



Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Adopted 25 June 2025

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Bromley Town Centre is located in the north-west of the borough; formerly a market town, it is the largest town centre in the borough and a designated Metropolitan Town Centre. Bromley Town Centre is, historically and currently, the principal retail and commercial hub for the borough and contains the administrative centre for the London Borough of Bromley.
- 1.2 The Conservation Area designation covers the core of the town centre, with a central spine covering the High Street, Market Square and the lower part of London Road. To the north and east it includes College Slip, East Street, West Street, North Street and parts of Widmore Road and Tweedy Road / Kentish Way. To the south it extends as far as Elmfield Road. To the West it extends into the Ravensbourne Valley / Shortlands and includes Church Road, Glassmill Lane, Queen's Mead Road, Martins Hill and parts of Beckenham Lane; and part of Valley Road west of the railway line, including the Listed Pumping Stations and housing on Valley Road.
- 1.3 Bromley Town Centre has two railway stations, Bromley South and Bromley North. Bromley North Station is located within the Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The area contains two Grade I listed heritage assets, Bromley College (and its gateway), and a number of Grade II* and II listed buildings including several notable civic buildings such as Bromley North Station, the Old Town Hall, the Church of St Peter and St Paul, and Shephard's College. There are also a number of locally listed buildings of historical interest and architectural merit. Key components of character within the area include:
 - A high concentration of statutory listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the character of the town centre.
 - Green open spaces which make an important contribution to the Conservation Area and the wider town centre setting (Church House Gardens, Queens Gardens, and Martins Hill).
 - The topography of the town centre is a defining characteristic; the High Street sits on an elevated plateau to the north sloping down to the south.
 - Consistent pattern/urban form of the High Street and fine grain character of Bromley North Village (the historic core of the town centre).
 - Strong architectural heritage/language reflected within the Conservation Area, particularly in the northern and central parts of the town centre.
- 1.5 Bromley Town Centre has both historical and architectural interest. The northern part contains a cluster of historic civic buildings forming a transitional zone between the residential fringe and the town centre. Bromley North Village, the historic nucleus of Bromley, is characterised by fine grain buildings and high quality public realm with a unique village character. The High Street has an established pattern of built form with a clearly defined urban edge, and retains the human scale character of a traditional market town setting.
- 1.6 Statutory Listed Buildings and non-statutory Locally Listed Buildings within the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area are listed in Tables 1 and 2. Statutory Listed Buildings are the most important structures within the Conservation Area; they add significant architectural interest and make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Locally Listed Buildings are also considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

Table 1: Statutory Listed Buildings

Name	Number	Street	
Gates at Bromley College		London Road	I
Bromley College		London Road	I
Bromley War Memorial		Martins Hill	II*
Church of St. Peter and St. Paul		Church Road	II*
Pixfield Court		Beckenham Lane	II
Bromley (St Peter and St Paul's) War Memorial	St. Peter & St. Paul's Church	Church Road	II
K2 telephone kiosk		College Slip	II
	19	Glassmill Lane	II
Royal Bell Building	171-177	High Street	II
	179	High Street	II
	181	High Street	II
	223-225	High Street	II
Star and Garter Public House	227	High Street	II
	180-184	High Street	II
Swan and Mitre Public House	260-262	High Street	II
The Partridge Public House	194	High Street	II
Iron Gates and Piers, Queens Gardens		Kentish Way	II
Sheppard's College		London Road	II
Bromley North Railway Station		Tweedy Road	II
Old Town Hall		Tweedy Road	II
Former Central Library		Tweedy Road	II
First Church of Christ Scientist		Widmore Road	II
Old Town Hall Extension		Widmore Road	II
Main Pumping station		Valley Road	II
Old Partially Disused Pumping Station to South East of Main Pumping Station		Valley Road	II

Table 2: Locally Listed Buildings

Name	Number	Street
Glebe Knoll	5	Beckenham Lane
	11	College Slip
Boundary Post		College Slip
Former Post Office	3	East Street
Former Local Board offices	19	East Street
The Old Drill Hall (now O'Neill's Public House)	27-29	East Street
Railway Hotel Public House	45	East Street
Martins Hill Lodge		Glassmill Lane
Aberdeen Buildings	95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107 and 109	High Street
	157	High Street
	159	High Street
	161	High Street
Primark	162-178	High Street
	163	High Street
	165-167	High Street
	189-193	High Street
	204-206	High Street
	207	High Street
	209	High Street
	215	High Street
	217	High Street
	221	High Street
Odeon Cinema	242	High Street
Cast Iron Water Pump		Market Square

Name	Number	Street
	1-3	Market Square
	4-5	Market Square
	14-16	Market Square
	20-25	Market Square
	27-28	Market Square
	29-36	Market Square
Bromley Baptist Church		Park Road
The Vicarage	9	St. Paul's Square
	8	South Street
Fire Station		South Street
Community House		South Street
The Compass Public House	10	Widmore Road
Former Police Station		Widmore Road
	56	Widmore Road
	60	Widmore Road

Legislative and policy framework

- 1.7 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the primary legislation which protects the historic environment. Section 69 of the Act states that:

“Every local planning authority... shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and... shall designate those areas as Conservation Areas.”

- 1.8 Section 71 places a duty on local planning authorities, requiring them to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are Conservation Areas.
- 1.9 Section 72 of the Act imposes a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals on Conservation Areas. requiring that “special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”
- 1.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) sets out national planning policy relevant to the historic environment, with further guidance set out in the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Paragraph 8 of the NPPF defines economic, social and

environmental objectives which together will help to achieve sustainable development; the environmental objective includes the protection and enhancement of the built and historic environment.

- 1.11 Section 16 of the NPPF sets out how the historic environment should be conserved and enhanced. This section contains policy relevant to decision-making and plan-making, as well as policy concerning the designation of Conservation Areas. Paragraph 204 states:

“When considering the designation of Conservation Areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.”

- 1.12 Paragraph 212 concerns decision-taking in relation to heritage assets (which includes Conservation Areas). It states:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

- 1.13 The “significance” of a heritage asset means the value of a heritage asset (both designated and non-designated) to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also importantly from its setting. Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals. Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that applicants should set out the significance of any heritage assets affected by development proposals, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 1.14 Paragraph 213 states that “any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification”. Paragraphs 214 to 215 set out the tests which must be met where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset; or less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.
- 1.15 The London Plan (2021) provides a strategic framework for development in London. This includes key policies related to the safeguarding of London’s heritage assets and their settings, including policy HC1. Part C states:
- “Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.”*
- 1.16 The 2019 Bromley Local Plan has several policies directly relating to the historic environment in Chapter 5. This includes Policy 41: Conservation Areas.
- 1.17 The Urban Design Guide SPD (July 2023) provides detailed guidance notes on the importance of reinforcing local character and identity (DG1) and preserving and enhancing

heritage assets (DG2). The SPD highlights the importance of understanding and responding to the historic environment with heritage being central to good placemaking.

- 1.18 In addition to national regional and local policy and guidance, there are various guidance notes issued by Historic England which may be relevant to specific proposals in the Conservation Area.

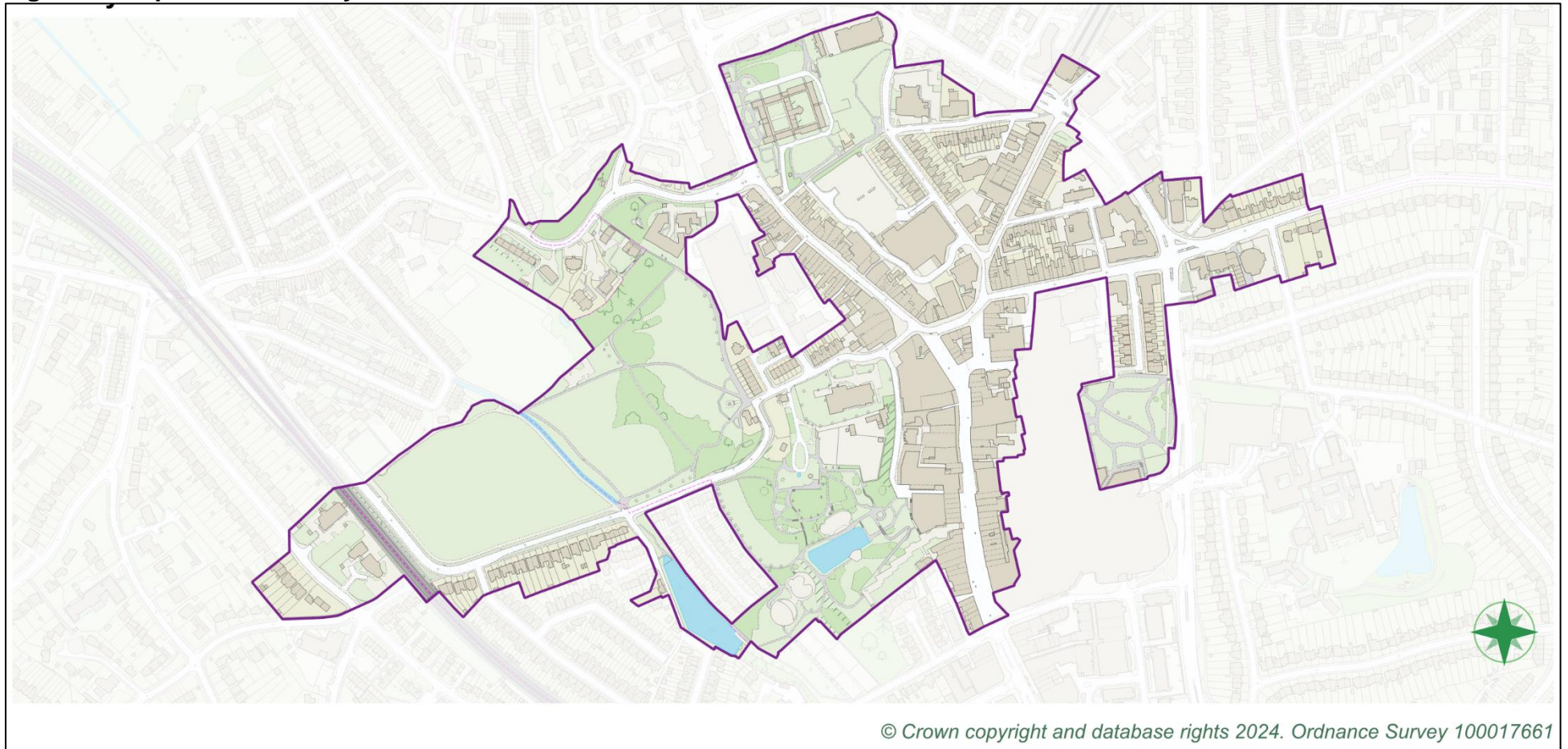
Role of Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

