

Local development framework

CHELTENHAM

Local development framework

**THE POETS CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

JUNE 2009

Cheltenham Borough Council
www.cheltenham.gov.uk

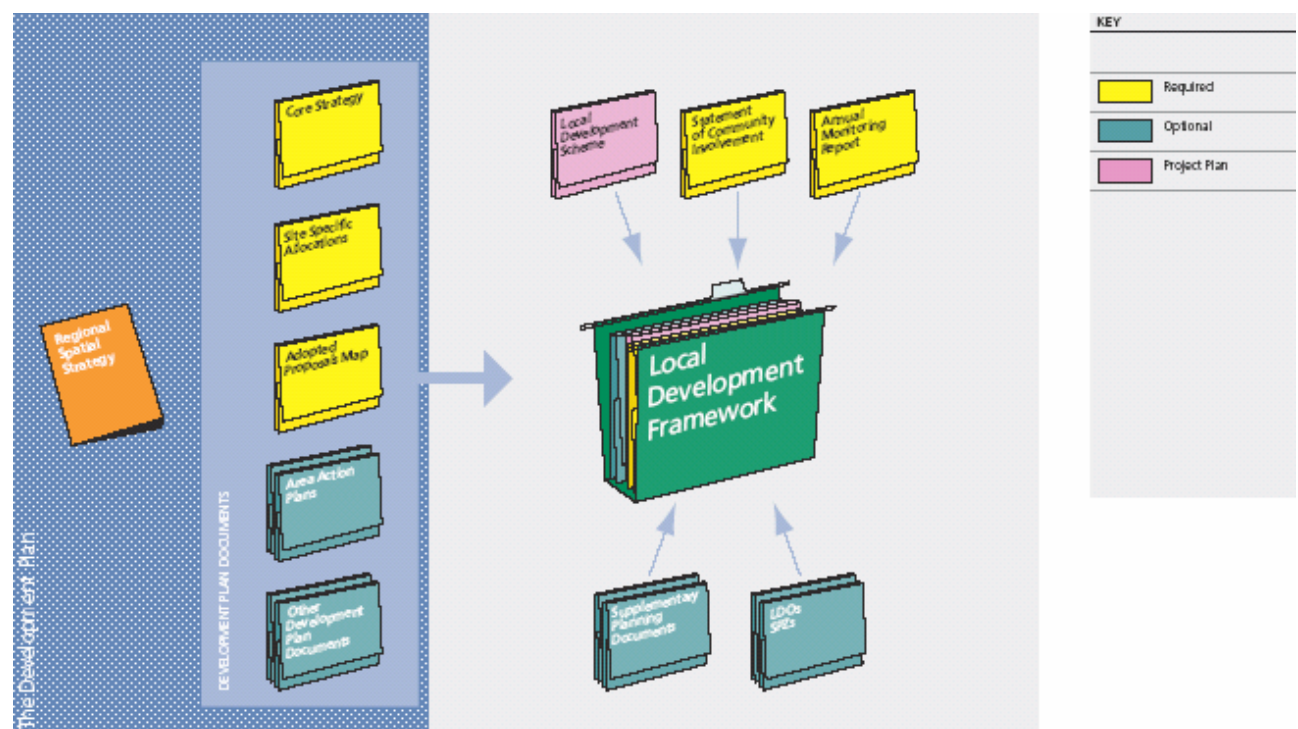
Supplementary Planning Documents & Local Development Frameworks

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are intended to expand upon policy or provide further detail to policies in Development Plan Documents (DPDs). They must not however, be used to allocate land. SPDs are not subject to independent examination and are not part of the statutory Development Plan, unlike DPDs. However, the SPD will form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF), and will be an important consideration in determining planning applications. These documents can demonstrate how policies can be taken forward.

SPDs may cover a range of issues and can be thematic or site specific. For example, a SPD can be a design guide, development brief or a topic or issue based document. These will help to guide people when applying for planning permission such as designing extensions and conservatories. SPDs must be consistent with national and regional planning policies as well as the DPDs in the LDF.

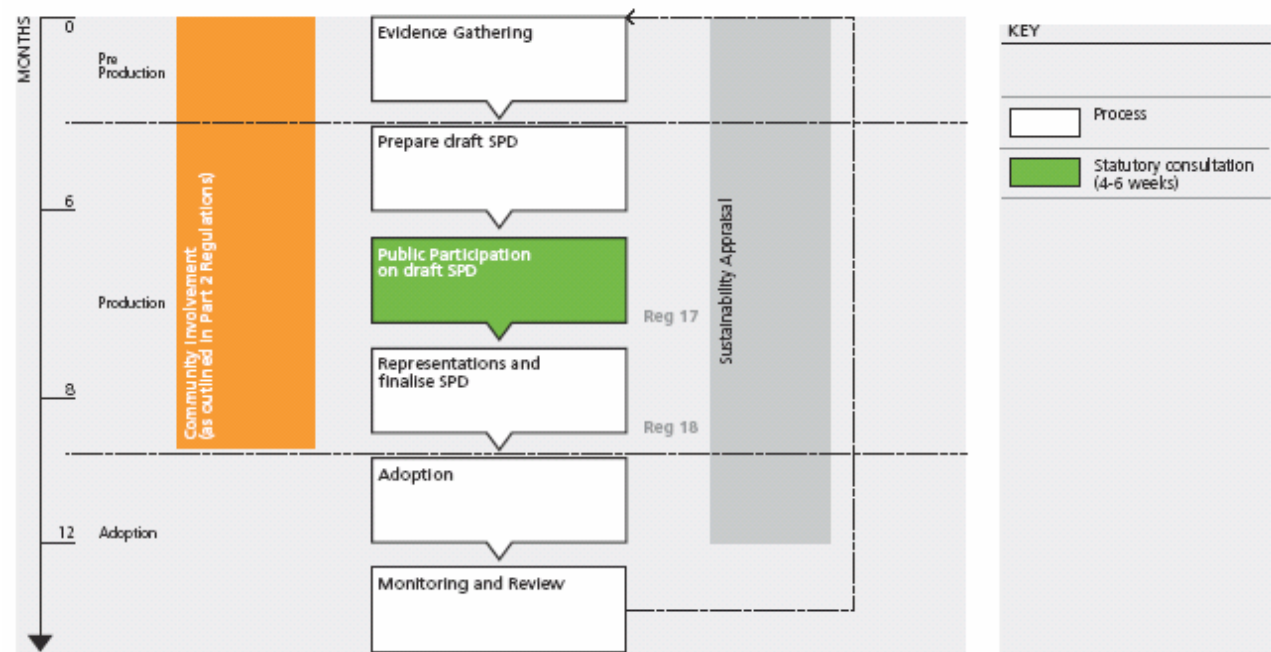
Local planning authorities must undertake a Sustainability Appraisal, which is a process designed to ensure that sustainability is inherent within all plans, policies and programmes throughout the preparation process of a SPD, and to include the timescale of producing this and the SPD in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is a proposed timetable for the preparation of planning policies and priorities for bringing forward documents which will deliver the strategies of the local planning authority. Please see Diagram 1 for the required documents of LDF.

Diagram 1: Key documents of the Local Development Framework



Local planning authorities should prepare SPDs taking into consideration the process of continuous community involvement in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). SCI sets out the ways in which local planning authorities will consult and involve people when developing planning policies and considering planning applications. The process for producing a SPD is shown in Diagram 2.

Diagram 2: The Supplementary Planning Document Process





The Poets Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

June 2009



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Key characteristics

This Character Appraisal of The Poets Conservation Area concludes that the special interest of the area derives from the following key characteristics:

- The Conservation Area comprises of a carefully planned and laid-out residential suburb, which was constructed in the years immediately after the First World War;
- The development seeks to emulate the 'Garden City' aesthetic in its overall form and layout;
- The houses represent a strong, cohesive group. They have good group value and a distinctive identity;
- Houses are set in well spaced plots which creates a unifying rhythm along the street and a fine urban grain;
- Roads are frequently tree-lined with the trees forming a distinctive visual characteristic of the area;
- There is a strong influence of the Arts and Crafts movement to be found in the architecture of the houses. The distinguishing architectural style includes features such as gables, hipped roofs, sweeping cat-slide rooflines and steeply pitched clay tile roofs with chimney stacks;
- The road junctions within the Conservation Area are defined by the planned and formal arrangement of houses around them. The junctions also create an interesting visual symmetry as houses on opposite sides of the road to one another are frequently identical.

Key issues

A number of problems and issues have been identified that have a negative impact on the character of The Poets Conservation Area. These form the basis for the Management Proposals of the Management Plan in the Part 2 of this document and are summarised below:

- Control of new development;
- Loss of traditional architectural features on some historic buildings;
- Negative impacts of the presence of equipment or installations on or around buildings, such as large aerials or satellite dishes;
- Drives and loss of front gardens;
- Tree management;
- Boundary enclosures;
- Setting and views;
- Enhancement of existing buildings and land;
- Rat-running through the Conservation Area.

