

Hampstead Garden Suburb

Brim Hill – Area 11

Character Appraisal



BARNET
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HAMPSTEAD - GARDEN - SUBURB - TRUST

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Contents

Section 1	Background historical and architectural information	5
1.1	Location and topography	5
1.2	Development dates	5
1.3	Originating architects and planners	5
1.4	Intended purpose of original development	5
1.5	Density and nature of the buildings	5
Section 2	Overall character of the area	6
2.1	Principal positive features	6
2.2	Principal negative features	7
Section 3	The different parts of the Brim Hill area in greater detail	9
3.1	Howard Walk and Gurney Drive	9
3.2	Vivian Way, Totnes Walk, Devon Drive, Harford Walk	12
3.3	Greenhalgh Walk and Blandford Close	15
3.4	Brim Hill and The Leys	17
3.5	Cornwood Close and Widecombe Way	19
3.6	Lyttelton Road	21

[Map of area](#)

Character appraisal

Section 1 Background historical and architectural information

1.1 Location and topography

The Brim Hill area lies on a south-facing slope in the northern part of Hampstead Garden Suburb. Brim Hill itself has an east–west axis and follows the contour line near the top of the slope. At the bottom of the hill, Lyttelton Road forms the southern boundary. This busy arterial road broadly follows the low-lying land in which Mutton Brook flows westwards, towards the Welsh Harp. Three roads run north–south joining Lyttelton Road and Brim Hill; the other closes and drives are either cul-de-sacs or curved roads which exploit the gentle slope and provide attractive views to the south.

1.2 Development dates

Land entitled 'The Three Hundred' acres was purchased in 1911 and sold in blocks for commercial development. Building did not begin until 1931. Houses were built between 1931-1938, the majority between 1932 and 1936.

1.3 Originating architects and planners

The houses were designed by a number of established architects of the time who had already designed houses in other parts of the Suburb. They included C.M. Crickmer, C.G. Butler, Philip Dalton Hepworth, A.H. North and Ernst Freud. The layout of the area was done by the then Trust Architect J.C.S. Soutar, following the principles established by Unwin in the older part of the Suburb.

1.4 Intended purpose of original development

The area was designed and commercially developed for middle income owner residents. Most houses are situated in large plots, some with particularly, generous gardens. The developments were aimed at car owners (garages are an integral feature of many of the houses) and also at commuters travelling via the newly-built East Finchley Underground station.

1.5 Density and nature of the buildings

This is a low-density residential development of mainly semi-detached houses, with some detached houses placed at focal points or in a balancing position. Throughout the area, the gardens provide a sense of space. All houses have green views from both the front and rear elevations. The flats and maisonettes in Lyttelton Road have a higher density of development but are also surrounded by gardens.

Section 2 Overall character of the area

With the exception of Lyttelton Road, the Brim Hill area is a quiet residential neighbourhood. The way in which the street pattern exploits the sloping terrain adds interest to the streetscape and the architectural features of the buildings. The main part of this area has a formal pattern at its heart; the 'acorn' shape of Gurney Drive and Howards Walk is flanked on either side by closes and then a north-south road linking Brim Hill and Lyttelton Road. The geometric design reflects the layout of the earlier Holms nearby. Other roads are either curved or are cul-de-sacs and give an overall impression of calm. There is a great sense of privacy in the closes. Footpaths, known as twittens, link many streets, including all the closes. These are both convenient and attractive, and are all lined with tall hedges, enhancing the rural impression.

The whole area is very leafy; varied trees line the streets, providing blossom in the spring and varied colours and shapes in the autumn. Well-kept gardens and hedges add to the green character, as do the views from Brim Hill towards the trees of Hampstead Golf Course and the Heath Extension on the horizon.

Most streets have a distinct character and the houses typically have strong architectural features, some showing an Arts and Crafts influence, others displaying the influence of Modernism. The architectural variety reflects the range of architects employed, each designing groups or whole streets of houses. Many houses have very high quality decorative features, such as patterned brickwork and timber detailing. Variation, within defined design parameters, in each street enlivens the visual impact without undermining the sense of cohesion. Within the groupings, symmetry and repetition are characteristic, while asymmetrical semi-detached houses are a design feature.

