

Battenhall Villas Conservation Area (CA20)

Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals
Adopted by Planning Committee – 14 October 2010

First designated 2005; 12.7 hectares

Summary of Special Interest

- A high-class late 19th century residential suburb planned to offer a semi-rural life-style.
- The architectural and historical interest of the area's largest domestic estate, Battenhall Mount; the main building, the stable block and the gatehouse are Grade II listed buildings;
- Distinctive 19th century villas rich in architectural character set in large and mature grounds;
- Group value of no.51-65 Battenhall Road;
- The informal landscaped qualities of the roads, some bordered with garden walls.
- Mature trees, in both the streets and gardens.
- Historic garden layouts, sense of open space, mature garden trees and biodiversity in the gardens are all important, needing protection.
- Villas could lose some of their integrity if their garden space were to be eroded by development.
- Front garden walls have significant role in setting the character of for the roads and need to be cared for.
- There is a danger of loss of detail if property entrance gateways are widened to suit modern vehicles.
- The replacement of modern light standards with cast iron replicas would enhance the area. Similarly if the street name boards were replaced with cast metal in one of the traditional patterns this would be an enhancement.

Principal Conservation Issues

- Conservation area boundary needs reconsidering to include neighbouring properties.
- Public realm expenditure is needed on repairs to highways and pavement.
- Public realm detail needs to be safeguarded and could be enhanced.
- Street trees need maintenance, including pollarding.
- Subdivision or aggregation of large garden plots for development, could damage the historic plot divisions, threaten the spacious character and undermine the setting for each large house.

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Character Area 1: Battenhall Road

The character is firstly derived from the gentle curves of the road, with its street trees dominating. While the trees have only reached maturity in the last half century, the villas themselves are substantially as they were a century ago. They, with their gardens, drives and boundaries all contribute to the character of spaciousness, seclusion and under-stated wealth within a semi-rural environment. Consideration needs to be given to the desirability of enlarging the boundary to include the curtilages of nos.52-56 Battenhall Road.

Key assets and characteristics:

- Street trees.
- Garden walls with narrow entrances and gateposts.
- Narrow gravel driveways each with a dog-leg feature.
- Hedges and shrub planting creating privacy.
- Group of Victorian houses aligned well away from road.
- Surviving historic garden layouts.
- Glimpsed views of distant hills.

Negatives:

- Loss of enclosure by thinning of boundary planting where new development has occurred.
- Widening of entrances and loss of gate-pier details.
- Over-growth of plane trees needs regular lopping.
- Pavements disrupted by tree roots.

Character Area 2: Battle Road

This is largely a linking area. Its character is formed first from its fairly steep gradient. The two listed buildings effectively make book-ends to the road. These, with the dense shrub planting on the east side, contrast with the low-key infill housing on the west side. Here the sense of enclosure is lost because of low boundary fencing. The views out of the area to the south are important, providing an opportunity to enjoy what must have been a grand vista when the area was developed.

Key assets and characteristics:

- Curved road with steep gradient.
- Two listed buildings – gatehouse and stable block.
- Dense vegetation to one side.
- Retaining wall on the east side in Malvern granite rubble blocks.
- Views out.

Negatives:

- Varied quality of housing in the setting of the CA.
- Undistinguished boundary treatments to houses, with loss of enclosure.

For Character Area boundaries see the map on the back page



- Green open space in grass verges, open garden frontages and allotments (eastern end).
- Historic blue brick kerb-stones.

Negatives:

- Historic kerb edging dislodged by traffic, and pavement levels insufficiently marked.
- Poor quality fencing to school tennis courts.
- Maintenance of grass verges left to householders.

Character Area 3: Battenhall Avenue

While the early developments date from the same period as Area 1, the character is different. One difference is because of the way in which the school extensions are hard against the pavement edge, where the pavement is relatively narrow. With the road being straight at this point a tight spatial enclosure is created, more familiar in the city centre. There are views westward towards the city, which reveal the historic skyline beyond suburban housing. The houses opposite the school share some of the characteristics of those in Battenhall Road, notably their large sizes and their distance from the road, creating a strong statement as grand villas within their own substantial grounds. The front boundary treatments with original walls, decorative features and gate piers reinforce this. The road is narrower than in Area 1, and though the street trees are less developed their impact is still notable especially in the eastern end where the curves of the road draw attention to them. At this end the grass verges add to the remote, informal, rural impression.

Key assets and characteristics:














- Sinuous curves and straight stretch of narrow road.
- Enclosure provided by the school main building.
- Glimpse of Battenhall Mount tower over wall.
- Contrast of boundary treatments to school – dense planting and high walls.
- View out towards city centre.
- Grand houses behind strong decorative boundary walling and planting.
- Street trees and garden trees.

This leaflet summarises the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals document for Britannia Square Conservation Area. The full text is available on the Council's website and a hard copy may be ordered for purchase from the Customer Service Centre, Orchard House.



Lark Hill
Conservation area (6)

Battenhall Villas Conservation Area (20)

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Proposed Alteration to Boundary
-  Adjacent Conservation Area
-  Character Area Boundary
-  Listed Building Grade II
-  Key Unlisted Structure
-  Significant Feature
-  TPO Tree/Group
-  Area TPO
-  Other Significant Tree/Group
-  Important View
-  Important Open Space
-  Structure/Site of Negative Impact

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