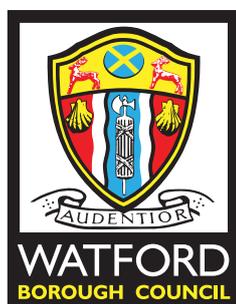


Estcourt



Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Adopted December 2015



Planning for a Better Watford

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1.0 Introduction

The Estcourt Conservation Area character appraisal aims to set out the area's special character and appearance and how it can be preserved or enhanced.

This appraisal will be used to help inform the design of any future development proposals so that they preserve or enhance the area and acknowledge its features.

It is important to note that no appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and that the omission of a particular feature, building or open space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

2.0 Background, scope and structure

The Borough of Watford contains eight conservation areas, the oldest of which were designated in 1973 and 1975. The Urban Conservation Strategy produced during 2001 designated a further five conservation areas – including Estcourt. The High Street / King Street Conservation Area was designated in 2006, while the Watford Heath Conservation Area and Estcourt Conservation Area were extended in 2008 and 2010 respectively. More recently, Macdonnell Gardens was designated as a conservation area in 2012 and Oxhey was designated as a conservation area in 2013.

This appraisal is structured to include:

- A summary of designation
- Policy background
- Definition of the special interest of the area via spatial and character analysis, historical development and important features.

3.0 Designation

The Estcourt Conservation Area was originally designated on 22 January 2001 under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The main aims stated within the designation report for the Conservation Area (Watford Borough Council, 2001) were:

- To maintain the small scale of the buildings;
- To enhance key focal points such as Sotheron Road/ Sutton Road/Cross Street junction to make a greater contribution to the area;
- To help maintain the mixed use character of the area;
- To protect the appearance of buildings and

roofscapes by encouraging the re-use of original materials and prioritising refurbishment over demolition.

4.0 Definition/summary of special interest

The core of the Estcourt Conservation Area is one of Watford's oldest residential areas. Previously farmland, the area was built up rapidly during the latter half of the nineteenth century as the town expanded northwards towards the newly opened railway station at Watford Junction.

The area is distinctive from other later Victorian areas of the town for its mixed-use character with terraced housing interspersed with small workshops and yards, as well as a wide variety of public houses, independent shops and public buildings. The strong small scale streetscapes and roofscapes are an important feature emphasised by the topography, as are the spaces created at the junctions of the roads where a variety of land uses prevail.

5.0 Location and setting

The Estcourt Conservation Area lies broadly between the town centre and Watford Junction railway station. A highly urbanised setting, the boundaries of the Conservation Area are a mixture of those marked by clear physical distinction and more complicated boundaries relating to urban grain and land use.

The boundary to the east of the Conservation Area is marked by the raised embankment that forms the principal railway line through the town. To the west, the boundary is marked by the transition from the Victorian streetscape of Estcourt Road to the modern office land uses of Clarendon Road. St John's Road marks the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, where the distinction is made between the Victorian buildings to the south and the more mixed character of historical building types to the north. The southern boundary is formed by the transition point between the Victorian street patterns and the modern development associated with the building of the town centre ring road along Beechen Grove. The Broadway, a street made up of buildings that are largely contemporary with the rest of the Conservation Area, has been added to the existing designated area due to its high proportion of high quality buildings.

6.0 Archaeology and historic development

6.1 Archaeology

There is no documented evidence of archaeological finds within the Conservation Area. Given the paucity of evidence suggesting any major development took place within this location before the nineteenth century, it is unlikely that the area has a high likelihood of revealing significant archaeological finds from later periods. There are no scheduled monuments in the Conservation Area.

6.2 Historical development

Until the 1860s the area that now makes up the Estcourt Conservation Area remained essentially rural. The tithe map, which was produced in 1842, shows the area made up entirely of farmland, with the edge of development spreading northwards from the High Street stretching up to the southern border of the study area. The fields in question were owned by six separate landowners, with the majority of the land under the ownership of 'Thomas Estcourt Grimstone Bucknall' and 'Marianne Clutterbuck'. Most of the land was arable farmland, with the remainder made up of meadows.

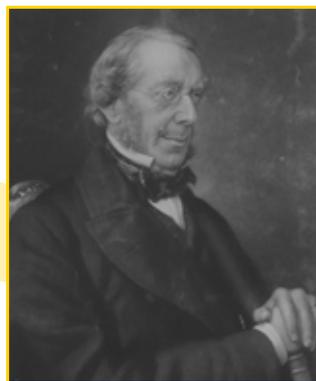


1842 Tithe Map

The tithe map does however show a track, which was later developed as the road known as Loates Lane. It also shows tracks on the alignment of what were later to become the roads known as Gartlet Road and the southern stretch of Estcourt Road.

After 1842, the land remained as farmland until the late 1860s, when land was put up for auction and a new network of streets started to be developed. Although only partially of influence on development at this time, it is worth noting the opening of the railway station at Watford Junction by the London and North Western Railway Company on the 5 May 1858. Replacing a much smaller station, that opened in 1837 on St Albans Road, Watford Junction undoubtedly provided a stimulus to development nearby. By the 1860s, the farmland to the south of Watford Junction was therefore a prime area for development - lying between the existing town core and the new station.

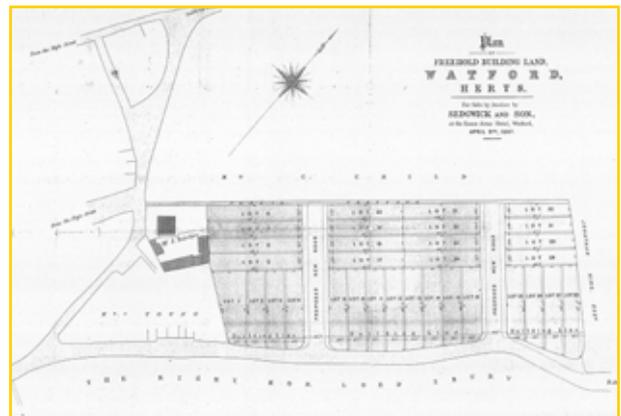
The principal landowner at this time, a Mr Thomas Henry Sutton Sotheron Estcourt, began to start selling off his Hertfordshire landholdings during the 1860s (Child, 1992). Estcourt had inherited the land following the death of his father - Thomas Estcourt Grimstone Bucknall, in 1853. Thomas Estcourt (1801-1876) was both a landowner and a politician, who rose to prominence as the Secretary of State for the Home Department in 1859. However, he did not live in Watford and his career as an MP included representing Marlborough, Devizes and North Wiltshire. The large collection of names that Thomas Estcourt had accumulated by this period were as a result of conditions on the various wills that had gifted Estcourt his land holdings. The names 'Sutton', 'Sotheron' and 'Estcourt' were thus utilised for the newly created streets in Watford.



