

# Conservation Area Appraisal



## Bray Village

January 2009

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## Foreword

*By Councillor Mrs Alison Knight*

*Lead Member for Planning and Development*

The Borough Council has carried out an appraisal for the Bray Village Conservation Area and produced this appraisal document, which describes the important features and characteristics of the area and will be used when any planning decisions are made that affect the area. The approach used follows advice set out in English Heritage guidance, which follows on from more general guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.

This is the first appraisal document to be produced for Bray village and it is now recommended in guidance from English Heritage that these appraisals are reviewed every five years. This appraisal is part of a longer project to review all the existing Conservation Area Appraisals in the Borough, and to complete appraisals for Conservation Areas that do not presently have one.

The Bray Village Conservation Area Appraisal also includes a Five Year Conservation Area Management and a proposal for the introduction of extra planning controls over some of the properties within the Conservation Area. The Management Plan is intended to summarise the actions that the Council will take in the period to ensure that the character and appearance of the area is preserved or enhanced. The appraisal is not proposing any alterations to the existing Conservation Area boundaries.

A draft version of this document was subject to a public consultation exercise during September and October 2008, and this final version contains some amendments made in response to comments received.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of the Appraisal or Management Plan, please contact:

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# Contents

## 1 Introduction

### What does Conservation Area designation mean?

**1.1** A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 69). The responsibility for designating Conservation Areas lies with the Local Planning Authority.

**1.2** The aim of Conservation Area designation is to protect the wider historic environment. Areas may be designated for their architecture, historic street layout, use of characteristic materials, style or landscaping. These individual elements are judged against local and regional criteria, rather than national. Above all, Conservation Areas should be cohesive areas in which buildings and spaces create unique environments that are irreplaceable.

**1.3** Local Authorities have a statutory duty to review all their Conservation Areas regularly. English Heritage recommends that each area is reviewed every five years.

**1.4** Conservation Area Designation provides extra protection within Conservation Areas in the following ways:

- Local Authorities have general control over most complete demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas
- Local Authorities have extra control over minor development
- Special provision is made to protect trees within Conservation Areas
- When assessing planning applications, Local Authorities must pay careful attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

**1.5** The Local Authority can include policies in the Local Plan or Local Development Framework to help preserve the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

### What is the purpose of Conservation Area Appraisals?

**1.6** The aim of the Appraisal is to:

- Identify the Special Architectural and Historic Interest and the changing needs of the Conservation Area
- Clearly define the Conservation Area boundaries
- Increase public awareness and involvement in the preservation of the area
- Provide a framework for planning decisions
- Guide controlled and positive change within the Conservation Area, thus avoiding mediocrity of development

# 1 Introduction

## What is the status of this document?

**1.7** A draft version of this document was published for public consultation during September and October 2008, and this process is summarised in Appendix 6. Following the consultation exercise the comments received have been considered and some amendments have been made. This final version of the appraisal has been approved for publication by the Lead Member for Planning and Development, and endorsed by the Cabinet of the Royal Borough of Windsor, for use to guide and inform all planning considerations and other council activities in the Conservation Area, on Thursday 22nd February 2009.

**1.8** The contents of this appraisal and the associated maps and appendices are intended to highlight significant features but they should not be regarded as fully comprehensive and the omission of, or lack of reference to a particular building or feature should not be taken to imply that it is of no significance. This significance may only be fully identified at such time as a feature or building is subject to the rigorous assessment that an individual planning application necessitates.

**1.9** Similarly, the controls that apply to elements vary and in some instances the items that have been identified as significant features cannot be fully protected by planning legislation. Further guidance on the controls that apply in conservation areas is given on the council's website [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) <<http://www.rbwm.gov.uk>> or in the leaflet 'Conservation Areas- what they are and what it means to live in one'. Copies of the leaflet or initial advice on individual planning queries can be obtained by contacting the Council's Customer Service Centre either in person at the Town Hall Maidenhead, via the Council website, or by telephoning 01628 683 810.

# Planning Policy Context

## 2 Planning Policy Context

**2.1** The current Development Plan for the area consists of the following documents:

- Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9) - which will remain in place until superseded by the Regional Spatial Strategy: the South East Plan (due to be adopted during 2008);
- The Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 (adopted 2005);
- The Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire incorporating alterations (1997 & 2001);
- The Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (adopted 1998)
- The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Incorporating Alterations Adopted June 2003).

**2.2** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 all policies in adopted or approved local plans were 'saved' (i.e. remained operational) for a period of three years until 27 September 2007. The local authority could request that the policies be saved after this date. These however would need to be justified under the provisions set out by the protocol issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government during the summer of 2006. The policies which have been saved beyond September 2007 include several that are applicable to Conservation Areas.

**2.3** The Local Plan will be replaced with a new form of planning document called a Local Development Framework (LDF). Rather than being a single document the LDF will consist of a number of separate documents covering different subject areas. Further details about the Local Plan, the LDF and its constituent documents can be found on the Council's website, or by contacting the Council's Strategy and Plans Team.



# Background

## 3 Background

**3.1** Bray Village Conservation Area was first designated in April 1968 and as such was one of the first Conservation Areas in the Borough, signifying Bray's strong historical importance.

**3.2** The 1968 designation described Bray as *a beautiful Thames-side village situated about one mile south of the town of Maidenhead and has many buildings of historical or architectural interest.*

**3.3** In 1990, the boundaries were revised to include the cricket ground to the north east of the Conservation Area. From this time no other amendments to the boundaries have been made and none are suggested in this document.

# Summary of Special Interest

## 4 Summary of Special Interest

4.1 The special interest of the area is made up of three principle factors.

- **Location and Development:** Despite being located on the very edge of Maidenhead, Bray still maintains a strong village atmosphere. The village is situated on the banks on the River Thames. It has a history dating back to mediaeval times. The village core has a layout which has remained largely unaltered since the 17th century. The layout of the village is a complex network of narrow one-way roads and long footpaths, making the area best explored by foot.
- **Architectural Character:** The village has architecture of varied style and proportion, reflecting the growth of the village from mediaeval to present day. However, there is a local vernacular evident with the repeated use of traditional materials and building constructions, such as black and white timber framed buildings.
- **Use:** Bray is an affluent residential area, as well as being a popular tourist destination, particularly in the summer months. The village has long had an almost celebrity status, relating in the early 20th century to the exuberant nightlife of dancing and cabaret at the former Hotel de Paris and also deriving from association with the neighbouring film studios. This has continued in this century related to fine dining, with the Conservation Area containing two of Britain's most prestigious restaurants. The village is now primarily residential, with the exception of the dining establishments which make Bray unique.



