

Conduit Head Road Conservation Area Appraisal



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1 Introduction

Designated in 1984, Conduit Head Road is one of seventeen Conservation Areas in Cambridge. This appraisal provides information about the area's architectural merit and historic development and seeks to define the special interest of the area.

1.1 Method

The Conservation Team of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service analysed the character of Conduit Head Road and the surrounding area, comparing it with the 2009 appraisal, and set out the essential characteristics of the location and how it might be protected and improved.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

This document aims to:

- provide a clear direction to guide future development in the area
- identify the features which contribute to the special character of the area, and those which need to be improved
- conserve the positive features of the area and target resources to those aspects in need of improvement
- raise awareness and interest in the area
- ensure better co-ordination of Council wide activities in the area
- raise awareness of other public sector agencies about the area's special character

1.3 Location

Conduit Head Road is located approximately one and a half miles to the north-west of Cambridge City Centre. Situated along the principal route of Madingley Road (A1303), the area, despite the development of Eddington to the north-west, is located within a semi-rural landscape.

The area encompasses Conduit Head Road, Bradrushe Fields, number 34 Madingley Road, and 12 Lansdowne Road. An area known as the 'Wilderness' is included to the west of the area.

The University Department of Earth Sciences and University Observatories are located to the east of the Conservation Area, and a number of University Laboratories and the School of Veterinary Medicine are located across Madingley Road to the south. Farms and farmland are located to the north, whilst Lansdowne Road, and Madingley Road Park and Ride are set to the west.

2. The Planning Policy Context

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to designate as Conservation Areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

The special character of Conservation Areas means that the control of development is stricter than in other areas. Therefore new buildings and the spaces around them must preserve or improve the character of the area. The siting, scale, height, form, details and building materials will all need to be carefully chosen.

2.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Chapter 16 on conserving and enhancing the historic environment discusses heritage assets which include Conservation Areas.

2.2 Local Policies

The Cambridge Local Plan (2018) sets out the current policies and proposals for future development and land use to 2031. A joint plan with South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, is being developed.

Policy 61 outlines specific requirements for development within, or affecting the setting of, or impact on views into and out of, Conservation Areas. Cambridge's Conservation Areas are relatively diverse. The City Council is committed to the systematic appraisal of its Conservation Areas and these Appraisal documents define the individual area's special character and include guidance for preserving and enhancing this.

The following Local Plan designations are relevant to the Conservation Area:

- Conduit Head Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance
- Public Transport Route (Maddingley Road A1303)

3. Summary of Special Interest

Conduit Head Road Conservation Area comprises a 20th century residential development, built between 1914 and the 1990s. The buildings are generally large, detached properties, set in sizeable, mature gardens. The area developed in a piecemeal fashion, displaying a variety of different architectural styles. A number of Modernist houses, built in the 1930s and 1960s, are of particular note. These buildings provide a high quality and progressive architectural character in the area.

The Conservation Area retains a significant amount of mature vegetation. This, coupled with the dog-legged and quiet nature of the private road itself, acts to provide a sense of enclosure and seclusion in the area, with few long views available and the majority of buildings screened from the road.

The area includes five Listed Buildings and two buildings identified as Buildings of Local Interest, as described in Appendix I.

Additionally, many trees in the area are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and the area known as the 'Wilderness', to the west of the Conservation Area and to the rear of properties along Conduit Head Road, has a group Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The TPOs in the Conservation Area are shown in Appendix II.

3.1 General Character

There are two distinct character areas within the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area:

- The area along **Conduit Head Road** in the west of the Conservation Area, comprising large, high quality architect designed properties.
- The area of **Bradrushe Fields**, and the similar 1990s housing along Conduit Head Road to the east.



Salix, 1934 by HC Hughes for Dr Oliphant, grade II listed

The Conduit Head Road area comprises high quality 20th century housing set in large gardens with high levels of vegetation. The area includes several Modernist houses, including the three 'White Houses' of Willow House, Salix and White House. The houses are stepped back from the roadside behind tall hedges and mature vegetation, providing a sense of privacy and seclusion to the area. Many of the properties back on to an area identified as the Wilderness (though known by the locals as the 'gravel pit' after brick making), creating an interesting spatial arrangement emphasising the close relationship between Modern Movement architecture and its 'quasi-wild' surroundings.



