

Esher Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Proposals

Esher Green
492



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Esher Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Proposals

This document has been commissioned by the Town Planning Division, Elmbridge Borough Council, as part of its rolling programme of undertaking conservation area appraisals and preparing management proposals.

The document has been created through collaborative working by the Esher Conservation Area Working Group. The group included residents, representatives from a variety of historical, amenity and conservation societies (including the Conservation Area Advisory Committee), local Councillors and officers from Elmbridge Borough Council. The Paul Drury Partnership was appointed as heritage consultants to facilitate the project and produce the character appraisal and management proposals.

The designation, review, protection and management of conservation areas are part of the statutory duties of Elmbridge Borough Council as the local planning authority. Community involvement however is essential in understanding the special nature of, and different issues for, each individual conservation area. The Working Group identified a range of aspects and issues that were incorporated in the document at its initial draft stages. This document has been the subject of wider public consultation for a six-week period commencing on 26 November 2007 and the comments received have informed the final document.

This guidance document will be used to refer to and in the interpretation of existing policies in the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Council Local Plan 2000 (REBLP 2000); in the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF); as a basis for understanding the area; and as a tool to inform decision-making, monitoring and management. It will be the subject of an ongoing five-year review, providing the opportunity to bring it into the LDF process.

The document was considered and endorsed by the Elmbridge Borough Council Planning Committee on 19 February 2008 and by a meeting of full Council on 27 February 2008. The Council also confirmed three extensions to the existing conservation area comprising Nos 53-65 (odd numbers) High Street, Nos 1-46 (inclusive) Wolsey Road, 1-17 (inclusive) Wolsey Grove and 1-11 (inclusive) Charlotte Mews and public car park, Heather Place, and trees and public verges on Lammas Lane.

The document is available on Elmbridge Borough Council's website, www.elmbridge.gov.uk, and to purchase in printed form from Elmbridge Borough Council.

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Aerial view of the conservation area

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I INTRODUCTION

The Esher Conservation Area was designated on 31 July 1973 by Surrey County Council. It was extended by Elmbridge Borough Council to include Clive Road and the adjacent properties on the High Street on 21 June 1983.

Conservation areas are defined as areas of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. They were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are now designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Under Section 72 of the same Act, designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. In fulfilling this duty, the Council seeks to manage change in a sensitive way, ensuring that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced, rather than eroded.

This document seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of the "appraisal").
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the "management proposals").

The document therefore provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Esher Conservation Area can be assessed. However, it is not a complete audit of every building or feature, but rather aims to give an overall picture of the area. It should be read in conjunction with the wider adopted development plan policy framework produced by Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey County Council. These documents include:

(i) *The Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000*: Chapter 8 addresses the historic built environment. The management of conservation areas is covered by saved policies HEN9, 11, 13 and 14; Policy HEN17 deals with archaeology. This will be replaced by future Development Plan Documents.

(ii) *The Adopted Surrey Structure Plan 2004*: Provides strategic guidance for the built environment for the period to 2016.

The document is in conformity with English Heritage guidance, as set out in *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* and *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (both February 2006). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15). Government advice on archaeology, which is relevant to the Esher Conservation Area, is set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning*.



Esher Green

2 LOCATION AND SETTING

LOCATION

The Esher Conservation Area forms the historic core of Esher, which is located at the junction between the former main London to Portsmouth Road (now the A307), and the roads to Weybridge and Leatherhead (via Oxshott). Esher is situated some 15 miles to the south-west of London.

BOUNDARIES

The existing conservation area encompasses the older part of the High Street, the area around Esher Green, Park Road - Esher's earliest residential street - and Clive Road, which is lined with high quality interwar housing. Occupying the 'hole' in the middle of the area are Wolsey Road and Wolsey Grove, two late 19th century residential streets. Given their close geographical association with the surrounding area, these streets have been included in the appraisal.

GEOLOGY

The underlying geology of Esher is London Clay; its upper levels, where they contain sand, are known as the 'Claygate Beds'. To the south-west, and in the conservation area itself, the London Clay is overlain by the Bracklesham Beds of sand and gravel. This produces relatively poor soils, characteristically supporting heathland or secondary woodland. The settlement of Esher indeed appears to have developed around the edge of a large common (see p3).

TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

Esher is situated on relatively flat ground on the southern slope of the Thames valley. The junction between the three roads sits in a shallow bowl between two slight hills. The Portsmouth Road, Esher Green and Claremont Lane rise gradually to the south-west, north-east and south-east respectively, while the road to Weybridge (Lammas Lane) descends to cross the River Mole three quarters of a mile to the west.

Although very close to suburban south-west London, the town retains its identity as a separate settlement by virtue of the areas of open land surrounding it. These include Sandown Park Race Course to the north, Littleworth Common to the west, Arbrook Common to the south, and Moore Place Golf Course and Claremont Landscape Garden to the south-west. These commons and their Green Belt designation form the present constraints to the expansion of Esher.

ARCHAEOLOGY

As the core of a settlement of medieval origin, the town centre, including the northern part of the High Street, Church Street and the junction of Esher Green with the High Street, falls within an Area of High Archaeological Potential, referred to in the *Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000* at Appendix C. Further guidance is to be found in policy HEN17 and paragraphs 8.30-8.31 of the *Plan*, and PPG16.



The High Street, NatWest Bank

3 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA

OUTLINE HISTORY

The first historical reference to Esher is in 675AD, when land there was granted to Chertsey Abbey. The name Esher is probably derived from Old English, suggesting that the settlement was founded during the Saxon period. While no evidence has yet been found of Saxon or earlier occupation in the centre of Esher itself, there is archaeological evidence of prehistoric, Roman and early Saxon activity on the Warren, close by Esher Green.

During the middle ages, the parish of Esher was divided into three manors: Sandon, Esher Wateville and Esher Episcopi. Sandon occupied the north-east of the parish, including what is now Sandown Race Course, centred on a small Augustinian Priory and later on a manor house on the High Street. Esher Wateville occupied the southern part of the parish and became, with the addition of land from the Esher Place estate (Esher Episcopi), the Claremont Estate. Here the architect John Vanbrugh built in 1708-14 a palatial house for Thomas Pelham, Earl of Clare and subsequently Duke of Newcastle, around the core of Chargate Farm, a small house Vanbrugh had initially built for himself. This was replaced by the present house, on a slightly different site, in the 1760s. The owners of the Claremont Estate were also Lords of the Manor of Esher. They thus owned the Green, which explains why it remained open land. The owners also had a private pew in St George's Church, known as the 'Newcastle Pew'.

Esher Episcopi occupied the north-west of the parish and was held by the Bishops of Winchester for most of the medieval period. At the reformation (from 1538), it became the Esher Place estate. Of the medieval manor house, only the gatehouse survives, built by Bishop Waynflete c1475-80. It was remodelled and extended for Henry Pelham (Thomas' younger brother) by William Kent between 1729 and 1748. Kent was an important architect and landscape gardener, who also designed the surviving entrance lodges on Esher Green and worked for Newcastle at Claremont. In 1805, Kent's house was superseded as the centre of the estate by a new building on higher ground, which still stands today, although much extended in the 1890s.



East and West Lodges, Esher Green

The lands of these manors met at the junction of the main London-Portsmouth road with the roads from Weybridge and Leatherhead, close to a crossing of the River Mole. During the middle ages, this was a large common, which was gradually enclosed during the early modern period to become the centre of Esher village. This process of enclosure helped to concentrate the development of what previously was probably a dispersed settlement around the road junction and church. St George's was rebuilt c.1540, and is the oldest standing building in the conservation area. Treswell's map of Esher Place, dated 1606, shows some encroachment on the common by enclosure and very few buildings in what is now the centre of Esher.

Esher became a principal coach stop on the London- Portsmouth Road and flourished from the 16th to the 18th centuries, as traffic to the Royal dockyard increased. The road was turn-piked in 1749 and, by the 18th century, there were several inns serving the needs of travellers. One of these, The Bear, still survives and functions. The fabric of the current building dates from the early 18th century, but an inn is reputed to have stood on this site since the 16th century.



The Bear Hotel



Extract from Treswell Survey of Esher Place, 1606.

Rocque's map of Middlesex, published in 1762, show settlement concentrated on the London-Portsmouth road and the north-east side of Esher Green. The majority of the buildings on the south side of the High Street (The Bear Hotel, The Grapes and numbers 77, 83, 85 and 99-103) date from the early 18th century, as do numbers 136-138 on the north side.

Typically for a village close, and with easy access, to London, in parallel with these developments there was a proliferation of large houses on the outskirts. These included the late 17th century Sandown House, Clive Place and Moore Place. A further group to the north of the town centre was demolished and replaced by shops during the 1930s.

These buildings all appear on the first large scale map of the village, the 1840 tithe map, which shows a similar settlement pattern to Rocque's map. The majority of the houses on the north-east side of Esher Green had been built and the triangle of land between the High Street and the Green covered with buildings, of which numbers 10-26 Church Street survive. A mix of small cottages and detached houses in large plots is shown on the north-west side of the High Street, which remained relatively undeveloped.

A railway station to serve Esher was built in 1846, but it was some distance from the town centre. The remoteness of the station and the

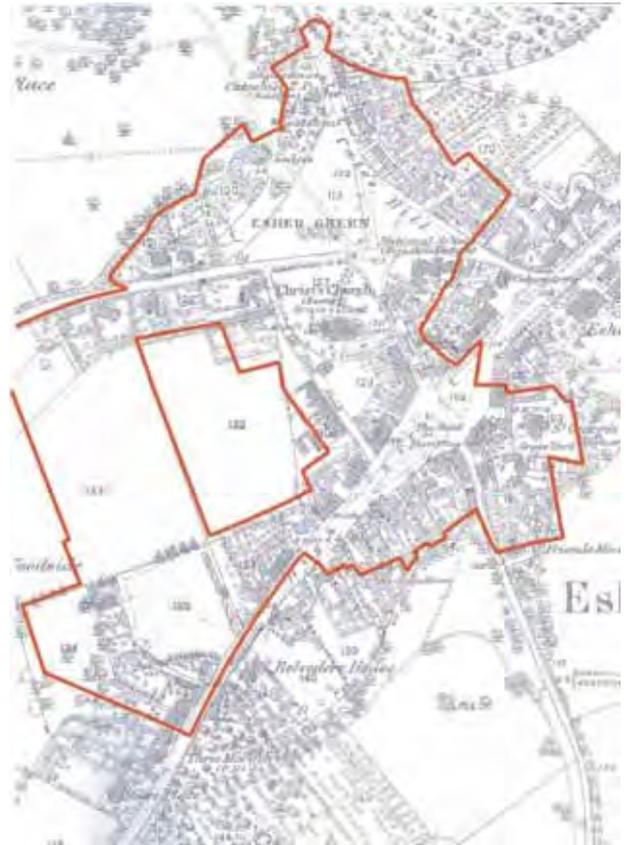
existence of the large estates meant that suburban expansion was restricted to the relatively small area of land between the High Street and Esher Green. Historic Ordnance Survey maps indicate that Park Road was laid out here before 1868, and lined with compact, terraced houses by 1894/5. Wolsey Road, Wolsey Grove and Park Square were all developed between 1868 and 1894/5. At the same time, closely-packed terraces were erected on the north side of the High Street. The number of public buildings also increased during the later part of the 19th century. Christ Church, on the Green, was completed in 1854, and exemplifies the growing prosperity of the emerging town. Esher National School, now the local centre for adult education, opened in 1859. A Baptist Church was built in Park Road between 1868 and 1894/5 and a Methodist church in Wolsey Road in 1889.