# Location, Setting and Development of the Area

## 5 Location, Setting and Development of the Area

### Location and Setting

**5.1** The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is a large borough, to the west of London. The Borough is predominantly rural, with two large towns, Windsor and Maidenhead, and a number of other smaller towns and villages. The northern boundary of the Borough follows the River Thames.

**5.2** Bray Parish is a large parish with a three-mile river frontage, located between the urban settlements of Windsor and Maidenhead. As well as the village itself, the Parish contains a number of other villages and hamlets, often greens, which would have begun as settlements scattered amongst Windsor Great Forest.

**5.3** The village of Bray (sometimes Bray-on-Thames) stands on the banks of the River Thames, just south-east of Maidenhead. It is located on the B3028, just off the busy A308, which links Windsor to Maidenhead. The village is situated on a flood plain and has been susceptible to flooding in the past.

### Topography and Geology

**5.4** The Conservation Area is defined by a flat topography and is dominated by the presence of the River Thames. The village lies within an area that is categorised in a detailed Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2004) as Settled Developed Floodplain. The characteristics of the landscape are identified as;

- Wide slow moving river with natural, diverse river edge and wooded island habitats
- Wide, meandering river course of the Thames
- Broad flat open floodplain with a fragmented landscape pattern
- Expansive naturalised and restored man-made wetland landscapes of ecological importance
- Remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees from former traditional landscape patterns, within new wetland landscapes
- Shelter beds and linear woodlands
- Detached riverside residential settlement
- Waterbased activity and passive recreation facilities
- Network of minor roads and tracks
- M4 road corridor
- Absence of extensive land management (farming)

**5.5** Extensive outcrop of Reading Beds made up of various deposits of sand, gravel and clays.

# Location, Setting and Development of the Area

## History and Development

**5.6** Bray was a royal manor and administrative centre of a mediaeval Hundred (a mediaeval administrative area). It was first recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086, though it is not known if the late Saxon administrative centre lay near the present church or closer to the Hundred's geographic centre at Holyport. However, it is likely that the present settlement was in existence by the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This is supported by a stone relief of Norman date, depicting a horse, that is built into the wall of the 14<sup>th</sup> century churchyard chantry chapel. Bray was also a Thames ferry crossing, though this role declined apart from local traffic after Maidenhead Bridge opened in the 1280's.

1744 Estate Plan of Thomas Reeve. Berkshire Records Office



**5.7** Since it was first depicted on a 1744 map, the village core has remained largely unaltered. This shows the village was located in open common fields on the Thames floodplain, the built up area forming a roughly Y shape. The High Street is shown stretching between Jesus Hospital in the south and the end of the causeway in the north-west. No development is shown north of the churchyard towards the River Thames. The two small lanes that lead from the High Street to the Church are both depicted as are Ferry Road and Old Mill Lane. These streets are all lined with houses, with larger orchard and garden plots behind them. The outer boundary of these plots shown on the south side of the High Street now forms the Conservation Area's southern boundary.

**5.8** Rocques map of 1761 shows a similar topography, but suggests more buildings existed along the Ferry Road. Church Path is shown running from Ferry Road and through the churchyard to the river edge. Originally the footpath ran along the riverbank to the Church but

one vicar was unhappy about the general public passing through his land and close to the vicarage. Thus, the path was moved away from the river bank to its present position. The Causeway, today only a footpath, was then the main route across the floodplain from Braywick. The 18<sup>th</sup> century maps illustrate the extent and layout of the late mediaeval village and today this part of the village still retains many buildings of mediaeval origin. Francis' 1821 map of Bray also confirms this general arrangement, but suggest the river frontage was occupied by a wide-open space, possibly a river wharf. The common lands and fields depicted on the 1744 map disappeared following enclosure in 1817, but today the boundaries of the Allotment Gardens opposite Jesus Hospital still preserves the outline of one strip of common field. Bray's population is unlikely to have exceeded 150 inhabitants until well into the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Until this time the village would have largely consisted of a single street of dwellings from Jesus Hospital to the Lych Gate.

**5.9** By the time of the 1899 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map, there had been very little change to the extent of the village apart from some infill development on the riverside. A large part of riverside frontage was by now occupied by the Vicarage, set in riverside grounds. These grounds stretched from behind the buildings fronting Ferry Road in the east to beyond the churchyard in the west. Today, this whole area has been subdivided into around half a dozen separate properties including the converted Vicarage coach house. The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition shows very few new buildings along Old Mill Lane apart from the Albion Public House and the riverside wharf to the north. The Albion was built around 1850 to serve the barges that brought coal and timber to the wharf.



## Location, Setting and Development of the Area

1885 English Heritage NMR



1885 English Heritage NMR



**5.10** The population of Bray grew in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

and again in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and this relates to the increase in building. The eastern side of Old Mill Lane within Bray Field was developed for housing and properties began to fill in the spaces on the High Street and Ferry Road. Property developer, T.J Digby was particularly important in the evolution of Bray, buying a great deal of land and creating Ferry End, Bettoney Vere and a number of detached properties which now make up a large part of Brayfield Road. Bray became well known in the 1920's as hub of nightlife and high society. The former Hotel de Paris on the banks of the Thames was a focal point and the scene for many lively parties. The village became synonymous with the age of the Bright Young Things and various residences thronged with all night gambling and dancing. Following this age of notoriety, Bray evolved into the more sedate, residential village existing today and with this evolution, came the detached dwellings lining the Thames from the 1930's onwards. This is illustrated on the 1931 OS map. Development continues in Bray, with a modern housing scheme on the site of the former Hotel de Paris, just outwith the Conservation Area and other examples within the Conservation Area, including the West Court development just off the High Street. Whilst this evolution continues to shape the village, the main character of the 17<sup>th</sup> century village core has been successfully maintained.

