick (c1930) as a house with rear workshops, it has a gabled slate roof and chimney stacks, and a small front gable. While the ground floor has been replaced by a large modern shopfront with bright colours and bold signage, most of the upper floor sash windows have been retained. To the rear on Park Street rear single storey workshops and offices have been added later in corrugated iron / brick.



340 – 350 High Street

6.92 The lower ends of additional side roads in High Street West include Kings Road, Elm Grove, Cowper Road, Park View Road, Boxwell Road and Kitsbury Road. Most comprise the rear plots of High Street properties, commonly used as hard or rough surfaced car parking with a brick boundary wall: 189 High Street (Barclays Bank on the corner of Kings Road); 197 High Street (on the corner of Elm Grove); 223 – 233 High Street (Saxon House); 263 – 265 High Street (Salter House by Park View Road, hidden mostly from view by tree cover); 275 High Street (Boxwell House; brick paved car park for the office at no. 275); 277 High Street (The Lamb public house, on the corner of Boxwell Road along with 285 High Street, a small modern office development). At the west end, behind the rear brick boundary wall of 307 – 323 High Street, is a very poorly surfaced car park with single storey, brick and probably asbestos, garages. The rear elevation of nos. 307 – 323 is also clearly visible (including satellite dishes, metal staircases and metal air ducts).



Christian Science Church, Cowper Road



The Chapel House, Cowper Road



Cowper Road from the High Street



The Chapel, 1 Park View Road

6.93 Other rear plots have buildings ranging in date, but commonly are modern office or residential developments. Nightingale Lodge on Cowper Road comprises three-storey flats with a carriageway through to another block of flats at the rear. Despite soft planting to the front areas, it is a large and imposing residential development that has little in common with the character of the remainder of Cowper Road / Torrington Road (Area 3). Behind 235 – 241 High Street (Almshouses) is a row of four, modern, well-designed, semi-detached, two-storey houses (1a – 1d Cowper Road) in yellow brick with red brick detailing, slate roofs, dormers, chimney stacks, sash style windows, and panelled doors with hoods over. To the fore of each is a small walled garden with railings. Beyond the former Wesleyan Chapel on Cowper Road (now occupied by the Christian Science Society) is York Court; a new residential flat development, hidden from view, but comprising

two and a half storeys built in yellow brick with red brick detailing, tall gabled tile roofs and modern sash-style windows and dormers. Much of the surrounding area is hard surfaced and is very much over-looked by a new development of Torrington Road (nos. 12 a – d).

6.94 Park View Court on Park View Road lies partly in Area 1 and Area 3. 1 – 6 Park View Court, Park View stands back from the roadside with a half paved front garden and is built in red brick with a tall pantile roof, dormers and a central two-storey bay with doors to the ground floor. Its neighbouring building (7 – 12 Park View Court) lies on the other side of a hard surface car park and is identical in design. Although softened with planting and green space, their appearance is out of character with the other houses on Park View Road. On the opposite side of the road is a modern office building (Orbital House) that stands behind Jelmac House (269 High Street) with which it shares some design characteristics (along with 187 High Street, Police Station). Beyond Boxwell House (275 High Street) on Boxwell Road is a modern, two-storey, rendered building (The Coach House). Used as an office with a hipped slate roof that is mostly hidden from view by a wall and tall trees, it stands in the former rear plot of the main house.

6.95 On some rear plots stand older buildings, commonly dating to the nineteenth century. Behind 195 High Street on Elm Grove, is a two-storey, yellow brick workshop (now Kings Road Garage) with a gabled tile roof, and flat and segmental headed windows. It probably dates in part to the early nineteenth century. Beyond the Almhouses (235 – 241 High Street) on Cowper Road is the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (c1887 with an added porch in 1923), later the Christian Science Church, built in brown brick with red brick detailing and sash-style windows. Recently sensitively converted into residential use it retains the steps up to the front door. To the side is a hard surface driveway leading to another nineteenth century building, The Chapel House (a former Sunday School), with a slate roof and dormers that has also recently been converted to residential use. On Park View Road lies a sensitively converted church, The Chapel (1 Park View Road), built in yellow brick with red brick detailing, a bell tower and a tall gabled

slate roof (now in residential use with rooflights). Behind 305 High Street, set back from the road is 2 Kitsbury Road, an early twentieth century, brick (part pebble dashed), detached, two-storey house with a gabled tile roof and chimney stacks, and studwork to the front gable and a bay window. Although its windows are replaced (uPVC) it has retained much of its 1920s / 30s character and is contemporary with the other houses on Kitsbury Road.

Side roads leading off from High Street West

6.96 The side roads leading off from High Street West include Lower Kings Road (continuing over the river and canal), St. John's Well Road and Park Street. Lower Kings Road is predominantly lined with purpose-built commercial premises. Most of the buildings have a similar layout and design to those on the High Street, facing the street with little green space. The street comprises a mostly adjoining row of two storey commercial properties dating to between the nineteenth and late twentieth century, except for 40 Lower Kings Road, a detached early twentieth century Edwardian house lying next to the river with two-storey bay sash windows, a slate roof, cellar and a walled front garden that is now in commercial use as an office (Barker & Co.). There are a few single storey and three storey buildings such as 1, a prominent three-storey building behind Petal flowershop on the corner of the High Street, 1B (Amulet), 13 and 15 (Fennel and Christopher John) and 16 (Traditional Interior).

6.97 2 – 30 Lower Kings Road (west side) form more of a homogenous contemporary group than nos. 1 – 43 (east side), and were probably built between 1920 and 1930. Nos. 2 – 14 (Scoops coffee shop to Chiltern Mobiles) holds a prominent position on the corner of the High Street comprising one long red brick, two-storey building with concrete block quoins, a buff brick parapet (stepped), and a cupola and clock tower on its roof. On the ground floor are five shopfronts occupied by four premises; each sit within the original plan separated with brick pillars (pilasters) with a concrete console above in the modernist-style. Most of the shopfronts have been replaced but retain some form of the original style; only no. 2 (Scoops) has the original small decorative glazing above the main windows.

Above on the first floor, the original casement crittal windows survive; it is reached by a large glazed remodelled doorway. 16 Lower Kings Road is a single storey building in yellow brick with red brick detailing and a parapet that has retained some original features such as the tiled pilasters around the modern glazed windows. Attached is a two-storey, yellow brick building with similar features such as the red / yellow brick parapet, nos. 20 – 24. Now with pebble-dash render to the upper floor (and four modern uPVC windows), no. 20 has a more traditional style shopfront while its adjoining premises has been split into two properties (nos. 22 and 24). Attached are two further two-storey properties, 26 and 28 – 30 Lower Kings Road. Although with different windows to the upper floor (transom and mullion or arch-headed sash), they both have more traditional-style shopfronts with decorative features. No. 26 (Colin Gray Solicitors) has unusually recessed canted bays with tiled faces under and a heavy cornice above as well as a decorative fanlight above the door; its roof has been altered to a mansard with dormers.



Lower Kings Road: view from the north end

6.98 Beyond is the entrance into Waitrose Supermarket and car park, a recent development. At its entrance are several trees, particularly to the north side along the river and some have recently been planted into the hard standing car park either side of the adjoining blocks of supermarket buildings. Built in yellow brick with red brick detailing and a hipped slate roof, it comprises two parts; the main single storey shop (typical Waitrose design) and a two-storey office that has an industrial / warehouse design. The supermarket is the largest single building in the conservation area and occupies the biggest area including the car park. It can be seen from Lower Kings Road and St. John's Well Lane car park, but is almost entirely hidden from view of the High Street, other than very narrow pedestrian footpaths such as between 250 and 254 High Street. It stands on ground along the riverside that once formed the rear garden plots of buildings that lined the High Street (roughly nos. 222 - 280); these plots were shortened in the mid-nineteenth century and



Waitrose, Lower Kings Road

then partially built upon between 1900 and 1925 (a portion of the area housed the Bulbourne Clothing Factory). Along its northern tree-covered boundary is the River Bulbourne and a footpath, named the 'River Walk', which leads from Lower Kings Road to the footbridge over the canal (between Broadwater to Waitrose car parks). Along the path are metal railings, signposts and information boards / desk stones, such as 'Canal Fields' and 'The Canal and River Berkhamsted'. There is also an old lock that lies along the footpath by the river. Within Waitrose car park are also two 'Historic Berkhamsted' boards outlining historic properties in the town. There are two low-key single storey properties hidden from view by trees along the north side of the car park opposite Kings Court (Area 2),

'Nucleus House' (Harpenden Cars: a single storey cabin with a flat felt roof) and the 'Berkhamsted Physiotherapy and Sports Injury Clinic' (36A Lower Kings Road: single storey, red brick, 1930s bungalow with a curved pediment and bulls-eye windows either side of the front door).

6.99 The rear aspect of the buildings facing onto the north side of the High Street (nos. 212 – 284) seen from within Waitrose car park have previously been discussed. The rear elevations of properties on Lower Kings Road (nos. 20 – 30 on the west side) are clearly seen from within the car park, along with alterations. Their plots are used for car parking and open directly into main car park. Alterations include low-key, single storey additions (the largest being a yellow brick garage with a railed roof terrace above), extensions up into the roof space, and separate access or fire escapes leading from the inserted doorways at the first or second floor level (26 and 28 – 30 Lower Kings Road each have a metal spiral staircase).

6.100 1 – 43 Lower Kings Road comprise several building types from older surviving properties and to modern offices such as Claridge Court between 9 and 13 Lower Kings Road; an imposing, late 1980s, two and a half storey office building in red brick with gables, dormers, oriel windows and a driveway through the ground floor to the rear courtyard with parking. Adjacent to Petal flower shop is 1 Lower Kings Road, a prominent, early nineteenth century, three-storey building in red / blue brick (partly rendered) with a hipped slate roof and bay windows or sash windows to the side / rear. On the ground floor on Lower Kings Road is an inserted but traditional-style shopfront (Haydons Cook & Dineware). Attached is a row of nineteenth century properties, 1b – 9 Lower Kings Road. 1b is a single storey property with a traditional-style shopfront (Amulet). Nos. 3, 5 and 7 form a two-storey, rendered brick workshop with corrugated iron roofs at two different levels, and rows of windows to the first floor and two modern shopfronts to the ground floor. Bailey and Sons (jewellers) at no. 9 is red brick with a slate roof,

transom and mullion first floor windows and a modern shopfront with a more traditional awning. After Claridge Court, is a two-storey mid-nineteenth century property in red brick, now rendered, with two shops to the ground floor, nos. 13 and 15 (Fennel and Christopher John), with modern shopfronts and sash windows to the upper floors. Beyond is a further row of buildings, 21 – 43 Lower Kings Road. Nos. 21 – 27 are a row of four adjoining shops built in brick, now painted, with a slate roof in the mid-nineteenth century. Each of the four gables has a wavy bargeboard and an original first floor sash window under. On the ground floor are four older-style shopfronts with smaller glazing above the large pane and a curved end window into the recessed doorway; three are now Pizza Pasta (nos. 21 and 23 with awnings) while the fourth is separate (Dog & Bone).



1B – 9 Lower Kings Road



21 – 27 Lower Kings Road

6.101 29 – 33 Lower Kings Road is a two-storey twentieth century building with large windows to the ground floor and upper floor and a flat roof (Hamlins and Berkhamsted Arts & Crafts), whose appearance is not consistent with the character of Lower Kings Road. Adjacent is a group of early and mid-nineteenth century yellow brick buildings with red brick detailing/banding incorporating a hay loft window and slate hipped or gables roofs. There is also surviving signage writing on the sidewall which describes Meek's stables with victorias etc. for hire. The building and firm almost certainly predate the building of Lower Kings road (35-43, Berkeley Galleries and Blakes of Berkhamsted). They have various styles of retained sash windows to the front and casements to the side elevation by the river. There are four shopfronts; two have retained more traditional features while the fascia of Blakes continues over two premises (nos. 33 and 35; no. 35 is partly single storey).

6.102 The remaining two roads, St. John's Well Lane and Park Street lie at the west end of High Street West. Both are a mixture of residential and commercial use. The east side of St. John's Well Lane has modern commercial buildings set back from the road with a more open character with mature trees on the corner of the High Street. Beyond the grass verges and metal fencing are the modern red brick buildings of former Royal Mail Offices (300 High Street) and the Telephone Exchange. On the west side are the recently built St. John's Well Lane veterinary surgery and car park, built in red brick with yellow brick detailing, slate roofs and sash windows to complement the style of the neighbouring Victorian villa houses, 320 – 338 High Street. Beyond is St John's Well Court (25 – 30), a modern development, part of which lies in the conservation area. It comprises a three-storey, red brick block with gabled concrete pantile roofs, modern windows and doors with Juliet balconies set back from the road on open grass verges. The road continues into St. John's Well Lane car park past the boundary fences of the Telephone Exchange (see above under Lower Kings Road) and 1 St. John's Well Lane, a row of four terraced cottages

now included within the conservation area boundary.

6.103 Beyond the entrance to Park Street on the east side lies a row of nineteenth century houses nos. 2 and 4 – 13, commonly of two-storeys in yellow brick with red brick detailing (some since rendered) and gabled slate roofs (some replaced with tile). Many have timber sash windows (some with uPVC sashes) and single or two-storey bays. Low walled gardens lie in front of nos. 4 – 13 and there are two carriageways through to rear yards (nos. 2 and 4). Some have added dormers or rooflights. 14 – 16 Park Road are modern, three-storey townhouses in yellow brick with a gabled tile roof, a tile hung wall to the second storey and integral garages on the ground floor; no. 14 lies within the conservation area boundary but nos. 15 and 16 do not. The boundary of the conservation area does not continue past the workshops and offices of 352 High Street on the west side of Park Street.



St. John's Well Lane: view up to the High Street



4 – 14 Park Street

Some new development has occurred along Park Street (groups of two and three terraced houses), and while these lie outside the conservation area boundary, their design has more in common with the rows of houses on the east side of the street (including their use of pilastered doorcases).

Negative features:

- Some poor quality in-filling (both residential and commercial)
- Out of scale commercial or office development, particularly on the prominent corners of adjoining side streets, and inappropriate / out of scale new residential build on plots behind High Street buildings
- Out of character extensions
- Loss of traditional windows and doors, the addition of render or paint, the replacement of traditional slate with concrete tile roof tiles, and the addition of roof lights and dormer windows
- Loss of front gardens to hard standing parking, and the insertion of hard landscaping to former rear plots for hard standing car parking (including wide gaps in boundary walls into car parks)
- Loss of more traditional shopfronts, on the High Street and also Lower Kings Road, including disruption of property lines by over-running or continuous shopfronts. Insertion of less appropriate awnings and modern corporate-style signage
- The large, open, hard surface parking area around a large supermarket building by the river bank

Berkhamsted School

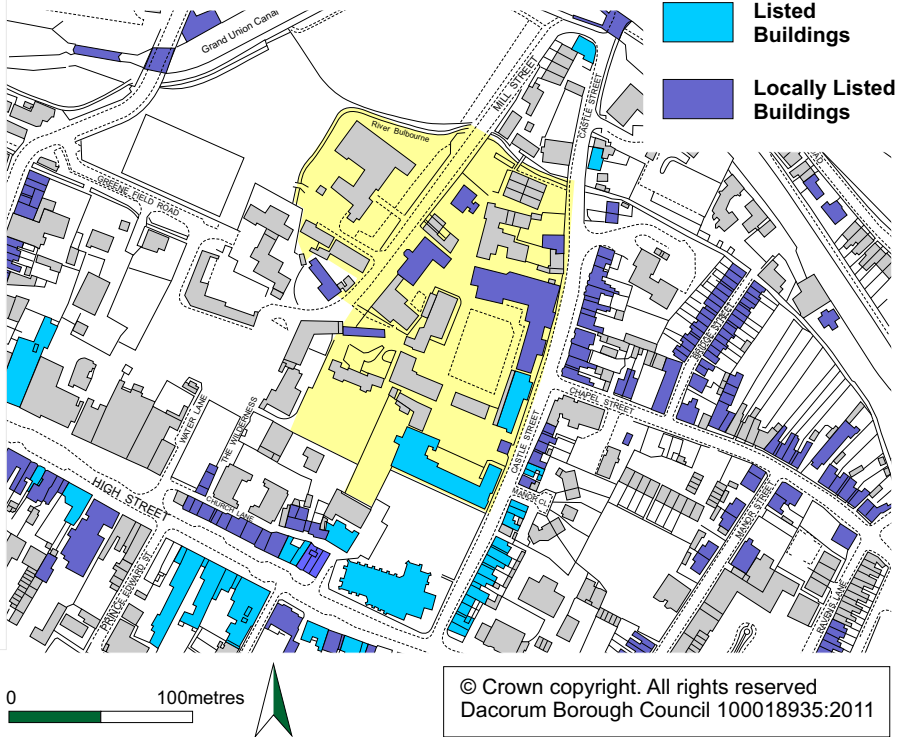
6.104 Berkhamsted School covers the smallest portion of Area 1 and the Berkhamsted Conservation Area. It is predominately related to the buildings of Berkhamsted School incorporating part of Castle Street (west side) and Mill Street. Although it lies within the historic core of Berkhamsted, its character is very different to that of High Street Central. As a multi-period site, Berkhamsted School has grown from its origins following its foundation in 1523 and the first building of 1544 to incorporate the later school buildings of the twentieth century. As a result, common architectural characteristics and features are rare.

6.105 Two buildings within the Berkhamsted School area are statutory listed buildings: the Old School Building and the School Chapel. A small number of other buildings are considered to be of local importance and appear on the Berkhamsted Local List (see Introduction, 1.12 – 1.15, and Appendix 2).

6.106 The buildings lining Castle Street are the larger dominant buildings of the sixteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite the size of the individual school buildings, as Castle Street is not as narrow as some side roads in the conservation area, the view and character of the street is not enclosed or obstructed as might be anticipated. Although some of the larger school buildings line along the street frontage and have a few doors leading onto Castle Street, they are predominantly accessed from entrances within the school site.

6.107 The Old School Building is grade I listed and lies open to view from the street over St. Peter's churchyard. It is a two and a half storey, red brick structure with a gabled red tile roof and several large chimney stacks, and has a large single storey hall with stone mullioned windows. Beyond is the large timber lychgate that leads through to a hard surface courtyard (car park). Next to this is the late Victorian, red brick Chapel built with red brick in the Tudor-style with gothic tracery stone windows, buttresses and a spire. It is decorated with moulded terracotta tile banding and is grade II listed. 1. Attached to the Chapel is a smaller brown and red brick late nineteenth century school building, also in the Tudor-style, with an oriel window and dormers and a red tile roof ('Deans' Hall Cloisters'). Attached is another large red brick building, Deans' Hall, c.1910 that shares architectural characteristics and features with the Chapel and forms part of a group with the Chapel and Old School Building; both Deans' Hall and the Chapel were designed by Charles Henry Rew. Along the boundary is a low red brick wall that has been softened by planting, especially next to the lychgate; at the north and south ends the wall has additional metal gothic-style railings. Behind the Chapel is a lawn surrounded by a quadrangle of late nineteenth / early twentieth century red brick buildings including the Library that stands directly behind the Chapel (by Maule and Forsyth, 1924).

Map 13: Area 1: Berkhamsted School



6.108 No 61 Castle Street and St George's (formerly the Temperance Hotel) are also part of the school site. The hotel, said to date from 1878, was paid for by Earl Brownlow of Ashridge, who took a great interest in the temperance movement. Its unusual design is attributed to the fact that it is a copy of a house which the Earl had admired at an exhibition in Paris and was partly prefabricated – evidence suggests that it is constructed in sections. Both face



The Old School Building, Castle Street



Chapel and lychgate, Castle Street

onto the street front, are of two storeys with chimney stacks; no. 61 has a large gated opening through to the rear and remnants of a former shop frontage, since replaced with two windows. All its windows are replacement uPVC windows, unlike St George's, which has wooden multi-paned windows. St. George's has roughcast render to the lower floor and jettied upper floor. The ground floor windows and doors have tile hoods over. On the first floor black timber framing has been painted over the render. There are two pargetted panels under each of the two first floor two windows and above is a gable with panels of moulded tiles (giving the appearance of being tile hung). These moulded panels also lie to the first floor of the north side; set within is an oriel window. To the north are more modern buildings that stand set back from the roadside beyond an older brick wall, a two-storey red brick L-shaped building with a tall gable roof (Wingrave) that can also be seen from Mill Street, and a single storey sports building with a metal roof (Fives Courts). These are bounded by the River Bulbourne. Over the river is a large, new, three-storey building, the Chadwick Centre, which stands within Area 2 and shares a boundary with Mill Street.

6.109 On Mill Street, the character of the road is generally more open and 'green', and less urban than elsewhere in Area 1. The school buildings stand back from the roadside and the view along the road leads down to The Moor (recreation ground in Area 2 between the River Bulbourne and the canal). At the end of this view by The Moor the eye is drawn to the mature trees on both sides of the road. In addition, the view across to Newcroft, (1958) is obscured by a planted row of younger trees set along the paved pavement edge.



Adelbert House, Mill Street

6.110 The buildings along the west side of Mill Street lie at its south end by Adelbert House and comprise two, two-storey classrooms now with concrete tile roofs (Frys & Adders – originally school houses and Newcroft Science block). The windows are contemporary but vary in style; a continuous row of adjoining windows, small single square windows, a massing of smaller windows, or large single windows with two main panes and three side panes. The larger building, Newcroft, has a roughly H-plan and stands back from the road behind a low brick wall with a lawn and planted beds. Where this low wall ends, it forms a semi-circle with a grassed area in front and beyond is the River Bulbourne (where Upper Mill sluice once stood), which runs eastwards across Mill Street through the school grounds towards Castle Street.



The Music School with a Dutch-style dormer, Mill Street

6.111 Opposite over the railings are the modern school buildings as seen from Castle Street across a lawn (Fives Courts and Wingrave), which stand next to the riverside. The boundary is softened by planting and the school grounds



The School Gym, Mill Street



Deans Hall and St. George's, Castle Street

beyond comprise an attractive newly installed lawned area with pathways, block paved drives and footbridge over the River Bulbourne leading to the large new three-storey school building (the Chadwick Centre: Area 2). Behind an adjacent red and blue brick wall with piers and a circular

feature is The Music School; a red and blue brick, two-storey, gabled building dated 1926 by Forsyth and Maule. It has a Dutch-style dormer facing the street and a series of other transom and mullion windows, including a tri-partite window (flat headed Palladian-style) in each gable end with a clock under the south gable.

6.112 14 & 15 Mill Street is a detached house of the late nineteenth century with a small planted front garden. Built in yellow brick with red brick details, it has canted bays, ground floor windows (uPVC windows) and two dormers, and a gabled tile roof with chimney stacks. Next to the house is the School Gym, a two-storey, symmetrical, red brick building with a gabled tile roof with sweeping eaves built in the Arts and Crafts style (1937-8) by H.P.G Maule. It has two large and two smaller dormers to the upper floor, a three-storey canted bay to the centre, and mostly long multi-paned windows to the ground floor gym; its original metal-framed windows survive. Attached to it is a 1970s, two-storey, red brick school building with large windows (the Thorn Building). The ground in front is grassed over with some low trees, but there are a lot of paved footpaths, forecourts and hard standing car parking between the buildings. On the corner of Mill Street, set back from the roadside at an angle is a two-storey, asymmetrical, red brick building with applied close-stud work and rendered panels dating to the late nineteenth century (2 Mill Street, Staff Cottages). Its roofline comprises several gables and sloping roofs, all tiled with prominent chimney stacks. Unusual in character, it is one of four pre-war buildings that lie along the east side of Mill Street.

Negative features:

- Some typical 1960s / 1970s school buildings
- Loss of traditional windows
- Open hard surface paved area in front the school gym
- Hard surfacing and gaps in boundary walls to car parks

Area 2: The Canal (East and West), Castle and Railway, and George Street housing district

6.113 Area 2 runs almost parallel with the nearby High Street and a little further to the north. It consists of a long narrow strip of land with the railway gently curving on its far boundary and with the canal taking a somewhat winding route through the central core of the area. For this reason, it can be stated that the canal provides the dominant feature of this part of Berkhamsted Conservation Area. The town's important and historic castle is included in the same area on the far side of the railway tracks. Additional growth of the town has also taken place on this far side beyond the railway, but this lies outside the conservation area boundary. For much of the length of its northern boundary, Area 2 also represents the outer limits of the town's urban fabric and it faces out at these points on to open fields and woods. Area 2 is bounded on its south side not by the banks of the canal but by the River Bulbourne. In the area's centre these two watercourses are sufficiently far apart to have allowed some development to take place at the far ends of Mill Street and Castle Street near where they converge at the canal bridge. This is the part of Area 2 of greatest historical interest, apart from the castle itself, as the 1811 map shows (page 91).

6.114 While the castle, railway and most of the canal occupy a significant portion of the conservation area, Area 2 is clearly the least-inhabited part but, even so, its residential status is far from non-existent. In addition to the transient population living on the narrow boats on the canal a dense sub-area of housing, mainly terraced in layout, is found in George Street and other streets nearby such as Ellesmere Road situated in a rectangular narrow and densely built plot between the canal and the railway. These houses are almost all nineteenth century in date and owe their development principally to the industrial and commercial activities prompted by the existence of the canal and railway which flank them. During the twentieth century and in recent years more housing has been added here and there in various parts of the area. Such additions may be described firstly as re-developed, brownfield sites flanking the canal and secondly

as in-fill developments taking up spare land and other small vacant sites in various parts of the area. Despite such alterations the canal's presence here in the centre of the area has provided consistency over the years and, without requiring extensive regeneration, it has led to classic scenes being preserved unaltered, as below.

6.115 Each day, thousands of people pass through the area (mainly at high speed) on the trains and a further population spend varying amounts of time at a much slower pace on and around the canal. Among these are the occupants of narrow boats, seasonal tourists and the many Berkhamsted residents who also make much use of the canal's towpaths and of its bridges, the waterside pubs and the children's playgrounds as a leisure facility throughout the year. Such users of the conservation area as



The Rising Sun PH and lock no. 55



The same view c1950 Waterways Trust, Gloucester

these are drawn to it for its quietness, its tranquil natural environment and the quaint, old-fashioned appearance of its canal scenery and buildings. Cycling and walking are favourite activities along the tow path's length. A third group passing through Area 2 every day are the motorists who cross the few road bridges on busy routes between the town centre and the areas to the north.

6.116 Area 2 consists almost totally of buildings of nineteenth century origin with the exception of the castle (which dates back to the Norman period) together with The Boote (a Grade II cottage, 1605) and the modern contributions made much more recently. The site of Berkhamsted Castle is, of course, a major historic monument containing the fragmentary remains of the medieval buildings and its extensive earthworks. Area 2 currently contains only three buildings that are on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest; the former Castle Inn on Mill Street and The Boote on Castle Street, and the (former) Lock-keepers' Cottages next to the canal lock and bridge where Ravens Lane meets Gravel Path. It is possible this total could increase due to research into the past and a higher awareness of the value of the heritage. Additions to the number of fully-listed buildings could result and this particularly applies to the built heritage of the canal itself, currently with only two fully listed buildings here on this stretch.

6.117 In recent decades the banks of the canal have seen the loss of most remnants of its former industrial past from the gas works upstream to the boatyards, workshops and storage sheds that once lined the banks of the central area close to the Castle Street and Ravens Lane bridges. Near to these, the mill buildings in Mill Street did not survive beyond the 1920s. Most recently, the former sheds of Bridgewater Boats were demolished early in 2011 to make way for a new domestic development. Two important reminders of this past era on the canal do exist but in

much-altered form, both overlooking its banks:- the former warehouse now re-modelled as flats next to the late-Victorian bridge on Lower Kings Road and the Castle Wharf private house whose access is via Ravens Lane (The Warehouse). The latter began life as a warehouse and has been altered by adding a top floor and various other domestic adornments.

6.118 This Appraisal also contains material on other sites where it is felt that local listing of buildings has been justified. The canal, railway and nearby streets of housing contain a considerable number of buildings (including the Station itself) that have been included on the Berkhamsted Local List (see introduction, 1.12-1.15, and Appendix 2).