The 19th century development of Esher continued to be influenced by the main local land owners, in particular the royal family. Claremont was acquired by the Crown in 1816 as a residence for Princess Charlotte and her husband Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. After Charlotte's death, it became a refuge for the French royal family in exile, and then was occupied by Queen Victoria in 1865. She donated the drinking fountain which stands in the High Street. The former Bunch of Grapes Inn became the home and studio of Francis John Williamson, Queen Victoria's favourite sculptor, whose work includes the statue of Britannia opposite, and George Meredith, the Victorian novelist, also lived there for a short period. The owner of Esher Place, J.W. Spicer, donated the land for Christ Church.

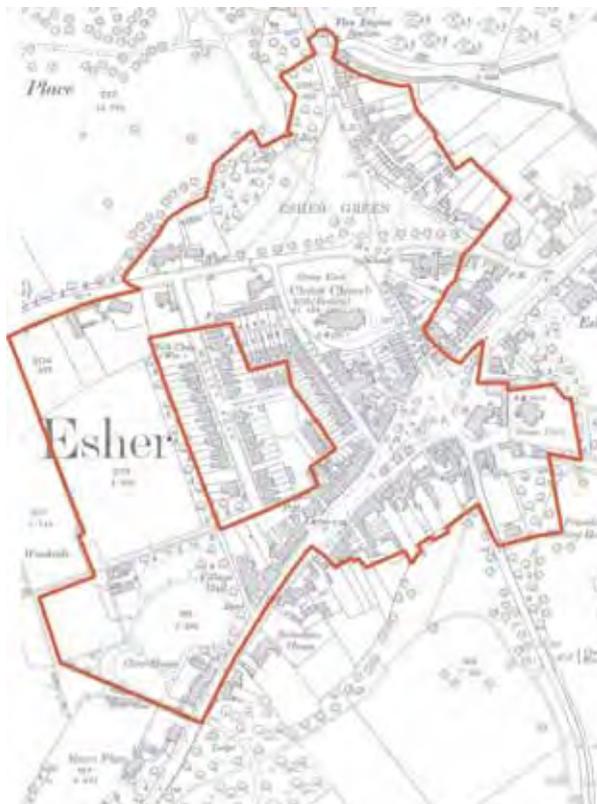
During the later 19th and early 20th centuries, opportunities for development had become limited, so only a few new buildings were constructed in the centre. The most notable are the Queen Anne-style bank on the corner of the High Street and Church Street, and the former Post Office (number 81) on the south side of the High Street. Regrettably, a very fine village hall at 140 High Street, built in 1886, has been demolished. New development concentrated on the fringes of the town, where the old estates were at last being broken up. In 1875, a large part of the Sandon Estate became the Sandown Park Race Course. Most of the Esher Place and Claremont Estates were developed with large, detached houses between 1912 and 1938, transforming Esher from a country village into the centre of a commuter suburb. The best of these developments was undoubtedly Clive Road, a



Extract from the 1840 tithe map of Esher Parish



1868 Ordnance Survey



1895 Ordnance Survey



1938 Ordnance Survey

stylish enclave built in 1925-1935 in what were the grounds of Clive House. All the original houses were designed by the architect George Blair Imrie.

The urbanisation of the town centre was completed before 1938 by the replacement of the large houses at the north end of the High Street with parades of shops and a cinema, the inevitable consequence of the growth of suburban housing. During this time, the usage of buildings on Esher Green changed from a mixture of houses and shops to almost wholly residential. Further expansion of the town has been constrained by the surrounding green belt. Subsequent development has mostly been on brown-field sites, and has generally involved the replacement of terraced housing along the High Street with larger blocks, consisting of flats above shops.



St George's Church

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF HISTORICAL INTEREST IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

- The historic layout of the High Street and Esher Green
- The mid-16th century Church of St George, with its churchyard, timber fence and chest tombs
- The 17th century Grapes House and Grapes Cottage
- A group of 18th century buildings: The Bear Hotel, 83-85, 99-103 and 136-138 High Street, Clive House on Portsmouth Road and The Lammas on Lammas Lane.
- The early-mid 18th century entrance lodges to Esher Place by William Kent
- The 1793 Friends' Meeting House in Claremont Lane
- The group of early-19th century cottages at 28-34 Esher Green
- The mid-19th century Christ Church and the former Esher National School.
- The later-19th century development on the north side of the High Street, Church Street, Park Square and Wolsey Road
- Victorian monuments on the High Street green: the drinking fountain, statue of Britannia and the pump
- The high-quality 1925-35 suburban development of Clive Road



High Street green, the pump

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Early maps of Esher make clear that the village grew up around the edges of a large open common at the centre of the three manorial estates, with roads entering at its four corners (the London to Portsmouth Road, More Lane, Lammas Lane) and another in the middle of the south-east side (Claremont Lane). Plots were gradually enclosed along the north-east and south-east sides, between roads across the common and the common edge. In the post-medieval period, the south-west side of this common became enclosed, in fields with characteristic long straight boundaries. Through the 18th and, especially, the 19th centuries, these were sub-divided and developed, leaving the two isolated areas of common land that survive today – the High Street green and Esher Green.



The High Street Green

One of the most distinctive aspects of the conservation area now is the way in which it naturally divides into five distinct spaces: the town centre, Esher Green, and the three successive residential streets to the west. Visually, there is little to connect them, but all are loosely linked by views of the spire of Christ Church, in the centre of the area, which can be glimpsed down roads, or through gaps between buildings.

The largest space is formed by the long, gradually curving, High Street, which widens dramatically as it nears the Church Street/Claremont Lane junction, resulting in a striking funnel shape. This was probably due to the turnpike (18th century) improvement of the Portsmouth Road, straightening its course and easing its gradients. The space between the two routes remained the site of the annual fair, which was held here until

the 1870s. Church Street and Claremont Lane form part of the same historic north-south road, with long views past the High Street junction towards Esher Green, focused on the war memorial.

Esher Green, to the north, is an open triangle of land rising gently to the north, divided by two roads, More Lane and Esher Place Avenue. It is enclosed on all sides, with the only outward view being down Church Street towards The Bear. The gap between buildings at the High Street/Esher Green Road junction currently provides an opportunistic long view towards the spire of Christ Church, albeit over a desolate-looking car park.

The western part of the conservation area is divided by three residential streets running north-south. Each is a discrete enclosed space, visually connected with the rest of the area only by links at its entrances. The oldest of these, Park Road, connects Esher Green to the High Street. It is a straight, narrow road, closely hemmed in by terraced houses on either side. The next, Wolsey Road, is wider, with semi-detached houses set back behind small front gardens, and connected to the High Street only by a narrow, offset lane. The third, Clive Road, is much more spacious. A wide, winding corridor is formed by the road and large front gardens, behind which are substantial detached houses.

As a relatively flat area surrounded by suburban development, the conservation area is largely enclosed, with limited long views out or in.



Clive Road

5 ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA

IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTER AREAS

As suggested by the spatial analysis, the conservation area falls naturally into five areas of distinctive character:

- 1: The Town Centre, including the High Street, Church Street, Claremont Lane, St George's Church and Dawes Court.
- 2: Esher Green, Christ Church and the buildings surrounding it
- 3: Park Road, including Park Square
- 4: Wolsey Road and Wolsey Grove
- 5: Clive Road

CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND USES

These character areas have differing dominant uses, which contribute to each area's distinctiveness. The High Street/Church Street/Claremont Lane junction forms the historic centre of the town. The development of the parades of shops to the north in the 1930s shifted the retail centre, however, and today the southern part of the High Street forms a secondary retail area, with a large number of cafés, restaurants and offices. Most shops have flats on the upper floors.

Esher Green is predominantly open space, which is used extensively for recreational and leisure purposes: there is a popular pub, The Wheatsheaf, at the northern end. The green is surrounded by residential and civic buildings, including the parish church and the Esher Green Adult Learning Centre.

The other three character areas, although of markedly different scales, are almost entirely residential. A joinery workshop in Wolsey Grove, off Wolsey Road, is an interesting survival.



Wolsey Road

CHARACTER AREA 1: THE TOWN CENTRE

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

First impressions of this part of the conservation area are, sadly, dominated by traffic. Although no longer the main road to Portsmouth (the town was by-passed by the new A3 in 1974), the High Street remains one of the main feeder routes to the A3 and Claremont Lane is now a busy link to the M25. Through traffic has always been an essential characteristic of the area, but there is now such a volume of traffic, the flow is so fast and the noise so great, that it discourages visitors from spending time in the area and restricts pedestrian movement.

If the traffic can be ignored, this an attractive historic town centre. Much of its interest derives from the way in which it combines the now dominant urban characteristics with relicts of the village from which it grew. This is exemplified in the mature trees and triangle of grass around the Church Street/Claremont Lane junction, which give, if only fleetingly, the impression of being in the centre of a country village.

Reminders of the village past are also present on the south-east side of the High Street, where buildings have evolved gradually, resulting in an informal, village-scale streetscape. These buildings are relatively small, generally of two storeys and an attic and, although all are roughly of the same height, there is no continuous roof line. Neither is there a consistent building line. Some houses are set back, retaining a front garden, whereas others stand right behind the pavement. A few buildings are detached, while others are grouped in short terraces.



The High Street, south side



The High Street, north side

By contrast, the north-east side of the High Street and Church Street is more urban in nature. The buildings are tightly packed terraces, all of which are set on the pavement line. They are generally tall, at between three and four storeys in height, but the occasional two-storey block and single storey shop attached to a larger building add variety to the streetscape

Entrances to the area are clearly defined, with an abrupt change of character at each threshold. At the north end, where the conservation area abuts the main shopping centre, the area becomes largely urban. Street greenery disappears, and the road becomes wider and straighter and the buildings larger and more uniform. Along Claremont Lane, there is a marked change to a more rural character, defined by high walls and trees.

The urban grain breaks up at the southern end of the High Street, where the historic pattern of village-scale development has been replaced by a Waitrose supermarket and a modern police station. The Waitrose supermarket, with its massive footprint, is over-scaled in comparison with its neighbours, and the police station compares poorly to the older buildings opposite, due to its brutally plain detailing. Both are surrounded by an uninviting expanse of tarmac and parked cars. Another large car park to the south of Belvedere House further breaks up the townscape. Beyond this, there is an abrupt change of character from urban to rural, as buildings give way to woodland.

FOCAL POINTS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

The focal point of this character area is undoubtedly the High Street/Church Street crossroads. The trees here terminate views up and down the High Street, and feature prominently in views from Claremont Lane down Church Street and vice versa. The two most prominent buildings in the town centre are also situated here: the bank on the corner of the High Street and Church Street, and The Bear Hotel opposite.



