

**BUSH HILL PARK  
CONSERVATION AREA  
ENFIELD  
CHARACTER APPRAISAL**



**London Borough of Enfield**

prepared by  
**The Paul Drury Partnership**

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Fig. 1: ‘Rustic bijou villas’ from North London Estate Company’s brochure 1886

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# Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 *Conservation areas*

1.1.1 Conservation areas are areas of ‘special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’<sup>1</sup> and were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area<sup>2</sup>. In fulfilling this duty the Council does not seek to stop all development, but to manage change in a sensitive way, to ensure that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced rather than eroded.

1.1.2 Conservation area designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and the lopping or felling of trees above a certain size. However, it does not control all forms of development. Some changes to family houses (known as “permitted development”) do not normally require planning permission. These include minor alterations such as the replacement of windows and doors, or the alteration of boundary walls. Where such changes would erode the character and appearance of the area, the Council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4(2) directions. The result is that planning permission is required for such works.

### 1.2 *The purpose of a conservation area appraisal*

1.2.1 A conservation area character appraisal aims to define the qualities that make an area special. This involves understanding the history and development of the place and analysing its current appearance and character - including describing significant features in the landscape and identifying important buildings and spaces. It also involves recording, where appropriate, intangible qualities such as the sights, sounds and smells that contribute to making the area distinctive, as well as its historic associations with people and events.

1.2.2 An appraisal is not a complete audit of every building or feature, but rather aims to give an overall flavour of the area. It provides a benchmark of understanding against which the effects of proposals for change can be assessed, and the future of the area managed. It also identifies problems that detract from the character of the area and potential threats to this character.

1.2.3 This appraisal of the Bush Hill Park Conservation Area (hereafter referred to as the Conservation Area) supports Enfield Council’s commitment in its Unitary Development Plan<sup>3</sup> (UDP, adopted 1994) and its duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

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<sup>1</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 s.69

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, Section 72

<sup>3</sup> POLICY (II) C22

Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in the Borough and to consult the public about the proposals. The assessment in the appraisal of the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the character of the Conservation Area is based on the criteria suggested in the appendix of the English Heritage guidance *Conservation area appraisals* (1997) (reproduced in Appendix 7.2 to this document).

### **1.3 Conservation in Enfield**

1.3.1 Since the 1870s, Enfield has developed from a modest market town surrounded by open country and small villages to a pattern of suburbs on the edge of London. This transformation was triggered by the advent of suburban railways and took place in a piecemeal manner, with former villages being developed into local shopping centres and industries being developed along the Lea Valley. Conservation areas in Enfield reflect this pattern of development, including old town and village centres, rural areas centred on the remains of former country estates, examples of the best suburban estates and distinctive industrial sites. Some of the smaller designated areas are concentrated on particular groups of buildings of local importance.

1.3.2 Bush Hill Park is a planned suburban estate that forms one of the more interesting and attractive aspects of Enfield's late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century heritage. It was designated as a conservation area in 1987 and extended to include Private Road in 1994. The Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Study Group was formed by residents in 1987 to facilitate a better understanding of the area and aid the protection of its special character.

## **2.0 Planning policy framework**

2.1 The legal basis for conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. National policy guidance is provided by Planning Policy Guidance notes 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) and 16 (Archaeology and Planning). The Enfield UDP sets out a basic framework of conservation policies ((II) C21-34) for all areas.

2.2 The UDP is due to be replaced by a new Local Development Framework (LDF). This Conservation Area Appraisal will be used to support the conservation policies that will form part of the Core Strategy of the new LDF.

## **3.0 Appraisal of special interest**

### **3.1 Location and landscape setting**

3.1.1 Bush Hill Park is situated approximately ½ mile (0.75km) to the south east of Enfield town centre, immediately to the west of the branch line from Edmonton Green to Enfield Town, on the boundary between the historic parishes of Enfield and Edmonton. It forms part of an extensive residential suburban area between the local centres of Edmonton and Enfield Town.

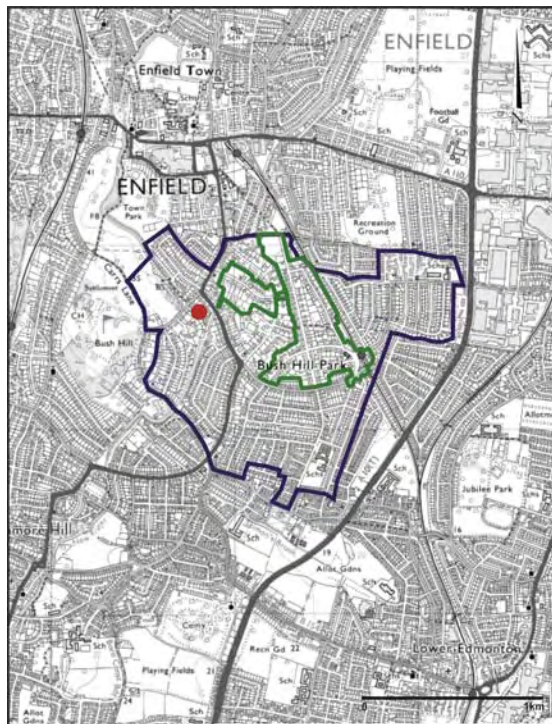


The Conservation Area is almost entirely residential in nature, with a small retail and commercial centre around the station.

3.1.2 As originally conceived, the Bush Hill Park Estate straddled the Edmonton- Enfield railway line, with artisan housing to the east and larger, more prestigious properties intended for the middle class to the west. The Conservation Area, however, covers only part of the surviving core of the original prestige development. This consists of approximately 273 houses, most of which remain in single occupancy, and 22 blocks of modern flats situated on plots formerly occupied by the larger houses.

3.1.3 Much of the character of the area derives from its plan form, which was laid out at the beginning of the estate's development and bears no relation to the field pattern of the farmland it replaced. The semi-formal layout, consisting of a wide central spine, Wellington Road, from which narrower side roads branch off, gives the area an air of order and spaciousness. Wellington Road is widened twice to form small circuses, one of which leads to Abbey Road. The other, half way down Wellington Road, was intended to lead to a road never actually constructed. However, these circuses have little spatial impact because the buildings around them do not respond to the change in street form.

3.1.4 The topography is generally flat, with a slight rise to the west along Private Road. The area is therefore relatively self-contained, with no significant views or vistas in or out of it. Saddler's Mill Stream, a tributary of the River Lea, runs from west to east across the middle of the area, but makes little impact on the landform. As in the rest of this part of the Borough, the surface geology of the area is valley brick earth.



*Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal map 1: location map*

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Full extent of the Bush Hill Park estate
- Site of Bush Hill Park house

## 3.2 Historical development

3.2.1 Bush Hill Park is essentially a creation of the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, built on farm land that had formed part of an estate centred on Bush Hill Park House, a country house situated 0.5km to the west of the present day Conservation Area, overlooking the New River and first mentioned in 1671<sup>4</sup>. The estate changed hands several times during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and reached its greatest extent under the ownership of William Mellish (d.1839), a merchant and MP for Middlesex, when it became the third largest in the parish, covering 438 acres<sup>5</sup>. After passing through several hands, the estate was broken up in 1875, with the 373 acres now known as Bush Hill Park being bought by the North London Estates Company<sup>6</sup>, a speculative development company. Bush Hill Park House itself was sold separately and demolished in 1929<sup>7</sup>.

3.2.2 Initially, the North London Estates Company was slow to develop the land. However, the building of Bush Hill Park station in 1880<sup>8</sup> on the existing Great Eastern Railway branch to Enfield Town provided an impetus for development. The first phase took place between 1880 and 1886<sup>9</sup> (*fig. 2 and map 2*) and was divided into a prestige development in Village Road and along the north east side of Private Road and more modest, but still substantial, houses on the west side of Wellington Road, the south side of Queen Anne's Place and the north side of Dryden Road. Most of the earliest houses were designed for the company by R Tayler Smith<sup>10</sup>, although, in Private Road and Village Road, some houses were individually designed by privately-commissioned architects.

3.2.3 As this was a development on virgin land, the North London Estates Company was also responsible for laying roads, building drains and sewers and providing a water supply. This was done to a high standard, with a well, reservoir, water tower and pumping plant in Quaker's Walk providing piped water from the start. Bricks for the development were made on site, using a deposit of brick earth found at what are now Bagshot and Amberly Roads to the south east of the Conservation Area<sup>11</sup>.

3.2.4 During the early part of the 1880s, the house building industry had boomed, but, by 1887, there was a surfeit of housing in Enfield that led to a ten-year period of stagnation, when little building took place. The North London Estates Company was an early casualty, going bankrupt in 1886<sup>12</sup> and the estate was sold to the Bush Hill Park Company. Development of the estate remained slow, however, with the 1896 Ordnance Survey map

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<sup>4</sup> Baker T (ed) *Victoria County History of Middlesex V*. (OUP 1976), p.161

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Pam, D. *A History of Enfield II*. (Enfield Preservation Society 1992) p20

<sup>7</sup> Baker T *op cit* p.161

<sup>8</sup> *ibid* p.136

<sup>9</sup> Pam, D. *op cit* p.21

<sup>10</sup> Pevesner N & Cherry B *The Buildings of England, London 4: North*. (Penguin, London 1998) p232-3

<sup>11</sup> Pam, D. *op cit* p.21

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

showing that only a few properties had been constructed since 1886 (*map 2*). The waterworks were sold off separately to the New River Company in 1887. In 1896, the company redirected the New River into an underground conduit that runs across Private Road.

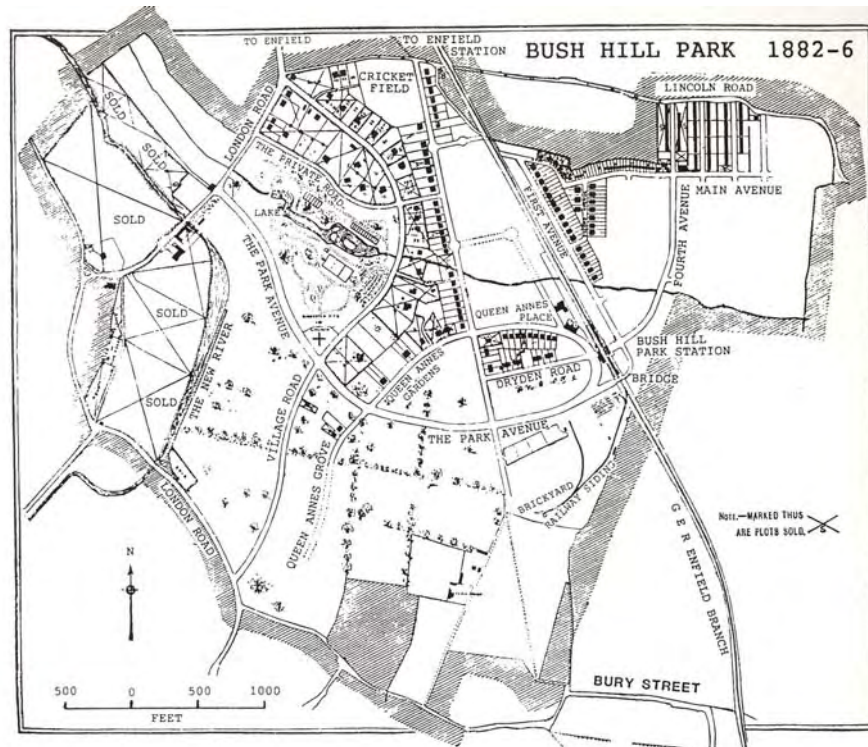


Fig. 2: 1886 map of Bush Hill Park Estate

3.2.5 The Bush Hill Park Golf Club was started in 1895 and had its first club house in Queen Anne’s Gardens, roughly on the site of no 12. No house of any kind then stood between the clubhouse and Bury Street to the south. The clubhouse was eventually moved to the west to become the pavilion of the tennis club that is now called Enfield Chase, close to St Stephen’s Church.<sup>13</sup>

3.2.6 The demand for housing picked up in 1897, due principally to the expansion of the Royal Small Arms Factory during the Boer War and the extension of the local tram system. Building at Bush Hill Park seems to have peaked between 1904 and 1908, when 350 houses were built and let or sold immediately<sup>14</sup>. By 1914, the estate largely resembled its present form<sup>15</sup>.

3.2.7 This second phase of development was rather different to the first, consisting of smaller, more closely packed semi-detached houses that may reflect a lack of demand for the original large, high status residences. Despite this, these later houses are of above average quality and large detached houses continued to be built on the south side of Dryden Road.

