

11. CHARACTER STUDY-HACKETTS LANE AREA

11.1 Location and extent

Coldharbour Lane
Coldharbour Road (North West extremity)
Hacketts Lane
Wildwood Close
Timber Close
Woodlands Road
Berkeley Gardens

11.2 Description and History

At the beginning of the 19th century the area around Hacketts Lane was probably open or common land. The land was acid and of poor quality and the grazing of commoners' animals eventually died out and the land was succeeded by birch and willow scrub. Towards the end of the 19th century a full coniferous woodland had developed.

After the Enclosure Act of 1815, one thousand four hundred acres were enclosed, half of which went to the Lord of the Manor, Hacketts Lane was acquired by Lord King, and subsequently passed on to his son, the Earl of Lovelace and then to Lady Lovelace.

From 1880 the beginnings of urban growth in Byfleet and Pyrford meant that these land areas acquired a greatly increased value as building land. In 1887 the opening of West Byfleet station encouraged the beginning of many expensive low density houses to be planned.

In the Ordnance Survey map of 1870 two houses in Coldharbour Road at the junction with Old Woking Road were in existence. In 1905 41 acres of land on the north side of Coldharbour Road, bounded by the Old Woking Road and including Coldharbour Road, Woodlands Road and Berkeley Close was sold to Mr J H Robinson. In 1906 four acres of land in Coldharbour Road were sold to W. G. Tarrant for four houses. The first three houses to be built in Hacketts Lane were built on the north side in 1908. In 1923 the first house known as Hacketts End was built on the south side by Mr Horford. Development since then has been fitful. The majority of houses were built in the 1950's. Wildwood Close, and Timber Close, both cul-de-sacs on the southern side of Hacketts Lane, were built in 1961 and 1986 respectively. Berkeley Close, a cul-de-sac off Woodlands Road, was built in 1978. The latest development of three

houses was in 2004, although a Planning Approval has been given by Woking Borough Council to build on the land of the former Oakfield School which fronts onto Hacketts Lane.

The land on which Coldharbour Lane was developed was (prior to 1906) the property of Mrs Knowles. The first house to be built, in 1877, was at the very end of the cul-de-sac. A chapel that no longer exists is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1914. The later development of bungalows occurred from the late 1950's

11.3 Distinctive Features

There are no listed buildings nor are there any public open spaces.

11.4 Typologies present

All the houses in Hacketts Lane, Coldharbour Road, Woodlands Road, and Berkeley Gardens are large detached houses built on substantial plots of land with garages generally double and integral with the house. On the north corner of Woodlands Road and Old Woking Road is a recently constructed block of luxury apartments. There are no other apartments in this section.

Substantial paved areas in the front of the houses allow for several parking spaces.

The development along Coldharbour Lane is different in form comprising mostly of detached bungalows excepting for a couple of semi-detached houses. The majority have attached garages but a few rely on forecourt parking. The development takes place on only one side of the lane, the opposite side of the lane has the back garden boundaries of Hacketts Lane.

11.5 Built Form Characteristics

The houses in Hacketts Lane, Coldharbour Road, Woodlands Road, Wildwood Close and Timber Close have all been individually designed. They are substantial, and vary in style from mock Tudor, mock Georgian, Victorian, Arts and Crafts, 'Tarrant style' and of contemporary design. Materials vary from all red brick, brick with tile-hanging, half rendered or completely rendered. Without exception all have two storeys with pitched and tiled roofs.

Berkeley Gardens differs in that the cul-de-sac was built by the Berkeley Group and has two bungalows and three detached houses. The houses are identical and have buff brickwork with weather boarded first floor elevations, columned lean-to porches and double garages. The bungalows are similar in character but without the weatherboarding. Coldharbour Lane has an eclectic mix of styles. The original semi-detached Victorian cottages built in 1893 are of red brick with red clay roof tiles. Generally the bungalows have buff coloured brickwork, white rendered or pebble-dashed walls with interlocking concrete roof tiles and white painted window frames. In all there are seventeen dwellings in Coldharbour Road.

