

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

VIII MILL ROAD

Location and Topography

Mill Road Conservation Area is just over one mile west of Worthing Town Centre about half a mile back from the seafront. The land slopes gently down towards the sea.

Origins and Development of Area

Mill Road runs along the line of the footpath that crossed Heene Parish. Its name is probably associated with the windmill in the area from around 1650 onwards. This was located on part of a field, the site now occupied by No. 67 Grand Avenue. There was a mill in this area until 1903, although it seems to have ceased use by 1896.

Development of this area should probably be seen in relation to Heene, which was a small resort in its own right by 1814. The "West Worthing Investment Company" bought much of Heene Parish for development in 1864. Roads were laid out, including Grand Avenue, and probably Mill Road, but water shortages meant that little development took place; by 1896 this part of West Worthing remained predominantly undeveloped. Building of the present properties in the Conservation Area appears to have taken place in a narrow period after 1898 into the first decade of the 20th century.

Architectural and Townscape Qualities

Mill Road Conservation Area is regarded as containing perhaps the best examples of Edwardian houses forming a group in Worthing. The buildings are all large and include a variety of typical Edwardian features. Many more examples of Edwardian buildings along Mill Road have been redeveloped so constraining the size of the Conservation Area.

Many of the properties within the Conservation Area are large Edwardian houses, mostly detached, although some are semi-detached. Several dwellings have other, smaller buildings in their grounds, or adjacent, which are now used as separate, self-contained units. Important characteristics of these properties are:-

- two-storey development
- red brick, red tiles and terracotta finials; some tile hanging
- regular skyline (north side)
- some "mock Tudor" elements
- front boundary walls of red brick with flint panels
- some mature trees

The characteristic building materials and detailing are more apparent, and more consistent on those dwellings on the north side of Mill Road. These buildings have a strong group value. This consistency and strength of style is not so apparent in those properties on the southern side of Mill Road. This is further emphasised by the relatively recent development of Carlton Mews which although it takes materials and detailing references from the Edwardian buildings does not have their spaciousness and massing, or supporting grounds.

Greenery and Open Spaces

Trees frame the road well and there may be scope for more. The Edwardian houses stand comfortably in appropriately sized plots. There is no public open space beyond the streetscene.