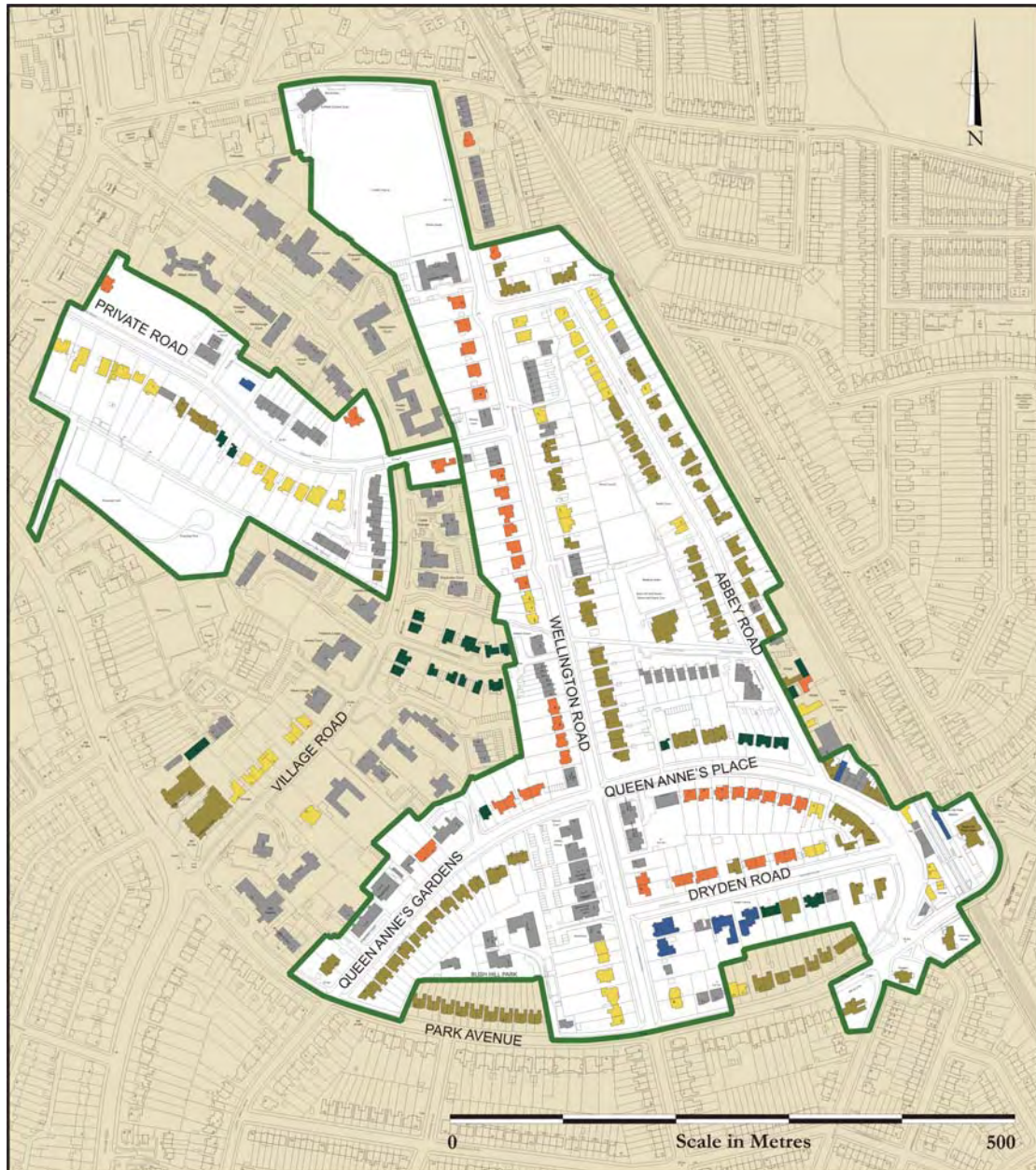
<sup>13</sup> Denis Hoy, *From Fields to Flats* (Enfield 1985), page 17

<sup>14</sup> *ibid* p.76

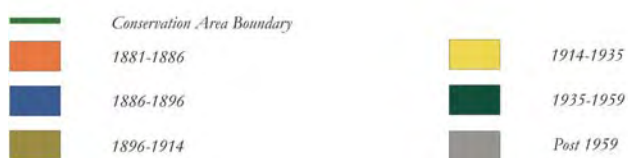
<sup>15</sup> OS 25” map 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1914 revision



3.2.8 Between 1914 and 1960, development was restricted to limited infilling of the remaining plots. More radical change came after 1960, when most of the larger properties in Village Road, at the south end of Wellington Road and the north side of Private Road, were demolished and replaced by blocks of flats. As a result, most of the first class houses of the estate have been lost. Designation as Conservation Area in 1987 halted such redevelopment.



*Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal map 2: historical development*



### **3.3 Archaeology**

3.3.1 Despite a current development pattern beginning in the 1880s, this area, like much of the Lea valley, has a history of intensive land use stretching back into prehistory. In general, this was restricted to agriculture, but there is evidence of more intensive activity, for instance, traces of Iron Age occupation in Park Avenue and a Roman cemetery in Private Road. There is a strong possibility that other archaeological remains are yet to be discovered in the area.

### **3.4 Identification of character areas**

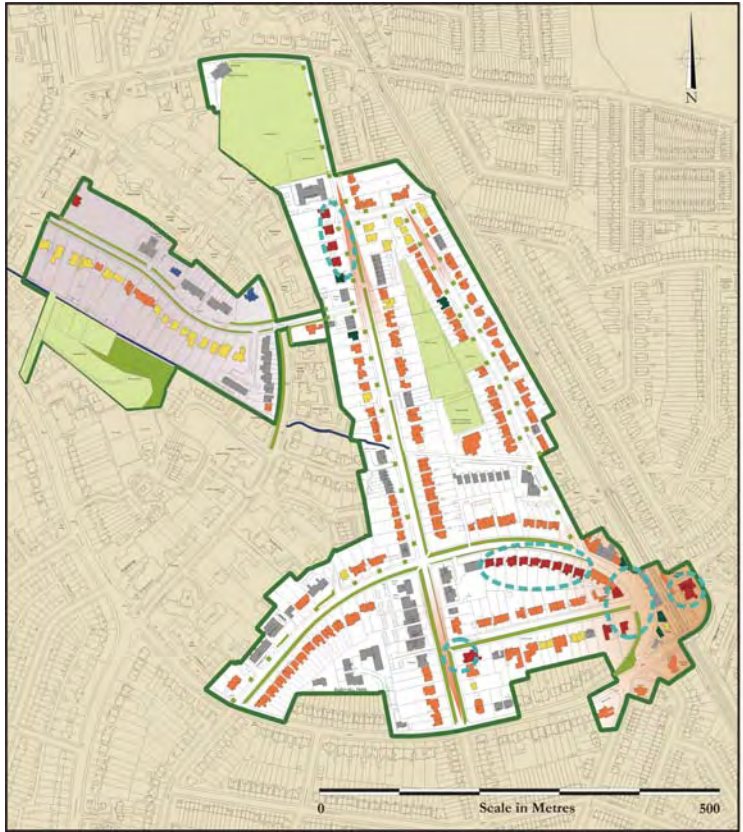
3.4.1 The Conservation Area can be divided into three discernible character areas, which are indicated in map 3. The first is the core of the estate. This forms the heart of the Conservation Area and is characterised by suburban development with a formal layout of large, spacious detached and semi-detached properties, interspersed with blocks of flats. The core area includes Wellington Road, Queen Anne's Gardens, Queen Anne's Place, Dryden Road and Abbey Road. The second area, Private Road, is characterised by later buildings and a much less formal layout. The third area comprises the station and its immediate environs, which are much more urban in nature. This area covers the junction of Queen Anne's Place, Dryden Road and Park Avenue, Bush Hill Park Station and the Bush Hill Park Hotel.

3.4.2 An isolated group of three large houses stands on Park Avenue to the south of the station. As individual properties, these are similar in character to the grander houses found in the main core area, but the adjoining houses, which are smaller and much more densely packed, and the busy, wide road, give this part of the area a more urban feel that places it within the station character area.