- 1.19 This document provides a detailed statement of character and appearance for the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area, setting out the reasons for designation as required by Section 69 of the Act; along with a management plan for its conservation as required by Section 71 of the Act¹. The document is relevant to development proposals and enhancement works in the area.
- 1.20 Understanding how the planning process works in a Conservation Area can be complicated, including what actually constitutes 'development', and what Permitted Development rights are applicable (as some Permitted Development rights are restricted). Common development proposals that might be restricted include alterations to doors, windows and roofs, and construction of boundary treatments such as fences and gates. The Council recommends that anyone intending to undertake development in a Conservation Area (from small-scale development proposals right up to major development) seeks pre-application advice at the earliest opportunity².
- 1.21 The Council will ensure that Development Management in Conservation Areas is undertaken with care and sensitivity to the character and appearance of the area. This is achieved by referring relevant applications to the Council's conservation officer, as well as seeking input from other parties (internal and external to the Council) where necessary, for example the Council's tree officers.

¹ This version of the appraisal and management plan replaces the version adopted in 2011. This updated version includes additional content reflecting the small extension to the Conservation Area designated in 2021; and amendments to reflect the up-to-date policy and legislative context.

² Details of the Council's pre-application service are available here: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/planning-applications/pre-application-planning-advice>

Figure 1: Map of the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area³



³ This map can also be viewed on the Council website at: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/conservation/conservation-areas-2>

2 Historical development

Early History

- 2.1 Bromley or Broomleigh means 'the heath where the broom grows'. The Manor of Bromley was a Royal gift to the Bishop of Rochester in 955. This Royal Gift led the way to Bromley becoming the official residence of the Bishops of Rochester (from around 1077) which continued until 1845. The current palace dates from 1775. Various palaces were built during the residence of the Bishops. The former Palace of the Bishops of Rochester was formerly home to the civic offices of the London Borough of Bromley.
- 2.2 From earliest times, Bromley has had a strong connection with the Diocese of Rochester. The first certain record is a charter of 862 that refers to a gift of "ten ploughlands at Bromleag" given by King Ethelbert of Wessex and Kent to Dryhtwald, his minister. By the tenth century, various land disputes forced the Bishop to seek a declaration of his interest in the Manor of Bromley from the King, who, on receipt of a sum of money, obliged the Bishop by granting him land at Bromley in perpetuity. Various further attempts were made to gain control of the Manor, by Saxon Lords, invading Danes and, after the Norman Conquest, by Earl Odo of Kent. However, the power of the Archbishop of Canterbury ensured that King William I restored Bromley to its rightful owner. In 1086, the Domesday Book recorded the Manor as belonging to the Bishops of Rochester. It had arable land for 13 plough teams, wood for a hundred hogs, one mill and two acres of meadow. Current estimates suggest that this land would then have supported a population of three hundred.
- 2.3 At some point in the mid-1100s, Bromley had grown sufficiently to support a parish priest of its own. Before that time, it is possible that the people of Bromley worshipped in the chapel of St Blaise, attached to the Bishop's Palace.
- 2.4 By the beginning of the 1200s, Bromley had become a small town, with a population approaching 1,000. On the 19 July 1205, King John granted The Bishop of Rochester the right to hold a weekly market on Tuesdays. In 1477, the crown granted a further charter to the Bishop, establishing Thursday as market day (which it remains to this day).
- 2.5 Bromley grew slowly in the medieval period. By the seventeenth Century, the population is estimated to have been around 700 which subsequently doubled in the eighteenth Century. The town's most impressive buildings from this early period are the Grade I Listed Bromley College (seventeenth Century), which is a development of almshouses on London Road at the northern end of the High Street; and the Grade II Listed old Bishops Palace in Stockwell Close (eighteenth Century)⁴. The majority of the Conservation Area is covered by an Archaeological Priority Area (APA)⁵, both Tier 1 and Tier 2 grades, which are the most sensitive grades reflecting a higher likelihood of archaeological remains being present.
- 2.6 The principal historic route through Bromley is the High Street, which forms part of the historic coaching road from London to Hastings; as a result, a number of coaching inns were developed. Some of the old inn names survive today, often in rebuilt premises, including The Royal Bell and The Swan and Mitre. The High Street is comprised of two parts (north and south) which meet at Market Square at different angles. The Market Square is strategically

⁴ The Old Palace is not within the Conservation Area boundary

⁵ APAs shown here: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/homepage/121/archaeological-area-map>

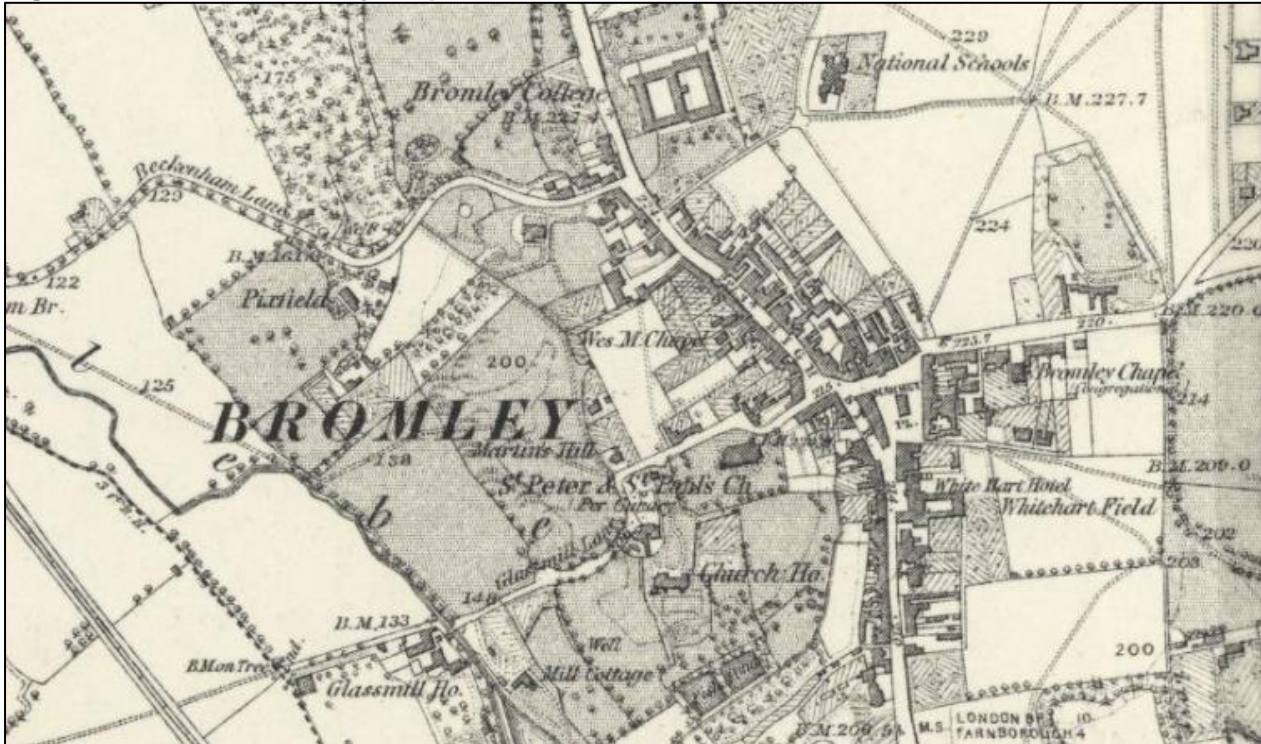
placed where this north/south route is crossed by Church Road/Widmore Road, linking Bromley to Beckenham to the west, and Chislehurst to the east.

- 2.7 The historic maps of Bromley illustrate the development of the town and clearly show the main east/west and north/south roads into Bromley. Bromley College is shown to the north of the Town Centre and the parish church is shown to the west of the town centre. The historic street plan of Bromley Town Centre is clearly recognisable today.

