

Broadway Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Broadway

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1. Preface

- 1.1 A conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Such areas are designated by local authorities and unlike Listed Buildings, there are no national grades or standards. In Kingston upon Hull there are 26 conservation areas (as at January 2010).
- 1.2 In designating conservation areas, it is vital that the special interest justifying conservation area status is clearly defined and analysed in a written appraisal of its character and appearance. This is important for assisting the management and development control process for the area. Beyond their use as planning tools, appraisals also have a much wider application as educational and informative documents for the local community, and for property owners contemplating alterations or repairs. It must be remembered, however, that no appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest or value.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Broadway conservation area was designated in March 1994. It is located approximately 2.5 miles (4.1 km) north-east of Hull City centre (just off Holderness Road). The conservation area covers 3.57 ha (c. 8.84 acres) and contains 80 dwelling houses and 1 community building. At the time of writing, none of the buildings is statutory or locally listed.
- 2.2 The conservation area comprises 4 roads: The Broadway, The Bowling Circle, Willows Avenue and Seafield Avenue, and is the second smallest in Hull. The topography is very flat like most of the City, and there is no known archaeological interest within the conservation area.
- 2.3 The above 4 roads and their houses were laid out as the primary phase of the British Oil & Cake Mills’ ‘Garden Village’ for its employees in the early 20th century; previous to this development the area was open countryside. The company’s development of this land was never finished, and parts of the development such as the sports facilities that did get built have since been erased. The original 4 roads and houses of the Garden Village are now designated as the Broadway conservation area (Figure 1).
- 2.4 Due to the lack of free space and the residential nature of the conservation area, there is little opportunity for future new development.

3. History & Development

- 3.1 In 1910 the present conservation area was still undeveloped fields (Figure 2). However, housing development was encroaching with development steadily creeping along the nearby Holderness Road and at the west end of Portobello Street.
- 3.2 Just after the First World War, the British Oil & Cake Mills company (BOCM, formed July 1899) bought c.42 acres of land (including within this the present conservation area) on which to build a 'little' Garden Village for their employees to live in – similar to Hull's more famous and larger Garden Village built by the Garden Village (Hull) Ltd, mostly between 1907-1913, but extended in 1924. The purchased land was bounded by Holderness Road to the north-west, Portobello Street to the south, and in the east by a winding field-drain or ditch running north from Portobello Street. On the north side it was bounded by a watercourse which crossed Holderness Road at the Summergangs gate and flowed into what is now the East Park area. The path of this watercourse, and thus the original northern extent of the land purchased by BOCM, can still just be traced on modern maps.
- 3.3 In the earlier 20th century the BOCM had already provided the Pearson Institute on a different site for its workers (Cleveland Street on the east side of the River Hull) in order to promote sports and recreation. To improve on this provision the company intended to build on the 'little' Garden Village site magnificent facilities and services for its workers – 400 to 500 houses were planned along with a library, concert hall, club room, tennis courts, a pavilion, cricket and football pitches and a 15 foot wide cinder running track.
- 3.4 The first phase of the BOCM Garden Village was opened with a ceremony on the 23rd July 1921 (photo 1). This first phase of building was to comprise 112 houses, but by 1921 only the 56 houses (those in the current conservation area) built on the south side of The Broadway and all along Seafield Avenue were completed, and it was these which were celebrated in the July opening ceremony, along with the running track and pavilion on the sports grounds immediately east of the housing area (Figure 3). The houses were built in 'Early English cottage styles' (Vernacular Revival style), and with a general wish of avoiding uniformity Mr A.I.Windross, estate agent, and Major Edward Goddard, timber merchant, designed (with advice from the architect T.B.Thompson) 11 different house types, across 4 different sizes of house, placed in semi-detached pairs as well as short terraces (photos 2 & 3). Significant among these were the show house (opened by the Lord Mayor) and the 'Sunshine Houses' (built in terraces-of-4) with large living rooms designed to get the sun throughout the day.
- 3.5 Development after this first phase was slow. More houses were added to the Garden Village along Willows Avenue in 1925, after a bequest of £10,000 by the late Mr J.B.Willows (a director of the BOCM) was left to assist in building. The street bears his name, and one of the 18 half-timbered houses built along it was affixed with a bronze plaque (photo 4):

1925
'THE J.B.WILLOWS'
WORKMEN'S COTTAGES'
ERECTED UNDER A BEQUEST MADE
BY THE LATE J.B.WILLOWS ESQ (JP)
FOR 24 YEARS A DIRECTOR OF
THE BRITISH OIL AND CAKE MILLS LTD

