

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGY OF THE LOCAL PLAN

CRAWLEY'S GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

- 2.1 Crawley borough is situated in the north eastern part of the county of West Sussex. Mainly urban in character, Crawley has a population of just over 90,000. It is surrounded by countryside and a small part of the southern area is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has excellent communications, being adjacent to the M23 and close to the M25 and having good railway services to London and to the coast. Gatwick Airport, one of the world's busiest international airports, is located within the borough.

ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF CRAWLEY

- 2.2 Crawley has its origins in the Middle Ages or even earlier. Vestiges of its long history still remain in parts of the town. However, the majority of its growth and its character is derived from its designation as a New Town in 1947. Crawley was one of eight new towns established by the Government after the war to stem the increasing congestion and outward sprawl of London and to provide a better quality of life for Londoners living in the inner, overcrowded areas of the city. The New Town was to provide employment and good quality housing in a green environment. It was intended that the need to commute to London should be reduced or eliminated by providing new self-contained communities with both housing and jobs.
- 2.3 The basic design concept of Crawley New Town is a series of residential neighbourhoods located around a town centre with a separate industrial area located to the north. Each residential neighbourhood contains a mix of house types and sizes within a well-designed, attractive and spacious living environment. Each is provided with local shops, services and schools close enough for people to walk and cycle to without having to cross main distributor roads. The original neighbourhoods of West Green, Northgate, Three Bridges and Langley Green were joined later in the 1950s by Pound Hill, Southgate, Tilgate, Ifield and Gossops Green. The most recent neighbourhoods are Furnace Green, Bewbush, Broadfield and Maidenbower, with the latter two still in the process of being built. Crawley's physical growth since the late 1940s has been rapid. In 1951 the population was approximately 10,000. By 1961 it had increased to approximately 54,000 while in 1995 it is estimated to be approaching 91,000. This rapid rate of growth is partly due to the comparatively young age structure of the town. The population is forecast to increase to over 96,000 by the year 2001 and could reach at least 99,000 by the end of the plan period in 2006.
- 2.4 Crawley's location within the South East and its excellent communications, including Gatwick Airport, have meant that pressures for residential and economic development have often been intense. Such pressures could continue, particularly with the development of the single European market and the opening of the Channel Tunnel. Whilst new development can offer many opportunities to enhance the local economy and the quality of life for Crawley's residents, the challenge for the Local Plan is to ensure that the new development which is to be accommodated is not at the expense of the environment.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Regional Guidance

- 2.5 Regional Guidance for the South East issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment contains three broad objectives for planning policies in the region:
- * Economic Performance

To provide a framework for economic growth to maintain and develop the South East's competitive position in Europe and to give employment to its people.
 - * Sustainable Development and Environmental Enhancement

To achieve the development needed by the region in a way which is environmentally sustainable - that is to provide for development which avoids damage to the global, regional and local environment or helps to improve that environment.
 - * Opportunity and Choice

To provide opportunity and choice to the people of the South East through planning policies for the economy, housing and transport.
- 2.6 Geographically, the overall aim of the guidance is to change the balance in the location of new development from the western areas of the region (which for the purposes of the guidance includes Crawley and Gatwick), to the east (in the main, the East Thames Corridor).
- 2.7 In the western sector the guidance states that a reducing rate of development is appropriate to enable infrastructure and services to catch up with the rapid growth of the recent past. At Crawley/Gatwick in particular, local constraints on development and policy constraints such as Green Belt designation in adjoining areas make regionally significant expansion undesirable. In approving the 1993 Structure Plan, the Secretary of State emphasised the need to slow down the rate of development in this area and that it should no longer be viewed as a growth zone.

