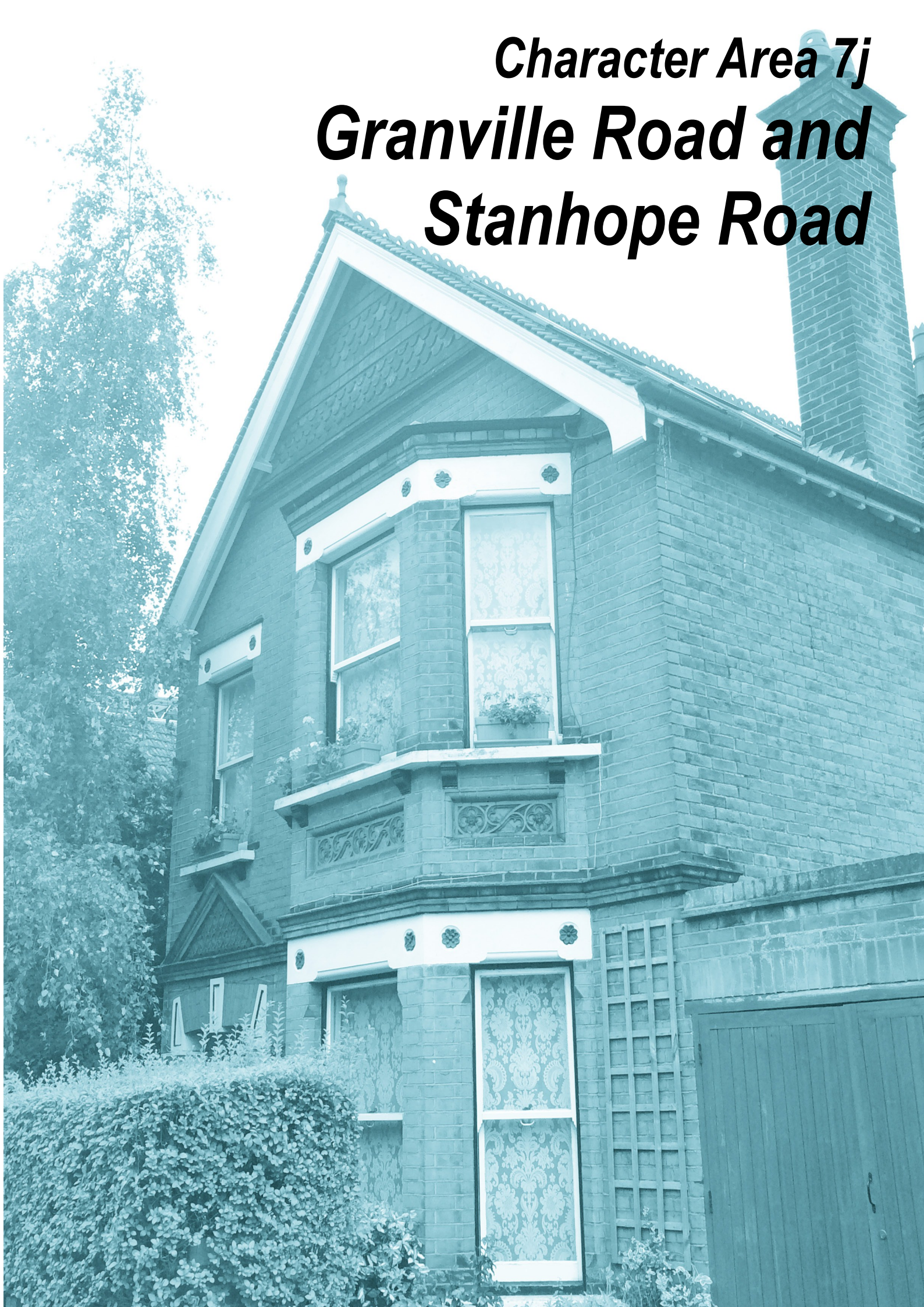
