

Heritage Assets Review Crawley Borough Council



Client
Crawley Borough Council

Date:
December 2020

Version	Date	Author	Description of changes
1.0	13/05/2020	Megan Lloyd-Regan	Initial Draft
1.2	10/12/2020	Maria Kitts, Tim Murphy	Final Draft
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1. Introduction

This document provides an overview of the review of certain heritage assets within Crawley. These include non-designated heritage assets, i.e. Locally Listed Buildings, Areas of Special Local Character, and Historic Parks and Gardens. Four of Crawley's Conservation Areas were also reviewed. The non-designated heritage assets are currently identified in Policy HA5 (Locally Listed Buildings), Policy HA3 (Areas of Special Local Character), and HA6 (Historic Parks and Gardens) of the draft 2020 Local Plan.

Project Aims

Crawley Borough Council commissioned Place Services to review the Council's approach to their Local Heritage List to determine whether these assets merited inclusion, and to undertake a review of four Conservation Areas.

This project will assist Crawley Borough Council in making clear and current information on non-designated heritage assets accessible to the public and thereby provide greater clarity and certainty for developers and decision-makers. It will also ensure that information within the Conservation Area Statements is appropriate and boundaries are robust.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of this project. It outlines the methodology and findings of the review of both non-designated heritage assets and the Council's current approach in light of current national policy and best practice guidance. It establishes whether the existing local heritage lists are a robust means of identifying and conserving such assets in Crawley, and what scope is there for improvement.

This report also provides an overview of the methodology and findings of the review of the Conservation Areas: Brighton Road, Hazelwick Road, St Peter's and the High Street.

Consultation and adoption

The Local Heritage List and any updates to it are subject to a required period of public consultation before adoption by the Council, in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2. Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Three groups of non-designated heritage assets were reviewed during this project. A review of the existing Locally Listed Buildings was undertaken, and an additional number were reviewed for addition. Further assessment was also undertaken to the Historic Parks and Gardens and Areas of Special Local Character to ensure a consistent approach to all non-designated heritage assets in the Borough. The reports pertaining to each of the heritage assets are included as the following Appendices:

- Appendix A1: Local Heritage List: Buildings
- Appendix A2: Building assessed but not recommended for adoption.
- Appendix B1: Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Parks and Gardens
- Appendix B2: Assessment of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Parks and Gardens
- Appendix C1: Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Areas of Special Local Character
- Appendix C2: Assessment of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Areas of Special Local Character

The methodology for this project follows Historic England Advice Note 7: Local Heritage Listing (2016), which sets out proposed methods and criteria for assessing Local Heritage Lists and locally listed non-designated heritage assets. This work considers the previous approach that has been used by the Council in the identification of potential assets and their assessment for inclusion in the Crawley Local Heritage List. The methodology comprised of the following sections:

Stage 1: Review of Policy and Guidance

A review of current national and local policy guidance which relates to the establishment of Local Heritage Lists and the assessment and review of local heritage assets was undertaken. This included national guidance by Historic England and any local guidance which is relevant to Crawley Borough Council's parks and gardens.

Stage 2: Review of Current Approach

A review of the Council's current approach to local heritage assets was undertaken. This considered the Council's approach against the main phases identified below:

1. Identification of potential assets;
2. Assessing suitability of assets for inclusion in the local list;
3. Ratification of the proposed list;
4. Publication of Local Heritage List; and
5. Review and updating.¹

This section will outline the current approach and highlight how far it reflects the scope and range of non-designated heritage assets in Crawley, any inconsistencies between the approach and national policy and guidance, and opportunities to strengthen the approach.

Stage 3: Defining the Scope and Criteria of the Local Heritage List

This section will draw from the findings of Stage 1 and recommendations identified in Stage 2 to propose a thorough and robust approach to the Local Heritage List.

Stage 4: Review of Current List and Nominations

A review of the existing assets identified within Crawley's Local Plan, and nominated sites, was undertaken. This review identified how far the current list is in line with the findings of Stages 1-3 (above), and therefore whether the list is currently in line with national policy and guidance. It will identify areas where there is scope to strengthen the list on a case-by case basis, highlighting sites where changes might be required to ensure a robust approach. This may include recommendations for boundary reviews, or further assessment of sites to determine their suitability for inclusion on the local list.

