

**MILL ROAD HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**BUILDING AND SITE REPORT No. 21**

# **Greville Road, Romsey Town**

## **A Street Re-inventing itself**



**John McGill**

The Mill Road History Society was formed in 2015 to continue the work of the HLF-funded Mill Road History Project (2013–2015). One of the Project’s principal products was a series of twelve building or site reports, researched and produced by volunteers. These were published in print form for limited deposit, and on the website [www.capturingcambridge.org](http://www.capturingcambridge.org). The Society has maintained this important facet of the Project’s work, and the present report is the twenty-first in the series.

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*Cover image: Greville Road, at turning circle (photo: Ian Bent, 2024)*

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21. Greville Road, Romsey Town *John McGill* (2024)

### *Also published by the Mill Road Society:*

A Guide to Researching and Writing a Building or Site Report for the Mill Road Area  
*Ian Bent, Katie Blyth and Allan Brigham* (2017)

## INTRODUCTION

Greville Road, running east to west in the Mill Road vicinity of Romsey Town, is unique in Cambridge in as much as the whole street and every house on it was developed by one business concern – Crown & Cox. That was in the late 1930s, when many a suburban development was taking place around more or less every urban area in the UK.

Few such “mono-developments” took place in the first half of the twentieth century, when, in the majority of cases, there would be a mix of private builders (the exception being in public sector schemes, of which there were many).

It seems, from the records of the Greville Road Residents’ Association and Spalding’s Directories, that the majority of the first occupants were local Romsey Town and Petersfield folk. Many were engaged in manual trades, a few clerical, and by moving into such relatively spacious houses, and on a quiet street, most must have considered themselves on the up-and-up.

Eighty or so years later Cambridge has changed – manual occupations have decreased and professional/technical/academic employment, and population, has boomed. The new is quite evidently replacing the old.

Over the last decade or so, it would have been noticeable to any passer-by that Greville Road appears to be in a state of near-constant domestic construction work – skips and builders’ vans seem to be part of the general streetscape. Expansive tarpaulins are draped over many a roof and the sound of hammering and drilling seems pervasive. So, what’s going on?

### **The Origins of Greville Road**

Prior to 1925, most of the land lying between the Marmora Road/Argyle Street alignment on the north side and Cherry Hinton Road on the south side – with the mainline railway to the west – was agricultural land mainly owned by Jesus College. The soil here cannot be considered of great value, being generally chalk marl with a hard stratum of dense clay lying not far beneath the surface. Nonetheless, the land was divided into fields and was largely cultivated, though with what type of crops has not been ascertained.

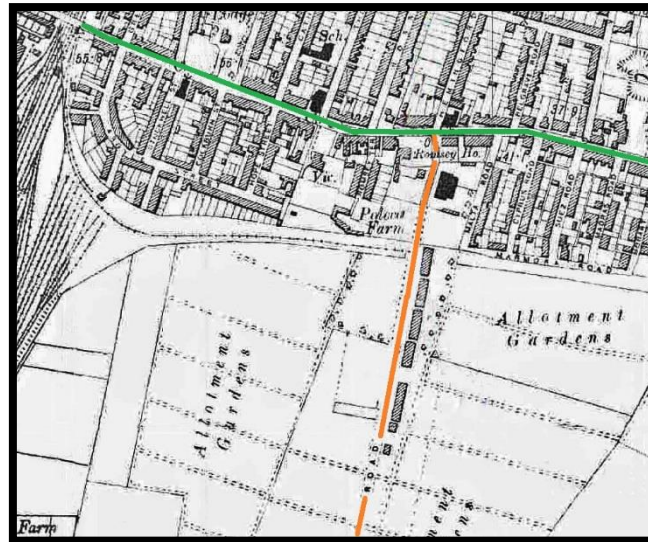


Figure 1 – Ordnance Survey map of 1886<sup>1</sup> (orange = Coleridge Rd; green = Mill Rd)

Fig. 1 above – an Ordnance Survey map of 1886 – shows several fields laid out on the land south of the Newmarket railway line, and this pattern of similar fields would have continued to the south and the east. Note, however, the enclosure with a narrow, wooded surround just across the railway from Polecat Farm<sup>2</sup> – Greville Road would later pass through a portion of this.

In Romsey Town, the street layout is much as it still is in 2023 though without the housing, particularly east of Thoday Street. Note too that the parliamentary constituency and municipal boundary line ran north-south. West of this line was the Borough of Cambridge and east was Cherry Hinton, falling into the remit of Chesterton Rural Borough Council.

What would have been the use of the land at the time? Agricultural, most likely leased out to local farms. The soils in the area cannot be considered particularly fertile. Fig. 2 below shows basic geological types:

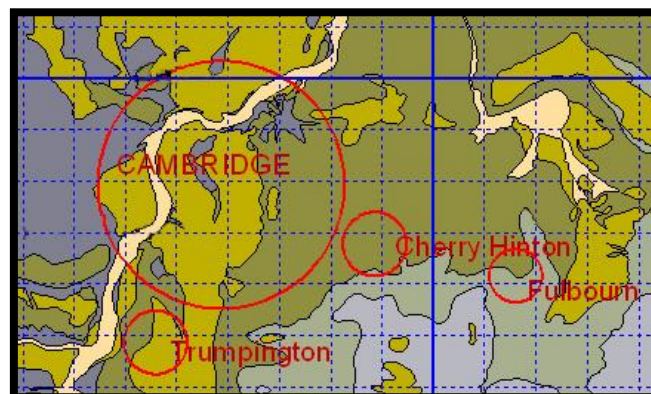


Figure 2 – extract from Dylan Moore, *Cement Plants*:

dark blue = gault clay	grey = grey chalk	dark green = chalk marl
light green = sands & gravel	light blue = middle & upper chalk	cream = quaternary clays

<sup>1</sup> Figures 1, 3, 4, and 21–24 consulted at: <https://maps.nls.uk/os/townplans-england/cambridge.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the fields may have been cultivated by Polecat Farm, though there doesn't seem to be any proper railway crossing.

Greville Road, situated between Cambridge and Cherry Hinton, sits on the land shaded dark green, indicating chalk marl. This will be no surprise to anyone in the locality doing any digging – the nearby Burnside lakes were excavated for cement marl.

Nonetheless, the fields would have been cultivated with a wide variety of crops and the land would have had realistic agricultural value. Processing and storage facilities would be nearby, at Cherry Hinton, Fulbourn and elsewhere. It is doubtful whether there would have been great landscape or biodiversity value – mono-cropping with deep drainage would most likely have dominated, and older maps do not indicate any tree belts or copses.

### The Semi-rural Situation in 1902



Figure 3 – Ordnance Survey map 1902

By 1902 (Fig. 3 above) the field pattern remains much the same as in 1886, though there seems to have been some subdivision. Notable, though, is that some of the land has been turned over to allotments – the field lying immediately east of the tree-fringed enclosure. The conversion of land from conventional farming to more temporary allotment use might indicate that urban-based uses may have been determining the character of the land. A track is shown accessing the allotment block from the vicinity of Malta Road – so some form of access across the rail track had been effected.<sup>3</sup>

During the 1920s it became increasingly clear to Jesus College, the principal local land owner, that this area of Cambridge had considerable potential for urban development – as pointed out by their estate agents, Carter Jonas. Cambridge had been expanding to the east for some time, and there was a particular eastward thrust in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods along the alignments of Mill Road and Cherry Hinton Road that resulted in the establishment of Romsey Town on the north and the Blinco Grove area on the south. Infilling between these two lines of development was obstructed by the Newmarket railway line that ran from the mainline east to Cherry Hinton and beyond, and even though the line had ceased to be operative in the 1890s it still effectively blocked any connection to Mill Road. The land upon

<sup>3</sup> The faint colouring of three parcels in the south east, along with an outline road layout in the vicinity of where Coleridge Community College now stands, might indicate that the map was subsequently used to sketch out ideas. The scribbled “allots” on the easternmost parcel (shown as No. 116) may have been part of these ideas. None represent the state of the land in 1902.



which the alignment ran remained the property of the London and North Eastern Railway Company (LNER).

