



29. BRENTRY CONSERVATION AREA

DESCRIPTION

- (1) This Conservation Area comprises the historic landscape around Breamsbury House, Breamsbury, including the wooded ridge between Breamsbury Hill and Henbury and the grounds of Wesley College. It also includes the landscaped garden settings of three Listed Buildings and a number of large detached houses in the vicinity.
- (2) The Conservation Area is bisected by the busy dual-carriageway, Passage Road, a major traffic route linking the city centre to the M5 further north. This stretch of the road within the Conservation Area is attractively contained by mature landscape and rubble walls.
- (3) A remnant of the wooded slopes which once linked Breamsbury to Blaise and Kingsweston is a unifying element linking both halves of the Conservation



Area. It includes the secluded Sheep Wood which separates the Conservation Area from the sub-urban housing areas to the north.

- (4) To the east of Passage Road lies the extensive grounds of Brentry House, a Grade II Listed Building. The house complete with its parkland setting, was designed by Humphrey Repton, the eminent landscape gardener of the Georgian period, together with his son, John. Brentry House a grand two storey Bath stone mansion, is now part of Brentry Hospital. The visually prominent foreground to Brentry House is a high quality parkland landscape offering extensive views towards the Severn Estuary, and which still reflects Repton's design for an impressive approach to the house. Elsewhere a number of institutional buildings have been constructed. These date from the Edwardian period to the present day and vary greatly in quality.
- (5) The area immediately to the west of Passage Road is more residential in character, comprising substantial detached houses in mature landscaped gardens. Within this part of the Conservation Area there are two structures which are distinctive and very unusual. In a private garden at the edge of Sheep Wood stands the stone tracery of a huge arched window with related turret. This was removed from the Lord Mayor's Chapel on College Green in the city centre.
- (6) Close by and in dramatic contrast is the 'Concrete House'. A modern building of the internationalist or cubist style built in 1935. It is a rare example of this revolutionary design and was the first to be built outside the London area. Within this part of the Conservation Area there has been some recent residential development.
- (7) Farther west lie the grounds of Wesley College. The college itself is a large brick educational building adjoined by a modern hall of residence and an open field.
- (8) Beyond the college forming the western boundary of the Conservation Area is Didsbury House, a Georgian building similar in style to Brentry House, with a secluded terrace garden overlooking Henbury Village.

KEY ISSUES

Traffic Movement

- (1) A pedestrian footpath exists within Sheep Wood and there are remnants of a footpath within the wooded slopes of Brentry House. Passage Road and the rubble walls which define its edge impede the establishment of a desirable pedestrian route which would link the woodland of the Conservation Area.

Land Use

- (2) There is increasing pressure for development particularly for residential use throughout the Conservation Area. The further disposal of hospital land could threaten the historic parkland setting of Brentry House. This, together with further extension of the theological college and the infilling of extensive private gardens, either by extension or new development, would undermine the open character of the Conservation Area.

Townscape

- (3) Most post-war development within the grounds of Brentry House has been piecemeal and of poor quality, harming the setting of the Listed Building and degrading its parkland.
- (4) Recent housing within the garden of a large detached house has produced a form of development whose density and style lacks the distinctive qualities of other residences within the Conservation Area.



- (5) Sheep Wood and other woodlands in the Conservation Area show signs of neglect and misuse. They also fail to realise their educational and recreational potential.

GENERAL ENHANCEMENT OBJECTIVES

- (1) In conjunction with land owners in the area and the Highway Authority a footpath linking the woodland of the Conservation Area should be established.
- (2) Any development within the grounds of Bentry House on land flanking the east side of Passage Road and the north west side of Charlton Road will be resisted. However, a study should be undertaken to identify other land that could be developed without adversely affecting the character of the Conservation Area.
- (3) The City Council will encourage the Health Authority to apply the principles and guidance relating to new buildings in Conservation Areas which are expressed in the City Council's Conservation Handbook.
- (4) Design guidance for new development within the Conservation Area will need to be produced. This should focus on the relationship between building views and the historic landscape.
- (5) A woodland management plan needs to be produced to enhance the quality of woodland in the area. This should explore opportunities for educational and recreational use in accordance with the strategic greenway routes identified in the Bristol Local Plan.