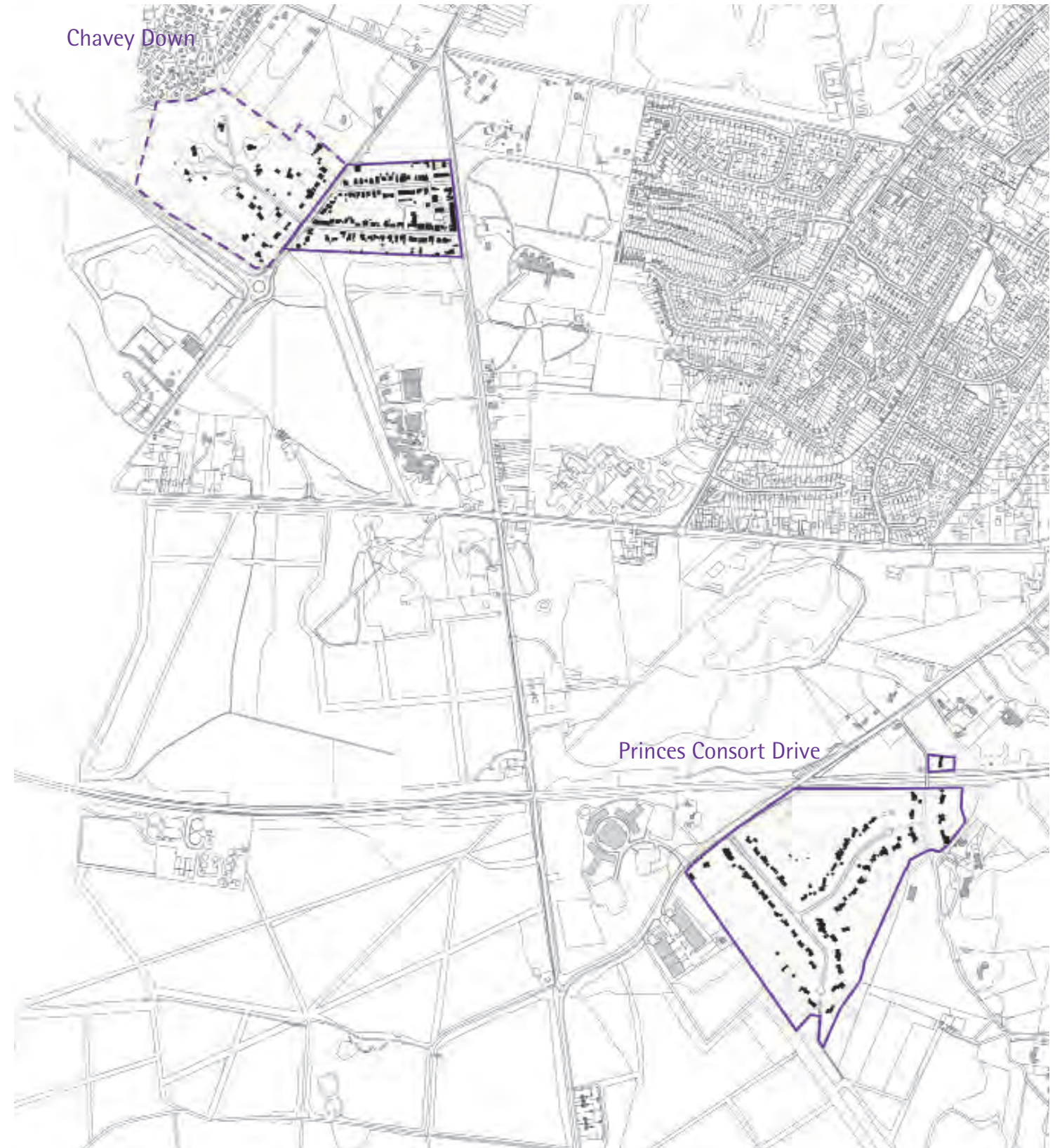
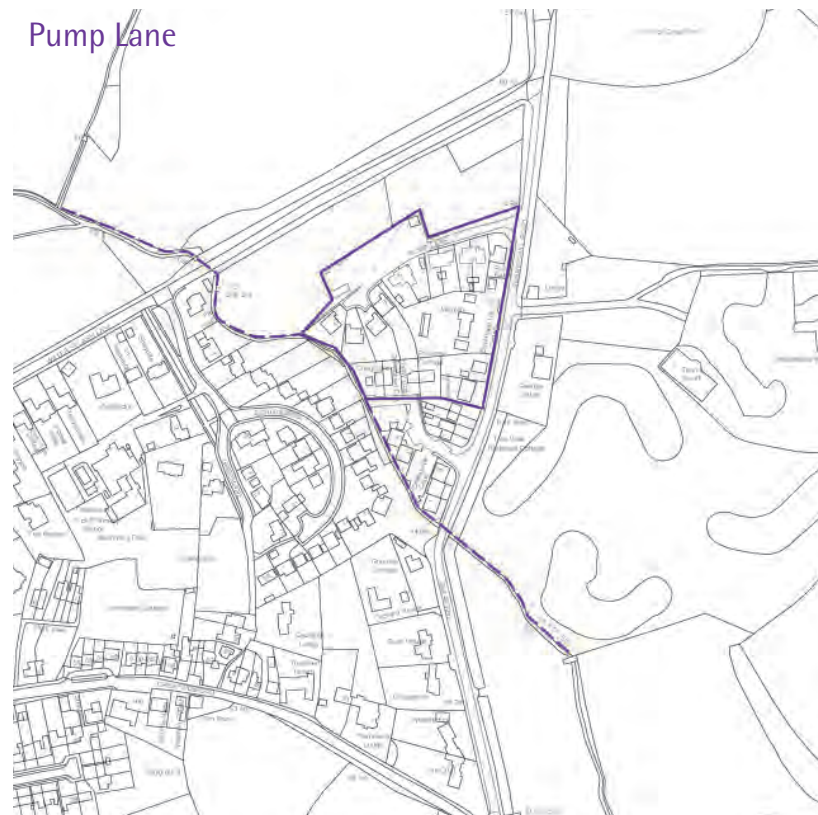