Lyttelton Road is a dual carriageway and heavy traffic dominates. Here there is mixed residential development of houses, maisonettes and two blocks of flats. The Grade II-listed Belvedere Court is a strong modernist block, its great scale broken by curved bays. The flats provide a barrier, guarding the quiet atmosphere of the rest of the area from the A1.

2.1 Principal positive features

Layout and public realm

- the combination of formal and informal elements in the layout makes for an attractive residential area with satisfying streetscapes and interesting views
- the prevalence of cul-de-sacs, short streets and curves gives a feeling of intimacy
- the footpaths (twittens) linking them provide visual and practical links
- low-density housing; the arrangement of the houses gives a spacious impression
- the retention of the original name-plates for streets and footpaths in raised black and white lettering is sympathetic to the Thirties architecture.

Landscape and trees

- hedges, trees and garden planting provide a green ambiance. There are glimpses of trees and gardens between houses and, in the distance, views of the trees on Hampstead Golf Course and the Heath Extension
- street trees have been carefully selected to provide year-round interest and are of an appropriate scale
- the positioning of the two small 'greens' which include trees as well as grassed areas provides additional open space and "village green" character in Vivian Way and Brim Hill.

Building type and design

- most of the buildings are of traditional design but, different groupings of houses reflect particular architectural styles such as Arts and Crafts, Moderne, Neo-Georgian and Tudor styles
- groups of houses are varied to avoid monotony. There are many asymmetrical semi-detached houses and these sometimes frame a sequence of houses with complicated patterns of repetition of four or five styles of house
- there is a strong sense of planning in the design and placing of the buildings. Detached and semi-detached houses are well-placed to create balance; houses at road junctions make gateways.

Materials and detailing

- building materials are of good quality and relate to the style of individual houses
- windows are generally consistent with the styles of houses and are an important determinant of the character of groups of houses, for example; curved steel windows in Moderne houses, sash windows in Neo-Georgian groups and leaded casements associated with Arts and Crafts and half-timbered vernacular styles
- there are many examples of interesting detail consistent with the designs of the houses. For example decorative, brickwork, (particularly in doorways and above windows), pediments, fanlights, curved windows, decorative Art Deco ironwork.

2.2 Principal negative features

Layout and public realm

- the pavements are generally in a bad condition; there are many broken and uneven paving slabs and asphalt replacement for paving is unsightly and uneven where the tree roots have disturbed the surface
- paving slabs and kerb stones on a number of corners have been replaced by concrete, which is often damaged in turn and unsightly
- there are numerous traffic and parking signs, many of which are obtrusive due to their height, number or positioning; this is especially so at the entry to the streets from the A1.

Landscape and trees

- front hedges have been removed in a minority of properties
- a significant number of front gardens have been lost or substantially reduced by hard standing.

Building type and design

- obtrusive changes have been made to houses which undermine both the design of individual houses and the cohesion of the street as a whole, for example; over-large dormer windows, inappropriate window replacements and garage conversions which do not accord with the style of the house
- there are examples of poor extensions which detract from the character of houses.

Materials and detailing

- significant numbers of replacement doors in unsuitable materials, for example; glass and wrought-iron, or faux-Georgian
- many drives have been finished with unsympathetic materials, mainly concrete or blocks
- a few houses have had tile hanging and/or bricks painted over, which detracts significantly from the character of the houses and the cohesion of the street
- replacement tiles of modern style and colour give roofs a patchwork effect.

Section 3 The different parts of the Brim Hill area in greater detail

The above features are found throughout the area but certain features are more characteristic of particular parts of the area. To illustrate some of these features the Brim Hill area can be divided into 6 sections.

- 3.1 Howard Walk and Gurney Drive
- 3.2 Vivian Way, Totnes Walk, Devon Rise, Harford Walk
- 3.3 Greenhalgh Walk and Blandford Close
- 3.4 Brim Hill and The Leys
- 3.5 Cornwood Close and Widecombe Way
- 3.6 Northern side of Lyttelton Road

3.1 Howard Walk and Gurney Drive

Character and landscape

These two roads form the central 'acorn' of the layout of the area as a whole. Howard Walk is the crescent on the brow of the hill and all houses have southerly elevations to the front or rear, making them very light. The white, Modernist style architecture gives the crescent a unified, modern, light appearance. The privet hedges are mostly retained but telegraph poles detract from the overall appearance of the Walk.

