

Materials and Details

The principal materials used for building in The Butts are painted brick or render, although some buildings on the eastern side are soft red brick.

Slate is the dominant roof material with some plain tiles. Several houses have unfortunately been re-roofed in concrete interlocking tiles. Nearly all roofs are fully hipped or plain gabled. Other details used are typical of mass late Victorian semi-detached/terrace house construction:-



- doorways set in recessed porch some under simple canopies
- 4 pane sash windows set in reveals some with moulded architraves;
- decorative bargeboards.



Several houses are symmetrical and are handed pairs; they retain the proportions of their sash windows. However, on many of these houses their architectural integrity and proportions have been visually damaged due to inappropriate use of plate glass and the replacement or enlargement of original sash windows.

Development in the Conservation Area

The design of new buildings, extensions and alterations to existing buildings or new uses within the Conservation Area will all affect its character. In The Butts owners are encouraged to retain original features such as Victorian doors, sash windows and the pastel colour scheme. The boundary walls surrounding the front gardens should also be retained or replaced with picket fencing.

In order to maintain and build upon the character of The Butts, alterations and extensions should ensure the proportion of these buildings are retained. Window styles should match the original and balanced fenestrations are important.

Further advice is given in the following leaflets which are published by East Hampshire District Council as part of the Conservation Area Directory:-

- Conservation Areas in East Hampshire.
- Caring for East Hampshire's Conservation Areas and Historic Buildings.

Further reading:

- C W Hawkins - Story of Alton. 1973.
- W Curtis - A Short History and Description of the Town of Alton. 1896.

For further information contact:

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Conservation Area



**The Butts
ALTON**

Introduction & Brief History

The Butts Conservation Area was designated in 1975

The Butts is the name given to the triangular green marking the western entrance to Alton. It was originally used for archery, hence its earlier name of Robin Hood Butts. The target mound is believed to have been located near to Whitedown Lane (the road to Basingtoke).

There was a turnpike and gate near to the junction of Whitedown Lane and Butts Road. *The earliest buildings are both 18th Century, No. 68 The Butts and the French Horn Public House.*



The area surrounding The Butts developed in the 19th Century and from about 1850 the hop field enclosures became sites for new building, i.e., the gas works and the police station.

The Alton to Winchester railway line prevented any substantial development to the south of The Butts.

Character of the Conservation Area

The character of The Butts is determined by:-

- the triangular green surrounded by mature chestnut trees; and
- the Victorian and later semi-detached houses in Butts Road on the north side of the green.

The Butts is enclosed on all sides giving the space a 'village green' appearance.

On the west side The Butts is fronted by the French Horn Public House, its outbuildings and the adjoining terrace of modern houses.

On the south west side, views of The Butts are prevented by the brick masonry of the two bridges created by the railway line viaduct over Butts Road and Whitedown Lane. Passing under these by road, views open out across the green under the canopy of mature chestnut trees which form the southern side of The Butts. *The trees and green provide an impressive and surprising entrance feature to Alton.*



On the north side of Butts Road, running parallel to the line of trees and facing onto The Butts, is a row of late Victorian semi-detached houses. These are essentially uniform in appearance with mainly slate roofs and painted elevations in pastel colours.



The houses are set back from the roadside with small front gardens. 3 - 4 ft high walls of various materials separate the roadside edge from these gardens. The walls replace the original white picket fencing.