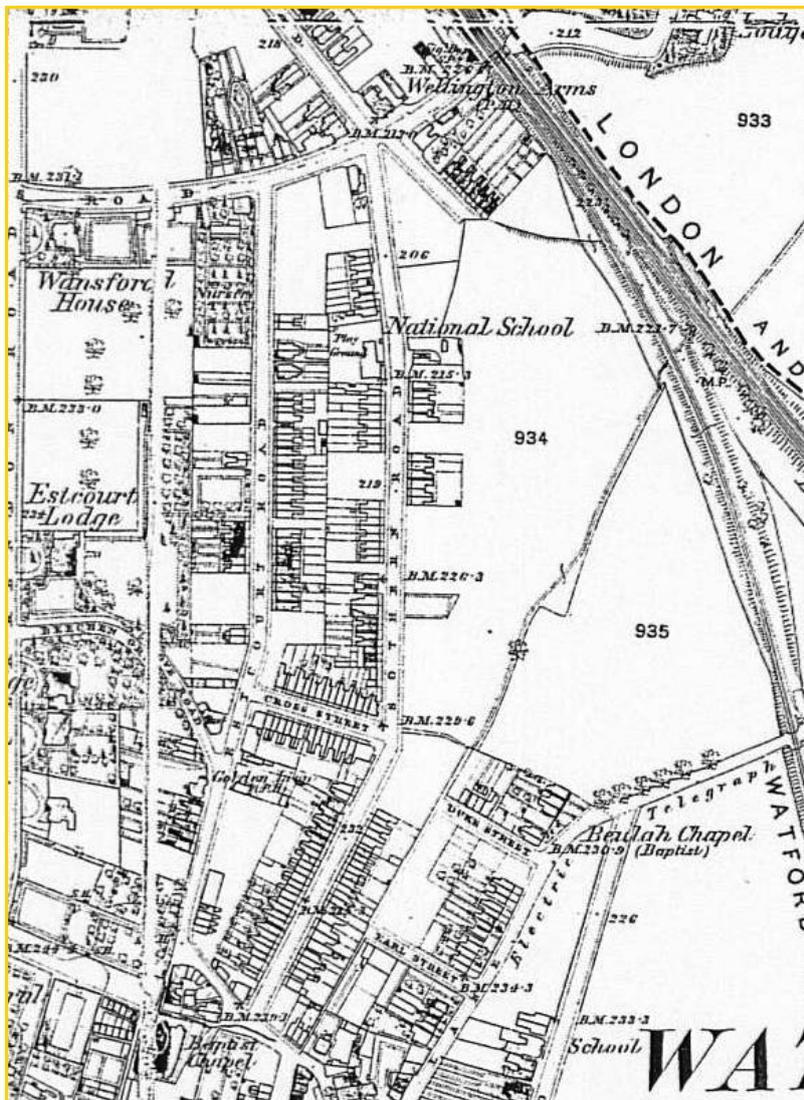
Thomas Henry Sutton , Sotheron Estcourt



1849 Board of Health, Report Map



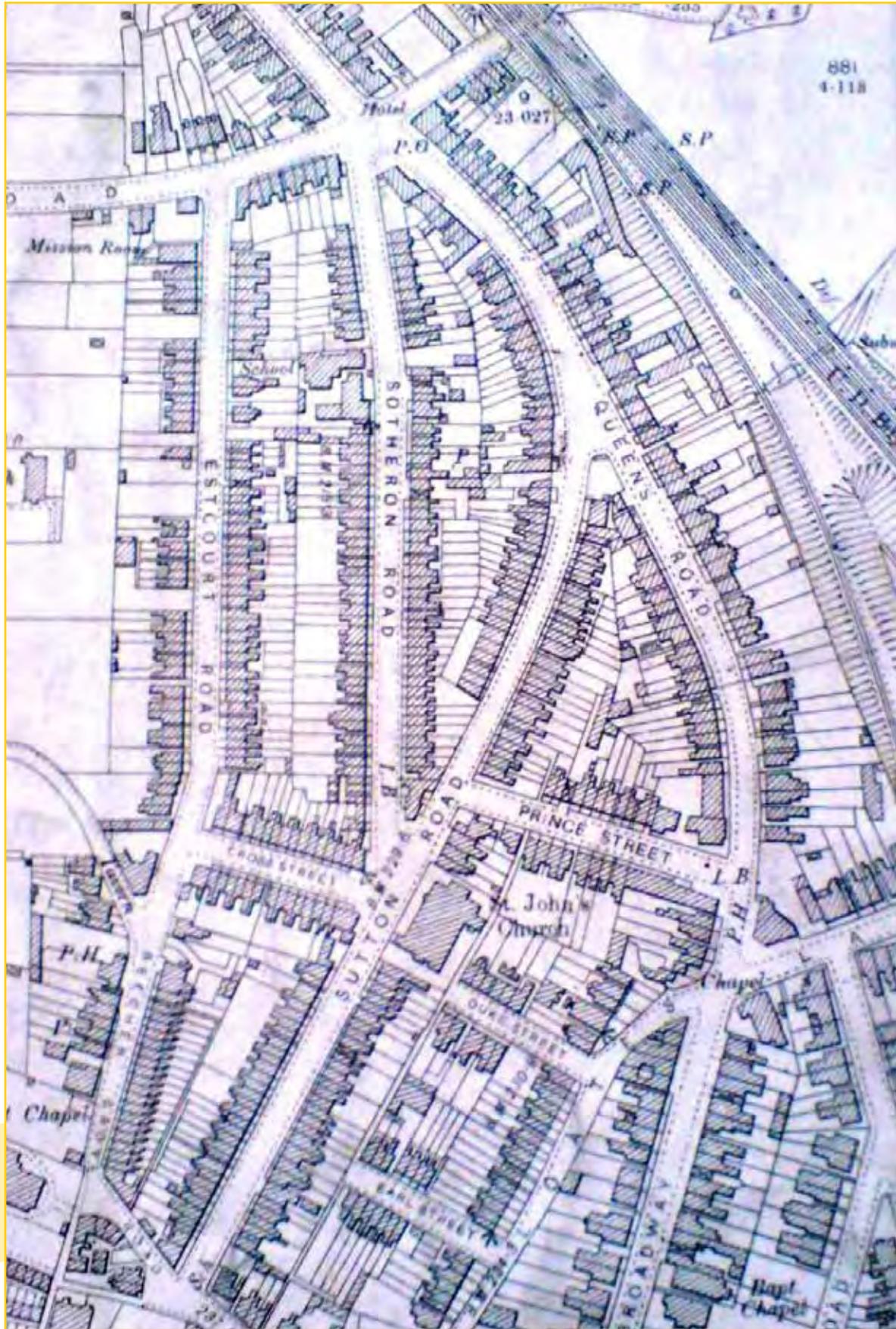
1867 Land Sale Plan showing the proposed layout for Earl Street and Duke Street