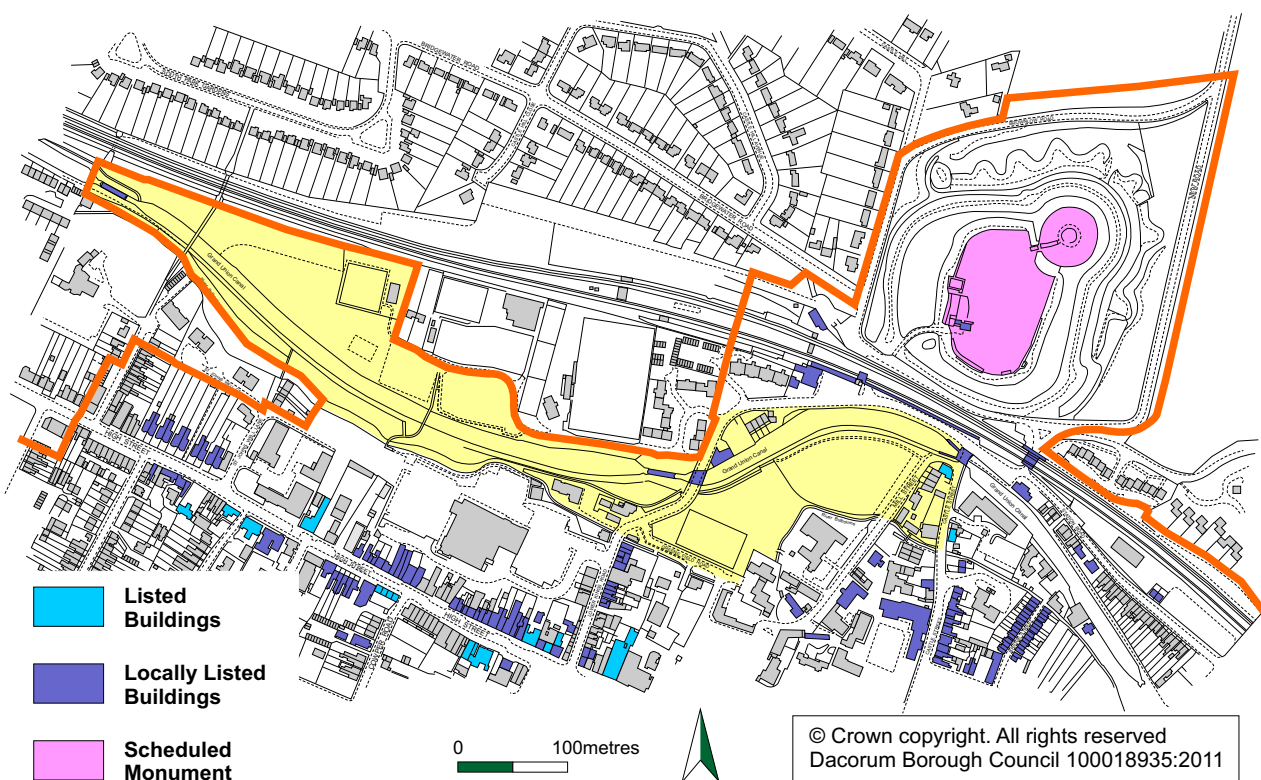
The Canal (Canal West and Canal East)

6.119 The Canal West and Canal East comprise two distinct sub-areas with their own character dictated by the use that has developed in recent decades. Canal East is the area downstream from Castle Street bridge. Its landscape character is more enclosed through the construction of housing from the nineteenth to twenty-first century. Through this sub-area the canal threads its way through a 'green' corridor

lined with trees, hedges and private gardens. Upstream from Castle Street Bridge, the canal runs between extensive open areas of amenity space with housing located further back from its banks (Canal West).

6.120 Canal West is less built-up than Canal East and comprises more open space along the canal side. To the west of Lower Kings Road bridge on the south bank is Kings Court, a late twentieth century two-storey, red brick flat development with a concrete tile roof; whilst it is mostly concealed from view from the canal and Lower Kings Road, its design fails to address the character of the canal side setting. It forms part of a small group of buildings along the south bank by Lower Kings Road bridge that includes 40, 40A, 44, 46 – 50 Lower Kings Road next to the river, and 47 on the east side of Lower Kings Road (a shop). No. 40 is a detached early twentieth century Edwardian house lying next to the river and lies in Area 1. 40A – 50 range from the 1930s to the post war period and are in commercial use. No. 40A is a 1930s two storey building, now rendered, with a hipped roof and a more traditional style shopfront. No. 47 on the east side of Lower Kings Road also dates to the 1930s and has an Art Deco style with rendered

Map 14: Area 2: The Canal West



walls, a flat roof and curved windows to the shopfront. Opposite Kings Court over the canal on the north bank is a hard standing car park that is open to view from the canal side, and adjacent Bowling Green that is hidden from view.

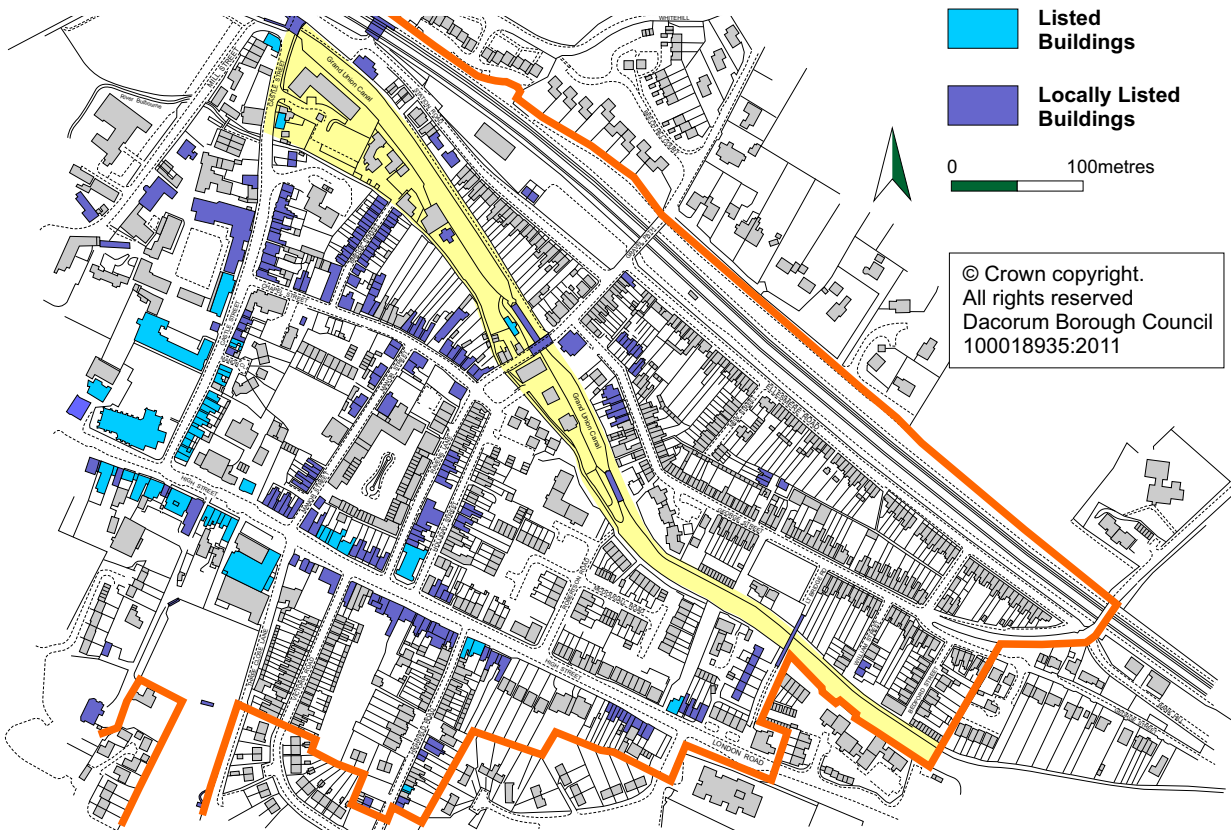
6.121 To the east of Lower Kings Road bridge is Castle Mill, an early twentieth century four-storey yellow brick building that has been recently converted to residential use (including the addition of an upper floor). Castle Mill is the only recognisable and substantial former industrial building that survives on the canal's banks within the conservation area (Canal West). Its neighbour, 51 – 54 Lower Kings Road is a contrasting red brick row of three storey housing in a more traditional domestic style with a slate hipped roof. Opposite on the south bank are the tennis courts on the corner of Greenfield Road, and The Moor. The north end of Mill Street is at the east end of Canal West and comprises a row of recently built, three-storey, yellow brick townhouses with a hipped slate roof and walled front boundary, 38 – 44 Mill Street. Its Neo-classical style has a pleasant character and design features that complements its neighbour,

the former Castle Inn, a statutory listed building that dates to the early nineteenth century.

6.122 Beyond to the south is a large, new, three-storey school building (the Chadwick Centre) belonging to Berkhamsted School and a recently completed brick and tile hung building with a mixture of gables, turrets and ventilation towers, all built in a Post-modernist style that form a dominant and eye catching feature at this point. A long terraced structure once stood on this site and led up towards the bridge; it formerly backed on to the site of Upper Mill. All of these older buildings have since been cleared and re-developed by Berkhamsted School. The Chadwick Centre is the only example of its type and style within Area 2 and, as such, stands out from the small two-storey dwellings that make up the rest of the area in the same way that the castle stands out.

6.123 Canal East comprises a series of buildings dating to between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, except for a former

Map 15: Area 2: The Canal East



inn, The Boote on Castle Street that was built in 1605. A statutory listed building, it has been altered on the exterior with applied timber framing and four ground floor bay windows. Attached on the north side is a taller, two-storey, brick nineteenth century cottage with sash windows; it has been extended to the rear. By Castle Street bridge is Alsford Wharf, a recent flat development of varying roof heights (two and three-storeys). Built in yellow brick with red brick dressings, Juliet balconies to the first and second floors, and a slate pitched roof, some of the gables over-look the canal. Although it is built as an L-shaped block, the variants in roof height create an appearance of separate units and has an appropriate canal side character.

6.124 Beyond is Bridge Court, a group of two irregularly planned, two-storey yellow brick buildings with pitched roofs. Built in 1982 as retirement flats, they are accessed by Bridge Street (in Area 1) and stand between the river and canal. Next to this is a site of new build in yellow brick and re-development along with a older-style, detached dwelling of two-storeys, gable ended, now rendered and painted pink with a two-storey flat roofed extension to the rear. It stands at the end of Bridge Street. Beyond lies Castle Wharf; it contains surviving brick walls as evidence of the building's former industrial use (The Warehouse). However, this industrial character has been transformed in recent decades as a result of domestic conversion

including the addition of an attic floor and a conservatory. By Ravens Lane bridge between the river and the canal are three cottages, nos. 23 - 25, in mid-nineteenth century yellow brick with slate or concrete tile roofs, partially painted with extensions. Between is a brick-paved access driveway to The Warehouse. On the downstream side of the bridge along the south bank is Ravens Wharf, a recent flat development on a site shown as a "Coal yard" on the early Ordnance Survey map of 1877; it has now been constructed as three separate blocks with gabled slate roofs facing the canal side. Built in yellow brick with red brick dressings and Juliet balconies to the first and second floors, it has an appropriate canal side character facing the canal with good landscaping. However the long side of the flats facing Ravens Lane contains a less marked industrial character.

6.125 The earliest known map on a large scale is the 1811 survey drawn up in connection with early works on the Grand Junction Canal; it has kindly been provided by British Waterways for use in this Appraisal. The map (see below) shows how the River Bulbourne provided a route and a water supply for the canal's creation but that no surviving older buildings appear to have existed on its banks. The canal was cut through an area then largely deserted and, therefore, all the buildings we now see have been created as a result of the canal's construction and then as a result of the railway from the late 1830s. The



1811 Map of the Grand Union Canal showing the lock nos. 52 - 55 and bridges 141 and 142 (British Waterways, Milton Keynes)

'looped road' shown to the right of the vertical fold line through the map is Mill Street / Castle Street today; this is the boundary between Canal West and Canal East and where Castle Street bridge stands (the "New Brick Bridge" of 1819 by the former Castle public house).

6.126 The first bridge in the area to cross the canal was the Ravens Lane / Gravel Path example next to The Boat public house and this bridge is clearly shown on the 1811 map (Canal East). It has since been largely re-built and the oldest surviving bridge is therefore the "New Brick Bridge (1819)" that stands at the point where Mill Street and Castle Street join at their northern end. This (un-listed) bridge is easily recognised from the well-known print of the railway (see page 20) and the original bridge has undergone only a few alterations in nearly 200 years.

6.127 Evidence of earlier or pre-canal crossings of the River Bulbourne is now practically non-existent. Some old- looking fragments may be seen across the Bulbourne in brick footings in Castle Street near The Boote and in further brick footings next to 25 Ravens Lane. The dam of the Bulbourne in Mill Street appears from an



Brick footings of a road bridge crossing the River Bulbourne next to 25 Ravens Lane

inscription to have been rebuilt in 1927 with the area of water it held back later drained and turned into a grassed play area.

6.128 The brick dam wall, although now 'redundant', is worthy of preservation as a relic of the former feature of the Bulbourne at this point. The Mill that stood here itself no longer exists (see 6.110 above).

6.129 Overlooking the "New Brick Bridge" of 1819 the former Castle public house was also built (but later than 1819) and it remains, used now as a private dwelling, as the only canal



The 'New Brick Bridge' of 1819 crosses the canal next to The Castle, former PH

structure currently fully listed together with two lock keepers cottages (seen below). All of this early fabric is in the plain brickwork masonry favoured during the years around 1800 and makes use of the familiar buff-coloured local brick. Darker "engineering" bricks and red bricks from the Midlands add to the palette of colours in some places on the canal or as part of the railway. Next to the Castle Street bridge, on the east side south bank, stands a decorative wooden totem pole that was erected in 1970. Carved by a member of the



Lock-keepers Cottage, now listed (left), and in c1950 (right: Waterways Trust, Gloucester)

Kwakiutl tribe in Canada, it stands on the site of Alsford's Wharf (a former timber yard). This area was the hub of boat building, wood-working and cabinet making along the canal.

6.130 "Then and now" photographic comparisons of the canal's banks are notable for the increased number of trees and other green features that now line the banks.

Negative features:

- Some poor quality in-filling (residential)
- Existence of two groups of lock-up garages whose sites are visually poor and architecturally negative

Castle and Railway

6.131 Berkhamsted Castle dominates the area beyond the railway although the walls and embankments of the latter have prevented it from being viewed from the town ever since the mid-1830s. The River Bulbourne is shown in 1811 (the date of the oldest large scale map) as being to the south at some distance from the castle's outer perimeter at this point. The newly-opened Grand Junction canal loops upwards in the direction of the castle and close to a lane which skirted the castle site. Presumably the canal needed to by-pass the existing buildings here that stood near the course of the Bulbourne. When a public house was built here after 1819 it was called The Castle as

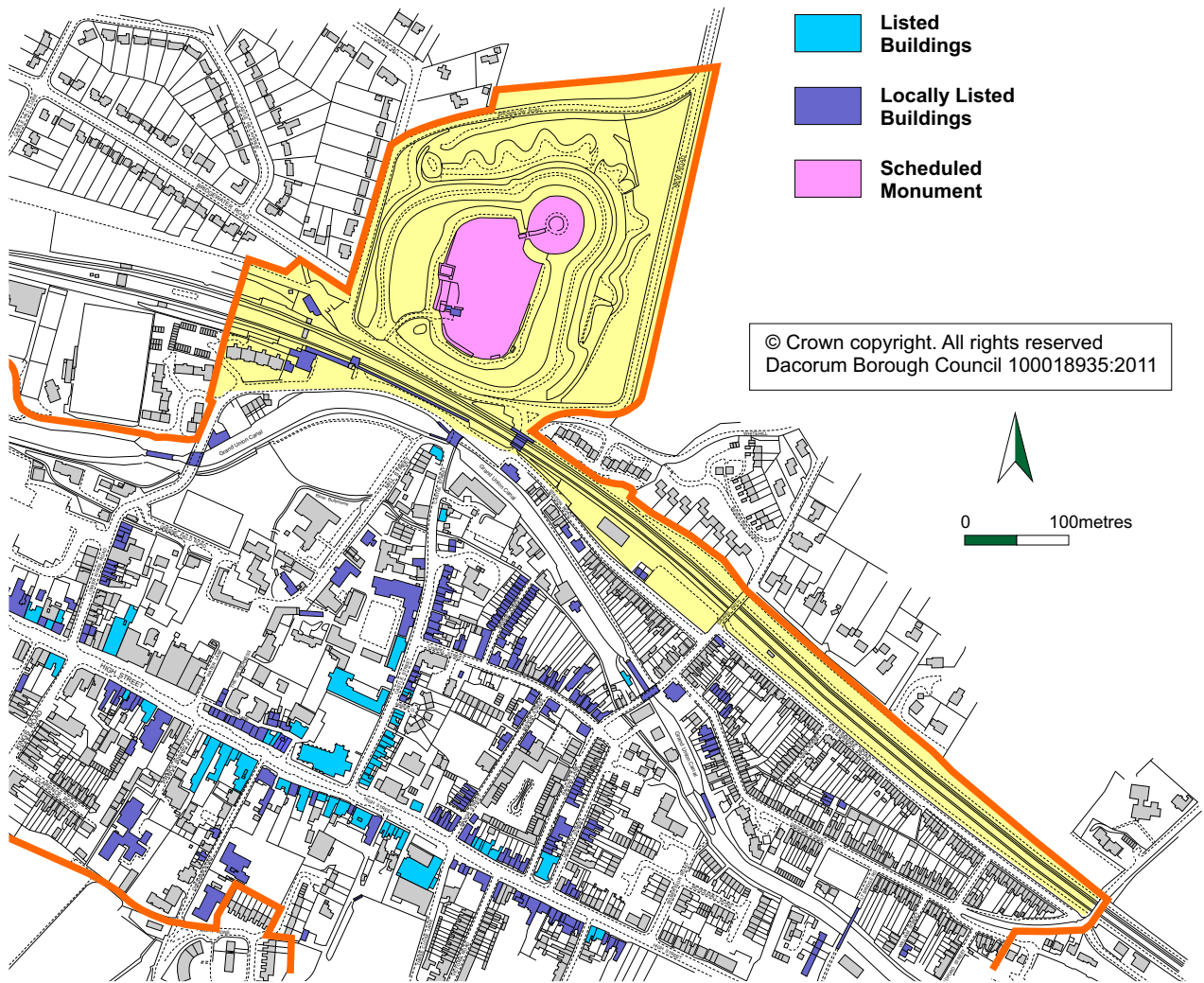
then it still enjoyed a direct view over the ruins beyond the new canal.

6.132 Such a view no longer existed after 1834 - 37 when the new railway line and its high embankments and walls intervened between the canal and the castle. The line from London to Birmingham was constructed during these years with a station originally a little to the east of the present site. The station buildings seen today date originally to 1875 although, like most sites in constant use for so long, they have been subject to change and modification and the loss of some entrance piers that formerly closed off the entrance yard from the roadway passing in front. Access to the station was restricted to the single canal bridge at the end of Castle Street until Station Road and the new Kings Road Bridge were created later in the nineteenth century. Despite the importance of the railway to the town



Berkhamsted Castle from within the outer perimeter of the site

Map 16: Area 2: Castle & Railway



since 1837 it is surprising how much historic fabric still survives here from the first half of the nineteenth century with a positive effect on the local character.



View of the castle is halted by the walls of the railway line

Lower Kings Road and Station Approach

6.133 The main station buildings (the Ticket Office and Fish Restaurant) comprise single and two-storey yellow brick buildings with red and grey brick detailing, hipped slate roofs and sash windows. Attached to the east is the railway line raised upon a substantial yellow brick wall with a covered area punched with a series of arches along its length (used as a cycle shed). Under the skewed railway bridge over Brownlow Road are the Brownlow Rooms (now the Montessori Nursery School) on Station Approach. The areas in front of these two groups of buildings have an open character allowing views towards the station buildings from the roads. A commanding view of the railway line and station buildings is obtained from the earthwork mounds of the southwest corner of Berkhamsted Castle, while the earthworks and flint curtain wall block views to the northeast.

6.134 Along Lower Kings Road, the house next to the station, no. 56 (Station House), is a two-storey red brick house with prominent chimney stacks to the end walls rising above the gabled slate roof. Its former front garden has been turned to hard standing for car parking. To the west is a recent residential development constructed as a row of two and a half storeys, set back from the roadside beyond metal railings with an attractive communal grassed area and planting to the fore. Built in yellow brick with red brick dressings, there are four prominent front-facing gables and a series of dormers. While the row utilises similar building materials as the nineteenth century station, the fenestration is of a more modern arrangement. Further along this section to the east, between Castle Street and Ravens Lane on the south side of the railway, is a slither of land occupied by a merchants yard that is hidden from view.

Negative features:

- Signage and advertising at the Station and nearby that detract from these dignified Victorian buildings
- Front garden to housing converted to hard standing for parking and front boundary removed

George Street housing district

6.135 In the new areas made accessible to the north by the two canal bridges the George Street development of two-storey cottages standing in terrace rows took place in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Beginning at the western end development gradually moved along George Street and Ellesmere Road. The small district's boundaries may be traced from field boundaries shown on the 1811 canal map. In the lanes to the south between the canal and the High Street more housing was built in matching style and both areas remain today in a largely unaltered form.

6.136 The style of these streets near the canal may be characterised from their familiar

rectangular door and window openings derived from Georgian classical architecture set into plain brick masonry which endured well into Victorian times. Brick lintels with a gentle curve or stone ones top the openings although round arches punctuate the frontages in many places where access alleys have been made so as to give the means to reach rear areas. In a number of locations broader openings occur beneath longer lintels in the frontages to mark the sites of former carriage arches. The original windows, where they survive, are timber sliding sashes and the roofs were once all slate. In general the houses stand directly on to the pavement but in later examples, built towards the end of the nineteenth century (after c1880), the existence of small front gardens allows scope for front walls and ground floor bay windows; these features soften the streetscape.

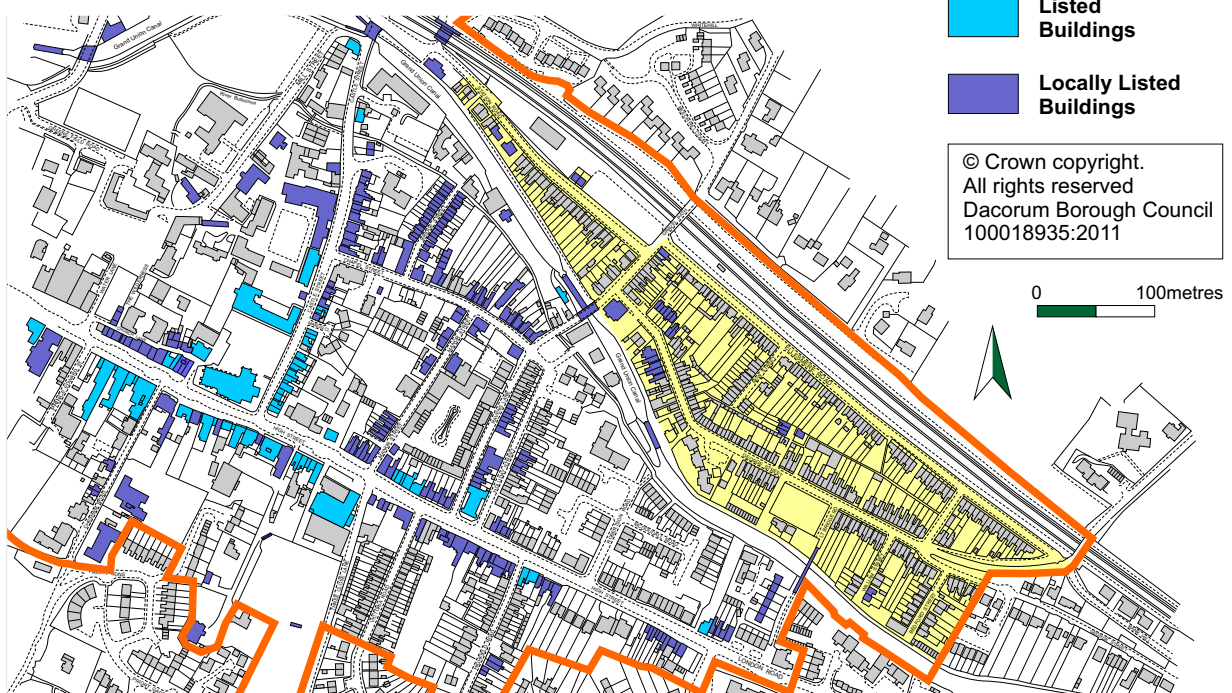


Ellesmere Road houses; a well-presented group with surviving features



George Street; view across the playground to terraced housing

Map 17: Area 2: George Street Housing District



6.137 In the final quarter of the nineteenth century the development of the area beyond the canal resumed to the west of George Street when the strip of land between its banks and the railway was filled with houses from the Crystal Palace pub and downstream as far as the bridge next to The Boat pub. The houses face towards Station Road and the railway embankment and their long rear gardens slope down to the towpath.

6.138 Predominantly the houses here in Area 2 are standard, two-storey brick cottages with slate roofs originally and are typical of the period from about 1830 - 1840 to about 1880. A further type followed up to about 1910 with variations and improvements on this pattern.

George Street

6.139 1 – 11 George Street form a group of six terraced cottages set back from the road behind a front wall and gardens (north side). They date to the early to mid-1800s and are shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map. This is a landmark group and probably represents the beginning of development in George Street. Nos. 13 & 15, 17 & 19 and 21 & 23 were built after 1877 and form another group arranged in pairs; they are staggered to give views of their side elevations. Onwards from no. 23 lie a series of cottages

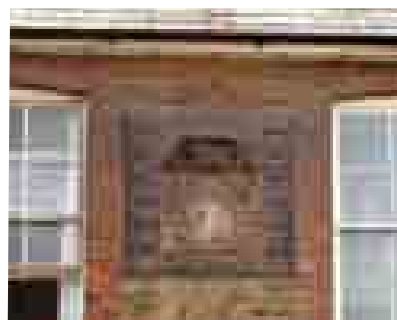
arranged in a long terrace fronting directly on to the street; nos. 25 to 91. There are a few small gaps between each group and, in several places, through arches giving private access to the rear back yards. Between 39 and 41 George Street is a round-topped alley opening and a surviving carriage arch. This terrace is already shown on the 1877 map, but all developments further to the east along George Street came after this date. The round-topped alley opening between 39 and 41 George Street on the north side leads through from New Street (and then Ellesmere Road), thus connecting these areas with the tow path of the canal. Although most views are along the length of the streets, this alley way together with similar openings dotting various points in Area 2 (some now with doors) provide glimpses into rear gardens at right-angles to the lines of the streets.

6.140 At the corner with Gravel Path stands The Boat public house together with its car park and canalside terrace (south side). These are modern rebuilds (an "Inn" stood here by 1877 as shown on the Ordnance Survey map), but the choice of red brick and the quality of its architectural details are good and the building makes a positive contribution as a landmark on this crucial site. To the rear of the pub site, where George Street begins at this point on its south side, are a pair of modern semi-detached infill

houses of no special interest. 12 to 20 George Street form a group of five model-type cottages with three storeys including roof dormers. They are built in red brick and appear typical of improved housing from 1890 to 1910. The group also carries various small inscription stones, "A.E.D" "D.K.D" "B.R.D" etc; they are believed to have been built for the sons of William Dwight (1843-1917). 22 – 28 George Street along with no. 32 and nos. 36 - 42 were already built by 1877 (as shown on the Ordnance Survey map). They represent the limits of continuous development on the south side up to this time (considerably less than the opposite side) up to the elbow-bend in the road.

6.141 Rising Sun Public House, near the canal lock (British Waterways number 55) lies behind 42 George Street (south side). The public house was already built by the time of the 1877 map. The pub (also described elsewhere) is a typical alehouse of the mid-1800s with accommodation for the publican's family upstairs. It is the best preserved of the original alehouses next to the canal and its two-storey brick frontage has canted bays that overlook the lock standing nearby. These features and the short access path next to the pub form a picturesque group. Beyond the pub is the largest of the modern in-fill developments of housing situated between George Street and the towpath. It appears to have filled a gap site left undeveloped here throughout the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Being set back diagonally from the line of the street, it was designed with little regard either to the George Street terrace style or to the setting near the canal and it was constructed in a darkish red brick that bears no resemblance to the surroundings.

6.142 Further along the south side of George Street beyond the elbow-bend in the road is no. 70; it is shown as having been built by 1877 on the Ordnance Survey map. Beyond 70 George Street lie nos. 72 – 86, a group of eight cottages built after 1877. Next to no. 86 is a popular children's playground. Formerly the site of a coal yard, the 1877 map also shows buildings



1897 Diamond Jubilee plaque on 152 George Street



Traditional cast iron street sign off George Street on a well-preserved example of brickwork

constructed across what is now the carriageway at this point. The low wall of the former yard's enclosure survives and surrounds the open space (and its swings and roundabouts) and is a defined space between the street and the canal. On the lower side of this site and therefore backing on to the canal is a group of four modern in-fill houses built in an interesting and acceptable style, although different from the nearby traditional cottages.

