

The Avenue Conservation Area



Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan





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Introduction

JB Priestley said of the Avenue in the 1930s, “This is a fine approach, very gradual and artful in its progression from country to town. You are still staring at the pleasant Hampshire countryside when you notice that it is beginning to put itself into some order, and then the next minute ...you find that it is Southampton Common and that the townsfolk can be seen walking there; and, the minute after, the road is cutting between West Park and East Park and on either side the smaller children are running from sunlight to shadow, and there are pretty frocks glimmering among the trees; ... and now, in another minute, the town itself is all around you, offering you hats and hams... Further down, at the bottom of the High Street, you must go carefully; otherwise you may lose England altogether and find yourself looking at the Empire State Building, or Table Mountain... This one road begins as if it had lately been cut out of the New Forest and ends in the shadow of the great liners.”

The Avenue Conservation Area was designated in 1975 and comprises the southern section of The Avenue, a main route into the city from the north. The Conservation Area extends northwards from the junction of London Road and Dorset Street up to Northlands Road, taking in properties and streets on the east side between Southcliff Road and Alma Road, and on the west side Avenue between St. Edmund’s Roman Catholic Church and Cavendish Grove, as show in Fig 1.

With Conservation Area designation comes extra controls. These controls cover the following:

- minor developments such as porches, extensions, satellite dishes and boundary walls are restricted and some cases require permission before they can be built whereas normally this would not be required;
- demolition of buildings requires approval before it can be undertaken; and
- works to trees require consent before they can be undertaken.

The objectives of these measures are to help preserve the special character and appearance of the area and maintain, or improve, its environmental quality. Whilst it is recognised that Conservation Areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands, it is important that this occurs within a framework of controlled and positive management. Southampton City Council will aim to review The Avenue Conservation Area every five years.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is laid out in two sections. The first section highlights the key historical and architectural characteristics of the area, analyses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved, and looks at the changes affecting the Conservation Area which have taken place since the area was last appraised in 1997.

The second half of the document establishes management policies that set a framework within which future development should take place. This document is material consideration for development management purposes and will be used to judge all future planning applications in the Conservation Area.

The following work has been done to deliver this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan:

- A photographic survey of all buildings in the Conservation Area
- An assessment of historic maps and a brief analysis of the facades of most of the buildings
- An assessment of the issues facing the Conservation Area
- A review of the appropriateness of the Conservation Area boundary
- An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the Conservation Area
- The formulation of management policies for the area.

For any further information or advice please contact:

Historic Environment Team
Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton SO14 7LY
Telephone 023 8083 3192

