



24. AVON VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA

DESCRIPTION

- (1) The Avon Valley Conservation Area consists of the land immediately abutting the River Avon from New Brislington Bridge at Netham up to the city boundary at Foxes Wood and the extended area comprising the Brislington House Estate. The northern boundary of the Conservation Area is delineated by the stone perimeter walling of Avon View Cemetery along Beaufort Road and the recently completed post-Conservation Policy housing development 'Beaufort Heights'.



The plateau forming the cemetery ends at the southern perimeter where the land falls steeply down to the river beyond Crews Hole Road. Strawberry Lane and Lamb Hill form pedestrian links from Beaufort Road through the pleasant, steeply sloping and wooded gardens of Crews Hole to the riverside, and also provide access to Troopers Hill, where industrial archaeological artefacts remain from the coal-mining, quarrying and lead-mining activities of the 18th and 19th Centuries.

- (2) The eastern boundary follows the line of Troopers Hill Road and includes some of the original cottages from the industrial mining community along Firtree Lane and Niblett's Hill and the recently built, post-Conservation Policy 'Quay-Side Village' on the old Tar Works site, before enclosing the recreation ground accessed from Furnwood and the wooded slopes of Conham Valley.
- (3) At the Conham River Park the city boundary and Conservation Area boundary coincide to include the towing path and pedestrian/cycle way along the river bank with the landscaped slopes of Avon Valley Park and Hencliff Wood forming a backdrop to the Conservation Area up to Foxes Wood on the opposite bank.
- (4) The extension to the Avon Valley Conservation Area (1987) continues the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area at the city boundary up to the Bath Road, where the southern and western Conservation Area boundaries enclose the original Brislington House Estate and Oakleigh (a Grade II Listed Building).
- (5) The perimeter of the original Brislington House Estate is defined by stone walling and extensive tree and shrub planting which extends from the Bath Road boundary to Broomhill Road and Ironmould Lane. Trackways connect the various houses of the Estate and provide access, at gateways within the perimeter stone boundary walls, to the public highway. The Bath Road entrance provides vehicular and pedestrian access to Brislington House Nursing home and Lodge – Grade II Listed; the Broomhill Road entrances lead to St. Brendan's College and the The Beeches respectively; the Ironmould Lane entrances provide access to Swiss Cottage and the rear of Brislington House respectively.
- (6) The western boundary of the Conservation Area continues from Heath Farm, (a Grade II Listed Building) , following the railway line to Birchwood Road tunnel to include the estate of Eastwood Farm and Eastwood up to the river bank. Eastwood Farm is designated as Public Open Space where development and land use has been promoted by the City Council according to the Eastwood Farm Public Open Space Landscape Plan and Land Use Policy since 1983.
- (7) The perimeter of the old St. Anne's Board Mills site forms the continuation of the Conservation Area western boundary up to New Brislington Bridge and Netham Lock and Bridge, (Listed, Grade II) , and includes St. Anne's Wood and Nature Gardens, and the post-Conservation Policy industrial development 'St. Anne's Business Park' located in the wooded valley containing Brislington Brook and accessed by St. Ann's Road and footpaths linking to the footbridge over the River Avon and the Crews Hole stretch of the Avon Cycle/walk way.
- (9) The Avon Valley Conservation Area (1980) was selected for its "*secluded riverside charm enhanced by an 18th Century settlement pattern*". Predominant architectural features are pantiled and slate roofs, random stone walling, painted, rendered walls with timber window frames and doors, generally proportioned and detailed in the cottage vernacular of the period.

KEY ISSUES

Traffic and Movement

- (1) Improvements to the A4 between Hicks Gate roundabout and the traffic light controlled junction at Emery Road/Stockwood road are currently being



considered by Avon County Highway Engineers, in conjunction with the approved 'Park and Ride' facility for 600 cars at the Stockwood Road/Bath Road junction.