### **3.5 Character area 1: The core**

#### *Spatial analysis*

3.5.1 Overall, the core of the Conservation Area has a very spacious feel, with an informal and varied appearance, overlaying its formal and homogenous structure. This underlying structure is provided by the network of symmetrically planned straight or gently curving roads and reinforced by the pattern of building, consisting of houses of roughly equal massing, a consistent building line and, in much of the Conservation Area, a continuous eaves line. The sense of spaciousness is due to the wide roads and visible open sky, the recessed building line and large front gardens, and the generous plots on which the houses were built. The key through route is Wellington Road. This forms a central spine, dividing the area into two and is distinguished by being wider than the other roads with wide pavements on each side and a thick belt of planting formed of a hedge interspersed with trees on the western side.



*Bush Hill Park Conservation Area  
Character Appraisal map 3: townscape analysis*

- Conservation Area Boundary
  - Listed building
  - Landmark building
  - Building making a positive contribution to the area
  - Building with opportunity for enhancement
  - Neutral building
  - Building with a negative impact on the area
  - Focal point
  - Belt of street greenery
  - Open space
  - Street tree
  - Key view
  - Suddler's Mill stream
- Character areas:*
- Main core
  - Private road
  - Station area

Note: unlisted buildings were assessed using criteria set out in Appendix 1 of the English Heritage guidance document 'Conservation Area Appraisals' (1997)

3.5.2 Within this framework, the plot size does vary, reflecting the historic development of the area. The largest plots are associated with the biggest and earliest houses in the estate, or, now, by blocks of flats where large houses formerly stood. Later development, particularly in Abbey Road, is characterised by more modest plot sizes, resulting in closer-packed houses that were built nearer to the road.

3.5.3 Within the core, there are two large areas of open green space, Enfield cricket ground and the Bush Hill Park Bowls, Tennis and Social Club (*map 3*). The cricket club, which was established in c 1856, is situated at the extreme north of the area, beyond a large block of modern flats which acts as a visual stop to the view north along Wellington Road. The presence of the cricket ground, nevertheless, helps to create a sense of spaciousness when approaching the Conservation Area from the north, along Lincoln Road. The bowls and tennis club is tucked away in a central triangle of land behind Longleat, Wellington and Abbey Roads. Although largely hidden by houses, the club has had a significant impact on the atmosphere of the area for nearly a century. Other than the floodlighting equipment, it still retains an Edwardian ambience that influences the properties bounding the site. The clubhouse itself has been little altered over the years and is well maintained.

3.5.4 Views are not a significant feature of the area. This is because of the flat terrain and the fact that the estate was designed to appear as rural as possible, with gently curving roads, abundant street greenery and a lack of landmarks, giving the area a more enclosed, intimate feel. The exception to this is Wellington Road, where good views up and down this long, wide and straight road are possible (*map 3*).

#### *Character analysis*

3.5.5 Much of the character of the area derives from the informal streetscape and the street greenery which is its most significant feature (*map 3*). Mature street trees, predominantly lime, but also oaks and yews, and thick laurel hedges planted on verges, give the area a green and leafy feel and dominate it to such an extent that the houses are often largely hidden from view. Well-planted front gardens, often containing large mature trees and extensive hedges, complement the street greenery. The informal nature of the area is emphasised and a feeling of privacy provided by varied boundary treatments, such as low brick walls capped with hedges, or lapboard fences. A distinctive local feature is the use of randomly coursed burrs (deformed waste bricks) in many of the original boundary walls.

3.5.6 The greenery is most prevalent in Queen Anne's Place and Queen Anne's Gardens. Although the trees and hedges are no bigger here than elsewhere, they appear more significant in the narrower roads. The greenery and the gently curving roads add to the informality of the area. Abbey Road



is less densely planted and without street hedges, resulting in a well-ordered and less spacious feel. This is reinforced by the more urban treatment of boundaries, with a greater number of brick walls in evidence. The greater prominence of the houses themselves, which are closely packed, gives the road a more regimented character.



*Abbey Road*



*Wellington Road*

3.5.7 Surfacing is exclusively in tarmac, which is in keeping with the informal nature of the area. It is likely that streets were originally surfaced in gravel and that most pavements had at least a small grass verge. The area benefits from simple and unobtrusive street furniture and an absence of visually intrusive signage and street markings, which enhances the uncluttered, informal suburban character of the area.

3.5.8 The buildings in this part of the area are partially hidden by the street greenery, with individual houses glimpsed through the trees, rather than dominating the streetscape. The buildings nevertheless are generally attractive and of a high quality and make a key contribution to the character of the area. Part of the appeal of the area is its architectural variety, with groups of between two and eight properties, representing the dominant styles of the late Victorian, Edwardian and interwar periods and a wide variety of design and detailing within buildings of the same timeframe. A common building line, eaves line and overall massing of this varied group of buildings, constructed from a shared palette of materials including red and brown brick, painted render, natural slate and smooth finished clay tiles, imposes some order on the area as a whole.

3.5.9 The use of differing architectural styles also illustrates the phased development of the area. There are four distinct groups: early buildings associated with the first phase of development by the North London Estates Company between 1880 and 1886; buildings associated with the Bush Hill Park Company's development between 1896 and 1914; a small number of interwar and early post war structures; and blocks of flats erected after 1960, replacing the original large houses (*map 2*). The first phase of building consists of attractive, large detached houses, influenced by the Arts and Crafts style and built of brown stock brick, with red brick dressings, high pitched tiled roofs, tall prominent chimneys decorated with over-sailing



courses and timber sash windows. Façades tend to be informal, often with offset gables and irregularly spaced windows.



*Dryden Road: 1<sup>st</sup> phase house*

3.5.10 Buildings of the second phase are generally smaller, more closely packed and mostly semi-detached. Redbrick ground floors and rendered upper floors predominate and the later properties, particularly in Abbey Road, often have mock-Tudor details, such as half-timbering. Casement windows replace sashes and formal, regular frontages, particularly the use of bay windows, replace the informal elevations of earlier buildings.



*Wellington Road: 2<sup>nd</sup> phase house*

3.5.11 Much of the attractive character of both these phases of building is due to the high quality of detailing. Particular emphasis is given to porches, which range from simple, flat canopies and brick arches to glazed, half-octagonal examples with leaded lights and delicate timber fretwork. Decorative stained glass is frequently used, often in tall windows lighting stairwells, and many of the grander houses have elaborately detailed windows. An oriel at first floor level, often with a decorative oval central

panel, is a common motif. Roofs are often enlivened with decorative ridge tiles and finials.



