

At the eastern end the facade breaks out into bays. At ground level there are tall timber sash windows in a Queen Anne style with flat brick arches with exaggerated stucco keystones and ashlar rendered spandrel panels above. The first floor window sills combine to form string courses with white painted pebble dash walling between. The rainwater gutters are concealed behind pebble dash fascias which are moulded to an ogee profile.

5.15 The terraced properties on the south side of Racton Road form a more homogenous group with paired front doors and a large casement window to the first floor. Interest is given by the projecting party walls to the front facades and by gables to some of the properties which form a pattern along the terrace as a whole. There is a 1900 date plaque on the front elevation of No. 36 Racton Road. No 58 Racton Road was built as the bakehouse to a long established bakers shop which was located at 23 Tamworth Street.



Former St Oswald's Vicarage, Racton Road

5.16 The former St. Oswald's Vicarage, No. 40 Racton Road (now St John's Vicarage), also designed by Walter Cave, was built for the demolished St Oswald's Church (the redeveloped site of which is excluded from the designated area). It is an imposing three storey red brick building with double fronted gables and projecting two storey brick bays with narrow sash timber windows in the manner of Philip Webb. The flat window arches are formed from rubbed brick voussoirs and have scrolled keystones. There are dressed coping stones to the parapet gables and the original cast iron rainwater pipes and hoppers remain as well as the wrought iron railings.

Anselm Road

5.17 The terraced properties on the north side of Anselm Road have a semi-basement with steps with railings to the ground floor. Of a different detailed design to the other properties in the conservation area they follow the same theme with two storey bay windows and timber sash windows. The three sashes to the ground floor are set closely with mullions, and a transom providing three smaller upper lights.



Terraced properties on north side of Anselm Road

5.18 The above window detail can also be seen to the ground and first floor of the properties on the southern side of Anselm Road which do not have a basement. These all have strong gable details forming a continuous skyline. They differ in their detailed design, some having oriel windows while others have small casements. The end and central properties have two storey bay windows and these together with the gable design define the overall appearance of the terrace.

Micklethwaite Road and Farm Lane

5.19 The properties in Micklethwaite Road continue the theme seen in the conservation area. The end of terrace properties have bays with arched gable details and oriel windows whilst other properties have canted bays. Render detailing can be seen and this is used to emphasis certain properties within the terrace group. The fanlights are particularly distinctive features and remain in most properties.

5.20 The properties in Farm Lane follow the general pattern seen in Sedlescombe Road. The majority have flat fronts but gables and bays

are used to emphasis the terrace form. The original sash windows can still be seen in some properties.

Halford Road

5.21 Arthur House, 160 Halford Road, is a detached double fronted two storey house squeezed in between the rears of Ongar Road and Tamworth Street. The Original slate roof remains with decorated red terracotta ridge tiles behind a brick parapet. There are quirky arched pediments above the two storey brick bays. The chequer board detailing is similar to that at Tamworth Street, although unfortunately the brickwork and quoins are painted and replacement uPVC windows spoil the fenestration.

General

5.22 The brickwork was originally struck pointed with a lime/sharp sand mortar. The brickwork to many buildings has been repointed with a cement/soft sand mortar, which is not only structurally damaging but is detrimental to the colour, texture and grain of the brickwork.

5.23 All of the roofs within the designated area are visible from street level, even those behind gables or parapets. The original materials include both Welsh slates and clay tiles with clay ridge tiles and terracotta chimney pots. Generally, the pitch of the roof (22.5° or 45°) is indicative of whether it was originally clad in slates or clay tiles. The vertical rhythm to the skyline is broken where chimney pots have been removed and is an unfortunate loss to the character and appearance of the area.

5.24 There have been only limited roof extensions which introduce a full additional storey, such as no. 96 Farm Lane. Other properties have had front dormers added such as those to nos. 21, 31 and 39 Tamworth Street. Such roof extensions detract from the character of the area and further additions should be discouraged. Where buildings have been reroofed, the colour and rhythm of the terrace is often adversely affected by the inappropriate replacement materials.



Contrast between inappropriate replacement windows and the original timber sliding sash windows in Micklethwaite Road

5.25 The original joinery materials for windows and doors within the conservation area include, painted softwood sash or casement window frames and painted softwood doors. These have been replaced in some cases by aluminium and uPVC sash or casement window frames and stained hardwood doors. This has a negative impact on the character of the conservation area, as does the replacement of the original cast iron rainwater goods by uPVC pipes and gutters.

