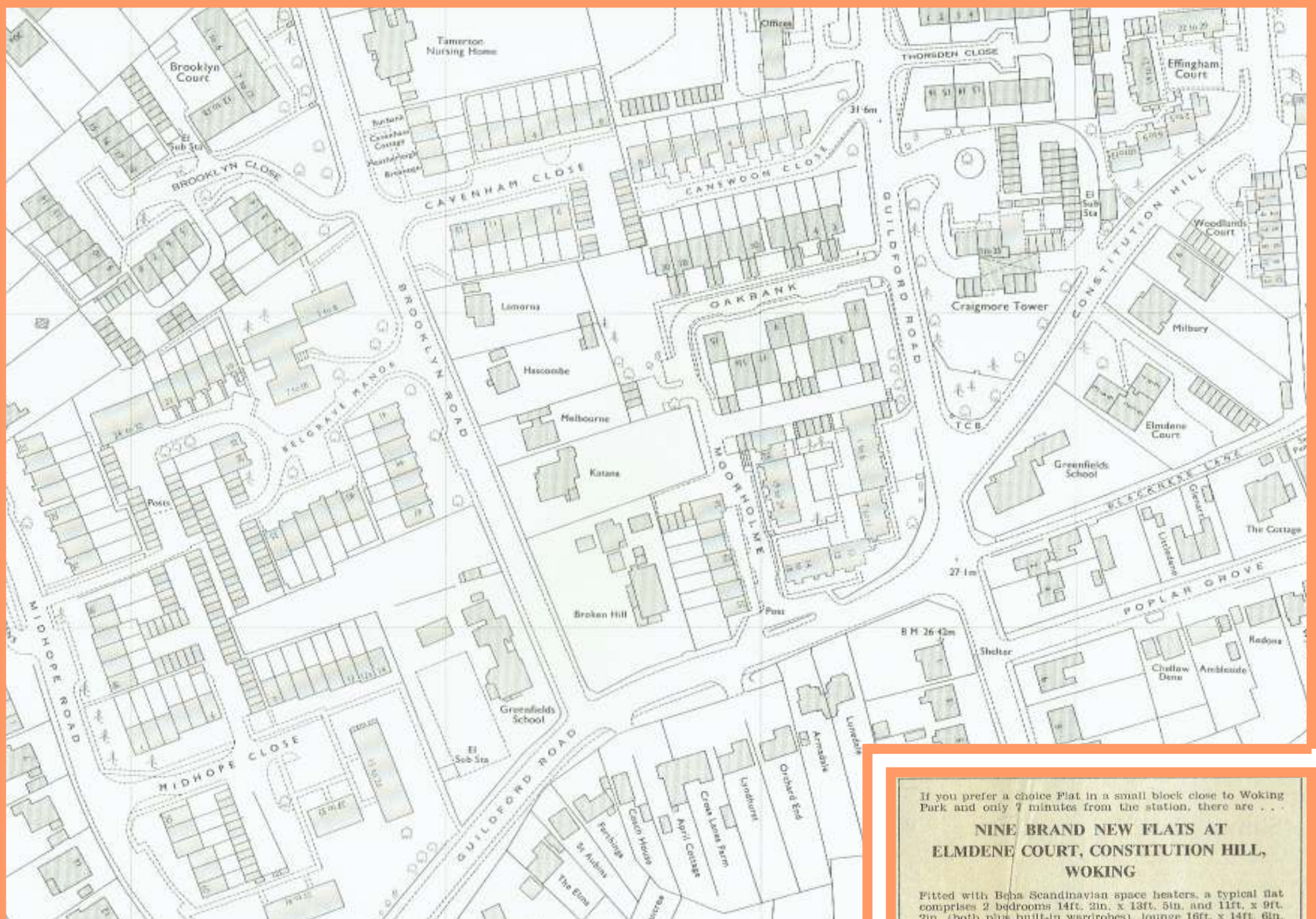


# WOKING COUNCIL - PUTTING THE 'CART' OF MORE RATEPAYERS, BEFORE THE 'HORSE' OF BETTER FACILITIES

Iain Wakeford 2018

Back in the early 1960's, when the council were debating high-density housing to the south of the station, it was pointed out by many that in doing so they were in effect putting the 'cart' of more residents before the 'horse' of better facilities in the town.



