

Cross Oak Lane Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Proposals

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Introduction

What is a Conservation Area?

Conservation areas were first designated as a result of the Civic Amenities Act 1967. They are defined in the legislation as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: Section 69(1)(a)). The Borough contains 21 Conservation Areas at present.

Designation gives the local planning authority greater control over extensions and demolition, the display of advertisements and works to trees. Special consideration has to be given to proposals for development or redevelopment within them, to ensure that the character or appearance of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced. In most cases, however, conservation areas are living and working communities with both residential and commercial uses. The purpose of designation is not to stifle or prevent change and evolution, but to control it in such a way as to maintain and enhance character and local distinctiveness.

Purpose of Appraisal

Local authorities are advised by English Heritage to carry out appraisals that should identify the key features of the area and how they combine to give a place its particular character. By establishing what makes a place special and distinct, the local planning authority can more effectively ensure that change through development, or through other changes resulting from its own actions or those of other statutory authorities, do not undermine this character and can in fact enhance it.

As well as identifying the positive features of a place, an appraisal can also highlight areas where there is scope for improvement. This could be in terms of new development or redevelopment, or more small-scale improvements to, for example, the appearance of street furniture or signage. The results of appraisals can also be used to help prioritise available resources for environmental enhancement. This appraisal also sets out the Enhancement Scheme for the area, which makes reference to potential areas for enhancement, as well as providing guidance for use in the development control process.

The Planning (Listed Buildings And Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets in sections 71 a duty to formulate policies for preservation and enhancement. The 2005 Borough Local Plan Policy Pc 14 reinforces this objective. English Heritage guidance states that policies are needed that clearly identify what it is about the character or appearance of an area it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and the means to achieve this. A clear assessment and definition of an area's special interest is needed.

The structure of this Conservation Area Appraisal is based on the English Heritage documents “Conservation Area Practice” and “Conservation Area Character Appraisals” and the RTPI's ‘The Character of Conservation Areas’ document. It follows the urban morphology approach of cascade from large to small elements.

Main Character and Basic structure Topography and Geology

Main Character & Basic structure

Cross Oak Lane is located in the Weald, on the flat plain of the Burstow valley to the north east of Horley. The special interest of the conservation area is derived principally from the quality and group value of the 1930's Blunden Shadbolt houses. Blunden Shadbolt (1879 – 1949) is known for his picturesque mock tudor style of architecture. The historic orchard and earlier buildings add interest to the group. The road layout follows the contours of the local topography.

Topography

The settlement is situated on the bottom of valley at about 60 metres above sea level, on the Weald.



Geology

Cross Oak Lane is located on flat Wealden clay on the plain of the Burstow Stream. Brick and tile have historically been made from the clay, timber frame from the native Oaks, with the occasional stone from local puddingstone, periwinkle stone (paludina) and sandstone.

2) History and evolution

The first property to be located within the Conservation Area was Strutfield Farm which was demolished at the turn of the century. Watt's Farm (later Brooklyn) was constructed in around 1800 (it appears on the OS manuscript copy of 1806-1810, but not Lindley and Crosley's map of 1790) and it's orchard is shown on the 1848 Tithe Map. The Whitegate cottages also appear on this map.

In 1930 Blunden Shabolt bought land at Cross Oak Lane and built Cross Oak (Orchards) for himself to live in. In 1933 due to financial problems, Blunden Shabolt had to move to a smaller property he has built next door, The Granary, which stood on staddle stones, and built the Nest next door for his sister. Orchards was purchased by a Mr Thompson after retiring from the Indian Railways . Mr Thompson then bought Brooklyn's Orchard to develop with Blunden Shabolt designed houses. Four houses were built in 1934, Brooklyn Cottage, with the Grevilles, being the first tenants. Old Straddles was then commissioned by Mr Gillette, Mole Cottage for Mr & Mrs Moss and Woodbrook for the Honorable Harvey- Bathurst.

Donald Campbell's biography of Blunden Shadbolt is attached in the appendices.

KEY DATES

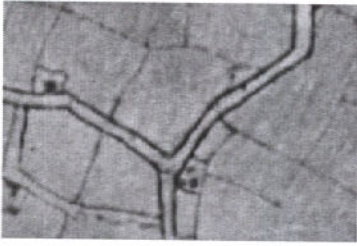
1930 Cross Oak (Orchards) built by Blunden Shadbolt for himself.

