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WEST WIMBLEDON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

**WEST WIMBLEDON CONSERVATION
AREA**

CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

2004

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

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PART ONE: GENERAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Arrangement of this Assessment

This assessment is arranged in four parts, as follows:

- Part One provides a general description of the West Wimbledon Conservation Area, its context, history, character, details of its designation and particularly relevant policies in the Borough's Unitary Development Plan;
- Part Two, which takes up the great majority of the assessment, provides an analytical description of the Conservation Area with the use of maps and photographs, including features of particular significance, arranged under 33 Sub Areas some of which are divided into two or three parts, and suggests ways in which the Conservation Area might be further enhanced;
- Part Three provides a statistical analysis of the positive or negative architectural and historical contribution which each building and Sub Area makes to the Conservation area, and assesses the quality of most of the major developments which have occurred within the Conservation Area since the 1950s; and
- Part Four indicates those properties which have been added to or excluded from the Conservation Area, and recommends buildings to be added to the statutory and local lists of buildings of special architectural and historic interest, and parts of the Conservation Area which would benefit from greater planning control through the use of Article 4 Directions.

Location

As its name implies, Wimbledon West Conservation Area – or West Wimbledon Conservation Area as it became known - is situated immediately to the west of The Village, the historic centre of Wimbledon, in the borough of Merton, South London.

Orientation and Topography

The central spine of the main section of the conservation area, **Ridgway**, runs approximately east-west and forms part of one of the historic routes from London to the south-west. The general orientation of the Ridgway, and of the Conservation Area as a whole is actually aligned somewhat north-east to south-west, but since two of the roads which edge the north-west and north-east parts of the Conservation Area are named West Side Common and Southside Common, the historic convention that these and adjoining roads are oriented north-south etc is maintained in this Assessment.

The Ridgway runs from east to west along the top of a major escarpment. To the north an extensive area of flat land reaches across Wimbledon Common towards Kingston, but to the south the land falls away dramatically into the Wandle valley. The gradient is at its steepest at the eastern end, south of Wimbledon Village, and levels off towards the west, along Copse Hill. At about the time of the Black Death this escarpment was known as "The Wild Land"

Extent

West Wimbledon Conservation Area is one of the largest in the Borough, covering about 103 hectares. It stretches from Wimbledon Village westwards for about 1,500 metres as far as Copse Hill and Cottenham Park, and for nearly 2,000 metres from its south-eastern boundary along Worple Road to Caesar's Camp, on Wimbledon Common, in the north-west. It varies substantially in character - the area to the north-west, around Cannizaro Park, being quite different in layout and density from the predominantly residential section situated between Southside Common and Worple Road.

Geology

The northern section of the Conservation Area forms part of a region of well drained light gravel soil about 45 metres above sea level extending over Wimbledon Common and beyond, where natural springs attracted early settlers. Although not particularly suitable for farming, the area proved ideal for grazing animals, while south of the Ridgway, on the slopes above Worple Road, the exposed London clay was suitable for arable farming.

These natural advantages, together with the extensive views to the south-east, made the area not only an appropriate home for early man, but in more recent times an attractive and desirable place for important and wealthy families to locate their estates.

The village of Wimbledon became a desirable place in which to live because the subsoil is rapidly draining gravel. Before the days of damp proof courses this was an important asset to a building. It is to the gravel soil therefore and its breezy upland position that Wimbledon owes its heritage of so many seventeenth and eighteenth century buildings. [Myson & Berry 1972 p.16]

Archaeology

There is evidence that west Wimbledon and its environs has been settled in one form or another since before the Roman invasion, and the area now covered by the Conservation Area extends over two Archaeological Priority Zones, Wimbledon Village and Wimbledon Common, which are important for their settlement patterns and prehistoric landscapes. The latter Zone has revealed evidence of human settlement since the end of the last Ice Age, and the area has been populated, if sparsely, since Neolithic times. Evidence of Stone Age habitation includes the discovery on the Common of over 3,000 stone flakes for tool making dating from about 100,000 years ago [Ecology Handbook 29, p.7]. During the Bronze Age (c.2000 to 600 BC) a chain of hill forts was constructed to help protect the important trade routes along the Thames Valley. One of these, immediately west of the conservation area, is now known as Caesar's Camp.

Because of the protected status of Wimbledon Common and Cannizaro Park, and the density of development elsewhere in the Conservation Area, there has been relatively little archaeological excavation, and evidence of early occupation is limited to a few Mesolithic stone knives, a Neolithic flinthead and a bronze axe. But these stray or casual finds demonstrate evidence of possible buried remains covering the whole prehistoric period.

History

The name Wimbledon is thought to derive from the Anglo Saxon "dun", meaning hill, added to a proper name, and the battle of Wibbandune is thought to have occurred at Wimbledon, in which the first Christian monarch, Ethelbert, was defeated in 568 AD attempting to capture the area now occupied by the county of Surrey [Ecology Handbook 29, pp.7-8]. Wimbledon is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 because at the time it formed part of the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor of Mortlake, but from the tenth century onwards the settlement of "Wunemannedun" began to appear in written records. The name of "Wimeldon", "Wimmeldun" or "Wymbaldone" occurs in thirteenth century records, but this may not have referred so much to a coherent village as to a collection of scattered settlements or farms, spread along the valley and over the plateau. [Milward 1989 p.8]

It is thanks to Henry VIII's rejection of Catholicism that Wimbledon was first recognised as a desirable residential area. As part of his separation from the Church of Rome, the king took over the Rectory in 1536 and leased it to his courtiers, the most important to settle in Wimbledon being Sir William Cecil, and by building the first of Wimbledon's great manor houses in 1588, his son, Thomas, turned the small and rather isolated village into a fashionable retreat for wealthy Londoners.

Another important contributory factor was the area's convenience to central London. By 1780 the "Wimbledon Machine", a public short-stage coach, travelled from the Rose and Crown in Wimbledon Village to Charing Cross every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in two hours, and eighty years later Mr Boustead of Cannizaro House would regularly drive in his hansom cab

to Trafalgar Square in only 50 minutes. [Milward 1989 p.43 & undated p.17]. The arrival of the railways in the 1830s made access to central London even more convenient for those working in the City and the West End.

The increasingly large number of middle class professionals settling in the Wimbledon Area were able to unite effectively against Lord Spencer's efforts to enclose the Common by guiding The Wimbledon and Putney Commons 1871 Act through Parliament. According to the Norman-Smiths, *Not only did the 1871 Act buy the Common, and in effect also, the manor, out of feudalism; by preserving its amenities, it made it suitable for desirable bourgeois development* [p.16]

Population

Little information exists as to the population of Wimbledon before the eighteenth century. The population of 200 or so residents in Wimbledon in the 1330s fell away dramatically during the plague years of 1348 to 1450, when only half the land appears to have been cultivated. According to a survey of 1617 there were then 45 "tenements" in the village and round the Common, which suggests that the total population was then about 225. An improved standard of living up to the end of the century resulted in an increase to about 550, but it fell back to 500 or so due to smallpox and other epidemics between 1700 and 1750 [Hawtin 2000 p.66].

From 1750 the population grew steadily, largely due to workers attracted to the area in the hope of finding work in the large houses around the Common, there being no "middle class" in Wimbledon in the eighteenth century [Hawtin 2000 p.85]. A "Sketch of the Town of Wimbledon" of 1776 indicates that the population had doubled in the previous 16 years, and by the 1801 census it had increased to nearly 1,600. During the first half of the nineteenth century the numbers climbed slowly, reaching 2,195, in 316 dwellings, by 1831, but in the next thirty years it rose to over 4,600. By 1871 it was over 9,000 and ten years later it was almost 16,000. It had grown to over 20,000 by 1891, by the turn of the century it had reached 41,630, and ten years after that it had gone up to almost 55,000. [Milward 2000 p.66, Hawtin p.157-8].

Character

Wimbledon has many of the qualities of a "garden Suburb", but it was not planned as a single design. It grew gradually over a long period, around a scattered village on the edge of a high common, and over the landscaped park of a vanished great house. Its buildings are predominantly Victorian and Edwardian rather than of earlier periods; their quality however is excellent, and the character of the area is enhanced by its many fine trees and gardens and the 1300 acres of Wimbledon Common. [p.1, VicSoc report 1973]

The area west of Wimbledon Village is predominantly in residential use with a few commercial buildings along the Ridgway. The grid of streets is interspersed by educational buildings such as King's College, Wimbledon College and the Ursuline Convent, whose substantial grounds and playing fields contribute significantly to the sylvan character of the area.

While most of the housing developments were purely speculative and have always been privately owned, several groups of "social" housing were built, including schemes of *good suitable dwellings for the working classes at a moderate rent* [Hawtin 1973] by the local Cottage Improvement Society in an area adjoining Denmark Road, then known as South Road.

The character of the residential areas has largely been determined by the way in which increased population densities have been achieved through parcelling up the larger estates into more modest residential sites. Further increases in residential densities have been achieved through the further division of these plots, the replacement of modest with larger houses, and the conversion of period property into flats, residential homes and sheltered

accommodation. With the ever increasing desirability of the Wimbledon area, some of the historic houses have been converted back into individual family homes.

The various periods of construction have resulted in a diverse range of architectural styles, such as Gothic, Dutch, Queen Anne, Arts and Crafts, Georgian, modern and various revival styles. A substantial proportion of these houses are now either statutorily listed as of Special Architectural and Historic Interest or included in the Borough Council's Local List.

Prevalent building materials include walls of brick and smooth or rough cast render with stone detailing or plaster mouldings, and roofs of Welsh slate and plain clay roof tiles. The use of stone masonry is mainly limited to church buildings, particularly Christ Church, Copse Hill, in coarse rubble work, and the Church of the Sacred Heart, Edge Hill, which is built of knapped flint with stone dressings.