**5.11** See appendix 1 for historic maps and references.

### Archaeology

**5.12** Remarkably little archaeological fieldwork has been carried out in Bray, but documentary sources, stray finds and the presence of many historic buildings all point to a high archaeological potential. Prehistoric artefacts have been retrieved from the River Thames at Bray, including Neolithic axes and late Bronze Age swords. Roman coins were found close to the vicarage, although no evidence for settlement has been identified. The mediaeval church and chantry, and 15th and 16th century hall-houses and cottages are all noted on the Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record.

**5.13** Groundworks within most of the Conservation Area would be likely to have an impact on archaeological remains relating to mediaeval development, trade and small-scale industry, and possibly to earlier (Prehistoric) settlement and agriculture.

# The General Character and Form of the Area

## 6 The General Character and Form of the Area

**6.1** The extent and layout of the centre of Bray has changed very little from the 18th century, the High Street, Ferry Road and Old Mill Lane are still the dominant roads and form a Y shape in the centre of the village. From the 19th/ 20th centuries, there has been expansion to the village, mostly on the riverside north of the Church and to the east of the Conservation Area. Brayfield Road has developed east of Old Mill Lane and has a much more formal layout than the village core with large houses in spacious plots.

**6.2** In order to simplify the character of the area, it is considered appropriate to subdivide the Conservation Area into three distinct zones. Despite the relatively small size of the village, it is possible to identify three areas with their individual characteristics.

**6.3 Area A - Medieval Core.** This is the historic centre of the village and as such, contains most of the



buildings of substantial age. Within this area there are many Listed buildings or structures and buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The buildings themselves vary from detached, brick built buildings to small timber frame cottages and rows of terraces. As is the case with many medieval villages, it would appear that Bray developed outwards from the central point of the Church. This is supported by the fact the oldest buildings are found near the Church. The majority of properties in this area are entered into directly from the highway and this gives an intimate feel to the village centre. Any garden areas are mostly to the rear of properties or contained within high walls or fences. Parking tends to be on-street in this area.

**6.4** This is the area of the Conservation Area which provides the greatest percentage of mixed use activity. Although predominantly residential, the dining establishments bring a hub of activity to this area. The other commercial use includes a hairdressing salon and office facilities within Opec House. The cricket club provides a further alternative use, as well as sporting activities, also holding evening events. Thus, both day and night, this area is often full of activity.

## The General Character and Form of the Area

**6.5 Area B - 19th/ 20th Century Expansion.** This area to the east of the Conservation Area, is a



much more deliberately designed space than the historic core. Many of the buildings were constructed within the same period and by the same property developer, T.J. Digby, in the early 20th century. As such there is a uniformity of style and design. The buildings are nearly all detached dwellings with the notable exception of The Terrace, a distinctive row of brick built dwellings. The area is characterised by wide, tree lined streets and mature, landscaped gardens. There is a feeling of openness and space, in contrast with the village core. In this area, the colour palette of black and white is very much adhered to. As the properties tend to be larger with large gardens, parking is accommodated for within the properties and there is less on street parking than in area A.

**6.6** The area is almost exclusively residential and has a sedate, quiet atmosphere. The only commercial use is the Caldesi in Campagna restaurant.



**6.7 Area C - The Riverside.** This area spans the north boundary of the Conservation Area and is dominated by the River Thames. The area north of the Church did not begin to develop until the 20th century and until that time the only buildings located on the riverside were connected to the Vicarage. However, from the 1920's properties began to appear. The buildings are all detached and are built to front the River Thames, the properties tend to be set in mature grounds with high boundary fences or walls. As such, this area does have a rather detached feel from the rest of the village. The buildings restrict any public views to the river. Despite being of modern build, the properties respect the character of the village and are constructed using sympathetic materials and design. Similar to area B, parking is accommodated for within the property boundaries.

**6.8** Area C has an exclusively residential use and activity here is limited to those walking along the footpaths that run alongside the properties. Formerly, there would have been commercial activity in this area, commonly known as part of the Fisheries. As the name would indicate, the area would have been used for the catching and selling of fish.

# Special Features of the Area

## 7 Special Features of the Area

### Listed Buildings

**7.1** As is to be expected, all the Listed buildings within the Conservation Area are to be found in the historic core, Area A. There are 25 separate entries within the Conservation Area on the Bray Parish List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Of these, one is Grade I, two are Grade II\* and the remaining, Grade II.

**7.2** Perhaps the most significant of these buildings is the Grade I Jesus Hospital, located to the south of the Conservation Area. This is a red-brick series of Almshouses, constructed in 1627 to house the aged poor of Bray. A full size statue of the founder, Sir William Goddard, dominates the front of the building. Set in a square configuration and within well maintained grounds. The gardens to the property are of considerable local interest and the site as whole dominates the southern entrance to the Conservation Area.

**7.3** The other most significant building within the area is St Michael's Church. This fine building is probably 13th century although the 80ft tower, so dominant in the streetscape, was added in the 15th century and major alterations were carried out in the 19th century. The building is mostly constructed from flint and chalk. The Church is very large for the size of the village, however this reflects the size of Bray Parish as a whole. The Church is renowned because of the famous satirical verse The Vicar of Bray. The churchyard, maintained by the Parish Council, is an important element of the village and contains several Listed chest tombs and gravestones.

**7.4** Other significant Listed buildings near the Church include St Michael's Hall, the Lych Gate, the Hind's Head Public House and Chantry House. St Michael's Hall is located on the north boundary of the churchyard, built at the same time as the Church itself, the Hall is constructed of the same chalk and flint composition. The Hind's Head is a traditional timber frame building, which has evolved and expanded from two 16th century cottages. The building today is well maintained and a popular eatery. Chantry House is a large dwelling situated in mature grounds to the east of the Church. This building was originally a workhouse. Built in the 18th century it is an imposing brick built building with large bay windows. Finally, the Lych Gate, dating from the 15th century serves as an attractive entrance to the churchyard from Church Lane.

**7.5** In the centre of the Conservation Area, the Listed War Memorial and the Old Dutch House dominate the scene. The Old Dutch House, a former farmhouse, is of timber frame construction with brick infill and hand-made clay tile roof. The building is a prime example of a black and white painted building, which are a defining feature of the character of the Conservation Area. The Crown Inn, opposite the Village Hall, is thought to be one of the oldest buildings in Bray, with the central section of the building dating from the 14th century. This building is one of the few in the village with a cellar.

