

Conservation Area Character Appraisals

1.0 CONTENTS and PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the policy background to conservation area character appraisals. It identifies the existing and future need for appraisals and the way in which they will fit into the new planning system. The report also highlights the current and future procedures required for conservation area management, and the relationship of appraisals within them.
- 1.2 The document attached comprises three parts. The Introduction is standard and describes the background to conservation area designation in general terms, and for L B Hounslow as a whole.
- 1.3 The second part is a group of documents comprising an individual character appraisal for each of the three conservation areas that lie all or partly within Central Hounslow Area Planning Committee's area.
- 1.4 The individual character appraisal for each conservation area is provided in accordance with the intention identified in UDP policy Env-B.2, 4.15. Their content and format are described in more detail in section 6 of this report.
- 1.5 The third part is again general, being an explanation of the approach that should be taken to work on buildings in conservation areas. This is proposed as the basis for a general management framework, and which is to be extended to cover aspects of work in more detail.
- 1.6 This material is brought to the committee for information and commentary, and also for approval to present it to Sustainable Development Committee, for authorisation to undertake public consultation. This will commence a conservation area management regime that accords with the new planning system in terms of public involvement, sustainability appraisals and environmental assessments.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The committee is requested to note and comment on the conservation area appraisal statements; and to recommend them to SDC for approval on a stand-alone basis, and as a basis for extending the appraisal process into a management framework relating to the new consultative and flexible planning system.
- 2.2 The committee is requested to note the identified pressures, and to comment further on potential for change in and to the conservation areas. Comments could include requiring investigating possible changes such as:
 - Extension or reduction of the boundary areas;
 - Further properties to be included on (or excluded from) the non-statutory List of Buildings of Townscape Character;
 - Identification of key issues for enhancement ie neutral or negative areas, tree planting or management,
 - Emphasis on special features for preservation by way of Article 4(2) reduction of permitted development
 - Emphasis on extra care to be taken eg on traffic management and streetscape issues

- 2.3 The effect of these comments, and pressures on the character of the conservation area will be tested during survey and feedback at a further consultation process, and results will be brought back with appropriate recommendations at a later date.
- 2.4 The committee is requested to note the principles for consideration of development proposals set out for each area. Again these are not intended to be complete, and the opportunity to extend these and augment with more specific detail will follow from the baseline appraisals once they are approved.
- 2.5 The committee is requested to note that development control guidelines, as set out in the supplementary planning guidance for the relevant conservation areas, will stay in force until they are superseded by the requirements of the new planning system. **The existing guidelines will not be superseded by these statements at this stage.**

3.0 CURRENT POLICY BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Designation of Conservation Areas has been possible since the Civic Amenities Act 1967. It has remained the method of putting area-based conservation policies, in support of a special interest, ahead of the presumption for development. It began with, and still works best, with public endorsement.
- 3.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which empowers the method requires (Section 69) that every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas, to be **“an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”**. The duty is then imposed on the planning authority, by Section 72, to pay special attention, whilst exercising their planning powers (for example, in relation to applications) to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.3 Further explanation on how to evaluate the special interest, and then manage the area/s designated is described in Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 15, Planning and the Historic Environment, (September 1994). This remains the primary government guidance on conservation areas, although it is expected to be updated relatively soon.
- 3.4 Under the new planning system: the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, Hounslow Borough’s UDP of December 2003 and its supplementary guidance will have to be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF). This introduces a family tree or portfolio of policy *documents*, which will collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the Borough. Integral to the production of these documents is the statutory requirement to carry out sustainability appraisals assessing the social, economic and environmental impacts of each planning document.
- 3.5 The London Plan is part of the statutory development plan and is a material consideration in determining planning applications. The UDP of December 2003 and its supplementary guidance are “saved” as policy for a period of 3 years from commencement of the Act, ie until September 2007. The currently adopted supplementary planning guidance on conservation areas (1997), saved along with the current UDP, will have to be re-built to complement the new planning framework.
- 3.6 The current (December 2003) UDP includes a dedicated range of Heritage policies at ENV-B.2. The currently adopted supplementary planning guidance (SPG) 1997 was consulted upon with the contemporary UDP, therefore Chapter 7, comprising the statements on conservation areas, is part of the “saved” policy.

This includes statements for:
St Stephen’s, Hounslow Cavalry Barracks

3.7 There is no SPG entry for the subsequent designation: *Woodlands Grove* Conservation Area. However this went through public consultation and the full descriptions at the time of designation is effectively a conservation area statement / appraisals.

3.8 The Residential Design Guidelines, illustrating designs that may be considered appropriate, are adopted SPG. There is a specific chapter on conservation areas.

4.0 CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENTS / APPRAISALS IN GENERAL

4.1 The purpose of designating Conservation Areas is to put into the decision-making process, when considering proposals for change, the *character* of an area. The area is a defined landscape made up of individual buildings, their settings and groupings, with trees, streets and other important spaces.

4.2 There is no standard legal specification for Conservation Areas, other than the general definition in the Act (shown in bold in 3.2 above), but all the guidance emphasises that designation should be based on a description of the *special interest* that can be defined and justified. This is often called a Conservation Area Statement.

4.3 The statement identifies the attractiveness or interest of an area and what makes it special. It is the justification for the way in which individual owners and potential developers are restrained, and directed, in order to enhance or preserve the character.

4.4 “Character” is less easy to define than a purely physical description and is distilled from many aspects, ie it can have more than a visual effect. An identity of *place* can be found through the other senses, and the way in which an area influences or is influenced by its particular context can be quite profound.