West Sussex Structure Plan 1993

- 2.8 Local planning authorities have a duty to seek the achievement of the objectives of the Structure Plan for their areas. The West Sussex Structure Plan 1993 covers the period mid-1989 to mid-2006. The first and paramount objective of the Structure Plan is the protection and improvement of the urban and rural environment of West Sussex and the quality of life within it. However, the resources needed to care for the environment are dependent on a prosperous local economy. This relationship means that providing for the needs of local people and businesses for new buildings and other development must be a close second priority.
- 2.9 The Structure Plan makes provision for development within the county in accordance with regional guidance taking account of environmental concerns. In order to protect the countryside and to reduce energy use through transport, particularly car use, development is to be encouraged within built-up areas rather than in the countryside.
- 2.10 Over the Plan period, the Structure Plan requires Crawley to provide 8,600 new dwellings and approximately 340,000 sq.m. of new business, industry and warehousing floorspace. A major requirement of the Structure Plan is the provision of a new neighbourhood at Crawley. One reason given for locating this development at

Crawley is for housing to be in close proximity to where there are most jobs, thereby reducing the extent and amount of travel-to-work journeys. The Structure Plan identifies Crawley as a sub-regional shopping centre and seeks significant improvements to the town centre.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE LOCAL PLAN

Environment

- 2.11 Crawley's environment is generally of good quality and the small amount of countryside within the borough provides an important setting for the town. However, some recent developments and changes have threatened to erode elements of character and environmental quality in parts of the town. In particular, some of the most attractive, older areas of the town have come under pressure for change. Private gardens, public open spaces and playing fields have been lost to meet the need for residential and commercial development and increased use of the motor car has put more traffic on roads and created pollution, congestion and parking problems. In line with the Structure Plan, best use must be made of land within the built-up area. The challenge for the Local Plan is to ensure that the changes which take place occur without a deterioration in the essential environmental quality of the area and without town cramming problems such as the loss of open spaces and residential amenity.
- 2.12 A second key environmental issue concerns the sustainability of new development. Sustainable development is 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The global need for sustainable development was recognised at the United Nation's Earth Summit held in 1992 at which a world-wide action plan for the 21st century (Agenda 21) was agreed. In the light of this, the Government has prepared a 'U.K. Strategy for Sustainable Development'. Both Agenda 21 and the U.K. Strategy recognise the important role of local authorities in promoting sustainable development. Many of the key issues addressed by Agenda 21 and the U.K. Strategy are affected by land use planning decisions. The Local Plan, through its land use and transportation policies, must therefore identify ways of minimising the loss of non-renewable resources, conserving energy, protecting wildlife and open spaces, facilitating recycling and reducing pollution. The challenge for the Local Plan is to aim to secure a more sustainable environment which is healthier, cleaner and safer whilst at the same time providing for a range of development needs.

Built and Natural Heritage

- 2.13 Crawley has many open spaces which constitute important features within the overall townscape and which are valued for amenity, recreation and nature conservation. However, some of these areas are neglected and need improving and others are overused. Crawley has a number of historic buildings and areas which are vulnerable to development pressures and some are neglected and poorly maintained. A key issue for the Local Plan is how to accommodate new development requirements, mainly within the built-up area, whilst protecting and enhancing valued environmental features.

Countryside

- 2.14 The small area of countryside within the borough provides an important setting for the town, contributes to the quality of the urban area and is used for informal recreation by residents. However, the proximity of Gatwick Airport and the urban area has led to development pressures and environmental problems commonly associated with the

urban fringe such as blight, unsightly uses and neglected land. Also, changes in agricultural practices and the rural economy are affecting the traditional uses in the countryside. With less land being used generally for agriculture, there is more demand for alternative uses such as recreation and tourism. In certain circumstances, opportunities may exist to re-use existing buildings in the countryside for alternative uses. The Local Plan must seek ways of protecting and improving the countryside and its character whilst accommodating changes in the traditional use of this area.

Transport

- 2.15 Many of the transport issues which the Plan needs to address are associated with car use. Car ownership and use is increasing, reflecting the undoubted advantages of the car in terms of mobility, choice and opportunity. However, as car use has grown so has traffic congestion, particularly in the town centre, causing delay, noise and air pollution. The dominance of the car is also evident in residential areas where parking on streets and on verges causes environmental and safety problems. As car use increases, problems are caused for pedestrians and cyclists. In particular, access to those employment, shopping and recreational facilities which are far from residential areas and not always served by public transport is difficult for those without use of a car. In the wider context, the car is a major consumer of energy and a major contributor to global warming. A key issue for the Local Plan is to seek ways of managing the transport network to ensure safe and efficient mobility for people and freight without causing environmental problems.

