

G - CLUSTERED CUL-DE-SAC DEVELOPMENT



In the last twenty years several opportunities have been taken to redevelop redundant sites for housing or create new residential areas on previously open land within the built up area. These developments are not as extensive as the earlier open plan estates characteristic of the 1960s and 70s. In line with Government policy of making the best use of sites, these housing schemes are generally designed to a higher density than in the previous decades and using different design principles.

Whereas development in the 1960s - early 1980s often consisted of houses spaced out evenly along, and facing, the road on a relatively consistent building line, more recent developments primarily consist of detached or attached houses, with integral or attached garages, set along an uneven building line or at angles to the road. The different roof forms and details often give interesting and varied roofscapes. Properties often front directly onto the pavement/road or shared surface or are set behind a shallow unenclosed front garden of low planting and have private enclosed space to the side or rear. Houses have parking spaces or garages. The steep roofs and more compact form give the development a more enclosed urban character. The urban form is softened by the use of short curved cul-de-sac layouts which keep traffic speeds low and often encourage shared road use for pedestrians and cars. Sometimes the access roads will be cobbled or paved in a contrasting colour to emphasise this shared use. The enclosed cul-de-sac layouts create a quiet, private character.

The curved street layout combined with the variable building line, also creates a series of enclosed spaces and changing vistas and views which to some extent replicates the ad hoc development found in traditional town and village centres. Whilst a variety of materials and building designs are used, the overall form, materials, scale and character is generally very cohesive.

Properties are finished in a variety of traditional materials with relevance to the Kent vernacular such as red/orange bricks, weatherboarding, white painted render and hanging clay tiles (sometimes decorative). The designs may also incorporate traditional details such as dormer or half dormer windows, arched brickwork over doors and windows, contrasting brick string courses, chimneys, cupolas and ridge tiles. Windows and doors are often well aligned with each other and the dominant areas of brickwork over glazing give the facades a robust appearance.

LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

Age of buildings	Mid 1980s onwards
Type of buildings	Detached, semi-detached and attached houses
Main uses	Residential
Building heights	2 storeys
Prominent building materials	Red, orange/red and yellow brick, tiled and slate roofs, weatherboard, hung tiles, white casement windows
Predominant boundary treatments	Open frontages or some boundary treatments including hedges and fences
Open spaces	Landscaped public amenity space sometimes incorporated in the developments

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Enclosed urban form whose scale and materials create a cohesive character
- Traditional materials represent the local vernacular
- Traditional brick, tile and roof details
- Interesting roofscapes
- Quiet residential character with no through traffic, may include shared road space
- Soft landscaping usually incorporated as part of the design scheme
- Curving layout and varied building line creates a series of vistas and views

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors

G1 – TOLSEY MEAD AREA

Comprising: Eaglestone Close and Tolsey Mead

A cul-de-sac development accessed via Wye Road constructed in 1985 on the northern edge of Borough Green adjoining open countryside.



The detached two storey houses face onto the road or shared accesses on a variable building line. They are constructed of red or yellow/brown brick some with half timber effect upper storeys. Single storey pitched roof porches or porch canopies supported on wooden brackets project towards the road. The roofs have brown shaped tiles and gabled ends, some facing the road. A few gables are embellished with shaped white bargeboard. The windows are white or brown casements, some with shallow brick arches above. The properties have integral or free standing garages.



Eaglestone Close and the eastern end of Tolsey Mead are paved.

The development is on flat land and is inward looking with no wider views. The frontages are open plan with some hedges and decorative panel fencing on the side boundaries. Trees and shrubs on the front lawns are a feature of the development, softening the townscape and there is a landscaped open space to the west of the entrance screening the development from the Wrotham Road.

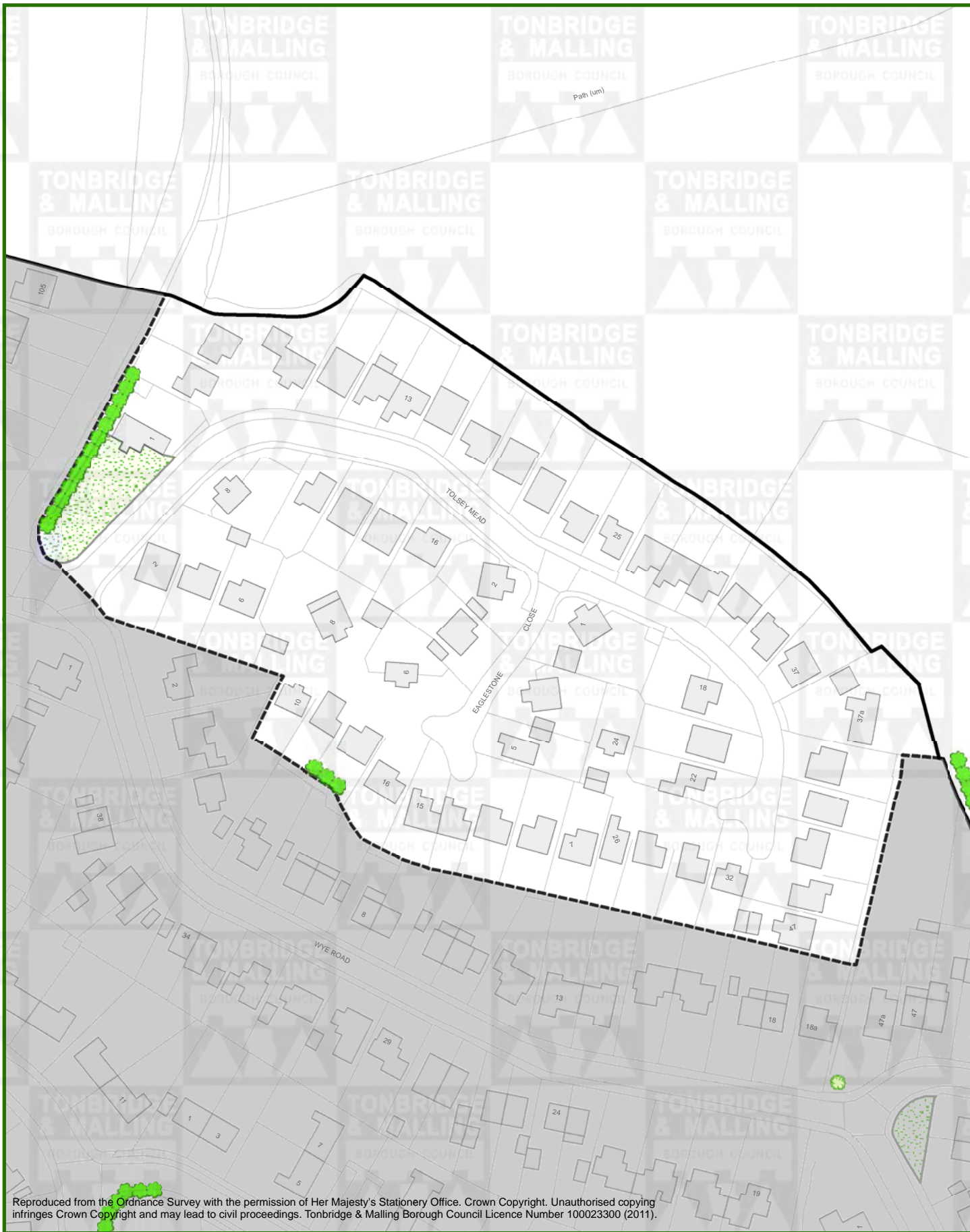


Locally Distinctive Positive Features

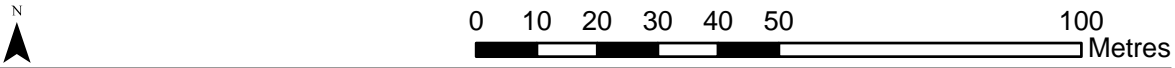
- The development has a private, enclosed character
- The landscaped green space to the west of the entrance screens the development from Wrotham Road
- Landscaping and specimen trees create interest

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **G1**
 Title **Tolley Mead Area**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



G2 – GRIGGS WAY AREA

Comprising: Griggs Way and Hunts Farm Close

A narrow development built in the 1980s on previously open land skirting around the west side of Crow Hill. The houses which are set above street level and are framed by a landscaped boundary and the school playing fields to the north west and Crow Hill to the south east.



The detached and attached two storey houses in Griggs Way are mainly located on the rising land to the east side of the road looking out towards a belt of tall trees screening the school playing fields or westwards where tall conifers screen the housing around Hill View. The houses are constructed of red/brown brick some with red or brown hung tiles or weatherboard on the upper storeys. The brown tiled or slate roofs are half hipped with some front facing gables and pitched dormers. The windows are white square or horizontal casements. The front gardens are open plan or enclosed by beech hedges with some panel fencing and brick walls.



The entrance to Griggs Way from the A25 is spacious and verdant with a high conifer hedge, deep verge, street trees and garden hedges. The listed Hunts Farmhouse to the east of the entrance is a prominent feature. Traffic levels are low although there is noise at the southern end from the A25. A narrow hidden footpath leads up to Crow Hill.