Protection

A movement to protect Wimbledon against undesirable change started just over a century ago when Richardson Evans, a journalist, campaigned for the need to *protect and improve the grace, dignity and picturesque amenities of the area*. In 1902 he wrote to several eminent residents suggesting establishing a local conservation society, and early the following year they formed the John Evelyn Club *to safeguard the amenities of the district, to promote an interest in local history and wild life and to preserve objects of historical and natural interest*. The Club, which was renamed the Wimbledon Society in 1982, has always had its own premises at the corner of Lingfield Road and the Ridgway, and has played a significant part in the protection of the Wimbledon area over the past hundred years. [Milward, 2003]

Traffic

Like many other parts of the Borough, West Wimbledon suffers from considerable traffic congestion and this is having a seriously detrimental effect on the character of the Conservation Area. Most of the roads are lined both sides by parked cars and many of the front gardens have been paved over to provide parking areas, as is shown in the Sub Area maps. Some paved areas are so extensive as to have a detrimental effect on the streetscape and to infringe policies in the Unitary Development Plan. The Ridgway, being a Local Distributor Road, suffers particularly badly from through traffic and, although the roads nearest Wimbledon Village are subject to parking restrictions and to one-way circulation, most of the others except the *cul-de-sacs* also suffer to a varying degree, even though they are designated as merely Local Access Roads.

There is no simple or obvious solution, and this Assessment recommends that a **traffic survey** be undertaken as the first phase of a detailed investigation be carried out to find possible solutions, such as speed bumps, more on-way street, greater parking restrictions or even road closures.

1.2 DESIGNATION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Context

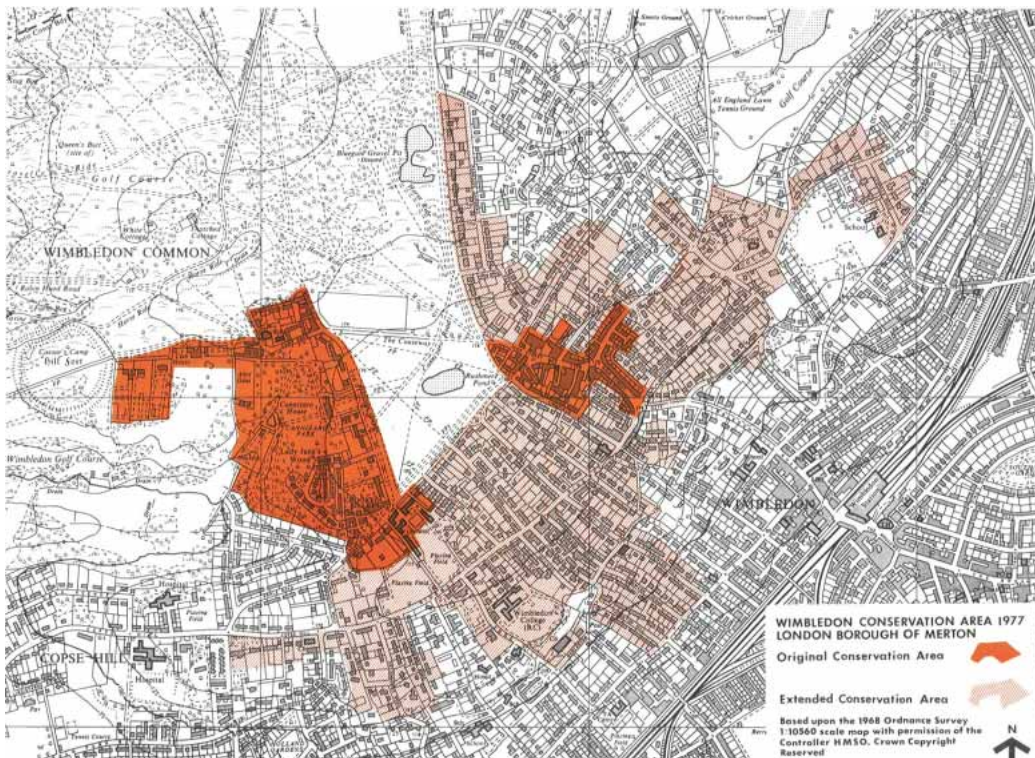
West Wimbledon Conservation Area (CA) is one of several which have been designated to help protect Wimbledon's character. Wimbledon Village CA covers the historic core, Wimbledon Hill Road CA includes some of the historic areas to east of the Village and, as their names indicate, North and West Wimbledon and Wimbledon Broadway CAs cover the residential extensions of the Village to the north and west and part of Wimbledon town centre. Further west, a smaller conservation areas have been designated to protect the character of Copse Hill, Drax Avenue, Dunmore Road, Durham Road, Lampton Road, Westcombe Avenue and Wool Road and their environs. An obvious omission appears to be Wimbledon Common itself but, since the Common is protected under other legislation, conservation area protection has proved unnecessary.

The Process Of Designation

West Wimbledon Conservation Area was formerly part of The Merton (Wimbledon) Conservation Area designated by the Greater London Council as an “Area of Special Architectural Interest” which extended over areas bordering Wimbledon Common and its approach roads. Following a recommendation on 29 March 1968 by the Borough Surveyor, a conservation area was then designated which covered two separate parts of Wimbledon. One took in the area around Wimbledon High Street, and the other stretched from the Crooked Billet to North View, including Camp Road, West Side Common and Cannizaro Park [English Heritage: *Conservation Areas in London and the South East*].

The 1968 designation largely reflected the historic importance of the two disparate parts of the original conservation area, Wimbledon Village forming the core of the original historic settlement, and the other containing both the historic Park and many of Wimbledon’s most important historic buildings.

The then John Evelyn Society campaigned to have the conservation area extended. It undertook a survey of the buildings of the wider area, including the Ridgway, the slopes between the Ridgway and Worple Road, and other parts of West Wimbledon, and in 1973, with the support of six other local amenity groups and the Victorian Society, it presented a report (the “VicSoc Report”) to the Council recommending a considerable increase in the extent of designation to protect the best examples of local Victorian and Edwardian architecture [Plaistow, 2003].



Map of the original and extended Conservation Areas

As a result of the greater protection to Conservation Areas provided under the 1974 Town and Country Amenity Act, a report was submitted to the Council’s Development and Planning Committee on 17 June 1976 recommending that the two separate parts of the Conservation Area be extended. It stated that:

In recent years much redevelopment of large Victorian and Edwardian houses has occurred in West and North Wimbledon. In some cases the character of whole streets has been

Changed by redevelopment for flats (as on the eastern side of Lansdowne Road) and in others by scattered pockets of new housing [para. 3]

Council policies had proved to be inadequate in controlling development in West Wimbledon, resulting in the loss of appeals against planning refusal for new development, and stronger policies, such as conservation area designation, were needed. So, after consultations between the Council, the Greater London Council, the Department of the Environment and the Civic Trust, and with considerable public support, the area was extended in September 1976 and designated as the Wimbledon Conservation Area. As well as the village itself, it covered residential areas to both the north and west of the Village, and was by far the largest conservation area in the Borough. In recommending the extension of the conservation area, the 1976 report explained that this part of Wimbledon is:

included amongst the best half dozen or so areas outside Central London with regard to exceptionally high amenity and architectural and historic interest. In addition to pockets of Georgian cottages, the locality is particularly valuable in that it possesses a cohesive and extensive area, which represents a high point of Victorian and Edwardian domestic architecture. A substantial number of houses and in many cases whole streets exhibit this quality, in some cases sufficiently so to merit inclusion in the list of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. In some instances, the architecture is amongst the finest in the Borough, representing valuable examples of the various styles of domestic architecture in fashion at the turn of the century. [para. 3]

The character of a large part of west Wimbledon derived from such factors as the architectural merit of individual buildings and their relationship with each other, and the quality of the streets, the mature trees and the large well planted gardens.

These various factors are interrelated and indivisible and substantial changes in these factors will tend to dilute the character of the whole area.

Since the area as a whole is varied in nature and was considered not to hold together as a cohesive unit with its own unique character, it was divided into three separate conservation areas in February 1987, named Wimbledon North, Wimbledon Village and Wimbledon West. [Development Committee Report, 4/12/1986]

The Wimbledon Society produced a series of environmental assessments of eight of the roads in the West Wimbledon Conservation Area which have proved particularly useful in the production of this Assessment. They comprise Denmark Avenue, Denmark Road, Edge Hill, The Grange, Hillside, Spencer Hill, Thornton Hill, and Thornton Road.

The Boundary

The 1987 report explained that

In order to achieve a cohesive, continuous and convenient boundary it has been necessary to include some aesthetically inferior development and pockets of recent development, the exclusion of which would have fragmented the area and made it difficult to administer. In addition there are small groups of buildings outside but in close proximity to the proposed area, meriting inclusion but which are only weakly connected to comparable buildings, the best procedure for those isolated elements is by listing and tree preservation orders.

The boundary excluded some parts recommended by the GLC and the VicSoc Report, such as the southern part of Arterberry Road, but included others, such as the northern end and The Drive, and since 1987 there have been several minor extensions to the boundary to take in the following properties:

- June 1987: 1-15 Edge Hill.
- July 1988: houses in Pepys Road, Durrington Park Road and Durrington Avenue, and between Conway Road and Atterberry Road.
- May 1990: 1-4 and 17-19 Crescent Road.

One of the purposes of this Character Assessment has been to look again at these boundaries in the light of further development and changing attitudes to historic buildings over the past 25 years or so, and as a result the Conservation Area has been further adjusted. Details are given in Part Four.

The process of determining the boundary of a Conservation Area, selecting those areas worth including in the conservation area and those which are not quite of sufficient architectural or historic interest to justify inclusion, can be a major task. In the case of the West Wimbledon Conservation Area, the east, north-west and northern boundaries are clearly defined by those of other conservation areas (Wimbledon Village and Wool Road Conservation Areas) or areas of quite different character which are protected in different ways (Wimbledon Common). But in the south-west and south the change of character is far more gradual, and it is mainly here that adjustments have been made. The southern boundary runs roughly parallel to Worple Road, and a major consideration in determining the alignment has been to decide where the character changes so much from the outstanding architectural and historic quality of the northern part of the Conservation Area to areas of less distinction and the more mundane character of the Worple Road area.