Nineteenth Century

- 2.8 In 1811 the town's population was nearly 3,000 and it was at that time served by a timber framed eighteenth Century Market House. During the following decades, the town experienced little change. Bromley Town extended as far north as Bromley College and as far south as the location of today's Central Library tower. The parish church was located to the west of the town and development extended only a short distance along Widmore Road to the east. Market Square was bypassed in 1832 by a new section of road which joined the north and south parts of the High Street so as to avoid market day traffic congestion.
- 2.9 The 1840s was a period of decline in Bromley. The sale of the Bishop of Rochester's Palace to a private owner (Coles Child) and the subsequent removal from the town of the patronage of the Bishop of Rochester had an adverse impact on local trade. By 1851, the population had fallen by 200 to 4,100 and the Market House had closed, and the future of Bromley looked uncertain.
- 2.10 The railways extended first to Bromley South in 1858, which allowed the town to expand, and in time the wider area developed into an area of middle class suburbs. Coles Child, who bought the former Bishop's Palace for his private residence, replaced the Old Market Hall with a new structure (a Town Hall) in the 1860s (now demolished).
- 2.11 In 1864, the North West Kent Water Company sank a shaft in a meadow near the railway line on Valley Road and began to pump water. The Old Pumping Station was built soon after and was worked by two engines.
- 2.12 Figure 2 shows the Ordnance Survey map (published 1870). It was in the later decades of the nineteenth Century that the town began to expand and renew itself. Bromley's outskirts, which were traditionally surrounded by pasture and arable land and gentry houses, gave way to new suburban streets. The High Street began to extend south to meet the new Bromley South Railway Station, with a mixture of villas and commercial premises. One remaining villa exists on the lower section of the High Street, at 98-102 High Street, Bromley. However, its ground floor has been substantially altered and only reads as a villa from above fascia level.

Figure 2: Ordnance Survey map, 1870



- 2.13 East Street, West Street, South Street and North Street all date from the late nineteenth century, and consist predominantly of two storey buildings. Widmore Road and East Street contain mainly commercial properties and lead to Bromley North Railway Station (opened in 1878 with the station building subsequently constructed in 1925). North Street, West Street and Queen's Road (which dates from the same period and lies off Widmore Road) contain residential properties. This area of Victorian town extension also retains a number of important civic/government buildings, which reflects the transition from market town to suburb. These include the former Post Office at 3 East Street (built in 1896), the former Local Board Offices at 19 East Street (built in 1875), the former Fire Station at 2 West Street and the Old Drill Hall at 27-29 East Street (built in 1872).
- 2.14 Commercial buildings often replaced old vernacular properties in the mid to late nineteenth Century. These replacements were often carefully considered and ornately detailed. Some of these include 95-109 High Street, Bromley; 157 High Street / 27-28 Market Square, Bromley; 215-217 High Street, Bromley; 181-183 High Street, Bromley; and 180-184 High Street, Bromley.
- 2.15 A gas supply was established in the town centre in 1837, followed by an electricity supply from 1898. Electricity was generated in a power station at Walter's Yard. The modernisation of Bromley allowed for its transformation from a small market town to a busy suburban centre. As such, most of the housing on the High Street and Market Square was converted to commercial use during that period.
- 2.16 The town continued to expand during the late Victorian and Edwardian period. During this time, a number of historic inns were rebuilt in an ornate and grander style retaining their historic names. Surviving examples include the Star & Garter at 223-227 High Street; and the Royal Bell at 171-177 High Street. Some new public houses were also established.
- 2.17 By 1894, Bromley had become an Urban District and around this time a node of 'Civic' buildings developed around Widmore Road, South Street, Court Street and Tweedy Road. These buildings include the Former Central Library, Tweedy Road; the Former Police Station,

Widmore Road; the Former Town Hall, Tweedy Road; the Former Town Hall Extension, Widmore Road; the Former Magistrates Court, South Street, the Fire Station, East Street and the First Church of Christ Scientist, Widmore Road. Provision was also made for public parks and open spaces during the nineteenth Century.

- 2.18 The Ordnance Survey map of 1898 (shown at Figure 3) shows that Queen's Mead has become a more formal park with trees planted around its edge; several of the villas on the south side were built by this time. On Valley Road, the terrace on the west side close to the pumping stations has also been built by this time.

Figure 3: Ordnance Survey map, 1898



Twentieth Century

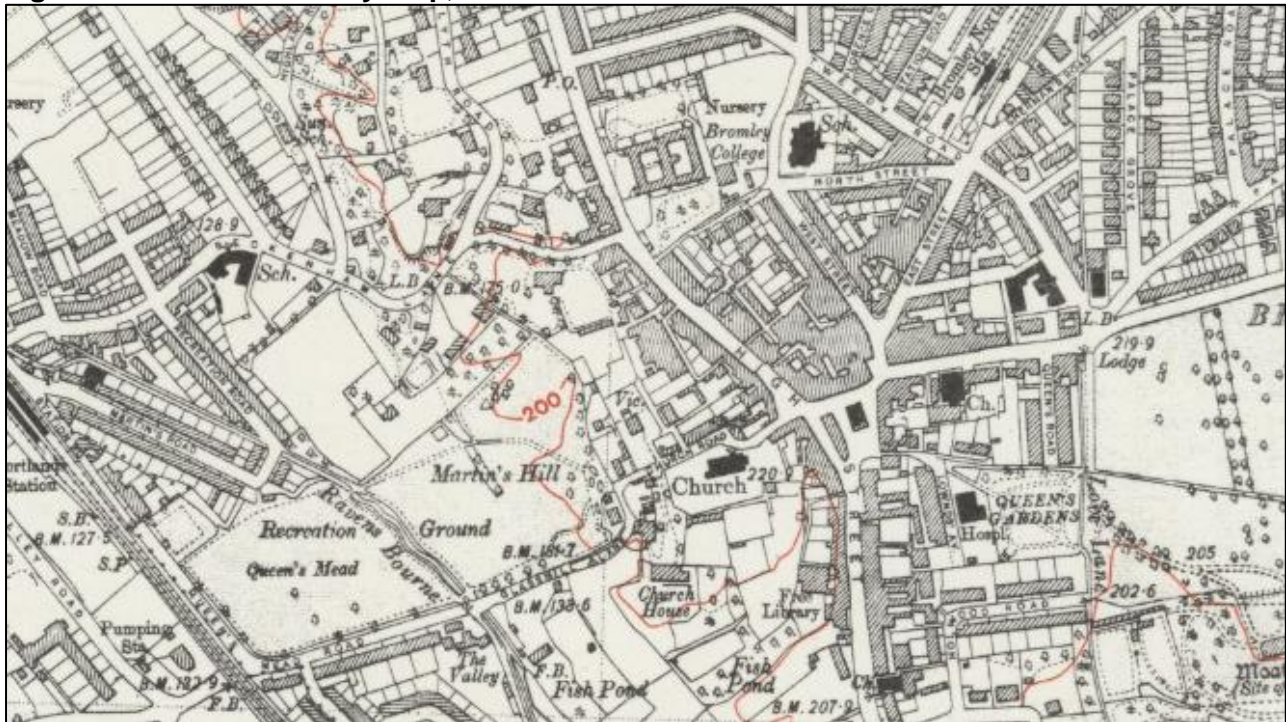
- 2.19 Figure 4 shows the Ordnance Survey map (published 1919). The area now covered by the Conservation Area saw little change in the decades leading up to the Second World War. However, the Town Hall was extended in the 1930s and parades of shops and large individual stores were built on redeveloped sites. It was at this time that the Old Town Hall (in Market Square) was demolished, and the market moved to a site outside the Conservation Area (adjacent to Bromley North Station). The Art Deco inspired department store at 162-178 High Street (Medhurst's) and the Odeon Cinema were built in the 1930s, on the northern section of the High Street; the Odeon was one of three cinemas in the town at the time. On Valley Road, the Main Pumping Station is thought to date from the 1920s.

Figure 4: Ordnance Survey map, 1919



- 2.20 During the Second World War, the town centre sustained extensive bomb damage. The greatest loss was the medieval Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul on Church Road. The current parish church is a post-war replacement which retains the original thirteenth Century tower, a lych gate and a brick and flint churchyard wall.
- 2.21 Major redevelopment in the last decades of the twentieth Century has brought change to the town centre. Walter's Yard was redeveloped to the northeast, including development of the Sainsbury's supermarket, with the site edge at College Slip landscaped and enhanced.
- 2.22 In the early 1990s, the construction of Kentish Way (a continuation of the A21) allowed the central section of the High Street, within the Conservation Area, to be pedestrianised. The Glades shopping centre, a large commercial development, was completed in 1991 and has been well integrated into the town centre, complementing rather than competing with the traditional grain and pattern of the High Street. The creation of Kentish Way and the Glades shopping centre did, however, cause the town centre to change considerably, with many houses, churches and streets being demolished to facilitate the development.
- 2.23 The 1946 Ordnance Survey map (shown at Figure 5) shows the Main Pumping Station thought to date from the 1920s.

Figure 5: Ordnance Survey map, 1946



3 Spatial form

Location and topography

- 3.1 Bromley Town Centre is located to the north-west of the borough, comprising of a former hilltop settlement built on an elevated plateau to the north. The contours rise steeply up Martins Hill from the Ravensbourne Valley below. The Ravensbourne River is located to the west of the Conservation Area. The High Street follows a sloping ridge down to Bromley South which sits at a lower level, and drops away steeply into the Shortlands Valley to the west.