### The Beginnings of Coleridge Road in 1925

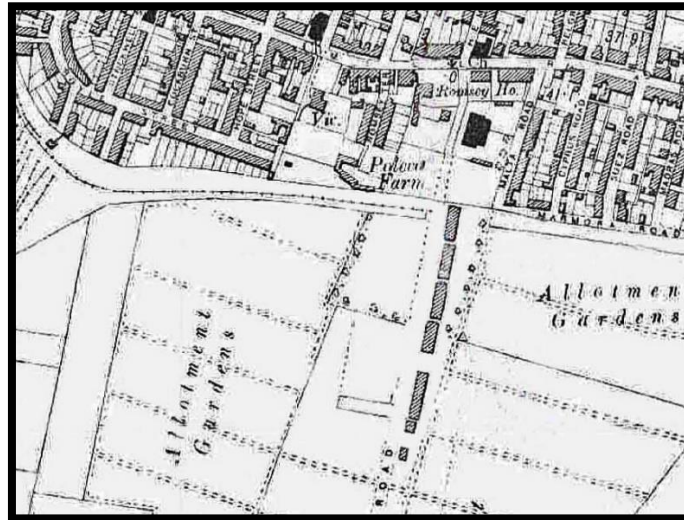


Figure 4 – Ordnance Survey map 1925

Fig. 4 above, the Ordnance Survey map of 1925, shows an altogether different picture. Several terraces of housing have been developed along the east side of the newly laid out Coleridge Road, which leads from Cherry Hinton Road to Mill Road, passing through the remains of the tree-fringed enclosure, then across the old railway line to join with a new (dotted) alignment leading past Romsey House to Mill Road.

The four northern-most terraces appear to be the current Nos 17 to 77 Coleridge Road, extending south to Hobart Road, which is indicated by a dotted route leading east. It is unknown what the hard-lined truncated road more or less opposite No. 87 is – there is no road there today. Similarly, there is no indication of the Greville Road alignment. Allotment gardens seem to have taken over all the previously farmed land (although Polecat Farm is still there), and a pattern of access tracks has been laid out.

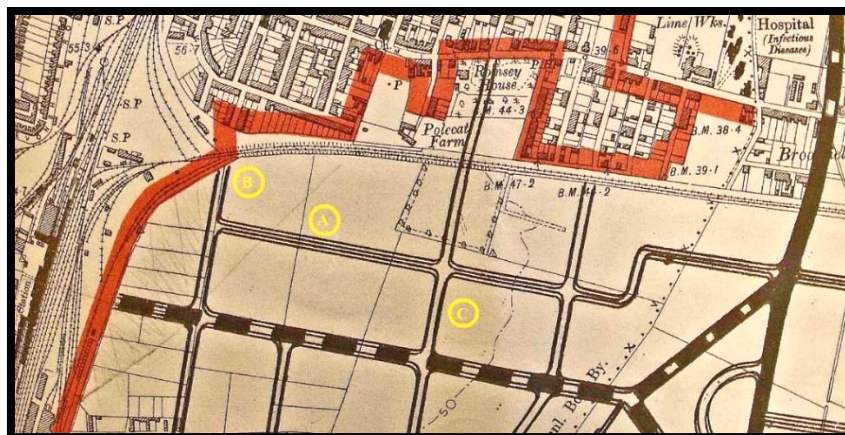


Figure 5 – Jesus College land in Greville Road vicinity (Jesus College Archives)

Fig. 5 (dating from between 1925 and 1935) shows the extent of Jesus College land in the Greville Road vicinity, with red marking its northern and western boundary. This map was

drawn prior to the opening up of the land and its development and the street alignments are only initial ideas, much of which were not realised. Nonetheless, “A” indicates a possible alignment of Greville Road with “B” being an extension of Charles Street and “C” being Coleridge Road.

Jesus College embarked upon plans for how this bonanza land could be developed, one main feature of which was the alignment of Coleridge Road, going from Cherry Hinton Road to Mill Road – effectively a main spine, along with Perne Road further east. How the land was subdivided into blocks has not been determined, yet it must be assumed that the whole of the estate was partitioned and sold off or leased to developers – Jesus College was not a builder.

There may, of course, have been no firm pattern of subdivision – Jesus College, or more likely its agents, Carter Jonas, may have simply advertised general availability and responded to and negotiated over expressions of interest. Looking at the current form of development in the area is not particularly instructive – there are streets of terraces that were most likely developed by the Borough/Council (e.g. Suez and Hobart streets), and streets of individual or semi-detached houses which were most likely built by private developers (e.g. Greville, much of Coleridge, and Radegund roads). Exactly how this pattern was arrived at is not clear. Nonetheless, an attractive slice of land running off Coleridge and conveniently close to Mill Road, came to be purchased by Messrs Crown & Cox.

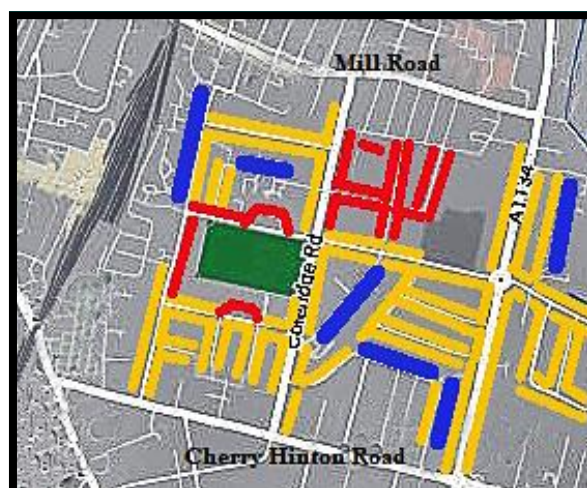


Figure 6 – Building types developed in the Jesus College land  
(adapted from the Ordnance Survey map of 1991)

Fig. 6 is an indicative map<sup>4</sup> of the building types developed on Jesus College land: yellow = individual or semi-detached houses, generally for private sale; red = terraced or block housing, generally for public sector tenancy; blue = post 1960s developments.

The sketch above should only be taken as suggestive, yet it reveals little overall plan as to how the Jesus College estate was developed. It seems as though public sector development – i.e. Borough or Council housing – was restricted to extensions to Hobart and Suez streets and Coleridge Road, and somehow, two ranges of blocks of flats were built on Davy and Fanshawe

<sup>4</sup> “indicative”, in this instance, meaning a map that has been manipulated to accentuate certain points.



roads.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, the detached or semi-detached form presided, almost exclusively for private sale. The blue (post 1960s) indicates areas which were later infilled – the Golding Road area being notable for its post-war pre-fab buildings.

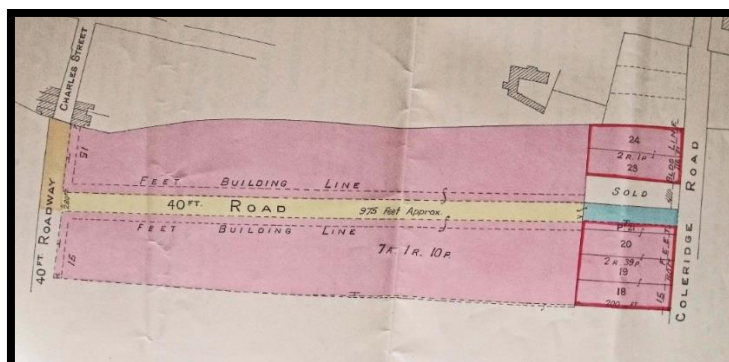


Figure 7 – Tract of land on which Greville Road is laid out (Abstract of Title of Messrs. Crown & Cox to Freehold Land on the West Side of Coleridge Road in the Borough of Cambridge. 1935 (Cambridgeshire Archives)

Fig. 7, above, is the tract purchased by James Crown and George Cox from Jesus College in 1934. According to the Abstract of Title, it was conveyed in two sections: the first being the two blocks lined in red facing on to Coleridge Road, comprising “2 roods and 39 perches”<sup>6</sup> and “2 roods and 1 perch”; the second being the “7 acres, 1 rood and 10 perches” coloured pink, yellow and blue. Use of the land coloured brown (on the west), being an extension of Charles Street, was granted as a right. The narrowing of the pink on the north west side (up against Charles Street) is determined by the track of the old railway and is how the land actually stands – it is not a wrinkle in the paper.

Polecat Farm is clearly shown, and the course of the old railway ran east-west just south of it – along the back gardens of Nos 2 to 88. Notice “15 ... feet building line” indicating the setback of the houses from the 40ft wide road (which presumably included the pavements).

## Building and Planning Applications to the Borough

Research in the Cambridgeshire Archives has revealed several sets of drawings submitted by Crown & Cox to the Borough for permission to build – they do not, however, give complete coverage. Having purchased the land in 1934, it seems that 1936 was the year of house building.

<sup>5</sup> These two blocks (actually six buildings) appear to be based on the Lubetkin model (Berthold Lubetkin was a notable émigré from the Soviet Union in the 1930s). Arriving in the UK he became a central character in Tecton, responsible for numerous Modernist buildings of the late 1950s/early 1960s in various parts of London, and probably elsewhere.

<sup>6</sup> According to the University of Nottingham, 1 perch is equivalent to 30¼ square yards, 40 perches amounts to 1 rood, and 4 roods equals 1 acre. Hence, 5 roods is approximately 1.25 acres, which is about half a hectare – <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/researchguidance/weightandsandmeasures/measurements.aspx>.