Housing

- 2.16 In line with Structure Plan requirements, sufficient housing should be provided to meet the needs of existing and future households as well as to provide an appropriate amount to sustain the local economy. However, this must be reconciled with the need to protect and improve the environment.
- 2.17 A variety of housing needs exists. There is evidence to suggest that much of the housing need in Crawley is for subsidised housing (for those unable to afford housing at market prices) and low cost market housing (for those who can afford to buy or rent but only at the lower end of the housing market). There is also a requirement for housing to meet special needs, e.g. the elderly, those with disabilities and those needing community care. There also continues to be a need for small dwellings as the size of households continues to decrease. Single people and single parent households are particular need groups in Crawley who may require small dwellings. A major housing issue to be addressed by the Local Plan is how to stimulate provision for a variety of housing needs and to ensure that the new housing is of a suitable standard and continues to remain available to those in need.
- 2.18 As a new town with a large stock of modern and generally well maintained-housing, a precedence for maintaining this standard has been set. All new housing and its surroundings should be suitable in terms of size, design and facilities for the requirements of its occupants and should not give rise to environmental and amenity problems.

Economy

- 2.19 The Local Plan needs to provide for the development of sufficient employment generating floorspace to meet the employment needs of Crawley's workforce and to allow for the growth and development of the local economy of the central Sussex area. The local economy is still very dependent on a few key sectors such as the airport. Serious economic and unemployment problems can therefore arise if the prosperity of these sectors is arrested. A key economic issue to be addressed by the

Local Plan is to provide for the needs of the local economy and to widen the economic base. At the same time it is important to ensure that such provision does not lead to an over-heating of the economy and problems of skill shortages as have occurred in the past. This could lead to pressures being placed on the housing provision and consequently on the environment.

- 2.20 As manufacturing industries continue to decline so too does the requirement for traditional skills. New types of skills are needed by the economy, particularly in the service sectors and by high technology firms. A number of residents either lack the skills to take up new employment opportunities or are unable to use their skills because of childcare commitments or mobility problems. Facilitating greater access to employment opportunities for local residents is a key issue for the Local Plan.

Shopping

- 2.21 The town centre contains a wide range of shops and serves a market which extends well beyond the borough boundary. However, the town centre has experienced major changes at the same time as it has been affected by the national economic recession. The opening of County Mall has increased the range of shops but changed the focus of activity in the town centre. Non-retail uses have become established in areas previously considered part of the shopping area and out-of-town shopping has diverted trade from town centre sites. Added to this, some parts of the town centre lack the quality of environment expected by shoppers in the 1990s. The Local Plan must address these issues with policies to secure the future viability and vitality of the centre so that the conflict between the demand for increased personal mobility and the need to protect the environment can be resolved.
- 2.22 Neighbourhood parades provide convenient, local shopping facilities. However, a number of the shops on the parades have been lost to non-retail uses and some of the parades are not as attractive as they used to be. The Local Plan must consider how the important role of these local shopping centres can be protected.

Gatwick Airport

- 2.23 Gatwick Airport generates significant benefits for the economy of Crawley and the surrounding area. The Local Plan needs to address many development and environmental issues arising from the airport, balancing growth at the airport against environmental objectives.

Recreation and Leisure

- 2.24 The recreation and leisure needs of the population are diverse and continue to change. The predicted increase in the numbers of the elderly and of school age children will require particular types of provision. Easy access to recreation facilities is essential for these groups, who often have mobility problems. The existing provision of recreation facilities is also threatened by pressures for alternative and more profitable development. The major issue for the Local Plan is to seek ways of facilitating new provision to meet a range of needs at the same time as protecting existing facilities.

Community Services

- 2.25 New requirements for community services have arisen from changes in the legislation and provision of community care and education and there is increasing pressure for the provision of more locally based facilities. With the predicted increase in the number of elderly people, new demands will arise for the provision of day care and

other support facilities. As general needs change, a number of existing community services and facilities have become out-dated and need to be relocated or modified. The Local Plan must address ways of securing the provision of facilities to meet the variety of changing needs.

