

CRICKET HILL CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Approved Document

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Cricket Hill Conservation Area

Cricket Hill is almost the most northerly of Hart's conservation areas, close to the Berkshire border and located on undulating former heathland. It forms a group of conservation areas (Yateley Green, Cricket Hill and Darby Green) which lie within one mile of each other in the parish of Yateley and are loosely connected by the Reading Road. About one quarter of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area is registered common land (Yateley Common - designation number CL24), the common now being partly wooded with some areas of restored open heathland. Four ponds, meandering watercourses, and undulating topography characterise the Conservation Area, providing a pleasant backdrop to the rather dispersed development. Cricket Hill Green, just off Cricket Hill Lane, and the adjoining Cricketers Public House, gives some focus to the community, the public house being one of the few commercial businesses in the area apart from a hotel and restaurant in Handford Lane (Casa dei Cesari) and some offices in Cricket Hill Lane (Yateley Lodge). Otherwise, the uses are almost entirely residential.

Whilst a substantial amount of the Conservation Area is open green space and woodland, providing a rural quality to the area, areas of 1960s and 1970s housing lie to the north and west of the Conservation Area's boundaries. The busy Cricket Hill Lane runs through the centre of the Conservation Area, connecting Reading Road in the north to the A30 in the south. Historic buildings, mainly small detached houses and cottages, lie on either side of this road, or are collected into small groups in Sunnyside and Brandy Bottom. There are only three listed buildings, Yateley Lodge, a substantial house re-fronted in the early 19th century house with an earlier core; Thatch Cottage, a modestly sized re-fronted timber-framed cottage, probably 17th century in date; and The Nest, a mid-18th century brick cottage which also faces Cricket Hill Lane. Old Welmore contains a number of Inter-War houses, set in spacious plots, with some later infilling.

This part of Yateley Common, between Reading Road and the A30, is owned and managed by Hampshire County Council. Another large area of Yateley Common to the south of the A30 is owned by the MOD and managed by the Hampshire Wildlife Trust. Away from the inhabited area successive heathland restoration projects have cleared trees and undergrowth to provide suitable habitats for ground-nesting birds, particularly night jays, Dartford warblers and woodlarks. Most of Yateley Common forms the major part of the Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons *Site of Special Scientific Interest* (SSSI) which is itself part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area for Wild Birds (SPA), designed to protect the habitats of these three ground nesting birds. In total Yateley Common covers about 500 hectares, and has six different owners.

The Cricket Hill Conservation Area was designated by Hart District Council in March 1988 and subsequently extended by the Council in June 1990 to include Royal Oak Valley and the remainder of the Old Welmore area. A Conservation Area Proposals Statement for the Cricket Hill Conservation Area was published in 1999, including a further addition to the Conservation Area, namely the addition of Yateley Lodge and the adjoining pond on Cricket Hill Lane. This appraisal draws on, and supersedes, this earlier document.

1.2 Summary of key characteristics and recommendations

This **Character Appraisal** concludes that the key *positive* characteristics of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area are:

- Historic rural settlement located between Yateley village and Blackwater in north Hampshire
- About one third of the Conservation Area is formed by Yateley Common, a large registered common which stretches from Reading Road in the north and beyond the A30 in the south
- Large areas of wooded and open heath, with some open areas of grass – principally Cricket Hill Green
- Most of Yateley Common is a Special Protection Area (SPA), designated under European Directives to protect the habitats of three specific species of ground-nesting birds, as well as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – this also provides protection to a variety of other wildlife interests within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area.
- Cricket Hill Lane forms the ‘spine’ of the Conservation Area, running north to south from Reading Road to the A30
- There is dispersed historical development, mainly along the eastern side of Cricket Hill Lane
- Further focused historic development of cottages and small houses in Sunnyside and Brandy Bottom, where the properties tend to date to the late 19th or early 20th centuries
- Old Welmore was developed from the late 1920s onwards and contains a number of ‘positive’ houses of architectural interest
- Cricket Hill Green (forming a small part of Yateley Common) and the adjoining Cricketers Public House provide some focus to the community
- Other commercial uses include a hotel and restaurant (Casa dei Cesari) in Handford Lane and the offices in Yateley Lodge, which is located on the corner of Cricket Hill Lane and Reading Road
- There are three listed buildings – Yateley Lodge, Thatch Cottage and The Nest – and (currently) no locally listed buildings
- Use of brown or red brick, slate, red clay tiles, and a little exposed timber-framing and thatch

The **Management Proposals** make the following Recommendations (summary):

- Protect Yateley Common and its setting through the strict enforcement of policies contained within the Local Plan and resist applications for change which would have a detrimental effect on the land and properties within or on the edges of the Common
- Continue to ensure that all applications for change within, or on the edges of the Conservation Area, preserve or enhance its rural character, taking the scale, general form and materials of the proposal particularly into account
- Seek the continued protection of all heritage assets, including the listed and (potentially) locally listed buildings, and their settings, from demolition or unsympathetic change
- Do not allow uses within or on the edges of the Conservation Area which it is considered do not enhance the rural character of the Conservation Area

- New development must not generate additional traffic, including HGVs, that might adversely affect the rural qualities of the Conservation Area
- Produce additional publicity and guidance about the existing Article 4 Direction for property owners in the Conservation Area
- Undertake a building-by-building photography survey of all of the affected properties to aid possible future enforcement action
- Produce detailed Design Guidance, to help property owners repair and alter their buildings in a sympathetic way
- Monitor all applications for change to 'positive' buildings extremely carefully and refuse any which adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.
- Applications to demolish 'positive' buildings will generally be refused
- Review the Local and the Statutory List for Cricket Hill, ideally in partnership with the Yateley Town Council and the Yateley Society
- Add two buildings in Reading Road to the Conservation Area (the Royal Oak Public House and Corner Cottage, listed grade II)

1.3 The planning policy context

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

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

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in “*Guidance on conservation area appraisals*” (August 2005) and “*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*” (August 2005). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within *Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5)*, which has recently replaced *Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of the “Character Appraisal”)
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of the “Management Proposals”)

1.4 The local policy framework

These documents provide a firm basis on which applications for development within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area can be assessed. The omission of any feature in either the appraisal or the management proposals does not imply that it is of no interest, and because both will be subject to regular review, it will be possible to amend any future documents accordingly.

It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework as set out in the South East Plan (Approved May 2009) and Hart District Council's Local Plan, adopted in December 2002. This provides general policies relating to listed buildings, locally listed buildings, and conservation areas which are relevant to the Cricket Hill Conservation Area, but there are no site specific issues.

The 2002 Local Plan is being incrementally replaced by a new *Local Development Framework*. This new planning system was established by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which abolishes Structure and Local Plans and replaces them with *Local Development Documents*. More information about this important change to the planning system can be found on the District Council's website: www.hart.gov.uk.