- 3.6 The current Broadway conservation area consists of the houses celebrated by the opening ceremony in 1921, and the others built along Willows Avenue in 1925. This comprises 74 houses; however, currently there are 80 houses within the conservation area (See 3.10 below).
- 3.7 Maybury Road was built in 1925 according to the original plan of the BOCM, and was a part of Hull's outer ring road (Figure 4). A few more homes were added along Maybury Road and Holderness Road (not included in the current Broadway conservation area – though perhaps this is a consideration for the future).
- 3.8 The scheme then floundered, with no more than 130 houses built on approximately half of the land originally purchased by the BOCM. The Second World War saw the sports field and running track used for anti-aircraft activities; after the war ended, pre-fabricated houses (prefabs) were erected on the remainder of the original land purchased by the BOCM with the basic course of the running track transformed into 'Broadway Drive' (Figure 5).
- 3.9 In the early 1990s the 'prefabs' were cleared and replaced by bungalows and sheltered housing. The bungalows on the north side of The Broadway (outside the conservation area) are of this period of construction. Although outside the conservation area, they provide a sympathetic and complementary backdrop by virtue of their subordinate scale, subtle Vernacular style, and soft gardens and boundary treatment (photo 5).
- 3.10 Along with the original 74 BOCM Garden Village houses there are 6 other houses built within the Broadway conservation area. There are 3 bungalows ('Broadway Cottages'), accompanied by a small private residents' 'nature reserve' built on the eastern-most section of the conservation area. The bungalows were built (and the 'nature reserve' land put aside) in the late 1990s and they are part of the 1990s housing scheme immediately to the east of the conservation area, which replaced the post-Second World War prefabs (which in turn had been placed over the BOCM sports grounds). There is also one bungalow, built in the 1970s, on previously open land where Willows Avenue meets the Bowling Circle, and two 2-storey Moderne semis (c.1930s) on the corner where Seafeld Avenue and The Broadway meet (photo 6). The only other substantial building not part of the original BOCM development is the Portobello Methodist Scout Group Headquarters on The Broadway (photo 7). This was opened in 1962 and extended a few years later.

Character & Appearance

4. General

- 4.1 Broadway conservation area is a small but good example of a planned early 20th century 'Garden Village' built by a private company, The British Oil & Cake Mills Ltd (BOCM), in the 1920s. The 'little' Garden Village was originally built for employees of BOCM. The company still exists, as BOCM Pauls Ltd, and still holds in trust 18 of the properties: 2-20 Willows Avenue and 37-51 Seafield Avenue. The Trustees are all currently or recently retired employees of BOCM Pauls and they continue to run the Trust for the benefit of retired employees or children of employees of BOCM in Hull. The remaining properties in the Garden village are privately owned.
- 4.2 Significant elements which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Garden Village include:
- the scale, density, height, massing, layout, rhythm, style, detailing and original materials of the inter-war housing;
 - soft front gardens, boundary hedges (typically privet) with wooden garden gates (photo 8);
 - grass verges and open spaces; and
 - tree-lined streets.
- 4.3 The original 74 houses are built in a variety of Vernacular Revival styles ('Early English cottage style') and are a mix of 2-storey semis and terraces-of-4. Houses are typically of red brick and roughcast with steep roofs (gabled, hipped and half-hipped being represented). Half-timbering is common. The traditional roofing material (principal, bay and porch) is red plain and/or ornamental tiles (such as bull-nose, fishtail and club). Positive building elements, which add a great deal of character to the neighbourhood, include bay windows (square and cant), porches (recessed and projecting), canopies, front-facing gables, deep eaves, and stout chimney stacks. Dormers, where they occur, tend to be massive gabled types set on roofs sloping down to ground floor eaves. Each set of houses has therefore something new to offer to the eyes and avoids uniformity (photos 9-16).
- 4.4 Sadly, some original features, such as the vast majority of timber doors and windows, have been lost in the conservation area, replaced almost entirely by PVCu facsimiles that bear little resemblance to the design and style of the originals (photo 17). At the time of writing only one original front door survives (photo 18) and only two houses retain their original front windows (complete with the odd bull's-eye pane) (photos 19 & 20). Some inappropriate modern bow windows have also appeared in place of original bays and flush windows (photos 14 & 21). Loss of traditional and characteristic plain/ornamental roof tiling has occurred too at some properties. However, despite the loss of some original features, the character of the individual buildings remains strong.

- 4.5 Roads and pavements are of tarmac and kerbs generally of concrete, although some good quality granite and York stone kerbs survive here and there. Street lighting is modern and replaces the old 'electrified' gas lamp columns that survived until the turn of the century (photo 22). The new pressed aluminium street lighting (photo 24) has undermined the 'village' appearance of the area, and robbed it of valuable historic street furniture which added charm, character, richness and variety to the street scene.
- 4.6 Other negative elements contributing to the erosion of the character and appearance of the area include:
- the replacement of soft grass verges with ill-considered grass-crete (photo 23);
 - the replacement of traditional roofing materials with out-of-character materials (eg plain tiles for concrete double Roman tiles) (photo 25);
 - the repair of ornamental roofs with plain tiles (photo 26);
 - the removal of boundary hedges (photo 27);
 - leaving boundaries open or installing hard boundary treatments (eg walls, railings and fences) (photo 27);
 - the replacement of soft front gardens with hard standings (photo 27);
 - installing satellite dishes on chimneys, walls or roof slopes which face onto, and are visible from, a highway (photo 29);
 - installing solar panels on front roof slopes (photo 25);
 - installing inappropriately designed rooflights (photo 30); and
 - enclosing recessed and open porches (photo 31).

5. Perambulation

5.1 The Broadway

5.1.1 The Broadway is the 'main entrance' to the conservation area and between its junction with Holderness Road and Seafield Avenue it is divided in two by a grassed central reservation, planted with several small trees. The street has a great sense of space at this point due to its broad width and is bordered on either side, as it is for its entire length, by grass verges with tall trees. Beyond its junction with Seafield Avenue, the street narrows and gently curves towards The Bowling Circle (photo 32).