1871 OS Map

As can be seen from the plans on this page, the area was developing rapidly during the late 1860s and early 1870s. As well as the roads named after landowners, other new streets, such as Queens Road and Earl Street, reflected the Victorian's taste for honouring the nobility. Cross Street, which was created in 1868, was possibly named after Richard Assheton Cross, who was one of Thomas Estcourt's fellow parliamentarians. In 1869 a new school was opened on Sotheron Road and the various pubs on Estcourt Road and St Johns Road were established. In the same year the Beulah Baptist Church was opened on Loates Lane, along with an associated school building to its rear. Around this time the building company known as Clifford and Gough had their premises constructed at 96 Estcourt Road. They subsequently erected many terraced houses in Watford. Interestingly, the 1871 OS Map shows 17 St Johns Road, which still stands, as being part of a nursery stretching down much of the western side of Estcourt Road.

Development after 1871 continued at a rapid rate, to the extent that by 1896, when the next OS Map was produced, the Estcourt area was almost fully developed. A sale plan from 1875



1896 OS Map

shows Prince Street and the joining up of Queens Road between the existing elements around Loates Lane and St John's Road. During this period a number of the most important buildings in the area were built and the streetscapes we see today were consolidated. Between 1884 – 1885 the Mount Zion Baptist Church was built on Queens Road, while the Church of St John was built on Sutton Road between 1891 – 1893. St John's Church had existed since 1873, but only within a temporary iron building on the Sutton Road site. By the 1890s, the Mission Hall, at 125 Estcourt Road, had been built and so had the Police Station, at 5 Estcourt Road.

was the demolition of the terraced Victorian houses at numbers 105 – 109 Queens Road and the building of a new link between Radlett Road and Queens Road. Running under the railway line, this new stretch of road was named as an extension to the existing Radlett Road. In 1903 a water trough commemorating local soldiers who had died during the Second Anglo-Boer War was installed in Queens Road, while St John's Hall on Estcourt Road was built between 1911 - 1912.



View from 1891 of the carriage building works of William Tucker. Junction of Prince Street with Queens Road



Two views from the junction of Queens Road with Woodford Road. The picture above is looking south from Woodford Road while the picture below is of the opposite direction and shows the 1922 Charter Day celebration.



Church of St John on Sutton Road following the completion of building works in 1893

After the 1890s, change to the urban form within the area can be characterised as being relatively minor. The most significant development in the next couple of decades

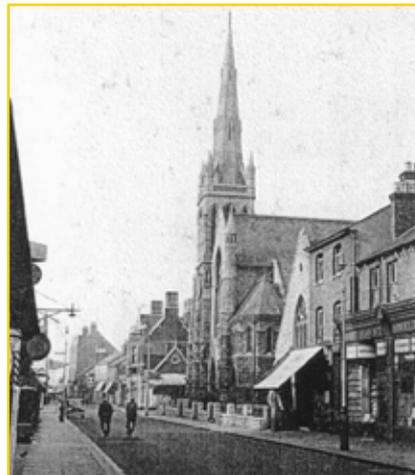
Although the character of the area remained fairly consistent during the first half of the twentieth century, there were still incidents that impacted on it. In July 1907 there was serious flooding in the northern part of the area as a result of the 'Great Storm'. The World Wars also impacted on the area – most noticeably in December 1940 when buildings on St John's Road, immediately to the west of number 17, were destroyed by bombing.



1914 OS Map



Sotheron Road: 22 July 1907



St John's Road: 12 December 1940



Two photographs taken before the inner ring road scheme took place. The picture at the top shows a view looking south along Queens Road towards the High Street - from what is the current boundary edge of the Conservation Area. None of the buildings shown in this photo remain today. The picture below shows a view looking south along Estcourt Road. The buildings on the right side are numbers 5 – 15, which remain today, but the buildings in the distance were demolished to make way for the new road.

In the latter half of the twentieth century there were a number of significant developments that had a material impact on the character and setting of the area. In 1950, the Victorian terraced houses at numbers 17 – 21 Cross Street were demolished and replaced with a hall, which is now used as a social centre for blind people. In 1956, the Victorian terraced houses at numbers 141 – 147 Queens Road were demolished and replaced with garages. However, the biggest impact from this period came during the 1960s when the inner-urban ring road was built along Beechen Grove. This radically altered the layout of the area immediately to the south of the present day Conservation Area. Long standing routes along the north-south axis were severed and large areas of existing development were demolished to make way for the large relief road and the associated car parks.



1960 OS Map – before the road improvement works took place



1970 OS Map – showing the new road and the adjacent buildings demolished

Further developments within the area during this period included the demolition of the Victorian terraced houses at numbers 3 – 13 St John's Road, to make way initially for a new surface level car park. This was subsequently turned into a small public park. Another notable demolition occurred on Sotheron Road where, following its closure in 1974, the principal building of St Andrews School was demolished. In 1990 the former Queens Road Primitive Methodist Chapel, which had stood on the southern corner of Queens Road and Queens Place, was demolished and replaced with a block of flats. The Tantivy public house, which had stood at the northern corner of the aforementioned junction, was demolished in 2003. The garage site at the junction of Sutton Road and Queens Road was redeveloped with housing in 2011, while the eastern side of Loates Lane is gradually being redeveloped with residential properties.