6.143 Opposite the playground on the north side of George Street is Foster's Garage (no. 107) which preserves one of the carriage arches that characterise different parts of the housing area. Farther along, at no. 119, a garage has been constructed alongside the two-storey house in part of the gap that stands at this point in the street.

6.144 After the playground is Little Bridge Road leading to an inter-war pedestrian concrete bridge which accounts for the "Little Bridge" name as it crosses the canal at this point. Beyond stands a further group of late-nineteenth century housing with projecting, single storey front bays, 112 - 118 George Street. Nos. 120 - 132, Cowley Cottages, merge with the above and are similar in type. This far end of George Street on the south side begins to take on a distinctly turn-of-the-century appearance that makes it more akin to properties in Station Road. Nos. 134 - 152 is a group with an 1897 Diamond Jubilee plaque. This small group has red brick mixing with the familiar buff bricks on its frontage and returns to the six-over-six "Georgian" pattern of sliding sash windows typical of the "Arts and Crafts" inspired domestic architectural styles of the end of the nineteenth century. George Street splits off to the right beyond this point. Originally a footpath in 1877, it contains nos. 154 and 156 and 160 - 164 showing a somewhat larger, more middle-class housing type, post -1910 with two-storey projecting bays.

6.145 Development opposite the playground on the north side of George Street (nos. 93 - 149) from Cambridge Terrace eastwards as far as the corner of Paxton Road, took place after 1877 up to about 1910. Some examples have small front gardens and single-storey projecting bays. Beyond Paxton Road, nos. 151, 153 and 155 George Street are still pre-1910 in type. The line of Paxton Road is shown as a field boundary in the 1877 map; here is a single house of nineteenth century type on the right-hand side of the road. On the west side of Paxton Road is an access alley leading to the rear of the gardens of the properties standing on either side.

6.146 Little Bridge Road, William Street and Bedford Street are a group of three extremely short streets leading off the south side of George Street at its half-way point; there are no houses in Little Bridge Road but William Street and Bedford Street contain further, small, two storey properties of the same type as described above. Architecturally these three small streets are no different from the majority of properties nearby in George Street and development here appears to have begun by 1877 and to have continued shortly afterwards. William Street contains both a small group of nineteenth century cottages and some modern houses of no special interest constructed in a similar fashion. The street at its end near the canal leads to a small private car park and to Union Court, a modern development of flats with its end elevation overlooking the car park. Its side elevation near the canal is partly raised over a walkway and the overall design quality is acceptable. At the other end, Union Court leads to the end of Bedford Street, which consists of post-war two storey housing of no special interest and with little relationship to the surrounding Victorian architecture.

Ellesmere Road

6.147 Ellesmere Road was developed with small houses (on its south side only and facing the railway) in two phases. Before 1877 it stretched from the corner with Gravel Path approximately as far as today's no. 53. This earlier group is mainly terraced and facing directly on to the pavement and many of the cottages are the smallest and most simply constructed in the George Street district or anywhere in Area 2. Ellesmere Road is a long almost unbroken terrace of two storey properties

similar in most respects to George Street properties. At its mid-point a single break occurs between the Gravel Path and Paxton Road ends of the road at New Street, a short group of more properties of the same type as seen elsewhere and leading down a steep slope that overlooks the rear of George Street at the end.

6.148 Beyond no. 53 the construction dates are post-1877 and building probably continued to the east along the road until 1910. Some houses (e.g. nos. 61 - 68) have single storey projecting bays of the late-nineteenth century type similar to others elsewhere in the George Street district. Magnolia House (no. 59) has a basement floor at the rear and no. 54 is double-fronted; they are the two grandest houses in this group of streets.

6.149 Ellesmere Road is punctuated by gap sites at nos. 53 - 54 and 59 - 61 and by garages that form part of the frontages of 15 - 16 and of 37 and 38. The terrace housing is also interrupted by modern in-fills of two storey units at nos. 3 and 4, nos. 18, 19 and 20, no. 29 (a larger style of house with the upper floor entirely within a mansard roof) and no. 54. None of these replacements of the original terrace styles of the nineteenth century are of special merit or interest and the use of red brick frequently creates a discordant note when compared with the surrounding buff bricks of the older houses.

6.150 Overall, the quality of the original build and of modern presentation improves as Ellesmere Road extends along its length to the far end of the street where the late-nineteenth century produced a more comfortable style of house. A good deal of original detail may be found in this last group of houses including fenestration and doors and iron front railings at nos. 68 and 79.

6.151 At its far end beyond the Paxton Road junction Ellesmere Road is terminated by the earthen bank below the bridge that crosses the railway line and leads north to Ivy House Lane. A set of steps ascends to the pavement above. In the narrow triangle at this point between the backs of the last few Ellesmere Road houses and the road frontage of George Street are a small row of garages that contribute little to the urban quality of the area.

Station Road

6.152 The line of Ellesmere Road, west of Gravel Path continues as Station Road. This is a further area of housing and was developed only after 1877. Up to this date it was a triangular strip of empty land between the canal and the former goods yards and sidings of the railway. Most of the original houses (excluding modern in-fills, of which there are several) have extensive rear gardens which attractively stand on sloping sites that stretch down as far as the canal towpath. The houses here all face north in the direction of the railway except for a single, red brick pair of railway cottages (nos. 26 and 27) that stand between Station Road and the railway embankment.

6.153 These houses in Station Road have long, narrow plots that provide them with their spacious rear gardens that slope down to the canal towpath. Although all the houses are brick and mostly reflect a solidly middle-class lifestyle, they are by no means uniform in style. The street appears to have been developed in small batches and thus a good deal of variety was created within the limits of narrow plots with the usual two storey frontages beneath a slate roof. Bay windows are common and can even extend up to the first floor.

6.154 The range of types and of architectural detail is diverse and a variety of Arts and Crafts fashions may be seen in the frontages, windows and doors of individual examples. Where modern

in-fill has taken place, it has generally failed to match the standards of the original houses nearby in this sub-area.

6.155 Station Road delineates the boundary of the Victorian and Edwardian area of the town at this point. Beyond it and northwards on the far side of the railway further developments (except for a few isolated examples) all took place later than 1935. To cross into this new area on its sloping ground is to enter a different and more spacious world that was now governed by motor-car ownership. Detached or semi-detached houses here stand on the larger plots customary in prosperous mid- twentieth suburbia. The houses here are now usually flanked by their own garages and the parking problems of the narrow streets near to the canal thus no longer exist.

6.156 Within the Station Road development, a number of late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century examples may be cited, in particular: The Coach House, no. 9: a good refurbishment of a previous stable and hayloft. No. 4: very good example of an Arts and Crafts townhouse, about 1900. No. 11: as above. Most of the other houses here are either terraced, semi-detached or detached. They contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area and are architecturally worthy of note. Nos. 26 and 27 are the only houses on the north side of Station Road and represent the same type of late-nineteenth century red brick railway houses as the surviving one (others have



Views of Station Road from the street front and from the canal side. The houses have small front gardens with brick boundary walls but longer rear gardens overlooking the canal

been replaced) next to the station. The development continues around the corner of Gravel Path until it reaches the canal bridge and lock near The Boat public house.

6.157 Standing in the short stretch of Gravel Path between the Ellesmere Road and George Street corners are a row of properties similar in date and overall style to most of George Street nearby except that they contain two carriage arches with their wooden doors intact and these attractive features serve to remind us that pony and trap was the usual method of carrying goods or people when these streets were first laid out. Near this point are the area's only two commercial premises: The Boat public house and the butcher's shop opposite in Gravel Path. A slaughter house once stood at the rear and a former local post office at the corner, now marked only by a pillar box.

6.158 The George Street / Canal East area has three surviving public houses: the best preserved architecturally is the Rising Sun, which has two bays of two storey bay windows at the front that overlook the canal and create a picturesque effect. The main building appears to have two phases with a conspicuous join in the brickwork between front and back. It stands immediately next to a lock. As stated above, The Boat is a landmark structure. It seems to be an old site (an "inn" in 1877) but the present building is a sympathetic red-brick reconstruction. Steps down from the main level connect with the towpath and the pub has a well-

designed terrace overlooking the water and one of the few private car parks in the district.

6.159 The third pub is the Crystal Palace and it carries a blue plaque on which it is stated to be mid-1800s, due to the obvious reference in its name to the Great Exhibition of 1851. Its end elevation once contained a small-scale version of Joseph Paxton's famous iron and glass structure, but this was later walled-up. The position directly adjoins the canal towpath and it is close to the site of the "New Brick Bridge" of 1819 and it was also extremely near to the first Berkhamsted railway station. Its construction site was at the junction of three former field boundaries and considerably pre-dates the layout of nearby Station Road which did not take place until after 1877.

Negative features:

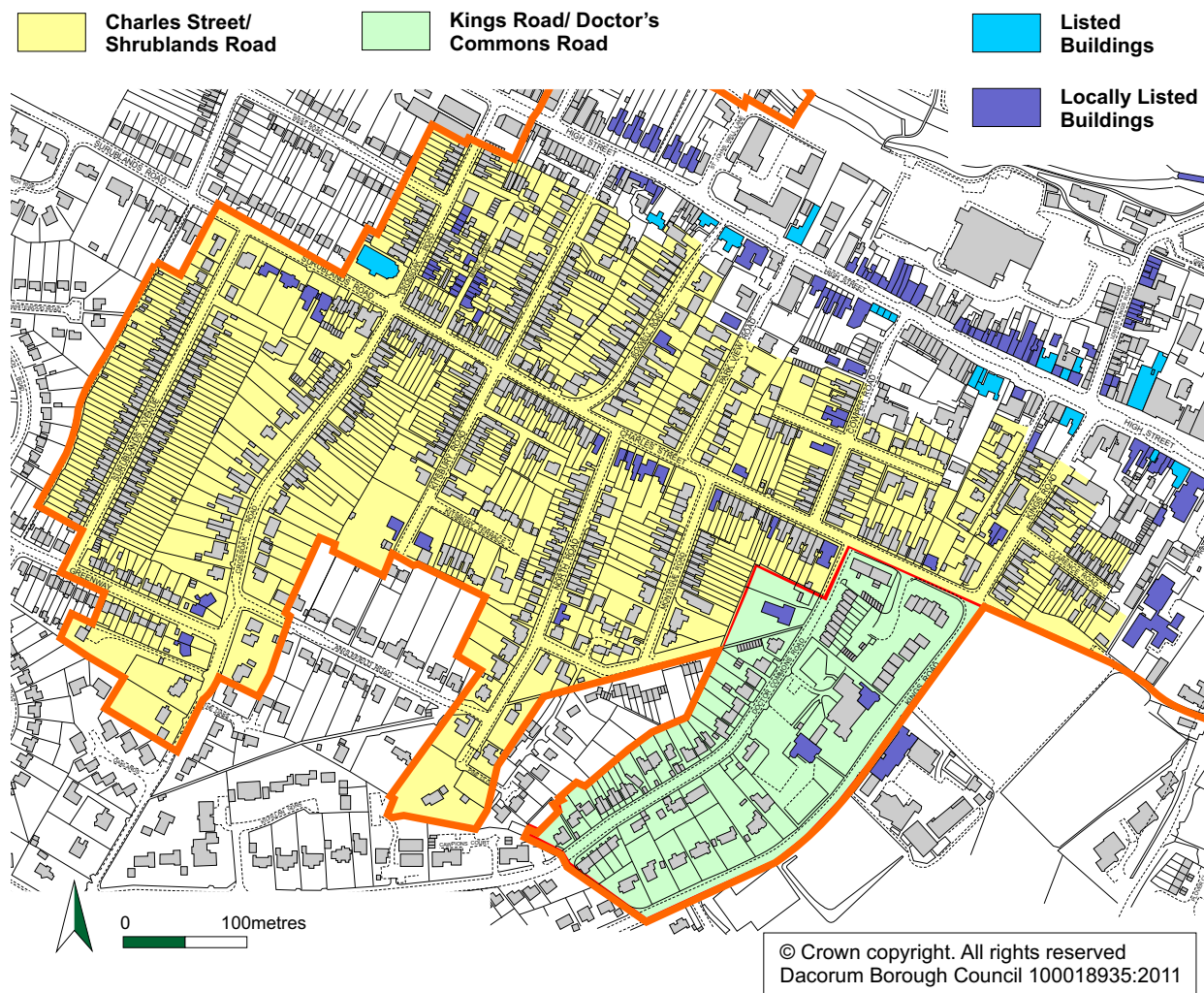
- Some poor quality in-filling (residential)
- Destruction of the uniformity of terraces and adjoining groups: loss of traditional windows and doors, render or paint, addition of external cladding to brickwork and replacement of traditional slate with concrete tile roof tiles
- Addition / position of satellite dishes to front elevations and the growing number of roof lights along with a small number of poorly designed, large, flat-roofed dormer windows to rear elevations
- Existence of one group of lock-up garages whose sites are visually poor and architecturally negative



Views of The Boat PH from the opposite canal bank and a view of the terrace that is joined by steps to the towpath

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

Map 18: Area 3: Charles Street (Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road)



6.160 Area 3 is sub-divided into two parts: Charles Street / Shrublands Road (to include the greater set of residential side streets that adjoin Charles Street as far as Kings Road and Doctor's Commons Road) and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road (including housing plots and the Berkhamsted School / Preparatory School).

6.161 There is only one statutory listed building within Area 3: the Church of All Saints, Shrublands Road built in 1906 in the early English revival style. Several other buildings are considered to be of local importance and are included on the Berkhamsted Local List (see Introduction, 1.12 – 1.15, and Appendix 2).

Charles Street / Shrublands Road

6.162 The area is described from east (Kings Road end of Charles Street) to west (Shrublands Avenue).

6.163 From the junction with Kings Road the first house to the north side facing the street is a two and a half storey, Edwardian, Domestic Revival style house (with a small matching garage) in brick and roughcast. Up to Cowper Road, are a series of varied Victorian / Edwardian houses of two storeys with ridge line parallel to the road and with bay fronts.

6.164 Nos. 12 & 14 are a pair of three storey, red brick villas with stonework bays and feature positively in the street. On the south side are the

Lincoln Court flats, three storeys, the façade stepped slightly, but bland. The old street boundary wall (with inset Royal Mail post box) is retained in front of them. West of Lincoln Court on the Charles Street frontage, a long c1960s block of flats (Bay Court) of three storeys and flat roof relates very poorly in materials and form to the houses opposite.

6.165 A three storey building marks the northwest corner with Doctor's Commons Road – in old London stock brick with red brick bands and tall, plain chimney stacks. Plainer but attractive houses opposite on Cowper Street corner appear deceptively tall. There is a typical view over the High Street to woods beyond at Cowper Street junction illustrating how “intervisible” many parts of the town are.



12 & 14 Charles Street

6.166 On the south side of Charles Street, is a good quality, well detailed Edwardian terrace. Low, brick boundary walls and low greenery are typical here. Nos. 17 – 25 are individual houses to the south varied in materials and appearance forming a prominent group.

6.167 Nos. 27 - 37 are a two-storey terrace at the junction with Montague Road, slate roofed and distinctive for their gault brick façade with red brick detail. They are well maintained and retain matching timber windows,

doors and low front boundary walls with railings. The north side of street here has wooden fencing and a pair of garages, neither adding quality to streetscape. A large pale painted, freestanding villa (no. 24) maintains the punctuated nature of



Nos.17 to 25 Charles Street



Fern Court at junction with Montague Road



View from Charles Street down Cowper Street to beyond the High Street



Nos 39, 41, 43 & 45 Charles Street

this north side. The southwest corner with Montague Road is uncharacteristically open due to the 1960 / 70s building, Fern Court being set back from it. Its panel fencing and rear / side garden is also out of character with the context.

6.168 Either side of the junction with North Road, Edwardian houses with a white rendered upper storey, dormers and exposed rafter feet form a strong composition. The poor design of infill house & garages opposite at no. 32A produce a negative feature.

Cowper Road (from Kitsbury Road to Cross Oak Road)

6.169 From the Charles Street end are two two-storey terraces with good survival of period features, all stepping down hill and in the established palette of materials. Some have dormers (lead hipped) and some have projecting two-storey canted bays that break through roof eaves lines. In front, are low front boundary walls with piers and some hedging or greenery; generally they also have a single step up from the pavement. On the west side are a taller pair of houses. Next to these, on the corner with Torrington Road, no. 7 is a larger villa with more elaborate decoration in terracotta or shaped



Nightingale Lodge (above) and (below) houses opposite it on Cowper Road



brick. On the northwest corner with Torrington Road, is a large building in Domestic Revival influenced style: rendered upper floor; half-timbered gable; stone ground floor window surrounds; round-arched porches.

6.170 Further down Cowper Road, the north side terrace down to no. 1 is of slightly larger, slightly more decorated houses than the upper end of the road. These have for example pronounced gables over two-storey bays with round arched windows and feature keystones. The recent three-storey block of red brick flats (Nightingale Lodge) opposite fails to fit in due to its scale, and general appearance (and lack of front boundary wall). On the north side, a chapel in the grey / red brick / slate palette is unusual in having plain sash windows rather than gothic style ones; its 1928 build date may help explain this.

6.171 The last street building is a recent terrace: Eastview and Westview, which is of sympathetic scale and appropriate front boundary treatment, though is let down by clumsy fenestration. Opposite, the streetscape breaks down and gives way to car parking.



New development- Torrington Road (west)

Torrington Road

6.172 To the east side, chimneys, bays and gables are prominent. 26 Cowper Road is a part tile- hung house on the corner plot. Beyond is a modern infill house and two pairs of "lost" 1950s semis. Opposite, are three good detached Edwardian houses, the last with a spectacular dormer.

6.173 The western half of Torrington Road has firstly, the flank, tallish boundary wall and hedge



Entrance between the two Park View Court blocks

of 7 Cowper Road to the south side, followed by two and three storey, period, semi-detached and detached houses (nos. 15 – 23). Opposite to the north side stands no. 14 and an adjacent new development (picture above) in the former plot of no. 12, the façade of which fits in reasonably apart from the window proportions.

Park View Road

6.174 There are extensive views over the High Street to countryside to the north from the top of the road. On the west side, are characterful Victorian / Edwardian houses, especially at the top, nos.19 and 21 with their wide-arched porches and verandas.



14 Park View Road

Opposite on the east side, are five unusual later-built houses (nos. 6 -14) that probably date to the 1930s. The central three have hipped roofs with an “eye brow” dormer, while those either side have a tall brick gable with a narrow window in a similar format. The top two houses (nos. 12 and 14) retain the original Crittal windows.

6.175 1 Park View Road is an exuberant, refurbished chapel to lower west side with an old white-washed bungalow (Montessori School office) next to it. Beyond is the mansard roofed Orbital House, an office building with undercroft; it manages its scale and hillside position well from the uphill direction from the High Street (both lie in Area 1). Opposite, the front elevation of the two Park View Court blocks are well proportioned but the whole development is set

too far back from the pavement and the car park entrance between them punctures the streetscape and is out of character (part of this development lies within Area 1).

Boxwell Road

6.176 Unlike other roads of the late-Victorian period, this street curves downhill from its junction with Charles Street and curves slightly again towards its junction with the High Street. Generally Boxwell Road has a fairly regular house style on the west side, all old being built in London stock brick and red brick, and having bay windows with small gables above.



View from top of Park View Road

6.177 The east side is of more varied designs with some painted brick or stucco (including the Surgery). There is good survival of features and front boundary walls. In contrast to the predominant building form here, a chalet (no.1A) and two bungalows all on the east side are thoroughly out of place in terms of building form and plot frontage.



Boxwell Road – west side & (above) opposite them on the east side of the same street!

6.178 Further down Boxwell Road are more car parking yards either side of the road near the junction with the High Street. On the west side, set back from the frontage, stands a recently-built office building, 285 High Street (behind 277 – 287 High Street), that is of no relevant design merit to the conservation area.

incongruous detached garage at no. 25). On the west side are unusually large front gardens compared to most of the streets in the sub-area. Recent houses built at no. 20 and next to Schenley House fit in well to this end of the road. The layout of the Rosehill development is not characteristic of the conservation area.

Montague Road

6.179 At the junction with Charles Street are views beyond the town. 1 Montague Road stands on the east side of the road and is effectively the corner element of a gault brick faced terrace, Montague Villas (27 - 37 Charles Street). Built in gault bricks with red arches, no. 1 has a slate roof with rolled lead hips and provides a strongly positive feature on the east side of Montague Road. Opposite, Fern Court occupies an uncharacteristic corner plot in relation to Charles Street, as commented on above. However, up Montague Road there is a plot rhythm at least.

North Road

6.181 From Charles Street, the junction is marked by a pair of two and a half storey Edwardian houses (with dormers) oriented onto Charles Street. On the west side is a late Victorian / Edwardian red brick terrace and opposite on the east side a striking pair of large, semi-detached houses in grey and red brick (nos. 35 and 36). Houses here have sets of several steps up to the front doors. Beyond the houses on the east side are generally consistent in both period and form (brick with an upper roughcast level) until no. 26A, a 1960s two storey house (set-back infill). No. 25 is a large, tall villa, and Yew Tree House is a modern two storey house but occupies the corner unobtrusively. On the

6.180 There is considerable variety along the middle section of Montague Road (though an

west side are 15 & 16A - C the latter are the same type as the unusual nos. 6 - 14 Park View Road. High Garth next to no.16C may be of the same period.



New houses at 20 Montague Road

6.182 There is a change of scale and character on the west side, with three large roughcast houses (a group with nos. 22, 23 & 24 opposite) and no. 20 on corner with Anglefield Road. At Pine Close / The Pines. W.A Burr made applications for all of the detached houses to the southern end of North Road (except no. 21); and H. Burr for



Nos.17 and 19 North Road of c1902

The Pines in 1939. From the original plans and elevations there is a strong similarity to all of these buildings.



6.183 Off The Angle Path is an access road running south on the west side of which are several nineteenth century houses. Two of these are a joined pair. Between these and the third is a narrow, altered, building. The group appear on the 1898 Ordnance Survey map and pre-date the surrounding street layout.

Kitsbury Road

6.184 High Street to Charles Street section: Beyond the High Street parade of shops are c1920s semis, still a visually cohesive group in spite of now varied fenestration and doors. Some on the west side suffer from ugly parking handstandings / forecourts. From no.10 the houses revert to Victorian / Edwardian but compared to other streets here, there is much variation in form & facing materials within a short stretch. Most of this is as built, although at no.16 it is as a result of later "improvement" ("stone" cladding and a "Georgian" Bay window). Further along, nos. 55 - 60 are some quite modest terraced cottages. At the junction with Charles Street, the scruffy flank of The Old Post Office

outbuildings (38 Charles Street) is a detractor from the street.

6.185 Charles Street to top section: The modest scale of the houses compared to other roads in the sub area continues but other themes remain in common such as roofs stepping up the hill and low front boundary walls. Unusual however, is a rash of inappropriate replacement windows as the pictures below illustrate. Hamilton Road is unmade-up and has an informal character. Hamilton Road is unmade-up and has an informal character, with small-scale garages to the rear of the Charles Street plots on the north side.



A concentration of inappropriate replacement windows at Kitsbury Road





36, Kitsbury Road and The Grey House



6.186 Further up the road, beyond Kitsbury House, the character changes with large villas on bigger plots and with good survival of features.

6.187 Kitsbury Terrace is a private road with a good two-storey terrace in red and gault brick; slate roofs; and narrow two storey projecting bays on a higher ground level. Of the other buildings here, Longmead of c1930 is also of interest.

6.188 At the top of Kitsbury Road, no. 36 is a large stuccoed detached house with raised window surrounds and decorated porch (somewhat compromised by new unit beside it). Opposite, The Grey House (currently under

refurbishment and development) is plainer but still grand. Its projecting bays, chimneys, and roof profile, compliment Nos. 34, 35 and 41 (opposite) lower on the hill. Its boundary wall is a feature of the street.

6.189 Middle Road is a narrow unmade-up back road – unusual and with interesting elements. There are two short terraces of smaller scale two-storey houses but also a converted workshop / stable after no. 11 and a rare timber-clad store / workshop / stables adjacent to no.1 Middle Road and behind 50 / 52 Charles Street. Otherwise, the road consists of the backs of plots on Cross Oak or Kitsbury Roads.



Buildings at Middle Road including a timber-clad building in yard behind 50 / 52 Charles Street

Cross Oak Road

6.190 High Street to Charles Street / Shrublands Road:

There is a considerable loss of features such as sash windows, original doors and boundary walls closer to the High Street. At the Middle Road Junction stands an out-of-place 1970s (?) corner development, Kewa Court, a negative feature. Nos. 21 - 29 are a terrace of cottages, well set back, unusually. Several of these have poor window

replacements but with nos. 32 - 49 also on the east side, these are earlier (1870s) than much of surrounding development (such as the terrace opposite). All Saints Church, is a grade II statutory listed building (when this Appraisal was written, the only statutory listed building in Area 3) in an imposing position and has three tall pine trees that are a significant feature of the locality. Oakhill Court next to it, a recent infill with a broad gable to the street and undercroft drive, fails to fit into the streetscene and jars with the listed church.

6.191 Charles Street south to The Oaks: Recent flats development (Rothesay Court) on the west side of Charles Street / Cross Oak Road junction is of too great a scale, poor detailing and imposes a wide car park / entrance on the street frontage. This development is altogether a very negative feature. Two-storey cottages step up hill opposite. From no. 42, are a number of recent terraced houses in red or yellow stock bricks. Their fenestration, proportions to eaves and detailing mean that they do not match the earlier houses. Nevertheless, these recent units maintain the street building lines in contrast to the



Cross Oak Road. Various replacement window styles opposite the West Road junction

pair of semis set-back opposite which leave a hole in the street frontage. Notably the terraced houses here are above road level with retaining walls and steps up.

6.192 The character then changes away from a terraced street layout. Houses are later and set back more and with front gardens. The detached house at no. 82 is the same type as the group at nos. 22, 23 & 24 North Road (also 29 Kings Road).

6.193 Junction of Cross Oak Road and Greenway: At this junction is a set-piece development consisting of 1 Greenway and High Rising to the south with opposite, 2 Greenway and 86 Cross Oak Road canted towards Cross Oak Road. These are Arts & Crafts influenced, white rendered and apparently designed as a set-piece entrance to Greenway which has much more modest buildings but which appear to be of contemporary age and style. These latter are in terraces punctuated with gables at regular intervals. Further along (past the conservation boundary) on this street its character changes.



Cross Oak Rd at Greenway entrance



Houses on Shrublands Avenue

Shrublands Avenue

6.194 From the Greenway end a view over the valley is presented. Running down the hill are serried ranks of gabled (gables mostly on the east side of the street) terraced houses. Short front gardens with low brick boundary walls and piers are characteristic. The houses have minimal decoration. With the qualification that many slate roof coverings have been replaced by concrete tiles, retention of features of the houses is reasonably good.



Nos. 5 and 7 Shrublands Road

6.195 The pattern breaks down towards the bottom of the road with three detached, later houses (the two on the west side fitting into the street scene particularly poorly) and the pair: nos. 7 and 11.

Shrublands Road

6.196 Only the south side of Shrublands Road lies within the conservation area boundary. A wide road with old kerbstones, as elsewhere, and with a hedged and tree laden nature. Nos. 9 (Stonycroft), 11 (Rowans) and 13 are three large, detached Edwardian houses of individual designs. Nos. 5 - 7 (Dunslan House and Mullions) is an unusual Domestic Revival-style building in red brick, part rendered, with four gables and stone dressings to the bay windows and doors on the ground floor. Set back from the roadside over a brick boundary wall and front lawns, there are a series of steps leading up to the three main doorways. All of these houses have significant presence in the street.

6.197 1A to 5A Shrublands Road are modern redevelopment built in multi stock brick. At a full three storeys compared to the two and a half of the houses to their west, they are overly prominent within the street.