Christ Church spire seen from the High Street

There are also long views up the High Street from the High Street Green towards the south west, terminating in a mass of tree foliage at the entrance to Clive Road. The key short views are of the spire of Christ Church along Park Road, which is framed by curved corner buildings either side of the entrance to Park Road, the war memorial on Esher Green seen down Church Street, and the bellcote of St George's Church (another focal point) seen along Esher Park Avenue and over the car park of The Bear. Unfortunately, the latter is marred by the encroaching vegetation and the large expanse of tarmac and car park entrance of The Bear.



The High Street, looking south-west

There are two other focal points. The first is the half-timbered gable and bay window of the former post office at 81 High Street, opposite Park Road on the south side. The other is Belvedere House, in Belvedere Close. Although outside the conservation area, this attracts attention as an older building standing on its own.



81 High Street

OPEN SPACES, LANDSCAPE AND TREES

Despite being a busy town centre, trees and grass are important elements in this part of the conservation area. Their informal character serves as a reminder of their origin in a more rural past, rather than as a planned part of an urban landscape.

The significance of the trees at the High Street/Claremont Lane junction and at the south west end of the High Street has already been identified. They are relatively new additions (historic maps suggest that they were planted during the later 19th century): previously, this area was simply grassed. Much of the attraction of this area of green space lies in its openness and simplicity, which still echoes the centre of a rural village. Trees are informally grouped and are mainly mature Common Limes, augmented by smaller Cherries and the more recently planted Ash, Rowan and a fastigate Oak. There is no other planting.

Other important groups of trees are to be found around St George's Church (including Horse Chestnut, Sycamore, Sweet Chestnut, Yew, Holly, Oak, Cherry, Judas tree and Persian Ironwood), giving it the air of a country churchyard and lining the south side of the High Street, complementing the village-scale buildings beyond. Another important tree group is to be found around the pedestrian entrance to Clive Road, where pollarded Limes provide a dramatic break with the urban grain of the town centre.



St George's Churchyard

Trees also feature strongly in Claremont Lane, where mature specimens include Limes and Cherries, while a group of Scots Pine and a large Bay tree outside Ashley House and 77 High Street make an important contribution to the suburban street scene.

PUBLIC REALM

Street furniture is dominated by traffic management signs. These include high, motorway-standard streetlights, numerous traffic lights and functional pedestrian safety barriers. A more sympathetic approach has been adopted on the south side of the High Street, where timber posts with steel rails have been employed. Surfaces are generally tarmac, with concrete or granite kerbs.

There is an interesting group of monuments around the High Street/Church Street junction, including a drinking fountain and railings (a gift from Queen Victoria in 1877), a pump (commemorating the marriage of the Comte de Paris in 1864) and a statue of Britannia (commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee of 1897). These are partially hidden by the surrounding trees and signage and only becoming apparent when the High Street green is explored, rather than being perceived as landmarks.



The High Street, drinking fountain

As most buildings front directly onto the street, boundary treatments do not play a major role in the town centre. They form an important element in Claremont Lane, however. The tall brick wall in front of the Friends' Meeting House makes an important contribution to the suburban character of this road and sets the tone for houses outside the conservation area. In Esher Park Avenue, the timber pale fence around St George's Church, with its charming heart-shaped fence posts, enhances the 'country churchyard' feel of this part of the area.

BUILDINGS

Architectural styles and detailing

The dominant style in this area is of simple, sub-classical buildings of the mid 19th-century. These are concentrated on the north-west side of the High Street and the west side of Church Street. Relatively straightforward in form, they are characterised by low-pitched slate roofs, some of which are hidden by parapets, large four pane sash windows and full shopfronts on the ground floor. Some are enriched by stucco window surrounds. Most are of brick, which has often been painted. Numbers 98-108 stand out due to their knapped flint walls with yellow brick dressings. They would be even more prominent if they had retained their original pantiled roofs, all but one of which have been replaced in slate.



98-108 High Street

A second common building type is Georgian vernacular, which is dominant on the south-east side of the High Street and the east side of Church Street, with a few examples on the north-west side of the High Street (numbers 136-138 High Street and Clive House). These are mostly of local stock brick and often rendered. Windows are generally small paned sashes, chimneys are relatively short and roofs tend to be either high-pitched, or of the mansard type, and covered in clay tiles. A fine classical porch is attached to the front of number 85. The weather-boarded early 19th century houses of Dawes Court, just off the south-east side of the High Street, provide a variation of this style. While extensively rebuilt, these are the last remaining examples of a building type that was once common in Esher.



83 High Street

The Friends' Meeting House of 1793, on the south-east edge of the conservation area, is a characteristically simple building and orientated at right angles to Claremont Lane and with a burial ground with the plain markers characteristic of the Friends.



Friends' Meeting House

Much of the character of these relatively simple buildings derives from their architectural details. In some cases, these details have been lost to insensitive alterations: sash windows have been replaced with PVCu units, original slate and clay tile roofs replaced with concrete tiles and chimneys have been reduced or demolished.

The street scene is enlivened by a number of buildings in a contrasting style. St George's Church, which is just off the High Street, but is prominent in views around The Bear, is very simple, almost vernacular, in form. The steep gable and bellcote are in stark contrast to the surrounding secular buildings. Two late 19th century buildings, the Queen Anne revival bank on the corner of High Street and Church Street and the 'Jacobethan' former Post Office at 81 High Street, have already been mentioned as focal points. In addition to their townscape value, their high quality detailing makes an important contribution to the character of the area. The bank is of two storeys below the main cornice, plus an attic storey with a balustraded parapet, red brick pilasters to the end bays, and architrave surrounds to the windows in stone or red brick, which contrast strongly with the plum coloured brick used for the walls. The Post Office stands out due to its bright red brick, stone mullion-and-transom windows and black and white decorative half-timbering. Tudor North House employs similar details, adding interest to views down Claremont Lane. The large window with lattice glazing bars on the first floor brings life to the otherwise unremarkable number 91 High Street.

Various modern buildings have been inserted. These have generally been in a neo-Georgian style and include two large blocks on the north-west side of the High Street (numbers 70-80 and 110). While they have made an attempt to complement

the character of the area, in many ways they have not been particularly successful. This includes the use of poorly proportioned and flush windows and over-large mansard roofs with near-vertical front slopes,



70-80 High Street

Shopfronts

The ground floors of most buildings are given over to shopfronts. In the early 18th century buildings on the south-east side of the High Street, these tend to take the form of inserted bow or bay fronted windows, which work reasonably well with the floors above. There are several good traditional shopfronts. The best, which are virtually intact, including ventilation grills and arched window heads, are to numbers 134-138. A good early shopfront also survives at number 94. Many interesting fragments from lost shopfronts also survive. The best of these are the faience pilasters and console brackets between numbers 86-92. An early blind box survives at number 98, elegant narrow glazing bars to the windows at 120, and a good fascia with classical detailing at number 91. An unusual modernist 1930s fascia at number 96 is marred by the unsympathetic modern shopfronts



136-138 High Street

beneath. Most other shopfronts are modern, of less sympathetic design, poorly detailed and with deep fascias. Some do, however, make an attempt to fit in with the area, although with varying degrees of success. The best are those at numbers 86-92 and 106-108.



Esher Green looking south

CHARACTER AREA 2: ESHER GREEN AND CHRIST CHURCH

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

The character area consists of Esher Green and the southern end of More Lane; part of Tellisford; the approach to Esher Place Avenue; the eastern end of Lammas Lane; and the north end of Church Street. Although Lammas Lane is the main road to Weybridge, and thus very busy, the area retains much of the character of a rural village green, in contrast to the densely developed town centre to the south. As the largest single space in the conservation area, the Green itself dominates the townscape. Its visual impact is accentuated by the perceptible slope of the ground from north to south.

Most of the surrounding buildings are relatively small scale, accentuating the size of the Green. To the east, a group of 18th and 19th century cottages is a reminder of the early development of this area. To the north, widely spaced, detached buildings dating from the 1930s form part of the Esher Place development, and are mainly hidden by trees; the focal point remains the 18th century lodges to Esher Place. The south side is dominated by larger, more architecturally ambitious buildings, including the Victorian Gothic former school (now the Esher Green Adult Learning Centre) and Christ Church. The wide spacing of these buildings and well-planted



86-92 High Street, Console bracket

churchyard reinforce the village-like character of the area. At the west end, the Green tails off, with houses built up close to Lammas Lane. Architecturally, these are in a mix of styles, including later buildings inserted around the late 18th century listed house, 'The Lammas'.



Esher Green Adult Learning Centre

FOCAL POINTS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

The spire of Christ Church, by far the highest structure in the conservation area, is the most striking feature in the wider townscape. Within

the character area, the best views of it are along Lammas Lane and from the north end of the Green, the highest topographical point. Landmark buildings are the Tudor-style Queen's Close, dating from the 1930s, which is arresting if only for its grand scale and dramatic elevations, Kent's lodges to Esher Place, which feature strongly in views north from Christ Church, the war memorial and Few's Cottages (numbers 24 and 26 Church Street), which occupy a prominent site on the corner of Church Street.



Christ Church

Most views across, and in and out of, the Green are glimpsed through extensive tree cover; cuts between buildings and the ubiquitous highway signage. There are good views south-west from Esher Place Avenue towards the former school and Few's Cottages. Across to the east, there are views towards the listed cottages on the north-east side of Esher Green. At the west of the Green, the sloping landscaped view towards number 5 Esher Place Avenue and its garden is striking, although the building itself is not of particular architectural merit. From the west, views are of the significant trees which frame the entrance to the Green along Lammas Lane. From the south, there are clear views of the war memorial from Church Street

OPEN SPACES, LANDSCAPE AND TREES

The Green itself is the most significant space in the area, effectively separating development north of the town centre and the Esher Place Estate. All the trees on the Green make a valuable

contribution to its special character, framing the central landscaped area, and reinforcing the impression of a village green. Tree coverage is particularly extensive to the north and the approach from the west along Lammas Lane. The dominant species is Lime, but there are also examples of Sweet Chestnuts, Tulip Tree, Horse Chestnuts, Oaks and Maple. Tree avenues define the views towards Christ Church and provide a visual screen between the distinctly rural character of Esher to the north and the more urban town centre to the south. The setting of Christ Church is dominated by mature specimen Cedars. Large front gardens to the properties bordering the north and east sides, often edged with high hedges over low brick walls or timber fences, add to the pleasant, village green character. The railings in front of the Adult Learning centre and the combination of walls, fences and hedges in front of numbers 28-34 Esher Green make a particularly strong contribution. Recreational and leisure uses on the Green are important, and are encouraged by the provision of seating.



Queen's Close



Gateway to Esher Place

PUBLIC REALM

The simple surfacing and absence of pavements running through the Green on the approach to Kent's lodges make a significant contribution to the rural character of the area, although this is impaired by the predominance of traffic and signage. The war memorial, an obelisk with a cruciform head, is an important focal point, despite its location in a busy traffic environment. The sign for The Wheatsheaf pub on the north-east side of the Green adds visual interest. Conservation kerbs have been used in this area.



