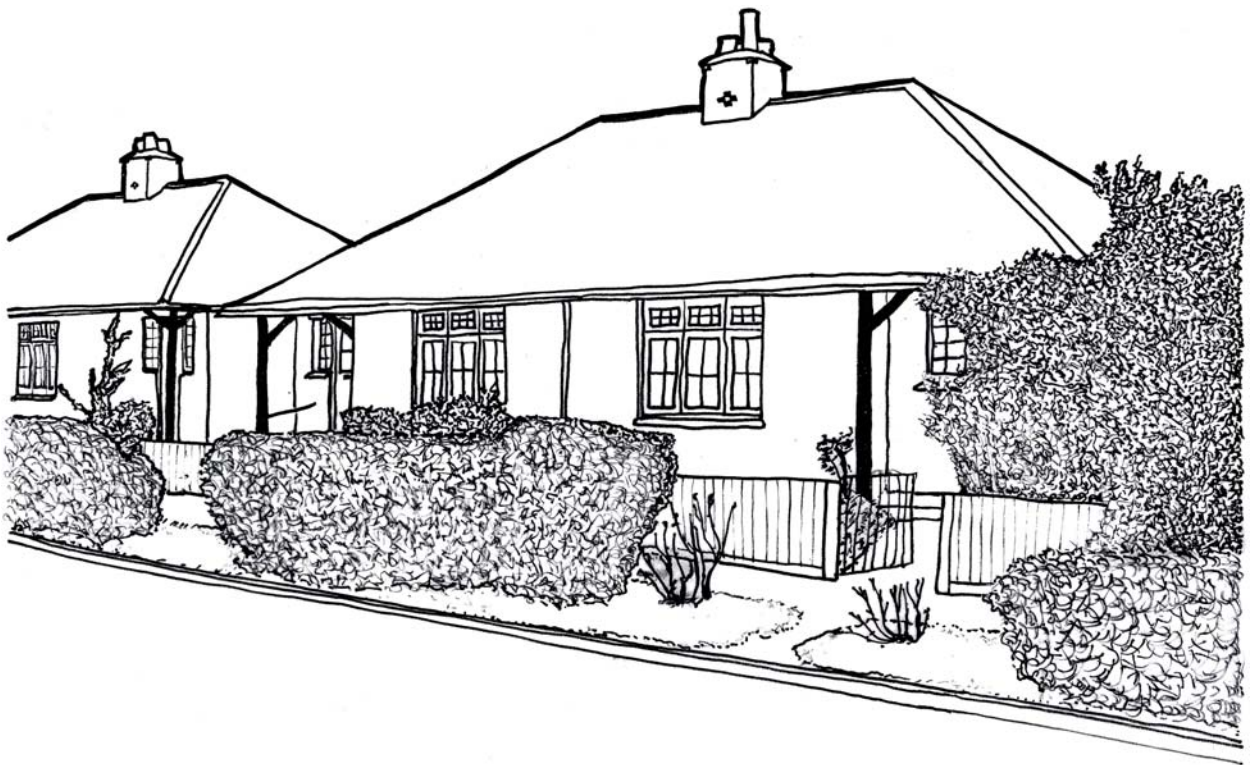


FLORENCE GARDENS HADLEIGH

Conservation Area Review and Management Plan



Essex County Council

Front cover illustration: 1-3 Florence Gardens

This document was produced by Essex County Council
for Castle Point District Council.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Conservation areas are 'Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The conservation area in Florence Gardens was designated on the 18th November 1997, since which there have been no revisions to the boundaries.

The conservation area includes twenty-five bungalows built by the Salvation Army for its retired officers. The boundary follows the rear of the plots and includes the road and all gardens and bungalows to the original planned development (fig. 1). Numbers 1-24 are locally listed for their architectural or historic interest. There are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the conservation area. A scheduled monument (number 108, SMR number 9536, see Appendix); a Roman fort shown in crop marks is approximately 80 meters to the South East.

Designation of a conservation area extends planning controls over certain types of development, including extensions, boundary treatments, the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees. However, it does not prevent any change and it may be subject to many different pressures (good and bad) that will affect its character and appearance. Florence Gardens appears well kept and has changed little since its construction. The biggest change has been to its setting, with extensive residential development taking place on all sides. 'Modernisation' and 'improvement' have affected its character to a certain extent; the most noticeable changes have been carried out as permitted development within the provisions of the General Development Order.

Castle Point District Council commissioned Essex County Council to prepare this conservation area appraisal and management plan in April 2005. The research and fieldwork were carried out between April and June 2005.

The document provides a brief history of the conservation area, assessment of its character and recommendations for future management. Any issues which affect the protection of character will be highlighted and opportunities for enhancement identified. This appraisal also considers alteration of the boundary to the conservation area.

1.1. Character Statement

The character of Florence Gardens has been determined by numerous factors, the following being the most significant: Salvation Army colony, uniform design and materials, continued Salvation Army use, formal layout and landscaped verges and gardens.