1933 Blunden Shadbolt moved to The Granary due to financial hardship, where his family lived till 1951.

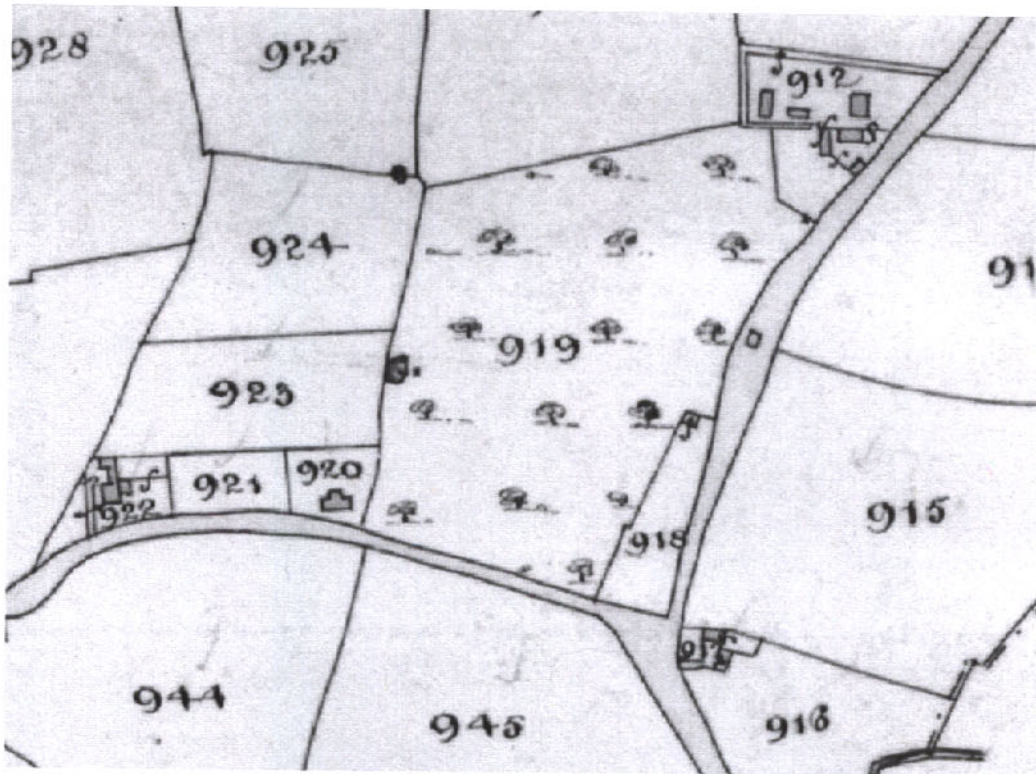
1933 Blunden Shadbolt built The Nest for his sister.