Chapter 6

East of Bracknell study area

The study areas within East Bracknell are self contained settlements or clusters of development. Their setting within the landscape contributes considerably to their character.



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Structure

Area A: Chavey Down East

- Chavey Down is a clearly defined settlement that is surrounded by woodland;
- It is based on a historic street pattern with a tight grain of development that dates back to Victorian times;
- Remnant of Victorian settlement; and
- Narrow plots, very narrow in parts.

Area B

- The importance of Chavey Down West has to be seen in context with the eastern part;
- It is of very low density allowing for an over arching woodland setting and a dense tree canopy; and
- This landscape buffer is important for the definition of Chavey Down.

Area C: Prince Consort Drive and King's Ride

This area comprises a low density development of large houses set within generous plots. It is a cluster of exclusive housing within countryside.

Area D: Pump Lane, Cheapside

The area around Pump Lane forms part of a larger settlement, Cheapside. Although this lies within a different borough, the character cannot be seen independently.



Area D



Borough boundary

Area C



Landscape Setting

Area A: Chavey Down East

- The area lies within the Chavey Down Small-scale Enclosed Forest and Heaths (Entec 2006);
- The surrounding suburban and urban fringe uses (mobile home park, former landfill, recreation land) sit within a strong wooded landscape of mixed and deciduous tree cover;
- The character area and its wooded setting form an important landscape gap between Bracknell and North Ascot;
- The area sits on a local high point at around 98m AOD and falls due westwards;
- There are good visual links between character area A and character area B but these two parts of the settlement are physically very different;
- The surrounding woodland visually encloses the character area but there are long views westwards down North Road and Church Road to the woodland and housing in character area B; and
- There is no focal point to the area.

Area B: West of Long Hill Road

- The area lies within the Chavey Down Small-scale Enclosed Forest and Heaths;
- The character area is an extension to the small scale nucleated village of character area A;
- The surrounding suburban and urban fringe uses (mobile home park, landfill, recreation land) sit within a strong wooded landscape of mixed and deciduous tree cover;
- The character area and its wooded setting form part of an important and narrow landscape gap between Bracknell and North Ascot;
- The area sits on an undulating land gently falling westwards;
- There are good visual links between character area B and character area A but these two parts of the settlement are physically very different;
- The surrounding woodland visually encloses the character area; and
- There is no focal point to the area.

Area C: Prince Consort Drive and Prince Albert Drive

- The character area is not included in the Entec study. The BLCA includes it in Ascot Settled Farmlands (BLCA 2003). It is characterised by its large blocks of deciduous, mixed and coniferous woodland, as found surrounding the character area; and
- Prince Albert Drive retains the historic woodland approach to Kings Ride House.

Area D: Pump Lane, Cheapside

- The area is not included within the Entec study. It lies within the BLCA Ascot Settled Farmlands (BLCA 2003) but sandwiched between the Forested Sands of Sunninghill to the south and Royal Forest to the east both of which heavily influence the setting of this small character area. It is characterised by its large blocks of deciduous, mixed and coniferous woodland as found to the west of Cheapside. Within this lies intact pasture and with remnant parkland trees such as to the north of Pump Lane;
- Remnant evidence (boundaries and tree locations in evidence on aerial photographs) of former link from Pump Lane south west in a curve down to Cheapside Road;
- Bounded to the west and south by modern development which contrast in pattern and landscape character;
- Undulating landscape with the character area sitting on the side slope of a shallow valley; and
- Strong visual link with open countryside to the north.