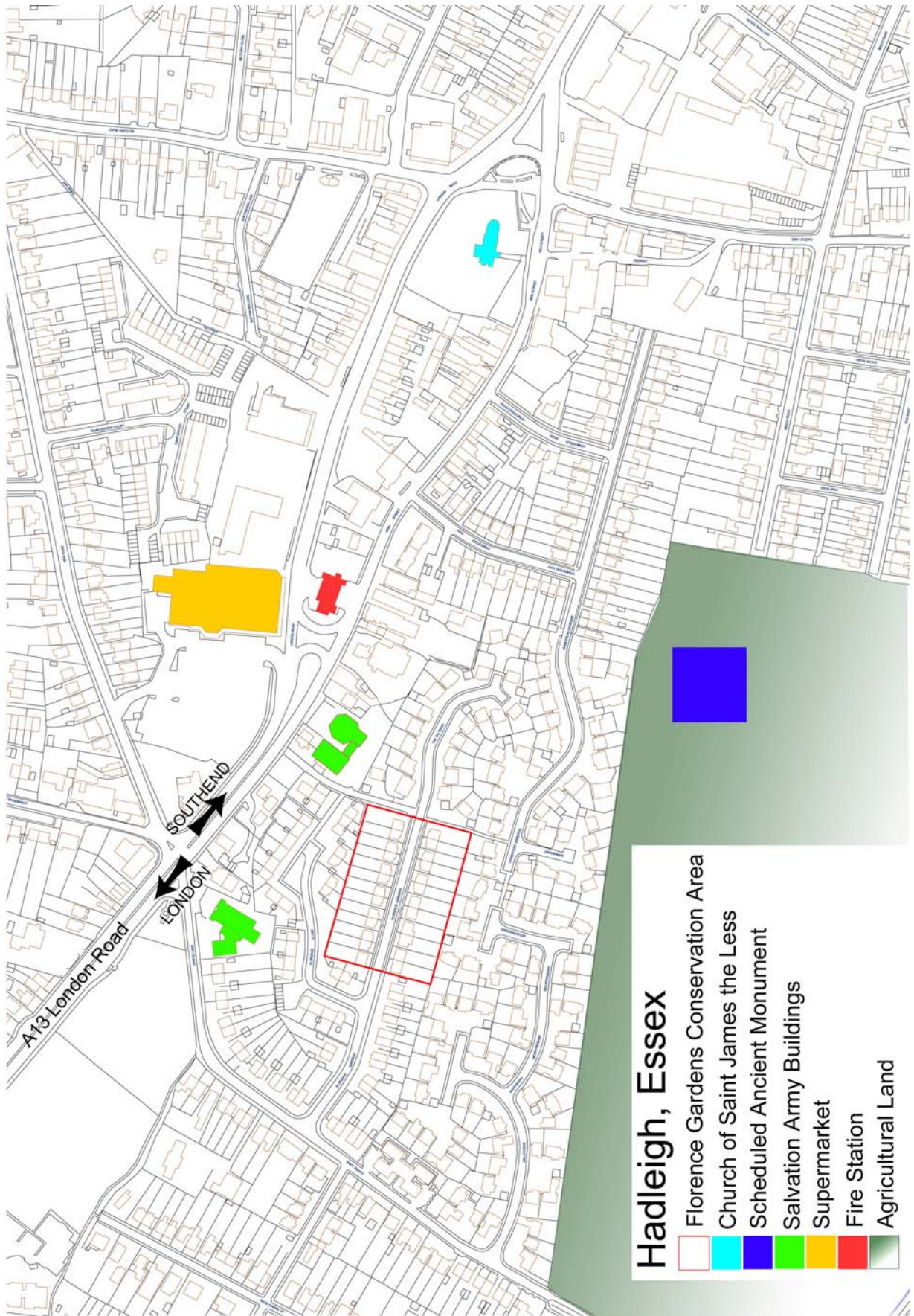


Fig. 1 Florence Gardens Conservation Area

2. ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Location

Florence Gardens is located approximately half a mile from the centre of Hadleigh, 4 Miles to the West of Southend-on-Sea and just off of the A13, the main road between London and Southend-on-Sea. The River Thames is to the South and the underlying geology sandy clay loam.

2.2. History

Hadleigh is noted for its fine church of twelfth century origin and the castle dating from 1230-39 with extensive rebuilding in the fourteenth century. The village was a small settlement based around the church, with farmland down to the creeks adjoining Canvey Island. During the twentieth century ribbon development has linked Hadleigh to Benfleet, Leigh and Rayleigh effectively forming one large urban conurbation.

Appalled by the poverty in London and other large cities 'General' William Booth founded the Salvation Army in 1878. His book 'Darkest England and the Way Out' in 1890 outlined the organisations plans to help the starving, homeless, criminal and drunken.

Three types of colony were proposed, with a city colony to recruit people, a farm colony to detoxify, realign and retrain the recruits and an overseas colony for their future development and independence.