A VISION FOR CRAWLEY

- 2.26 Underlying the Local Plan Strategy is a vision of the type of place and environment which is sought for Crawley by 2006. It takes account of the Council's Corporate Strategy for the borough which aims to improve the quality of life in Crawley and to protect those characteristics which contribute to its special identity. It also takes account of many of the principles of the original Master Plan for Crawley, which remain just as valid and important today as they were in 1949.
- 2.27 The aim of the 1949 Master Plan was to create a self-contained community in which people have their work and homes within easy reach. It sought to achieve a compact town which was easy and economical to use but without creating high residential densities or a deficiency of open spaces. It proposed small, socially mixed residential areas - neighbourhoods - each with their own individuality and a centre containing services for day-to-day needs in order to promote neighbourliness and the social development of the town. Housing was to be affordable and of suitable standard within areas free from through-traffic. A diversity of industry was to be provided for stable employment and a range of job opportunities. The town centre was to be accessible and lively with through-traffic eliminated. A network of footpaths and cycleways was to be implemented throughout the town for safe and attractive access and open spaces provided for health and recreation.
- 2.28 The overall vision for Crawley embodies the above objectives. It constitutes a town in which residents and workers would have access to a range of good quality employment opportunities and affordable housing of a good standard. Access to these opportunities would be equal for all groups. Crawley would fully participate in the economy and life of the wider region, taking up opportunities from Europe if these are of benefit to the town and compatible with the need to safeguard the environment. Residents would live within a safe, clean, accessible and attractive environment where access to a range of facilities, including shops and recreation facilities is not dependent solely on the use of the car. The neighbourhood would continue as an important concept whereby residents live conveniently close to schools, local shops and other facilities. The town centre would be the hub of the town, providing a range of shops, restaurants and services as well as commercial employment within an attractive environment. It would be lively, safe and secure and provide easy access for pedestrians and cyclists.

ACHIEVING THE STRATEGY

- 2.29 The Strategy for this Local Plan is based on six main principles which are derived from the analysis of the land use problems and issues facing Crawley.

Principle 1

Improving the Quality of Life for Residents and Workers

- 2.30 The achievement of a good quality of life for the local community is an important aim of the Local Plan. Policies which facilitate the provision of a range of good quality housing, jobs, shops and social and recreational facilities should help residents and workers to obtain a good standard of living and to participate more fully in the social and economic life of the borough and the wider area. In addition, the environment in which people live, work, play and travel is important to the quality of life. A clean, safe

and accessible environment which is also attractive to look at not only enhances social and economic opportunities but it also generates a sense of well-being and civic pride.

Principle 2

Contributing to the Achievement of a Sustainable Environment

- 2.31 The quality of life and economic well-being are closely linked to the state of the environment. However, the environment is fragile and easily damaged. The promotion of sustainable development will help to enhance both the quality of life and the environment in the borough benefiting people living now and in the future. The Local Plan aims to minimise the loss of non-renewable resources including energy, valuable sites for nature conservation and other urban open spaces. It also aims to minimise the generation of pollution (particularly that generated by car use) to land, air and water in order to protect environmental resources and to contribute to the reduction of global warming.

Principle 3

Maintaining and Enhancing the Vitality and Economic Prosperity of Crawley

- 2.32 Despite current unemployment problems, Crawley has many assets which can contribute to its economic vitality and make it attractive to businesses. It has excellent communications (including Gatwick Airport) and is centrally located in relation to London, the Channel Tunnel and ports. It also has an adaptable workforce, a good quality environment and a large range of shops and recreation services. The Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance these assets as well as to facilitate a range of employment opportunities. These will help to bring investment into the town and to provide resources to enhance the quality of life for residents and workers as well as resources to help protect the environment.

Principle 4

Maintaining and Enhancing the Individual Character of Crawley

- 2.33 As a New Town, Crawley has particular characteristics which contribute to its special character, identity and quality of life. It has distinctive modern architecture and well-designed buildings and open spaces. A major feature is the residential neighbourhood providing a well-designed, attractive and spacious living environment with safe and convenient access for residents to local services, schools and shops. Other special characteristics in Crawley include the large amount of open spaces and the many trees which contribute to an attractive and human environment. The Local Plan aims to protect these characteristics and to ensure that they are incorporated into all new development where appropriate.

