

# **NORTH FLEET CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

**APPROVED DOCUMENT**

**04.12.08**

Approved at Cabinet 04.12.08 – incorporating amendments and corrections from the public consultation

This document has been written by The Conservation Studio,  
1 Querns Lane,  
Cirencester,  
Glos GL7 1RL  
Tel: 01285 642428  
Email: [info@theconservationstudio.co.uk](mailto:info@theconservationstudio.co.uk)  
Website: [www.theconservationstudio.co.uk](http://www.theconservationstudio.co.uk)

<b>Contents:</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	
1.1 The North Fleet Conservation Area	
1.2 Summary of key characteristics and recommendations	
1.3 The planning policy context	
1.4 The local policy framework	
1.5 Article 4 Directions	
1.5 Community involvement	
<b>2 Location and landscape setting</b>	
2.1 Location and activities	
2.2 Topography and geology	
2.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings	
2.4 Biodiversity	
<b>3 Historic development and archaeology</b>	
3.1 Historic development	
3.2 Archaeology	
<b>4 Spatial analysis</b>	
4.1 Layout and street pattern	
4.2 Open spaces, trees and landscape	
4.3 Focal points, focal buildings and views	
4.4 Boundaries	
4.5 Public realm	
<b>5 The buildings of the conservation area</b>	
5.1 Building types	
5.2 Listed buildings	
5.3 Locally listed buildings	
5.4 Positive buildings	
5.5 Building styles, materials and colours	
<b>6 Character areas</b>	
6.1 Fitzroy Road to Reading Road North	
6.2 North of Reading Road North - Springfield Lane to The Avenue	
6.3 Victoria Road, Victoria Hill Road, Branksomewood Road, Church Grove and Church Road (south)	
6.4 Fleet Community Hospital and Church Road (north)	
6.5 Hagley Road and Gough Road	
6.6 Broomrigg Road and Calthorpe Road	
6.7 Elvetham Road	
6.8 The Stockton Estate - Avenue Road, Stockton Avenue, and Waverley Avenue	
<b>7 Issues</b>	
7.1 New development	
7.2 Maintaining the existing buildings and their plots	

- 7.3 Trees and landscape
- 7.4 Traffic and roads
- 7.5 Pavements and the public realm
- 7.6 Protection of the views
- 7.7 The impact of non-residential uses
- 7.8 Local List
- 7.9 Conservation area boundary review

## **THE MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS**

### **8 Introduction**

- 8.1 Format of the Management Proposals

### **9 Issues and recommendations**

- 9.1 New development
- 9.2 Maintaining the existing buildings and their plots
- 9.3 Trees and landscape
- 9.4 Traffic and roads
- 9.5 Pavements and the public realm
- 9.6 Protection of the views
- 9.7 The impact of non-residential uses
- 9.8 Local List
- 9.9 Conservation area boundary review

### **10 Monitoring and review**

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Ages of Buildings map  
Character Areas and Conservation Area boundary review map  
Planning Policy Map
- Appendix 2 Article 4 Directions
- Appendix 3 Bibliography
- Appendix 4 Contact details

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

Historic maps and photographs (to follow)

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 The North Fleet Conservation Area

The North Fleet Conservation Area was designated in 1994 and lies on the northern side of the town of Fleet, a largely Edwardian development of former heathland which followed the growth of nearby Aldershot and Farnborough from the 1860s onwards. Before the provision of a direct railway line from Fleet Pond to London in the 1840s, the area was largely uninhabited, and was used for gravel and sand extraction. A few large country houses, some of which remain, were built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and under the patronage of the Lefroy family a church and school were built in 1862 and 1884 respectively. However, the main impetus for development came after the 1880s when H W Brake bought most of the land in Fleet and mapped out a series of plots, on the heathland, around and to the south of what is now Fleet Road. Fleet Urban District Council was established in 1904, confirming that a mature settlement had formed.

The conservation area provides contrasting areas of residential development, some of it laid out in a grid pattern, and some set to either side of gently curving roads. Historic maps confirm that few buildings remain of pre-1846 date, or even of 1890. The majority of the buildings appear to therefore date to between 1890 and 1922, or even later, with several streets not being completed until the 1930s. However, the spacious plots, with the mainly detached houses set back from the road behind mature trees and other planting, provide the defining feature of the conservation area. It is this sylvan quality, allied to some unmade roads, grass verges, and (in places) undulating topography, which gives the conservation area its special character.

## 1.2 Summary of key characteristics and recommendations

This **Character Appraisal** concludes that the key *positive* characteristics of the North Fleet Conservation Area are:

- Quiet residential estate largely developed mainly from the 1880s onwards, with a few substantial houses remaining from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century;
- Close proximity to Fleet town centre, but separate from it;
- All Saints Church (1862) listed grade II\*, and Fleet Cottage Hospital (1897) which is locally listed, are the principal non-residential buildings;
- Grid pattern of streets to the south-west, and softer, curved streets with a less formal arrangement, to the north-east;
- Abundance of trees and mature shrubbery (particularly rhododendrons) provide an almost rural quality to the conservation area;
- Unadopted roads, grass verges, footpaths add to the informality of the area;
- Sparse and unobtrusive lighting, both in the streets and on the exterior of buildings add to the semi rural character of the area;
- Generally flat to the extreme east and west of the conservation area, with a notable change to the topography created by a steep hill to the east of Reading Road North;
- Buildings are detached family houses, generally of two stories in height, domestic scale, often hidden from view by planting and set in spacious plots resulting in lower densities. These densities range from (approximately) not more than 25 dwellings per hectare, down to not more than 5 dwellings per hectare, depending on the location of the dwellings within the four areas defined in saved planning

- policy URB18. Buildings vary in style but generally have features associated with the 1930s;
- Different parts of the conservation area are laid out to different densities, identified in the Local Plan, with different planning policies for each;
  - Enclosed character to the conservation area, because of the planting, apart from views from the northern boundary over the railway line.

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

- The Council will protect buildings of quality from demolition and resist applications to amalgamate plots or over-develop sites;
- The Council will protect existing buildings from inappropriate extensions or alterations;
- The Council will enforce the existing Article 4 Direction, and protect or enhance existing front boundaries;
- The Council will advise and assist residents with the management of their trees by means of the conservation area protected trees legislation;
- Traffic management measures could be considered within the conservation area;
- The Council will maintain existing alleyways and public footpaths through liaison with HCC;
- The Council will ensure that public realm works do not detract from the rural qualities of the conservation area;
- The Council will protect views within or on the edges of the conservation area;
- The Council will protect the residential character of the conservation area by carefully monitoring non-residential uses; applications for new non-residential development will be very carefully considered;
- Recommendations for the Local List;
- Recommendations for small additions to the conservation area.