Part 1 – Character Appraisal

Townscape Analysis Map of The Poets Conservation Area

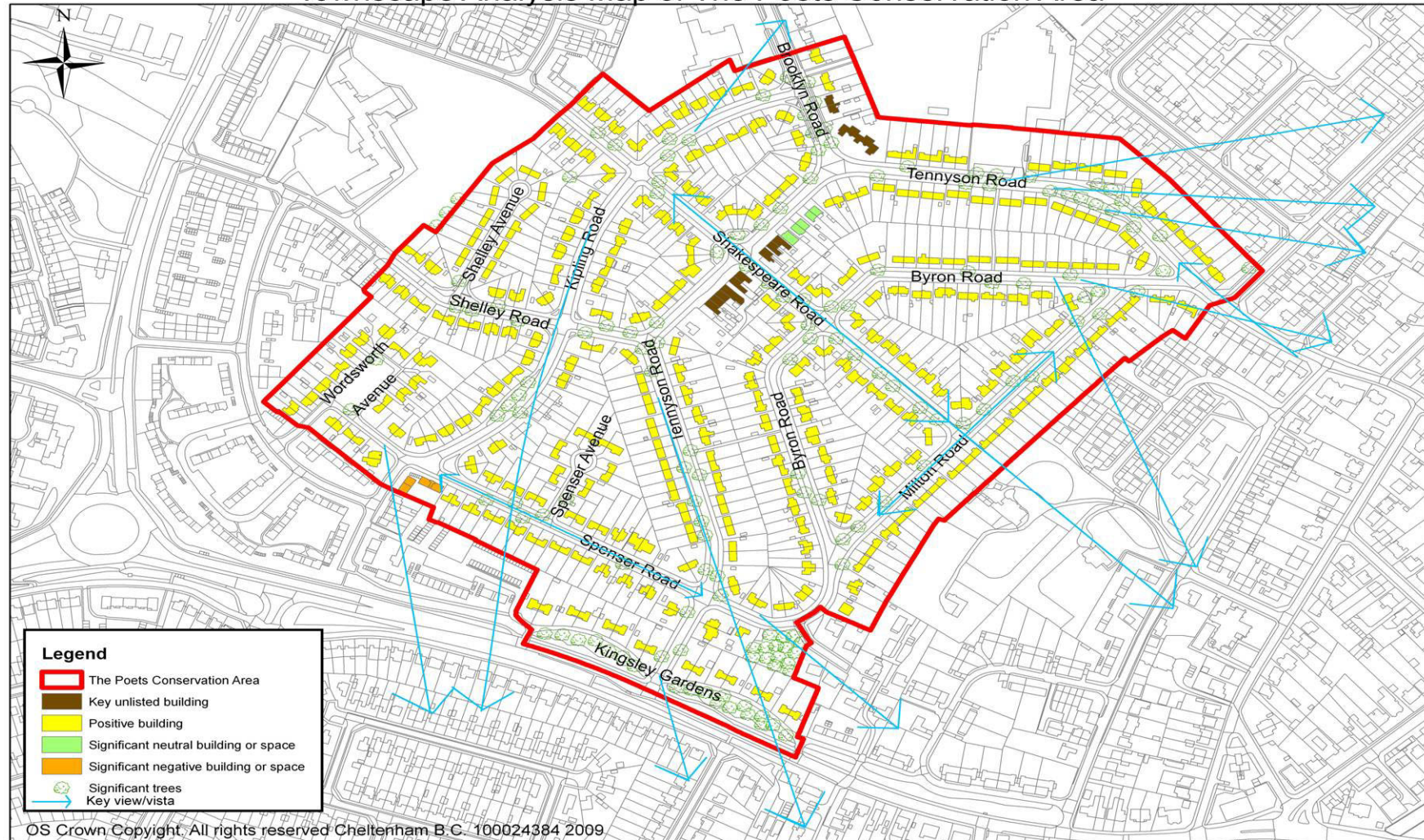


Figure 1 Townscape Analysis Map of The Poets Conservation Area

1 INTRODUCTION

What is a Conservation Area

- 1.1 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, in which the character or appearance is considered to be worth preserving or enhancing. It is given special protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Government policy in relation to Conservation Areas set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15). This legal protection enables the best features of an area to be preserved and new buildings and street works to be designed in-order that they enhance the area.
- 1.2 Some building work which does not require planning permission (known as “permitted development”) can damage the special qualities of a Conservation Area. “Article 4” directions can be applied by the planning authority to limit permitted development rights and thus give extra protection to particular buildings.

The need for an appraisal

- 1.3 PPG15 stresses the need for local planning authorities to make an assessment of the special character and appearance of all Conservation Areas in their districts. The Government has also made the preparation of such assessment appraisals for all conservation areas a Best Value Performance indicator for local authorities. These assessments should be reviewed by local planning authorities every five years.
- 1.4 This document has been split into two parts. Part 1 of the document forms the character appraisal which provides an assessment of the character of a conservation area or parts of it. This appraisal provides the basis for Part 2, which comprises a management plan which gives guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance can be achieved. It also provides a sound basis for development control decisions made by local authorities (such as the design of highways or the appropriateness of the design of new buildings or open spaces).
- 1.5 Both parts of this document were subject to public consultation between 2nd March and 13th April 2009. Following consideration of representations received, the Management Plan was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on 29th June 2009 as a Supplementary Planning Document. It will be used in conjunction with the Local Plan as a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 1.6 A statement entitled *The Poets Conservation Area Character Statement – Key Issues and Actions* was produced by Cheltenham Borough Council in 2003. It was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The SPG has been referred to in writing this Character Appraisal and Management Plan, which supersede it. The main actions arising from the original SPG relate to traffic management and parking on front garden space, use of appropriate boundary treatments, maintaining street trees and managing incremental change to properties. Through the Management Plan SPD, the Council is continuing to manage these issues. With reference to the issue of parking on front gardens, the Council has developed a Supplementary

Planning Document which provides guidance on this issue (see Management Proposal 'Drives and loss of front gardens' in the Management Plan SPD).

Planning context

- 1.7 Cheltenham Borough Council has various adopted and emerging planning related documents. They can be found on the Council's website - www.cheltenham.gov.uk Some of the documents are quite broad in their content, whilst others are thematic, site specific or area specific. However, all fall within the statutory planning framework and all are material considerations in determining planning proposals. Together, these documents look at various aspects of the built environment and need to be read as a whole within a particular context.
- 1.8 This document is part of that overall framework. The Character Appraisal (Part 1) assesses the character of the Conservation Area and highlights negative issues, which are then addressed through Management Proposals within the Management Plan (Part 2). In developing planning proposals, the Character Appraisal and Management Plan need to be considered along with advice, guidance and policy set out in other planning documents, be they general, thematic or spatially specific.

Conservation Area boundaries

- 1.9 There is a requirement for existing Conservation Area boundaries to be re-assessed from time to time. The boundary of the Poets Conservation Area remains the same since its original designation in May 2001. This character appraisal for The Poets is not intended to look at reviewing the boundary of the Conservation Area. However, it may be desirable to review the boundary in the future, and the following notes have been made for such a time: the Conservation Area boundary should be extended to include Nos. 28 to 46 (evens) Libertus Road. Historical evidence shows that this row of semi-detached houses were amongst some of the first houses to be developed in the St. Mark's Estate. They are characteristic of the planned houses within the Estate, in terms of their size, scale, design, footprint, construction materials etc. Their inclusion within the Conservation Area would complete the planned form of the Estate and further strengthen the cohesive identity of The Poets. Preliminary consultation on the draft version of the character appraisal has also raised the possibility of including St. Mark's Church on Church Road, The Granleys and The Knowle, both on Griffiths Avenue, within the Conservation Area. These buildings were designed by architect John Middleton and are all Grade II listed.

The Poets Conservation Area

- 1.10 The Poets Conservation Area forms part of the ward of St. Mark's in Cheltenham. St. Mark's is located about 1½ miles west of Cheltenham town centre. It has a "...population of around 6,000."¹ The Poets Conservation Area was designated by Cheltenham Borough Council on 24th May 2001. The Conservation Area covers about 26 hectares.

¹ cheltenham4u.co.uk Cheltenham Areas: St. Mark's and Surrounding Areas

- 1.11 The Conservation Area does not contain any statutory listed buildings but has two locally listed buildings. Buildings within the Conservation Area are of value on a group basis due to their cohesive identity, rather than having value on an individual basis.

Summary of special interest

- 1.12 The Poets Conservation Area is special because:
- The Conservation Area comprises of a carefully planned and laid-out residential suburb, which was constructed in the years immediately after the First World War;
 - The development seeks to emulate the 'Garden City' aesthetic in its overall form and layout;
 - The houses represent a strong, cohesive group. They have good group value and a distinctive identity;
 - Houses are set in well spaced plots which creates a unifying rhythm along the street and a fine urban grain;
 - Roads are frequently tree-lined with the trees forming a distinctive visual characteristic of the area;
 - There is a strong influence of the Arts and Crafts movement to be found in the architecture of the houses. The distinguishing architectural style includes features such as gables, hipped roofs, sweeping cat-slide rooflines and steeply pitched clay tile roofs with chimneys;
 - The road junctions within the Conservation Area are defined by the planned and formal arrangement of houses around them. The junctions also create an interesting visual symmetry as houses on opposite sides of the road to one another are frequently identical.

2 LOCATION AND SETTING

Location and context

- 2.1 The ward of St Mark's is well linked to Cheltenham town centre through the A40 and local B4633 (Gloucester Road) and A4013 (Princess Elizabeth Way) road networks. St Mark's is a residential area in the west of the town and within it The Poets Conservation Area is a planned residential housing estate dating from around 1920. St Mark's is surrounded by other suburban residential development in Benhall, Rowanfield, Fiddler's Green and Hester's Way.

General character and plan form

2.2



Figure 2 The shops on Tennyson Road form a designated 'neighbourhood centre'

The character of The Poets Conservation Area is shaped by the planned Garden City inspired residential development of this part of the St Mark's area, which took place in the years immediately after the First World War. This planned residential suburb seeks to emulate the 'Garden City' aesthetic in its overall form and layout. Although both St Mark's and The Poets are predominantly residential, the Conservation Area contains other important uses such as

the local shops on Tennyson Road. This small retail area forms a designated 'neighbourhood centre' in the Cheltenham Borough Council's Local Plan.

- 2.3 A booklet entitled 'The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa', which was produced in 1934, states that "*The primary characteristics of the Estate are variety of design, abundance of open space, generous provision for gardens, and convenient placing...the effect of the layout and grouping is distinctly pleasing.*"² These positive characteristics remain present today. The inter-war houses are set in sizeable plots and follow a similar building line along the street. The frequently tree-lined roads give a distinctive visual characteristic to the area. The houses are either terraced or semi-detached. There is a strong influence of the Arts and Crafts movement to be found in the gables, rooflines and other architectural forms of the houses. The style of the houses and their placement in the street, combine with the building materials to provide the area with a distinctive and cohesive identity which gives The Poets a unique character and visual appearance.



Figure 3 Residential houses within the Poets Conservation Area which have an Arts and Crafts style of architecture

- 2.4 Since the development of The Poets estate in the inter-war period, its structured and planned road layout has been retained unchanged. The roads have been carefully designed to be well connected and integrated with each other and houses have been evenly spaced along the roads. The road layout enables housing to be laid out in perimeter blocks, with frontages onto the street and gardens backing onto one another within structured plots. There is a mixture of busier through roads and quieter cul-de-sacs within the Conservation Area.



Figure 4 Shakespeare Road functions as a through-road



Figure 5 Shelley Avenue functions as a quiet cul-de-sac

² Author unknown (ca. 1934) The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa (pg. 11)

Wider landscape setting

- 2.5 The Poets Conservation Area is surrounded on all sides by the suburban development of St. Mark's and the surrounding suburbs of Hester's Way, Rowanfield, Benhall and Fiddler's Green. Although The Poets is surrounded by much residential housing, its carefully planned development gives the Conservation Area a cohesive and unified identity and a unique character.
- 2.6 The physical character of the Conservation Area is determined by the open spaces, wide streets and the layout of the roads and buildings and the gaps between them. There are frequent views of Cleeve Hill, Leckhampton Hill and the Cotswold scarp from various parts of The Poets. The hills provide a sense of distant enclosure and frame views looking across and out of the Conservation Area.



Figure 6 Views of countryside from within the Conservation Area

2.7



Figure 7 Red-brick houses follow strong building line along Shakespeare Road

Buildings within The Poets Conservation Area tend to have a collective group value which creates a strong identity. Many of the roads have a straight plan form which creates long vistas. The houses frequently follow a set building line along the street and are set back from the footpath behind small front gardens. The front garden space provides a sense of spaciousness and the tree-lined streets enhance the linear form of the street.

