

# Gillingham Park conservation area

## Article 4(2) Direction design guidance



April 2010

# The Gillingham Park conservation area

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### Background

The Gillingham Park conservation area consists of Gillingham's first public park, opened in 1906, and the surrounding semi-detached and terraced houses built soon after. The area is recognised as being of special interest as it represents a good example of an Edwardian planned development in an attractive setting that survives in a relatively unaltered state. The area was given conservation area status in 1989.

### The reason for the introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction



*Gillingham Park area*

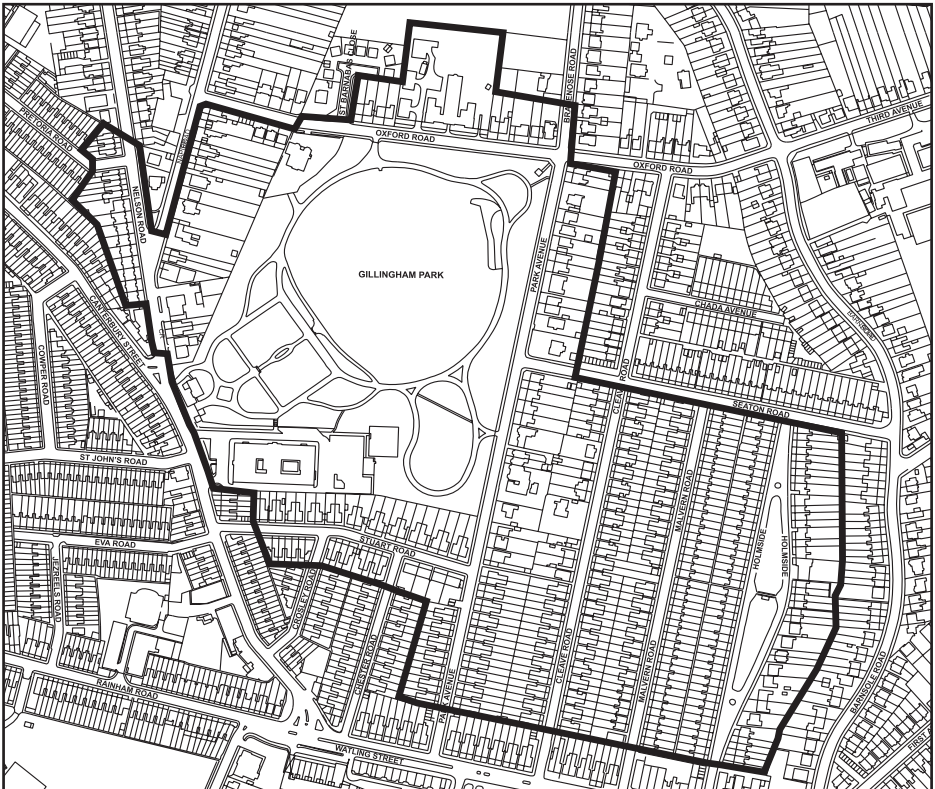
Much of the architectural interest of the houses in Gillingham Park conservation area comes from the design of details, such as doors, windows, and the elaborate brickwork surrounding them. Most of the properties were built in groups of identical buildings and the uniform appearance of these structures, together with the high quality of the materials used in their construction, are very important contributors to the character of the

area. The small gardens with low boundary walls and gateposts in front of the properties also make an important contribution to the area.

These features are under threat from modern alterations. Many properties have already had their windows and doors replaced with modern alternatives and driveways have replaced gardens. Concrete tiles have replaced most of the original slate roofs in the area.

To prevent further loss of architectural details an Article 4(2) Direction has been placed on this area since February 2001. **This means that planning permission is required for the following works to elevations fronting a road, path or open space such as Gillingham Park:**

- building, altering or removing a chimney;
- enlarging, improving or altering a house (including the replacement of windows, doors and rainwater goods and the application of bargeboarding);
- altering a roof (including re-roofing in a different material);
- building a porch;
- laying a drive or path;
- installing, altering or replacing a satellite antenna;
- building, altering or demolishing a gate, fence wall or railings painting, rendering or pebble dashing the exterior (excluding painting joinery).



As with other areas planning permission is still required for extensions, conservatories and roof alterations to the back of the property. Further guidance is provided in the council booklet: **Conservation areas in Medway – a guide to the law and the council’s polices** and in the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions’ booklet ‘**Visual Guidance on Household Projects**’, available at the planning portal website - [www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/government/tools/house/](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/government/tools/house/).

## Design guidelines

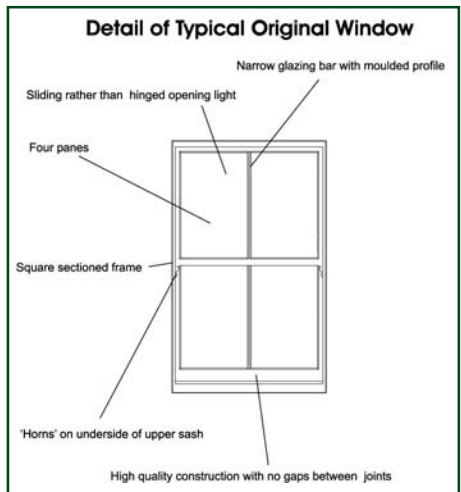
The council will expect planning applications to conform to the following guidelines:

### Windows

The original type of window in the Gillingham Park area was generally the four-paned timber-framed sash window. These usually conformed to the pattern shown.

Many original windows have been replaced with unsuitable timber, uPVC or aluminium units that detract from the appearance of these properties and the overall character of the area.

