

# St Peters Conservation Area Statement

May 2004

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## Introduction

Section 91 of the 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act defines Conservation Areas as “areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.”

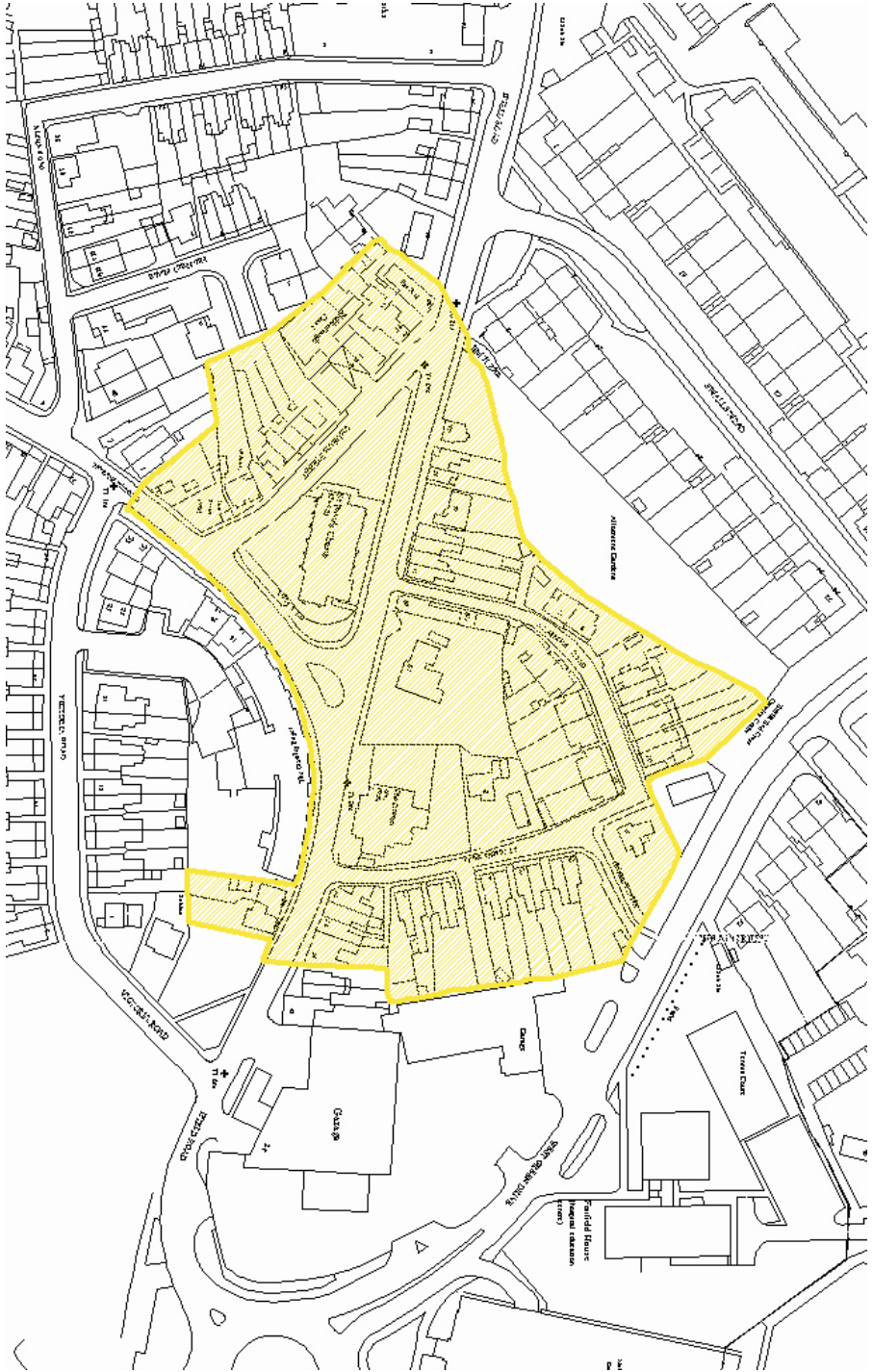
The designation of a Conservation Area is based on a number of factors and does

Not solely relate to the age of the buildings. Architectural interest and the quality of the area rather than individual buildings is also important.

The purpose of the Conservation Area Statement is to recognise the important character of St Peters and set out proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area.



# St Peters Conservation Area Boundary



## Objectives for the Conservation Area

The aim of the Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance the distinctive character of St Peters; to maintain the quality of the buildings and the spaces around them, keeping true to the original design and materials where practicable.