5.1.2 The first building to be seen along The Broadway is the single-storey Portobello Methodist Scout Group Headquarters, situated on the west side of the street. This is a later addition to the 'village' (built 1958-62 and extended 1965-6), and was opened by Lord Middleton on 7th April 1962. The extension was opened by Sir Leonard Hutton on 29th January 1966. Although the mass, scale and height are at odds with the other buildings within the conservation area, the building, a valuable community asset and focal point, has a 'village' feel and

domestic scale. Its assimilation is further helped by the nature of its sympathetic construction, comprising brick (laid in English Garden bond) and roughcast under a gabled roof. Simple but attractive detailing completes the picture; scalloped lead flashing on the bargeboard and on the distinctive gabled sign on the front gable end (photo 34).

- 5.1.3 The next buildings encountered on the west side of the street, two semi-detached inter-war houses (nos.14 & 16), are not characteristic of the main Garden Village housing (being later additions). The majority of the Garden Village housing is built in a Vernacular Revival style, whereas the two aforementioned semis are of Moderne design, typical of the 1930s. Although re-fenestrated, they retain many distinctive features, including curved 'suntrap' bays, corner windows, hipped roof, plain chimney stack and side doors recessed beneath a broad arch. No.16 also retains its original coloured glass door, side lights and over light. Although of a different design, they are very characteristic of their era, and because of this and their appropriate scale, height and materials, they do not detract from the area's charm, but are rather a beneficial quirk.
- 5.1.4 Between Seafield Avenue and The Bowling Circle, still on the west side of The Broadway, are 10 semi-detached houses. Each pair of semis is designed slightly differently, but all are in a Vernacular Revival style. The chief characteristic of the houses along this stretch of the road are the massive gabled dormers set on roofs sloping down to ground-floor eaves. Unfortunately, as with most of the houses in the area, they suffer from the all too common degradations of re-fenestration, and in some cases porch enclosure and retiling in non-traditional materials.
- 5.1.5 The greenery of this street is also slightly compromised by the introduction of brick walls, railings and fences, or open frontages, to replace front boundary hedges.
- 5.1.6 The modern late C20th bungalows on the east side of the road are excluded from the conservation area. Although excluded, the bungalows, with their gabled timber bay windows and neat gardens with wooden garden-gates and privet hedges, fit in comfortably with the area's original 'English Cottage Style', providing a sympathetic backdrop to the conservation area while not being part of the area itself.

5.2 The Bowling Circle & the east end of The Broadway

- 5.2.1 The name 'Bowling Circle' echoes the sports field and facilities previously located immediately to the east of this area. Now however it is a pseudo village-green, a wide and green grassy circle, with large mature trees inside (photo 35). The presence of this space gives a very peaceful look and feel to this part of the small neighbourhood. The Bowling Circle is bordered on the northern edge, as at The Broadway, by more of the late C20th bungalows, with the same neat front gardens, wooden garden-gates and privet hedges, which again provide a sympathetic backdrop.

5.2.2 To the south of the Bowling Circle are 6 semi-detached houses (The J.B. Willows' workmen's cottages), officially part of Willows Avenue (photo 36). The first 2 pairs of semis look directly out onto the Bowling Circle, and the other two pairs are at an angle to it and sit on the corner with Willows Avenue proper. These 6 half-timbered houses, with a roughcast finish, have retained their original plain roof tiling, soft front gardens and traditional boundary hedges. This is typical 'Garden Village' and is only spoilt by the inappropriately styled and designed PVCu replacement doors and windows. Having said that, a small saving grace is that the uniformity of the terraces has been taken into consideration and maintained.

5.2.3 The very east end of The Broadway runs into the entrance of a 1990s housing scheme (built for The Pickering & Ferens Homes). Only the 3 'Broadway Cottages' at the entrance and the adjacent residents' private nature park (a positive open space) are within the conservation area though. The neutral 'cottages' are similar to the bungalows mentioned earlier, on the east side of The Broadway, except they are a little higher.

5.3 Willows Avenue & the south end of Seafield Avenue

5.3.1 Willows Avenue proper and the south end of Seafield Avenue are dominated on the east side by more of the delightful J.B. Willows' workmen's cottages, arranged in 3 obtuse terraces-of-4. However, the southern view down Willows Avenue is arrested by a single bungalow built on the corner of Willows Avenue and the Bowling Circle. This bungalow (built in the 1970s) conflicts with the Vernacular Revival style of the original BOCM houses, and as it was built on previously open space (which originally extended as far as no.36 The Broadway), it has reduced the spacious feel of the street. The view looking south also takes in the back of the houses along Seafield Avenue (which is not unattractive aspect where original roofing materials survive) (photo 30). Grass verges and front boundary hedges complete and enhance the scene.

5.3.2 The 12 Willows' cottages, grouped into three terraces-of-4 all retain their original plain roof tiles, and have a uniformity of build which is very pleasing to the eye. Although re-fenestrated with PVCu windows, some thought and reference has been made again to the uniformity of the terraces and the original windows. The replacement windows and doors are still, however, poor facsimiles of the originals, particularly the windows which were multi-paned originally. The doors also lack the character and charm of the originals (photos 3, 37-39).

5.3.3 At the southernmost end of Seafield Avenue there is a good semi-'open' vista out of the conservation area where, across the junction with Portobello Street, there is a small grassed open space.