4.5 PPG15 paragraph 4.4 advises, “*The definition of an area’s special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it. The assessment should always note those unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area*”. The reason is that “*It is important that designation is not seen as a means to an end in itself: policies will almost always need to be developed which clearly identify what it is about the character or appearance of an area which should be preserved or enhanced and set out the means by which that objective is to be achieved.*” (Section 4.9).

4.6 The definition needs to be sound in order to justify the policies and restrictions that flow from it: not just in the conservation areas, but as a material consideration of proposals which would affect their setting, or views into or out of them.

4.7 Recognising that changes may occur after designation and because of the restraints that designation imposes, the P(LBCA) Act requires the relevance for, and of, a conservation area to be regularly *reviewed*. This is to see whether the policies are still appropriate, and are being successful in retaining the special interest.

4.8 Success and appreciation of an area may be such that a review might find the boundaries could be extended. Others may have been less successful, eg the amount of permitted development may have eroded the character to a stage where the special interest has been lost. Age, accidents and development imperatives may have led to such extremes of alteration that the special interest is no longer sufficient, in part or in whole, to justify conservation area status.

- 4.9 To help the understanding of what creates “character”, both for designation and management purposes, in the mid 1990s English Heritage and the English Historic Towns Forum provided guidance documents. These included what a review might entail; describing these assessment activities as *appraisals* of conservation areas.
- 4.10 English Heritage document *Conservation Area Appraisals* 1995 focussed on identifying the special interest of the area, and included neutral and negative impacts that might lead to opportunities for enhancement. The term “appraisal” therefore describes not just the definition of special interest, but those aspects which need policies to make something happen, and now often includes the follow-up – or continuing - review process required by Section 71 of the P(LBCA) Act.
- 4.11 *Conservation Area Appraisals 1995* also identified the potential for following up with a conservation *study*. This could include explanations of development control principles relating to the special character, and specific control needs. Enhancement schemes and proposals could be gathered under the umbrella of the specific character area, as part of its *management*. Article 4 Direction is a major management option (which also requires considerable resources to implement and monitor).
- 4.12 In Hounslow borough, management takes the form of general but well-defined principles in the UDP, with more detailed aims in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for pre 1997 conservation areas. Article 4(2) Direction is such a management device.

5.0 FUTURE PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The current (December 2003) UDP sets out an intention for the existing or proposed detailed conservation area statements to be published as supplementary planning guidance. This intention is overtaken by the new planning system.
- 5.2 English Heritage has updated and consolidated their guidance, in the light of
(a) the new planning system;
(b) the local authority Best Value Performance Indicators, which in 2005/6 include performance in relation to the historic environment. (*Guidance on conservation area appraisals* and *Guidance on the management of conservation areas*, EH August 2005).
- 5.3 Beneath the overarching policies, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) can “supplement higher level policy in controlling erosion of the special interest that warrants designation and, where appropriate, guiding the form of new development.” (*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*, EH August 2005.)
- 5.4 EH explains that conservation character appraisals as such, defining the special interest, will not become supplementary planning documents (SPD) on their own. Therefore they can be made available without first going through the sustainability evaluation and at least be in position more quickly.
- 5.5 The character appraisal statements can be adopted by the council, however, together with any additional information, in order to explain the council’s understanding of its planning duties under the P(LBCA) Act to give due consideration to its conservation areas.
- 5.6 The statements are then available to form supporting evidence for one or more conservation area policy SPD, complete with development control principles and other management proposals, after the due consultations and sustainability evaluations.

SPD does not have the maximum statutory importance in decision-making, but it is an important material consideration when a decision is made about a planning application. SPD's will need to be consistent with policies in the new planning framework and with national and regional planning guidance.

- 5.7 Best Value Performance Indicator BV 219b states that "Clear and concise appraisals for the character of conservation areas provide a sound basis for their designation and management, and will inform local development documents."
- 5.8 Best Value Performance Indicator (BV 219b) explains that *Character appraisals should highlight the special qualities of individual conservation areas as the basis for the policies that the local authority adopts to maintain and enhance character and appearance.*
- 5.9 English Heritage's guides were published in August 2005, and set out requirements in a clear and consistent way. Yet they still describe themselves as consultative documents. This is indicative of the degree of change expected in the process, and continuing adaptation needed to manage and if possible strengthen the special character of conservation areas.