5.26 It is unfortunate that the maintenance and alteration of properties, particularly in Farm Lane, has resulted in the introduction of alternative materials and components, which have significantly altered the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Boundary Treatments and footpaths

5.27 The original materials for boundary treatments include wrought iron railings on stock brick walls with dressed stone copings. Archive photographs indicate that wrought iron railings typified the original boundary detail. Unfortunately all the railings on the 'Estate' were removed during World War II (apart from those to the school entrance). The removed railings were in an Arts and Crafts style. The wrought iron railings in the conservation area today contribute significantly to the elegance and unity of the street scene, as seen in Tamworth Street.

5.28 Replacement boundary materials include painted softwood palings, painted brickwork, rendered blockwork and mild steel tubular

railings. Despite the radical change in the nature of materials used, and although these materials do not contribute positively to the character of the boundaries, it is apparent that the strong line of the front boundary remains intact. This is important in defining the character of the conservation area.

5.29 The footpaths are generally in good condition and retain their granite curb stones with modern paving slabs of a traditional rectangular shape. Original granite sets remain in some cross-overs as at St. Oswald's Studios, and the garage to the rear of 41 Tamworth Street. The character and appearance of the streets in general is greatly enhanced by the street trees.

6 BROAD DESIGN GUIDELINES

6.1 The previous section described the character of the conservation area looking at individual buildings, groups of buildings and the general townscape. This section identifies key components which define the character, or those which affect it, suggesting broad design guidelines to deal with each one.

6.2 Piecemeal changes to individual properties, when considered cumulatively, can have a severely negative affect on the special character and appearance of an area. The following section outlines factors the Council considers to be important in preserving the character of an area through encouraging good practice. Not all the alterations and works listed below require planning permission or conservation area consent. (This is set out in a general leaflet for this conservation area which residents of the conservation area should have received through their door. Alternatively it is available from the Council at the address on page 1).

6.3 In respect of the highway and its infrastructure the constraints on local government expenditure and the duty to maintain a safe surface means that priority can not be given to providing historical materials or upgrading or altering street furniture.

Uses

6.4 The balance of uses within a conservation area are important in defining its character particularly if they reflect the historic development of the area.

Alterations to Buildings

6.5 The character of the conservation area is derived from the groups of terraces and their uniform appearance and form. Alterations to buildings can have a particularly damaging effect on this destroying the homogeneity. The massing and rhythm of the buildings within a street is a key element in defining its character. Extensions and alterations to properties should not visibly affect their scale, rhythm and massing when seen from the street or any public space and should not be excessive additions to the properties.

Disabled Access

6.6 The Council will support dignified and easy access to and within historic buildings for disabled people. Suitable access for disabled people, which does not compromise a building's special interest, can normally be achieved if treated as part of an integrated review of access requirements for all visitors or users, and a flexible and pragmatic approach is taken.

Roof Extensions

6.7 Front roof extensions are generally considered unacceptable and will only be considered if the property is within a terrace which has been significantly impaired by front roof extensions.

6.8 The design of any rear roof extension should be sympathetic to the character of the conservation area. Where they are visible from the street, including long views, then particular attention will need to be paid to their appearance. In some cases, high visibility of the rear roof of properties may prohibit a roof extension where it would have a detrimental affect on the character of the conservation area.

6.9 Where traditional materials remain in place

repairs or alterations to roofs and dormer windows should use matching traditional materials, i.e. slate, lead and timber.

6.10 Existing rooflines should not be disturbed. Original features such as decorative ridge roof tiles, finials, cast iron gutters and down pipes, original roofing materials and their pattern should all be retained.

6.11 Chimney stacks which are visible from the street or public spaces should be kept. Original chimney pots should not be removed.

6.12 Modern additions such as satellite dishes, T. V. aerials, rooflights, vents and telephone and other cabling should be as inconspicuous as possible. Enclosed water tanks on roofs should be avoided.

Rear Extensions

6.13 The design and materials of rear extensions should be in keeping with the existing property and all planning standards in the Unitary Development Plan should be met. When they require planning permission rear extensions will be considered on their own individual merit.

