



*Basingstoke
and Deane*

Conservation Area Appraisal

Fairfields



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Introduction

The Fairfield's Conservation Area was designated in 2004 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the area.

Having designated the Conservation Area, the Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that those elements forming its particular character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced, especially when considering planning applications.

It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities or elements that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area and to assess how they combine to justify its designation as a Conservation Area. These factors can include its historic development, the contribution of individual or groups of buildings to the streetscape, the spaces that surround them and the relationship of the built environment with the natural landscape. They can also include the less tangible senses and experiences, such as noise or smells, which can nevertheless play a key part in forming the distinctive character of an area.

The Appraisal takes the form of written text and an Appraisal Plan. In both respects, every effort has been made to include or analyse those elements key to the special character of the area. Where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted, it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value to the Conservation Area. The document is intended to be an overall framework and guide, within which decisions can be made on a site-specific basis.

This document was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane on 22 July 2004, and complements the policies of the adopted Borough Local Plan.

It has been subject to consultation with Councillors, local amenity groups, and residents. A full list of consultees, copies of their responses, and details of the Council's consideration of the issues raised during the consultation period, are available for inspection, at the Civic Offices, by appointment during normal office hours.



Fairfields Arts Centre



All Saints Church



View westwards from Southern Road towards Victoria Street

Location

The Fairfield's Conservation Area is situated immediately south and west of Basingstoke town centre and in places abuts the boundary of the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area. It is possible that some developments could affect both Conservation Areas, and it may be advisable in some circumstances to refer not only to this Appraisal, but also to that for the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area.

The area is bordered to the north by the town centre, to the south by the Southern Ringway, to the east by the War Memorial Park, and to the west by Winchester Road and Kings Furlong.

Historic Development

Settlement Origins

The Conservation Area lies on upper chalk beds capped by superficial clay-with-flints deposits. Prior to the 1786 Enclosure Act, nearly the whole area formed part of Hackwood Field and Winchester Field, two of the six open fields which lay around the town of Basingstoke. By the early nineteenth century, open land in the Conservation Area had been enclosed within four fields, Fair Field (or Fair Close), Jubilee Field, Castle Field and Davis's Close.

At this time, most of the Conservation Area was given over to the cultivation of malting barley and the grazing of horses. Brewing was an important local industry, and large numbers of horses were needed by the five Basingstoke Inns contracted to provide teams of horses for the various stagecoaches running through the town.

The roads on the western, eastern and northern edges of the Conservation Area are all ancient in origin. By far the most important was Winchester Road to the west, a turnpike road and part of the main coaching route from London to Winchester and beyond. Hackwood Road to the east, another turnpike road, formally known as Hackwood Lane, provided access to Basingstoke from the south – as did Cliddesden Road, formerly known as Cliddesden Cartway. Southern Road and Bounty Road, formerly known jointly as Back or Butt Lane, formed a local track to the south of the town, joining Hackwood Road and Winchester Road.

Until 1830, agricultural land stretched south throughout the Conservation Area and beyond. In the early 1830s a large plot of land running west from Cliddesden Road was enclosed, and The Shrubbery house was built. In the early 1970s Ring Road South was driven through the grounds of the Shrubbery and now forms the southern boundary of the Conservation Area.



Winchester Road - an ancient Turnpike Road



Bounty Road - historically known as Back Lane



Nos 4 to 8 Fairfield's Road

Settlement Development

Much of the land in the western half of the Conservation Area came into the possession of Basingstoke Corporation, and this land has been little built upon since. Housing development in the rest of the Conservation Area progressed slowly throughout the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. This resulted in an interesting mix of housing types and styles.



Mays Bounty - originally known as "The Folly"



The Recreation Ground



The empty School site circa 1880

As early as 1851 a bowling green was in existence on land between Winton House and the Manor House on Winchester Road. The first recorded cricket match at May's Bounty was in 1855. Originally known as The Folly, the ground was later re-named May's Bounty as a tribute to Lt. Col. John May, a member of the Basingstoke-based family of brewers. He bought The Folly from Thomas Burberry, inventor of gabardine waterproofing, and founder of the internationally renowned retailers, to preserve it for sporting activities. The May's Bounty land had before then been included in land proposed for development under the 1883 Fairfields Estate Plan, which resulted in the construction of many of the houses now seen in the area. Between 1906 and 2000 county cricket matches were frequently played at May's Bounty.