Boarded up terraced houses on St John's Road before demolition



St Andrews School on Sotheron Road in 1975 - following its closure

7.0 Spatial analysis

This section considers the morphology of the area, key spaces, and important views and vistas into and out of the area.

7.1 Character and interrelationships of spaces

As a heavily built up area, the importance of open spaces within Estcourt becomes heightened due to their limited scale and frequency. The two modestly sized parks, whilst of importance to the area as a whole, are relatively modern additions. The key historic spaces are found at road junctions, where feature buildings punctuate the townscape and the most interesting street relationships are found. The small landscaped space at the junction of Queens Road with Sutton Road is marked by a historic water trough, which forms a local landmark.

At other junctions, such as Estcourt Road/Gartlet Road and Woodford Road/Queens Road, the space opens out and the character is defined by the commercial buildings, of varying styles and scales, that enclose the space and generate activity. The key space though is formed at the junction of Sutton Road/Cross Street/Sotheron Road, where a larger space, not dissimilar to a village centre, is created – with areas of parking and landscaped public space. The space gives St John's Church, the key feature building, a setting that allows it to dominate the area and provide a key central point to the Conservation Area.



Junction of Sutton Road and Sotheron Road

The Church of St John provides the key landmark for the Conservation Area and is a focus for a variety of other views that exist into Estcourt. As it is next to an important railway line, the Conservation Area can be viewed from passing trains – with St John’s Church providing the key identification. Views down from the upper storey of Sutton Road car park provide an interesting perspective on the Conservation Area, where St John’s Church provides a clear landmark. The small scale of buildings that predominate in Estcourt provide the context that allows the Church to stand out as a key feature.



Junction of Estcourt Road and Gartlet Road



View southwards up Sutton Road

7.2 Key views and vistas

The views and vistas within, into and from the conservation area are important. The key sequential views within the conservation area follow the north-south axis and are found along the main streets, such as Queens Road, Sutton Road, Sotheron Road and Estcourt Road.

There are a variety of different views into the Conservation Area, some of which are clearer than others. The view southwards from Woodford Road is framed by the two public houses on either side of the street and then looks onto the range of commercial premises that are positioned around the junction with St John’s Road. This junction marks the topographic low point of the Conservation Area and a clear vista is found uphill towards the southern end of Sotheron Road. A similar vista is found looking southwards up Sutton Road, where St John’s Church provides a landmark feature – at a high point of the Conservation Area.



View northwards from Sutton Road car park

Other views into the Conservation Area vary in their degree of clarity. The view eastwards along Gartlet Road provides a dramatic juxtaposition from the modernity of Clarendon Road. The view westwards from Queens Place is focused on the landmark feature of Central Hall on Loates Lane, while views northwards from the

southern end of Estcourt Road focus on the Estcourt Arms. Views northwards up Loates Lane, from the Conservation Area boundary, are diluted by the poor quality of buildings on the eastern side of the street, while views towards The Broadway from the south are disrupted by the level changes around the ring road underpass. The view northwards down Estcourt Road focuses on the unusually large Victorian Villas, that have three storeys, at 8-12 St John's Road.



View eastwards along Gartlet Road



View northwards along Estcourt Road

8.0 Character analysis

8.1 Character zones

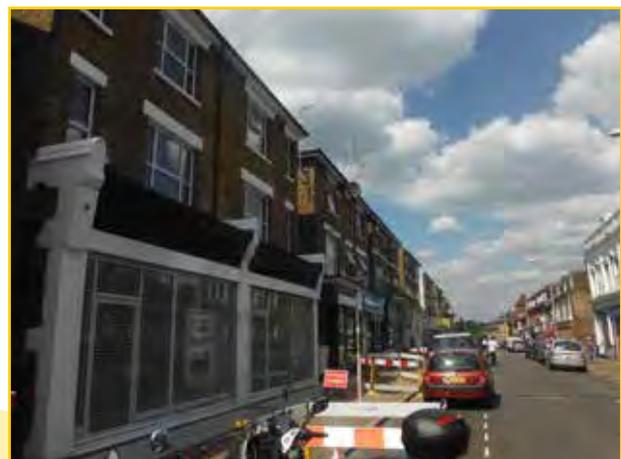
As the vast majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area were constructed within a 20-30 year timeframe during the latter half of the nineteenth century, it is not overly surprising that Estcourt shares a similar character throughout. Building heights, materials, elevational

detailing and the street forms themselves are remarkably consistent across the area. The tight urban grain and modestly sized public spaces make for compact development, where the relationship between buildings and streets is very close. Clearly urban, the lack of large scale modern development within the Conservation Area has allowed it to retain its Victorian character, albeit one that is now impacted upon by rows of parked cars.

The only obvious demarcation that can be made to distinguish 'character zones' would be in acknowledging that The Broadway has a more overtly commercial character. This compares with the rest of the Conservation Area, where residential land use is more dominating, with only some commercial uses mixed in.



East side of Sutton Road



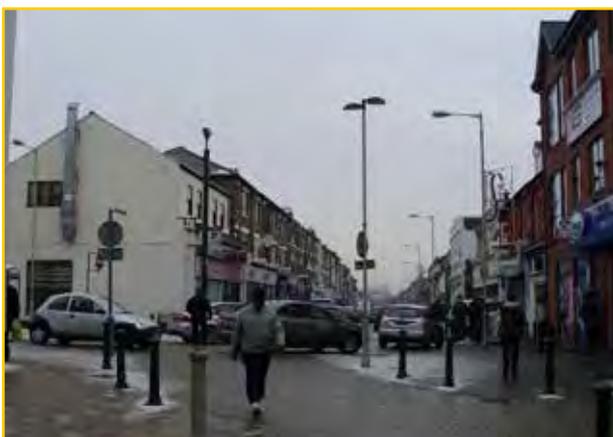
The Broadway (Queens Road) looking north

8.2 Activity

Activity in Estcourt varies between the busier areas, at the northern and southern ends of the Conservation Area, and the quieter areas in the middle, which are largely residential. The busiest part of the Conservation Area is the southern stretch of Queens Road - known as The Broadway. This street is characterised by a particularly diverse range of land uses, and houses the bulk of the retail units within Estcourt.