6.14 Rear building lines should respect and take into account the value of rear gardens.

Brickwork, render and painting

6.15 Properties should be retained in their original condition if they are not already rendered or painted.

6.16 Existing brick elevations including chimney stacks should be properly maintained and appropriate repointing undertaken where necessary. If a property has been painted advice should be sought from the Council regarding whether the paint can be safely removed or the property should be repainted a brick colour to match the colour of the original brick.

6.17 On properties which are already rendered or have stucco mouldings these should preferably be left in their original state and specialist advice

should be sought where re-rendering or repairs are necessary. On properties where render or stucco is painted, it should be repainted an appropriate colour (or colours) i.e. white, pale or pastel shades rather than vivid colours.

Windows and original features

6.18 Original architectural features such as timber sash windows, panelled doors, decorative stucco, moulded window surrounds, door cases, and historic shopfronts should be maintained and repaired wherever possible. Where renewal is unavoidable or features missing, owners are encouraged to reinstate these with traditional or matching designs.

6.19 All original features should ideally be kept. If their loss is unavoidable they should be replaced with exact replicas.

6.20 Owners of properties with poor replacement windows should be encouraged to change them for those of a more appropriate design when an opportunity arises.

Other Additions

6.21 Alarm boxes should be located away from important architectural detail so as to minimise their affect on the townscape quality of an area and the appearance of the building on which they are located.

6.22 Satellite dishes and T.V. aerials will not be permitted where they would be visually obtrusive and where alternative locations are possible.

6.23 Further detailed guidelines may be helpful in ensuring that they do not have a negative impact upon the character of the conservation area.

Continuity and historic names

6.24 The Council considers the retention of the old names of sites and properties within the conservation area to be desirable. This would enable the historic identity and continuity of areas to be preserved. The names of historic or locally important developments and their associated

signage and features should be kept.

6.25 The Council would also like to see the inclusion of date plaques on any new developments. This would provide interesting features in the townscape and points of reference for the future.

Setting of the conservation area

6.26 The setting of a conservation area is important in defining its character and appearance. Any development, or alterations to properties, affecting the setting of the conservation area should take full account of the character and appearance of the conservation area, and should preserve or enhance it, as described in the profile.

Landmarks

6.27 There are no real landmarks within the conservation area though the three storey end buildings to the terrace of Nos. 25 to 41 Tamworth Street are features, as is the Vicarage.

Views

6.28 Great care is required so as not to block, or have an impact on, key views by intervening or inappropriate development. The existence, and importance of these views should help determine the permitted heights of new buildings in the conservation area.

Building line

6.29 The frontages on either side of a street define an enclosed space which is in a critical relationship to the scale of the buildings. This relationship has sometimes been lost by redevelopment breaking the rhythm of the elevations and spaces. Any new development in the future should respect the dominant building line within a street, and the general rhythm of the facades, conforming to the height and alignment of the existing frontage.

6.30 There is a definite pattern of fronts and backs throughout the conservation area with properties fronting onto the street or public space. The building line of the rear of buildings can also

be important as can its relationship with gardens. This should be maintained as much as is possible throughout the conservation area.

Boundary Treatment

6.31 There is a mix of boundary treatments with a variety of railings, low brick walls and hedges, or a combination of these. The original railings remain in front of some properties. These should be retained and the replacement of those missing in the correct design and height encouraged, particularly where they will strengthen the original uniformity of the development. The hedge planting and greenery in many of the front gardens is important in softening the street space.

6.32 Unfortunately, several properties have no boundary definition. This spoils the rhythm and enclosure of the street. Ideally the original railings should be returned where appropriate, or in the later buildings a low brick wall of an appropriate and sympathetic design and materials.

6.33 Permission should not be granted for alterations or removal of original or traditional front walls and railings and their footings. Owners should be encouraged to maintain railings in good repair, and to reinstate them with traditional and appropriate designs where they are missing, in a design matching the original where it is known. Where gates are required, these should match the railings.

6.34 In streets and terraces with traditional railings, dustbin or meter enclosures should not be permitted where these would detract from the appearance of the area.

6.35 The excavation of front gardens to provide windows to basements or increase the light to basements should not be permitted in areas where the planting of the front gardens is an integral part of the design of the street or terrace and the extent of the excavation would negatively impact upon this. They may be acceptable if they are sensitively designed and proportioned.