On the 25th March 1891 800 acres of land were purchased, situated about five miles from Southend, and about three miles from the villages of Leigh, Rayleigh and South Benfleet. Formal possession took place on the 2nd May 1891, when a notice was erected stating:

The Salvation Army "Darkest England." The castle and park farms with other properties have been purchased by General Booth for the establishment of the first Farm Colony and elimination of the submerged tenth.

The estate included Park and Castle Farms, Sayers Farm, Leigh Marsh and Hadleigh Castle. The land at Hadleigh was chosen because it had been out of cultivation for many years and needed work, whilst there were good transport links, with both the London to Southend railway line and the river Thames to the South.

New recruits received training in farm work, carpentry, house painting, boot repairing and other handy-crafts, as well as in laundry, cooking and household work. The use of the estate evolved over the years, turning from alcoholics and the homeless to deviant boys in the inter and post war period.

The estate had extensive brickfields, with production lasting from 1892 until 1957. Bricks were transported to London via the wharf at Hadleigh Ray onto Thames barges (*fig. 2*).

During the mid 1920s twenty-five bungalows were built on agriculture land in the northern part of the Colony to house retired Salvation Army officers. Such an exercise in social housing as a planned estate is comparatively rare, particularly in Essex, although examples on a larger scale also survive at Silver End (near Braintree) and Bata (Tilbury).

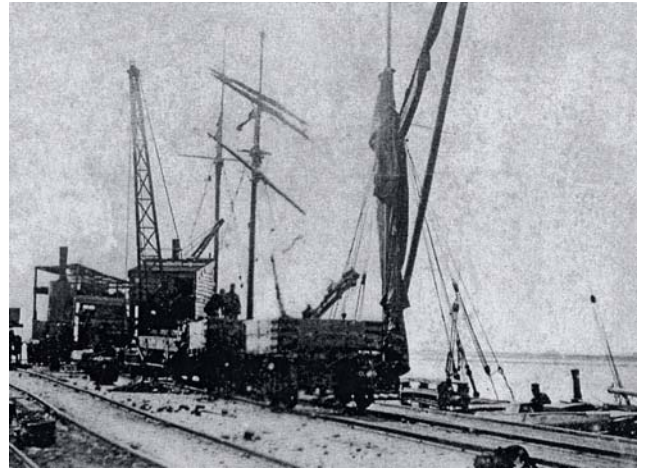


Fig. 2. Thames Barges at the wharf

Documentary evidence for the houses is limited, but one source suggests they were damaged in an air raid in the Second World War on 8th June 1940 (Hancock & Harvey). The bungalows remain in the ownership of the Salvation Army and are well kept, still occupied by some of the ex-officers.

The Salvation Army colony gradually declined in the 1960s. The social activities reduced and the colony was run as a commercial farm. Through the 1980s and 1990s there were several planning applications for the development of the northern part of the colony, with development taking place to the East and South of Florence Gardens for Mountnessing and Galleydene Lands.

2.3. Cartographic Evidence

The colony was at its peak in the early twentieth century, with 6,870 men passing through in the first 21 years (Sandall). A map of c.1900 indicates the range of buildings and activities on the estate, *see fig. 3*.

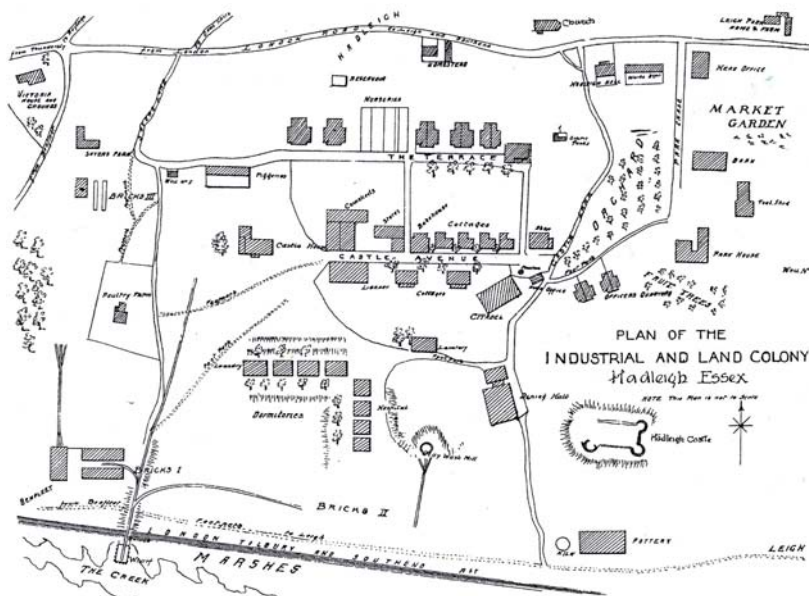


Fig. 3. Map of the Farm Colony c.1900

The third edition Ordnance Survey map of 1922 shows the Northern part of the colony and the site of Florence Gardens used for agriculture (fig. 4). A leaflet produced in 1926 shows the bungalows (fig. 5). The exact date of construction is uncertain but it was undoubtedly between 1922 and 1926.