6.0 CENTRAL HOUNSLOW AREA'S APPRAISALS

- 6.1 English Heritage's August 2005 *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* was subtitled "Understanding Place", and the basis for defining "the character " is much the same as the 1995 guides. The major difference seems to be the greater emphasis on public participation.
- 6.2 The conservation area appraisal statements for Central Hounslow Area generally follow this guidance. They describe the origins and existing features as the area was at designation, aspects of special interest and the resulting character. They may need to be updated in the light of changes to the area, especially the neutral and negative aspects.
- 6.3 Each individual conservation area's document is divided into four sections. The first section identifies the current status of the conservation area as a position statement, analysing its origins and the resulting physical character. This factual information is from generally available sources, such as was provided - or could have been provided - at the time of designation, and through observation. It forms the relatively static baseline of the appraisal process, identifying the essence of the conservation area and its special interest.
- 6.4 The second section of each appraisal statement is a brief summary of the current pressures on the area, as found during development control. This could be further extended. It is a more dynamic aspect, may have affected the special interest and character, and may be continuing.
- 6.5 The third section of each appraisal begins to note proposals and opportunities. This will allow the appraisals to be developed, through consultation, as part of the management framework, or even influence the boundaries of the area.
- 6.6 The last section of each appraisal notes recommended guiding principles, to be added to the existing guidelines' supplementary planning guidance (where these already exist) for individual areas. Again these will form part of the development of the management framework, particularly for development control.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There is no requirement in the P(LBCA) Act to consult prior to a designation, although it is good practice to do so. However section 71 places a duty on the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas, and this has always required consultation. Article 4(2) Directions are such an option.
- 7.2 Previous guidance has encouraged consultation as good practice. In addition, Best Value Indicators will require an appraisal to be carried out as part of future conservation area designations.
- 7.3 The new planning system emphasises the need for community consultation before guidance such as supplementary planning documents can be adopted.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The UDP of December 2003 and its supplementary guidance are “saved” as policy for a period of 3 years, from commencement of the Act, ie until September 2007. The London Plan is also part of the statutory development plan and is a material consideration in determining planning application. Heritage policies are included in the UDP. The currently adopted supplementary planning guidance on conservation areas (1997), saved along with the current UDP, will have to be re-built.
- 8.2 The conservation appraisal statements are produced to set out the current position, will discharge the UDP commitment as far as is currently available to the council, and address the requirements of BV 219b.
- 8.3 The appraisal statements will be an integral part of any further appraisal study. Together they will then be available to support and inform the production of supplementary planning document/s on management, to be continued as and when resources are available, and as required by BV 219c.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 9.1 The committee is requested to note and comment on the introduction and conservation area appraisal statements;
- 9.2 The committee is requested to recommend these to SDC for approval on a stand-alone basis and, including public consultation, as a basis for a further appraisal study process.
- 9.3 The committee is also invited to note the statement on the *General principles of work within conservation areas*, with a view to its inclusion in the general management framework, and further expansion into more detail.

10.0 APPENDICES

- (1) Introduction to the conservation area character appraisal statements (general)
- (2) The 3 conservation area character appraisal statements for the Central Hounslow planning area.
- (3) A statement on the General principles of work within conservation areas
- (4) Bibliography

Note: Maps showing the conservation area boundaries and their buildings of special interest will be available to the meeting and on the website

Aerial view maps showing the individual conservation area boundaries will be available to the meeting and on the website

APPENDIX ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL STATEMENTS.

SUMMARY

The purpose of designation is to put the into the decision-making process when considering proposals for change, the character of an *area* - which is a defined landscape made up of individual buildings, their settings and groupings, with trees, streets and other important spaces. The statement identifies the attractiveness or interest of an area in which it is important that individual owners and potential developers are restrained, to assist the collective benefit.

Best Value Performance Indicator (BV 219b) 2005/6 explains that *Character appraisals should highlight the special qualities of individual conservation areas as the basis for the policies that the local authority adopts to maintain and enhance character and appearance.*

The conservation area character appraisal statements form a starting point, to show clearly the original position, with a brief indication of changes and pressures on the area. It is proposed that the statements be endorsed as working documents with further considerations to be added. The statements form the background from which further appraisal of the boundaries and policies can take place, and as part of the management strategy.

CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

Origin and significance.

The ability to designate areas - rather than individual buildings - which were considered in the public interest to preserve or enhance, derived from the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. This was a reaction to the wholesale loss, or wrecking, of familiar and "cherished" places. It was a ground-swell opposition to clean-sweep clearances, and to selfish development or redevelopment that was insensitive to its context. Nearly 40 years on, the way in which urban context is appreciated in the design process owes a great deal to conservation area policies: celebrating local identity, in scale, detail and variety.

The first designations tended to be of very obvious groups of buildings, often tightly formed around individually special - and often Listed - Buildings, landscapes or small areas of strongly similar architectural design. Many such building groups have in fact been Listed. Later it was seen that larger areas, where less obvious origins such as topography, routes and use had produced a special character, could benefit from being designated. By retaining the special interest and with careful consideration given to design and knitting-in of changes, these areas often thrived aesthetically and benefited economically.

General policies on conservation areas

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special interest. The Council as the local planning authority has a duty (under section 69) to consider which parts of the London Borough of Hounslow, being of special architectural or historic interest, should be designated as conservation areas in order to preserve or enhance their appearance.

Recognising that changes may occur after designation and because of the restraints that designation imposes, the Planning (Conservation and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 requires that the need for new conservation area designations, and the results of having existing ones, be reviewed from time to time. This is to see whether the policies are still appropriate, and are being successful in retaining the special interest.

Success and changing appreciation may be such that the boundaries could be extended. Some have been less successful. The amount of permitted development may have eroded the character past a stage where the special interest has gone. Age, accidents and development imperatives may have led to such extremes of alteration that the special interest is no longer overwhelming, in part or in whole.

Current protection

Designation introduces legal controls: over demolition of unlisted buildings and the need to advise the Council before carrying out work to trees, to give time for a possible tree preservation order to be made instead. It reduces the level of “permitted development” that a house-holder may not otherwise need planning permission for. Designation also enables the use of London-wide planning policies - via the London Plan – and borough policies, which are designed to preserve or enhance the special interest of such an area. The Council also has a duty (under section 71) to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

London Borough of Hounslow’s conservation areas.

The borough of Hounslow, because of its location and topography, has produced a great range of different characters. Its position on the west of London has made it a route for highways since Roman times, and an accessible place to live near the less healthy city, but up-wind of it. The rivers, commercial waterways and the bordering River Thames have provided many artefacts, occupations and attractions: the products of its landscape and geology used from beer to brick-making. The long shape stretches from near rural landscapes to high-density residential areas both suburb and city-grid. *Pevsner* notes the areas of architectural riches within the borough:

The Parks enfold mansions of national repute: Chiswick House, Gunnersbury, Osterley, Boston Manor and Syon House. Away from the main roads are picturesque riverside stretches of Chiswick and less familiar interesting houses in Isleworth. At Brentford there is The Butts, an exceptionally attractive and unspoilt group of houses of c1700. The Victorian suburbs that developed in the grounds of older houses are appealingly varied, from relics of grand villas of Grove Park Chiswick and Spring Grove, Isleworth and the cosier and consciously artistic Bedford Park. The twentieth Century brought the 1930’s factories of the Great West Road.