The public houses, with their associated outdoor seating areas, in the southern stretch of Estcourt Road, form another area of heightened activity within the Conservation Area. The link to Clarendon Road provided by Gartlet Road provides another route with higher pedestrian movements. In a similar vein, the junction of St John's Road with Orphanage Road has a significant level of activity generated by the two public houses and the various other businesses located there. As well as pedestrian movements around this junction, there are notable levels of traffic.

The majority of the Conservation Area is comparatively quiet and displays low levels of street activity, pedestrian movements and traffic. This is largely as a result of the dominance of residential land uses and the lack of major traffic flows. The latter issue is partly as a result of larger roads existing elsewhere and also due to the high levels of public transport provision locally.



Pedestrians and vehicles on the south side of The Broadway



People spilling out onto the streets outside the Wellington Arms

8.3 The qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

Almost all of the buildings date from the latter half of the nineteenth century and can be observed to have a consistency of architectural form. The dominant urban form is of terraces of two storey brick buildings with pitched roofs. Three storey buildings are rare and as a result form feature terraces within the otherwise uniform townscape. Notable examples are 8-12 St John's Road and 60-82 Queens Road. Although the type of bricks varies across the Conservation Area, the dominant form is of yellow London stocks, with red bricks for decoration – such as window arches. Brick chimneys are common, as are wooden doors and sliding sash windows.

Variation within the built form of the area is demonstrated most noticeably by the mixture of building types. Despite having a tight urban grain, with consistent block forms and building heights, the area does include a wide range of land uses. While largely residential, the streets also include a number of public houses, shops, workshops, halls and churches. The detailing on these 'feature' buildings gives interest to street façades and yards accessed through gateways/arches provide a key component of the Victorian character of the area.

8.4 Listed Buildings

The following building is included on a register called the "List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest," issued by the Department of the Environment under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, with assistance from English Heritage.

- Church of St John (Sutton Road) – Grade II. Listed in 1983.

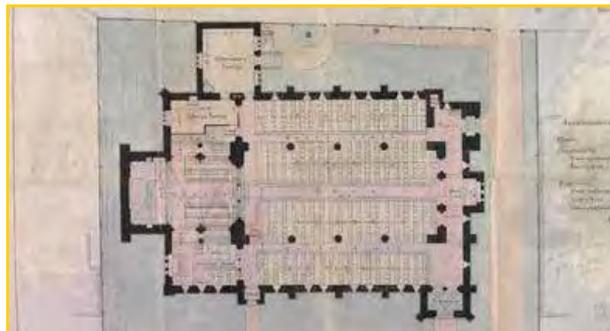
The first church to be built on Sutton Road was a simple iron structure, which had previously been used as a temporary church in the grounds of St Mary's Church, while the town's oldest church was being renovated. The iron church was moved to Sutton Road on the 23 November 1873 and existed as St John's Church until a new building was constructed. The dedication stone for the structure, we see today, was laid on the 17 July 1891 and the new church building was consecrated on the 19 July 1893. It cost £11,000 to build. The Gothic style church was designed to be a "Chapel at Ease" to St. Mary's, to provide for those who lived on the Sutton-Sotheron-Estcourt estate and in the Waterfields area, and only later became a separate parish. The tower and spire that are shown on the original plans for the building, but were never actually built, would have been more than double the height of the building that was constructed. Historically an 'Anglo-Catholic' church within the Anglican denomination, it was attended for a period by the author C. S. Lewis.

The architect, Eley Emlyn White (1853/1854 -1900), was in professional practice with John Thomas Christopher - who lived in Watford for a period of time. Based in Bloomsbury Square in London, Christopher & White were responsible for a number of local projects – such as alterations to St Mary's Church and new build housing designs in Nascot and Watford Heath. White was an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects but

relatively little is known about his professional life, while his private life is thought to have been quite turbulent. He committed suicide in 1900.



Original design concept shown in an architectural journal



Plan of church (1890)



Photograph from 1910

8.5 Locally Listed Buildings

As part of the Council's Urban Conservation Strategy, a register of Locally Listed Buildings was compiled within the Watford District Plan 2000 (2003). The following buildings were included in the list due to their importance in terms of: architectural interest, function, historical interest, landmark quality and streetscape quality.

• Former Police Station, 3 – 5 Estcourt Road

The property was built in the late nineteenth century as a police station and was operating by 1884. The building subsequently became the local office of the 'Inspector of Weights & Measures, food & drugs, petroleum & explosives and fertilisers & feeding stuffs', which it remained until the later twentieth century.



- **The Estcourt Tavern, 25 Estcourt Road**

Dating from the 1869 the property was the first to be built in this location.



- **Central Hall, Loates Lane**

The property was formally opened in August 1869 as a chapel for the Christian denomination known as 'Strict Baptists'. The Baptists vacated the building in January 1888, when the Baptist Tabernacle on Derby Road was opened, and the hall was taken over by the Plymouth Brethren. From 1891 the building was known as Central Hall and by 1949 was in the ownership of 'The Christian Assembly'.



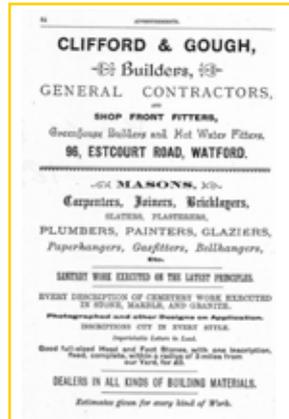
- **Former building works, 96 Estcourt Road**

Builder's offices, yard and outbuildings. The building firm that occupied the site: 'Clifford and Gough' were one of the most prolific developers within Watford.



- **67 Queens Road**

Purpose built shop premises designed by the architect Leonard G. Ekins, who was the chief architect for the Cooperative Wholesale Society for 37 years. Built in two stages in 1921 and 1928. Ekins was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Institute of British Architects and was the designer of nationally Listed Buildings in London, Northampton and Newcastle. He also designed 187-189 St Albans Road, which is also Locally Listed.