Stonycroft, 9 Shrublands Road

Negative Features

- Charles Street: bland block of flats (Bay Court) of three-storeys and flat roof
- Fern Court has resulted in an uncharacteristic corner at the Charles Street / Montague Road junction
- Poor design of infill house & garages at no. 32A Charles Street
- Nightingale Lodge fails to fit-in on Cowper Road due to its scale, general appearance and lack of front boundary wall
- Park View Court car park entrance punctures the Park View Road streetscape and is out of character
- Boxwell Road: bungalows on the east side are thoroughly out of place in terms of building form and plot frontage
- Kitsbury Road (southern / top section) inappropriate replacement windows in some of the houses. Also a group at Cross Oak Road
- Cross Oak Road: at the Middle Road Junction an out of place 1970s corner development, Kewa Court
- Rothesay Court on the west side of Charles Street / Cross Oak Road junction is of too great a scale, poor detailing and imposes a wide car park / entrance on the street frontage
- Failure of infill / new development to maintain the street building line
- Most recent infill or redevelopment with poor window design (size / type / proportion) and facing materials (brick etc) that do not fit in with the established materials on a street
- Failure of much infill or redevelopment to continue the characteristic front boundary treatment or front yard / gardens

Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road and the Berkhamsted School

Kings Road

6.198 Rising from the High Street, Kings Road is flanked on the east side by the 1970s Police Station and then the County Library. The latter, with most of the building being set back from the road, does not have a street façade and thus leaves something of a hole in the streetscape. On the west side is the red brick boundary wall from Kings Road Garage and the red brick rear boundary wall of the houses facing Elm Grove. Both are strong features of Kings Road. Beyond is Kings Road Church (Hope Hall, a chapel of the Plymouth Brethren dating to 1874) that has significant recent extensions and alterations. Nos. 8 - 20 opposite on the east side are Edwardian two-storey houses with good survival of period features (e.g. window and door types / slates / chimney stacks / pots). Old kerb stones are present along the roadside. On the west side of Kings Road leading up to the corner of Charles Street is a tall, yellow brick, retaining wall with trees behind. It is the boundary wall to nos. 5 & 7 and 9 and is a strong feature of the street; it is very unusual having concave sections between the piers.

6.199 Beyond the entrance to Clarence Road on the east side are 22 - 36 Kings Road, a group of Edwardian houses in the established palette of materials, some with yellow London stocks, and with a good survival of period features. Low boundary walls some with railings feature. The street frontage includes a former Baptist Chapel at no. 30. This scene is overlooked from higher level ground by the gables of nos. 5, 7 and 9, two pairs of villas placed side on to Kings Road (nos. 5 & 7

are notably early, appearing on the 1878 Ordnance Survey map).

6.200 The view up the hill is dominated by trees, the continuing wall, and railings to Butts Meadow opposite. There are views over the meadow. There are also views back down to the High Street (to nos. 204 etc) and to woodland beyond. To the west, the wall (its make-up changes) and trees are a constant feature. Past these, buildings of Berkhamsted School can be seen. These are steeply accessed from street level up flights of steps. There are three large, c1897 former houses forming the key features amongst links and extensions. The southernmost, no. 19 a very prominent feature of Kings Road, is of three storeys and attics, symmetrical stone-framed bay windows either side of a narrower central entrance bay. It is of "streaky bacon" bands of yellow stock and soft red brickwork with tiled roof and tall chimneys. The middle building of these three is entirely faced in soft red brick with half-timbered gables and a corner bay. The northernmost of the three with two wide, four storey, front bays, has a stone headed entrance and stone headed bay windows all of impressive scale. Its elaborate moulded brickwork and terracotta panels are also notable.

6.201 The School's building (of 1902) on the east road frontage is also of notable quality. The principal building is of three storeys, the lower in red brick and the upper two in roughcast with lower ranges to either side. It also features prominent ranges of timber framed windows.



Railings & view to Butts Meadow (left). View west towards Victoria School and beyond from Butts Meadow (right)

6.202 No. 21 Kings Road is of the same period as the three large, pre-1898 Ordnance Survey school buildings.

Towards the southern end of the length of Kings Road within the conservation area, where the wall gives way to hedges, and the west side reduces in height, the buildings are substantial detached pre-1925 Ordnance Survey, Arts and Crafts style houses (except the more recent house next to the footpath where the conservation area boundary turns west) set back and of two storeys and attic. Nos. 25, 27

and 29 are all on a common building line (they may all be by the same architect / builder) and of brick lower and rendered upper storey with tiled roofs as is no. 31 but this has a gabled front. No. 23 is more individual and is all rendered and part gabled, part hipped roof.



Berkhamsted School building fronting Kings Road

Clarence Road

6.203 Clarence Road is built of two-storey terraced houses e.g. Clarence Cottage, dated 1897 on a plaque. Typically built in plum (Luton Grey) brick with red brick bands and features. Their roofs are gabled and are of slate; chimney stacks and pots are a feature of the roofline. The houses on the north side have single storey



Terrace on Clarence Road showing typical materials (and poor replacement windows to middle left)

canted bay windows, while those on the south side have two-storey canted bay windows. All have low front boundary walls and most have alleyways through from the street to private rear gardens. The pavement is covered with tarmac.

Doctor's Commons Road

6.204 The character of this road is set by large, Domestic Revival influenced period houses (in brick, tile and roughcast with some stone) such as Brent Lodge and Marchmont House dominating on the west side. The bungalow, Rose Corner, is a diminutive exception. Angleside House, next to the Angle Place path, is of impressive scale and appearance and its

boundary wall defines one side of the alleyway. The pair, Glendair and High Kelton are faced all in roughcast other than a brick base and notably, their first floor windows are off - set in the gable. Rafter ends are exposed at the eaves and chimney stacks and multiple pots are also important features. The houses here are on an elevated level in relation to the road surface, increasing southwards. Consequently, a retaining wall at the back of the footway is a strong feature

in the street. In places it is punctuated with garage doors. Original stone kerbs are retained.

6.205 To the east side of the road, are a boarded fence and trees after which, along the road, buildings are very mixed and altogether less coherent.



Angleside House



Tree Tops and Greensleeves, Doctor's Commons Road



6.206 The scale of some of the houses is reduced towards the southern end / boundary of the conservation area (where a footpath crosses). On the west side, Heatherbank is incongruous amongst older neighbouring buildings. On the east side, are a range of more recent houses of various designs. Darul Aman is the most unusual. The latest pair, Tree Tops and Greensleeves, successfully use brick hanging tile, plain tile roofs and timber bays together, as on the original old houses.

Negative Features

- The County Library's lack of a street façade leaves a gap in the street frontage
- The appearance of some garages on Doctor's Commons Road fails to blend with the street
- Incongruous more recent house amongst older neighbouring buildings on west side of Doctor's Commons Road



Well integrated (left) and less so (right) garaging on Doctor's Commons Road

7 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

7.1 For the purposes of this report, some of the details discussed in the previous chapter (architectural styles) are brought out in Chapter 7 to provide a general over-view. Due to its size and complex character, the discussion of the buildings of the conservation area have been divided into three 'Identity Areas' and sub-divided into its nine small constituent parts.

- **Area 1.** High Street (High Street East; High Street Central; High Street West; Collegiate)
- **Area 2.** Grand Union Canal (Castle and Railway; The Canal; George Street)
- **Area 3.** Charles Street (Charles Street / Shrublands Road; Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road and the Berkhamsted School)

Architectural styles and detailing

7.2 The diversity of the buildings throughout Berkhamsted Conservation Area makes the description of materials appear wide ranging and changeable due to its multi-period nature. However, the character of the conservation area owes much to the use of local materials in the construction of its early historic buildings and minor structures such as outbuildings and some boundary walls; timber oak frames (exposed or hidden behind later brick re-fronting), red and yellow brick, and red clay tile. Some of the later buildings have utilised materials that have been brought in from other parts of the country, including Welsh slate for roof coverings.

7.3 Early bricks are red or pinkish red, manufactured since at least the seventeenth century in the neighbouring Ashridge woods. Later bricks from the eighteenth and nineteenth century can be orangey red, deep red or red / brown and may be from a different local source. Sometimes they are used in conjunction with burnt headers (blue bricks). Yellow bricks dating to buildings from the nineteenth century range in their colour depending on their source from creamy pale yellow to yellow-grey and light to dark buff. Darker bricks are also found, referred to as plum-coloured. Some lighter bricks have become darkened over the years by dirt; a few

buildings have had their brickwork cleaned. Chalky white gritty lime mortars were used in early brickwork and only start to be displaced by cement / sand in the twentieth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century tuck pointing coloured to match the brickwork was used on some buildings. Examples of the type of building materials found in the conservation area are provided in Appendix 7.

7.4 The buildings of the conservation area range from religious buildings to commercial, amenity, industrial and residential properties. They also range in size from a narrow terraced house with a small rear garden to a large supermarket standing in a large hard standing car park and from a medieval castle to a canal with several locks.

7.5 There are a number of large buildings and structures within the conservation area dating from the medieval period up to modern times:

- Berkhamsted Castle: c1155 – c1360. Significant earthworks (banks and ditches) with the substantial remains of medieval flint boundary walls, and some towers and outer walls of buildings
- The Parish Church of St. Peter, High Street: c1200. Exceptional in its scale and height, and also its extensive (and exclusive) use of stone and flint; substantially re-built in the nineteenth century
- The Old Hall at Berkhamsted Collegiate School, Castle Street: 1544. The earliest example of a red brick medieval building in the town
- The Grand Union Canal: 1798. Canal and lock system with lock-keepers cottages and its remaining pubs, two warehouses (now domestic), various bridges etc. Other fragmentary fabric on the banks of the River Bulbourne
- The railway line and associated buildings including the re-built station and rail bridges, Station Road / Lower Kings Road: 1834 (nothing left) & 1875
- Berkhamsted Baptist Chapel, High Street: 1864. Non-Conformist Church and Sunday School

- Chapel and New Hall at Berkhamsted Collegiate School, Castle Street: 1894 – 1911. Late Victorian and Edwardian red brick additions to school site
- The Victoria Church of England School, Prince Edward Street: 1897. A Victorian school, much extended
- All Saints Church, Shrublands Road: 1906. An Edwardian red brick church
- The Rex Cinema and adjoining flats, High Street: 1938. Brown brick and partly rendered group comprising a cinema and adjoining flats with shops on the ground floor
- Royal Mail Offices and Telephone Exchange, High Street / St. John's Well Lane: 1960s. Two modern brick commercial buildings
- Waitrose supermarket, Lower Kings Road: 1996. A modern brick commercial building with a large open area of car parking
- Chadwick Centre (Art Block), Castle Street / Mill Street. A recently completed brick and tile hung building with a mixture of gables, turrets and ventilation towers (in a Post-modernist style)

Area 1: High Street

7.6 In general terms, materials range from timber oak frame (sometimes elm), cut stone, or red / yellow brick. Few buildings have exposed timber framing and stone is only used as a building material for the Parish Church. With the growing scarcity of timber from the late seventeenth century onwards, bricks were increasingly used. The most common type is red or yellow brick, with occasional use of blue headers for decoration. Some have exposed unpainted brickwork, while others have since painted or rendered the brickwork. Brick in a contrasting colour (red / orange / yellow) is used above windows, around doorways, and for other types of architectural detailing. In common with the north Chilterns, flint is not abundantly used in Area 1. It does not appear within the town centre as a major building material, except for St. Peter's Church that was re-faced in knapped flint between 1866 and 1888. Flint has also been used in a boundary wall on Highfield Road along with a few other boundary walls in the town.

7.7 Roof lines of High street properties generally run parallel with the road, although

some gables do face onto the street and have features such as mock-timber framing or windows set within them. Roofs are mostly gabled at a common pitch, but there are some hipped roofs too (a few have a very low pitch); projecting eaves are common-place. Both plain red clay tile and slate are used (slate became more commonly used after c1800). Chimney stacks are common features of the High Street skyline and there are surviving small school bell towers to two former schools, Overton House (nos. 131 – 133) and the Bourne School (no. 222, now the Britannia Building Society). Dormers within attic spaces of older buildings are rarely seen along the High Street in Area 1. Roof lines found on the rows of houses along the side roads leading off from the High Street tend to be grouped together in two and threes due to the incline of the topography; they also take a more common form and pitch. Slate is more commonly used than tile, and chimney stacks are common features of the skyline. Dormers within attic spaces are rarely seen along the side streets, however they are becoming more common in new-builds.

7.8 Windows and doors are generally recessed back into reveals; some doorways have internal porches. The majority of window openings have projecting stone window sills. Timber is the predominant material used for window frames, most often painted white. While both sash and casement windows prevail, sash windows of all styles tend to remain most common (some replacement windows in uPVC have also used the sash-style). Timber remains the most widely used material for doors (painted in a non-white colour). Most are panelled, some are part glazed.

7.9 Other architectural details used include coricing (brick or timber), pilastered timber doorcases, columned porches (to grander buildings), decorative ridge pieces in red clay, fanlights above doors, stone lintels above windows / doors, decorative red clay tiles, and decorative timber bargeboards and fascias.

7.10 Buildings commonly stand along the roadside / pavement. About half of all residential properties have small front gardens standing behind low, red / yellow brick front walls; some have added decorative metal railings.

7.11 Shop windows. There are a mixture of shop windows types and materials used in Area 1; this often relates to the period in which they were built or converted from one use to another. Most lie along the High Street, Lower Kings Road and Castle Street; some are found on side roads that are often no longer in commercial use. Some use the traditional material (timber), while others have installed modern aluminium shopfronts with large single glazed windows. Traditional timber shopfront design should comprise a stallriser (base panel), side pilasters with a fascia (freeze) above, a transom and mullioned window with transom / clerestorey lights, and a part glazed door. Most fascias, lettering and shop signage is generally kept to a minimum and is in-keeping with the low-key traditional style. Some shops have added awnings to protect goods in the shopfront; most have more traditional styles (traditional types are made from cloth and are usually flat).

Medieval – c1650

7.12 Apart from the Parish Church of St. Peter, all early buildings in Area 1 of Berkhamsted Conservation Area are timber-framed; these date from the late thirteenth century to the seventeenth century. Post and truss frames are commonly found with stud work and in-fill panels (brick noggin or plaster); decorative stud work tends to be a later feature of the nineteenth century (mock-timber framing).

7.13 A few timber buildings with an aisled frame survive, but this is often hidden by later works. Within the town some medieval buildings were originally open hall houses with crosswings (later internal floors being inserted), while other smaller houses were jettied (oversail the ground floor). All these buildings tend to be limited to

High Street Central either on the High Street or Castle Street.

7.14 Examples of timber framed buildings dating between the late thirteenth and seventeenth centuries include 51 / 53 High Street, 125 High Street, Dean Incents House (129 High Street; it also has internal wall paintings), the former Swan Inn (139 High Street), 173 High Street and 207 – 209 High Street.



129 High Street, Dean Incents House (High Street Central)



The former Swan PH, 139 High Street (High Street Central)



Church of St. Peter, High Street (High Street Central)



51 & 53 High Street (High Street East)

1650 – 1750

7.15 Entirely new buildings began to be built within the town during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Some still used traditional building methods, the timber frame, while others began to use brick as a new building material, especially for Georgian townhouses of the wealthy. Brick went on to become a common building material from the late eighteenth century onwards. Chequered brickwork with blue brick headers in Flemish bond was used as a fashionable form of decoration of several early eighteenth century buildings that line the High Street. A symmetrical design with Georgian sash windows, panelled doors, doorcases (with columns / pilasters), cornicing and pediments all begin to feature on larger townhouses. The oldest public house and coaching inns belong to this period (1650 - 1750) and are found dotted along the length of the High Street.

7.16 Examples of seventeenth century timber framed buildings and new brick buildings of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century include 10 High Street (The Bull PH), 139 High Street (attached to the Swan Inn), 147 High Street (Kings Arms Hotel), 227 High Street (The Lamb PH) and 296 / 298 High Street (Café Rouge). Brick properties include 189 High Street (Barclays Bank), 216 – 216A High Street (part of M&Co.), 275 High Street (Boxwell House), and The Red House, High Street. 235 – 241 High Street (Sayer's almshouses) are also from this period. During this period, some of the existing timber framed houses were extended and / or re-faced in brick.



10 High Street, The Bull PH (High Street East)



189 High Street, Barclays Bank (High Street West)



The Red House, High Street (High Street Central)



227 High Street, The Lamb PH (High Street West)



275 High Street, Boxwell House (High Street Central)

1750 – 1800

7.17 Building activity continues during this period with much the same building materials and architectural detailing. New materials begin to be imported into the town, such as Welsh slates. Red brick is the predominant building fabric along with slate roofs, sash windows and pilastered doorcases; a style seen as emerging during the early eighteenth century. As with the early Georgian period, some of the existing timber framed houses were extended and / or re-faced in brick.



141 – 143 High Street (High Street Central)

7.18 Examples of buildings from this period appear to predominately lie within the central area of the High Street and include 119, 120 and 121 High Street. No. 121 has its attic storey within a brick parapet that hides the roof form behind. This is common to the period, but not much seen along the High Street. Older buildings re-fronted in brick include 130 – 132 High Street and 141 – 143 High Street.



120 High Street (High Street Central)



130 – 132 High Street (High Street Central)



121 High Street (High Street Central)

1800 – 1850

7.19 Building activity continues on during this period. Not only on the High Street (particularly the east end), but more so along the east side of Castle Street, new houses for all classes, public houses and religious buildings appear. Early nineteenth century buildings were built using the character and appearance of the Georgian period, whether large or small. While red brick remains the most common, yellow brick begins to be used in new buildings. The use of slate roofs and other Georgian detailing continues, but is now used on housing built for the less wealthy too along with religious buildings.



108 High Street, The Dower House (High Street Central)

7.20 Examples of late Georgian-style buildings dating to the early nineteenth century are 103 – 109 High Street, 108 High Street, 117 High Street, 205 High Street, 5 to 9 and 11 Castle Street, 12 & 12A Castle Street, 15 – 16 Castle Street and the Quaker Meeting House, High Street.



103 – 109 High Street (High Street Central)



Quaker Meeting House, High Street (High Street West)



5 - 8 Castle Street (High Street Central)

1850 – 1900

7.21 The second half of the nineteenth century saw a vast increase in house-building in Berkhamsted, mostly away from the High Street to the east especially after 1851 when Bridge Street, Manor Street, Chapel Street, Holliday Street were planned. These side streets began to develop rows of terraced housing for local



69 High Street (High Street East)



Mid nineteenth century housing on Bridge Street (High Street East)

workers on land formerly owned by the Pilkington Manor Estate, and included development along an older road, Ravens Lane. Commonly these were built of brick of the two-up two-down floor plan with a single sash window to each room and the main door to the front elevation. During the mid-late nineteenth century, other side streets were also built at the east end of the town with similar small terraced houses: Highfield Road and Victoria Road. In addition, a row of larger Victorian villa-style houses were also built at the west end of the High Street towards the end of the nineteenth century.



320 – 338 High Street (High Street West)

7.22 Civic, school and religious buildings began to be constructed with a strong sense of individual character, often with a Gothic revival or mock-Tudor architectural style that was typical of Victorian public buildings. Examples include Berkhamsted Baptist Church (1864), the Town Hall (1859), the Bourne School (222 High Street c1854), Victoria Church of England School (1897) and the Chapel at Berkhamsted School, Castle Street (1894 - 5). The use of Gothic Revival architecture is also seen on a private house / shop, 76 – 78 High Street (dated 1863), which shares similarities with the Town Hall.



96 – 104 High Street (High Street East)

7.23 Shops were also built during this period or shop windows inserted into older properties: 96 – 104 High Street are a row of late nineteenth century mock-Tudor shops with flats above and, almost opposite, stands 85, 87 & 89 High Street dating to 1865 that have a mixture of gothic and Tudor details (gothic-style doorways, Tudor-style decorative studwork and first floor oriel windows). Industrial buildings such as maltings were also built; the maltings on Chapel Street (now the Scout Hall) were constructed in yellow brick.



Town Hall, High Street (High Street Central)

1900 – present

7.24 Building during this period has the most wide spread character across the town centre. Examples include commercial, civic and residential properties, some of which have a combined function such as flats over shops. A mixture of building styles and designs have been used; this often relates to the decade or period of the twentieth century in which they were built (pre-war, inter-war, post-war).

7.25 Although brick continues to be used as the main building material since 1900 (red, yellow or buff), other modern materials have also been introduced such as cladding or aluminium shopfronts. Roofs have various forms, and some are hidden or flat. However, the gabled roof probably remains as the most common form. They are covered with clay or concrete tile, slate, pantiles or a selection of other modern materials.



134 High Street (High Street Central)



2 - 10 Lower Kings Road (with 208 High Street)



230 High Street (High Street West)

7.26 There are several large buildings dating to this period within the High Street in particular, some having a greater architectural significance than others. Earlier buildings often occupied the same plot as an older property, but may be three storeys in height rather than two storeys. Examples include 134 High Street and 230 High Street. Inter-war buildings were generally larger in scale, occupying more than one plot such as The Rex Cinema and adjoining flats (1938), The Hall Walk (1934) and 2 - 10 Lower Kings Road (with 208 High Street).



The Rex Cinema, High Street (High Street Central)

7.27 From the 1950s onwards the High Street underwent a series

of changes to its character, most notably being affected by larger block formations after wholesale demolition of earlier properties. Post-war buildings take many forms, but were often for commercial or civic use such as 187 High Street (Police Station), 160 – 194 High Street (Tesco's to Boots) including 184 High Street (Chiltern House), and Waitrose supermarket, Lower Kings Road.

7.28 The housing stock has been increased through the use of flat developments; early on these were built above shops on the High Street such as those next to The Rex Cinema (1938) and The Hall Walk (1934). This also continued in the 1950s such as 250 High Street. Other non-flat housing developments were mostly small-scale in-fill schemes until more recently when larger sites, such as the Robertson Road / McDougall Road development have been built with a mixture of flats, three-storey townhouses, and semi-detached and terraced two-storey houses.



The Hall Walk, London Road (High Street East)



250 High Street (High Street West)

Area 2: Grand Union Canal

7.29 In most parts of Area 2 and except for the castle itself the predominant building material is the grey / buff brick commonly used in the first three quarters of the nineteenth century when the area from the River Bulbourne and across the canal to the railway was being developed. Towards the century's end, as this development reached its conclusion, red brick and a variety of other materials became available and introduced a number of further options. Engineering brick with its darker, almost black hue and shiny surface made an appearance both on the canal and the railway as well as the plinth of the single surviving warehouse structure. Piers, copings and the footings of industrial structures used these harder, less porous engineering bricks with their high cement content.

7.30 Doors and windows in the houses are traditionally wooden and the double-hung sliding sash window pattern from Georgian times remain the norm in most properties as well as in the station buildings. Slate roofs are universal particularly as the houses in Area 2 all had shallow-pitched roofs. Although windows and doors as well as roof coverings in many parts of George Street and Ellesmere Road etc. have suffered modern replacement in substitute materials, these alterations have not diluted original character in the area's housing to the point where such character can no longer be recognised. Loss of character has been incurred to a greater degree, however, by poor design and the sub-standard use of details and materials in several post-War in-fills or other new developments and garages on sites near the canal.

7.31 Elsewhere, there are sufficient examples of the survival in good condition of original windows, doors and other essential features of the nineteenth century George Street type of small houses and other rather more ambitious houses in Station Road. These provide good models for replacement. Those who wish to improve their houses in an authentic style do not have far to go to find such models.

7.32 Although the limited availability of materials and styles in the whole of Area 2 for most of the nineteenth century might sound dreary, this is far from the impression today. The rising topography gives the rows of small houses much visual charm (as in New Street). The plentiful survival of chimneys and their red chimney pots (as at the far end of Ellesmere Road), the variety of rear extensions and garden structures (as at the back of Station Road), the painting and decorating of frontages and the ingenuity of many householders in all parts of Area 2 in the presentation of the front areas of their properties, despite the small scale of front gardens, make most of Area 2 visually pleasing and quite picturesque.



The castle motte

Medieval – c1650
Berkhamsted Castle

7.33 Berkhamsted Castle represents the earliest fabric in the conservation area and it is the principal example of medieval architecture apart from the Parish Church. The castle ruins are therefore different in structure, materials and architectural quality from everything else nearby. The large open area all around the site isolates the surviving earthwork features and fragmentary walls of the defensive structure from the surroundings beyond the castle's site. With its

historical and archaeological importance as a large example of the 600 motte and bailey sites known nationally, the castle is also un-typical in every respect from other parts of the conservation area. It is the sole example of a ruin in the whole conservation area.

7.34 Only the non-Scheduled fabric of the red brick and flint, tile-roofed Lodge within the castle grounds bears any resemblance to other domestic buildings elsewhere in the town. There is evidence in the 1841 census of a cottage in the Castle grounds. The present cottage has the date above the doorway, 1865 and was almost certainly erected by the Brownlows who had just purchased the manor of Berkhamsted, apart from the Castle and the living of St Mary's Northchurch, from the Duchy of Cornwall.



The castle lodge

7.35 From its abandonment as a feudal residence in the 1400s until May 1909, the date of its initial survey by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, the castle was privately maintained. The Castle belongs to the Duchy of Cornwall but is managed by English Heritage having passed into State Guardianship in 1929. During a period when the town was expanding and modernising, therefore, the castle remained

protected, was mainly exempt from change and it served as a dampener on the development of housing in this area on the outer edges of Berkhamsted.

7.36 The construction of the railway and road nearby to the south of the site altered the outer defences on this side and traces of the entrance to the castle were lost. The “modern” road shown in the 1909 survey, now called Brownlow Road, cut off from the main site the eastern portion of the outer earthwork defences. It is believed that these outer earthworks were later lost in the course of developing Brownlow Road.



The station (1875) showing its proximity to the castle perimeter

7.37 In its materials the castle is mainly earthworks but the surviving walling is flint with rubble stone and a mortar binding but various other fragments are built into it including some tile. The scheduling was revised in 1992 (National Monument Number 20626) and the castle is summarised in this scheduling as having historical records dating from the twelfth to fifteenth century. The surviving motte and bailey

and its defences are “in extremely good condition” with the site's “considerable potential for the preservation of archaeological and environmental evidence” also given emphasis.

7.38 The Boote, 1605, is the only building of its era between the middle ages and 1800 to exist in Area 2. It is Grade II listed and, although the modest-sized house is much altered and

modernised, it retains historical interest and makes a landmark contribution in Castle Street.



The Boote (former inn), dated 1605

1800 – 1850

7.39 With the exception of The Boote (see above), a listed but altered building reputed to date back to 1605, the fabric history of Area 2 resumed in the late – eighteenth century after a long lapse lasting several centuries from the castle's completion to the initial canal works in the final years of the 1700s. The opening of the canal's route to Brentford late in 1798 implies that its watercourse, locks and other essential infrastructure were all in place by this time. Bridges and waterside buildings are believed to have come slightly later and to fall mainly in the period between the early 1800s and the railway's advent nearby (began November 1833, and the line fully open September 1838). The two most significant features of Area 2 following the castle were thus both created and complete during the forty years between 1798 and 1838. The effects of the arrival of the canal and railway would last for a further period of about 100 years from 1838 to c1938 as development took place nearby due to the industry, commerce and housing generated as a consequence. In comparison with this nineteenth century work, the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries have added comparatively little on Area 2.

7.40 Horse traction played a vital part in the early years of the canal until steam and diesel engines came in later to power the barges. There is abundant evidence of the use of horses in the architectural features which survive. Ramps at bridges and locks, the tow path itself and the

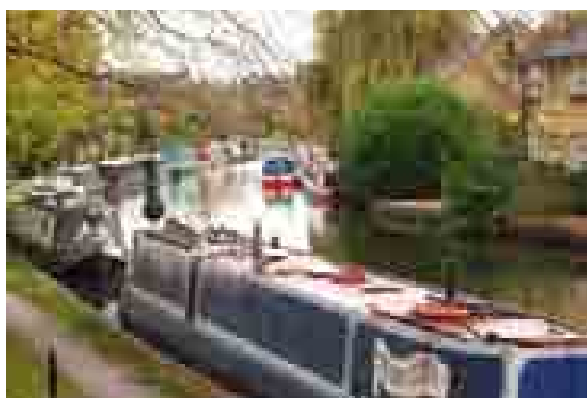


Castle Street bridge showing an original horse ramp and more recent pedestrian access

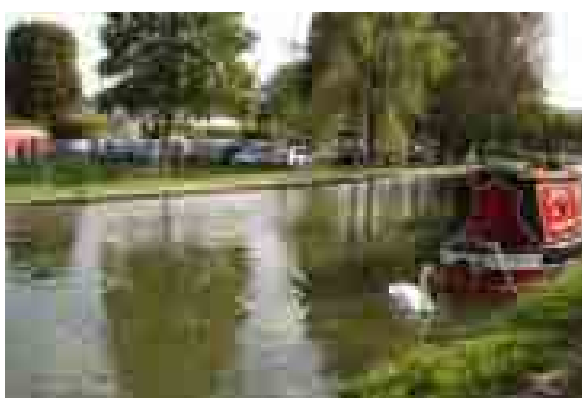


The bridge over the River Bulbourne (right) and Lower Kings Road canal bridge (left)

gentle curves built into the approaches to bridges all owe their shapes to the needs of draught horses. Pedestrians were accommodated with steps and these features also survive abundantly near the canal. The manual operation of locks also remains traditional and the paraphernalia of operating barges still adds greatly to the visual quality of the scenery at the water's edge.