Despite its present lack of architectural quality, Worple Road is in fact of considerable historic interest. The name Worple derives from the sixteenth century "Warpelle", a "common way" or public right of way, and the road has been known variously as Warpell Way, Middle Worple Lane and Upper Worple. It was originally no more than a cart track which petered out at what is now the south end of The Downs, but during the 1870s much of it was developed by Richard Thornton and the Revd. John Brackenbury with substantial detached houses and generous front gardens, the western part being completed by about 1891. The gardens were first shorted to make way for the tram service from Wimbledon to Kingston in 1907 and, as its role as a major communication route increased, most of the houses were replaced by modern development. [Milward 1989, pp.173-4 & 177].

Many of the houses on both the northern side of Worple Road and at the southern end of the roads which lead into it have been converted to or been replaced by flats and offices, so that its architectural interest has been largely destroyed. Therefore, far from attempting to protect its present character, measures are required to discourage development from further eroding the integrity of those parts of the Conservation Area which adjoin it and whose setting could be adversely affected by unsympathetic development. It is with this objective in mind that the boundary of this part of the Conservation Area has been considered.

1.3 THE CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The Purpose of Character Assessments

In its report of 25 May 1995 the Borough's Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) considered the feasibility of preparing character assessments for all the Borough's conservation areas, based on the recommendations of the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, which suggests that the definition of an area's special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to it.

Character assessments set out the specific characteristics which merit the area's designation, and they provide a tool which helps the Council to assess the impact of development proposals on the conservation areas' character and appearance. They also provide a guide for property owners and developers when designing new development or considering alterations to buildings in conservation area by explaining the context to which any new development will need to relate.

The character studies on which the Borough of Merton's original conservation area designations were based were regarded by the CAAC as somewhat rudimentary, and it was agreed that the character assessments should provide a more detailed descriptive analysis. In view of the likely length of such documents, the CAAC agreed at its meeting of 14 November 1996 that character assessments should be prepared in two stages, the first being

a general overview which would be available to the public, and the second a more detailed working tool for use within the Council, but accessible to members of the public and developers.

Because of the size and complexity of the West Wimbledon Conservation area, and the need to justify various recommendations concerning its boundary, it was regarded as more appropriate in this case to carry out the more detailed assessment first, and to then produce five briefer Design Guides for public distribution, each of which cover different parts of the Conservation Area.

The West Wimbledon Character Assessment

This Assessment provides an analysis of the Area's special character by considering the conservation area as a whole, investigating its origins and development through an analysis of information gathered from publications, historic maps, archaeological records and other sources. It includes consideration of the area's topography, urban development and building types and styles, based on research and site inspections. Although it is a detailed Assessment, it is not intended to be exhaustive, and failure to consider any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is assumed to be of no interest.

As part of the analysis, the Assessment also reviews the boundaries in the light of recent physical alterations to the area and changes in attitudes about the benefits of conservation, recommending the removal of parts of the Conservation Area whose character has been eroded, and the addition of areas which are now regarded as of sufficient architectural or historic interest.

The information is used to help identify thirty-three Sub Areas of indigenous character, both within and adjoining the Conservation Area. Each Sub Area has then been analysed in more detail through site visits and an examination of historic archives and contemporary records relating to groups or individual buildings and their surroundings, including:

- The way in which each sub-area has changed over time;
- An assessment of local topography, such as views, landmarks, urban features and streetscape character;
- Natural features and their importance;
- Building characteristics, such as age, density and historic importance of individual or groups of buildings; and
- Elements which contribute to or detract from the character or appearance of each Sub-Area.

With the exception of a few open spaces, such as Cannizaro Park, the informal public open space adjoining the Crooked Billet, and the playing fields to the two major schools in the area, West Wimbledon Conservation Area is basically urban in character. It's character therefore depends more than anything else on the quality of its buildings and their preservation and enhancement. This Assessment therefore concentrates on the quality of the buildings in the Conservation Area, the extent to which their character and their setting may have been eroded by unsuitable extensions or alterations, and the degree to which these changes have affected the character of each Sub Area.

This analysis has then used to assess how much the Sub Area contributes to the Conservation Area. If it makes little contribution, or detracts from the Area's overall character, the Assessment explains why it has been excluded in whole or in part. A similar exercise has been used to determine if Sub Areas adjoining the Conservation Area are worth including.

The character of some parts of the Conservation Area has been eroded by the piecemeal removal or alteration of features of architectural or historic interest and, where appropriate, Article 4 Directions have been recommended to help resist this process of erosion.

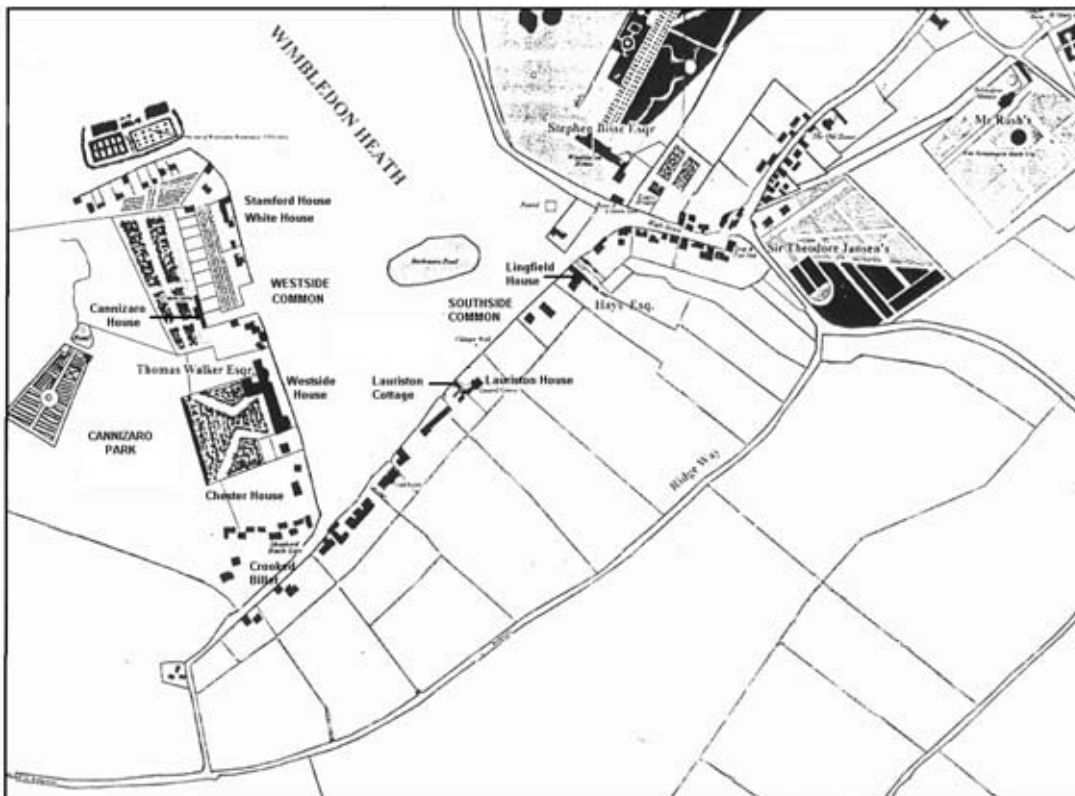
1.4: DEVELOPMENT

Much of the information in this part of the Assessment is based on the excellent guide by Richard Millward and Cyril Maidment *Wimbledon: A Surrey Village in Maps* in which various historic maps of Wimbledon dating from 1745 to 1890 which have been reproduced to a standard format.

Before 1745

There was little development in the area until Tudor times, when the elevated position and views to the south and east attracted wealthy Londoners, whose estates extended over the present West Wimbledon CA and beyond as far the Kingston Road and along the Wandle and Beverley Brook,

The John Roque Map of 1745



Map based on John Rocque's map of 1745

John Roque's map was the first to depict the area in detail. It shows that the first areas to be developed west of the Village were along the southern edge of the Common (then known as Wimbledon Heath) and on the area now occupied by West Side Common and Cannizaro Park.

The estates of the large houses along what is now known as **Southside Common**, or simply "Southside", included **Lingfield House** and **Lauriston House and Cottage** (1680). Lingfield House was demolished in the late 1950s and replaced by three modest detached cottages, but some of the outbuildings to the House, and are now named Lauriston Cottage survive and listed **grade II**. The estates extended south-east as far as the Ridgway (then known as the Ridge Way) and beyond, and the houses often gave their names to the roads which were later to be built within their grounds.