Principle 5

Contributing to the Achievement of Equal Access to Resources and Opportunities for all Sectors of the Community

- 2.34 Crawley's residents, workers and visitors are of diverse ages, ethnic origins, skills and physical abilities who will often have differing needs to be met from development. Some find it difficult to gain access to the opportunities and facilities offered by new

development for a variety of reasons, for instance because of lack of skills, mobility problems (e.g. physical disability and lack of access to car transport) or because they spend the majority of time looking after dependants. The Local Plan seeks to facilitate equal access to opportunities amongst all groups by ensuring that the design of all new development takes account of people's differing levels of mobility. It also encourages the provision of facilities and services to increase opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

Principle 6

Taking up Opportunities offered by European, National and Regional Developments

- 2.35 Crawley already contains a number of developments (eg The Hawth Arts Centre, hotels and County Mall shopping centre) which serve more than a local need and contribute to the town's economy, image and quality of life. Additional opportunities offered at European, national and regional levels in the arts, sport, leisure and tourist sectors could also be of benefit to the borough. However, this needs to be balanced against the priority to be given to local needs and the over-riding aim of the Plan to protect the environment and quality of life of Crawley's residents. Within these constraints, the Local Plan aims to allow for such development opportunities.

POLICIES

- 2.36 The above principles encompass several objectives which could conflict. The requirement to provide for the needs of the borough for new development and to enhance its economy could conflict with the need to protect the environment and retain its individual character. Careful balancing of objectives and an indication of priorities is required. The Structure Plan places a high priority on the need to protect the environment and this must be the starting point for the strategy.

Protecting the Environment

Policy STRAT 1

In all its decisions as local planning authority, the Borough Council will attach great weight to protecting and improving the natural and built environment and the quality of life for those who live and work in the borough. In particular, it will seek to protect environmental resources, minimise pollution and energy consumption.

- 2.37 The need to protect the environment and its resources is a primary aim of the Local Plan, providing the overall context to all policies and proposals. It sets the parameters to guide the amount, type and location of new development proposed in the Plan. A good quality and sustainable environment creates a pleasant place to live, work and play and contributes to a better quality of life. It also enhances the overall image of the borough and creates a sound basis for economic prosperity and growth by attracting income, investment and employment.

Providing for New Development

Policy STRAT 2

Taking into account the aim of Policy STRAT 1 and in accordance with the Structure Plan, the Borough Council will provide for sufficient development to meet the social and economic needs of the borough's existing and future inhabitants and to meet the needs of the local economy.

- 2.38 Taking into account environmental objectives and parameters, the Local Plan provides for sufficient housing and employment development to meet the needs of the resident population and workforce and the local economy up to 2006. The provision of good quality housing, jobs, shops, recreational and community facilities will help to achieve a good standard of living and quality of life. In addition, a prosperous local economy will provide the resources necessary to help protect and enhance the environment.

Locating New Development

Policy STRAT 3

In considering the location of new development, the Borough Council will seek to minimise the need for the consumption of resources and energy usage. In particular, the Borough Council will take into account the need to:

- (i) minimise the consumption of resources of the countryside;**
- (ii) make use of unused or underused land within the built-up area;**
- (iii) reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car;**
- (iv) be efficient in the use of energy.**

- 2.39 In accordance with the environmental objectives set for this Plan, two themes underpin this strategy policy. These are to make the best use of available land resources within the built-up area and to locate much of the new development provided for in this Plan where it is most easily accessible by all of the population it is intended to serve. As far as possible, new facilities which mainly serve defined local catchment areas should normally be located within or close to where that population lives. Facilities and jobs mainly serving a wider area of the town or beyond should as far as possible be located in accessible central locations. Reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car will help to minimise energy usage. Greater efficiency will also be achieved through the consideration of particular forms of building design, layout and construction which may affect or reflect the location of development.