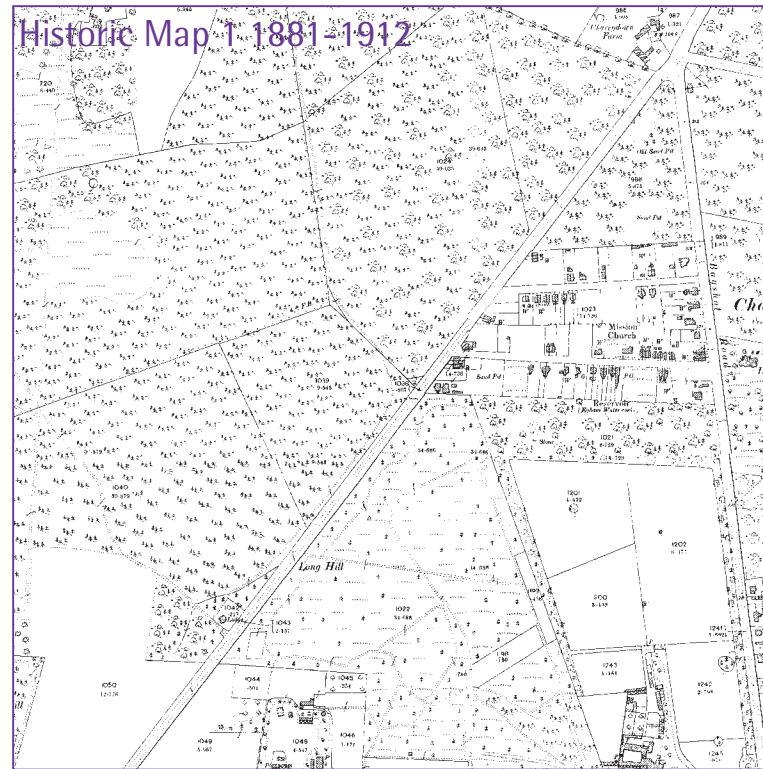


Priory Road

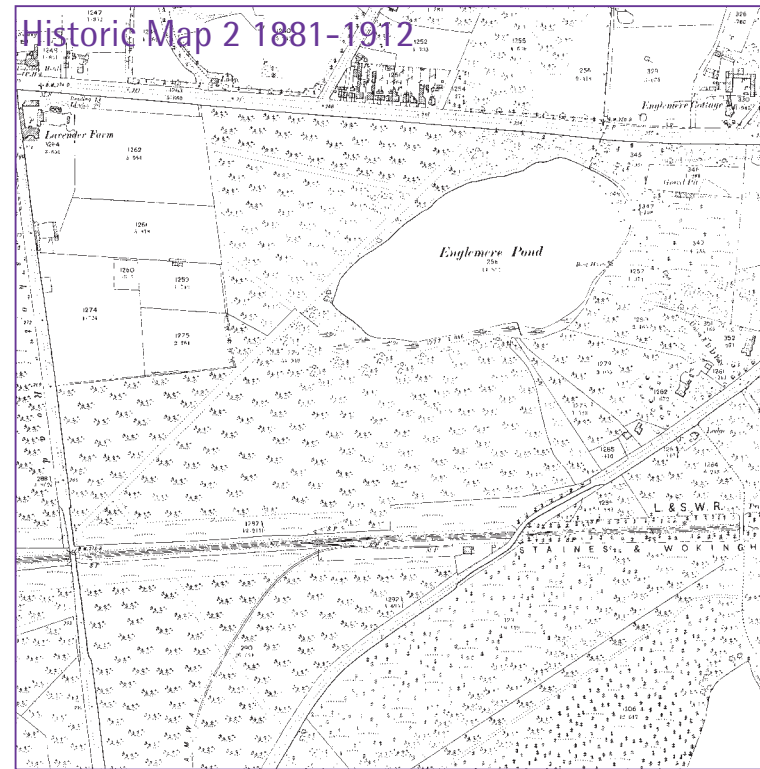


Pump Lane

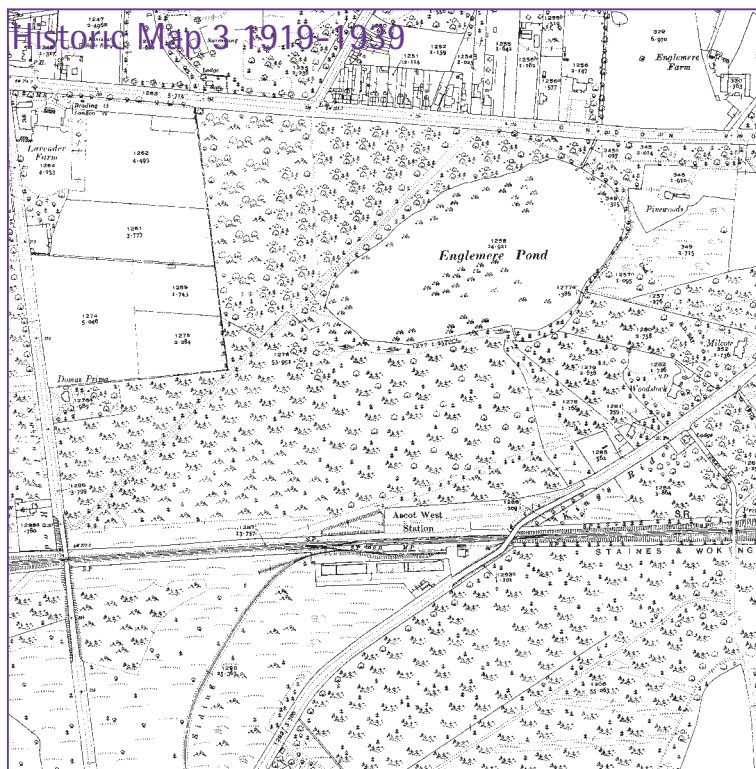




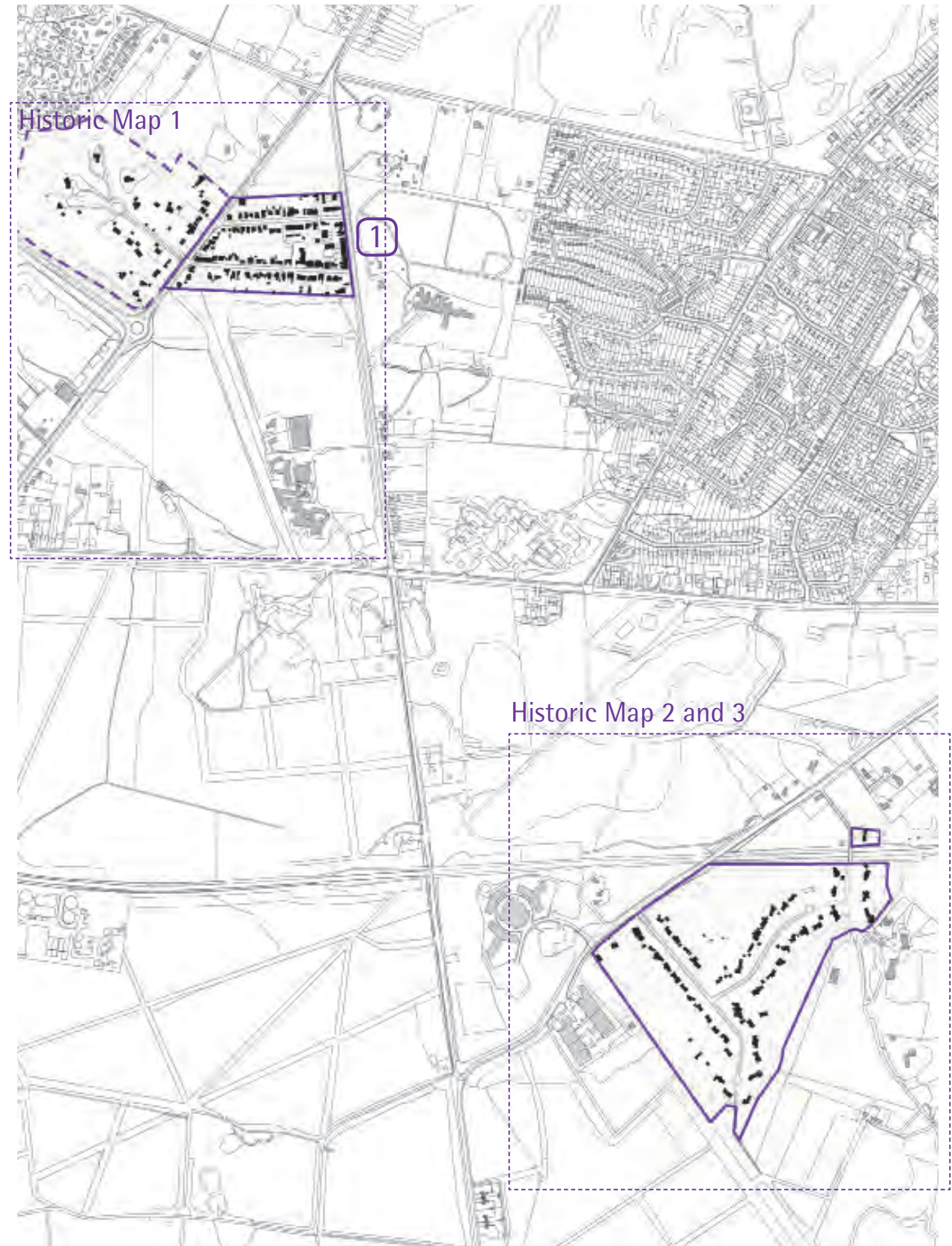
This part of the current settlement still more or less represents the Victorian and pre second world war development at Chavey Down.



The belt of trees bounding the character area to the south east is a remnant of the Victorian forest ride planting.



The belt of trees bounding the character area to the south east is a remnant of the Victorian forest ride planting.



Area A: Chavey Down East

This area comprises part of the settlement of Chavey Down. Its tight urban form dates back to maps from 1881-1912.

Landscape character:

- Tight knit grid with uniform narrow front gardens;
- Mixed front garden treatment and lack of cohesion to street edge;
- Narrow plot widths and small back gardens; and
- Open frontage to Long Hill Road in contrast with well vegetated frontage to character area B.

