

Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal



2026

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1 Introduction

The Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area was designated on 3rd October 1977 by Slough Borough Council.

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is “an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Proposals should be publicised and incorporate public comment.

Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF 2024 provides an overarching planning framework to which local planning policy must relate. The Framework notes that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. The Framework also places certain responsibilities upon Local Planning Authorities in that they should have a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Framework states:

When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. (Paragraph 204)

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas ...and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. (Paragraph 219)

New development and change will always take place in conservation areas, and the main purpose of designation is to ensure that any proposals will not have an adverse effect upon the overall character and appearance of an area. Within conservation areas there are special controls on some alterations, the demolition of buildings or parts of buildings and on the felling, uprooting, lopping and topping of trees.

Development within Conservation Areas is underpinned more broadly by Slough Borough Council's Core Strategy 2006-2026 (December 2008)¹

¹ Policy EN13 (Conservation Areas) in the Slough Local Plan Saved Policies (adopted 2004) has not been a saved policy since 2007. The new Local Plan (to 2045) for Slough is in preparation at the time of publication.

CORE POLICY 9 (NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT) Development will not be permitted unless it:

- Enhances and protects the historic environment;*
- Respects the character and distinctiveness of existing buildings, townscapes and landscapes and their local designations;*

This Appraisal highlights the special qualities and features that define the character of Sussex Place and justify its designation. It is written in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England, in its 2019 Advice Note 1, *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*, on how to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of Conservation Areas. This appraisal will provide a firm basis on which future planning and listed building consent applications can be assessed.

This appraisal is intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. However, omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape feature, space, feature or aspect located in or adjacent to the Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset.

A detailed review of the existing boundaries of the Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation. No changes are proposed.

2 Location and Setting

2.1 Location

Sussex Place lies within the large town and Borough of Slough, Berkshire, just to the east of the town centre. Slough is located 20 miles west of central London and 2 miles north of Windsor. Heathrow Airport lies approximately five miles to the southeast. The conservation area is in Slough (Unitary Authority) and is a non-civil parish in the country of Berkshire.

2.2 Boundaries

The conservation area includes the majority of houses along the north side of Sussex Place and a few on the south side, the houses on the east side of Uxbridge Road and part of Clifton Road. Nixey Close is also included along with Elvian House, Clifton House and part of Lascelles Park at the southern end of the conservation area.



Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area boundary map

2.3 Topography and Landscape Setting

The topography of the conservation area and its immediate surroundings is level. A mix of nineteenth century and more recent development now surrounds the conservation area, all part of urban Slough.

2.4 Geology

Slough sits on the northern side of the Thames Valley, the bedrock is Cretaceous chalk with deposits of sand and gravel and overlain by Lambeth Group and London Clay formations. In the late 19th and 20th century clay was being dug out of the ground to the north of the village for brickmaking, this was a major industry within the town.

2.5 Archaeology

The Thames Valley area has yielded numerous prehistoric archaeological remains on the Lynch Hill Gravel terraces whilst finds from the Mesolithic and Neolithic period onwards have been found in Cippenham, and elsewhere, all of which suggests this Thames Valley landscape was under almost constant human influence throughout this time. The land was farmed from the Iron Age onwards with small settlements gradually developing into the Saxon period.