There is some evidence (the abandonment of a plan to build a second detached house – like No. 1 – when no potential buyer could be identified) that Crown & Cox went some way in drumming up public interest in the scheme prior to commencing building work. The planned development of desirable houses may have been advertised. Deposits from prospective purchasers may have been taken – Crown & Cox may have needed the investment in order to proceed.

The first set of drawings, dated 6<sup>th</sup> February 1935, appear to be for Nos 3 and 5:

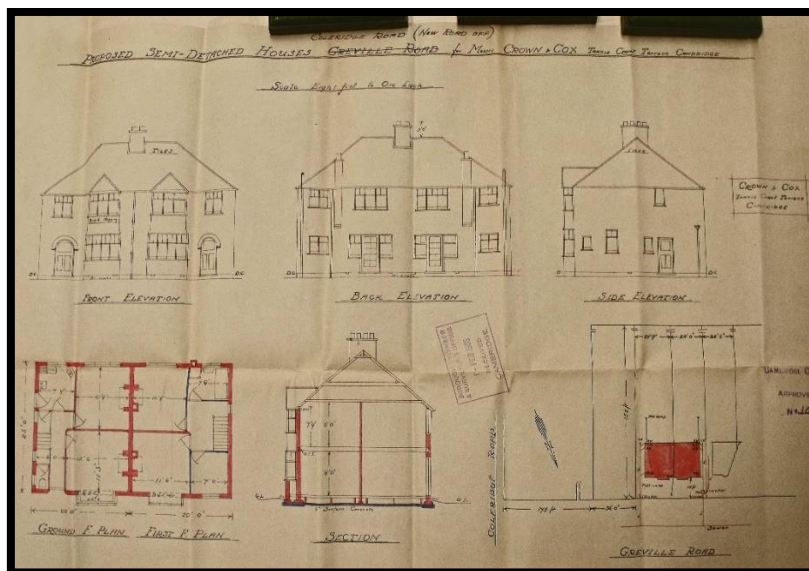


Figure 8 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council February 1935 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Shown are the front, rear and side elevations, a plan of the ground and first floors, the section (room heights and basic construction), and a location plan – note that this is on the south side of the street. It is titled “Proposed Semi-Detached Houses Greville Road for Messrs Crown & Cox, Tennis Court Terrace, Cambridge”. “Greville Road”, though, has been struck through with “Coleridge Road (new road off)” written above. It seems that though Crown & Cox were willing to call it Greville, the name might not have been officially adopted by the Borough. Why the name Greville? A possible explanation (from Gray and Stubbings, p. 36) is that it refers to one Fulke Greville (1554–1628) of Jesus College, a friend of Sir Philip Sidney, whose cousin was the founder of Sidney Sussex College.

The ground floor had two reception rooms, with French windows on to the rear garden, a kitchen (with exterior door on the side) and a loo. Upstairs were three bedrooms and a bathroom: a very familiar layout.<sup>7</sup> There must have been a trap door into the attic, though none is shown.

Notice the inclusion of “sump” in the rear garden – indicating no connection to the main sewer system.

<sup>7</sup> So familiar, in fact, that almost every 1930s semi-detached house in the UK has the same floor plan.

No. 1 Greville Road, the only single house in the street,<sup>8</sup> occupies the lot immediately to the east of Nos 3 and 5. The location plan in Fig. 8, above, shows the lot but not the house, yet Mr Briggs is recorded in Spalding's Directory as in residence in 1935/36. Perhaps No. 1 was the first house to be built.

Then on the next day, the 7<sup>th</sup> February 1935, another plan was submitted, this time for Nos 7 and 9 – still on the south side of the road, and still with “Greville Road” crossed through and replaced by “Coleridge Road (New Road Off)”.



Figure 9 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council March 1935 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

This drawing has the same arrangement as Fig. 8, though it shows two types of front elevation – type A with full downstairs bay windows and type B with a shallower bay windows though with a form of tiled verandah running the width of the front, with white-painted render above. Looking at the houses in 2023, it is apparent that type A must have been rejected, though the floor plan indicates a ground floor bay window. Furthermore, the floor plan shows no downstairs loo – was this simple economising? – was it reflected in the price?

Then, on the 26<sup>th</sup> (or 25<sup>th</sup>, the date has been overwritten) of May 1935, further drawings were submitted. “Block Plan Proposed 18 Pairs Semi-Detached Greville Road [...]”. These are the houses in the central part of the road. What is noticeable though is the line: “These Plots are in Accordance with the Approved Land Unit”. This clearly indicates that Crown & Cox had gained outline planning permission for the development of the whole of the road prior to commencing the building of the actual houses. The Borough, handily presided over by William Briggs (of No. 1), had given Crown & Cox the go-ahead, allowing them to proceed with confidence. The name Greville Road has now, evidently, gained official approval.

<sup>8</sup> Occupied for many years by William Briggs, alderman and later Mayor of the Borough. According to the Greville Road Residents' Association, Crown and Cox had planned another single house opposite No. 1, yet changed their plan when no potential buyer could be identified.

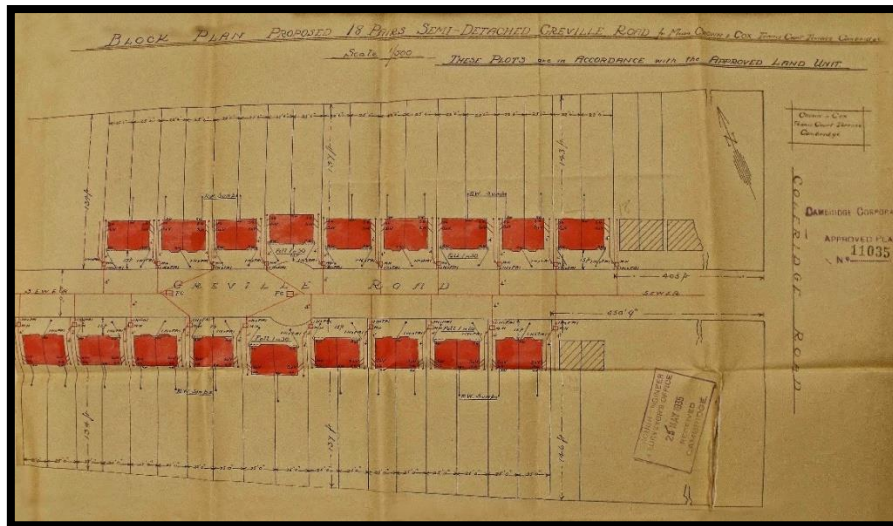


Figure 10 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council May 1935 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Note in Fig. 10 above that there is a turning circle – the only one in the road, more or less equidistant from east to west – and hence the house numbers can be determined. On the north side: Nos 56 & 54, 52 & 50, 48 & 46, 44 & 42, 40 & 38, 36 & 34, 32 & 30, 28 & 26 and 24 & 22. On the south side: Nos 59 & 57, 55 & 53, 51 & 49, 47 & 45, 43 & 41, 39 & 37, 35 & 33, 31 & 29 and 27 & 25. An innovation, not seen in the previous drawings, is the sewer running along the centre of the road, connected to the kitchen and downstairs toilet of each house. However, connections to the sumps in the rear remain.

The drawing for the eighteen pairs shown above was accompanied by Fig. 11 below, also dated 26<sup>th</sup> May 1935 detailing the design and layout of the houses intended to comprise the eighteen pairs. The proposed buildings appear to conform closely to the form of the earlier houses.

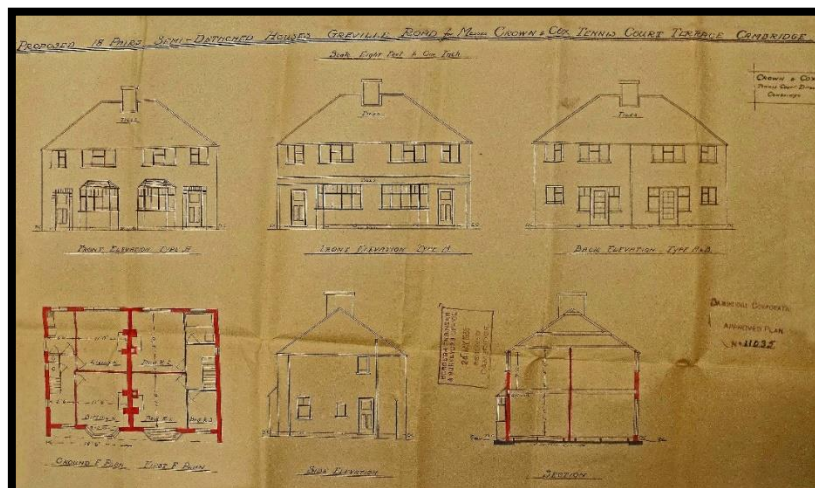


Figure 11 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council March 1936 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Then there is an interlude, between May 1935 and the next drawings from March 1936. Of course, there may have been no such interlude – it is quite probable that the drawings sub-



mitted in that period are absent. The next recorded drawings (Fig. 12 below) are for 7<sup>th</sup> March 1936.