3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Archaeology within St. Mark's

- 3.1 Some archaeological research has been conducted within the Borough of Cheltenham and in-depth research can be found in "Pre-Regency Cheltenham: An Archaeological Survey".³
- 3.2 No archaeological remains have been unearthed within The Poets Conservation Area. However, some sites located near to the Conservation

³ 'Pre-Regency Cheltenham: An Archaeological Survey' Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, 1975

Area have been recorded on the Gloucestershire Sites and Monument Record. These include a well and pond in the St. Mark's area, which dates from 1886; a building described as "Alstone Lock-up" by local informants; part of the Gloucester and Cheltenham Tramroad and St. Mark's Church.

- 3.3 Archaeological discoveries and buried archaeological remains provide a basis for researching the origins and early development of the St. Mark's area, and contribute indirectly to a sense of place evident in the modern era.

Summary of Historic Development of Cheltenham

- 3.4 The first documentary reference to Cheltenham itself occurs in an account of the Council of Cloveshoe held in 803. It is highly likely, given the archaeological finds and possible place-name derivation that Cheltenham was in existence as a farming village for a long time before the 8th century. Its status was raised to that of a market town in 1226 and the market played a key role in its economy for several centuries. From c.1247 Cheltenham was also a Liberty. Spa waters were discovered adjacent to the town in 1716 and after King George III's visit to sample the waters in 1788, Cheltenham grew rapidly as a fashionable spa resort. The popularity of the town as a summer resort resulted in Cheltenham having a wealth of tree-lined walks and rides, squares and gardens. Its popularity led to expansion of the town away from the ancient High Street, and many fine classical style buildings were built for the growing population. The popularity of the spa waters waned from the middle of the 19th century, and Cheltenham developed other roles in the form of its growing importance as a major educational centre during the latter half of the 19th century. In turn this led to the development well into the 20th century of some acclaimed public schools and churches. Before World War II, light industry boosted the town's economy. The establishment of GCHQ in Cheltenham immediately after World War II has had an enormous impact on employment in the town. Today, the town's attractions include fine shops and events such as the races and numerous cultural festivals as well as its legacy of Regency architecture, with trees, parks, gardens and public spaces.

Summary of Historic Development of St. Mark's

- 3.5 The ward of St. Mark's originally comprised of open fields located in the west of Cheltenham. In the late 18th century and first half of the 19th century, Cheltenham began to grow rapidly, largely due to the popularity of the developing spas. At this time, however, St Mark's remained as open land, which had been divided into large fields.
- 3.6 It was not until the mid 19th century that this area began to be developed. The website cheltenham4u.co.uk explains how *"In 1850 the Cheltenham and Gloucester Freehold Land Society...brought 15 acres near Lansdown Railway Station...as their first venture...Originally this area was fields known as Dudleys, The Langett, and part of Hazard's Field."*⁴ However, little development had taken place within the area by the end of the 19th century. Land to the east began to be constructed on with buildings including St. Mark's Church, The Granleys, Hillfield, and Southfield being built.
- 3.7 Three Housing Acts came into force in 1919, 1922 and 1923, which largely determined the development of The Poets area. These acts were

⁴ [Cheltenham4u.co.uk](http://cheltenham4u.co.uk) [Cheltenham Areas: History of St. Mark's](http://cheltenham4u.co.uk)

underpinned by the earlier Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890. This act “...strengthened earlier acts and encouraged local councils to undertake housing improvement schemes.”⁵ Immediately after the First World War had ended, the St. Mark’s Estate was developed by Cheltenham Town Council, in response to Prime Minister Lloyd George’s call for “a land fit for heroes to live in.”⁶ Homan explains how “the housing sector was a major focus of...concern (after the First World War).”⁷ “In November 1918 the Local Government Board issued a circular to local authorities requesting that they draw up plans for the provision of houses.”⁸

- 3.8 The Housing and Planning Act 1919 (known as the Addison Act), enabled “local councils (to be) given subsidies from central government to build cheap rented houses.”⁹ Consequently, in 1919, the Town Council bought 115 acres at St Mark’s off Gloucester Road from the landowner, Mr H. Unwin. The Council planned to build 400 houses on this land. It was in the years immediately after World War I that the St. Mark’s area became developed with mass housing. Pakenham states that “...the St Mark’s area, (was) the site of the first Borough Council housing experiment.”¹⁰ Hodsdon explains how “First designs had been provided...with plans for an initial build of 10 houses at the Libertus Road end of the estate.”¹¹ The first ten houses were ready for occupation in January 1921. Houses were initially constructed in the north and east of the area and were opened in 1922 “under the banner of the ‘houses for heroes’ motto.”¹² The website cheltenham4u.co.uk explains how “The first road in the first major Cheltenham Borough Council development, begun immediately after the First World War was Tennyson Road...The construction of Byron Road started in 1921 and in 1926 36 houses were occupied.”¹³
- 3.9 In 1923, another Housing Act was passed, known as the Chamberlain’s Housing Act. The Government gave private builders subsidies to build houses. “This helped people who could not afford to buy their own homes.”¹⁴ After this Act was passed, housing developed around the central part of The Poets, typically in a red-brick construction with an Arts and Crafts style of architecture which is typically associated with this area of St. Mark’s. A third Housing Act known as the Wheatley Housing Act came into force in 1924. “Central government gave subsidies to local councils to build houses. By 1933 500,000 council houses had been built (throughout the country).”¹⁵ After this Housing Act was passed, development took place within the south and west of the Conservation Area.
- 3.10 In 1920 it was agreed that the roads in the new suburb should be named after English poets, two of whom (Tennyson and Byron) had connections with the town.
- 3.11 The St. Mark’s development was constructed over a relatively short period of time. A map dating from 1938 shows the full extent of the St. Mark’s housing development as being completed. Houses were evenly spaced along roads

⁵ <http://www.tiscali.co.uk/reference/encyclopaedia/hutchinson/m0014282.html>

⁶ Homan, R. (1981) Gloucester Community Council local history bulletin, no. 44 – Homes fit for Heroes (pg. 9)

⁷ Homan, R. Ibid. (pg. 9)

⁸ Homan, R. Ibid. (pg. 9)

⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/bitesize/standard/shockwave/history/housing.1930.swf>

¹⁰ Pakenham, S. (1971) Cheltenham A biography (pg. 164)

¹¹ Hodsdon, J. (1997) *An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham* (pg. 177)

¹² Cheltenham4u.co.uk Cheltenham Areas: St Mark’s and Surrounding Areas

¹³ Cheltenham4u.co.uk Cheltenham Areas: History of St. Mark’s

¹⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/bitesize/standard/shockwave/history/housing.1930.swf>

¹⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/bitesize/standard/shockwave/history/housing.1930.swf>

with good sized gardens which backed onto one another and inter-connecting roads had been constructed.

- 3.12 The form and layout of the St Mark's development was based on the 'garden city' aesthetic of Howard and Unwin in places such as Welwyn and Letchworth. Welwyn and Letchworth were the only two 'garden cities' to have been built in England. Ebenezer Howard was responsible for developing the concept of the 'garden city' and he sought to establish new towns which incorporated the best elements of the town with the best elements of the countryside, but which had the disadvantages of neither. *"Howard's concept was to create 'satellite towns' to help ease poor and overcrowded living conditions in London."*¹⁶ Howard planned that people moving to garden cities would be able to enjoy working and living within close proximity of the countryside and have their own garden and open space. *"He promoted well-planned towns with careful land zoning and a quality of life."*¹⁷ [Letchworthgc.com](http://www.letchworthgc.com) explains how *"A Garden City would have well designed houses with gardens set in tree lined avenues, clean and healthy work places and a pleasant and healthy environment in which to live, work and follow leisure pursuits."*¹⁸
- 3.13 The characteristics and ideal of the garden city can still be clearly seen today in The Poets area of St. Mark's. Its strong, cohesive identity has been recognised as being of particular value to not just the St. Mark's area, but Cheltenham overall. The distinctive character of The Poets has generally been well preserved and the Conservation Area has a unique and cohesive character, which is quite different to the other Conservation Areas within Cheltenham.

Development of The Poets Conservation Area by 1884

- 3.14 Historic maps dating from 1884, 1923, 1938, 1948 and 2008 have been studied in analysing the historic development of The Poets Conservation Area.
- 3.15 The 1884 map of Cheltenham shows the area covered by The Poets Conservation Area remaining as open fields at this time. A small amount of development had occurred to the east of the Conservation Area, on the west side of Gloucester Road. This development was in the form of large detached houses. St Mark's Church had been constructed in 1860-66, and was positioned on Church Road (which was unnamed at this time). The website cheltenham4u.co.uk explains how *"In 1850 the Cheltenham and Gloucester Freehold Land Society...brought 15 acres near Lansdown Railway Station...as their first venture...Originally this area was fields known as Dudleys, The Langett, and part of Hazard's Field."*¹⁹ Blake explains how *"...St. Mark's (was) built to serve the area around Lansdown station and the Libertus estate."*²⁰
- 3.16 Although The Poets area was at this time still open fields, much of Cheltenham's town centre however had become developed. The development of the centre of the town followed the growing popularity of the town as a spa town and later as a major educational centre and popular retirement settlement.

¹⁶ Welwyn Garden City information BRITAIN www.informationbritain.co.uk/towndetail.cfm?id=227

¹⁷ Letchworthgc.com The World's First Garden City – About Letchworth
<http://www.letchworthgc.com/aboutletchworth/index.html>

¹⁸ Letchworthgc.com The World's First Garden City – About Letchworth, Ibid.

¹⁹ Cheltenham4u.co.uk Cheltenham Areas: History of St. Mark's

²⁰ Blake, S. (1996) [Cheltenham A Pictorial History](#) (pg. 61)

Development of The Poets Conservation Area by 1923

- 3.17 The OS map of Cheltenham dating from 1923 shows significant levels of planned development occurring within the Conservation Area at this time.
- 3.18 In the earlier years of the 20th century, "...there began to be a need for new housing on a modest scale (within Cheltenham)."²¹ Soon after the First World War had ended, the Government introduced the 1919 Housing Act (known as the Addison Act). "This act attempted to provide "homes fit for heroes to live in". Local authorities were required to provide schemes on how they would achieve this in working class areas. Central government gave financial help for this between 1919 to 1923."²² In 1919 the local Council bought 115 acres of land in St. Mark's from landowner Mr H. Unwin, who lived at Arle Court. The Council planned residential housing for the area. At this time, the St. Mark's District was "...described as "a quiet, select, residential area."²³ Immediately after World War I, the development of mass housing began. The architects Messrs Chatters, Smithson and Rainger were employed to carry out the original scheme. Historical sources identify the early contractors as "Messrs. A. C. Billings & Sons, Ltd..."²⁴ and "Collins and Godfrey...and William Drew. The cost of each house varied between £946 and £949."²⁵ "In addition to the role as developer, the council was also responsible for tenancing the houses."²⁶ Cheltenham Town Council's Housing Sub-Committee "...adopted a preferential system favouring ex-servicemen."²⁷
- 3.19 The houses in the area covered by The Poets Conservation Area were opened in 1922, having initially been constructed in the east of St. Mark's, around Libertus Road. Tennyson Road was the first road to be constructed in the area, the development of which was begun immediately after the First World War. Tennyson Road is clearly shown on the 1923 map with semi-detached housing positioned on either side of the road. After Chamberlain's Housing Act of 1923 was passed, private builders were given subsidies to build houses and The Poets area began to develop further. Under the 1923 and 1924 Housing Acts, William Drew was responsible for constructing the majority of the later houses within the estate. Byron Road and Milton Road are shown on the map as being developed with housing on one side. Shakespeare Road, Brooklyn Road had been laid out but no development had taken place along them at this time. The roads had been carefully laid out to run through the area and frequently connect with one another. Large spaces had been designed between the roads for housing development.