The general objectives for policy and proposals for the Conservation Area are:-

- To ensure the proper upkeep and maintenance of the buildings and common areas in their original style and appearance.
- To protect the areas distinctive layout and appearance.
- To promote environmental improvements within the Conservation Area consistent with its character.

To ensure that all alterations respect the character of the area



## **The History of the Conservation Area**

St Peters Conservation Area designated in 1996, is situated 0.4km west of the town centre. The architecture of the area is Victorian in style and predominantly consists of terraced and semi detached two-storey residential properties..

The area has medieval origins which are still reflected today in the street layout and includes the remnants of the village green which surrounds the church. The layout and character of the area has particular value when contrasted with the new town development to the north and west.

The area remained a small hamlet until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century when it saw substantial growth. St Peters Church was erected on the village green in 1892. It remains a fine example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century chapel set in a generous grassed area and complimented by a number of mature trees and is a focal point within the Conservation Area.

## **Characteristics of the Area**

The predominantly Victorian architecture gives the area its character. The residential properties in St Peters and St Johns Road are constructed of brick, often with red brick quoins and lintels. The front gardens are bordered by walls and hedges and several properties have distinctive brick porches. The roof pitches are relatively steep and the eaves are often characterised by decorative fascia boards. Both roads are narrow and the proximity of the houses to the pavement or road frontage reinforces the street pattern and layout.

The buildings in Church Street and Ifield Road are predominantly residential and of Victorian character with similar architectural features to those in St Peters and St Johns Road. Most of these properties are also situated close to the pavement or road, the layout orientated to face St Peters Church. A number of buildings have been converted into shops and other small business premises at ground floor level. The Crown Inn and Swan Inn due to their size and siting appear as prominent buildings within the Conservation Area.



## Locally Listed Buildings

There are two buildings which are locally listed and of architectural importance. These are:

**The swan public house, church street -** A fine example of Victorian pub architecture.

**St peters church -** A late 19<sup>th</sup> Century dressed sandstone chapel in Neo-Gothic style. It contains a good example of dressed stone windows and door detailing. A particular feature on the church is the external bell tower topped with a Celtic style cross.

## Trees

There are many mature trees within the Conservation Area located in gardens and on the green around St Peters Church, these make a valuable contribution to its character.

In addition, there is one Tree Preservation Order affecting a mature oak tree located in the rear garden of 14 Church Street.



## General Controls and Policies affecting the Conservation Area

The following section provides a brief summary of the planning controls intended to protect the Conservation Area.

### The Crawley Borough Local Plan 2000

Local planning policy for Conservation Areas is included in the Built and Natural Heritage Chapter of the Local Plan. Policies BN1, BN2, BN3, BN4, BN5 and BN6 seek to protect and enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas when development takes place.

### Trees

All trees within Conservation Areas have greater protection by law because many of these will contribute to the special character and amenity of the area. If you wish to undertake any works to a tree (involving surgery to live growth) from lopping branches to removing the tree, you must give the Council six weeks notice in writing of what you wish to do. The Council will then assess your proposal and the amenity value of the tree, if it is considered appropriate a Tree



Preservation Order may be served. If you do not receive a response within six weeks then you have two years in which to carry out the proposed work.

Further information regarding trees and the regulations which protect them is contained in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 6 'Trees' which is available free of charge from the Planning Department and is on the website.



### **Alterations to dwellings**

There are a number of implications for householders resulting from the Conservation Area designation. The Town and Country (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, normally allows for certain minor forms of development, such as small house extensions, roof alterations and the erection of domestic outbuildings to be implemented without the need to make a planning application. In a Conservation Area these 'permitted development rights' are more restrictive, and planning permission may be required for certain types of development which would be classed as 'permitted development' elsewhere.

Planning permission will be required for exterior cladding with stone, artificial timber, timber, plastic or tiles and all alterations which enlarge the roof of a property. In addition there is a smaller volume allowance for domestic extensions and tighter restrictions on the size of buildings and structures within the gardens of properties. There are also additional controls on the siting of satellite dishes and radio masts.

It is always advisable to check with the Planning Department whether or not you will require planning permission. Planning permission will only be granted where the proposed development is in keeping with the character of the area. Even in instances where planning permission is not required, the Council will encourage alterations to be carried out with sensitivity and respect for the setting and character of the Conservation Area.



## Advertisements

Within the Conservation Area there are tighter controls regarding the display of advertisements. If you wish to display an advertisement or sign you should always check first with the Council as you may be required to submit an application for Advertisement Consent. The Council is also able to provide advice on the style and design of signage which would be acceptable in the Conservation Area.