Canal East from Castle Street bridge demonstrating an attractive gathering of narrow boats



Canal West from the tow path. The view of the car park detracts from the wide open scenery typical of this stretch

The Canal

7.41 The main architectural features of the canal are its bridges, its locks and the (former) keepers' cottages on the banks. Attracted by the canal and its users, inns eventually appeared nearby and the most characteristic of these in the conservation area is now the Rising Sun.

7.42 Of the bridges, the most complete survivor in the central area is the Castle Street example, which is believed to have been added in 1819 about 20 years after the canal was dug. Although not listed, it is a fine example and represents locally numerous features typical of the heyday of canal architecture as found elsewhere throughout the United Kingdom. The arch is constructed in grey-buff brick with the parapet possibly rebuilt later and higher and in a slightly darker colour of bricks from the spandrels.

7.43 The up-stream side of the same bridge has seen a modern, metal bridge added for pedestrians and minor modernisation of other features. Despite these alterations it retains two striking ramps that connect each of the towpaths with the carriageway above. Their parapets have a curved coping of brick, which consists of dark "engineering" brick.

7.44 On its downstream side, Castle Street bridge has a more old-fashioned appearance and bears a modern plaque as a reminder of the Grand Junction Canal's origins. The ramps for horses have been lost due to re-landscaping of both banks on this side and the new scheme on the south side is also the location for a well-known local landmark: the Totem Pole.

7.45 Nearby stands another of the canal side listed structures. This is the former Castle Inn, more recently converted to a private residence. The four-square buff-grey brick building with a low-pitched slate roof and a wrought iron balcony overlooking the canal is in a restrained "Regency" classical style typical of its construction date



Former Castle Inn (c1830)

about 1820 - 30. Farther downstream is the unlisted Rising Sun public house, also in the buff-grey brick but demonstrating a later, mid-Victorian taste with a bay window frontage overlooking the nearby tow path.

7.46 The Crystal Palace is a rendered, mid-nineteenth century public house standing directly over the tow path a little downstream from the Castle Street bridge. It has undergone a number of alterations in its history. The Boat public house is a modern re-construction in red brick standing next to the oldest known bridge site at Ravens Lane / Gravel Path. The bridge, like the nearby public house, is mainly modern in date although the two buildings retain scenic value and make a positive contribution to the overall appearance of Area 2.



The Crystal Palace (mid nineteenth century)

George Street

7.47 This long street does not appear on the map of the Grand Junction Canal dated 1811 although the street's east-west line corresponds to a field boundary shown on the map. The name, presumably, is from George III, who died in 1820 and was commemorated widely from statuary down to pub-signs. The development of this area of housing appears in fact to have begun, as judged from the late-Georgian style of its oldest houses, from about 1820. William IV's name (reigned 1830 - 37) could explain the date of this small street farther into the development and to the east as the houses later spread in this direction. Houses of even later date, some of which conveniently bear date stones, came well into Victoria's reign (1837 - 1902) and reflect the architectural styles and typical materials of their era.

7.48 This whole small suburb, bounded by the canal on one side and by the railway on the other, is dominated by George Street and represents nearly every aspect of working-class and lower middle-class housing from about 1820 to about 1914. This road is probably named after William Paxton who was Earl Brownlow's Land Agent and related to Joseph Paxton, the mid-nineteenth century gardener and greenhouse designer whose greatest creation, the Crystal Palace, gave its name to the public house at the West end of the sub-district.



Early row of cottages on George Street, since modernised

7.49 Without ever quite being a south of England version of "Coronation Street", this small and compact group of densely-built streets demonstrates numerous typical features of housing that can trace its beginnings back to an industrial era that was founded on horse traction, developed with steam power and finally moved into using early forms of the internal combustion engine. The workshops, factories, mills and warehouses have now all closed and almost entirely disappeared to leave only the railway as an active survivor from the industrial past. A good deal of gentrification has taken place since in the housing stock but the essential, original character remains intact.

7.50 Above all, the canal has been transformed since about 1970 from its former negative, industrial impact into a positive and leisure use that gives to the George Street houses generally (and to the rear of Station Road in particular) a sympathetic, picturesque environmental setting largely consisting of the green banks of the canal and River Bulbourne.

7.51 Development beginning from Gravel Path and later spreading in an easterly direction gave rise initially to the groups of houses at this Western end of George Street and Ellesmere Road. The first group in George Street are of good quality and have long front gardens. The corresponding houses at the West end of

Ellesmere Road are smaller, are built directly on to the footpath and lack the overall quality of their neighbours in most of George Street. Facing also north towards the railway, their aspect is less inviting.

7.52 Despite these differences, most of the properties in George Street and the other nearby streets that make up this part of Area 2 share a common set of architectural features. An entry hallway-cum-staircase leads off the front door and one ground floor room flanks this. A further rear parlour lies immediately

behind with a kitchen / scullery extension at the back in most cases. The upper floor that contained the bedrooms (but no bathroom originally) replicates the same plan as the ground floor. A central chimney stack rises on the party wall between houses and emerges through the shallow-pitch slate roof at the ridge.

7.53 In a few cases dormer window roof extensions have been added and the rear extension wing has frequently been added to by building out farther into the back garden. Bathroom conversions on the upper floor are virtually all at the rear and they have not had the adverse effect of introducing vents or pipes to front elevations.

7.54 Virtually all of these small houses still remain in single-family occupation and they have not been sub-divided into flats.

7.55 External changes have adversely affected doors and windows by replacing wood with uPVC. Roofs have often seen factory tiles replace slate but most chimney stacks are still in place although (in a small number of isolated examples) exterior false-stone cladding has replaced brick masonry. The painting white of brick frontages is relatively widespread but still remains a minority taste among local householders. In general, the George Street area and its nearby streets remains full of original architectural features and the building materials can still clearly be recognised from their construction period in the first half of the nineteenth century.



Houses on Gravel Path showing two of the many carriage arches

1850 – 1900

7.56 The further and later development of the George Street housing area took place mainly beyond the elbow-bend in George Street and the former coal yard opposite (now the walled Playground) with Cambridge Terrace and New Street marking the same limits up towards Ellesmere Road. Eastwards from these points most of the houses have the typical characteristics of the second half of the nineteenth century. This was a slightly more spacious era with higher expectations of domestic comfort giving rise to a call for light-filled sitting rooms, indoor WC facilities and more spacious kitchens. Victorian taste also expected a greater degree of external ornament on house fronts.



Well-presented late nineteenth century houses in Ellesmere Road

7.57 The two-up, two-down plans of these newer houses remain largely traditional and they are mostly grouped in terraces as the older ones were. A few individual houses are semi-detached. Free-standing properties or double-fronted layouts remain strictly in the minority throughout Area 2.

7.58 Bay windows appear more often as the nineteenth century progressed whether they overlook the street directly or are placed in small front gardens. The small scale of these front gardens carries with it the impossibility of conversion to hard standing for cars and Area 2 is mercifully without this common blight to the urban scene.



Turn of the century individual house in Station Road with high-quality detailing

1900 – present

7.59 Small or medium-sized infill developments have taken place in various residential parts of Area 2, mostly the insertion of post-war houses into small plots. The nature of these plots allowed for little architectural originality and the results have generally been disappointing visually. In particular, red brick has been used and little regard has been shown for the coherence of the existing stock of the George Street area's older buildings. A few individual houses of better quality have appeared on sites overlooking the canal,

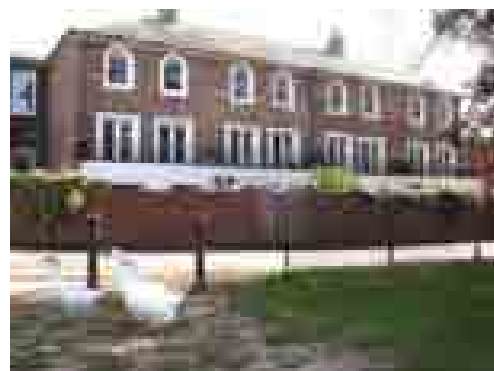


38 – 44 Mill Street

sometimes with better results due to more careful design and the use of appropriate materials. 38 - 44 Mill Street stands out as an example of recent modern development taking its inspiration from the Regency style and doing so with a high regard for architectural details.

7.60 Chadwick Centre at Berkhamsted School occupies a large site within Area 2 and stretches north from the far side of the River Bulbourne. The building's face is set back behind an open, landscaped area and the river's bridges so that it achieves a freestanding site. On the east side it directly overlooks Castle Street. This building forms the most imposing and important development to have taken place in Area 2 in recent decades. The design adopts a Post-Modern architectural language using neo-Tudor elements such as gables and large conical towers covered with tiles; there are also several additional small 'water towers' upon rooflines. This structure is built in traditional brick and is clad at first floor level using a modern tile hung form; this is also applied to the jettied gable ends. The reddish-orange-brown palette of brick and tile relates more to the school's older buildings rather than to the buff-grey brick of most of Area 2.

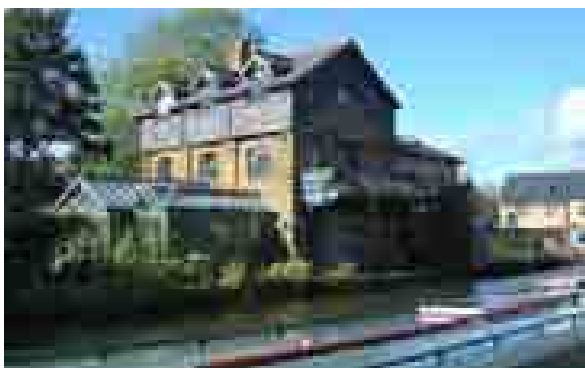
7.61 Larger developments of blocks of flats have either made use of existing industrial fabric, for example Castle Mill (the conversion next to the Lower King's Street canal bridge) or have replaced this fabric on brownfield sites with new structures. The bold gabled frontages that face on to the water of the canal (such as Alsford Wharf by Castle Street bridge opposite The Crystal Palace, and Ravens Wharf by Ravens Lane bridge opposite The Boat) are generally regarded as the most noteworthy and use appropriate brickwork despite the lack of some architectural details.



Chadwick Centre, Castle Street

Canal developments

7.62 Despite its overall appearance of remaining unchanged, the canal has altered considerably since the 1950s when its industrial origins gradually gave way to the present leisure uses. Except for The Warehouse on Castle Wharf, nearly all of the former warehouses, factories, depots and workshops have disappeared and have given way now to increased numbers of houses and flats overlooking the water. The infrastructure continues to require renewal and upkeep although the traditional appearance of locks is unaffected. Bridges across the canal are, for the most part, unaltered and this is despite the fact that none of them has statutory protection, although all the principal ones have been added to the Berkhamsted Local List. New footbridges have appeared in the 1930s at Little Bridge Street and, towards the end of the twentieth century, at Canal West (linking St. John's Well Lane car park with the car park over the water). The provision of pedestrian access down to the towpath, which is much used as a route through the town, may be seen at several points but a number of the former horse ramps and some of the older steps have been preserved.



The Warehouse, Castle Wharf. A nineteenth century industrial canal building converted to residential use (further new development to the west side)



Canal side development (left, Alsford Wharf) next to Castle Street bridge, opposite The Crystal Palace side)

Area 3: Charles Street

7.63 This area comprises Victorian and Edwardian development and the predominant architecture is of this period. Characteristically, the form of development is streets of terraced or attached pairs of houses. There are fewer detached houses (Doctor's Commons Road, Shrublands Road etc).



Gables and chimneys feature on Kings Road

7.64 The style of the Victorian and Edwardian development ranges from small, utilitarian cottages through medium and larger terraced houses with increasing amounts of detailing / decoration in the form of contrasting brick bands and arches. The established palette of materials also included slate tiles, and red, gault, Luton grey or yellow London stock bricks (according to the particular terrace concerned). With the larger terraced houses or villas more stonework decoration may be found and use of stained / coloured glass was greater.

7.65 In the later of these houses, the Arts and Crafts style had an impact in terms of detailing and materials with for instance more roughcast

render, plain tiles and leaded light casement windows.



Stone door and window arches

7.66 Roof lines generally run parallel with the street, although gables do face onto the street and have features such as mock-timber framing or windows set within them. Roofs are at a



Entrance detail: Charles Street



Recessed balconies

common pitch. Slate roofing predominates but plain red clay tiles are used on the Arts and Crafts style buildings. Chimney stacks are an important feature of the skyline. Dormers to attic spaces are not uncommon though entirely absent from some terrace types.

7.67 Window openings generally tend to have projecting stone window sills. Timber is the predominant material used for window frames and vertical sliding sash windows prevail (though side-hung or multiple casements on the Arts and Crafts style houses). Windows and doors are generally recessed in reveals and some doorways are set back within internal porches. Timber remains the most widely used material for doors which are likely to be panelled with upper parts glazed and a frame incorporating a plain toplight panel.

7.68 Other architectural details include decorative clay ridge tiles, stone lintels above windows / doors, vertical hanging tiles, and decorative timber brackets, bargeboards and fascias.

1850 – 1900

7.69 This is the earliest period of built development located within Area 3. The earliest plots to be laid out in c1870 were on the block comprising Kitsbury Road / Middle Road / Cross Oak Road and the connecting section of Charles Street. The earliest buildings were short terraces of small, unembellished cottages in brick with slated covered roofs and chimneys in shared stacks, and a continuous ridge running parallel to the street. Also, a few pairs of late-Victorian villas of a medium size were also constructed along Charles Street. Windows were commonly of the vertical hung, sliding sash type.



Terraced cottages

There are examples of large houses on this part of Doctor's Commons Road and Kings Road with Domestic Revival influenced decoration and materials.

7.70 From the 1880s new streets and houses appeared at Cowper Road, Torrington Road, Montague Road and the linking part of Charles Street. From this point, the houses erected became somewhat bigger and the level of decoration or architectural detail increased. This is illustrated in the four photographs on this page with the simplest and earliest cottages at top right and the larger and most elaborate at the bottom right.

7.72 This period saw the intensive development of Area 3 and represents the bulk of today's streets. The Domestic Revival had heavily influenced architectural detailing and materials.

7.71 After the first part of the Kingshill estate was sold in 1888, development subsequently spread further up the valley side, stretching from Kings Road to Cross Oak Road and in 1897 land was sold that became Doctor's Commons Road.



Gables and stone window lintels



Bay windows and brick bands



Brick & terracotta decoration

1900 – 1920

7.73 The beginning of the twentieth century, saw the continuation of development of the pattern from the Victorian carried into the Edwardian period. The northern end of North Road was developed with terraces and in 1902 Shrublands Avenue was started. However, Arts & Crafts style houses are a very significant component of the make-up of the area.

7.74 Immediately following the First World War during the inter-war period, there was only limited building within Area 3. This included a small number of larger houses that were being built along Shrublands Road and also Anglefield Road.



Kings Road



North Road



Arts & Crafts influence, Doctor's Commons Road

1920 - present

7.75 There are only one or two short stretches of inter-war houses and a limited amount of development in the 1950 / 60s is present mostly on small infill plots. Sub-division of plots or redevelopment from the 1960s / 70s entailed uncompromising buildings. In the 1980 / 90s, these were larger scale redevelopments of varying appearance and materials and may have involved demolition of earlier buildings and loss of plot boundaries. The most recent and successful developments have incorporated facades more closely based on those of Victorian and Edwardian houses. Examples of all these are referred to in the Character Area description of Area 3.



Unusual inter-war design, Park View Road

Boundaries

Area 1: High Street

7.76 In Area 1, the boundaries of each plot are characterised by where the building line meets the pavement or roadside. Commercial buildings commonly open directly onto the High Street. Residential housing on the High Street and those lying along the side roads often have small front garden areas bounded from the pavement by a low brick wall. These are commonly eighteenth and nineteenth century houses, although some recent developments have also provided low front walls. A few properties have additional metal railings that stand upon their front boundary wall; these usually belong to larger detached properties or town houses. Some houses in Area 1 have brick walls that surround their back gardens; these are often of some height and may include walls of brick outbuildings within them.

Area 2: Grand Union Canal

7.77 In Area 2, the boundaries of building plots and sites range in their extent and materials. Within the castle site, its flint curtain walls are bounded by a series of defensive ditches, while the whole site is contained by modern roads extending at all four points of the compass. The railway is bounded by the walls that contain the tracks, small areas of open space at the east end, and by the yards in front of the present station buildings. The canal is bounded by the tow path and walls / hedges adjoining it, along with the walls surrounding its bridges, and by the iron railings opposite the station. Some boundaries of the canal are shared with the rear boundaries of private houses.

7.78 A significant number of houses have frontages situated directly along the pavement. A lesser number have small front gardens with a variety of brick walls, picket fences, hedges, and a few with railings. More recently constructed flat developments have communal gardens to the fore.

7.79 The amenity spaces (The Moor, Bowling Green and car parks) are each bounded by a variety of trees, while George Street playground is bounded by a low brick wall surviving from the time it was a coal yard. In all of the views outwards from the canal there is no large-scale intrusion caused by the sight of parked cars nearby with the exception of the Council's own car park on the meadows south of the railway and near to this playground. It is desirable that cars should continue to be excluded from the vicinity of the canal and that its banks should remain predominantly green in character.

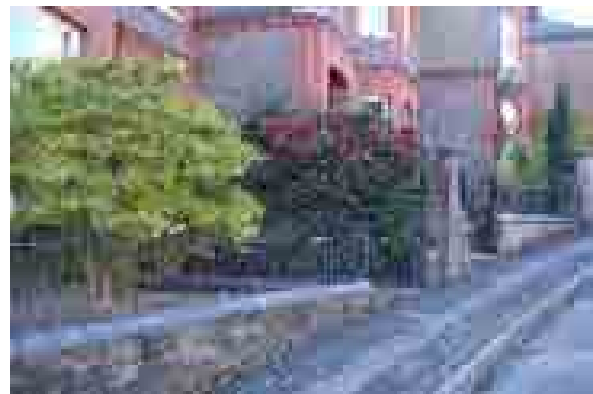
7.80 The loss of domestic boundaries is normally due elsewhere to the common practice of placing cars in front of houses by converting the former front garden into a hard-standing. It has fortunately not become usual in Area 2 (due mainly to such spaces not being available) and only the pair of red-brick houses next to the Station in King's Road has cars parked in front. Off-road parking is a rarity in these parts of the town except for a small number of sites in Ellesmere Road between houses and at three garage sites located at the end of George Street, and near the canal banks close to William Street and Bedford Street.

Area 3: Charles Street

7.81 In Area 3, the street front boundaries of the houses here often have small front garden areas bounded from the pavement by low brick walls stepping up / down the hill. The particular make-up and details vary from street to street and even within a single street. These are commonly nineteenth or early twentieth century houses, although some recent developments have also provided low front walls. Some houses retain or have installed, metal railings on their front boundary wall. Some houses in Area 3 have taller brick walls (e.g. Kings Road and Doctor's Common Road) and these are significant features in the street. Front boundary hedges also feature on streets such as Park View Road.



Low boundary walls and piers



Low walls and railings

8 Negative Features and Issues

8.1 The high quality of the surviving historic built environment of Berkhamsted Conservation Area is a tribute to the efforts of the local community and the Local Authority Planning Department. Its beauty, overall attractiveness and continued economic prosperity is a huge asset to the Borough, its residents and visitors. However, there are several individual sites within the extensive boundary of Berkhamsted Conservation Area that require some attention, as well as other general points that would improve the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole.

8.2 While there have been a number of recent housing developments built within the town, particularly in Area 1 (some replacing older properties and less attractive buildings / sites), there remain a number of problems facing existing structures such as street clutter & poor maintenance, a steady erosion of architectural features, inappropriate shopfronts, poorly maintained buildings.

8.3 The spaces (and views they afford) between buildings and the setting of individual buildings within their plots make an important contribution to the character of the Berkhamsted urban landscape, its densely terraced and sub-urban residential streets, and its local waterways. The insertion of large new developments across earlier plot boundaries or which are inward looking, or gated developments where previously ways through existed, threatens to impede pedestrian permeability through the town centre.

8.4 Views across the valley from Areas 2 and 3 are as important as those along the High Street and Grand Union Canal. Large-scale developments, extensions, or over development of rear plots could potentially harm these views and the character of the conservation area.

8.5 In addition, the relationship between public space and private space, and the qualities they offer to the local character are in danger of being eroded, such as the loss of High Street front or rear gardens (including boundary walls)

to hard standing parking or outdoor seating areas (Area 1).

8.6 Existing traditional street patterns and plot layouts have also been altered by some new large residential developments (flats and houses), especially in residential areas of both densely terraced and sub-urban character.

Neutral and Negative Buildings

8.7 There are a number of sites and buildings that have been assessed as having either a neutral or negative impact upon the character and appearance of Berkhamsted Conservation Area. This neutral and negative list has been divided into each of the three main 'Identity Areas': Area 1 (High Street: East, Central, West, Collegiate), Area 2 (Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle, George Street housing district) and Area 3 (Charles Street, Doctor's Commons Road). Neutral and negative sites / buildings are shown on Map 19.

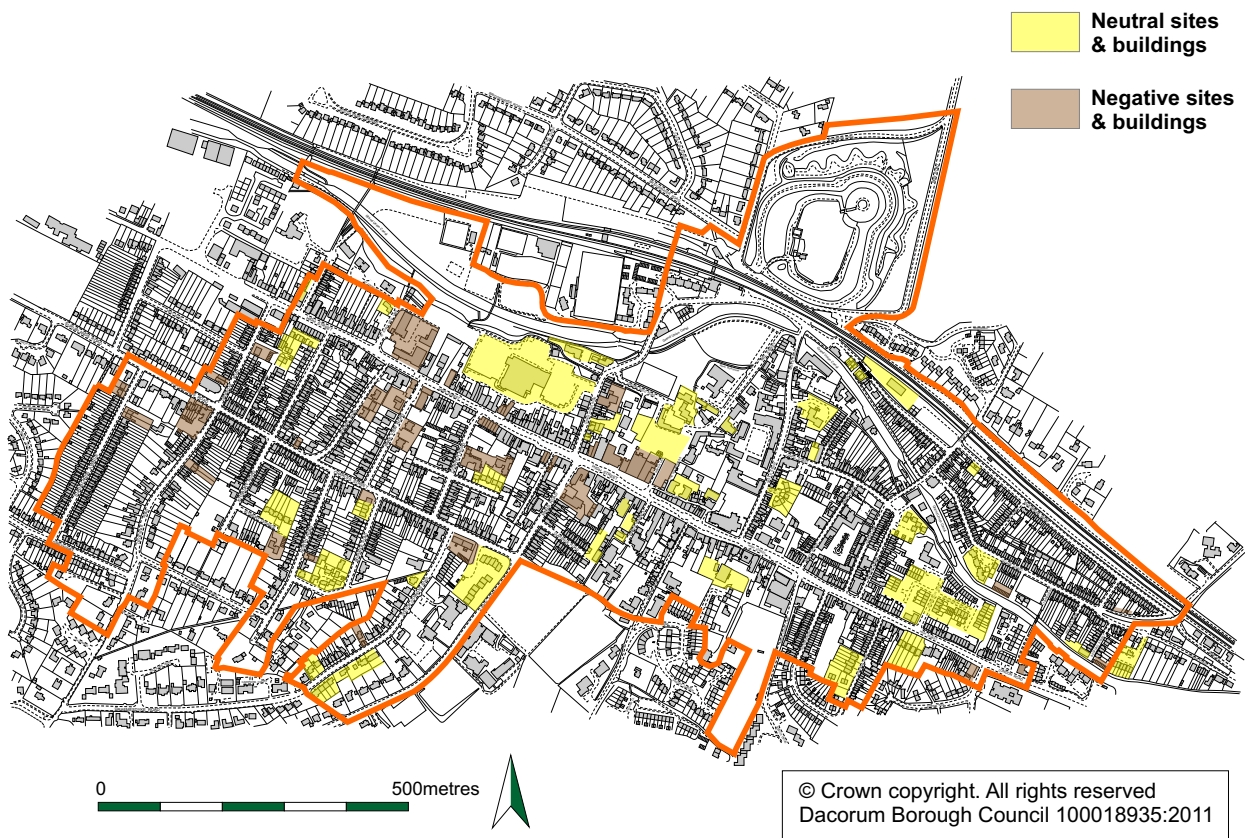
Area 1: Neutral buildings / sites

8.8 These include where buildings have less attractive architectural qualities or are not related to the predominant street character, layout (street pattern) or surrounding buildings. In many cases these sites could be enhanced via sympathetic alteration or improved management of their appearance.

High Street (East, Central, West)

8.9 Buildings or sites that lie at the east and west ends of the High Street form the gateway into Berkhamsted Conservation Area. These are important indicators of the local character and should be given a high priority. Some have been neglected or unsympathetically altered and could be improved (for the east end of the High Street see negative sites). The buildings at the very west end of the High Street on the corner of the High Street and Park Street (352 High Street) fall into the neutral category and are of particular note. This site could be improved, especially with regard to the buildings to the rear (workshop and offices) that have potential for enhancement. The character of the house fronting the High Street has been somewhat

Map 19: Negative / Neutral sites in Berkhamsted Conservation Area



eroded through the use of signage, different window styles and its bright colour scheme; it could also be improved if bought back to residential use.

8.10 Some new residential developments are also considered to be neutral sites, particularly those that are not related to the predominant street pattern, such as the McDougall Road area (away from the High Street) including Augustus Smith House and Thomas Bourne House on the corner into the site.

8.11 35 – 43 High Street is a small row of 1930s houses and bungalows somewhat hidden behind mature planting. While not unattractive, they have a neutral impact upon the street scene due to their layout and the design, which is not in-keeping with the general character of the east end of the High Street. In addition, some are losing their front gardens and boundary walls for hard standing car parking, which makes them more visible.

8.12 Land behind the street front properties of the High Street is often not directly visible from



352 High Street and workshop / office to the rear (corner of Park Street)



35 – 43 High Street

the roadside. However these are important plots and a few are considered to be neutral sites. The steeply rising land behind 125 High Street is an open car park that is bounded by neighbouring rear plots and by a timber fence to the south side with a gateway backing onto St. Johns on Chesham Road. The car park is accessed by a carriageway leading through the east end of the sixteenth century timber framed open hall house and extends behind the rear plots of nos. 121 (a statutory listed building) and 123. Redwood House stands behind 119 High Street and is accessed from Rectory Lane with its own car park. Although it is not seen from the High Street and has a fairly low-key impact on Rectory Lane, the building has a larger impact from within the car park behind 125 High Street. Coupled with its car park, it is considered to be a neutral site.



Thomas Bourne House on the corner of the High Street and Robertson Road

8.13 On land behind the Civic Centre (161 High Street) is a large car park with rows of old garages that fall into the neutral category whose amenity value could be improved / upgraded. In addition there are also several other former outbuildings that have intrinsic interest and group value, such as the old fire station, which is currently occupied by the Dacorum Heritage Trust as their Museum Store and is on the proposed local list (see Appendix 2). If the opportunity for enhancement arises this group should be retained and re-inforced. Some of rear extensions to the Civic Centre are also unattractive and are therefore included in the neutral category, particularly as they can be seen from Prince Edward Street (see Prince Edward Street).



Land and garages to the rear of 307 – 323 High Street (off Kitsbury Road)

8.14 The land and garages to the rear of 307 – 323 High Street close to the junction with Kitsbury Road (behind a row of nine purpose-built shops erected in the 1950s in the Tudor-style) could also be improved with new surfacing and garaging.

Highfield Road

8.15 There are several issues surrounding the character and appearance of Highfield Road with neutral sites forming one part. The street pattern / layout and the design of some of the housing of Highfield Road is not in-keeping with the nineteenth century character, and while they may not be deemed as being unattractive in their own right, they have a neutral impact upon the street scene. These are two semi-detached properties, nos. 46 & 48 and nos. 50 & 52 that do not line the street front and an adjoining row of later semi-



46 – 52 Highfield Road

detached houses with integral garages, nos. 26 – 36. The brick and flint wall along the side of no. 52 is a significant feature and is not included as part of the neutral site.

8.16 Behind 46 – 52 Highfield Road is a hard standing car park, which is an important community amenity but could be improved from the street front.



26 – 36 Highfield Road

Chapel Street and Holliday Street

8.17 The working garage at 3 Chapel Street has been included as a neutral site due to the nature of its character and use within what is predominantly a residential area. The adjoining Scout Hut is of local significance and is not included with no. 3.



Garage, 3 Chapel Street (not including the neighbouring Scout Hut)

8.18 The modern flats on Holliday Street, Waterside, do not have a particularly attractive design and are not in-keeping with Ravens Wharf



Waterside (flats), Holliday Street

and to some extent, Glassmill House, both of which are modern, residential water front, developments with greater character.