Before the end of the nineteenth century children were playing football on Corporation land south of Fairfields School, (as they still do) on Castle Field. The small recreation ground immediately south of Fairfields School was laid out towards the end of the nineteenth century. It was described in 'Basingstoke: the Official Publication 1911-12' as "an ornamental recreation ground, upon which has been erected a handsome bandstand, the gift of Col. May, in which promenade concerts are given. There are also tennis courts and bowling greens, for the use of which a small charge is made." The tennis courts and bowling greens are still in use, whilst the bandstand was moved to the War Memorial Park in the early 1920s.

In 1888 the Fairfields Schools opened in two buildings as the Basingstoke Board Schools. The high land on which the schools were built was 'deemed to be a healthy spot for children'.

As a result of falling school rolls in the 1980s the two schools came together as Fairfields Primary School in the larger of the two buildings and, in 1987, the Fairfields Arts Centre opened in the smaller building.

Among those educated at the Fairfields Schools were John Arlott, 'the voice of cricket', Lord Wigg, Paymaster-General in the 1964 Labour Government and George Willis, renowned local historian.

All Saints' Church, across Southern Road from the Arts Centre, was designed by the architect, Temple Moore, and built during World War I. It is claimed to be the last gothic church started in England.

Housing development progressed slowly in the Fairfields area. By the 1850s groups of dwellings lined Winchester Road, west from the town to Bounty Road. More dwellings lined Hackwood Road and Cliddesden Road for a few hundred yards, south from the town. There was also a cluster of buildings around the cattle market and fair-ground (where the Arts Centre stands today), including the row of cottages at the southern end of Victoria Street.

Apart from The Shrubbery, the rest of the Conservation Area remained in agricultural and horticultural use. There was a large orchard and garden at the junction of Hackwood Road and Southern Road, marked on later maps as the Hackwood Road Nursery. Remnants of this nursery survived until the middle of the twentieth century.

By the 1870s a row of cottages had been built on the south side of Southern Road, and Goldfield House, later known as Hillstead House, built on the east side of Cliddesden Road. By the mid-1880s the cottages in Jubilee Road were in occupation.

Throughout the 1880s, 1890s and the Edwardian Era, small to medium-sized houses were built in Beaconsfield Road (named after statesman Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield), Fairfields Road and the eastern half of Wallis Road (named after a prominent local businessman and benefactor). Meanwhile the undeveloped land on either side of Cliddesden Road was divided into generous-sized plots, and large detached and semi-detached houses built, most of which survive today.

Since the end of World War I further development in the area has been very limited. Wallis Road was extended to its present length and lined with detached and semi-detached houses. There has been some infilling on particularly large plots, and a few houses have been demolished and replaced with more modern houses or flats. For example, in the 1960s, the flats in Montague Place were built on the site of St Vincent's School which had been bombed during World War II, in the 1980s Hillstead Court on Cliddesden Road replaced Hillstead House, and in the 1990s Burberry Court on Fairfields Road replaced the May's Bounty Hotel.

Finally, construction of the Southern Ring Road in the early 1970s so blighted the Shrubbery that the house was demolished in 1992, and a footpath constructed through the grounds.



Victoria Street



The Shrubbery - demolished 1992

An Appraisal of the Conservation Area

An Overview

The essence of the Conservation Area is of rows and terraces of two-storey brick Victorian and Edwardian housing. These are intermixed with key individual buildings, and defined by public and private open spaces.

The original street pattern remains clear as laid out in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the more ancient routes forming the key extents of the area. The Conservation Area can be subdivided into three character areas, which although somewhat different in character, flow comfortably together to form one cohesive area.

The Appraisal Plan identifies those buildings, views and key features that are considered essential to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition to the listed buildings, it also includes unlisted buildings of particular individual or group value, which are indicated on the Appraisal Plan as notable. This does not undermine the value of other unmarked buildings or structures that reflect the historic development of the area without detracting from its special qualities.

Individual hedgerows have not been included on the Appraisal Plan. However, their contribution to the character of the Conservation Area should not be underestimated, and their significance is implicit in the Appraisal.

Built Form

Due to the small domestic scale of most buildings in the area, it is the group value of buildings that contributes most significantly to the overall character of the area. However it is the contributory character of individual buildings and their constituent parts that form the core values of these groups of buildings. In particular, there are a number of key buildings, both listed and unlisted, which are of individual note, and form focal points to the area.