Map of the Conservation Area

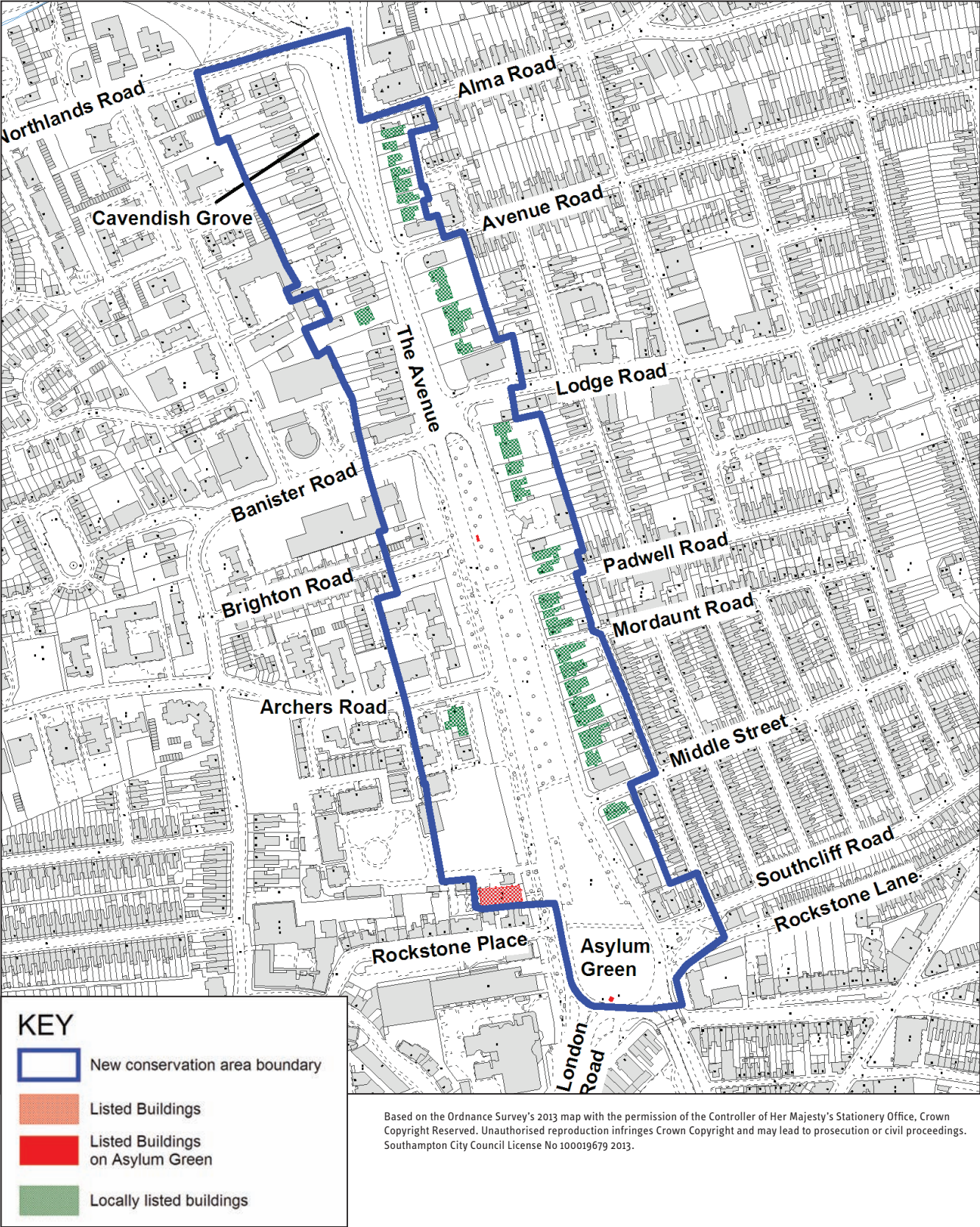


Fig. 1 Map showing The Avenue Conservation Area

Background and history

The following section briefly summarises the development of the Conservation Area.

Archaeology

Evidence of Iron Age and Roman deposits has been recovered from excavations along Archers Road, which runs at 90 degrees to the Avenue at the junction with Lodge Road. However, very little archaeological excavation has taken place within the conservation area itself.

It is anticipated that any surviving archaeological remains would reflect the largely agricultural nature of the area, although it is possible that isolated settlement evidence may survive.

18th Century

Prior to the 18th century the area was originally part of the Common and was used predominantly as pastureland. The Avenue was laid out in the early 18th century.



Fig 2. 1846 map of the area (copyright Southampton City Council)

19th century

The area developed in the mid 19th century as a residential suburb and includes a variety of Victorian architectural styles, with yellow Beaulieu brick villas on the eastern side, built between 1850 and the 1870s, and an attractive mixed group of late Victorian red brick detached and semi-detached villas in Cavendish Grove on the western side, built mainly from the 1870s onwards. Forty one of the residential properties in the Conservation Area are on the Local List as recognition of their valued contribution to the local scene or for their historic association.

Asylum Green in the south on the Conservation Area takes its name from the asylum for military orphans (1816). The area was landscaped in the 19th century, which included Padwell Pond being filled in and the erection of a drinking fountain in 1865, bearing the inscription “Drink but waste not”, as a gift from Councillor John Ransom to the town. The large, square-shaped, stone drinking fountain is approximately



Fig. 3 Asylum Green

Fig. 4 Listed Drinking Fountain

8 foot high and rests on 3 stone steps. Each face has a pediment with engaged Corinthian columns and a semi-circular stone drinking bowl; one side has a drinking trough for horses. This drinking fountain is one of two listed features in the Conservation Area, the other being a commemorative monument (1909) which is situated in centre of the Green near the junction with Brighton Road. The monument was presented to the town by a resident to celebrate his 60th birthday and consists of three stone pillars, the central one larger, surmounted by stone urns and linked by a stone screen. The central urn has scenes from the History of Southampton, on one side Canute is depicted rebuking his courtiers and on the other 'The Mayflower' is shown departing for the New World. The handles are in the form of a ship's prow.



Fig. 5 Listed Monument
Fig. 6 St. Edmund's Roman Catholic Church

A milestone can also be seen in the central grass area near the junction with Archers Road.