APPENDIX TWO

The 3 conservation area character appraisal statements for the Central Hounslow planning area.

At this stage they remain draft documents.

Mark J Price, Grad Dip HB Cons AA, IHBC, former conservation officer for the borough, compiled the 26 basic character appraisal statements.

Information has been added as gained through observation and feedback from development control. Current (1997) supplementary planning guidance remains valid, with additional pointers to commence the next stage of the management policy.

For comments on source, such as "Pevsner", please see the bibliography.

HOUNSLOW CAVALRY BARRACKS

Boundary: See Map 10

Date of Designation: 14 April 1992

Date of Extension: None

Additional protection to the area: the majority of the buildings are listed, the remainder being on the local list.

Special Architectural and/or Historic Interest

Hounslow Cavalry Barracks is important as an 18th century barracks, an early and preserved survivor set in a formal landscape. The construction of barracks buildings specifically to house soldiers collectively, in strategic locations for policing within the realm rather than for defence of the realm around the coast, was new socially and politically. Hounslow Heath had a long association with military activity, and was chosen as a location because of its nearness to London; it is the last surviving entity of its period.

The barracks buildings are formally disposed around the parade ground, such that the spatial qualities of the whole are important, as well as the individual buildings.

History

The Cavalry Barracks in Beavers Lane was begun in 1793, under James Johnson, the first of forty barracks built during the Napoleonic wars; added to in the mid 19th century. There are also major extensions and buildings designed by L B Ewart in 1876. The main buildings, formally arranged on three sides of a large parade ground, still reflect the orderly layout of the late 18th century. Later additions are neatly arranged around the periphery. It is owned and operated by the Ministry of Defence.

The Barracks show substantial survivals of the first phase; further buildings were erected towards the middle of the 19th century and a big expansion took place under C B Ewart around 1876. Each property is listed chronologically in detail, as this is an unusual conservation area.

Main Building

The principal block at the head of the main parade ground, facing south was originally by Johnson c1793, but extended and refronted by Ewart 1876. Johnson's plainer, two-storied work can be seen from the rear. The main front has a three-storey centre block of fifteen irregular bays, the centre five gabled with a clock, the rest with semi dormers. It is all in yellow brick with gault bands and arches. There is a slate roof and small central portico.

Stable/Barracks Blocks

There are two long two-storey blocks on either side of the main parade, by Johnson, c1793. The ground floor was originally stables and the upper floor formerly troopers' dormitories. Verandahs added on the innerside of centre parts by Lothian Nicholson, 1861. Built of multi-coloured stocks and irregular fenestration as numerous windows have been inserted. At the end of three of the blocks are the former Coach Houses and Forage Barns, but missing at the corner of the south and east ranges; and also much altered for other uses.

Former Riding School

Probably part of the Johnson scheme of c1793, but altered.

Old Sergeants' Mess (First Hospital)

A three storeyed multi-coloured stock brick block of five bays aligning with the old Riding School and another of Johnson's buildings. Segmental arched windows.

Former Canteen

A once quite distinguished two-storey yellow brick building of c1840. Five bays with recessed panels and big sash windows; gauged flat arches. Hipped slate roof.

Former Chapel

1845-51. Later used as dormitory and library. Yellow stock brick with slated roof. The only obvious external ecclesiastical features are the four-light tracery, the diamond panes at the sides of the entrance and the applied mock-classical entrance façade.

Former Married Quarters

A three storied yellow brick block dated 1860 and probably by Nicholson. A very early example of purpose-built married quarters, with one room per family. East elevation of eighteen bays; slightly projecting end wings linked by verandahs at the three levels. There is an iron stair in an open 'tunnel' through the centre with big gauged brick arches.

Old Hospital

An unusual building of cream-coloured terracotta blocks with red brick arches, quoins and plinth, and hipped slate roof. Eight bay ward wings with big flat-arched, sash windows. End pavilions are similar but windows are narrower. The plan is that recommended in the 1861 Royal Commission for Improving the Sanitary Condition of Barracks and Hospitals.

Keep

Part of Ewart's building programme of the mid 1870's, in yellow stock brick with gault bands. A squarish three storey block with four storey stair towers at the two corners and in the centre of the opposite rear side. Blind panels in the top storey of towers, then brick eaves brackets and pyramid roofs. Some windows have cast iron internal shutters.

Former Institute Building

Another of Ewart's buildings of c1876 with similar window details to that of the Keep. Irregular, roughly square plan; two storeyed with single storey additions to the sides and back. Some semicircular window heads to the ground floor, but mostly segmental; upper storey has flat arches to windows in thinner panels between piers. Brick bracketed eaves and slate roof. Stone faced clock turret with tile-hung casing behind.

House

An informal two-storey house close to the main gate also by Ewart. Yellow brick and gaults. Slated roofs with some windows on the north side breaking through eaves as semi-dormers.

Old Fusiliers' Block

This is a two storeyed, yellow brick building with irregularly spaced sash windows, very tall in ground storey c1875 by Ewart. Decorative brickwork to gables and eaves. Hipped slate roof and large chimneystacks. Main front to north; thirteen bays and gabled ends slightly projecting, the right-hand one with arched feature windows on first floor with diapered tympanum.

Terrace

A complex, picturesque group with main gables of at least four different sizes as well as projecting porches, large chimney stacks and some dormers c1900. There is also a semi-detached pair to the end.