Townscape:

- Many of the original buildings remain and create the dominant character for this area;
- Another strong influence is the topography. Roads are laid out across a ridge line which allows for good views along steeply sloping streets;
- Local focal points on Long Hill Road defines the junctions to Church Road; and
- Roofscape is important due to the topography and creates an townscape element.

Built form:

- Predominantly Victorian houses with some sympathetic infill development;
- Predominately red brick and white render;
- Simple building forms and traditional pitched roofs;
- Mostly small houses, some on very narrow plots;
- Building lines are consistent and create a positive street scene; and
- Buildings are predominately 2 storeys high; with slightly larger buildings along Priory Road.

Vegetation and Hard Landscape:

- Trees in gardens at the centre of character area;
- Surrounding tree cover right up to the back of perimeter gardens; and
- Lawson Cyprus, privet and laurel hedging.

Boundary condition:

- Boundary treatments vary from hedges, timber fences to low walls. However the boundary line is consistent and creates a robust edge to the public realm; and
- Low brick walls to new development on Priory Road has been detailed to reflect the local small plot width used as frontage treatment very successfully.

Summary:

The area is very distinctive and has a positive character. This is partly due to the clear definition of settlement boundaries and the contrast between its tight development grain and the surrounding open woodland.

Due to this tightness, in some areas, parking is damaging the short front gardens and the character of the street scene.

Recommendations

- Development in Chavey Down East could be of relatively high density with tightly set buildings. However the building height should not exceed the predominant height of the settlement;
- Buildings along either of the east-west roads need to reflect the vertical rhythm of the existing street scene;
- Merging of plots should be avoided as it would destroy the small scale, characteristic of this area;
- The adjacent woodland must be retained as its erosion will damage the existing townscape/landscape relationship and give rise to the loss of identity and separation from the major settlements;
- Maintain plot and front garden scale; and
- Front gardens should be of appropriate design and use low brick walls.



View down North Road shows how the development is embedded in the wider landscape.



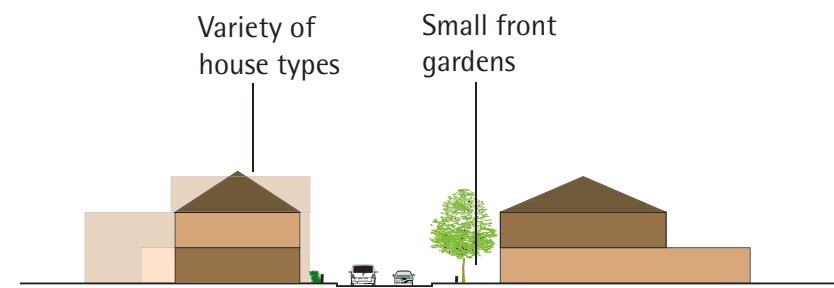
View east on Church Road



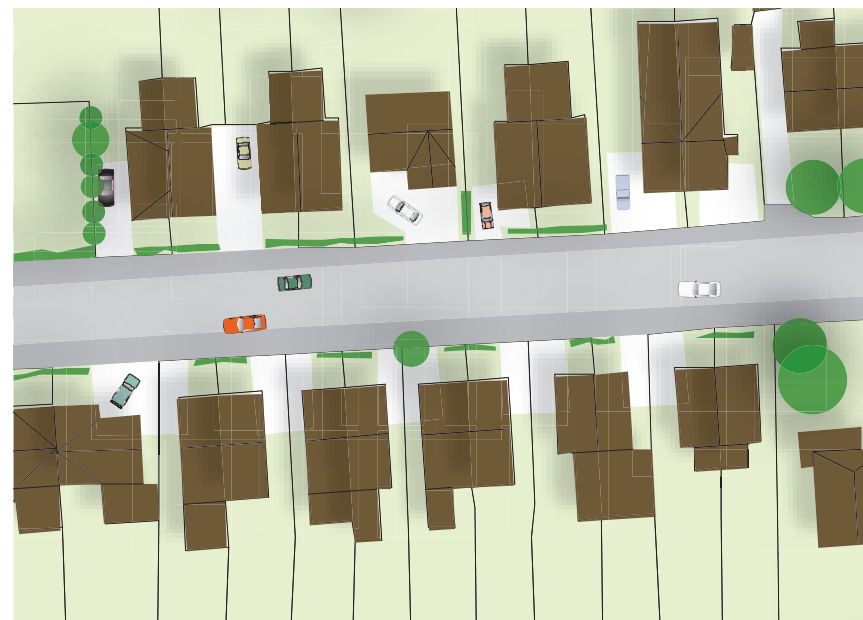
View west along Church Road shows the predominance of red brick



Victorian house with white render.



Typical section through North Road



Typical plan of North Road



Area B: West of Long Hill Road

This area is very different in character to Chavey Down East. It does not form part of the main settlement, but contributes to its character.

This area is of very low density and houses are well dispersed within woodland.

Landscape Character:

- Gardens wrapped around by mixed and deciduous woodland, extending into the plots; and
- Houses set well back from the road with a common building line. Development to the rear of the Long Hill Road frontage retains the relationship between buildings and garden size.

Townscape:

- Large suburban houses in generous gardens.