### 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 North Fleet 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 Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*” (PPG15).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the North Fleet 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 North Fleet 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 Hampshire County Structure Plan (Review) 1996-2011 and Hart District Council’s Local Plan, adopted in December 2002.

In the Local Plan, Inset Map No. 10 confirms that the following policies apply to the North Fleet Conservation Area:

URB 18(i)  
URB 18(ii)  
URB 18(iii)  
URB 18(iv)

These are set out in Appendix 2 and refer to maximum densities for new development.

North Fleet lies within the zone of influence of the North Hampshire SPA (Special Protection Areas) as it is located between 400m and 5km away from the boundary of the area designated. Accordingly, residential development within this zone of influence will have to be supported by the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

The 2002 Local Plan will be replaced in due course 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](http://www.hart.gov.uk).

#### **1.5 Article 4 Directions**

An Article 4 Direction was served by Hart District Council in March 1998 on the North Fleet Conservation Area, covering all unlisted family dwellings within the area. The Direction brings under planning control the following:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure to the frontage of a dwelling.

The purpose of the Article 4 Direction is to prevent the loss of front boundaries, which are particularly important in the conservation area. A copy of the Direction can be viewed at the Planning Department, Hart District Council, Fleet, and a more detailed summary of the Direction is included at Appendix 3.

## **1.6 Community involvement**

This document was initially drafted following a walkabout with representatives from Hart District Council and local historians on 30 January 2008, when the extent of the conservation area boundary was discussed, along with some of the main problems and issues which face the community. Following this meeting, a first draft was agreed with the District and the document was then put on the District Council's website from 26 August for six weeks. After the completion of this period of public consultation, the final draft was produced and the document illustrated and printed.

## **2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING**

### **2.1 Location and activities**

Fleet is the largest settlement within Hart District, and is located immediately to the south of the M3 between Hartley Wintney and Church Crookham, with which it is now contiguous. Farnborough and Aldershot both lie to the east, less than five kilometres away. Odiham is about eight kilometres to the south-west.

Fleet is located on former heathland which is still evident at Yateley Heath Wood, north of the North Hants Golf Course and the M3. Tweseldown lies to the east, separating Fleet from Aldershot. Further countryside to the south towards Ewshot is farmed, but like the Forest, there is limited public access due to military operations. To the west of Fleet, and the north of Crookham, the agricultural land is flatter and crossed by streams, drainage ditches and the meandering course of the Basingstoke Canal, which follows the 80 metre contour.

The North Fleet Conservation Area is almost entirely in residential uses, the main exception being the Community Hospital, All Saints Church, and the school which is located in Stockton House. There are a number of care homes for the elderly.

### **2.2 Topography and geology**

The conservation area has areas of undulating topography, most noticeable along Broomrigg Road, where the unmade road falls steeply towards Reading Road North. This hill is also evident in the northern section of Broomrigg Road, towards Elvetham Road. This ridge provides some of the properties, particularly those on the west side of Hagley Road (e.g. The Beacon and Buena Vista), with good views over their rear gardens and beyond, as the land falls towards Reading Road North. Other parts of the conservation area are much flatter, with some gentle undulations, such as Fitzroy Road to the west, or Waverley Avenue to the east.

Fleet lies within what was once a large area of natural heathland, and within the conservation area there are many remaining areas of coniferous trees and poorly draining sandy soils. The survival of Brickyard Plantation to the north of the conservation area confirms that clay is also present and has in the past been excavated to make bricks and tiles.

### **2.3 Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings**

The Landscape Character Assessment (prepared by Hart DC and Hampshire CC in 1997) of this part of Hart defines Fleet as lying to the west of the Tweseldown Character Area, which is mainly composed of coniferous forest (the Forest of Eversley) and open heathland. To the north of Fleet lies the Minley Character Area, which is more mixed with farming land as well as heathland, leading towards Yateley Heath Wood, with its deciduous woodland and open commons.

The conservation area lies to the north of the town of Fleet, with Fleet Road just a few minutes walk away providing most of the daily shopping needs of the community. Beyond Fleet Road, the grid pattern of residential streets provides evidence of the survival of planned development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

To the east of the conservation area, Fleet Pond is an attractive and well used local facility, with further residential and commercial development beyond. The conservation area is constrained to the north by the line of the railway, beyond which is the Golf Course and more housing. To the west, Post-War housing and more recent development around Hitches Lane area ( was known as Hitches Hill) has infilled the gap between Fitzroy Road and the more open countryside which can still be seen from Hitches Lane.

## **2.4 Biodiversity**

There are no special designations for the natural environment in the North Fleet Conservation Area, although the many trees, plants and large private gardens all provide a range of natural habitats for a variety of wildlife, including bats. The Elvetham Heath Nature Reserve lies close to the M3, within walking distance of the conservation area. Fleet Pond, also close to the conservation area, is an important centre for all kinds of wildlife, particularly wild fowl, and has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Pond Society and Hart District Council work together to maintain and improve the nature reserve.

### **3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Historic development**

'Fleet' probably derives its name from the large pond at the northern end of the modern town, which was historically known as the Flete. In the Norman period, the area lay in the Hundred of Crondall, in the Tithing of Crookham, but the large pond is believed to have been created during the Roman period as a way of providing fresh fish. It is known that the pond was used as a source of fish for Winchester Abbey until the Dissolution in 1536. There were few dwellings before the late 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the poor sandy soil, and gravel and sand extraction appears to have been the only occupation. Isaac Taylor's map of Hampshire drawn in 1759 shows only three groups of buildings in the area: Fleet Farm, The Mill and Broomhurst Farm. The completion of the nearby Basingstoke Canal in 1794 does not appear to have had any effect on the area.

In 1818 Itchell Manor and Crondall (which encompassed Fleet) were inherited by the Lefroy family, Huguenots who had left France in 1587 to escape persecution. However, the area remained undeveloped until the 1840s when the London and South Western Railway constructed a new station at Fleet Pond. After this, Fleet became a popular destination for city dwellers who enjoyed the landscape and natural history, and the setting of pine forest and heathland. New houses began to be built as Londoners purchased land and set about creating capacious houses of some grandeur, several of which remain: Stockton House (now a school), Lismoyne (now the Lismoyne Hotel) and Stanton Lodge. Slightly afterwards, the Lefroy family endowed two major buildings in Fleet - All Saints Church, which was built in 1862 in Church Road, and a Church of England School, built in 1884 in Albert Street.