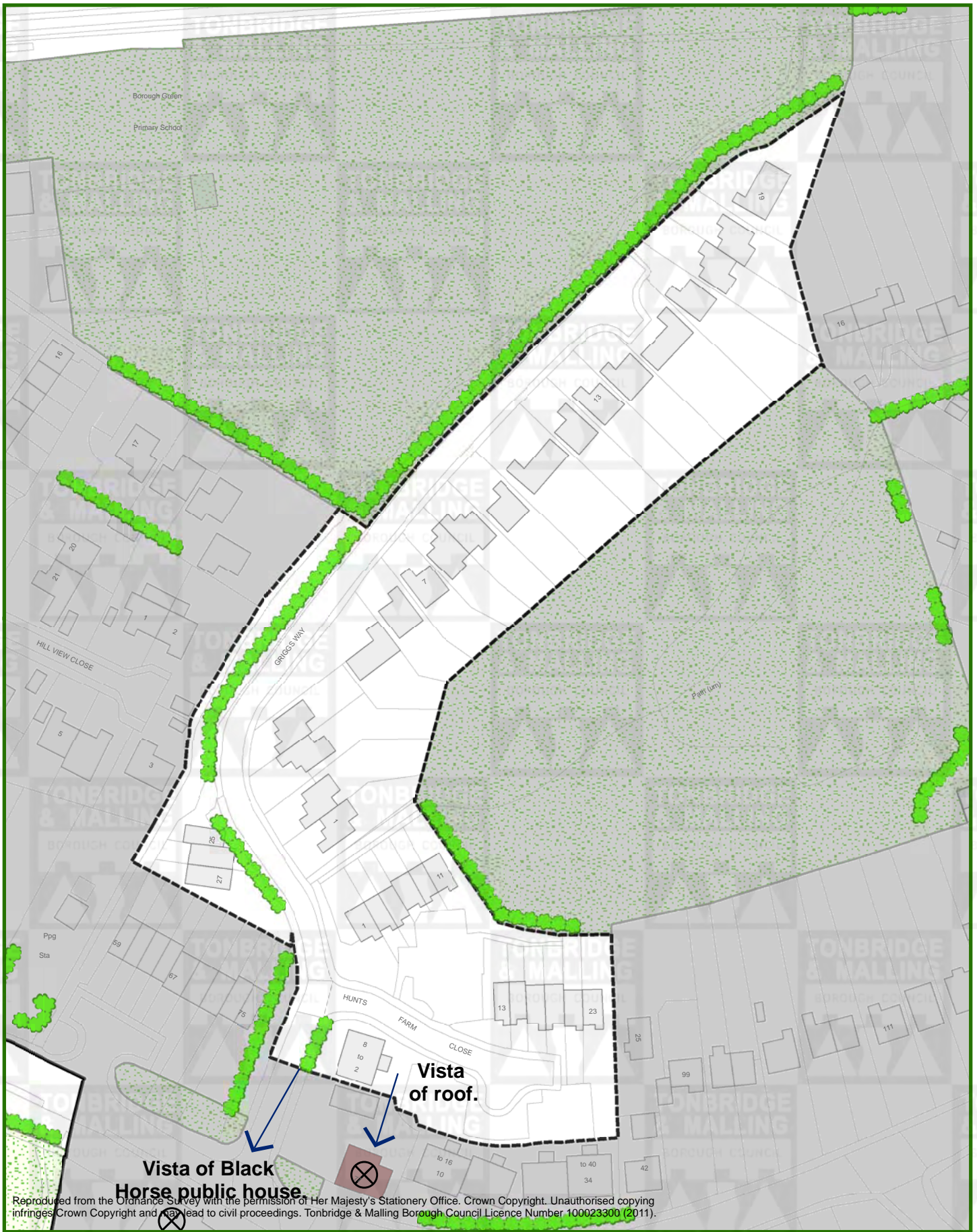
Hunts Farm Close leads off Griggs Way parallel to the A25. On the north side terraced housing with a communal landscaped parking area steps up the hill. Mono pitched porches project forward and gabled dormers add interest to the roofline. To the south and south west there are important vistas of the roofs and chimneys of Hunts Farm and the Black Horse Public House. Specimen trees and shrub planting enhance the character of Hunts Farm Close.

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Green outlook to the north west side of Griggs Way
- Vistas of Hunts Farm and The Black Horse Public House
- Landscaping and specimen trees

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Road noise from the A25



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Ref **G2**

Title **Griggs Way Area**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



G3 – STALEYS ACRE

Comprising: Staleys Acre

A small development of detached houses off Tilton Road built after 1992 on land adjoining Borough Green House.



The two storey red brick houses have brown tiled gabled and half hipped roofs with white bargeboards. Whilst there is a strong consistency in the size and materials of the buildings, interest is created through variations in the roofline with front facing gable ends and pitched dormer windows together with the decorative details which include hung tiles, white painted render, decorative porches and brickwork. The houses are set behind open plan lawned frontages and tarmac driveways around a paved shared access. The development has a quiet inward looking character and is framed by tall trees and hedges to the north and east screening it from surrounding housing. The small landscaped play area enclosed by black railings and the vista of Borough Green House are particular features of the area.

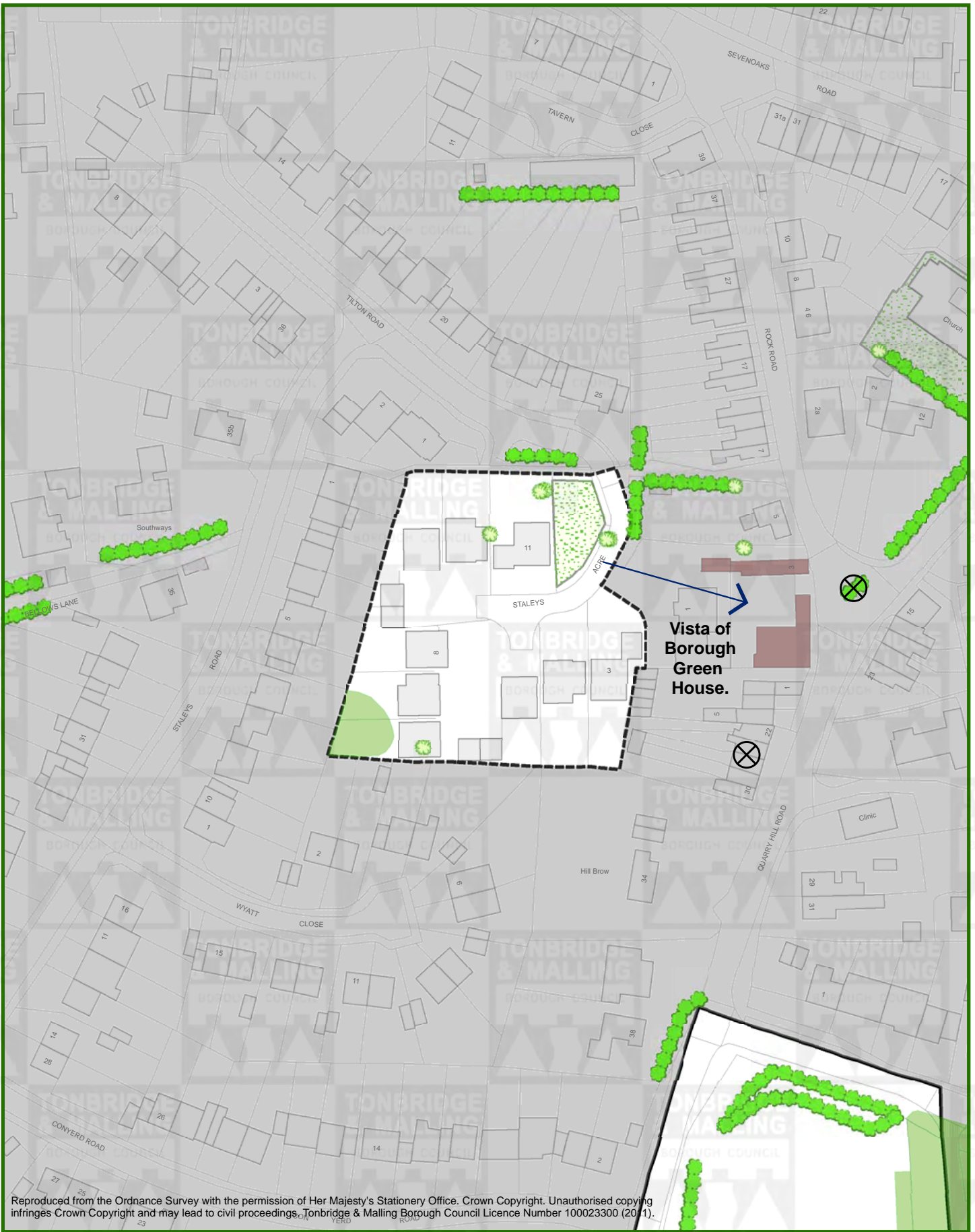


Locally Distinctive Positive Features

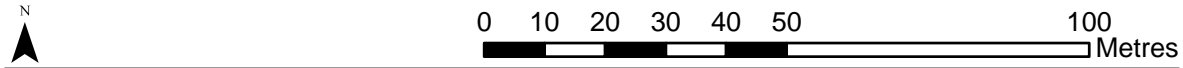
- Landscaped play area and specimen trees. Screened from surrounding housing by hedges and trees
- Vista of Borough Green House

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **G3**
 Title **Staleys Acre**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



G4 – BLACK HORSE MEWS

Comprising: Black Horse Mews

A small development to the rear of the Black Horse Public House.



