

Cranleigh Design Statement

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Prepared taking into account discussions with

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Introduction

The parish of Cranleigh comprises a well-developed village surrounded by agricultural land and woodland. The village, which had served the local farming community, was enlarged in the 19th

century due to the coming of the railway and further expanded in the middle 20th century. Sometimes referred to as the 'largest village in England' it offers a unique combination of country living with urban facilities. The residents love the community spirit and rural atmosphere of Cranleigh but also appreciate the many amenities and organizations available.

Historically the village grew up around the Parish Church, the High Street and the Common and the construction of residential areas to the north and east have not spoilt this original area. Now mostly part of a 'Conservation Area' the style and layout of the buildings are greatly enjoyed and are seen to represent the character of Cranleigh.

This Cranleigh Design Statement has been researched and prepared by local people who have sought to identify the design features and character of the village that are valued by its residents.

This statement:

- has been co-ordinated by a steering committee funded by Surrey County Council Local Area Committee
 - should be read in conjunction with the current Regional and Local Planning Document
 - is a statement by the residents and landowners of the Parish to be used by Cranleigh Parish Council and Waverley Borough Council.
 - has been adopted by Waverley Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, to be taken into account as material consideration when planning applications are considered. The Supplementary Planning Document amplifies Saved Policy D4 Design and Layout, of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002.”
- It should also be used by those wishing to build, modify or extend property, or seeking to change the use of land.
 - identifies key features, which make Cranleigh what it is, and is specifically directed at the way inevitable future changes should be managed to maintain the character of the village and its surroundings.

Why is the Statement required?

This Statement illustrates some of the distinctive elements and characteristics of design that should be considered when plans are being prepared.

The Statement should be used in formulating and considering Planning Applications, and in reviewing developments, which may have an impact on the local environment within the Parish. Newness and change are not necessarily bad, with thought they can complement the old.

Planning Designations

The Village lies in Countryside beyond the Green Belt and much of the Centre is designated a Conservation Area. Rowly, on the outskirts of Cranleigh is a Rural Settlement within the Green Belt. Both areas are subject to stringent planning laws to protect the rural landscape. Within the Parish boundary countryside to the north lies within Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Certain areas have been designated as Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and therefore planning restrictions would apply. Definition of areas and the policies associated with them are in accordance with the *Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "The Plan")*.

Who should use this Statement?

Residents: Providing guidance when planning proposed alterations or extensions, so they will be in keeping with the character which the community values.

Planning Applicants, Applicants will find this Statement useful in preparing their application

Architects and Builders: To explain what the village values in the existing community and what it wishes to see in new and altered buildings and land uses.

The Parish Council: To assist it in commenting on planning applications and on the enhancement, protection and management of the area.

Waverley Borough Council: Which has adopted this statement as Supplementary Planning Document, to consider and determine local Planning Applications and environmental issues in the Parish.

Surrey County Council: To assist it with determining planning applications that are within its jurisdiction.

Geology and Landscape

The sandstone quarry at Pitch Hill provided valuable local stone and was used in many of Cranleigh's older buildings, most notably the National School, now redeployed as the Arts Centre.

Whilst the Wealden landscape is mostly flat an examination of contours shows that when the sea receded islands of sandy soil or alluvium were left behind. Most of the early farming settlements, or at least those that survived, can be found on these higher points and give rise to names like High Canfold, High Wykehurst, Upper House, Upfold and the like.

For centuries the Wealden clay proved an obstacle to transport and agriculture, being a sticky morass in winter and becoming hard as concrete in summer. Gradually improved methods of tillage and the addition of lime and manure improved the fertility and agriculture became the main employer right up to the 20th century.

Oak trees grow well on the heavy soils and have provided a key structural material for our timber-framed buildings until the 17th century after which bricks tended to dominate. The use of clay for making bricks and tiles was well known to the Romans but the art seems to have been lost for a thousand years. However by the beginning of the twentieth century about a dozen brickworks flourished in the parish struggling to keep pace with demand. Their names live on at Smithbrook Kilns and Manfield Park and today the works at Rudgwick and Ockley provide traditional product lines made by modern methods.