¹ Historic England Advice Note 7: Local Heritage Listing (2016)

Stage 5: Conclusions

This section will collate the findings and recommendations of the review to identify where there are opportunities to strengthen the Local Heritage List. It will propose any scope required for further assessment or changes to the current list.

3. Conservation Areas

A review of four of the Borough's Conservation Areas (Brighton Road, Hazelwick Road, St Peter's and High Street) was undertaken which considered the content and suitability of the existing Conservation Area Statements, provided an overview of their significance, and assessed the appropriateness of the existing boundaries, key views and recommendations for management.

The assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised Historic England Advice Note 1 for Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (Second Edition 2019) and Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).

The report includes the following:

- Desk-based research (including a review of documentary and online sources, existing Conservation Area Statements, photographs and historic maps);
- A walk-over survey of the Conservation Areas and their surroundings;
- Assessment of the existing Conservation Area Statements;
- Assessment of changes to the Conservation Areas and their significance; and
- Recommended boundary changes and management proposals.

The assessment concluded that the St Peters and High Street Conservation Areas would benefit from updated Conservation Area Statements. Updates and further detail could also be added to the more recent Conservation Area Statements for Brighton Road and Hazelwick Road Conservation Areas, particularly in regard to key viewpoints and management proposals.

The boundaries of the Conservation Areas and suggested boundary amendments were assessed. It is recommended that the Hazelwick Road Conservation Area boundary is not amended as it adequately protects the special interest of the area. Small boundary enlargements are recommended to Brighton Road, St Peters and High Street Conservation Areas. These recommendations considered paragraph 186 of the NPPF which states:

When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

The report is included as the following:

Appendix D: Conservation Area Review

4. Conclusions

Each of the reports (appendices A – C) have comprised:

- A review of policy and guidance, including current national and local policy guidance which relates to the establishment of Local Heritage Lists and the assessment and review of local heritage assets;
- A review of the Council's current approach to local heritage assets;
- Defining of the scope and criteria of the local heritage list in relation to the specific type of asset (ie building, area or park and garden); and
- A review of current assets and nominations, including recommendations for boundary reviews, or further assessment of sites to determine their suitability for inclusion on the local list against robust criteria.

Local Buildings

The existing Local List of historic buildings was completed in 2010 and prior to existing guidance. The existing local list was reviewed, and two issues were identified. Firstly, there was no detailed methodology and secondly, the information in the individual listing descriptions was not considered sufficiently detailed.

A new criteria was created (outlined in Appendix A) which was informed by Historic England's 2016 guidance. Seventy-two buildings were initially assessed and of these, fifty-eight had previously been included in the Crawley Local Building List (November 2010). An assessment was then made of further nominations put forward of those buildings identified during survey which were considered to be of merit and worthy of inclusion within the Local List.

Appendix A1 outlines the updated methodology and the buildings recommended for adoption. These include buildings in the existing adopted 2010 list (with enhanced detailed designation forms) and proposed additions.

Appendix A2 includes nominated buildings which have been assessed but are not recommended for adoption.

Recommendations arising from this project include the adoption of Appendix A1. It is further recommended that, using the methodology in Appendix A1, a borough wide consultation process is undertaken to identify any additional candidates which can then be assessed for inclusion. It is recommended this is undertaken in the next 18-24 months.

Historic Parks and Gardens

The review of Historic Parks and Gardens (Appendix B1) and the approach of the Council found that a thorough assessment of the historic development and significance of the parks and gardens in Crawley had been undertaken, through the work of the Sussex Gardens Trust and their report in 2013. However, it was been identified that without a criterion for assessment, there was an opportunity to strengthen this work.

A criteria was established using Historic England's guidance on Local Heritage Lists, which notes a variety of values by which a site can be assessed, including: Age; Rarity; Aesthetic Interest; Group Value; Archaeological Interest; Archival Interest; Historical Association; Designed Landscape Interest; Landmark Status; and Social and Communal Value. Further guidance on registered parks and gardens offers scope to create sub-criteria which are specific to this type of heritage asset within Crawley also.