1911 advert

- **Former Baptist Chapel, 69 Queens Road**

The chapel was built for the Christian denomination known as Strict Baptists between 1884 -1885 and was originally called 'Mount Zion Baptist Church' (Mount Zion was the holy hill in ancient Jerusalem). No longer used as a religious building, the chapel was converted to be used as a hostel during the 1990s.



- **1a St John's Road**

Dating from the 1860s the property is contemporary with the earliest period of building within the Estcourt Conservation Area. The earliest records show the property belonging to a Mr Thomas Cheeseman – a dairyman, who used the property as a shop and house with stores to the rear.



- **79a Queens Road**

This shop was built in 1890 as part of a terrace of commercial properties on the eastern side of Queens Road. An unusual and particularly fine example of a Victorian shopfront in the town, the unit has operated as a music shop for over 50 years.



- **55 Sutton Road**

Victorian building and rear yard. The building firm 'Stratford and Son' were based on this site from 1930. It was at this time that the building at the rear of the property was constructed. The company played a part in the development of Watford during much of the twentieth century.



Additions to register of Locally Listed Buildings in 2010:

• Estcourt Arms, 2 St John's Road

Dating from the 1869, this public house is contemporary with the earliest period of building within the Estcourt Conservation Area. Two storey structure of old London stock brick. Red brick detailing in symmetrical bands. Southern entrance has part glazed wooden door with top light and stone steps. Splay bay windows to each side of this entrance with tripartite sashes.

Wooden sliding sash windows at first floor level with painted arches and stone cills. Principal eastern entrance has brick porch and part glazed wooden door with top light and stone steps. Additional ground floor splay bay window with half-hipped lead roof. The roof is part pitched/hipped and of slate tiles – topped with four brick chimneys. Former stables to rear.



• Water Trough, Queens Road

Originally erected in 1903 by a Mrs W. R. Woolrych, of Croxley Green House, to be used as a drinking trough for horses. Structure was dedicated to soldiers of the local district who died fighting in the Second Anglo-Boer War.

Horse trough with a drinking fountain at one end, inscribed on the eastern side of the basin edge. It is made of marble. The bottom edges of the trough are chamfered and there are 4 semi-bollards at the corners. The lower basin is shallow and open, while the larger upper basin has been utilised as a flower bed. There is a small semi-circular basin at the southern

end. Original water pipes have been removed. The basin has been repositioned on a cobbled stone base.



8.6 Other significant buildings/structures

A number of unlisted buildings in Estcourt Conservation Area contribute positively to the character of the area despite not meeting the criteria for statutory or local listing. They reflect the age, style and material of a substantial number of buildings in the Conservation Area and are a reminder of the gradual development of the town.

- Druids Public House, 17 Estcourt Road;
- St John's Hall, Estcourt Road;
- 60 – 82 Queens Road;
- 87 Queens Road;
- 8 - 12 St John's Road
- 17 St John's Road;
- Wellington Arms Public House, 2 Woodford Road.

8.7 Prevalent local and traditional building materials

Facing materials

London stocks are the predominant facing brick in the Conservation Area with stone dressing used on a number of buildings; the shades of colour vary from a lighter yellow through to a reddish tone. The dominant roof material is slate or red plain clay tile on the pitched roofs. Most windows are wooden and some sliding sash, but many have been replaced by plastic versions; most are painted white.

Floorscape materials

- There is little evidence of original historic fabric in the floorscape; much of the floorscape has gradually been replaced by modern concrete paving slabs or tarmac for the carriageways.
- A number of the small carriageways leading to rear yards have surviving cobbled brick floor surfaces.

8.8 Contribution of trees and green spaces

The Conservation Area is heavily built up and has little open space. As a consequence there is little space for trees within the public realm. The main open space is the St John's Road playground, which contains a number of trees (notably a tulip tree) and is added to by mature trees in an adjacent garden. Other spaces include:

- the pocket park in Estcourt Road;
- a small green with grass, water trough and trees at the junction of Queens Road and Sutton Road;
- a hard landscaped area, containing a short row of trees, is located at the junction of Cross Street, Sutton Road and Sotheron Road.

There are street trees planted in Cross Street, Estcourt Road, Lord Street, Prince Street, Sotheron Road and Sutton Road.

There are valuable, albeit limited, views of trees in rear gardens consisting of lawsons/leyland cypress and eucalyptus giving the evergreen element and sycamore providing the deciduous element. The street layout tends to block off views of the rear gardens with very few trees visible above roofs from street level. Views of trees outside the Conservation Area boundary are available to the North East : there are limited views of trees within the office developments on the Western boundary.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders within the Conservation Area boundary. However, the standard restrictions on works to trees within conservation areas apply.



St John's Road Park



Junction of Queens Road/Sutton Road

8.9 The extent of intrusion or damage (negative factors)

Loss of building features and boundary walls

Throughout the Conservation Area there are examples of unsympathetic alterations that have been done to the external elevations of buildings. This includes the removal of original chimneys, windows, doors, shopfronts and other detailing, as well as the addition of new wall cladding, porches and satellite dishes. A particularly frequent problem is the replacement of original wooden framed sliding-sash windows with poorly suited upvc replacements. A further problem is the removal of original boundary walls, which help to give the area its character and continuity to the streetscape.



Loss of original doors, windows, shopfront and signage.



Addition of cladding, satellite dishes and porch. Loss of windows and door.



Flats at 91 Queens Road

New buildings within the Conservation Area should be of a high architectural quality and their design should be responsive to the context provided by their site. The large block of flats on the northern side of the junction between Queens Road and Queens Place provide a notably poor example of development. The building sits uncomfortably within its location and has a negative impact on the integrity of the Conservation Area.

Shopfronts

There are many examples of poor shopfronts or fascias on properties located around the Conservation Area, although the highest proportion are located in The Broadway. Some fascia boards are placed too high up the building and many are in poor quality materials. In some cases there are inappropriate replacement windows in the floors above. Individual visually poor shop units inevitably have an effect on the whole façade of the building and the perception of this stretch of the Conservation Area as a whole.