In some clay deposits a layer of thin hard stone occurs and this so called Horsham stone has found use as roofing material in a few of our more prestigious buildings such as the church and Belwethers.

Swallow Tiles, along the Ewhurst Road, made tiles by traditional methods and their output can account for many of the clay tile roofs and decorative cladding which has been influential in defining what we now regard as the traditional or vernacular Cranleigh house.

Man's use of the land is dictated by the underlying geology. It is a major determinant of topography, agriculture and the building materials available.

The area known as the Weald spans the counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. At one time the whole area was covered in a huge dome of sandstone with an outer crust of chalk. At a later stage in pre-history the land sank and the sea penetrated once more and washed most of the dome away to expose the underlying clay. Remnants of the dome are evidenced in the North and South Downs and the Greensand ridge, which has its highest point at Leith Hill.

The result of all this geological activity is that most of Cranleigh parish lies over a heavy clay subsoil whereas the northern boundary lies on sandy, well-draining soil in the area known as Winterfold Heath. With the soil improvement that took place over the centuries, Cranleigh Loam was much in demand as topsoil for gardens and sports fields. The result has been that much of the natural loam has been removed giving rise to much frustration amongst gardeners in dealing once more with the fertile but difficult clay.

Climate change is one of the biggest issues facing the world today. This Design Statement therefore encourages all forms of planning to take this into account. Traffic issues are referred to under the section on Settlement Areas and renewable energy and sustainable construction are included in the Building Design section. All these matters have a bearing on alleviating climate change.

The History of the Parish of Cranleigh

Little is known about the foundation of Cranleigh but it almost certainly began life as a settlement in a clearing in the dense Wealden forest which once covered the region.

The source of the original name Cranley is also uncertain, although the ending “-leah” derives from the Old English, meaning a clearing in the forest. The crane, which still forms the village’s emblem today was once said to be reared for the table in the ancient manor of Vachery.

St Nicolas church was built in the 12th century to provide a place of worship for the artisans on the local estates and since then it has remained at the centre of village life around which buildings and community developed. Another centre of population grew up at the western end around the Common where animals could graze and where once stood the windmill. The High Street we recognise today eventually linked the two hubs and the agricultural economy gradually gave way to the need for trade and accessibility by motor transport.

The monuments that survive to this day remind us of Cranleigh’s past. The Obelisk commemorates the opening of the turnpike road in the 1820’s, from just south of Bramley to Rudgwick in Sussex and this event transformed the village from an isolated farming community to a centre conveniently placed between the major towns of Guildford and Horsham. Furthermore, the improved state of the roads greatly eased local transport and many of the surrounding villages came to rely on Cranleigh for essential supplies not available in their own community.

The Wey and Arun canal opened in 1816 and whilst it was never a commercial success, large bulky items like timber and slates for building, and fertiliser and lime for the fields were regularly unloaded at the wharf in Elmbridge. The canal finally closed in 1870, its demise accelerated by the coming of the railway a few years earlier. Traces of the old canal bed can still be seen in some places and local volunteers are making great strides to reopen sections as a leisure amenity to be enjoyed once more. Educational facilities were in a very parlous state in the early 1800’s but were given a considerable boost in 1847 with the opening of the National School. Expansion took place on a number of occasions to cater for the burgeoning population and when the school finally closed in the 1960’s the premises were converted for use as an Arts Centre, which continues to be of much benefit to the local residents today. Cranleigh is probably better known for its public school which was opened in 1865 as “the Surrey County School for parents of the middle class or moderate incomes” and is today one of the leading private schools in the country.

The village hospital, opened in 1859, is the first of its kind and until recently provided healthcare for the local villagers. The building has been extended on at least two occasions but now faces an uncertain future. It is hoped that at some time it may be returned for use as an amenity which once again benefits the community at large. The Health Centre now provides essential services but the building is in need of refurbishment to return it to modern day standards. The new millennium was signalled by plans to build a new hospital providing a modern primary healthcare facility but this is currently subject to critical scrutiny by the Primary Care Trust.