There are a number of ecclesiastical buildings in the area. The first to be built, in 1884, was a temporary iron church within the grounds of the convent run by the Sisters of the Congregation of La Sainte Union of St. Edmund's. This was replaced in 1924 when a permanent chapel was constructed, which still exists within St. Anne's Catholic School grounds. The form of the chapel remained unaltered until the 1960s when it was extended to the east with a nave and to the west with an apse.

In 1892 Avenue House was purchased and a 'moveable building, St John's Free Church' was put up for sale, bought



Fig. 7 Spiritualist Church
Fig. 8 Christian Scientist Church
Fig. 9 Milestone near junction with Archers Road

and re-erected in the garden. This was in turn replaced with St. Andrew's United Reformed Church (located just outside the Conservation Area boundary) which was consecrated for worship in December 1898. Records suggest that St Andrew's was the first public building in Southampton to have electricity for lighting and 'blowing the organ' ¹.

Other churches followed: St. Edmund's Roman Catholic Church in 1896 - 1897, Southampton Spiritualist Church in 1909 - 1910, the Christian Scientist Church in 1952 (with a single-storey, brick-built reading room, built after 1966, at the entrance to the site) and, last but by no means least, the attractive and unassuming Bethesda Strict Baptist Chapel in 1953.

20th Century

Whilst the majority of development in the area occurred in the 19th century it has continued sporadically until the present day.

20th century additions to the built environment include 76 - 77 The Avenue (a pre-war semi detached property), the purpose built flats named Dornan House, the eight storey Travelodge (built as a seamen's hostel), two large car dealerships and, most recently, the redevelopment of the La Sainte Union site for residential use (which sits immediately outside the Conservation Area boundary).



Fig. 10 Bethesda Strict Baptist Chapel

Fig. 11 76 - 77 The Avenue

Fig. 12 Dornan House



Fig. 13 Travelodge

Fig. 14 Two car salesrooms

Fig. 15 Redevelopment on previous La Sainte Union site as seen from the Conservation Area

References

1. Century of Change for Avenue by Dora Caton, in Hampshire, vol. 32, no. 8, May/June 1992.

Character Appraisal

The Conservation Area can be divided into three distinct areas – properties to the east and west of The Avenue and the central strip of maintained landscaping.

Eastern Side of The Avenue

Buildings on the eastern side consist of fine examples of substantial villas and semi-detached houses built to a common line which give continuity in terms of character and materials, resulting in a pleasing and simple style and layout. Features include decorative brickwork to the eaves and chimneys with ornate stonework to bay windows, doorcases, etc. Whilst none of these villas are statutorily listed, their group value

has been recognised and the majority are on the Local List. Nikolaus Pevsner in the Buildings of England: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight describes them as ‘broad, square and very solid in unostentatious Italianate Style...’ The Travelodge hotel and the Christian Scientist Church (set back from the road) are less successful architecturally and create an interruption to the rhythm of buildings on the Inner Avenue. There has been some more recent development to the south of the Inner Avenue, including purpose built offices at No 11 (Moore and Blatch Solicitors) and the office block at No 1 – 3 on the corner of Southcliff Road – although larger in scale than adjacent houses both developments have been designed to blend in with neighbouring properties.



Fig. 16 No 13 The Avenue, formerly St Luke's Vicarage
Fig. 17 No 51 The Avenue

Fig. 18 Nos 22 – 23 The Avenue
Fig. 19 No 55 The Avenue



Fig. 20 No 11 The Avenue



Fig. 21 No 1 - 3 on the corner of Southcliff Road

Western Side of The Avenue

The western side, mainly developed from the late Victorian period, is very different architecturally and less homogenous than the east, and has experienced more change. The southern section includes Italianate villas in Beaulieu brick and the red brick church of St. Edmund. The Society of Friends' Burial Ground (1662), tucked away behind a brick wall and iron gates, offers a quiet area in marked contrast with the busy road beyond. Banister Road junction is dominated by two large garage forecourts with associated car dealers. Nos 69 - 73, the Stag Gates Shopping Parade, consists of late Victorian three storey buildings with quality detailing to the first and second floors but the installation of inappropriate shop fronts and extensive forecourt parking has detracted from the character of this part of the Conservation Area. Stag Gates House (1986), a purpose built office block, sits alongside No 62, a villa with an elegant metal canopy over the front door, which from 1900 was owned by Mr. John Smith, a prolific local builder. Nos. 58 - 61 comprise of a solid terrace of late Victorian three storey red brick houses, with overhanging eaves and 'Tudorbethan' gables. The majority of these properties are used as offices.