Fig.4. Ordnance Survey Map c.1922.

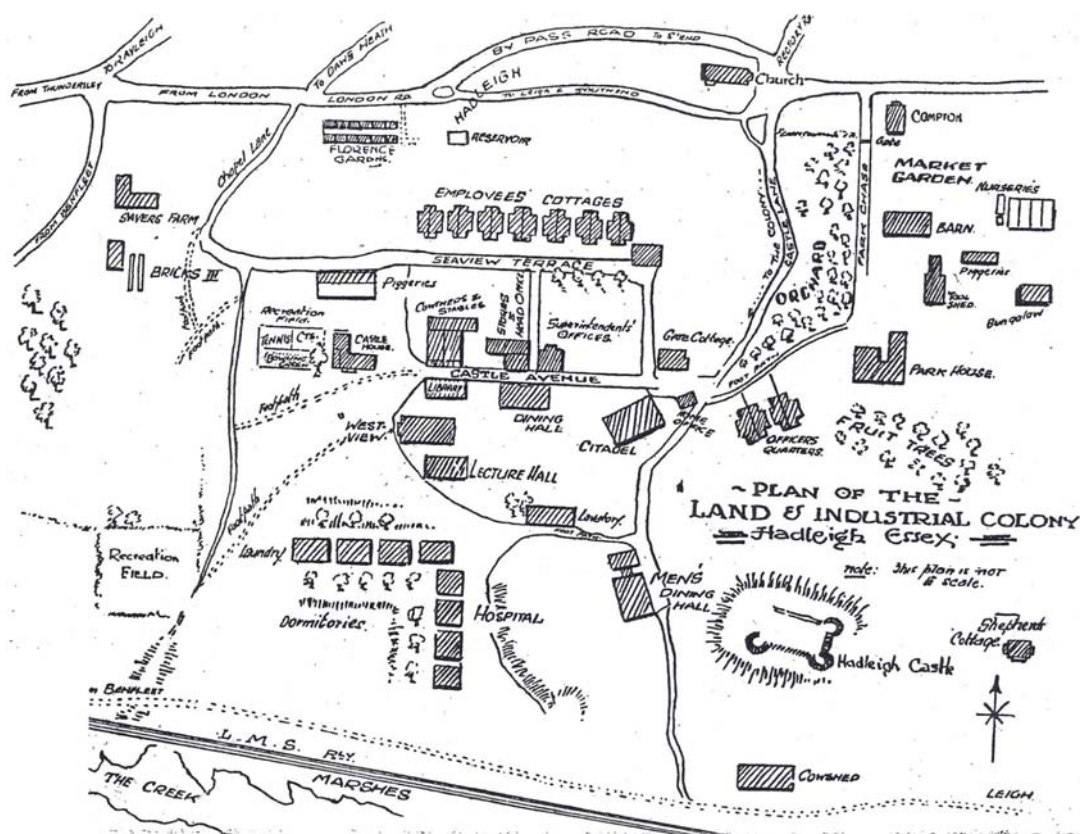


Fig. 5. Leaflet showing bungalows, 1926.

The fourth edition ordinance survey map (1939) shows Florence Gardens shortly after construction (*fig. 6*). The original, long plots are shown, with an open field setting. The Salvation Army chapel (opened 8th January 1939) is just to the north, the large-scale interwar development to the East and West is immediately apparent when compared with the third edition map.