**7.6** For a full list of buildings of architectural or historic interest within the Conservation Area, refer to appendix 2 for full information and illustrations.

### Important Non Listed Buildings

**7.7** In addition to recognising Listed Buildings it is important to acknowledge any other buildings that make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Buildings selected as important are considered as making a positive impact on the area and as such, should be maintained and conserved. In the Bray Conservation Area there are a great many important non-listed buildings due primarily to the age and historical significance of the village.



## Special Features of the Area

**7.8** In Area A perhaps the most prominent of these buildings are the groups of terraces, Ferry End and Bettoney Vere. Both were built by T. J. Digby at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and both demonstrate the distinctive black and white palette. Ferry End sits in the centre of the Conservation Area opposite the War Memorial and was built at an angle to the main road, presumably to best utilise the corner space that the cottages occupy. In layout and size, none of the cottages are identical but do share the same external detailing and form an interesting group visually. Bettoney Vere, located between Old Mill Lane and Ferry Road, is a row of six houses on a former orchard plot.

**7.9** Other important non-listed buildings in Area A include Quoin House, Flagpole House and the Waterside Inn. Quoin House is located in the centre of the High Street and is notable in that it is constructed in the same brick as used in Brunel's Maidenhead Bridge. Flagpole House, largely rebuilt in the 1970's, is of a distinct flint construction and is prominent to the north boundary of the Conservation Area. The Waterside Inn, as the name suggests, stands on the River Thames and is a large brick built building, originally the site of the George public house. The building is now home to a world renowned restaurant.

**7.10** In Area B, the majority of buildings are considered significant and contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area. This is due to the fact there is a very definite building style in this area. Nearly all the properties are detached dwellings and have been built to echo one another. The buildings are of a brick construction, mostly painted white, with decorative timber details, painted black. There are common architectural features prevalent such as gable windows and steep pitch roofs. Of these properties, two of the oldest are Careless Corner to the south of Brayfield Road and Far End to the north. Both were constructed by T. J. Digby and are of an L shape and exhibit these distinctive features.

**7.11** In this area, The Terrace stands out as the exception. This is a block of three terraces, the first block built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The terraces were built in an economical manner using local materials such as gravel dredged from the river bed. The third block was constructed in concrete. The terrace forms an attractive elevation when viewed from the south of the Conservation Area.

**7.12** The Village Hall is another prominent building in this area, dominating the south of the High Street. Built in a modern style the building features a tall, peaked clock tower.







**7.13** In Area C, the majority of buildings are of a modern build and yet in keeping with the traditional style of the area. Most can only be viewed from the River. One of the earliest 20<sup>th</sup> century additions is Little Basing and this is one of the few that can be viewed from within the Conservation Area. The house is of brick construction, painted pink, unusual for the village. The building also features a Dutch style gable.

**7.14** In this area, Berkleys and Tudor House are both of considerable age and significance, both having formed at one time, the earlier Vicarage. Tudor House dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is of timber frame construction with a hand made tile roof. Berkleys dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is of brick construction, painted white and featuring a shallow pitch slate roof. At one point, these properties were linked.







**7.15** The above is only a brief summary of the buildings considered significant to the Conservation Area. Refer to appendix 3 for a full list of buildings and illustrations.

# Special Features of the Area

## Building Materials

<b>Building Materials - Area A</b>		
<p><b>Brick</b></p> <p>The principal building material is the rich, orange-red brick typical of this part of Berkshire.</p> <p>The older buildings feature handmade bricks, usually infilled into existing timber structures. Some in this area have painted over the brickwork, however many have left infill evident, such as the cottages of Church Lane. The bricks tend to be of a smooth, soft grained texture.</p>		
<p><b>Timber</b></p> <p>Timber framing is present throughout the historic core of the village and there are numerous well maintained examples. Exposed beams are a predominant feature of the area.</p> <p>The exposed timbers are almost always painted black, with brick infill painted white. Examples of this are evident throughout the area, including Shottery and Stuart Cottage.</p>		
<p><b>Flint</b></p> <p>Flint has been used as a construction material and is most dominant on Flagpole House and St Michael's Church, both of which use flint as a principal construction material. The frequent use of flint is a reminder of the chalk geology of this area.</p>		

# Special Features of the Area

<b>Building Materials - Area A</b>		
<p><b>Chalk</b></p> <p>The key examples in the area are found within St Michael's Church, which was originally of chalk construction. Clunch (hard chalk) with flint facing is used and contrasts with the Bath stone used in the 19th century alterations to the Church. The Church Tower is constructed of flint rubble with chalk dressings and there is also a pointed arch of chalk.</p>		
<p><b>Clay Tiles</b></p> <p>The roofscape is primarily made up of handmade clay tiles which are orange/red in colour.</p> <p>The handmade tiles are an important feature of this part of the Conservation Area helping to give the buildings a distinct character.</p>		
<p><b>Slate</b></p> <p>Slate is used less frequently in this part of the Conservation Area, but does feature on buildings such as Sunflower Cottages and on some of the 19th/20th century properties such as Aley House.</p>		

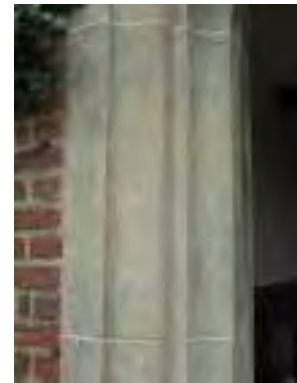
# Special Features of the Area

## Building Materials - Area A

### Stone.

Stone has been used sparingly and has primarily been used in the construction of the church, walls and some decorative detailing of houses. Jesus hospital features stone dressings.

Quion House, as the name would suggest, features distinctive cornerstones.



## Building Materials - Area B

### Facing Materials

Most of the buildings in this area utilise machine made bricks, commonly more used in the 19th/20th century. On the majority of the properties in this area the bricks have been painted white, alternatively, a render has been applied.



### Timber


Timber decorative finishes have been used on the dwellings of late 19th early 20th century and are for aesthetic purposes rather than structural. The majority of the properties in Brayfield Road utilise this, featuring black painted timbers mostly on upper floors. They are a key feature to this part of the Conservation Area.