Urban layout

- 3.2 The High Street has developed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from a modest market town to a Metropolitan Town Centre. The town centre has grown around the High Street on the upper plateau and the eastern and western slopes of the hillside. The western side is steeper, with side streets including Ethelbert Road, Ringers Road and Ravensbourne Road falling away to the lower lying residential areas. Two of the largest green open spaces; Church House Gardens and Martins Hill are located in the steepest parts of the town centre.
- 3.3 The High Street has an established pattern of built form characterised by a lower well-structured and clearly defined urban edge (typically three to four storeys) with taller elements set back behind. At the southern end of the High Street, taller blocks (built in the 1960/70s) sit one block back fronting Elmfield Road.
- 3.4 In the centre of the High Street on the western side, the height of the Churchill Theatre, a local landmark building, is set back in a stepped form so as not to disrupt the rhythm of the street edge. A more recent example can be seen in the siting of the Regents Place development on Ringers Road where the tallest element (Henry House, 10 storeys) is set back forming a backdrop to the smaller scale buildings fronting the High Street.
- 3.5 Taller blocks set behind lower finer grain buildings, responding to the ridge profile of the town centre topography, is a clearly distinguishable feature which enables newer development to stitch more sensitively into the traditional market town setting. This form reinforces a sense of townscape continuity, value, and coherent streetscape pattern. The human scale feel of the High Street and local heritage assets within, contributes positively to its character and identity.
- 3.6 Market Square marks the crossing of the historic principal north-south and east-west routes through the original hilltop market town. The northern section of the High Street extends beyond Market Square terminating at Beckenham Lane; it includes notable heritage assets such as the Grade II Listed Partridge Public House and the Royal Bell.
- 3.7 To the north-east of Market Square, East Street retains the fine grain character of a traditional shopping street on an intimate scale with high quality public realm. South Street (to the east of Market Square) is framed by buildings of local historic significance including the former Fire Station and Community House (former Magistrates Court).
- 3.8 Widmore Road functions as a primary east-west vehicular movement route; it contains several statutory and non-statutory heritage assets including the former Town Hall Extension, First

Church of Christ Scientist, and the former Police Station. The setting of these buildings is somewhat compromised by the heavily trafficked road environment.

- 3.9 To the west of the town centre is Martins Hill and Queen's Mead. Martins Hill was set out as Bromley's first recreational area; its meadow was renamed Queen's Mead. The open green spaces of the Ravensbourne Valley character area which are reflective of the rural setting origins of the town centre and its hilltop location make an important contribution to the Conservation Area.
- 3.10 Queen's Mead Road follows and extends the route of the old Glassmill Lane, which wound down from Bromley to cross the river further south. Valley Road, which runs along the west side of the railway line, appears to follow the route of an old footpath along the base of the valley. The siting of the pumping stations by the railway line would have been logistical, originally for coal delivery.

Open green spaces

- 3.11 There are a number of green spaces within the Conservation Area, many of which are found along the steep escarpment to the west of the town centre.
- Bromley College: This area is a mix of public (College Green) and private open space. The public area is located to the east of the college.
 - Martins Hill: This area is public open space and used for sports as well as a pedestrian link from Shortlands Station to the northern end of the High Street. The Bromley Local Board (predecessors to the Council) purchased Martins Hill for £2,500 in 1878 and it has remained in public use. It retains a sense of the former rural setting of the wider area in close proximity to Bromley Town Centre.
 - Church House Gardens: This area of public open space is extensively landscaped and includes a music bowl and lodge. The gardens have direct but not well integrated links to the pedestrianised High Street. Library Gardens is the space at the top of the hill adjacent to the Churchill Theatre; which then becomes Church House Gardens moving down the slope. Historically, this area was the private garden of Church House, a grand house with a long history, last reconstructed in 1832. The house and gardens were opened to the public by the Council in 1926 and further landscaping undertaken in the 1930s. It was destroyed in a Second World War bombing in 1941, in the same raid that destroyed the parish church. The gate lodge and driveway to the house can still be seen in the Gardens.
 - Queens Gardens: This area of public open space is a formally landscaped garden which has direct links to the Glades Shopping Centre and forms part of the pathway from the former Bromley Civic Centre and Palace Gardens to the High Street. Queens Gardens were formerly called White Hart Field. Once the Cricket field of the White Hart Inn (remembered in the name of White Hart Slip), the gardens were the location of County cricket matches until 1847. The gardens were given to the town in 1897 by Mr Coles Child who owned the former Bishop of Rochester's Palace (now within the grounds of the Bromley Civic Centre) to commemorate the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria and were landscaped in 1900.

Gaps and views

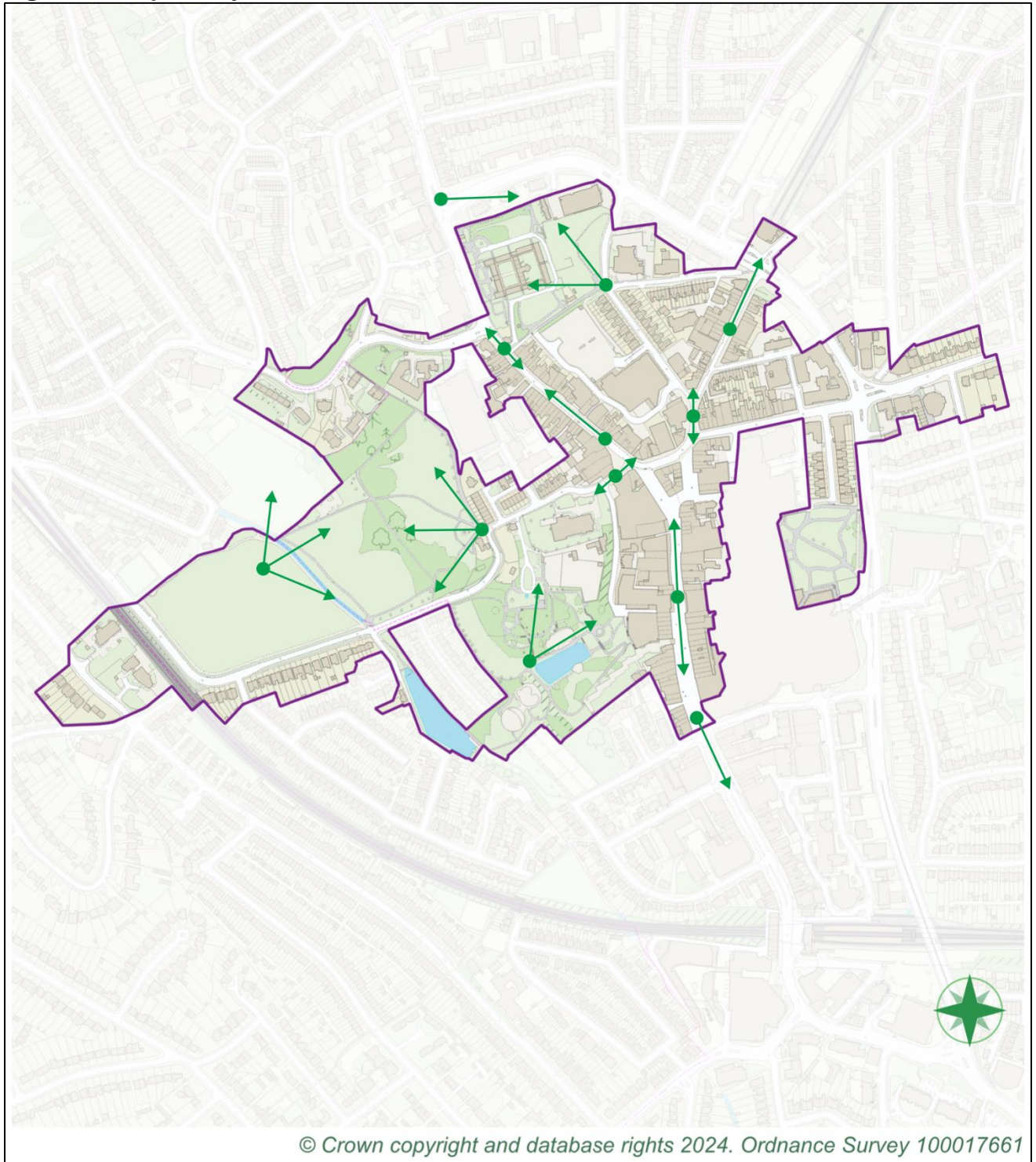
- 3.12 A number of key views into and out of the Conservation Area have been identified and shown at Figure 6. These include views from Martins Hill out to the Ravensbourne Valley; from Queen's Mead up to St Peter and St Paul's Parish Church; from Queen's Mead towards

Pixfield Court and Bromley Hill Wood; and other views within the Conservation Area⁶. Local Plan policies 42 and 48 will be relevant to the assessment of any proposals which may impact on views within the area, and into or out of the area.

- 3.13 The setting of the Conservation Area as experienced in views (static and kinetic) from the High Street, Church House Gardens and from the open spaces to the west, makes a positive contribution in enabling an appreciation and understanding of the significance, character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.14 From the pedestrian bridge between Queen's Mead and Valley Road, the views along the railway looking northwest, with the tower and chimney of the listed pumping stations on Valley Road punctuating the skyline above the tree screen along the railway, also have particular value.

⁶ The Shortlands Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, paragraph 3.17, identifies the importance of particular views towards areas within the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area, and as such may be a relevant consideration when assessing development proposals which could impact any relevant views.