Winchester Road and Cliddesden Road are both linear pattern developments, with a varied built form. These two roads form the north-western and eastern extents of the Conservation Area, whilst the Ring Road and Southern Road form the southern and northern boundaries.

The area between Council Road and Cliddesden Road is a largely rectilinear grid pattern development, with a strongly planned feel. However it retains a spacious feel, with moderately wide streets and a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties of varying ages. In contrast, the area west of Council Road is dominated by the open space of the May's Bounty Cricket Ground, with the linearly developed Bounty Road running down to Winchester Road.



Terraces in Winchester Road



Paired houses in Beaconsfield Road



Yard off of Jubilee Road

Winchester Road follows the course of the ancient London to Winchester road that has had a key influence on the development of Basingstoke as a market town, and in particular forms the east/west spine of the town centre.

Key Individual Buildings

There are five buildings located within the Fairfields Conservation Area that are included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

The most prominent is the Grade II listed All Saints Church, which sits on the corner of Southern Road and Victoria Street. Built in 1915 by the notable Architect, Temple Moore, it dominates the small square that it forms with the Arts Centre, Bounty Inn and Victoria Terrace. It can be seen from many parts of the town outside the Conservation Area. Its social importance is clearly fundamental to the area, and forms a focal point of local life. The ashlar stonework from which it is built, contrasts with the dominant red brick seen on most other buildings in the area, emphasising its social status within the area.

Also Grade II listed are 21 and 23 Winchester Road. No 21 is an early 19th century symmetrical brick house with a shallow-pitched slate roof. Directly adjacent and partially attached to this is no 23, which is a late 18th century house. This house is also symmetrical and brick-walled, but with a steeply-pitched tiled roof. To the rear of these are a series of historic brick and flint boundary walls.

Further west along Winchester Road are nos 33 and 35 which are also Grade II listed. A symmetrical pair of attached mid 19th century brick villas, they feature a hipped slate roof with deeply projecting eaves, recessed porches and timber bay windows to the ground floor.

No 41 (also incorporating nos 37 and 39) is a timber-framed building dating possibly from the 17th century. Its position (set back and down a sharp slope from the road), and its highly vernacular, informal character, is in contrast with the regular terraced properties opposite and adjacent.

Undoubtedly the most dominant unlisted building in the area is the former Board School, now known as Fairfields Primary School. Together with the Fairfields Arts Centre (formerly the Infant School), it forms a focal point at the centre of the area, and acts as a landmark within and beyond the immediate vicinity. The tower of the school can be seen from long distances throughout the town. Tall developments within the core area of the town could block long views of the school and of the church, and so must be carefully considered in terms of location and height.



All Saints Church



33 and 35 Winchester Road



41 Winchester Road



Fairfields Primary School



The Bounty Inn

The Bounty Inn is a significantly smaller building, but one which has a key social role in the area, and occupies a prominent location at the top of Victoria Street.

The flint and buff brick walling of no. 8 Fairfields Road is individually notable for its contrast to the red brick of almost every other building in the area. It is handsomely and individually designed and of late 19th century origin.



8 Fairfields Road

Notable Groups of Buildings

Victoria Terrace faces onto the small square area at the junction of Victoria Street, Southern Road, Council Road and Bounty Road. It is one of the earliest groups of buildings in the area – perhaps of early to mid 19th century date. Built in a simple vernacular brick and tile form, these cottages are a pleasant link to the period before the major Victorian and Edwardian developments that they preceded. The small panes of their timber sash windows contrast with the larger panes of the later developments in the area.

Nos 1 to 18 Fairfields Road are a particularly strong and uniform row of Victorian semi-detached villas. Built of red and buff brickwork, arranged in a decorative pattern around windows, doors and quoins, they provide a strong impact of uniformity leading up to the school.



Victoria Street

The corner of Cliddesden Road and Beaconsfield Road is strongly defined by a terrace of small Victorian houses, punctuated at the corner by a later shop-front. Further down Cliddesden Road is a series of larger Victorian and Edwardian properties of two and two-and-a-half storey scale.

Lining the southern side of Southern Road is a series of terraces of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, of varying character. This group is punctuated at the eastern end by nos 1 to 17 (which sit atop a high retaining wall), and at the western end by the corner shop that continues the terrace into Jubilee Road.