Built form:

- Buildings vary in architectural style and there is no consistency in terms of their period, alignment or material palette.

Vegetation and Hard landscape:

- Strong tree belts along Long Hill Road and within the plots linking the roadside planting with the surrounding woodland;
- Mixed conifer and deciduous tree and hedgerow cover; and
- Granite sett edging to Long Hill Road.

Boundary treatment:

- The boundary along Long Hill Road is densely planted with shrubs, hedges and trees; and
- The treatment of plot boundaries varies, but is mainly planted with shrubs and hedges.

Summary:

Overall this area has a positive character, mainly due to its woodland setting.

Recommendations

- Development should be of low density, so that the existing landscape character is not disturbed;
- The existing tree cover should be retained and mature trees protected;
- The wooded gap to Bracknell is very vulnerable to erosion and should be protected;
- Vegetation along Long Hill Road should not be lost as this would significantly erode the local character;
- Maintain and enhance the internal and surrounding woodland and tree or mature hedgerow cover; and
- Maintain the balance between buildings and the sizes of gardens or grounds.



View along Long Hill Road with character area a to the right and B to the left of the road.










Houses are set between dense shrub and hedgerow planting and trees



The aerial photograph shows the landscape character of Chavey Down and surrounding.



-  Character area boundary
-  Buildings
-  Woodland
-  Dense planting alongside road allows view views into adjacent plots
-  Varied boundary treatment but consistent alignment
-  Fairly consistent building line
-  Key views

Low density development and woodland planting provides an important landscape screen to Chavey Down East

Area C: Prince Consort Drive, Prince Albert Drive

Landscape Character:

- The character area still retains the appearance of its origins of being carved out of the woodland;
- The front gardens to Prince Consort Drive are well vegetated but fairly open, giving a sense of confidence in neighbourly security, in contrast to the front gardens of Prince Albert Drive which are heavily enclosed by front hedges with elaborate secure entrance gates;
- Wide verges within front gardens and generous road width;
- Wooded footpath link between the two areas;
- Narrow pinch point at end of Prince Albert Drive as approach to Kings Ride House, characterised by mature trees which are former sweet chestnut coppice stools³ ;
- Tree cover rises above the rear of the houses;
- Views limited by curve of the drives and woodland cover; and
- No key focal points.

Townscape:

- Cohesive pattern of buildings parallel with the drives (disrupted by one or two more modern redevelopments);
- Originally this area was developed comprehensively with consistent architectural approach, boundary treatment and landscape; and
- Houses are laid out to terminate vistas.

Built form:

- Detached houses set in large plots;
- Houses substantially set back from road;
- Consistent architectural approach;
- Predominant building materials are a combination of brick, waney edged oak weatherboard (stained dark), white render; and
- Hipped roofs.

Vegetation and Hard Landscape:

- Brick piers and elaborate security gates to Prince Albert Drive;
- Lack of hard landscape features within Prince Consort Drive is a positive characteristic;
- Strong tree belt at the back of plots;
- Fingers of woodland extend down the plot boundaries;
- Evergreens and conifers dominate the landscape; and
- Planting includes scots pine, Cyprus, rhododendrons, juniper, eleanus, birch, and outgrown sweet chestnut coppice stools and beech in Prince Albert Drive.

Boundary treatment:

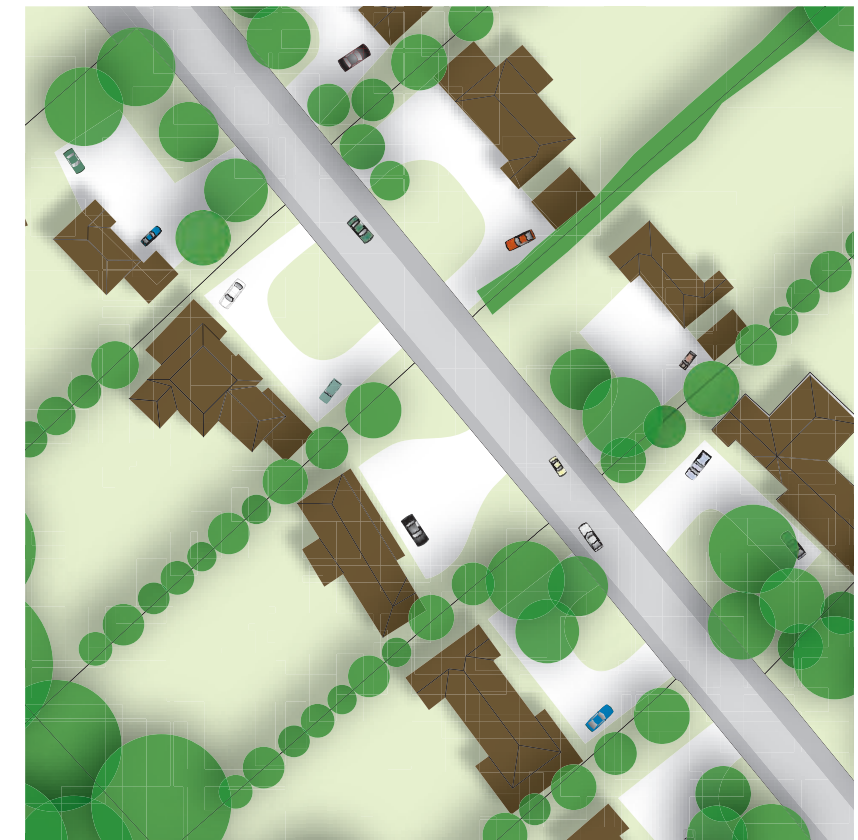
- Boundaries along Prince Consort Drive are open and trimmed lawns with planting create a buffer zone between road and houses; and
- High hedges and tall gates enclose Prince Albert Drive.