The railway from Horsham to Guildford arrived in Cranleigh in 1865 and the village never looked back, as not only did local trade profit as never before but a large immigrant population was able to take advantage of the commuting potential for London and the rest of Surrey. The rural setting and the proximity to London proved an irresistible attraction and many grand houses were built as new or as conversions of existing farmhouses. As a result, the population at the end of the 19th century nearly doubled compared to the figure at the beginning of the century. The volume of postal material grew to

such an extent that the authorities asked that the village name be re-spelt from Cranley to Cranleigh to avoid confusion with Crawley. In 1965, the railway closed and the station was demolished to make room for Stocklund Square, but the old platform levels are still visible at the rear of the shops. One great benefactor to the village was Stephan Rowland who added the new shop frontage to Ivy Hall Farm and brought gas and water supplies to the village. It was he who later set up a company to develop the New Park Estate in the area of land bounded by Ewhurst Road and Horsham Road. Although many of Cranleigh's old buildings have been converted for different uses the character of the original can often still be detected on close inspection. How many visitors, or residents for that matter, realise that the restaurant opposite the Rectory was once a tailor's shop or the jewellers at the top of Knowle Lane once housed the Post Office and the restaurant above was the location of the Telephone Exchange.

For those wishing to find out more about the life and times of the village the Library keeps a wide selection of new and historical books, and the Local and Family History Centre holds copies of census records and parish registers dating from 1566

Cranleigh Today

Cranleigh today is a large but attractive Wealden village situated approximately 14.5km (9 miles) from both Horsham and Guildford.

The civil parish occupies an area of 3467 hectares (8569 acres or 13 sq. miles).

The population at the last census was some 12 000 persons, most of whom live in residential areas at the eastern end of the village.

The main axis of the High Street lies roughly east to west and links the two historic centres around which the original settlements grew. These being the parish church of St Nicolas at the eastern end and the Common at the western end.

At the heart of the village lies a Conservation Area "of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced."

Within this are 19 statutory listed buildings out of a total of 70 in the whole parish.

Featured amenities include Cranleigh School, Village Hospital, Public Library, Arts Centre, Village Hall and Band Room.

Some important Heritage structures include the War Memorial, Obelisk, Drinking Fountain, and the Lych Gate entrance to the churchyard.

Fortunately Cranleigh has escaped the worst scourges of the modernist styles typical of the sixties and its shop fronts have retained an individual character despite the ingress of the multi-national chains. It still retains its village character despite phenomenal growth over the last three decades. Whilst its shopping and leisure facilities are shared with a large hinterland of neighbouring villages the sense of fellowship remains intact and comes to the fore when necessary to resist changes seen as detrimental to the welfare of the community as a whole

Cranleigh can be proud of its health care, leisure, arts and sports facilities but most of all its community spirit, which lives up to its reputation that "Cranleigh Cares" is a fitting motto for the village.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESULTS AND FINDINGS

How has the task been approached?

A steering committee was formed consisting of representatives of Waverley Borough Council, the Parish Council and Cranleigh History Society. Other village organizations were invited to participate. It was decided, following the recommendations of the Countryside Commission Guidelines, to reach as many residents and landowners as possible to ascertain their views.

Do You Care What Cranleigh Looks Like? This was the name of a questionnaire intended to allow as many local residents as possible to give their opinions on the present buildings and environment of the village as it is today. It was distributed to most households and was available in public places. 230 replies were received. A public meeting in the Village Hall and another in the Arts Centre were other chances for people to make their suggestions. This statement has been written after careful analysis of the comments received from all sources and has regard to the views expressed.

The Character of the Village

A large number of respondents remarked on the friendly atmosphere of the Village. Despite its size, they felt it had retained its community spirit and they enjoyed the wide range of cultural, sporting and leisure activities available. The relatively unspoilt centre of the Village with so many independent retailers, the Library, Health Centre and Post Office were particularly valued. The Supermarkets received a mixed reaction with their architecture and associated traffic problems disliked on the whole. Other Village activities which people felt added to its charm were events on the Common, Bonfire Night and the various markets. One resident put it well: 'We have the facilities of a town and the atmosphere of a village.'