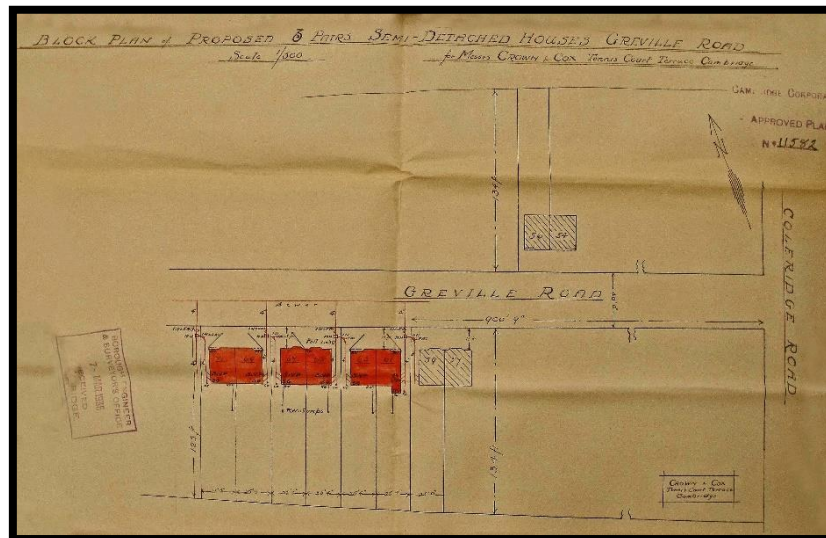


Figure 12 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council March 1936 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Here is the siting plan for Nos 71 & 69, 67 & 65, 63 & 61, shown as neatly following on from Nos 59 & 57 which had already received approval. There is one particular anomaly here – the small rear extension to No. 61.



Figure 13 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council March 1936 (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Here (Fig. 13) – elevations, layouts and sections for Nos 63 & 61 – it can be seen that No. 61 has a ground-floor rear extension and a coal shed, both accessed from the rear exterior though the coal shed has a door straight into the kitchen. This has been tacked on, as can be seen in the drawing. The 1936/37 Spalding's Directory (recording the occupants of all streets and roads in town) has an E. E. Leeke, bricklayer, as the occupant of No. 61 – seemingly someone able to get Crown & Cox to cater to individual requirements.

These 1930s, and earlier, architectural drawings never indicated detailed matters of utility provision, such as where coal for the clearly indicated fire hearths was to be stored – in a



homemade shed? However, this inclusion of a coal shed might indicate one of two things: those buying this property demanded better storage provision, or that central heating was being introduced. This may be moot, yet where would a central heating boiler be sited? There wasn't much room.

Nos 61 and 63 were built to the Type B architectural model, with only No. 63 still having the original window arrangement. The roof line has not been altered and there are no Velux windows. The rear elevation, which is for both types A and B, shows the tacked-on WC and coal shed on No. 61. It is interesting to note, via Google Maps' ability to snoop, that both No. 61 and No. 63 currently have these little extensions, though probably no longer used as a WC or for coal. Was No. 63's a later development?



Figure 14 – Building plans submitted by Crown & Cox to Cambridge Borough Council (Cambridgeshire County Archives)

Here (Fig. 14 above), also submitted on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1936, are the elevations, floorplans and sections for Nos 65 & 67, 69 & 71.

In this case, both Type A and Type B designs were used; A for Nos 69 and 71, and B for Nos 65 and 67, and this is clearly visible in 2023, though the original window design is retained only by No. 69. Nos 67, 69 and 71 have all had roof alterations which have, as with No. 3, resulted in the abandonment of the original slopes in favour of pointed gable ends – all these three houses also have Velux windows on the front elevation.

This also indicates that Crown & Cox must have made the small addition to their design in order to accommodate a request from a buyer, implying that No. 61, at least, had been earmarked for a buyer prior to it being given building consent by the Borough. However, such an addition to their otherwise uniform designs shows that Crown & Cox were willing to be a little flexible.

There are several houses for which no architectural drawings have been found in the Archives (and thereby no building applications to the Borough). The Greville Road Residents' Association states that Nos 6 and 8 were built at the same time as No. 1. Yet that leaves Nos 10 & 12, 11 & 15, (there is no No. 13) 17 & 19, 21 & 23, and 73 & 75 unaccounted for. Furthermore, no drawings or application papers have been found for the four-house "terraces" – five on

the north side and one on the south. Five of these terraced houses are at the west end of the road, furthest away from where construction began, and one near the east end.

There is variation among them. Nos 14/16/18/20, Nos 58/60/62/64 and Nos 82/84/86/88, on the north side, have the same design: the outer two units extending forwards and flat-fronted, while the inner two units have bay windows – an entry passage to the rear divides the block. Also on the north side are Nos 66/68/70/72 and Nos 74/76/78/80, each with a bay window, no forward extensions, and divided by an entry passage. No. 88, the last house before Charles Street, used to have a corner shop on its ground floor – the sole commercial premises in the road. It was once a flourishing grocer’s shop and, having a strategic location just where foot and cycle traffic is funnelled on to the Carter Bridge, it should have continued to prosper. It has, however, now closed and the space has been converted into a downstairs room for No. 88A.



Figure 15 – No. 88. Left, the corner shop as it was in the late 1930s, with Mr Wallman and two assistants (Greville Road Residents’ Association).  
Right, the later reconfiguration into No. 88 (author).

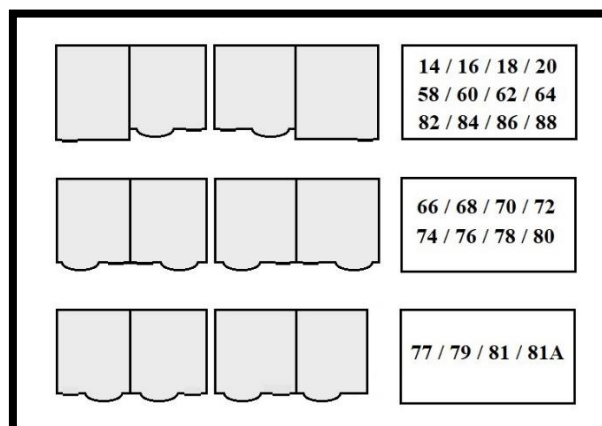


Figure 16 – Variations in the six terraces (author)

Nos 77/79/81/81A, on the south side of the road, present the only irregular version of the local four-house terrace design. Here it is evident that No. 81A has been added on to the terrace sometime after the others were built – it has no front door and is accessible only via a back gate; furthermore it has visibly different brickwork and minimal external space. Nonetheless the overall design complements Nos 77, 79 and 81.



Figure 17 – No. 81A, added to the end of the terrace of 77, 79 & 81

## Architectural Design

The architectural design is typical of the period, and is found in every urban area in the UK. Gone is the Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing (though that style continued with the public sector housing on Coleridge, Suez and Hobart roads). The semi-detached house was more airy, lighter and spacious, and set in more ample grounds – front and back.

The general design harks back to the style that was founded by the Arts and Crafts movement in the 1890s and taken forward by such people as Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin,<sup>9</sup> and Charles Voysey. The supposed traditional country cottage was the inspiration – with the use of exterior render (often painted white), ornate brickwork, exposed wooden beams, exaggerated roofs and generally strongly defined shapes.



Figure 18 – A Charles Voysey design from the 1900s, a far cry from previous 19<sup>th</sup> century designs (Cole, 2015)

By the time Crown & Cox were building, the idealised version had been watered down for mass production at reduced cost. Osbert Lancaster, in his *A Cartoon History of Architecture*, labelled it dismissively as “by-pass variegated”. Nonetheless, note the detailing in the windows of Nos 3 and 5 Greville Road, and the white-painted render on the front reliefs – a seemingly essential and enduring feature of many of these Arts and Crafts inspired houses.

<sup>9</sup> Housing pioneers behind the development of Letchworth Garden City.



Figure 19 – Nos. 3 & 5 Greville Road, displaying the essence of Arts and Crafts design, with alterations to roof and rear (author).

There are 85 houses on the street that were built in the 1930s – one detached, 61 semi-detached, and 24 in six four-unit terraces – in three styles (“verandah”, bay-windowed, and double bay-windowed). The six terraces are a mix of the first two styles. The one detached house has a plain front, and one single-storey house has been built within the last twenty or so years.