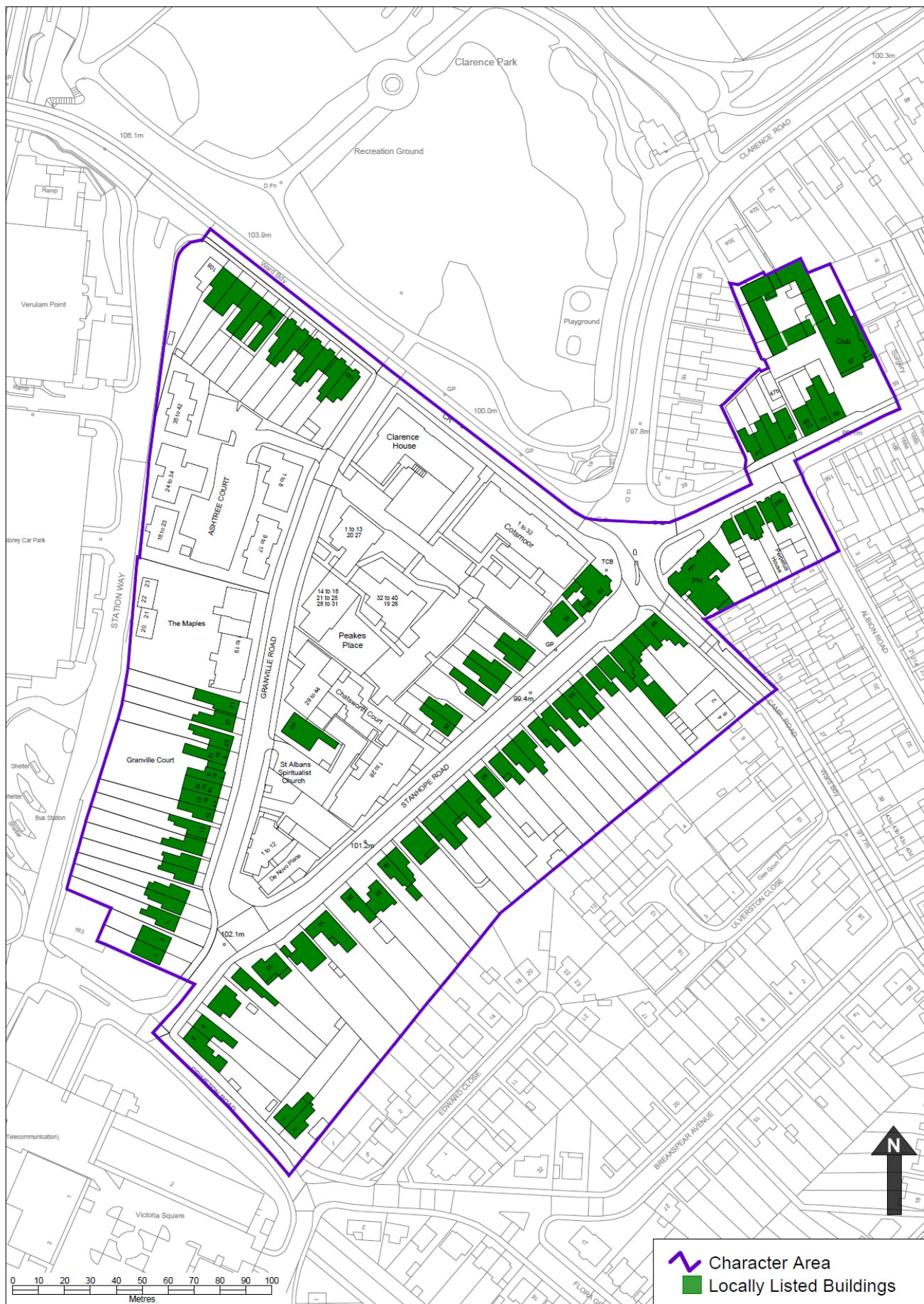