The war memorial

BUILDINGS

The architectural style and detailing of the buildings in the area is very varied. Nevertheless, the architectural quality of most buildings is high and the variety of styles contributes greatly to the interest of the area. Those on the south side are predominantly Gothic revival, including Christ Church (Benjamin Ferrey, 1853-4), with its broached spire of buff coursed rubble stone with ashlar dressings, as well as the more modest Adult Learning Centre, originally the Church School (1859). On the east side, the only buildings of significance are the two listed lodges by William Kent. These are classically proportioned and detailed, with red brick on a rendered plinth, slate roofs with brick stacks, and a dentilled eaves band,

but given a gothic twist by ogee arches above the windows. Other buildings on this side are unremarkable 1930s suburban houses associated with the Esher Place Estate, which are largely hidden by trees and contribute little to the character of the area. The east side is mainly composed of 18th and early 19th century vernacular cottages. Each is different, but some unity is given by the general use of flush-fitted casement windows, high pitched gabled roofs covered with slates, plain or pantiles and squat ridge stacks. Some houses are enlivened by segmental window heads or dentilled eaves. To the south, the scale of buildings increases, with large detached Victorian villas of rendered brick with low-pitched slate roofs.



Cottages to the east side of Esher Green

The architectural style of the west end of Esher Green is particularly diverse. The outstanding building here is 'The Lammas' on the north side of Lammas Lane. This classical late 18th century townhouse (sometime the rectory) is of brown brick, with red brick and stone dressings and flat-roofed dormers. Its façade of 4 unequal bays has a plat band over ground floor and to the parapet base, small paned sash windows and a six panel door under a traceried fan light. The shallow canted bay windows of the adjoining house add interest to this group. By contrast, Queen's Close, the mansion block nearly opposite on the south side, is in a Tudor style, with mock timber framing. Due to its scale, this block dominates the west end of the Green.

There has been limited post-war infill development, including number 2 Lammas Lane (east of Down House on Lammas Lane), numbers 1 and 3 More Lane and modern detached properties within Tellisford. These properties do not contribute to the special character of the area.



'The Lammas'



22 Esher Green

CHARACTER AREA 3: PARK ROAD

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

This character area is composed of closely packed, predominantly mid- to late-19th century houses. The most striking aspect of the area is the strong continuous building and roof lines, evident particularly on the west side, which consists of a long terrace of two storey houses. The continuity of the streetscape is accentuated by the way buildings are set very close to the pavement, with tiny front gardens enclosed by low brick walls. By contrast, Park Square is much less formal. It is formed of two small terraces set in large gardens either side of a narrow pedestrian alleyway accessed from the west side of Park Road. The buildings are virtually hidden by the high garden fences enclosing the alley.

and Christ Church itself, framed by extensive tree coverage and foliage. From the southern end, the spire of Christ Church provides a focal point for long views along Park Road. The reverse of this view, from the middle of Park Road, is focused on the Old Post Office.



Park Road



View of Christ Church

FOCAL POINTS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

As continuous terraces enclose both sides of the road, views in and out are limited. The junction of Lammas Lane and Park Road allows short views toward the buildings to the west, the churchyard

PUBLIC REALM

A single, elegant swan-necked cast iron street lighting column dating from the mid 20th century stands by the entrance to Park Square. The only other items of street furniture are modern street lights. Roads and pavements are surfaced in tarmac, with concrete kerbs in keeping with the urban nature of the road. The tall trees in the Christ Church churchyard (a line of pollarded Limes and a large Pine and Cedar) on the north-east boundary of the character area soften the edge of what is otherwise an intensely developed area.

BUILDINGS

This road is made up of very plain terraces, almost all of which have lost a degree of their original detailing. However, the road retains character and integrity mainly by virtue of the properties on the west side, where slate roofs and shutters provide interest. Canted bays are the most common ground floor feature, with the upper floor windows in line above. Some horned sash windows survive. There is also a gable-fronted brick building, number 45, with stone detailing, including sills and key stones to brick segmental arches.



Baptist Church



Bewley House

There are three buildings of specific interest. The most important is the Baptist Church, a formal composition in the Tuscan Doric style of white brick with stone dressings. This dates to the mid-late 19th century and is in sharp contrast to the simple surrounding houses. A modern building at the southern end of the road, Bewley House, is a competent architectural pastiche and creates a strong feature on the corner of Heather Place. Park Cottage (number 4), a prominent detached dwelling at the south end on the east side, stands out due to its more elaborate detailing, including splayed window heads and stone sills, despite being rendered and having PVCu windows.

Late 20th century development has dramatically altered the character of Heather Place. Here, two storey residential development of limited architectural merit has recently replaced a mix of 19th century terraces and a ramshackle collection of sheds and workshops.

CHARACTER AREA 4: WOLSEY ROAD

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

This part of the area represents the second phase of development to the west of Christ Church. Although not currently included in the designated conservation area, its townscape qualities and historical and architectural interest are at least equal to that of Park Road. Wolsey Road is typified by high quality, late 19th century two storey dwellings set slightly back from the road on a consistent building line. Although varying in detail and interspersed by some later buildings, they form a cohesive group.



Wolsey Grove

FOCAL POINTS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

Like Park Road, the area is relatively enclosed. The junction of Lammas Lane and Wolsey Road, however, provides long views, which take in the whole street. From the southern end, the road slopes gently down and affords a view of The Lammas framed by significant trees on Lammas Lane. The junction of Wolsey Road and Wolsey Grove provides a glimpse of the spire of Christ Church, with terraced cottages on the north of Wolsey Grove in the foreground.

PUBLIC REALM

The small front gardens to most of the properties make an important contribution to the character of the area. Most are well planted, adding a welcome note of greenery and informality. Tree planting is limited although small trees in front gardens make a positive contribution to the streetscape and mature trees to the rear of numbers 47 and 49 and in the rear gardens of Clive Road contribute to providing a green backdrop. A group of large trees at the south end of the road forms an attractive green backdrop to views in from Lammas Lane. There are three elegant street lighting columns dating from the mid 20th century. There is no other street furniture.



Wolsey Road

BUILDINGS

The area is made up of 19th century terraces of semi-detached and detached dwellings, which are of a similar period and which therefore, although varied architecturally, make a contribution to the character of the area as a group. Many retain original details, including canted bays and four pane sashes. Bays occasionally run to two storeys with dormered gables, for example to numbers 7 and 9. On the west side, semi-detached villas alternate with detached gable-fronted villas. One detached villa, Wolsey House, has a two storey canted bay, with decorative barge boards and an arched entrance porch and is of particular merit.

The only non-domestic buildings are the former Methodist Church and a joinery workshop on Wolsey Grove. The church is of brick with stone dressings. This has a central gothic doorway with drip mould, below a rose window, again with a drip mould. Although of simple composition, it adds some interest to the street by virtue of its architectural contrast. The workshop is very simple and in need of external decoration, but is

pleasingly proportioned and detailed. It is of interest as the last remaining example of a commercial building in this area.

Several modern buildings have been inserted, including numbers 4-6 Wolsey Road and numbers 8a, 9-17 Wolsey Grove. These are generally of a similar scale and style to the earlier buildings, but are inferior in the quality of materials and detailing used.



The Methodist Church



18-28 Wolsey Road

CHARACTER AREA 5: CLIVE ROAD

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

Clive Road forms the winding spine, running roughly north-south, of a private residential estate on the west side of the conservation area which is strikingly different from the rest of the area. Within this enclave, there is a sense almost of stepping back in time to the 1920s. The houses and their setting still succeed in presenting an imagined, idealised and sanitised vision of a traditional rural England.

The estate is the creation of a single mind, that of the architect George Blair Imrie (1885-1952), who was renowned for his sensitive and individual house designs. Entirely residential, made up of large houses and built in a relatively short space of time, it has a contrived homogeneity that would never be found in a historic village; but the original houses are superbly crafted and the result charming.



Clive Road

The tranquillity of the character area contrasts sharply with the noise and traffic of the town centre and Esher Green. This is largely due to the topography and a skilful road layout. Clive Road is a private cul-de-sac entered from Lammas Lane, so there is no through vehicular traffic; there is only a pedestrian link to the High Street. The setting of the development, on gently rising ground and at a significantly lower level than the nearby High Street and Wolsey Road, effectively separates Clive Road from its surroundings. This separation is reinforced by the trees on Lammas Lane and in back gardens, which restrict views

out. A short spur and carriage ring at the south end of Clive Road is the most private part of the development: not only is it a cul-de-sac with minimal traffic, but the houses within are also screened by numbers 30 and 32, which step forward, and the hedges and trees in the garden of number 16. Tall trees in the centre of the carriage ring give further screening to the houses behind.

As would be expected in such a high-quality development, the houses are substantial and set in large gardens. Each is of a unique design and the generous plot sizes give nearly every building its own setting. A wide variety of boundary treatments enhances this individuality. Some houses engage directly with the road over manicured lawns and ornamental flower beds; others have well kept hedges (mainly of Privet, Beech, Laurel, Conifers and Yew).



Boundary hedge



Formal front garden

The sense of privacy and exclusiveness is deliberately limited. These are not houses that encourage their occupants to shut themselves away from their neighbours behind high walls and electronic gates. Rather, they have been carefully designed as a group and suggest a sense of community. A consistent building line and roofline, and strong similarities in scale and massing between properties, give the road a strong sense of identity.

FOCAL POINTS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

Due to the enclosed nature of the area, views in and out are limited. The road can be glimpsed from the end of Lammas Lane and from the gated entrance on the High Street. These are cleverly designed hints at what lies beyond, tempting the viewer to come in and explore. Likewise, there are few views out beyond the occasional glimpse of the spire of Christ Church between houses. The best of these glimpses is between numbers 7 and 9. The trees on the opposite side of Lammas Lane (a mix of Sycamore, Elm, Lime Oak, Hornbeam, Blackthorn and Holly) block views out to the north. The kink at the centre of the road further deflects views in and out, heightening the internal sense of privacy. Within the area, trees and hedges in front gardens have been carefully planted to enhance views of individual houses, resulting in a sequence of intriguing vistas provided by gables and chimneys rising out of greenery.



View from the High Street

LANDSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM

The dominant theme of the landscaping and public realm generally is informality, spaciousness and harmony with nature. This makes an important contribution to appearance of the area as an idealised re-creation of a green and pleasant English village. It is largely achieved by large, luxuriantly-planted front gardens. Several individual trees make a strong contribution, including the massive London Plane in the garden of number 29, the Weeping Ash at number 34, the Yews occupying the island in the cul-de-sac and the mature Wellingtonia at number 16. Garage drives are relatively small, surfaced in gravel or crazy paving, and do not detract from the lushness of the gardens. A mix of fences, stone and brick walls adds interest to front gardens. The informal nature of the street is reinforced by the gravel surfacing to the road and paths, which are defined by grass verges rather than kerbs. Part-way along the west side of the road, front gardens are reduced in size to form a small green.



Well-planted front garden and gravel drive

This is a private estate and the street furniture is simple and again rural in nature. Timber gates guard the entrances and white-painted posts and rails control access to the narrow overgrown path that crosses the area. The street lights are reproductions of traditional styles, which are well-suited to the area, adding to the sense that it is a conscious re-creation of a past era.