Other buildings within the Barracks

In addition to the buildings singled out above there are several minor ones of early 19th century date facing Beavers Lane; they include the old Farrier's Shop and Guard Room west and east of the main gate, and the Barrack master's Quarters further along; also the former Soldiers' Quarters south of the former Sergeants Mess.

Other features of interest

Along Beavers Lane Boundary (but not continuous) are simple spearhead railings with fleur-de-lys standards with a concrete plinth on a brick base. By the Old Fusiliers' Block is a pair of brick piers probably by Ewart, and vehicular and pedestrian gates of plain spiked pattern separated by cast iron posts of twisted design, all disused. Spearhead railings continue partially round the hospital enclosure too.

Character Appraisal

The character of the area is distinct and specific. It is really defined by the military buildings contained within the site and their formal positioning, use and hierarchy. It would be a similar arrangement to those built elsewhere, if they survived so completely, but the special relationship with the borough is through the military uses and good communications of Hounslow Heath in relation to the city. The Bath Road was turnpiked in 1717, and in 1884 the Hounslow and Metropolitan Railway was extended to what was then called Hounslow Barracks station. The location is an important part of its character and historic interest

Pressures on the area.

- The Ministry of Defence has not indicated that this site is surplus to their requirements.
- It is a large and specialised site that would be very easy to wreck if insensitively handled.

Potential

A Planning Brief for the site sets out the Council's preferred development should this situation arise. This statement should be updated in the light of heritage knowledge and policy and used in conjunction with that brief.

Guiding Principles

There are a number of statutorily listed buildings (indicated above) of architectural and historic interest on the site. There is a presumption in favour of preserving and restoring these buildings. All the other unlisted buildings are contained within Hounslow's Local List and these should also be retained in the event of future development. Attractive elements and details should be retained and restored. For example the Staffordshire Blue pavours should be retained and the chimney pots on the Terrace and the Old Fusiliers' block should be retained and missing pots replaced. There is scope for restoration. Many of the buildings have been adapted and altered with unsympathetic fenestration and would benefit careful reinstatement.

The design and layout is important to the Cavalry Barracks. It would be important to retain the open space in front of the Main Building and Stables as these are the earliest buildings and retain their formal character of that date. Careful selective refurbishment and infill development may be acceptable in other areas of the site but should adhere to the Planning Brief; only site-specific and high quality design would be considered.

ST STEPHENS'S

Boundary: See Map 16

Date of Designation: 26 March 1987

Date of Extension: None

Additional protection to the area:

(With acknowledgments to Chris Hern for his contribution to the historic development).

Special Architectural and/or Historic Interest

St Stephen's Road is one of the best preserved and complete late-Victorian streets within the Borough by the architect W Hanley. The original 1880 layout of the road and building plots are still recognisable. The historic buildings in the area illustrate the full range of Victorian building materials used in a variety of ways to create an attractive street around the Church.

History

In the 18th century the area now occupied by St Stephen's Road was part of the open Hounslow Heath, which extended across 14 parishes from Hampton and Teddington, through Hounslow to Harmondsworth and Stanwell. In Hounslow the Whitton Rd formed the eastern boundary of the Heath: beyond were enclosed fields. By 1635 a small enclosed area projected into the Heath, just to the north of the present day Whitton shopping centre. This area was extended in 1726 and became the Whitton Park estate of the Duke of Argyll; later in the 18th century the park was taken over by the Gostling family.

In 1813 an Act was passed to enclose the Heath in the parishes of Hounslow and Heston (Hounslow High Street formed part of the boundary between the two parishes.) George Gostling, as owner of land within Isleworth parish was allotted land in the "enclosure award" of 1818, but was also sold an area of 52 acres to the north and west of Whitton Park, and east of the road to Hanworth. The sale was to defray the expenses of the commissioners who examined many claims to land from the heath to compensate for the loss of rights conferred by existing ownerships in the parishes; they then made appropriate allocations. Most of the land on either side of Wellington Rd south was similarly sold, and the larger allocations were also made in this area. The great majority of allotments were small: ½ acre or less, and located in the areas of former waste close to the town centre. The existing open area of Hounslow Heath was saved because it passed to the quartermaster general of his majesty's forces as a parade ground.

When the Hounslow loop railway line was constructed in 1850 the north-western half of Gostling's land, near to Hanworth Rd., became cut off from the main estate.

No development took place until, by 1875, building expansion and population growth in the area to the south of Hounslow High Street meant that there was a need for a new church. A mission church had been established in the Whitton Road in 1872. Under the energetic leadership of Rev Henry Layton the mission church flourished, and it became clear that the expansion warranted the construction of a permanent church. Col. Gostling-Murray, the then owner of Whitton Park had lived with his wife's aunt on the estate since 1854, and inherited ownership in 1874 of detached land close to Hounslow and the railway station. A London merchant apparently providing the finance for laying out the Parkside and St Stephen's Road, the colonel then donated the site of St Stephen's Church, which was completed but without the tower in 1867, by local builder Thomas Hiscock, providing added value to the status of the new development.

The area was laid out in the late 19th Century as a suburb centred around the focal point, the church of St. Stephen's. The majority of the buildings in the area were started around 1881 and were completed by about 1886.

Early housing development.

The area, including also the Hanworth Road frontage, was then marketed for development as part of the "Whitton Park Estate". Land appears to have been sold in 2-3 acre tranches, starting near the church. Auction particulars from 1877 suggest that the lands "being almost contiguous to the town and station are ripe for development for building purposes". In 1881, 15 houses had been built along Hanworth Rd (5 still unoccupied). St Stephen's Vicarage, on Parkside Rd (now demolished and replaced) and the six houses opposite the church on St Stephen's Rd (St Stephen's Villas) were the earliest in those roads. The eleven houses of Parkside Villas, on the north side of Parkside Rd had just been completed, 6 being uninhabited in 1881.