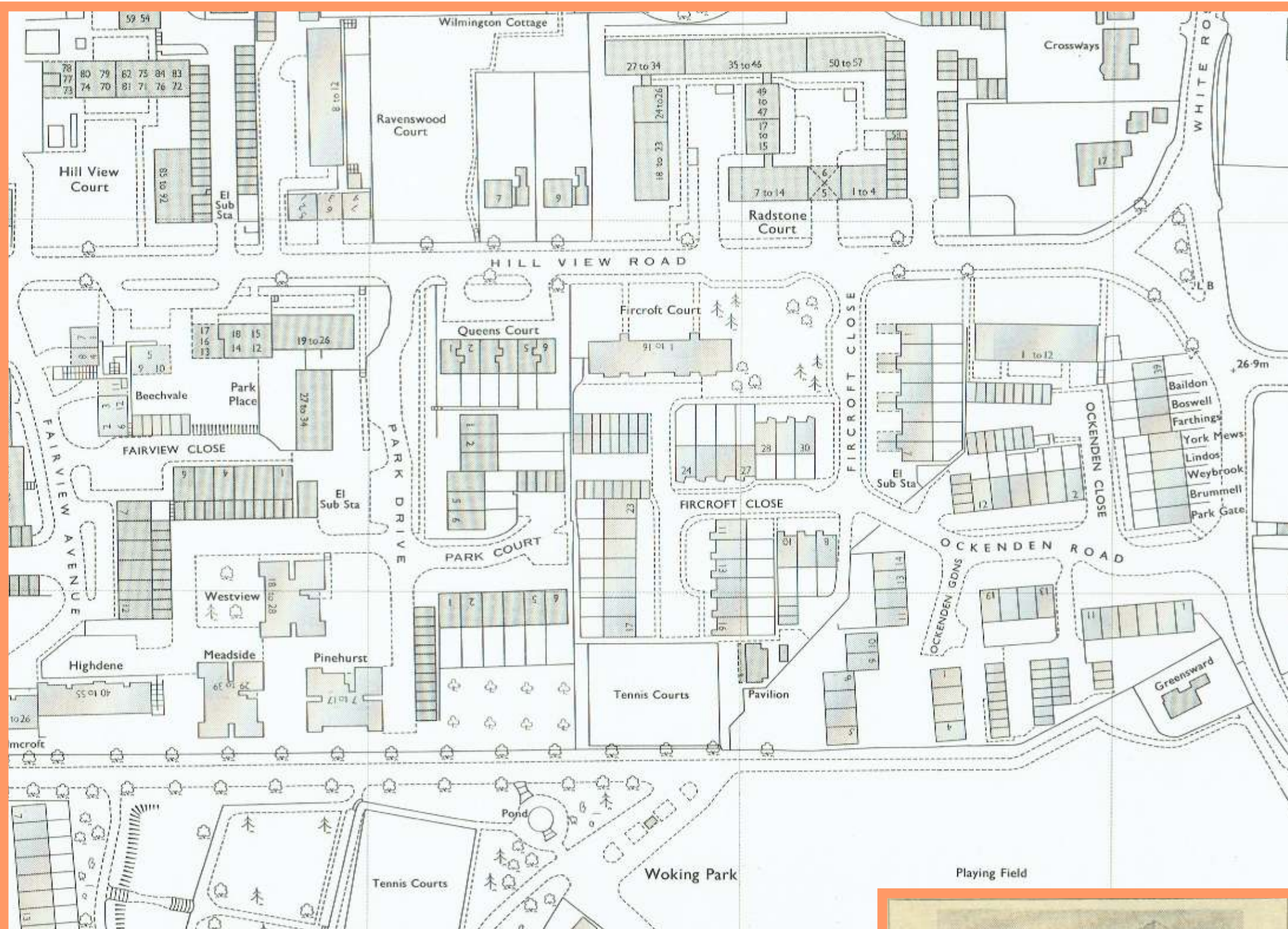
At the time many councillors were anxious that the town should gain 'Borough Status' (in a way that some may now view 'City Status'), but others thought it was not its status, but its state, that was holding the area back!

It did not go unnoticed that several of the councillors opposed to better shopping facilities were local businessmen themselves, and one local resident, Mr D.R.E. Bryant of York Road, probably expressed the thoughts of many when interviewed by a local reporter.



Should the large, and largely well-built, houses of Mount Hermon & Heathside have been redeveloped, before the smaller and more in need of replacement properties of Walton Road and Goldsworth?