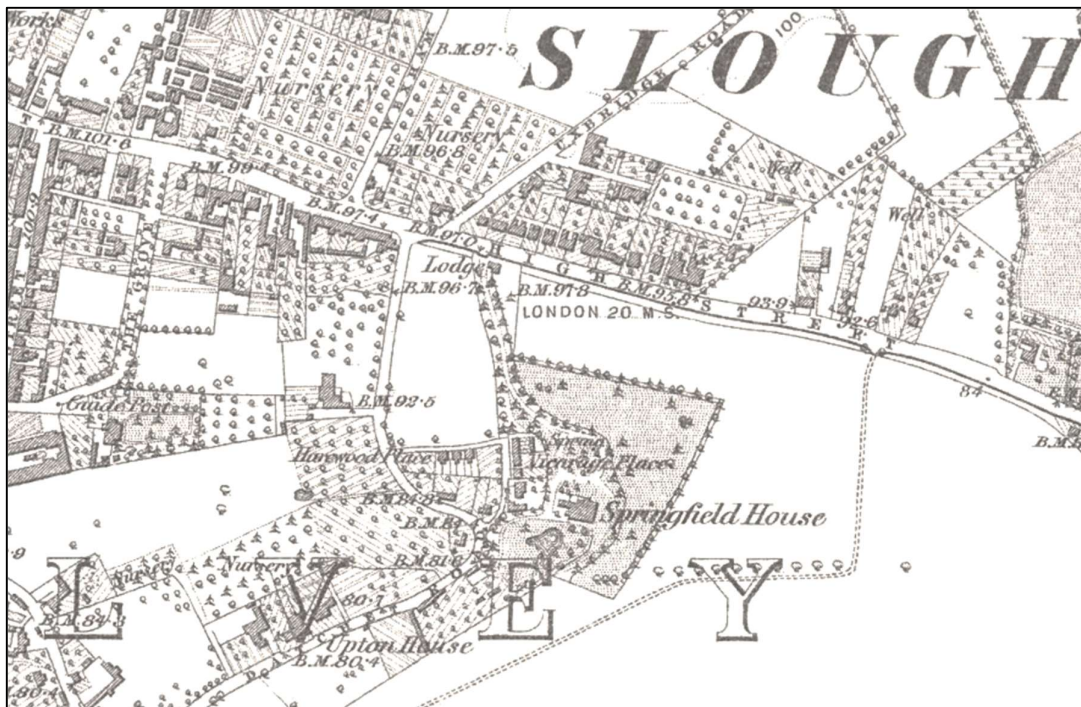
There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the conservation area. There is one Historic Environment Record - the A4 Bath Road from London to Bristol (HER Number 05052.00.000).

3 Historic development

Sussex Place was originally part of the High Street. Slough's historic high street route originates from the 17th-century Bath Road, acting as a former key coaching route from London to Bath and Bristol. Housing developed along what was the north side of the High Street in circa 1830 on land belonging to Slough Farm, with detached and semi-detached villas houses being built, these would have been lived in by wealthy individuals.

The former vicarage lying to the south of the High Street was redeveloped in 1856. It was bought by W. G Nixey, the inventor of 'blacklead', this was a very popular brand of stove and grate polish, used to clean, protect and give a glossy black finish to cast-iron ranges and fireplaces. He had offices in Soho Square, London and became known as the 'Blacklead King'. Nixey built a large Victorian house, first known as Springfield House, named after a spring on the site – it became known locally as Blacklead Castle. A lodge (marked on the 1881 OS map) was built at the top of the drive to Springfield House which had gardens surrounding it. Chiltern House was built in the late nineteenth century just to the west of Springfield House.

Housing continued to be built, with the matching terraces either side of the entrance to Clifton Road.



Extract from the 1881 Ordnance Survey map

The 1925 Ordnance Survey map shows further housing had been built along Sussex Place and on its south side. Springfield House was re-named Upton Towers and stayed in use as a private house until 1919 when it became the Princess Alice Home for Disabled Sailors and Soldiers. It was used as an emergency Maternity Hospital during World War II, and after it was leased to Buckinghamshire Council as an old people's home. The house became offices in 1980 and was substantially extended at this time, it was renamed Elvian House. It was used as offices for several

years but then lay vacant and was vandalised, in 2011 a large fire broke out in the building but it was saved and subsequently converted to a number of apartments.



Sussex Place in about 1910 (Slough History Online)



Extract from the 1925 Ordnance Survey map

Sussex Place became a 'no-through road' in the latter part of the twentieth century which has led to the centre of the Conservation Area having a peaceful character, despite its proximity to the town centre and the busy Uxbridge Road running along its north-western edge. There has been some modern infill development within the Conservation Area in the latter half of the twentieth century.