The first dwellings in Parkside and St Stephen's Roads were built speculatively, for renting, and in one ownership. This followed the prevalent mid-Victorian pattern, evident in Hounslow and in the 1860's Villas development around Pownall Gardens to the north of the station. However the Hanworth Rd properties included some custom-built detached houses that were owner-occupied. These were followed in the early 1880's by several substantial detached houses to the south of the church along the west side of St Stephen's Rd, perhaps because of the second land sale, in 13 lots, in April 1878. Subsequent sales included block sales to builders; Edward Addis built a detached pair and lived in the No 53 half; a pattern repeated by others renting out their second half. One of his plots was developed in 1896-7, the other in the inter-war years. The classier properties had good bay windows looking into the side of their gardens: The Hollies, 62/4, 330 Hanworth Road. Heath View Villa, the terrace of three dwellings built by Hiscock in 1883 at the southern end of the road, uses similar window styling, and represents the smallest class of dwelling to be permitted in the road.

The varying styles and sizes of the late Victorian dwellings is an important part of the character of the conservation area. In 1902 a short terrace, Murray Cottages, which followed the re-designed road round to Hanworth Road, was built on "left-over" land still owned by Whitton Park Estate.

Later development

Development was sporadic because there were cheaper and more easily assembled terrace plots elsewhere in Hounslow. Plots that remained undeveloped on the 1915 OS map were used sometimes as orchards or nursery gardens; numbering, introduced in 1906, included gaps to take these into account. In the interwar years most of the vacant plots were developed; there was a flatted terrace development at Cranfield Gardens, and there has been other less satisfactory post-1945 development at Angelfield and Hanworth Rd. No 122 was filled in 1960, No 84 in 2005 and 144 remains empty. Interesting examples of newer buildings are numbers 5a and 5b St Stephen's Road that were built as post-war exhibition houses in 1955. The tower of St Stephen's was added, built in 1934-5.

Character Appraisal

The character of the conservation area is essentially made up of its 19th Century good quality residential properties along one street, which have been little altered, together with church at the end. Apart from one or two extensions and site cramming, the area remains one of small scale housing, of similar general materials, but developed independently and with differing plot sizes. Trees and gardens are mature, some noticeably wider than others.

St Stephen's Road is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile long and is lined with mature lime trees on both sides. There is a wide range of architectural styles and features that were vogue in 19th Century, but have a characteristic palette of stock brick with red brick details. Features include the conservatory at the rear of Stanley House, the Cross and Font in the Churchyard, Victorian street furniture, and a Victorian dairy building.

No. 90 had a coach house, a harness room and places for hay and straw. In addition a considerable amount of properties still retain original doors, sash windows, stained glass, stucco embellishments, original roof coverings, chimneys and front boundary walls. In spite of variety at an individual property level, these features create a Victorian cohesive whole and give the area its preserved 19th century appearance.

St Stephen's Church

The only landmark building is St Stephen's. 1875-6 by Ewan Christian, a substantial red brick building in the manner of Brooks, with lancet windows and apses to the chancel, vestry and a West baptistery. The South West tower was added by N F Cachemaille-Day, in 1935, and is all in brick. It is an austere and powerful design, relieved only by a row of lancet belfry windows and a multi-ordered, sharply pointed South doorway. The tower can be seen from all the surrounding streets.

Pressures on the area

- Subdivision and use of buildings as flats, including rebuilds and extensions, resulting in loss of forecourt walls and greenery, and loss of trees, for further parking
- Infills and extensions resulting in loss of integrity of layout, loss of character and loss of architectural quality
- Loss of trees along boundaries and in rear gardens
- Conflicts of walls and trees: even lesser specimens of tree cover contribute to the general greenery and should be retained if possible

Potential

- One or two plots remain but need to be appropriately located within their plots and carefully designed and respectful of the context
- Survey and tree-replanting programme

Guiding Principles

- Retain original windows, doors, chimneys or other architectural features of interest.
- Dormers to rear should be half width
- Front boundaries are important to the area and introduction of hardstandings / reduction in wall or hedge enclosure should be resisted
- The spaces between buildings are important to the original formal design
- Special features such as coach houses, hay lofts and conservatories should be preserved where possible
- Emphasise importance of trees

WOODLANDS GROVE

Boundary: See Map 20

Date of Designation: 02 November 99

Date of Extension: None

Additional protection to the area:

Special Architectural and/or Historic Interest

The Woodlands Estate is one of the earliest “railway suburbs” in the Borough, being the best preserved of speculative developments that sprang up soon after the opening of the Richmond to Windsor Railway’s loop line from Barnes to Feltham in 1859-50. The original 1850 layout of the Estate, its roads and building plots are still recognisable. The historic buildings in the area illustrate the full range of architectural styles prevalent in the mid 19th century for the middle class speculative house, ranging from examples of the classical late Georgian Regency style, Neo-Tudor and Italian Renaissance.

History

The locality originally formed part of the common land between the parishes of Isleworth and Heston that was used for grazing sheep and cattle. It was crossed in an east-west direction by the London to Bath turnpike road, now called London Road, which was joined by a road from the southeast, the Isleworth Road (now St John’s Road). In 1818, when an Act of Parliament was passed for the subdivision and allocation of the common land in the parish, the major beneficiary Mrs Frances Goodenough secured four plots totalling 11 acres. In 1818 the land was cultivated as market gardens and there were no buildings.