Therefore, to ensure consistency in the Council's approach and that the full value of the parks and gardens is realised, it was recommended that a criterion by which *all* non-designated heritage assets are assessed is utilised. This will inform definitively and transparently whether a building, feature, area or historic park and garden is of high enough value to be included within the local heritage list.

The assessment of Historic Parks and Gardens using an agreed criterion is included in Appendix B2. This assessment concluded that the following parks merit inclusion on the list, due to the reasons outlined:

- Broadfield Park: Historic designed elements of the park and its phasing are legible; however, some management of planting may be beneficial to preserve historic and aesthetic value.
- Goff's Park: A number of original features of the nineteenth and mid-twentieth century have been lost, however the park in its entirety is a good example of the phased development of green spaces using New Town principles and is continuing to be developed and used today by the local community.
- Land South of St Nicholas' Church: Due to the nature of the site and Coronavirus regulations at the time of survey, it was not possible to undertake a site visit of this park. Assessment was undertaken, where possible, from surrounding areas of public realm; however, overall condition could not be evaluated. As a result, it is important to note that future applications must adhere to NPPF Paragraph 189 and describe the significance of the historic park and garden, along with any heritage assets within it that are affected, submitting an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- Memorial Gardens: While some historic features have been lost, the park has retained many historic elements which contribute to its significance and have maintained its sense of identity through continued sympathetic development.
- Tilgate Park: The park is extensive and well maintained, and of aesthetic, historic and social value.
- Worth Park: The park has retained a high proportion of historic features and is well maintained, and of good aesthetic, historic and communal value.

Areas of Special Local Character (ASLCs)

The review of the existing ASLCs and criteria found that, although the previous assessment of the areas is thorough and the current criteria is well defined and specific, the rigidity of the criteria prevents the recognition of other potential areas with local heritage interest in the Borough. A new criteria was created (outlined in Appendix C1) which was informed by Historic England's 2016 guidance, permitting a broader approach to the designation of ASLCs and enabling a Borough-wide review of potential ASLCs, focusing on elements of Crawley's heritage which are currently under-represented in the designation, including New Town development and residential areas of a higher density.

The review of the six existing ASLCs found that the designations were robust and appropriate, but that the areas would benefit from further assessment in line with the suggested new criteria. Some boundary amendments were recommended to better reflect the special character of the areas. The review of the nominated ASLC (New Town Centre) found that the suggested boundary was not appropriate for ASLC designation, but that it could be beneficial to assess a more compact boundary, omitting modern infill development and areas of unsympathetic change.

A further detailed assessment of the existing ASLCs and five areas nominated for potential ASLC designation was undertaken against the proposed new criteria (Appendix C2). This assessment also included the recommended revisions to the ASLCs' boundaries as suggested within the initial review and concluded that the following areas (both existing and proposed) merit designation as ASLCs:

- Albany Road
- Blackwater Lane
- Church Road
- Goffs Park Road
- Milton Mount Avenue
- Mount Close
- Northgate Neighbourhood Centre
- Rusper Road
- West Green Neighbourhood Centre

The assessment concluded that the Barnwood area (currently part of the Mount Close & Barnwood ASLC) did not warrant ASLC designation due to unsympathetic alterations in the area which have eroded its character.

The assessment recommended that two nominated areas (Gossops Green Neighbourhood Centre and the New Town Centre) could be considered for conservation area designation due to their special interest. It was not considered appropriate to designate these areas as ASLCs due to their greater special interest.

The findings of the assessment, particularly in relation to Barnwood and the New Town Centre, differed from the conclusions of the initial review. This was due to additional research and detailed assessment against the suggested new criteria, as well as the revision of boundaries.

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6. Appendices

Appendix A1: Local Heritage List: Buildings

Appendix A2: Building assessed but not recommended for adoption.

Appendix B1: Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Parks and Gardens

Appendix B2: Assessment of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Parks and Gardens

Appendix C1: Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Areas of Special Local Character

Appendix C2: Assessment of Non-Designated Heritage Assets: Areas of Special Local Character

Appendix D: Conservation Area Review

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