1.5 Article 4 Directions

There is currently an Article 4 Direction in the Cricket Hill Conservation Area. This is a matter which is further discussed in the Management Proposals.

1.6 Community involvement

This document was initially drafted following a walkabout with representatives from Hampshire County Council, Yateley Parish Council, local stakeholders, and local residents on 13th December 2010. During this event, the extent of the existing Conservation Area boundary was discussed, along with some of the main problems and issues which face the community. A questionnaire was also provided to encourage more detailed responses before the document was drafted.

The first draft was subsequently agreed with the District and the document was then put on the District Council's website for six weeks from 4th July 2011. After the completion of this period of public consultation, the final draft was produced.

2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

2.1 Location and activities

Cricket Hill lies within the parish of Yateley in north eastern Hampshire close to the boundaries with Berkshire and Surrey, with Sandhurst and Blackwater both near by. The Conservation Area is located between the busy Reading Road and the even busier A30, although the designated area does not quite stretch as far as this principal route.

Unfortunately, Cricket Hill Lane itself is a short-cut for heavy traffic, including HGVs, from nearby Berkshire towns to junction 4A of the M3. Blackbushe Airport is located not far away on the edge of the Common, to the north of the A30. Two further conservation areas can be found nearby at Yateley Green and Darby Green.

The name 'Cricket Hill' is a relatively late (possibly 18th century) name which referred to the rural area around a small green, now next to the Cricketers Public House. Today, Cricket Hill forms one of a group of small neighbourhoods (Yateley village, Darby Green, and Frogmore) which together form the parish of Yateley. These historic settlements have been incrementally linked by Post-war residential development, mainly dating to the 1960s and 1970s, which now stretches from Blackwater in the east to Yateley village in the west. To the north of the settlements the ancient water meadows in the floodplain of the River Blackwater now mostly consist of a complex of man-made lakes which have been formed from earlier gravel workings. The River Blackwater, which eventually joins the Whitewater, flows westwards through these lakes.

The Conservation Area is almost totally in residential uses apart from offices in Yateley Lodge and a hotel and restaurant named Casa dei Cesari in Handford Lane. The Cricketers Public House, located in a late 1920s building on the edge of Cricket Hill Green, provides a useful local facility. The part of Yateley Common, which is owned and managed by Hampshire County Council has been designated as a Country Park, and a small part of this is included in the Conservation Area.

2.2 Topography and geology

The parish of Yateley lies on a succession of terraces of Bagshot Sand which rise to the south of the valley of the River Blackwater, which flows through a number of lakes created by the flooding of post-war sand and gravel pits. The historic settlements of Yateley Green, Cricket Hill, and Darby Green are all located on gently undulating heathland, cut by small streams which largely flow northwards towards the River Blackwater. Two such streams run through the Cricket Hill Conservation Area, the slightly larger stream in the east (Pottle Stream) providing the water for four large manmade ponds which all lie within the Conservation Area. The second stream runs through the Royal Oak Valley which forms the western boundary to the Conservation Area. These streams originate from naturally occurring springs which characterise this part of Yateley. To the east of the Conservation Area, the land rises more noticeably along Stevens Hill.

The Landscape Character Assessment 1997 for Hart District defines the heathland area within Cricket Hill Conservation Area as within Character Area 12 - Minley. The key characteristics are:

- A diverse patchwork of farmland, open heath, woodland and parkland with a mixed but pervasively 'heathy' character
- The extensive open commons of Yateley and Hawley, heavily used as a recreation resource

- A somewhat suburbanised and fragmented character created by the intrusion of roads and isolated buildings and installations, and its proximity to the urban fringes of Blackwater and Hawley

The underlying geology is of sand and gravel (geomorphology: Barton Sand and Valley Gravel), that provides a poor soil for agriculture, so much of this area remained heathland or common land with a few dispersed farmsteads, such as Hilfield (now demolished and redeveloped for housing) to the north-east of the Conservation Area.

2.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings

A large part of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area is formed by Yateley Common, a substantial swath of woodland and heathland which separates the settlements of Yateley from the A30. Yateley Common extends to the south of the A30, as far as the ancient boundary between the Hundreds of Crondall and Holdshot, first mentioned in a charter before the Conquest. South of that boundary there is further heathland (Warren Heath, Yateley Heath Wood, Horningly Common and Hawley Common) as far as the M3. The eastern and southern boundaries of the Conservation Area therefore abut areas of woodland and open heathland associated with the Common, as well as some areas of open fields. Estates of 1960s and 1970s houses abut the Conservation Area on its west side, although the Royal Oak Valley provides a strong boundary between the two. To the north, the Reading Road creates an obvious boundary between the Conservation Area and the more built-up area of houses beyond.

2.4 Biodiversity

In 2005 much of Yateley Common was designated as part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is a network of heathland sites which are designated under the European Birds Directive¹ and the Habitats Directive² and protected in the UK under the Habitats Regulations³. The SPA provides a habitat for the internationally important bird species of Dartford warbler, nightjar, and woodlark. These birds are particularly subject to disturbance from walkers, dog walkers and cat predation because they nest on or near the ground.

Particular rules apply to development proposals in the vicinity of the SPA designed to ensure that they are not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA, either alone or in combination with other developments. The duty to consider the possibility of likely significant effects applies to all types of development, but it is residential development that has been most affected. Proposals for an increase in the number of dwellings within 5km of the SPA, without 'avoidance measures' are considered likely to have a significant effect on the SPA. Within 400 metres of the SPA 'avoidance measures' are unlikely to be effective and net residential development should be avoided. (Please see the Council's Avoidance Strategy for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area for further details).

¹ European Directive 79/409/EEC Conservation of Birds

² European Directive 92/42/EEC Conservation of Habitats

³ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

A large section of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area lies within Yateley Common, which consists of around 500 hectares. Until the 1950s Yateley Common remained as the man-managed open heathland it had been for millennia. When active management ceased after WW2 the heathland (then consisting of low heathers and gorse) was overrun by scrub and trees, quickly creating young woodland. In 1978 the Yateley Common *Site of Special Scientific Interest* (SSSI) was notified, covering 218 hectares of Yateley Common. This was subsequently greatly expanded and now covers almost 1,000 hectares in both Hart and Rushmoor, stretching from the Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve in Eversley to Hawley Common.

The Common immediately surrounding, and partly included within the Cricket Hill Conservation Areas, is owned and managed by Hampshire County Council. Since the 1970s the County has managed their part of Yateley Common, which extends to some 193 hectares, as a Country Park accredited under the 1968 Countryside Act.