It is council policy to insist on the retention of any remaining original windows, or where necessary their replacement with an exact copy. However, applications to renew replacement windows of poor design are encouraged provided that the new units would be of the same pattern as those originally found on the property. In these cases double glazed uPVC units may be considered acceptable provided that:



*Example of good sash window*

1. The windows are of the same pattern as the original windows (generally four panes).
2. The detailing of the windows follows the original as closely as possible. NOTE: large section frames and glazing bars will not be acceptable.
3. The windows should be sliding sash rather than hinged opening light type.
4. The windows are fitted into their original openings, i.e. they are recessed rather than flush fitted.
5. The original sills, arches and pillars surrounding the windows are retained.

Timber framed casements were also used on the roads fronting the park (Oxford Road and Park Avenue) and along the east side of Holmside. These are of a variety of different types and replacements should follow the exact form of the original windows in the house. Should there be no original windows left to copy the design and conservation department would be pleased to advise you on an appropriate design.



*Example of good casement window*

More substantial changes, such as the replacement of bays or extensions to the front elevation will not normally be permitted.

## **Doors**

The doors traditionally used in Gillingham Park are timber. Designs vary from simple four panel doors to elaborate designs divided into small panels. Glazed upper panels, which would have originally featured stained glass are a common feature. It is common for doors to be recessed into the body of the house, forming a small open porch.



A large proportion of these doors survive and it is council policy that original doors are repaired and retained. Should householders wish to replace unsuitable modern doors replacements should be in timber and copy the design of an original door in the same street. It is also important that open porches are retained rather than enclosed with an outer door.



## Roofs



*Good roof example*

As originally built most of the houses in Gillingham Park would have had slate roofs with clay ridge tiles and finials (a decorative tile placed over the gable end). Several houses in Oxford Road and Park Avenue had plain tile roofs, again with decorative ridge tiles and finials. The majority of these have now been replaced with concrete tiles and the ridge and finial details lost. It is council policy to retain slate roofs wherever they remain. The replacement of concrete tiles with slate is encouraged.

Apart from their coverings roofs have in general been altered very little. However, some properties have had roof-lights inserted into the front roof slope or large dormers installed. These alterations break up the uniform appearance of the street scene and are harmful to the appearance of individual buildings. Further alterations of this type will not normally be permitted. Alterations to the eaves will not normally be permitted for the same reason.



*Finial*

## Painting and rendering

In general the majority of houses in the conservation area retain their original finish of untreated brick. In some roads, such as the east side of Holmside and Park Avenue, properties have always been rendered.

A minority of properties that were originally unpainted brick have been either painted or rendered. While this is often seen as an economic means of repair and protection, in the long term it is no substitute for proper brickwork repairs and is damaging to the appearance of the individual property. This is because original details are obscured and the appearance of the area deteriorates as the uniform appearance of the street is lost. **Further painting and rendering of façades will not normally be permitted.**



*Good brickwork*

## Front gardens



*Path retained*

Most of the houses in this area originally featured front gardens with low brick garden walls, railings and gateposts. Gateposts were topped with either a ball or a pyramidal cap. Railings were of an ornate design with floral motives but were removed during the second world war. Boundary treatments in Oxford Road and Park Avenue tended to be less formal, with thick hedges above walls, low walls or timber fencing. Another common feature of the area are tiled pathways, many of which survive.

The desire for off-street parking and the inconvenience of maintaining a very small patch of green space has led to many of these gardens being covered in concrete and the garden walls removed. A further problem has been replacing walls with inappropriate materials such as concrete blocks, concrete shapes and modern bricks.

Council policy is that removing garden walls and gateposts and original paths will not be permitted. Replacement walls should be constructed of suitable materials, such as brick that matches the rest of the house in colour and texture. The replanting of gardens and the reintroduction of hedges is encouraged.

The alteration of existing walls will only be permitted if the alterations are in keeping with the character of the area. This means that generally the wall and coping must not exceed 80 centimetres high. The replacement of railings is encouraged provided that these are of a suitable design. The design and conservation section of the council would be pleased to give householders more detailed guidance this matter.



*Original railings*

### **Repairs and maintenance**

Planning permission is not required for like-for-like repair works and the council is keen to encourage owners to maintain their properties in an appropriate way. The regular painting of external joinery is particularly important as this prolongs the life of woodwork considerably, reducing the need for expensive repairs and replacements.

### **Contacts**

The **DESIGN AND CONSERVATION** section of Medway Council is keen to advise householders on the care of their property. This includes advice on the design of alterations and repairs. For general enquiries on all aspects of planning contact **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT** and for enquiries relating to building regulations contact **BUILDING CONTROL**.

Design and Conservation and Development Management can be contacted at:

Development, Economy and Transport, Regeneration, Community and Culture, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR

Tel: 01634 306000, Fax: 01634 331125

Building Control can be contacted at:

STG Building Control Partnership, Compass Centre, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, Kent ME4 4YH.

Tel: 01634 331133.



Further information about Victorian and Edwardian buildings can be obtained from:

The Victorian Society  
1 Priory Gardens  
Bedford Park  
London W4 1TT  
Tel: 020 8994 1019

The council booklet **Conservation areas in Medway – a guide to the law and the council’s policies** provides further information on conservation areas and the extra planning controls in force.

## Who to contact



**Customer services: 01634 333333** 8am to 8pm (Mon-Fri) 9am to 1pm (Sat)

Please note: Calls to customer services may be recorded or monitored for security and staff development purposes.



**Design and Conservation, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road,  
Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR**



Email: [design.conservation@medway.gov.uk](mailto:design.conservation@medway.gov.uk)

Website: [www.medway.gov.uk](http://www.medway.gov.uk)



Minicom: **01634 333111**

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This information can be made available in other formats  
from **01634 333333**

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If you have any questions about this leaflet and you want to speak to someone in your own language please ring **01634 335577**

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