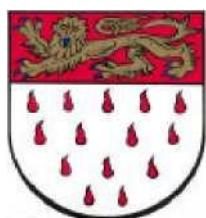




SUMMERSDALE
NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER APPRAISAL
GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING

Prepared by
Summersdale Residents' Association
May 2020



Chichester City Council



Summersdale Neighbourhood Character Appraisal Guidelines for Planning

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Executive Summary

Summersdale is an attractive area in the north of Chichester. Spacious and leafy, the character of the area is now under threat with many houses on large plots at risk of demolition and re-development. It is an historic neighbourhood with high quality architecture in street scenes that are worthy of enlightened protection.

This Appraisal, written in conjunction with the Chichester City Planning & Conservation Committee, was limited to the oldest properties and roads in the neighbourhood. It describes the history and distinctive visual character of the neighbourhood, and provides a framework for limited and sensitive development, while protecting the long established character and heritage of the area.

A case is made for either an appropriate Conservation policy, or a comprehensive Local Listing of buildings 'the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (PPG15). Note that we have been advised that Grade 1/2 listing of individual dwellings is unlikely.

It also makes a strong case against demolition, and puts quality well before quantity in any re-development. There are no current opportunities for large scale development in the prescribed area and few, if any, for appropriate infill re-development. The area needs no re-generation per se, and the local demand for other than established family homes should be easily absorbed by the large residential developments nearby at Graylingwell Hospital and the Roussillon Barracks.

The initial version of this appraisal was adopted by Chichester City Council at its meeting on 9 July 2008, and added as an Annexe to the Chichester Town Plan Document (adopted by the City Council on 7 September 2005) as revised in September 2009.

Unfortunately it was not taken up by the District Council owing to lack of resources, and recent years have seen significant re-development, especially on the Lavant Road. But we now have the chance for it to influence the new Neighbourhood Plan currently under development.

This revised document attempts to update the original in view of recent developments, and relegates the historical background and architectural detail to a separate Appendix in the interest of brevity

Objectives

Summersdale is a very attractive area of northern Chichester, immediately north of the City's Conservation Area. Its early buildings are of late Victorian origin but Edwardian-style architecture and features. Spacious and leafy, the character of the area is now under threat with many of the houses, on plots large by today's standards, at risk of demolition and re-development. It is an historic neighbourhood, with a coherence and identity worthy of respect and enlightened protection. It has proved to be a sustainable and pleasant place in which to live.

The historic core of the neighbourhood, and the focus of this Appraisal, consists of the four roads in the original Summersdale Estate, The Avenue, Highland Road, The Broadway and Summersdale Road, together with The Drive, Lavant Road, Rew Lane and Brandy Hole Lane. In general, the Appraisal will only concern developments prior to 1970.

To guide future planning applications, the Appraisal sets out the type and form of development that might be considered acceptable on individual sites. It has three objectives:

- * To describe the distinctive visual character of the neighbourhood, its surrounding setting and the elements that comprise its green leafy nature, built form and open spaces.
- * To inform and involve the local community and landowners and to give them a chance to influence future development of individual sites; and
- * To provide a framework for developers who may be interested in such sites.

The aim of the Appraisal is to act as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for re-development of residential properties, but not to require it to go through the process for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. The weight it might be given at any Appeal will in the end be judged by how clearly it describes the settlement character and the design guidance thought necessary to protect its character. It should be compatible with the statutory planning system and its local application, but it will be about managing change, not preventing it.

Introduction

Several villages around Chichester have written Village Design Statements (VDS) and had them accepted by the Executive of Chichester District Council (CDC) as material considerations in the determination of planning applications. The Summersdale Residents Association (SRA) believed a similar such document would provide a measure of enlightened protection against inappropriate development in its historic neighbourhood. Detailed research into the area's housing stock and its settlement pattern provided the base data.

Several examples of local VDS were studied and typical contents defined before it became apparent that they were invariably written in conjunction with the appropriate Parish Council, the first legitimate layer of local government, thereby conferring status on the documents. Summersdale is not a village but a neighbourhood, so the SRA document came to be known as a Neighbourhood Appraisal. To enhance its prospects of acceptance by the Executive, the CDC advised the SRA to develop it in conjunction with its own Parish Council - namely the Chichester City Council. The SRA's subsequent membership of the NE Chichester City Forum would facilitate closer links with the statutory bodies represented thereon.