Gurney Drive is a Y-shaped road sloping down the hill to Lyttelton Road. It has a traditional feel with Neo-Georgian and Arts and Crafts style houses. A few houses lack hedges which detracts from the overall green appearance. Originally, the front paths were separated from the garage drives by a strip of planting and these have, in some cases, been lost to create a wider area of hardstanding. At the other extreme, some planting is out of scale with the houses and gardens.

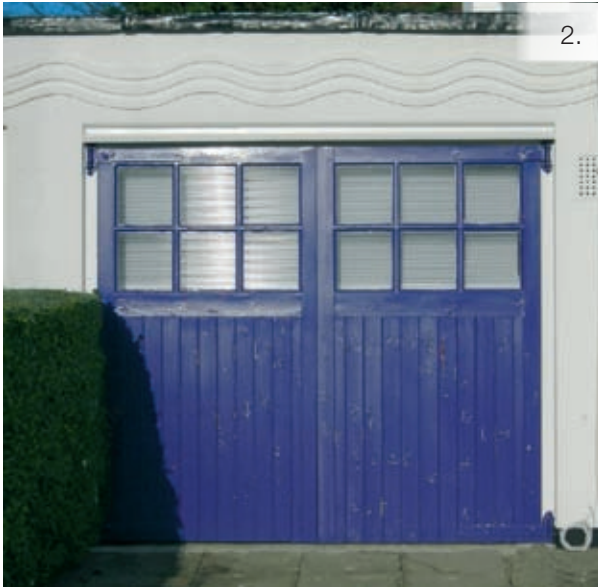
Architecture



1.

Howard Walk was designed by C.M. Crickmer and built in 1935 in the white rendered modernist style sold as "sun-trap". This is a distinctive English compromise in which Art-Deco features are combined with a traditional pitched roof with plain tiles and hipped ends (Photograph 1). The horizontal windows are steel with opening lights on each side. Curved corner windows in many houses catch light from two directions and many have chevron vents in top centre, as at Nos. 15, 17 and 19. Some houses have the original semi-circular canopies with a teardrop pattern. Others have straight

windows and angled porch canopy. Many garages retain the Art Deco decoration on the parapets (Photograph 2). There is visual unity in the grouping of detached and semi-detached houses. The views between houses over linked garages give flow and continuity.



A few original front doors remain, with canopies and planting troughs in the porch. Most houses have the original red steps in the porch and brickwork either side of the front door, but some are painted black or white. Only No. 19 has an original garage door; sadly some front doors are alien replacements and several porches are now glazed in. Modern dormers/loft conversions from the early 70s in two houses look clumsy and heavy. The condition of some white rendering walls also detracts from the overall pristine effect.

The eastern fork of Gurney Drive was designed by Philip Dalton Hepworth in 1931 in a Neo-Georgian style. These houses are generally regarded as having exceptional architectural merit.



The semi-detached houses are asymmetrical, so that at first glance each pair looks like a single house (Photograph 3).

Wooden sash windows with slatted decorative shutters give this road a picturesque, almost New England look (Photograph 4). Nearly all the detached houses have a triangular pediment above the doors, which matches that on the wider of each pair of semis. Adjoining houses have a small canopy. The doors are essential to the character of the houses; most are original, wide and solid with attractive fanlights above and many retain their original door-furniture. One front door has been made flush and painted yellow which detracts from the character of the street.

Individual features give variety, such as an arched doorway on No. 56 and different leaded patterns in the glass fanlights. There is one unusual pair of houses at No. 50 and No. 52 with a projecting front section with a parapet and a two-storey bay at No. 50 instead of the usual flat roofed ground-floor bay. A minority of the houses have garages, all set back from the boundary, and only a few of these are still used as garages. There are no dormer windows on the front of the houses; the only visible ones are at the side of No. 44, a house tucked into a corner, and an unusual arrangement at the side of No. 54, where dormer windows are built around the chimneystack.



Many houses have a traditional white wooden gate with the characteristic tops on the gateposts known as 'scent bottle stoppers' (Photograph 5). However, the front paths and drives have no consistent style or surface, and some are of materials that are not in keeping with the character of the road. The original paths were stone paving edged with brick.