5.4 Seafield Avenue

- 5.4.1 Seafield Avenue is the longest street in the conservation area and has the most housing; these houses were also the first to be built by the BOCM. This street is a little narrower than the other streets within the Garden Village, and with houses on both sides consequently has a little less of the airy, spacious feel about it. This street also seems to have suffered most over the years, in terms of original features being lost and greenery being reduced (photo 40).
- 5.4.2 During World War I, BOCM had developed New Pin Soap, a hard soap for household cleaning and after the war this became so successful a line that Seafield Avenue was almost named after it.
- 5.4.3 Starting from the south end of Seafield Avenue, the view up the street in terms of greenery is less than in the other parts of the conservation area. The tall trees remain to add plenty of verdure, but the replacement of grass verges with grass-crete has had a profound effect on the character and appearance of the street, which once had a village-lane feel (photos 23, 27-28, 41). The loss of the grass verges is not ameliorated by other greenery at eye-level, as many front boundary hedges have given way to other forms of boundary treatment eg walls, fences and railings (or some cases none at all), with hard standing and gravel accompaniments (photo 27). Parking has obviously been an issue for residents in this area, considering the placement of grass-crete and hard standing. The loss of the old 'electrified' gas lamp columns has also had a negative impact on the character and appearance of this street (photo 22).
- 5.4.4 The houses along Seafield Avenue provide the characteristic mix of Vernacular Revival style detailing, and one of the most pleasing things about the street is how the varied elements (gables, porches, bays and canopies) contribute to the vista. On the negative side, some original roofing materials have been replaced with out-of-character concrete double Roman interlocking tiles (photo 25). Poor and inappropriately designed PVCu replacement windows also add discord to the character and appearance of the buildings and area, particularly in matching semis and terraces.

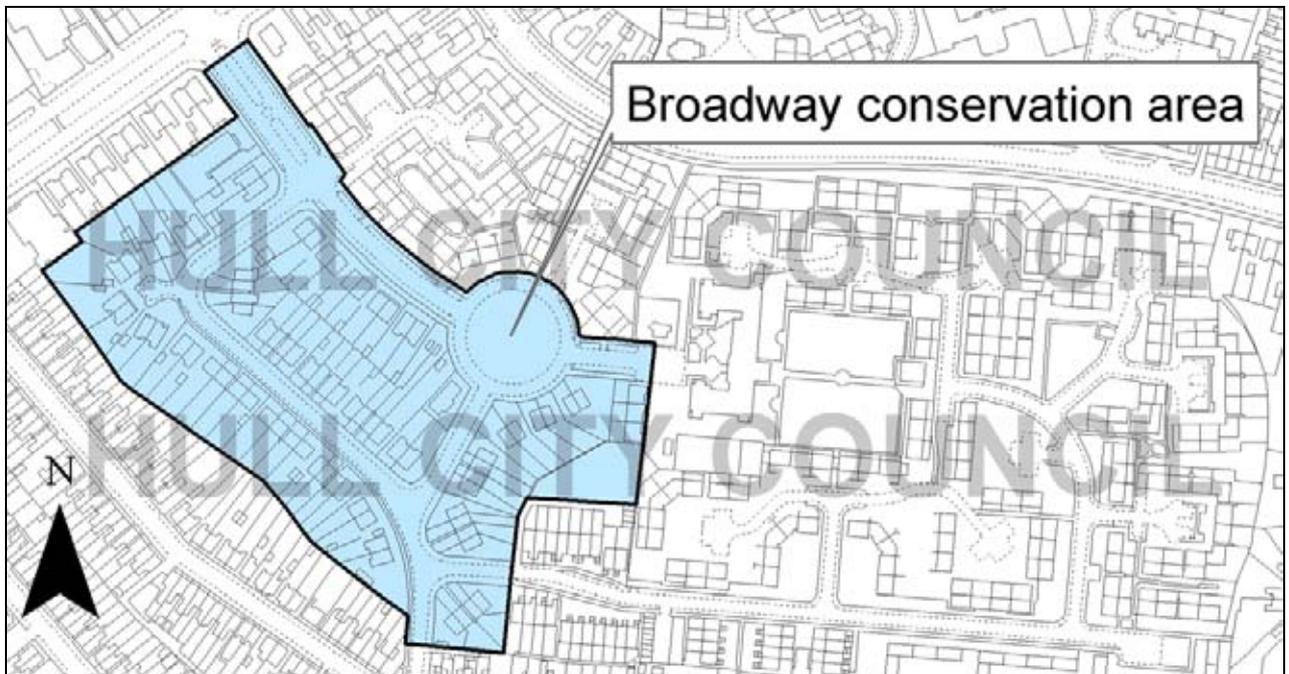
6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Broadway conservation area is a good example of a small planned early 20th century 'Garden Village' built by a private company, The British Oil & Cake Mills Ltd (BOCM), in the 1920s.
- 6.2 Significant elements which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Garden Village include the inter-war housing (both Vernacular Revival style and Moderne); soft front gardens; boundary hedges (typically privet) with wooden garden gates; grass verges and open spaces; and tree-lined streets.
- 6.3 Some original features, such as the vast majority of timber doors and windows, have been lost in the conservation area, replaced almost

entirely by PVCu facsimiles that bear little resemblance to the design and style of the original windows. Loss of traditional and characteristic plain and ornamental roof tiling has occurred too at some properties. However, despite the loss of some original features, the character of the individual buildings remains strong.

- 6.4 The general character and appearance of the area also remains strong in most parts, but is under threat in some corners, particularly Seafield Avenue. Overall, though, the houses and gardens are generally well kept and well maintained by owners and tenants and there is a strong sense of pride and community spirit in the area. This aided in part by BOCM Pauls continuing strong links with and commitment to the Garden Village.