Yet who was the architect? There is no mention. Crown & Cox may have simply copied design from other builders, and may have made a few alterations, though there are few if any deviations from the norm. They may have hired an architect, or a builder with some architectural knowledge, to draw up a selection of designs that could easily be repeatedly used.

They had some house-building experience prior to undertaking Greville Road. In 1929 they were at work on Hurst Park Avenue in Chesterton, a street of stolidly Voysey-esque houses, and in 1932 they were at work on Vinery Road, though it must have been in-fill among the prevailing late Edwardian terraces. Also in the 1930s they built various houses on Radegund and Perne roads – all thoroughly in the 1930s established semi-detached style.

After Greville Road, they were, it is said, building flats in 1946 on Queen Edith’s Way – though where? Being flats, the only block, as such, is Tamara House, an expressively Modernist building and surely a tad too Modernist for the speculative builder. From the late 1940s onwards, the company seems to have moved with the times and opted for simple low-cost standardised design.

As of 2023, the front elevations of the houses look much the same as shown in the drawings, except for the arrangement of window panes and the burglar alarms. There are now Velux windows in many a roof, and all manner of alterations to the rear. Attention ought to be paid, however, to the retention (or possibly replacement, in some cases) of original features. Many of the front door windows and upper panes in the bay windows have retained their original decorative motifs; white render is seemingly painstakingly maintained; chimney stacks remain – even perhaps when no longer needed.



## Situation in the Late 1930s

That the Greville Road houses were occupied so soon after being completed – occupants more or less moving in as the decorators moved out – indicates that Crown & Cox must have signed up potential customers before embarking on construction. Indeed, there may well have been deposits put down. The 1936/37 Spalding's Directory lists seventy households and four unoccupied houses. Moreover, house building was still in progress, with Nos 79 and 81 on the south side, and the two four-house terraces (74/76/78/80 and 82/84/86/88) on the north side yet to be completed.

Yet all the occupants were recorded in Spalding's Directory for 1936/37, the same year that Crown & Cox were still submitting applications to the Borough. Business was evidently brisk.

1936/37	1951	1973
<b>South side</b>	<b>South side</b>	<b>South side</b>
1. Briggs, Wm, L., J.P., Mayor	1. Briggs, Wm, O.B.E., J. P.	1. Ray, Edwin
3. Barrow, A.	3. Jellings, Geo.	3. Jellings, Miss P
5. Redhouse, W. E.	5. Redhouse, Wm., E.	5. Redhouse, Wm. E.
7. Backler, S., shop assistant	7. Backler, Stanley	7. Backler, Stanley
9. Everitt, A. W., railway controller	9. Everitt, Arth., W.	9. Everitt, Mrs. B. G.
11. Cross, E., engine driver	11. Cross, Ernest	11. Cross, Mrs E.
15. Robinson, W. L., bricklayer	15. Robinson, Wm., L.	15. Curtis, Jack
17. Grant, W., clerk	17. Grant, Wm.	17. Harvey, Donald
19. Pamplin, H.	19. Pamplin, Mrs. E.	19. Goode, Mrs.
21. Sanders, W. G. L., gas fitter	21. Sanders, Wm., G. L.	21. Sanders, Wm. G. L.
23. Pistor, F. A., clerk, sec. I.O. Rachabites	23. Pistor, Frank	23. Dunn, Chas.
25. Docwra, W. H., railway servant	25. Docwra, Harold, Wm.	25. Docwra, Harold Wm.
27. Mason, R. S., clerk	27. Mason, Regnld. Stanley	27. Mason, Regnld. Stanley
29. Breed, J. L., detective constable	29. Breed, Jsph., Leonard	29. Chapman, Mrs. E.
31. Utteridge, A.	31. Utteridge, Arth.	31. Prime, Mrs.
33. Fitzgerald, L., printer	33. Fitzgerald, Leslie	33. Fitzgerald, Leslie
35. Franklin, J. F., engine driver	35. Beard, Wm., E.	35. Beard, Wm. E.
37. Heap, W.	37. Nicholas, Altr.	37. Nicholas, Wltr.
39. Dodson, G., L.N.E.R. linesman	39. Dodson, Geo.	39. Johnson, Fredk.
41. Cash, W., clerk	41. Cash, Wm., A.	41. Cash, Wm. E.
43. Cash, R. A.	43. Cash Rt., A.	43. Cash, Rt. A.
45. Leyshon, W., warehouseman	45. Fella, Ernest	45. Wilkin, P. J.
47. Gunstead, S.	47. Bishop, Rt., A.	47. Jeffrey, Kenneth
49. Mann, F. S. A., gas co employee	49. Mann, Surrey, A.	49. Mann, Doris C.
51. Wick. H., engine driver	51. Wick, Herbt.	51. Wick, Herbt.
53. Fenn, S.M., fireman	53. Fenn, Stanley, M.	53. Fenn, Stanley M.
55. Stigwood, W., lab assistant	55. Stigwood, Wm.	55. Stigwood, Mrs. M.
57. Clark, A. E., L.N.E.R fireman	57. Clark, Albt., Edwd.	57. Wight, Jnr.
59. –	59. Squires, Harry	59. Squires, Harry
61. Leeke, E. E., bricklayer	61. Leeke, Ernest	61. Leeke, Misses.
63. Sharp S. J., L.N.E.R. fireman	63. Halls, Rt., Jr.	63. Halls, Louisa
65. Cook, E. J., servant Ley's School	65. Ryder, Ernest	65. Binks, Douglas
67. Harrison, E. J., engineer	67. Christopher, Mrs.	67. Boreham, Wm. J.
69. Stonebridge, R., instrument maker	69. Stonebridge, Rd., E.	69. Stonebridge, Rd. E.
71. Culpin, R., gas co employee	71. Culpin, Mrs. F. E.	71. Colcough, Alan
73. Linsey, F. J., L.N.E.R. fireman	73. Hunt, Victor	73. Filby, H. W.
75. Drane, L., L.N.E.R driver	75. Drane, Leonard	75. Drane, Frances
77. Hawkes, J. H., clerk	77. Hawkes, Jsph., H.	77. Rumbelow, Eric
<i>Houses being built</i>	79. Negus, Percy	79. Rogers, Kenneth O.
	81. Alen, Jas.	81. Brand, Regnld
<b>North side</b>	<b>North side</b>	<b>North side</b>
	88. Wallman, Bernard, groceries & fruiterer	88. Tanner, F. & C., grocers
	86. Wallman, Bernard	86. Chiddicks, Raymond
	84. Gothard, Mrs. S.	84. Turnbull, Thos. W.
<i>Houses being built</i>	82. Rix, H. Graham	82. Cook, Harry
	80. Hurst, Ernest	80. Hurst, Ernest
	78. Lockwood, Regnld.	78. Lockwood, Regnld.
	76. Burgess, Claude, A.	76. Gray, Jn.