In 1878 H W Brake bought most of the land in Fleet in the centre of what is now Fleet, but mainly on the south side of Fleet Road. In due course, new roads were formed in a grid pattern, and new building plots were laid out in increments of 20 feet. However, it does not appear that he purchased much land in what is now the conservation area apart from the southern end of Branksomewood Road and Victoria Road, and the estate was therefore developed in a more incrementally way by different land owners. This means that Victoria Road still retains the long, thin plots which characterise the streets to the south of Fleet Road, such as Albert Street and Clarence Road. A wooden Estate Office stood in Fleet Station yard, and the first plots sold for ten shillings per foot of road frontage, although plots in Fleet Road were always double the cost of plots anywhere else.

Historic maps show how the conservation area was developed, with the earliest groups of houses close to Fleet Road. By 1890, Stockton House, All Saints Church, Woodlands, The Grove and Crookham Villa were the principal buildings, with much open space in between, particularly towards Elvetham Road. There were some cottages and more modest houses, most notably in Victoria Road and Church Road. A Non-Conformist burial ground and Sunday School is shown off the continuation of Church Grove. Fleet Cottage Hospital was built in 1897 in Church Road on land donated by Lady Calthorpe from Elvetham Hall. In 1899 a new Wesleyan Methodist Church was erected on the corner of Branksomewood Road and Fleet Road, to replace a smaller building of 1887 (this was demolished in late 1960s and Woolworths built on the site).

Despite this rapid building programme, large areas of natural woodland still remained until the 1900s, particularly to the west of Reading Road North which was not developed until the 1920s and 1930s.

As soon as the Fleet Urban District Council was formed in 1904, the cost of land almost doubled. During this period, some of the larger, original houses were demolished and their gardens and estates broken down into smaller plots. Fleet Station was doubled in size, also in 1904, to cope with the influx of customers. A great deal of further development occurred in the 1920s along Reading Road North, and in the 1930s, most notably the Stockton Estate area to the west of Reading Road North. The new streets, such as Fitzroy Road, Gough Road, and Calthorpe Road, were named after local benefactors or other personalities.

The conservation area was designated in 1994, and the Article 4 Direction, to protect front boundaries and gardens, was served in 1998.

### **3.2 Archaeology**

The HER (Historic Environment Record) for Hampshire, prepared by Hampshire County Council, lists 23 entries for the Parish of Fleet area, including:

- Roman flagons of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century have been found in the area and are now in Acton Museum;
- A small piece of medieval pottery has been found;
- Post-medieval earthworks survive in places;
- Various remains from World War II are still evident – pillboxes, anti-tank blocks, and an air-raid shelter.

The HER also details listed buildings and other historic structures, all Post-medieval.

## **4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Layout and street pattern**

The North Fleet Conservation Area is made up of a number of contrasting streets, some of which are laid out in a straight line, such as Reading Road North and Fitzroy Road, and some of which are curved, such as Waverley Avenue and Gough Road. The northern part of the conservation area is defined by Elvetham Road, which is almost completely straight and runs parallel to the railway line.

#### **Insert 1900 map**

The map of 1900 confirms that a grid pattern of streets had been laid out by this time, set at right angles to both Fleet Road and Elvetham Road, and four roads running parallel to Reading Road North. These streets are Victoria Road, Branksomewood Road, Church Road (which contains the only curving section of road which was originally around a house called 'Peatmoor', now demolished), and Stockton Avenue. To the north, Avenue Road leads from Church Road straight up to Elvetham Road, with a number of what appears to be unmade up new trackways also running at right angles into Elvetham Road. Beyond these roads are areas of undeveloped heathland called Farnham Road Heath and Crondall Road Heath in the west.

#### **Insert 1922 map**

By 1922, the grid pattern of streets remain in the south-east of what is now the conservation area, but gently curving streets (Broomrigg Road, Calthorpe Road, and Gough Road) have been added to the north-west of Victoria Hill Road, with houses, set in very spacious gardens, being shown on the map. Houses of a similar type had also been built along the south-west side of Reading Road North, although Fitzroy Road, Herbert Road, and the Stockton Estate were still not laid out – development seems to have occurred in these locations in the 1930s.

Since the 1950s, a number of changes have been made to the conservation area and its immediate setting. Some of the larger houses have been demolished, such as Peatmoor (now Peatmoor Close), Tantallon (now Pheasant Copse), and Thurlston House (replaced by a new Thurlston House and terraces of small houses and flats). Small areas of new development, such as Rosedene Gardens off Avenue Road, Queen Mary Close off Elvetham Road, or Glendale Park off Hitches Lane, have been inserted on backland sites.

Of note are the un-adopted roads which can be found in various locations, such as Springfield Lane, Broomrigg Road, Pines Road, part of Calthorpe Road, and part of Waverley Avenue. These are quite rough in places but add to the rural qualities of the conservation area. Small alleys can be seen in the south-east of the conservation area between Reading Road North and Church Grove, particularly around the Hope Cemetery, also adding to the pleasantly 'green' character of the conservation area.

## **4.2 Open spaces, trees and landscape**

The North Fleet Conservation Area does not contain any 'planned' open spaces apart from the churchyard around All Saints Church and the Hope Cemetery off Church Grove. However, some of the streets, such as Waverley Avenue, Gough Road, Herbert Road and Fitzroy Road, have very attractive deep grass verges, some edged by clipped hedging, which make a major contribution to the special character of the conservation area. In Gough Road, rounded clumps of clipped shrubbery are a more unusual variation on this theme.

Because of the density of the trees and other shrubbery, there is also little appreciation of individual private gardens, which can usually only be glimpsed from the public viewpoint. These trees, particularly the naturally occurring conifers, have been infilled with a range of specimen trees, such as Wellingtonias and cedars, which are now reaching their prime. Rhododendrons are another shrub which are very evident. This mixture of indigenous planting with trees and shrubs which have been added by individual property owners, is a notable feature of the conservation area.

## **4.3 Focal points, focal buildings and views**

### Focal points

North Fleet is primarily a residential estate and there was never any need to provide focal points such as a public park, commercial facilities, or educational or cultural activities, all of which are provided in the town centre which lies close by. Also, because of the layout of the buildings, densely planted landscape and undulating (in parts) topography, there are no gaps in the generally consistent form of development which would act as 'focal points'.

### Focal buildings

The majority of the buildings in the conservation area were built as residential houses, and they generally make an equal contribution to the overall character of the area. However, the following buildings do stand out in views along the adjoining streets:

- All Saints Church, Church Road;
- Cottage Hospital, Church Road,
- Stockton House School, Stockton Avenue;
- Beacon House, Victoria Hill Road.

### Views

Because of the enclosed character of much of the conservation area, and the lack of any particular 'focal points', views are largely limited to views across, into or out of the conservation area, or to views along each street, sometimes closed by planting or buildings.