4 Surviving Historical Features within the Conservation Area

4.1 Summary of historical features

- Elvian House, a fine Victorian house built for W. G Nixey, the inventor of 'blacklead'
- The circa 1830's Victorian development of detached and semi-detached villas
- Lascelles Park with a number of fine mature trees (historically some of these were within the garden of Elvian House)
- Former lodge to Elvian House on corner of Sussex Place and Nixey Close
- Victorian and Edwardian boundary walls

4.2 Street pattern and building plots

Sussex Place was originally a continuation of Slough town centre's High Street (and on the earliest maps is named High Street). Houses, either detached or semi-detached are set back from the road with good sized front and rear gardens. Nixey Close was historically the private drive to Springfield House (now named Elvian House) and there is a lodge on the corner of Sussex Place and Nixey Close that was associated with Elvian House. Uxbridge Road forms the west boundary of the conservation area and is now a very busy route through the town centre. Clifton Road includes two groups of terraces either side of the entrance to the road, these are more modest in scale. There are several examples of plots being subdivided and new development being built within the conservation area.



View along Sussex Place from the junction with Uxbridge Road

5 The Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

5.1 Analysis

The Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area reflects the way Slough town centre developed in the early part of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. The character of the conservation area does differ, with that of Sussex Place and Clifton Road being more obviously residential and the southern part incorporating part of Lascelles Park and Elvian House.

5.2 Summary of townscape features

- Early nineteenth century detached and semi-detached villas on the north side of Sussex Place and either side of the entrance to Clifton Road
- The Victorian gate lodge on the corner of Sussex Place and Nixey Close.
- The open space with a variety of well-established trees in Lascelles Park
- Late Victorian and Edwardian properties on the south side of Sussex Place
- The trees lining Nixey Close (former drive to Elvian House)
- Victorian and Edwardian brick boundary walls
- Widespread use of red and buff brick, stucco render, slate and clay tile

5.3 Current activities and uses

The conservation area is predominantly residential, many of the houses have been subdivided internally to create flats. Elvian House was in office use but has recently been converted to apartments. There is a Doctors Surgery at 18 Sussex Place. At the southern end of the conservation area is part of Lascelles Park with its network of footpaths leading from Nixey Close and on to the rest of the park and its playing fields.

5.4 Focal points, views and vistas

The tall, crenelated brick tower of Elvian House is less of a landmark feature than may be expected due to the trees which surround the site and the intervening modern office building (Wardour Place) which blocks views of Elvian House on the approach to it along Nixey Close. The brick lodge to the corner of Sussex Place and Nixey Close is a focal point due to its prominent position, despite its modest scale.



View of Elvian House from Lascelles Park

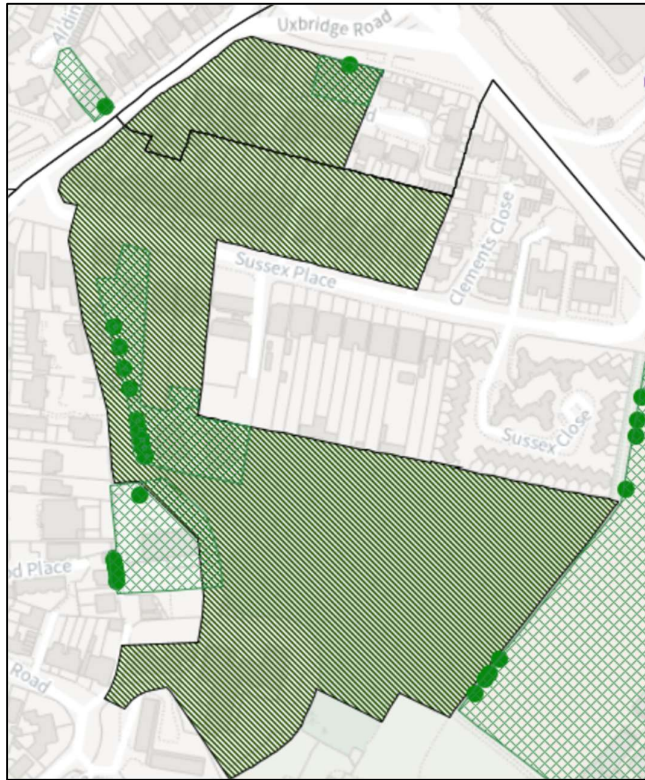


The former Lodge to Elvian House

5.5 Open spaces, landscape and trees

The northernmost part of Lascelles Park is the primary area of green open space, there are a number of well-established trees within the park and throughout the Conservation Area – particularly on the east side of Nixey Close (the historic driveway to Elvian House). These are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and there is a blanket TPO in place too.