Figure 8 Newly completed houses in Tennyson Road, 1925.
(Photograph copied from 'Cheltenham A History' by S. Rowbotham and J. Waller, published by Chichester, Phillimore & Co. Ltd)

²¹ Pakenham, S. (1971) *Cheltenham A biography* (pg. 142)

²² http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/public_health.htm Important events in public and environmental health in Great Britain 1900 to 1939

²³ Author unknown (ca. 1934) *The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa* (pg. 9)

²⁴ Author unknown (ca. 1934) *The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa* (pg. 10)

²⁵ Homan, R. (1981) *Gloucester Community Council local history bulletin, no. 44 – Homes fit for Heroes* (pg. 10)

²⁶ Homan, R. Ibid. (pg. 10)

²⁷ Homan, R. Ibid. (pg. 10)

- 3.20 In 1920 it was agreed that the roads in the new suburb should be named after English poets, two of whom (Tennyson and Byron) had connections with the town. These included *“Lord Tennyson (who) came to live in Cheltenham in 1844...”* and *“...Lord Byron who visited Cheltenham at the age of 13 with his mother in the summer of 1801 and again 1802.”*²⁸
- 3.21 As discussed in paragraph 3.12, the form and layout of the St. Mark's development was based on the garden city aesthetic. The characteristics of the 'garden city' were carefully incorporated into the development of The Poets area, with the planting of formal tree-lined streets, construction of Arts and Crafts style vernacular houses, construction of cul-de-sacs and good sized front and rear gardens. Homan explains how *“The exterior designs (of the houses) were based on the popular ideal of a “worker's cottage” and incorporated the rural and vernacular features characteristic of the Garden City Movement.”*²⁹
- 3.22 Away from the construction of houses within the area, an office equipment factory is shown on the map located on Tennyson Road. This factory building originally contained Messers Smith's Systems Furniture Factory. St. Mark's Recreation Ground is shown to the north of Tennyson Road.
- 3.23 An area to the south east of Milton Road was named as Wasley's Brake on the 1923 map. This open land remains today, bearing the same name. It forms a nature reserve.

Development of The Poets Conservation Area by 1948

- 3.24 By 1948, the entirety of The Poets area had become developed with residential housing. The passing of The Wheatley Housing Act in 1924 led to the development of housing in the west of the Conservation Area, around Spenser Road and Spenser Avenue. The planned development is clearly shown on the 1948 map, in a contained area. 'The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa' explains that beyond this area there *“...is open country with green hedges and groups of stately elms.”*³⁰ Blake explains how *“Building continued on the estate until the 1930s and eventually totalled over six hundred houses.”*³¹ Outside the contained area of the St. Mark's Estate, to the south and west, much of the land remained open and undeveloped. The south of the area was bounded by Gloucester Road.
- 3.25 Kingsley Gardens had been developed from 1927 to 1928, and comprised of two crescents of semi-detached housing. It was described by 'The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa' as *“...two crescent-shaped ornamental shrubberies which form a very decorative frontage to the Estate as approached from Gloucester Road...”*³² It was originally intended that four crescents of houses would be built, along the Gloucester Road frontage. However, the houses were seen to be too expensive, and only two of the crescents were actually constructed.
- 3.26 The map clearly shows The Poets area as being carefully planned and thought out, with formally laid out, well spaced houses set within the plots. The roads had been constructed in a structured, well connecting grid pattern.

²⁸ Cheltenham4u.co.uk [Cheltenham Areas: History of St. Mark's](#)

²⁹ Homan, R. (1981) [Gloucester Community Council local history bulletin, no. 44 – Homes fit for Heroes](#) (pg. 10)

³⁰ Author unknown (ca. 1934) [The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa](#) (pg. 16)

³¹ Blake, S. (1996) [Cheltenham A Pictorial History](#) (pg.103)

³² Author unknown (ca. 1934) [The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa](#) (pg. 10/11)

They ran on a loosely north/south and east/west axis and two cul-de-sacs were present within the area.

3.27



Figure 9 Shops and bus terminus on Tennyson Road, c.1934.

(Photograph copied from 'Cheltenham In Old Photographs A Second Selection' by R. Whiting, published by Sutton Publishing Ltd)

There was a row of shops along Tennyson Road. These comprised of St. Mark's Pharmacy, J. Maxwell Fish and Poultry Supply, St. Mark's Stores/Post Office, R. Clapton Family Butcher and W. T. Morris Fish and Chip Restaurant.³³ The shops had traditional shops fronts, some of which had canopies.

3.28 It is interesting to note that a map included within 'The Residential amenities of the St. Mark's Estate, Cheltenham Spa', which was published in 1934, shows a proposed extension of Brooklyn Road, which ran in a straight form down the western edge of the St. Mark's Estate. This road would have provided a strong and distinctive boundary for the area, but was never constructed. However, the western boundary of The Poets Conservation Area approximately follows the line this road would have taken.

3.29 Bombing during World War II destroyed six houses on the east side of Kipling Road. They were destroyed when a bomb exploded in the middle of the road on December 11th 1940. A terrace of four houses and a pair of semi-detached houses were built on the site in the 1950s.

3.30 The Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses were built on the junction of Brooklyn Road with Tennyson Road in 1924, by Chatters, Smithson and Rainger. The almshouses are run by a charitable trust which provides accommodation for the elderly.

Development of The Poets Conservation Area by 2008

3.31 The Poets Conservation Area has changed relatively little since its development in the years after the First World War. Although the houses have experienced numerous alterations and additions throughout the years, the area's distinctive character and plan form has been well retained and is clearly visible through the layout of the roads, the urban grain of the area, the detailing of the houses and the green spaces.

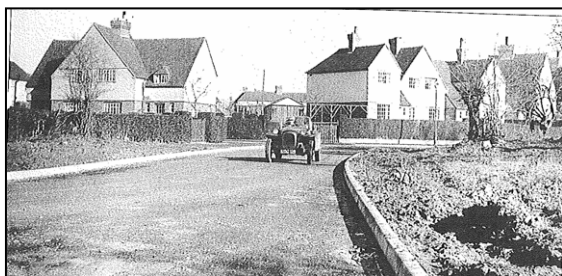


Figure 10 View from Wasley Road looking towards Wordsworth Avenue (to left) and Kipling Road (to right), January 1953.

(Photograph copied from 'A Century of Cheltenham' by R. Brooks, published by Sutton Publishing Ltd)

³³ Author unknown, Ibid.

- 3.32 There remain a significant number of local authority homes within the Conservation Area, which are now managed by Cheltenham Borough Homes. In total, there are around 70 houses located within the Conservation Area which are owned by the local authority.
- 3.33 The shops along Tennyson Road remain and are well used by local residents. Some of these have changed use, whereas the pharmacy, butcher and convenience store remain in their original use.
- 3.34 The site of the Office Equipment Factory on Tennyson Road is now occupied by Spirax Sarco. This is a busy site which creates activity throughout the day along this stretch of Tennyson Road. However, it may shortly relocate.

Historic Development of The Poets Conservation Area

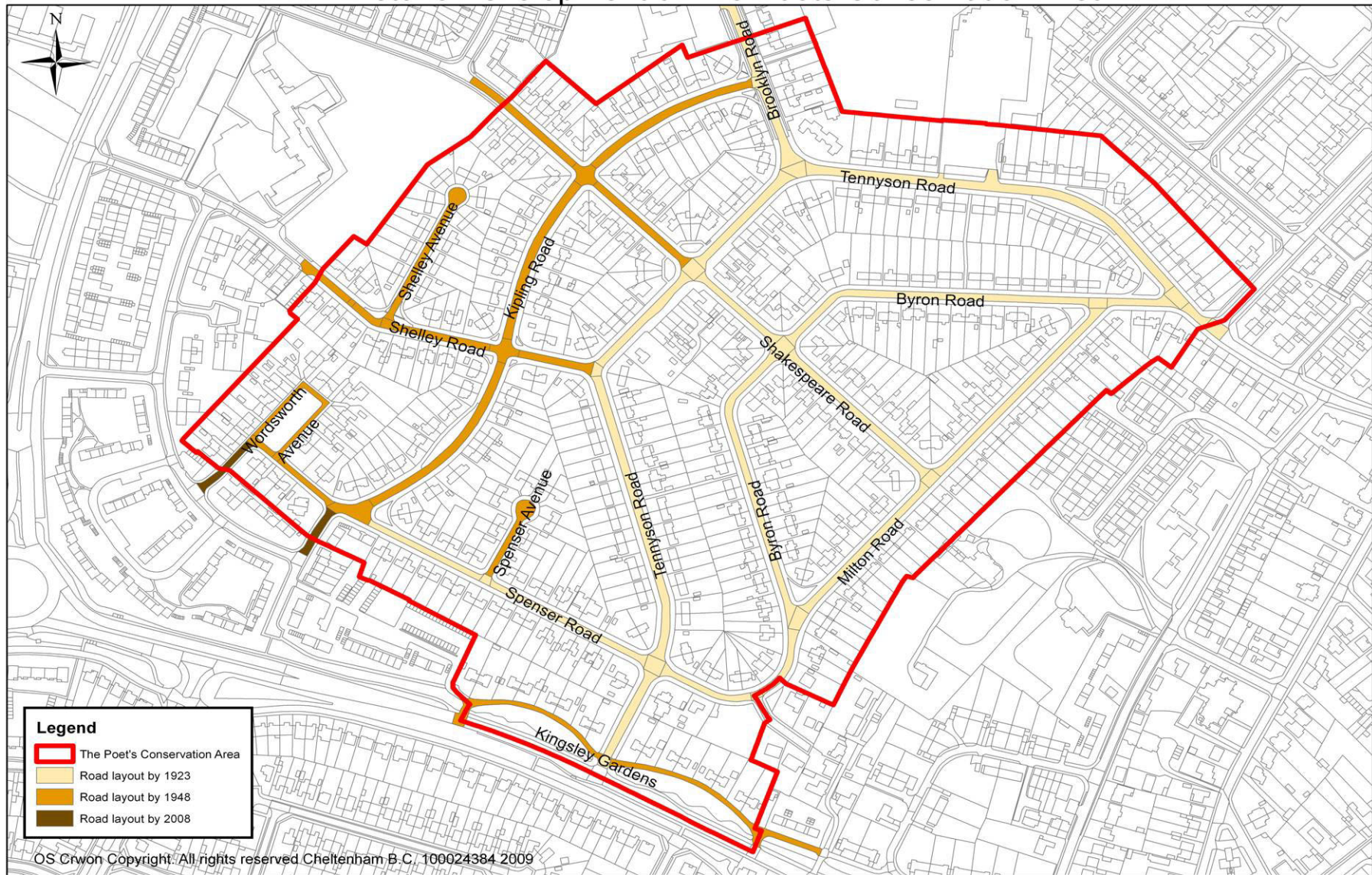


Figure 11 Historical Development of The Poets Conservation Area

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area and key views/vistas

Public and private space

- 4.1 One way in which the character of the Conservation Area can most readily be experienced, is through the quality and variety of its spaces and views. The Poets has an interesting mix of spaces and views, with some areas having contained space and shortened views whilst other areas are more open and spacious in character, with long distance views.
- 4.2 The substantial areas of private green space within the Conservation Area are formed by front and rear gardens. These gardens and private spaces are key features in contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. They contribute to the sense of space and greenery seen within St. Mark's. They are a fundamental component of the 'Garden City' aesthetic which emphasises the importance of the green environment within urban areas. Gardens form an attractive traditional front to the houses, providing them with a colourful, interesting setting and enhancing the special qualities or properties and the street. Well established front gardens are apparent in all the streets, although many have been at least partially converted to hard-standing for cars. Trees and shrubbery in front gardens helps to create privacy by screening houses from public view and public spaces. The greenery contrasts well with the striking red-brick construction of many of the houses.