Character Area 7j
Granville Road and
Stanhope Road





AREA 7J: GRANVILLE ROAD / STANHOPE ROAD

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Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Albion Road (part), Camp Road (part), Clarence Road (part), Granville Road (incl. Ashtree Court), Grimston Road (part), Hatfield Road (part), Stanhope Road, Station Way (part).

Scheduled Monuments

None.

Listed Buildings

None.

Locally Listed Buildings

Clarence Road

Odds: 30c (with 57 Hatfield Road).

Granville Road

Odds: 1-15 (incl) Flats 1-21 Granville Court, 25, 27, 31.

Evens: 40 (Spiritualist Church).

Grimston Road

1&2

Hatfield Road

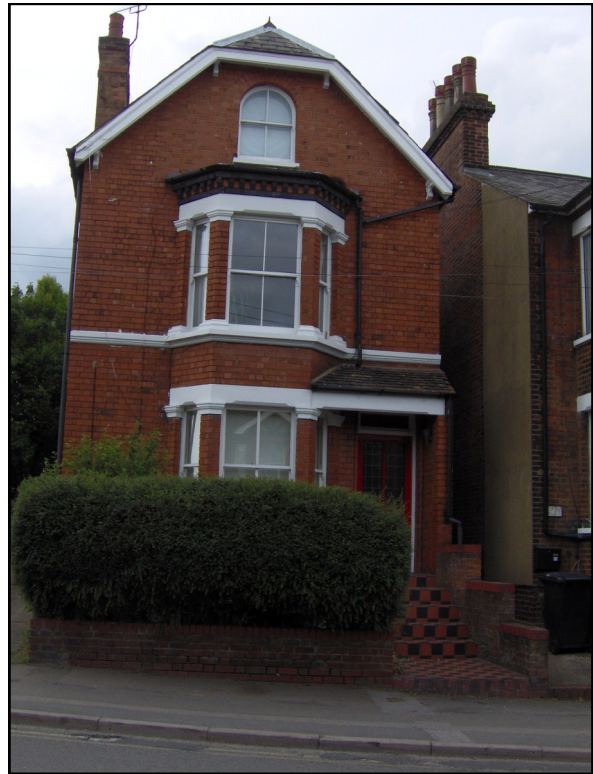
Odds: 41-55 (incl), 57 (Club and rear outbuildings (through to 30c Clarence Road).

Evens: 110-130, 144 (The Crown P.H.), 146-154.

Stanhope Road

Odds: 43-61.

Evens: 2- 68.



No. 47 Stanhope Road (locally listed).



No. 40 Granville Road, the Spiritualist Church (locally listed).



No. 12 Stanhope Road (locally listed).

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Character Summary

This character area comprises a broadly triangular area with a Y-shaped network of roads at the eastern edge of the conservation area, immediately north of the former prison, east of the City Station and south of Clarence Park. Formerly fields and a plant nursery, it was offered for residential development in 1880 with houses and a few shops appearing shortly after. It is now a busy area affected by its proximity to the railway station and its location between two key east-west routes, Hatfield Road and Victoria Street. Stanhope Road, in particular, is on a busy bus route in its role linking these two roads. The character area also includes a few buildings in Hatfield Road which were independently developed but in a similar style and date. Around the early C20 some commercial buildings appeared with a large factory and cinema but is now again largely residential mixed with some commercial uses, in the main of small scale. Stanhope Road on its east side retains its frontage of historic buildings largely intact. Granville Road retains its original houses at the southern

end of the west side but has some backland residential development. The central triangle formed between these two roads is the most changed, but some surviving houses exist amongst the new flat developments particularly at the northern end of Stanhope Road, echoing the former character of that area. The street trees on Granville Road make a pleasing contribution giving this part a more suburban feel.

