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## **East Molesey (Old Village) Conservation Area**

**East Molesey (Old Village) Conservation Area  
(Designated by Elmbridge Borough Council – 20 October 1975  
and extended – 18 April 2006)**

### **Statement of Designation**

The Conservation Area is based upon the original village settlement of East Molesey around St. Mary's Church. Now no longer the centre of East Molesey, this area has been left relatively unspoilt by the growth of Molesey during this century.

The village can be traced back to mediaeval times and bearing in mind the proximity of Hampton Court, there were significant links with Henry VIII during the 16th Century. Most of the early buildings were clustered around Bell Road, which originally stretched from the River Mole to Old Molesey Road. The focal point of the village would have been St. Mary's Church and the Bell Inn.

The Old Church was a small building which was demolished in 1864 following a fire. The existing larger building was built in 1865.

The area contains several buildings of architectural and historic interest. The Bell Inn was built around 1550 and became a popular coaching inn used by travellers from London and Hampton Court to the South Coast. Tales of visiting highwaymen such as Claude Duval and Jerry Abershaw are part of the tradition of the area. The Bell was Molesey's first Post Office and was a popular meeting place for fairs and dances. Quillets Royal is a restored cottage dating from the 16th Century with its 18th Century Manor House extension. Park House in St. Mary's Road was the home of Ugo Foscolo, Italy's third most famous poet, for a year. Matham Manor, parts of which date from the 16th Century, once stood in grounds extending from the Church to the Mole, which were planted out as orchards. The horseshoe-shaped Matham Road was developed towards the end of the 19th Century.

The predominant character of this area now is that of a quiet residential area with considerable historic interest and varied architectural styles. Bell Road has been largely

unaffected by modern development and there are few roads in N.W. Surrey as attractive as the stretch running from St. Mary's Church to Green Arden, which includes a long terrace of cottages, the Olde Manor House, Quillets Royal and The Bell Inn on the opposite side.

Matham Road was developed towards the end of the 19th Century by way of large individual Victorian Villas on large plots planted with frontage trees. Since then, some infilling has taken place on smaller plots, which has not always produced buildings fully respecting the prevailing architectural style and scale. Nevertheless, this has resulted in a satisfactory balance between new and old, large and small. This balance is in danger of being upset as the large villas fall into disrepair and pressure mounts to redevelop by way of two-storey modern detached houses.

There is a clear need for conservation measures in this area. Firstly, there is the importance of conserving the sense of scale of buildings in redevelopment and secondly there are opportunities to facilitate the proper preservation and enhancement of buildings, walls, trees and views.

For more information, please email us at [tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk](mailto:tplan@elmbridge.gov.uk)