Approved by the Planning Committee on 16th February 2010 & adopted after public consultation by the City Planning Manager on 6th April 2010.



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Figure 1: Broadway conservation area boundary.

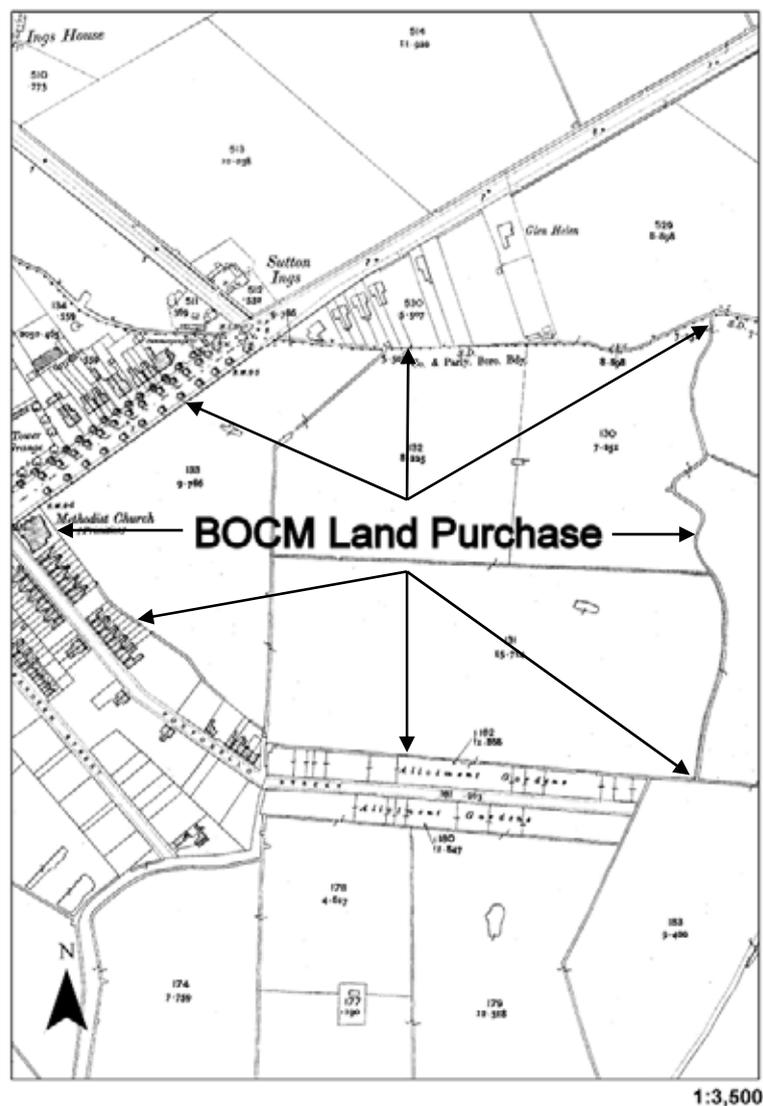


Figure 2: Map extract (Ordnance Survey Edition of 1910), showing the land purchased by the BOCM just after the First World War, on which they intended to build their Garden Village and sports facilities.