The most important more general views are:

- Views over the south-east of the conservation area can be obtained from The Views Meadow Recreation Ground, looking northwards, from where the well treed conservation area can best be appreciated;

- There are also views out of the conservation from Elvetham Road, looking northwards over the railway line to the Golf Course and open landscape beyond, and Hitches Lane westwards, again over woodland and open country;

There are also a number of more limited views along virtually all of the principal streets, sometimes terminated by a curve in the road, planting or a building. The most attractive views are, perhaps, the following:

- Along Fitzroy Road, taking in the wide street, grass verges, well clipped beech hedges (including some amusing topiary), cottage-style 1930s houses, and the woodland at the northern end of the road;
- Up Broomrigg Road from Reading Road North, taking in the curving trackway, copious planting and trees, and the overall rural qualities of the area;
- Along Church Road from the car park, taking in the grade II\* listed church, the former National School, the copse of fir trees, Alvecote, and the bend in the road to the north;
- Along Gough Road, taking in the wide road, grass verges, clipped shrubbery (creating 'balls' of green which sit on the verges), and the particularly well spaced plots on the north side with well detailed houses dating to the 1920s or earlier;
- Views from Stockton Avenue of The Coach House with Stockton House beyond, surrounded by tall Wellingtonia trees.

#### **4.4 Boundaries**

Throughout the conservation area, the most attractive boundaries are made up from planting, either created by clipped hedges (often beech) or by shrubbery, such as rhododendrons, left in a fairly untrained and natural form. In many locations, these are reinforced with trees of varying species and sizes, although naturally occurring conifers are prevalent.

There is some use of timber fencing. Where this is kept simple, using vertical unstained boards with a straight top, such as along Avenue Road or Hagley Road, this is acceptable and merges in well with the leafy gardens and planted boundaries. Also in character is the use of low (about one metre high) timber palisade fencing, again left unstained and very simple. Less successful are some examples of over-fussy timber fencing, such as the wavy curved panels at the entrance to Queen Mary Close, or the use of shiplap panels, also in Hagley Road.

In the part of the conservation area closer to Fleet Road, which has a generally more built-up, urban character, the cottages which face Victoria Road often retain their original low brick front boundary walls, with the brick matching the building. New development on the north side of the road has copied this detail, but unfortunately the new walls are too high and too ornately detailed, with string courses, dentils and coping details. By contrast, a more simply detailed historic brick wall, nearly two metres high, encloses the site of The Bailey on the corner of Victoria Hill Road and Branksomewood Road, which although unusual, is a positive feature.

Front gates within the conservation area, despite the planning controls already exercised by the District Council, can sometimes be far too ornate and dominant. For instance, the use of brick pillars, with curved entrance walling, along with high metal gates, is far less

appropriate than simple timber gates, with timber supports. Fitzroy Road has good and bad examples of both.

#### **4.5 Public realm**

Whilst some of the streets are surfaced, others are un-adopted (such as Broomrigg Road) and are not much more than tracks, without pavements or other features. However, for most of the roads in the conservation area, there are pavements, and these are simply covered in black tarmac, with concrete kerbs or not kerbs at all, which suits the semi rural character of the area. A very small quantity of Pennant stone kerbing remains in Hagley Road but this is unusual. There are some curved cast iron gutters in various locations including Fitzroy Road and Avenue Road, so these must date to no earlier than the 1920s. Street nameplates are simple aluminium plaques with black lettering on a white background, supported on metal poles. Street lighting is usually provided by medium height modern steel standards with a simple lantern, painted a pastel colour, although many of the streets are in fact not lit and many houses have little external lighting. It is this quality of darkness, in contrast to other parts of the town, that give the area its special character.

The general informality of the public realm adds to the rural characteristics and qualities of the conservation area and should be protected and reinforced when changes are proposed, either by the District Council, County Council or even by individual owners, who may wish to change their front boundaries or driveways.

## **5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

### **5.1 Building types**

The buildings of the North Fleet Conservation Area date to between the 1840s and present-day, and although the majority are Inter-War i.e. 1920s and 1930s, there are also a good number of 1960s buildings with even later infilling. These buildings are almost exclusively in residential uses, and provide a mixture of mainly detached houses and the occasional more modest cottages or even bungalows. Some of the larger houses have been converted into care homes for the elderly or, as with Lismoyne House, a hotel. Stockton House, a very large Italianate-style villa of c1850, is now a private school. There are very few flats, though there is pressure to provide more by demolishing family houses and replacing them. Other buildings within the conservation area include All Saints Church and the Cottage Hospital, with its various outbuildings and extensions.

### **5.2 Listed buildings**

There is only one listed building in the conservation area, All Saints Church in Church Road, which is listed grade II\*. The foundation stone was laid by Mr Lefroy, the squire of Crondall (which included Fleet) in memory of his wife Janet, but he died in 1861 before the church was finished. The building was opened in 1862 and was designed by the famous Victorian architect William Burgess in the style of an Italian basilica. It is notable for its use of bright reddy-orange brick, the steeply pitched tiled roofs, the use of Gothic details such as the pointed windows to the side chapels, and the barrel vault roof which can be seen inside. A beautiful tomb with the recumbent figures of Mr and Mrs Lefroy can still be seen in the north aisle.

### **5.3 Locally Listed buildings**

The District Council has produced a short list of locally significant buildings within the District of which two lie within the North Fleet Conservation Area. These are:

- The former National School, no. 36 Church Road, next to All Saints Church. In 1860 Fleet had a population of about 300, about 30 or 40 of them being children. Mr Lefroy decided to buy a pair of newly built but unfinished cottages, which could be finished inside as required for the new school. Within five years the need for larger premises became obvious and the school in Albert Street was built. The first school was then converted into a house and is still occupied as such today. The building is gabled with a steeply pitched tiled roof, substantial brick stacks and casement windows;
- Fleet Cottage Hospital, Church Road – this was opened in 1897, two years after Lady Calthorpe had donated the site. The principal building, a gabled bungalow, has been demolished, and was replaced, probably in the 1920s, with a new block which still remains. This has neo-Georgian details, including an Ionic portico and sashed windows, and has itself been much extended. The building is now called the Fleet Community Hospital, and further along the road is the new Fleet Medical Centre.

Locally Listed buildings are mainly 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century structures which provide well detailed facades, and they are Locally Listed to provide them with a degree of additional protection. Policies for their preservation are included in the Hart Local Plan, adopted in December 2002.

#### **5.4 Unlisted historic buildings**

In addition to the Listed and Locally Listed buildings, a large number of unlisted historic buildings can be found in the conservation area, although they are often partly hidden from the public view point by the many trees and other natural features. For that reason, they have not been specifically assessed as making a 'positive' contribution to the special character and appearance of the conservation area (as recommended within the English Heritage guidance), although many of them do retain well detailed facades and their general appearance is in keeping with the overall character of the conservation area.