Traffic and pedestrian management

Given that the area was developed before cars were invented, there are longstanding issues within Estcourt over how car parking can be accommodated on narrow streets of terraced Victorian properties. The demolition of existing buildings and the creation of surface car parks would not be acceptable within the Conservation

Area. Although traffic levels are relatively low throughout the majority of the Conservation Area, there are higher volumes around the St John's Road/Orphanage Road junction, which have a negative impact on the amenity of this setting.

8.10 Neutral areas

There are some buildings within the Conservation Area that are not contemporary with the bulk of the other buildings and are of only limited architectural interest or quality. Notable examples of such buildings include the garages at the northern end of Sutton Road and the business premises at 192-192a Queens Road. A number of buildings on the eastern side of Loates Lane would also fit into this classification. These are the buildings which may be considered in any proposals involving redevelopment in this area providing there is clear benefit to the conservation area.

8.11 Capacity for change

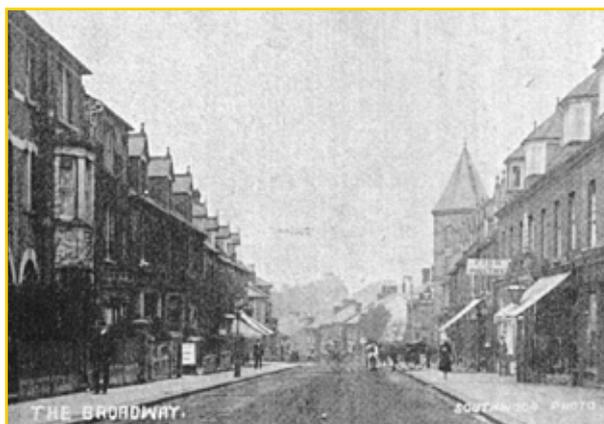
As an area of the town that was 'built out' well over 100 years ago, with few obvious sites with development potential for new builds, the capacity for change within Estcourt is relatively modest. The designation of a conservation area does not however provide a block on any development within its boundaries. The area has changed considerably since it was first built and the renovation and reuse of properties by new owners and businesses is to be welcomed as a means for ensuring the continued vitality of Estcourt as a mixed use area. Change must not however come at the expense of degrading the character and scale that makes the area special, and alterations to properties need to be sympathetic to their context. The large proportion of vacant commercial units, particularly around The Broadway, provides a particularly important area within which change will need to be delivered sensitively. A number of key buildings have been allowed to be demolished in recent years. Care should be taken to ensure that the character of the area is not threatened by further demolition.

9.0 Suggested boundary changes

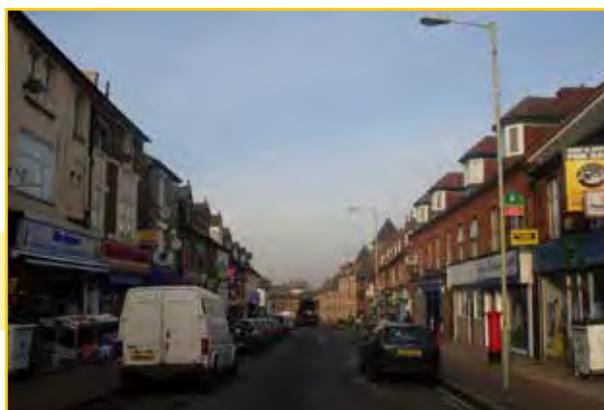
In producing the last version of the Character Appraisal in 2010, the Council had the opportunity to review the existing boundaries of the Conservation Area and assess whether they should be revised. We decided then that none of the roads within the existing Conservation

Area should be removed, but concluded that the area covered by protective designation should be extended to include the southern element of Queens Road that extends southwards to the Lord Street junction.

The original Conservation Area includes the majority of Queens Road, but does not include the stretch that is also known as 'The Broadway'. This road was laid out between 1868 and 1871 and is therefore contemporary with the earlier phase of road building within the Conservation Area. Almost all of the buildings on it were constructed during the latter half of the nineteenth century and display a range of different Victorian architectural styles. The street, both now and historically, has provided a mixture of uses. As well as shops and houses, the street has included churches, public houses, cafes and a variety of public or charitable service providers. The working men's club at 70-72 Queens Road has operated continuously as a social club in this location since the late nineteenth century.



1900s view of The Broadway looking north



2010 view from same location

As well as being of a character and historical basis that would make it suitable to be included within the Estcourt Conservation Area, the southern stretch of Queens Road also has a high proportion of architecturally significant buildings and has an impressive streetscape. A large number of the properties on this part of Queens Road were included on the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings, which was adopted in 2003 as part of the Watford District Plan 2000. The extension of the Conservation Area therefore provides additional protection for these buildings and discourages development that harms their setting.



77-79a Queens Road, Built in 1890.



60-80 Queens Road, Built circa 1870s.

The boundaries of the Conservation Area extension go as far south as the junction of Queens Road with Lord Street. This is because the built form south of this point is modern and the historical fabric has been lost (see page 12). The eastern boundary of the extension is formed by the rear boundaries of the Queens Road properties. The eastern side of Loates Lane has been added to the Conservation Area. Although this side of Loates Lane is relatively poor in streetscape terms and lacks consistent architectural quality, it has a clear impact on the setting of the adjacent parts of the Conservation Area and remains an area where the potential for responsive enhancements to be made is significant.



65 Queens Road, Built circa 1880s.

The Council formally extended the boundary of the Conservation Area to include the area detailed above on the 7 June 2010. The plan on page 23 shows the extent of the original and the extended areas.

10.0 Changes to Locally Listed Buildings

The following buildings were removed from the council's list of locally important buildings in 2010 due to their non-compliance with the strict criteria set out for local listing designation:

- 2 Duke Street;
- 1a Earl Street;
- 75 – 79 Loates Lane;
- 60 – 82 Queens Road;
- 77 – 79 Queens Road;
- 42 Sutton Road;
- 61 Sutton Road.

The following buildings were added to the council's list of locally important buildings in 2010 due to their compliance with the criteria set out for local listing designation:

- Estcourt Arms Public House, 2 St John's Road;
- Water Trough, Queens Road.