Summary:

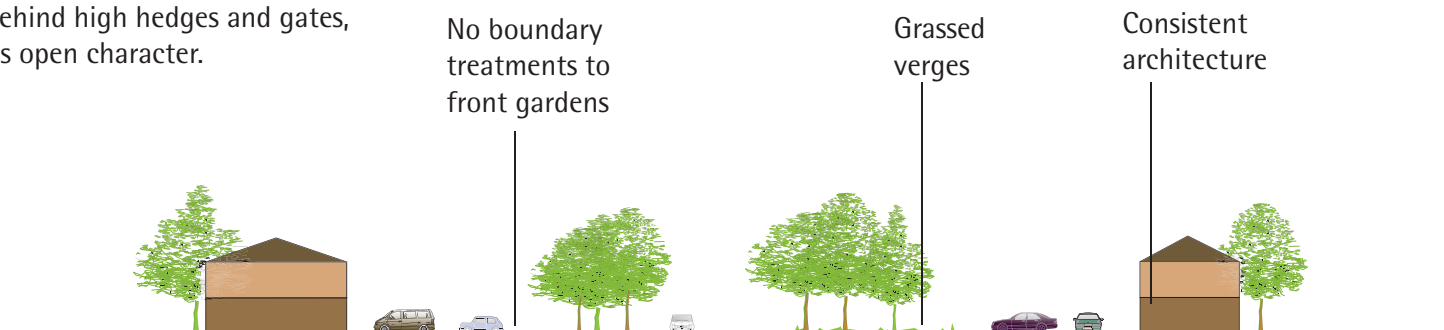
The area around Prince Consort Drive is very distinctive and of a positive character. It provides a high quality residential area, with large houses and well kept landscape.

There seems to be very little opportunity for future development in this area, other than the redevelopment of houses and extensions to existing properties. Some of the houses appear to have been redeveloped in the past.

Prince Consort Drive in particular is of an open and welcoming character due to limited boundary treatments and lawns. However the entire area is covered with woodland planting including many evergreens. Prince Albert Drive is less formal in terms of street design, but properties are set behind high hedges and gates, creating a more private and less open character.








Typical plan of Prince Consort Drive



Typical section through Prince Consort Drive

³ Footnote: a forestry practice of cutting down the stems of certain tree species (commonly sweet chestnut and hazel) to within 1m (3ft) of the ground and allowing new young stems to grow up. The stems were used for making different products such as hurdles.

-  Character area boundary
-  Houses have a characteristic architectural style
-  Woodland
-  Wide verges, lawns in front of houses are very distinct for the area
-  Dense boundary planting alongside road allows view views into properties



Along the first section of Prince Consort Drive buildings are formally aligned parallel to the drive.

Railway line

Wide street and open character due to verges and building set backs

Less formal alignment of buildings around cul-de-sacs

High degree of enclosure around road

Recommendations

- New houses should adhere to the overall architectural language;
- Infill development and extensions should not detract from the cohesive character;
- Open boundary treatments must be retained on Prince Consort Drive;
- A design guidance/brief should be prepared to guide future development within this area;
- Further loss of existing front garden treatment, and the building to drive relationship, through inappropriate orientation of new development and urbanising security features should be avoided;
- The dominance of the wooded landscape over the built form should be retained and inappropriate mass and height in new development must be avoided;
- Maintain character of front gardens as found in Prince Consort Drive;
- Retain pinch point and associated planting in the approach to Kings Ride House;
- Avoid erosion of the back garden tree cover and surrounding woodland cover; and
- Plant species and composition to reflect the local characteristics.



Prince Consort Drive



Prince Consort Drive with strong vista.



Typical architectural style



Houses set behind open lawn creates a welcoming character



High degree of enclosure with high boundary hedges that allow only glimpse views on Prince Albert Drive.



Buildings are set behind high hedges and tall gates on Prince Albert Drive.

Area D: Pump Lane, Cheapside

This character area is part of the settlement of Cheapside. Although the majority of the settlement lies outside the Borough boundaries the character of Pump Lane cannot be seen separate.

Landscape Character:

- Strong rural character;
- Small scale open frontages;
- Open views over a field and line of trees flanking Pump Lane to open countryside;
- Small front and rear gardens; and
- Small soft verges to lane.