8.19 Next to Waterside is a hard standing car park with en-block garages and recycling bins, which although is an important community amenity, could be enhanced.

Castle Street

8.20 Castle Street is one of the main streets leading away from the High Street at the historic core of the conservation area. Buildings that are neutral include the Fire and Ambulance Station and Chesham House (next to the church). Neither detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area as they are set back from the street front, however both are sites for potential enhancement.



Fire and Ambulance Station, Castle Street



Chesham House, Castle Street



1 & 2, and 3 Manor Close (Castle Street)



4 & 5 Manor Close (Castle Street)

8.21 Manor Close leads between buildings along Castle Street to a small group of five 1950s semi-detached houses. Although secluded and set back from the street front, they are out of character with the layout and character of the street and nos. 4 & 5 have been significantly altered / extended.

Prince Edward Street

8.22 The area along the west side of Prince Edward Street beyond no. 3 up to the Victoria Church of England School is considered to have a neutral influence on the character of the conservation area. This includes the hard surface parking at the rear of no. 3 up to Gable House, and Gable Hall. Exempt from this is Gable House, which has attractive architectural qualities.



The rear yard and car park behind 3 Prince Edward Street, and visible rear extensions to the Civic Centre



Gable Hall, Prince Edward Street (the red brick Gable House stands next door)

Church Lane, The Wilderness and Water Lane Car Park

8.23 Church Lane forms a narrow, brick laid, back street of the former market place, and although it cannot be seen directly from the High Street, its character and appearance is unique in Berkhamsted. However, the modern offices,



Church Gates (1, 2, 3 & 4) Church Lane

Church Gates (nos. 1 - 4), have a neutral design and do not seem to respect the character of Church Lane and The Wilderness.

8.24 While it is recognised that Water Lane Car Park and the Public Toilets are a vital amenity and to the sustained economy of the High Street and that they are hidden from the High Street by modern commercial buildings, the whole area is not particularly attractive and so could be improved. Although Amersham House and Berkeley Court flats behind are located away from the High Street and have little in-common with the character of the conservation area, both are considered to be less attractive and therefore neutral buildings.



Water Lane Public Car Park and Toilets



Amersham House, Water Lane Car Park



Berkeley Court, Water Lane Car Park (by Mill Street)

Lower Kings Road

8.25 The late 1980s office development, Claridge Court, has a long frontage facing Lower Kings Road. Its design neither enhances nor detracts from the character of the conservation area. 3, 5 and 7 Lower Kings Road are older workshop buildings that should be retained, but whose appearance could be enhanced or improved.

8.26 The car park and development of Waitrose supermarket on Lower Kings Road, has been added to the neutral list based upon its overall size and massing that is out of character with other shops located within the town's conservation area. Its build character (and therefore impact) can only be seen from within the site as it is mostly shielded from the river / canal by trees and from the High Street by tall buildings and the topography of the land. While the two-storey office part of the development has the appearance of an industrial building, the main shop has a design typical of the Waitrose supermarket chain. There is little direct impact upon Lower Kings Road itself as it stands back from the roadside in the centre of the large site, and attempts have been made to soften the hard landscaping by tree planting in the car park (yet to mature as it is a new development). However the wide entrance on

Lower Kings Road does have an impact on the street scene, especially from the northern approach (from the canal). This type of large-scale build should be discouraged within the town centre; the commercial retail character of the town is that of small-scale, adjoining buildings standing along the roadside.

St. John's Well Lane, Park Street and Park View Road

8.27 St. John's Well Lane acts as a route to a St. John's Well Lane car park and into Waitrose supermarket (Lower Kings Road).

8.28 While its character is softened by the tree cover and the sloping landscape leading to the picturesque canal (Area 2), the character of most of its buildings are considered to be either neutral and negative. Part of the residential development, St. John's Well Court, lies within the conservation area (nos. 25 – 30). Its design is not in-keeping with the overall character of the High Street, Park Street or other more attractive river side developments. The whole site could be enhanced, and so therefore nos. 25 – 30 are considered to be a neutral site within the conservation area.



St. John's Well Lane, view towards the canal (St. John's Well Court stands to the left side)

8.29 The light industrial buildings (workshop and offices) on Park Street lie behind 352 High Street are also considered to be neutral, as described above, along with the modern three-storey flats with integral ground floor garages (nos. 14, 15 & 16 Park Street). Of their time in design, they do not share the common characteristics of other properties on Park Street. However, only no. 14 is considered to be a neutral site, as it is the only property that lies within the conservation area boundary.



Workshop and offices on Park Street (behind 352 High Street)

High Street (Berkhamsted School)

8.30 Mill Street mostly lies under the authority of Berkhamsted School. While many of the older style buildings and more recent premises are attractive, there are a few post-war school buildings that are less attractive where the sites could be improved. The two buildings lie at the south end of Mill Street, one on either side of the road, by Adelbert House (Fry & Adders) and next to the school gym (The Thorn Building).



School building by Adelbert House (Fry & Adders), Mill Street



School building next to the gym (the Thorn Building), Mill Street

Area 2: Neutral buildings / sites

Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.31 Either directly next to the canal's banks and tow path or standing within sight of the canal but removed back from it by some distance are residential developments from the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s that lack a sufficient degree of character to make any more than a neutral impact. Their built form, architectural style, attention to detail and materials all lack attributes that make them worthy of the attractive setting provided by the Grand Union. The area of George Street houses also has distinctive character and other developments of recent decades fail to match this character and therefore make only a neutral impact. Examples include Union Court flats between William Street / Bedford Street; 70A Bedford Street; council houses at 44 – 68 Bedford Street. In addition, the builder's merchants on Station Road is also considered to be a neutral site as it is hidden from view and lies next to the railway line.

8.32 In-fill developments in limited parts of Ellesmere Road and in Station Road, mainly of recent date and always to provide houses or flats, fail to match the standards of design and finish that can enhance the conservation area. The repetition of developments like these in future should be avoided. Examples include 3 – 7 Ellesmere Road; Ashleigh, 2A & 2B, 2C & 2D on Station Road.

8.33 Additional sites with poor design or that do not fit into the character of the streetscape are Kings Court off Lower Kings Road between the river and canal; 44 and 46 – 50 Lower Kings Road.

8.34 The development of Canal Court (a group of houses off George Street and near to the banks of the canal) has resulted in an area lacking strong character and making only a neutral contribution. The layout provides an example of the lack of address towards the canal side and the development is inward looking and thus fails to exploit the potential of its setting. Canal Court lies on the edge of the existing conservation area boundary; however the proposed boundary extension would include this site.

Area 3: Neutral buildings / sites

Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.35 The streets within Area 3 are generally homogeneous in terms of the predominance of late nineteenth / early twentieth century houses. Later buildings, if not carefully designed for the context, tend to stand-out obviously. However, the buildings in the "neutral" category are not considered to stand-out so much that they detract from the conservation area. Nevertheless, they do not reinforce the character or appearance of the area and would not be appropriate precedents for further development.

Kings Road / Charles Street

8.36 Lincoln Court Flats are screened from Kings Road and so do not have a presence there. On Charles Street, though their materials and detail do not match surrounding buildings, they are behind the old street boundary wall and there is some variation in the facade and roof line.



Lincoln Court Flats from Charles Street

Doctor's Commons Road

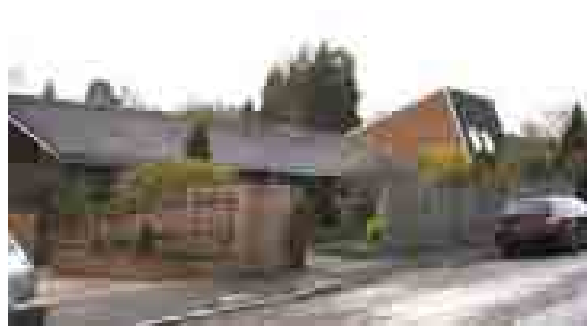
8.37 Rose Corner is a bungalow very much out of scale with neighbouring buildings but has sufficient space around it to ameliorate any incongruity.

8.38 The southern end of Doctor's Commons Road (especially the eastern side) has a mixture of later twentieth century houses which as they stand together, rather than on odd plots between the older buildings, are not so stark in contrast with the latter. They are illustrated below (The

Pennant, Holly House, Darul Aman, Langdale, Grymesdyke, Claremont and Mooring). In addition, the impact of those on the eastern side of the road is reduced by their modest scale and the slope of the land (Rosebank & Claverhouse).



Rose Corner (to right), Doctor's Commons Road



The Pennant & Holly House, Doctor's Commons Road



Langdale to Mooring at the south end of Doctor's Commons Road



Rosebank & Claverhouse, Doctor's Commons Road



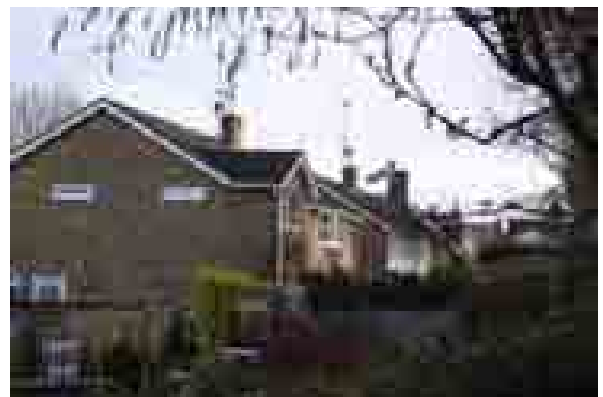
Darul Aman, Doctor's Commons Road

Torrington Road and Kitsbury Terrace

8.39 The east end (northern sides) of both Torrington Road and Kitsbury Terrace contain a row of twentieth century houses that do not share the characteristics of the houses on adjoining plots (Torrington Road: 1 – 3 Bankside, nos. 2 / 4, nos. 6 / 8. Kitsbury Terrace: Linden, Marlins, Upper Cheyney, Trees and no. 9). However, in these locations they are at least not prominent within the conservation area.



Bankside-Orchard End, Torrington Road East



Kitsbury Terrace. North side.

Montague Road

8.40 The Fern Court town houses facing Montague Road (nos. 2 - 5) are not of sympathetic architectural style or front boundary treatment but do step up the hill as individual units in a way similar to other terraces here.

8.41 The cul de sac layout of the Rosehill development is not characteristic of the conservation area and would be harmful if superimposed over the regular plot boundaries typical of the area. Other aspects including materials are also unsatisfactory. Impact is mitigated by scale and by trees and by the particular location.



Fern Court, Montague Road



Rosehill, Montague Road

North Road

8.42 Yew Tree House is relatively unobtrusive and screened despite its materials and later build date compared to North Road houses in general.

Middle Road

8.43 The north east part of Middle Road has had a range of secondary buildings in the past and two pairs of inter-war houses. Recent new buildings close to the “elbow” of this road contribute to a lack of cohesion or character in contrast to the southern end cottages.

Area 1: Negative buildings / sites

8.44 These include buildings that were assessed as having particularly visually detracting architectural qualities or not being related to the predominant street character, scale and size, layout (street pattern) or surrounding buildings. As such, they compromise the integrity and attractiveness of the conservation area as a whole. There are a significant number of mid – late twentieth century commercial and residential developments spread throughout the three 'Identity Areas' that do not respect the character of Berkhamsted Conservation Area; most lie along the High Street.

High Street (East, Central, West)

8.45 Buildings or sites that lie at the east and west ends of the High Street form the gateway into Berkhamsted Conservation Area. These are important indicators of the local character and should be given a high priority. Some have been neglected or unsympathetically altered and could be improved. The car lot at the east end of the High Street, next to 9 High Street (Berkhamsted Tool Hire) by Swing Gate Lane mini-roundabout on a corner plot, is a visually unattractive open space. Coupled with the machinery from Berkhamsted Tool Hire that stands on the pavement, this area could be improved. In



Car lot by 9 High Street (corner of Swing Gate Lane)

addition, improvements could be made to 11 - 15 London Road across the street. A former semi-detached cottage, half of which has been significantly extended and its cottage character extensively eroded through commercial use (only nos. 11 and 13 are included on the negative list).



11 – 15 London Road

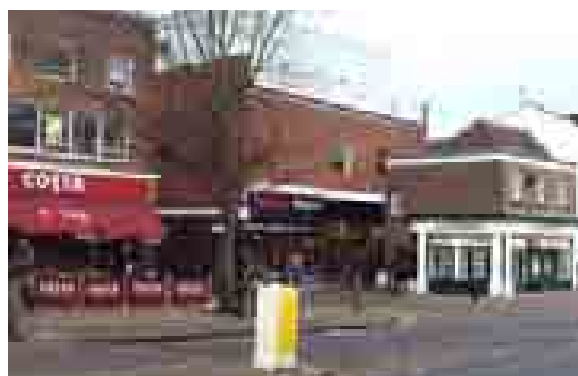
8.46 Several mid – late twentieth century commercial developments do not respect the local character of the historic High Street, and lie between the central core close to St. Peter's Church and the old market place, up to the west end of the High Street by St. John's Well Lane (see list below). Many hold prominent corner positions and some have been built since the designation of the conservation area in 1969, such as Chiltern House (184 High Street, c1978) and 187 High Street (Police Station, c1972)

- 160 High Street (Tesco by Water Lane)
- 162 – 166 High Street (Costa Coffee) and its adjoining row up to and including Boots,
- 192 High Street (nos. 168, 172 – 176; 178); and Chiltern House (no. 184) between WH Smith and Boots
- 187 High Street (Police Station)
- 197 & 197b High Street (Nationwide Building Society and Ash)
- 198 (Halifax) and 200 (Clintons) High Street close to the corner of Lower Kings Road
- 223 – 233 High Street (Saxon House) on the corner of Cowper Road
- 250 High Street (includes 250 b, c, d & e)
- 263 – 265 High Street (Salter House) and 267 – 269 High Street (Jelmac House) on the corner of Park View Road
- 286 - 290 High Street (Kwik Fit)

- 300 High Street (former Royal Mail Offices and the neighbouring Telephone Exchange on St. John's Well Lane)

8.47 Many of the buildings lining the north side of the High Street in the centre of the town between The Wilderness and Lower Kings Road appear on the negative list. Suggestions made in the Council's 2007 guidance, 'Concept Statement for Water Lane / High Street Berkhamsted', for this area have been noted. Properties that appear as 'buildings of poor townscape value' in the Concept Statement (160 – 176 High Street) also appear on the negative list as given above, along with the public car park behind, which is on the neutral list of sites in this report.

8.48 This historic area, close to the old Market Place, is sensitive to change due to the number of historically significant buildings standing close by. However, its re-development could enhance the existing character of this part of High Street Central (Area 1), particularly as its earlier appearance has been so affected by the row of modern (negative) buildings. Nevertheless, large en-block retail forms should be avoided as this would only repeat some of the out of character, massing and design problems that already exist. The height of any new buildings should also be considered; it should not stand more than three storeys. The narrow roads, Water Lane and The Wilderness should be retained and carried through the car park to re-introduce the previous historic street form, since lost. Overly modern 'town centre re-development' designs should also be avoided; new architecture should be site specific to complement the predominant traditional urban character of Berkhamsted High Street, in particular those buildings lying to the east towards St. Peter's Church.



160 High Street (Tesco)



187 High Street (Police Station)



198 & 200 High Street (Clintons and Halifax)



250 High Street (includes 250 b, c, d & e)



286 - 290 High Street (Kwik Fit)

Lower Kings Road, Park View Road & St. John's Well Lane

8.49 A small number of mid – late twentieth century commercial developments that do not respect the local character are also found outside the High Street. These include 29 – 33 Lower Kings Road (Hamlins; Berkhamsted Arts & Crafts) with its associated rear office buildings / plot and car park accessed from Greenfield Road, and Orbital House on Park View Road. Orbital House shares several characteristics with other modern developments such as the Police Station (187 High Street, c1972) and stands behind 267 – 269 High Street (see above) and across from 263 – 265 High Street (Salter House). The corner to Park View Road has particularly suffered from inappropriate modern development, along with other the nearby modern High Street commercial properties, Kwik Fit and the former Royal Mail Offices.

8.50 The Telephone Exchange on St. John's Well Lane is part of a larger negative site that includes the former Royal Mail Offices, 300 High Street (see above).

8.51 Park View Court, Park View Road is a modern flat development located partly in Area 1 and partly in Area 3 (see 8.60).



29 – 33 Lower Kings Road



Telephone Exchange, St. John's Well Lane

Cowper Road

8.52 Along Cowper Road is Nightingale Lodge, a large, imposing, modern residential development that shares little characteristics of the neighbouring properties and residential streets. As well as being visible from the street, both buildings are clearly seen across the open car park of the neighbouring office block behind Saxon House (223 – 233 High Street).

Area 2: Negative buildings / sites

Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.53 These comprise groups of modern garages that have little architectural value and are considered to be negative sites: the row of garages that are situated near the canal at the end of Bedford Street and a further row of garages situated between the canal and the George Street playground are the two sites that fall into this category within Area 2. A third group of garages of may be found at the east end of George Street (forming part of the rear gardens of houses in Ellesmere Road).

Area 3: Negative buildings / sites

Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.54 The buildings in the “negative” category stand-out as detracting from the architectural qualities or not being related to the predominant street character, scale and size, layout (street pattern) of this late nineteenth / early twentieth century area of development. They are later buildings not designed for the context and which due to their prominent positions, appearance, materials and / or scale compromise the integrity and attractiveness of the conservation area.

Kings Road

8.55 The County Library is a typical Hertfordshire library of its period. It is low level and back from the street frontage. This together with the access to its parking, make for a gap in the streetscape. On the west side, the car parking area next to Kings Road Garage at least has a tall wall to provide enclosure.

Doctor's Commons Road

8.56 Heatherbank though set back, sits on a high ground level and is of a form and materials that contrast very strongly with the period houses either side.



Heatherbank (centre), Doctor's Commons Road

Kitsbury Terrace

8.57 Kitsbury Court is an incongruous flat-roofed block of flats in the southeast corner of Kitsbury Terrace, but is visible from some vantage points.

Charles Street

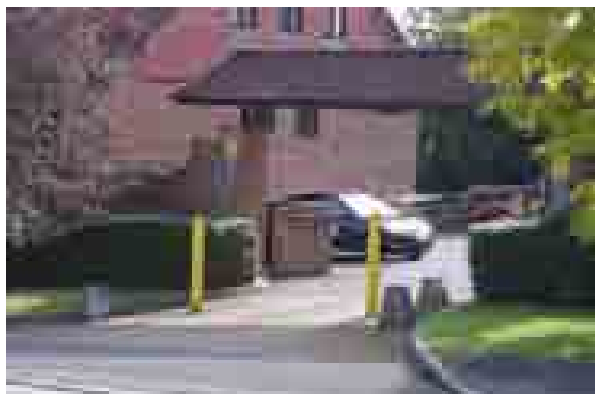
8.58 The Bay Court block of flats fronting Charles Street at the Doctor's Commons Road junction is a c1960s building of three storeys with a flat roof and relates very poorly in materials and form and general appearance to the houses opposite and to the conservation area setting in general.

8.59 The corner unit of Fern Court (no. 1) at the junction with Montague Road leaves the street uncharacteristically open due to the buildings set back position rather than the building being placed in the corner. There is a resultant corner garden space. The materials and style of the building do not refer to the context.

8.60 32A Charles Street (and adjoining double garage) is an example of a mid-twentieth century house that sits on a plot between older houses. It appears completely alien and as it stands in a very visible position on this thoroughfare, it detracts severely from the streetscene.

Park View Road

8.61 Park View Court, Park View Road is a modern flat development that lies partly in Area 1 and partly in Area 3. The design of its wide, set-back, vehicle entrance (with wall and canopy and yellow bollards) into a parking area detract from the Park View Road. In addition the wide gap between the two buildings gives the appearance of there being a 'gap-site' along the street frontage, especially from the view down the road from the north.



Entrance to Park View Court, Park View Road

North Road

8.62 26A North Road is a detached house c1960s of materials, form and open frontage that standing between period houses, detracts severely from the streetscene.

Boxwell Road

8.63 This is generally a street of strong form and houses built to a common building line. However, a chalet (no. 1A) and two adjoining bungalows all on the east side are thoroughly out of place in terms of building form and plot frontage.

Cross Oak Road

8.64 At the Middle Road corner stands an out of place c1970s rectangular, block of flats Kewa Court that fails to relate to the context. Its garage block on Middle Road also represents an opportunity to improve the latter road.

8.65 Oakhill Court is an infill standing next to All Saints Church between it and terraced houses. Its broad gable to the street, undercroft drive, materials and fenestration all fail to fit into the streetscene and it detracts from the setting of the listed church.



Oakhill Court, Cross Oak Road

8.66 Rothesay Court, a late twentieth century development of flats, is imposed on the Charles Street / Cross Oak Road junction where its gross scale, bulk and corner tower overwhelm the two storey houses on Cross Oak Road and challenge the setting of All Saints Church. Neither is its quality of materials, detail or fenestration appropriate in the conservation area. Also on Cross Oak Road, former garden area is taken over for parking associated with the development.

8.67 On the east side of Cross Oak Road, nos. 83 / 85 are a pair of 1960s semis in brown brick, render and concrete tiles set far back from the characteristic building frontage and thus appearing both a gap in the street and of unsympathetic design.

Shrublands Road

8.68 The units at 1A – 5A Shrublands Road also appear to be part of the Rothesay Court development and are of the same tall, three storey plus roof height (on an elevated level) compared to the two storey plus attic scale of the houses on Shrublands Road. The relationship of the western gable of this group with Dunsland House next to it, looks particularly stark.

Shrublands Avenue

8.69 Shrublands Avenue is lined mostly with Edwardian terraced houses with short front gardens with low brick boundary walls. Towards the bottom of the road, the two mid-twentieth century detached houses on infill plots on the

western side below no. 2 (Sarnia and Selattyn), fit into the street scene particularly poorly due to their form and materials and front parking. Nos. 7 & 9 a post-war pair are less intrusive though their hipped roof form and set back from the building line creates an awkward appearance next to the first house of the adjoining terrace.

clutter & poor maintenance of roads / pavements, uncoordinated signage, graffiti, and poorly maintained buildings or spaces. Many of the modern commercial buildings located on Berkhamsted High Street that were purpose-built and do not respect the character of the area appear in the neutral / negative section above.

Inappropriate Alterations to Buildings

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Colligate)

8.70 A number of problems facing existing structures have over the years affected the visual character of the conservation area through incremental loss such as a steady erosion of many architectural features, inappropriate extensions or alterations and the use of inappropriate shopfronts / awnings. In addition there are some ongoing issues that also detract from the character of the area – general street

8.71 The erosion of architectural features to existing older properties includes the insertion of inappropriate styles of windows (and sizes), shutters & bars, front porches, render or cladding, position of satellite dishes to front elevations, concrete tile roof coverings (replacing tile or slate) and the growing number of roof lights. This is a particular problem to buildings along residential streets - mostly those leading off from the High Street, although a few buildings located at each end of the High Street also suffer from the use of inappropriate window styles, shutters and security bars.



Replaced doors, windows and slate roofs on Highfield Road and Ravens Lane



Replaced doors, windows and slate roofs on Holliday Street and Victoria Road



Roof lights on Chapel Street and the Victorian villas on the High Street (nos. 320 – 338)



Replaced doors, windows and slate roofs on 15 – 27 High Street

Inserted shopfronts at 279 – 283 High Street. Traditional (no. 283) and modern (no. 279)

8.72 The use of inappropriate shopfronts can detract from the character of an urban conservation area. While there are many good examples of retained or more traditional-style shopfronts along the High Street and Lower Kings Road, there are also a number of shopfronts on older properties in the town that have been adapted or altered with new glazing / doors inserted. This is particularly prevalent at the east and west ends of the High Street, away

from the historic core of the town around the church and old market place where many older properties are statutory listed or are located near listed buildings. In other cases, shopfronts extend over more than one property breaking the building line. In a number of cases bright colours have been used, in others the style / size / material is not in-keeping with the local character such as bold lettering across the fascia.



Altered shopfronts and windows, and added security bars at 325 – 329 High Street

Inserted shopfronts and window shutters 301 – 305 High Street

8.73 In addition, signage pasted upon the window glass to the shopfront (external and internal), and the use of modern awnings or large advertising flags has an adverse effect on the street scene. Examples are found on the High Street, Prince Edward Street and Holliday Street.



Extended shopfronts at 220 - 212 High Street with bold lettering to the fascia



256 High Street (Acorn pharmacy) built-out on the ground floor with bold signage



Internal shopfront advertising on the High Street



Inserted modern shopfront into an older property at 193 High Street next to a listed building



Painted brickwork, awnings and advertising flags at 296 High Street (Woods garden centre)



Inserted shopfront 76 - 78 High Street (a listed building)



Bold fascia on 90 High Street (on the corner of Manor Street)



Less traditional shopfronts at 198 - 200 High Street

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.74 A number of private houses have inappropriate replacement windows or doors or have replaced slate roofs with factory tiles and a small minority of houses have been re-clad in an inappropriate manner. In some cases original chimneys have been demolished.

8.75 There are a number of sky dishes on front elevations. In a few rare instances, individual houses have been re-clad to cover the original brickwork typical of George Street and other nearby residential streets; this creates a particularly bad visual effect in the context of areas with houses standing in terraces.

8.76 There are a number of box dormers of inappropriate scale on rear elevations.

8.77 Car parking on front gardens with the consequent loss of front boundary walls is not a significant problem.

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.78 In general, the buildings in this area have suffered remarkably little inappropriate alteration and there is much surviving Victorian and Edwardian building detail to admire including for instance, panelled doors with stone steps, coloured glass, tiles, decorative timberwork etc.



Shopfronts on Charles Street

8.79 There are local pockets of the loss of features such as sash windows / original doors & boundary walls towards the northern end of Cross Oak Road. Another is part of Kitsbury Road roughly between Hamilton Road and Kitsbury Terrace where a number of cottages

have inappropriate replacement windows. On Shrublands Road, no. 13 has also had clearly out of character windows added. Loss of railings to boundary walls has occurred historically in Area 3, as it has elsewhere in the conservation area, but is not an ongoing issue.

8.80 Of the few shops on Charles Street at the Kitsbury Road junction, the shopfronts of nos. 38 (newsagent) and 42 could be improved by removal of the fixed canopies, replacement of the raw aluminium window / door frame on no. 38, and return to a plain rendered / brick base and side on no. 42.



Poor alterations at 13 Shrublands Road

Properties in poor state of repair

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Collegiate)

8.81 Buildings in a poor state of repair have a negative impact to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. Despite the large size of Berkhamsted Conservation Area there are relatively few buildings that are vacant or have not been well maintained, or at least currently require minimal upkeep (re-painting of windows / doors, re-pointing or replacing slipped roof tiles). However on the High Street there are two premises that are in this category, 58 and 279 High Street. No. 58 is on the Berkhamsted Local List (Appendix 2).

8.82 Currently there are no statutory listed buildings within Berkhamsted Conservation Area that meet the criteria of being on the Building At Risk Register. However, the overall condition of The Bull Public House, 10 High Street, has been assessed and is considered to be 'vulnerable' (category 4).



58 High Street (East, north side)

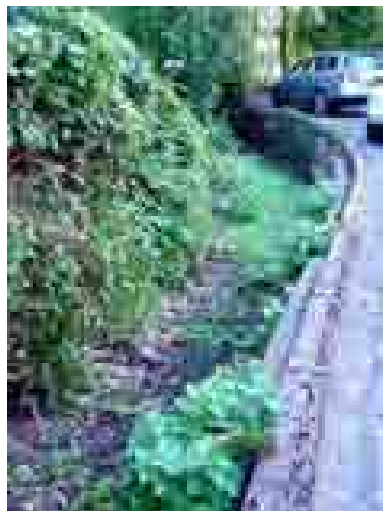
8.83 The metal gates and brick piers at both entrances to the cemetery on Rectory Lane and Three Close Lane need repair. In addition the small cemetery building entry on Three Close

Lane is currently not in use and is at risk. Both structures are included on the Berkhamsted Local List (Appendix 2).

8.84 The poor condition of River Bulbourne is seen along most of its length from where the river meets the canal outside Glassmill House / Costins Walk (the Robertson Road / McDougall Road development), along the rear boundary walls of houses on Chapel Street, through the Berkhamsted School site (Castle Street / Mill Street), and then along Greenfield Road / Lower Kings Road towards and throughout the River Walk by the boundary of Waitrose car park, Lower Kings Road. This includes the severely overgrown vegetation and some evidence of rubbish dumping. Better maintenance of the river is required. The riverbed is particularly dry along the Riverside Walk.



Piers and gates to the cemetery on Rectory Lane (left) and cemetery building at the entrance on Three Close Lane (right)



The River Bulbourne by Lower Kings Road, River Walk and behind Chapel Street

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.85 There are no properties in a poor state of repair in Area 2.