Figure 6: Map of key views



4 Architectural interest

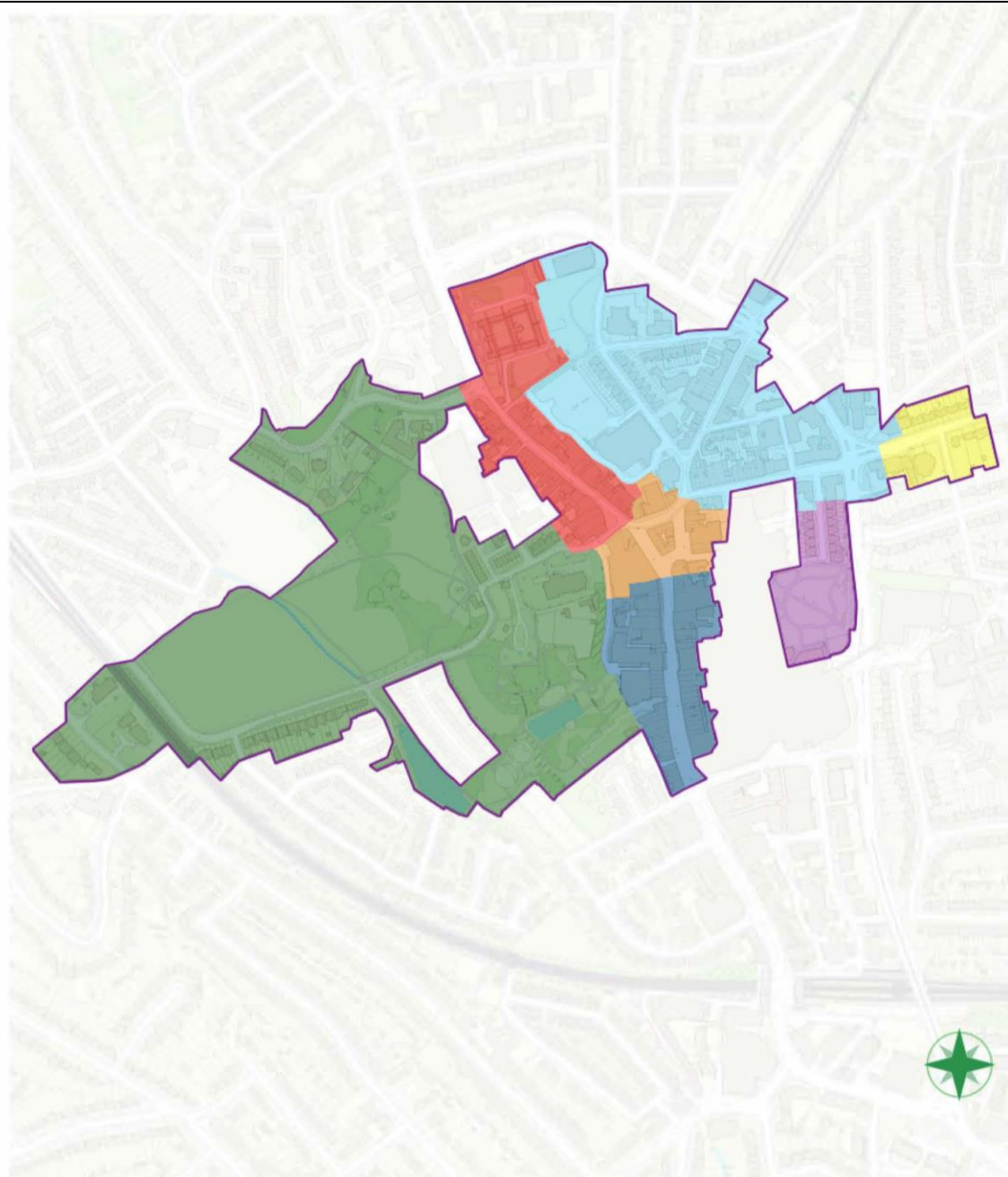
4.1 The Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area encompasses the historic heart of Bromley, and reflects the various functions of a major urban centre which has evolved from a modest rural settlement. The Conservation Area is comprised of several areas each with a distinct character which cover:

- the retail core radiating along the main streets which meet at Market Square;
- civic and institutional nodes;
- pockets of residential development; and
- a landscape and parkland setting.

4.2 The character areas are as follows (and are shown at Figure 7):

- High Street (central section)
- High Street (northern section)
- Market Square
- Ravensbourne Valley
- Widmore Road (East) and Tweedy Road
- Queens Gardens
- Bromley North

Figure 7: Map of the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area character areas



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Key

	High Street (Central)		Widmore Road (East) and Tweedy Road
	High Street (Northern)		Queens Gardens
	Market Square		Bromley North
	Ravensbourne Valley		

High Street (central)

- 4.3 The Central High Street Character Area extends from Elmfield Road in the south to Market Square in the north. This section of the High Street has a varied built character which is unified by the pedestrianisation of the street. The main pedestrian flows are from north to south, whilst there is also significant movement west to east through the Marks and Spencer store into the Glades shopping centre. Street trees are located at the southern end and street furniture is located along its length. A reproduction milestone is located outside 90 High Street adjacent to Ethelbert Road. The pedestrianisation of the High Street allows for regular themed markets.
- 4.4 Some buildings in this Character Area survive from the early nineteenth Century; these tend to be modest two storey structures with traditional detailing. The remaining buildings are a mixture of late nineteenth Century to early and mid-twentieth Century buildings. The former tend to be two and three storeys in height, with narrow frontages following the traditional building plots with well detailed commercial facades in brick or faience. The western side of the High Street contains large plots with uncompromising modernist buildings built following the war. The Glades shopping centre, completed in the 1990s, has been integrated behind the existing buildings on the east side of the High Street with little impact on the street scene or grain.
- 4.5 At ground floor level, the properties contain shopfronts of various ages and designs. Most shopfronts are modern and are predominantly comprised of sheet glass and some have stallrisers. At first floor level, there is much variation. Some buildings have bays, some are Victorian terraces, some properties do not have a first floor level, some properties have a setback first floor and some of the more modern properties have a jettied first floor. The roof forms are varied and include flat roofs, gables, mansard roofs, modern roof forms, and set back first floors. The predominant building materials are brick, concrete, timber and aluminium.
- 4.6 The view north up the High Street is terminated by the 1930s neo-Tudor building in the centre of Market Square. The view south from the High Street into Market Square is terminated by number 20-25 Market Square. The view south down the High Street is terminated by numbers 76-82 High Street, a red brick neo-Georgian building, which also terminates the view west down Elmfield Road.
- 4.7 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of a human scale, fine grain, traditional shopping street with individual shop fronts retained.

High Street (northern)

- 4.8 The Northern High Street Character Area runs from Market Square in the south to Bromley and Sheppards Colleges in the north. This section of the High Street is open to traffic and is narrower than the lower section of the High Street. This section of the High Street is a main vehicle thoroughfare through the town centre, as it contains several bus routes and also leads to the A21 (Kentish Way) via Widmore Road.
- 4.9 The majority of buildings in this character area date from the late nineteenth Century and the majority are three and half storeys in height with narrow frontages; notable buildings include the Star & Garter at 223-227 High Street; and the Royal Bell at 171-177 High Street. A number of earlier buildings survive and are much lower timber framed two storey structures. This section of the High Street has not attracted corporate chain stores or much investment and consequently there have been few enhancements or restorations in recent decades.

- 4.10 The northern High Street character area is characterised by a variation in facades and roof forms. This is due to the fact that the plots within this section of the Character Area were developed and redeveloped at different times. The building materials are predominantly brick with some render and some timber.
- 4.11 Pedestrian flows tend to be linear along the High Street with the exception of a passage which gives pedestrian access from the eastern side of the High Street to Walters Yard and the Sainsbury's supermarket. Most of the rear elevations of the premises on the east side can be viewed from Walters Yard and their irregular appearance contributes to the character of that space.
- 4.12 The High Street becomes London Road at the northern end of the character area. Bromley and Sheppard's College is located on London Road opposite the junction with Beckenham Lane. Bromley College is a Grade I Listed complex of buildings which dates from the seventeenth century and is enclosed within a red brick boundary wall consisting of two courtyards of residential accommodation and a chapel. The Grade II Listed Sheppards College is also located in this area and consists of a Victorian residential block. The Grade I Listed gateway to the Colleges consists of iron gates hung on mitre topped piers marked 1666. The Grade II Listed Swan & Mitre Public House is located opposite the Colleges on the High Street / Beckenham Lane junction.
- 4.13 The view north up the High Street is terminated by the Magistrates Court, a modern brick building on the western side. The view south down the High Street is terminated by numbers 145-153 High Street. The view west along Church Road is one of the most important in the Conservation Area as the Grade II* Church of St. Peter and St. Paul is framed by mature trees, a view which has changed little since medieval times.
- 4.14 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of a fine grain traditional shopping street with individual shop fronts retained.

Market Square

- 4.15 The Market Square Character Area links the northern and central High Street character areas. Market Square functions as a continuation of the pedestrian precinct with the exception of its northern side which is open to vehicular traffic. This section of road contains several key bus stops and is a busy through road.
- 4.16 The character of the Market Square is intimate, and the buildings are typically two to three storeys. The square is dominated by the large 1930s locally listed neo-Tudor building in the centre, which replaced the Victorian Town Hall. This building is well detailed, and its shopfronts share a common unified treatment of painted render pilasters and fascia.
- 4.17 A large mural representing the work of Charles Darwin locally is painted on the wall of 19 Market Square, and is located adjacent to the locally listed water pump. A small portrait of HG Wells, who was born in the vicinity of Market Square, is also included on the mural.
- 4.18 The view south down the High Street from Market Square is terminated by numbers 145-153 High Street, which comprises a low, wide, modern building. The view north from Market Square into East Street is terminated by 19 East Street, a locally listed building which was originally built to house the Bromley Urban District Council and now houses an Estate agent.
- 4.19 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of a traditional market town setting with an intimate fine grain scale and appearance.