## Special Features of the Area

<b>Building Materials - Area B</b>	
<p><b>Clay Tiles</b></p> <p>Although mostly machine made, the tiles in this area are again in the distinctive red commonly found in the area.</p> <p>Tiles are often used in a decorative manner, for example several properties are tile hung on their elevations. The Waterside is an example of this.</p>	
<p><b>Slate</b></p> <p>Though not as frequent as clay tiles, slate is a common roofing material in the area. Welsh slate is present on some of the buildings and generally relates to 19th century buildings or to later 20th century buildings or extensions.</p> <p>The slate roof houses tend to be shallower in their pitch. The Terrace features slate roofing, which has remained largely unaltered and is a key characteristic of the group.</p>	

<b>Building Materials - Area C</b>	
<p><b>Brick</b></p> <p>Again, machine made bricks have been utilised and often painted over. However, the palette here is more varied with colours such as cream and pink utilised.</p>	

# Special Features of the Area

## Building Materials - Area C

### Timber

Tudor House is the only property in this area of timber frame construction, dating from the 17th century.



### Roof Materials

The buildings in the area predominantly feature roofs of tile constructions. As the majority of the buildings are of modern age the tiles are predominantly machine made, with the exception of Tudor House.

Berkeleys features an attractive example of a low slate pitch roof.



## Architectural Details

**7.16** Architectural details add to the character of the Conservation area and are an important factor. Windows, ironwork and chimneys are all of a common style and create a distinct feel.

## Architectural Details - Area A

### Windows

Traditional windows in the area are made of timber, and are predominantly painted white. Windows are generally of two types, side hung casement windows with glazing bars, or leaded lights, or vertical sliding glazing bar sash windows. Some cottages, for example Ferryside, feature horizontal sliding sash windows, which are an attractive feature.

Jesus Hospital features metal casement windows with leaded lights and attractive stained glass within the Chapel. Likewise, the Victorian stained glass windows present in St Michael's Church are regarded amongst the best in any Berkshire church.



# Special Features of the Area

## Architectural Details - Area A

### Doors

Doors in the area are predominantly timber, some half glazed. Many doors retain attractive features, such as cast iron hinges, traditional knockers and letterboxes.

Some properties feature attractive timber doors contained within boundary walls. One example is at the Old Dutch House.

Small brick/tiled open porches feature on several properties, in particular the cottages opposite The Waterside.



### Roofs and Chimneys

Roof shapes are simple with ridges parallel to the road. Roof construction is primarily gabled but there are also a proportion of hipped roofs or a combination of the two forming half hips. Many roofs are steeply pitched, however slate roofs of the 19th/20th century properties are shallower in their pitch.

Chimneys are a common functional feature within all of the areas, they tend to be tall, and brick built structures. Those on the late 19th C buildings are larger and more ornate than the earlier buildings.

Dormer windows are not generally found on the older properties which tend to have unbroken rooflines. Where they do occur, such as on the Old



# Special Features of the Area

## Architectural Details - Area A

Dutch House they are small. On the early 20th century properties they tend to be predominantly flat roofed.

### Building heights

The buildings within the Conservation Area are predominantly two storey. However, heights differ between the small 16th century cottages with very low ceilings and the much larger detached 19th century properties. St Michaels' Church is an obvious exception in height, with its 80ft tower.



## Architectural Details - Area B

### Windows

The windows are largely similar to area A, however, some UPVC windows have started to appear, some of which do not relate well to the original architectural detailing of the properties



### Doors


The majority of doors are timber construction many of which are panelled and have a painted finish. Many of the doors in the area are partially glazed.



In this area, several properties have porch areas as a distinctive feature of the building. The Homestead is an example of this, where the porch runs the length of the four properties and is an important feature.





## Special Features of the Area

<b>Architectural Details - Area B</b>	
<p><b>Roofs and Chimneys</b></p> <p>The roof pitches tend to be fairly steep within this area and as the properties tend to be larger, the rooflines are often of complex form with protruding gables.</p> <p>Dormer windows are present and generally cut through the eaves line flush with the principle elevations and are of both gabled and flat roof construction. Many of the original dormers are relatively small, whereas modern alterations have introduced larger elements that can sometimes appear out of character.</p>	

<b>Architectural Details - Area C</b>	
<p><b>Windows and Doors</b></p> <p>As the buildings are generally more modern within this area, there is a mixture of doors and windows utilised. Timber doors are again dominant, however, windows vary between timber and UPVC. The majority are white.</p>	
<p><b>Roofs and Chimneys</b></p> <p>Roof shapes are once again simple, the majority low in pitch with small chimneys. Little Basing has an usual dutch style gable.</p>	

### Trees

**7.17** Trees play an important part in establishing the rural character of this settlement and provide an attractive setting to the buildings in the Conservation Area. Characteristic tree species in the area are willow, alder, birch, oak, sycamore, ash, holly, hazel, and yew. There are numerous examples of mature trees in the area, including the following:

## Special Features of the Area



**7.18** Area A- St Michael's Churchyard dominates the landscape providing a green oasis within the village. There are many fine Yew and Holly trees here and a number of other ornamental trees, which grace the churchyard enhancing its setting. Yew trees are the most symbolic being a species often associated with traditional places of worship. Other examples of significant trees in the area can be found in the grounds of The Jesus Hospital and within the grounds of many of the older properties, for example within The Dower House, Chantry House, Hill House Cottages and Vicarage Cottage which displays 4 large Lime trees. To the north of the Causeway carpark there are several mature trees and younger plantings including a large Sycamore, Horse chestnut and Lime which are so situated as to provide an attractive green curtain around Bray Green. Braydene End and One Braydene feature some fine Copper Beech. Located within The Vicarage garden is a large tulip tree reputed to be the largest in Southern England.