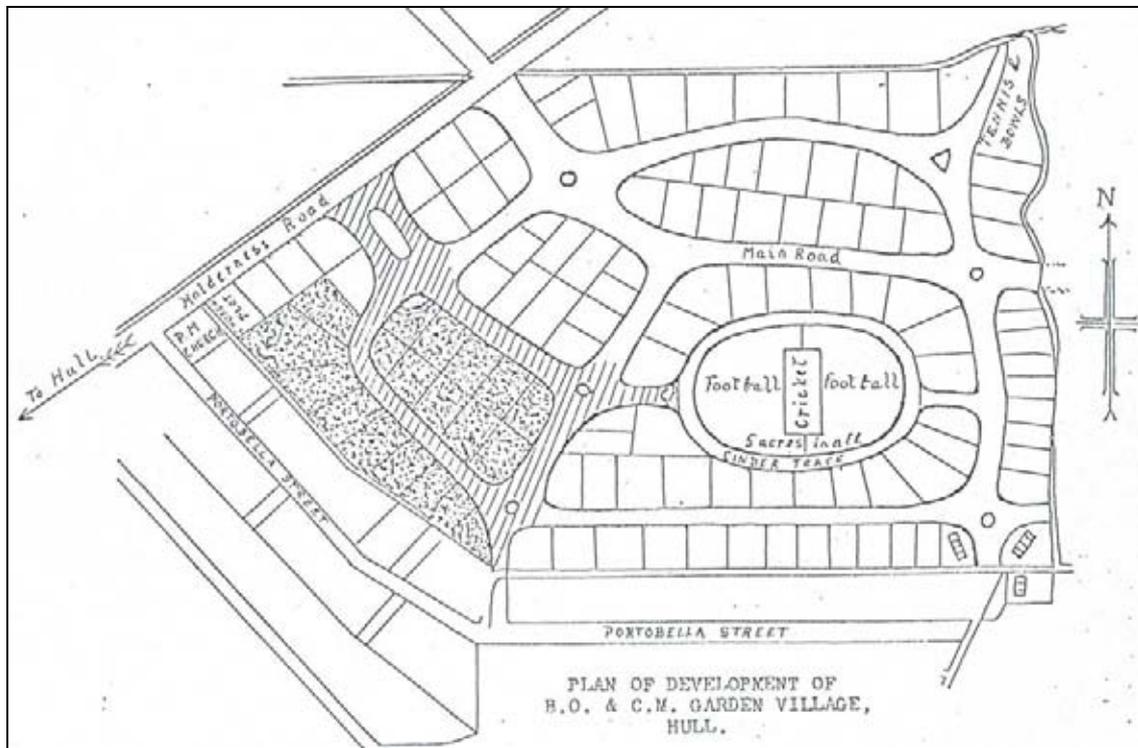


Figure 3: Plan of Development (1921). The speckled portion indicates the houses already built or in the course of building in 1921, and the hatched portion the streets laid out.

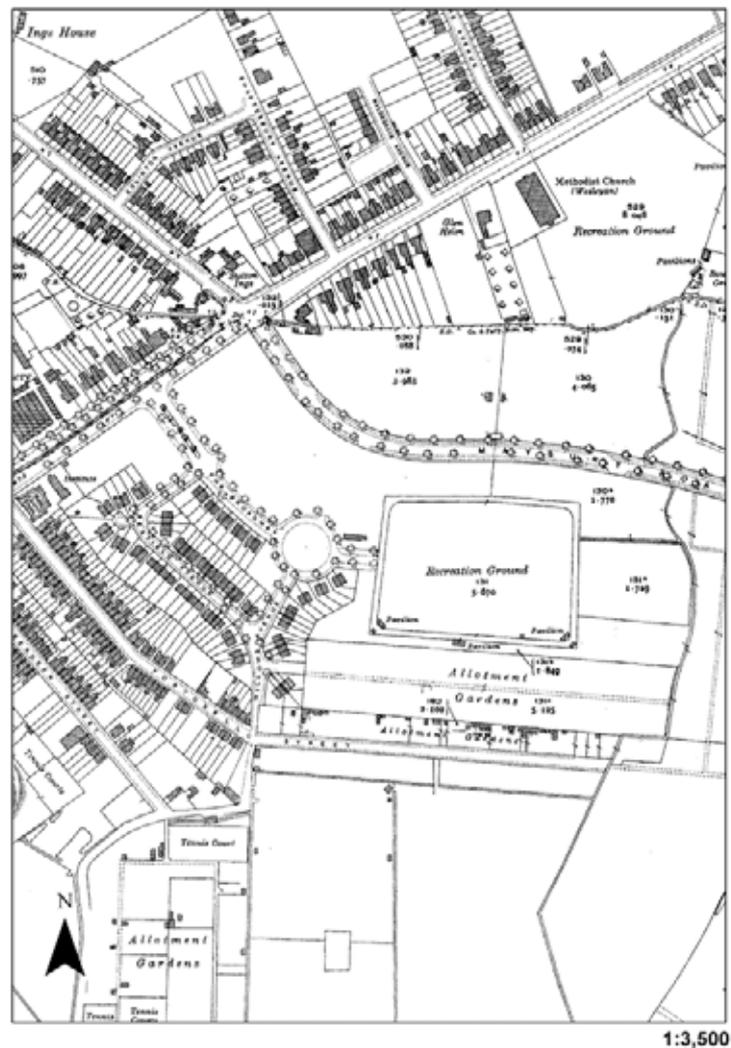


Figure 4: Map extract (Ordnance Survey Edition of 1928), showing the progress of development between 1921 & 1928.