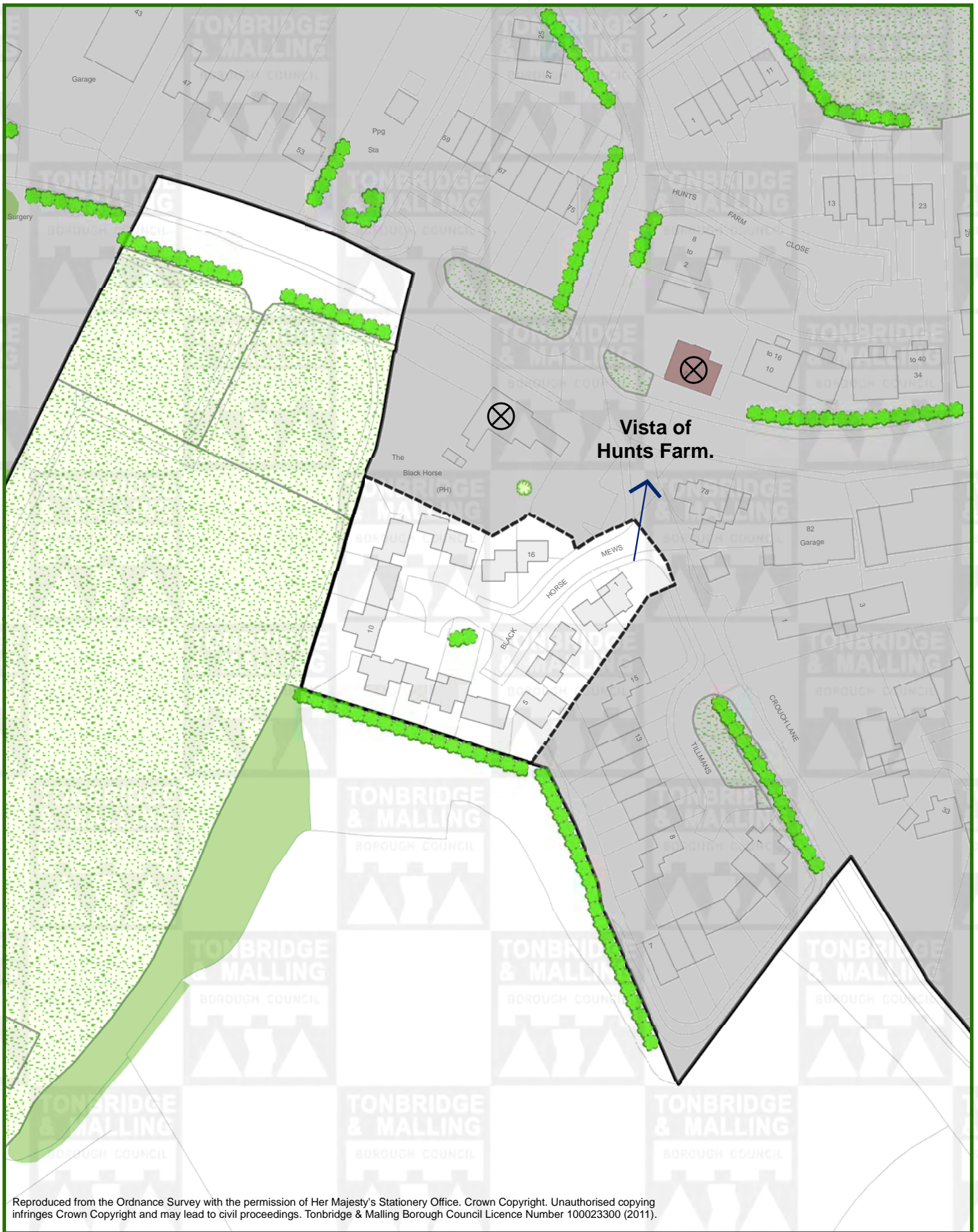
The red/brown brick detached and attached houses have gabled brown plain tiled roofs and some have hung tiles on the upper storey. The pitched porch canopies are supported on white wooden brackets and the casement windows have white frames. Some properties have single storey canted bay windows with pitched roofs. The houses front onto the pavement with narrow grass and shrub frontages and paved parking areas. The development clusters around a small green area planted with a tree and shrubs. The access surface is partly tarmac and partly paved. Strips of granite setts provide a contrast. The development is inward looking with no long views and enclosed on the south side by a tree belt at the edge of the built up area. There are vistas from the entrance of the listed Hunts Farm.

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

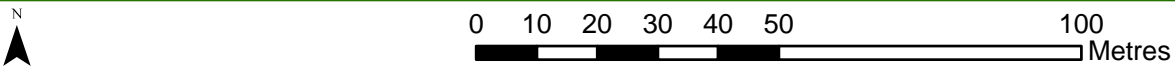
- Vista of Hunts Farm

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Road noise from the A25



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Ref **G4**
 Title **Black Horse Mews**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



G5 – HILL VIEW (NORTH EAST)

Comprising: Hill View (north east)

A very small cul-de-sac development off Hill View of detached 2 storey houses.



The orange/red brick houses have gabled slate roofs, chimneys, brown casement windows and single storey attached garages. They face onto a landscaped parking area. The scheme is screened from the school playing field and surrounding development by high hedges and trees to the north, east and south.

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

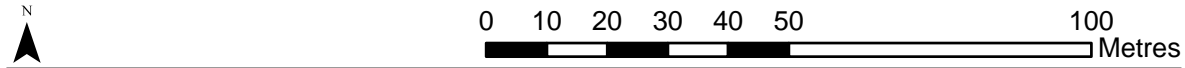
- See introductory Section

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **G5**
 Title **Hill View (North East)**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



G6 – TOLLGATE MEWS

Comprising: Tollgate Mews

Four pairs of semi-detached houses constructed by around 1992 by Russet Homes Housing Association on the site of a pair of semi-detached dwellings and an area of lock-up garages to the north of the railway line and accessed via The Crescent.



Locally Distinctive Positive Features

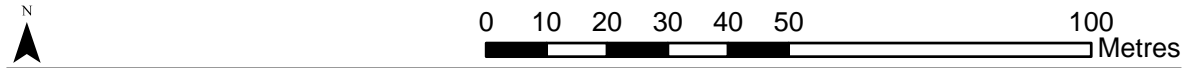
- Trees along railway line form backdrop
- View of North Downs

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- View of industrial units to the west



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Ref **G6**
 Title **Tollgate Mews**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



H - COMPACT CUL-DE-SAC DEVELOPMENT



Designed on similar principles to the clustered cul-de-sac developments appraised in Section G, these developments are of higher density, comprising apartment blocks or terraced town houses set within compact plots or communal grounds. They have all been constructed since the late 1980s on redundant commercial sites or other infill sites within the built up area.

Properties often front directly onto the pavement or road or are set behind a shallow unenclosed front garden of low planting and have private enclosed space to the rear. Properties have parking spaces or garages. The steep roofs and more compact form give the development a more enclosed urban character. The enclosed cul-de-sac layout creates a quiet, private character.

Whilst a variety of materials and building designs are used, the overall form, materials, scale and character are generally very cohesive.

Properties are finished in a variety of traditional materials with relevance to the Kent vernacular such as red/orange bricks, weatherboarding, painted render and hanging clay tiles (sometimes decorative). The designs also incorporate traditional details such as dormer or half dormer windows, contrasting brickwork over doors and windows and chimneys. Windows and doors are often well aligned with each other and the dominant areas of brickwork over glazing give the facades a robust appearance.

LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

Age of buildings	Late 1980s onwards
Type of buildings	Terraced town houses and apartment blocks
Main uses	Residential
Building heights	2-3 storeys
Prominent building materials	Red, orange/red and yellow brick, tiled roofs, weatherboard, white casement windows
Predominant boundary treatments	Open frontages
Open spaces	Landscaped amenity space in Roman Court

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Enclosed urban form whose scale and materials create a cohesive character
- Traditional materials represent the local vernacular
- Traditional brick, tile and roof details
- Quiet residential character with no through traffic, may include shared road space
- Soft landscaping usually incorporated as part of the design scheme

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors

H1 – ROMAN COURT

Comprising: Roman Court

A development of sheltered apartment blocks to the north of Borough Green station.



The two storey red brick buildings, with yellow brick bands and brown roof tiles on shallow hipped roofs, have white casement windows and prominent 2 storey bays with white weatherboard finish. The buildings are arranged around a carefully landscaped car park and communal grassed amenity space. Set below Fairfield Road, the buildings are barely visible over the high hedge except at the western end where Fairfield Road falls. The development is screened from the railway by a panel fence.

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

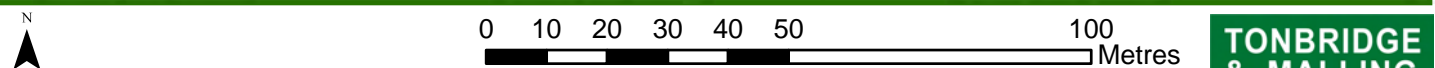
- Enclosed urban form whose scale and materials create a cohesive character
- Traditional materials represent the local vernacular
- The white bays and yellow brick bands add variety to the wide facades
- The height, scale and materials of the apartment blocks are sensitive to the location
- The high quality landscaping enhances the character

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **H1**
 Title **Roman Court**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



H2 – STONE COURT

Comprising: Stone Court

Located on a narrow strip of land east of Wrotham Road, Stone Court incorporates apartments and terraced town houses, and is a distinctive enclave. The site slopes down gently towards the east and faces over the light industrial site to the south. The loss of the protected hedge on the boundary means that the properties look directly onto the rear of the industrial units.



The most distinctive feature of the development is the consistent use of yellow brickwork with pale and mid grey upper storeys and slate roofs giving this small inward looking development a unique and strongly cohesive identity.



The dog leg entrance screens much of the development from the main road. The properties face on the main access road and short culs-de-sac leading off it northwards. The front elevations have projecting two storey bays topped by gabled ends or a projecting upper storey supported by metal posts. White window frames, doors and barge boards brighten the grey tones and give the development a uniform appearance.

The access is bordered by green verges and a variety of surface treatments have been used, including tarmac, gravel and paving stones which contribute to the environmental quality and coordinated appearance of the scheme. The properties have compact rear plots which are enclosed by panel fencing. The buildings and trees enclose the views but there are glimpses of trees and high land to the south east.



Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Forms a distinctive and unique enclave with consistent design, materials and colour, incorporating references to the local vernacular
- High quality street surfacing

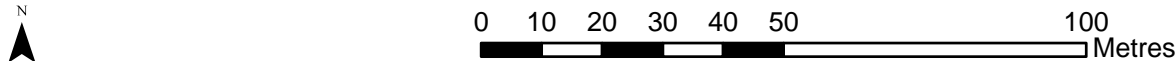
Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Some road noise from Wrotham Road
- Outlook over the back of industrial units



Outlook onto rear of industrial buildings.

Glimpses of trees.



Ref **H2**
 Title **Stone Court**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



H3 – TILLMANS

Comprising: Tillmans

A development off Crouch Lane on the south side of Borough Green on a former works site.



Terraced three storey town houses face onto a dog legged cul-de-sac and shared access, set behind a pavement, landscaping and parking spaces. The red/brown brick front elevations of the three storey buildings are hung with red tiles on the top storey. The two storey properties have white weatherboard on the upper storey. The properties have pitched tiled porch canopies supported on white wooden brackets, Juliette balconies, white balcony doors and prominent pitched dormers, creating a busy façade. The roofs are gabled or hipped with brown plain tiles and narrow chimneys.

The street furniture is carefully coordinated and the surfacing incorporates brick pavers, tarmac on the drives and gravel. The ornamental black lamp

Crouch Lane looking south east from Tillmans.

Tillmans is at the edge of the built up area and at this point Crouch Lane has the character of a narrow winding country lane. A landscaped grass area and belt of trees screen Tillmans from Crouch Lane. The buildings are set back from the road on low land and do not impact on its rural character.

A tree belt frames the buildings on the south west side.

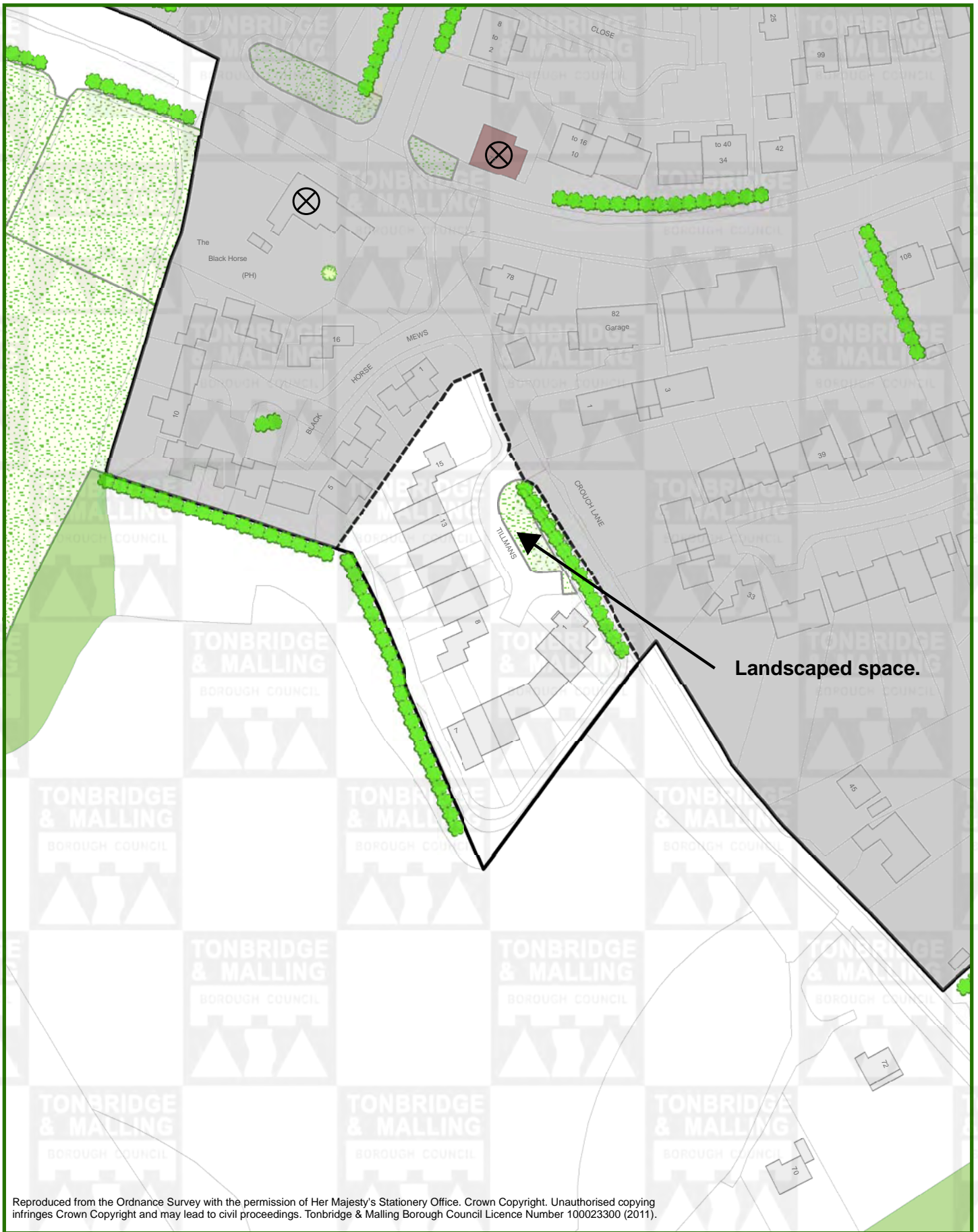


Locally Distinctive Positive Features

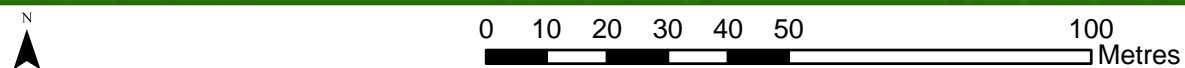
- Tree belt to the north screens the development from Crouch Lane
- Tree belt to the south west forms a green backdrop to the buildings and an edge to the built up area
- High quality street surfacing and furniture

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **H3**
 Title **Tillmans**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



I – MIXED CHARACTER AREAS

Some road frontages have a mixed character in which no one period or style of building predominates. These may result either where a street was constructed at a particular time, but subsequent redevelopment and infill development has diluted the original character to such an extent that it no longer is apparent or where a street has been developed gradually with successive phases of development.

I1 – WESTERN ROAD (WEST)

Comprising: Western Road (west)

The western end of Western Road has a mixed character due to redevelopment and infill development.

The buildings date from around 1900 to the present day. They are primarily residential with some mixed uses and are set back from the road behind shallow front gardens or parking areas. However, the bulk, design, building line, materials and roofline of the buildings vary considerably and provide no strong unified character.



There are views westwards along Western Road of Sevenoaks Ridge.



The buildings are constructed on an uneven building line with enclosed or open frontages and incorporate a variety of designs, roof lines and materials. The townscape lacks cohesion.



The three/four storey shopping parade is out of character with the village centre in terms of scale, materials and form and is a jarring element in the townscape.



The junction with the A25 provides a nondescript entrance to the heart of the village. The flat grassed area is cluttered with signage and the bungalows to the north of the junction are set back creating an open, poorly defined space. The poor state of the former Red Lion Public House on the south side, further reduces the townscape value of this junction.

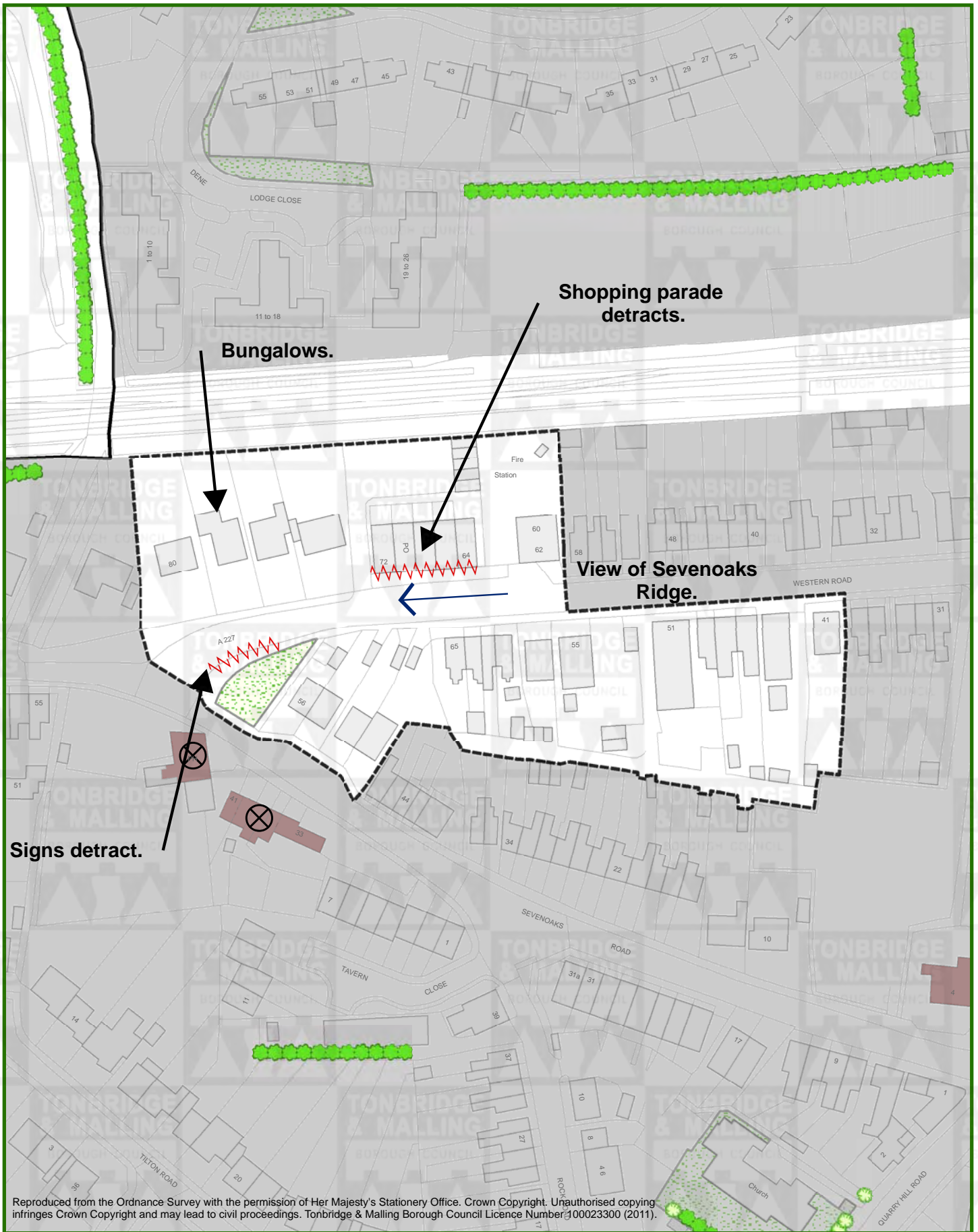
LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES	
Age of buildings	Mixed age, principally 19 th century onwards
Type of buildings	Detached, semi-detached and terraced
Main uses	Residential, commercial and community
Building Heights	1 - 3/4 storeys
Prominent building materials	Brown and red brick, painted render, tiled roofs, concrete
Predominant boundary treatments	Various including brick walls, wood panel fences, railings, hedges and open plan
Open spaces	None