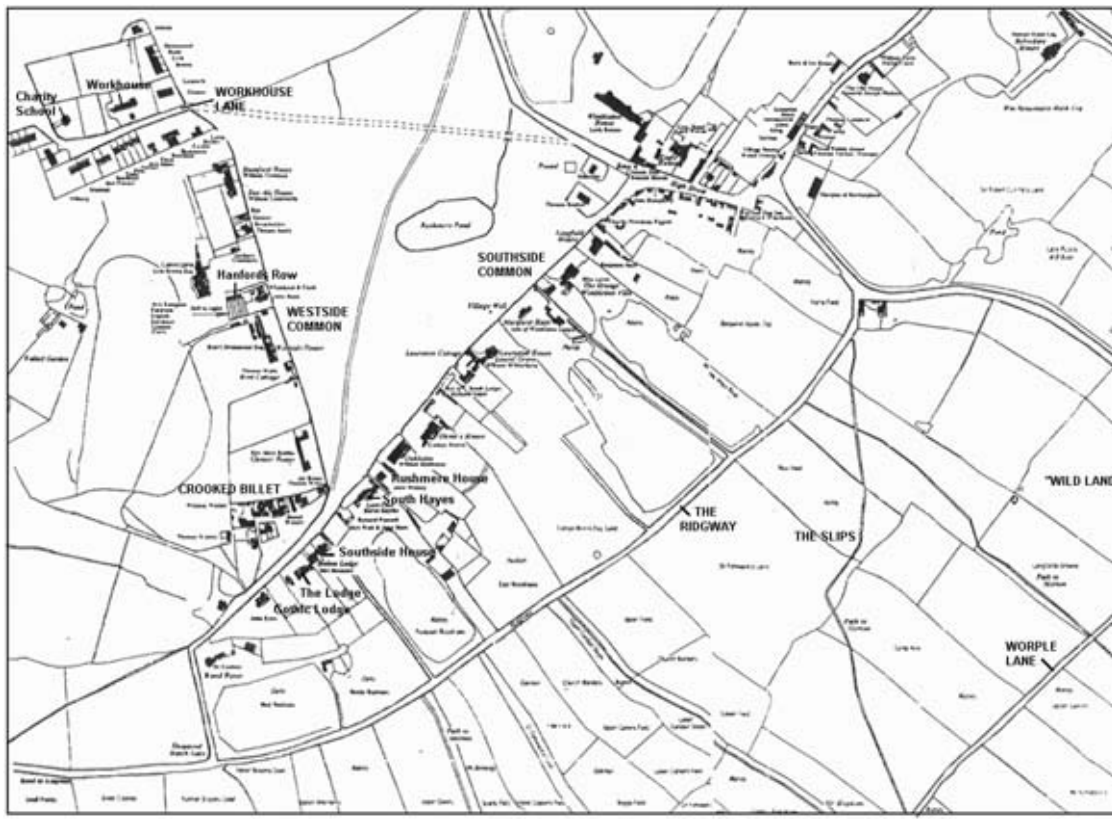
The area to the west was already occupied by **Chester House** (1692), **Westside House** and **Cannizaro House** (both c.1705), **Stamford House** (1730) and **The White House** (1740), and their extensive grounds. Chester, Westside and Stamford Houses are listed **grade II** and the estate to Cannizaro House is now a **grade II*** Registered Park.

William Browne built Cannizaro House for his own occupation, and he built Westside house to lease to wealthy friends

These wealthy friends were almost certainly wealthy Londoners, who in the early years of the eighteenth century were looking for a country house within easy distance of the capital. They wanted to escape, in the words of Daniel Defoe, 'from the hurries of business to draw their breath in a clear air and to divert them selves and their families in the hot weather'. Escape became much easier in 1729 with the opening of Putney Bridge, which made it possible to reach villages like Wimbledon 'within an hour's driving upon a good road'. So in summer they could leave their families to enjoy life in the country, while for the first time they commuted daily to London. [Milward undated p.2]

Some cottages and a public house - **The Crooked Billet** – had by then also been built at the junction of Westside and Southside.

The Bond-Hopkins Map of 1772-1776



Map based on Bond Hopkins' map of 1772-1776

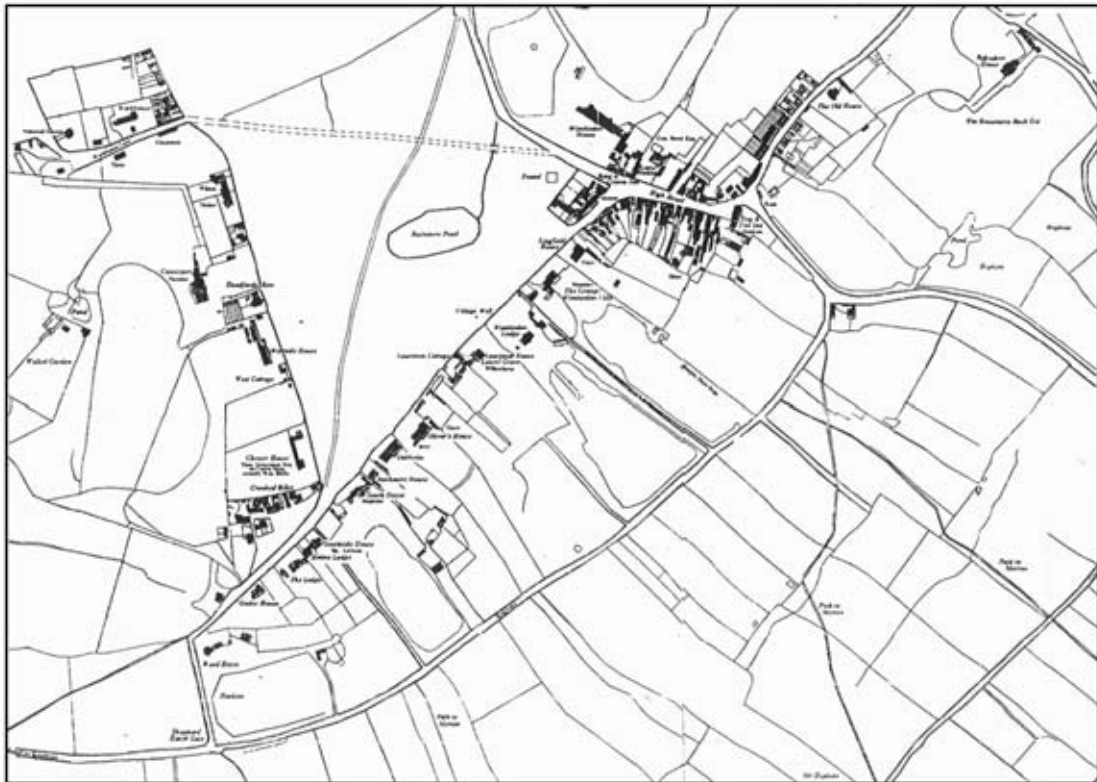
The dramatic increase in housing density can be largely attributed to John "Vulture" Hopkins, a skilful financier who invested his fortune in Wimbledon property by developing much of the land along Southside, the Ridgway and Worple Lane. The map of 1772-1776 is based on that prepared by Benjamin Bond, who inherited John Hopkins' estate in 1774 and changed his name to Bond-Hopkins.

Between 1745 and 1775 the intensity of development increased, but continued to be located along the south side of the Common. Of those houses which survive, **The Lodge** was built in

1750, followed by **Southside House** in 1751, **Gothic Lodge** and **South Hayes** in 1760, and **Rushmere House** in 1770. Gothic Lodge (located strictly in what is now Woodhayes Road) is listed **grade II** and South Hayes now forms part of Kings College School.

Except for the construction in 1760 of **Hanford Row** (listed **grade II**), little further development had occurred among the large houses along what is now **Westside Common**. But there had been considerable activity to the north and south. At the northern end a **workhouse** and the **grade II** listed octagonal **Charity School** were built in 1752, and encouraged the erection of a string of cottages along **Workhouse Lane** (now the eastern end of **Camp Road**), while to the south the area around the Crooked Billet had become a mini-village in its own right.

Although the Ridgway was still bordered by open countryside, the boundaries of the fields on each side were already an echo of the pattern of the road network we know today. One feature, a remnant of which still survives, is **The Slips**, an historic right of way which led from the eastern end of the Ridgway diagonally across the escarpment down to **Worple Lane**. Since it avoided the steepest part of the "**Wild Land**" it tended to form the natural boundary of development south of the Ridgway until late into the nineteenth century. The section between Oldfield Road and Ridgway Place still remains as a narrow pedestrian shortcut [Hawtin. P.144].



Map based on the John Corris map of 1787

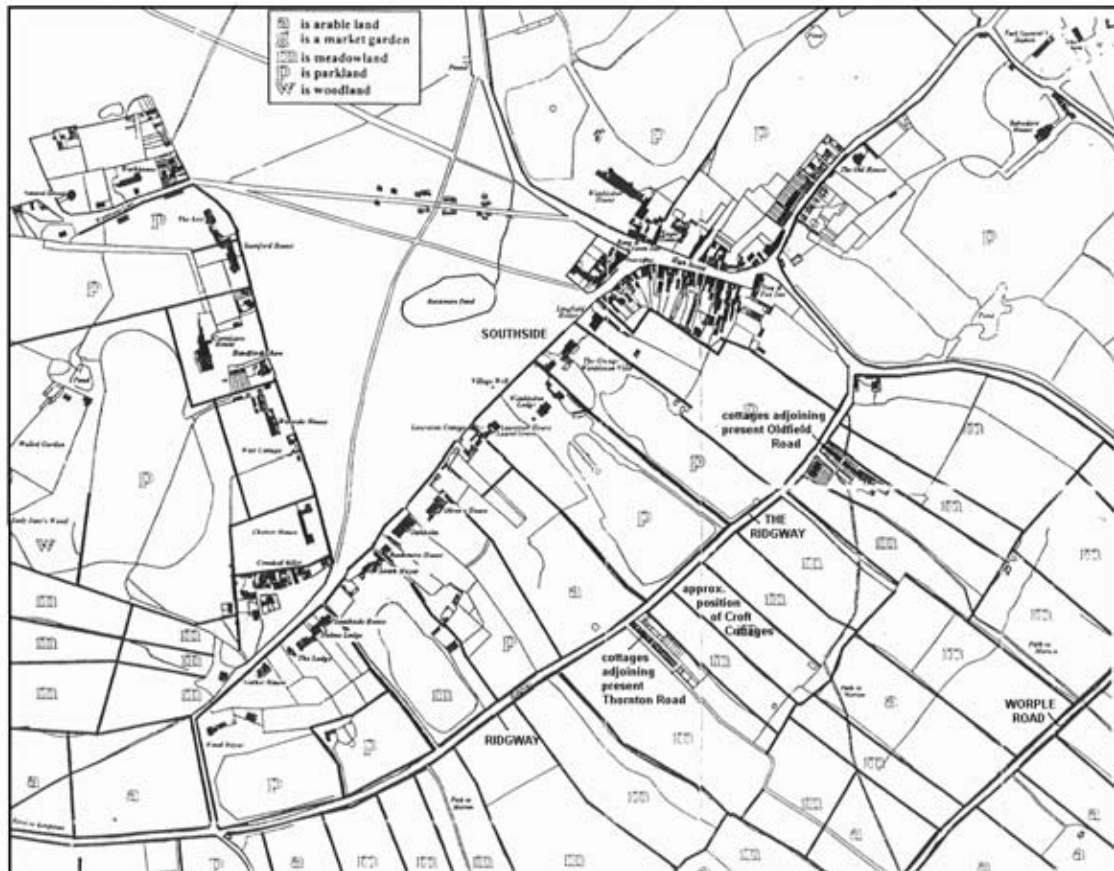
The John Corris Map of 1787

The 1787 map shows that little development had occurred over the following decade, the main change being to the north of Westside, where the cottages along Workhouse Lane appear to have been replaced by more intensive development along what is now West Place.