**7.19** Area B- Within this area, trees are very much a characteristic feature. Brayfield Road is lined with mature trees giving a feeling of greenness to this residential area. Of these trees, there are several fine examples such as the mature Horse chestnut, London planes, Robinia and Hornbeam. To the south of Bray village car park there is a group of mature trees mainly comprising of an example of a large Deodar cedar tree, Copper beech, Sycamore and London plane with understorey which provides an attractive foil to the carpark and main road. Within residential properties, a Horse chesnut at Thames Cottage and Yew tree within Barnacle Lodge are both protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

**7.20** Area C- The trees in this area tend to act as boundary aids and any significant trees are not as prominent from within the Conservation Area, although they are a backdrop feature. However, they do provide an important visual screen when viewed from the Thames and enhance the setting of the Thames as well. Several of these trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

## Special Features of the Area

**7.21** In addition to these individual trees, are important groups of trees which screen the Conservation Area, for example on the boundary of Bray village green and to the south of the Conservation Area and, to the rear of the properties on Brayfield Road.

### Open Spaces



**7.22** Bray, despite the proximity to Maidenhead, still maintains the character of a rural settlement, which is assisted by the separation provided by the number of open spaces surrounding the village. However, unlike many surrounding villages of similar size and scope, Bray's village green is not central, with green spaces instead located on the periphery of the Conservation Area. Despite this, the Village green, located to the north west of the Conservation Area, is still a significant open space and is well maintained by the Parish Council.

**7.23** The majority of open spaces within the Conservation Area tend to be the garden areas of private properties, yet these areas still add to the character of the village. A notable example are the gardens of Jesus Hospital, which positively enhance the setting of the Listed Building. The internal courtyard of the hospital was depicted in Frederick Walker's 'Harbour of Refuge' which now hangs in the Tate Gallery.

**7.24** The Church plays an important role in the preservation of open space in the village, primarily through the preservation of the churchyard, which is an important and well utilised green space. However, Church covenant also stipulates that the land between St Michael's and Vicarage Cottage be kept open and although this is private garden land, it creates a welcome sense of openness in the centre of the village.



## Special Features of the Area



**7.25** The Maidenhead and Bray Sports Club creates an important area of open space to the north of the Conservation Area. The sports club began in 1919, taking over land used formerly for grazing cattle. Like much of the land surrounding St Michael's, this was once owned by the Church, but was purchased by the Sports Club in the 1960's.

**7.26** The open spaces surrounding the Conservation Area are fundamental to the character and appearance of the area, acting as a buffer between Bray and the residential expansion of Maidenhead. It is important that these open spaces are retained in order to maintain the village identity of the Conservation Area.

### Boundaries



**7.27 Area A-** As most of the older properties would have fronted directly on to the streets, there are few front garden boundaries in the area. Where these areas exist they are demarcated in a variety of ways, including hedging and small picket fences. The front garden areas at Ferry End and Braydene are examples where front garden areas have on the whole been maintained.

**7.28** Between the building frontages, large fences, walls and hedgerows continue the enclosure of the roads. There are several examples of tall, 2m walls painted white, which help maintain the privacy of the properties but still add to the character of the Conservation Area. For example, the wall surrounding the Old Dutch House. The brick wall surrounding the Jesus Hospital is of similar age and construction to the building itself and as such is a prominent boundary within the Conservation Area.

**7.29** There are no formal pavements in the area with the exception of the High Street.

## Special Features of the Area



**7.30 Area B-** This area is the most open in the Conservation Area and as such, the property boundaries tend to be at a lower height than elsewhere in the village. However, most properties in the area are still separated by brick walls or hedgerows ranging from 1 to 2 metres in height. Picket fences and iron gates are attractive features and are on the whole well maintained.

**7.31** Despite the hard landscaping in the form of brick walls, hedgerows and green boundary planting are still prominent. Wide pavements with grass verges feature. Old Mill Lane has no pavement, small stones interspersed with boulders have been used here to deter parking on the verge.



**7.32 Area C-** Vicarage Walk and Church Path span the length of this area and effectively separate the properties from the south of the Conservation Area. Vicarage Walk is lined on either side by tall hedgerows, which are a defining characteristic of the area and create a very enclosed atmosphere to the walk. Similarly, Church Path also has a sheltered feel, however, here this is created through tall brick walls and metal fencing.

**7.33** Hedgerows and green planting are the main boundary aids in this area and create a sense of privacy for the properties whilst still promoting a rural feel.

## Special Features of the Area

### Street Furniture



**7.34** The areas of public seating located within the area provide important outdoor uses. There are wooden benches located at the slipway, opposite the Old Dutch House, within the Churchyard and on Bray Green.

**7.35** The green area between the Village Hall and the car park is a well maintained space where wooden benches are available. The Parish Council noticeboard is also located here and of timber construction, an attractive and functional piece of street furniture.

**7.36** There is a mix of lighting columns used throughout the village, however, the majority are painted black and in keeping with the general character of the area. There are some examples of distinctive cast iron lamp columns found throughout the Conservation Area, for example at the top of Mill Lane and within the Churchyard. These are an attractive feature.



**7.37** The bollards and planting boxes forming the area locally known as 'the Throat' throughout the High Street, act as a deterrent to parking and to demarcate the road from the pavement. These are modern items in a traditional style, painted black and white, in keeping with the area.

**7.38** There is a traditional red telephone kiosk located on the junction of Brayfield Road and Old Mill Lane and a red letter box outside the Crown Inn. These are important traditional features and should be retained.



## Special Features of the Area

### Paving and Surface Treatments



**7.39** Due to the fact that Bray village has become a thoroughfare for traffic, the streets of the Conservation area are all covered in a modern tarmac and where there are pavements, these too are tarmaced. However, the pavements in the High Street are divided from the road using traditional stone setts, which does contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There are small sections of paving remaining, such as in front of Jesus Hospital and under the Lych Gate, which illustrate the traditional surfaces that would have been used at some of the more prominent buildings within the Conservation Area.

**7.40** In some areas of the village, road surfaces have suffered from utilities work etc and should be improved.

### Important Views, Vistas and Landmarks



**7.41** Although Bray village is surrounded by green space, the flat local topography and closely built nature of the village ensure that buildings enclose views across the Conservation Area and limit views to the adjoining countryside. As such, the main views in the Conservation Area tend to be looking inwards as opposed to looking out. For example, the view along the High Street towards St Michael's Church is a classic one of the village and has remained largely unaltered, as historic photographs and drawings indicate.

**7.42** Despite being located on the banks of the Thames the only public view of the river to be found is at the end of Ferry Road, where there is a small public slipway. This is an important aspect of the Conservation Area, providing an attractive view of the Thames and is maintained by the Parish Council.