-	74. Woodley, Rt.	74. Collis, David
72. Butler, P. G., decorator	72. Howard, Ernest, Wm.	72. Howard, Mrs
70. -	70. Watts, Wm., Fredk.	70. James, S.
68. Cutler, Mrs.	68. Cutler, Mrs. M.	68. Cutler, E. S.
66. -	66. Shenton, Harry	66. Watson, Graham
64. Whittaker, S. J., clerk	64. Thoday, Frank	64. Thoday, Mrs E. Mm
62. Parsley, S. J., clerk	62. Parsley, Leslie, Victor	62. Parsley, Leslie Victor
60. Pinfold, W. J., auditor	60. Bloy, Edwd., Victor	60. Brown, Colin A.
58. -	58. Saunders, Basil, F.	58. Hotchkiss, Alfd. H.
56. Martin, M. E., P.O. eng. Dept.	56. Martin, Maxwell, Edwin	56. Horrex, Arth.
54. Wright, J. A., L.N.E.R. guard	54. Wright, Jn., Arth.	54. Wright, JR. Arth.
52. Dyke, W., grocer's manager	52. Tweed, Rd., Geoffrey	52. Tweed, Rd. Geoffrey
50. Hawkes, S. J., joiner	50. Hawkes, Stanley, Geo.	50. Hawkes, Stanley Geo.
48. Dennis, H. J.	48. Burn-Murdoch, Jn., A.	48. Lawrence, I.
46. Jacobs, L. G., engineer	46. Jacobs, Lawrence, Geo.	46. Thompson, Desmond
44. Cox, F., L.N.E.R. servant	44. Cox, Fredk.	44. Cox, Fredk.
42. Baker, W. C., upholsterer	42. Baker, Warwick C.	42. Baker, Warwick C.
40. Gooch, E. J., postman	40. Hewson, Fred.	40. Bennet, David J.
38. Abbott, A. G. C., police constable	38. Abbott, Terrance G. C.	38. Abbott, Terrance G. C.
36. Butler, R. J., fitter	36. Butler, Rt. Jack	36. Butler, Rt. Jack
34. Tindele, Brian, water inspector	34. Greenfield, E.	34. Isaacson, Gordon
32. Fletcher, E. E., mechanic	32. Fletcher, Ernest Edwd.	32. Fletcher, Ernest Edwd.
30. Day, W. G.	30. Kenzie, Mrs. F.	30. Starling, Donald
28. Missen, C., mechanic	28. Sharp, Sydney Edwd.	28. Sharpe, Mrs
26. Ellis, W. E.	26. Webb, Jr. Yeoman	26. Blanks, Mrs D. E. L.
24. Speechley, H., scientific inst. maker	24. Speechley, Harry	24. Speechley, Harry
22. Hawkes, H.	22. Hawkes, Harold Jsph.	22. Hawkes, Harold Jsph.
20. Copon, F. G.	20. Lee, Cyril	20. Lee, Cyril
18. Easy, Mrs. O. M.	18. Easy, Mrs. O. M.	18. Ellis, Rt.
16. Starling, W., wireless mechanic	16. Starling, Wm.	16. Starling, Mrs M.
14. Webb, J., co-op. employee	14. Dosanjh, Balwant S.	14. Dosanjh, Balwant S.
12. Lenoir, E. F.	12. Lenoir, Edwd. Fras.	12. Parsons, Michl.
10. Moule, F., L.N.E.R servant (Barnes, J.)	10. Moule, Fred	10. Moule, Leonard
8. Ferguson, H. L.	8. Ferguson, Herbt., L.	8. Hurst, Barry
6. Jackson, W. H.	6. Jackson, Herbt., Wltr.	6. Jackson, S. W.
4. Beck, H. G.	4. Beck, Mrs. A. L.	4. Swain, Rt.
2. Beck, G. J.	2. Beck, Geo. Jas.	2. Beck, Geo. Jas.

Figure 20 – Extracts from Spalding's and Kelly's street directories

Fig. 20 above shows entries from Spalding's and Kelly's directories for 1936/37, 1951 and 1973. By 1951 (in fact probably a few years earlier) construction of the houses had been completed and all were occupied. What is noticeable, however, is that thirty-one households remained in continuous occupation over the period – almost half of occupants from 1936 to 1973. Here and there it is evident that the wife, daughter or son outlived the original recorded male householder.

The mix of employment is noticeable too, ranging from railway-related work (so often found in Romsey Town) to auditor and scientific instrument maker, and, indeed, to Mayor.

It does seem that Greville Road may have represented a distinctive break from the more mono-stratified characteristics of so many other streets in Romsey Town. Here, though, a question arises. Were all the houses occupied by their owners, or were some owned by non-occupants and rented/leased to other parties, who are recorded as occupants but not owners? Examination of the council tax rolls could reveal that – though that is beyond the scope of this report.

## From 1938 to 1991

The Ordnance Survey map of 1938 (Fig. 21 below) shows Greville Road, and much of Coleridge and other surrounding roads, as developed, though it looks more like planned than built development. The houses are represented by long continuous blocks rather than individual buildings, and no gardens are shown. Even so, there are several things to notice: Rustat, Davy, Corrie and Brackyn roads are not yet laid out, though the recreation ground is there; Radegund Road is present, though not individual houses; a church is indicated (now a gurdwara); the buildings of Polecat Farm are still there (though, as the farm land had disappeared, what were they used for?).

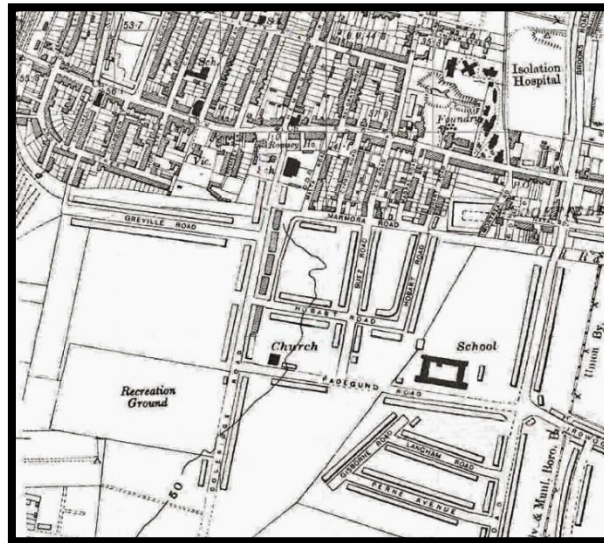


Figure 21 – Ordnance Survey map of 1938

The Ordnance Survey map for 1950 (Fig. 22 below) shows the individual building blocks – including the five 4-house terraces and the oddly truncated 3-house terrace at the south west end. The Corrie and Brackyn road area is still undeveloped – seemingly open fields or allotments. It can be seen, though, that the buildings of Polecat Farm are still in place. Rustat Road has not yet been laid out hence there is no Carter Bridge over the railway lines, and no Davy Road.

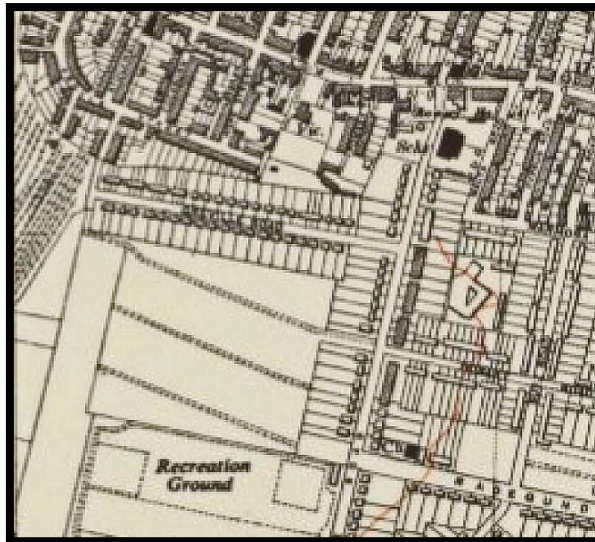


Figure 22 – Ordnance Survey map of 1950

Fig. 23 below shows the area in the 1973 Ordnance Survey map, showing the area much as it presently is, though with some particular differences.



Figure 23 – Ordnance Survey map of 1973

Greville Road is displayed somewhat simplistically – no semi-detached houses, just blocks, that don't conform to the actuality. Nonetheless, Rustat and Davy roads are now laid out, as are the first parts of Corrie and Bracklyn, though the middle section remains open. The William Smith Close area is still allotments; there is still no Carter Bridge; Polecat Farm has finally gone. No. 2A Greville Road, built in the garden of No. 32 Coleridge Road, is yet to be realised.

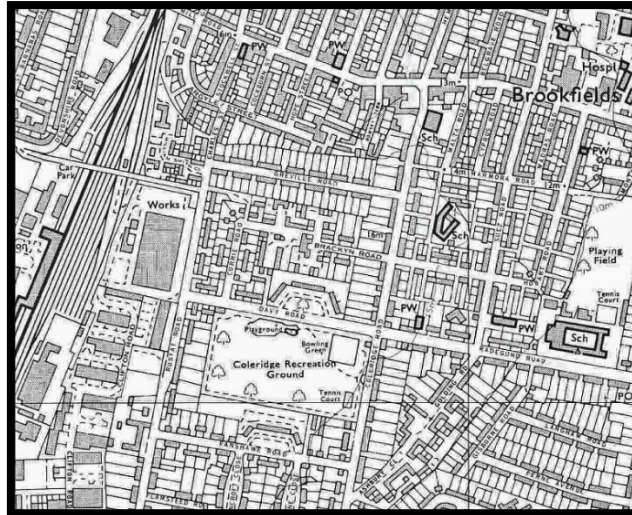


Figure 24 – Ordnance Survey map of 1991

Fig. 24 above shows the area as in the Ordnance Survey map for 1991. Greville Road is still imprecisely indicated, though the William Smith Close area has been developed, the Carter Bridge has been erected, and a large “Works” site occupies the space where the Rustat Avenue and Close apartments now stand, these having previously been allotments. Further afield, it is noticeable how the Golding Road area (which had accommodated a lot of pre-fabs post war) has been redeveloped into a cul-de-sac estate.

### The Big Social and Economic Change

Throughout the 1970s, ‘80s and early ‘90s it appears that Greville Road continued to be a street occupied mainly by Romsey Town-based households – many, if not most, being those who first moved in – with little or no view to alterations or extensions to the built fabric. Applications to the Borough planning department mainly concerned proposals for garages and bicycle sheds. The houses themselves were not greatly altered (excepting the introduction of central heating, TV connectivity, etc).