Individual applications of Conservation Area Consent (CAC) to demolish such buildings will need to be assessed by the District Council on a case-by-case basis, but generally, permission will be refused. All applications for CAC will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification for the demolition of the building (as is already required for the demolition of a Listed Building), and the applicant must prove that the following:

- The building is incapable of beneficial use;
- The building is beyond the point of economic repair;
- The building does not make a 'positive' contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- That the building has been marketed and an alternative use/owner has not been found.

There is a general presumption that all buildings which date to before 1940 are likely to make a 'positive' contribution, but again, this will have to be decided as each application is received.

#### **5.5 Building styles, materials and colours**

The buildings in the conservation area date mainly to the late 19<sup>th</sup> or earlier part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and most were built as family houses in large plots. There is a mix of architectural styles – late Georgian, Victorian, Queen Anne Revival, Arts and Crafts, and 1920s vernacular, all of which add interest and vitality. Walls can be red brick, smooth stuccoed, or pebble-dashed, with sash or casement windows. Overall though, the general form of these houses is similar; mainly two storeys with pitched roofs, providing medium-sized family homes. The overall impression is very much of the Edwardian era, with even the 1920s and 1930s houses retaining elements of that period. The occasional single storey building occurs, some of which are historic, such as the well detailed 'bungalow' on the corner of Victoria Road and Victoria Hill Road (no. 48 Victoria Road). This is built from red brick, some of it painted white, with a slate roof, gables, and sash windows, and appears to date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The earlier buildings (mid to late-19<sup>th</sup> century) tend to be built from red brick with sash windows and pitched tiled or slated roofs in the late Georgian style. A good example are

the cottages opposite the Cottage Hospital (no. 70 Church Road) which use a bright red brick, with painted sash windows, and have a very shallow pitched slated roof with the original decorative clay ridge tiles.

Stockton House, now used as a school, is probably the earliest surviving building in the conservation area and dates from c1850. An unusual pair of houses can be seen in Hagley Road – High Banks and Copse View (once called Buena Vista) are a pair of Italianate-style villas, more in keeping with an urban setting. They are built from one brick with ground floor canted bays, sash windows without any glazing bars, a modillion eaves cornice, and slated roofs with tall well detailed chimney stacks. Another, and slightly earlier example, is No 52 Fleet Road, on the western side of Stockton Road, at its junction with Fleet Road which is marked on the 1900 map. The house appears stylistically to date to the 1860s with margin lights to the ground floor bays, a stuccoed façade, and a symmetrically arranged shallow pitched slated roof.

After about 1890 the buildings became more vernacular in form and detailing, following the more fashionable Arts and Crafts idiom. A very good example is Alvecote in Church Road, built in about 1910 with a gabled frontage which is decorated with false timber-framing and leaded casement windows. Similar, but less imposing examples of this style of building can be seen in many places, but another good example is Larch Hill in Hagley Road. No. 73 Victoria Road, on the corner with Victoria Hill Road, is also built from red brick, but this time is decorated with blue brick string courses and tile-hung gables, but again with sashed windows. It dates to also just before 1900.

After World War I there was a return to 'cottage' style details, such as casement windows, low eaves, and steeply pitched tiled roofs, with leaded light or steel Crittall windows. One of the best examples is Woodlands in Broomrigg Road, and others can be seen along Fitzroy Road and Reading Road North.

## **6 CHARACTER AREAS**

### **6.1 Introduction to the Character Areas**

The North Fleet Conservation Area has a fairly homogenous appearance, but there are some distinctions which provide slightly different Character Areas. These are:

#### Character Area 1: Fitzroy Road to Reading Road North

Key characteristics:

- 1920s and 1930s development;
- Detached two storey houses set back from the road in spacious plots;
- North side of Fitzroy Road – properties are set well back from road;
- Distinctive layout of dwellings because many are aligned to face south with the principal area of garden to the side of the house (whether to the front or rear). This gives a diagonal layout of development.
- Very sylvan character with groups of conifers and mixed deciduous trees;
- Fitzroy Road has wide grass verges with clipped beech and evergreen hedges;
- Cottage-style but quite substantial family houses built mainly from brick, with casement windows with glazing bars and steeply pitched clay tiled roofs;
- Property boundaries defined by trees and hedging and driveways marked by traditional timber gates;
- Traffic levels tend to be low. The roads are quiet and used largely by residents only. This adds to the semi rural character of the conservation area;
- Attractive long views along Fitzroy Road;
- Notable views from Hitches Lane westwards over woodland;
- Properties in Reading Road North are more varied and have been altered more.

Negative features/issues:

- Use of brick walling to define boundaries;
- Inappropriate entrance gates e.g. Hadley, Reading Road North;
- New white painted house on north side of Fitzroy Road is rather dominant;
- Busy traffic along Reading Road North;
- Potential loss of original houses in Reading Road North and other areas from proposed redevelopments and amalgamation of plots;

#### Character Area 2: North of Reading Road North – Springfield Lane to The Avenue

Key characteristics:

- Location on west facing slope which drops down to Reading Road North;
- Two unadopted lanes with a variety of residential houses and cottages, some of them dating to before 1900;
- Alleyways connect through Hope Cemetery to Church Grove;

- Despite the close proximity of the busy main road, this area retains a 'hidden' and more intimate character, with planting providing cover from the traffic;
- Hope Cemetery is a pleasant, green space with a sense of tranquillity;
- Very sylvan character with groups of conifers and mixed deciduous trees;
- Beacon House and the Briary Care Home are the principal buildings.

Negative features/issues:

- Car park to Briary Care Home is a little obtrusive;
- Commercial uses generate visitors and service vehicles;
- Busy traffic along Reading Road North;
- Future care and maintenance of the alleyways and Home Cemetery.

Character Area 3: Victoria Road, Victoria Hill Road, Branksomewood Road, Church Grove and Church Road (south)

Key characteristics:

- Location close to the town centre, so parts of this Character Area are more urban than rural;
- Incorporates part of H W Brake's grid pattern layout;
- Contains a high proportion of pre-1900 buildings, ranging from modest cottages in Victoria Road to the some of the largest buildings in the conservation area such as All Saints Church and Lismoyne Hotel (built in the 1880s and converted into a hotel in 1932);
- Churchyard is an attractive open space, one of only two such spaces in the conservation area;
- Victoria Road and Branksomewood Road are both wide, straight streets with fewer trees in general;
- Northern section of Church Road is more typical of the conservation area as a whole with the curve of the road around the former site of Peatmoor being of special note.
- Trees on boundaries and in gardens providing the skyline;

Negative features/issues:

- Church Hall is a prefabricated 1960s building;
- Signage to Lismoyne Hotel is somewhat garish facing Church Road;
- Several new blocks of flats including the block next to Alvecote in Church Road, and two blocks on the north-east side of Branksomewood Road – the latter particularly as despite attempts to separate the two blocks visually, they read as one;
- Whole block of 1960s development between Victoria Hill Road and Church Grove;
- Some of the trees are in poor condition and need management;

#### Character Area 4: Fleet Community Hospital and Church Road (north)

Key characteristics:

- Site developed from the 1890s onwards;
- Current building is probably of the 1920s and is Locally Listed;
- Some surviving trees and attractive landscaping in front of hospital entrance;
- Attractive buildings on the opposite side of Church Road in associated uses.