Lighting column

In some cases, the size of the front gardens has been reduced by the creation of large driveways accommodating multiple vehicles. A few drives have been resurfaced with concrete setts, giving them a much harder, more urban appearance. The occasional boundary wall has been replaced in artificial stone. The inappropriateness of these materials is made obvious by the contrast with adjacent natural materials.

BUILDINGS

The original Blair Imrie buildings are beautifully designed and detailed in a vernacular revival style. Together, they can be seen as a catalogue of Surrey's architectural history. Some are clearly inspired by the medieval and early-modern timber framed farmhouses of the county. These are asymmetric in composition, clad in timber framing, tile hanging and painted weatherboarding, with sweeping tiled roofs and tall chimneys enlivened by decorative brickwork. Others are influenced by small Queen Anne and Georgian houses. These have symmetrical double fronts, central entrances and hipped roofs, again with prominent chimneys. Plans are made up of blocks of traditional depth covered with roofs of traditional

(mostly 45°-50°) pitch. Individual houses are enhanced by unique details or unusual materials. A couple are thatched and a few have pan-tiled roofs or Horsham stone slabs at the eaves. There is the occasional Tudor-style carved stone doorway or decorative frontispiece. Number 14 has a charming lych gate. Despite the variety of styles, the palette of common materials and details, including brown brick laid in a Flemish bond, leaded casement windows and handmade clay roof tiles, regular massing, and the consistent use of architectural forms inspired by the Surrey vernacular, give a sense of unity to the group. The buildings are also very much of their time. While they show a deep understanding of the historic buildings that inspired them, they are clearly of the 1920s. This is due mainly to the modern plan form that is to an extent expressed externally, and their regular spacing along the road.



24 Clive Road



2 Clive Road

The garages associated with these buildings also make a positive contribution to the character of the area. They are mostly simple structures with timber double doors and hipped tiled roofs, which complement the main houses. Some are designed to give the appearance of the small ancillary buildings often attached to traditional farm houses.



Clive Road garage

There is one earlier building, number 1, which is late Victorian. Although a handsome building, it has little in common with the Blair Imrie houses, being clad in bright red tile hanging. It is almost completely hidden by trees, however, so does not play a significant role in the streetscape.

Blair Imrie conceived Clive Road as complete development and planned and spaced the houses accordingly. Some houses have been inserted later, by dividing the original building plots. Where this has happened, the sense of space between properties has been reduced or lost and the street scene becomes crowded. An example is number 19, originally a small later house of no architectural distinction, which has been altered and enlarged to the extent that it crowds its neighbours and projects beyond the general building line.

Blair Imrie's architectural vision was very strong and the new houses all compare poorly with the originals. Numbers 3 and 5 probably date from the 1970s and do not really attempt to fit in with

the character of the area. However, the extensive tree cover in front of them lessens their impact. The proportions, materials and details of other relatively recent buildings have been chosen carefully to complement the surrounding buildings. They do not, however, succeed in matching the quality of the original houses and therefore compare poorly to them.

The original houses survive remarkably unaltered, retaining key original details, such as windows and doors. However, they are very sensitive to small changes of detail. Several houses suffer from over-large extensions which upset the balance of the original composition and reduce the space between houses. An example can be seen at number 11, where a side extension reveals an incongruously large roof in views up the road. Despite this, some houses have been enlarged successfully. The extension to number 28, for example, has achieved a close match with the original in terms of materials and detailing and the added hipped roof has improved the overall architectural composition of this building.



1 Clive Road detail of chimneystack

6 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The key characteristics that give the Esher conservation area its distinctive character and therefore special interest can be defined as follows:

- *The distinctive linear settlement pattern of the High Street* – the High Street is a classic example of a small historic linear settlement, where the main street widens to accommodate a fair or market.
- *The survival of Esher Green* – again, the Green is another survival of a historic settlement pattern and defines the townscape of the northern part of the conservation area
- *A variety of types of townscape* – much of the area's charm comes from the contrast between the differing types of built form. These range from the urban town centre to the rural green, and the successive and contrasting suburban townscapes of Park, Wolsey and Clive Roads.
- *Extensive street greenery* – a mixture of large areas of open space, street trees and well planted front gardens provides a reminder of the village from which the town has developed.
- *The High Street green* – the open space around the High Street/Church Street junction, which makes an important contribution to the village-like qualities of the area.
- *The variety of boundary treatments* – away from the High Street boundary treatments range from low walls to high hedges and make an important contribution to the character of the area, providing a sense of seclusion to the setting of some buildings, and spaciousness to others.
- *The high architectural quality of many of the buildings* – The conservation area contains a large number of high quality buildings dating from the 16th to the early 20th century. While there is a great variety of architectural style in the area as a whole, ranging from Tudor to contemporary, one style tends to predominate in each of the

five character areas. Original details make an important contribution to what are, in the main, relatively simple buildings.

- *A number of landmark buildings*– a number of high quality buildings provide focal points in the townscape. The lodges at the entrance to the Esher Place Estate, the Bear Hotel and the NatWest Bank in the High Street are the best examples.
- *The spire of Christ Church as the dominant local landmark* – the spire can be glimpsed from all over the conservation area, terminating many of the best views.
- *A scatter of interesting street furniture and floorscapes* – a range of unusual items of Victorian street furniture enlivens the High Street green. Historic lamp standards add interest to Wolsey and Park Roads, whilst timber gates and gravel surfacing make an important contribution to the informal character of Clive Road.

Particular features of historic interest are noted at page 6.



Esher Green



24 Esher Green

BUILDING QUALITY

Listed buildings

A listed building 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 Elmbridge Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. The listed buildings are marked on the Townscape Analysis map. These are:

St George's Church
Chest Tombs
Christ Church
Chest Tombs
The Bear Hotel, High Street
77, 79a, 79, 83, 85, 99-103, 136 and 138 High Street
Drinking fountain and surrounding railings, High Street
Pump, High Street
Statue of Britannia, High Street
Clive House, Portsmouth Road
Friends Meeting House, Claremont Lane
East and West Lodge, Esher Place Avenue
The Lammas, Lammas Hill
28-34 Esher Green

All are listed at grade II, except St George's Church at grade I, which includes the most important 2% of all listed buildings in England.

Locally listed buildings

These are buildings which have been identified by Elmbridge Borough Council as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list or simply inexplicably omitted. They are indicated on the Townscape Analysis map, and comprise:

81 High Street (former Post Office)
Clive Place, Portsmouth Road
24-26 Church Street
15-17 Esher Green



Few's Cottages (24-26 Church Street)



Clive House

Significant unlisted buildings

A number of buildings has been identified on the Townscape Analysis map as "Significant unlisted buildings" with townscape merit. Buildings identified as having "townscape merit" will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provide the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, it is excluded.

Government guidance in PPG15 *Planning and the historic environment* advises (at para 4.27) that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The guidance note states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings.

7 NEGATIVE FEATURES AND ISSUES

There are various issues that detract from or threaten the special interest of the conservation area:

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

Heavy traffic dominates the High Street and, to a lesser extent, Esher Green. This makes pedestrian movement difficult and sometimes dangerous. The green spaces in the centre of the High Street provide visual relief, but are difficult to access, and the environment within them is dominated by passing traffic.



The High Street and Esher Green, traffic management

PUBLIC REALM

The need to try to manage traffic around Esher Green and the High Street has led to a proliferation of standard, heavy duty street furniture and a plethora of signs. This includes large trunk road style street signs, traffic islands with plastic internally-illuminated bollards, high level street lighting, numerous sets of traffic lights and extensive pedestrian railings.

Some of the prominent Lime trees on the High

Street green are evidently nearing the end of their life and shortly will need replacement.

BUILDINGS

Many buildings, particularly in the High Street, Church Street and Park Road, have lost their original architectural details over the course of time, particularly windows and slate or tile roof coverings, which made an important contribution to their architectural character. Some of these buildings do not have permitted development rights, or are listed.



High Street, modern windows in a listed building

Some modern buildings and extensions, particularly in the High Street, have been poorly designed and detailed, and tend to be over large in scale; In particular, some new buildings and extensions in Clive Road, while carefully detailed, have had a negative effect on the cohesive character of the area due to their scale and the way in which they have reduced the space between buildings. This has diluted the integrity and consistency of Blair Imrie's original architectural composition.



Unsympathetic modern development adjacent to a listed building

SHOPS

A few interesting historic shopfronts remain, and modern units tend to have less division and detail. An issue is the use of deep fascias in unsympathetic materials, which affects approximately 20% of shops in the High Street and Church Street.



Large shopfront fascias in the High Street

FRONT GARDENS, BOUNDARIES AND OPEN SPACES

The boundaries and front gardens of Wolsey and Park Roads have largely been retained, thus preserving their character. This is probably due their smallness, which make them unsuitable for conversion for parking.

The introduction of wider driveways and parking areas surfaced in uniform artificial materials has begun to detract from the appearance and setting of some of the properties in the conservation area, e.g. Clive Road.

The large car park and bulky buildings at the south end of the south-east side of the High Street create a poor edge to the conservation area.

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

The conservation area boundary was reviewed as part of the appraisal process. It appears that there are areas of architectural or historic interest that should be considered for inclusion. These are:-

A group of neo-Georgian shops immediately to the north of The Bear Hotel. While not of outstanding architectural importance, they are



Front garden converted into a drive

well-proportioned and detailed, and are of the same scale as the adjacent buildings. They provide an important visual stop, enclosing this end of the High Street and mediating the transition to a larger scale of development outside the conservation area.

Wolsey Road/Wolsey Grove. A high quality, late Victorian residential street, which occupies the centre of the conservation area and survives in relatively unaltered condition. It provides an important historical link between the older terraces of Park Road and the spacious suburban development of Clive Road.

The trees and public verges on Lammas Lane opposite the north end of Clive Road, which frame the gateway to Esher Green and terminate views down Clive Road.



75-65 High Street

Part 2: CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

I RECOMMENDATIONS

I.1 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The designation and appraisal of any conservation area is not an end in itself. The purpose of this section of the document is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area's special interest, informed by the appraisal, and to promote consultation with the local community about those proposals. The special qualities of the area have been identified as part of the appraisal process in the first section of this document. This guidance draws upon the themes identified in Section 7 of the conservation area appraisal 'Negative features and issues' and makes proposals for ensuring the continued preservation and enhancement of the area. The document thus satisfies the statutory requirement of sections 71(1) 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas" (s71(1)).

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions... and determine whether any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas" (s69(2)).

The document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy guidance 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment', PPG 16 'Archaeology and Planning', English Heritage guidance titled 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas' (February 2006), Best Practice guidelines, policies within the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan (REBLP 2000) and any policies which supersede this in the LDF, together with published planning guidance such as the Elmbridge Residential Design Guide and leaflets including 'Conservation Areas' and 'Shopfronts in conservation areas'.