Following the notification in 1993 that much of Yateley Common, and all the 'County Park', would be designated a "Proposed Special Protection Area for Wild Birds", the County Council redoubled its efforts to balance the inevitable conflicts between maintaining public access to the common as a Country Park, and the requirements of the EU Habitats and Wild Bird Directives. Article 6 is one of the most important articles in the Habitats Directive as it defines how SPA sites are managed and protected. Paragraphs 6(1) and 6(2) require that, within SPA sites, Member States must:

- Take appropriate conservation measures to maintain and restore the habitats and species for which the site has been designated to a favourable conservation status;
- Avoid damaging activities that could significantly disturb these species or deteriorate the habitats of the protected species or habitat types.

As part of the SSSI recovery plan the County embarked on a heathland restoration programme including clearing parts of the woodland to create a suitable habitat for the protected species of birds to breed. Near the adjoining Darby Green Conservation Area, Stroud Pond is managed as a wild life pond and as a focus for the County Rangers' education service to local schools and colleges. Similarly, within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area, there are two ponds which appear to have been created as fish ponds or reservoirs, Wyndham Pond and Hospital Pond. These are also subject to proposals for change, including the creation of a more open area to the east of Wyndham Pond.

There are other similarities resulting from management objectives and practice. In order to achieve 'Favourable Conservation Status' for the SPA and SSSI, site managers must try to emulate the methods employed by the commoners historically. In Yateley in the past commoners' animals, put out to graze daily and the annual burn of the common in February, controlled and renewed the heathland habitat, preventing the growth of trees and tall brush. Since grazing has ceased site managers must copy these traditional practices by tree-felling, mechanical scrub clearance and the deployment of volunteers including members of the Yateley Society. Traditional management methods are no longer practiced since the farms that once exercised their common rights are now in private residential occupation, and their farmland is covered in new housing or in institutional use such as schools. Because of the new housing and schools the controlled burns are also no longer acceptable.

The legal origins of Yateley Common go back to the Statute of Merton in 1236, and in practice its origins may go back millennia. It could be argued therefore that Yateley Common is the oldest man-made 'heritage asset' within the boundaries of the Conservation Area, and that managing the Conservation Area to the benefit of the biodiversity of this oldest 'heritage asset' must be the main conservation objective both because it is legally required to obtain biodiversity objectives, and because those legal requirements sit neatly with the normal requirements for the preservation of heritage assets required by the 1990 Act.

3 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET HILL

3.1 Early development

The earliest evidence for human activity in Yateley was provided by the discovery of a concentration of knapped flints on Yateley Common, dating to the Mesolithic period. Burial urns of early Bronze Age settlers have been also found on the river terraces to the north of Yateley Green, at Hillfield and at Quarry Lane (both within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area), and close to Minley Manor. Much later, evidence for pre-Conquest occupation is provided by the survival of Saxon place names and, most significantly, the Saxon north wall of St Peter's Church.

The name 'Yateley' appears to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'yat' (gate) and 'ley' (forest clearing). The name 'Cricket Hill' is shown on the 1841 census although the game of cricket does not appear to have been regularly played on Cricket Green until the 1880s, when the census of 1881 records the existence of the original Cricketers Inn, originally licensed as a 'beerhouse' in 1830.

3.2 Post-Conquest development

The development of Yateley

The Cricket Hill Conservation Area lies about one kilometre from the centre of the larger village of Yateley around Church End Green, and its history is therefore closely interwoven with the development of Yateley and the surrounding area.

Before 1066 the area lay within the Manor and Hundred of Crondall, part of the royal demesne of Wessex. The Manor was granted by King Alfred in his will of 899 to his nephew Ethelm, but was soon under the control of the Prior of Winchester. At the Reformation the land holdings of the Prior passed to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, then to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and, much later, to the Church Commissioners, who remained the Lords of the Manor of Crondall until the 1950s, when the 'waste of the manor' was sold to Yateley Town Council. Meanwhile the Hundred of Crondall had effectively been removed by the Local Government Act of 1894 and by the 1920s Law of Property Act.

The medieval parish of Yateley included Blackwater, Hawley, Southwood, Bramshot, Cove and Minley. At this time Yateley was a loosely dispersed settlement with small farms eking out a living on the heathland soil. A system of 'common land' was already

established by the Norman Conquest, whereby peasants were allowed to settle on poor quality land and use it to graze their animals. They were also allowed to take bracken for roofing and animal bedding, as well as heather and wood for fuel.

It is surprising to learn therefore that in 1334, when a national tax was levied, Yateley returned the highest tax within Crondall Hundred, equal to the tax levied in Leeds. Some of this wealth may have come from income derived from its location close to what is now the A30, the historic route from London to Salisbury and the West Country beyond. St Peter's Church facing Church End Green in Yateley village was enlarged in the late medieval period and was partly rebuilt following a fire in 1979. A medieval mill is recorded on the river Blackwater.

A large medieval 'capital messuage' (called Hall Place) is recorded in 1287 on the site of what is now Yateley Manor School, about a mile to the west of Cricket Hill. By 1567 Richard Allen lived there and he had 23 tenants. During the late 17th century the property was owned by Sir Richard Ryves, a director of the East India Company. By the 18th century it was in the ownership of Thomas Wyndham who called it the Manor of Hall Place, effectively a sub-manor of Crondall Manor. Hall Place was then the principal house and estate in Yateley, and Thomas Wyndham soon expanded his property holdings by purchasing Minley Manor and the inn then known as the Red Lion at Blackwater. He also built a large pond in Yateley Common (which now lies within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area) as a water supply to fish ponds further down the valley. The pond was drained during WW2 and has been refilled since to create an important wildlife habitat in the middle of Yateley Common Country Park. Another substantial house, Yateley Hall, is located to the south of Yateley Green and is now listed grade II*. Previously known as Calcotts, the garden is included on Hart District Council's Historic Parks and Gardens Register grade 'B' and includes the remains of a ha-ha and a short canal feature which may be the remains of a medieval moat.

The close proximity of Sandhurst, Camberley and Aldershot (by 1854, the 'home' of the British Army) ensured a constant demand for a variety of houses in Yateley and in the immediate vicinity. In 1942, when a major new airfield was built on Yateley Common at Hartfordbridge, most of the farmland in western Yateley was covered in hutments for the RAF – which on closing at the end of WW2 were used for squatter housing. When the time came to move these residents on, land owned by Yateley Manor was sold for new development. Despite this expansion the population of Yateley was only 4,469 in 1961 but by 1981 it was assessed at around 20,000 – demonstrating the type of growth experienced by the official New Towns.