Bradrushe Fields, 1990s housing development

The area of Bradrushe Fields is of a different character. Designed as one development, all the buildings share a similar architectural style, with brick elevations and pitched tiled roofs. Most of the houses are set back from the road, however, in contrast to the majority of the area, the boundaries between road and house are low, or non-existent. This means that the houses create a much stronger presence along the streetscape.

3.2 Landscape Setting

Private gardens form a large constituent of the Conservation Area, and as such, mature vegetation and trees are a significant part of the character of the area. Much of Conduit Head Road is tree-lined with a row of trees set along the road to the south, and more informal garden boundaries, included several tall beech hedges, to the north. The Wilderness to the west also adds significantly to the green space in the area. The vegetation is higher, and of a more varied character than that found in the surrounding area and includes a number of ornamental varieties.

A high level of vegetation, coupled with the relatively flat topography of the area has created a secluded, inward-looking sense of enclosure. Views are directed along the tree-lined portion of Conduit Head Road, from the junction with

Madingley Road and out of the Conservation Area along Madingley Road itself. Views into the area are similarly restricted, with the tree line of the designated area visible within the surrounding landscape.

3.3 Historical Development

Throughout most of its history, the area between Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road has been in agricultural use. Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's 1743 'Northwest Prospect of the University and Town of Cambridge', depicts the view from the 'Gravil Pitts near Trinity Head Conduit' towards the town centre. The view shows the present Madingley Road, with open land, including some distinctively arable land, to either side.

The first major development in the area was the construction of the University Observatory in 1823. The Observatory is shown on the 1886 Ordnance Survey (OS) map to the east of the present Conservation Area. A number of model farms are located in the wider area, with a pub named 'Man Loaded with Mischief', now demolished, set within the Conservation Area itself. Two further buildings and an area of ponds are located beside the pub, which are likely to relate to brick manufacture. The area displays a distinctive field boundary pattern, with boundaries defined by tree planting. The map also identifies the presence of the medieval Trinity Conduit Head, located to the north-east within the Conservation Area boundary.

Madingley Rise, now part of the BP Institute, was built in 1890 by Marshall & Vickers for HT Newall who was Professor of Astronomy and therefore the reasoning behind the location near to the Observatory. By 1925 the current Conduit Head Road had been laid out, with Grithow Field, now Conduit Rise, and Conduit Head constructed to the north of the area.

Development continues along Conduit Head Road in a piecemeal fashion. By 1939 the public house and other structures on Madingley Road have been demolished. In the latter half of the 20th century Lansdowne Road was constructed to the west, and Bradrushe Fields was developed in the 1990s, replacing a number of earlier structures and open space in this area.

3.4 Archaeology

The Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) lists a number of excavations and locations of archaeological artefacts, including those at Vicar's Farm and University Farm, which provide evidence for prehistoric activity in the area. Excavations at Vicar's Farm to the south-west of the Conservation Area, for example, found Mesolithic/Neolithic artefacts, and a number of Iron Age pits.

The proposed route of a Roman road is shown on the modern Ordnance Survey (OS) map to the southwest of the site, and a number of artefacts have been found to support Roman activity in the area. These include a Roman settlement

and two associated cemeteries at Vicar's Farm, found during excavation in 1999-2000. Further Roman burials were also found at Gravel Hill Farm.

A probable Anglo-Saxon burial was discovered to the north of the area during gravel digging in 1903, and provides the only evidence recorded on the HER for Anglo-Saxon activity in the area.

Trinity Head Conduit was constructed in 1327 to bring water from its source to the Franciscan Friary formerly on the site of Sidney Sussex College. It was held jointly by the friars and scholars until the dissolution of the monasteries, at which point it was granted to Trinity College in its entirety. The supply was, until recently, used to feed the fountain in the Great Court, built in 1601-2. The Head of the Conduit is located in the east of the Conservation Area and is currently housed within a small ashlar building assumed to have been built by the Franciscans. An area of ridge and furrow has been identified by aerial photography to the northwest of the Conservation Area, supporting the idea that the area was in agricultural use during the medieval period.