- (2) The proposals will need to be examined for any effect that road widening/dual carriageway and roundabout construction will have on the Conservation Area, particularly any alterations to stone boundary walls and associated landscaping.
- (3) Improvements to Crews Hole Road from Conham River Park to Blackswarth Road are also currently being considered by Avon County Highway Engineers with the intention of including the proposals in the Bristol Development Corporation (BDC) Avon Valley Development Brief subsequent to public participation.
- (4) As Crews Hole Road is now predominantly residential the 1976 plan to increase the width to 6.8 metres to allow the road to function as 'light traffic relief' to the A431 has now been amended to a general increase to 5.5 metres with a 1.8 metre wide footway.
- (5) Some road widening has already been completed adjacent to the 'Quay-Side Village' site but future proposals will need to be assessed for any detrimental effect on hedgerows, stone walling and buildings immediately abutting the road to ensure that the narrow winding country lane character of Crews Hole Road is not lost.
- (6) Road speeds may increase as a result of road widening, which will need to be countered by 'traffic calming' measures and pedestrian crossings to ensure that pedestrian routes to the riverside are maintained and safe to use.
- (7) The environmental issues associated with the road improvements to Crews Hole Road are now the responsibility of the BDC as the planning authority for this part of the Conservation Area. (Bristol City Council will be consulted on any future planning and Conservation Area consent applications to be considered by the BDC.)

Land Use

- (8) Projected changes in land use are largely determined by the BDC as part of their Avon Valley Development Brief, (which is based on the general principles of the BCC Avon Valley Development Brief and Conservation Policy 1983), as this authority is now responsible for controlling and promoting development within approximately half of the Conservation Area, i.e. from the southern perimeter of Avon View Cemetery across the river to the Conservation Area boundary around St. Anne's Wood as far as Birchwood Lodge. The narrow strip of development east of Troopers Hill, the Recreation Ground and Conham Valley remain within Bristol City Council's jurisdiction as does the remainder of the Conservation Area south of the Conham River Park where there are no major changes in land use projected.

Townscape

- (9) There have been a number of applications for planning and Conservation Area consent within the Conservation Area prior and subsequent to the Bristol Development Corporation (Area and Constitution Amendment) Order 1988, some of which represent a change in the townscape/estate aesthetic of the Conservation Area.
- (10) The effect that current consents and future applications will have on the townscape of the Conservation Area needs to be monitored to ensure that the character of the Conservation Area is not eroded.
- (11) There is a danger that the large gardens of Brislington Estate, for example, will be infilled altering the 18th Century estate character.
- (12) Unsympathetic extensions and alterations to houses will threaten the character of the Conservation Area.



- (13) To accord with the above criteria and concerns an application to erect 60 dwellings on land adjacent to Brislington House with access from Ironmould Lane was refused in 1988 and an appeal dismissed. Similarly an application to substantially extend the existing Victorian buildings of The Beeches, part of the original Brislington House Estate, was refused in 1991.

GENERAL ENHANCEMENT OBJECTIVES

- (1) An environmental traffic management scheme needs to be prepared in conjunction with the highway authority. This should address the issues raised in the section on Traffic and Movement.
- (2) The City Council will apply Principles P11–P19 in the Conservation Handbook to extensions and alterations to traditional buildings within the Conservation Area.
- (3) New buildings should complement the scale and character of the Conservation Area and conform to Conservation Principles P2–P10.
- (4) Eastwood Farm Public Open Space landscape Plan and Land Use Policy (1983) will apply to the Eastwood Farm Estate.
- (5) The subdivision of large garden plots will be resisted. Conservation Principle P33 will apply.
- (6) A landscape management scheme needs to be prepared in conjunction with the Leisure Services Directorate which includes the following area set out in (8) and (9) below.
- (7) Extra tree and shrub planting at the perimeter of the Brislington House Estate to provide screening and noise insulation from the projected widening and dual-carriageway construction along the Bath Road, (and in association with item (1) above).
- (8) To landscape along the riverbank in association with the Avon cycle/walk way, to enhance the riverside environment and provide safe pedestrian access.