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.86 There are no properties in a poor state of repair in Area 3.

Street Furniture

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Berkhamsted School)

8.87 While street furniture, such as lamp posts, refuse bins, railings, bollards, benches, plants / trees, bus stops, pedestrian crossings, traffic lights, phone boxes and post boxes, is important to the character and appearance of a conservation area, over proliferation of street furniture can reduce the overall quality of the area. Note is also made here of poor planning and maintenance of street furniture and road / pavement surfaces.

8.88 The urban character of Berkhamsted means that its roads and pavements are lined with all types of street furniture. Unattractive examples include the metal railings painted yellow outside 9 – 27 High Street (south side) along with the clutter of equipment laid outside Berkhamsted Tool Hire (9 High Street). Bent railings and additional bollards lie along Chesham Road. Similar modern utilitarian metal railings lie across the pavement for 'pedestrian safety' at the

entrance to Sevens Close, a new development between 75 & 77 High Street. A row of large new bollards have been erected outside Pilkingtons / Dean Fry Court on the High Street (the site of the former Pilkingtons Manor); these are used to prevent parking.



Railings and bollards on Chesham Road



Commercial bins along Church Lane

8.89 Small black refuse bins are found along the High Street, but Church Lane suffers in particular from yellow commercial bins that lie the side of the brick laid street. The area on the north side of the High Street between Water Lane and

Lower Kings Road has a high number of different types of street furniture such as bollards, lamp posts, refuse bins, bus shelters, bicycle lock-ups, benches, signage, parking ticket machines and traffic lights as well as trees and outside seating to cafes / restaurants making the pavement look cluttered. A further area of note that has all types of proliferated street furniture (road signs, bollards,



9 – 27 High Street (south side)

lamp posts, telegraph poles) is seen on the High Street at the junction of Victoria Road (with the mini-roundabout) and Ravens Lane. There appears less proliferation of street furniture at the west end of the High Street.

8.90 Other types of street furniture have begun to appear on the wider pavements of the High Street in the form of bistro seating with fabric barriers and umbrellas that carry bold signs or adverts. While these are regarded as being temporary structures that can be removed, attention should be given to the amount / extent it intrudes onto the pavement, and the designs used as they can be overly intrusive and detrimental to the historic character of the street scene.

8.91 Lamp posts providing street lighting are essential and are often required to have different functions. However, along the High Street and Castle Street there is a confusion of lamp post styles from modern very tall posts with plain lights (and shorter versions of the same), to converted lamp posts with 'conservation style' lights, and old Victorian style lamps attached to buildings or Victorian High Gothic styles (especially next to the church). In addition, some lamp posts close to the church also hold spot lights to light up the church; these could be better positioned such as within the churchyard or behind the church boundary walls. Although there is one style found predominantly in Area 1 along the High Street (tall posts with

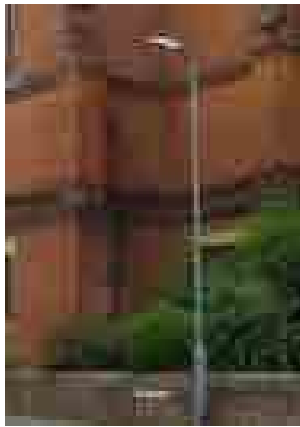


The pavement on the north side of the High Street between Water Lane and Lower Kings Road is cluttered with different types of street furniture as well as trees and outside seating

conservation style lights), they only extend eastwards from the centre up to the junction with Manor Street and westwards up to the junction with St. John's Well Lane. Overall, the lamp posts are not intrusive but many are in need of maintenance such as painting.



Different styles of lamp posts close to St. Peter's Church in the historic core of the High Street



Selection of styles of lamp posts on Castle Street, including those used to light the church standing by 120 High Street and 1 Castle Street

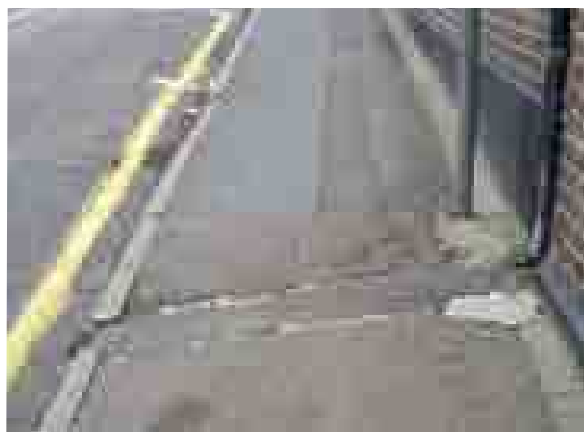
8.92 Paving within Area 1 is also listed under negative features due to the unattractive and at times poor nature of the pavements; mismatched in many places along the High Street, Lower Kings Road and the side roads leading off the High Street north and south. Those that are particularly poor are Highfield Road, Prince Edward Street, Victoria Road, Bridge Street, Park Street and Park View Road. Track lines run along most of the roads and pavements and there is a general patchiness to repairs.



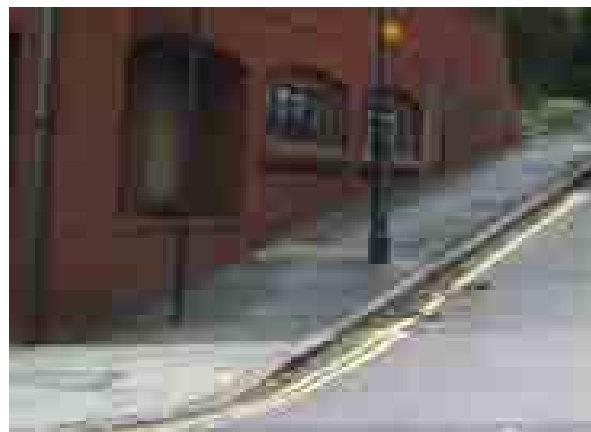
Poor pavement outside St George's, Castle Street



Five types of mis-matched paving outside Pilkington Manor, High Street



Poor pavement on Victoria Road



Poor pavements on Park View Road outside Salter House where it meets the High Street paving

Signage

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Collegiate)

8.93 Road name signs located within the High Street and the roads leading off from the main thoroughfare are of different styles, materials

and age, some of which are in a poor state of repair. The older signs add character and could be re-painted / repaired while some of the other signs could be replaced with a more appropriate design.



Road name signs with traditional materials and a modern sign with less appropriate materials

8.94 Directive signs found on the High Street are of a reasonable quality and are in appropriate positions. However the finger post on Lower Kings Road at the entrance to the Waitrose car park is hidden by over grown trees and is somewhat over shadowed by the neighbouring large Waitrose sign



Road name signs which need some general maintenance



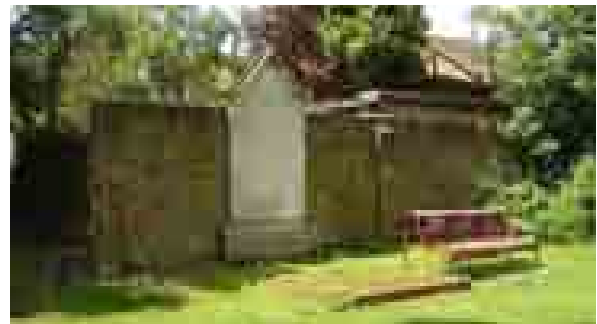
Neighbouring signs on Lower Kings Road (modern and conservation style metal finger post)

such as one at Kitsbury Road mounted high on the side of a building. In the interests of character, the recent green lettering and edge signs on recycled plastic legs (e.g. Anglefield Road / Cross Oak Road junction) should be avoided.

Graffiti

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Berkhamsted School)

8.98 While the main roads and spaces within Berkhamsted Conservation Area appear to be mostly graffiti free, the cemetery to the rear of The Rex Cinema on Rectory Lane / Three Close Lane has a problem with graffiti on its walls and on the metal seats that needs to be cleaned. The metal seats are particularly unattractive and should be replaced with more appropriate seating.



Graffiti on the walls and metal seats by the Bridgewater Monument in the Rectory Lane / Three Close Lane cemetery

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.95 Area 2 contains a good deal of high quality signage. Much of this is associated with the canal and includes the "Port of Berkhamsted" signage on the bridge near The Boat PH. Good traditional pub signs may be found on the same pub as well as on The Rising Sun.

8.96 In the vicinity of George Street there are a number of early street signs and their preservation in these positions on walls adds a good deal of local character. In some cases they are rusty and this should be addressed.

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.97 Road name signage is predominantly, the familiar, traditional, black lettering on a white background with black edging, often mounted low on a wall. There are a smaller number of recent blue background signs on short legs (the North Road / Charles Street junction for example having one of each). Scarce are older, original blue background, enamelled road name signs

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.99 Some graffiti exists on a small scale beneath the King's Road canal bridge and on nearby brickwork next to the steps up to the roadway.

Area 3: Charles Street, Doctor's Commons Road

8.100 No graffiti noted within Area 3.

Intrusive Traffic & Residential Parking

8.101 This Appraisal has considered the current parking controls and the general effects of traffic and parking within the conservation area.

8.102 If parking controls are further introduced there should be careful consideration of means to reduce the visual impact on the appearance of the streets. This would include keeping signage to a minimum, avoiding the erection of large numbers of signposts and using minimum width of road markings (as is provided for in conservation areas).

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Berkhamsted School)

8.103 The High Street is a busy main road and although cars and lorries are arguably part of the character of the High Street, at certain times it may be considered as intrusive. However, some traffic calming measures have already been instigated, such as the reduction of the speed limit to the main core to 20 mph. Traffic does build up at the High Street / Kings Road junction where traffic lights are situated.

8.104 Parking facilities are found within several car parks within the town and there are a limited number of short stay on-street parking bays for visitors to Berkhamsted. However, residential parking remains an issue on the narrower side roads due to the nature of their nineteenth century character; in places cars are parked partly on the pavement and partly on the road. In some cases, cars parked on these streets during the daytime may be commercial / visitor parking.

8.105 At the east end of the High Street along the south side between Highfield Road and Ravens Lane cars park upon the sloping pavement in between trees. The sloping hard standing area may have replaced a former grass bank, which remains as such further along the



Parking on residential streets: Victoria Road



Parking on the High Street between Highfield Road and Ravens Lane

High Street to the east. Although parking issues are problematic for these properties on the High Street, the overall appearance of this area could be improved such as having a cobble-paved line of parking bays.

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.106 Through traffic using the limited number of rail and canal bridges for journeys north / south gives rise to a major environmental problem with the area. These streets were laid out before the motor age and there has been little scope for adaptation to provide measures to reduce the area's general traffic congestion and lack of parking.

8.107 Station Road is a particularly difficult example as it is used by a great deal of east / west traffic and is reduced to a single lane thoroughfare due to on-street parking all along the South side of the carriageway.

8.108 In George Street cars may be found parked on both sides of the road. This leaves room for a single lane in which cars can pass down the centre of the carriageway, with cars mounting the pavement when parked in some places.

8.109 The presence of this traffic is detrimental to the environment of the area. In general, the difficulties of driving and / or parking within Area 2 are considerable as the generally narrow streets can hardly cope with the sheer quantity of cars and vans.

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.110 Parking currently takes place on either side of most roads on streets south of the High Street. Off street parking is unusual on streets of terraced housing. Where it has been provided as part of some recent developments of flats, gaps in the street result and harm its character. Such gaps open up views of unattractive hard surfaced areas (where there were once gardens), and sometimes of the backs of buildings too.

8.111 Charles Street is probably the most difficult to drive along owing to its many junctions as well as other parked vehicles.

Inappropriate Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

Area 1: High Street (East, Central, West, Berkhamsted School)

8.112 There are a few areas where modern houses are set back from the roadside and were either built with or have lost their front boundaries to hard standing surfaces for parking; these include properties on the east and west sides of Highfield Road and the flats with ground floor garages on Park Street (nos. 14 – 16). On the High Street a few nineteenth and twentieth century houses have removed front boundary walls and laid hard surfaces for parking (35 – 43 High Street and 259 High Street in Camilla Terrace).



No front boundary walls to modern properties on Highfield Road

8.113 On the High Street several properties have lost rear garden plots to hard standing surfaces for parking, such as behind 137 High Street (Chesham Road), 111 High Street (Rectory Lane), 189 High Street (Barclays Bank, Kings Road), and 275 High Street (Boxwell House; two car parks on Boxwell Road).

8.114 While public car parks are a necessity in the town centre, most comprise large areas of hard landscaping (tarmacadam) with little attempt to soften the character or utilise different types of surfaces. Some smaller residential car parks on the side streets in Area 1 have also suffered in a similar way, and often boundary walls have been altered to accommodate the land use.



Loss of front boundary walls and hard surfaces laid at 35 – 43 High Street (above) and 259 High Street in Camilla Terrace (below)





137 High Street: rear plots now with parking (Chesham Road)



111 High Street: rear plots now with parking (Rectory Lane)

6.115 A potential problem is the gradual loss of brick-built rear walls and outbuildings to nineteenth century properties, particularly those on Ravens Lane that back onto Holliday Street and the houses on Victoria Road that back onto Three Close Lane.



Houses on Ravens Lane that back onto Holliday Street

Area 2: Grand Union Canal and Railway, Castle and the George Street Housing District

8.116 In general the quality of boundary treatment throughout Area 2 is high. Cases where front boundary walls have been demolished to create a standing for a car are unknown. Most walls and fences are acceptable and in some cases the presentation of the canal is greatly enhanced by attractive and appropriate property boundaries nearby.

Area 3: Charles Street / Shrublands Road and Kings Road / Doctor's Commons Road

8.117 Back of footpath retaining walls (e.g. on Kings Road and Doctor's Commons Road) and low front boundary walls (some with railings) are characteristic features of the residential streets south of the High Street. There are instances of this being ignored in mid-twentieth century infill where houses were built set back from the roadside. A run of interwar houses at the north end (west side) of Kitsbury Road have lost their front walls / gardens to unattractive hard standing surfaces for parking.



70 - 74 Kitsbury Road. Loss of garden and front walls

Part 2 Conservation Area Management Proposals

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Management Proposals

The designation and appraisal of any conservation area is not an end in itself. This conservation area is under pressure from infill, inappropriate extensions and alterations, and future development both within and on its fringes. It is important that the development control process ensures the preservation of its special character and that opportunities are taken to identify and implement enhancements. As well as defining the character and appearance of the conservation area and what makes it special, it is important to develop proposals for the future management of the conservation area. The resulting Management Plan relates the designation and management of a conservation area to the principles of historic environment planning.

1.2 Mechanisms for Management

There are several mechanisms through which the Council can manage the future of the conservation area:

- Application of policy
- Policy and design guidance
- Development briefs
- Application of an Article 4 Direction
- Monitoring change
- Boundary changes
- Appraising the condition of significant buildings that contribute positively to the conservation area and developing a strategy for repair
- Enforcement proceedings
- Proposed enhancement schemes
- Proposals for economic development and regeneration (including grants)
- Designation of Heritage Assets

2.0 Application of policy

2.1 Introduction

Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. Dacorum Borough Council will apply

such policies rigorously when considering development proposals affecting the conservation area.

The National Planning Policy Framework, places emphasis on conserving and sustaining the significance of heritage assets and their settings. This includes designated heritage assets (such as Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, etc) and non-designated heritage assets (including local interest buildings, unregistered parks & gardens or areas of archaeological interest). Designated heritage assets (listed buildings) are identified in Appendix 1, while non-designated heritage assets (locally listed buildings) are identified in Appendix 2 along with a set of proposed criteria for local listing in Appendix 3.

At a local level, Policy CS27: Quality of the Historic Environment is included in Dacorum Borough Council's Adopted Core Strategy. This Conservation Area Appraisal is an approved Council document and will, therefore, be a material consideration in any planning decision. It is anticipated that the Conservation Area Appraisal will help inform and strengthen decisions made in line with this policy framework, which will be one of the most direct and effective means of managing the conservation area in the long term. For example, the Appraisal helps define the plan form of the area, the typical scale, form, massing and materials of buildings, traditional detailing, important views, significant trees, etc. These elements should be considered when looking at any development proposal. The Appraisal also sets out key buildings and features that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area. As such, there should be a preference against demolition or loss of any building or feature identified as meeting these criteria.

The exclusion of any building or feature within the Appraisal does not necessarily indicate that it makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal can also be used to inform decision-makers about other local

or national conservation policy considerations, such as the statutory requirement for decision makers to have regard to the need to conserve and enhance the Natural Beauty of the landscape in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

By defining and identifying significant buildings and areas of open space, trees, etc, the Conservation Area Appraisal provides information that will inform planning decisions on the merits of development proposals.

2.2 Legal framework

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, particularly paras. 126-141. Further policy is contained within the Dacorum Local Plan.

2.3 The Local Development Framework

This Conservation Area Appraisal will be used to support adopted plan policy particularly Policy CS27 in the Adapted Core Strategy 2006-2031.

2.4 Planning controls in Conservation Areas

In addition to the above, there are a number of planning controls that relate specifically to conservation areas:

- **Extensions to dwelling houses**

Planning permission is required for any extension that would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original house, or if the extension would have more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original house;

- **Cladding or rendering the exterior of a house**

No part of the exterior of a dwelling house can be clad in stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles without planning permission from the District Planning Authority;

- **Alterations to the roof of a dwelling house**

Planning permission must be obtained for any enlargement of the house, which would consist of alterations to the roof (i.e. loft conversion). Any alterations that would protrude more than 150mm beyond the

plane of the original roof, or would result in part of the roof being higher than the highest part of the original roof, will require planning permission;

- **Erecting new outbuildings in the grounds of dwelling houses**

The provision within the curtilage (grounds) of any building or enclosure, swimming pool or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the house, or the maintenance, improvement or alterations of such buildings or enclosures, will require planning permission if the building, enclosure, pool or container would be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation of the house and the boundary of the curtilage of the house;

- **Installing, replacing or altering chimneys, flues and soil vents on dwelling houses**

The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue (including flues for biomass or combined heat and power systems) or soil vent pipe on the wall or roof slope which fronts a highway and forms either the principal elevation or side elevation of the house will require planning permission;

- **Microwave antennas**

The installation of an antenna on a chimney, wall or roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from a highway, or on any building which exceeds 15 metres in height, requires planning permission in conservation areas. Generally, planning permission is needed for all of the following: more than two antennas; a single antenna exceeding 100cm in length; two antennas which do not fit the relevant size criteria (only one may exceed 60cm for example); an antenna installed on a chimney, where the length of the antenna would exceed 60cm or would protrude above the chimney; an antenna with the cubic capacity in excess of 35 litres; an antenna installed on a roof without a chimney where the highest part of the antenna exceeds the highest part of the roof; or in the case of an antenna installed on a roof with a chimney, if the highest part of the antenna would be

higher than the highest part of the chimney, or 60cm measured from the highest part of the ridge tiles of the roof, whichever is the lower.

- **Installing, replacing or altering solar photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on a dwelling house**

If the solar photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on the roof of a house or a building within the curtilage (grounds) of the house will protrude more than 200mm beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof, or would be higher than the highest part of the roof excluding the chimney, planning permission will be required. Permission will also be required if it is to be installed on the wall forming the principal elevation of the house and is visible from the highway.

- **Installing, replacing or altering stand alone solar within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house**

Planning permission will be required for any stand alone solar within the grounds of a dwelling house if it is visible from the highway or if more than one is installed; permission will also be required if the solar will: be higher than 4 metres above the ground; be situated within 5 metres of the boundary of the curtilage; be within the curtilage of a listed building; or have a surface area exceeding 9 square metres or any other dimension including housing exceeding 3 square metres.

- **Installing, altering or replacing a ground or water source heat pump within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house**

Installing, altering or replacing a ground or water source heat pump within the curtilage (grounds) of a dwelling house is permitted development and planning permission is therefore not normally required.

- **Display of advertisements**

Advertisements are regulated by controls set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. The display of advertisements in conservation areas is

subject to additional restrictions.

Illumination, for example, generally requires advertisement consent. Tethered balloons, illuminated signs in retail parks and business premises, flags displayed by house builders and advert hoardings around building sites also require advertisement consent. Further guidance on advertisements in conservation areas can be found in (saved) Policy 113 of the Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan 1991-2011.

- **Demolition**

A listed building will always require Listed Building Consent for demolition. However, the total or substantial demolition of unlisted buildings within the conservation area that are over 115 cubic metres requires Conservation Area Consent. The demolition of any wall over 1 metre high facing a highway, waterway or open space, or any wall over 2 metres high elsewhere, will also require Conservation Area Consent.

- **Works to trees**

In most cases, six weeks notice must be given to the District Planning Authority for any cutting down, topping, lopping or up rooting of trees greater than 75mm diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground in a conservation area. There are however exceptions to this: Where a tree is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), for example, a formal application seeking approval to carry out works to trees protected by a TPO must be made to the District Planning Authority. Alternatively, where works to trees have been approved by planning permission in conjunction with development proposals, additional applications are not required.

2.5 Special planning controls

Planning authorities have the power to introduce stricter planning controls in conservation areas by means of an Article 4 Direction. An Article 4 Direction further removes permitted development rights where it is considered that such rights would have a damaging effect on the character of an area. They can ensure that traditional details such as sash windows, timber doors, chimneys, etc are not removed or altered

without planning permission. Currently, there are a number of Article 4 Directions in place within the Berkhamsted Conservation Area (see Appendix 5). In the future additional sites may be added (see 5 below).

2.6 Other statutory designations

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are recognised in statute as being of special architectural or historic interest. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is a criminal offence to demolish or alter the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building without approval from the District Planning Authority. There are three types of listed building: grade I and II* (considered to be the most special listed buildings); and grade II buildings.

The listing covers both the inside and outside of the building, and any structure or building within its curtilage which was built before 1947. 'Listed Building Consent' is required from the Council for any work which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. There are presently 76 listed buildings (53 entries) within Berkhamsted Conservation Area. Extensions and alterations should conform with (saved) Policy 119 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 and should generally:

- Take into account the prevailing forms of development
- Complement the form and character of the original building
- Be subordinate in bulk and scale to the principal building
- Use high quality materials and detailing
- Pay particular attention to roof lines, roof shape, eaves detail, verge details and chimneys

Scheduled Monuments

Certain important archaeological sites and monuments enjoy special protection under the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. There is one Scheduled Monument in Berkhamsted (Berkhamsted Castle: 20602).

Tree Preservation Orders

A tree preservation order (referred to as a TPO) is an order made by a local planning authority in

respect of trees or woodlands, the principal effect of which is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping or damaging of those trees without District Planning Authority approval. There are a number of TPOs within the Berkhamsted Conservation Area. It is worth noting that regardless of whether a tree is covered by a TPO or not, it is likely to be protected if it lies within the conservation area boundary. Advice should always be sought from the District Planning Authority on any proposed works.

Disclaimer

This advice is intended to be a general guide and does not purport to be a definitive guide to the legislation covering conservation areas. For specific proposals you should seek advice from the District Planning Authority.

2.7 The consent process

Where permission is required for development within the conservation area, details will need to be submitted to the Council for consideration. For most works in a conservation area you may only require planning permission. Where demolition is involved, however, you may also require Conservation Area Consent.

If your building is listed, works to it including extensions and installation of a satellite dish, will require a separate Listed Building Consent.

If you have any doubts as to whether or not your building is listed or in a conservation area, or would like to know whether specific works require planning permission or other consents, then please seek advice from the planning authority. Contact details are given at the back of this document.

2.8 New development in conservation areas and the importance of design

The purpose of conservation area designation is not to arrest development but to guide it so that the special character of an area is not adversely affected. New developments should be sympathetic in their design and use appropriate materials. They should complement established patterns and strengthen local distinctiveness, but not necessarily imitate existing buildings. Before applying for planning permission it is advisable to

contact the Council's Development Control and Conservation Teams to discuss your proposals. The value of employing a suitably qualified architect/designer with a track record of conservation projects to draw up your proposals cannot be stressed highly enough.

There are a number of features that contribute to Berkhamsted's identity and character and which should be preserved through a programme of regular maintenance. These elements should be retained and used to influence further development or alterations to existing properties within the conservation area.

Berkhamsted's layout has evolved over time through a series of town planning events relating to the period in which they were set, unlike villages that appear to have a more 'unplanned' or organic nature. As such, the buildings and ancillary structures within the town contribute to its unique character. Any future development should respond positively to its existing layout / form.

Whilst, there is some scope / opportunity for both small-scale and large scale re-development within the conservation area, the character of the area has been compromised as a result of some poor quality infilling, large-scale developments and unsympathetic alterations; some of these have already been noted in neutral / negatives sites and buildings. Good examples of re-development in the conservation area are given below.

Some developments utilised former industrial sites or open land of High Street back plots. While some of these rear yards are not open to view from the High Street, they are seen from side roads or public car parks.

While some of the building fabric used in relatively new build properties can be commended, there are issues over design features that are often missed e.g. housing where chimneys are often not added to roof lines, and windows that are set inline with the front face of the building (not recessed backwards) or where windows have simply been poorly proportioned.

Commercial developments and canal / riverside

residential developments have also suffered from inappropriate design, layout, massing and scale.

Many of these issues would benefit from Supplementary Design Guidance specific to the conservation area. It is proposed that preparation of such guidance on the following subjects be considered:

- New development within residential streets
- New development within the urban town centre
- New development along the river and canal

As such, this Appraisal provides a series of drafted comments relating to design issues on the above subjects (Appendix 6).

Non-residential uses of land and buildings should be protected, and residential development or conversion avoided. Should any opportunities for development arise, buildings should remain mostly two-storey, should face the street, should respect the massing, scale and layout of the neighbouring buildings, and employ a palette of materials sympathetic to and consistent with the prevailing character and appearance of that part of the conservation area. Only good quality schemes that respond positively to their historic setting and incorporate exceptionally high standards of quality and design will be considered acceptable.

In the 1992 Review of Berkhamsted Conservation Area, several issues were highlighted as potential future problems / threats with regard to safeguarding the existing character of the conservation area.

The Supplementary Planning Guidance, produced by Dacorum Borough Council in 2004, set out the conservation policies for Berkhamsted Conservation Area covering all three 'Identity Areas'; sections 4.2, 5.2 and 6.2. It stated that development (including extensions) should follow certain principles that will respect and complement the character of neighbouring local built environment or parent building. Amongst more recent developments and alterations there are some good examples of recent new build given below.

Recommended Action: The Council endeavour, as resources allow, to produce a series of SPGs as appropriate to facilitate better / appropriate design for residential and commercial developments within the conservation area.

Erosion of Character

The Appraisal identified that the following alterations pose a threat to the special character of the area:

- Loss of timber windows and doors
- Alterations to window / door openings
- Painting of brickwork, application of render or stone cladding
- Appearance of satellite dishes and unsympathetic front porches
- Changes to roofs including
 - Changing materials
 - Changes to pitch and roof form
 - Introduction of rooflights and dormers
 - Loss of traditional rainwater goods
 - Removal of redundant chimney stacks
 - Loss of timber fascias and bargeboards
- Unsympathetic use of shutters and security bars
- Use of unsympathetic awnings / advertising flags
- Unsympathetic changes to shopfronts (including pasted interior signage to shop glass and advertising in garish bright colours; alteration to doors / windows; loss of more traditional shop fascia - cornice, stallrisers, pilasters, consoles on plinths and mullion (vertical) glazing bars; shopfronts extending over more than one property breaking the building line). The appearance of less traditional styles of shop awnings.

Certain minor works and alterations to unlisted buildings can cumulatively have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Powers exist for the Council, using Article 4 directions, to control some of alterations in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommended Action: In order to monitor and manage change, the Council shall:

- encourage the return of more historic features and appropriate materials to properties in the conservation area.
- produce a series of Supplementary Planning Guides as appropriate, such as windows; doors; roofs (including chimneys, rooflights, dormers); front porches; satellite dishes and shopfront design.
- consider the need for Article 4 directions on a case by case basis, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings in the conservation area are protected.

Application of an Article 4 Direction

Common to many historic environments is the cumulative effect of piecemeal, but significant, alterations to the architectural features of properties that contribute positively to a conservation area. Many of these alterations do not require planning permission and are regarded as permitted development. A good example of this is when traditional timber windows are replaced with PVC- u in a different style and profile. Alterations like this can be very harmful to the character and appearance of a conservation area. It is possible to bring such alterations under planning control with the implementation of an Article 4 Direction, which would require an application for planning permission for alterations that otherwise fall outside normal planning control.

An Article 4 Direction can provide a positive framework for helping manage the character and appearance of a conservation area. The implementation of an Article 4 Direction requires a strong justification for proposing the Direction as well as appropriate stakeholder support.