Industrial Estates: There are several areas of small industrial activities on the boundaries of the Village and a few small areas within it. These were considered to perform a very useful role in the life of the Village enabling residents to buy goods and services without too much travelling and also providing employment for local people. They vary from those estates designed as a whole enterprise and those which have grown on an ad hoc basis. Their design and the use of building materials cannot be judged in the same way as the properties above but it is desirable that they should be sited carefully with consideration given to nearby residents and the effects of traffic. The industrial estate at the western end of the village and Hewitts, Manfield park and Little Mead Industrial Estates are defined in the Plan as Areas of Suitably Located Industrial and Commercial Land (Policy IC2)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The design guidelines which form the main outcome of this Statement have been formulated having regard for the views of residents and the policies stated in the *Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002*. Modifications have been made following public consultation and application of a Sustainability Appraisal

Settlement areas

As stated in the section *Cranleigh Today*, it is clear that there has already been a large degree of development around the Village. Those houses built in the 19th century are closer to the centre and of the traditional Victorian style. The 20th century residential areas contrast with the historical buildings but are mostly of a traditional structure, are set out in well-planned streets and are acceptable to the people in the Village. The consideration of any future development outside the Village envelope should take into account the increase in road vehicle use leading to higher emissions. Parts of Cranleigh are on a

flood plain; hard surfacings which increase rainwater run-off should, where possible be avoided. Information on the flood plain may be found on www.environment.agency.gov.uk

Design guidelines

- **Sites for new development should have regard to the traditional character of the Cranleigh area. Development in the various residential areas should have regard to the design and character of those particular estates.**
- **The provision of light industry is an important part of the Village. Future development should ensure that it remains in specific areas that are not intrusive and does not spread on an ad-hoc basis**
- **Any new or refurbished development should take into account the loss of ground available for the absorption of rainwater which could lead to flooding**
- **New development should take account of the existence of a flood plain in Cranleigh**

Property characteristics

There are a wide variety of styles among the buildings in Cranleigh depending largely on the period in which they were developed. The pre-Victorian houses are mostly in the more central part of the Village and line the Common, Cricket Green and High Street. There are many outlying houses, usually originally farmhouses, of great value historically. Other houses relate to the two phases of development, that in the 19th century which followed the coming of the railway and that in the mid 20th century. There is a thriving shopping centre in the High Street and many of the shops are in old or attractive buildings, which have been sympathetically renovated. Much of this falls within the 'Conservation Area' but the southern side of the High Street from the Hospital to the Common is not covered by this restriction. There are some newer buildings, notably the Post Office, and the group of shops built in the 60's and 70's on the south side of the High Street, which are considered to be markedly out of character. The transformation of Stocklund Square and the addition of Sainburys drew a mixed reaction but many felt the architecture of the Supermarket was obtrusive.

After the first residential estate was built at the end of the 19th century (the New Park Estate) there was little development until the 1950's. Glebelands (a Local Authority Estate) was followed in the 1960's and 1970's by large areas such as Park Mead, Hitherwood, Summerlands, etc. These are of a mixed but modern design using some traditional materials (local bricks and tiles) and more contemporary materials. Residents of these houses are satisfied with their surroundings particularly enjoying the layout of those estates which leave some open spaces and trees.

We will continue to prioritize developments which include small, affordable housing.

Design Guidelines:

- **Future developments should have regard to the traditional character of the Village, especially those in the historically sensitive areas, by relating to the form and scale of existing buildings and using materials of local provenance, such as clay tiles and bricks and local stone.**

- Where there is an opportunity to provide low cost housing, this should always be considered.

Building Design

SW Surrey in general and Cranleigh Parish in particular have a rich stock of historical buildings in the familiar Wealden style, which contribute to the image of the village. Listed buildings include timber framed houses from the Tudor period as well as many attractive early Victorian premises which relate to the post-railway increase in population. In the twentieth century the need for substantial dwellings was satisfied by local builders such as Holden, Warren and Thorpe whose characteristic style is recognizable today. In addition, to talented local architects Thomas Wade and Henry Peek, examples of the work of nationally renowned names such as Henry Woodyer, Reginald Blomfield and William Butterfield can be found.