Many of the front garden areas have been completely given over to parking to the detriment of the streetscape and setting of the Victorian properties.



Map showing the Conservation Area with hatched areas showing blanket TPOs and individual TPOs (green dots)



Trees in Lascelles Park



Trees along the east side of Nixey Close (former drive leading to Elvian House)

5.6 Public Realm: Floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

The roads are metalled and pavements where they exist are tarmac with granite kerbstones. No historic surfaces remain and street lights are modern. Where historic boundary walls have been retained, they contribute positively to the street scene.

6 The Buildings of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area contains an interesting collection of mostly Victorian and some Edwardian residential properties, with a variety of architectural styles. There are no listed buildings within the conservation area and currently no Locally Listed Buildings within the conservation area; however three buildings are recommended for inclusion on the Local List. Local Listing does not bring additional statutory protection in itself, but being within the conservation area, such buildings are already protected from substantial demolition. Certainly, every effort will be made to safeguard their contribution to the conservation area and that of any other buildings within its boundaries that contribute to its character as an historic settlement.



Numbers 6, 8 and 10 Clifton Road – yellow stock brick with stucco porches and window surrounds



Stucco fronted pair on north side of Sussex Place

6.1 Architectural styles, detailing and materials

There are some particularly good examples of the circa 1830's development within the conservation area such as 1 Sussex Place and Clifton Lodge, Clifton Road.

Construction materials include yellow stock brick, red brick, render and stucco. There is an example of pebbledash on 4 Uxbridge Road. Both Elvian House and the lodge feature stone dressings and detailing. Roofs are predominantly slate clad but there are examples of clay / concrete tile to the Edwardian properties on the south side of Sussex Place, these properties also feature applied timber 'framing' to the front gables and a mix of red brick and pebbledash. Numbers 19 and 21 have retained an original canopy with wrought iron supports.

Historically windows were timber sashes but the majority of these have been replaced with uPVC versions.

6.2 Boundaries

Boundary treatment varies throughout the conservation area and in front of several houses' boundaries have been completely lost to provide off-street parking areas. A nineteenth century boundary wall remains on the west side of Nixey Close and 4 Uxbridge Road is set behind a nineteenth century brick wall. There is a close board fence along the east side of Nixey Close.



Nineteenth century boundary wall along Uxbridge Road



Edwardian brick front boundary wall with clinker brick panels

6.3 (Proposed) Locally Listed Buildings

These are buildings which have been identified as being individually of special architectural or historic interest but falling just 'beneath the line' for inclusion within the statutory list. They make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

The current Local Plan for Slough (adopted March 2004) at the time of publication has a policy relating to Locally Listed Buildings, Policy EN17 which states that special consideration will be given, in the exercise of the development control function, to the retention, enhancement and appropriate refurbishment of locally listed buildings together with their setting.

The (proposed) locally listed buildings are marked on the map and are:

- Elvian House
The former vicarage on the site was demolished and a new Victorian mansion built by W. G. Nixey, the 'Blacklead King' in 1856. The house is of red brick construction with stone dressings, brick detailing and a slate roof. It has a taller crenelated brick turret which is not all that visible. Despite the dominance of the late twentieth century office extensions, the Victorian part of the building is of architectural and historic interest.