The opening of the Richmond to Windsor Railway’s loop line from Barnes to Feltham on 22 August 1849, with the Isleworth station on the London Road provided the impetus for speculative development of the land for middle class housing. To the south of the station the Woodlands Estate, 1850, and to the north, Spring Grove Estate (Spring Grove Conservation Area), 1852, by Henry Daniel Davies.

Mrs Goodenough was the first landowner to profit from the coming of the railway with the sale of a plot of land on the corner of Woodlands Road and St John’s Road for the erection of ‘The Railway Inn’ (now called The Woodlands Tavern) in 1849-50. The second building to be erected on the new estate was number 41 Woodlands Road in the early 1850’s, as were Nos. 69 Woodlands Road and No. 1 Woodlands Grove. The closeness to the station was one of the attractions used in the marketing of the Estate. The boom period for the erection of houses on the Estate was 1857-1863. The catalyst was provided by the erection, on the adjoining parcel of land to the east given by The Duke of Northumberland, of St John’s Church (Grade II) in 1855, parsonage (Grade II) 1856, almshouses (Grade II), 1857 and school (Grade II) in 1859, essential building provision for an emerging suburb.

Character Appraisal

The Woodlands Estate cannot boast the architectural distinction of Estates such as Bedford Park. However, its local architectural significance lies in the comprehensiveness of the styles it embraces, for nowhere in the Borough is there so complete a spectrum of mid-Victorian middle-class taste. It has local importance as one of the earliest railway suburbs in the Borough. Although the 20th century redevelopment of the central area does not contribute to the character, the estate layout retains its integrity.

Much of the character lies in the detail of the individual buildings within the enclave and is described as such within the descriptions below.

1-23 & 10-16 Woodlands Grove

These properties form one of the two outstanding groups of historic buildings within the Conservation Area, illustrating the full range of styles prevalent in the mid 19th century for middle-class speculative housing.

1 Woodlands Grove

No. 1 is one of the earliest houses erected on the Estate. It is exceptionally well detailed, a rarity in the Borough: a tall narrow three storey gabled house faced in stucco with Neo-Tudor detailing and original boundary wall.

3,5 & 7,9 Woodlands Grove

These properties display all the features of mid 19th century domestic architecture, illustrating the richness of the Italian Renaissance style of architecture. These three-storey houses were later introductions to the Estate, not being erected until 1866-8. These houses are grand and have exquisitely detailed stucco trimmings.

11,13 Woodlands Grove

This is an interesting pair of semi-detached houses erected in the late 1850's. They are two-storey raised up on a basement to enhance their impact in the streetscene.

15 Woodlands Grove

A detached house of the mid 1850's in the Neo-Tudor style, brick faced and minimal plaster trimmings. There are well-executed mock Tudor details including a 4-centred arch to the porch.

17,19 & 21,23 Woodlands Grove

These are three-storey semi-detached pairs of houses, erected in the mid to late 1850's. They have a late Georgian character in a stripped classical style with finely gauged brick arches. They also have Italianate touches with broad overhanging eaves. They also retain their elegant porches and original boundary walls. Nos. 21 and 23 are a little later and not as well detailed.

Hawkfield Court

This purpose-built three-storey block of 30 flats erected in 1965 by Dunleary Properties Limited of Hounslow is simply detailed in red brick. The linked blocks provide a strong sense of enclosure to the south side of Woodlands Grove as well as the trees which were part of the gardens of the villas formerly on this site.

10,12 Woodlands Grove

This fine pair of houses was erected in the late 1850's. They are raised up on their basements to enhance their impact in the streetscene. They are Italianate in style with massive plaster entrance porches and stucco trimmings.

14,16 Woodlands Grove

14 and 16 are again a pair of early 1860's villas; strongly Italianate in style, with a U-shaped plan and adjoining halls and flanking cross wings. These are two storey plus semi-basement and stucco faced. Enriched stucco-work forms the quoins.

2-16 and 17-41 Woodlands Road

These properties form an outstanding group of historic buildings, illustrating the full range of domestic architecture prevalent for the middle class speculative house. They are well detailed with stucco dressings, bracketed windows and mouldings to windows.

2 Woodlands Road

No. 2 is a detached two storey house erected in the early 1860's in the Italianate style, brick faced with stucco mouldings and bold classical entrance porch.

4 Woodlands Road

This is a detached two-storey house erected in the late 1860's and one of the plainest designed properties with decoration restricted to the porch.

6 Woodlands Road

This another Italianate detached house erected in the late 1850's, two storeys raised on a semi-basement. It has rich stucco dressings to the classical entrance porch and wide overhanging eaves.

8,10,12,14 Woodlands

This is the only terrace of houses on the Woodlands Estate. This group dates from the late 1860's. It is three storeys raised up on a tall basement, in a confusing amalgam of styles, but mostly Italianate with a shallow pitched roof. The gabled dormers make this an interesting piece of Victorian architecture.

16 Woodlands Road

An attractive detached house erected in the early 1860's in the Italianate style with exceptionally rich stucco mouldings, a classical pilastered treatment to the ground floor.

17,19 Woodlands Road

A pair of semi-detached houses erected in the early 1850's, with two-storey moulded stucco dressings to the first floor windows.

21,23 Woodlands Road

This is a show-piece of mid 1860's domestic architecture and amongst the most charming properties within the Estate. Two-storey, a pair of houses in the Italianate style, with characteristic low pitched slate roof with wide overhanging eaves. The pair has rich stucco dressings including linked porches (the halls adjoining), bracketed cornice and bay windows. The chimney is unusual at 23 as it tapers upwards.

25,27 & 29,31 Woodlands Road

Two pairs of semi-detached houses in a restrained design, a richness is provided by their elegant classical plaster doorcases.