The Thomas Milne Land Utilisation Map of 1800

Until the turn of the century, West Wimbledon continued to be largely untroubled by new development. According to Milward and Maidment, for the previous two hundred years Wimbledon had been:

a countrified parish dominated by the Common, large private parks, a network of fields and some dense woods which still covered the land on both sides of Copse Hill. [Milward 2000 p.23]



Map based on the Thomas Milne Utilization Map of 1800

Wimbledon Village was surrounded by five large private parks. Those to the west comprised Old (or Warren) Park, and the Prospect Place estate. The latter originally covered 60 acres off Copse Hill but was enlarged to 250 acres in the late 1790s. Wimbledon was becoming increasingly fashionable, as indicated by the design of one of the few additions at this time to the large houses on Southside - **Wimbledon Lodge** - which was in the latest Greek Revival style, with Coade Stone lions on either side of the entrance and elegant caryatids supporting a balcony overlooking the garden. [Milward 2000 p.23]

Although the Ridgway was still rural in character, two groups of cottages had been built to the south-east approximately on the lines of **Oldfield Road** and **Thornton Road**.

The row nearest the Village appears from the map to include 5-17 Ridgway, 1 to 13 Oldfield Road and 1-5 Linden Cottages. If so, the present terraces date from between 1787 and 1800 and comprise the first development between the Ridgway and Worple Road within the conservation area. However, this does not seem to accord with Millward's researches about the origins of Brickfield terrace, as set out in the description of Sub-Area 14A, below.

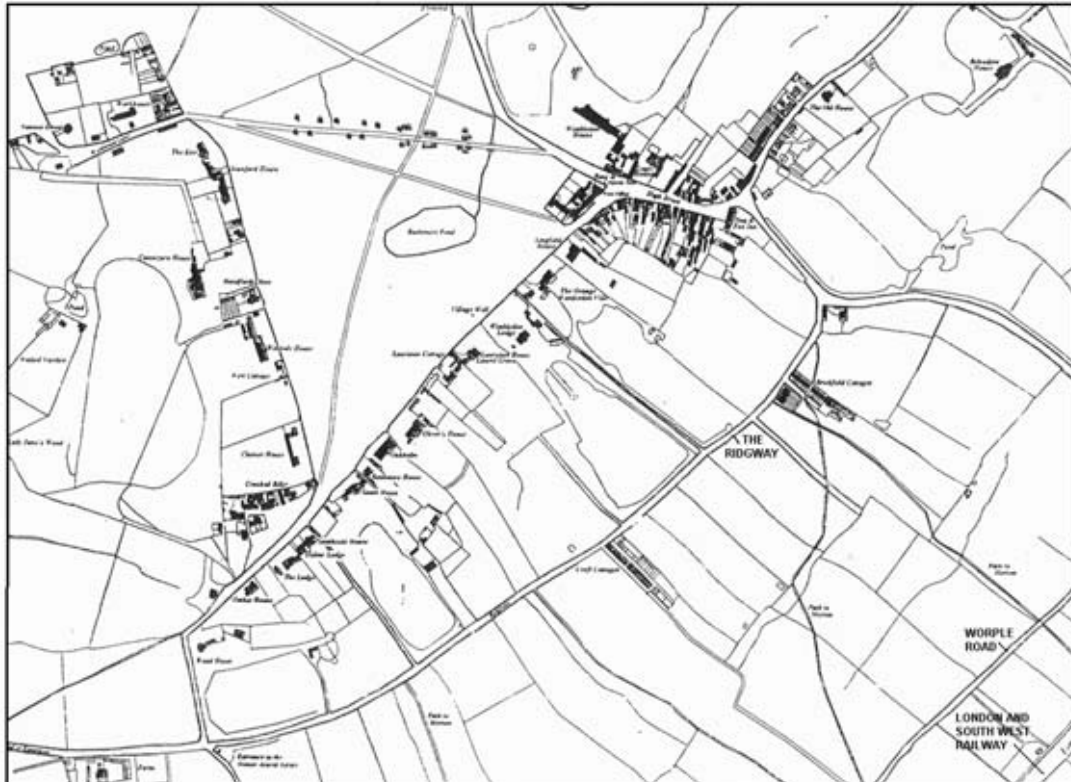
According to Milward, the group further from the Village, known as Croft Cottages, was also built in the 1820s as model cottages *for applicants of good character and cleanly habits* [Milward 2000 p.25]. They appear to have been built on or near the land now occupied by 47 to 73 Denmark Road.

One useful feature of the 1800 map is its indication of land uses. Since the area between Southside and the Ridgway formed the grounds to the houses on Southside, they were - not

surprisingly - mainly laid out as parkland. The meadowland immediately south of the Ridgway was grazed by sheep and cows, but changed to arable land on the lower slopes towards what is now Worple Road.

The fields in Wimbledon were managed by four farms: Manor (or Wimbledon Park) Farm, Cowdrey Farm, Warren Farm and Watney Farm. Much of the land within West Wimbledon Conservation Area appears to have originally formed part of Warren Farm. It was first mentioned in 1617, and from 1785 to 1812 it was run by the Watney family, of brewery fame. In about 1770 John Watney built **Rushmere House** on Southside Common and a farm house between Southside and the Ridgway.

The Tithe Map Of 1838



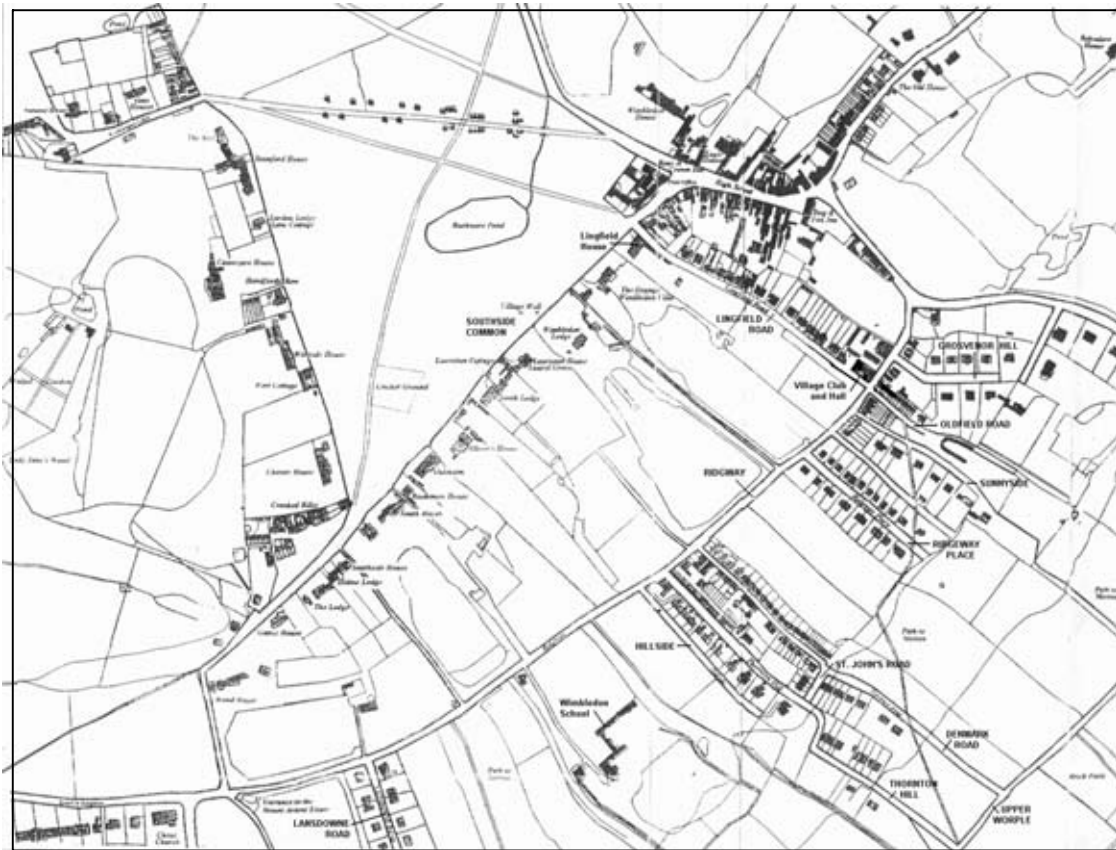
Map based on the Tithe Map of 1838

The most significant change at this time was the opening of the London and South West Railway, south of Worple Road, in May 1838. Until then, no settlement had developed below the Wimbledon plateau and, although a directory of the time described Wimbledon as a *beautiful and highly genteel village*, by today's standards many of its four hundred or so houses were apparently little more than hovels.

The line of the railway was originally to be north of its present alignment, crossing Worple Road near its present junction with Spencer Hill and following a course about midway between the present line and the Ridgway. As the 1838 map shows, almost nothing had been built south of the Ridgway at that time, and the cutting needed to enable the trains to cross the escarpment would no doubt have resulted in a very different housing layout in this part of the Conservation Area. But the Earl of Cottenham, who owned the fields west of Pepys Road, opposed an alignment so close to his house, and the Company was obliged to move it further south.