Links with the City Council were established in late 2007 and agreement reached that the City Council's Planning & Conservation Committee (P&C) would assume co-ownership of the document so as to use it as a template for other groups within the City, each document supporting the City Council's next Town Plan. The SRA's base data was shared with the P&C Committee, and development of the collaborative document began in early 2008. The format for the document was devised by a sub-group of the P&C Committee, and the title changed to Summersdale Neighbourhood Character Appraisal, in line with the Chichester District Council's document - the Chichester Conservation Area Character Appraisal. The size of the document was prescribed, as was the need for some form of community involvement.

After adoption by the City Council, the joint Appraisal will be published and comments invited via newsletters, notice boards, and the web sites of both the City Council and the SRA. All comments will be welcomed and reflected in the document to be submitted to the District Council for approval and wider circulation.

Description of the Area

Overview

Charles Stride created the historic elements of Summersdale in the late 1890s with the Summersdale Estate of just four new roads - The Avenue, Highland Road, The Broadway, and Summersdale Road. The Lavant Road bordered his land to the west, The Drive bordered his land to the north and east. Development along all of these roads began at much the same time, in the very early 1900s. Until the middle of the 20th Century they were little more than gravel tracks, but most were tree-lined.

The Avenue linked Summersdale Farm with Lavant Road and Warren Farm to the west. Summersdale Road ran north/south, linking the Barracks and Graylingwell Hospital with The Broadway, Highland Road and The Avenue. At its northern end, the road became The Drive, encircling the estate and joining the Lavant Road at the northern entrance to the City (see map of the area).

Brandy Hole Lane forms a very important graded edge to the City. It was the southern boundary of Warren Farm, and existed as a tree-lined country lane before the creation of the Summersdale Estate. It is semi-rural in nature and appearance, with development along its northern edge starting in the 1920s. Rew Lane, to the north of The Drive, was developed in the grounds of Woodland Place in the 1950s.

The northern entrance to the City along the Lavant Road is an important introduction to the City and its Conservation Area, a fine first impression and a significant contribution to sense of place of both Summersdale and the City as a whole. The impression going south along the road is one of rural to urban transition, with the greenspace in the north giving way to a denser built morphology as one moves towards the City.

The NE Chichester Development Brief recognised Summersdale as an important green link and gateway into the City from north of the Downs. It offers an attractive and uncluttered route from Lavant to the City centre. It is a place with its own identity, yet within walking distance of the centre.

Architectural Design

Edwardian architecture features strongly within the area, with a variety of detailing both inside and out, producing treasure houses of design and craftsmanship well worth protecting.

Perhaps the most noticeable and attractive aspect of older Summersdale, particularly along the **Lavant Road** and **The Avenue**, is the considerable variation in roof forms. Generally two stories high, the roof/sky relationships are important and defining. There is an informal scattered layout of dwellings, perhaps with dormers in the roof, and chimneys that provide vertical punctuation to the skyline.

Throughout Summersdale, glimpsed views abound, with clusters of individual houses defined by the space between and around them, filled with an abundance of mature planting. This contributes to the area's distinctive character, a green leafy vista subtly interspersed with an informal vernacular architecture of flair and individuality.

As with the City itself, Summersdale has a 'diversity in harmony'.

These characteristics and this harmony are difficult to define in planning terms, but are immeasurably important to the street scene and very much cherished by those who visit or live in the area - as testified by the flood of well-reasoned letters of objection generated by any planning application deemed inappropriate.

A map of the area and photographs of characteristic individual properties are shown at the end of this document.

See separate Appendix for historical background and architectural detail

Green and Leafy character

Summersdale is renowned for its green appearance, both as viewed at street level and against the sky through gaps between buildings. Good examples are Chestnut Avenue and the northern section of The Drive, as well as the Lavant Road – where it has recently come under threat. Unlike most neighbourhoods these days, the motor car does not dominate our street scene.



<The Drive – street scene>



<Chestnut Avenue – street scene>



<Lavant Road – street scene>

Typical Properties & Street Scenes

Properties that typify the street scene and represent the high aesthetic value of the buildings within this historic neighbourhood include the original roads of Stride's vision.