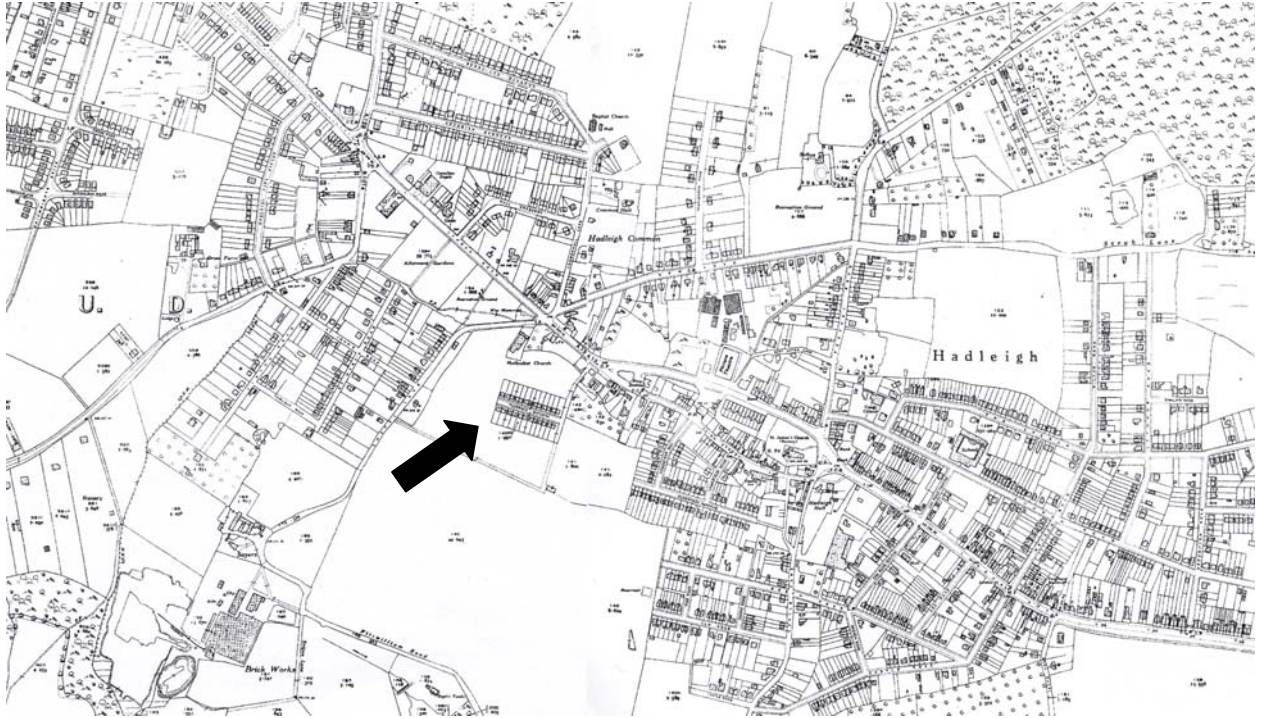


Fig.6. Ordnance Survey Map 1939.

3. MATERIALS AND DETAILING

The materials used are the same throughout all twenty-five of the bungalows, unifying the design. Profiled concrete tiles to the roofs, pebble dashed walls and chimneys and timber eaves and porches.

Concrete roof tiles were commonly used from the 1920's as a cheap and plentiful alternative to traditional materials. The roofs are all hipped, the verge and ridge tiles are half round bedded in mortar. The consistency of the roof materials is a significant part of the overall uniform appearance. Any replacement tiles or whole roofs should match the profile, colour and texture of the existing tiles as closely as possible; overly harsh and lifeless modern tiles should be avoided.

The chimney stacks project through the roofs at regular intervals, giving considerable roofscape interest. Stacks project through the ridge and the eaves in some instances. Projecting brick headers decorate the chimney stacks, which are otherwise finished in pebble dash (fig. 7). The bricks probably came from the Salvation Army brickworks on the colony, but there is no evidence to confirm this. Orange clay chimney pots cap the stacks.



Fig. 7. Chimney stack finished in pebble dash.

The low vertically boarded timber fences to the front and side of all the properties, backed by soft planting in most instances (fig. 8), adds to the uniform appearance of the area, whilst giving a relatively soft boundary. The gates are all of a similar design in metal, finished black. In some instances the properties are divided by a low wire fence with concrete posts which adds to the unpretentious, low key appearance of the properties.



Fig. 8. Timber fences.

The eaves detail is again consistent throughout the houses, with exposed rafter feet and a timber fascia board. Where recessed porches are formed timber posts and brackets support the roof. All of the timber work is painted black (*fig. 9*).



Fig. 9. Eaves detail.

The windows and doors have all been replaced with UPVC plastic. This has harmed the appearance and integrity of the bungalows, but as they are all the same type the overall unity has been maintained. The lifeless finish of the material and the false glazing bars are particularly alien to traditional character of the bungalows (*fig. 10*).



Fig. 10. UPVC doors

The rainwater goods have all be replaced with black plastic, but many cast iron soil vent pipes are still present on side elevations.

4. CHARACTER ANALYSIS

When considering the bungalows on their individual architectural significance, they are of little out of the ordinary, comparable to many houses of the period. Their significance lies partly in their origins, as a planned social housing exercise. The uniform layout and design, combined with the importance to the local area and the contribution as part of the Hadleigh Salvation Army colony and the lack of substantial alterations as a group make them worthy of preservation.

Although the layout and design is uniform, there are in fact three slightly difference house types. Numbers 1-23 (odd) and 2-12 (even) have a recessed entrance porch, so that the roof forms a canopy supported on a timber post with brackets (*fig. 11*). Numbers 14-24 (even) have a lower eaves height to the central section, giving a projection to overhang a three sided bay and form a canopy over the entrance door (*fig. 12*). A further variation is number 25, a one off which is basically half of one of the semi detached units with a projecting bay (*fig. 13*).



Fig. 11. Recessed front wall to create porch



Fig. 12. Projecting bay house type



Fig. 13. Detached Unit

The uniform, planned layout of the mid 1920s, regular detailing and materials all contribute to the character of the area. Because of this uniformity the area is particularly susceptible to unsympathetic changes. The long term single ownership of the bungalows by the Salvation Army has helped prevent alterations of a varied and indifferent quality. There is obviously considerable care taken in maintaining the area and a feeling of local pride.