Gravel extraction is known to have taken place in the area from the medieval period onwards giving the field name Grit How. Archaeological excavations to the east of the Conservation Area have found evidence for this, dating mainly to the 18th and 19th centuries.

A brick kiln of unknown date was found to the north of 34 Madingley Road, which would suggest that the various ponds depicted on historic OS maps relate to the brick industry.

4. Spatial Analysis

Conduit Head Road is a high quality, high status road, of distinct character. The spatial relationships between the buildings and their leafy surroundings are particularly important to the character of both areas.

There are no public open spaces in either of the character areas. Conduit Head Road provides the main public access route through the bulk of the Conservation Area.

4.1 Conduit Head Road Character Area

The buildings along the west side of Conduit Head Road were constructed over the course of the 20th century. They are all set back from the road, with large formal gardens. The relationship between architecture and nature was closely studied by Modern Movement architects. The relationship was established by different architects in many diverse ways. Large expanses of glass were used to maximise sunlight, to integrate interior and exterior, and to frame key views and vistas. Many of the buildings back onto the 'shared space' of the Wilderness. This is a distinctive space, private, as it has no formal public access, but shared by the residents of these individual properties. This therefore creates a distinctive spatial arrangement which is key to the character of the area.

Dense vegetation and tall hedges combined with wooden fences of varying designs have been used to define building plots, such that the architecture is only occasionally glimpsed from the road itself, providing a sense of seclusion and privacy. The houses in this area therefore retain a minimal presence, and the streetscape is instead leafy and green in character.

Levels of privacy are clearly defined through the use of different road treatments. The main portion of the road is tarmacked, with hard kerbs. Where it becomes private, the road surface changes to compacted gravel with soft verges.

The dog-legged layout of the road means that there are few long views within the character area. The dense vegetation also obstructs any long views out of the Conservation Area into the surrounding landscape. This lack of views emphasises the private, secluded character of the area, which is in marked contrast to the open views available within the surrounding area.

4.2 Bradrushe Fields Character Area

Bradrushe Fields is a modern housing development dating from the 1990s. Constructed along the east side of Conduit Head Road, and along the Bradrushe Fields cul-de-sac, the buildings are mostly set back behind moderately sized gardens, with some ancillary buildings fronting directly on to the road. The gardens retain low-level wooden fences or non-existent boundary treatments, and low levels of vegetative cover, such that the buildings have a much greater

streetscape presence than those in the Conduit Head Road Character Area. As such, the area is also less secluded and more public in character.

The row of trees lining Conduit Head Road acts to draw the eye along the road, framing views to and from the Madingley Road junction. The row of trees, planted on a grass verge, is more formal in character than the neighbouring vegetation in Conduit Head Road Character Area.

A linear group of trees acts to delineate the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. Subject to a group TPO, the trees retain a high canopy, and provide a visual barrier between the development on Bradrushe Fields and the open space to the east. They also help to integrate the Bradrushe Fields development into the Conservation Area as a whole.

4.3 Lansdowne Road

12 Lansdowne Road is located west of the Wilderness, sharing a similar relationship with this area as that established by buildings within the Conservation Area. The building plot also retains a number of large trees, including a willow and several sycamore, ash and silver birch specimens.

4.4 Traffic

Madingley Road is a main principal route into Cambridge City Centre. Its busy nature contrasts significantly with that of Conduit Head Road.

Conduit Head Road and Bradrushe Fields are both cul-de-sacs, and are therefore generally only used by residents. This is especially the case for the far end of Conduit Head Road, which is a private road. The area is therefore subject to very low levels of traffic, which emphasises the secluded character of the area.

5. Architectural Overview

The properties on Conduit Head Road and Bradrushe Fields display a range of architectural styles which span much of the 20th century. There is little regularity to the size or shape of the plots, reflecting the piecemeal development of the area.

The properties are predominantly large and detached, set within private gardens. The area is residential in its entirety.