The development of Cricket Hill

Whilst there is evidence for some fragmented development during the 17th century, Cricket Hill appears to have grown as a series of early 'squatters' encampments, with small groups of tiny cottages being built on the edges of Yateley Common from the 18th century onwards. Two of these groups can be seen, albeit expanded, at Brandy Bottom and Sunnyside, with some 20th century buildings scattered in between mainly 19th century cottages and slightly larger houses. Jesse Cottage is recorded on the Tithe Map of 1846. The oldest house in the Conservation Area appears to be Yateley Lodge, which despite its early 19th century appearance, contains 16th 17th and 18th century fabric. Casa dei Cesari also retains a 17th century cottage at its core, and Thatch Cottage, facing Cricket Hill Lane, is said to similarly contain early timber-framing,

although the brick façade to the front was probably added in the late 18th or early 19th century. Close by, The Nest dates to c1750. These properties possibly took advantage of the availability of water, as this part of Yateley lies over the spring line, as is evidenced by the two streams which rise close to or within the southern part of the Conservation Area.

In 1827 a small Baptist Chapel (called the Zoar Chapel) was built on Cricket Green – this was demolished and replaced with the present building in 1965. A National School was also built in Cricket Hill Lane at about the same time (1834) but in 1866 it was transferred to a new and much larger building on Yateley Green, which is now Yateley Village Hall. This remained as the village school until 1958 when it was replaced by a purpose-built primary school which was provided on land previously owned by Yateley Manor School. This primary school has recently (August 2010) closed. The old school building in Cricket Hill went into private ownership in 1865 and in 1900, when the owner died, he donated it to the community and with some additional funds from another benefactor, a small Cottage Hospital was set up. This was expanded over the years and was a popular local facility until it closed in 1974. In 1988 the old buildings were demolished by Hart District Council and a large block of flats was built, now called Heathlands Court.

Much of the later development of Cricket Hill, between the mid-19th to the early 20th century, came under the influence of the Stilwell family who lived in the largest house in the immediate area. This was called Hilfield, and it was located on the east side of Cricket Hill Lane to the north of Yateley Common. John Pakenham Stilwell, JP (1832-1921) was a wealthy London banker who came to Cricket Hill when his wife, Georgina Stevens, inherited Hilfield from her parents in 1871. They were both involved in local affairs - Stilwell was a member of the church choir and also a Chairman of the Parish Council, and in 1900 he became the secretary of the Conservators of Yateley Common, successfully resisting proposals to have the Common enclosed. Hilfield at this time was a Victorian mansion which had been added onto a more modest but older property, but in 1900 it burnt down, necessitating a complete rebuilding. The new structure was renamed Yateley Place. When Geoffrey Stilwell died in late 1920s the estate was sold although several members of the family continued to live in Yateley, including his widow, who had a new house built for her in Stevens Hill (Thriftswood). Hilfield House was eventually demolished in 1973 and the land around it developed for housing.

Insert historic maps: 1846, 1888 and 1900

The 1846 map of Cricket Hill shows the location of Hilfield on the northern edge of Yateley Common, with larger, enclosed fields to the west and north. Gravel pits are also shown, and a few buildings in what are now Brandy Bottom, Sunnyside, and Cricket Green. Dispersed houses can also be seen along the east side of Cricket Hill Lane – many of these buildings remain today. Otherwise, the Zoar Chapel and Hilfield House, on the north-eastern edge of Cricket Green, are the only two 'named' buildings (although what is now Yateley Lodge would also have been a prominent local building). By 1888, Wyndham's Pond and Hospital Pond are both clearly illustrated on the map. There has also been further development at Brandy Bottom and Sunnyside. By 1900, both of these areas contained more continuous groups of properties, with 'Cricket Hill House' being clearly marked on the north side of Cricket Hill Green – this is now Casa dei Cesari and appears to have been substantially extended in the 1890s. A large fish pond is also shown to the south of Stevens Hill.

In the 1920s and 1930s new large houses were built in Cricket Hill, Yateley and Darby Green for members of the army who had recently retired, or who were based at nearby Sandhurst or Aldershot. In Cricket Hill, Old Welmore was created, providing a number of very substantial houses set in large gardens, which were further infilled in the Post-WW2 period. In 1928 a new public house, now called The Cricketers, was built facing The Green and the former public house (now called The Old Cricketers) became a private house.

During WW2 RAF hutments stretched north to Cricket Green itself. The sewerage system installed for the hutment area to the west was the primary instigation for the greatest changes to the area which came in 1960s and 1970s, when much of Yateley was developed with new housing estates which incrementally joined Blackwater to the historic core of Yateley through Frogmore and Cricket Hill. Heathlands Cemetery, on the edge of the Conservation Area, was provided on former heathland in 1957.

The Cricket Hill Conservation Area was designated in March 1988 and extended to include Royal Oak Valley and the remainder of the Old Welmore area in June 1990. As a result of further public consultation, Yateley Lodge and an historic pond off Cricket Hill Lane were also added to the designated area.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Layout and street pattern

The principal route is Cricket Hill Lane, which forms the spine of what is essentially a linear Conservation Area. This north-south route connects Reading Road in the north to what is now the A30 in the south and in 1971 it was straightened out and widened – a small section of the ‘old’ lane can be seen forming the lay-by in front of Thatch Cottage and between the junctions with Beaver Lane and Quarry Lane. The lane bends slightly along its course, running roughly parallel to the line of the Pottle Stream, which drops down from the two ponds in the north, around Stevens Hill, then under Reading Road before joining the River Blackwater. Skaters Pond, once called Hilfield Pond, lies on the east side of Cricket Hill Lane and once lay within the gardens of Hilfield House – despite pond clearance some 20 years ago it is now little more than marsh due to the pond incrementally silting up. .

Handford Lane is another old route and connects Cricket Hill Lane with Yateley Green. Cricket Hill Green lies close to the junction of Cricket Hill Lane and Handford Lane, but its impact on the main road is lessened by the hedges which surround it, although views over the Green to the 1930s public house are of note.

Both lanes are largely surrounded by areas of woodland, particularly in the south, where the land falls within Yateley Common, or by low density houses or cottages, mostly set back slightly from the road in large gardens. Development tends to be concentrated to the west side of the lane, with quite different groups of houses or cottages, according to when they were built.

Mainly 19th century development, such as that seen in Brandy Bottom and Sunnyside, is made up of single depth properties which share a fairly common building line and are set

close together with large gardens behind. These are accessed off the main roads by narrow unmade tracks which cut through the woodland. More recent 20th century development, such as can be seen in Beaver Lane, Old Welmore and Quarry Lane, is characterised by narrow winding unmade roads with large detached houses set in very spacious plots. These differences are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6: *Character Areas*.

4.2 Open spaces, trees and landscape

With about half of the Conservation Area being wooded heathland, open green space or private gardens, the whole area is dominated by trees which form significant groups on either side of Cricket Hill Lane. Larger areas of woodland also stretch back from Cricket Hill Lane, on the east side, around Hospital Pond and Wyndham Pond. The woodland is made up of both deciduous and coniferous trees, with many small self-seeded Silver Birches. A large Cedar tree in the garden of Yateley Lodge is of special note. The most important trees and groups of trees are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, but due to the very large number and density of the trees within the Conservation Area, are indicative only.