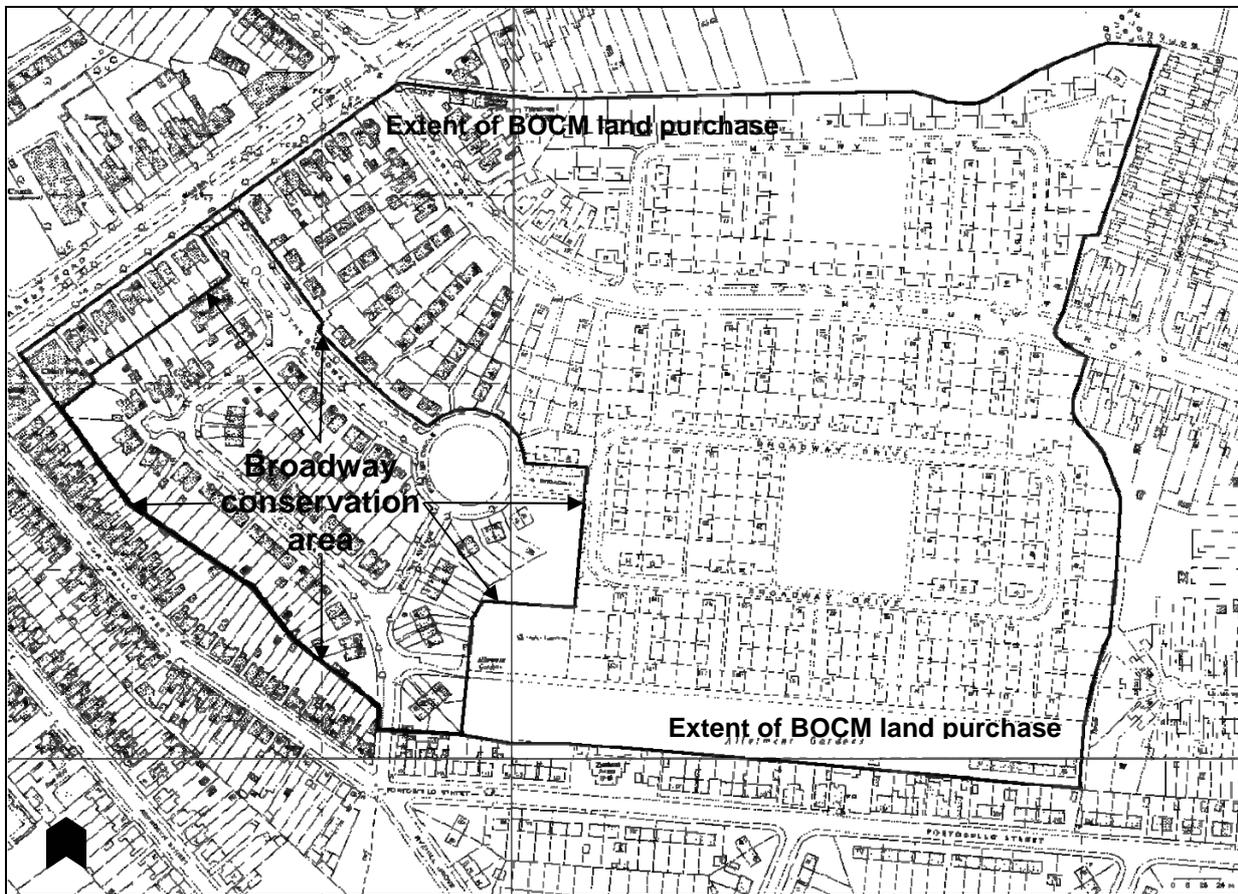


Figure 5: Map extract (Ordnance Survey Edition of 1952). By the 1930s the BOCM scheme to build an extensive Garden Village had floundered. Following the Second World War (1939-45) over half of the land originally purchased by the BOCM was given over to the erection of pre-fabricated houses (prefabs). Around 160,000 prefabs were hastily erected around the country from 1945 to 1949 to try to ease a post-war housing shortage. Cheap to build and needing only a concrete base, the houses were mass-produced in sections at a factory and assembled on site. The prefabs proved surprisingly popular, in large part because they included such luxuries as fitted kitchens and bathrooms, as well as private gardens. Despite being intended as a temporary solution, large numbers survived into the late C20th, including the 'BOCM' prefabs which were not cleared away until the early 1990s.



Photo 1: Houses at The Broadway built in the first phase of the BOCM Garden Village in 1921.

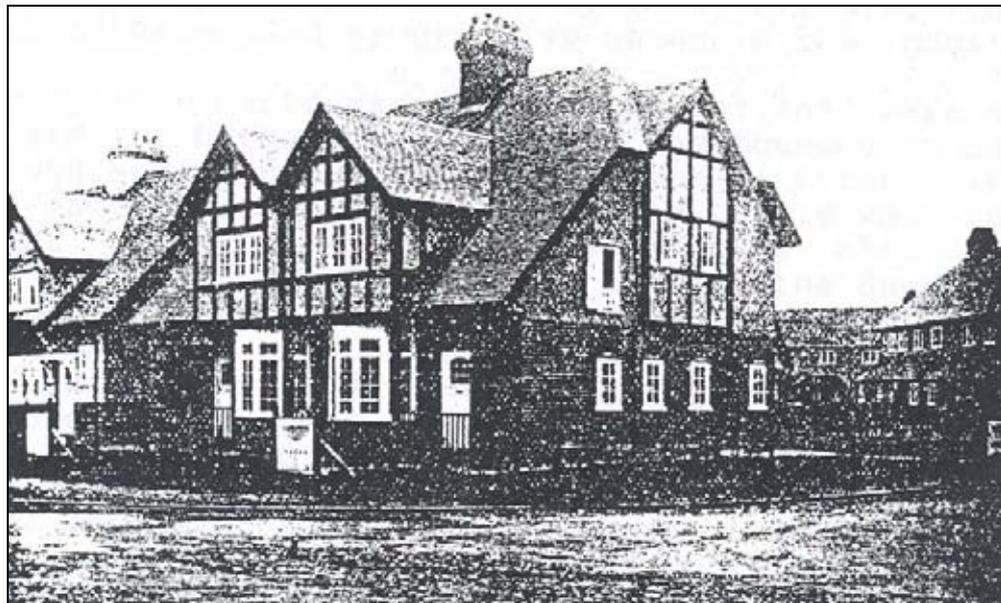


Photo 2: Typical example of the Vernacular Revival style architecture ('Early English cottage style') of the BOCM Garden Village in 1921.