1934 Blunden Shadbolt built Brooklyn Cottage, Old Straddles, Mole Cottage and Woodbrook.

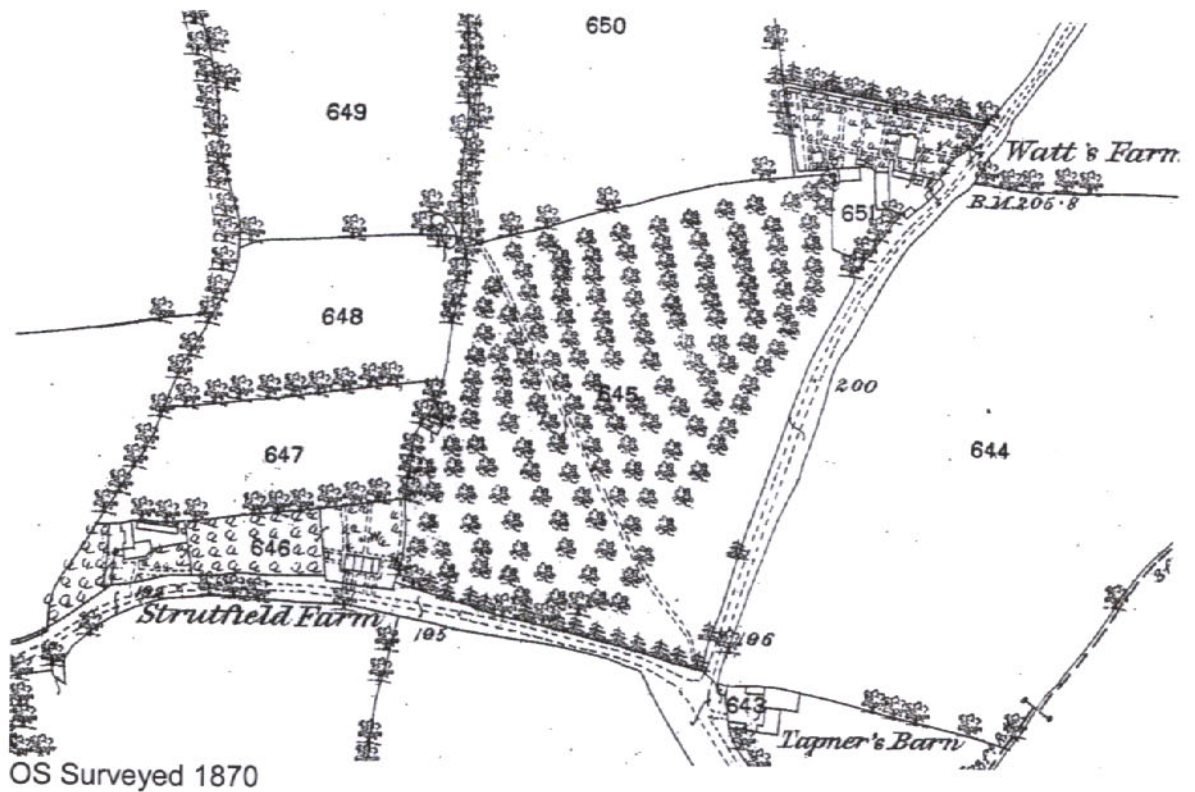
Cross Oak Lane Historic Maps



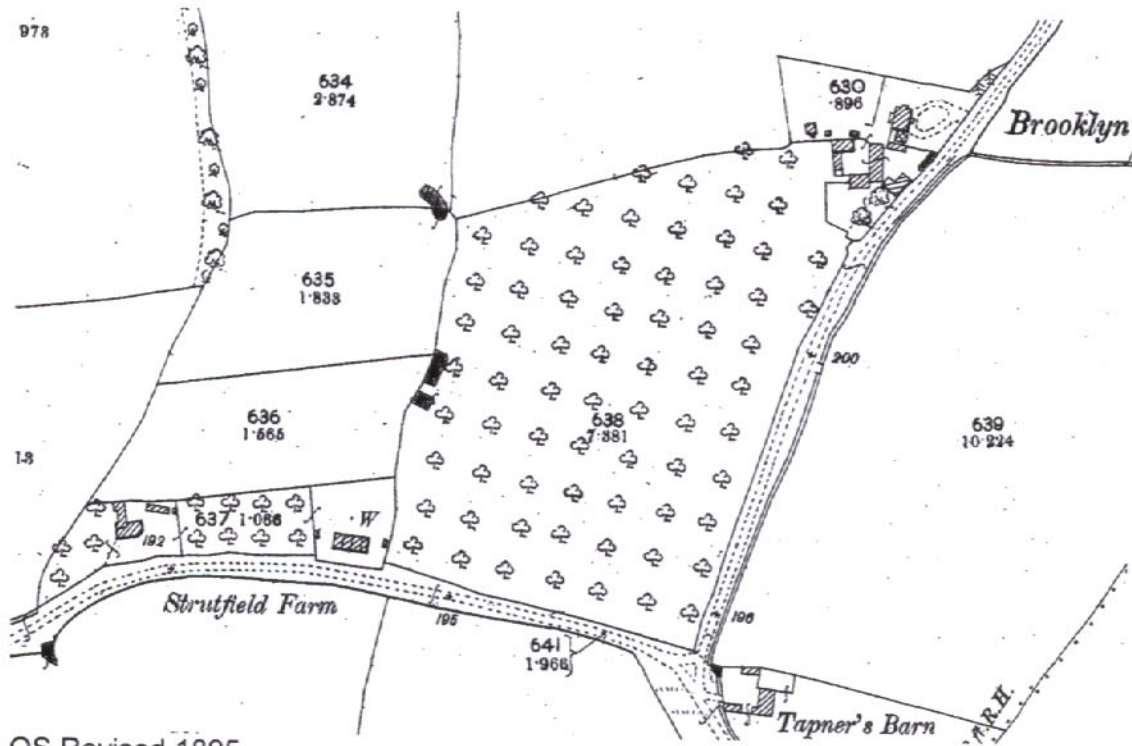
OS Map 1808