- Former Lodge to Elvian House, 14 Sussex Place

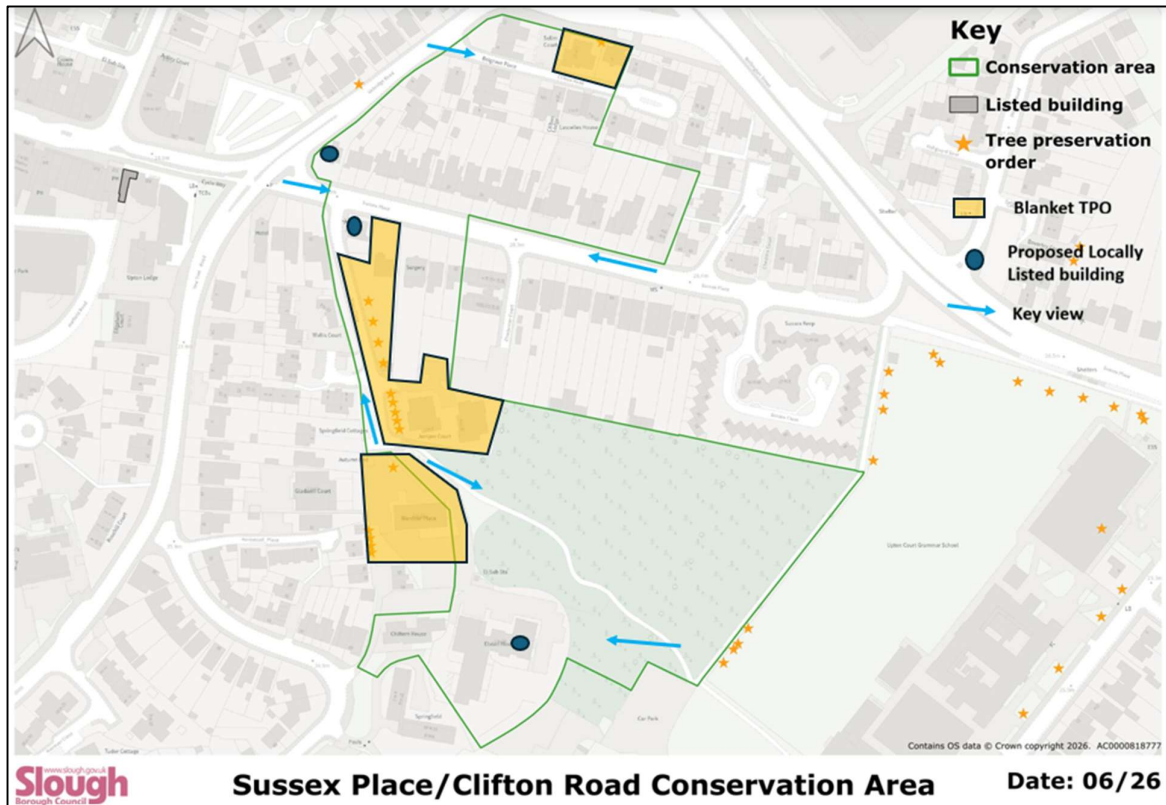
The former lodge was built at the top of the drive to Elvian House (then known as Springfield House and built by the 'blacklead king' W. G. Nixey) in 1856. It is of red brick construction with red coloured mortar joints and stone dressings, the steeply pitched slate roof has decorative timber bargeboards to the gables and the building clearly reads as a former 'lodge' due to its small scale, position and architectural detailing.



- 1 Sussex Place

A circa 1830 villa built of yellow stock brick, it has a symmetrical façade with central portico and a series of timber sash windows. The slate roof has a deep eaves. A good, and relatively unaltered, example of the development on Sussex Place in the nineteenth century.





Conservation Area character analysis map

7 Negative Features and Issues

Some of the mid to late twentieth century development within the conservation area fails to preserve its character and appearance. Examples include Juniper Court, Nixey Close; 2 Uxbridge Road, 12a Clifton Road and Selim Court, Clifton Road.

Wardour Place, a brick and glass office building lies outside the conservation area boundary but its prominent position at the end of Nixey Close does harm the setting of the conservation area.