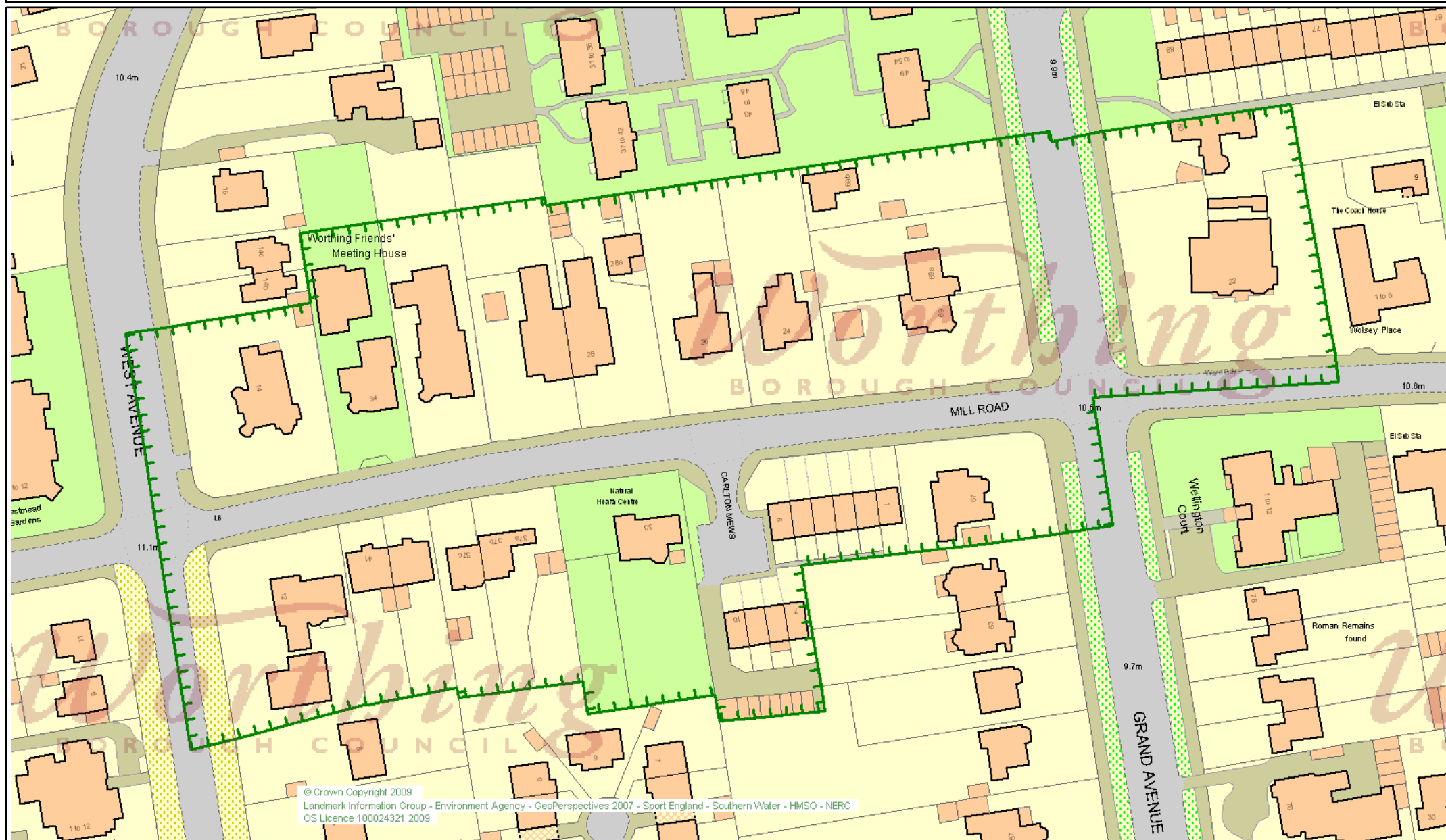
Enhancement Opportunities

- Clean the graffiti from the junction box south-west of the Mill Road/Grand Avenue junction.
- Replace modern lamp standards with cast iron ones of a similar design to the traditional examples found in neighbouring streets.
- Remove weeds from the pavements. Grass over the tarmac on the roadward side of the centre gutter in the pavement on both sides of West Avenue, south of the Mill Road junction. Tidy the verges on Grand Avenue and redesign the pooper-bins.
- Maintain and encourage frontage planting (in particular, the mature trees at Nos. 14 West Avenue and 30 Mill Road make an important contribution to the streetscene). Discourage the use of front gardens for car parking, especially where this involves concreting or tarmacadaming the entire frontage - existing car parks could be landscaped.
- Plant additional trees in the pavement, particularly in Mill Road (silver birch is characteristic) and Grand Avenue.
- The lack of dense planting at the back of Nestledown (No. 12 West Avenue) allows a pleasing view of the back of the buildings on Mill Road, including the verandah of Nestledown.
- Resite television aerials and satellite dishes out of sight and away from main elevations.
- Replace the aluminium road name signs with others of appropriate design and materials.

- The houses in this area are characterised by individual design and detailing (eg. egg and dart moulded string courses, corner turrets, ridge ornament, chimney arrangement, mock-Tudor elements, partial pebble-dash or stucco etc). This should be retained/reinstated and, where appropriate, the theme should be continued in the design of any extensions to the original buildings.
- Original/traditional fenestration and doors should be retained. Necessary replacement should match the traditional design and materials in general, this would be: for windows - white painted timber sash framing with a plain lower section; for doors - painted, panelled timber). Re-roofing - only when necessary - using red tiles to match existing.
- Restrict development to two-storeys to preserve the regular skyline.
- Preserve the open spaces around the houses, particularly the frontages and also the back gardens at the western end of Mill Road which are visible from the street.
- Retain the panelled flint and brick walling at the back of the pavement; discourage rendering or painting. Reinstall missing sections. Retain the original gate piers. Replace concrete or modern stock brick piers using appropriate materials.
- Retain the brick plot-boundary walls (eg. there are attractive stretches of back wall facing Dorchester Gardens which enhance the view into the Conservation Area from the north).
- Replace fencing with shrubs or trees. (If it has to be retained, ensure it is kept in good order - replace the broken shiplap fencing to the north of No. 69b Grand Avenue).
- Remove overhead lines and poles.
- Rationalise/relocate profusion of equipment boxes at Mill Road/Grand Avenue junction.
- Resurface concrete drive entrances.
- Provide more appropriate design of bus stop.

Setting

- Retain the view of the sea from Grand Avenue (ie. monitor development on West Parade).
- Increase screening of Carlton Mews with appropriate flint and brick walling and frontage planting. Repair the coping of the flint wall to the west of Carlton Mews.
- Remove the flaking paint from the front garden wall of No. 20 Mill Road.



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