*Dryden Road: oriel window*



*Dryden Road: porch*

3.5.12 Several buildings and groups of buildings from these two early phases make a particularly positive contribution to the character of the area, due to their prominent positions and eye-catching details (*map 3*). In Wellington Road, for example, numbers 22-28 form an especially attractive group. These buildings date from the first phase of development, but their red brick construction, simple symmetrical façades and low-pitched hipped slate roofs, with wide bracketed eaves, is in marked contrast to other buildings in the area. The bright red brickwork and relatively sparse tree screening in their front gardens ensure that these buildings stand out in the streetscape. Originally, there were five similar houses in the group, but number 30 has been so altered that it now bears little resemblance to its sister buildings.



*24 Wellington Road*



3.5.13 Numbers 14-32 Queen Anne's Place form another striking group. They are also from the first phase of development and are unusually closely set on small plots when compared with other houses from this phase. They are all virtually identical detached houses, with twin gables creating a strong regular rhythm that is emphasised by the curve of the road. Mature trees in both the street and front gardens ensure that the leafy and spacious character of the area is maintained, despite the use of what in other circumstances would be a very urban building form. When viewed closely, the fine detailing of these houses, particularly the baroque style timber porches, becomes apparent.



*14 Queen Anne's Place*

3.5.14 Other important buildings include 91 Wellington Road and 22-24 Dryden Road. The former is a typical house from the first development that stands in a prominent situation on a corner plot. A canted bay forms a strong corner feature, and the building makes the most of its site. Numbers 22 and 24 Dryden Road are early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings belonging to the second phase of development and occupying prominent sites on the corner of Dryden Road and Queen Anne's Place. Bright red brickwork and bold massing, including prominent white painted gables, give the houses prominence and an exceptionally high quality of detailing; particularly the semi-circular side bays, capped with hemi-domes, adds interest.



3.5.15 Between 1914 and 1960, the remaining vacant plots were filled with a mixture of relatively modest semi-detached houses and bungalows. Most are typical of the era, being relatively simple in design and detail, with large prominent tiled roofs and timber casement windows, but their size and situation in large gardens means that they mostly fit in well with the surrounding buildings and the overall character of the area.



1930s Semi: Dryden Road

3.5.16 The more modern buildings in general do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Most are blocks of flats, larger and more intrusive than the earlier buildings, and break what was previously a relatively uniform eaves height. Their impact is accentuated by the frequent use of bulky and unattractive mansard roofs. The dominant building material is brick, though the bricks used tend to be machine-made reds and greys that do not share the attractive patina and colouring of earlier buildings. Roofs are generally covered with concrete tiles, which again compares poorly with the colouring and patina of the slates and tiles of earlier buildings. The proportions of these recent structures, which generally have lower storey heights and large picture windows, do not relate to the earlier buildings. Detailing, which consists of plain casement windows, is also meagre in comparison.



*Summary – key characteristics*

3.5.17 The key characteristics of this part of the Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

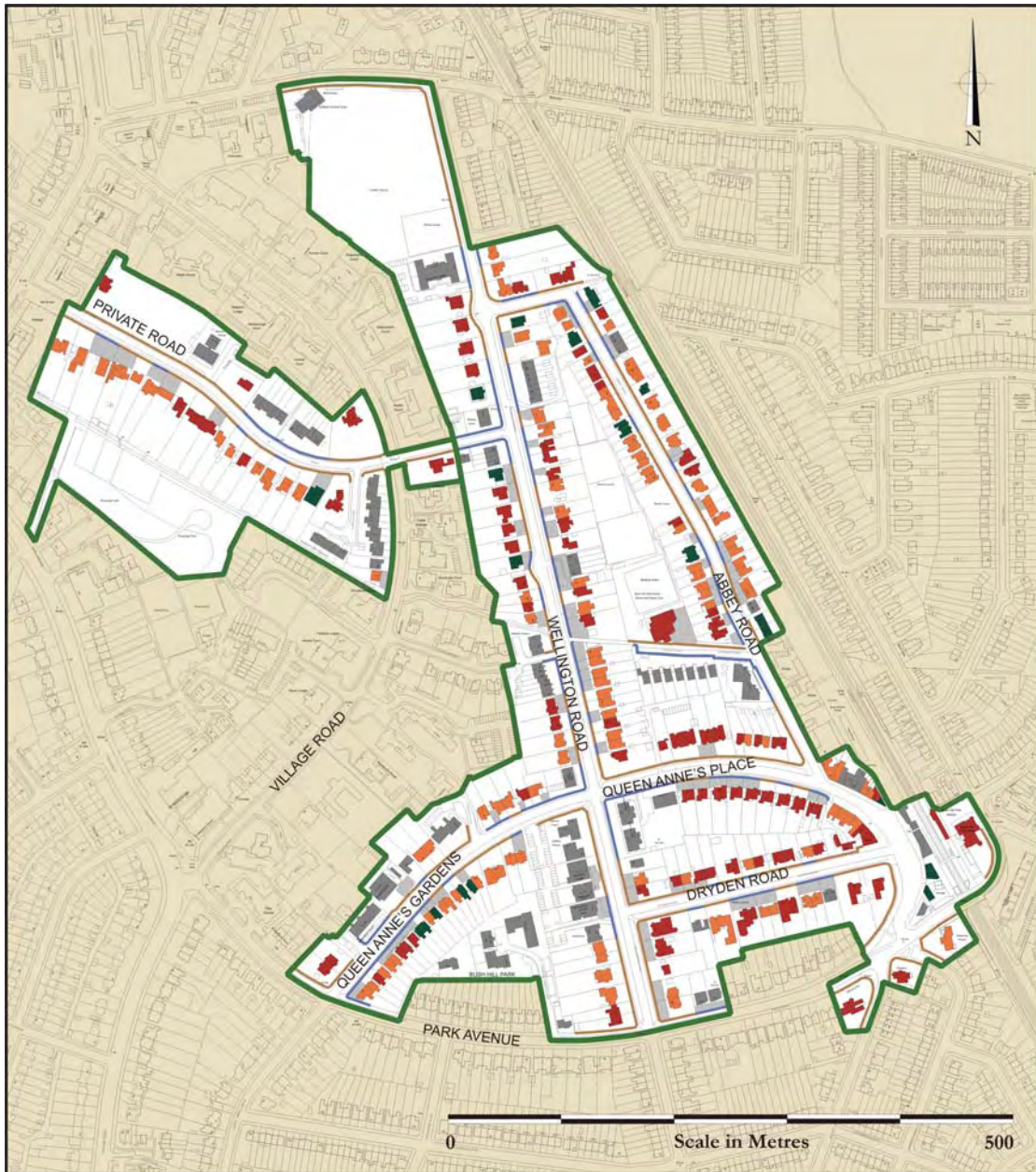
- A feeling of spaciousness - given by the wide roads, large plot sizes, recessed building line and generous front gardens
- The leafy, informal and secluded private atmosphere – created by the prominent street greenery, well-planted front gardens, informal boundary treatments, the variety of building types and the irregular façades of many of the earlier buildings
- The underlying structure and discipline of the layout - provided by the semi-formal road network, common building line and similar massing and eaves level of the older properties
- The scale, and generally high quality of design, materials and detailing of the pre 1960s houses
- The atmosphere of a prosperous and prestigious neighbourhood provided by these often large houses.