In contrast, the western fork of Gurney Drive and southern side of Brim Hill are designed by Butler in an Arts and Crafts style. Throughout the road, leaded casement windows can be seen, with small square timber panes, enhancing the cottage appearance. Most houses have dormer windows in the front; there are several side dormers of varying sizes and proportions, some in better proportion than others. Most houses have garages, some integral, some set back and attached to the side of the house. Front doors, garage doors and gates vary widely which detracts from the character of the street.

On closer inspection, there are numerous differences between the houses which give interest. The houses at the entrance to the western arm of Gurney Drive form a symmetrical pair. A number of first floors are tile-hung, with a mansard roof at the side of No. 17. Nos. 24 and 26 are an asymmetrical pair, No. 24 has a tiny window in the gable above the door where No. 26 has a square area of basket



6.

weave brickwork. Nos. 6 and 8 have arched doorways outlined in bricks, with similar arches in the brickwork next to the door, forming a porch area supported by a brick pillar (Photograph 6). No. 9 has a glazed porch and, although with no hedge, both the entrance and the front garden look very different from the other houses, with the garden particularly well designed and maintained.

In the lower section of Gurney Drive the style changes completely. Here there are maisonettes similar to those in Lyttelton Road.

3.2 Vivian Way, Totnes Walk, Devon Drive, Harford Walk

Character and landscape

Devon Rise and the cul-de-sacs Totnes Walk and Harford Walk rise up a gentle gradient from south to north, with Vivian Way running from east to west as a southern boundary. This is a green and peaceful area, shielded from the noise of Lyttelton Road by Belvedere Court. Twittens run east-west from the closes through Deansway, providing quick access to East Finchley Underground station. Street furniture



7.

is not obtrusive, with parking control signs below hedge height. Wooden telegraph poles blend in extremely well with existing trees, unlike the concrete bollards used to protect the pavement from heavy lorries. Parking controls have enabled these roads to remain relatively clear of parked cars, however, garage conversions have led to the disappearance of several front gardens and a reduction in hedge size. Small ornamental trees line the roads, while mature silver birches on the two green open spaces in Vivian Way add to the 'green' character (Photograph 7). Though there are no grass verges, the red engineering brick paviers create a cohesive appearance.



8.

This is diminished where unsightly black tarmac has been used to replace paving ([Photograph 8](#))

Architecture

This section of the Brim Hill area was developed between 1934-38. The architects involved had all built extensively in the Suburb and care was taken to achieve an overall harmony in design with many attractive symmetrical groupings. Use was made of traditional materials (brick and tile, oak doors) but also of the new metal Crittall windows. Similar architectural details, such as decorative porches and door frames, contribute to the sense of unity in this area.

Totnes Walk was designed by J. A. Bateman in 1938. The houses display both traditional features, such as projecting garages under hipped roofs, and more modern features, such as the square bay windows and Moderne style doors ([Photograph 9](#)). Focal point houses at the top of Totnes Walk have projecting parapets with decorative stone finials above the first floor ([Photograph 10](#)).



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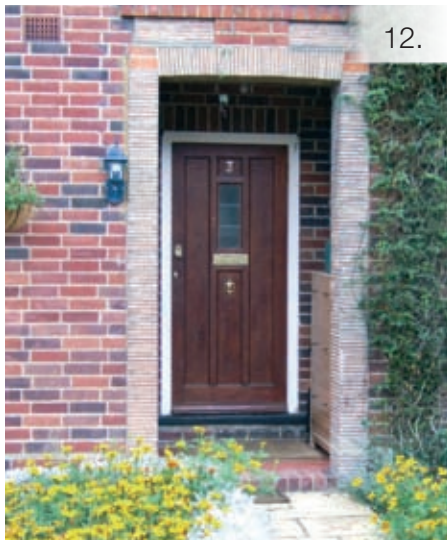
Devon Rise, (Crickmer 1934-37) has a similar mixture of traditional and modern features. The symmetrical group of four semi-detached houses on the west are more traditional, with downswept tiled roofs over projecting garages. Nos. 1-3 and 13-15 also have front dormers in the main roof and in the garage roof.



11.

On the east side, the houses have a more streamlined modern look. There is a pair of detached houses linked by garages and another semi-detached pair with central garages ([Photograph 11](#)).

Harford Walk (Butler, 1936) maintains the pattern of modern large-paned window features with traditional roofs. Here the treatment of doors and porches is



12.

important to the character of the walk with decorative brickwork on flat and arched doorways and tile-creased porches supported by a brick column (Photograph 12).