'I think one must ask oneself two questions regarding these and previous Council proposals, namely is the increase in population being forced upon us in a final attempt to obtain borough status, which seems to be so vital to some who possibly imagine themselves in mayoral robes?' and then 'is an attempt being made by certain interested parties in the town purposely to restrict shop development in order to stifle competition?' Mr Bryant then went on 'At any rate the last person to be considered appears, as usual, to be the ratepayer, who each year has to pay an increased rate for fewer facilities'!

One Councillor at least, Labour's Rhoda McGaw, bemoaned the way the new Mount Hermon High Density Area would affect the growth of the town. In a letter to the local press she pointed out that 'surely the guiding principles for redevelopment should be firstly, that it is undertaken in areas that need new housing to replace obsolete housing; secondly that it

should be comprehensive and lastly that the end in view should be to improve the amenities of the district, not to secure the maximum profit regardless of good standards'.

The poorer houses in the Walton Road and Goldsworth areas were more in need of redevelopment than the large houses and grounds of Mount Hermon & Heathside, where mini-estates of flats or terraced houses were not seen by many to be an improvement at all.

Whilst Craigmere Tower off Guildford Road was the only truly high-rise 'skyscraper' development, there were many other high-density schemes that were changing the character of the area - and not necessarily for the better.

An advertisement for the newly completed Craigmere Tower were even the penthouse suite only cost £10,750.

The developer of Craigmere - Day & Sons (Builders) Ltd - also built the flats, maisonettes and town houses of Moorholme, opposite.



**CRAIGMORE TOWER**  
THE ONLY "SKYSCRAPER"  
BLOCK IN WOKING  
LUXURY FLATS CONVENIENT TO  
STATION  
PASSENGER LIFTS, PANORAMIC  
VIEWS, CENTRAL HEATING, WOOD-  
BLOCK FLOORS  
FLATS FROM ... £4,900  
PENTHOUSES FROM ... £10,750  
SITE OFFICE OPEN WEEKENDS

NEW PROPERTIES AT  
MOORHOLME, GUILDFORD ROAD,  
WOKING

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE IN THIS FINE DEVELOPMENT BY DAY & SON OF WALTON  
ELECTRIC RADIATORS — WOODBLOCK FLOORS — KANDYA KITCHEN UNITS  
LANDSCAPED GARDENS

2-bedroomed Flats and Maisonettes  
with garage. £4,575

TOWN HOUSES  
3/4 bedrooms, bathroom, hall with cloakroom,  
lounge/dining room, etc.; garage.  
From £6,075

VISIT THE SITE OFFICE AT CRAIGMORE TOWER (opposite)  
Open Saturday and Sunday afternoons





Until the 1960's the gardens of Hillview Road and Constitution Hill blended in with the grounds of Woking Park, but as the decade wore on most of these large, detached, properties were demolished and replaced by estates of flats overlooking (if not overshadowing) the recreation ground.



Eventually Woking Park was overlook by more than just the Woodlands, Highdene and Elmcroft developments seen in the background of this view.





FIRST TIME ADVERTISED

## Farm Hotel Development – Woking

UNDER ONE MILE FROM STATION

Reservations now being taken for NEW REGENCY STYLE HOUSES with COMPLETE CENTRAL HEATING, WOOD BLOCK FLOORS, 3 bedrooms (1 with basin), bathroom, living room (17ft. x 12ft. 6in.), dining room, excellent kitchen; garage; individual gardens.