The principal open green space is Cricket Hill Green, an area of rough grass which lies between the Cricketers Public House and Cricket Hill Lane. There are further open green spaces, similarly informal and simply grassed, in front of Sunnyside and Brandy Bottom. The Royal Oak Valley is a pleasant but often very narrow linear park which forms most of the western boundary of the Conservation Area and which forms a useful separation between Old Welmore and the Post-War housing estates further west.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

There are no focal points in the Conservation Area apart from Cricket Hill Green, which has greater impact in the summer months when some of the customers of the public house sit outside. Because most of the buildings were built as cottages or relatively modest houses, there are no buildings which have any great impact apart from:

- The Cricketers Public House, The Green – important in views across the open green space, particularly from Cricket Hill Lane
- Handfords, Handford Lane – a locally listed but important historic building (presumably once a farmhouse) with a weather-boarded barn next to it, also Locally Listed, which together are very important in oblique views along the lane
- Well Moor, Cricket Hill Lane – another important but unlisted historic building which sits on the west side of the road and is again important in oblique views along the road
- Yateley Lodge, on the corner of Cricket Hill Lane and Reading Road – the oldest and most impressive historic building in the Conservation Area, which is also notable for the large cedar tree in its front garden
- The Royal Oak Public House (currently not within the Conservation Area) – a late 19th century double pile building which sits on a prominent corner site

Casa dei Casari has recently been extended and, although now by far the largest building in the Conservation Area, it is set well back from Handford Lane and is not particularly dominant in views from the lane. The impact of this hotel's more recent development can be seen from Cricket Hill Green, largely because the new development comes right up to the property boundary next to the 1960s Baptist Church.

Whilst there are many oblique views along the roads or lanes within the Conservation Area (most notably along Cricket Hill Lane), longer views are relatively limited due to the way in which the buildings are laid out. Areas of thick woodland are also dominant and prevent views in many locations, although along the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, they contain views to the skyline of Stevens Hill from Cricket Hill Lane. There are pleasant views across Cricket Hill Green, and short views across the two ponds in the Country Park.

The most important views are noted on the Townscape Appraisal Map, but the omission of a view does not mean that it is of no significance.

4.4 Boundaries

Nearly all of the boundaries to the properties within the Conservation Area have front gardens of some size, and the majority of these are defined by clipped or 'natural' hedging (the simplest and most in keeping), low brick walls, or low timber palisade fencing (stained or painted), such as can be seen in Sunnyside. Along Cricket Hill Lane, and less appropriate, the busy traffic and HGVs means that some property owners have erected high brick walls or modern timber-panelled fencing, or have grown tall Leyland Cypress (*leylandii*) hedges. The untidy timber panelled fencing in front of Handfords is a regrettable feature.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm is composed of the space between the buildings, largely in public ownership, which is made up by the streets, pavements, lighting, street furniture, signage and other similar features. For most of the roads and lanes in the Conservation Area, the public realm is simple and very low key with pavements and streets covered in modern black asphalt (in some locations there are no pavements, in keeping with the rural character of the area). There are no examples of historic paving. Street lighting is provided by modern concrete 'hockey-stick' standards with glass lanterns, or, on the Reading Road, by tall slender steel poles with curved tops and glass lanterns. Street names are marked by modern white plastic signs with black lettering, on black posts, similar to the signage found throughout Hampshire. A traditional 'pub' sign, advertising The Cricketers, can be seen on the west side of Cricket Hill Lane. Two carefully designed 'Yateley Common' signs can be seen in Cricket Hill Lane and in Handford Lane. There are some overhead cables, but they are not particularly dominant.

Because the tracks through Yateley Common are across registered common land they cannot be surfaced without the consent of the Secretary of State for the Environment, pursuant to the Commons Act 2006 as an 'enclosure' of common land. They are thus not adopted. The recent resurfacing with asphalt of the lane which leads around

Thriftswood and down to Heathlands Cemetery has caused a degree of local controversy.

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Building types

Most of the buildings in the Conservation Area are unlisted and date to the 19th or 20th century, but there are three earlier listed buildings, of which one (Yateley Lodge) is now used as offices. Several other buildings may be of listable quality and this is discussed further in the Management Proposals.

All of the buildings (both historic and more recent) in the Conservation Area were built for residential use apart from the Cricketers Public House, but it does not stand out in that it is only two storeys high and retains a domestic character. Heathlands Court is the only purpose-built block of flats, and its large bulk is unfortunately highly visible due to its location next to Cricket Hill Lane.

The buildings within the Conservation Area fall roughly into three types:

- Distinctive rows of mainly late 19th century cottages and houses located in a woodland setting (Brandy Bottom and Sunnyside)
- More dispersed linear development with a mixture of historic and more modern buildings (around the west and north side of Cricket Hill Green, and along the east side of Cricket Hill Lane – some of these are listed)
- Inter-War houses set in very large gardens in a 'planned' layout (Old Welmore) – three of these are considered to be of special quality (Quarry House, Tudor House, and Mill House)

5.2 Listed buildings

There are just three listed buildings in the current Conservation Area, all listed grade II, as follows:

Yateley Lodge, Cricket Hill Lane

The list description says c1800, and the details are Georgian, but the slightly asymmetrical window layout and front parapet suggests a refronting of an older building at about this date. Otherwise the two storey building is faced in painted stucco with a simple Tuscan portico facing the large front garden. Later two storey extensions have been added to the south (appropriately) and to the north (less sympathetically). This part of the building appears (from Reading Road) to be suffering from damp penetration. The refronted house disguises several earlier phases of the building commencing from the Tudor era, with principal additions in the late 17th century.

Thatch Cottage, Cricket Hill Lane

Thatch Cottage sits down from the road and its low eaves and prominent thatched roof mean that it is hardly visible from the pavement. The building is timber-framed with a painted rendered front, casement windows, and a modern (in keeping) thatched porch.

It may date to the 18th or even the 17th century and is typical of the small (two cell) cottages which would once have been far more common in the area.

The Nest, Cricket Hill Lane

This building was listed in 1989 and the list description was amended in 1998. It is now described as an 18th century two bay two storey timber-framed cottage with a front elevation of red brick with glazed headers. The pitched roof is covered in clay tiles with a half hip on the northern end and brick chimney stacks at either end. The windows are modern casements, in keeping, and there is a simple tiled porch to the front. Like Thatch Cottage, it sits well down from Cricket Hill Lane.