Figure 12 Garden space within the Conservation Area

4.3



Figure 13 Dense hedgerow along Kipling Road acts as a distinctive boundary treatment

Houses within The Poets Conservation Area follow a strong building line, being set back from the road behind front gardens. This building line creates uniformity, rhythm and cohesion within the street. There are frequently boundary treatments in place along streets, which comprise of dense hedgerow, some walls and some fencing. However, a number of boundaries have been removed to enable vehicles to park on the front garden space of properties. The boundary treatments are generally low enough in height to allow a full

appreciation of the buildings. Dense hedgerow is a highly distinctive and attractive characteristic of the Conservation Area. Where boundary treatments are of the same form along a road or along parts of it, they create a unified and planned appearance and consistency in the street scene.

4.4



Figure 14 Shops on Tennyson Road front directly onto the pavement

In contrast, the commercial premises along Tennyson Road are set at the back edge of a wide pavement with no visible front boundary marked. Whilst this forecourt treatment is undoubtedly due to a functional requirement, it also gives the shops a visual prominence.

4.5

A particularly important and special characteristic of The Poets Conservation Area is the treatment of road junctions. Houses address the road junctions by being set either at right angles or at 45 degrees to the junction. They define the junction by their planned and formal arrangement around it. Houses positioned at junctions provide nodal points where roads inter-connect. They also create an interesting visual symmetry as houses on opposite sides of the road to one another are frequently identical. At some junctions, houses are set behind a roughly triangular shaped grass verge which enhances the visual appearance of the roads. They provide a well planned and welcoming approach into these roads.



Figure 15 Identical houses on the junction of Kipling Road with Shakespeare Road

4.6

There is a deliberate pattern and layout to the roads. They vary between being straight and sinuous. All the roads have been carefully planned to interconnect with one another to form a distinctive area. There are distant views from the majority of the roads and these create a sense of space. Shakespeare Road has its own distinctive plan form. It is a very long, straight road which runs through the middle of the Conservation Area, splitting it into two halves. The linear form of Shakespeare Road creates a tunnelling effect down the road, which is further exaggerated by large, mature street trees growing on either side. Many roads join on to it which in turn form important crossroads. Byron Road and Tennyson Road have an interesting and distinctive plan form which imitates one another. They have three distinct sides. These roads are broken up in places by other roads connecting with them. In contrast to the distance views which are presented in the majority of

the roads, Kipling Road has a gentle, curving plan form which restricts distance views in places. There are a couple of footpaths present in the Conservation Area which connect roads with one another. These footpaths have a narrow plan form and are enclosed by high, dense hedgerow and some fencing. The narrow form creates a sense of enclosure.



Figure 16 Linear plan form of Shakespeare Road



Figure 17 Part of the distinctive form of Tennyson Road

Key views and vistas

4.7



Figure 18 View from Kingsley Gardens of surrounding countryside

Views are very important in enhancing the character and appearance of The Poets Conservation Area. They create a sense of place. Throughout the Conservation Area, long distance views of the Cotswold scarp, Cleeve Hill, Leckhampton Hill and Robinswood Hill are apparent, between buildings and over rooftops. This creates a distant enclosure and an attractive visual setting for the area. The hills also frame views. Extensive views of the surrounding hills can be seen from Kipling Road, Tennyson Road, Byron Road, Kingsley Gardens, Shelley Road and Milton Road.

4.8



Figure 19 View of St. Mark's Church spire from Shakespeare Road

An attractive view of the spire of the landmark St. Mark's Church on Church Road can be seen rising above the large street trees when looking east down Shakespeare Road. The church spire is a striking feature in the street scene and provides an interesting visual contrast to the uniform building heights along the eastern stretch of Shakespeare Road. St. Mark's Church spire can also be glimpsed from Byron Road.

4.9



Figure 20 The Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses close the view down Tennyson Road

Looking in a northerly direction from the central section of Tennyson Road, the Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses close the view at the junction of Tennyson Road with Brooklyn Road. The almshouses date from 1924 and are an important and valuable addition to the historic built environment of the Conservation Area.

- 4.10 There is a key view of the tower of Christ Church, which is located in Malvern Road. This view is presented from Tennyson Road, when looking in an easterly direction. The church tower is a dominant feature which rises in the skyline, protruding above the roofs of houses on Tennyson Road. From Tennyson Road there are glimpses of St Gregory's Church spire and Eagle Tower between buildings and over roof-tops. These views connect The Poets Conservation Area with other areas of Cheltenham. The views help to establish a sense of place and Cleeve Hill provides an attractive background to these distance views.



Figure 21 View of Christ Church tower looking east down Tennyson Road



Figure 22 Glimpse of St. Gregory's Church spire between houses on Tennyson Road



Figure 23 Glimpse of Eagle Tower from Tennyson Road, looking over roof tops

Urban grain

- 4.11 Urban grain refers to the arrangement, size and pattern of buildings, plots and streets within an area. The Conservation Area has a fine urban grain – though it is by no means tight. Plots are of regular shape and dimensions and the

pattern of building layout is uniform with houses and plots set out in a steady rhythm along the street. The development is distinctive and well contained, and has a rigid structure to it. The roads and houses within the roads relate to one another, and have been carefully designed to address road junctions and open spaces.

5 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Use of area and how use creates special interest

Residential

- 5.1 As is evident from the history of the area, residential use is predominant in the area. Apart from the replaced bombed houses, the majority of the estate is as originally built in the 'homes for heroes' era.
- 5.2 The terraced and semi-detached houses tend to be either red-brick or rendered. The architectural design of many has been based on the Arts and Crafts style. In many cases individual streets are partly defined by the unique architectural detailing of buildings and style within them which creates uniformity and cohesion within streets. As well as the unifying detailing, the houses also frequently have identical sizes, scales, footprints and materials.
- 5.3 The area is not busy during the day and gives most streets a quiet and peaceful character.



Figure 24 Houses within The Poets Conservation Area

Commercial

- 5.4 The Poets Conservation Area contains a mix of commercial services, which all contribute to ensuring the continued vitality and activity within the Conservation Area, which is supplemented by the nearby Coronation Square. They include a convenience store, an off licence, a hair salon, a car parts shop, a pharmacy, a Chinese takeaway and a butcher's shop.
- 5.5 These services are still concentrated along the middle section of Tennyson Road, designed as the original commercial hub of the area in the 1930s and their function is historically important and valuable. In connection with the commercial activity, there is a degree of vehicular and pedestrian traffic movement along this road and in the surrounding area. This area consequently experiences higher noise and activity levels throughout the day. These services are regularly used and attract people from the surrounding area, as well as those living in the Conservation Area.



Figure 25 Shops on Tennyson Road

5.6



Figure 26 Spirax Sarco site on Tennyson Road

Another important commercial use within the Conservation Area is the light industrial site where Spirax Sarco is located. Although the building is positioned just outside The Poets Conservation Area, its car park is within the Conservation Area boundary, the line of which provides a consistent boundary line along this stretch of Tennyson Road. The car park and associated site generates some noise and activity level.

Road Use

- 5.7 Traffic moving through the Conservation Area is mainly local, but there is a sizeable element of rat-running and short-cuts for vehicles travelling across St. Mark's in various directions, to avoid some of the busier routes such as Princess Elizabeth Way and Gloucester Road. This appears to be particularly apparent at rush-hour times. Heightened traffic volumes during peak times places additional pressure on existing road systems. A cycle route picks up these routes, cutting between the railway station and Princess Elizabeth Way/GCHQ.
- 5.8 When the St. Mark's Estate was developed, Tennyson Road was used as a bus route which connected St. Mark's with other areas within the town. Along with Shakespeare Road, this road is still in use today as a bus route, with regular services running to and from the area.

Architecture and historic qualities of buildings

- 5.9 All the houses in The Poets Conservation Area date from the years after World War I, with the earliest houses being constructed in the early 1920s and the four bombed houses on Kipling Road re-built in the 1950s. As discussed earlier, they are built on Garden City principles.
- 5.10 Many of the houses have unifying characteristics which provides the area with a unique and highly distinct character. The houses frequently have unifying features such as their footprint, size, scale, positioning, materials and architectural detailing. They tend to follow a strong building line along the street and help to establish an identity for the street. These characteristics also identify houses as a cohesive group. The houses tend to have group value rather than value on an individual basis.

Architectural detailing

- 5.11 The Poets Conservation Area may be seen to have three distinctive and separate styles of architecture within three areas of the Conservation Area. Houses in the north part of the Conservation Area tend to be semi-detached houses which are rendered. They tend to be smaller and have less decoration than the red-brick houses found in other parts of the Conservation Area. They tend to have steeply pitched roofs. Houses on the north side of Byron Road have elements of a classical design, such as their symmetrical proportions and the use of timber sash windows in their design. These houses were constructed with steel frames, supplied by the Dorman Long Company.



Figure 27 Rendered houses on northern section of Tennyson Road



Figure 28 Houses on the north side of Byron Road

- 5.12 The central part of the Conservation Area, around Shakespeare Road and Byron Road, contains the red-brick, Arts and Crafts style houses which are strongly associated with The Poets Conservation Area as a whole. These houses are constructed from red-brick and are frequently semi-detached. These houses tend to be larger in size and have more decoration than the rendered houses. There is often attractive brick detailing around the windows and doors. These houses often have gables and sweeping catslide rooflines. This style of house can be found on the road junctions of Shakespeare Road with Kipling Road, Byron Road and Tennyson Road which run through the central core of the Conservation Area. A large number of other houses in the central and western parts of the Conservation Area have rendered first floors and brick ground floors. This style of house is particularly prominent in Kipling Road, Shelley Road. Houses in Kingsley Gardens and Wordsworth Avenue in the south of the Conservation Area are constructed in a similar style.