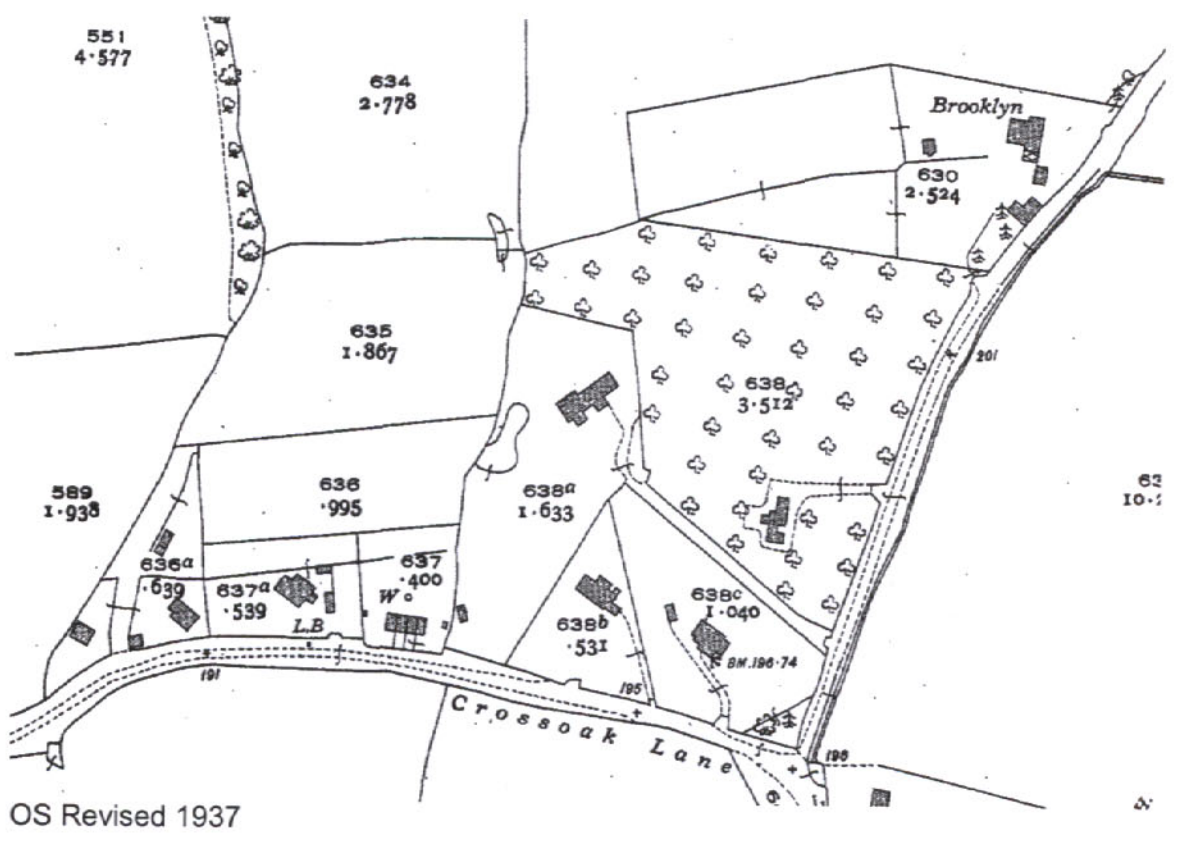
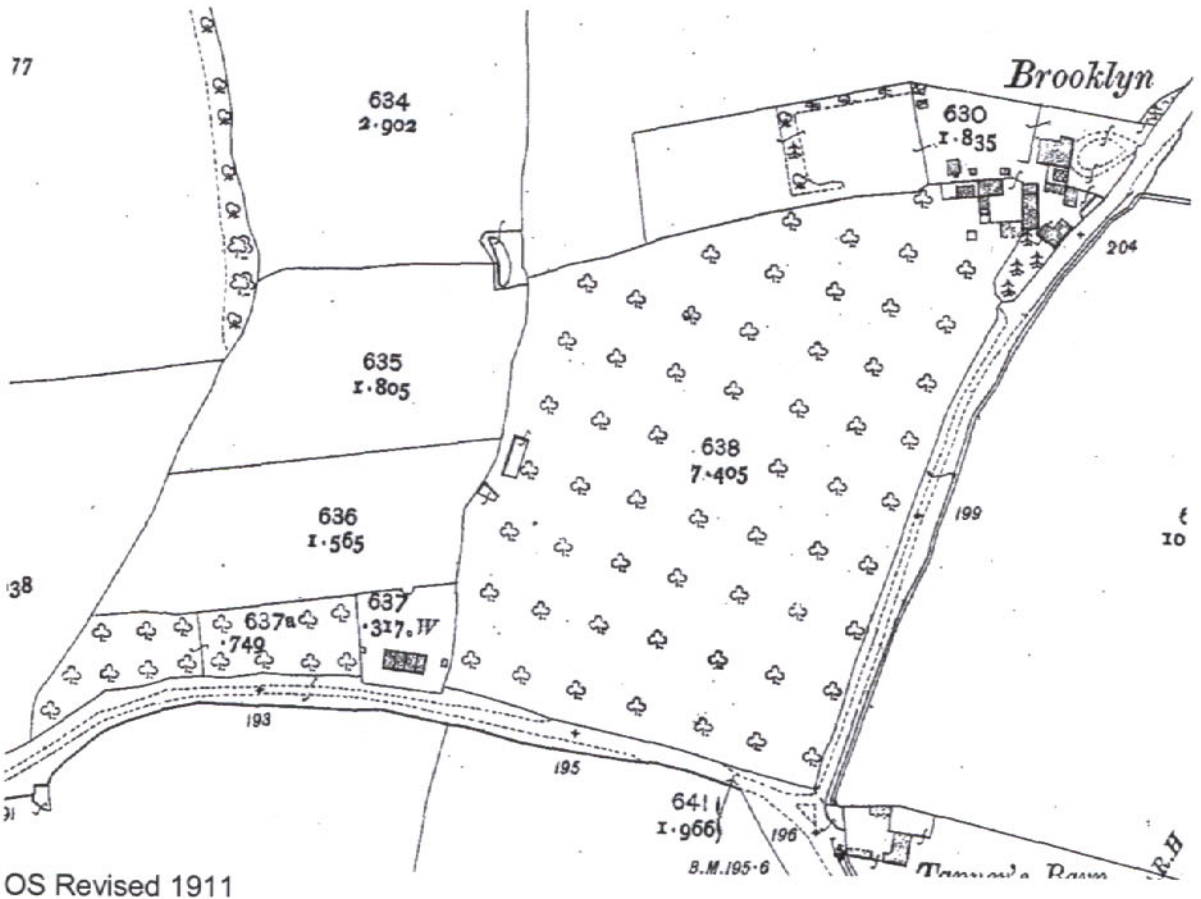
Horley Tithe Map 1848