I.2 BOUNDARY EXTENSION

Three additions to the existing boundary are considered desirable:

- 53 to 65 High Street, 1930s neo-Georgian building that makes a valuable contribution to the townscape;
- 1-46 Wolsey Road, 1-17 Wolsey Grove and 1-11 Charlotte Mews, Heather Place. These properties occupy the current 'hole' in the centre of the conservation area. As most are good examples of late 19th century housing.
- The trees and public verges on Lammas Lane opposite the north end of Clive Road. These define the Lammas Lane entrance to the Conservation Area and terminate views out of Clive Road.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to extend the existing Esher Conservation Area boundary to include the areas detailed above.

I.3 STATUTORY CONTROLS

Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provision aimed at assisting the "preservation and enhancement" of the area. These controls include requiring conservation area consent for the demolition of any unlisted building, fewer permitted development rights for alterations and extension, restrictions on advertisements and requiring notice for proposed tree works. These are outlined in the Council's guidance note 'Conservation Areas'.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to ensure that any development within the conservation area requiring planning permission preserves or enhances the character of appearance of the area in accordance with REBLP 2000 and other guidance.

1.4 LISTED BUILDINGS

Listed buildings are buildings considered to be of national architectural or historic interest and are protected by law as set out in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. 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 25 listed buildings in the conservation area, including three monuments in the High Street.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to ensure that all works to listed buildings and their settings preserve the architectural and historic interest of these buildings and conform with saved REBLP 2000 policies and other guidance.

1.5 BUILDINGS OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS.

In addition to the listed buildings, there are many individual and groups of buildings and structures which are of local historical and architectural interest. These are included on a ‘Local List’ and there are 5 such buildings within the Esher Conservation Area. The Council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm their character, appearance or setting. Saved Policies HEN10-12 (inclusive) of the REBLP 2000 provide the criteria against which all such proposals for alterations will be assessed: further design advice is given in Appendix I.

The character appraisal identifies 147 additional unlisted buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area; once extended, there will be a further 55, and all are marked on the townscape analysis map. The Council will encourage all applications for alterations and extensions to these buildings to be particularly carefully considered.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to ensure that all Locally Listed and Significant Unlisted Buildings are protected from inappropriate forms of development, or unjustified demolition.

1.6 EROSION OF CHARACTER AND ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONTROLS

The character appraisal has identified that there is a potential threat to the character and appearance of the conservation area from inappropriate alterations to buildings. This is principally due to the addition of large extensions of a design and in materials which are not of the same quality as the original buildings, and to the loss of original architectural details.

The design of extensions can normally be controlled through existing planning powers, unless “permitted development” (see below). In order to ensure a high quality of new development, it is important that the design guidance given in Appendix I, and general guidance on development in conservation areas, is followed.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to ensure that planning applications are assessed in accordance with published design guidance.

Similarly, the loss of architectural detail on both listed buildings and buildings other than single occupancy dwellings (ie the majority in the High Street and Church Street) can be controlled though existing listed building and planning powers. It is likely that increasing public awareness of this issue will help to reduce the level of unauthorised works.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to increase awareness of planning and listed building regulations in the conservation area.

The appraisal identified that the following types of alteration may pose a threat to the special character of the area:

- loss of original windows and doors
- alterations to window/door openings
- replacement of original roof coverings with

alternative modern materials
 the painting of brickwork, or application of render
 removal of front boundary wall or fences and
 enlargement of drives or hardstanding

Many of the properties in the conservation area are single family dwellings. They therefore have 'permitted development' rights, which means that minor works, such as the replacement of windows or doors, the removal of redundant chimneystacks and the painting or rendering of brickwork, do not require planning permission. 'Permitted development' falls into various classes, which are listed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Powers exist for the Council, known as Article 4(2) directions, to withdraw some of these rights in the interests of preserving and enhancing the appearance of the conservation area.

It is therefore recommended that consideration should be given, subject to available resources, to the use of appropriate Article 4(2) directions, with initial priority for locally listed buildings, in order to prevent the further erosion of the character of the conservation area.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to consider, on a case by case basis, the need for introducing Article 4(2) directions covering selected buildings, to ensure that the special qualities of the conservation area are protected.

1.7 SHOPFRONTS

The character appraisal identified historic



Traditional details on Clive Road

shopfronts at numbers 94 and 134-138 High Street, with significant historic fragments surviving at numbers 86-92, 98, 120, 91 and 96 High Street. It is important that both categories should be retained. Where fragments survive, the appropriate restoration of these shopfronts should be encouraged when the opportunity arises. Elsewhere, the replacement of inappropriate modern shopfronts with traditionally-proportioned units, using high quality materials and detailing, should also be encouraged. Both traditional and modern interpretations that harmonise with the historic buildings of which the shops form part would be appropriate.

The Council has produced detailed advice on the design of new shopfronts entitled *Shopfronts in conservation areas* (March 2002), and all such proposals will be assessed against saved policies HEN13 (*Shopfronts within a conservation area*), HEN14 (*Blinds or Canopies within a conservation area*) and HEN 15 (*Adverts in a conservation area*) of the REBLP 2000.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek the retention of period shopfronts which contribute to the character and appearance of the area. Proposals for new or replacement shopfronts and changes of use will be assessed against saved policies in the REBLP 2000 and other guidance.

The Council will seek to ensure that all advertisement proposals relating to shops respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, in terms of siting, number, colours, materials and form of illumination.



Traditional style shopfronts in the High Street

1.8 TREES

The appraisal has identified a large number of significant trees and tree groups in the Esher Conservation Area. Within all conservation areas, anyone intending to lop or fell a tree greater than 100mm diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. This provides the Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) may be served.

Many significant trees in Esher are to be found in public spaces owned by Elmbridge or Surrey Councils and thus TPOs are not considered to be appropriate. The townscape analysis map has also identified significant tree groups on private land in Clive Road, at the entrance to the conservation area on Portsmouth Road and in the churchyards of St George's Church and Christ Church. A detailed survey of these areas and the issuing of TPOs on key specimens would improve the protection of these trees by highlighting their importance in advance of any works being contemplated.

Many significant trees in the High Street are understood to be reaching the end of their life. As these make an important contribution to the character of the area, they should be replaced where necessary with specimens of the same or appropriate species.



Esher Green looking north

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders further to protect trees in appropriate circumstances, where a tree has significant amenity value and is considered to be potentially under threat. This will include trees both within the conservation area and those outside the conservation area which are considered to contribute to its setting, or to views identified in the appraisal.

1.9 NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT, ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

There are few opportunities for large scale redevelopment, although some improvement of existing buildings may be possible, subject to very rigorous controls, and there may occasionally be sites where completely new development, or the replacement of an existing poor quality building, is acceptable. The Council will encourage good quality schemes that respond positively to their historic setting. Further guidance is found at Appendix I.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to determine applications with regard to the Council's adopted Design Guidance, REBLP policies and any policies which supersede this in the LDF.

1.10 THE PUBLIC REALM AND ENHANCEMENTS

In the High Street and around Esher Green, high levels of traffic, modern street furniture, street lighting and extensive road signage combine to detract from the appearance of the conservation area. Given that major roads run through the area, it is unlikely that the volume of traffic can be reduced. Extensive signage, lighting and traffic control measures are therefore always likely to be necessary. Nevertheless, efforts should be made to reduce excess signage and improve the quality of the street furniture whenever opportunities arise. The appraisal has also identified the importance of the simple ambience of the lines and groups of trees set in grass in both the High Street

Green and Esher Green. Every effort should therefore be made to maintain the simple approach to landscaping in these areas.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to work with their partners at Surrey County Council as the highway authority to try to ensure that any new highway works will bring about environmental improvement to the conservation area. The Council will endeavour to ensure that all new street works are in accordance with the English Heritage guidance Streets for All. The Council will also seek to ensure that an appropriate landscape strategy in the High Street is maintained in the course of any future improvement opportunities.



Traditional lamp standard in Park Road

1.11 ENHANCEMENTS

The appraisal has identified Waitrose, the Police station and the Highwayman’s Cottage Car Park to the south west end of the High Street as an area that detracts from the setting of the conservation area. The visual impact of the buildings might be reduced and the setting of the conservation area improved by landscape improvements

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to agree and implement landscape improvements at Highwayman’s Cottage Car Park and to encourage other initiatives when the opportunity arises.

The appraisal has identified the opportunity for the setting of St George’s Church on Esher Park Avenue to be enhanced by improving the views of the church from the High Street through the car park of The Bear, and improving the condition of the churchyard boundaries and maintenance of the chest tombs, some of which are listed and in poor condition.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to work with different landowners, voluntary groups and charitable organisations to improve views, boundary treatments and grounds maintenance at St George’s church yard.

The appraisal has identified the war memorial on Esher Green as a focal point at the end of Church Street. There have been previous proposals to consider moving the war memorial on Esher Green a short distance to the north-west, away from the road, as part of a highway improvement scheme. Whilst this scheme is no longer being pursued, it would have provided more space in which to conduct Remembrance Sunday services and make visiting the memorial an easier and more pleasant experience.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to monitor any proposals in the future and, should relocation of the war memorial become an option, ensure that it is placed in a high quality setting and in line with its present setting, so that it continues to provide a focal point in identified views.

1.12 HOUSES IN CLIVE ROAD

The Blair Imrie-designed houses in Clive Road display a high standard of architectural details and materials and the quality of the layout of the estate and the design of the road is very high. Imrie was an important architect who specialised mainly in