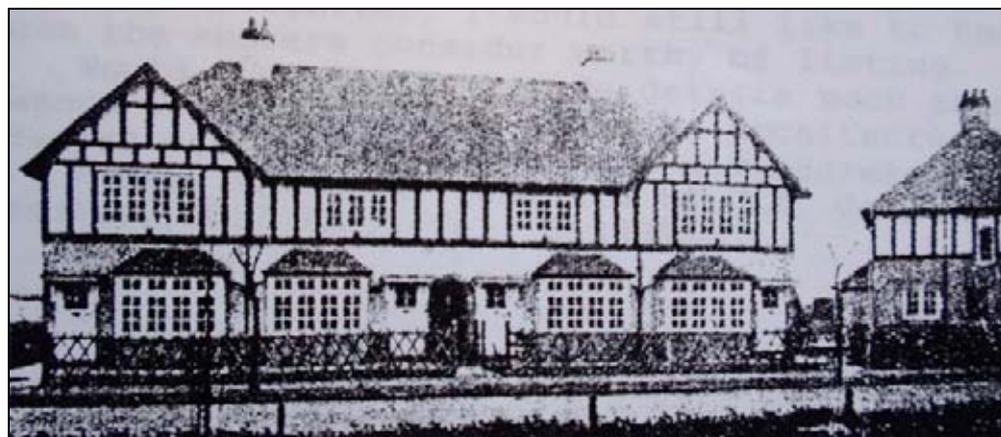


Photo 3: One of the three J.B. Willows' terraces-of-4 erected in 1925.



Photo 4: Bronze plaque, The J.B.Willows' workmen's cottages.



Photo 7: Portobello Methodist Scout Group Headquarters, The Broadway.



Photo 5: Bungalows on the north side of The Broadway.



Photo 8: Typical inter-war housing with soft front gardens, privet boundary hedges and wooden garden gates.



Photo 6: Moderne semis (c.1930s), The Broadway.



Photo 9: Half-timbered 2-storey semis with steep gabled roofs and dormers.



Photo 10: Ornamental 'club' tiles.



Photo 11: Plain tiles (top) and ornamental 'bullnose' tiles (bottom).



Photo 12: Ornamental 'fish-tail' tiles.



Photo 13: Brick & roughcast terrace-of-4 featuring square and cant bay windows, canopies and projecting open porches.



Photo 14: Positive features – projecting open porches and canopies. However, the composition is let down by the PVCu replacement doors and windows, particularly the uncharacteristic bow window (far right) in place of a flush window.



Photo 15: Half-timbered 2-storey semis with half-hipped roofs and massive gabled dormers set on roofs sloping down to ground floor eaves.



Photo 16: Positive features – front-facing gables, deep eaves and stout chimney stacks. However, poor PVCu replacement windows, loss of boundary hedges and grass verges degrade the scene.



Photo 17: Original front door (right) and modern PVCu facsimile (left). The timber door on the right was one of only two surviving examples in early 2009, but this too was replaced by the end 2009.



Photo 18: The last remaining example of an original front door within the conservation area (2009).



Photo 19: Rare original multi-paned timber windows, complete with the odd bull's-eye pane. One of only two houses to retain its original fenestration in 2009.



Photo 20: Rare original multi-paned timber windows, complete with the odd bull's-eye pane. One of only two houses to retain its original fenestration in 2009.



Photo 23: Ill-considered 'grass'-crete in place of soft grass verges.



Photo 21: Unsympathetic modern bow window in place of an original canted bay.



Photo 22: One of the old 'electrified' gas lamp columns in 1993, all now replaced (see photo 24).



Photo 24: Standard modern pressed aluminium lamp-post in place of old 'electrified' gas lamp column.



Photo 25: Traditional plain tile roof (left), with unsympathetic solar panels, and non-traditional concrete double Roman tile roof (right).

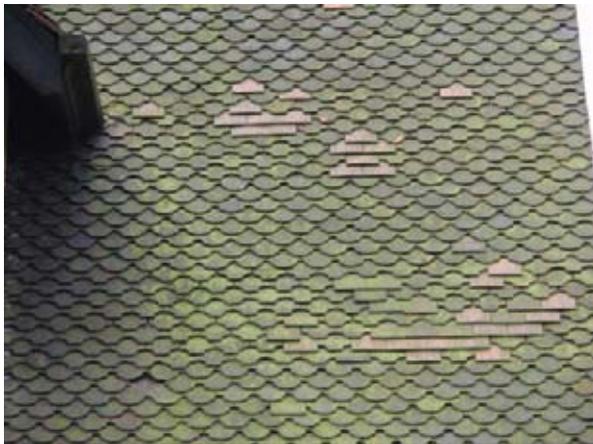


Photo 26: Unsympathetically repaired ornamental tile roof.



Photo 27: Negative features: open boundaries with hard front standings.



Photo 28: The same scene as previous (photo 27) in 1993.



Photo 29: Satellite dishes facing onto and visible from the highway.



Photo 30: Unsympathetic (non- conservation type) rooflights.



Photo 31: Original open porch (right) and enclosed 'open' porch (left).



Photo 35: The Bowling Circle in 2009.



Photo 32: The Broadway, viewed from the Bowling circle in 2009.



Photo 36: The semi-detached J.B. Willows' workmen's cottages (Willows Avenue) to the south of the Bowling Circle.



Photo 33: The same scene as above (photo 32) in 1993.



Photo 37: One of the three J.B. Willows' terraces-of-4 in 2009 (north side of 'Rutherglen Drive'), with modern PVCu front doors and windows which bear little resemblance to the originals (see photo 3).



Photo 34: Distinctive gabled sign on the front gable of the Scout Group Headquarters.



Photo 38: One of the three J.B.Willows' terraces-of-4 in 2009 (south side of 'Rutherglen Drive'), with modern PVCu front doors and windows which bear little resemblance to the originals (see photo 3).



Photo 39: The same scene as above (photo 38) in 1993, with some original doors and windows (but without the multi-panes) still extant.



Photo 40: Seafield Avenue in 2009.



Photo 41: The same scene as above (photo 40) in 1993.