33 Woodlands Road

A mid 1850's Neo-Tudor detached building of two storeys with characteristic gables to the front.

35,37 Woodlands Road

Two-storey, handed so that their halls adjoin, this pair of semi-detached houses was erected in the late 1850's. They are in a restrained design, with unadorned first floor windows.

41 Woodlands Road

This is an important building within the Estate, and maybe the first house to be erected in 1850. It is old fashioned in style of the mid 19th century; it could pass for an early 1840's house because of its late Regency style. It is two-storey with a tall parapet wall concealing the roof; the only architectural decoration is the Tuscan porch. The tented canopy roof to the ground floor bay window is typical of the Regency period. A 150-year-old tree in the garden frames the vista along Woodlands Road.

55 Woodlands Road

A detached house erected early 1850's, this was extended to the west in 1929. It comprises two storeys raised on a tall basement, of elegant proportions, with a central classical plaster porch and further stuccoed mouldings.

Bedfont Lodge, Woodlands Road

This is a purpose-built block of 6 flats erected for Mr Loughton of Hounslow in 1937 and is a well managed design of 1930's architecture.

59 Woodlands Road

This is a detached house erected in the early 1860's of two storeys raised up on a basement. It has an unusual design with a standard classical plaster entrance porch.

65,67 Woodlands Road

This is an early 1860's detached house in the Italianate style, sub-divided into two houses and extended in the 1920's. It has a characteristic, low-pitched roof.

69 Woodlands Road

One of earliest buildings on the Estate, erected 1850, and one of 4 houses in the Neo-Tudor style. It is rendered with Tudor details with an arch to the entrance doorway and plaster hood moulds.

The Woodlands Tavern

The public house was the first building to be erected on the Estate following the building of the railway. A purpose-built public house in the late Georgian style, it has many good original decorative features. It forms a landmark within St John's Road and the beginning of the Woodlands Estate.

Pressures on the area

- Enlargements of property and infills
- Loss of trees and forecourt planting
- Demand for parking and road space following sub-division of properties
- Loss of historic fabric eg windows
- Loss of enclosed front gardens to parking
- Intensification of use of apartment blocks through additions which harm their character

Opportunities

- Consider extension of the area to include the Duke of Northumberland's River, St John's church and associated buildings, and Farnell's Almshouses.
- Further tree planting

Guiding Principles

- Street and plot layout, and spacing, important
- Large trees important
- Extensions should not 'unbalance' a pair of properties
- Roof extensions should be carefully designed
- Boundary walls important
- Window proportions and materials important
- Authentic detail related to individual properties should be retained
- Maintain the character of the forecourt and boundary treatments.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF WORK WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS

Standards of design.

The Council has a duty to designate areas of special interest in the Borough as Conservation Areas; ie the existing character of such areas is either historically important or architecturally interesting, or both. So to preserve or enhance this character, development in conservation areas must be of a high standard of design and have regard for the existing architectural style, scale, proportion, position, materials, roof, boundary treatment and landscaping within and around the site.

All forms of development within a conservation area, including conversions, will affect the outside appearance of the property. Works such as the replacement of a roof, installation of new windows, removal of boundary walls, removal of a chimney will all impact on the overall appearance of the property and area. Individual changes can cumulatively create a large effect. The Borough has illustrated potentially acceptable design “solutions” in the Residential Guidelines SPG, and how these should be modified for use in a Conservation Area. However analysis and understanding, leading to skilled design and one-off solutions are likely to provide the best results.

The conservation approach.

The primary need is to understand and augment the properties and their context in an appropriate way. Buildings were almost always designed to provide a logical appearance relating to their aspect, access, scale, height and use. They were then influenced by available technology and contemporary regulations, all being exaggerated or minimised to provide the required aesthetic. Therefore alterations need to be based on an understanding of the reasons and merits of the original construction.

Appearance derives from aesthetically preferred proportions and materials and styles, which varied historically (austere / regulated / quiet to revival gothick – or - classical to exuberant / decorative to vernacular etc); but has also been heavily influenced by the conditions at the time of construction. Sizes, materials and positions of buildings have been planned and regulated since Elizabethan times.

Some regulations derived from best practice to maintain safety and these affected appearance as well as construction. Fire protection brought parapets, heights and position of chimneys, setback of windows in the facade, distances between them and other properties, position and amount of inflammable material around windows or for cladding and roofing. Sanitation and drainage requirements influenced soil-and-vent-pipes in relation to windows, styles and numbers of gutters and down-pipes. The social importance of rooms and which floors they were on affected ceiling heights and the sizes and proportions of windows.

Above all, the technology available to the period of construction was influential, such as: spans of floors and roof beams influencing bay widths; wall materials influencing their height and thickness; roof pitches dictated by the particular materials' fixing and overlaps; opening mechanisms and the size and weight of glass affecting window frames and panes; the structural use of arches and lintols... and affecting appearance.

Designers have always taken all these parameters and made them into a whole by exaggerating and minimising certain aspects.

There are many texts that explain construction relating to different periods.

- **Applications should describe the likely impact of the proposal on the special interest of the area.**
- **Alterations or addition of new buildings should subtly refer to the logic and reason behind the appearance of the existing, and add to that character, not destroy or negate it.**
- **Applications should show the adjacent buildings and context, and sufficient detail to ensure that good quality design and construction are intended.**
- **Proposals are required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.**

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It should be noted that much of the history within the statements was taken directly from the relevant section of Cherry, B and Pevsner, N (1999) The Buildings of England, London 3: North West; Penguin Books, which was itself assisted, among others, by Andrea Cameron.