The following should be candidates for Local Listing:

The Avenue - 13 Edwardian houses on the north side (1 to 29), all display classic Edwardian architectural features, with many similarities but subtle differences. Externally, several are wholly original but others now have garages and modest extensions; some have also been converted internally. They demonstrate the Edwardian love of pattern

and intricacy, red tiled roofs, rough cast plaster walls, and little balconies. Flourishes of mock Tudor include patterned tiles and plaster, with turrets, attic windows and prominent gable ends. The design and intricacy of individual fenestration, all hand-made, is a particular joy to behold. These are well set back from the road, and many if not all have a covenant specifying that “the space between the building and the road boundary shall be used as a flower garden or ornamental ground only”; and within which “fences to be not more than four feet high”.

The houses on the south side are equally prestigious (notably no 30 Highwayke Lodge), with several built in the 1930s before later infilling.

Trees and hedgerows define and articulate boundaries, with large houses nestling in landscaped settings, giving a sense of depth to the buildings as they recede into the landscaping. The Avenue was tree-lined from the beginning.

Just to the east on Fordwater Lane is **The Barn**, recently subject to a sympathetic restoration and extension.



<The Avenue, north side – street scene>

Lavant Road, on both sides are several black and white mock Tudor-style houses (no 24 on the east side and 7, 25 & 27 on the west side). Built in the Arts & Crafts style of the 1920s and 30s, with leaded lights under steep gables, the latter properties reflect an evolution of Edwardian grandeur and design concepts. No 7 Tudor House is mentioned in Pevsner’s Buildings of England as “an extravagance of 1926 by H. Osborne. Half-timbering and twisted chimneys done with enormous gusto, and the proportions as sensitive as Voysey in their funny way.” Sadly no 21 was demolished in 2018 and replaced by a block of 8 flats fronted by a sterile parking court. Other substantial houses include no 2, 6 & 10 on the east side.

As with The Avenue, trees and hedgerows define and articulate boundaries, with large houses nestling in landscaped settings as if dropped into a woodland background, giving a sense of depth to the buildings as they recede into the landscaping.



<Lavant Road, west side – street scene>

The Broadway - 14 pairs of flint faced semi-detached Edwardian houses or villas on the north side (5/7 to 61/63), built in 1901-1903, with a six foot gap between pairs. Each villa has a long back garden, and a small one at the front.

Most still exist in their original frontal form, creating a distinctive row of modest Edwardian properties. Most now have rear extensions, and/or the creation of car parking to the front.



<The Broadway, north side – street scene>

Highland Road Like the Broadway, the distinctive properties on the south side are mostly semi-detached with good-sized rear gardens. The nine pairs of semi-detached villas (2/4, 8/10, 12/14, 16/18, 20/22, 24/26, 42/44, 48/50 and 52/54) and five detached houses (6, 28, 30, 46 and 60) are characteristic of the Edwardian style. They remain unchanged and well maintained in keeping with their historic significance as a feature of Stride's vision. Unfortunately, there is also a row of five modern in-fill houses of a different and uncharacteristic style that contributes nothing to the street scene other than as a stark contrast to their Edwardian neighbours.



< Highland Road, south side – street scene>

Summersdale Road has four pairs of near-identical Edwardian semi-detached houses on the western side between The Broadway and Highland Road. The houses have walls of flint with similar iron work for lower roof support and decoration. These "Alphabet Houses" still carry their original names in alphabetical order, Abbotsford & Brookland, Castleton & Downview, Edenvale & Ferncliff, Glenwood & Hillside.

All have been well maintained, mainly original, and form a distinctive row of attractive properties. The pairs are further apart than those along The Broadway, with a gap wide enough for garages and some side extensions.

The eastern side of the Summersdale Road also has seven pairs of attractive Edwardian semi-detached villas, seven pairs of semi-detached and one detached property (Downcote), with many still keeping their original names – Jacaranda & Dell Side, Ivy Bank & Langley, Greengates & Amberley, The Poplars & Kendall, Stoke & Ellington, St Hilda's & Goojerat and Ormidale & Danehurst.

The properties on this side do not have the distinctive flint stone facing or the ornate ironwork of those across the road, but still form an attractive row in character with the period.

The original Summersdale Estate, the Stride vision, has survived well the ravages of time, virtually intact with few signs of unwelcome development.