*Problems and pressures*

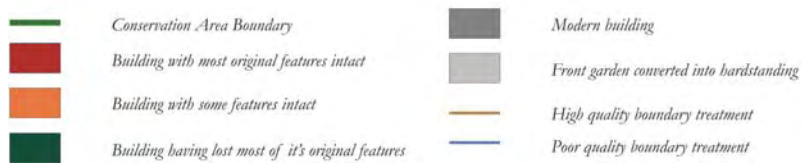
3.5.18 Several issues threaten to compromise these key characteristics and reduce the attractiveness and special character of the area.

- i) The replacement of original single dwellings with large blocks of flats. While this practice effectively stopped with the designation of the Conservation Area, a large number of modern structures have been built in Wellington Road and Queen Anne’s Gardens that have had a lasting negative effect on the area. The bulk of these structures, particularly their greater height and large size in relation to the plots on which they stand, dominates the older buildings and reduces the feeling of spaciousness. Even the smaller modern properties tend to have poor quality detailing, low pitched roofs and open front gardens used for forecourt parking, that contrast badly with the fine detailing of the older properties and compromise the informal pattern of the streetscape.
- ii) The more recent trend to convert larger properties into multi occupation or commercial uses, particularly retirement homes. Often, this has involved a sizeable extension that compromises the spacious setting of the original property and is generally inferior in terms of design and detailing. Conversion of houses to commercial uses has, in some cases detracted from the domestic character of the area through the addition of institutional lighting and signage, and the introduction of front garden parking, poorly designed access and rubbish storage facilities.





*Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal map 4: building survival*



- iii) The loss of original architectural details from older properties (*map 4*). Much of the special character of individual buildings is attributable to details such as timber sash and casement windows, often with decorative stained glass, decorative detailing on porches and the use of attractive natural materials such as slate and tile on the roofs. However, in many houses these features have been replaced, often by PVCu windows and concrete tiles. Occasionally, facing brickwork has been painted or rendered over. Generally, where only a single key element, such as the roof or windows, has been replaced, the property retains much of its original appearance and character. In extreme cases, originally attractive houses that were assets to the Conservation Area have been thoroughly spoiled.
- iv) The conversion, in part or in whole, of the large front gardens that make such an important contribution to the green nature of the area into hard standing for cars (*map 4*). The large size of many properties means that numerous drives have been successfully introduced without the loss of a large part of the garden. However, the increased number of multiple-car families and conversion of properties into multiple-occupancy has led to ever larger areas of the front garden being converted into hard standing. In some cases, this has been disguised to an extent by the use of natural surfacing materials, such as gravel, and the planting of large hedges and borders behind the boundary. In other cases, gardens have been completely replaced by unattractive areas of concrete or block paving. The problem is most pronounced in Abbey Road, where the smaller size of the houses makes it difficult to incorporate even a modest drive in a sensitive way.
- v) The replacement of the original, informal boundary treatments with modern walls and railings, or their removal altogether to provide access to drives. The use of modern machine-made bricks and often crudely designed railings gives frontages a hard urban character that is at odds with the informality of the rest of the streetscape. The complete loss of these original features robs the properties of an appropriate setting and leaves them dominated by the cars parked in front of them.

### **3.6 Character area 2: Private Road**

#### *Spatial analysis*

3.6.1 The layout of the gated Private Road is similar to the core area, but more informal in nature. This is due to the gently winding nature of the road and the generally larger plot size, often occupied by smaller houses or bungalows, which are mostly well set back in large gardens. There is a substantial block of flats and a group of townhouses on the north side of the road, but their impact is lessened by being well set back.

3.6.2 Private Road is situated on a gentle slope that rises to the west of the area and complements the gentle curve of the road. The recessed building

line, large amount of greenery, relatively flat terrain and curving road means that the area has no significant focal points or views.



*Private Road*

3.6.3 To the south is Riverside Park, an informal public open space well planted with trees. This area was laid out as an ornamental lake in the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>16</sup>. This is also shown on the Estate Map of 1886 (*figure 2*), but, as the Ordnance Survey maps from 1866 and 1879 show the area as a marsh, it may have fallen into disrepair in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. The area had been drained and the stream placed in a conduit by 1896<sup>17</sup>. Riverside Park is an attractive green area, but, since it is largely hidden from public view, being tucked behind the houses of Private Road and Park Avenue, and both visually and physically separated from the wider area, it has little impact on the character of the Conservation Area as a whole.

#### *Character analysis (map 3)*

3.6.4 In general, this area is similar to the core, with street trees and hedges being the dominant feature. The lack of kerbs, the provision of a single pavement, partly surfaced in gravel and set back behind a wide grass verge, on the south side, with mature street trees and high hedges on the north side, give the street a semi-rural feel. Some householders have added individual touches to their front verges, such as ornamental planters, or low post and chain fences. These currently add further variety to the street, though there is a risk that intensified personalisation could detract from the appearance of the area. Front gardens are generally large and well planted in a variety of styles, some with large trees that hide the property and others with large areas of lawn and low planting.

3.6.5 Much of this area was developed later than the core and the architectural style is less distinguished. Most properties on the south side are bungalows or detached houses dating from the 1930s. While many of the

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<sup>16</sup> Edmonton enclosure map 1803

<sup>17</sup> OS 25" map 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1896



buildings themselves are unremarkable, with simple, large roof forms, rendered walls, casement windows and verandas, their modest size and massing along with their recessed position in the streetscape reinforces the semi-rural atmosphere of the area. By contrast, on the north side, large blocks of modern townhouses and flats, characterised by bland, regular elevations of buff coloured brick and picture windows, are the dominant building form. A further relatively modern development sits along Laura Close near the junction with Village Road and contains unremarkable modern buildings that are largely hidden from view by substantial hedges.



*Private Road: bungalows*

3.6.6 A few individual houses stand out. Number 9 is an unusual 1930s structure, with an attractive, prominent Westmoreland slate roof and an interesting, symmetrical facade, with a projecting central bay containing the front door and a narrow stair window. Numbers 19 and 21 are an attractive pair of very large, Edwardian semi-detached houses, similar to contemporary examples in the core of the Conservation Area. Number 15 is of a similar date, but more reminiscent of the Victorian style of the first phase of the core, particularly in its use of timber sash windows and brown facing brick with redbrick dressings. The most striking feature of this property is the unusual porch supported by elegant Arts and Crafts style tapered posts.



*15 Private Road*



*9 Private Road*

3.6.7 There are three other buildings of note on the north side of Private Road. Number 2 and 13 Village Road are both substantial Arts and Crafts style villas and Number 8 is a most unusual stripped classical creation by local architect A H Mackmurdo in 1883. Both 13 Village Road and 8 Private Road are statutorily listed grade II. These buildings are set well back behind high hedges and therefore currently make little contribution to the street scene. However, this reflects their designer's intention that these should be very private residences and does not detract from their contribution to the wider character of the Conservation Area in terms of illustrating its historic development.