5.1 Conduit Head Road Character Area

The houses along Conduit Head Road comprise high quality, individual architect-designed properties. The high quality nature of the architecture is central to its special interest as a Conservation Area. Many of the properties date to the 1930s, and are in the International Style of Modernist architecture. Cambridge in the early 20th century was particularly progressive in its ideas and politics. This is reflected in its architecture, as the city experimented with Modern Movement architecture to a greater extent than many other British cities. The properties along Conduit Head Road provide a good example of a group of such houses, conforming to the ideal of natural balance with the establishment of a quasi-wilderness to the west. They comprise progressive and radical designs by some of the leading architects of the time:

- Willow House (originally Thurso House) was designed by George Checkley for King's College Don, Hamilton McCrombie. It was built in 1932 as a companion to Checkley's own house, White House, which had been built on the neighbouring plot previously. The design was particularly innovative for its time, and was featured in many contemporary architectural journals. Both of two storeys, the structures are constructed in reinforced concrete, with flat roofs and white-painted rendered walls. Willow House was designed to have a spacious setting to balance its stark modern design. Its principal rooms and windows face south on to the garden space. The refurbishment of Willow House was featured in the Architect's Journal on the 16th October 2003 pp 38-45 ('Balancing Act' by Barrie Evans).



Willow House, formerly Thurso, 1932 by George Checkley, grade II*

- 'De Stijl' was built on the former tennis court to the immediate east of Willow House in the 1990s. Designed to reflect the surrounding Modern Movement housing, it is of one storey, with white rendered walls and a flat roof. A large picture window forms a feature of the south elevation. At the time of construction, it was agreed between vendor and purchasers, and required by the City Council, to provide no physical separation between Willow House and De Stijl. This allows the setting and original curtilage of Willow House to survive intact.
- Salix was built between the two Checkley properties in 1934. It was designed by H C Hughes for Dr Oliphant. It was extended in 1936. Built in white-painted rendered brick, the house is of one and two storeys with flat roofs.
- Built in 1938 by MJ Blanco White, Shawms provides another good example of the Modernist style. Timber framed on a concrete raft, the building is clad in horizontal weatherboarding with a felt roof. It is of two storeys with a roof conservatory and retains hardboard wall cladding throughout the interior.
- Built between 1965 and 1967 by Colin St John Wilson, Spring House provides a good example of later Modern Movement architecture. Built on an L-plan, to provide a terrace and veranda, the building is constructed in

pale cavity brick with concrete tile mono-pitched roofs, and open timberwork below.

Some 20th century buildings of less innovative design are located between these Modernist structures, creating variety in architectural style and detailing. These are generally of good quality and individual design. The buildings are mostly of two storeys with a mixture of flat and pitched roofs, and with brick and render finishes to the walls. The area contains a number of small ancillary buildings and garages, which are not in-keeping with the character of the area.

St John's Flats was built in the 1970s and extended through the addition of a pitched roof with two extra flats in 1988. Of brick construction with a heavy tiled roof, the building is unsympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area, and in particular to the setting of the White House and its relationship to the road. The White House and flats are separated by a tall conifer hedge, which effectively obstructs views between the two structures. However, the presence of conifers is not conducive with the character of the area or the Listed Building. A garage set to the north-west of the White House is similarly unsympathetic.

The buildings to the north end of Conduit Head Road (Conduit Rise, Clement's End and Conduit Head) comprise the oldest buildings in the Conservation Area. Both Conduit Rise and Clement's End are designated as Buildings of Local Interest. Built in 1914 and c.1926 respectively, the buildings reflect very different architectural styles. Conduit Rise is built in an Arts and Crafts style, with heavily pitched tile roofs and tall brick chimneys. Clement's End is of a more eclectic style, with a dominant projecting entrance bay. Conduit Head is not visible from public land in the Conservation Area, therefore it has very little impact on the character of the area, but its absence from the streetscape does act to further enforce the sense of privacy in the area.

A single historic sewer vent pipe survives outside number 6 Conduit Head Road. Built of cast iron, it has crown decoration to its top. It predates the Modern Movement architecture of the area, and provides an insight into the character of the area prior to the 20th century. The remaining street furniture in the area is of mediocre design and has a neutral impact on the area.