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

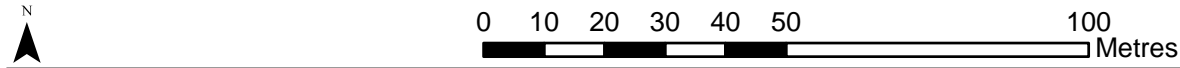
- Some retention of historical details and boundaries

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Traffic noise and movement
- Clutter of signs and open featureless appearance of the junction with A25



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Ref **11**
 Title **Western Road (West)**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



I2 QUARRY HILL ROAD (SOUTH)

Comprising: Quarry Hill Road (south)

The road falls sharply southwards.



Three lower density detached houses of mixed age are set back from, and above, the road on the west side behind verdant frontages, whilst the east side comprises a mix of commercial, community and residential buildings. There are views down the hill of trees. There is a sense of opening out which contrasts strongly with the tightly enclosed 19th century character further north on Quarry Hill Road and in Rock Road.

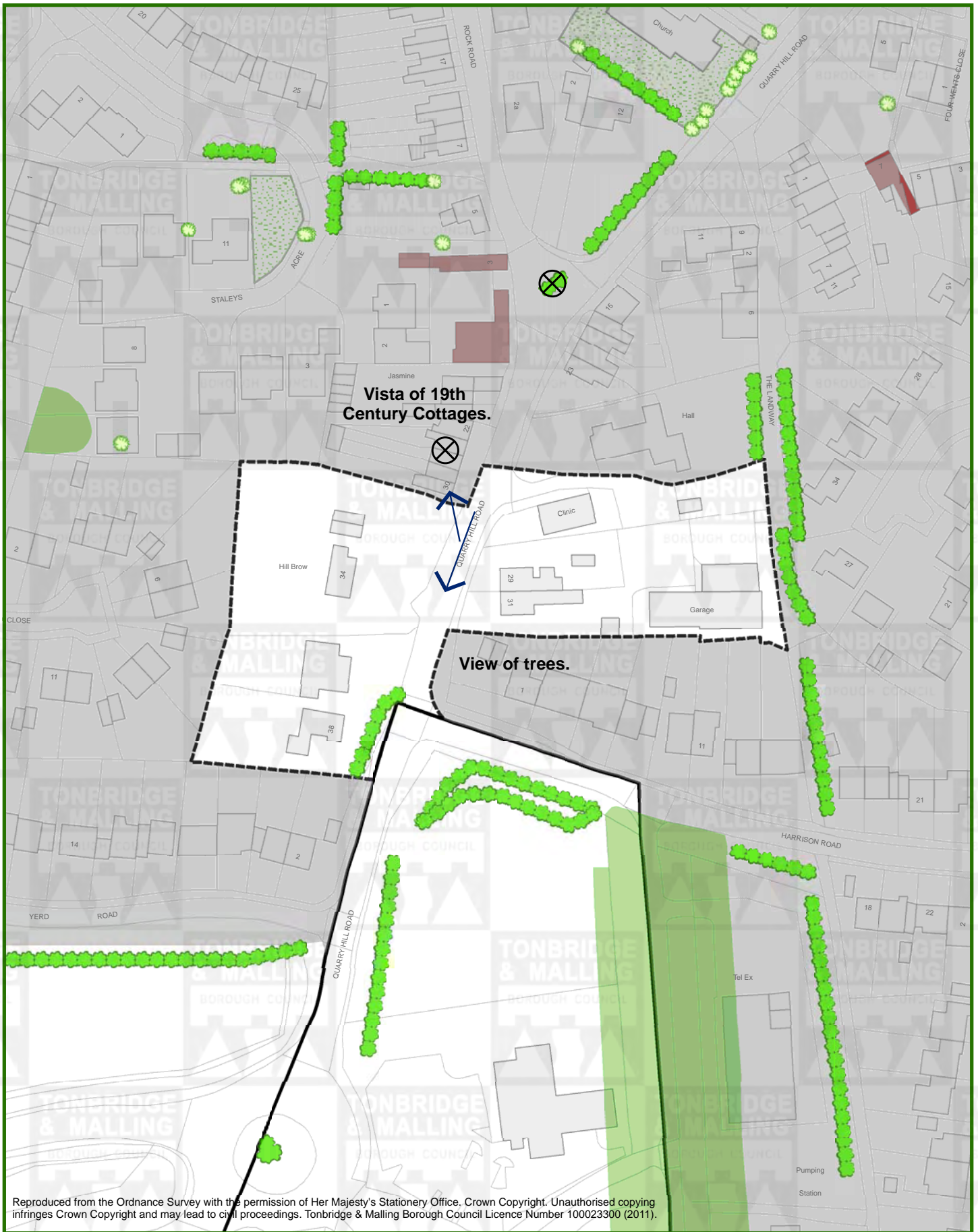


Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- View of trees to the south
- Vista of 19th Century cottages to the north

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **I2**
 Title **Quarry Hill Road (South)**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



J - BUNGALOWS

Bungalows became a popular form of development initially in the 1930s particularly on what would have been relatively cheap suburban land. The majority of bungalows in Borough Green date from the 1930s-1960s. There is one small bungalow development off Hill View. Other bungalows in the village are found along the main road frontages considered in Section A and as a component part of larger estates considered in Sections D and F.

JI – HILL VIEW CLOSE

Comprising: Hill View Close

This small development of semi detached and detached bungalows was constructed in the 1950s/60s to the east of Hill View.



Tucked back within their plots and behind boundaries only the bungalow roofs are visible from the entrance. The buildings are of red brick with prominent white windows and brown tiled hipped roofs with, in one case, a prominent dormer extension. The gardens are enclosed by a variety of brick walls, panel fences, hedges and shrubs. Tall conifers to the rear screen Griggs Way. Concrete garages and poor surfacing detract from the townscape.

LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

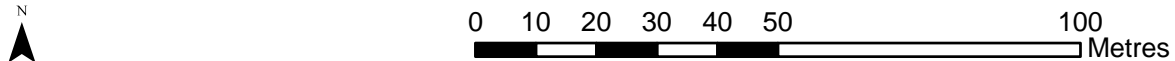
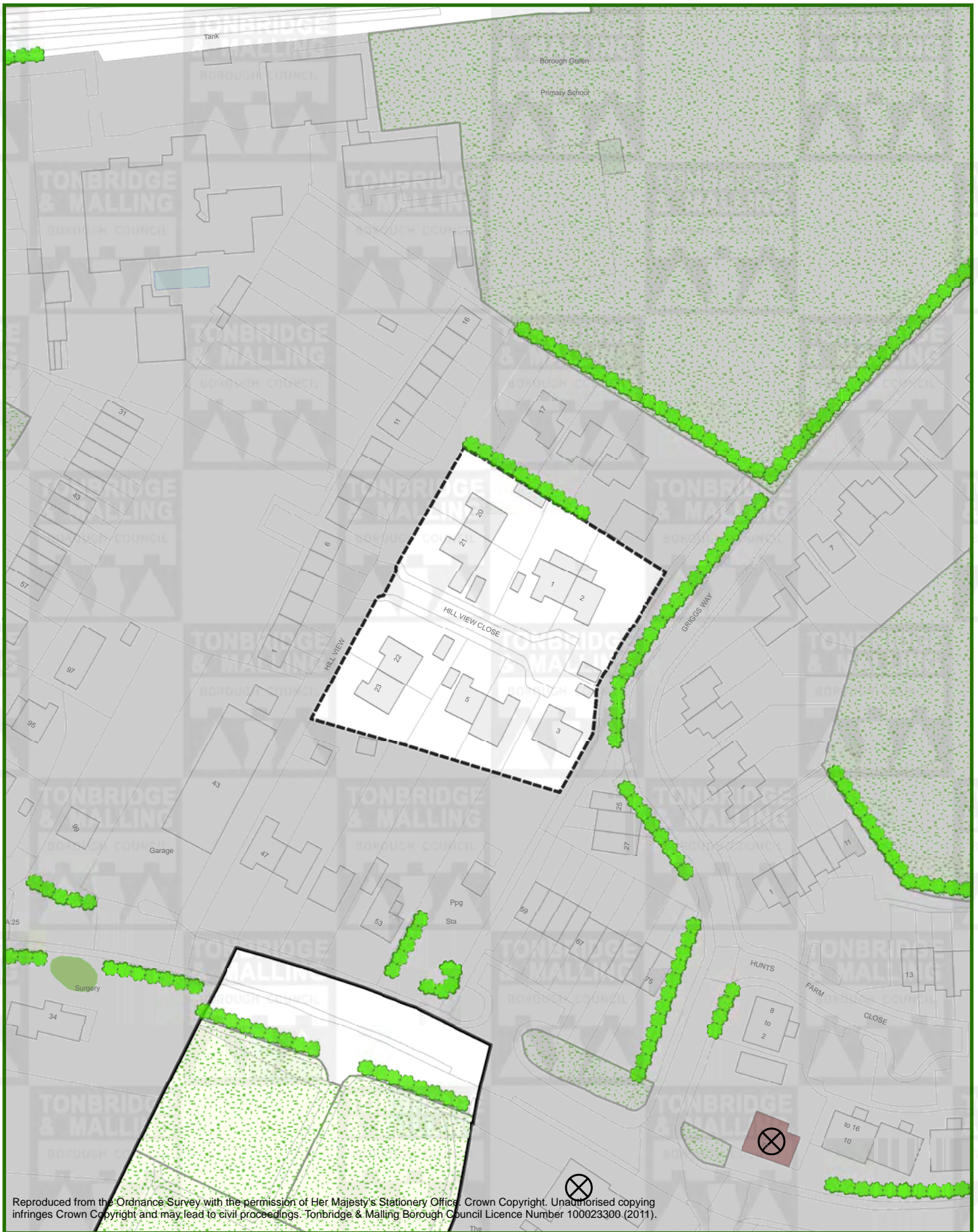
Age of buildings	1950s/60s
Type of buildings	Semi-detached and detached bungalows
Main uses	Residential
Building Heights	1 storey or with upper storey in the roof
Prominent building materials	Red brick, brown roof tiles, white windows
Predominant boundary treatments	Brick walls, panel fences, hedges and shrubs
Open Spaces	None