5.3 Locally Listed buildings

The District Council has produced a short list of locally significant buildings within Yateley Parish. Three of them lie within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area boundary. Local listing provides such buildings with a degree of additional protection, and policies for their preservation are included in the Hart Local Plan, adopted in December 2002.

More information, and suggestions for Local Listing, are provided in the *Management Proposals*.

5.4 Positive buildings

In addition to the listed and Locally Listed buildings, many unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map as being *positive* historic buildings of townscape merit. Buildings identified as being *positive* will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides 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, they are excluded.

Within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area, the 'positive' buildings are mainly grouped in Sunnyside, where 13 out of the 17 properties in the group are considered to be of special merit. A small group of three 'positive' buildings can also be seen to the north of Thatch Cottage, and another group of three in Old Welmore, but otherwise, the 'positive' buildings tend to be somewhat scattered throughout the Conservation Area.

The most important 'positive' buildings are:

- Thriftswood, Stevens Hill – this substantial brown and red brick house was built in 1929 for Geoffrey Stilwell's widow by the architect A C Martin, a pupil of Edwin Lutyens. It is mentioned in both the old and new additions of Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series.
- Quarry House, Old Welmore – one of a number of significant 'Tudor' style houses which were erected in the area in the 1920s by a local builder, B A Fullbrook. A former quarry (hence the name) lies within its front garden which has recently been

developed with a new detached house. The site is contained by boundary walls built from unusual burnt blue and red bricks. Two further 'positive' buildings, of similar quality, lie to the south (Tudor House and Mill House)

- Well Moor – a 17th century cottage (exposed timber-framing can still be seen on the north flank wall) which was much extended in 1937 to form a substantial house which faces the main road.
- Handfords – a former farmhouse with adjoining weather-boarded barn – the simple brick faced two storey building with a long catslide roof at the back, casement windows and three brick chimney stacks, is probably 18th century but may be earlier. A dwelling of this name is mentioned in the 1567 Crondal Customary.
- The Old Cricketers, Cricket Hill Green – a three bay early 19th century white painted brick cottage with casement windows and a clay tiled roof.
- Moorside, Cricket Hill Lane

In addition, there are a number of well detailed mainly mid to late 19th century cottages or small houses – good examples are Cricket Hill Cottage, on the north side Cricket Hill Green, and Jesse Cottage (although it has been much extended) in Brandy Bottom.

English Heritage guidance advises 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. Again, further information is provided in the *Management Proposals*.

5.5 Building styles, materials and colours

The overall character of the historic buildings in the Conservation Area is domestic and vernacular, so most of the buildings are modestly sized (just two storeys high) and are faced in brick or painted stucco. Steeply pitched roofs, covered in natural slate and handmade or machine-made clay tiles, are also prominent. Thatch Cottage, as its name suggests, is the only example of the use of this material which must have once been far more common. Handmade clay tiles are important on Handfords and The Nest, and on some of the cottages in Sunnyside. Decorative tile hanging, again using handmade clay tiles, is also notable on some of the late 19th century cottages in Brandy Bottom, and also (again) in Sunnyside. Brick red brick, mixed with blue headers, can be seen on the front elevations of The Nest and Jesse Cottage. Several buildings appear to have been built as timber-frames, but the only building which has any visible framing is Well More on Cricket Hill Lane.

Whilst timber casement windows, painted white, would once have been the most predominant window type, many of the properties facing Cricket Hill Lane have uPVC or modern timber windows which do not replicate the original design (this is despite the Article 4 Direction which seeks to control the use of modern materials and details). Yateley Lodge is one of the few properties in the Conservation Area which has multi-paned sash windows, many of which appear to be early 19th or possibly late 18th century. Some of the houses in Brandy Bottom and Sunnyside have substantial extensions which are often almost as large as the original building.

6 CHARACTER AREAS

The Cricket Hill Conservation Area divides into four Character Areas according to the age and type of the buildings, and the landscape setting (see Map 2 *Character Areas*). These are:

- Reading Road and Cricket Hill Lane
- Old Welmore and the Royal Oak Valley
- The Green, Hartford Lane and Sunnyside
- Stevens Hill and Yateley Common

6.1 Reading Road and Cricket Hill Lane

These two roads form the ‘spine’ of the Conservation Area and are both historic routes although modern road-widening schemes have somewhat obliterated their earlier features. Cricket Hill Lane is the most important road in the Conservation Area, although it does retain more of a rural character due to the mature trees and ponds which mainly lie to the east and south. Dispersed development of cottages and small houses can be found on both sides, though to the south and west, large areas of woodland conceal Sunnyside. Cricket Hill Lane retains the Conservation Area’s only listed buildings – Yateley Lodge, Thatched Cottage and The Nest.

Negative features or issues for this Character Area:

- The continued maintenance and enhancement of the natural features – trees, grass verges, watercourses and ponds
- The busy and fast moving traffic (despite the 30 mph speed limit), which creates a potentially dangerous pedestrian environment
- There has been a large amount of Post-War development, mainly along the south-east side of Cricket Hill Lane, of no special interest
- Heathlands Court is a large modern block of flats which is out of scale with the other buildings in the Conservation Area
- The large plot sizes in many locations means that there is pressure for further development
- Parking in front gardens and the loss of front boundaries
- The loss of original features such as windows and front doors on some of the unlisted family dwellings (despite the Article 4 Direction)
- Some of the buildings may be eligible for local listing or even statutory listing
- A small extension to the Conservation Area to include the Royal Oak Public House and Corner Cottage is proposed, both in Reading Road

6.2 Old Welmore and the Royal Oak Valley

Old Welmore was laid out in the late 1920s, probably after the Hilfield estate was broken up. There are three narrow access roads – Quarry Lane, Old Welmore, and Beaver

Lane, which provide access to nearly 20 detached properties, the largest and oldest of which are on the north side of Quarry Lane (Quarry house, Tudor House and Mill House). These are well detailed very substantial houses which sit in very large plots. Some of the properties have been added since WW2 and at least one is a bungalow. Clipped hedging, and the unusual purple and brown bricks outside Quarry House, make a major contribution to the character of this part of the Conservation Area.

The Royal Oak Valley is a narrow, well treed public woodland, much of which is a SINC, which follows the course of the stream northwards towards Reading Road.