OS Surveyed 1870



OS Revised 1895



3) Spatial Structure & Pattern: Identity Areas, Rhythm: plot size, unit size

An identity area is an area which has an identifiable character. Conservation Areas can have composite characters as well as cohesive character.

The identity area centres around the Blunden Shadbolt houses, which form the dominant character of the Conservation Area. The earlier properties Brooklyn and Whitegates add to the character and historic interest of the area.

Views

Views are relatively limited due to the wooded nature of the Conservation Area, though The Nest is visually prominent and all the buildings are publicly visible.

Rhythm: plot size, unit size

The area has a rural character with houses in substantial plots with the large properties set back from the road.

Townscape analysis



Aerial view of whole area

The following is a perambulation around the Conservation Area giving a brief description of the buildings and layout.

Scale, height, rhythm, form, layout & materials summary ;

Two storey (except The Granary), spacious plots, larger houses set back from road. Blunden Shadbolt houses timber frame with brick infill, timber casement windows, most with leaded lights, second hand peg tile roofs, pantiles to outbuildings. Early 19th century buildings stucco with slate roofs and sash windows.



Aerial view of Cross Oak Lane

Starting at the west side of the Conservation Area in Cross Oak Lane, the first building is a small timber framed cottage with a catslide pantiled roof, called The Nest, built in 1933 by Blunden Shadbolt for his sister. The next property is the Granary rebuilt by Blunden Shadbolt for himself in 1933 when he had to move from Cross Oak (Orchards) due to financial hardship. It originally stood on stone staddles.



The Nest



The Granary



Cross Oak

The next property is Cross Oak, built in 1930 by Blunden Shadbolt for himself but which he had to sell in 1933 due to financial difficulties previously mentioned. Next is Whitegates, a row of early 19th century cottages, now one house. On the right Woodbrook, a Blunden Shadbolt house of 1934, with a small pantiled garage nearer the road. The next three houses, Old Straddles, Brooklyn Cottage and Mole Cottage were also built in 1934 by Blunden Shadbolt. Old Straddles also has a thatched garage and brick drive. Brooklyn Cottage has an impressive jettied garage. Between Brooklyn Cottage and Mole Cottage is the drive to Woodbrook, which originally had apple trees growing in the drive, typical of Blunden Shadbolt's approach of retaining existing vegetation to give an impression of age. To the north of Mole Cottage in New House Lane, is a utilitarian stable block, paddock and some incongruous looking Lombardy poplars, at odds with the prevailing Oak trees and Hawthorn hedge boundaries. At the north end of the Conservation Area is Brooklyn, built around 1800, with its ancillary cottages and coach house to the south.



Woodbrook



Whitegates



Old Straddles



Brooklyn Cottage & garage



Mole Cottage



Brooklyn



Aerial view of New House Lane

Materials, Architectural Conventions & detail

Architectural Conventions

Illustrations of Materials, Architectural Conventions & detail of Blunden Shadbolt houses



Typical characteristics of the Blunden Shadbolt houses

Primarily second hand materials, with wobbly lines to create new old look. Irregular ridge lines. Irregular second hand timber framing. Prominent chimneys, often to the front, with decreasing roofed stages to chimneystack as it rises, steep 48 degree roof pitches, gabled roof forms, jetties, deep cross wings often breaking the ridge, catslide roofs. Irregular placement of windows, rectangular plan forms and short roof spans.

Typical Materials of the Blunden Shadbolt Houses



The key materials are secondhand peg tiles, second hand oak timber framing and second brick in decorative and irregular bonds, often painted.



Secondary buildings are often of black feather edge boarding and secondhand pantiles.

Windows are casements, usually leaded lights, single glazed to give reflection.

New and machine made brick and tiles or upvc windows should never be used.

5) Highway issues, Street furniture and Footscape

Cross Oak Lane and New House Lane both have rural characteristics with kerbless green verges bound by hawthorn hedges. Traffic speeds on Cross Oak lane is an issue.



For residential curtilages gravel drives is the most traditional finish, with Blunden Shadbolts planting of trees and shrubs close to the drive to give an irregular appearance.

Some of the original Blunden Shadbolt footpaths and drives are sometimes in handmade brick.



6) Greenery: Trees, Shrubs

The area is characterised by a number of native tree species of the Weald. Oak trees predominate with hawthorn hedgerows. Grass verges are kerbless. The Lombardy Poplars are prominent but out of place feature.



Some of the original apple trees survive from the pre 1848 orchard, but are hollow inside. Propagation of these trees from seed would be welcome.



7) Development Management & Statutory designations: Listed Buildings & Article 4 Directions

Controls operating in the Conservation Area

Designation of the Conservation Area

The original Conservation Area was designated in 1990.

No amendments to the boundaries are proposed.

What is the Effect of Designation?

The principal differences from the normal form of planning control include:

- a) Control over demolition. Conservation Area Consent is required for demolition
- b) Greater control over works which would require planning permission. As many properties in the Area are not dwellinghouses and therefore do not have permitted development rights, external alterations such as changing windows or roofing materials would be controlled. 'Permitted development' rights for dwellinghouses are also more controlled.
- c) Wider protection of trees. Six weeks notification to the Council will be necessary before the intended lopping, uprooting or felling of trees. (Trees less than 7.5 centimetres in diameter, at a height of 1.5 metres above the ground are exempt). (Works to trees the subject of a Tree Preservation Order will continue to need formal consent.)