The planted verges and front gardens add to the picturesque appearance of the bungalows and minimise the impact of parked cars in the street. The open space between buildings contributes to the suburban appearance of the area, with views back into the long open rear gardens (*fig. 14*). The paths, road, lamp posts and telegraph poles are all relatively sensitive, in materials in keeping with the period of the bungalows.

Satellite dishes are placed on many bungalows, which undermine their traditional appearance. Positioning of such paraphernalia discreetly is highly desirable.

The bungalows have a strong horizontal emphasis, set in wide low pairs. The close proximity of the buildings to the street, the narrow breaks between buildings and the continuous fenced frontage make the street feel dynamic, with a strong feeling of surveillance from the numerous window and projecting bays.



Fig. 14. View through, between properties

The slight curve to the Eastern end of Florence Gardens and The Saltings gives a subtle informality to the layout of the new housing, which contrasts with the rigid layout of the bungalows. The set back building line at both 26 and 28 Florence Gardens and the lack of front boundaries makes the bungalows stand out in stark contrast.

The alley way from the High Street gives a tightly enclosed approach, although this has been eroded by the new Salvation Army car park. There are good views across the back gardens of the bungalows, with extensive mature planting within the reasonably large gardens. Sheds and lean-to conservatory additions are low, subservient features allowing the bungalows and planting to remain the dominant features.

The new housing to the South and East is set well back so it does not over dominate the setting of the bungalows. The gaps between houses give glimpse views through to the bungalows, giving a sense of place to the new development, any extensions to the houses should preserve these views.

To the North Florence Close is a group of 1960s bungalows, which relate well to the scale of the Florence Gardens Bungalows, again allowing glimpse views through to the rear.

The fences with concrete posts and gravel boards on the corner of Florence Close and Florence Gardens, fronting the alley to the High Street and Mountnessing and at the rear onto Florence Gardens undermine the traditional appearance of the setting to the bungalows. Whilst on or just beyond the boundary they nevertheless have an adverse affect upon it.

The regular building line, building types, materials and boundary treatments all add to the overall harmonized appearance of the bungalows.

5. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

The local planning authority's role is largely reactive, dealing with planning applications, for instance. But opportunities for enhancement, additional planning controls and management often exist.

A photographic survey is attached (*see section 8.*) which provides a record of the condition and level of alteration. An updated record should be made every four years.

5.1 Boundary Changes

The original development of bungalows was on agricultural land, part of the Salvation Army colony. This semi rural setting has changed significantly with the development of housing all around the bungalows, most notably in the 1960s (to the West and North) and 1980s (to the South and East). None of the surrounding housing is of any architectural or historic interest, and doesn't relate to the character of the conservation area in any way. It is not therefore proposed to amend the existing boundaries.

5.2 Additional Planning Controls

At present the bungalows remain relatively unaltered externally and form a unified group. This unity is very fragile and changes in ownership could seriously harm the character of the area in a relatively short time. Works which can be carried out as permitted development leave the bungalows open to minor changes which could undermine the overall unity and detailing of the area, which is fundamental to its special character. Article 4(2) directions can limit permitted development rights, so that planning permission is required for certain works. The following article 4(2) directions are recommended to control works which may be unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the area:

Alteration of a dwelling house affecting windows, doors or other openings to the front and side elevations, including the insertion of dormer or other windows in the roofs and change of roof materials.

The application of any form of cladding or rendering to the external walls of the front and side elevations. The painting of any exterior wall of a dwelling house.

The erection or construction of a porch outside the front or side door, or the infilling of an existing porch of a dwelling house.

The erection, alteration or construction of any fences, walls or gates or other forms of enclosure to the front or side of a dwelling house.

Numbers 1-24 Florence Gardens are included in the local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest. Number 25, although a different house type to the others, is part of the group and retains similar features. Number 25 should also be included on the local list when the opportunity arises for amendment.

The 1930s Methodist Chapel in Chapel Lane to the North West of the conservation area is of interest for its historical association with the colony. It is however too remote from the conservation area to be included within the boundary, but it is of sufficient interest to be included on the local list.

5.3 Enhancement

The bungalows are well kept and retain the entire planned layout of the original concept. There is little scope for enhancement, although some opportunities do exist to improve the appearance of the area and reinforce its character:

1. Boundary Treatments.

The tall fences with concrete posts and gravel boards at the East and Western ends of Florence Gardens are particularly unattractive at the proponent gateways to the conservation area (*figs. 15 & 16*). The entirely concrete fence to the North facing onto Florence close is also harsh and unpleasant. Improvements to the fences could be done in a number of ways, whilst balancing the needs for security and longevity. Vertically boarded timber fences with timber posts would be preferable, or the existing fences could be softened with screen planting in some instances. The tightly enclosed alley up to the High Street has lost some of its pedestrian friendly scale and enclosure with the new access works to the rear of the Salvation Army Hall. Originally this alley was the only access to the bungalows, when they were laid out in farmland, but it is still an important entrance to Florence Gardens. This area would benefit with fenced and planted enclosure on an important access route into the conservation area (*see fig. 17*).