The Stag Gates (fig. 25) stood at the Avenue entrance to Lodge Road. They were originally the entrance to Bevois Mount, a large country house and estate created by the Earl of Peterborough c.1723. Lodge Road was originally one of the carriageways to the house. The gates were erected by William Betts, the owner of Bevois Mount, in 1845. The stone gate pillars were demolished c.1920 when Lodge Road was being widened. The metal gates had been removed to the new cemetery on the Common some time before.

Cavendish Grove, a road set back and separated from The Avenue by a belt of mature trees, consists of 18 high quality two and three storey detached and semi-detached houses with a wealth of architectural details. No two are identical in spite of their common features. They were once substantial family homes and many retain that appearance. The plots are long and narrow, oriented east-west. Cantled bays to the side elevations, to provide extra light to the second living room, open brick or timber porches and gravel drives are important features. Many retain their sash windows. No 7 is particularly interesting with a prominent Italianate tower, decorated ironwork to the ridge and fishscale tiles to the roof.



Fig. 22 Hollingside



Fig. 23 Glenfern

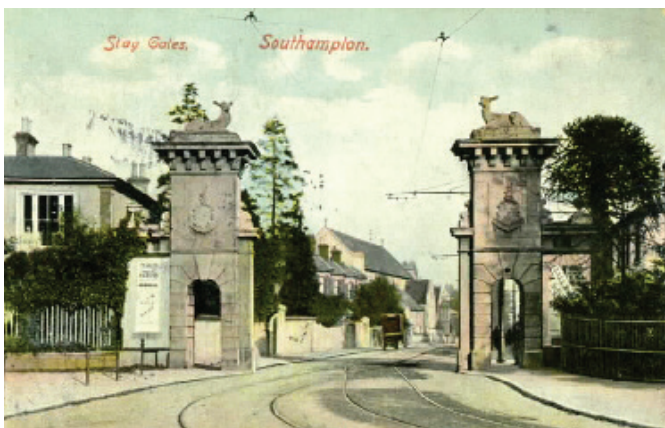


Fig. 24 The Society of Friends' Burial Ground
 Fig 25 The original Stag Gates, 1900, copyright
 Southampton City Council
 Fig. 26 Stag Gates Shopping Parade

Fig. 27 Stag Gates House
 Fig. 28 No 62 The Avenue
 Fig. 29 No 58 - 59 The Avenue



Fig. 30 View along Cavendish Grove
 Fig. 31 No 3 Cavendish Grove
 Fig. 32 No 5 Cavendish Grove

Fig. 33 No 7 Cavendish Grove
 Fig. 34 No 8 Cavendish Grove
 Fig. 35 General view of Cavendish Grove



Fig. 37 Trees and shrubs separating Cavendish Grove from The Avenue

Central strip of The Avenue

Part of the character of any conservation area is created by the relationship of all the elements that make up that environment: buildings, trees, open space, road and so on. The Avenue is a very fine approach to the city (especially when travelling from the north through the Common). The character of the Conservation Area is strongly influenced by the roadside trees from which The Avenue takes its name. Whilst there are no specific focal points in the Conservation Area, the main vista (when looking from north to south) is formed by the trees and line of adjacent buildings which produce a harmonious and consistent character.



Fig. 38 Stone marking site of first Common gate

Trees and open space contribute significantly therefore to the character of The Avenue Conservation Area, with most of the trees either protected through Conservation Area legislation, by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) or by being on land owned by the council (since all trees on city owned land are deemed to have similar protection to trees covered by TPO). The continuous avenue of trees, the central landscaped strip and Asylum Green include a variety of mature trees including Oak, Chestnut and Lime, and provides a welcome contrast to the built environment and busy road system. On the west side, between Banister Road and Rockstone Place, there is an extensive strip of mature planting and several gardens have achieved maturity, which further enhance the leafy character of the Conservation Area.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

An analysis of the Conservation Area looked at areas of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and these are listed below.