5.2 Bradrushe Fields Character Area

Housing in the Bradrushe Fields Character Area dates to the 1990s, and is largely of two and three storeys with tiled pitched roofs. Ancillary buildings are of one storey and one storey with attic. The buildings are constructed in brick, with some use of dark-stained weatherboarding. Windows vary in size, and are set irregularly across the facades. The buildings are set closely together, with long garden plots extending to the east. Although each building differs in its detail, the architecture of the development is uniform in its overall style, emphasising that

these buildings were built in a single phase. The buildings are of lesser overall quality than those in the Conduit Head Road Character Area, and have a neutral effect on the Conservation Area.

5.3 Lansdowne Road

Number 12 Lansdowne Road comprises a large, detached, modern property constructed in 2007 by Donald Insall Associates. Of one to three storeys, it is built in pale yellow brick with mono-pitched roofs on a distinctive semi-circular based plan.

The property won the Best 'One Off House' category of the 2007 LABC National Built in Quality Awards. This award recognises and rewards the most forward looking people and organisations, and the most innovative construction projects. It forms a high quality landmark building with a strong architectural character of the Conservation Area and warrants inclusion within its boundary.



12 Lansdowne Road, Donald Insall and Associates

6. Trees, Landscape and Open Spaces

There are no formal public open spaces in the Conservation Area. Conduit Head Road, and the grass verges along its length, comprise the main public access routes. The road is dog-legged, foreshortening views along its length and thus emphasising the private nature of the area. The presence of grass verges provides a sense of openness to the road, which is balanced by the enclosure created by the dense and tall vegetation along much of the perimeter of the road. Vegetative cover is fundamental to the character of the area and should be maintained and renewed as and when required.

6.1 Conduit Head Road Character Area

Trees and vegetative cover have a major impact on the character of the area, which is reflected through the designation of many individual and group TPOs. The vegetation acts to enclose the area, screening views into the surrounding landscape. It also reduces views through to the private garden spaces and buildings in the area, emphasising the privacy of these areas. The vegetation to Conduit Head Road includes a range of species, including hawthorn, ash, sycamore and occasional willows, which provide pleasantly varying forms and foliage. Some conifers are present, particularly around the White House and St John's Flats, which screen views extremely effectively, but are not in keeping with the character of the area.

The gardens throughout the area compliment the properties through their size, design and planting schemes. However, a number of building plots have been subdivided in the late 20th century. This has led to the destruction of the setting of some of the structures, which now feel over-sized and cramped within their building plots, and has also eroded the leafy, high quality character of the area.

The Wilderness, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, to the rear of properties on Conduit Head Road and number 34 Madingley Road, forms an important integrated shared private space. Although designed to look 'wild' and 'natural', this space has been heavily managed to create the 'ideal image' of nature. The area was historically associated with brick manufacture, and it is possible that some industrial remains survive, complimenting the ecological and scientific interest of the area.



The Wilderness looking towards 12 Lansdowne Road

6.2 Bradrushe Fields Character Area

In contrast to the majority of the Conservation Area, vegetation within the gardens on Bradrushe Fields is more ornamental in character, including specimens of *Magnolia Grandiflora*, Larch and Cherry, along with a greater number of shrubs and evergreens. As this development only dates to the 1990s, much of the vegetation has not yet reached maturity. The vegetation is of aesthetic value, but retains a distinctly different character to that in the remainder of the Conservation Area. However, the linear group of trees to the west of Bradrushe Fields provide a prominent backdrop to the development and help to integrate the modern development into the remainder of the Conservation Area.

7. Key Characteristics of the Area

The preceding pages describe the key characteristics of the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area. These combine to give the area its sense of place as a whole. The elements fundamental to the character of the area can be summarised as follows:

- A wholly residential area, mostly comprising large, detached properties of individual, high quality design, with a small number of flats.
- High quality, progressive 20th century architecture by leading architects of the time.
- Houses set back from the road within large plots of land.

7.1 Conduit Head Road Character Area

Buildings occasionally glimpsed through a screen of dense vegetation, and therefore not forming a prominent part of the streetscape.