The time then taken from "Wimbledon and Merton" Station to Nine Elms was only 18 minutes, from where commuters could board a river steamer to the City. [Milward 1989 pp.98-9]

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1865



Map based on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1865

Whereas the 1838 map shows little change from its predecessor, that of 1865 indicates a dramatic increase, mainly south of the Ridgway. As Hawtin explains, Wimbledon was no longer a *rus in urbe*:

Industry, mining and shipping created a new middle class. So in XIXthC Wimbledon we find soldiers in plenty, Anglo-Indians, civil servants, lawyers from British and colonial postings, merchants, engineers, railway constructors, hereditary aristocracy and a new mercantile middle class. [Hawtin p.101]

The map shows that, although Southside Common had been lined with gracious villas for about a hundred years, residential expansion did not commence from Southside towards the Ridgway, but on the meadowland further south, presumably because the estate owners were content to sell their land for development so long as the new properties did not encroach too closely on the vistas they had so long enjoyed.

One villa whose view was compromised, however, was **Lingfield House**. **Lingfield Road** was constructed across its grounds and houses were built backing the village with attractive views west over the neighbours' estates towards Kingston. Most of these houses survive and, although the VicSoc Report suggested that many of them should be listed, only No.28, the **Village Club and Hall** at the junction of the Ridgway, is on the statutory list, **grade II**. No.28 was designed by SS Teulon in 1859 and is now the home of the Wimbledon Society Museum. Of the 24 houses on the east side of Lingfield Road, 15 are now **locally listed**.

South of the Ridgway, about a dozen roads and tracks were laid out in the 1850s and '60s, two of which, **Denmark Road** and **Thornton Hill**, reached as far as **Upper Worple**, the present Worple Road.

The 1865 map indicates that the road nearest the Village, **Grosvenor Hill**, contained particularly large detached houses. Many of them have either been demolished or suffered unsympathetic alterations, and are now converted into flats.

The layout of the cottages in Oldfield Road appears basically unchanged, and large detached villas were constructed to the west, on **Sunnyside**. Only Nos.1-4, at the northern end, survive, together with most of the houses built at that time at the northern end of **Ridgway Place**. According to Milward, the latter incorporated all mod cons, such as bathrooms and gas lighting [Milward 2000 p.25].

Moving westward, the next row of houses to be laid out during this period was along the northern part of **Denmark Road**. The model cottages designed by Samuel Teulon were joined by the row of semi-detached houses on the eastern side. In its Report, the VicSoc recommended that almost all the houses in Denmark Road be statutorily listed and Nos.47 to 73, by Teulon, are now **grade II**. The pairs at 21/22, 33/34 and 39/40 are on the **local list**.

Croft Cottages survived on the east side of what became known as Thornton Hill (now **Thornton Road**), and was joined by the semi-detached houses at the northern end of the present **Thornton Hill**. The beginnings of **St John's Road** were also laid out between Thornton Road and Denmark Road, and Nos.1 to 6 constructed along the northern side.

The character of Thornton Road and **Hillside**, immediately to the west, are unusual in being single sided. That is to say, the front facades of the houses to the west of both roads face west, presumably to obtain the maximum benefit of the views in that direction, and the back gardens to the villas in Hillside lead directly into Thornton Road, while those along the east side of what was to become Berkeley Place lead on to Hillside. Thornton Road, Thornton Hill and Hillside are all within the conservation area, and nos.11 and 12 Hillside are **locally listed**.

Until **Berkeley Place** was developed towards the end of the century, the houses in Hillside enjoyed a particularly pleasant view because, except for Wimbledon School (now **Wimbledon College**, also designed by Teulon and listed **grade II**), the meadows further west remained open land as far as **Lansdowne Road**. Because of the way in which its character has been eroded, only parts of this street are included in the Conservation Area. The large houses on the eastern side have unfortunately been mostly redeveloped, but Nos. 11 to 17, opposite, are included on the **local list**.

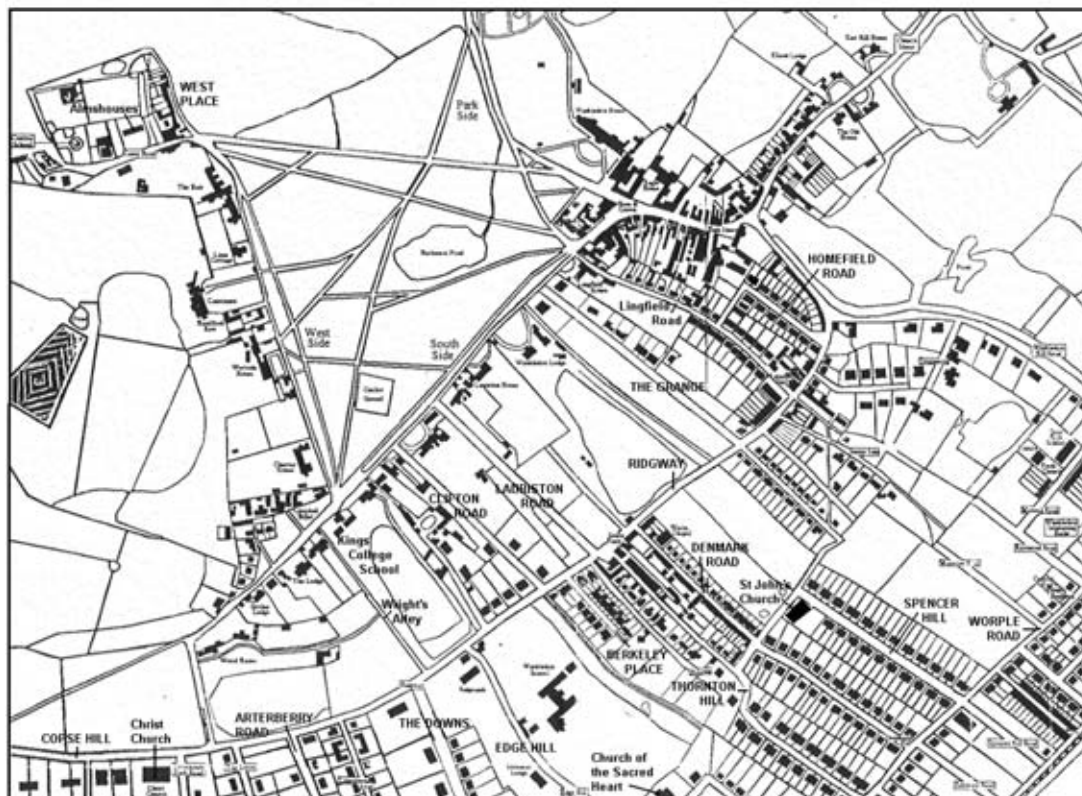
Further west, beyond Map No.8, **Cottenham Park Road** and **Pepys Road** were among those laid out after Cottenham Park was taken over by developers in the 1850s. Cottenham Park Road is no more than a reminder of the 230 acres assembled by James Mayrick (1748-1818) in this part of west Wimbledon which originally made up the Cottenham Park Estate. The grounds, landscaped by Henry Repton, have long since been built over [Hawtin p.98]. **Christ Church**, also by Teulon, was built in 1859, and the large houses to the west of the church, along the south side of **Copse Hill**, were built during this period.

The Stanford & Ordnance Survey Map of 1890

The population increased from 4,650 in 1861 to 9,000 in 1871, almost 16,000 by 1881 and about 25,000 by the 1890s, during which time Wimbledon changed from an isolated village to a London suburb. Not that development proceeded unchecked. In 1871, for example, the Commons Preservation Committee was formed to prevent Earl Spencer from enclosing most of the "untamed" Wimbledon Common as a public park.

North of the Ridgway houses were beginning to appear on the western side of Lingfield Road, and **Homefield Road** had been carved out of the backs of the commercial properties facing the Village High Street. A few houses were also being built along **The Grange**, **Lauriston Road** and **Clifton Road**, which have recently been constructed between Southside and the Ridgway. Also, some activity was taking place to the south of what is now Kings College School, including **Glencairn**, a **grade II** listed house built in 1866 on the northern spur to the

Ridgway adjoining what are now the school playing fields. It was also at this time that **Wright's Alley**, between the playing fields, makes its appearance.



Map based on the Stanford & Ordnance Survey Map of 1890

There had been considerable activity between the Ridgway and Worple Road, particularly on the slopes south of St John's Road, which now stretched from Thornton Hill to Ridgway Place. The church of **St John the Baptist** (listed **grade II**) had been completed in 1875, and the houses on the west side of **Spencer Hill** were built between 1873 and 1888. The large houses in **Thornton Hill** and on the east side of **Denmark Road** were also built during the 1880s. By 1860, Thornton Road and South Road (which half way along became Denmark Road), reached as far as Worple Lane, now Worple Road.

As far as the slope of the hill, both were already lined with Victorian houses, small at the top, very large on the slope. A third road, Hillside, had also been built.... mostly with large middle-class houses only on its eastern side. Even larger houses had been put up about the same time along other new roads running south from the Ridgway: Grosvenor Hill, Sunnyside, Ridgway Place and, beyond the Downs, Lansdowne Road. [Milward 1989 p.154]

Nos.1 to 10 **Berkeley Place**, now **locally listed**, were built in 1879 with their backs turned to the houses in Hillside, while Nos.13 and 14 Berkeley Place, which date from about 1880, are listed **grade II**. South Place, a narrow thoroughfare between Denmark Road and Thornton Road, makes only a brief appearance on the 1890 map.