Negative features or issues for this Character Area:

- Pressure for the redevelopment of existing properties or the addition of further properties using existing garden space, as has been recently done at Quarry House
- The protection of the tranquil, sylvan character of this part of the Conservation Area
- Some of the buildings may be eligible for Local Listing

6.3 The Green, Handford Lane and Sunnyside

This part of the Conservation Area has a very rural character due to the areas of thick woodland and the open green spaces within it. Around the Green are a number of cottages and smaller houses of which Cricket Hill Cottage is perhaps the best preserved. The Green forms a focal space which is overlooked by the public house (The Cricketers) and the 1960s Baptist Church. Whilst there has been some modern development, the spacious plots have been preserved and the many mature trees all add to the rural character of the area. Casa dei Cesari is the largest building but is surrounded by trees and set back from the road. Its main visual intrusion is to the left of the Baptist Church. Handford Lane cuts through this part of the Conservation Area and is also very busy – Handfords is a locally listed former farmhouse which, with its barn, also locally listed, is a key focal building. Further south, Sunnyside is a row of mainly mid to late 19th century houses accessed by an unadopted road from Cricket Hill Lane – most of the properties are considered to be ‘positive’, and overall they remain reasonably well preserved with many retaining their original front doors, windows, and roof materials.

Negative features or issues for this Character Area:

- Ensuring that the Article 4 Direction is adhered to
- Protection of front boundaries and front gardens
- Preventing out of scale development and the loss of garden space
- Busy traffic and HGVs along Handford Lane
- The poor condition of the access lane to Sunnyside
- Out of keeping modern garages in Sunnyside
- The timber panel fence to Handfords is in poor condition
- The impact of the new extensions to Casa dei Cesari on the adjoining area
- A Yateley Common sign on the edge of the Green has been vandalised

6.4 Stevens Hill and Yateley Common

This large area of mainly woodland, streams, and ponds makes up about one third of the Conservation Area. Stevens Hill, to the north, backs onto more open farmland although there are also areas of woodland. Otherwise, most of this area forms part of Yateley Common and is managed by Hampshire County Council's Rangers, who are currently undertaking a series of landscape improvements as part of the heathland restoration programme and also to try and prevent vandalism and other anti-social activities.

Apart from some detached houses in Stevens Hill, there is only one area of development – Brandy Bottom – a row of mixed 19th and 20th century houses with small front gardens which is accessed from an unadopted lane which leads past Hospital Pond.

Negative features or issues for this Character Area:

Brandy Bottom:

- Despite the Article 4 Direction, some of the properties have been altered using modern materials such as uPVC windows
- Some dominant modern garages
- Jesse Cottage is the oldest building and has been substantially extended
- A few visible satellite dishes in front gardens
- The poor condition of the access road to Brandy Bottom
- Pressure for new development including extensions

Yateley Common:

- The care and enhancement of Yateley Common
- Balancing the need to protect the Common with the need for public access

General:

- Thriftswood in Stevens Hill may be eligible for local or even statutory listing

7 ISSUES

7.1 Summary of Issues

Based on the Negatives Features summarised in Chapter 6, and on comments made during the initial public consultation/walkabout, the following are considered to be the most important Issues for the Cricket Hill Conservation Area at this point in time:

Protecting Yateley Common and other green spaces

- The protection of the common land and other open green spaces (and their setting) from unsympathetic new development
- The care of the natural features of the common land and other green spaces – the trees, grass verges, ponds, and watercourses

- The continued protection and restoration of the SPA and SSSI
- The general enhancement and protection of the rural qualities of the Conservation Area

The control of new development

- A general pressure for new development, including the redevelopment of existing buildings (where larger plot sizes exist)

Building issues

- The continued protection of all heritage assets, including the Listed and Locally Listed buildings, and their settings, from demolition or unsympathetic change
- The control of unlisted positive buildings through the existing Article 4 Direction
- A thorough review is needed of the statutory and the Local List

Conservation Area Boundary Review

Additions:

- Add properties in Reading Road – the Royal Oak Public House (a purpose-built public house dating to c1900) and Corner Cottage, a grade II listed late 18th century house on the opposite side of Reading Road

Deletions:

- None

THE MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

8 INTRODUCTION

8.1 Format of the Management Proposals

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Cricket Hill Conservation Area which make the Conservation Area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals*, builds upon the negative features which have also been identified, to provide a series of Issues and Recommendations for improvement and change. Most, but not all, will be the responsibility of the Hart District Council, Yateley Town Council or Hampshire County Council.

The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis, as set out in Chapter 10.

9 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Protecting Yateley Common and other green spaces

Yateley Common makes up a substantial (about one third) part of the designated Conservation Area, and it therefore makes an important contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area because of its green spaces, watercourses, ponds, and, most importantly, it's wooded and open heath. These are looked after by the Common rangers who are employed by Hampshire County Council. The rangers work in a team of four people and are responsible for a total of 13 sites in all. A Management Plan for Yateley Common has been drawn up in past, and a partnership with DEFRA has resulted in a Countryside Stewardship scheme which has a further three years left to run. This has primarily provided funding to improve the conservation status of Yateley Common to "unfavourable – recovering", including the clearing of trees and scrub within the Common to create the open spaces and heath land favoured by ground-nesting birds. A new Management Plan has recently been approved by the Yateley Common Management Committee and it is hoped it will result in new funding partly from the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. The rangers carry out much of the tree work themselves, with occasional help from local tree surgeons. They use subcontractors for large scale heathland restoration involving mechanical equipment, and volunteer groups for many other projects. A principal concern of the rangers is to enhance the wild life opportunities within the SPA and SSSI in order to meet national and European Union targets, and to provide educational opportunities for children and the public in general. They also undertake a number of other improvements and projects, such as the creation of the new pond on the south side of Darby Green Road

The south-eastern quadrant of Yateley Common is owned by the MOD, part of their Minley Manor estate, and is managed by the Hampshire Wildlife Trust. The Wildlife Trust has recently been asked to manage the south-western quadrant of Yateley Common, which is owned by the Calthorpe Estate. The north-western quadrant of Yateley Common is owned by Blackbushe Airport and is currently unmanaged with respect to wildlife interests. An extensive area along the river valley of the Blackwater is administered by the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership, an authority made up from the three county councils and all the adjoining local authorities. The grass verges either side of Cricket Hill Lane and Reading Road are looked after by Hampshire County Council (Countryside Services).

The greatest threat to Yateley Common comes from new development, either in the form of alterations to, or reconstructions of, existing properties, or from completely new development, which could have a detrimental effect on the peaceful ambience of the majority of the Common. Any increase in traffic along the principal roads such as Cricket Hill Lane and Reading Road should also be resisted due to the impact on the Common (and the flora and fauna within it) and the more incipient effect on the Conservation Area in general.

Recommendation:

- *The District Council and Hampshire County Council will continue to protect Yateley Common and its setting through the strict enforcement of policies contained within the Local Plan and will resist applications for change which*

would have a detrimental effect on the land and properties within or on the edges of the Common.

9.2 The control of new development

There are very few opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area due to restrictive Local Plan policies other than the extension or rebuilding of existing properties. In both instances, there is a possibility of the new development being too large and not in keeping with the modest, domestic scale of nearly all of the buildings in the Area. Additionally, new development must not be allowed that would generate large amounts of new traffic, although the largest commercial business in the Conservation Area, Casa dei Cesari, has already been substantially extended. In accordance with existing Council policies, Conservation Area Consent should not be granted for the demolition of any building without an agreed scheme for the site being granted planning permission.