Two categories of buildings can be recognised:

The Village Centre: There is no single building style that typifies the Village of Cranleigh. It contains a variety of period, styles, roof heights and materials, which add to its character. With a few notable exceptions the structures do provide a harmonious setting, a group of buildings at one with their surroundings, in traditional materials. Any future development in this area should complement the scale, height and proportion of these buildings.

Residential estates: The older estates are often also built of local materials eg. brick and tile. On the newer estates some effort has been made to use local materials but there is inevitably an introduction of various styles, which are the trademark of the developer. Most residents felt happy with the estate on which they lived but disliked extensions which did not respect the style of the building.

The Structure Of Buildings

The great majority of buildings are on two storeys. There are a few bungalows spread around the outer Village of post-war construction and a very few buildings of more than two storeys.

Sustainable construction: Sustainable construction can be defined as the use of design and construction methods and materials that are resource efficient and that will not compromise the health of the environment or the associated health of the building occupants, builders, the general public or future generations.

Roof shape: Roofs are mostly pitched, some with gabled windows. Flat roofs where they exist are disliked

Roof tiles: Roof tiles of most of the older buildings are of local manufacture and have a mellow brown-orange colour. Ridges are usually finished with hand made hogged back ridge tiles. A few buildings have roofs made of Horsham slabs which weather attractively. Some of the newer houses have various man-made materials on their roofs and these are not felt to be in keeping with the Village. Flat roofs are felt to be totally out of keeping.

Hanging tiles: A feature of Wealden architecture is the hanging clay tiles on the upper storey of the houses. These locally produced tiles blend in with the bricks and roof tiles and are often used to make patterns using specially shaped tiles.

Brickwork: Most houses in Cranleigh are made entirely or partly of bricks, often the local brick which has a mellow tone. Modern 'red' brick used on some houses and extensions is seen as out of keeping.

Windows: On the traditional houses windows are usually fairly small and many paned. They often have natural wood frames and black leading. There are Victorian houses, which have sash windows in

keeping with the period. The modern houses usually have casement windows in white, often PVC replacements of the original metal frames. It was felt that replacement windows should always be in the style and colour sympathetic to the building.

Wiring, aerials and security lighting: Aerials and satellite dishes disturb the character of local properties when not positioned to minimize their visual impact. Telecommunication masts present an obtrusive and contentious feature. Security lighting can be visually intrusive and disturbing to neighbours if not sited and directed correctly.

Renewable energy: Renewable energy is that which is obtained from sources that are inexhaustible, unlike fossil fuels of which there is a finite supply. Renewable sources include wind power, wood, sunlight and geothermal. Use of small energy saving devices such as solar panels and wind generators are acceptable but should be positioned so as to cause minimum visual impact.

Design Guidelines:

- **New developments should harmonize with the rural character of the locality and be of sustainable construction.**
- **Every attempt should be made to conform to the character of the local housing by using local materials such as bricks and tiles whenever possible.**
- **The height of a new building should be sympathetic to its context**
- **Roofs should normally be pitched on new buildings and extensions to existing buildings.**
- **Replacement windows and doors should reflect to the style of the original building.**
- **Shop owners should be encouraged to retain shop fronts in sympathy with the design of the original building.**
- **Any lighting, telecommunication, or energy-saving devices should be carefully positioned so as to minimize any visual impact.**

Open spaces and woodland

Common open space: The situations of the Common and Cricket Green in the centre of the Village are of great value to all and there is a strong desire to maintain the feeling of space that they create. They should be maintained carefully but considerably remembering the need for wild life preservation. The spaciousness of some of the newer estates, for example Park Mead, was appreciated by residents. It was strongly felt the views of the nearby hills should not be obstructed by development. Infilling of large gardens worried people who felt the roads were becoming urbanized.

Playing Fields: To the south of the village the Snoxhall playing fields and recreation ground have been designated an Areas of Strategic Visual Importance (ASVI) in the Plan. They are seen as areas of open land which prevent coalescence of settlements and act as a “green lung” in the urban centre. To this end they should be maintained and enhanced.