To the west of Wimbledon College, parts of **Edge Hill** and **The Downs** had also been developed. The **Church of the Sacred Heart** and the **Cottage**, at the entrance to the College, are listed **grade II**, and No.33, **Donhead Lodge**, opposite, is **locally listed**. At the top of Edge Hill, Nos.86-90, which date from 1897, are also **locally listed**, as are Nos. 4 to 12, near the bottom. While the whole of Edge Hill - if not all the buildings along it - is included in the Conservation Area, only the top end of The Downs has merited inclusion. **The Drive** and the eastern side of **Arterberry Road** were laid out in about 1870, the west side forming part of the Mount Ararat Estate. Both Atkinson Morley and The Cottage hospitals, beyond the Conservation Area, were built at about the same time [Hawtin p.148].

In contrast to this frantic activity, the 1890 map shows that there had been very little change to the part of the Conservation Area around Westside and Cannizaro Park over the past 100 years or so. The buildings at the northern end of Westside had coalesced into **West Place**, the Workhouse off Camp Road had given way to Almshouses and Workhouse Lane was for a time renamed Almshouse Lane [Hawtin p.118]. Otherwise, all that appears to have occurred along Westside and Southside Commons is a slight consolidation of the historic properties, most of which appear to have survived in their original state.

Maps from 1898 to the Present Day

The great majority of road building had been completed by the end of the 19th century, and the Ordnance Survey map of **1898** shows a general infilling along the roads between Southside and the Worple Road.

Except for the erection of the large late Victorian semi-detached houses along North View, the **1920** Ordnance Survey map still shows little change to the area around Westside. But by then the last of the roads between Southside and Worple Road - **Murray Road** - had been pushed through following the demolition of Wimbledon Lodge, the house's distinctive semi-circular driveway forming the road's northern entrance. **Kings College School** was developed along Southside. South of the Ridgway, the west side of Crescent Road had been developed between 1885 and 1893, and **Ridgway Gardens** was constructed on the front lawn of Wimbledon College.

Since the grid of roads within the conservation area between Southside and Worple Roads was now effectively complete, no significant changes appear on the Ordnance Survey maps of **1938** and **1951**, and it isn't until the map of **1976-7** that any infilling of the grounds of the houses along Westside is shown to have taken place. The estate along **Chester Road** and **Sycamore Road** is very typical of the 1950s, while **Lordell Place** and the developments north of Cannizaro House and along **Eversley Park**, off Camp Road, are of more recent origin.

Conclusion

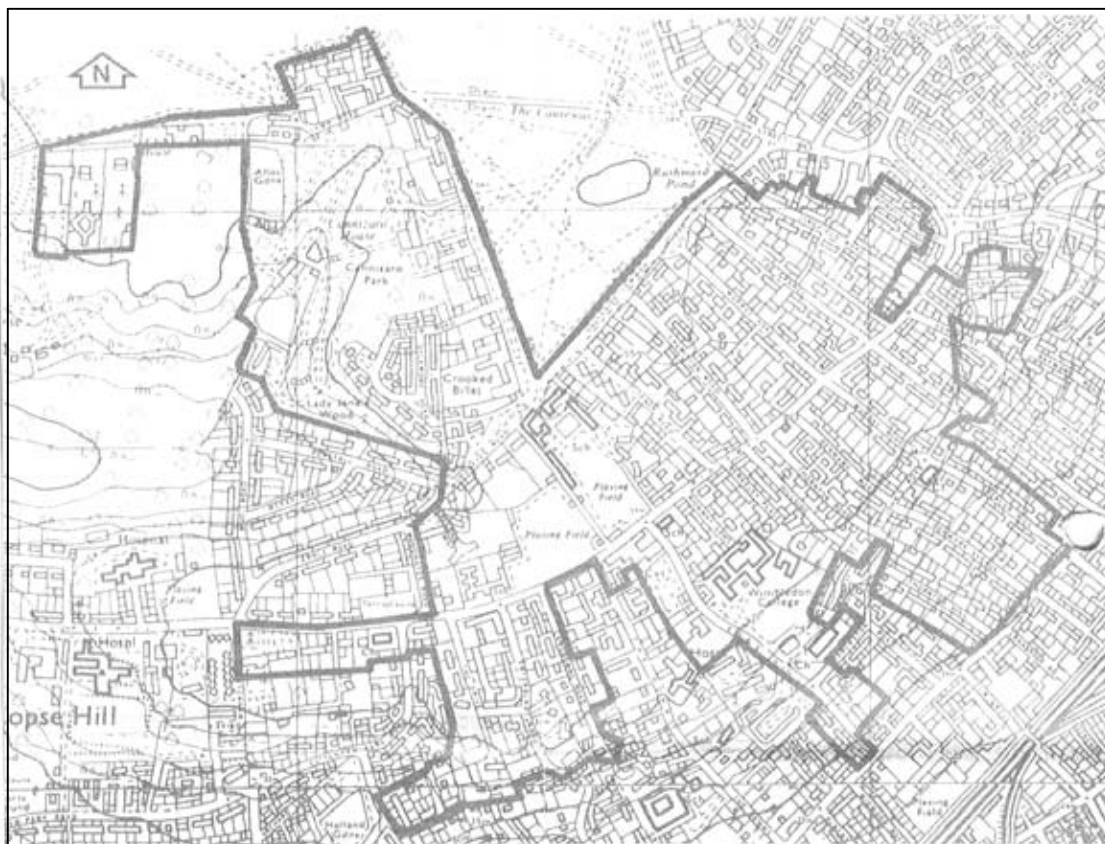
It can be seen from this analysis of the various maps of the area that, although development spread gradually westward from the historic core of Wimbledon Village, as might be expected, a more pronounced movement occurred first south of the Ridgway and then to the north.

Until the coming of the railway, development was determined by outlook, orientation and distance from the Village, the large houses along Westside and Southside having extensive grounds and distant vistas to the south and west respectively. But from 1838 onwards, development occurred in clearly defined strips, first near the Village and then during the latter half of the nineteenth century between the Ridgway and Worple Road. It was only during the first half of the twentieth century that the section between the Ridgway and Southside was extensively developed, and there was little expansion west of Westside until after the 1939-45 war.

Development after 1838 and the increasing prominence of Wimbledon Town Centre over the Village from the 1870s onwards reflects the greater ease with which the residents were able to reach the town and the railway station. Housing north of the Ridgway became more attractive with the introduction of bus services through the Village, and west of Westside as car ownership increased. Not only the distance but also the climb up the hill from the station was no doubt a significant disincentive for those returning home from a hard day in the City. According to Milward, when the Station Master was asked by a commuter why the station could not have been located in the Village at the top of the hill, he replied "we did think about that sir, but in the end we decided that it would be best nearer the railway"!

The process of expansion was also far from even. Not only were individual fields developed in a sporadic way, but also land was divided and subdivided from large to smaller and yet

smaller housing plots until the area achieved the densely populated pattern of development we see today. Indeed, this process continues, with corner plots and back gardens being exploited as far as the restrictions on development will allow. Not only have large houses been sub-divided into flats, but there is increasing pressure to replace modest houses by more substantial ones on small plots.



The present extent of the Conservation Area

1.5: RELEVANT BOROUGH POLICIES

This Character Assessments has been produced within the context of the Initial version of Merton Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP), dated November 2003. Most of the policies affect the West Wimbledon Conservation Area to a varying extent, and this part briefly describes those of most obvious relevance.

Strategic Policies

The UDP follows central government advice, including that set out in the London Planning Advisory Committee's 1994 Advice on Strategic Planning Guidance for London, whose objectives include the need to safeguard and improve London's heritage, including its buildings, conservation areas and archaeological remains, and to protect and improve the quality of the green environment. It also adheres to the criteria and objectives in the Council's Sustainability Appraisal, including the need to maintain, improve, enhance and protect the quality of the built environment.

Policy **ST.1** requires development proposals to meet the principles of sustainable development, and applications for large development schemes should include a sustainable development statement.