Ravensbourne Valley

- 4.20 The Ravensbourne Valley Character Area is located on the western side of the Conservation Area and encompasses the major thoroughfares to Shortlands - Church Road, Glassmill Lane, Queen's Mead Road and Beckenham Lane - as well as part of Valley Road to the west of the railway line. This character area is adjacent to the Shortlands Village Conservation Area and shares similar characteristics with the area. The Shortlands Village Conservation Area and Management Plan document may be a relevant consideration when assessing development proposals within the Ravensbourne Valley Character Area.
- 4.21 The gardens and grounds fronting Beckenham Lane are lined with mature trees and shrubs. A number of Victorian villas step down the hill from Bromley. These include Hill House, Pixfield Court (a Grade II Listed red brick Georgian house), The Hollies, and 5 Beckenham Lane. All the buildings here either adjoin or can be seen from Martins Hill.
- 4.22 Lower down Beckenham Lane, on the edge of Shortlands Village, is Valley Primary School, which is an Arts and Crafts building. Its playing fields and grounds behind extend the open character of the land back through to Martins Hill.
- 4.23 Church Road runs west from Market Square, becoming Glassmill Lane at the top of Martins Hill, and then Queen's Mead Road as it sweeps down the hill into the Ravensbourne Valley at Shortlands; it has an open and semi-rural character. The entrance to Church Road is framed by the Grade II Listed Partridge Public House and the flank wall of the locally listed 162-178 High Street.
- 4.24 The Grade II Listed St. Peter and St. Paul Parish Church, and its Churchyard, are located on the south side; the Churchyard is enclosed by a brick and flint wall with a lychgate. The Churchyard contains many monuments including those to Coles Child Sr and Jr. The church is constructed from flint and stone and is comprised of a medieval tower and 1950s nave. The view of the Church from the High Street, west along Church Road has particular value.
- 4.25 Church House Gardens is located on Church Road beyond the church. The entrance to Church House Gardens is marked by a Victorian Lodge with piers and ornate gates. The view from Church Road towards Martins Hill is terminated by another Victorian lodge. A row of two storey Victorian cottages and shops is located on the northern side and the character is more varied.
- 4.26 St Paul's Square contains a modern housing development which was built on the site of a Victorian vicarage. A small group of early houses survive in Church Road and the Vicarage at 9 St. Paul's Square (formerly 'Wotton Hatch') which is thought to date from the early nineteenth century. Houses of this type, built for 'small country gentlemen'⁷, farmers and traders in the town market, are now rare survivors in the town centre.
- 4.27 Tetty Way runs south from Church Road, parallel to the High Street. Tetty Way provides service access into the rear of the High Street stores. Although these High Street buildings are large, they are mostly well screened from view by the trees in Church House Gardens.
- 4.28 Martins Hill retains a semi-rural character and is a valued recreational asset to the town. At the top of the hill is the Grade II* Listed War Memorial, which is an obelisk flanked by the figures of Victory, Liberty and Peace. A Victorian lodge adjoins the park. The Grade II Listed Pumping Stations are prominent in views out of the Conservation Area from Martins Hill to the

⁷ An architectural term referring to homes designed for the lesser gentry or wealthier farmers who owned or managed modest estates in rural areas. These individuals were not part of the aristocracy but were socially and economically above tenant farmers and labourers.

valley below. The wild broom, which grows on the upper slopes of Martins Hill, lends its name to the town. The Ravensbourne River, which has been enclosed in a modern concrete culvert, crosses the middle part of Martins Hill.

- 4.29 On the lower slopes of Martins Hill, the openness is preserved by the playing fields of Valley Primary School, which link through to Beckenham Lane. Glassmill Lane encloses the South side of Martins Hill and contains Victorian housing which overlooks the parkland.
- 4.30 At the point where Glassmill Lane crosses the River Ravensbourne, the road branches south along the riverside to the old millpond. The millpond adjoins the extreme Western boundary of Church House Gardens and is of historical importance. The Grade II Listed weather boarded property at 19 Glassmill Lane is believed to have housed workers of the former mirror polishing mill that stood in this area, which lends its name to Glassmill Lane.
- 4.31 Queen's Mead Road curves around Queen's Mead on its western and southern sides; it adjoins Station Road to the west and Glassmill Lane to the east. It is lined with an avenue of trees, many of which are mature specimens. There is a railway footbridge across to Valley Road where the road curves.
- 4.32 On the south side of Queen's Mead are a row of handsome detached, semi-detached and terraced houses set back behind low walled gardens often with hedges screening the house. The grander houses are closer to Glassmill Lane. On the corner of Glassmill Lane originally stood Glassmill House, later the Valley; this was demolished by the 1970s and replaced with a modern development of little architectural interest. To the south of this is a run of five handsome detached villas. The first, number 11, is different in style, possibly built later, and seems to have originally stood within the curtilage of the Valley. It is two storeys under a hipped tiled roof with a finial on the ridge and curved tile hung two storey bay window and recessed porch to the front.
- 4.33 The next four houses are similar in character and detail, and are in a good state of preservation. These are two and a half storey London stock brick houses with red brick front elevations, stone dressings and pitched slate roofs. They have a large and small gable to the front, stepping up to the half glazed door with leaded stained glass main entrances and square bays to either side; the smaller bay to the right has a balcony above which spans the main entrance creating a porch. The overall effect of these houses is that of grandeur and high status with their prominent position overlooking the park.
- 4.34 Adjacent is a group of three semi-detached pairs of houses that are smaller in scale. The outer pairs have red brick elevations while the pair in the middle are brown. Originally, they had hipped roofs, but these have now mostly been converted to gable ends. They have small half-timbered gables to the front and double height square bay windows; and steep pitched roof timber porches with finials under which are stained glass entrance doors.
- 4.35 The two semi-detached houses up to Bromley Gardens (numbers 35-41) are similar in detail but larger in scale and were built with pitched roofs and an attic floor with a dormer to the front. The other side of Bromley Gardens (numbers 43-53) the semi-detached houses reduce in scale again but retain pitched roofs. They are stock brick with red brick elevations and double height canted bay windows. Numbers 47-53 have dentilled eaves and diagonally laid brick work below. Numbers 43-45 just has the diagonally laid brick work. Number 53 next to the railway has a large side extension.
- 4.36 Valley Road was laid out after the railway was built. The first building to be built was the Grade II Listed Old Pumping Station in the 1860s, followed by plots on the other side of the road in front of the Main Pumping Station. The Grade II Listed Main Pumping Station dates from the 1920s.

- 4.37 Despite later conversion and infill development, the Pumping Stations contribute positively to Valley Road, not only through their architectural interest but also their verdant leafy settings. The older station is next to the pedestrian railway bridge and dates from 1866. It is a tall two storey buildings on a plinth built of Kentish ragstone under a hipped slate roof. It is built in a romantic French gothic style with circular turrets, lance windows and buttresses, the effect is charming particularly when viewed from the railway bridge.
- 4.38 The later Main Pumping Station is between one and three storeys, built of Kentish ragstone under a pantile roof, and was clearly designed to complement its neighbour in terms of materials. However, it takes its architectural style from more classical references with second floor lunette windows inspired by Roman baths, and neo-Georgian style windows with a mixture of round and flat architraves. Its scale and character is more substantial than the earlier pumping station, but collectively they form a distinctive group.
- 4.39 Opposite the Main Pumping Station is a group of three tall semi-detached houses, numbers 46 to 56 Valley Road. The land slopes upwards from the road on this side and the houses are set back behind long front gardens. The right-hand pair, numbers 46 and 48, have four storeys to the front with the entrance at first floor level and a hipped slate roof with distinctive bracketed eaves. This pair has a more elegant early Victorian character than numbers 50 to 56, which have pitched roofs and dormers. An engraving of the 1860s shows three pairs of houses in the style of numbers 46 to 48. This might be artistic license, but it may also indicate that the other two houses were later replacement buildings. Supporting the idea of a rebuild is the fact that the maps show a continuous terrace at this point which does not correspond to these semi-detached pairs of houses.
- 4.40 The War Memorial, Martins Hill Lodge, the Churchill Theatre and the medieval parish church tower are local landmarks when viewed from within or across Shortlands Valley.
- 4.41 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of an open green setting reflective of the rural origins of the town centre.

Widmore Road (East) and Tweedy Road

- 4.42 The Widmore Road (East) and Tweedy Road Character Area is located on the eastern side of the Conservation Area. It extends east from the Kentish Way/Tweedy Road Junction to 85 Widmore Road on the northern side and number 60 Widmore Road on the southern side. The western section of Widmore Road is located in the Bromley North Village Character Area.
- 4.43 The Bromley Baptist Church on Park Road is located within the Bromley North Village Character Area. To the east of the church is 1 Park Road, an attractive suburban villa with a painted stucco finish and curved dormers. On the opposite side of Park Road, on a triangular plot is 61 Widmore Road, a recent brick office building which reinterprets the adjoining buildings, borrowing from them architectural features such as its cupola.
- 4.44 On the south side of Widmore Road, at the junction with Tweedy Road, stands the former police station, a locally listed Edwardian building in red brick with bow windows and dormers. Beside it is a new building and beyond this to the east is the Grade II Listed First Church of Christ Scientist, a red brick building which makes the transition from town centre to suburb.
- 4.45 At this point Widmore Road changes to a suburban road. On the South side, beyond St Blaise Avenue, are a row of modest, carefully considered Arts and Crafts houses in landscaped gardens (including numbers 56 and 60 which are locally listed). On the opposite side of the road there are tall stock brick Victorian villas.

- 4.46 The view into Bromley along Widmore Road shows a varied roofscape and street trees. The view is terminated by 9 Market Square and 1 East Street, which are both former bank buildings. The tall chimneys and roofline of numbers 171-181 High Street are visible behind.
- 4.47 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of a residential road on the edge of the Town Centre, with elegant rows of houses on either side of Widmore Road.