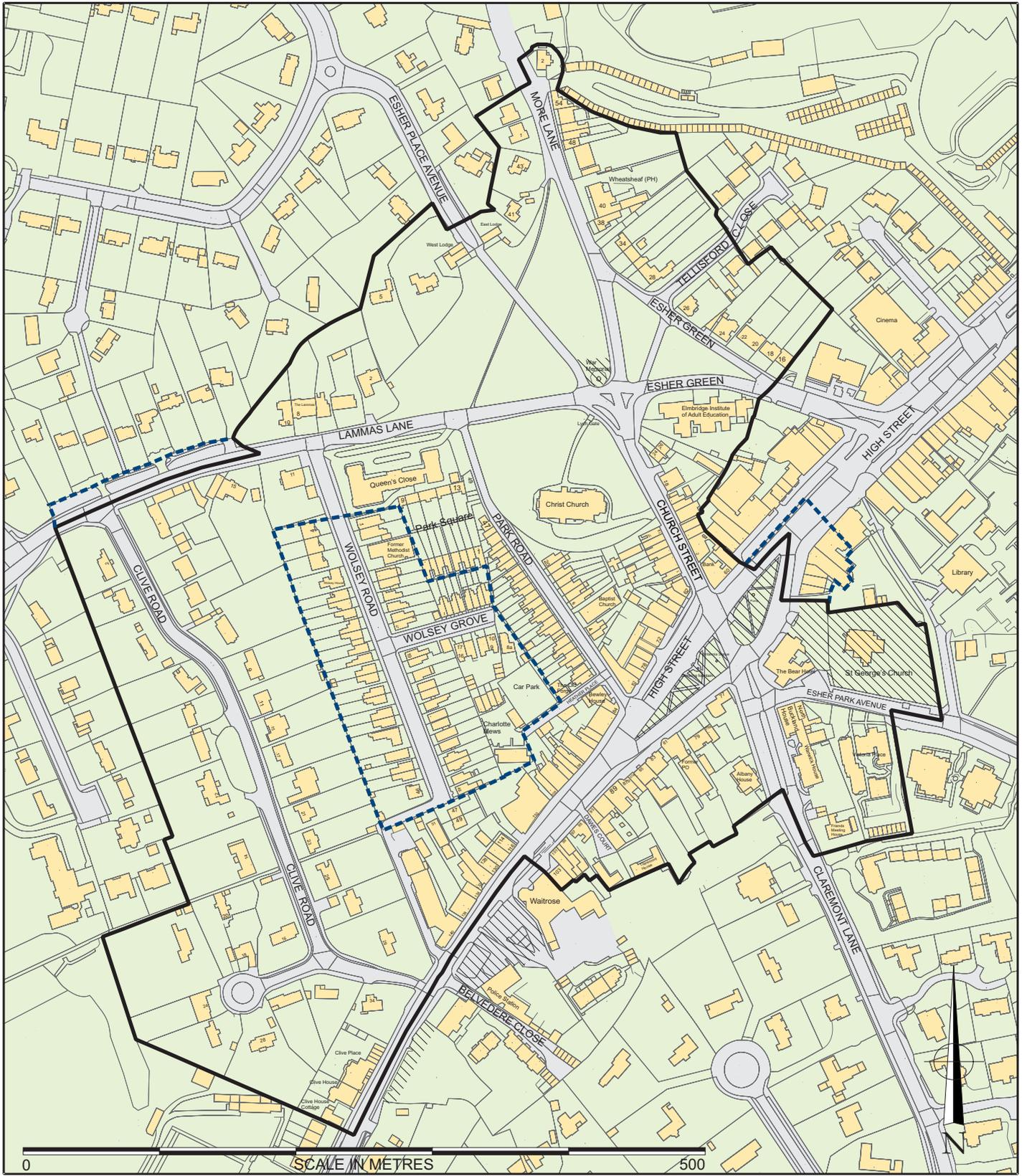
domestic architecture. He had a particular talent for laying out housing estates (both private and local authority owned). It is possible that some houses may be worthy of statutory listing, assuming that they also have high quality interiors. Individuals can request a building to be listed by writing to the Heritage Protection Operations Team, at English Heritage. Listing is not automatic and would depend on demonstrating that the buildings are of national historical and architectural interest. The normal selection criteria for listing are age and rarity, intactness, quality of design, materials craftsmanship and historic associations. Due to the greater survival of houses built after 1840, only an example of the highest quality or historically most interesting houses would be normally selected. The English Heritage *Country and suburban house selection guide* (2007) states regarding arts and crafts houses that: “good examples that show a strong influence on a planned estate will merit inclusion”. The English Heritage *Modern house and housing selection guide* (2007) highlights the importance of local architects and the use of local materials and styles.

Further research, including assessing the quality and survival of interiors, and a full understanding of the work and importance of Blair Imrie as an architect and the place of these buildings in his body of work, would be necessary before a view could be formed as to whether any of these buildings are of sufficient quality to justify submitting a request for listing. Such a research project might perhaps be undertaken by voluntary organisations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to support efforts to understand the Blair Imrie houses in Clive Road more fully.



4 Clive Road



ESHER CONSERVATION AREA: PROPOSED BOUNDARY EXTENSIONS AND POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT AREAS

-  Boundary of Conservation Area
-  Proposed extension
-  Potential enhancement area

2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The following actions are recommended to ensure that the character appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community:

2.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The draft Esher Conservation Area character appraisal and management proposals has been created by collaborative working through the Esher Conservation Area Working Group. This has been a partnership between Elmbridge Borough Council and the local community (including the Conservation Area Advisory Committee). The programme was managed by The Paul Drury Partnership. An initial workshop identified the key issues important to the area, which were incorporated into the documents. Drafts were circulated among the working group and amended in the light of comments received.

The appraisal and management proposals were then subject to a six-week period of wider public consultation, commencing on 26 November 2007. This included sending consultation letters to all those within and adjacent to the conservation area, placing the document on the Council's website and in local libraries, consulting with local amenity and residents' groups, and providing a public exhibition at the Civic Centre in Esher. The document has subsequently been amended to incorporate relevant comments and suggestions.

2.2 CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Council has established an Esher Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC), which comprises a cross section of local people, including representatives of amenity associations and professional people. The Council consults the CAAC on applications affecting the character and appearance of the conservation area. The Committee also plays an important role in the general care and monitoring of the conservation area and make proposals for its improvement. There may be an opportunity for members to undertake a 'Heritage Count', making a photographic record of all the buildings within the

conservation area.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will continue to support and consult the CAAC, and the community in general where appropriate, on applications within the area. The Council and the CAAC will work together on recording and monitoring projects and identifying and, where appropriate, implementing enhancement opportunities.

2.3 BOUNDARY REVIEW

The appraisal identified three areas as worthy of inclusion (53-65 High Street, 1-46 Wolsey Road, 1-17 Wolsey Grove, 1-11 Charlotte Mews and public car park, Heather Place, and trees and public verges on Lammas Lane)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will continue to review the boundary of the conservation area in accordance with Best Practice and guidance on management of the historic environment.

2.4 BUILDINGS AT RISK

Generally, the buildings in the conservation area appear well maintained. A single listed building (Grapes Cottage, 79 High Street) is on the Council's 'buildings at risk' list as being at medium risk (factor 3).

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. Under section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has powers to secure the preservation of listed buildings by issuing an Urgent Works Notice. If the owner concerned does not carry out the specified works, the Council may carry out such works as are considered necessary and recover the costs incurred from the owner. Urgent Works Notices

may also be issued in respect of unlisted buildings in poor condition in the conservation area, although the Secretary of State's permission must be sought first.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Council will seek to monitor the condition of all listed buildings, report findings and advise action as necessary. Where the condition of a building gives cause for concern, appropriate steps will be taken to secure the future of the building, including the use of statutory powers. The Council will monitor the condition of other unlisted buildings as resources permit.

2.5 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 its boundary(ies);
- An updated 'Heritage Count'
- An assessment of whether the management proposals detailed in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A review of Buildings at Risk;
- The production of a short report, detailing the findings of the survey and setting out the proposed actions and amendments, including how the character appraisal should be revised to reflect any changes to the character or appearance of the area that have occurred since the current document was prepared;
- Public consultation on the review findings, including any proposed changes and input to the final review.

INTRODUCTION

As much of the conservation area is either highly developed, or important open space, opportunities for new buildings within it are limited. However, there are some sites which may come forward for development and there is obviously considerable pressure for the extension of existing dwellings. The aim of these guidance notes is to indicate how the Council will view subsequent applications for change within, or adjacent to, the conservation area.

CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

All development, but especially that in conservation areas, must respond to its immediate environment, its 'context', in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing. Applicants for planning permission must therefore provide with their proposals a 'Design Statement', to justify the design decisions that have been made as the scheme developed and how it relates to its context. Most of the development opportunities within the conservation area will be on small, enclosed sites, where the 'context' – the surrounding buildings and the historic grain of the immediate area - may be obvious, but still needs to be acknowledged.

The emphasis in any new development or alterations must always be on the need to provide a high quality of design. This could be modern design, providing a contemporary statement, or, more generally in historic areas, a traditional design solution. Positive change in the historic townscape can provide vitality and interest to the streetscape and designation as a conservation area should not stifle well thought-out contemporary design.

The basic form of new buildings or extensions should be governed by the urban grain, scale, height and massing of existing development. These elements should be used to set out the basic form of the building or addition, including roof shape and pitch, height, depth of plan and the rhythm and composition of the façade.

Urban grain

The 'urban grain', or form, of historic development within the Esher Conservation Area has been described in the character appraisal. It varies according to location, with continuous terraces in Church Street, the north-west side of the High Street, and Park Road; a mix of terraces and detached houses on the south-east side of High Street and the east side of Esher Green; tightly packed semi-detached houses in Wolsey Road; and mostly large detached houses on Clive Road and the west side of the Green, set in mature gardens. This very varied 'urban grain' is an important part of the character of the area and should be protected. Proposals for new development must include a detailed analysis of the locality and demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local townscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building forms and plot ratios.

Scale

Scale is the combination of a building's height and bulk and the way in which this is articulated (for example, by the fenestration) when related to its surroundings. The character appraisal has identified considerable variation in scale, from modest artisan cottages to prestigious detached houses, as well as the contrasting scale of the commercial development and the landmark church. This variation is an important aspect of the character of the area and contributes to its special interest. Whilst some modest changes in scale may continue the tradition of variety, new buildings and extensions should generally respect the scale of their neighbours. For new development, the applicant should provide accurate elevations of the surrounding buildings, showing how the new development will relate to them.

Scale is a particularly relevant issue in Clive Road, where the original plot sizes and spacing between the houses are an important aspect of the area and need to be preserved as far as possible.

Height and massing

Within the conservation area, some buildings are already more prominent because of their height

and massing. Generally, the height of any new development should match the adjoining buildings, although allowing for the inevitable variations in height and bulk which are natural in a historic townscape. Height is especially relevant, for example, in the High Street, where it will be important to maintain existing rooflines.

Massing is the combination of the scale of the development, its layout and its site coverage. The majority of redevelopment in the conservation area will be extension or new buildings on small infill sites, and the issue of massing is often less relevant than scale and height.

Appearance, materials and detailing

Both traditional and modern approaches to design are appropriate in a conservation area, provided both are executed well.

High quality materials are very important for any new development. Existing buildings in the conservation area make use of a wide variety of materials, including yellow stock-brick, stucco, weatherboarding and tile hanging for walls, and clay tiles and slate for roofs. This palette remains appropriate for both traditional and modern designs. It is important that the very best quality of building materials is used, including handmade brick and clay tiles and natural slates.

Roof pitch and shape varies widely in the conservation area, with large, steeply-pitched roofs predominating in Clive Road and relatively low-pitched roofs, sometimes behind parapets, common in the High Street. The roofs of new buildings and extensions should relate well to existing buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Recent buildings in the High Street have tended to be designed with either very large pitched roofs concealing an additional storey, or bulky mansard roofs, which generally have not been successful visually: such devices are best avoided in new development in historic areas. Dormers are a common feature on the High Street and Church Street and occasionally appear in Clive Road, and further modestly sized and well detailed examples may be acceptable in some circumstances. Elsewhere, uninterrupted roof slopes are a distinctive feature in the streetscape and thus

dormers should generally be avoided. Modern roof lights should be avoided on front roof slopes, wherever possible. New buildings designed in a traditional style should include chimneys, which make an important contribution to roofscapes in the area.

The composition of façades should harmonise with adjacent buildings in terms of storey height, rhythm and proportions. This need not imply a slavish copy of the existing buildings, but an informed response to them.

Where a traditional design is adopted, windows should be painted, not stained, sashes or side hung casements. Glazing bars should be narrow, in keeping with most of the buildings in the conservation area. Casements should sit flush with the surrounding frame. New windows in Clive Road should use the same leaded-light design found in the original houses. If windows are to be double glazed, then they must be carefully designed. Avoidance of glazing bars, which can otherwise appear to be over dominant, can assist in achieving a satisfactory solution. Consideration should be given to alternative ways of complying with Building Regulations if traditional windows are to be used.