At the north-east end of the character area, the Crown public house is a prominent local landmark. The gatehouse of the former Victorian prison, opposite the southern end of the area, is another local landmark which closes the vista southwards. This character area also takes in a small section of Hatfield Road which developed at about the same time and which now forms the conservation area boundary. This character area includes the former St Peter's Farm now located between Hatfield Road and Clarence Road which pre-dates the rest of the built development.



Stanhope Road has largely retained its historic frontage on the east side. The area has returned to its original mix of residential and commercial uses, having had larger industrial/ commercial buildings in the C20.



The area is very busy because of its location close to the City Station and its use as a link between Victoria Street and Hatfield Road. There have been some larger, modern flat developments, many on ex-factory sites.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

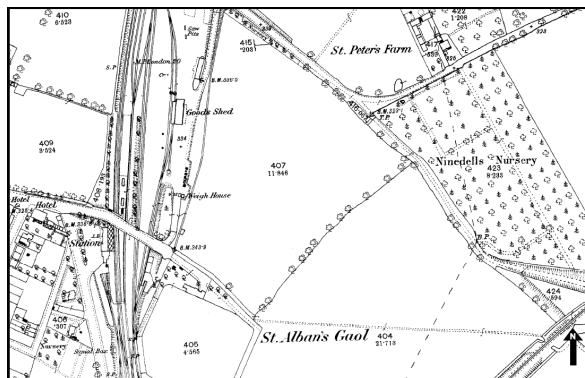
History

The Midland Railway line largely comprised the eastern edge of the developing Victorian town for a further twenty years after its construction in the 1860s. Thus, in spite of its close proximity to the station, this area was fields and a nursery (Ninedells) up until 1880 when it was offered for sale for residential development. The former shape of the fields and nursery can still be identified in the present pattern of development. The boundary of the conservation area runs along the rear of the houses on the east side of Stanhope Road, which follows a former field boundary. The northern boundary of the area comprises Hatfield Road, which was already beginning to be developed by the middle of the C19.

One of the first groups of houses to be built were nos. 110-130 on the south side of Hatfield Road. Those at the railway station end are, unusually, three storeys high including a partial basement. They were built close to the road with a short flight of steps up to their front doors. The adjacent group is a more typical late Victorian terrace of six houses. This whole group faces Clarence Park on the other side of the road which was opened in 1894. They originally formed part of a larger run of houses as far as Stanhope Road but those between Granville Road and Stanhope Road were demolished in the 1920s.

Like much of late Victorian St Albans, Stanhope Road and Granville Road were developed in a piecemeal fashion. Development took place between 1882 and 1914 with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and short terraces of houses. They are mainly two storeys with a few having small dormer windows. They are houses of the middle size, with rearward projections to provide a third bedroom, and presumably they were tailored to meet the growing demand for houses near the station for affluent commuters. Few appear to have been specifically architect designed and were probably taken from standard builders' pattern books of the time. Windows and doors have decorative stone or stucco arches and bay windows predominate. Often they were called villas indicating a slightly grander style than the basic terraced cottage. A few

shops and a post office were also built at the north end of Stanhope Road at about the same time and in a similar style.



1880s OS map showing the railway to the west and the fields and nursery that were in the area prior to development.



The houses on Hatfield Road included in this area are larger, three storey dwellings with steps up to the front door (in the foreground) and more typical terraces (in the background).



The houses in Stanhope Road are likely to have been built from builders' pattern books and commonly have bay windows.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

History (contd.)

At the same time, to the north east, separate development was taking place along Hatfield Road. Surviving early Victorian buildings from St Peter's Farm which pre-dated the late Victorian development of the area, including no. 57 Hatfield Road (the farm house, now a club) and no. 30c Clarence Road (a farm building), have all been locally listed. The range of farm buildings are being converted to residential use. Currently there are mixed uses in the area including a few more shops. The Crown Hotel (now the Crown P.H.) was a new building dating from the late Victorian era, presumably built to meet passing trade and the rapidly expanding residential development to the east of the town.