## Special Features of the Area

**7.43** Although there are no formal views out of the Conservation area, the vista is one of green open space, particularly visible from the rear of properties on the west of the High Street and from the Causeway. It is the open nature of the fields to the West and the South of the Conservation Area which help to maintain the character of the Conservation Area and strengthen the identity of the village as a separate entity. The open fields to the south and the west of the Conservation Area, part of which come close to Jesus Hospital, should be maintained against incursions.



# Opportunities for Enhancement and Change

## 8 Opportunities for Enhancement and Change

### Negative Areas



**8.1** Perhaps the biggest issues that affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are those of traffic and parking. The High Street through Bray is used as a short-cut by commuters and as such is a busy thoroughfare, carrying nearly 7,000 vehicles per day. The narrow section of the High Street in the centre of the village operates a priority traffic flow system, which contributes to congestion in peak hours. A number of schemes have been introduced since the 1970's to attempt to overcome this issue, schemes include a 20 mph limit and associated traffic calming.

**8.2** The pressures caused by parking within the area have encouraged several properties to convert their front gardens into parking and it is acknowledged that this is very detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In Ferry End in particular, this is becoming an issue. The erosion of front gardens is a negative feature within the Conservation Area. Within the historic core of the village there are very few front gardens and where there are, there should be a preference for retention.

**8.3** In the same way, the erosion of the architectural detail of properties that is outside general planning control is another problem, which can be found at times within the Conservation Area. Changes to listed buildings are controlled by legislation but on non listed buildings alterations such as the replacement of traditional windows, altering roof materials and boundary treatments can result in significant changes. For example some traditional windows replaced by modern counterpart with different detailing can appear rather incongruous. This is a particular issue when occurring within a terrace. Where modern windows and doors are inserted, the character and appearance of a building is often completely transformed and the buildings can look out of place when compared to the neighbouring dwellings.

**8.4** These issues could in part be addressed by the implementation of additional planning controls; this is addressed in the accompanying Management Plan.

# Opportunities for Enhancement and Change

## Condition



**8.5** Bray is an affluent area and in general is well looked after and maintained. There is therefore little need for action to be taken to repair individual buildings.

**8.6** Likewise, the open spaces are well taken care of with residents taking a great pride in their surroundings. Bray has won the Britain in Bloom award for Best Kept Small Village in 1998 and 2005. The village gains continual success in the event, in 2008, the village received both a gold award and a special award.

## Enhancement Opportunities

**8.7** Regular maintenance of the trees within the area is to be encouraged to keep them in good health and protect the wooded character. There are several examples of tree maintenance and new trees being planted within the area and this is a positive enhancement.

**8.8** There are examples of signage clutter at the bus stop at the south of the Conservation Area and at Old Mill Lane. This signage could be reduced so that it does not detract so much from the character of the Conservation Area.

**8.9** Enhancement could occur through the reinstatement of traditional features which have been lost, for example in replacing UPVC windows with more traditional styles, or by restoring front gardens which have been given over to car parking.

## Sensitivity to Change

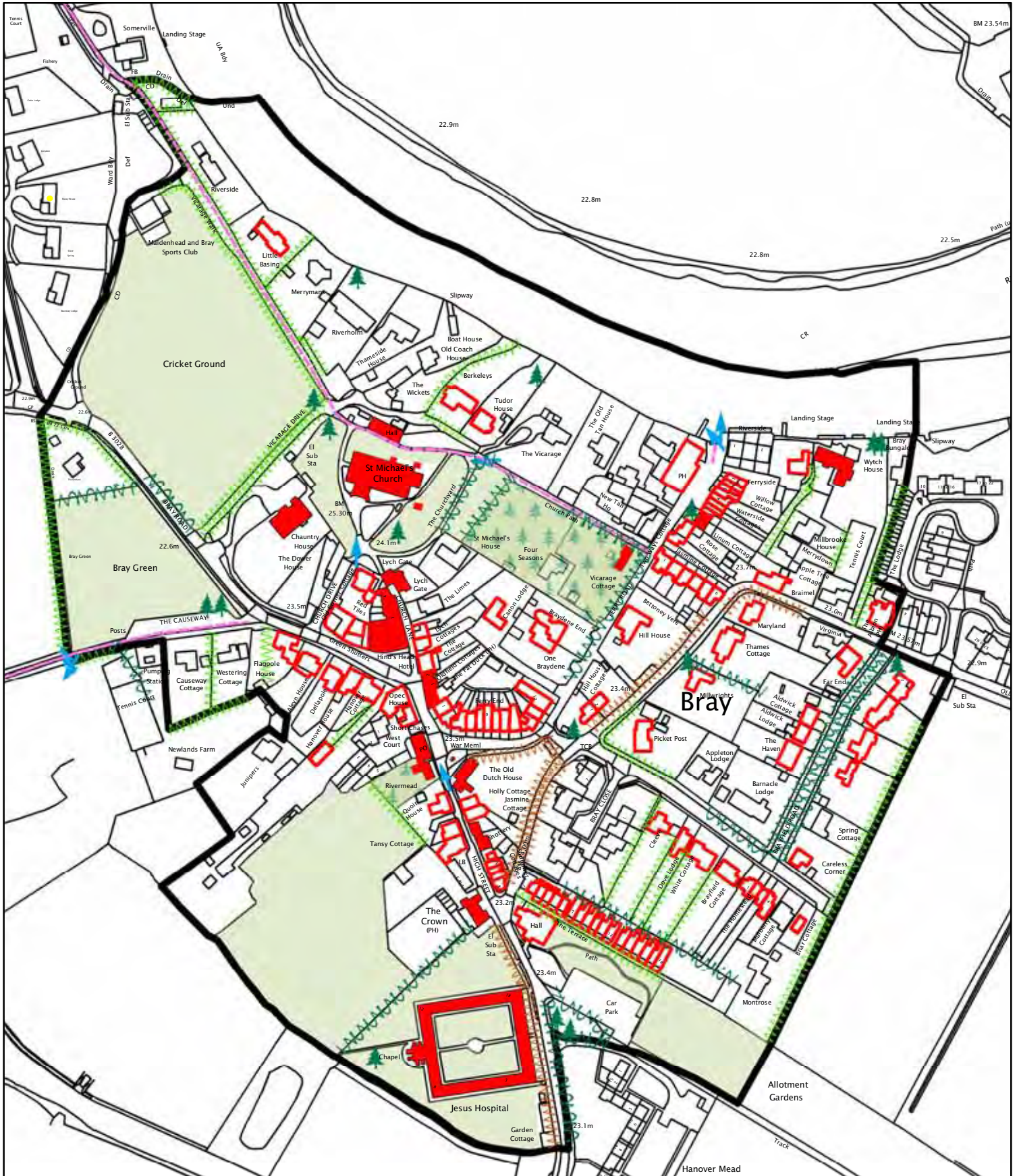
**8.10** Due to the proximity of Maidenhead, Bray village will always be an area sensitive to change, but at the present time pressures for large-scale change are relatively low. There is a need to protect the individual identity of the settlement and other neighbouring settlements, by protecting the rural character between them. Green belt policies help to ensure this character is maintained.