In all cases, modern top-hung lights and non-traditional materials, such as plastic or aluminium, are generally unacceptable for windows in the conservation area, particularly where a new building abuts a listed building or faces a principal street. Doors should also be of painted timber. In all cases, joinery details must be submitted with the planning or listed building consent applications.

Design check list

All new development in the area should:

- Where relevant and appropriate, achieve continuity in street frontage building lines, either set on the back edge of the pavement (in the case of shops), or behind shallow front gardens or forecourt enclosures;
- Maintain the historic pattern of development by respecting the historic grain associated with historic plots and the historic morphology of the immediate area, including retained spaces between buildings which

- contribute to the local character;
- Complement the human scale, height and massing of historic development in the immediate streetscape and the wider conservation area;
 - Reflect the proportion of solid to void found in the elevation of traditional buildings and employ robust detailing, avoiding fussy or gimmicky use of applied features or detailing;
 - Respect the historic hierarchy of development and detailing between principal

- and secondary street frontages, and within plots between frontage and rear elevations;
- Conceal any parking or servicing areas behind built frontages of appropriate scale, or by the sensitive use of hard and soft landscaping to provide screening;
 - Reinforce local identity by the use of the traditional materials used in the conservation area;
 - Re- use traditional buildings which contribute to townscape quality.

APPENDIX 2 FURTHER READING AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

FURTHER READING:

L Hutchins (2001) *Esher and Claygate Past*
 A Mitchell (1995) *Esher: a pictorial history*
 I D Stevens (1977) *Story of Esher*

FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING PLANNING AND CONSERVATION RELATED MATTERS:

Elmbridge Borough Council,
 Civic Centre,
 High Street,
 Esher,
 Surrey KT10 9SD.
 Tel: 01372 474474
www.elmbridge.gov.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING LOCAL HISTORY:

Elmbridge Museum,
 Church Street, Weybridge,
 Surrey, KT13 8DE.
 Tel: 01932 843573
 Fax: 01932 846552
www.elmbridgemuseum.org.uk

Surrey History Centre,
 130 Goldsworth Road,
 Woking,
 Surrey, GU21 6ND.
 Tel: 01483 518737
 Fax: 01483 518738
www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyhistorycentre

GENERAL INFORMATION RELATING TO LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS:

English Heritage,
 1 Waterhouse Square,
 138-142 Holborn,
 London, EC1N 2ST
www.english-heritage.org.uk

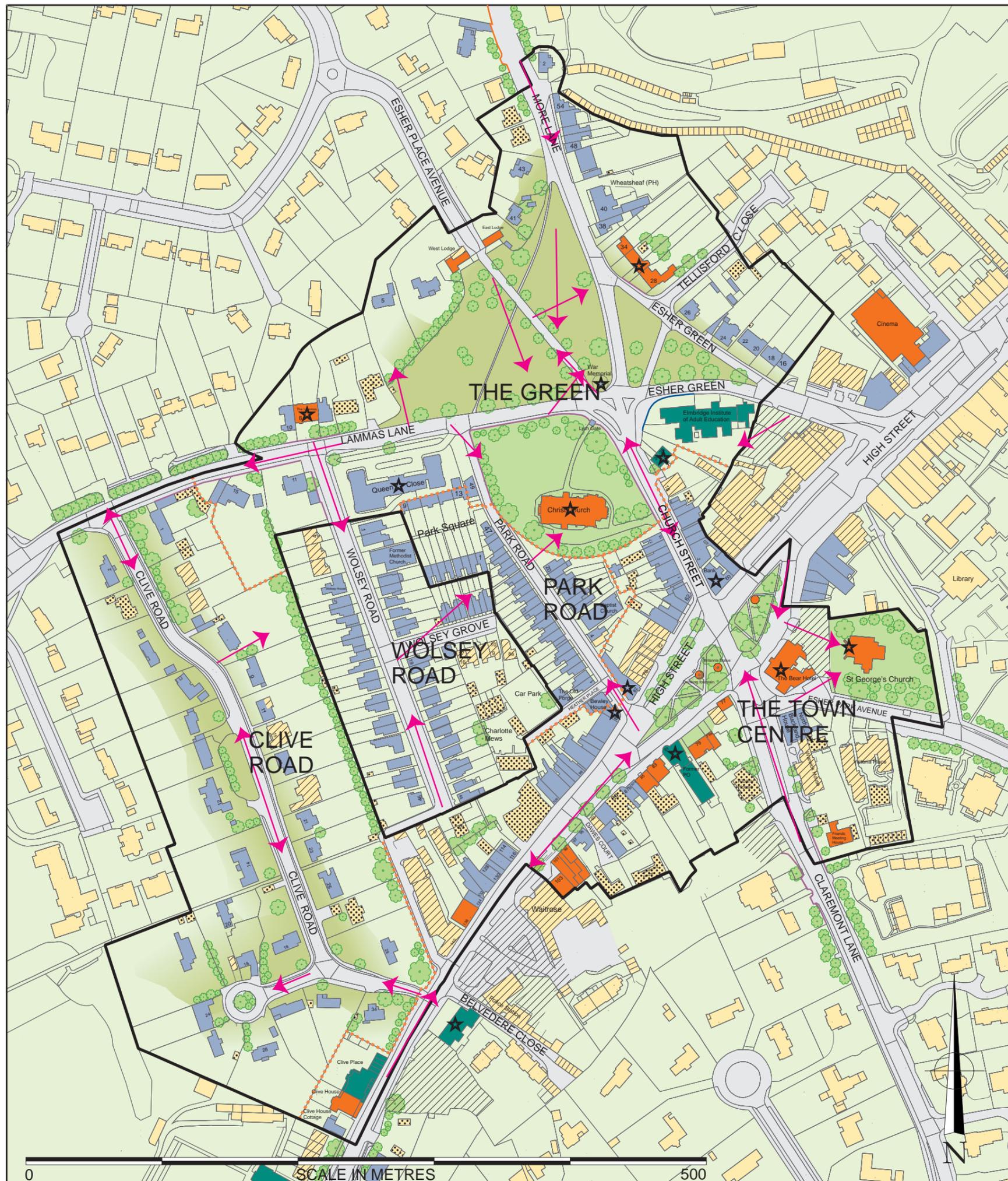
FOR TECHNICAL GUIDANCE:

The Georgian Group,
 6 Fitzroy Square,
 London, W1T 5DX.
 Tel: 087 1750 2936
 Fax: 087 1750 2937
www.georgiangroup.org.uk

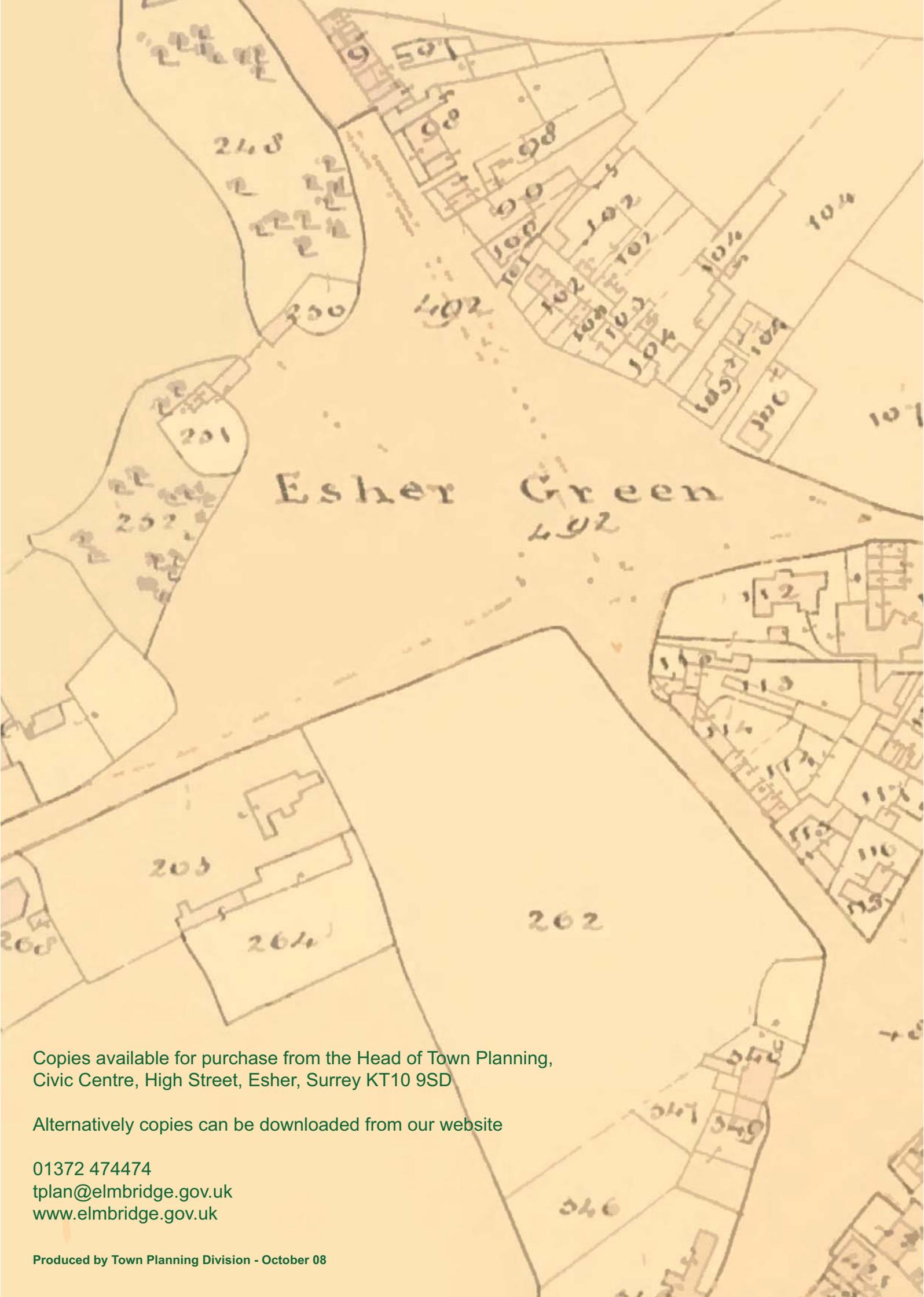
The Victorian Society,
 1 Priory Gardens,
 Bedford Park,
 London, W4 1TT.
 Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB),
 37 Spital Square,
 London, E1 6DY.
 Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk

ESHER CONSERVATION AREA TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS MAP



-  Boundary of Conservation Area
-  Character area
-  Focal buildings
-  Statutory listed Buildings
-  Locally listed Buildings
-  Significant unlisted Buildings
-  Neutral buildings
-  Negative buildings/sites
-  Significant walls
-  Significant railings
-  Important views
-  Significant trees
-  Important open space



Esher Green
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Copies available for purchase from the Head of Town Planning,
Civic Centre, High Street, Esher, Surrey KT10 9SD

Alternatively copies can be downloaded from our website

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www.elmbridge.gov.uk