Recommendation:

- *The District council will continue to ensure through the use of its Development Control powers, that all applications for change within, or on the edges of the Conservation Area, preserve or enhance its rural character, taking the scale, general form and materials of the proposal particularly into account*
- *The District Council will seek the continued protection of all heritage assets, including the Listed and Locally Listed buildings, and their settings, from demolition or unsympathetic change*
- *The District Council will not allow uses within or on the edges of the Conservation Area which it is considered do not enhance the rural character of the Conservation Area*
- *New development must not generate additional traffic, including HGV traffic that might adversely affect the rural qualities of the Conservation Area.*

9.3 Building issues

Article 4 Direction

Since 1998 the unlisted family dwellings in the Area have been protected by an Article 4 Direction which brings certain alterations to these buildings under planning control. This means that a changes to windows, front doors, roof materials, chimneys and front boundaries may require permission from the District Council (listed buildings, and unlisted buildings in other uses, are already protected by different legislation). In the past, there has been limited publicity about this additional level of control although the existence of an Article 4 Direction should show up on solicitor's searches when property changes hands.

Recommendation:

- *The District Council will consider producing additional publicity and guidance for property owners in the Conservation Area*

- *The District Council will undertake a building-by-building photography survey of all of the affected properties to aid possible future enforcement action (resources allowing)*
- *The District Council will produce detailed Design Guidance, to help property owners repair and alter their buildings in a sympathetic way*

The control of unlisted positive buildings (including Locally Listed buildings)

As part of the Appraisal process, and as recommended by English Heritage and in PPS5, a number of 'positive' buildings have been identified and are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map for the Cricket Hill Conservation Area. Generally, these are individual or groups of buildings which retain all or a high proportion of their original architectural detailing and which add interest and vitality to the appearance of the conservation area. Most of them date to the mid to late 19th century, but some may be much earlier. Where they have been too heavily altered, and restoration is not easily achievable, they are excluded.

As with listed buildings, there is a general presumption in favour of their retention. Any application for the demolition of a positive building will therefore need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification as to why the building cannot be retained, similar to that required for a listed building. The owner must also have made positive efforts to market the building, or to find a suitable new use, before an application can be determined.

Recommendation:

- *The District Council will consider applications for change to 'positive' buildings extremely carefully and will refuse any that adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.*
- *Applications to demolish 'positive' buildings will generally be refused.*

Local List and Statutory List

There are currently three Locally Listed buildings in the Conservation Area but no review has been carried out in recent years. Additions may include some of the 'positive' buildings identified as part of the Character Appraisal process. Some may even be eligible for statutory listing.

Recommendation:

- Subject to resources, the Local and the Statutory List for Cricket Hill should be reviewed, ideally in partnership with the Yateley Town Council and the Yateley Society.

9.4 Conservation Area Boundary Review

Addition

Add properties in Reading Road

- It is proposed to add two buildings to the Conservation Area. Firstly, the Royal Oak Public House, an early 20th century red brick two storey building which sits on a very prominent site on the corner with Reading Road, and secondly, Corner Cottage, a grade II listed mid-18th century two storey building which is located opposite the public house.

During the stakeholder's walkabout in December 2010, an inspection was made of Heathlands Cemetery; to see if could be added to the Conservation Area. The cemetery was opened in 1957 and although of undoubted local significance, it does not have any 'special architectural or historic interest' which would merit its inclusion within the Conservation Area. It may, however, be a possible candidate for Hart District Council's Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Deletions

There are no proposed deletions to the Conservation Area.

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption by Hart District Council. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the Conservation Area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action
- Publicity and advertising.

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the District Council. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Townscape Appraisal Map
Character Areas Map
- Appendix 2 Existing Article 4 Direction
- Appendix 3 Bibliography
- Appendix 4 Contact details

APPENDIX 1 Townscape Appraisal Map Character Areas Map

APPENDIX 2 EXISTING ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

The Direction controls changes to the principal elevations and roofs (where they front a highway or other public space) of all unlisted family dwellings within the Cricket Hill Conservation Area which might otherwise have been allowed automatically under house owners' 'permitted development' rights. The aim of the Direction is to prevent the Conservation Area from being incrementally spoilt by a variety of unsympathetic changes such as plastic windows or concrete roof tiles. The Direction means that planning permission is required for a variety of works as follows:

- Extensions, improvements or other alterations to the dwelling house
- Alterations to existing boundaries, or the creation of new boundaries

A copy of the Article 4 Direction can be viewed at the Planning Department, Hart District Council, Fleet, and a more detailed summary of the Direction is included below.

This Article 4 Direction covers all unlisted residential properties in use as a single family unit i.e. not flats or in multiple occupation, where different legislation applies. The Direction brings under planning control the following works as specified in the General (Permitted Development) Order 1990 (as amended):

- Class A The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of the frontage* of a dwelling or building within the curtilage of a dwelling, including works affecting a frontage* roof slope (*In respect of side extensions, these are covered where they are in front of the rear wall of the dwelling*);
- Class B The erection, construction, alteration or demolition of a porch on the frontage* of a dwelling;
- Class C The erection, alteration or removal of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure to the frontage* of a dwelling;
- Class D The exterior painting of any part of the frontage* of a dwelling or building within the curtilage of a dwelling (*This requires consent where it involves either a painting scheme dramatically different from the existing or involves areas of the building not previously painted*);

- Class E The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney or building within the curtilage of a dwelling;

***Frontage** refers to the elevations or roof slope of the dwelling which face a highway, a footpath, a bridleway, a waterway or a public open space. In respect of side extensions, these need permission where they would be forward of the rear wall of the dwelling. The **curtilage** is the contained area around the dwelling.

APPENDIX 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Yateley Society website (<http://www.yateleysociety.org.uk/>)

Kerslake, Valerie *A Walk on Cricket Hill* Published by the Yateley Society 1996

APPENDIX 4 CONTACT DETAILS

For further information, please contact the following:

**Hart District Council,
Civic Offices,
Harlington Way,
Fleet,
Hampshire GU51 4AE
Tel: 01252 622122**

Listed Buildings within Cricket Hill Yateley CA

Yateley Lodge	Reading Road	Yateley
Thatched Cottage	Cricket Hill Lane	Yateley
The Nest	Cricket Hill Lane	Yateley

Locally Listed Buildings within Cricket Hill Yateley CA

Cricket Hill Cottage (House)	Cricket Hill Lane	Yateley
Handfords	Handford Lane	Yateley
Handfords Barn	Handford Lane	Yateley
Exinct Lake at	Brandy Bottom	Yateley