Queens Gardens

- 4.48 The Queens Gardens Character Area is located to the east of the Glades Shopping Centre⁸ and encompasses Queens Gardens, Queen's Road and is contained by Kentish Way to the east.
- 4.49 Queen's Road is located to the south of Widmore Road and runs parallel to the Glades Shopping Centre and Kentish Way. Queen's Road is a remnant of the character of Bromley Town Centre prior to the construction of the Glades Shopping Centre and Kentish Way. Queen's Road contains pairs of two storey red brick Victorian houses with canted bay windows and ornate detailing. To the south end of the street lies Queens Gardens.
- 4.50 Queens Gardens is an important park linking the town centre and the former Bromley Civic Centre site, including Palace Gardens. It was originally known as White Hart Field and was linked to Market Square by White Hart Slip. Today the Glades Shopping Centre is located over White Hart Slip, but the right of way has been maintained. Queens Gardens has many mature trees and is enclosed to its west side by the somewhat imposing rear elevation of the Glades Shopping Centre. The Grade II Listed eighteenth Century gates, that at one time served Plaistow Lodge (an historic private residence on London Road, outside the Conservation Area), have been moved to the Kentish Way entrance from their original location adjacent to Market Square and White Hart Slip.
- 4.51 The Glades Shopping Centre is a substantial structure stretching south from Widmore Road to Elmfield Road. The building has been designed and detailed to complement the town centre with differing but harmonious treatments to the various parts. The building has been excluded from the Conservation Area but still has an impact on its character, as its eastern elevation dominates Queens Gardens.
- 4.52 Kentish Way is the by-pass for the town centre and links Masons Hill to the South to Tweedy Road in the north. It is flanked by a number of large trees at Queens Gardens and provides a vista northward which is terminated by the Grade II Listed former Central Library and the locally listed Bromley Baptist Church. The road follows the line of the ancient footpath, Love Lane, and the former carriage drive to Bromley Palace.
- 4.53 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of a quiet landscaped enclave with mature trees, which provides space for recreation close to the busy shopping centre.

Bromley North

- 4.54 The Bromley North Character Area encompasses the northern side of Widmore Road, from Market Square to the Junction of Tweedy Road and Kentish Way; Tweedy Road; East Street;

⁸ The Glades falls outside the Conservation Area boundary.

West Street/College Road; South Street; Court Street; North Street; and Bromley North Station.

- 4.55 Whilst Widmore Road is a long established route into Bromley, its earliest buildings are mid-Victorian. The north side of Widmore Road has a terrace of two storied stock brick buildings (numbers 1-21) all with shopfronts. Number 17 retains its original ornate shopfront with carved colonettes and mirrored soffit above the recessed door. Some shopfronts have been converted with folding doors or new fronts recessed behind balconies. On the south side near the junction with East Street are a number of well-detailed Victorian buildings, including The Compass Public House which is an Arts and Crafts building on the corner of Fyfe Way.
- 4.56 A large modern development, which is part of the Glades shopping centre and the United Reformed Church, is located on the southern side of Widmore Road adjacent to Fyfe Way. The former is a very large building, which has been carefully modelled with a distinctive roofline; and the latter is a red brick building incorporating attractive decorative brick and ironwork. These buildings add some variety to the street scene. 24-30; 32-38; and 33-37 Widmore Road are all modern buildings dating from the mid-late twentieth Century, and do not contribute to the character of the area.
- 4.57 Beyond Court Street, at the junction with Tweedy Road, stands the Grade II Listed Town Hall Extension which is a 1930s neo-Georgian building. This building, and the adjacent Old Town Hall building, have recently been sympathetically renovated to a high quality, retaining many original features of the building and ensuring that it will continue to contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 4.58 The view across Kentish Way along the eastern part of Widmore Road shows a road lined with trees and substantial suburban housing. This distinction between leafy suburb and town centre is particularly important illustrating the difference in character between the two distinct land uses.
- 4.59 The Tweedy Road/Widmore Road junction is enclosed by a number of very important landmark buildings and has a spacious character. This area, however, has a great deal of street clutter which detracts from the attractiveness of this part of the Conservation Area. Many of the buildings in this character area form part of a civic node, which also extends into South Street. The Grade II Listed Old Town Hall, which was opened in 1907, and the Grade II Listed former Central Library buildings face one another across Tweedy Road. The locally listed Bromley Baptist Church is also included in this node. A pedestrian passage separates the former Central Library building on the corner of Tweedy Road and Widmore Road from the adjoining Victorian building stock brick Baptist Church. This building is particularly important as it terminates the view up Tweedy Road from the South.
- 4.60 The civic node at the junction of Tweedy Road and Widmore Road also extends into South Street and Court Street which link back to East Street and Widmore Road respectively. These streets have a quiet and dignified character. The rear and flanks of the Old Town Hall are visible from these streets. The original architecture is attractively detailed and carefully executed. Unfortunately, the design quality of some mid-late twentieth Century additions have not been to the same standard. That can also be said of locally listed Community House (the former Magistrates Court) on South Street, a symmetrical neo-Georgian building that has been scarred by unsympathetic additions. However, the building does feature a distinctive and prominent cupola which makes a positive contribution to its architectural character and that of the immediate townscape.
- 4.61 The locally listed neo-Georgian Fire Station is located opposite the former Magistrates Court on South Street. The Fire Station terminates the view up Court Street from Widmore Road and complements the Town Hall and the former Magistrates Court civic grouping.

- 4.62 Further to the west, towards the junction with East Street, is a row of two storey stock-brick terraced cottages. These are of value historically in that one of them (number 8) was once a Dame School where H. G. Wells received his early education, and which is marked by a plaque; their residential character also adds welcome variety to the street scene in the core of the town centre.
- 4.63 East Street runs north from the junction of Market Square and Widmore Road, then north east up to Tweedy Road and the corner of north Street. East Street was laid out in the mid-nineteenth Century and is a narrow street with an assortment of Victorian commercial buildings and premises. Only two modern buildings (numbers 16-20 and 30-36) interrupt this Victorian character of stock brick buildings with traditional timber sash windows and tile or slate roofs. All of the other buildings contribute to the character and appearance of the area, including three locally listed buildings - the former Local Board offices at number 19 (; numbers 27 - 29 (Old Drill Hall); and the Railway Hotel Public House.
- 4.64 The former Post Office building at 3 East Street terminates views into Bromley, although the junction is cluttered with signage and street furniture. Views out of Bromley from East Street terminate with an oblique view of Bromley North Station.
- 4.65 North Street runs west to east between West Street and East Street. The south side has modest two storey Victorian houses with canted bays and traditional sash windows, although unfortunate alterations have marred some of these buildings. Its north side consists of all modern development. The view west is into College Slip and beyond, which is a leafy passage of semi-rural character.
- 4.66 West Street runs north from its junction with East Street and becomes College Road where it meets North Street. The southern part of West Street, nearest the town centre, has some attractive red brick buildings including 2 West Street. However, this end of the street is dominated by two large modern buildings - the Sainsbury's Supermarket; and 6 West Street. The former is sympathetic in red brick and features ceramic decorative panels of public art which are of limited interest. The latter makes no contribution to the Conservation Area.
- 4.67 The main part of West Street has modest two storey semi-detached Victorian houses, many of which have been altered. College Road has a number of similar Victorian houses and the modern Methodist Church on the east side. On the west side is College Green with its mature trees and important glimpse views of Bromley and Sheppards Colleges beyond.
- 4.68 The character that the Council wishes to preserve in this character area is that of an urban village with fine grain retail and residential leading to a gateway containing important landmark civic buildings, and a church at the junction of Widmore and Tweedy Road.

5 Management Plan

Demolition

- 5.1 Proposals for the demolition of structures within the Conservation Area will normally be assessed against the contribution of the structure in question. This contribution could be on an individual basis or as part of a group of buildings. This will normally be assessed on a case-by-case basis in the context of specific circumstances.
- 5.2 Some buildings and structures are individually designated through statutory or local listing, and these are strong contributors to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, non-listing by no means implies that a building is non-contributory, and there should be no presumption of this. The character and appearance of a Conservation Area is frequently embodied in buildings, which are not in themselves exceptional, but are contributors to the Conservation Area's noteworthiness. Non-designated heritage assets can be identified as part of the decision-making process⁹, which would give them a status akin to local listing.
- 5.3 A Heritage Statement should be provided with any application for demolition in the Conservation Area. The Heritage Statement should outline the contribution that a building or buildings makes to the Conservation Area.
- 5.4 To avoid vacant or derelict sites and consequent uncertainty about the future of a site, demolition will not normally be permitted prior to securing a binding commitment to a specific form of redevelopment, for example through a legal agreement.

Siting of New Development

- 5.5 New buildings in a Conservation Area will normally only be considered:
 - on a site created through demolition of an existing building;
 - on a currently vacant plot; or
 - as an additional building on a plot presently accommodating a building (where appropriate opportunities can be identified).
- 5.6 A Heritage Statement should be provided describing the significance of any heritage assets impacted by development proposals, including the contribution made to their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance in order for an informed assessment to be made. Heritage Statements should also take account of APAs¹⁰.
- 5.7 The characteristics of the area, as described in sections 3 and 4 of this document, should be a starting point for the conception of the design for any new development in the Conservation Area.
- 5.8 The established density and layout in the area will provide a guide to the appropriate scale and positioning of any new development. Insertion of new structures within already developed

⁹ Planning Practice Guidance, Historic Environment, Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723, available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

¹⁰ Information on APAs is available from: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/local-history-heritage/archaeology-bromley>

plots will generally require constraint in scale and careful positioning to ensure that they do not detract from the established character and appearance.

Layout

- 5.9 The siting and layout of new structures must be respectful of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This requires recognising and responding to the predominant scale, form and detailing of contributory buildings, and reflecting the bulk and spatial composition of structures and intervening spaces.
- 5.10 Spaces around and between buildings are often an important part of the character and appearance of an area, and the setting of principal contributory buildings. In particular in the town centre, the composition and relationships between buildings and open spaces (both public and private) is an important element of character and appearance. The Conservation Area contains numerous alleys, yards and slips. These are often representative of historic plot patterns and thoroughfares, and it is expected that they are maintained to a reasonable standard. These alleys, yards and slips should not be closed off by new development that would obstruct permeability or negatively affect important views.