Fig. 15. Poor quality boundary treatment at the Western end of Florence Gardens



Fig. 16. Poor quality boundary treatment at the Eastern end of Florence Gardens

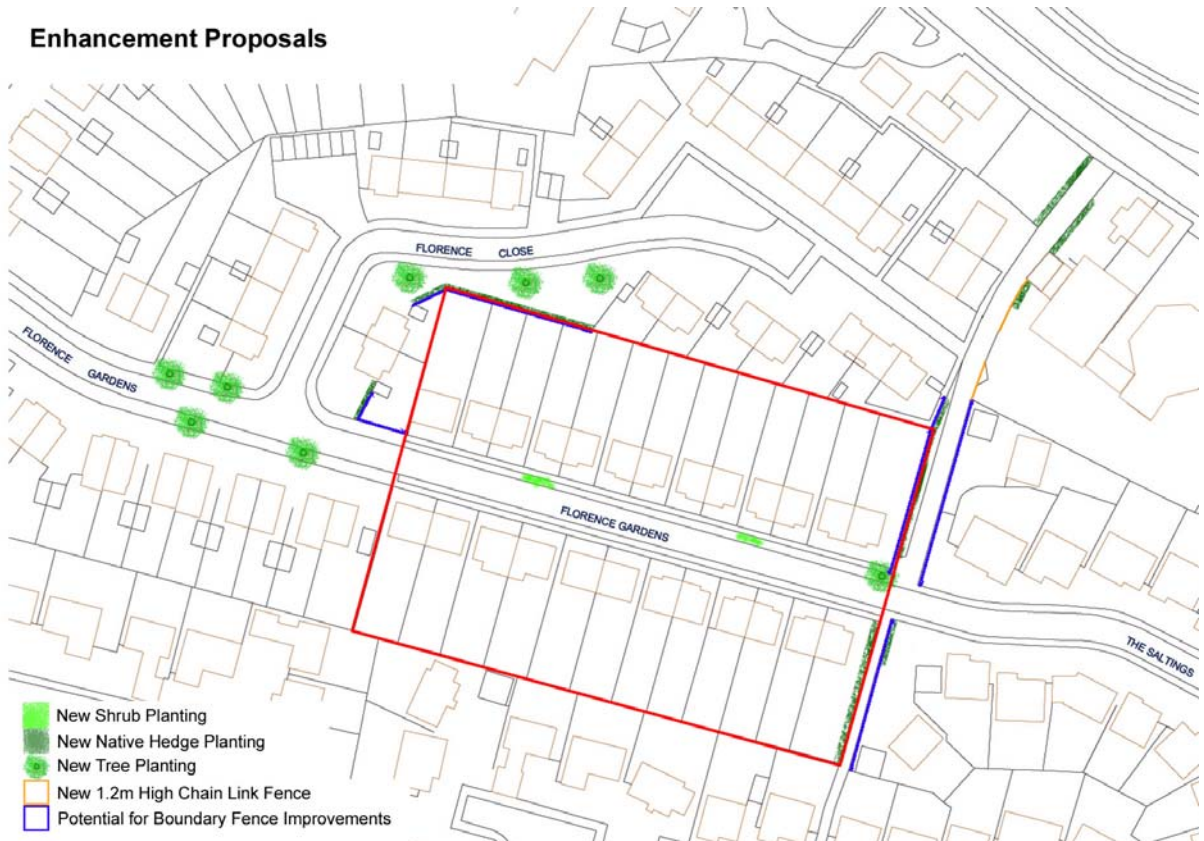


Fig. 17. Enhancement proposals

2. Planting

The existing soft planting makes a considerable contribution to the character of the area. There are however some areas where improvements could be made. The tall leylandil hedge at the Eastern end of the conservation area is dominant and alien. If the opportunity arises a native hedging would be a significant improvement. Some gaps exist in the existing shrubs to the verges which could be in filled. New tree and hedge planting in specific locations would also considerably enhance the setting of the conservation area (see *fig.17*).

3. Windows and Doors

The windows and doors have been replaced with UPVC plastic replacements. The originals would have been painted timbers, flush fitting casements. Reinstatement of timber windows and doors would be a significant enhancement if the opportunity arises.

5.4 Planning Policy

The following policies within the Castle Point Local Plan (1998) are relevant to the conservation area: EC25 Principles of control, EC26 Design and Development, EC27 Planning Applications, EC28 Restrictions on permitted development, EC29 control of demolition, EC37 locally listed buildings.

In addition to the existing policies when the opportunity arises additional policies within the local plan could strengthen controls with the introduction of a specific policy on the installation of satellite dishes and the desirability of protecting the setting of conservation areas.

5.5 Development Control Guidelines

The uniformity and integrity of the planned layout could easily be undermined by unsympathetic changes. The benefit of the planning system is that changes can be more carefully considered. Local Plan policies and national guidance form a basis for the local planning authorities determination of applications, however given the sensitivity of the bungalows some general development control guidelines are set out below, these are not intended to pre-empt the local authorities decisions or cover every eventuality, but are merely a basis for guidance which should be read in conjunction with the rest of this document.