Key negatives/issues:

- Impact of the hospital and medical centre uses in terms of traffic generation and parking issues;
- Use of uPVC windows in the hospital buildings;
- Car parking issues in Victoria Road and Branksomewood Road due to the proximity of the shopping area (although there is a large public car park off Church Road, on the edge of the conservation area);

#### Character Area 5: Hagley Road and Gough Road

Key characteristics:

- Area developed between 1900 and 1922, with the occasional earlier building;
- Level topography although Hagley Road sits on the ridge which falls towards Reading Road North;
- Some oblique views westwards over this hill;
- Gough Road and Hagley Road are gently curving surfaced roads with gravelled or tarmac pavements;
- Wide grass verges adds to the spacious feel of the streets;
- Clipped shrubbery in Gough Road adds to its special interest and frames a pleasant view along the road;
- Suburban rather than rural character, with many mature trees and much shrubbery;
- Mainly detached two storey family houses set in large plots;
- Some Victorian houses closer to Victoria Hill Road;
- Otherwise, mainly 1920s or later neo-Tudor styling with half timbering, leaded lights and tile hanging. (e.g. Larch Hill and Windmill House in Hagley Road);

Negative features/issues:

- Wavy-edge timber fencing to Larch Hill;
- Sheds in front of High Banks;
- Tree management needed in places.

#### Character Area 6: Broomrigg Road and Calthorpe Road

Key characteristics:

- Area developed between 1900 and 1922;
- Broomrigg Road and Calthorpe Road are unadopted roads without pavements;
- Limited street lighting provided by concrete columns;
- Curving narrow lanes and undulating topography;
- Abundance of trees (particularly conifers) and shrubbery makes the area feel wooded and enclosed;
- Wooded character with the buildings being largely concealed by the planting;
- Varied styles of building, but mainly two storey with brick or painted render facades, Crittall cottage-style casement windows, low eaves and pitched tiled roofs (e.g. Woodlands in Broomrigg Road).

Negative features/issues:

- Need to preserve the features of the 'natural' green boundaries;
- Tree management needed;
- Roads are muddy and not well maintained in places;

#### Character Area 7: Elvetham Road

Key characteristics:

- Busy main road with large detached houses on south side, set in spacious wooded plots;
- These mainly date to between 1900 and 1922, with more mixed dates to the east;
- Three buildings survive from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century – The Courtyard (associated with Stockton House and now divided into two), and nos. 61 and 67;
- Boundaries defined by hedging, often beech, often concealing the house from the road;
- Views northwards over the railway line to the Golf Course and woodland beyond;
- Boundary to railway has been sensitively created using a low timber fence with a wire mesh section above, providing views across the railway line.

Negative features/issues:

- Fast moving and frequent traffic;
- Some poor quality front boundaries, such as wavy-topped timber panels;
- Intrusive exterior lighting on some buildings and entrances.

#### Character Area 8: The Stockton Estate - Avenue Road, Stockton Avenue, Pines Road and Waverley Avenue

Key characteristics:

- Residential area developed in a more *ad hoc* way mainly since 1922;
- Detached family houses with large gardens;
- Some surviving earlier buildings, most notably Stockton House, now converted into a school, and The Courtyard, originally called Stockton Lodge and now divided into two;
- Positive impact of mature trees and shrubbery;

- Avenue Road is long and straight – Stockton Avenue and Waverley Avenue are more curvaceous;
- Waverley Avenue is not adopted so parts of it are not tarmacaded;
- Grass verges support the rural features in Stockton Avenue and Waverley Avenue.

Negative features/issues:

- The use of timber fencing in various places, not always appropriately detailed, such as the rather bright 'orange' timber fence in Avenue Road;
- Some tree management required.

## **7 ISSUES**

Drawing on the negative features identified in the proceeding chapter, notes made during the district council walkabout in February 2008, subsequent submissions by councillors and local historians, and the issues previously identified in the North Fleet Conservation Area Proposals Statement dated 1994, the following topics are considered to be the most important issues which need to be addressed:

### **7.1 New development**

- The need to maintain the historical form of development, consisting of spacious plots with family houses;
- The need to maintain existing plot densities (see Council Policy);
- Resisting the intensification of uses on the existing plots, such as the replacement of one house with perhaps two or three smaller houses;
- The preservation of the existing dwellings, particularly those built before the 1940s, and their protection from demolition and redevelopment;
- The protection of all of the existing buildings from demolition and their replacement with blocks of flats or other uses.

### **7.2 Maintaining the existing buildings and their plots**

- The need to prevent unsympathetic changes to the existing houses, such as oversize extensions or changes to the elevations and details;
- The need to preserve and protect existing front boundaries and ensure that new works do not detract from the sylvan character of the conservation area;
- The protection of front gardens, including resistance to the creation of parking areas;
- The potential loss of hedges and other shrubbery;
- The use of timber fencing and brick walls;
- The application of the existing Article 4 Direction, including enforcement.

### **7.3 Trees and landscape**

- Protect the well treed character and amenity of the conservation area;
- Continue the dominance of trees and shrubbery in the conservation area, including providing advice to property owners;
- Protect trees and woodland, including provision of advice to property owners;
- Encourage the planting of 'local' species;
- Care for the wildlife and encourage property owners to consider measures within their own gardens to do this;

### **7.4 Traffic and roads**

- Consider traffic management schemes in various locations within the conservation area;
- Need to improve pedestrian access across busy roads to encourage pedestrian access throughout the conservation area;
- Maintain the unmade-up roads and ditches;
- Improve the surface of Reading Road North;
- Consider traffic management along Elvetham Road;
- Discourage the use of roads through the conservation area apart from local traffic.

### **7.5 Pavements and the public realm**

- Care of the alleys and public footpaths, including the control of weeds and brambles;
- Maintain the existing system of street lighting, and discourage owners from installing security lighting which would have an adverse impact on the surrounding conservation area.

### **7.6 Protection of the views**

- Protect and enhance existing views into, across and out of, the conservation area.

### **7.7 The impact of non-residential uses**

- Consider a range of issues relating to non-residential uses within the conservation area

### **7.8 Local List**

- Consider additions to the existing Local List of buildings.

### **7.9 Conservation area boundary review**

- Make a few minor changes to the existing conservation area boundary.