< Summersdale Road, east side – street scene >



< Summersdale Road, west side – street scene>

Brandy Hole Lane, a leafy and highly attractive rural lane on the outskirts of the City, is residential with houses built both before and after the Second World War. It includes a mock Tudor house designed by Osborn for Dr Wm Templeton, built by Clare in 1929. Just to the north is **Warren Farm House**, Duchess style, c1880.

Brandy Hole Lane is an essential conduit for the whole of Summersdale to the local Nature Reserve Brandy Hole Copse and Centurion Way. To promote and protect these valuable recreational facilities, any development opportunity that may arise must be handled most sensitively.



< Brandy Hole Lane – street scene >

Community Facilities

Except for St Michael's Church Hall and the local One-Stop shop with its post office, the historic neighbourhood of Summersdale is residential. Its sense of community finds expression through an active residents' association (SRA), with a membership of some 400 households, and participation in a variety of clubs and activities held regularly in the local Church Hall.

The local 'One-Stop' shop is a combined general store, post office and newsagent. Owned by Tesco, the store is an essential facility for the whole of Summersdale, though parking can be a problem. Its only competition is a Co-op shop in the service station on the Lavant Road north of the area, but this has no post office.

Planning Policy & Proposals

National Planning Policy has evolved since the original Character Appraisal in 2008, and development has accelerated through lack of a coherent strategy for preservation of Summersdale, most recently with a seemingly determined approach to maximise the number of dwellings on relatively modest plots after demolishing a single house, especially on the Lavant Road, increasing the density, destroying much of the tree cover, and gradually changing the character of this hitherto leafy area.

The National Planning Policy Framework of February 2019 – with its “presumption in favour of sustainable development” – may make it more difficult to refuse the granting of permission, unless ***“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.....”***

The interpretation of this last phrase is inevitably somewhat subjective – as illustrated by some inconsistent decisions on Lavant Road development applications – so the following sections attempt to provide some guidelines

The Case for Protection

Aesthetic comment is subjective, in the eye of the beholder. Many hold the view that architecture in older Summersdale stands comparison with much that has been accepted in the extended Chichester City Conservation Area, but without the corresponding protection. This Appraisal describes and illustrates an ‘area of special architectural and historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’ (PPG15)

The supporting documents by English Heritage provide guidance for conserving and enhancing the character and identity of historic neighbourhoods, and the need to underpin the nature of the area with a long-term strategic planning approach developed with Community involvement. This Appraisal accords with that need.

Many of the buildings, both Edwardian and Arts & Crafts, remain in original form, and the leafy street scenes are both original and delightful. Traditional eclectic Edwardian architecture stands proud, and though not as old as much of that in Chichester City, it will get no older if demolished. The age gap between the younger buildings included in the Chichester Conservation Area (Wooburn Villas 1894) and the oldest Edwardian buildings in Summersdale (1901) is a mere seven years, and yet Summersdale has so far been accorded no protection. Early progress in updating the Local Listing would bridge the gap for those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. An extension of the Chichester Conservation Area into parts of Summersdale has been considered – for such as Lavant Road, The Avenue, Summersdale Road, Highland Road and The Broadway, but the lack of overall coherency

suggests that Local Listing for individual dwellings and groups of properties would be more appropriate.

Unfortunately, recent years have seen significant re-development, especially on the Lavant Road, and the Arts and Crafts house at no 21 was demolished in 2018 and replaced by a block of 8 flats.

It is therefore of paramount importance that demolition of historic and notable properties should be resisted and closely scrutinised for more desirable alternatives. Local history once destroyed can never be restored; erosion is irreversible. A policy of enlightened protection is needed to resist piecemeal or minor alterations before they have a cumulative adverse effect on the character and appearance of the street scene. Powers exist for the District Council to withdraw specific development rights in the interests of preserving and enhancing character and appearance (PPG15). In Summersdale there is a high survival of original detailing, original tiled roofs, fenestration, panelled doors and so on. If Local Listing is ineffective, permitted development rights could be withdrawn for some of the 'unlisted' family dwellings which have not already been adversely affected.

Above all the green areas, vistas of trees visible between buildings, and wild-life corridors that characterise the area must be protected against being gradually lost to new bulky developments.

Planning should take into account the character of each site and its setting in terms of its proportion, form, mass, siting, layout, density, height, scale and detailed design features to avoid over-development with properties that have little acknowledgement of the character of the area.

