

Willett Estate Conservation Area Character Statement



Designated: 1989

Area: 27.6410 Hectares 68.3009 Acres

Article 4 Direction: None

Introduction:

The purpose of this document is to describe the history and character of this conservation area in order to provide a context for policies contained in the Development Plan, which will guide future development and enhancements in the area. This statement was approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 18th February 1997.

Historic Development of the Area:

The area takes its name from William Willett, a builder of national repute, responsible for many of the fine houses built in the town centre during the last quarter of the 19th Century, however not all the buildings in this Conservation Area were built by Willett.

The Character of the Area:

The character and appearance of the conservation area which it is important to preserve or enhance, is derived in the main from large bay fronted, detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, set in spacious tree lined streets, behind walls with railings. The predominant building materials are yellow/cream gault brick and slate, however a significant number are rendered, and there is a peppering of red brick. The brick elevations are relieved by a variety of details, and the extensive use of decorative and moulded bricks with a floral motif is a particular feature in the finest Willett houses. Some have impressive porches, and tiled entrance paths and tiled or stone steps are common.

Individual streets have particular features of interest, for example on the east side of Norton Road there are steep pitched entrance porch roofs, and remnants of tuck pointing can be found. Some properties in Tisbury Road feature ornate moulded entrance ways and small round headed dormers are common. In Eaton Gardens modern blocks of flats intersperse original yellow brick detached houses set in large front gardens. The ornate properties in Cromwell Road display examples of overscaled attic storeys replacing traditional dormers.

Wilbury Road contains a wide but impressive variety of styles and materials. Of note are the lead entrance canopies with timber fretwork, and ornate Willett properties with grand swept entrance steps. Selborne Road features pierced rendered boundary walls, and properties close to the road. The Drive displays a mixture of styles and materials with some individually striking examples. At the northern end of The Drive the traditional spacing and scale of buildings which it is important to preserve has been disrupted.

Wilbury Grove, Cambridge Grove and Eaton Grove, (the latter approached through an attractive archway) are mews that originally served the properties in the area. Many granite sett road surfaces remain intact. The finest groups of Willett houses are to be found in Eaton Road, Eaton Gardens, Cromwell Road, and Wilbury Road.

The following properties are covered by the Willett Estate Conservation Area:

Cambridge Grove

Cromwell Road : north side from no. 2 east to Palmeira Hotel (No. 71), south side from Eaton Gardens east to Wilbury Road incl.

Eaton Gardens

Eaton Grove

Eaton Road: south side from No. 8 east to Salisbury Road, north side from Eaton Court east to Wilbury Lodge inclusive, excluding The Drive Conservation Area.

Norton Close (south end)

Norton Road

Salisbury Road: Nos. 4-27

Selbourne Road

The Drive: From Nos 7 & 8 north to Cromwell Road, excluding The Drive Conservation Area.

Tisbury Road

Wilbury Grove

Wilbury Road

The Following Properties are Listed Buildings:

Cromwell Road: Nos. 2-36 (consec)

Eaton Road: Nos. 16,18 & 18a

Eaton Gardens: Nos. 3, 8 & 14

The Drive: No. 16