

Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited

Development Policy

Context

The Chalfont Heights Estate was established in May 1927 when Stroud, a London lawyer, purchased 122 acres of farmland on the East side of Chalfont St Peter to create a private housing estate. The land was part of Winkers Farm Swan Farm which had for centuries been the home farm of the manor house, Chalfont Park. Lewis Stroud and his son Frederick laid out the roads, verges and planted hundreds of trees. 66 plots were sold and houses built between 1927 & 1939. A further 80 houses were built between 1950 & 1960 but the roads were still dirt tracks with no main drainage until 1964. Another 28 houses were added in the sixties and then a few more until today we have 196 in total.

Lewis Stroud died in 1959 and his son in 1951 leaving his younger brother as Trustee. He found they could no longer afford the upkeep of the roads and verges and asked the residents to carry this out for themselves. So the Roads Committee was formed in 1952 with an annual subscription of £3 for each house to prevent the roads from being impassable. Although owners are liable for the upkeep of the roads fronting their property under their Title deeds it was felt that an equal contribution from each house to a central fund was the simplest way to ensure the Estate was maintained to everyone's satisfaction. In September 1965 a formal conveyance was drawn up transferring ownership of the roads, islands, verges and trees from the Stroud family to four Trustees who were residents of the Estate together with benefits of the covenants. In October 2009 the Trustees transferred the ownership of the roads, islands & verges and benefits of the covenants to the Directors of the newly formed Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited.

Frederick Stroud's conception of The Heights was as a calm, peaceful rural estate on the edge of the village with quiet roads safe for children, adults and animals to walk on without fear from traffic and with well kept grass verges and trees. It is the Roads Committee's principal responsibility to ensure that the character and environment of the Estate is maintained within the original concepts of the Stroud family whilst recognising the changes over the past eighty years and the evolution of modern society. The covenants on each plot of land are valid to this day and form the foundation of the Development Policy which has ensured that the Estate will remain a special and delightful place to live for the current residents and those who succeed us.

Development projects inevitably create a great deal of disturbance and traffic from vehicles associated with deliveries, supplies and contractors. The Estate has very clearly defined rules and requirements which all contractors and residents undertaking development are required to accept and adhere to. These are to ensure that the disturbance and inconvenience to neighbours and other residents is kept to an absolute minimum. There is also a development fee charged by the Estate for all development projects, payable in advance which is to cover the additional wear to Estate roads caused by many commercial vehicles, some of which are of weights for which the Estate roads and particularly the foundations were never designed.

Design Guidance

Development within the Chalfont Heights Estate must maintain and preserve the special character and environment of the Estate for the benefit of all who live here. Any development for new buildings or extensions or alterations to existing buildings which will adversely affect the density of buildings or affect the character of the Estate will not be

allowed. All residents, house owners or property developers are required to comply with the following criteria:

1. The Estate has a unique character with houses of individual design, in good proportion to their plots, set well back from the road and with adequate space from neighbouring buildings. Proposals must retain these characteristics and not vary significantly from the proportions of other houses in the vicinity.
2. The mass and scale of the proposed building should not vary significantly from surrounding buildings in the vicinity so that it does not appear out of character with the surrounding houses.
3. The height and width of the proposed building should not vary significantly with other buildings in the vicinity and the building should not appear cramped or out of proportion to the plot width from the street scene.
4. The plot width should be similar to and in keeping with the width of other plots in the vicinity and any new building should be sited within the plot to maintain similar distances between buildings as already exist in the vicinity. .
5. The general frontage building line should be aligned with existing buildings on the same side of the road.
6. The verges of the Estate and trees on the verges are the property of the Estate and each existing plot has a right to one access entrance across the verge. Any additional or further access requires the written agreement and permission of the Trustees as owners of the verges. In all cases the Estate verges must remain intact and unaltered.
7. The size, mass, scale and overall appearance of the proposed dwelling and its position on the plot should be compatible with existing buildings in the vicinity.
8. The Estate has extensive mature vegetation in the form of trees, hedges, shrubs and natural screening throughout and this natural, rural appearance must be retained so the proposed dwelling blends well with the surrounding houses.
9. The bricks, roof tiles and other building materials must be similar to other houses in the vicinity and be approved by the Roads Committee. Different materials may be considered in designs of exceptional quality which can be justified by the designer. Extensions or additions to existing buildings must use closely matching materials.
10. Designers should note the features and characteristics of other buildings in the vicinity and ensure that their proposals will blend well with the surroundings and not be out of character.
11. New buildings or extensions to existing buildings should be designed to respect and preserve the privacy of neighbours and minimise overlooking of adjacent properties.
12. New development should not unreasonably interfere with the amenities of neighbours. It helps good relations to discuss plans and proposals with neighbours prior to formal submission.
13. Each proposed dwelling plot must have an existing frontage of similar width to that of adjoining houses onto an existing road within the Estate which is currently used by

vehicular traffic. Such a road should contain existing houses fronting the carriageway.

14. New development should not disrupt the integrity of the Estate by the introduction of 'infilling' on rear garden land.
15. To maintain the originally conceived rural environment of the Estate, owners are required to erect and for ever after maintain a live hedge with fencing along the whole length of the frontage of the plot and the sides. No such fence shall be less than 1.37m nor more than 1.83m in height out of the ground and not of brick construction. The live hedge shall be on the grass verge side of the fence to retain the natural appearance and character of the Estate.
16. Open drive entrances are preferred to gates but, if gates are installed, wooden construction (unpainted) is preferred to metal or painted wood. Gates should not be less than 1.37m nor more than 1.83m in height.

Procedures

The Title Deeds of houses on the Estate contain covenants established on each plot when houses were originally built. These require that plans and specifications **must** be submitted to and approved by the Directors before any building work can be commenced. It is recommended that the Directors should be consulted as soon as any development is being considered and prior to submitting applications to the Chiltern District Council Planning Department, as ideas and proposals can be discussed before plans are finalised.

The Estate lies within the Chiltern District of the Buckinghamshire County Council and therefore all proposals for development must meet the requirements of and be approved by the Chiltern District Council. Chiltern District Council has defined its planning policy in the CHILTERN DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN Written Statement which can be found at <http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan>

The Chalfont Heights Estate lies within an area defined by CDC Planning as an Established Residential Area of Special Character (ERASC) and a specific Policy H4 applies to all properties and plots lying within an ERASC. A copy of Policy H4 is attached as an appendix to this document and can be found on pages 117/118 of the Chiltern District Local Plan.

In making their decision on the suitability of any proposed development the Directors will have reference to the above policy H4 'Provision of Dwellings in Established Residential Areas of Special Character' and also to policy H12 'Private Residential Gardens throughout the District' – in both cases as they exist at January 2012.

The Chalfont Heights Estate has retained its character and charm over a period of 85 years mainly as a result of the detailed care and attention given to ensuring that developments meet these requirements and the terms of the covenants.