Townscape:

Pump Lane appears to be a remnant of a Victorian Lane, with a small numbers of cottages still existing. This character area comprises of only a few houses. The newer development at the end of Pump Lane is out of character with the wider character of Cheapside

Built form:

- The most distinctive elements along Pump Lane are three semi detached Victorian cottages;
- Building materials are brick and white render; and
- Building heights of 2-2.5 storeys.

Vegetation and Hard Landscape:

- Predominantly evergreen hedges including virburnum tinus and rhododendrons;
- Hedged rear boundaries;
- Lack of kerbs which helps retain rural character; and
- Understated front garden treatments – often no hard landscape elements.

Boundary treatment:

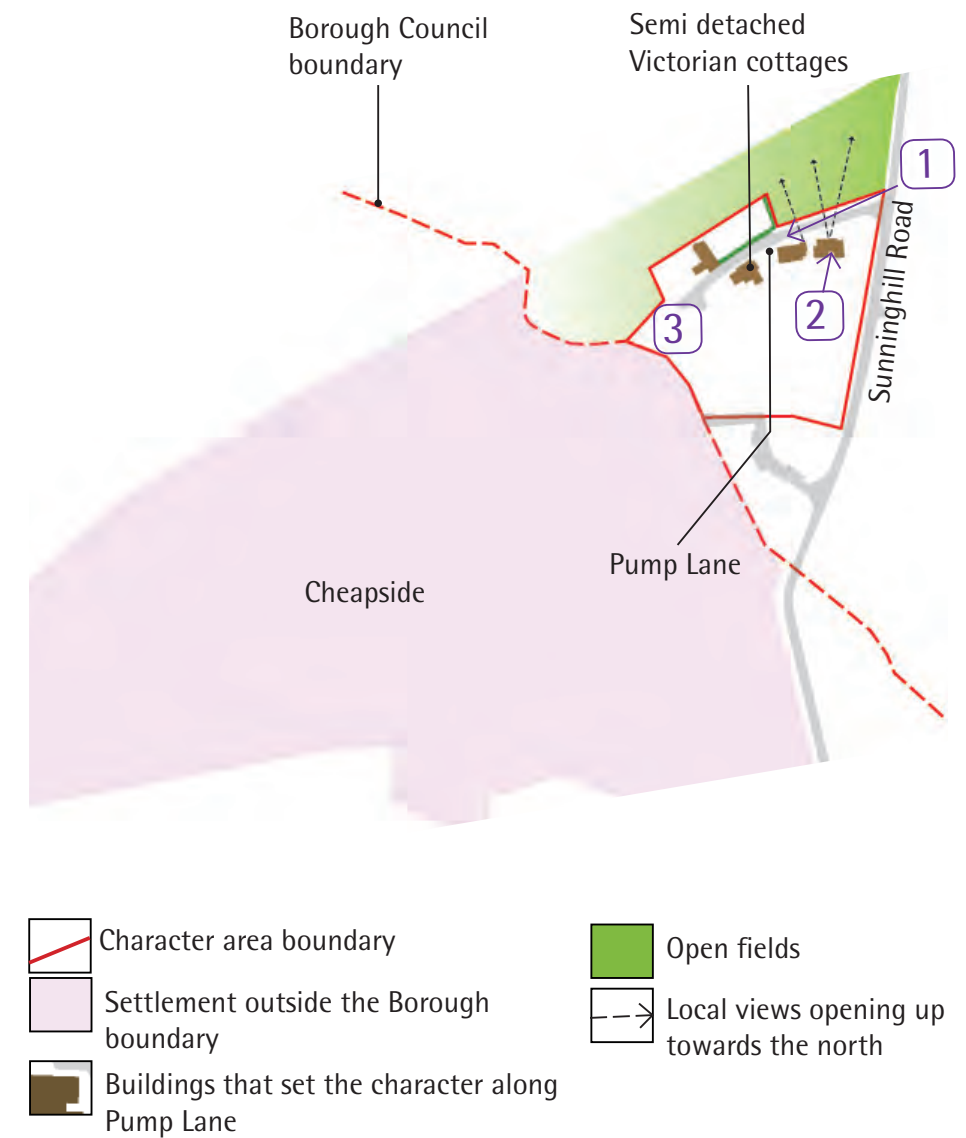
- The plot to the north of Pump lane is enclosed by high hedges, which adds to the sense of enclosure around Pump Lane.
- The cottages are set behind gravel areas, for parking or lawns. None of them has formal boundary conditions.

Summary:

- The development at the bottom of Pump Lane is out of character with Pump Lane and the wider Cheapside.

Recommendations:

- This character area should be seen in the context of Cheapside and a character study across Borough boundaries would be useful;
- The strongest characteristic in the wider area are the Victorian houses that remain after pocket infill and redevelopment. These should be retained and protected;
- Retain existing relationship with the open countryside in order to conserve the rural character of this pocket of development; and
- Retain simple tarmac road without kerbs.



1 Cottages fronting onto Pump Lane



2 Simple cottages set the character for Pump Lane



3 Development at the bottom of Pump Lane does not contribute to the overall character of this area or that of Cheapside as a whole.