Vivian Way has the most varied and eclectic architecture in this area. Although Drury and Reekie designed many of the houses, they used very different styles and the character of this road depends on maintaining the internal consistency of the small groupings of houses. On the south side Drury and Reekie designed a series of Moderne semi-detached houses, Nos. 4-6 are brick-built with pitched roofs and typical streamlined curved bays at ground and first floor level. They also have corner windows on both levels and the original curved porches over the door

(Photograph 13). Nos. 8-14 are more traditional, solid brick semis with centrally placed garages, a large staircase window and small windows flanking the front door. Facing the entrance to Devon Rise there is a run of white rendered Modernist houses from Nos. 16 to 30 which contrast with the dark brick houses opposite. These houses were originally built with flat roofs but only Nos. 20-22 still retain them.



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The newer pitched roofs are somewhat at odds with the angular windows and porches and inappropriate replacement doors further undermine the consistency of the style. On the north side, the houses are in a brick, Arts and Crafts style but with some idiosyncratic features, most notably, the brick pillared porches with open work panels of ridge tiles at Nos. 9, 25, and 31 (Photograph 14).

The road curves around a small green and rises to meet Deansway; here the character changes entirely with an enclave of 'Old English' country style house by R.H. Williams. These houses have the same confidently picturesque elements as the houses in Deansway and Edmunds Walk by the same architect; half-timbered gables, brick nogging, decorative tile-hung walls, and leaded casement windows. Many of the materials were reclaimed, adding to the patina of these houses.

As in other parts of the Suburb, the landscape is marred by replacement entrance doors and inappropriate additional features such as low concrete walls or wrought iron balustrades which are out of keeping with original designs. The almost total loss of original wooden front gates is to be regretted. There is also considerable loss of front gardens to hardstanding in this area. Extensions built right up to the boundaries of the twittens leads to graffiti, for example, along the side of a house in Harford Walk. The upper rear part of No. 2 Vivian Way is visible in passing from Lyttelton Road, revealing the view of a large dormer window and a Velux window on the rear roof, neither of which contribute to the character of this area.

3.3 Greenhalgh Walk and Blandford Close

Character and landscape

Greenhalgh Walk rises directly from Lyttelton Road to Brim Hill. Running parallel is Blandford Close, a short cul-de-sac with a small turning space at its head and a twitten linking it to Greenhalgh Walk. Street trees combine mature and semi-mature mixed species. Although all houses in Blandford Close have hard-standings and garages, residents' use of street parking has caused some damage to kerbs and grass verges.

Architecture

The relatively plain brick frontage of Crosby Court provides an effective visual transition between the houses of Greenhalgh Walk and the shops and flats on Lyttelton Road. This road, designed by Crickmer, consists mainly of pairs of brick semi-detached homes. Simple sloping roof forms dominate, although some houses have projecting bays with hipped roofs. House groups are generally matched on each side of the road, with a variety of wall finishes used on parts of the front elevations such as tile hanging (Nos. 1/3 and 2/4) and 'half-timbered' finishes (Nos. 6/8 and 7/9). Some houses, such as Nos. 3 and 5 incorporate the use of mixed coloured bricks, laid in a variegated pattern. With the exception of Nos. 6,



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8, 14 and 16, there are no dormer windows on the street fronts. Houses Nos. 14 and 16, which mark the centre of the house group, are detached villas, planned with symmetrical façades and feature large painted doorcases and recessed front doors (Photograph 15).

Only the central first floor window of each house has wooden shutters. Towards the top of the road, there is a stylistic shift towards simpler Modernistic forms and glazing, particularly on Nos. 24, 26, 27 and 29 (Photograph 16). These were built later than others on this road, albeit by the same architect. Of particular note is the use of horizontal steel window frames with curved glass and thin concrete bay window roofs, stretched horizontally to cover the front entrances. The original modern-pattern front doors have not survived on Nos. 24, 26 and 27.



Garages are generally integrated within the houses, although No. 2 includes a garage extension, having in-filled the original garage. Many houses, such as Nos. 4, 7, 9, 14 and 16 have retained the original garage doors. Some houses like Nos. 15 and 17 have had garage conversions and garage doors have been replaced with windows that generally match the originals. Hedges generally form the front boundaries, although wider openings into some houses (as at No. 22) have reduced the visual continuity of this feature.