Strengths

- Impressive entrance to the city, with surviving early 18th street pattern and roadside trees, from which The Avenue takes its name
- High quality townscape, with attractive Georgian and Victorian architecture, with common scale and palette of materials, creating the main character
- Survival of early 19th century substantial villas and semi-detached houses with good external features such as slate roofs, timber barge boards, stone detailing around windows and doors, wooden sashes, front gardens with brick and/or stone boundary walls with railings, some mature gardens remaining
- Views of the Common and St. Andrew's United Reformed Church from the north end of Conservation Area
- Cavendish Grove; oasis off busy main road
- High occupancy rate
- Established commercial businesses – solicitors, medical practices, etc.
- Large number of mature trees and open space, including central strip of maintained landscaping, and the area around the small substation at the south of the Conservation Area
- Twentieth century buildings of note include 76 & 77 The Avenue (1930s), Bethesda Strict Baptist Chapel (1953) and Dornan House (purpose built flats, 1960s)

Weaknesses

- High volume of traffic, which detracts from character, but is unavoidable as it is a major route in and out of the city
- Lack of pedestrian crossing on north side of Bannister Road to cross The Avenue from east to west
- A degree of unsympathetic infill development e.g. Travelodge
- Erosion of architectural character e.g. a number of detached properties have been joined by later link buildings, loss of garden walls and gate piers, loss of gardens to hard standing, replacement of wooden windows with uPVC
- The only Listed structures in the Conservation Area are the drinking fountain and the monument near the junction with Brighton Road
- Cleanliness and maintenance in and around the shops at Stag Gates (65 – 72 The Avenue)

- Management of the wheelie bins outside flats and Houses of Multiple Occupancy
- Concerns about the cycle lane between Cavendish Grove and The Avenue and by the Stag Gates shopping parade being a hazard due to restricted views, lack of clear markings/signage and the speed at which cars and bicycles travel
- Parking issues by the Spiritual Church, in Cavendish Grove, on the central green strip near the Courts and St Edmunds Church

Opportunities

- An Article 4 Direction for Cavendish Road
- Produce a shop front policy
- Energy efficiency in historic buildings e.g. photovoltaics (PV) could be used where not visible
- Protect the Ransom drinking fountain
- Potential development of the Christian Scientist Church site

Threats

- Continuation of small, unassuming but cumulatively inappropriate changes e.g. loss of garden walls, gate piers and chimney pots, gardens lost in order to create driveways/hard standing, installation of uPVC windows, etc.
- Erosion of character through inappropriate re-development
- Change of offices and family homes to Houses of Multiple Occupancy.
- Current economic climate lessens likelihood of businesses and private owners spending money on building maintenance
- Further decline in the quality of shop fronts
- Unregulated proliferation of advertising
- Development outside (but visible from) the Conservation Area
- Cars hitting the Ransom drinking fountain
- Fly tipping

Changes which have affected the Conservation Area

The Avenue Conservation Area was designated in 1975 and was last reviewed by Southampton City Council in 1997. Since then there has been a number of both positive and negative changes which have had a significant impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area; these are listed below.

Positive

Despite the fact that about 45% of properties are in commercial use, the Avenue Conservation Area is still predominantly residential in character and it is encouraging to see that several properties formerly in multiple occupation have been successfully converted back to single family dwellings.

The council has successfully opposed the use of front gardens for car parking.

Cavendish Grove is an un-adopted highway which has had road surface improvements made to it.

The Conservation Area was altered in 2013 to include Cavendish Hall, which is an example of a type of building which is becoming increasingly rare. There is a history of corrugated iron structures on The Avenue and this remaining example is considered worth conserving.



Fig. 38 Cavendish Hall

Negative

Several properties have unfortunately undergone unsympathetic modernisation in the case of office and hotel conversions.

Several properties have unfortunately undergone unsympathetic modernisation incorporating the use of dominant signs.

The current shop fronts in the parade of shops at Stag Gates (65 – 72 The Avenue) and forecourt area would benefit from investment.

The volume of traffic has increased since the area was designated as a Conservation Area in 1975.

Neutral

The La Sainte Union site, between Archers Road and the Friends' Burial Ground, has been redeveloped as an area of purpose built flats. The mature trees on the edge of the site have been retained and successfully screen the development from The Avenue, and the flats from the road.

The Conservation Area boundary was altered in 2013 to remove 3-6 Clifford Dibben Mews. This development was built after the Conservation Area was designated in 1975 and it was considered expedient to exclude these properties as they neither preserved nor enhanced the area.

The Avenue Conservation Area Management Plan

The overall aim of this document is to clearly state how Southampton City Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance, the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in line with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

This section sets out how Southampton City Council will aim to firstly preserve, and secondly enhance, the features and details that contribute to the character of The Avenue Conservation Area.