At some point – hard to define yet estimated as around the late 2000s – it can be surmised that considerable changes in house ownership were occurring. To put it simply, by the 2000s, if not earlier, the original occupants were coming to the end of their occupation, and new buyers were moving in. Estate agents would readily describe Greville Road as a “des res”<sup>10</sup> location – good, solid, roomy family houses, most of them semi-detached, set back from the road and with ample gardens, within walking distance of the railway station, the Mill Road shops, and a hop, skip and a jump from the city centre. Des Res indeed. A somewhat similar Cambridge road, such as Gilbert Road, is relatively far from the station (though the two new stations – Cambridge North and South – may change this).

An overview of house prices, as recorded by Rightmove, gives an indication of the change in value of the houses over the period late 1990s to early 2020s. The figures have been averaged so that no individual houses are identified.

<sup>10</sup> i.e. “desirable residence”.

1990s	£95,000
2000s	£225,000
2010s	£400,000
2020s	£650,000

Figure 25 – Indicative house values ([www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk) )

Obviously, such matters as rear extensions, side extensions, loft conversions, exterior and garden additions, etc, have influenced this quite phenomenal increase, the equation being, in most people’s minds, that the more one puts in the more one accrues. It has not been ascertained whether any Greville Road house has yet reached the £1,000,000 mark, though it can’t be far off, given recent trends.

### Extensions and Additions

Greville Road has been busy with seemingly constant building work for several years, if not decades – on one house after the other.

The road is strategically placed, and car parking is controlled under the Coleridge West Residents’ Parking Scheme. The road is generally quiet, yet is subject to a limited degree of ‘rat-running’ between Mill Road and Coleridge Road. It lies outside the Mill Road Conservation Area. Investment is assumed to pay off.

The road may be taken as an exemplar of trends in Cambridge. The city has, particularly over the last two decades, come to be regarded by investors as having a high potential for healthy returns, and this applies to both businesses and individuals. As is common throughout the city (and, indeed, throughout the land), loft and side extensions have become more-or-less the norm in freehold properties – yet few streets are so seemingly thoroughly characterised by these as Greville.

Research into planning applications (without identifying individual cases) reveals the following picture: The pace and scale of proposed extensions started to pick up noticeably in the 1970s, when most applications were for single-storey structures (taken generally as being the expansion of the living room into the garden). In the 1980s and 1990s applications for two-storey extensions began to emerge, though again mainly at the rear of the houses.

In the 2000s, applications for roof alterations and extensions started to increase, and by the 2010s there were numerous applications for rear, side and roof works (the majority approved). Indeed, in 2017 there was an application for comprehensive re-development with the stated intention of creating an HMO (house of multiple occupation). This trend has continued into the 2020s.

Extension of previously built houses has become common throughout the UK, though there is one particular qualification: the house must be of one to two storeys; apartment blocks, for example, are generally unextendible. Another consideration is ownership: if leasehold (through a council, building society, housing association, etc.) the scope for extension is lim-



ited, as the leaseholders would have to be re-housed during building work, and those on long-term rental arrangements (e.g. student accommodation) might also be compromised. However, freehold gives the owner *carte blanche*, hedged in only by finance and planning restrictions.

Greville Road is entirely freehold, though whether the freeholders are always the occupiers has not been determined – it is more than likely that several houses are leased or rented out. Moreover, the houses are entirely two-storey and, furthermore, nearly all of them are semi-detached – meaning there is space for side extensions. By August 2023 (the time of writing) there appeared to be only eighteen houses, out of a total of 85, that remain much the same, externally, as when they were built.

Yet it is noticeable that all this extension has resulted in many buildings appearing to be somewhat disproportionate. The original Cox & Crown houses were regular, almost four-square structures – not particularly exciting architecturally, but solid, if not stolid. Now, there has been so much added to the rear, to the roof and to the side, that it seems we are faced with two buildings – the often higgledy-piggledy accumulation of structure behind, with a relatively demure front usually unchanged since the 1930s. Why has so little been done to the front elevations? A cursory survey shows only two porch extensions, both modest.

The overwhelming majority of applications for planning permission for extensions are submitted to the planning department by architectural firms, and most, if not all, are *au fait* with the department’s policies. Submissions seek to reflect these stipulations as there is little enthusiasm for disputes, which can be protracted and costly.

Yet what are these stipulations? The 2018 Cambridge Local Plan contains a Roof Extensions Design Guide, given here in the Appendix (p. 28).

While the guidelines refer to alterations to the rear, the roof or the side, there is little or no mention of the front façade. There is mention of the “impact on townscape”, yet this is a variable term. Nonetheless, there remains an implied presumption against alterations to the front façade – and this seems to apply to nearly all buildings, of whatever age and whatever location. None of the Greville Road houses front directly on to the street, yet none, it seems, may cross the line into front garden (or parking) space.



Figure 26 – Indication of Rear and Roof Extensions:  
left = original Crown & Cox house; right = extended house (amalgam of planning applications)  
(Author/Cambridge City Council Planning Department)

## **Comparisons with Other Streets of 1930s Semi-Detached Houses**

Comparison with similar streets of 1930s semi-detached houses may be useful. In Gilbert Road, Cambridge, many of the houses have been extended to the rear and the side, yet the façades remain more or less as original, apart from several side garages having been heightened to extend the first floor. Windsor Road and Perne Avenue appear to have only some modest porch extensions. Ranging further to Leicester, Romway Road has additions all over the place (porches, ornate brick work, protruding sides); Cannonbury Avenue in Harrow is characterised by quite large porch extensions, with some living rooms thrust out to the front; Cranes Park Road, Birmingham, is noticeable for its extended porches, though, as with nearly all other streets of such houses, the front, particularly the upper front, has remained relatively untouched.

Greville stands apart from these examples for one particular reason – all the houses were designed and built by one developer.

A slight similarity can be made with the Orchard Estate in Cherry Hinton, where there are eighteen semi-detached houses (two rows of six on Orchard Estate with a further six ranged along Coldham's Lane), all apparently built by one developer. These houses are more ornately designed than those in Greville Road, most having white render with decorated corners and pronounced arched doorways. Here again there have been several extensions though only to the rear – the articulated corners of the sides making addition difficult. There is a 2-storey front extension over the doorway at No. 568 Coldham's Lane, though here attention has been paid to reproducing the white render and the articulated corners.

However, in all cases there appears to be a reticence to extend to the front. Research into any policy-based grounds for refusal of planning permission leads to the stated need to protect street frontage, yet this appears to be somewhat subjective with little or no obvious justification. Streetscape/street frontage is an important consideration in urban design, though the reasons, and parameters, should perhaps be clearly defined. Possibly, that one bold front extension in Orchard Estate mentioned above, which respects the original design, might point a way forward.

## **Interior alterations and Additions**

Having looked at the exterior of the buildings, let's now consider what is happening in the interior. It appears to be much as might be expected, though with one notable exception. Generally (having researched planning applications to the Council) it seems that upstairs, the bedrooms and toilet have been adapted to make room for stairs up to the loft conversion – many of which have an en-suite bathroom/toilet, and a Juliet balcony (an interesting phrase).

Downstairs, the kitchen and ancillary rooms that originally occupied the rear have been adapted so as to relocate the kitchen either to the side or to the interior, the former dining room being extended at the rear to form a conservatory-type lounge – facing the garden (at the end of which may well be a studio annexe).

The great exception seems to be the retention of the original front living room, with its bay window looking on to the street. Here matters become, again, somewhat subjective. Knocking through to create an expansive open floorspace may be fine, though retaining an extra “reception” room, or study, or whatsoever, seems quite desirable, the rear of the house being reserved for relaxation and recreation, the (slightly) noisier front dedicated to affairs that require no distraction.

### Deviations from the Norm

Much of this report focuses on the consistency in building design along the length of the street – all built uniformly in the late 1930s. There are two exceptions: “land adjacent to No. 1 Greville Road”, and No. 2A Greville Road. Both are at the eastern end of the street, both springing more from Coleridge Road than Greville Road.

What is now No. 2A is built upon land in the rear of No. 30 Coleridge. It is a bungalow of 1990s design, with varied sloping roofs, two large window spaces, and its concrete walls rendered in off-white – no roof tiles or red (or yellow) brick in sight, or garden space at the rear. It is said that the owners originally submitted to the planning authority drawings of more conventional design, and were refused permission. Nonetheless, it appears that they gained permission in 2008 for a radically new design.