Piecemeal development of Conduit Head Road reflected in the variety of built form.

Architecture includes predominantly flat or pitched roofs, brick or rendered walls, and buildings typically of two storeys.

7.2 Bradrushe Fields Character Area

Boundaries between gardens and road are low or non-existent, such that the buildings form a prominent part of the streetscape.

Uniformity of building materials and style reflects a single-phase development.

Architecture includes brick and weatherboarded elevations, pitched tile roofs and variety in the size of windows. Buildings are generally of two or three storeys, with lower ancillary buildings

7.3 Streets and Spaces

The main public access route through the Conservation Area is formed by Conduit Head Road. It is dog-legged, limiting long views along its length, and helping to create a sense of seclusion and privacy.

Significant amount of vegetation, including a variety of mainly native tree species. The dense vegetation helps to enclose the area and obscures views out to the surrounding landscape.

Private gardens and the shared private space of the Wilderness are important to the character of the area. The large plot size compliments that of the houses, while their leafy character contrasts with the stark design of the Modernist architecture.

The shared nature of the Wilderness provides a distinctive spatial arrangement closely associated with theoretical concepts of the Modern Movement.

The key individual trees, in addition to the TPO specimens, are:

- The cedar on Conduit Head Road at the entrance to Shawms.

The key groups of trees are:

- The trees lining the southern portion of Conduit Head Road, including oak, ash and sycamore; and
- The trees outside number 6 Conduit Head Road, including a number of large ash specimens.

Abutting the Conservation Area:

- Boundaries defined by dense vegetation.

8. Issues

8.1 Introduction

The Conduit Head Road Conservation Area is of special interest due to its high quality, progressive 20th century architecture and its leafy green, secluded character.

Over the last few decades, a number of the large building plots have been subdivided. This has been to the detriment of the setting of some structures, which now feel over-sized and cramped within their building plot. This practice has also eroded the leafy, high-quality character of the area.

The high levels of mature vegetation and trees are central to the sense of enclosure and privacy, and to the green character of the area. Several mature trees in the area are reaching the end of their natural lives. Although many of the areas, especially the Wilderness, are designed to look natural, the vegetation needs active management and maintenance to ensure its continued survival.

A number of developments have occurred in the Conservation Area since the designation of TPOs, in particular Bradrushe Fields, St John's Flats and the replacement of nos. 34 and 36 Madingley Road with two blocks of flats (no. 34 Madingley Road). This is likely to have significantly altered the setting of these trees, some of which appear to have been removed. The TPOs for these areas may therefore need reviewing.

8.2 Works to existing Buildings

The unique architectural interest of buildings in the Conduit Head Road Conservation Area is extremely vulnerable to incremental changes, such as alterations to windows and doors, works to improve energy efficiency and removal of fixtures and fittings. This is particularly the case for Modernist architecture, where experiments made in structural design and materials have meant that some buildings have aged poorly, and now suffer badly from maintenance problems. The accumulation of small changes to fabric can have a particularly harmful effect on these buildings.

8.3 Conservation Area Boundary review

The review of the Conservation Area has not found any need to revise the 2009 boundary.

9. Guidance

Conduit Head Road Conservation Area is characterised by high quality, progressive 20th century architecture, set within a leafy green, secluded landscape. Any proposed development, both extensions and new buildings, within the Conservation Area or its setting should meet the requirements of the relevant guidance as set out above.

The following notes supplement those in the guidance and aim to protect and maintain the elements of the area that have been identified as important to its character.

Subdivision of plots should be actively discouraged in order to maintain the original setting of the buildings. 'De Stijl' was built within the original building plot of the neighbouring Willow House. The boundaries between these two properties provide no physical separation, such that the original flow of space and setting of Willow House have been maintained. Efforts should be made to retain this lack of boundary treatment.

Development in or around the Conservation Area should reflect the high quality, progressive character of the present architecture. Any development should be set back from the road within a green and leafy setting, in order to maintain the enclosed and secluded character of the area. A design guide should set this out in greater detail.