Extending the existing Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) is also suggested for properties to be subject to Local Listing, either by area or specific trees.

Proposed Development Criteria

In principle, demolition within the historic neighbourhood of Summersdale should be resisted in favour of an ethos of *constructive conservation*.

If, after careful scrutiny, it becomes inevitable, the following criteria should be carefully considered:

1. There should be a strong presumption in favour of conserving large individual properties which form the historic core of Summersdale, unless there is exceptional cause or community benefit. In particular those important groups of buildings and individual dwellings that have been identified for Local Listing.
2. Density of re-development should not be sufficient to alter the character of the area in which it is set, while the spaces between buildings should be such that the buildings are set in their landscape environment.

3. Roofs should generally be pitched, in harmony and proportion with those of their neighbours.
4. The re-development should not destroy the harmony of long established street scenes.
5. Quality of design must always prevail over quantity, irrespective of the higher density requirements of PPS3.
6. If one- for-one replacement cannot be justified, the case should always be made for the lowest possible increase in density to safeguard street scene harmony.
7. Destruction of trees should be resisted to preserve the leafy appearance of the area both at street level and in the view between buildings; and not least, in recognition of the city's environmental commitment, that Summersdale serves as the "lungs" of the city. Carbon capture by mature trees is significantly greater than for new planting, so replacement should generally not be accepted in mitigation.
8. Backland development should be resisted unless the resultant layout is sympathetic to that of neighbouring properties
9. The environmental cost of demolition and new building should be weighed carefully against the modest impact of retaining older properties with a slightly higher energy consumption
10. New multi-occupancy buildings should be restricted to the corners of road junctions, as currently the case on the junctions of the Lavant Road with The Avenue and Plainwood Close
11. The gap between street frontages and the building line should be respected, whether for extensions or new build
12. The area between the building line and the front boundary should be predominantly laid to gardens or ornamental ground only, and not given over to large paved parking areas; NB houses on the north side of The Avenue are subject to a restrictive covenant to this effect, along with a requirement that fencing between the building line and the road boundary to be not more than four feet high
13. Suggestions for restricting Article 4 permitted property rights?

With any re-development, the character of the area demands a presumption against replacement of two or more buildings and the intervening space with much bulkier structures. (This feature was discussed and soundly rejected during the Sunrise application and Appeal – on the corner of the Lavant Road and Brandy Hole Lane).

It is noted that CCC's Planning Advisor has engaged consultants to contribute metrics including detailing individual and groups of properties of architectural merit, spatial detail (including property density) which contribute to the feel of the neighbourhood, and a survey of the tree canopy. An initial draft is currently under review.

Supporting Documents and Acknowledgements

Documents consulted

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development.

PPS3 - Housing.

PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment.

The Heritage of Historic Suburbs. English Heritage. March 2007

Suburbs and the Historic Environment. English Heritage. March 2007

Chichester Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Chichester District Council. March 2005

Chichester District Local Plan First Review, adopted April 1999

Towards a Vision for Chichester and a Plan of Action. Chichester City Council. September 2005

Numerous Village Design Statements

Local Listing

Historic England website <https://historicengland.org.uk/> definitions:

Local listing and local heritage assets

Local listing helps to raise the profile of local heritage by identifying heritage assets that are of greatest importance to local people. The National Planning Policy Framework (opens in a new window) also highlights the contribution of local listing to the development of the evidence base used to support local plan making.

Local heritage assets can range from buildings, designed landscapes, archaeology and elements of the natural environment. By involving local people in their preparation, local lists and the practices and processes that support them represent a voluntary agreement between local planning authorities and community representatives on how local heritage assets are managed.

Areas of special local character

Some local planning authorities have chosen to rely on additional forms of local designation to manage their local historic environment. These generally take the form of areas of special local character, designed to capture historically important areas that fail to meet the criteria for designating conservation areas. Although such areas of special character are generally used to identify areas based upon their architectural or townscape merits, they may also deal with other elements of the historic environment such as locally important landscapes or archaeology.