Figure 27 – left = No. 2A Greville; right = “Land adjacent to No. 1 Greville Road”. (Ian Bent, and author)

The structures at “Land adjacent to No. 1 Greville Road” received planning permission in 2022. The land lies to the rear of Nos 42, 44 and 46 Coleridge Road. From the Design and Access Statement accompanying the Planning Application, it is said that the applicants have family attachments to the area and wished to erect two dwellings. The land has lain undeveloped for a number of years. The two new houses are currently (March 2024) under construction. One wonders what house numbers they will be assigned.

It may be that these two aberrations from the predominant mood of the street will serve to diversify the ambience.

### What Might the Future Look Like?

From being a street of uniformly three-bedroom houses, many of those houses now have four or five bedrooms. This is fine for a growing family, yet with generational succession perhaps a simple three-bedroom option might be more suitable. The extended house may well come to be sold on to a new, growing family, or lodgers might be taken in. The characteristics of the

street, however, have changed and thereby the market. Greville Road, originally built for the local “up-and-coming”, is now real estate of national and international interest.

What are the visual impacts of the rear, roof and side extensions? Certainly, some houses appear to be somewhat lop-sided or over-loaded. Customary standards of architectural proportion have often been waved aside. Yet with all the bulk being piled up at the back, might it not eventually spill over to the front? The protection of the street-scene (the prospect of the buildings and layout of the street) is one of the policies guiding the assessment of planning applications (to build). Through there must be a degree of subjectivity in the definition of what exactly constitutes a street-scene, it is here that the regulations on permitted development (building works that don't require planning permission) surely come into play.

### **Permitted Development Rights**

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 first states that “enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse” is permitted development. It then goes on to circumscribe that statement. The provisions of the Order are lengthy, yet, in brief, permission is required should any new building work:

- exceed 50% of the property's grounds;
- be higher than the highest part of the existing structure;
- extend beyond the front of the original house, or form a front-facing side elevation to the existing house.

There are also numerous stipulations on the proximity of any new build to neighbouring structures.

It appears that these guidelines have been implemented by Cambridge City Council's Planning Department, as nearly all proposed extensions to existing structures in Greville Road have been subject to the approval process. It also appears that the agents (architects or otherwise) engaged by would-be extenders are thoroughly cognisant of the regulations, and keep their plans within the limit.

Currently (early 2024) the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is consulting on whether, and how, permitted development rights could be relaxed in order to maximise the development of domestic units, and perhaps thereby lessen demand for greenfield sites. Enabling the enlarging of existing three- to four-bedroom properties to, say, five- or six-bedroom ones seems unlikely to address current housing needs.

However, one of the most peculiar features in this extension trend is the adherence to the traditional front room. Knocking through to create an expanse of ground floor space appears to have not been a common practice.

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## APPENDIX

### Roof extensions design guide [Cambridge City Local Plan, 2018]

#### Context

E.1 In Cambridge the supply of housing is limited and house prices are high. Increasingly, people are trying to meet their need for additional accommodation by extending their existing houses, rather than moving elsewhere. Roof extensions are a popular way of providing more accommodation.

E.2 Roof extensions, however, can pose a considerable design challenge, both architecturally and structurally. In the past, Cambridge has seen many of its rooflines spoiled by inappropriate development, some of which has been carried out without the need for planning permission. This guidance aims to strike the right balance between the needs of the individual householder and the importance of maintaining and improving Cambridge's unique built environment – in particular its 'roofscape'.

E.3 The Council encourages householders, designers and architects to seek to extend houses so as to create attractive and interesting solutions, which will enhance the domestic architecture of the city.

#### Design principles

E.4 This appendix aims to provide general design principles for the design of the most common forms of roof extension. It seeks to promote good quality design appropriate to its setting and context. It adopts a flexible approach, encouraging innovation and creativity by designers. The guidance is relevant for roof developments in all parts of the city, whether in a conservation area or outside.

#### Massing and proportion

E.5 Roof extensions should relate well to the proportions, roof form and massing of the existing house and neighbouring properties. They must be appropriate in size, scale and proportion to the existing house and adjoining properties and must not be so large as to dominate the existing roof or to overwhelm their immediate setting. New roof extensions will be expected to relate well to existing local roof forms – but this does not necessarily mean copying existing forms, as innovative design of high quality is to be welcomed.

E.6 Proposals for roof extensions are unlikely to be acceptable where they:

- perpetuate forms of existing, but poorly designed roof extensions in particular; or
- are insensitively designed large 'box type' roof extensions which show little respect for the existing roofline or for the scale, design and proportions of the existing property and its neighbours.

#### Materials and detailing

E.7 The choice of materials should reflect or complement the character of the existing roof, the rest of the property and the immediate area. Materials that are appropriate for the age and style of the existing property will usually be the most appropriate. However, there may be circumstances in which complementary and contrasting materials may be acceptable, particularly where a more innovative or unconventional design approach is being taken. Whatever the approach, materials must be of high quality.

E.8 Where appropriate, the designer should use details reflecting those of the main house to add character to the roof extension. Features of the existing building, such as chimneys and parapet walls, should not be removed or hidden by the new extension where these are a key part of the architecture and their removal would be to the detriment of the overall design. Rain water goods and soil and vent pipes should be properly integrated and not disfigure the building.

#### Windows

E.9 The style of windows to be used in the roof extension should be influenced by the design, proportion and arrangement of existing windows in the building. The alignment and arrangement of new windows should also be considered and their relationship with the existing windows treated carefully. A less regulated approach to window design may be acceptable for more innovative or unconventional extensions, provided that they maintain or enhance the character of the existing building and the surrounding area. The visual impact of rooflights can often be reduced by using types that lie flush with the roof slope. Building Regulations requirements are also an important consideration, as windows and rooflights are often used as means of escape.

#### Impact on the roof

E.10 The ridge line, especially of terraced properties or groups of similar buildings, is an important part of the character of houses and streets. Roof extensions that raise the height of the ridge will normally not be supported unless the street

already lacks uniform roof heights or the ridge of the roof is not visible from the street. In exceptional cases it may be appropriate to project above the ridge, when it can be demonstrated that this would create a feature that enhances the streetscene.

#### Overlooking and loss of privacy

E.11 Roof extensions that give rise to significant additional overlooking of neighbouring property will not be supported. In assessing the degree of overlooking, factors such as the size, scale and orientation of the existing house, extent of existing outbuildings and garden curtilage will be taken into account

E.12 Roof extensions that incorporate high-level roof terraces or other areas capable of being used for sitting out will normally not be supported unless they are designed to mitigate the potential for overlooking.

#### Environmental impact and energy saving

E.13 The Council is keen to support development that minimises environmental impact. The use of sustainable materials which are appropriate to their context and designs and which take advantage of passive or active solar energy is therefore encouraged.

#### Common forms of roof extension

E.14 The following section offers general advice in relation to a number of common scenarios.

##### Front roof slope

E.15 Roof extensions on front roof slopes facing roads always require planning permission. The plan contains policies that not only address the impact of development on the specific site and its surroundings but also consider the impact on townscape.

E.16 The design principles contained in this guidance are particularly important in relation to roof extensions in such prominent locations. A key consideration will be the nature of the form and appearance of the existing roofscape.

E.17 New roof extensions on highly visible and unaltered roof planes will generally be resisted. Front roof extensions may be acceptable where front roof planes have already been altered sensitively, or where the rhythm of the existing roof planes is less regular.

##### Rear roof slope – visible in public realm

E.18 The degree of visibility of the rear roof slope varies considerably; however, it is common for rear elevations of houses to be visible from areas of public open space, public roads and car parks. As a general rule, the more visible a roof is from public areas, the more important it will be for it to be well designed. The degree of public visibility will influence the assessment of impact in each case.

E.19 Rear roof extensions that are not highly visible from public areas will be assessed on the basis of their impact on the house and its immediate surroundings.

##### Rear roof slope – only visible from other gardens

E.20 Rear roof slopes that are only visible from surrounding gardens still matter, as these have an impact on the amenity of the neighbouring houses. It is just as important for such roof extensions to relate well to the proportions, roof forms and massing of the existing house and its neighbours as elsewhere. However, in these circumstances a more flexible approach may be acceptable, depending on the individual circumstances. There may be situations in which extensions to the rear roof slope of a less conventional style are appropriate.

##### Side roof slope

E.21 Dormer windows to the side elevations of hipped-roofed, semi-detached houses are common and often combined with rear roof extensions. Roof extensions of this type are usually visible from the public highway and therefore have the capacity to affect the townscape. There is a potential for this type of roof extension to upset the balanced appearance of semi-detached houses. Therefore, if there is an opportunity to carry out a joint scheme with your neighbour, it should be taken. In order to minimise this impact, it is recommended that side dormers should be of minimum size and should be designed to retain the eaves line so as not to compromise the ridge line of the hipped roof.

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Cambridge City Council Planning Department

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/planning>

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