The gradual accumulation of unsympathetic repairs and alterations to the fabric of buildings should be monitored and harmful alterations discouraged. Where replacement or alteration is necessary, care should be taken to ensure it is sympathetic to the original.

An Article 4 (2) Direction may be worth considering to ensure that the architectural details are not lost to unsympathetic alterations. Article 4 (2)s can be used to remove certain Permitted Development Rights to enable the Local Planning Authority to retain specific features of an area, for example timber windows and front boundary walls.

There are a number of unsympathetic outbuildings within the Conservation Area. Where the opportunity arises, these should be removed and/or replaced with more sympathetic structures.

The relationship between the Wilderness and the houses that back on to it should be preserved. Although designed to look 'natural' and 'wild', the Wilderness comprises a heavily managed, manmade landscape. Management of this area should continue in order to maintain its present character.

Several mature trees in the area are reaching the end of their natural lives. Where such trees need to be removed, every encouragement should be made for similar trees to be planted as replacements. This will maintain high levels of vegetation in the area and thus preserve its green character, and sense of enclosure and privacy.

Many of the important individual and groups of trees in the area are already protected by TPOs. A single cedar and two groups of trees along Conduit Head Road have been identified as key trees. The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) should be used to protect these trees through TPOs.

A strategy for the retention, protection and replacement of trees, which includes regular inspection and maintenance of all trees within the Conservation Area will maintain the character of the area.

10. Summary

This Appraisal has sought to identify the special interest and character of Conduit Head Road Conservation Area, to review its boundary, and to provide policies for the future preservation and enhancement of the area.

The area is defined by high quality, progressive 20th century architecture, including a number of particularly innovative Modernist structures. It also includes a high level of mature vegetation and trees, which establish a sense of enclosure and privacy, and a predominant leafy green character to the area. Both the built and natural elements of the Conservation Area, and indeed the relationship between the two, are fundamental to the character of Conduit Head Road Conservation Area.

This document has appraised the character of all elements of the Conservation Area. Its content and the policies it sets out should be used to inform the future management of the area.



Clements End, circa 1926, Harold Tomlinson

Appendix I Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest

(i) Listed Buildings

Shawms (1938)

Listed at grade II*, Shawms was built in 1938 by MJ Blanco White. Comprising a good example of Modern Movement architecture, it is timber framed on a concrete raft, with a concrete boiler room to the west. It is clad in horizontal weatherboarding and has a felt roof behind a plain parapet. It is two storeys with a roof conservatory; it has a four window range to the entrance façade (north). This façade contains a glazed door set to the right of centre under a flat projecting porch hood supported on two steel posts. The ground floor retains a continuous frieze of sliding timber casements. The south elevation retains a five window range, overlooking the garden.

Willow House (1932)

Listed at grade II*, Willow House was originally named Thurso House, and was designed in a Modernist style by George Checkley, for King's College Don, Hamilton McCrombie. It was built as a companion to Checkley's own house, White House, which had been built on the neighbouring plot previously. The design was particularly innovative for its time, and was featured in many contemporary architectural journals. Of two storeys, Willow House is constructed in reinforced concrete, with a flat bituminised roof behind parapet and white-painted rendered walls. All metal-frame windows with casements. The house was designed with a spacious setting, to balance its stark modern design, and with a tennis court to the immediate east.

White House (1930)

Listed at grade II, White House was built by George Checkley as his own private residence. Constructed in a Modernist style, it is built in brick, which is rendered and painted white, with a flat roof set behind a parapet. It has a rectangular plan with a central entrance hall. It is of two storeys with a smaller third storey set back at the centre of the roof terrace. The main elevation faces east, and is symmetrical in design, with a central entrance and bands of windows to the left and right. Although the door has been replaced, the building retains its original metal framed casements and wooden sills.

Salix (1934/6)

Listed at grade II, Salix was constructed between the two Checkley properties. Formerly named Brandon House, it was designed by H C Hughes for Dr Oliphant. It was extended in 1936. Built in white-painted rendered brick, the house is of one and two storeys with bituminised flat roofs. The building faces south over the garden. The building retains its original metal frame windows, with continuous sills to the ground floor.