Design of New Development

- 5.11 Where new buildings are deemed to be appropriate, attention is required to ensure their compatibility with the Conservation Area, which should result in a positive contribution to the area both in its own right, and as an element in the urban form. As well as buildings, this relates to the spaces and relationships between buildings, and the treatment of the site and surroundings.
- 5.12 In particular, new buildings should not become overly dominant elements or overwhelm existing structures and spaces. It is good practice for new buildings to positively respond to the prevailing scale and height of existing buildings, and complement the wider setting. Building frontages and bulk should be addressed similarly. Attention should also be paid to the articulation, fenestration and break up of existing buildings, and the scale at which this occurs, avoiding visual massing out of scale with established and contributory elements.
- 5.13 The adoption of scale, forms and materials characteristic of the Conservation Area is appropriate; the underlying principles are similar to those relevant to alterations and additions, which are detailed below. However, design which attempts "mock" historic replication of buildings from earlier eras (pastiche) is discouraged, as this lacks authenticity, dilutes the Area's significance, and can confuse interpretation of the Area's historical development. An exception may be justified where reinstatement of an important missing element of the built form will repair a jarring gap and can be based on detailed historical records. In these cases, clues to the building's more recent origins may be provided by restrained detailing and a date stone where appropriate.
- 5.14 Further detailed design guidance in relation to layout, scale and massing, and architectural design is set out in Section 5 of the Urban Design Guide SPD.

Extensions and Alterations

- 5.15 Extensions and alterations to existing buildings within the Conservation Area should reflect the forms, materials, textures and finishes of the host building, along with the design philosophies underlying its style. These vary between individual buildings in this Conservation

Area, and therefore the design will need to respond to the specific building. Care should be taken with details such as the matching of brick bonds and continuation of stringcourses or lintels.

- 5.16 The proportions, positioning and integration of an extension to the host building should be designed to safeguard not only the building's contribution to the wider Conservation Area, but also its enduring value to the heritage asset itself. It should not be so large as to dominate or compete in visual terms with the host building.
- 5.17 Details characteristic of the building type and era should be retained wherever possible. Alterations to the exterior form and detailing of a contributory building should respond sensitively to the significant elements of the building. In particular attention should be paid to protecting and reflecting element of the original design detailing, such as chimneystacks, ridge tiles, lintels, and stringcourses. Every effort should be made to retain and repair such original details. Regular and timely maintenance is preferable to the difficulty and expense incurred by belated repair or, ultimately, replacement.

Shopfronts

- 5.18 Original shopfronts are an important element of local High Streets. It is important that traditional shopfronts with historic and/or architectural significance are retained, restored and enhanced with appropriate signage and materials. Where the introduction of new shopfronts/fascias is appropriate these should be designed to respect the original fabric of the building and to be sympathetic to the Conservation Area setting.
- 5.19 The architectural character and style of the upper floors should be understood in order to ensure that the ground floor is not designed in isolation but as part of the overall composition. It is also important to consider the impact of the design on the character and appearance of the wider streetscene. Proportions and materials should respect and maintain the rhythm and hierarchy of neighbouring buildings within the Conservation Area setting.
- 5.20 The Council will resist the removal of shopfronts of architectural or historic merit. The retention of original architectural features is key to safeguarding local character, where traditional features remain their retention and restoration will be strongly encouraged.
- 5.21 Particular care should be taken in the choice of materials for buildings within the Conservation Area in order to ensure that a sensitive and sympathetic design is achieved. Traditional materials such as brick, tile, terracotta, timber and masonry are typically more appropriate for shopfronts within Conservation Areas and on listed buildings.
- 5.22 The installation of permanently fixed, or external steel roller shutters detract from the streetscene and attract graffiti. Where it is considered that security measures are required, the use of toughened glass or internally fitted open mesh/lattice grille shutters will be encouraged in order to minimise the visual impact on the streetscene.
- 5.23 New and replacement signs should be proportionate to the rest of the building and designed in a way that minimises their impact on the Conservation Area setting, they should not be displayed at first floor level or above, especially on exposed flank walls. Projecting box signs are not appropriate in Conservation Areas. External lighting is preferred over internal illumination on traditional shopfronts, light fittings should be small scale and low key.
- 5.24 Further detailed design guidance is set out in Section 5 and DG10 of the Urban Design Guide SPD.

Windows and Doors

- 5.25 Original window and door proportions, materials and detailing should be retained. As Historic England advise in their guidance on historic windows¹¹, repair of original joinery is desirable where practical, with any necessary new work matching in materials and detailing. Unsympathetic replacement doors and windows can significantly detract from the character of a building and, in turn, the Conservation Area.
- 5.26 Mass produced standard components (particularly those made in UPVC) can rarely reflect the carefully considered proportions and detailed mouldings of original doors and windows, and their use is discouraged. Whilst their installation may be cheaper, they are visibly inappropriate to a period building, and can significantly detract from the heritage value of a property.

Dormers and Roof Lights

- 5.27 The desire to increase useable areas in a dwelling often leads to the conversion of attic and roof spaces into rooms. This results in the requirement for natural lighting where none, or insufficient, is available at present. The most common responses are to insert dormer windows into the roofline, or to install roof lights. The appropriateness of either approach will be dependent upon the character and design of individual buildings and should not begin with a presumption that either approach will necessarily be compatible.
- 5.28 Dormer windows are a component part of some architectural styles. However, in other cases the introduction of dormers will be inappropriate, particularly on prominent front or side rooflines. Close attention to the style of the host building can indicate whether appropriate opportunities exist. Where an opportunity is identified, the scale of a dormer should respond to traditional styles, usually requiring some restraint of the urge to maximise internal spaces to avoid adversely impacting upon the appearance of the building and Conservation Area. If installation of dormers is appropriate, they should be set below the ridgeline of the host building.
- 5.29 Roof lights must be sited sensitively to avoid detracting from important views of the building. Where roof lights are considered appropriate, they should be designed to sit flush within the roof with low-profile glazing in order to appear less prominent. Normally, placement in rear elevations is preferable to the front elevation.

Satellite Dishes, Domestic Microgeneration Equipment and Other Plant

- 5.30 Permitted Development (PD) rights allow for the installation of satellite dishes, domestic microgeneration equipment and other plant equipment, but these PD rights have specific restrictions and conditions.
- 5.31 The location and appearance of plant, extraction fans and other equipment such as satellite dishes on properties, should be carefully considered, so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building. All plant should generally be placed out of view from the public realm.
- 5.32 Satellite dishes should not be placed on a chimney, roof or wall that is visible from a highway.

¹¹ Historic England, Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading, available from: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/traditional-windows-care-repair-upgrading/>

- 5.33 Section 5 of the Urban Design Guide SPD includes guidance on the siting of solar panels, and identifies solar tiles as an alternative option for Conservation Areas which may be more sensitive to visual impact.
- 5.34 Solar panels and solar thermal equipment are not permitted in a Conservation Area if they are to be installed on a wall which fronts a highway. Any such equipment proposed to be installed on a flat roof in a Conservation Area may require prior approval with respect to the impact of its appearance on the Conservation Area.

Hardstanding and Driveways

- 5.35 Frequently, proposals for hardstanding and driveways are generated by the desire to accommodate motor vehicles on the plot, or to increase the capacity for this use.
- 5.36 PD rights allow the creation of hardstanding. Where that hardstanding would exceed 5sqm, planning permission is required unless porous materials are used, or provision is made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- 5.37 Where opportunities do exist, minimising the width of the opening in a front wall will reduce the impact upon the streetscene whilst retaining some screening of the front garden. Paving may be addressed as a component part of a comprehensive design treatment, so it visually remains part of the garden, rather than appearing as an area distinct from it. Retention of border planting can avoid starkness caused by paving to wall or building edges.

Garages

- 5.38 In residential sections of the Conservation Area, the introduction of garages needs to be sensitive to the building forms of the area. In some situations, a single level wing at the side of a larger dwelling may fit the general form of development, whilst in others it may detrimentally alter the built form, such as by blocking openings between buildings, which may be characteristic of the area. Traditional garages may be too small to accommodate modern vehicles. If enlargement or replacement can be sensitively achieved, it may be possible to borrow design elements from the original to retain compatibility. Rarely will enclosed parking forward of the primary frontage of the main building be appropriate.

Trees, Gardens and Hedges

- 5.39 Established trees and gardens play an important contributory role to the character of most Conservation Areas. Within the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area, the pockets of parkland and incidental trees and gardens are a vitally important relief to the intensive urban character of the town centre.

Changes of Use

- 5.40 The commercial centre of the Conservation Area is, by its nature, at the forefront of evolving demands and pressures for change. The challenge is to absorb change whilst retaining the essential character which links the centre with the richness of its past and sustains the spirit and identity of place.

- 5.41 The viability of a significant building's retention can sometimes be assisted through finding a new use which might return it to an economic function which can support maintenance, repair and conservation works. This must be balanced with other considerations, including the potentially reduced significance of a building, which no longer performs the role for which it was established.
- 5.42 Consideration also needs to be given to consequential pressures, which may flow from a change of use which may include the potential of increased demand for car parking, either on site or in the locality. On site parking can often impact adversely upon open spaces which are contributory to the character and appearance of the Area, such as through the loss of garden settings. Where parking is on street, the presence of many cars for much of the time can detract seriously from the appearance of an area.