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Hedges, shrubs and trees create a verdant character
- Quiet residential character with no through traffic

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Very poor surfacing and concrete garages



Ref **J1**
 Title **Hill View Close**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



K – COMMERCIAL AREAS

The commercial area of Borough Green, excluding the High Street area, is located to the east of Wrotham Road. Units are single storey with shallow roofs and built from panel materials and brick. Car parking areas and vehicular access tends to dominate.

K1 – BOURNE ENTERPRISE CENTRE

Comprising: Bourne Enterprise Centre

Set back from the road down a fairly narrow landscaped access on low lying land limits the visual impact of this use on surrounding residential areas. However the units are visible from Stone Court and Tollgate Mews. It is in a sensitive location adjoining the Old Manor, but protected trees and tall hedges help to protect the setting of this listed building.



This compact site of beige coloured single single storey units is set around a large parking area

LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

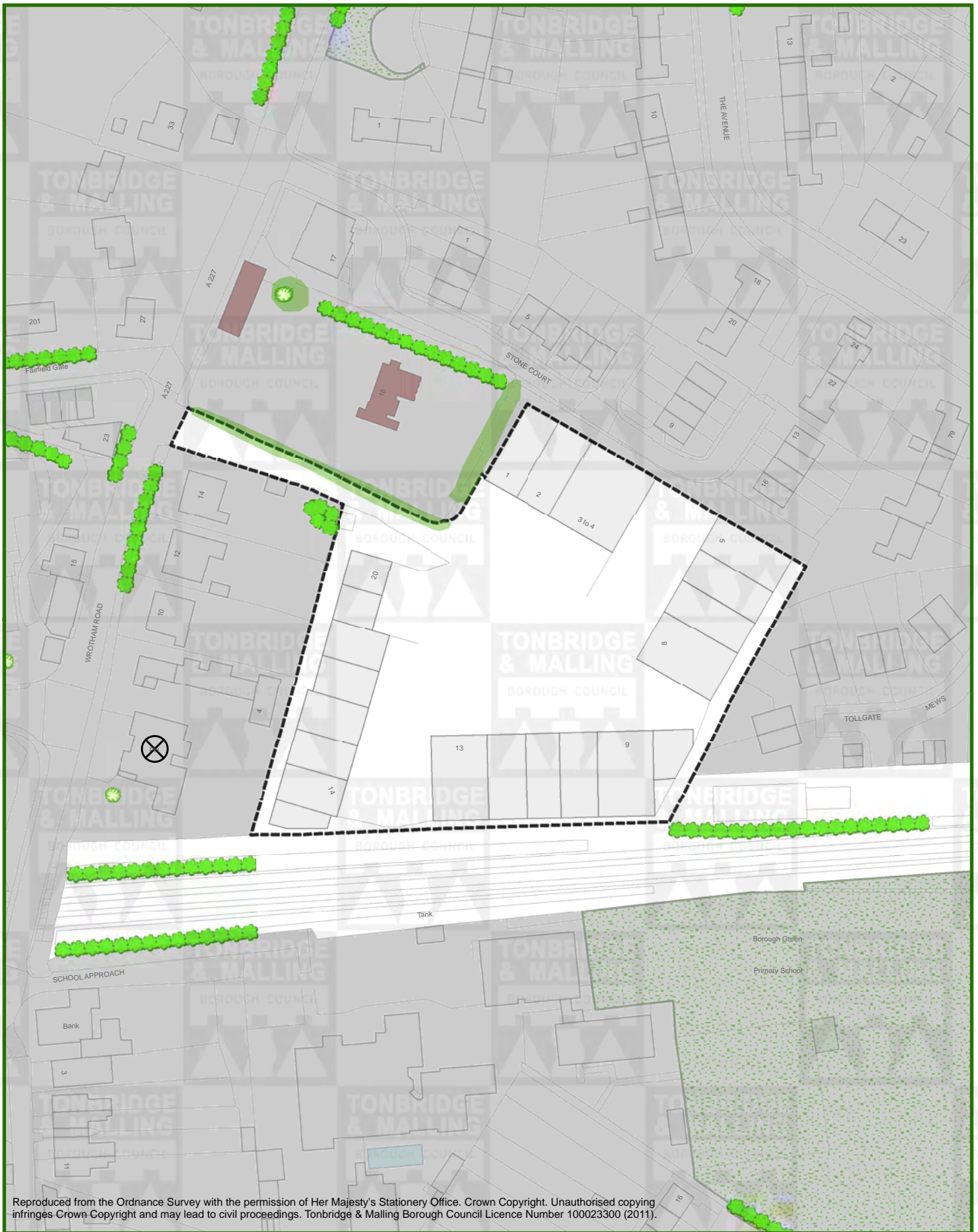
Age of buildings	1960s onwards
Type of buildings	Groups of linked units
Main uses	Industrial and warehouse
Building Heights	Single storey
Prominent building materials	Steel and brick
Predominant boundary treatments	Fences and open plan
Open spaces	None

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Low neutral coloured buildings on low lying land set back from the Wrotham Road limits the visual impact on surrounding residential areas
- Trees and hedges screen the development from the listed Old Manor
- Landscaped entrance

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- Undistinguished buildings with no local references
- Stone Court faces onto the rear of the units with no screening
- Large vehicles entering from Wrotham Road have resulted in damage to walls and street furniture



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Ref **K1**
 Title **Bourne Enterprise Centre**
 Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



L OFFICES

A small group of purpose built office buildings is situated immediately to the north of the station spanning Fairfield Road.

L1 STATION COURT

Comprising: Station Court and the A to Z Offices north of Fairfield Road



The two storey A to Z office building is set at right angles to Fairfield Road behind a metal fence, trees and extensive parking area. It is faced with yellow brick with brown brick details and a pitched tiled roof.

Station Court and a row of trees enclose the station forecourt. Constructed in red brick with yellow brick window details and string courses, pitched tiled roofs and a distinctive gabled design, the offices are set below the level of Wrotham Road. The projecting elements in the frontage, the varied roofline, the low building height, use of traditional materials and location on low lying land successfully minimises the impact of these relative bulky buildings on the wider townscape.



LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

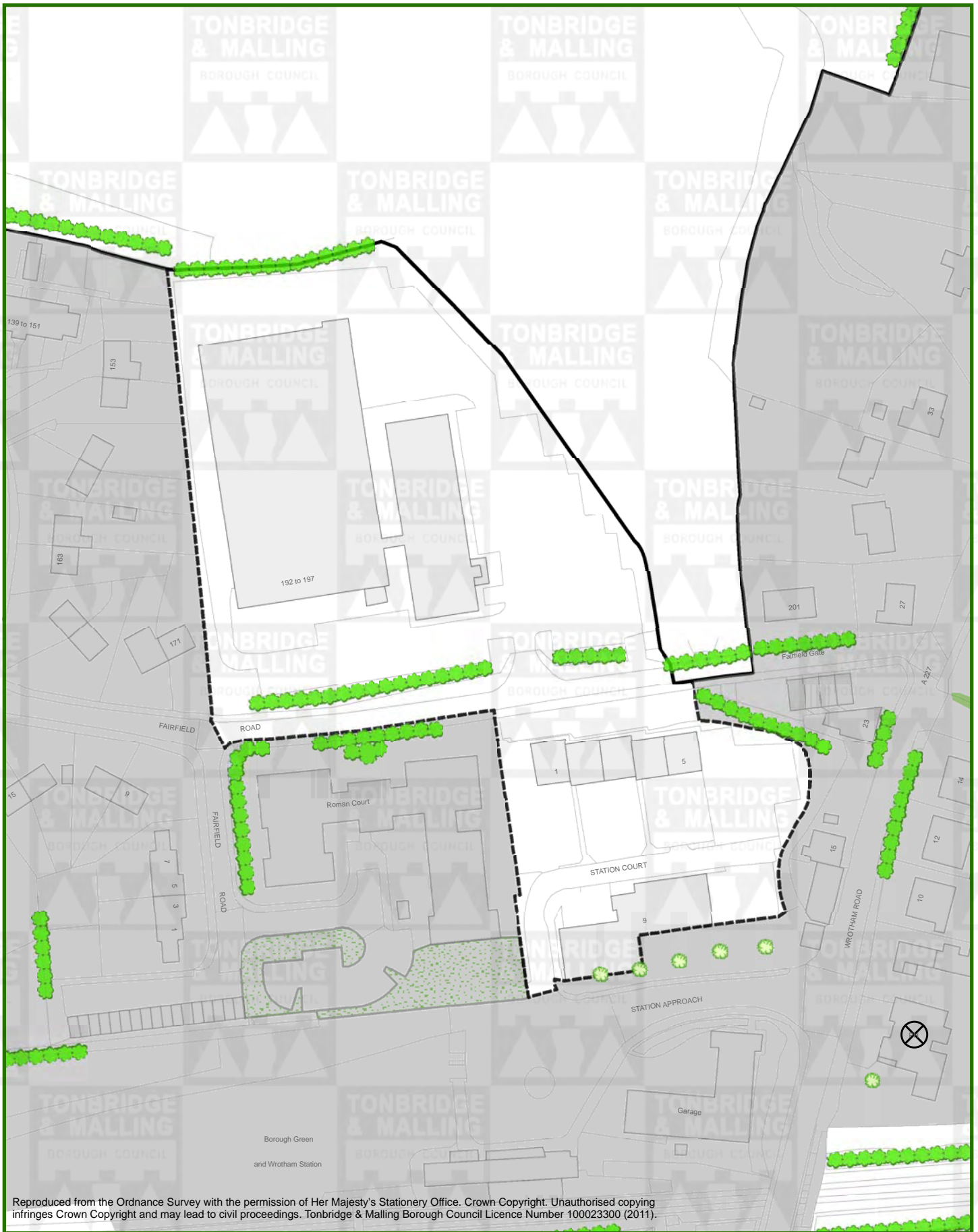
Age of buildings	1970s onwards
Type of buildings	Wide attached buildings
Main uses	Office
Building Heights	2 storeys
Prominent building materials	Red, yellow and brown brick, roof tiles
Predominant boundary treatments	Metal fences and clipped hedges
Open spaces	None

Locally Distinctive Positive Features

- Enclosed urban form whose scale and materials create a cohesive character
- Traditional materials represent the local vernacular
- The orientation, low height and neutral colour of the A to Z building together with tree planting on the boundaries minimises its impact on the surrounding residential areas
- Station Court encloses the Station Forecourt creating a well defined space and the buildings are well designed to minimise their impact on Wrotham Road and Fairfield Road

Negative Features Worthy of Enhancement

- No significant detractors



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Ref **L1**
 Title **Station Court**

Borough Green Character Area Appraisal



9 Design Guidance

New development of whatever scale cannot be viewed in isolation. The design of all new development should take into account the character of the building or site on which it is situated and the surroundings (the locally distinctive contextual features). This will help ensure that the design of new buildings evolves, where appropriate, from the qualities that make many parts of Borough Green distinctive. It is important that new development creates a place that is valued and well related to local character. Where such distinctiveness is present and is ignored, new development can be bland, lose reference to essential local features and, as a result, erode local character and distinctiveness.

Some minor development is permitted, by Parliament, without the need for a planning application (usually known as “permitted development”) and, home owners and developers who are considering such alterations are encouraged to refer to the distinctive characteristics of their area as described in this SPD when considering even minor development. The Council’s planning staff will also use the SPD as a basis for giving advice to those who intend to exercise permitted development rights. Although the Council will not be in a position to *require* these good design principles in such cases, it will nevertheless encourage their use where possible..

There are four principles which the Council will apply in protecting, conserving and, where possible, enhancing the character and local distinctiveness of the area. The principles are consistent with, and supplement, the policies in the Core Strategy and the Managing Development and the Environment DPD. In applying these principles, regard must also be paid to the need to achieve sustainably designed properties that, where practicable, take advantage of local site conditions and incorporate materials, technologies and planting that help to reduce their energy requirements and therefore lower their carbon footprint. This is a key priority of the Council as well as being an objective of the Managing Development and the Environment DPD. Providing this objective is addressed early in the design process in a sensitive way that respects the local character as identified in the Character Area Appraisals, there is no reason why it should not be effectively delivered without compromising the principles set out below:

Where validation provisions require it proposals should be accompanied by a design and access statement that explains how the proposal:

- **respects the locally distinctive positive features of the character area identified in the SPD. The positive features of an area such as building and roof lines, scale, massing, design characteristics, boundary treatments, landscape and layout should normally be reinforced by the proposal. Using local historic details and materials will also reinforce the character and local distinctiveness of the area.**
- **wherever possible, improves the character and design quality of the character area, and thus the village of Borough Green, by reinstating or reinforcing locally distinctive positive features of the character area identified in the SPD and/or replacing, screening or otherwise mitigating negative features worthy of enhancement, or**
- **creates a new local character in areas where there are few locally distinctive positive features or on more extensive sites where there is a greater opportunity to create a new local character.**

Proposals may come forward that can, exceptionally justify a departure from the local context. Such proposals will need to establish clear and overriding planning and design justification if they are to prove acceptable.

Local analysis and consultation has been used to interpret these design principles and develop appropriate design guidance for assessing development proposals within each character area. This is set out below.

Respecting the locally distinctive positive features of the character area identified in the SPD.

In order to respect the locally distinctive positive features of the character area, development will be expected to:

(1) Protect or enhance the setting of listed buildings

There are a number of listed buildings situated within Borough Green's character areas. Listed building controls apply to all works, both external and internal, that would affect a listed building's special interest, whether or not the particular feature concerned is specifically mentioned in the list description. Consent is not normally required for repairs, but, where repairs involve alterations which would affect the character of the listed building, consent is required.

The design of new buildings intended to stand alongside historic buildings needs very careful consideration. In relation to listed buildings the setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function.

(2) Respect the scale, height, form, alignment, space, layout and density, materials and character of the area

For each character area there are identified locally distinctive contextual features and positive features which new development should respect. In considering new designs, visual clues are seen, at the large scale, in terms of the form, height and alignment of the buildings and the rhythms formed, for example, by chimneys, porches, brick details and fenestration and, at the small scale, in relation to details such as materials, colour and brick patterning, the shape and pattern of windows and doors and boundary treatment.

At the large scale, the **height and form** of buildings are often relatively uniform within character areas, although some variation may be evident. Significant differences in height may not respect the local context. Roofscape patterns are often repeated through a street, bringing unity or a rhythm of repeated shapes (hipped or half-hipped roofs, gable ends facing the road, or unified, simple roof lines which front the street with no projections such as dormer windows). The unity or rhythm of rooflines should preferably not be compromised by inappropriate roof extensions.

In relation to **alignment** of the buildings, in some instances regular building lines are established. For example, 1960's – 1970s detached properties set back along a common building line. In other clusters, properties are situated on a straight building line with a minimal set back from the street providing a tight knit urban form. A distinctive unity is retained. It is important that new buildings respect the alignment of buildings in order to fit well within the local

context. Where buildings are set back a consistent distance from the street along a common building line the visual integrity of a whole street should not be compromised by porches or front extensions.

These considerations apply to the front building line and also to the width of the development within the plot and the **space** that exists between and around buildings. There should be sufficient width within a plot to locate the building(s) and provide adequate separation between them in order to reflect the general spacing characteristics of an area. There are considerable pressures to maximise the use of sites but this should not be to the detriment or erosion of the distinctive character of the area.

Many of the character areas possess a strong unified palette of **materials**. For example, the red brick, slate or tiled roofs and white sash windows of the 19 Century development or the red brick, brown tiles; ragstone in the Quarry Hill Road area and Sevenoaks Road; red brick and white/ cream painted render, brown roof tiles of the inter war and post war public housing schemes; . The choice and combination of materials is crucial to the success of a scheme. In creating a locally distinctive environment, the number of different materials used should generally be kept to a minimum. New buildings, or extensions, should be constructed of materials which respect those used in the character area within which they are proposed.

A richness of design and texture can be achieved through careful **detailing** eg brick detailing such as arches above windows and doors and string courses, bay windows. The following typologies of character areas contain significant examples of original and valuable detailing:

- Parts of the Maidstone Road Frontage
- The High Street Area
- 19th Century Development
- Clustered Cul de Sac Development
- Compact Cul de Sac Development
- Offices

New buildings, or extensions, should, where appropriate, apply local detailing which reinforces the character of the area within which they are proposed.

Careful consideration should also be given to ensuring that good quality traditional detailing on buildings is retained. Where these have been removed, efforts should be made to restore them. Replacement doors, windows and roofs should closely match the design and materials of the original features. Where inappropriate new windows, doors and roofs are to be replaced, the opportunity should be taken to put back in the original style.

The principles set out above should drive the design process in the vast majority of cases. However, they should not necessarily be regarded as a deterrent to the creation of imaginative high quality contemporary designs using appropriate contemporary materials in the right setting.

(3) Retain traditional boundary treatment and natural features

Ragstone and brick walls, hedges and mature trees, picket fences and black metal railings are prevalent features in different character areas. They help enclose the road space, define the boundary between public and private space and help reinforce the character of an area. Areas

can be distinctive by virtue of their well-treed appearance. Development should not erode such features through the loss of walls, hedges/ trees or the use of unsympathetic boundary treatment.

Parking areas have been created on some frontages leading to an erosion of the street enclosure, a loss of defensible space around the building and the link to the character of the area. Wherever possible, traditional boundary enclosure should be reinstated. Where the opportunity arises, new boundaries should use the prevailing materials and designs in the character area.

