



**CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT FOR
BRADING
TOWN CENTRE CHARACTER AREA**



BRADING

The legal background

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 69 also requires authorities to review their areas from time to time to see if further designation or alteration to existing designations is necessary.

Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) deals in some detail with the assessment and designation of conservation areas in section 4, and the adopted planning policy documents for the Island contain sections relating to development within such areas.

Character

The character relates heavily to the area's medieval street pattern and its history as a former market town. To an extent the charm of the long tightly-knit high street is undermined by the heavy through-flow of traffic.

NB this expression of 'character' is derived from the study below.

History of development

Brading was originally the Island's main port and provided good transport links to the north and south of the Island. It was recognised as far back as Roman times as a protected inland harbour with fertile fields close by and an elevated position capable of being easily defended.

The 1793 OS Maps show that the existing road structure through the conservation area and many of the buildings along the high street were in place by the end of the 18th century. Although there are in fact very few listed buildings in the area, many of the existing cottages date from the 17th and 18th century, with the oldest house dating from 1499/1502.

It is said that the town was founded in the 12th century by the Lord of the Manor of Whitefield with a weekly market being held until sometime in the 19th century. Besides the 12th century church and Old Town Hall, the Bull Ring is one of the only lasting reminders of the market town. The historic tethering ring would appear to have been repositioned between 1862 and 1908: moved to the roadside in front of the new town hall (1902) where the high street was also widened. In recent decades the high street has become increasingly affected by the growing presence of the car. Heavy traffic flow, road markings and signage clutter have undermined the charm of the area.

Archaeology

It is suggested that the town was founded in the 12th century. The earliest documentary reference to a church at Brading is mid 12th century but there must have been a church here at a much earlier date as Brading was an Anglo-Saxon mother parish.

Setting

The high street is fairly low lying and is set in a dip, with the land rising to both the north and south ends of the street. The area is bordered to the north by football

and cricket grounds and a mile and a half stretch of open fields, farmland and woodland. The main Brading Road runs through this.

To the east of the high street the land is lower lying, bordered along much of its length by 20th century housing, and enclosed by the Brading Railway Line. Beyond this there are open fields and marshland, through which the River Yar runs.

The west of the high street is bordered by a mix of 19th and 20th century residential development. Beyond this is open countryside, with the land rising up to Nunwell Down.

The south of the high street adjoins both the busy New Road, and the much quieter residential street, The Mall. It is along The Mall that the conservation area continues, but where a difference in character is evident (see 'The Mall' character area statement).

Materials

The conservation area makes use of render and painted brick for many of its buildings: colours varying from cream and yellow through to powder blue, pink and green. Several red-brick buildings are evident along the high street. A row of exposed stone terraced cottages, at the top of the high street, offers a modest distinction from the other buildings in the area. Slate and red clay tiles are the dominant roofing material.

Height, mass & form

The conservation area is almost wholly concentrated along a single stretch of road and is characterised by terraces of two storey cottages.

Roofs are unobtrusive, with only the church dominating. The narrow plot widths throughout the area contribute to a tightly-knit village centre. Most of the buildings along the High Street are set on the back of narrow pavements, accentuating the feeling of enclosure. This is contrasted by long rear gardens, found throughout the conservation area.

Typical details

Pitched roofs and chimneys are commonplace. Sliding sash window frames are used predominantly throughout the area, usually painted white. Some casement and bay windows are evident. The use of stone on boundary walls is a feature of the northern end of the high street and around the church.

Paving

An important stretch of traditional flagstone paving is still evident along Quay Lane, between the two listed buildings: the Wax Museum and the church. Moreover, many buildings in the area have at their entrance natural stone steps. The footways through the area are of concrete paving and pre-cast concrete slabs, the roads are of simple black top and the curbs of pre-cast concrete. The remainder being red herringbone paving.

Trees and open space

Few trees are evident along the high street and the only open spaces are the car parks, and grassed areas surrounding the church. The two ends of the high street are to an extent defined by landscaped seating areas, which although small, form an important break along an otherwise enclosed street.

Sound and smell

The sound of passing traffic is very evident. At peak times, the high street and New Road become very congested and the smell of exhaust fumes is apparent. The ringing of church bells is an important quality, notable on a Sunday morning.

Day and night

Throughout the day the high street is used as a thoroughfare: a continuous stream of traffic passes through the area and there is a regular presence of people waiting at the Bull Ring bus stop. The level of traffic drops considerably in the evening and the area becomes much quieter. Evening activity is focussed around the movement of cars and people to and from the pubs located along the high street.

Positive elements

- The original Bull Ring – a reminder of the old market town.
- The traditional flagstone paving along Quay Lane.
- The stone steps at the entrance to many properties.
- The quality of the historic buildings and number of listed gravestones – all of which contribute to Brading town centre being one of the most historic sites on the Island.
- The stone walls surrounding the church and graveyard.
- The unbroken terraces of historic cottages.
- The large tree opposite the church at the top of the high street.
- The topography of the land and meandering form of the high street ensures that each bend in the road provides a new visual opening. A view of particular importance is that of the church,

seen from the lane which joins St Mary's Road with the top of the High Street. This is one of the only positions from which the church can be viewed head on.