Nos 1 to 18 Fairfields Road

Similarly sitting atop a high retaining wall are nos 38 to 88 Winchester Road, separated into two terraces. These two terraces are among the earliest of the Victorian developments in the area, and partially date from the mid 19th century. Opposite are later Edwardian terraces of small dwellings, which show a strong uniformity of character. These are punctuated in the middle by nos 61 and 63, which despite a number of poorly considered 20th century alterations, are a smart symmetrical pair of Edwardian houses.

Other Features of Architectural or Historic Interest

A number of properties in the area retain their dwarf brick boundary walls. Some include the brick gate piers that were common in the area prior to the Second World War, when the majority of metal railings were requisitioned by the Government. These remnants of varying completeness are important to the setting of the area, and should be retained and reinstated wherever possible. Particularly important examples of boundary walls and railings can be seen surrounding the school and Arts Centre, and along Bounty Road fronting properties and defining the northern edge of the May's Bounty Cricket Ground. The high retaining walls on the south-eastern side of Winchester Road and at the eastern end of Southern Road are also strong townscape features.

The Character and Importance of Public and Private Spaces

The Fairfields Conservation Area features a number of public and private open spaces that help in shaping the character of the area.

By far the largest open spaces are May's Bounty Cricket Ground and the Castle Fields sports pitches. Separated from each other by a line of mature trees, these form a large portion of the south-western part of the Conservation Area, and provide a pleasant contrast to the urban development of the rest of the area.

At the eastern end of Southern Road is a small public garden on the corner with Hackwood Road opposite the Festival of Britain gates into the War Memorial Park. The Park in turn, although not within the Conservation Area, provides a quiet western backdrop to the urban environment of most of the Fairfields area.

The grounds of The Shrubbery (demolished 1992) are now an area of urban woodland running along the back of Wallis Road between Cliddesden Road and Castle Fields. This area of green space provides a valuable buffer and visual stop between the Conservation Area and the Southern Ringway.

The Bowling Green and tennis courts on the southern side of Fairfields Road are a well-used public facility and an interesting contrast to the surrounding linear street pattern and the wider open spaces of Castle Fields and May's Bounty Cricket Ground.

A number of larger properties in the area, in particular along Cliddesden Road, and to the western end of Wallis Road, sit within comparatively large plots. Although largely screened from public view, these private



Bounty Road - dwarf brick and flint boundary walls



The Pavilion at May's Bounty



May's Bounty



18 Cliddesden Road - red brick walling



Timber sash windows and slate roofing in Winchester Road



Trees lining Fairfield Road

spaces provide a pleasant contrast to the tightness of the otherwise prevailing small plots of the area. This is evident from the sudden enlargement of spacing between buildings.

Building Materials and Features

The area is characterised by largely red brick walling and both slate and clay tile roofs. Flint is used for a number of boundary walls and as the main walling material on one house. Buff bricks are used in moderation as dressings to flint or red brick, on both houses and boundary walls. Most historic buildings in the area retain their timber sash or casement windows.

There is only one timber-framed house in the area, at 41 Winchester Road, although this is not publicly evident due to its external rendering.

Given the domestic scale and simple provincial architecture of the buildings in the Conservation Area, historic joinery such as sash windows, doors and doorcases are often the features that define the appearance of properties. Where buildings are in close-knit, continuous street frontages the relationship of these features, and their historic arrangement becomes a significant factor in the overall special character of the area.

Although some groups of buildings have been modernised, the use and overall effect of inappropriate replacement windows and doors, and concrete roof tiles is quite limited. Similarly, few properties have been painted or rendered from their originally bare brick appearance.

The Importance of Green Spaces, Trees, Hedges and other Natural Features

Natural or planted vegetation is an important element of most Conservation Areas. Despite its urban location, the Fairfield Conservation Area features a number of quality mature trees, and a great deal of general vegetation. Although of lesser individual value, these have a group effect which shapes the form and appearance of individual spaces and of the area as a whole.

The area around the May's Bounty Cricket Ground is strongly influenced by the rows of mature trees separating it from Bounty Road and Castle Fields. Similarly, the mature trees running along the southern side of Fairfield Road (opposite the school), screen the Bowling Green from the road, and give it a strong sense of enclosure.