Policies STRAT 1, STRAT 2 and STRAT 3 determine the geographical expression of the Strategy as follows:

MAIN DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The New Neighbourhood

- 2.40 Careful consideration has been given to the best way of providing for the additional neighbourhood as required by the Structure Plan. Whilst there are a number of sites within the built-up area which are suitable for new housing development, no one site is large enough to provide a self-contained neighbourhood with a range of supporting facilities. Scattering the provision across a range of sites would not fulfil the neighbourhood requirement, would increase car journeys, exacerbate traffic congestion and use up valuable open spaces or countryside resources. The only area within the borough boundary large enough to accommodate a viable neighbourhood with a range of local facilities and services is located to the north east of the town (referred to as the North East Sector in this Local Plan). Moreover, this site is close to the main areas of employment in the borough and to public transport links. This area was designated in the 1993 Local Plan as part of the Strategic Gap: an area of countryside where development should only occur in compelling circumstances in order to prevent Crawley's coalescence with nearby settlements and to maintain its separate identity. However, as detailed in the Housing chapter (which contains the allocation Policy for the new neighbourhood) of this Local Plan, this is considered to be the only area which meets the requirements of the Structure Plan and is in line with the principles of the strategy of this Local Plan.
- 2.41 The North East Sector provides an opportunity to accommodate a number of other development needs which cannot easily be accommodated within the remaining built-up areas of the borough, such as community uses. However, the development of the new neighbourhood will form the major part of the North East Sector. Chapter 13 contains detailed policies on the development requirements for the North East Sector and the new neighbourhood.

The Town Centre

- 2.42 The town centre is identified as a major location for new development for a number of reasons. The main public transport services from the housing areas are to the town centre and use of these services, rather than the car, can be made to access the centre. Locating employment, shopping and leisure development within and close to the town centre meets a major environmental objective of the Local Plan. Additional new housing sites are allocated within and close to the town centre, some of which are to meet the needs of those who need to be near to central facilities and who may lack their own transport, e.g. the elderly and young single people. Much of the new employment development can be achieved through redevelopment and can secure major environmental improvements in this area.
- 2.43 Locating new development within the town centre will contribute to its regeneration in line with the Council's strategy to enhance its role as a sub-regional centre and to improve its environment and facilities, and its image and identity.
- 2.44 To retain the shopping viability of the town centre the Local Plan, in line with Government policy, discourages large out-of-town shopping developments. New shopping allocations are located within the main shopping area of the town centre to reinforce its sub-regional role and to make use of public transport.

DEVELOPMENT IN OTHER AREAS

Existing Residential Neighbourhoods

- 2.45 The existing residential neighbourhoods are not to be areas of major change and are for the most part subject to protection policies. A number of sites are allocated in several of them for new development to meet specific needs for housing, local employment and leisure/community purposes. Such allocations are made to fulfil the neighbourhood principle, that is to provide facilities and some jobs close to housing.

Gatwick Airport

- 2.46 Development requirements arising from growth at Gatwick Airport should be met primarily on the airport within which several areas for future development are allocated. A variety of airport-related uses (e.g.hotels) can be accommodated on sites throughout the borough, although certain uses must be located on the airport for operational, security and environmental reasons.

Other Locations

- 2.47 A variety of other sites within the built-up area are allocated for particular uses, partly reflecting past commitments but also providing a choice of sites for development. They provide, in the main, for local facilities and services and for development to further the growth of the local economy.

AREAS TO BE PROTECTED

Open Spaces Within the Built-Up Area

- 2.48 Most open spaces within the built-up area are protected by policies in the Local Plan because of their value for amenity, recreation, wildlife and nature conservation.

The Countryside

- 2.49 Local Plan policies aim to protect the countryside and there is a general presumption against development which is unrelated to the needs of agriculture or forestry and which does not need a countryside location. A small area is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (A.O.N.B.) and policies aim to protect its landscape quality and ecology. Most of the countryside is designated Strategic Gap where there is also a strong presumption against development in order to maintain the separate identity of Crawley and to prevent its coalescence with adjacent settlements.
- 2.50 Changes in agricultural practices and the rural economy are affecting the traditional uses in the countryside. There is now more of a demand for alternative uses such as recreation and tourism. Certain small-scale development may be appropriate in the countryside in certain circumstances, e.g. if it makes use of existing buildings. Parts of the countryside display problems which are often associated with the urban fringe, such as blight and the existence of some unsightly uses. Certain types of small-scale development, e.g. those associated with informal recreation may be appropriate to secure improvements in these areas.

Conservation Areas

2.51 Crawley has several areas of historic interest and a number of historic buildings which provide a sense of character and a link with Crawley's pre-new town origins. Some of these buildings are statutorily listed and within conservation areas. Others, whilst not listed are of local historic and architectural interest. It is important that such features are protected since once lost, they can never be replaced.