Open Spaces

The open spaces are a very important part of the character of the area. The gaps between bungalows are evenly spaced, providing rear access and glimpse views through to rear gardens, giving a spacious setting. The openness of the gardens surrounding the conservation area also add significantly to the setting, giving breathing space and glimpse views in. The narrow spaces between bungalows mean that side extensions would be inappropriate. The approach to the conservation should retain its open aspect. Any new development to surrounding properties should not be dominant in scale or position and maintain important open spaces and soft planting. Outbuildings should not dominate the garden setting of the bungalows and should preserve important views and soft planting.

Boundary Treatments

The front boundaries are all uniform; low vertically timber boarded fences with simple black iron gates. Any changes to these boundary treatments would harm the regular appearance to the street scene. Any changes to the fences or gates should replicate the existing type. Boundaries between properties are a mixture of low vertically boarded timber fences and low chain link fences, either are suitable, but should remain low where dividing the front gardens. Where rear garden fences are not prominent from public vantage points there is more flexibility in fence types, timber or chain link fences remain suitable, but should not be more than 1.8 m (6 feet) high.

Extensions

There are limited possibilities to extend the bungalows due to their confined plots. Any extension to the front or side, including porches or in filled canopies would break down the uniformity of the design. Rear lean-to extensions have been added to many of the bungalows, another alternative would be to add a rear wing, which should be set back from the flank wall and be significantly lower and narrower than the original bungalow. It would be desirable to match the existing materials.

Minor Alterations

Again the overall uniformity of the bungalows is very susceptible to change. Alterations to window openings, particularly on front elevations should be avoided. Canopy and eaves details should be retained. Satellite dishes should be placed on rear elevations or on low poles within rear gardens, where possible. Dormers, roof lights or changes to the profile of the roof would not be appropriate.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Florence Gardens is an important legacy of the Salvation Army colony in Hadleigh. Its attractive, suburban planned layout, uniformity, open spaces and soft planting all contribute to its character and appearance.

The bungalows remain relatively unaltered. There is an obvious local pride and care in maintenance, with a well kept and pleasing appearance.

New development has surrounded a once almost rural location. But its scale and layout is reasonably sympathetic to the conservation area. Some changes have affected the appearance of the bungalows, such as the insertion of plastic windows, but the overall uniform appearance has, at least been maintained.

Change in ownership often leads to modernisation and improvement, however due to the uniformity of the bungalows they are particularly susceptible to changes which can harm their appearance. Additional planning controls are recommended so control some changes, allowing the planning process to give more care and scrutiny of any changes which may harm the conservation area.

There are limited opportunities for enhancement, but changes to some of the existing boundary treatments and soft planting could further improve the appearance of the area.

This appraisal and management plan should allow the local planning authority, the highway authority, local residents, developers and other organisations to make informed decisions about changes affecting the conservation area and preserve its special character for future generations.

7. APPENDIX

ESSEX HERITAGE CONSERVATION RECORD

(Monument Report)

11/05/2005

SMR No: 9536

Site Name: Hadleigh Enclosure

Record Type: Monument

MonUID: MEX30229

Location:

National Grid Reference: TQ 8065 8685

FCE

TQ88NW

Administrative Area: Non Parish Area

CASTLE POINT,CASTLE POINT,ESSEX

Description:

Roman fort - rectangular enclosure. Appears as cropmark. <1><2><3>

Site Assessment = More information needed.

Classification:

Type and Date:

Materials/Evidence:

FORT undetermined - to

CROPMARK

RECTANGULAR cropmark - to
ENCLOSURE

Associated Finds:

Status and other references:

Old SMR Number - TQ88-002

Sites & Monuments Record - 9536

Rating and Scoring:

Completeness 6

Condition NOT VALID

Associated Events/Activities:

Field Observation: Field visit to 9536 by Paterson, H, FMW, 01/09/1979 - 30/09/1979

EEX3023

Field Observation: Field visit to 9536 by Paterson, H, FMW, 01/04/1980 - 30/04/1980

EEX3023

Field Observation: Field visit to 9536 by Chant, K, FMW, 01/06/1982 - 30/06/1982

EEX3023

Sources:

<1> AP: Hadleigh TQ88-2-127, , CUCAP YG50, 1959,

SEX5446

<2> AP: Hadleigh TQ88-127, , Clack, T, Southend Flying Club, ,

EHCR

SEX5446

<3> AP: Roman Signal Station Hadleigh TQ88.2, , St Joseph, CR86, ,

EHCR

SEX5446

Compiler:

Gilman PJ - Heritage Information and Records

Created By:

Date:

Updated By:

Date:

8. PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



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Florence Gardens 10-12 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 13-15 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 14-16 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 17-19 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 18-20 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 21-23 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 22-24 19-4-05.jpg



Florence Gardens 25 19-4-05.jpg

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