It is important to note that permitted development rights have been removed from commercial premises and flats, and the permitted development rights to change a family home (C3) into a small HMO (C4) also requires planning permission.

The policies below apply to non-Listed commercial properties and non-Listed residential properties where there is no Article 4 Direction in place. Listed building consent must be applied for in order to make any changes to a listed building which might affect its special interest. It should also be noted that maintenance and repairs to listed buildings do not require listed building consent provided that they are like-for-like.

1. Key theme: Preserve

The most significant problem facing conservation areas is the gradual erosion of character and appearance, caused by small changes and alterations to specific details, for example windows, doors, front garden walls, etc. Individual alterations of this kind may have little immediate effect, but a street can gradually be transformed by the cumulative effect of these changes. This section contains guidance on specific features identified in the character appraisal as significant in the character of the area.

1.1 – 1.3 Windows

A building's windows can have a greater effect on the overall appearance of its façade than any other single factor. Therefore, any replacement of windows has to be carried out with a high degree of sensitivity. The incremental introduction of modern materials or finishes, such as uPVC, aluminium and stained, rather than painted wood, has had an adverse effect on the appearance of some parts of the Conservation Area. These new materials frequently have different profiles, glazing bars and other details and can seem particularly conspicuous if introduced to a property that is part of a row of similar buildings where such amendments have not been carried out.

Policies:

- 1.1 On front elevations the council will support the retention of existing traditional window types, details and materials.
- 1.2 On front elevations the council will support the repair of existing windows wherever possible, and on front

elevations where uPVC windows need to be replaced, traditional materials should normally be used rather than like-for-like replacement. The use of uPVC, aluminium and other materials or finishes inappropriate to the area will be opposed.

- 1.3 The council recommends that wooden window frames which front or face a highway or open space are painted white.

1.4 – 1.6 Wall Finishes

The majority of the early to mid 19th century buildings in the Conservation Area have Beaulieu brick (yellow) or red brick facades.

Policies:

- 1.4 The council will support the retention and conservation of existing and original external wall finishes as appropriate and will normally oppose the introduction of materials which are likely to be inappropriate or ill-suited to the character of the area e.g. timber cladding.
- 1.5 The council will normally oppose the painting of surfaces such as brickwork where this was not originally intended.
- 1.6 Mortar for render and pointing should be used in accordance with recommended lime-based mixes. The use of cement is not acceptable.

1.7 – 1.8 Front Doors

In the conservation area the great majority of doors will be of wood, albeit with different patterns and detailing. It is usual for front doors to be painted. The aim should be to match, wherever possible, the existing pattern for the particular property or group of properties, rather than to use or prescribe a 'standard' pattern. The substitution of original doors with doors constructed of uPVC or metal would be regarded as unsuitable and would detract from the appearance of the conservation area.

Policies:

- 1.7 The council will support the retention or reinstatement of original or sympathetically designed external front doors and will oppose the use of doors of inappropriate size, design, colour or material.
- 1.8 Appropriate traditional style paint colours are recommended for use on front doors.

1.9 – 1.10 Rainwater goods

The use of uPVC rainwater goods can be unsightly and inappropriate on the facades of historic buildings.

Policies:

1.9 On front and side elevations where uPVC rainwater goods need to be replaced, traditional materials i.e cast iron or aluminium (painted black) should be used rather than like-for-like replacement. If no records survive of the original materials then original designs present in neighbouring properties should be used.

1.10 The use of cast iron lookalike rainwater goods made from uPVC will be opposed. Aluminium rainwater goods painted black will normally be an acceptable alternative to uPVC.

1.11 – 1.14 Roofs, chimney stacks and pots

The majority of older properties in this area will have had slate roofs and in some cases these survive. Some slate and clay tile roofs have been replaced by modern interlocking, concrete, tiled roofs, which may result in problems, e.g. roof spread, caused by the use of a heavier roofing material. The use of a variety of different coloured tiles can have a discordant visual effect. Some of the roofs in the Conservation Area are concealed behind parapets.

Some villas incorporate overhanging eaves and decorative timber barge boards. Roof details such as these and ridge tiles, finials, decorative shaped slates or tiles and patterns are important and should be retained wherever possible or salvaged and reused where the roof has to be replaced.