Subsequently some of the Victorian houses on Hatfield Road were acquired for development. Two industrial or factory sites were developed at the north end of the area. The first was the W. O. Peake coat factory on Hatfield Road which arrived in 1911. It manufactured a luxury coat under the Rodex brand and subsequently, Cotsmoor, a cheaper version. It later acquired further adjacent houses, most of which were demolished to allow for an extension to the factory. The factory was subsequently acquired by Aquascutum in 1962 and closed in the 1980s. A second industrial site occupied the top end of the west side of Granville Road (later Menzies), although it retained some converted houses into the 1980s. The lower end of the triangular island block between the two roads was not developed with housing. An adult school was built at the south end in 1912 and a Spiritualist Church in 1910. A cinema was built on the remainder of the land which opened in 1922. This was the Grand Cinema with an entrance frontage onto Stanhope Road. It was later renamed the Gaumont and it closed in 1973 and was finally demolished in 1987.

Finally, in the late C20, residential development of flats replaced the Aquascutum Factory (now Cotsmoor on the frontage and Peakes Place to the rear, named after the original factory and brand) plus offices (Clarence House) on the frontage to Hatfield Road returning into Granville

Road. Menzies factory on the west side of Granville Road was also replaced by flats in the 1980s. The Gaumont Cinema on the west side of Stanhope Road was replaced by Chatsworth Court. The 1912 Adult School (no. 16 Stanhope Road) was replaced by a block of flats, De Novo Place, in c.2000.

However, despite these radical changes, a substantial part of the original development still survives and all of the surviving Victorian and Edwardian buildings are locally listed.

The single storey Spiritualist Church dating from 1910 has also survived in its original form, sandwiched between the new residential developments and is locally listed.



The Spiritualist Church is the only surviving historic building in the triangle of land between Stanhope Road and Granville Road.



The Gaumont Cinema on Stanhope Road in the 1950s. It occupied part of the land between the two roads but has since been demolished and the land redeveloped as flats. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Buildings

Residential development of the area followed the initial sale by Mr. A. Rumball within a few years. The area was divided into plots and offered for development. The map of Valuable Freehold Building Land 1880 shows the roads marked out into forty foot (twelve metre) wide plots. However, as in other areas, this plot size was not consistently adhered to with some narrower and a few wider plots. Most roads had a ten foot (three metre) building line giving a front garden to all the properties. Most plots had long rear gardens, although the central "island" has shorter plots and only a six foot (two metre) building line. Materials used for the villas was mainly red brick with stone or stucco decorative features. Regrettably, some of the houses have subsequently been painted or rendered. Some have small areas of tile hanging and mock timbering to gabled fronts and some retain the original slate roofs. The planned layout of the development and the gentle slope rising from north to south adds interest to the streetscene. The original development turns the corner into Grimston Road and here the boundary of the conservation area takes in a pair of small villas with good detailing.

In addition to the surviving houses, the Crown P.H. is one of the most prominent historic buildings. It is a fine example of a late Victorian public house built in a hard red brick with decorative detailing. With its high tiled roof and prominent chimneys, it forms an important landmark building near the eastern boundary of the conservation area and closes the vista northwards along Stanhope Road. Stanhope Road has a pronounced kink at its southern end providing interest in the streetscene and vistas of the former prison building.



Some of the houses display small areas of mock-timbering or tile-hanging on their gabled fronts.



A pair of small villas on Grimston Road are part of the original development.



The Crown P.H. is a prominent historic landmark in the area.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Buildings (contd.)

A variety of styles have been used for the new flats. Those at the north end of Granville Road are some of the earliest and are generally of similar proportions and use dark brown brick.

Some of the blocks back onto Station Way at the rear of Ashtree Court and The Maples, and are visible from Character Area 6b. New flats and offices in Hatfield Road recently replaced former industrial buildings and are bigger in scale, although they step down slightly adjacent to no. 61 Stanhope Road, the former post office (now a restaurant). They front onto the busy Hatfield Road junction and overlook Clarence Park to the north. Finally, De Novo Place is an unusual development in a very contemporary style with curved metal roofs and timber clad elevations. Its location on a prominent corner plot helped to shape its design. As a stand alone building, it does not attempt to relate to the Victorian buildings on the two opposite sides of the road junction.