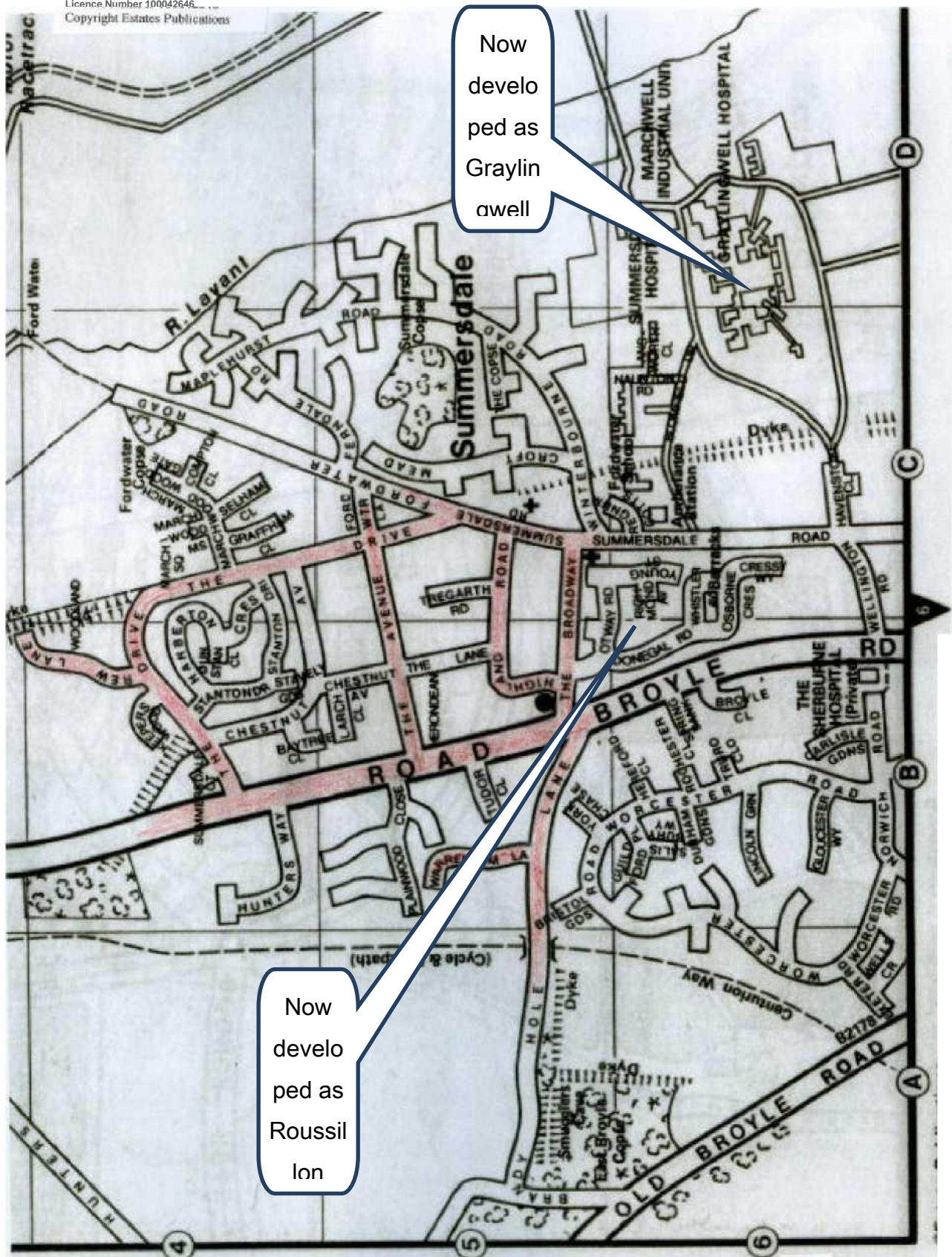
Civic Voice's Local Heritage Listing Toolkit on
<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/local-heritage-list/>

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Summersdale Map & Photographs

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Tree Lined Avenue



7 The Avenue



11 The Avenue



12 The Avenue



21 The Avenue



30 The Avenue

APPAISAL BUILDINGS

The Avenue



2 Lavant Road



6 Lavant Road



7 Lavant Road



21 Lavant Road



25 Lavant Road



27 Lavant Road

Now replaced by this
(Summersdale Place)!

APPAISAL BUILDINGS

Lavant Road



Warren Farm House



The Barn



Summersdale Road

(west side)



Downcote

Summersdale Road (east side)



Highland Road



The Broadway

The Broadway

APPRAISAL BUILDINGS

Other Roads