Roof extensions often lead to the loss of existing historic fabric such as pitched roofs and chimneys, and can lead to an unacceptable increase in the bulk of properties.

Policies:

1.11 The council will support the retention and use of traditional roofing materials (such as slate and clay tiles) and oppose the use of unsympathetic modern roofing materials (such as interlocking concrete tiles).

1.12 Roof details such as ridge tiles and decorative roofing should be retained whenever possible.

1.13 The retention of chimney stacks and pots will be supported and their removal will normally be opposed.

1.14 The retention of barge boards will be supported and their removal will normally be opposed.

1.15 Porches

Many front doors in the Conservation Area are either recessed or protected by porches; No. 12 for example includes a particularly fine partly glazed timber porch. Porches are a significant and valued feature, both from a practical and

decorative point of view.

Policy:

1.15 The retention of porches will be supported and their removal will normally be opposed.

1.16 – 1.17 Shop fronts

It is acknowledged that a shop front policy for Conservation Areas is required in the city in order to preserve and enhance historic shop front features and details that contribute to the character of Conservation Areas and to seek enhancement with regards to new shop fronts embedded within historic properties.

Nos. 65 – 73 The Avenue, the row of shops at Stag Gates with two storeys of residential space above, were purpose built. There is considerable scope for environmental improvements in this area, including to the forecourt area.

Policies:

1.16 The council will require planning applications for alterations to shop fronts.

1.17 The council will support the retention and reinstatement of historic shop front detail and ornament.

1.18 – 1.20 Retain important trees and green spaces

There are a number of trees and green spaces, including front gardens, Asylum Green and the Friends' Burial Ground, in the Conservation Area. Unfortunately, due to traffic volumes, the majority of green spaces are valuable more as a visual experience rather than usable space.

Trees in conservation areas are subject to special control. Trees with a trunk diameter greater than 75mm at 1.5m above ground level are protected.

Anyone wishing to do works to trees in a conservation area must give the Local Planning Authority six weeks' notice of their intention to lop, top, or fell the tree(s).

Policies:

1.18 The council will oppose the loss of existing areas of open land.

1.19 The council will oppose the loss of trees in this area and will support Tree Preservation Orders as necessary.

1.20 The council will continue to support the good management of trees in this area and will encourage new and replacement planting of appropriate species to help maintain and enhance the character of the area, including the replacement of dead or vandalised specimens.

1.21 – 1.23 Retention of front gardens and garden walls

Villas on The Avenue were generally designed with low front garden walls, often surmounted by cast iron railings, with decorative gate piers. Unfortunately many railings were removed as part of the war effort and some front gardens have been lost to create hard standing for car parking. The demolition of existing front and boundary walls requires Planning Permission. Further loss of gardens and removal of original architectural features will be opposed in order to conserve the special character for which the area was originally designated.

Policies:

- 1.21 The retention of front gardens and garden walls will be supported and their removal for hard standing will normally be opposed.
- 1.22 Demolition will be opposed unless garden walls and gate piers are to be rebuilt in appropriate materials and to a traditional design.
- 1.23 The replacement of front gardens with soft landscaping by hard standing for motor vehicles will normally be opposed.

1.24 – 1.25 Support the re-use of vacant buildings, sites and floor space

If buildings are vacant or partially vacant the likelihood of the fabric of the building deteriorating increases and this can lead to an increase in buildings, or parts of buildings, standing empty due to their poor condition. The Historic Environment Team aim to support the use of historic buildings either, where appropriate, for their original purpose, as homes and/or for commercial uses.

Policies:

- 1.24 The council will normally oppose any proposal which involves the loss of living accommodation.
- 1.25 The council will work actively with owners wishing to utilise vacant buildings, sites and floor space within The Avenue Conservation Area.

Maintenance of historic properties

The Historic Environment Team is able to advise on the maintenance of historic properties and the protection of remaining and replacement of missing original architectural ornament, windows and fenestration details, and cast iron rainwater goods.

2. Key theme: Enhance

The council recognises as priorities the following potential enhancements of the Conservation Area.

2.1 – 2.2 Change of use

The Avenue originally developed as a residential area but for many years a number of large detached properties have provided office space for businesses such as law firms, dental surgeries, trade unions and architectural practices.

Policies:

- 2.1 There will be a presumption against further loss of residential properties to commercial uses.
- 2.2 Applications to subdivide single family dwellings will only be considered if adequate parking and amenity space can be provided, where the conversion will not be detrimental to amenities of nearby properties and the use will not detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

2.3 – 2.5 Street furniture

Street furniture such as street lighting, bollards, signage and cycle parking facilities can add to or detract from the visual character of the area.