Blandford Close, designed by A. W. Newman in 1931, is a well-integrated group with good building scale in a traditional English vernacular style. The layout is symmetric with mirror-matched designs of semi-detached or linked houses on each side (Photograph 17 - see overleaf). At the top, Nos. 21, 22 and 23 are a trio of detached houses, built on unusually large plots, with generous rear gardens. Although No. 23 is built on the centre axis of the road, the house plan is informal rather than symmetrical. The house has a partly half-timbered projecting bay on this axis, but the visual impact of this from the road is diminished by high boundary hedging in front.

The external design of all the houses is to a very high standard of quality and originality. The front building line varies from house to house, and a composition of projecting bays, with gabled or hipped roofs, provides variety of form and a well-controlled use of finishes. Some of the bays are half-timbered or rendered, and some are brick. Intervening façades include roofs which slope down to the level of the first

floor or tile-hung walls. Entrances are either recessed with round brick arches or covered with corbelled canopies. Most of the front doors and all windows look original, with remarkably few interventions which might mar the original design. Strong distinctive Suburb features such as tiled roofs, dormers and tall brick chimneys are all evident here.



Most of the garages are integral with the houses, and like other roads, some gardens have been paved for additional off-street parking. This has generally not detracted much from the front boundary hedge lines or street sightlines.

Near the junction with Lyttelton Road, a symmetrical double-fronted detached house by A.H. North stands on raised ground. This house is related more to the adjacent houses on Lyttelton Road by the same architect.

3.4 Brim Hill and The Leys

Character and landscape

Brim Hill is a long, undulating road running west-east along the north of the Conservation Area. The traffic calming road humps limit potential though traffic, creating a relatively quiet street. Many front gardens have hardstandings and, in some cases, the paving is very extensive, detracting significantly from the green ambiance. Grass verges are for the main part small, though opposite the entrance to Greenhalgh Walk, the houses are set back from the road allowing a small grassed area. However, driveways with parked cars bisect this green oasis, detracting from its appearance. The Leys is a small close to the north-west of Brim Hill. Space limitations mean that the pavement (unusually made of red brick) runs only on one side, there are no grass verges, and no street trees, though this is mitigated by mature trees in front gardens. Many houses have had front gardens removed to make room for cars giving The Leys a less green ambiance than Brim Hill.

Architecture

Brim Hill is mainly made up of a sequence of small groupings of semi-detached houses. Many of these groups are symmetrical, while others play with replicated design features in slightly different compositions. Though designed by different architects, the predominant influence is Arts and Crafts. Repeated features include tile hung and wood panelled gables ends, steeply pitched roofs, dormer windows, metal



18.

leaded casement windows, bay windows and dominant chimneys. All houses have either integral or side garages. There is continuity of materials, with most houses built in dark brick with dark roof tiles, though a few have been white rendered. There are attractive brickwork details throughout such as brick mullion windows, soldiers and voussoirs above windows and doors, brick quoins and tile creasing ([Photograph 18](#)). There are many inappropriate replacement doors.

Interesting groups and features include:

- Several of Butler's designs are interesting asymmetrical semi-detached pairs, such as Nos. 42-48, 92-98 ([Photograph 19](#)). No. 94 is particularly striking, having a red tile-hung front elevation and central gable ([Photograph 20](#))



19.



20.

- The 1934 Butler group, Nos. 15-21, have a semi-detached pair with canted bays and linking pierced brick balconies at first floor level, flanked by two houses in a design which is atypical of Butler's work. They have very large bays topped with metal balconies and a huge window in a central gable
- Nos. 76-78, a Modernist white-rendered semi-detached pair at the corner of Widecombe Way by Evelyn Simmons. At the end of the pitched roof is a small flat roof balcony
- The asymmetrical pair Nos. 36-38 by Farmer (1931) contrasts with the rest of the road, with low eaves and tower-like projecting gable, which contains a garage and a tall window with balcony ([Photograph 21 - see overleaf](#))
- Nos. 95-109 is a symmetrical group built by Mechkonik in 1935. There are modernist influences, such as curved metal horizontal bar windows, and an interesting stepped-back side

- Crickmer designed the symmetrical group 35-49 (odd) in 1933. These houses combine traditional and new styles. First floors are rendered and the ground floors are brick ('skirt and blouse' style) (Photograph 22). Features include linked garages set back from the houses, original half-dormer windows over the entrances to the semi-detached houses, casement windows with small square panes and decorative slatted shutters.