Spring House (1965-7)

Listed at Grade II, Spring House was built by Colin St John Wilson. Comprising a good example of later Modern Movement architecture, it forms an Artist's house and studio, with garage. The building is constructed in pale cavity brick with concrete tile mono-pitched roofs, and open timberwork below. It is built on an L-plan, with a terrace and veranda located within the cut-away. The windows are of dark-stained timber, with aluminium opening lights. The studio incorporates large, high windows, with full glazing behind the cut-away terrace to the rear. This has timber columns supporting the roof, and a timber stair leading to the first floor veranda with door to an internal gallery. Thus indoors and outdoors are related.

(ii) Buildings of Local Interest

Conduit Rise (1914)

Identified by Cambridge City Council as a Building of Local Interest, Conduit Rise was built by Harry Redfern. Constructed in an Arts and Crafts style, it is located behind a tall painted brick wall, and is of two storeys plus attic. The walls are rendered and painted white, with a heavily pitched tile roof above and some weatherboarding to gable ends. A number of chimney stacks form a prominent part of the roofline. These are built in pale yellow and red brick with red brick detailing to the top. The windows are timber framed casements.

Clements End (c.1926)

Identified by Cambridge City Council as Building of Local Interest, Clements End was built by Harold Tomlinson. Of two storeys with a hipped tiled roof, the building is rendered and painted pale pink. The main façade fronts on to the road. Symmetrically arranged, it is of three bays. The central bay projects forward beneath a plain parapet, with a Georgian-style door with semi-circular fanlight to the ground floor, and a central window flanked by a single window to either side to the first floor. The right and left bays each contains a single window to both the ground and first floors. All windows are timber casements. The south elevation contains a square bay window carried from the ground to first floors.

Appendix II Maps – Protected trees, Listed Buildings and Landscape Features



Appendix III The Modern Movement

The Modern Movement formed a prominent development in 20th century architecture. It drew upon the technological innovations of 19th century industrial architecture and concepts of space, proportion and smooth surfaces. The designs aimed to break from the rigid conventions found in past architectural forms and provide a greater quality of life, with increased natural light, fresh air and greater contact with the 'great outdoors'. Concepts of health and cleanliness were central and led to the elimination of ornamentation in many designs. Traditional room divisions gave way to open planning, with links made between interior and exterior space through the use of roof terraces and balconies, as well as carefully placed glazing.

Nature and wilderness were key concepts within the Modern Movement. Architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier designed their buildings to relate to their surroundings. The stark shapes and bold designs of many Modern Movement houses are balanced out by the 'wildness' of their settings. The relationship between the architecture and its surroundings are emphasised through the use of large expanses of glass, and 'picture windows', which act to frame the external world so that it forms part of the interior. The desire of modernist architects for a natural landscape setting, preferably untouched and wild, was so prevalent that wildernesses would often be fabricated if one was not found on site. Within this, the more formal garden acts to bridge the gap between modernist architecture and the wilderness, thus anchoring the house within the surrounding landscape.

The 'International Style' of the 1920s and 1930s displays the purist application of these principles and can be characterised by the use of cubic shapes, metal and glass construction, white rendering, plain surfaces and open plans. However, the Modern Movement was more widely applied after World War II, when many of its principles were influential in the planning and rebuilding of major European cities. Shortages in materials led to experiments in alternative building materials, including painted weatherboard, brick and tile hanging, within these designs. The style was further developed in the 1950s, when variations such as 'New Brutalism' emerged, reacting against the mild Scandinavian 'Contemporary Style' Modernism of the 1940s, and returning to the 1920s pioneer works for their inspiration. Modern Movement architecture of the 1950s and 1960s were often designed in close harmony with existing mature landscape features. Large expanses of wall-to-ceiling glazing were used to create interaction between interior and exterior spaces.

Despite forming a prominent architectural movement, Modernist architecture never became the dominant architectural form in Britain. Around 300 individual Modernist houses were built, mostly in suburbs and surrounded by buildings of more moderate architectural styles. The use of innovative engineering solutions

and unconventional designs has led to maintenance problems, with extensive alterations made to many of the surviving buildings.