Retention of distant views: The open area of the Common allows views of the hills to the north and west of Cranleigh. There is a strong desire to retain the open view between buildings so infilling should be resisted.

Trees: Trees were considered a valuable asset to the Village. The Maples on the Common drew universal praise and should be replaced when necessary by the same variety of tree. Trees in other areas were also valued as long as they were trimmed when necessary.

The Common : Cranleigh Common is open land by ancient right and a valued area for sport, leisure and social events and of great visual impact. It was greatly valued by all our respondents.

Open land which is not common: The majority of open land is used for agricultural purposes, mainly grazing. It is important to retain the open land we have left on the outskirts of the Village.

Preservation of wildlife habitats: Although there are no SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) in the parish there are areas of nature conservation interest which are detailed in the section under Nature and Heritage Conservation.

Land for recreational purposes: Some land is taken up for equestrian activities and golf courses. Within reason this is acceptable. The many public footpaths give residents easy access to the countryside and the Downslink path is particularly well thought of.

Verges and pavements: Verges on the public roads are the responsibility of the Highway Authority, Surrey County Council. Maintenance of verges at the front of houses is the responsibility of the homeowner; these are by and large well maintained. The state of the pavements in the High Street was particularly criticized by our respondents.

Boundaries: The boundary should be in keeping with the size and situation of the house. Walls of local stone or brick are approved but natural hedging is also popular, as long as it is well trimmed. Tall fencing and untrimmed hedging were felt to spoil the street scene.

Design Guidelines:

- **Maintain the existing open spaces within the Village.**
- **Retain the balance of buildings and open spaces within present and future residential areas.**
- **No development should obscure significant public views, enjoyed by the residents of the Village, to the distant hills or countryside.**
- **Retain trees, especially the maples on the Common, as part of the rural character of the Village. Encourage new plantings where development has left the site bare.**
- **Retain the total area of the present Common and ensure no development impinges on the views both from it and of it.**
- **Land now used for sport and recreational purposes is greatly valued and should be maintained and enhanced.**
- **Boundary walls or fences should not dominate the plot and hedging should be suitable for regular trimming.**
- **New development should include sufficient parking areas so as to avoid any on street parking in accordance with Local Authority Guidelines.**

Nature and Heritage conservation

There are many areas of natural importance, which could be affected by unsympathetic development. These include several historical and still thriving ponds, two areas of woodland off Barhatch Road and many beautiful native trees in public places, which are being conserved by Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council and Cranleigh Parish Council with assistance from the Cranleigh Branch of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. There are 24 areas designated as SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest)

Conservation Importance, which were detailed by the Surrey Wildlife Trust at the instigation of Surrey County Council. Development in these areas should not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not conflict with nature conservation interests (Policy C10).

A number of sites within the parish have been designated as Sites and Areas of high Archaeological Potential (Policy HE14). In considering proposals for development an initial assessment of the archaeological value will be required. As a result a field examination may be required as part of the planning application.

Roads

Although not actually part of the brief of this Statement the development of buildings can have a great impact on the traffic in the Village. The siting of schools and other buildings used by the public, where there is no parking facility included, affects the safety and appearance of the Village. The density of traffic through the main roads was very commonly remarked upon and disliked. It was felt the High Street should have a unified appearance with fewer signs both on the pavement and the shops. All development should take account of the impact of its construction and use on the road immediately adjacent and the traffic flow in the Village generally;

A development should provide safe access and adequate off-street parking.

Conclusion

There will be change within the Parish over the coming years. The Parish Council and Waverley Borough Council have the responsibility to try to shape the changes to protect and improve the special character of the area for future generations.

This guide will help the Council understand what is special about Cranleigh to local people and will provide a source of ideas for residents and designers to work with local building styles which have helped to make the village what it is today.

Taken together with the accompanying text, the guidelines at the end of each section of this Cranleigh Design Statement provide details of the qualities which local people hold dear. Hopefully this guidance will ensure that all development is designed and located in such a way as to have regard to the local characteristics and to respect local values.

It is hoped that everyone will find this guide useful and that it will play a major part in retaining the special character of the parish well into the 21st century.

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