The Leys was designed by Butler in 1933-4. There are several different designs of houses within the close, which feels a little overwhelming in such a small space. Interesting features are the brickwork details around Nos. 3 and 4 and a projecting porch with balcony above, on Nos. 6 and 7, at the top of the close.

3.5 Cornwood Close and Widecombe Way

Character and landscape

Cornwood Close is a cul-de-sac running northwards from Lyttelton Road, up the slope to a turning area. The semi-detached houses step uphill in a picturesque grouping. The view northwards is terminated by a twitten leading to Brim Hill, flanked by matching detached garages which are deliberately elaborate and high for architectural effect. Widecombe Way runs northward from Falloden Way to Brim Hill.

This is a green and attractive residential area with a spacious feel. Hedge boundaries and street trees define the strong north south axis of Widecome Way. In Cornwood Close hedges form boundaries between houses, while street boundaries are mainly marked by low stone walls. There are only two houses with high hedges. Parking is difficult in the Close but many drives in both roads have been extended into front gardens using inappropriate materials, resulting in a harsh, unsympathetic look.

Architecture

The houses in Cornwood Close were designed by Courtney Crickmer and Allen Foxley and built between 1930 and 1932. They started their association with Raymond Unwin in Letchworth in 1903 and many

of their houses show the influence of this relationship. The majority of houses in Widecombe Way were designed by C.G. Butler and were built between 1931 and 1933.



Cornwood Close forms a very consistent and harmonious group, with identical pairs facing each other. Houses are mostly linked by screen walls with garages and arched openings to side passages in the Parker and Unwin tradition. There is uniformity of style and building materials; central chimneys, tile hanging, timber framing, steel windows with glazing bars. All are brick-built with contrasting render frieze and high hipped roofs. There is, however, variety in design and layout. For example, some houses were designed asymmetrically to look like a single house, with half-timbered gables or hipped tile-hung upper floors jettied out and supported on brick corbels over a ground floor canted bay (e.g. Nos. 22 and 23) (Photograph 23). There is interesting detailing, such as timber balconies on the symmetrical pairs, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12 (Photograph 24). Many of the doors are original, with wrought iron decorative hinges



(Photograph 25). Most houses have garages, some linked, detached and integral to the design. Some original timber garage doors remain. There is one first floor side extension, which is set well back, is kept low and is in harmony with the design of the property, although it does infill the space above the linked garage and detracts from the symmetry at the top of the close.

In Widecombe Way, the majority of houses are semi-detached with some striking and complex symmetry. On the west side of the street the first four pairs of houses are identical, the remaining Butler houses on this side and on the west side are asymmetrical semis. For example No. 17 has a projecting single storey hip roofed garage to one side, and No. 19 and



21 with a central projection with a coffin-shaped door case, a tall window above, and an integral garage set back to the side (Photograph 26). There are core consistencies in architectural style and building materials (brick, tile hanging, metal windows and glazing bars) even though the houses are the work of, at least, three architects. There is also high quality detailing, such as brickwork arched door cases, and decorative brick work. Houses are not linked, garages are to the side, sometimes set back, sometimes projecting forwards under a hipped gable roof, for example Nos. 7, 9, 11, 11a. Sadly, some modern replacement doors are out of character.

3.6 Lyttelton Road

Character and landscape

The defining feature of this area is the busy and noisy A1 traffic route and its associated signage. The residential development is set well back from the road in comparison with earlier Suburb houses on Falloden Way. In consequence, the width of this road is unlike any other in the Suburb, with open views towards the Market Place, and toward Aylmer Road, neither of which have visual focal points. There is no street parking on this arterial road.

Flats and maisonettes are set at the top of sloping, open front gardens with a notable absence of traditional Suburb boundary hedges. Wide green verges flank the carriageways and, at the junction with Vivian Way, there is a small area of grass with four mature silver birch trees planted informally. This is a welcome green space which is spoiled visually by the clutter of road signs and the track trodden through the grass by pedestrians taking the direct route to Vivian Way, suggesting that this might be better as a solid path.