North east of the Crown P.H., Hatfield Road leads towards Fleetville. Here on the north side at the rear between Hatfield Road and Clarence Road are the traces of St Peter's Farm, still recognisable as a farm complex from the early C19 and locally listed. No. 57 was the farm house (now a club) and behind it there is a group of former barns (no. 30c), red brick with slate roofs, arranged around a central farm yard (converted residentially). Along the Hatfield Road frontage on the north side are shops of domestic scale, predominantly with flats above. Several display the prominent mock timbered gables of a similar design to some of the houses in Granville Road. On the south side is a pair of red brick houses with well detailed bays and stone lintels (nos.148-150); the neighbouring buildings (nos. 152-4) are similar but plainer and with ground floors converted to shops. No. 154 also addresses the corner with Albion Road where the conservation area ends.



De Novo Place is in a very contemporary style with curved metal roofs and timber-clad elevations.



The flats and offices that front onto Hatfield Road replaced industrial buildings and are much bigger in scale.



Nos. 152-4 are locally listed, red brick houses with the ground floors converted to shops.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Public Realm

Old photographs show a traffic island with a mature tree at the Hatfield Road junction in front of the Crown Hotel. Now, however, it is one of the busiest routes into and out of the town and dominated by traffic which splits at this junction into Hatfield Road and Stanhope Road. Apart from the roads and footways, the area is largely private gardens and courts and does not include public open spaces. Interest is provided by street trees in Granville Road. Although there are small front areas, the buildings are fairly densely packed and glimpses through to back gardens are limited. The new flats have associated parking spaces but unfortunately the area is still dominated by cars. The overall character is now urban.



Street trees in Granville Road provide interest.



The Crown junction is very busy and dominated by traffic.



Most greenery is provided by private front gardens.



*In the past, the Crown junction used to have a traffic island with a mature tree. Image: <http://www.stalbansowneastend.co.uk/>
www.stalbansowneastend.co.uk/Fleetville_shops.html*



Cars still dominate the area despite the new flats on Granville Road having their own associated parking.

Area 7j: Granville Road and Stanhope Road

Positive & Negative Characteristics and Scope for Change

Positive

- ✓ An area which has some street trees in Granville Road.
- ✓ Proximity to Public Open Space at Clarence Park.
- ✓ Surviving and legible historic boundaries.
- ✓ Surviving early C19 farm complex which pre-dates the main period of development and is a reminder of the history of the area as farmland.
- ✓ Locally listed residential buildings exhibit similar features and give a strong sense of cohesiveness. The Crown public house is a locally listed landmark building and gives the area a strong C19 identity. The Spiritualist Church is also a reminder of the historic development of the area and an unusual and intact survivor.
- ✓ Front gardens with low red brick walls give a consistent character and appearance which complements the locally listed houses in Stanhope Road.
- ✓ Area borrows from the neighbouring character areas: the landscaped grounds and trees within the former prison site (Area 6b) and Clarence Park (Area 7i).

Negative

- ✗ Several large scale redevelopments, some of which replaced large scale commercial buildings of the mid C20, are close to and overbearing on the street frontage and smaller scale neighbours.
- ✗ Traffic dominates Hatfield Road and Stanhope Road and detracts from the character of the wider area.
- ✗ Some of the front gardens on the west side of Granville Road have been lost to hard surfacing and/ or parking.

Scope for Change

- Any development or redevelopment in the area must take account of the need to enhance the appearance and character of the area. The retention and enhancement of landscaping and the height and positioning of any new buildings within the area are key points in avoiding adverse effects and preserving the setting of the historic assets.
- Opportunities should be taken to enhance the appearance of the area during any programmed highway works.