## **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 North Fleet 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, Fleet 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 New development**

#### **The issues are:**

- The need to maintain the historical form of development, consisting of spacious plots with family houses in a well treed environment;
- The need to maintain existing plot densities (see Council Policy);
- Resisting the intensification of uses on the existing plots, such as the replacement of one house with perhaps two or three smaller houses;
- The preservation of the existing dwellings, particularly those built before the 1940s, and their protection from demolition and redevelopment;
- The protection of all of the existing buildings from demolition and their replacement with blocks of flats or other uses.

There is increasing pressure from developers and other property owners to maximise the potential of the large gardens which make up part of the essential character of the conservation area. The District Council has set out policies in the Local Plan (Appendix 1) which seek to control the increase in plot densities in different parts of the conservation area. The majority of the conservation area (mostly Character Areas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) falls within Policy URB18(i), which allows, subject to certain provisos, development up to two dwellings per acre (one dwelling per 0.2 hectares). Closer to Fleet Town Centre (mostly Character Area 2) this increases to four dwellings per acre (one dwelling per 0.1 hectares), and within the southern part of Character Area 3, the density increases again to a maximum of seven per acre (17 dwellings per hectare). These are all subject to the usual rigorous planning controls covering design, materials, access, and the effect on existing trees and other landscape features.

Conservation Area Consent is needed to demolish any unlisted building in the conservation area apart from All Saints Church, which as a listed building is controlled by other legislation. Generally, the District Council will refuse applications to demolish buildings which are considered to be of architectural or historic interest, particularly those which provide well detailed examples of late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century design styles. The redevelopment of Post-War buildings of the 1950s onwards may be allowed, subject to the replacement building being well designed and similar in terms of bulk and footprint. Each application, however, will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

General design advice for all new development in the District, and within conservation areas, is included in the Hart Local Plan and in PPG15.

#### *Recommendation:*

- The District Council will continue to carefully monitor applications to demolish existing buildings in the conservation area, and will only allow replacement dwellings of a suitably high quality of design;

- The District Council will resist applications which fail to preserve or enhance the special character of the conservation area, as described in this document, and also those developments which would result in the amalgamation of the existing plots, and the consequent loss of the historical form of development where it fails to respect or enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- The District Council will resist applications for new buildings which do not follow the established historic form of development in terms of height, bulk and plot ratios.

## **9.2 Maintaining the existing buildings and their boundaries**

### **The issues are:**

- The need to prevent unsympathetic changes to the existing houses, such as oversize extensions or changes to the elevations and details;
- The need to preserve and protect existing front boundaries and ensure that new works do not detract from the sylvan character of the conservation area;
- The protection of front gardens, including resistance to the creation of parking areas;
- The potential loss of hedges and other shrubbery;
- The use of timber fencing and brick walls
- The application of the existing Article 4 Direction, including enforcement.

In 1998, when the Article 4 Direction was served, it was decided not to impose planning constraints on individual owners in relation to minor changes to their houses which are usually considered to be 'permitted development'. This covers changes such as the installation of plastic windows, a change in roof materials, or the addition of front porches. Generally, the buildings in the conservation area have not suffered from these inappropriate changes so the decision not to impose the Article 4 Direction, other than the control of front boundaries, appears to be correct.

However, the success of the Article 4 Direction which was served has been somewhat muted and there are some examples in the conservation area of unsympathetic new gateways, fencing, walls and the creation of car parking in front of the houses. The removal of gardens and their replacement with vehicular hardstandings has more recently become an issue associated with climate change, as there is more recognition that rainwater should be allowed to soak into the land rather than channelled into public drainage systems.

There also appears to have been some uncertainty about the exact implementation of the Article 4 Direction and there have been issues with local property owners about consistency of decision-making and enforcement.

### *Recommendations:*

- The District Council will encourage property owners to retain the architectural features of their buildings, and will refuse planning applications for extensions which are considered to be either too large or badly designed;

- The District Council will continue to enforce the existing Article 4 Direction and will encourage property owners to keep existing vegetation if carrying out works to their front gardens;
- The District Council will enforce against owners who carry out unauthorised works to their frontages;
- The District Council will, funds permitting, provide written guidance for property owners about the Article 4 Direction, advising them what constraints are in force and providing 'good practice' advice about the creation of car parking, driveways, fencing, walls and the protection of greenery and trees.

### **9.3 Trees and landscape**

#### **The issues are:**

- Protect the well treed character and amenity of the conservation area;
- Continue the dominance of trees and shrubbery in the conservation area, including providing advice to property owners;
- Protect trees and woodland, including provision of advice to property owners;
- Encourage the planting of 'local' species;
- Care for the wildlife and encourage property owners to consider measures within their own gardens to do this;

The principal feature of the North Fleet Conservation Area, which makes it outstanding, is the 'green' landscape, with many mature trees and the areas of copses, woodland, shrubbery and other planting. Nearly all of these lie within privately owned land. Because of the very large number of trees, and the difficulty of obtaining access onto the private land, a full tree survey was not carried out at the time of the appraisal survey and the trees were not recorded on a map. Some of these trees are already specifically protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

It is important that local property owners are assisted by the Council in the management of the trees within their gardens. For instance, they should be encouraged to look after their existing trees, and where new trees are required, that owners plant only those species that are typical of the conservation area such Scots pine, silver birch, oak, or lime. The planting of specimen trees, such as Wellingtonias or Weston red cedars, should also be encouraged in the right locations. The use of 'inappropriate' trees such as leylandii, is to be actively discouraged.

Within conservation areas, anyone intending lopping or felling a tree greater than 75mm diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give the District Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. This provides the District 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 may be served. This protects the tree from felling or inappropriate lopping. Fruit trees are no longer exempt, although slightly different constraints occur where the tree forms part of a managed forest or is in another agricultural use.

Local residents are generally supportive of the wild life which uses their gardens but the District Council could encourage the creation of additional wildlife habitats, and help owners understand how wildlife can be encouraged and supported, by the production of

written advice. Some of this work could be undertaken in collaboration with local groups and, or, local school children.

The preparation of a Tree Management Plan for the conservation area could, in similar fashion, be prepared as a partnership between local groups and the District and/or Parish Council. This might include the identification of species as well as individual trees which may need tree surgery. Recommendations for additional TPOs and further tree planting could also be made. An illustrated Tree Trail based on the trees of North Fleet, (as has been done very successfully in Chichester) is another possible outcome of this work, which could also be allied to information about the local wildlife.