Figure 29 Red-brick Arts and Crafts style houses on Shakespeare Road

5.13



Figure 30 Houses in Spenser Road

The houses in the south of the Conservation Area were developed a little later and have plainer architectural detailing than the Arts and Crafts style houses. Houses in this southern part have a less distinctive identity, being a mixture of rendered houses on the southern section of Tennyson Road; red-brick houses on Spenser Road and Spenser Avenue; and houses with rendered first floors and brick ground floors on Wordsworth Avenue and Kingsley Gardens. Houses within each road do however tend to be unified in terms of their detailing. Some of the houses have low sweeping rooflines. Some houses have mansard and hipped roofs and gables are a key feature of these houses in general.

5.14 All the houses within The Poets Conservation Area are two storeys in height. There are frequently identically designed houses along the length of the road or stretches of it, which creates a consistent building line and building height and rhythm along the street.

5.15 These historic buildings forming the original estate are predominantly constructed in brick, although some of them have been finished in render. A small number of the buildings have been clad under the eaves in materials which include timber. This feature is particularly prominent in Shelley Avenue, where timber cladding can be found on the gables on the front elevations. Many front elevations have gable walls which is another distinctive characteristic of the houses in The Poets Conservation Area. The most common roofing material is clay tiles which are a unifying characteristic of the houses. Some of the roofs on the more recent houses are constructed from concrete pantiles. Some roof slopes have hipped gables. Roofs tend to have steep pitches and there are low catslide rooflines on the red-brick houses in the central and southern part of the Conservation Area. Casement windows are common on the houses although the majority have been altered and replaced over time. Some of the red brick houses have a tile creasing detail running at the head of the ground floor window.



Figure 31 Timber cladding under gables of houses on Shelley Avenue



Figure 32 Low rooflines of houses on Tennyson Road

- 5.16 A number of the houses in the southern part of the Conservation Area are rendered on their top half and are faced in brick on their bottom half.
- 5.17 The layout and form of the houses has been planned very carefully throughout the Conservation Area. The treatment of the junctions has been particularly well thought-out, with identical houses positioned opposite one another at junctions. The houses address the street and create uniformity at junctions and rhythm within the street scene. A sense of space prevails at these junctions as the houses are set back from the road within spacious gardens. The houses are semi-detached and are set at right angles to each other to front onto their respective road.
- 5.18 There are two sets of four adjoining houses on the junction of Shakespeare Road with Tennyson Road. The two rows of houses address the junction and welcome vehicular and pedestrian traffic travelling along Tennyson Road and west along Shakespeare Road. Their plan form curves around the junction and greenery at their frontage provides an attractive setting for the houses.



Figure 33 Pair of houses curving around the junction of Shakespeare Road with Tennyson Road

5.19



Figure 34 Flats on corner of Spenser Road and Wasley Road

There is a poor quality block of flats and two bungalows on the corner of Spenser Road and Wasley Road. The size, scale and footprint of this development is alien to that of the older houses in the Conservation Area. This modern development is constructed from a yellowy/brown brick which does not sit well with the dominant red-brick construction of the historic houses.

- 5.20 Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. All listed buildings due to their listed status are extremely important. There are not any statutory listed buildings within The Poets Conservation Area. The buildings within The Poets Area tend to have a collective group value rather than value at an individual level.

Index of Buildings of Local Interest

- 5.21 An Index of Buildings of Local Interest has been prepared for Cheltenham. Buildings and structures on the Index are protected by a Supplementary Planning Document which was adopted by Full Council on 28th June 2007.

There are two buildings in The Poets Conservation Area which have been placed on this Index. The Index can be viewed at http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=388&pageNumber=4

Contribution of key unlisted buildings

- 5.22 There are a number of buildings and structures which are not statutorily listed and are therefore not formally recognised nationally. However they do have qualities of age, style and materials which are locally distinct and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The unlisted buildings and structures in the table below are on the Index of Buildings of Local Interest. Please see the Index for further details about these buildings and structures.

1 & 3 Brooklyn Road (See Index of Buildings of Local Interest)



Figure 35 1 & 3 Brooklyn Road

Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses, Brooklyn Road (See Index of Buildings of Local Interest)



Figure 36 Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses, Brooklyn Road

Shops on Tennyson Road:

- The shops have historic value, being constructed around the early 1930s. The St. Mark's pharmacy, butchers and convenience store remain in their original use;
- They occupy visually distinctive buildings which are set in a prominent position on the junction of Tennyson Road and Shakespeare Road;
- The shops continue to provide important and well used local community resources.



Figure 37 Some of the key unlisted shops on Tennyson Road

Positive buildings

- 5.23 Positive buildings are identified on the Townscape Analysis Map (see Fig. 1) as those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of each Conservation Area. They often have a collective group value. In comparison key unlisted buildings tend to have individual value and qualities. They make a greater contribution to enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Local details

- 5.24 The Poets Conservation Area contains a variety of interesting historic local features which contribute positively to the character of the area and its local distinctiveness.

5.25



Figure 38 Lamp posts in Tennyson Road

There are a number of attractive 'swan-neck' street lights in the majority of the roads, positioned at the front edge of the footpath. They are valuable features in the street which enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

5.26



Figure 39 Dense hedgerow acts as a common boundary treatment within the Conservation Area

The presence of dense hedgerow is commonly used as a boundary treatment within the Conservation Area. The soft hedgerow acts as an attractive boundary treatment which is a key characteristic of The Poets area. Additionally, the greenery provides an attractive visual contrast to the red-brick construction of many of the houses. This visual contrast is particularly striking in Byron Road, Tennyson Road, Shakespeare Road and Milton Road.

5.27



Figure 40 'Byron Road' historic street sign

There are a small number of historic street nameplates still evident within the Conservation Area. They are attached to houses. Surviving examples are the Wordsworth Avenue and Byron Road nameplates.

5.28



Figure 41 Historic pillar box outside shops on Tennyson Road

An historic George V (1910-1936) pillar box is located outside the shops on Tennyson Road. It is an attractive feature in the street and enhances the historic character of The Poets Conservation Area.

Materials

Building material

- 5.29 The choice of building materials reflects the availability of materials, the social and economics pressures, and the architectural trends at the time of the construction of historic buildings. Historic buildings within The Poets Conservation Area predominantly comprise of brick, some of which have been rendered and painted. Houses frequently have red brick chimney stacks with chimney pots.

Roofing material

- 5.30 The most common roofing material on houses comprises of red clay tiles. This feature contributes to providing the houses with a distinctive character. Some of the more modern houses have concrete pantile roof constructions.

5.31



Figure 42 Shallow dormer windows on roof slopes of houses in Kingsley Gardens

The houses in Kingsley Gardens have shallow dormer windows in their roof slopes.

Ground surface material

5.32



Figure 43 Some former grass verges at the sides of pavements have been concreted over

The public highway is surfaced in tarmac with concrete kerbs at the edge of the footway. The pavements are constructed from concrete slabs. When The Poets area was originally developed, the footways comprised of gravel, which was an aesthetically more attractive surface material. Many of the grass verges at the sides of the roads

have been tarmacked over. This is clearly evident on Shakespeare Road, for example. Private drives are a mixture of brick, tarmac and gravel. The use of brick and gravel is more in keeping with, and sympathetic to, the character and visual appearance of the area.

Street furniture

- 5.33 Gloucestershire County Council, in conjunction with Gloucestershire Highways, manages the street furniture within Cheltenham. The County Council generally liaises with the Borough Council when implementing street furniture to ensure suitability etc.
- 5.34 There is relatively little street furniture within The Poets area due to its predominantly residential character. The overall lack of street furniture in the Conservation Area creates an uncluttered sense of space and enhances the suburban character of this area.
- 5.35 Street furniture which is present is generally of a suitable size and scale so as not to detract from the historic character of the area.

5.36



There are a few street signs at the various road junctions. The junction of Brooklyn Road with Tennyson Road has the greatest number of street signs, with traffic signs, road markings and pedestrian crossing points all collectively making a detrimental visual impact.

Figure 44 The junction of Brooklyn Road with Tennyson Road creates a poor setting for the Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses

- 5.37 There are a number of distinctive 'swan-neck' street lights present within the Conservation Area. They create a unifying feature within The Poets which enhances the area's character and appearance.
- 5.38 There are a significant amount of telegraph wires within the residential streets. Fortunately however, these telegraph wires are frequently screened by trees on either side of the road.
- 5.39 The bus route through the area is via Tennyson Road and there are some bus stops in this road which are of a functional design.

Contribution of trees and green spaces

- 5.40 The green environment is an essential element in the Poets garden city aesthetic. There is a large amount of green space in the area which permits

distance views, creates attractive settings for buildings and forms a key characteristic of this part of St. Mark's.

- 5.41 The green character of the Conservation Area is made up of the numerous street trees within the grass verges at the edge of the footway; the dense hedgerow which acts as a distinctive boundary treatment in the residential roads and greenery evident in the sizeable front and rear gardens of properties. The street trees were planted as part of the original scheme for the Estate.

Public green space

- 5.42 The majority of roads within the Conservation Area are tree-lined, with the size of the trees relating to the scale of the road. Many of the trees were planted at the time of the construction of the St. Mark's Estate, approximately 80 years ago, and were part of the original scheme. Consequently, many have matured and become large in size. They are particularly large and a dominant feature along Shakespeare Road, which provides the main vehicular access route through the area. This road has a linear plan form and the trees create a tunnelling effect along the road as they stretch over the road towards each other. Trees were planted in grass verges at the side of the public footway. Unfortunately, some of these grass verges have been removed and are now covered with tarmac. Tree species which have been planted as street trees include Norway maple, robinia, purple-leaved plum, Swedish whitebeam and flowering cherry trees.

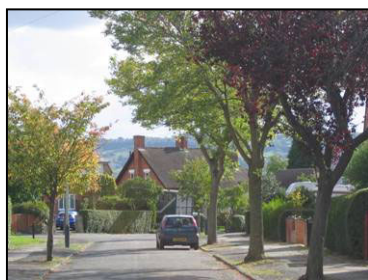


Figure 45 Street trees within The Poets Conservation Area

- 5.43 Although located outside the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, the King George V Playing Field off Brooklyn Road impacts upon its setting. The playing field forms a large area of open, green space which creates an attractive setting for the Poets Conservation Area.

5.44



Figure 46 Grass verge at the junction of Spenser Road with Kipling Road

The roughly triangular shaped grass verges at junctions provides a visually attractive feature within the street and an attractive setting for houses which front onto these junctions. Additionally, the verges help to create a sense of space.