Bounty Road is lined on its southern side by well-spaced trees of varying size and character, providing intermittent views across the cricket ground, and contrasting with the built character of the northern side of the road.

As mentioned earlier, the War Memorial Park has a marked impact on the eastern part of the Conservation Area, despite its location within the adjoining Basingstoke Town Conservation Area. This is in no small part due to the quality and extent of mature trees and other vegetation within the park.

The southern edge of the Conservation Area is largely defined by the formation of a strong backdrop of mature trees on the embankment of the Ring Road.

The Setting of the Conservation Area

The urban location of the Conservation Area dominates its setting and reflects the influences on its historical development.

To the north of Southern Road is the town centre, which undoubtedly has a direct association with the area, and has shaped its development. As part of the Central Area Action Plan, it is hoped that the relationship of the Town Centre with the Fairfields Conservation Area will be greatly improved.

To the west and north of Winchester Road are areas of 20th century suburban housing, which are fortunately quite well-defined from the Conservation Area.

There are further areas of suburban housing to the south and south-west, although these are greatly separated from the Conservation Area by the Ring Road, the embankment of which forms a clear southern visual boundary.

The War Memorial Park is on the eastern-most boundary of the Conservation Area where it directly abuts the boundary of the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area. With direct links into the Park, the mature trees and the boundary wall of the Park that runs along Hackwood Road, there is a clear definition between the two Conservation Areas.



Trees lining the Southern side of Bounty Road



View out of the Conservation Area north towards the Town Centre



Wallis Road



*Bounty Road looking towards
Victoria Street*



24 Winchester Road

Areas of Archaeological Potential

Every settlement contains archaeological evidence of its origins and development, of the economy and industry of the community and of the lives and lifestyles of past inhabitants. It is in the Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP) that such archaeological remains are most likely to be encountered. Where a development is proposed, the impact it might have on these remains is a material consideration within the planning process. This may, from time to time, result in the need for archaeological recording in the case of some developments.

There are no known major archaeological sites within the Fairfields Conservation Area, as recorded by the Hampshire County Council Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (as of February 2004).

Conservation Area Planning Controls

The following controls apply within the Conservation Area in addition to normal planning controls:

- Conservation Area Consent is normally required for the demolition of buildings or structures over a certain size within a Conservation Area.
- The Council must be given six weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to, cut down or uproot any trees over a certain size in the Conservation Area.
- Planning applications that, in the opinion of the Borough Council, would affect the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area, must be advertised and the opportunity given for public comment. This may include proposals outside the Conservation Area that nevertheless affect its setting.

Statutory policies relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are set out in the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan. These policies reflect the statutory duty of the Local Planning Authority to have special regard for the preservation of historic buildings or their settings, and to promote the enhancement of areas designated as being of special interest.

These policies seek to ensure that particular regard will be paid to the scale, height, form, materials, and detailing of proposals, including boundary treatments and other features of note. In order to consider the implications of development, and given the detail required, the Borough Council will normally require proposals within the Conservation Area to be submitted in the form of a full, and not outline, application.

The Borough Council's Conservation Officers are available for advice and information on all matters relating to development proposals in a Conservation Area.

Article 4(2) Direction

In addition to the above controls, the Borough Council has made a Direction under Article 4(2) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. This means that the following work requires planning permission:

- The replacement of windows and doors to elevations visible from a public space;
- The erection of a satellite antenna on an elevation visible from a public space;
- The external rendering or other cladding of an elevation visible from a public space;
- The painting or other coloured coating of masonry not currently painted, to elevations visible from a public space;
- The replacement of a roof covering with a dissimilar material;
- The insertion of rooflights to roof slopes visible from a public space;
- The demolition of chimneys;
- The demolition or erection of boundary walls or other means of enclosure;
- The construction of a hard-standing;
- The demolition or erection of buildings of any size.



The effect of window replacement



Alleyway between Cliddesden Road and Beaconsfield Road

Grants

The Borough Council provides grants for various types of work. These include Historic Building Grants, Environment and Regeneration Grants, and Village and Community Hall Grants. Leaflets are available explaining the purpose and criteria for each grant scheme. It is advisable to contact the Council's relevant key officer for further information on any grant scheme.



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Conservation Area Appraisal

Fairfields

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Produced by Graphics/Corporate Communications. October 2004