Design Issues

In Appendix 6 are drafted comments relating to design issues of new development within residential streets, the urban town centre, and along the river and canal. This information may also be further developed should a series of more in-depth Supplementary Design Guides be deemed appropriate.

Below are examples of recent new build properties within Berkhamsted Conservation Area where good design, scale, architectural proportion and use of appropriate materials have been utilised.



Sevens Close, off the High Street



38 – 44 Mill Street



1a -1d Cowper Road



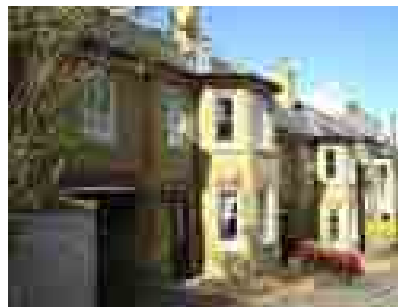
28 & 29 Ravens Lane



20a and 20b Montague Road



37 Highfield Road



*St Albans and Moss Edge House,
Elm Grove*



*The refurbished flats and shops
alongside The Rex Cinema and The
Gatsby restaurant (appearance of
street front only)*

Views

The setting of the conservation area is very important and development which impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and longer views into and from the conservation area will be resisted.

Boundary Treatments

A defining feature of the Berkhamsted Conservation Area is the subtle and restrained use of traditional materials for boundary treatments, complementing those areas where defined boundaries are noticeably absent. Details which are not traditional in the area include modern metal railings, manufactured flint blocks, timber fencing and rendered concrete blocks. It is important that materials and detailing found in the locality are used to help fit new development into its context.

There are a growing number of inappropriate landscaping and boundary treatments, particularly regarding the loss of front or rear gardens and walls to parking, and the greater visibility of hard landscaping.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to resist proposals to remove traditional boundary walls or which fail to respect the form and materials of traditional boundary treatments in the area. The retention of front gardens and the reduction of the visibility of hard landscaping should also be encouraged.

The Public Realm and Enhancement

The Appraisal has identified the immensely varied nature of Berkhamsted's urban centre from the densely terraced and sub-urban residential streets to the commercial centre, the castle, the riverside / canal habitat and the railway. As such this means the public realm is hugely diverse, ranging from public car parks to open green areas, cemeteries to canal towpaths, café-style outdoor seating on wide pavements to narrow streets with narrow pavements.

In addition, historic signposts, street signs, seating, telephone boxes, post boxes etc that survive in the public realm should be protected, and where appropriate, enhanced. Inappropriate signage can serve to detract from the quality of

the public realm and character of the area; redundant modern features should be removed or replaced with items more in sympathy with the historic environment – such as road name signs leading off from the High Street.

Where conservation lamp posts have been erected on the High Street, they could be better maintained and perhaps extended along the length to the east end of the boundary where they are of a non-conservation-style.

Clutter or over proliferation of many types of street furniture could be better coordinated particularly along the north side of the old Market Place where café-style outdoor seating extends into the pavement. Although this is attractive during the summer months and appears to be popular even in smaller venues on the High Street, it requires monitoring.

Mismatched / confused types of paving are seen on the High Street along with the poor condition of pavements away from the High Street. Better coordination of works to pavements would alleviate the patchwork effect and tracks that have begun to appear and are quite wide spread in the conservation area.

The amelioration of parking and traffic problems has been highlighted as a problem, especially on the side roads leading off from the main High Street. If parking controls are introduced there should be careful consideration of means to reduce the visual impact on the appearance of the streets. This would include keeping signage to a minimum, avoiding the erection of large numbers of signposts and using minimum width of road markings (as is provided for in conservation areas).

Recommended Action: The Council will seek opportunities to implement enhancement schemes to the public realm of the conservation area, ensuring that any historic features are retained while others are replaced with more appropriate styles.

The Appraisal has identified that the conservation area retains a strong historic street pattern, and there is a strong assumption in favour of

preserving the roads, lanes and paths of Berkhamsted, together with the vegetation and boundary materials that form their borders.
Recommended Action: The Council will seek opportunities to work with Hertfordshire County Council, landowners and partners to ensure that the historic road pattern is fully protected in any highways or regeneration schemes.

The cemetery is hidden from view from the High Street and stands behind brick walls. However the Appraisal identified that as a result it is showing signs of neglect; graffiti, poorly maintained seating and gate piers / gates, and an out-of-use building.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that these issues be taken into account in the management of the cemetery.

The condition of the River Bulbourne could also be improved through clearance and maintenance; the removal of vegetation over-growth and general dumped rubbish.

Recommended Action: The Council shall work in conjunction with the appropriate partners, that the river is appropriately managed and regularly maintained.

While only a few buildings are in a poor state of repair, monitoring of the condition of identified properties should be maintained.

Recommended Action: The Council shall regularly monitor the condition of buildings and encourages owners to adequately maintain them and put them back into use.

Advertisements

To help preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area, it is important that careful controls are maintained regarding the detailed design of signs.

Recommended Action: The Council will seek to ensure that advertisement proposals respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, in terms of citing, numbers, colours, materials and form of illumination.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

In addition to the listed buildings, there are many individual and groups of buildings and associated features which are of considerable local interest. These are included on a Local List and the Council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm the character, appearance or setting of the building. There is a presumption that all such buildings will be retained. Saved Policies 110-121 of the Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan 1991-2011 provides the criteria against which all such proposals for alterations will be assessed. There are presently nearly 400 locally listed buildings within the conservation area. The Council will seek to ensure that all Locally Listed Buildings (as identified on the conservation area map) are protected from inappropriate forms of development or unjustified demolition.

3.0 Policy and design guidance

The Council has produced relevant guidance documents on development in conservation areas, including Development in Conservation Areas or affecting Listed Buildings - Environmental Guidelines SPG Section 7. Further advice is contained on the Council's website: www.dacorum.gov.uk

These guidance sources are relevant to anyone thinking of undertaking development within conservation areas. It is hoped that this advice will help stakeholders of the historic environment make informed decisions and, therefore, contribute positively to the management of conservation areas. In addition to policy guidance, local generic guidance will be produced from time to time with specific advice on topics relevant to conservation areas e.g. window replacement.

4.0 Development briefs

The Management Plan can be used to identify any sites that would benefit from a development brief. A development brief is an outline of what might be expected or acceptable in principle on an identified development site prior to a formal development proposal. For example, this might be a gap site, or a site under pressure for demolition and re-development, or perhaps areas that have a neutral impact on the conservation area where redevelopment might readily be

accommodated. The definition and characterisation of the conservation area can be expanded to form a detailed design brief in order to help promote an appropriate form of development on the site.

Recommended Action: Where development is proposed on garden sites or infill plots, and the Council considers the principle of development in this location acceptable, the Council may take the opportunity to produce development briefs to inform developers or applicants as to what may be appropriate in terms of design and layout for the site.

5.0 Monitoring change

Monitoring change, both positive and negative, is very important for the long-term management of a conservation area. For example, it can help highlight problems that can be best tackled through an Article 4 Direction (see above) or show how effective policies have been.

Monitoring change can assist in identifying where more resources are required and in modifying priorities or policies.

A conservation area is thoroughly surveyed and described when first designated or when modified. Local planning authorities should seek to review conservation areas from time to time and update Appraisals. The Council will develop a schedule of conservation area reviews in due course.

The following actions are recommended to ensure that this Appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community:

Public Consultation

The Appraisal and Management Proposals have been subject to a period of public consultation. The formal consultation period covered a four week period from 1st October – 9th November 2012.

- Copies of the draft character appraisal were distributed to relevant officers within the Borough and County Councils, and notification letters sent to other appropriate organisations such as local amenity and residents' group

- The draft document could be viewed on Dacorum Borough Council's website, at the Council's offices at the Civic Centres in Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted and at Victoria Hall, Tring.
- A formal notice was placed in The Gazette on 26th September 2012.
- An exhibition was held in Berkhamsted Library from 1st October to 9th November 2012
- Dee TV were commissioned to make a film about the consultation
- DBC carried out an online Snap Survey, which produced 48 responses
- A further 22 letters/e-mails were received from individuals.
- A market stall in Berkhamsted was booked on Saturday 6th October 2012
- A further consultation took place regarding the local listing descriptions which were sent to individual owners between 4th and 29th November 2013. 39 responses were received.

The document has subsequently been amended to incorporate relevant comments and suggestions.

Document Review

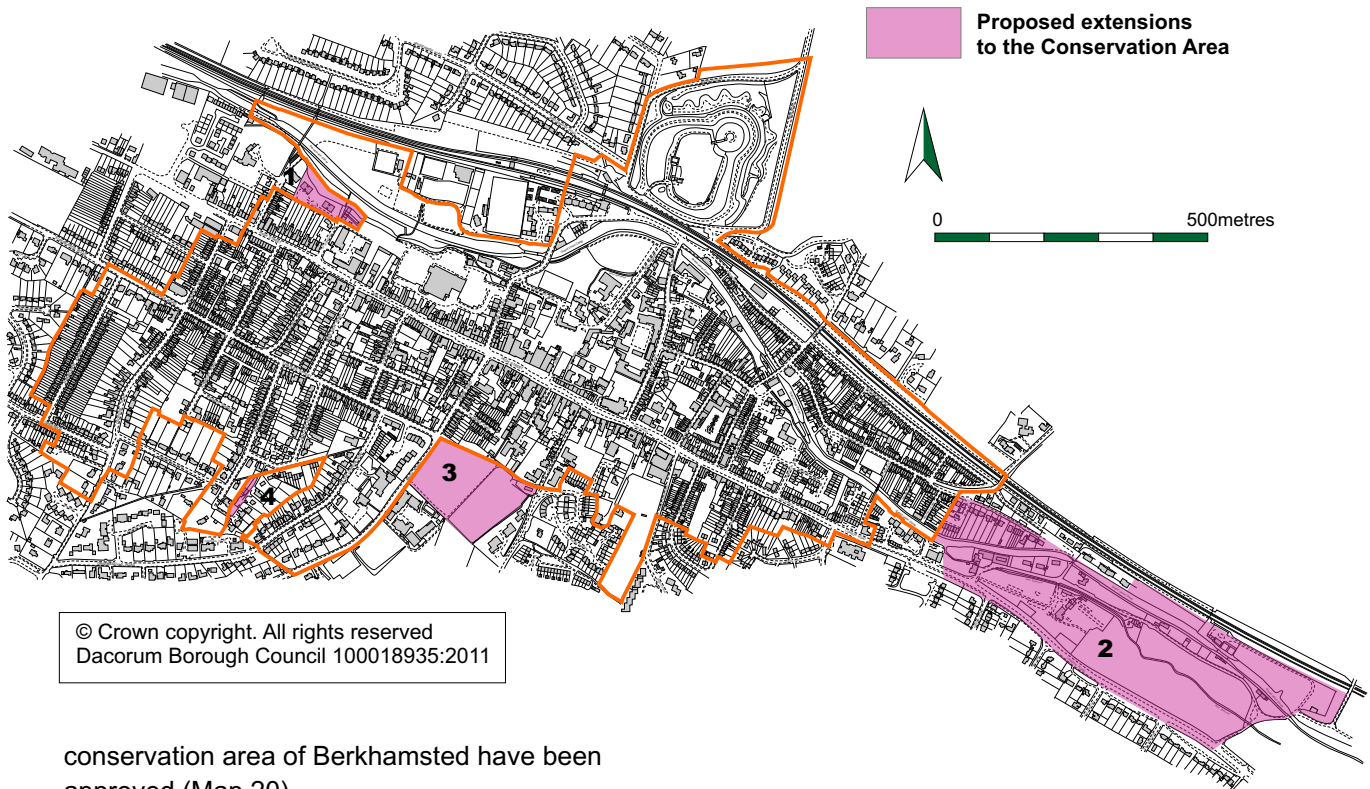
This document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area and boundaries;
- An updated 'Heritage Count';
- An assessment of whether the management proposals in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A Buildings at Risk survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and proposed actions and amendments
- Public consultation on the review findings, any proposed changes and input into the final review.

6.0 Boundary changes

An important aspect of this Appraisal has been considering whether the boundaries of the Conservation Area should be re-drawn. This Appraisal has examined the conservation area boundaries and four extensions to the existing

Map 20: Proposed Boundary Extensions



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conservation area of Berkhamsted have been approved (Map 20).

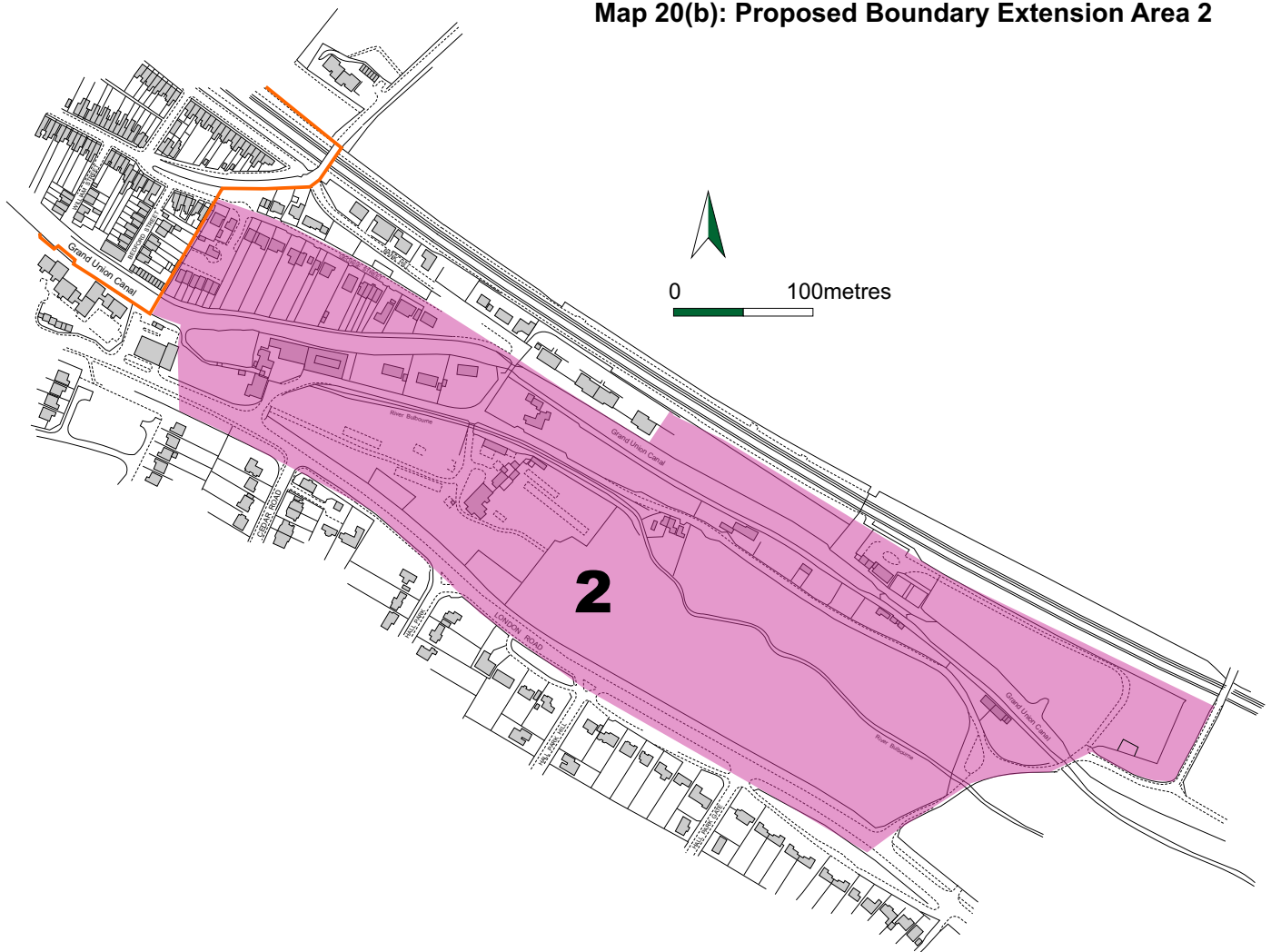
Extension 1: St. John's Well Lane (between Areas 1 and 2). The extension includes the row of cottages at the north end of John's Well Lane (nos. 1 – 4), and the pond, the River Bulbourne and foot bridge leading to the cottages, along with the remainder of St. John's Well Court (1 – 12 & 13 – 24) not already within the existing boundary.

Reason: This extension includes the features associated with the river and the canal, including the row of adjacent early nineteenth century cottages that are part of the historic layout of the canal environment. The cottages share an identical alignment to the canal seen with the later Londrina Terrace at the east end of the conservation area. A history board lies close to the footbridge / canal that explains the historic background to this area. The cottages lay close to the watercress beds and are shown on the 1841 tithe map; they were the only buildings along the lane.

Map 20(a): Proposed Boundary Extension Area 1



Map 20(b): Proposed Boundary Extension Area 2



Extension 2: London Road, Bullbeggars Lane, Bank Mill (Area 2). The extension includes land on the north side of London Road up to the railway line and extend east to Bullbeggars Lane (including the river and canal). It incorporates the properties on the north side of London Road from The Old Mill up to and including Bullbeggars Lane, follow along Bullbeggars Lane north towards the railway line, and turn west along the north boundary of the meadows (the south side of the railway line) back towards George Street. It includes the larger part of Bank Mill, the River Bulbourne, and the Grand Union Canal, including two canal bridges as far as Bridge no. 144 and a listed lock-keepers cottage, 102 Bank Mill Lane. It does not include the north side of George Street up to the railway.

Reason: This extension includes the continuing features and landscape of the Grand Union Canal and River Bulbourne as far east as the existing character continues. It forms part of the historic setting of the landscape and some older housing. The inclusion of two canal bridges is due to their well-preserved original historic character and current lack of other forms of planning protection from alteration. These bridges consist not just of a brick arch, but also of features such as parapets and access steps that also demonstrate their nineteenth century origins. The lock-keepers cottage and the meadows on either side of the canal are an integral part of the historic environment of this stretch of the canal.

Extension 3: Kings Road, east side (Area 3). The extension encompasses Butts Meadow recreation ground and the neighbouring allotments.

Reason: The sites are considered to be important open spaces with neighbouring buildings of visual and historic interest for the conservation area.

Extension 4: Montague Road (Area 3). The extension includes a slender piece of land along the east side of the existing boundary between North Road and Doctor's Commons Road off Angle Place (path), and four semi-detached houses, 29, 29a, and 31 & 33 Montague Road.

Reason: This extension has been included as the plots relate to the development of Montague Road that lies within the existing boundary.

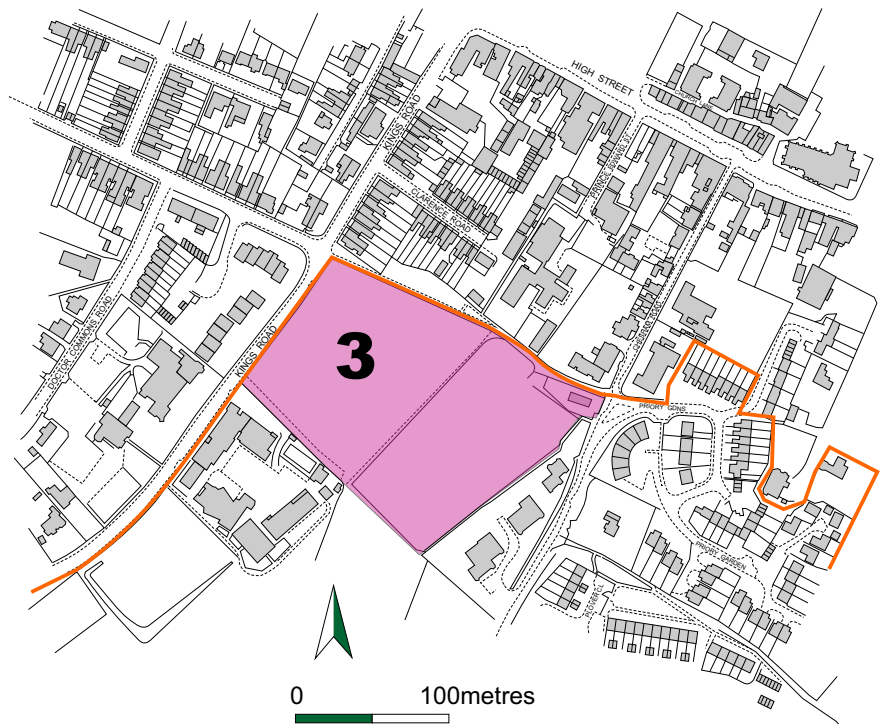
7.0 Appraising the condition of heritage assets

A survey is carried out from time to time at both a national and local level to assess the condition of heritage assets. This survey includes the identification of buildings that have fallen into disuse, dereliction or disrepair, commonly referred to as 'Buildings at Risk'.

This survey can provide a useful means of monitoring many significant historic buildings within conservation areas. The national Heritage at Risk Register covers grade I and II* buildings at risk and is available through www.english-heritage.org.uk.

A Building at Risk can be addressed through the grant aiding of target buildings, or through the use of legislation such as Repairs Notices or Urgent Works Notices, to bring about works to a building to either repair it or make it secure or weather tight. This is of particular relevance where a building is important for maintaining the

Map 20(c): Proposed Boundary Extension Area 3



Map 20(d): Proposed Boundary Extension Area 4



character and appearance of the area. The Council may carry out such works as are necessary and recover the costs incurred from the owners.

Generally, the buildings in Berkhamsted are well maintained and only a small number of buildings were identified at the time of the survey that require urgent attention; no statutory listed grade I, II* or II buildings were found to be a 'Buildings

at Risk' at the time of the area survey (June – December 2011): one fell in to category 4 (vulnerable). The Council will monitor the condition of statutory listed buildings in the conservation area and, where a listed building is threatened by a lack of maintenance or repair, the Council will use the available statutory powers to force the owner to take action. Some unlisted buildings were in poor condition and the Council will monitor the condition of other unlisted buildings as resources permit.

8.0 Enforcement proceedings

Unauthorised works and breaches of planning control can cumulatively harm the quality of both the built environment and surrounding spaces within a conservation area. An obvious example of this sort of damage could be unauthorised works to a listed building. A listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest and is enshrined in law under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Listed Building Consent is required for any works of alteration to a listed building and it is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works. The removal of traditional timber windows and doors, for example, and their replacement with uPVC or poor modern imitations, can be detrimental to the building's intrinsic special interest.

It is not only alterations to listed buildings that can damage the character and appearance of conservation areas. The unauthorised demolition of buildings, or detrimental alterations to unlisted buildings, can all erode the special character of a conservation area. The use of non-approved materials, for example, can be particularly harmful (e.g. modern cement rendering, inappropriate 'ribbon' pointing style, plastic rainwater goods, etc).

It is important, therefore, that the Council investigates breaches of planning law within conservation areas, as this can help preserve the quality of the historic environment. The survey process utilised in the production of an Appraisal may highlight planning breaches and unlawful alterations to listed buildings. In response to this survey, the Council can take appropriate action with owners on an individual basis. Anyone can report a suspected planning breach by contacting

the Council's Enforcement Team. The District Council regularly follows up reports of unauthorised work and may take enforcement action.

Where work has been carried out without planning permission and it is considered that such works are harmful to the character of the conservation area then an enforcement notice may be served requiring remedial measures to be taken.

9.0 Proposed enhancement schemes

The conservation area could be enhanced by for instance,

- amelioration of parking and traffic problems
- improvements to signage, especially road name signs
- re-surfacing of roads and pavements, and replacement of kerb stones
- extending the use of heritage lamp posts
- new heritage information boards (see Identification of Heritage Assets below)
- shopfront grant scheme

This is a situation that will be monitored and, should the opportunity arise, then reference will be made to the Appraisal in developing priorities and an appropriate enhancement strategy. All works should accord with the spirit of English Heritage's guidance.

The Council would also support the conservation of original features on historic buildings, and where appropriate the re-installation of tradition materials / features (such as timber windows, clay tiles or lime-based pointing), particularly where modern materials / features (such as UPVC windows, concrete tiles or cement pointing) have a detrimental impact on the character of the building, nearby listed buildings and the surrounding conservation area.

The removal of highway clutter would be supported by the Council.

10.0 Proposals for economic development and regeneration (including grants)

Many established organisations, businesses and institutions continue to play very important social and economic roles within Berkhamsted as a whole, and to the on-going vitality, viability and

quality of the Berkhamsted Conservation Area. Crucially, the continued use of historic buildings within the Conservation Area can help secure their future maintenance and viability. It is recognised that such bodies are dynamic organisations which will need to grow and change over the years in response to changing economic, social and technological circumstances to ensure their continued economic success.

This appraisal has identified Berkhamsted School between Castle Street and Mill Street as a particularly important multi-period site which has evolved and changed over five centuries in response to changing demands. The centre piece is the Grade 1 Old Hall, with a further listed building, two curtilage listed structures and some locally listed buildings on the main site. Whilst the relative importance and contribution of these individual buildings are recognised through these designations, it is acknowledged that common architectural characteristics and features are rare. The school will continue to evolve and it is clear that quality new design, such as the 2007 Chadwick Building, which lies to the north of the main site but also with the Conservation Area, can make a positive contribution to the street scene and Conservation Area. Some buildings on the site make little or no contribution to the Conservation Area and there is scope for further development and change to enhance the positive and important contribution of the School to the Berkhamsted Conservation Area. An assessment of the individual buildings and their historic context, and the potential impact of any proposal on the special interest and significance of the relative heritage asset when it comes forward, would ensure that future development is properly informed by and takes appropriate account of the need to preserve and enhance the historic environment.

Should any grant schemes be proposed that are specific to the Berkhamsted Conservation Area, details will be advertised on the website and relevant local stakeholders will be notified.

11.0 Designation of Heritage Assets

Dacorum Borough Council will actively keep under review whether there should be additions to the entries in Appendices 1 and 2 of the listed buildings, scheduled monuments and non-

designated assets such as unlisted buildings or structures and unscheduled archaeological remains within the conservation area.

When assessing the contribution made by heritage assets, consideration will be given to the impact on the special architectural or historic significance of a conservation area made by the heritage asset. For example, if a building is the work of a particular noteworthy local architect, it may carry historic significance. Other reasons to consider the significance of unlisted buildings might include:

- Qualities of age, style, materials or other characteristics that reflect those of a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area;
- Age, materials or other historic characteristics that relate strongly to adjacent listed buildings;
- Group value of buildings;
- Relationship to historic roads and layouts;
- Landmark qualities or contribution to recognised spaces and amenity;
- Usage where this reflects the historic nature of an area;
- Association with past events or people;
- Artistic significance

The overarching question is whether or not the building in question contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area and whether the loss or substantial alteration of it would be harmful to the intrinsic special interest of the conservation area.

Any building or structure meeting any of these key criteria should be considered as a heritage asset.

Identification of Heritage Assets

Although there are a number of different schemes employed to identify and interpret the historic environment of Berkhamsted, such as The Berkhamsted Heritage Walk, the local 'Blue Plaque' scheme and the desk stones along the canal, there is little within the town centre itself. The existing information boards in Waitrose car park could be overhauled and, while additional signage might seem as adding to street clutter, a single new board could be placed on the High Street (perhaps outside the Civic Centre where the town sign stands).

Disclaimer:

The appendices are by no means exhaustive. The absence of any building or structure from the appendices does not necessarily mean that it is of no interest or that it makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Further Reading and Sources of Information**Further Reading:**

Birtchnell, P. 1972. *A short history of Berkhamsted*. P. Birtchnell, Berkhamsted.

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Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 – 2011

Dacorum Borough Council's Planning Framework (Pre-Submission Core Strategy)

Dacorum Borough: *Supplementary Planning Guidance (May 2004)*

English Heritage. 2005. *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*.

English Heritage. 2006. *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*.

English Heritage. 2011. *Good Practice Guide for Local Listing. Identifying and Managing Significant Local Heritage Assets (Draft Feb 2011)*

Communities and Local Government, 2012. National Planning Policy Framework

Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)

For Further Information regarding all Planning and Conservation Matters:

Dacorum Borough Council

Civic Centre

The Marlowes

Hemel Hempstead HP1 1HH

Tel: 01442 228000

www.dacorum.gov.uk

See also Department for Communities and Local Government

www.communities.gov.uk

For Further Information relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas:

English Heritage
1 Waterhouse Square
138 – 142 Holborn
London EC1N 2ST
General enquiries: 020 7973 3000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

For Technical Guidance:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London E1 6DY
Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.spab.ork.uk

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 5DX
Tel: 087 1750 2936
www.georgiangroup.org.uk

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens
Bedford Park
London W4 1TT
Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

The Twentieth Century Society
70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
Tel: 020 7250 3857
www.c20society.org.uk