(4) Protect traditional shop fronts

A number of traditional shop fronts remain within the High Street area. These shop fronts are an essential part of the character of the area but insensitive shop fronts, which do not respect the traditional features or widths of upper storeys or the street scene, have been introduced in places.

Traditionally designed shop fronts should be retained. New shop fronts should respect the scale, period, design and detail of the individual building of which it forms part, as well as harmonising with the wider shopping area.

The Borough Council will bring forward a new supplementary planning document on shop fronts and advertisements. It will amplify, illustrate and potentially replace Saved Local Plan policy P4/13.

(5) Protect views of local landmarks

Borough Green contains a number of landmark buildings and individual specimen trees which help give historic and visual reference points, assist legibility of the area and help prevent a monotonous appearance. Such buildings can sometimes be somewhat unusual features in a particular character area. These buildings and trees are important in the distinctive character of a street scene.

(6) Protect and Enhance Landscape Features

Some character areas such as the inter-war and post-war public housing schemes and the Normanhurst Road area have larger areas of public open space (shown on the Townscape Analysis Maps) as an integral part of their character. Important open spaces may already be protected for their recreational value by other policies in the LDF but they should also be retained because of their importance to the amenity and character of the area.

There is an Area of Landscape Significance which provides a landscape feature within Borough Green: Crow Hill. Within this area, the landscape is the dominant feature. Development should not erode the character of the area which is valuable in its own right but also in providing a landscape framework to a number of surrounding character areas. The area also provides a vantage point for viewing surrounding character areas, several significant buildings and the surrounding countryside.

The appraisal also identifies a number of tree belts which are visible from the public domain (shown on the Townscape Analysis Maps) some of which may form an edge to the character

area (sometimes representing an original field boundary), and some form a backdrop to development or act as a visual amenity (sometimes in an area where the buildings themselves may have little distinctive character). These features perform an important function within a character area(s) and should be protected and, so far as possible, retained in any new development.

Development should not erode these unique features through the loss of trees which are important to the character or the generation of substantial additional traffic that would cause the erosion of the boundary features.

(7) Protect views of the open countryside

The topography of the area and the disposition and scale of development allows long views of the North Downs and Sevenoaks Ridge from some of the character areas (shown on the Townscape Analysis Maps). These views are important to the character of the area and should not be lost through future development.

(8) Respect the quiet residential character

The cul de sac layout with no through traffic; distance from the main roads; proximity of the countryside and almost exclusively residential development has resulted in a quiet residential character within a large number of the Borough Green character areas. This character should not be adversely affected by new development.

Improving the character and design quality of the character area, and as a result the village of Borough Green

In order to improve the character and design quality of the character area, and in turn the village of Borough Green, development will be expected to:

(9) In residential character areas of standard architecture with few historic place references, assess the opportunity to create new buildings of interest and/or landmark buildings

Many parts of Borough Green are likely to remain largely unchanged by substantial redevelopment over time but there may be opportunities for new development. For example, isolated properties or garage courts could be replaced. In such cases, the scale and form of the surrounding development as well as the locally distinctive positive features should be respected.

In some cases there may be opportunities to enhance the area through the creation of individual buildings of interest or additional landscape features. Landmark buildings can lift a design from the ordinary and may be justified on the basis of a sound urban design appraisal of their context and a perceived environmental uplift to the quality of the area.



In designing new development a high standard of intrinsic design quality is required. Interesting detailing such as created by brick patterning and the shape and pattern of roofs, windows and doors can enhance a design whether for new build or alteration to an existing building which can add to the character and distinctiveness of an area.



In designing new development such as replacing buildings which detract from the character of the area, or other opportunities, a high quality, visually attractive design is required. Detailing was not a feature of modern designs in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s to the detriment of the character of buildings and the wider housing estates within which they were situated. More recently, detailing such as brick patterning and the shape and pattern of windows and doors is being added to designs, and this will be encouraged, firstly when making an alteration to such a building and secondly where new buildings are erected to add to the character and distinctiveness of an area.



Over-generous road space should be avoided and streets should be defined by a coherent and well structured layout using different road widths which create a hierarchy of spaces with the buildings providing a strong sense of enclosure where the setting demands it (as in the example shown left). However, it would be inappropriate to seek to impose such a design solution in every case and where this would be inappropriate to the character of the area. (eg areas of open plan housing).

There is likely to be a demand to retrofit some buildings, not built to current energy efficiency standards, with new cladding, solar panels and added insulation (such as the example shown below). Whilst it would be desirable to minimise the impact of such changes on buildings of quality, it may be a virtue to use such improvements to uplift undistinguished, standardised architecture and add a new distinctiveness to an area. Likewise, new development built to a high sustainable standard can achieve similar benefits, providing the principles of passive design are addressed sensitively at the conception stage of the scheme having regard to the character of the area.



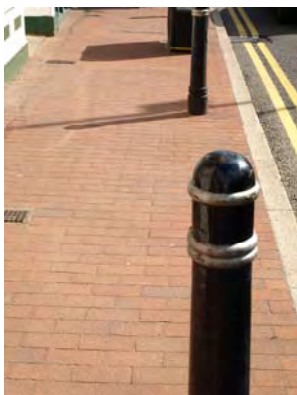
(10) Reinstate or reinforce positive features

Through the development process there will be opportunities to reinstate or reinforce the positive features which contribute to the character of the area. This could mean reinforcing the verdant landscape character with substantial specimen trees and boundary hedges.



There are examples where open frontages are created to the road leaving no definition of the space, reducing security and in many cases a loss of pride in the maintenance of the space. Where appropriate to the character of an area, private space should be defined by a clear boundary. Front boundaries should be retained or restored to the prevailing feature in the character area: such as approximately 1 metre high red brick wall with a coping and entrance gate pillars; brick wall topped by hedge; hedge and railings or mature hedge.

(11) Provide streetscape enhancements



Opportunity should be taken as part of development proposals to ameliorate the negative features of an area identified in the Character Area Appraisals. The High Street area has seen significant enhancements to the surfaces and street furniture. Improvements to boundary treatments or footway/road surfaces, would contribute to improving the character of the wider area.

(12) Noise

The main generator of noise in Borough Green is traffic on the main routes through the village. The level of traffic noise is not a matter that can be addressed by this SPD or in most cases by the Borough Council. However, where new development is proposed that might generate noise which could adversely affect the character of an area then the LDF contains a policy that aims to address the matter. However, the Council is not normally able to control noise disturbance during the construction period under planning legislation.

Appendix 1

By Design – Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice (DETR 2000)

The guide is intended as a companion to Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) [and subsequent Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)] and aims to encourage better design and to stimulate thinking about urban design.

The guide states that understanding the local context should be the prelude to drawing up the planning 'toolkit'.

A range of techniques is available, but the guide states that carrying out an appraisal is more important than the specific technique used and a simple assessment is better than none. The guide provides pointers to understanding an area in terms of its urban design.

The guide sets out a series of checklists to act as a guide to the assessment of an area. They are not meant to be followed slavishly. Understanding the local context does not require every item on the checklists to be examined on every occasion and in every place or in the same depth. The checklists provide pointers to understanding an area in terms of its urban design and the following elements have been particularly relevant to the appraisal of Borough Green.

Character

A place with its own identity

Appraisals can include assessments of:

- the origins and development of the topography of the area, including surviving elements of historic street patterns, plot subdivisions, boundary treatments and the relationships between buildings and spaces;
- the architecture and historic quality, character and coherence of buildings, both listed and unlisted, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area;
- the character and hierarchy of spaces and their townscape quality;
- prevalent and historic building materials;
- the contribution made to the character of the area by green spaces, trees, hedges and other cultivated elements;
- the area's prevailing (or former) uses, plan forms and building types;
- the relationship of the built environment to landscape or open countryside, including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas;
- features which have been lost, or which intrude on or detract from the character of the area.

Continuity of building frontages and enclosure of public spaces

A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished

Techniques include identifying and mapping:

- gap sites and abnormal setbacks which interrupt the common building line of the street;
- instances where the backs of buildings are exposed to public view and access (as in the case of back gardens on to roads, alleys and public spaces);
- active and dead frontages at ground floor level: positive factors such as entrances, shopfronts and windows; and negative factors such as long blank facades and high boundary walls, and service entrances and yards;
- active and dead frontages at upper floors: positive factors such as windows of habitable rooms overlooking public space; and negative factors such as blank gable walls and unused space over shops;
- places where buildings meet the public realm: boundary treatments such as gates, railings, fences and boundary walls; front gardens and in-curtilage parking; and servicing;
- spatial enclosure: the relationship between the heights of buildings and the spaces they define;
- planting (such as trees and hedges), natural features, land form, and retaining walls which define and enclose blocks and spaces.

Quality of the public realm

A place with attractive and successful outdoor

Public realm audits can include assessments of:

- hard landscaping (paving materials, kerbs, walls, steps and ramps);
- planting (trees, planters, grassed areas, flowers and borders);
- street furniture (seats, bins, bollards and railings);
- lighting (pavement, pedestrian, highway, security, building and feature);
- shopfronts (thresholds, glazing, stall risers, signs, banners and shutters).
- advertisements (hoardings, kiosks and banners);
- traffic and highways installations (including highway markings, traffic signals and control boxes);
- public space use and management (informal use as well as formal, events, markets, graffiti removal, litter collection and street cleansing).

Legibility

A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand

Appraisals of:

- gateways and points of transition (at main entry points, between different areas and at transitions between different uses);
- nodes (important junctions and points of interaction);
- landmarks and features (important buildings, corners);
- views and vistas (seen from within the area and from the outside);
- edges, seams and barriers (including the boundaries between different zones and areas, and streets which integrate or sever).