*Recommendations:*

- Subject to funding, and possibly in collaboration with outside groups, the District Council could prepare a Tree Management Programme for the North Fleet Conservation Area to provide the following:
  - Details of the constraints imposed by law on tree management in conservation areas;
  - Advice about suitable tree species and other tree management issues;
  - A Tree Trail, identifying specific trees and encouraging local residents to take a pride in their 'tree inheritance', subject to the agreement of the residents after a further public consultation;
  - Provide advice to property owners about the preservation and encouragement of the local wildlife in the conservation area.

#### **9.4 Traffic and roads**

**The issues are:**

- Consider traffic management schemes in various locations within the conservation area;
- Maintain the unmade-up roads and ditches;
- Improve the surface of Reading Road North;
- Consider traffic management along Elvetham Road;
- Discourage the use of roads through the conservation area apart from local traffic;

Since 1998, the County Council has installed some surface treatments in Reading Road North, to try and reduce traffic speeds. The general consensus is that these have not achieved anything. Further traffic management measures, for instance in Elvetham Road, should be considered.

*Recommendation:*

- Hampshire County Council, in association with the District Council and the Parish Council, should consider traffic speed reduction measures in North Fleet.

## **9.5 Pavements and the public realm**

### **The issues are:**

- Care of the alleys and public footpaths, including the control of weeds and brambles;
- Maintain the existing system of street lighting, and discourage owners from installing security lighting which would have an adverse impact on the surrounding conservation area.

It was noted in 1998 that some of the public footpaths and alleys were very poorly maintained. To a degree, this has now been corrected. Any further works to pavements or other parts of the public realm must be in character with the informal, rural qualities of the conservation area, including surfaces, street signage, furniture and lighting.

### *Recommendations:*

- The existing alleys and public footpaths through the conservation area must be maintained and kept in good repair, particularly where wheelchair access may be required.
- The imposition of new pavements, kerbing and streets lights should be resisted where this would impact on the rural qualities of the conservation area.

## **9.6 Protection of the views**

### **The issue is:**

- Protect and enhance existing views into, across and out of, the conservation area.

This Character Appraisal has identified a number of important views within or on the edges of the conservation area. New development must not be allowed to impinge on these views, and most particularly should not result in the loss of trees or other greenery which contribute so much to the special character of the conservation area.

### *Recommendation:*

- The District Council will seek to protect views within, or on the edges of the conservation area, including refusing new development which might adversely affect these views.

## **9.7 The impact of non-residential uses**

### **The issue is:**

- Consider a range of issues relating to non-residential uses within the conservation area

A number of non-residential uses, such as care homes for the elderly, the Lismoyne Hotel, All Saints Church and to a much greater extent, the Cottage Hospital in Church Road, generate activity and a degree of traffic and pedestrian movements. Night-time service vehicles are a growing problem. The recent expansion of the hospital has created a demand for parking which has caused problems in the immediate vicinity of the buildings, although this has to be balanced against the greater social need.

*Recommendation:*

- The District Council will continue to monitor sites where non-residential uses may have an impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area, for instance through a demand for more on-street car parking, or for night-time servicing;
- Planning applications for new non-residential uses will need to be considered in the light of the need to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area, including such issues as car parking provision, servicing, and general activity, as well as the design and detailing of any new buildings.

## **9.8 Local List**

**The issue is:**

- Consider additions to the existing Local List of buildings.

A number of buildings have been identified which may merit inclusion on the District Council's Local List. These are:

- Alvercote, Church Road: a substantial Arts and Crafts house of 1910 which has recently been refused statutory listing;
- Stockton House, Stockton Avenue: a very large Italianate villa, now a school, dating to c1850.

Further buildings may be eligible for Local Listing, subject to a more thorough review.

*Recommendations:*

- Consider adding Alvercote and Stockton House to the District Council's Local List;
- Funds permitting, carry out a complete review of the buildings in the conservation area to see if there may be any additional buildings which would merit Local Listing.

## **9.9 Conservation area boundary review**

**The Issue is:**

- Make a few minor changes to the existing conservation area boundary.

A number of minor changes are proposed to the existing conservation area boundary, all additions and marked on the Character Areas Map.

*Recommendation:*

- Add the following buildings to the conservation area:
  - Add Airedale Cottage, Hitches Lane – a late 19<sup>th</sup> century brick cottage with large chimney stacks and gables;
  - Add two rows of Locally Listed late 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages along Elvetham Road (nos. 10-20 and 22-28 even Elvetham Road – no. 20a is a detached modern infill);
  - Add nos. 52, 54 and 56 Fleet Road – detached mid-19<sup>th</sup> century villas;

## **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 Ages of buildings map  
Character Areas and Conservation area boundary review map  
Policy Areas map
- Appendix 2 Planning Policies
- Appendix 3 Article 4 Direction
- Appendix 4 Bibliography
- Appendix 5 Contact details

## **APPENDIX 1 MAPS**

- Ages of buildings map
- Character Areas and Conservation area boundary review map
- Policy Areas map

## **APPENDIX 2 PLANNING POLICIES**

### **Extract from Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 dated April 2003**

Fleet Conservation Area: Inset Map 10 – the following Policies apply:

Residential Densities in North Fleet and Yateley Conservation Areas

#### **URB18**

**IN ORDER TO RETAIN THE HIGH QUALITY OF THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE SPECIFIC AREAS OF NORTH FLEET DEFINED ON THE FLEET INSET MAP, RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE FOLLOWING DENSITIES WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY IS SATISFIED THAT THIS WOULD NOT RESULT IN ANY DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO THE CHARACTER AND VISUAL AMENITY OF THAT AREA IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROPOSAL GEN 4:**

- (i) Area A – dwellings on plots of more than approximately 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres);**
- (ii) Area B – dwellings on plots of more than approximately 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres);**
- (iii) Area C – development at a density of less than approximately 17 per hectare (7 per acre);**
- (iv) Area D – development at a density of less than approximately 25 per hectare (10 per acre).**

### **APPENDIX 3 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION**

#### **Details of the existing Article 4 Direction in the North Fleet Conservation Area**

Article 4 Direction served 13<sup>th</sup> March 1998

This Article 4 Direction covers all unlisted residential properties in use as a single family unit i.e. not flats or buildings in multiple occupation, where different legislation applies.

#### **SCHEDULE 1**

(a) The erection or alteration or removal of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure being development comprised within Class A of Part 2 of schedule 2 of the said Order where the gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure would be within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse and would front a relevant location\*.

(b) The demolition of the whole or any part of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse being development within Class B of Part 31 of Schedule 2 of the said Order and which fronts a relevant location.

\*Refers to the elevations of the dwelling which face a highway, a footpath, a bridleway, a waterway or a public open space.

#### **APPENDIX 4 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Fleet The photographic Collection*  
*Fleet The Town of my Youth*

Percy Vickery  
Geoffrey Edwards

#### **APPENDIX 5 CONTACT DETAILS**

For further information, please contact the following;

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