11.6 Streetscape and Spaces.

Hacketts Lane is a gated private through-road the majority of which is held by the Crown Estate in 'escheat', with house numbers 18 to 34 owning small portions of the road in front of their houses. The road is maintained by the residents. It is wide, with speed control humps. There are grassed verges that are either contiguous with the front gardens or divided by hedges or shrub planting. Coldharbour Road and Woodlands Avenue are adopted through-roads, the former with grass verges and the latter with tarmac footpaths. Front gardens are almost all very generous in size and afford plenty of parking spaces. Both Wildwood Close and Timber Close are cul-de-sacs and are approached by tree lined drives from Hacketts Lane to back-land development at the rear. All these roads have numerous very mature large trees creating an idyllic character. Wildwood Close is an adopted road.

Berkeley Gardens, a cul-de-sac, has footpaths on both sides of the adopted road with front gardens leading directly onto the footpaths. Colharbour Lane is a private cul-de-sac, having a single narrow lane with passing places at intervals. All houses have at least one parking space. Houses are built on the south side of the road and the north side has the boundary garden fences or hedges of Hacketts Lane.

11.7 Greenspace and vegetation.

Hacketts Lane, Coldharbour Road, Wildwood Close and Timber Close, have broad and open frontages facing the roadway and have lawns, mature shrubs and many with mature trees. Generally there is no delineation between road verges and private gardens. Drives are generous in size and are generally block paved. Woodlands Road is much more secluded with high hedging on boundaries, green verges and pavements. Again there are many mature trees in front gardens. Berkeley

Gardens has a group of conifers set within a grassed area enhancing the entrance but could be improved if there were more trees within. Coldharbour Lane has a variety of front gardens. Some having low brick walls on the boundary, some having chain and posts, a few with hedges and some completely open. As the frontages are comparatively narrow, most of the front gardens have hard landscaping for car parking. There is very little in the way of vegetation. On the north side of the road the rear boundaries to Hacketts Lane have either hedges or close boarded fences. There are many large mature trees in those back gardens.

11.8 Perceptual Factors.

Visually the well cared for landscaping and maturity of the trees in Hacketts Lane, Coldharbour Road, Wildwood Close and Timber Close, creates a harmonious and pleasing character even though styles and ages of properties vary. Only small glimpses of houses can be seen in Woodlands Avenue as all the houses have high hedges for privacy. Coldharbour Lane has a disjointed feeling as there is such a variety in character both in terms of scale and age

11.9 Opportunities and Issues.

There is not any scope for further infill in these roads as all possible infill sites have been built upon. None of the roads have any public open spaces.

Part of the grounds of the former Oakfield School has a boundary onto the north side of Hacketts Lane. Planning approval has been given for the demolition of the school and erection of a block of luxury apartments and four large detached houses, similar in style to the old school that had been built by W.G.Tarrant. Two of these houses will face and be accessed from Hacketts Lane.

Hacketts Lane, Woodlands Road, Coldharbour Road and Berkeley Gardens, are part of Woking's Urban Area of Special Residential Character which was adopted in 2000. Under this classification it is considered to be:

- A post war low density suburban estate of detached houses, characterized by quite regular sized plots.
- There is substantial planting on front boundaries and is well treed.
- Limited cul-de-sac and back-land development has taken place on some of the larger plots, but there is very little scope for more without damaging the character of the area.

11.10 Some individual street observations follow:

Hacketts Lane

This private road connects Old Woking Road to the south section of Coldharbour Road. At present there are thirty eight houses with a planned addition of two houses on the former Oakcroft school site. House numbers Eighteen to thirty four were all developed by E&L Berg Ltd. The first house was completed in 1965.

Coldharbour Road

There are between thirty and forty houses in Coldharbour Road on large plots of land. The road is adopted and has grass verges on both sides without footpaths. The through road connects Oakcroft Road and the southern section of Coldharbour Road with Old Woking Road.

Woodlands Road

There are sixteen houses in Woodlands Road on very large plots. The road is adopted and has footpaths and grassed verges either side. It is a through road connecting Hacketts lane to Old Woking Road.

Wildwood Close

There are eight houses in Wildwood Close with one recently extended. The road is an adopted, with a footpath on one side and a narrow grass verge on the other.

Timber Close

A group of five houses approached from Hacketts Lane via a tree lined avenue that has not been adopted. It has a shared surface road.

Berkeley Gardens

A cul-de-sac approached via Woodlands Road was built in 1978 by the Berkeley Group

Coldharbour Lane

There are sixteen dwellings in Coldharbour Lane.