The majority of original sash windows on the Victorian and Edwardian properties have been lost, replaced by uPVC versions with bulky frames and internal glazing bars; the original character of the properties has been weakened through the loss of these features. The replacement of slate with interlocking concrete tiles or clay tiles has occurred.

Another issue is the complete loss of front gardens and front boundaries to create hard surfaced off street parking areas.

Some boundary treatments have been poorly maintained and are in need of repair. Shared refuse bins used by the flats can be prominently sited within the street scene.



uPVC replacement window of unconvincing design



Loss of front boundary and garden to create a large area of hardstanding

8 Management Plan

The policies of the Slough Borough Local Plan are the primary source of reference for development control advice. If unclear on what requires planning permission within the conservation area please consult the Planning Portal www.planningportal.co.uk or Slough planning team for advice.

New buildings within the Sussex Place / Clifton Road Conservation Area shall preserve or enhance the appearance and special character of the designated area:

- Any new building works such as extensions, must be designed not as a separate entity, but should be sympathetic in form and scale with the existing buildings and the conservation area as a whole. The predominance of the original building in an architecturally unmarred form is paramount, and extensions should not detract from this characteristic or be prominent in public views.
- Materials for any new building works or surfacing must be sympathetic to those prevailing in the area. Where possible traditional material should be used - good quality matching facing brick and sand-faced clay roof tiles or natural slates. Where traditional materials survive, they should be retained.
- Listed and other significant buildings play a key role in the character of the conservation area: new development must not harm their quality or visual integrity and it should be recognised that in many cases new development may not be appropriate.
- Inappropriate replacement windows and doors can damage the character of the conservation area. Traditional natural materials should be used in order to safeguard the special character of the conservation area. This is particularly important in Upton Park where the window designs need to be replicated when beyond economic repair. Generally speaking painted timber windows and doors are appropriate and modern substitute materials such as UPVc and aluminium are not. Replacement windows and doors in houses may be possible under permitted development provided they are similar to the original windows and doors. If in doubt that they are sufficiently similar you can apply for a certificate of lawful development. Replacement windows and doors for flats will need planning permission.
- Within the conservation area planning permission is required for the installation of satellite dishes on flats and all buildings other than houses. On houses permission is required if the dish would be on an elevation fronting a road, public footpath or bridleway, on a chimney or anywhere on a building over 15 metres high.
- All trees in conservation areas are protected and special consideration should be given to those trees that have a significant public role or are within public open spaces to ensure that they are not harmed. It is a criminal offence to undertake works to trees in the conservation area without giving the council six weeks prior notice. New development should recognise this and not present a risk to their continued future growth and habit.

- Other trees are individually protected by Tree Preservation Orders and these are marked on the conservation area map. Consent is required for all work to such trees.
- As boundary treatment brick walls or hedges will generally be preferred to timber fencing.
- Tarmac is not considered an appropriate surfacing material for paths, car parks and drives. Bonded gravel, gravel or setts are preferable and brick for paths can be suitable.
- Areas of open space and gaps between buildings will be carefully considered for protection from development or enclosure in order to safeguard the character of the area and any important views.
- Applications for development adjoining but beyond the conservation area boundary will be assessed for their effect upon its setting and may be refused if this is considered adverse.
- Special care must be taken to ensure that views looking into and out of the conservation area are not spoilt. Those of particular importance are marked on the survey map.
- Street furniture, lamp posts, CCTV camera mountings and posts, telephone boxes, pavings and other public works which are beyond planning control can have a disproportionate impact on the streetscape and character of the conservation area and those responsible should consider the heritage context.
- In the conservation area higher standards of design are required in planning applications for it is the function of the planning authority in considering all applications to assess whether they preserve or enhance the special character identified in this appraisal.

Further Reading and sources of Information

M Fraser, *The History of Slough* (1973)

J Hunter et al, *A Town in the Making: Slough 1851* (1980)

Page, William, ed. (1925). *Parishes: Langley Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire*, Vol. 3. pp. 314–318.

Documents and Maps:

www.thegenealogist.co.uk

<https://maps.nls.uk>

Website:

www.heritagegateway.org