*Summary – key characteristics*

3.6.8 The key characteristics of this part of the Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- The informal, originally private, street layout – this is a defining characteristic of the area and responsible for much of its semi-rural feel
- The abundance of street greenery – again, a key contributor to the semi-rural feeling of this enclave
- The large plot size and set back building line – creating a feeling of spaciousness even where original buildings have been replaced with flats
- Attractive buildings – There are several buildings of architectural interest. Three, numbers 9, 19 and 21 are prominent in the street scene whereas others are glimpsed through greenery and contribute to the character of the area in that they form the last remaining evidence of the large houses hidden in generous grounds that originally lined the road.
- The bulk and massing of buildings – While many structures are not of interest in themselves their modest bulk and massing, and their large front gardens makes a strong contribution to the semi-rural feel of the area.

*Problems and pressures*

3.6.9 This area suffers from similar problems and pressures to the core area, namely: the replacement of large houses with blocks of flats and densely packed townhouses in the recent past; the loss of original architectural details; the introduction of large driveways in front gardens; and the use of inappropriate boundary treatments (*map 4*).

3.6.10 In general, however, these pressures are less pronounced in Private Road. The large size of the house plots and extensive hedge cover on the north side of the road does much to hide the bulk of the modern flats. The large plot size also means that fewer front gardens have been completely given over to parking and fewer urban-style boundary treatments have been introduced. Many properties have had their original features, particularly the windows, replaced, which detracts from the appearance of the area. However, this is not as serious a problem as in the core area, as most



buildings are less prominent. For the most part, the more important buildings in this road survive with their original details intact.

### **3.7 Character area 3: The station area**

#### *Spatial analysis*

3.7.1 In contrast to the rest of the Conservation Area, this small area is characterised by its relatively urban form. There are no front gardens, with the building line consistently at the back of the pavement. Properties are generally terraced and closely packed, with narrow plots no wider than the shopfront. In the north of the area, along Queen Anne's Place, the dominant building form is high, three storey terraces with attics. The scale reduces to more widely-spaced, single storey lock-up shops around the station, which lack the presence of the larger buildings. Despite this urban environment, the wide road helps to ensure that the area retains the spacious feeling prevalent in the rest of the Conservation Area. It also allows the eye to be drawn to the upper parts of the buildings, ensuring that the ground floors of the properties are not the dominant feature of the area.



*9-19 Queen Anne's Place*

3.7.2 The focal point of the sub-area is provided by the former bank building, now a nursery, which, with its distinctive corner tower, dominates the corner of Queen Anne's Place and Dryden Road. The Bush Hill Park Hotel, a tall building set on a slight hill, is also important: although cut off from the rest of the Conservation Area by the railway, it is prominent in long distance views across the single-storey lock-up shops around the station. The hotel also dominates the station forecourt, providing a focus for the small retail area on the west side of the railway just outside the Conservation Area (*map 3*).

#### *Character analysis*

3.7.3 The buildings dominate the character of this part of the Conservation Area. On the whole, they are attractive, with the best examples forming a

group that lines the northern part of Queen Anne's Place. This group is an eclectic mix of Edwardian baroque, Arts and Crafts and simple modern structures (*maps 2 & 3*). Despite the range of styles, the consistent massing and use of red brick gives the group a unified appearance. The earlier buildings have attractive decorative detailing such as gauged brick window surrounds and nicely detailed sash and casement windows that add interest.

3.7.4 To the south is a group of single storey lock-up shops. As a whole these are utilitarian buildings of little architectural interest that give the land surrounding the station a rather messy appearance. However, some of the earlier structures, which are enlivened by the odd decorative detail such as pilasters, have the potential to form attractive structures if fitted with more appropriate shopfronts. Cf. Management Proposals. The low roofline allows the views of the Bush Hill Park Hotel mentioned above.

3.7.5 Shop fronts make an important contribution to the appearance of the sub-area. Only two originals survive: number 5, Queen Anne's Place, which is simply designed, with heavy glazing bars and an arched head, and number 7, a rather fine tiled example. The other shop fronts are unattractive modern examples, many with large internally-illuminated plastic fascias and external shutter boxes that detract from the appearance of the building. However, most of the original pilasters dividing the shopfronts survive and their oversized console brackets add rhythm to the frontages.



*Former bank building*

3.7.6 The two landmark buildings, the former bank and the Bush Hill Park Hotel, are also the most interesting architecturally. The detailing on the former bank is superb, with lavish baroque-style decoration, including a striking corner tower with a cupola on a classical drum, an elaborate stone doorcase, stone window surrounds and a fine modillion cornice. The Hotel, in an Arts and Crafts style, is not so well detailed, but has some interesting

features such as a veranda, elaborate casement windows and a corner turret. It is also impressive due to its sheer size and bulk. Unusually, the station is extremely simple compared with the exuberance of the hotel. It is, nevertheless, a well-detailed building, with an attractive frontage consisting of a simple red brick screen wall, punctuated at intervals with sash windows.



*Bush Hill Park Hotel*

3.7.7 Street furniture is unremarkable, but simple and functional, again with a welcome absence of unnecessary signs and road markings. In contrast to the rest of the Conservation Area, there is little street greenery.

*Summary – key characteristics*

3.7.8 The key characteristics of this part of the Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- The urban form of the townscape - with its relatively high, closely-packed buildings and absence of street greenery
- The generous road layout – which gives a general feeling of spaciousness and allows clear views of the buildings
- Two landmark buildings - the former bank and the Bush Hill Park Hotel, which combine bold massing with high quality detailing to provide most of the visual interest in the area
- A good group of buildings to the north of the former bank – these are fine structures in their own right that complement the bank in terms of massing and similar detailing.

*Problems and pressures*

3.7.9 The principal problem facing this area is the replacement of the original shopfronts with bland modern examples, compounded by the installation of large box fascias with unattractive plastic signage, prominent roller shutters and crude, illuminated projecting box signs.

3.7.10 Additionally, several buildings, particularly their upper storeys, are suffering from a lack of maintenance, which makes them appear slightly scruffy. Original features, such as roof coverings and timber windows, have been replaced with poorly detailed modern alternatives.