## Demolition

There additional control over the demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas and Conservation Area Consent may be necessary. The Council should be contacted for further guidance on any proposal involving demolition.



**Further information** and advice from a Planning Officer on the requirements for planning permission, Advertisement Consent, Conservation Area Consent and tree works can be obtained from the Planning Services Division on 01293 438512.

## Guidance for Owners/Occupants

This section provides general guidance to ensure that any proposed alterations respect the quality of the Conservation Area. It is important that minor changes which includes those that do not need planning permission are carried out in the same style as the original buildings, respecting the original design principles and using similar materials. Generally, new materials should match the original, although there may be instances when modern alternatives are acceptable.

The properties in St Peters Conservation Area have a number of distinctive features which are particularly characteristic of the time they were built. These features include;

- Architectural Style and detailing.
- Materials.
- Layout of the buildings and the relationship to the landscaping and open space.
- Relationship with the surrounding areas.

### Windows

Replacement windows should be of the same size and arrangement as existing windows. For the Victorian properties, clear glass should be used and effects such as leading should be avoided. Where possible, original windows such as sash windows should be retained or a similar style used. UPVC will not generally be considered an acceptable modern alternative to the original wooden/steel windows.

### Doors

A number of properties have added traditional door features which complement the style of the houses. Over elaborate door furniture should be avoided. Doors should ideally be timber and finished in traditional Victorian colours.

### Roofs

Replacement roof tiles should match the original, and options for using reclaimed materials should be explored.



### **Satellite dishes**

Satellite dishes should be sited on the side or rear of a property in order to minimise their visual impact. Consideration should be given to the colour, size and appearance of the installation which should be designed to be as inconspicuous as possible on the building.

### **Extensions and other structures in gardens**

Extensions should be carefully designed to respect the character and features of the original property. Consideration should be given to ensuring materials, detailing and finishes match with the existing building. Opportunities will be sought to reinstate existing features and extensions that propose features which are unsympathetic to the design of the original property should be avoided. Further advice on designing extensions is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5 'Residential Extensions' available from the Planning Office and on the website.

Where planning permission is required for garden structures the Council will pay careful attention to the proposed materials and visual appearance of any structure and will apply the same criteria as for extensions.

### **Boundary treatments**

There are a variety of boundary treatments found enclosing the gardens and green spaces within the Conservation Area. Examples include walls, hedges, fencing and railings. The scale, design and finish of these features can have a significant impact on the visual appearance of the area. Inappropriate colours, materials or varying heights or designs can appear visually intrusive within a Conservation Area. Existing boundary features should be reinstated where possible and if a new boundary treatment is required this should respect the existing style, height and materials of boundary features in the locality.





## Signage

Outdoor advertisements are essential to the viability of the shops and businesses in the area. However, there are instances where advertisements are not sympathetic to the character of the area. It is therefore essential that new or altered frontages are well designed and of a quality fitting for a Conservation Area.

Advertisements and signs on commercial premises should normally only be located on the front or entrance of the premises, should be designed in proportion with the frontage as a whole and should not project above ground floor level. Visual clutter and signage of a mixture of sizes and styles must be avoided.

Large bright fascias, which dominate the shop front in an attempt to be eye-catching, will not normally be acceptable. Only one projecting sign for each retail unit will normally be permitted. Internally illuminated signs can be intrusive to nearby residential properties and detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area, these will not normally be acceptable.

Further advice on the design of shopfronts is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 7 'Shopfronts' and on advertisements in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 8 'Signs and Advertisements'. Both publications are available free of charge at the Planning Office and are on the Council website.

## **Environmental Improvements**

The Borough Council is committed to improving the Conservation Area subject to the availability of resources.

### **Improvements undertaken:**

- Railings to northern boundary of St Peters Church.
- Conservation Area road signage.

### **Possible future improvements**

Subject to the availability of resources a number of future improvements will be considered:

- Replacing existing lighting columns and road signs, which are in a poor state of repair. Consideration should also be given to opportunities to consolidate street signage to reduce the proliferation of signs within the area.
- Enhancing the setting of the buildings by identifying areas of neglect where paving improvements and boundary treatments such as fencing and landscaping should be considered.

- Identifying buildings in a poor state of repair and encouraging owners to upgrade their appearance.
- Continuing the railings around the church to prevent illegal parking and to further enhance its setting.
- Additional landscaping on traffic island to the east of St Peters Church.