11.0 Management Proposals

A separate Conservation Areas Management Plan was adopted in July 2013. The document is accessible to view here: www.watford.gov.uk/conservationareas

12.0 Article 4 Directions

An Article 4(1) Direction was made by Watford Borough Council on the 4th April 2013 for the following properties:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 **Cross Street**; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 **Duke Street**; 1, 1A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 **Earl Street**; 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132 **Estcourt Road**; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 **Gartlet Road**; 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79 **Loates Lane**; 1, 2, 3 **Orphanage Road**; 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26 **Prince Street**; 95, 99, 101, 102, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115,

116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 140, 142, 144, 149, 151, 153, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203 **Queens Road**; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 102 **Sotheron Road**; 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 16A **St Johns Road**; 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119 **Sutton Road**.

This Direction restricts permitted development rights with regards to:

- Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse comprised within the following classes of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

Class A – enlargement, improvement or other alteration;
Class C – any other alteration to the section of the roof that faces the street;

Class D – the erection or construction of a porch outside any external door;

- Development within the area defined by the attached map comprised within the following classes of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

Class A – the erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse comprised within the following classes of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

Class C – the painting of the exterior of any building or work.

An Article 4(1) Direction was made by Watford Borough Council on the 4th April 2013 for the following properties:

5, Druids (17) Estcourt Tavern (25), St John's Hall, 96, Church (125) Estcourt Road; Central Hall Loates Lane; 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 96A, 96B, 96C, 98, 100, 104, 104A, 106, 108, 110, 126, 136, 138, 146, 182, 188, 192, 205, 207, 209 Queens Road; 1, 78 Sotheron Road; 1A, Estcourt Arms (2), 15, 17, 19 St Johns Road; 61, 61A, 61B Sutton Road; 1, Wellington Arms (2) Woodford Road.

This Direction restricts permitted development rights with regards to:

- Development within the curtilage of a property comprised within the following classes of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

Class C – the painting of the exterior of any building or work.

13.0 Community Involvement

A draft version of the appraisal is published for public consultation. The Council will seek to identify and consult by letter those with an interest in the conservation area. The draft appraisal will be accessible on the Watford Council website. Responses will help shape the final version.

Bibliography: Books and reports

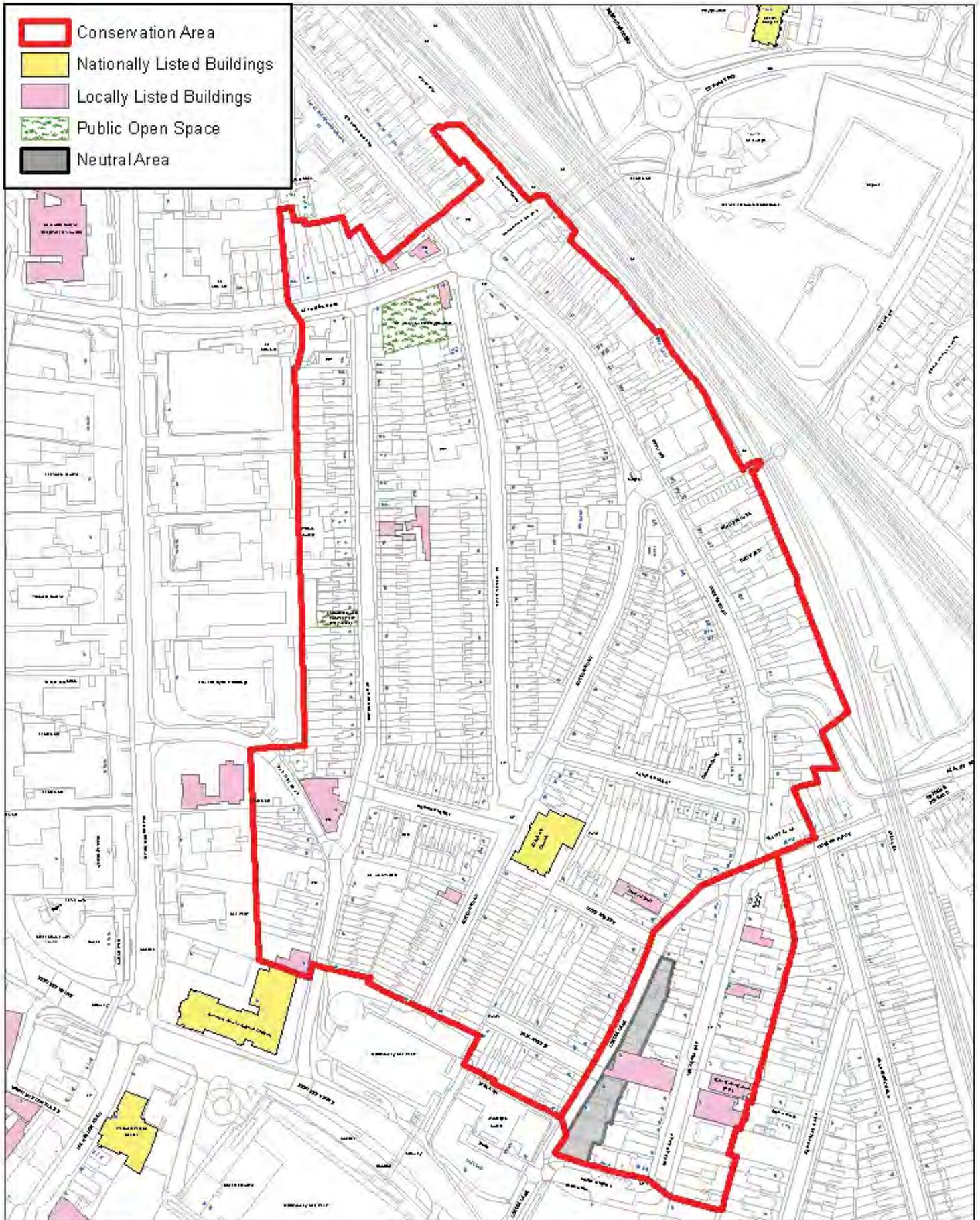
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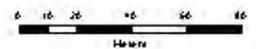


Estcourt Conservation Area

Produced by Teidal Mafusa, Planning Policy GIS, July 2011



Scale: 1:2,587
at A4



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