When considering proposals requiring Planning Permission or Conservation Area Consent regard will be had to whether they 'preserve' or 'enhance' the special character of the area. It should be remembered, though, that designation is not intended to stop change but to better manage new development so that it does not harm the area and even brings improvements.

Article 4 (2) Directions

Article 4(2) Directions control the following changes to dwellinghouses in the Conservation Area (It would be intended to serve an article 4(2) Direction on the area). All alterations or extensions facing an open space or highway will require planning permission, unless they are like for like repairs. Changes requiring planning permission would include, for instance, changing from timber to uPVC or Aluminium windows/doors or changing the style or design of window/door, changing from natural slate or handmade tiles to machine made, concrete or synthetic slates or tiles, or the insertion of rooflights or solar panels.

Listing

There are a number of statutory and locally listed buildings in the area. Where planning permission is required for a locally listed building Policy Pc10 of the Local Plan and PPS5 would be a material consideration. There are also some local listed historic garden designations.

Development Management & Principles of Control

The area is one where the Blunden Shadbolt and older buildings contribute to the character of the area and should be retained. The presumption therefore is in favour of retention of these buildings.

The overall objective in terms of elevational treatment will be the encouragement of the retention and where necessary reinstatement of original materials and detailing. This includes in the case of Blunden Shadbolt buildings original window detail, and in particular the reuse of second hand peg tiles. The use of inappropriate materials such as aluminium and upvc windows of various forms, machine made clay or concrete tiles and alien boundary materials such as larchlap fencing would be unacceptable.

Schedules and maps of the listed buildings, the Article 4 Direction and the Local Historic Garden designations the control of permitted development are set out in the appendices.

8) Enhancement & Improvements

No extra funding is proposed for the enhancement of the Conservation Area but a number of the objectives can be achieved in part by the Development Control process.

The potential for enhancement appears to the opportunity to reinstate traditional materials when repairing the Blunden Shabolt houses. In large part, the houses have survived without harmful alteration.

The use of second hand materials is important in the repair of Blunden Shabolt houses. The existing second hand peg tiles should be reused where there is a small shortfall made up in second hand peg tiles to match existing, and for larger projects or extension new peg handmade tiles should be used where second hand peg tiles would not be feasible.

Resource Implications

Enhancement of the Conservation Area can be achieved in part by the Development Management process and encouragement to have respect for traditional forms, materials and detailing.

Review of boundaries

The boundary of the area was subject of review at the time of production of the appraisal and a revised boundary has been designated subject to confirmation after public consultation.

Other Statutory Authorities

Statutory authorities are not generally subject to control by the local planning authority, although the provision and maintenance of their services can have an impact on the conservation area. A copy of this Appraisal will be forwarded to the relevant service providers to highlight the need for sensitive treatment within the conservation area.

Responsibilities of Owners and Occupiers

This Appraisal has identified the buildings, open spaces and individual features that define the character of the conservation area. The siting and design of new development should be such that the appearance and character of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced, and this Appraisal will be used to assess whether development proposals achieve this aim.

It is hoped that residents and other occupiers will, through this Appraisal, be made aware of the contribution that they can make to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area. This can be achieved through the retention of features such as chimneys and chimney pots, boundary walls and traditional windows, the use of appropriate materials in new build and repairs, and the general maintenance of properties and land. Alien materials such upvc windows and concrete tiles should not be used.

Statement of Consultation

The draft version of this Appraisal will be issued for public consultation. Letters will be sent to all residential and business premises in the conservation area. These will outline the purpose of conservation area designation and invite comments on the draft appraisal.

Copies of the Appraisal will be sent to English Heritage, Surrey County Council and Local Societies. Their comments are invited. A press release will be issued and the Appraisal was publicised in the local press . A public meeting will be held to consider the study. The responses made to the draft Appraisal will be considered and reported to the Council's Planning Committee

Land Use & Activity

The majority of the Conservation Area is residential. Part of the Conservation Area is in equestrian use. The surrounding land is agricultural.