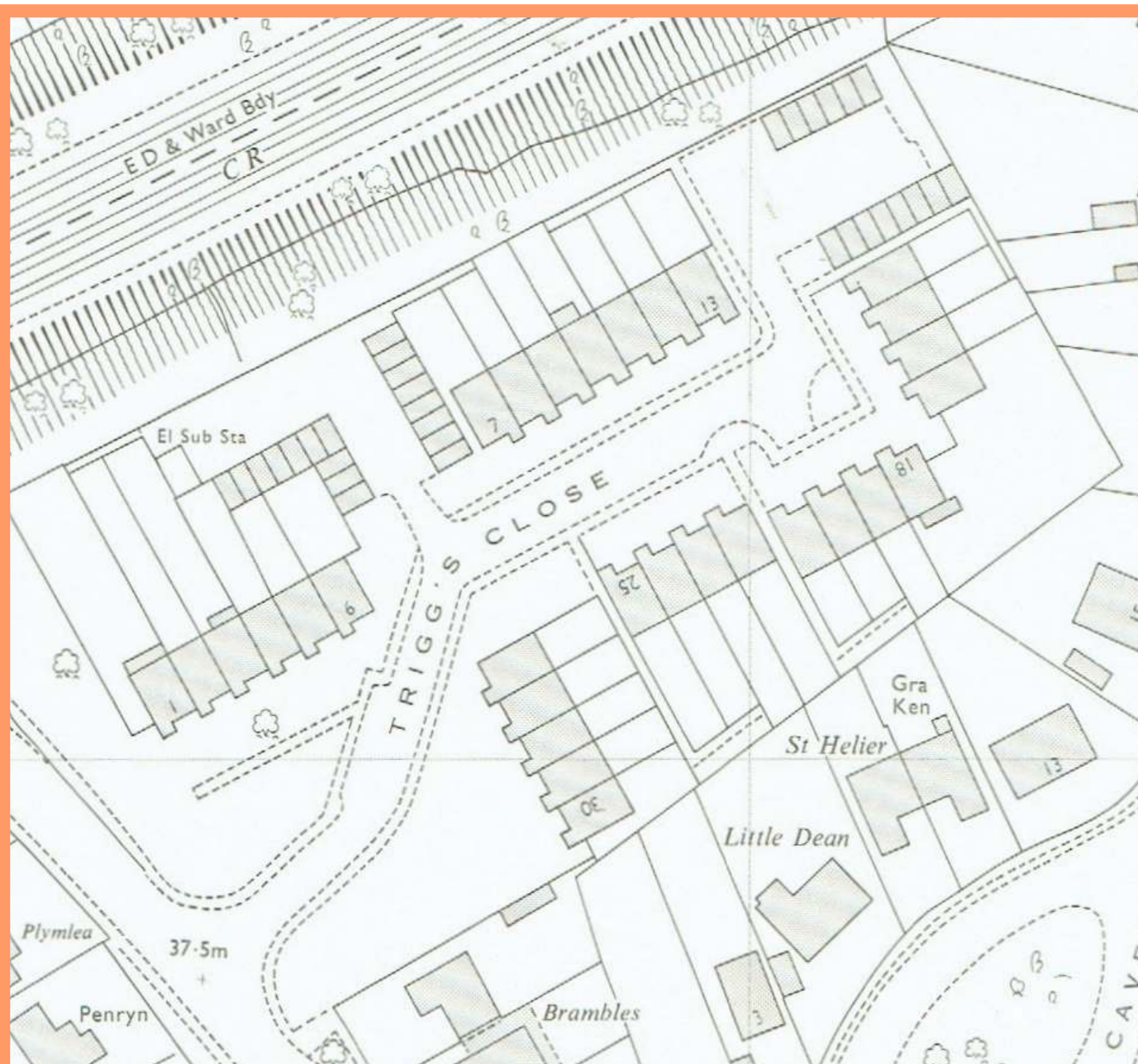
FROM £5,950 FREEHOLD.

Indeed at one stage the pleasant tree-lined entrance to the park from Constitution Hill was at threat of being lost, as in February 1966 the planning committee of Woking Council suggested the route should be used 'as access to some properties now being developed' in the area. Fortunately the parks committee did not agree and referred the matter back for further discussion, whereupon it appears to have been quietly dropped.

Of course development was not just restricted to the high-density area, as properties on the fringes were also demolished and replaced by new estates of terraced houses. Places such as the Farm Hotel in Triggs Lane where thirty new three-bed 'regency style' homes were on sale in March 1966 for just £5,450.

With so many new houses being built in Woking in the mid to late 1960's it is perhaps not surprising to find the price of the new 'Regency Style' houses of Triggs Close soon drop in price by £500 from the initial £5,950.

For that you still had the benefit of gas-fired central heating, woodblock floors and, perhaps most desirable of all at that time, a 'coloured bathroom suite'. I wonder how many today still retain all their original features!



## NEW DEVELOPMENT

AT

### FARM HOTEL, TRIGGS LANE

ATTRACTIVE REGENCY STYLE HOUSES WITH MANY FEATURES

- GAS-FIRED CENTRAL HEATING
- WOODBLOCK FLOORS
- COLOURED BATHROOM SUITES

3 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 reception, kitchen with quality fittings; garage, garden.

**From £5,450 Freehold**

95 per cent MORTGAGES AVAILABLE