Negative elements

- The high level of painted road markings.
- The multitude and variety of bollards throughout the High Street.
- Signage clutter – including redundant signage.
- Unsuitable replacement windows.
- Much of the paving is in poor condition, both cracked and crumbling.

Further information please contact

Planning Services
Seaclose Offices
Fairlee Road
NEWPORT
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PO30 2QS

Tel (01983) 823552
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For detailed information on policies, legal background and national advice, please refer to

The Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Planning policy guidance 15 – Planning and the historic environment.

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**CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT FOR
BRADING
THE MALL CHARACTER AREA**



BRADING

The legal background

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 69 also requires authorities to review their areas from time to time to see if further designation or alteration to existing designations is necessary.

Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) deals in some detail with the assessment and designation of conservation areas in section 4, and the adopted planning policy documents for the Island contain sections relating to development within such areas.

Character

The character of The Mall contrasts that of the town centre. The quiet residential area is tranquil, having a rural feel associated with long front gardens, the presence of trees and hedges and views across to Bembridge Down and the sea.

NB this expression of 'character' is derived from the study below.

History of development

The Mall appears to have been developed sometime after the high street, with the earliest remaining building dating from the early 17th century. The other listed buildings along the Northern end of The Mall date from between the late 17th and early 19th century. The southern end of The Mall has developed later: the gothic style listed building

appears to be the earliest development, dated at c. 1790. Several buildings occupied the southern end of The Mall by 1862, with the majority of buildings across The Mall having been developed by 1908.

Archaeology

It is suggested that the town was founded in the 12th century. The earliest documentary reference to a church at Brading is mid 12th century but there must have been a church here at a much earlier date as Brading was an Anglo-Saxon mother parish.

Setting

The Mall rises a hill – the top end of which allows spectacular easterly views over the downs, Bembridge Fort and the sea, and northerly views over the town centre and church. West of The Mall the land rises to Nunwell and Brading Down, through which Newport Road runs.

Materials

The Mall makes use of render and painted brick (in varying shades of white and cream) for several of its villas and much of its terraced housing. Many red-brick buildings are also evident. Slate is the principal roofing material in the area and stone is used predominantly along The Mall for boundary walls.

Height, mass & form

The scale and form of buildings along The Mall contrast that of the high street. Some terraced housing is evident but the form is generally of larger scale detached and semi-detached housing. Plots are wider and buildings are set back further from the road, with most houses

(particularly those at the southern end of The Mall) displaying substantial front gardens. Along the western side of the road the gardens are raised up behind stone walls and are accessed by steps leading off the footway. A couple of 3-storey buildings are evident as you enter The Mall from the high street, but the general form is of 2-storey housing, with the occasional bungalow.

Typical details

Stone boundary walls are an important feature found along the length of The Mall, with several properties displaying iron railings and gates. The presence of front gardens, trees and hedging is also continuous throughout the area. Pitched slate roofs, sliding sash windows and chimneys are all common features. Bay windows are notable particularly along the southern stretch of The Mall.

Paving

There is no formal pavement along certain sections of The Mall, while along other stretches the pavement is limited to one side of the road. The roads and walkways are composed of simple black top and the curbs of pre-cast concrete. Driveways are generally formed either of concrete or gravel.

Trees and open space

Front gardens are evident along the length of The Mall. These are scattered with trees, both deciduous and evergreens, hedges and shrubs. Along the upper stretch of The Mall a raised footpath is separated from the road by a grass bank that is planted with bulb flowers. This soft landscaping is extremely important to the character of the area, contributing

significantly to the peaceful, tranquil feel that the area possesses.

Sound and smell

In contrast to the high street, where the car plays a very dominant role, The Mall is a much quieter stretch of residential street. Although the quiet humming of nearby traffic can be heard along much of The Mall, the most apparent sound is that of birds singing.

Positive elements

- Views of the Church of St Mary and the rooftops of the high street buildings, seen from midway along The Mall.
- Views of the open countryside, across to the downs, Bembridge Fort and the sea, that can be seen through the gaps between buildings.
- Continuous run of stone wall along the front boundary of many of the properties.
- The presence of iron railings along the boundary wall of several properties.
- The good maintenance of the majority of properties and front gardens.
- The presence of trees, hedging and grass banks.

Negative elements

- The widened carriageway midway along The Mall, where a designated parking area breaks up the more intimate, landscaped nature of The Mall.
- Mediocre infill developments.
- An excessive number of inspection covers clustered along the carriageway.
- Poor condition, eroded pavement along sections of The Mall.

- Modern high fencing panels found midway along The Mall.
- Small sections of front boundary wall where stone wall is interrupted by modern brick and artificial stone.
- Inconsistent window frame design and material use along the rows of terraced housing.

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