Architecture

Lyttelton Road



Nos. 25-37 Lyttelton Road is a comparatively closely grouped line of houses by different architects. There is no special architectural coherence of style, roofline, brick type or fenestration. No. 25 has a steep tiled roof topped with a prominent flat roof, probably raised later, as the ridge tiles are no longer visible. The pedimented entrance on Greenhalgh Walk is flanked by a pair of curved bay windows. No. 37, also by Butler, is more Lutyens in style, with a symmetrical frontage to Blandford Close (Photograph 27) and a tall pair of chimneys at the

rear. In contrast, Nos. 31-33 are archetypal 1930s semi-detached houses, faced with pink bricks and light grey brick pointing. Each has an integral garage and a first floor balcony on the front.



Nos. 39-109 Lyttelton Road were designed by A.H. North in 1933/5. Nos. 39-69 are maisonettes built to look like houses ([Photograph 28](#)) Driveways lead through to garages set back behind the houses, while the entrance ways consist of shared steps. The central pair of 'semis' includes an upper storey, which is rendered and painted, as distinct from the half-timbered elevations and gable-ends of the other flanking pairs. All have jettied first floors with first floor bay windows, some with herringbone brick infill. The centre bay in contrast has corbelled rendered bays. The overall composition is of an interesting variety of finishes and use of materials.

In this group, some windows have been replaced with modern frames and a couple of gardens have been either paved or terraced with shrub planting, resulting in some visual disunity along the street scene. Nos. 53 and 55 have infilled front porches, possibly retaining the original canopies. Other entrance canopies appear to be in original condition but in need of repair. There is a group of three garages built as a single structure with a tiled, hipped roof. One of the garage doors appears to be original.

The next group, Nos. 71-109 between Gurney Drive and Cornwood Close is a more sober line of brick-faced maisonettes, also built to appear as houses. Again, the end houses are set slightly forward as book-ends, containing a well-controlled composition of gable and hipped roof types, a consistent white, elegant coved eaves detail, and uniform window patterns. Some houses include tiled roof corbels at the gable-ends and flush horizontal tiling as a string course along the front façades. All have curved ground

floor bay windows; most covered in pebble-dash cement-render ([Photograph 29](#)). Only one pair of bays, on No. 101, appears as originally designed in brick. Curiously, the colour, type and mix of brick used here is generally a variable, inconsistent mix of multi-stock bricks. There is rusticated brick detail in relief at the corners. Some fronts are spoiled by Satellite dishes mounted on the front façades at different levels.



29.



30.

Widecombe Court

Designed by Crickmer, Widecombe Court is a formal symmetrical block of flats in brick with tiled roof and an attic storey. The front elevation includes a deep stone spandrel along the first floor, broken by three stone-framed entrances. Windows are generally the original steel casements set into painted wood frames. The entrances include glazed doors with decorative leaded glazing on the side lights, complemented by ornamental wall lanterns ([Photograph 30](#)). The front façade is marred by two large satellite dishes fixed at the level of the first floor.

Belvedere Court

Designed by Ernst Freud in 1937, this is a Grade II-listed Modernist block of flats set back from the



31.

road. The block is divided into three bays, each slightly canted on plan, and separated by a bold bow-fronted deep bay with strip-glazing. The front elevation has continuous window sills and horizontal coursing

at the window heads in concrete, which emphasize the horizontality of the frontage. Two of the bays step up by exactly half a floor in response to the gradient of the site ([Photograph 31](#)). There is consistent and

original window glazing and other details such as square section rainwater pipes. Each of the entrances has an Art-Deco surround and glazed doors, with stepped cantilevered V- shaped canopies.

Currently, there is semi-mature landscaping to the front, together with extensive open grass areas. These are let down only by the poor and uncharacteristic timber fencing at the boundary with Long Drive and beyond. Of particular interest is the box hedging along the foot of the building which softens the ground line of the front of the block. The low front boundary wall is in matching brick, including the low brick 'drum' entrance posts, each with flush integral light fittings. Outside, in Lyttelton Road, the broader grass verge to the pavement is a positive element in the setting of the flats. On the west side of Belvedere Court, the triangular-shaped private open space within the site is determined by the line of Mutton Brook. This provides a short stretch of greenery along the road frontage, a welcome relief on the road scene. Here there are two tree groups, and some rather overgrown privet hedging along the boundary.