Policies:

- 2.3 The City Council will support the retention of historic street furniture where this survives.
- 2.4 Unightly and unnecessary street furniture will be prioritised for removal by the council, where possible.
- 2.5 New street furniture should comply with the requirements set out in Southampton City Council's Streetscape Manual.

2.6 – 2.7 Promote good quality new development and redevelopment

Not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to the predominant character of the area or the understanding of its' historic development. Certain elements may detract from its character and appearance or may simply not contribute to it in a positive way.

Several sites within the Conservation Area have redevelopment potential and, where redevelopment consists entirely of new build, the key to its success in design terms would be the pursuit of a general policy of 'reference, not deference.' New buildings should respect the surrounding historical context without attempting to reproduce it. This can be achieved by adhering to the general scale and character of development in the vicinity, acknowledging the rhythm of neighbouring elevations, and noting the vernacular (such as the materials used) in surrounding properties. Care should be taken to observe the materials and colour schemes used in buildings in the surrounding area.

Policies:

- 2.6 The City Council will insist on the highest possible

standards of design and architecture with regards to new buildings to ensure that development adds to the Conservation Area's unique qualities by respecting local scale, street patterns, elevations, features and materials.

- 2.7 Traditional materials such as brick, clay tiles, slates, timber, stone, render and lead would usually be preferred, although in a few situations more modern materials may be more appropriate e.g. lead substitute in order to prevent lead theft.

2.8 – 2.10 Extensions

Extensions on elevations fronting the highway normally require planning permission and will generally be discouraged, particularly in relation to the older buildings in the area.

Where an extension is required, the design should match or complement the existing original building, not only in more obvious respects such as external materials, but also in the detail, such as brick bonding and pointing, window style and associated dressings.

Large roof additions can spoil the appearance of a house and look incongruous in the general street scene. Careful thought needs to be given to ensure that roof additions do not dominate the roofscape, and as such it will largely be necessary to keep any dormers to the rear roof.

Policies:

- 2.8 Extensions will be opposed where they would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.

- 2.9 Large roof extensions will be discouraged, particularly at the front, where they would have an adverse visual effect on the existing building or townscape, or where they would lead to the loss of original historic roofs or their features.

- 2.10 Where roof extensions are permitted they should seek to match the existing building in respect of design and materials.

2.11 Energy Efficiency

The introduction of appropriate energy efficient systems to historic buildings is supported by the Council and a Sustainable Development sub Guide for Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas is available from the Historic Environment Team.

Policy:

- 2.11 The Council will support energy efficiency in buildings where appropriate and work with owners of historic buildings to improve the energy efficiency of buildings whilst retaining the character of the Conservation Area.

2.12 – 2.16 Management of Advertisements

Outdoor advertisements are controlled by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Large outdoor advertising hoardings and panels would be inappropriate in Conservation Areas, residential areas and on, or near Listed Buildings and will not be permitted.

Policies:

- 2.12 Advertisement consent will only be given where the scale, size, design, materials, colouring and luminance respects the character and appearance of the building or areas in which they are displayed.

- 2.13 Advertisement consent will only be given where there is no adverse effect on public safety including the safety of people using the highway.

- 2.14 In the case of large outdoor advertising hoardings and panels, advertisement consent will only be given where they are located in commercial and mixed use areas or they are intended to screen a site awaiting development.

- 2.15 The installation of skyline or parapet level advertisements on buildings will be opposed.

- 2.16 The installation of internally illuminated box fascias and illuminated projecting box signs on buildings will be opposed.

2.17 – 2.18 Satellite antennae and television aerials

Poorly placed satellite antennae and television aerials can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment.

Policies

- 2.17 Television aerials should, where possible, be located within the roofspace.

- 2.18 Satellite dishes require planning permission and the Local Planning Authority will require applicants to show locations which are unobtrusive, for example mounted in rear gardens.

Future possibilities regarding enhancement of the Conservation Area

The Historic Environment Team would welcome discussions with local residents and businesses, community groups, amenity groups, developers and their agents regarding any further enhancement proposals for the area. Such joint action can offer significant practical, aesthetic and financial benefits.

For further information and advice please contact:

Historic Environment Team
Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton SO14 7LY

Telephone 023 8083 3192

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