The character of the area is also sensitive to change through any loss of green spaces and trees within the Conservation Area itself. This pressure could come through the continued use of front garden areas for parking and any new build appearing in established green areas.

# Map of Main Features of Conservation Area

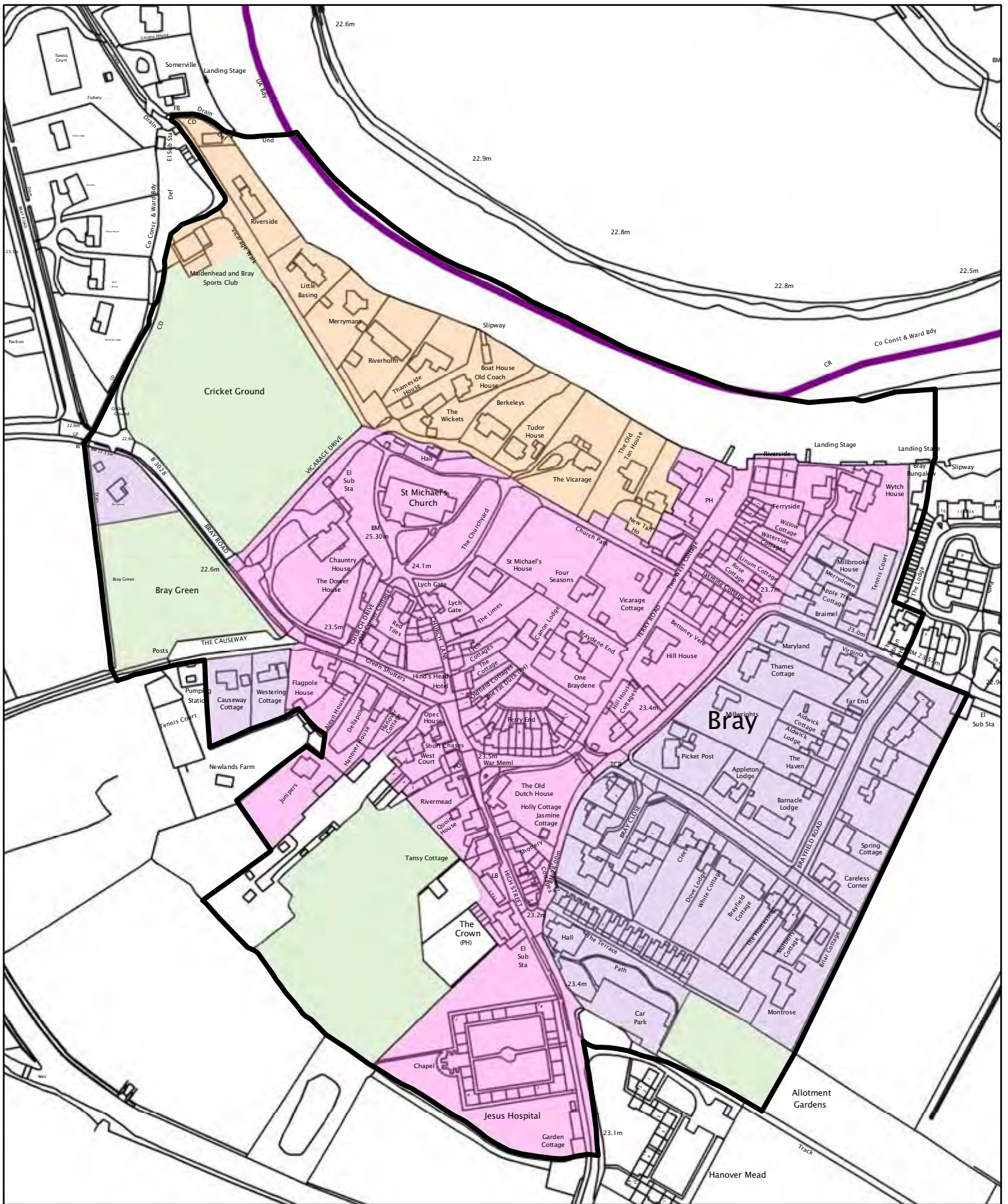
## 9 Map of Main Features of Conservation Area





<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>Scale: 1:3,000</p> <p>September 2008</p> <p><small>This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright.</small></p> <p><small>Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Licence Number 100018817. 2008.</small></p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Bray Conservation Area</h2> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> Conservation Area</td> <td> Important Green Spaces and Trees</td> <td> Important Green Spaces</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Listed buildings</td> <td> Important Walls</td> <td> View Points</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Important Non Listed Buildings</td> <td> Footpath</td> <td> Important Tree</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Important Tree Screen</td> <td> Important Hedges and Garden Boundary Planting</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Conservation Area	Important Green Spaces and Trees	Important Green Spaces	Listed buildings	Important Walls	View Points	Important Non Listed Buildings	Footpath	Important Tree	Important Tree Screen	Important Hedges and Garden Boundary Planting		<p style="text-align: center;">The Royal Borough</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Windsor &amp; Maidenhead</b></p>
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# Planning

Scale: 1:3,000  
April 2008



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## Bray Conservation Area

- Conservation Area
- Area C
- Area A
- Green Space
- Area B
- RBWM Boundary