Private green space

- 5.45 Private gardens provide a quintessentially important feature within the Conservation Area. Gardens were a key characteristic of the 'Garden City' aesthetic, and today they still make a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The philosophy behind the Garden City movement acknowledged and emphasised the importance of the natural green environment in establishing successful and sustainable communities. "...Architects Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker...planned the layout (of garden cities) carefully to use the existing landform, trees, hedgerows and other natural features of a site."³⁴ Ebenezer Howard was the founder of the garden city movement and his plans for Welwyn Garden City were that "people moving here would enjoy working and living within easy reach of the countryside and have their own garden and open space."³⁵ It is clear that both public and private green space is an essential element in achieving the garden city aesthetic.

5.46



Figure 47 Undeveloped front gardens on Wordsworth Avenue

Within The Poets Conservation Area, houses are sited in spacious plots, with the sizeable front and rear gardens. Gardens are also positioned to the sides of houses where the plot runs parallel to the road. Although front gardens have frequently been converted to hard-standing for cars, greenery screens properties which create a sense of privacy. Planting provides an attractive and colourful setting for properties.

5.47



Figure 48 Hedgerow contrasts well with the red-brickwork of houses in Milton Road

Dense hedgerow is a common boundary treatment within The Poets Conservation Area and it forms a key feature of the area. The greenery contrasts well with the red-brick construction of the houses and provides an attractive and consistent boundary treatment within the streets.

Other areas of greenery

5.48



Figure 49 Green space in Wordsworth Avenue

There is an attractive green outside Wordsworth Avenue which offers important amenity space for local residents. The green space provides an attractive setting for the surrounding houses which look on to the green. It acts as a focal point within this area. This space enhances the character and

³⁴ Homeownersales.co.uk History of the English House 1900-1930 <http://www.homeownersales.co.uk/1900.html>

³⁵ information BRITAIN Welwyn Garden City <http://www.information-britain.co.uk/towndetail.cfm?id=227>

appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

5.49




Figure 50 Wasley's Brake

An open and undeveloped space known as Wasley's Brake is positioned to the south of Spenser Road. It contains a number of trees. This green space has never been developed on and functions as an informal nature reserve. The site is enclosed on all sides by residential development.

Negative factors

5.50 Much of the Conservation Area remains largely unspoiled. However, there are some negative factors which detract from the character and appearance of the area. Negative factors are defined as buildings and spaces that detract from the character and appearance of the area but offer potential for enhancement. These can include visually prominent buildings and spaces, prominent poor detailing and inappropriate scale, design, materials or use. The identification of negative factors in this section and on the Townscape Analysis map is an indication of a need for improvement, not necessarily demolition. Negative changes and intrusions include –

- **Loss of traditional architectural features**, in particular loss of traditional casement and timber sash windows and front doors on prominent locations. There are now very few surviving original doors and windows, although other original architectural features such as chimney stacks remain in quantity;
- **Satellite dishes and large aerials**. These are harmful to the overall appearance of buildings and detract from their special historic and architectural qualities. These additions can often be seen clearly from public space which harms the character and appearance not just of individual buildings, but of the area generally;

- 

Boundary treatments have frequently been removed along the street to enable vehicles to park in their front garden space. To an extent, this creates a breakdown of the building line and creates inconsistency in the street scene. The loss of hedgerow (which forms a key characteristic of the Conservation Area) is particularly unfortunate;

Figure 51 Broken boundary line on Tennyson Road

- To accompany the loss of front boundary treatments, there has also been a **loss of garden space to hard-standing for vehicles**. This frequently involves the loss of greenery in front gardens which often

results in a poor setting for houses. The use of tarmac on driveways is particularly inappropriate and harmful;

- As well as hard standing on front gardens, there is also a significant amount of **on-street parking** evident throughout the Conservation Area. The area to the front of the houses frequently only accommodates one vehicle and consequentially additional vehicles park on the street. On-street parking creates active streets, but focuses attention and activity on the road rather than on the historic buildings and the spaces between buildings. A number of vehicles also park on the wide pavements within the Conservation Area. It is acknowledged that where front garden space has been fully retained, it is inevitable that vehicles have to park on the street; however both parking on front gardens and on-street is negative;
- There is some **traffic paraphernalia** evident on road junctions within the Conservation Area. This is particularly noticeable on the junction of Tennyson Road and Brooklyn Road, where bollards and pedestrian crossing points are positioned. These items provide a poor setting for surrounding houses, in particular the Jesse Mary Chambers Almshouses. The traffic paraphernalia is a negative feature which clutters the street scene;
- In a number of roads there is a proliferation of **overhead telephone wires**. These are unattractive;
- The **car park on Tennyson Road** which is associated with the Spirax Sarco development. The use of this space as a car-park creates a poor and unattractive feature in the street scene;
- Some of the roads within the Conservation Area suffer from **pot-holes** and are in need of attention. Byron Road is in a particularly poor condition;
- **A small number of buildings within the Conservation Area are negative** in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. They fail to respond positively to the historic context of the area and are poor additions;
- A small number of **front gardens** within the Conservation Area are **in a poor and unkempt condition**. The setting of the houses which own these gardens are negatively affected and these gardens would benefit from enhancement;
- A small number of houses have suffered from **poor, inappropriate additions**, which frequently take the form of extensions and porches. In some instances, these additions do not complement the historic building and are inappropriate to the built environment of The Poets area.

Neutral areas

- 5.51 A small number of buildings within The Poets Conservation Area neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the Conservation

Area, but have the potential for enhancement. They tend to be visually prominent within the street scene. The identification of buildings as being neutral in this section and on the Townscape Analysis map is an indication of a need for improvement, not necessarily demolition.

5.52



Figure 52 1950s houses adjacent to shops on Tennyson Road

There are five houses adjacent to the shops on Tennyson Road which appear to have been built in the 1950s. The detailing on these houses differs from the earlier houses within the Conservation Area. This is particularly noticeable due to the distinctive housing styles which are prevalent within the Conservation Area. However, the houses do follow a similar building line to the other buildings along Tennyson Road and they do not visually detract from the older buildings.

5.53



Figure 53 Houses on Kipling Road which replaced houses destroyed during World War II

A small number of houses on the east side of Kipling Road were destroyed during World War II. A row of four terraced houses in a red/brown brick construction were built to replace the original houses. A pair of rendered semi-detached houses was also built to the south. The terraced form of the brick houses contrasts with the dominant semi-detached form of the other houses in Kipling Road. The facing red brick at both ground and first floor level contrasts with the rendered first floors of the historic houses in Kipling Road. However, the terraced houses have gables and are set back from public space to follow the strong building line evident along the street.

General condition of area

- 5.54 The Poets Conservation Area is generally in a good condition. The majority of historic buildings have been well maintained with credit to their owners and occupiers, and remain in a generally satisfactory condition. It is important that the physical condition of the historic buildings continues to be well maintained in-order to retain the Conservation Area's unique character and special qualities.

Problems, pressures and capacity for change

- 5.55 The Poets Conservation Area has suffered from some incremental changes over time. Some modern day intrusions are creating problems and pressures for the Conservation Area. However, the historic built environment is still

largely prominent in the Conservation Area which provides it with its unique and distinctive identity.

- 5.56 Two problems the Conservation Area faces relate to vehicles. The first problem arises from the significant level of on-street parking the area experiences and the second problem arises from the use of some roads as rat-runs. Vehicles frequently park both on the street and on the wide pavements which creates pressure on both road systems and pedestrian space. They are harmful modern intrusions in the Conservation Area. The main roads within the area are also at times used as rat-runs. This is an inappropriate use of these roads within a distinctly residential area.
- 5.57 The Poets Conservation Area is already highly developed and built-up. The area was carefully planned and laid-out as a residential suburb after World War I. Consequently, there is little opportunity for further development within the Conservation Area. Any further development that does take place should not compromise the characteristic rhythm and placing of houses within the street.

Part 2 – Management Plan

1. Introduction

Purpose of the management plan

The purpose of Part 2 of this document is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of The Poets Conservation Area's special historic character and appearance. It has been subject to public consultation. Part 2 was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on 29th June 2009. It will be used as a basis to inform the planning and other decisions of the Council. Both the Character Appraisal and Management Plan have superseded *The Poets Conservation Area Character Statement – Key Issues and Actions* which was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2003.

The special qualities of The Poets Conservation Area have been identified in the Character Appraisal which forms the Part 1 of this document. The Management Plan draws upon the themes identified in sections 5.50 'Negative factors' and 5.51 'Neutral areas'.

The proposals are written with the awareness that, in managing Cheltenham's conservation areas, resources are limited and therefore need to be prioritised. Financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals may take longer than is desirable to implement. However, the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the conservation area in co-operation with property owners, groups and local businesses. These proposals are subject to the availability of resources, with this document forming an essential element when bidding for funds. As such, the management plan can be considered to have three broad functions:

1 a control tool - its action points will be material considerations in decision making on applications for planning and related consents;

2 a project development tool - it identifies proactive work which can address some of the negative factors identified in the Character Appraisal. The responsibility for the work falls within the remit of various agencies (primarily Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council). Many of the projects do not yet have resources (funding, staffing etc) and few are programmed. However, their inclusion in this document is important because as an adopted document, the management plan can form the basis for bids for resources and programmed works;

3 a best practice guide - it establishes a series of action points to preserve and enhance the area's character. They should be considered in the design and implementation of all projects regardless of the need for permissions and who is undertaking them (public bodies, corporate bodies or private individuals).

Both the Conservation Area Appraisal and accompanying Management Plan will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis.

Legislative background

This document satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas."

The document reflects Government guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' and policies set out in the Cheltenham Local Plan.

2. Article 4 directions

The majority of buildings within The Poets Conservation Area which, although not listed, have qualities of age, style and materials which all make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These properties are however vulnerable to future change. Some of them have already suffered from modern intrusions by way of alterations and inappropriate additions e.g. replacement windows and doors, aerials and satellite dishes.

There are a number of categories of minor works for which a planning application is not normally needed. This is known as *permitted development*.

Permitted development rights are more restricted in conservation areas and permission is required for works including:

- a. the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes;
- b. various types of cladding;
- c. erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway;
- d. certain extensions which would otherwise be permitted development.

In order to protect the character of conservation areas, legislation allows local planning authorities to remove permitted development rights in parts of conservation areas facing on to the highway or open space by using Article 4 (2) Directions. These cannot be introduced through this conservation area management plan – the Council will need to embark on a separate process. However, the Council can use this document to identify areas of concern, where it may apply Article 4 (2) Directions. If introduced, these will provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations which have the potential to adversely impact on the character of the conservation area. The effect of a Direction would be that certain alterations to unlisted residential properties which formerly did not require planning permission would need planning permission.

Works that can be controlled by an Article 4 (2) Direction include:

- a. changes to windows, doors, chimneys and roofs;
- b. the painting of previously unpainted walling;
- c. the construction of external porches;
- d. the provision and removal of walls, gates, fences and hedges.

3. Management proposals

The management proposals have been divided into two sections, comprising: Development control proposals and project proposals which relate to specific areas.