### 3.8 The public realm

3.8.1 The public realm is an important element of the Conservation Area. It can be summarised as follows:

- Roads and footways – Tarmac is used for road surfacing throughout the Conservation Area. Kerbs are generally of granite, apart from Private Road, where kerbs are absent. Footways are generally of tarmac. However, gravel is extensively used in Private Road and large concrete paviors are used in Abbey Road and around the Station. In Private Road, the footway is limited to the south side of the road.
- Signage and road markings – These are both kept to a minimum. Road markings are limited to lines denoting parking restrictions, which are concentrated in the south and extreme north ends of Wellington Road, Abbey Road and Queen Anne’s Gardens, and carriageway markings at junctions. Generally, there are no lines dividing the carriageway. Signage consists of small post-mounted signs concerning parking restrictions and wall-mounted street names. Interesting early 20<sup>th</sup> century enamelled street names survive in the station area. Traffic calming measures are limited to a single island and speed hump at the southern end of Wellington Road and a traffic island at the junction of Park Avenue and Queen Anne’s Place.
- Street furniture – This is generally simple and utilitarian, consisting mainly of concrete and steel lamp standards and green-painted telecoms cabinets. A number of fine traditional pillar boxes survive. Other distinctive features are the early 20<sup>th</sup> century drinking trough in Park Avenue and the timber post and rail entrance gates at the east end of Private Road.
- Street greenery – Throughout the area, standard street trees are generally limes planted at regular intervals on both sides of the road. In Queen Anne’s Gardens, these are supplemented by a large mature oak. All of the streets except Abbey Road and Private Road feature a thick hedge down one side of the road, which is generally of laurel reinforced with holly and ornamental firs. In Queen Anne’s Gardens, the hedges are interspersed with yew trees and rhododendrons: the latter also appear in Dryden Road and Wellington Road. In Private Road, the greenery in private gardens plays a more prominent role; there are two notable laurel bushes (outside no 25) and some impressive holly hedges. This road also has a wide grass verge with the occasional ornamental bush. Verges would originally have been a feature in all of the other roads, but have been replaced by tarmac.

## 4.0 Summary of special interest

4.1 The five key factors that give the Bush Hill Park Conservation Area its special interest can be summarised as follows:

- *The historic significance of the area in the development of the Borough of Enfield* – Bush Hill Park is physical evidence of the transformation of Enfield from a largely rural area to a suburban one in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is also interesting as an example of an upmarket, high-status development, especially when compared to the artisan housing by the same development company on the other side of the railway line.
- *The original vision of the North London Estate Company* – a prestigious, leafy suburb, consisting of high-quality, well-built properties, set in a park like context, though only realised in part, survives largely intact.
- *Street greenery* – The abundance of street trees and hedges and the well-planted front gardens of many properties give the area a pleasant, green and leafy atmosphere, which is enhanced by the informal boundary treatments. Overall, this is the most noticeable feature when first entering the Conservation Area and must be regarded as its key characteristic.
- *The spacious feel of the area* – This is due to the wide roads with open sky above, a recessed building line and generous front gardens. A particularly strong feature is the large plot size in relation to house size. It is noticeable that, where this relationship has broken down and a larger building has been erected on a plot, the entire character of the surrounding area changes.
- *The discipline imposed by the underlying structure of the area* – Despite the large amounts of greenery and informal nature of much of the architecture, a clear underlying structure is evident in the planned road network, regular building line and relatively consistent building size and height, which imposes an overall sense of order and gentle discipline on the area.
- *The architectural style of the buildings* – Here, the variety is an important factor, with common styles from 1880 to 1960, including good examples of Baroque revival, and Arts and Crafts designs, mixed together. This variety of styles adds interest, with the appearance of the area subtly changing every few hundred yards.
- *The design quality of the buildings* – Older properties are generally carefully designed, with interesting massing and handsome, well proportioned façades. Properties from the first phase of development often have a pleasing asymmetry that contributes to the informality of the area. In the larger groups of buildings, strong and lively rhythms are set up by the use of features such as bays and gables.
- *The quality of detailing and materials* - The earlier properties usually have a very high standard of detailing, particularly with respect to windows, and are built of materials that significantly enhance their appearance.



## 5.0 Summary of issues

5.1 There are several issues affecting the Conservation Area at present:

- *Loss of original details (see map 4: building survival)* – Most properties retain a large proportion of their original features and remain attractive buildings. However, there are many examples of properties losing at least one important feature, commonly the replacement of timber windows with PVCu, or the replacement of slate or clay tile roofs with concrete tiles. While this does not negate these buildings' contribution to the area, to an extent it damages the appearance of the property and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character. There are also a few examples of a property losing all of its original features and, with them, much of its appeal.
- *Increased car parking* – The pressure for off street car parking has already led to a number of front gardens being converted into hard standing for cars. This often results in the loss of the characteristic street greenery.
- *Loss of original boundary walls* – There are many examples of traditional, informal boundary treatments being replaced by modern brick walls and railings that are at odds with the character of the area, or being removed altogether to facilitate access to hard standing for cars.
- *Loss of original shopfronts* – In the area around the station, most of the original shopfronts have been replaced by crude modern examples, to the detriment of the appearance of both the buildings and the area in general.
- *Some vacant upper floors* - Several upper floors over shops in the station area appear to be unoccupied and are poorly maintained.
- *Need for the care and management of street greenery* – As the distinctive character of the Conservation Area depends so greatly on the presence of street greenery, this needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the lifespan of existing trees and hedges is maximised and that planned replacement takes place when specimens reach the end of their lives. The use of species that are unusual as street greenery, such as laurel and yew, adds local distinctiveness and is an important practice to continue. The Council has undertaken a survey of highway tree stock and has a Borough-wide tree management strategy which takes into account the important role played by specific species in forming the character of individual areas.
- *The need for appropriate highway maintenance* – At present, the area benefits from appropriate surfacing on highways and footpaths, sympathetic signage and a lack of street clutter. This combination of factors makes an important contribution to the appearance of the area and it is important therefore that the future management and maintenance of the public realm takes into account its special character.

## 6.0 Bibliography and contact details

### 6.1 *Bibliography*

The following reference works were used in the preparation of this appraisal:

Baker T (ed) *Victoria County History of Middlesex V*. (OUP 1976)

Pam, D. *A History of Enfield II*. (Enfield Preservation Society 1992)

Pevesner N & Cherry B *The Buildings of England, London 4: North*, (Penguin, London 1998)

Reference is also made to the following legislation and national and local policy guidance:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment  
Department of the Environment, Department of National Heritage 1994

Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning and the  
Historic Environment Department of the Environment, Department of  
National Heritage 1990

Enfield Unitary Development Plan 1994

English Heritage guidance *Conservation area appraisals* (1997): revised text  
version reissued as *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (September 2005)

### 6.2 *Contact details*

Enfield Council

Conservation Section

Planning and Transportation

PO Box 53

Civic Centre

Silver Street

Enfield

Middlesex

EN1 3XE

## 7.0 Appendices

### 7.1 *Listed buildings*

13 Village Road (grade II)

8 Private Road (grade II)

### 7.2 *Criteria for assessing unlisted buildings*

(from English Heritage guidance *Conservation area appraisals* (1997)\*)

*When considering the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area, the following questions might be asked:*

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?

- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?
- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?

Any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

(\* The criteria quoted remain unchanged in the revised version of the guidance issued September 2005)

*Appraisal and maps prepared by Richard Peats*

**The Paul Drury Partnership**

114 Shacklegate Lane  
Teddington  
TW11 8SH

telephone: 020 8977 8980 fax: 020 8977 8990  
email: [info@pdpartnership.com](mailto:info@pdpartnership.com)