Development control proposals

1 Control of Development

It is a statutory requirement that development should preserve the setting of any adjacent listed buildings and preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the site including historic context and distinctive site features; as well as the size, scale, urban grain, layout, design, massing, height, plot width, frontage activity, landscape and materials relating to such development. This does not dictate architectural style but helps deliver proposals which respond positively to their context with high quality design. Pastiche architectural styling, in which architectural historic elements are taken from different sources without being applied accurately, is not acceptable. However that is not to say that a variety of architectural styles, materials and forms of construction are not able to give interest within the Conservation Area. Provided the new buildings are carefully designed it should be possible for them to have a harmonious and positive presence.

Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan policies CP3, CP7, BE1, BE2, BE3 and BE5 relate.

ACTION TP1: The Cheltenham Borough Local Plan requires that new development shall preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. The policies of the Local Plan set out a general approach to the consideration of planning and related applications for development in conservation areas – they cover a range of issues including:

- new buildings
- extensions
- loss of green space
- impact on views
- demolition

In applying Local Plan policies, the Council will use the assessment of character set out in the appraisal accompanying this Management Plan as a basis for establishing the important aspects of context.

2 Loss of traditional architectural features on some historic buildings

A large number of the older buildings within The Poets Conservation Area have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or details such as the replacement of original timber sash and casement

windows, the loss of original front doors and the introduction of inappropriate modern additions such as some extensions and porches. All these alterations erode local building detail and fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. The Council's document Living and Working in a Conservation Area – Some Questions You Might Ask gives advice to building owners on their responsibilities.

Cheltenham Borough Local Plan policy CP 3 relates.

ACTION TP2: In order to preserve and enhance the character and setting of The Poets Conservation Area, the Council will:

- a. Keep under review the need to bring in additional planning controls over minor works in the Conservation Area through Article 4 directions;
- b. Use its powers to enforce against unauthorised development;
- c. Encourage owners to repair rather than replace original features;
- d. Consider producing detailed design guidance and information regarding materials appropriate for use in The Poets Conservation Area;
- e. Consider producing guidance to highlight to property owners the importance of regularly maintaining gutters to ensure they function to their full potential, thus preventing ceilings and roofs collapsing due to heavy rain and blocked gutters.

In undertaking any works to buildings in the Conservation Area, owners should consider the implications for sustainable building practices. This could take a number of forms, including sustainable sourcing of materials and use of energy efficient designs. Additional information is available in the Council's supplementary planning guidance on Sustainable Buildings http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/Sustainable_Buildings_2003.pdf

3 Equipment or installations (for example satellite dishes, large aerials, small scale renewable energy schemes and other such features)

The presence of various types of equipment or installations on or around buildings, such as large aerials or satellite dishes, can detract from the character of The Poets Conservation Area and in some cases the special architectural qualities of the buildings. There is also the potential for domestic wind turbines and other elements to impact similarly. To minimise their visual impact, they should normally be positioned away from public view or prominent positions; a judgment then needs to be made between this and the optimization of energy generation.

The Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan Policy CP 3 relates.

ACTION TP3: In order to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area the Council will:

- a. Keep under review the need to bring in additional planning controls over equipment or installations in prominent locations in the Conservation Area through an Article 4 direction;
- b. Use any planning powers to ensure that equipment or installations are installed away from public spaces and views, so as not to detract from views within the street scene and the overall character of the Conservation Area. This will look at balancing the visual impact against energy generation. Where the Council has no powers, property owners are encouraged to position such equipment with regard to this guidance;

c. Consider producing guidance regarding the design and siting of renewable energy infrastructure in The Poets Conservation Area.

4 **Drives and loss of front gardens**

Very often the front gardens of buildings in Conservation Areas are essential to the character of the Conservation Area. Many front gardens within The Poets Conservation Area have been partially or totally given over to car parking. The introduction of parking can detract from the historic character of streets. This can result from the nature of the materials used, the intensity or volume of the parking or the loss of soft garden features which can cause a reduction in biodiversity and 'wildlife corridors'. The loss of front gardens in this manner is also an unsustainable form of development – increasing run off, reducing planting available for carbon fixing and encouraging car use. Brick or gravel instead of tarmac, retention of some green space and appropriate boundary treatments would reduce run-off, offer a more attractive setting for buildings and give a more sustainable approach than some current practice. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008 addresses this issue, requiring planning permission to be sought for hard surfacing on front gardens where impermeable drainage methods are used. Further guidance is given in the *Residential Alterations and Extensions* Supplementary Planning Document.* Some useful design principles can be found in guidance available from the Royal Horticultural Society.* Letchworth has similar characteristics to The Poets Conservation Area in following the 'garden city' aesthetic, and the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation has produced guidance* on the suitable design of hard standings in such areas.

Cheltenham Borough Local Plan Policy BE 7 states that 'Development which introduces or extends the parking of vehicles on forecourts or front gardens of buildings in conservation areas will not be permitted.' Where there is existing frontage parking which adversely impacts on the character and setting of the Conservation Area, a new planning application may give opportunities to renegotiate a more sympathetic solution.

ACTION TP4: The Council will seek to limit the adverse impact of on-plot front area parking by using its powers under planning and other legislation to secure the use of appropriate, traditional and complementary boundary and surface treatments which will in turn greatly reduce levels of surface water run-off.

The Council will prepare a guidance note on sustainable design of front garden parking.

**Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD* - http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=388&pageNumber=5

**Royal Horticultural Society guidance* - <http://www.rhs.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/CAAB7116-B48D-4FEB-A68A-B91730EFC07E/0/FrontGardens.pdf>

**Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation guidance* - <http://designstandards.lgchf.com/professional/download/all-area-design-standards>

5 Tree Management

The presence of trees makes a quintessentially important contribution to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. They occur throughout The Poets Conservation Area, both as street trees and as trees in private grounds. The street trees are a particularly valuable characteristic. Trees play an important role in reducing the effects of climate change through carbon fixing, absorbing carbon dioxide and providing shade. They need to be well protected and managed in the future.

ACTION TP5: Cheltenham Borough Council will continue to maintain and protect trees by implementing Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) where appropriate, and when possible replant with new trees when old trees die or when trees have otherwise been removed. Trees located in pavements or grass verges at the side of roads and which are designated as within the public highway are maintained by Gloucestershire Highways with guidance from Cheltenham Borough Council. The removal of trees from public highways within a Conservation Area or which have a TPO placed on them are required to be replaced. If the tree in the public highway does not fall into these categories (i.e. if it is not located in a Conservation Area or does not have a TPO), and is not dead, dying, dangerous or causing a nuisance, it may be removed and a replacement tree would not be required. The replacement of trees in highways is a partnership between Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire Highways.

Trees located in public green spaces within the Conservation Area are managed by Cheltenham Borough Council in accordance with best arboricultural practice.

When a trees dies or is removed from private land within the conservation area, because it was dead, dying, dangerous or causing a nuisance, the land owner has a legal duty under section 213 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to plant a replacement tree of an appropriate size and species. The duty attaches to subsequent owners of the land, although the local planning authority has powers to dispense with the duty (Section 213 (2) and (3) of the Act). The Council may require owners to fulfil their legal obligation for replanting with new trees, especially where the old trees have made a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. In appropriate circumstances, the Council may decide to serve a tree replacement notice under section 207 of the Act. When appropriate, owners who have removed or destroyed trees in contravention of the conservation area legislation, may be placed under a duty to replace the tree with another tree of an appropriate size and species at the same location.

This action will maintain the overall leafy character and appearance of the area. The creation of gaps within formal planted avenues of trees will be avoided.

6 Boundary enclosures

At present, some poor boundary treatments harm the character and appearance of buildings and the overall street scene. A significant number of front boundary enclosures have been removed to enable access for vehicles to park at the front of properties. To an extent, this causes a breakdown in the strong line of the plot boundary present along the street at the back edge of

the pavement. Increased use of traditional boundary treatments, in particular privet hedging, in appropriate locations, would enhance the historic qualities, character and appearance of the area. Additionally, the use of hedgerow contributes to biodiversity by providing wildlife habitats.

See Cheltenham Borough Local Plan Policies BE 5 and CP 3.

Further guidance on suitable boundary treatments is given in the *Residential Alterations and Extensions* Supplementary Planning Document which can be found at www.cheltenham.gov.uk

ACTION TP6: The Council will use enforcement and other powers under Section 215 of the Planning Act to secure the repair of poorly maintained boundary treatments and the reinstatement of traditional boundary treatments to enhance the historic character of The Poets Conservation Area.

The Council will require the use of contextually sensitive boundary treatments on new developments where appropriate.

7 Setting and views

The setting of The Poets Conservation Area is very important. Any proposals for development will be required to demonstrate how the setting and long distance views, into and from the Conservation Area have been taken into account. The important views are identified on the Townscape Analysis map. The Council will seek to ensure that all development serves to respect these important views.

ACTION TP7: The Council will ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from The Poets Conservation Area. These views are noted but not exclusively identified on the Townscape Analysis map. The Council will ensure that these remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and redevelopment and that due regard is paid to these views in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes in accordance with the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan.

8 Enhancement of existing buildings and land

Some land and buildings fail to contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area. These are generally modern buildings, and where opportunities arise, the Council will use its various powers to achieve improvements (including potentially enforcement and Section 215 notices).

ACTION TP8: The Council will use its powers under Section 215 of the Planning Act to achieve the enhancement of buildings and land which detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

The Council will consider the introduction of a project to encourage the enhancement of other buildings which fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Project proposals

9 Rat-running through the Conservation Area

Some of the main roads within the Conservation Area (including Shakespeare Road and Tennyson Road) are used as short-cuts by vehicles travelling from one area of Cheltenham to another. These roads also experience significant levels of on-street parking, both on roads and pavements. The area has a strong residential character and such activity is not appropriate in the Conservation Area. The use of these roads as short-cuts places additional pressure on road systems and the traffic is a negative feature in the Conservation Area.

ACTION TP9: Cheltenham Borough Council will work with and lobby Gloucestershire County Council to address the problem of rat-running within the Conservation Area. It will work with the County Council to find ways of encouraging through traffic to move around the Conservation Area rather than through it.

10 On-street parking

There are high levels of on-street parking throughout the Conservation Area, and vehicles also park on the wide pavements of some roads. The roads were not designed to accommodate high levels of on-street parking and to an extent the cars visually detract from the houses. They are a negative feature in street scenes and the issue of on-street parking in the area needs addressing.

ACTION TP10: Cheltenham Borough Council will work with and lobby Gloucestershire County Council to address the problem of on-street parking within the Conservation Area. It will work with the County Council to find ways of accommodating parked vehicles in a way which does not cause harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

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<http://www.information-britain.co.uk/towndetail.cfm?id=227>

Letchworthgc.com The World's First Garden City – About Letchworth
<http://www.leitchworthgc.com/aboutleitchworth/index.html>

Welwyn Garden City information BRITAIN
<http://www.informationbritain.co.uk/towndetail.cfm?id=227>

Useful websites

British History Online

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

Cheltenham Borough Council Local Plan

http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/local_plan_2006_1_.pdf

Cheltenham Borough Council Index of Buildings of Local Interest SPD

http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/Index_of_Buildings_of_Local_Interest.spd

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