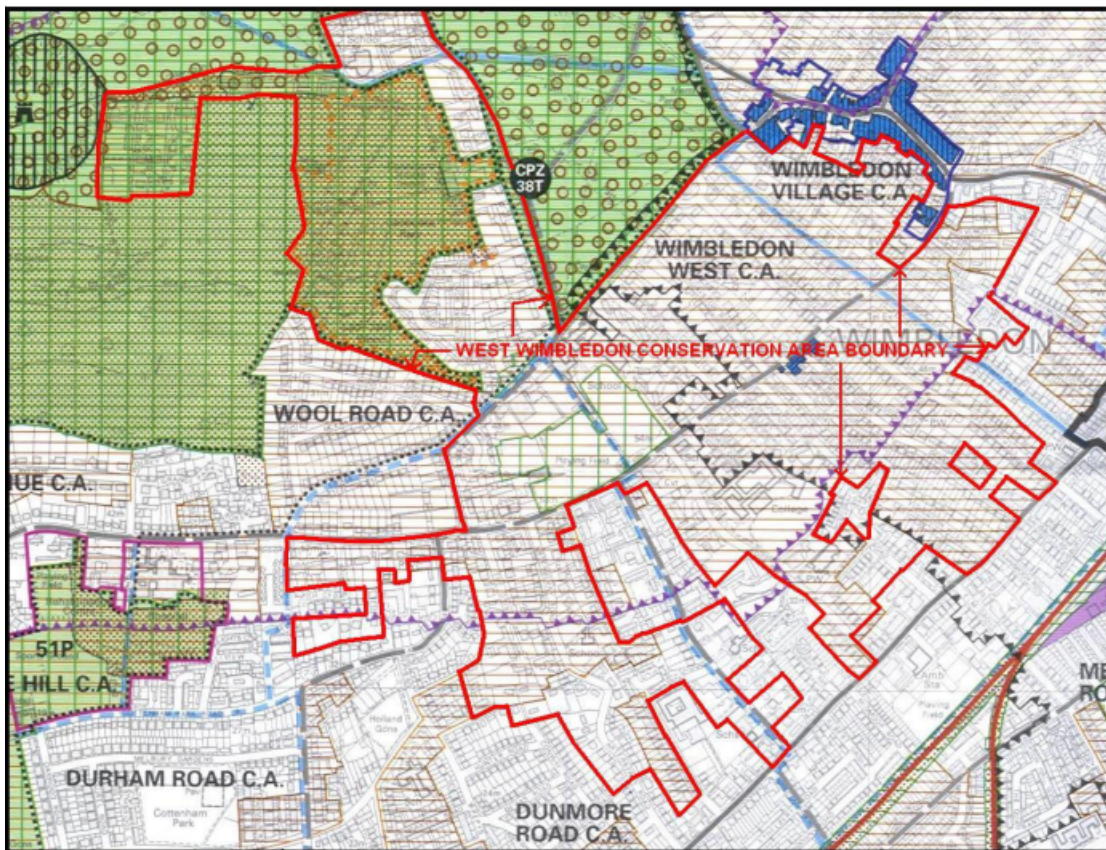
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Extract from and key to the Merton unitary Development Plan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Boundary Inset Map Boundary SITE PROPOSALS DETAILS IN SCHEDULE OF PROPOSALS Site Proposals ENVIRONMENT Metropolitan Open Land Policies (NE1, NE2 and BE20) Open Space Policies (Areas over and above 4 Hectares/10 Acres) (L3-L8) Sites of Special Scientific Interest Policy/Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation Policy (NE5) Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation Policy (NE6) Local Nature Reserves/Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (see Policy NE6) Green Chains Policy (NE3) Green Corridors Policy (NEB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Areas Policies (BE1-BE3) Archaeological Priority Zone Policy (BE13-BE14) Historic Parks and Gardens Policy (BE8) Scheduled Ancient Monument Policy (BE8, BE13) Areas at risk from flooding once every 100 years Policy (PE5) (Information provided by Environment Agency in 2002) Urban Village Policies (L1-L4) BUSINESS Industrial Areas Policies (E3-E5) Special Industrial Zones Policy (E8) SHOPPING Local Centre Boundary Core and Secondary Shopping Frontage Policies (S2 and S3) See Table 5.1 for details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Parades Policy (S4) TRANSPORT Rail/Tube Improvements Policy (PT2) Morden to Sutton Light Rail Policy (PT2) Merton Light Rail Policy (Via Colliers Wood) (PT2) Northern Line Underground Stations and Service Improvements Policies (PT2 and PT3, PT4) East London line extension - new underground Policy (PT2) Willow Lane Industrial Estate Access Improvements Area Policy (RN2) New and Improved Stations Policy (PT3) Safeguarded Land Adjoining District Line Policy (PT2) Strategic Route Policy (RN2) Fig 6.2 London Distributor Road Policy (RN2) Fig 6.2 Local Distributor Road Policy (RN2) Fig 6.2 Road Network Improvements Policies (RN2) Improvements to Road Junctions Policies (RN2) Existing Cycle Routes Policies (WC4) Proposed Cycle Routes Policies (WC4) Proposed Cycle Parking Walking Demonstration Projects Policy (WC1) Leisure Walking Routes Policies (WC2, L2) Controlled Parking Zones Policy (PK1)
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The dominant use of West Wimbledon Conservation Area is residential, and under policy **ST.10**, the Council is committed to protecting and, wherever possible, enhancing the character and amenity of all residential areas. Under policy **ST.13**, the Council will seek provision of a wide range of types of housing and tenure, and policy **ST.12** requires 95% of additional housing to be provided on previously developed land.

The increased emphasis by central government on high standards of architectural design and the need to provide sustainable forms of development make policy **ST.17** highly relevant to the built environment and its preservation in conservation areas. Policy **ST.18** provides a general commitment to protect, preserve or enhance all aspects of the Borough's environmental heritage, including the Borough's conservation areas, statutory and locally listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, and archaeological sites. And under policy **ST.19** the Council is committed to safeguarding areas of importance to nature conservation. Under policy **ST.20** the Council is committed to protect the Borough's natural environment, including areas of Metropolitan Open Land, open spaces and sports pitches, allotments and important rear gardens, and under policy **ST.21** to conserving and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity and natural heritage. These strategic policies are particularly relevant to this assessment since its primary objective is to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

Traffic congestion in the Conservation Area is a serious problem, and under policies **ST.32**, **33** and **34** the Council will seek to reduce overall traffic volumes by encouraging access by foot, cycle and public transport, while restraining car parking under policy **ST.35**.

Housing

Under policies relating to the retention of residential accommodation (**HP.2**), and rehabilitation and vacant dwellings (**HP.3**), a change of use will not normally be granted to any of the buildings unless it is in such a condition that such a change is crucial to its retention. The few buildings within the Conservation Area that are in poor condition are identified in the assessment.

Under policy **HP.4** the density of new residential development will normally expected to be at a minimum of 150 habitable rooms per hectare. An exception is where the character and appearance of the surrounding area would be adversely affected.

Although policy **HP.5** the Council normally permits single dwellings to be converted to flats, under policy **HP.6** the conversion of flats into dwellings that would lead to a loss of residential units is not permitted unless there is a need for larger family accommodation in the area.

In view of the character and uses with the Conservation Area, other housing policies that might be relevant include:

- **HN.1** and **HN.2**, regarding the proportion of affordable housing in any residential development.
- **HN.3**, requiring a mix of housing types in residential proposals.
- **HN.4** regarding the provision of residential institutions and housing for older people.
- **HS.1**, requiring residential amenity.
- **Schedule 1** of the UDP identifies sites proposed for housing, none of which occur within the West Wimbledon Conservation Area.

Education

Because the significant proportion of the Conservation Area is devoted to educational use, policy **C.10**, under which the loss of school sites will be resisted, and policy **C.14**, regarding new educational facilities and extensions / improvements to existing ones, may be applicable.

The Natural Environment

Despite the moderately high density of residential development throughout the Conservation Area, much of the space and land between buildings is of considerable value to nature conservation and the following policies are highly relevant.

Wimbledon Common and Cannizaro Park are designated as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

Policy **NE.1** explains that the use of land within an MOL must maintain its open character, improve its landscape character and nature conservation quality, and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation. And under policy **NE.2**, proposed development and change of use within or adjoining an MOL is also very strictly controlled.

Wimbledon Common and Cannizaro Park also form part of the series of linked informal open spaces within Merton and surrounding Boroughs, known as Green Chains, and under policy **NE.2** any development is expected to respect their character or function.

Cannizaro Park and the parts of Wimbledon Golf Club and Wimbledon Common adjoining Southside, Westside and Camp Road is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), and under policies **NE.5** and **NE.6** proposals which may have an adverse effect on these sites of nature conservation will not be permitted.

Under policy **NE.5**, Green Corridors, the Council has identified a network of relatively continuous areas of green spaces leading through the built up parts of the Borough which serve as a network for the movement of plant and animal species, and where development will normally be resisted. The Common, Cannizaro Park and the area adjoining the Crooked Billet form part of this network, and under policy **NE.8** the Council will encourage the management of landscape features identified under policies NE.4 and NE.5

As with other residential areas, the back gardens to the houses in West Wimbledon help to support much of the Borough's biodiversity, and under policy **NE.10** the Council oppose proposals that would result in significant harm to the character and biodiversity of backland areas.

According to policies **NE.11** and **Ne.12**, development will not normally be permitted if it would damage or destroy any trees, or unless it retains and, if possible, enhances hedges and other landscape features. This assessment identifies within the Sub Area maps those parts of the Conservation Area which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

The Built Environment

Conservation Areas

Pressure for new development is particularly severe in West Wimbledon, and as far back as 1990 the Conservation Area Advisory Committee acknowledged that relatively modern infill development had taken place that was out of keeping with the area's original character [CAAC 30 August 1990 p.6]. Conservation Area policies in the UDP are therefore of the greatest relevance, and to assist in determining appropriate and sympathetic development proposals this Assessment identifies buildings of varying quality within the Conservation Area. Paragraphs 4.28 to 4.31 commit the Council to the following actions:

4.28: *The Council will review and monitor the boundaries of existing Conservation Areas through the preparation of Character Assessments. A review of the boundary of West Wimbledon Conservation Area forms an important part of this Assessment.*

4.29: *The Council will promote enhancement schemes for Conservation Areas through pursuing opportunities for external funding and through partnerships with national funding bodies and the private and voluntary sectors. This assessment includes locations where enhancement schemes may be appropriate.*

4.30: *The Council can control certain adverse changes to the built environment within the conservation areas by issuing guidance and in the way that it determines applications for*

planning permission and listed building and conservation area consents (for demolitions). This is the primary function of this character assessment. Statutorily listed buildings are identified in the text and on the Sub Area maps.

4.31: *The Council will use Article 4 (I) and Article 4 (II) Directions where appropriate subject to the Secretary of State's confirmation where required, to protect the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, archaeological Priority Zones, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Buildings included on the Local List. This assessment also identifies locally listed buildings and recommends the possible location for Article 4 Directions.*

Policy **BE.1** states:

Within a conservation area a proposal for new development, alteration or extension to a building or for the change of use of land or buildings will be required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of that conservation area.

Proposals will be expected to:

- (I) Respect or complement the design, scale, form and materials of existing buildings and spaces*
- (II) Respect street patterns or other features contributing to the character, historic value of an area or the pattern of development in the area*
- (III) Maintain important views within and out of the area*
- (IV) Ensure that the level of activity, traffic, parking services or noise generated by the proposal would not detract from the character or appearance of the area*

The justification to the policy explains that the Council will encourage the sensitive redevelopment of sites that detract from the character of the area, that well designed new buildings can often enhance the character of a conservation area, and that applications for development need to be fully detailed. (This Assessment identifies those buildings that fail to preserve or enhance the Conservation Areas as well as those which have suffered from particularly inappropriate alterations or extensions.) It also explains that the Council will seek to retain buildings in the uses for which they were originally intended. The policy continues:

4.38: *The Council will encourage protection of the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, through the preparation of Design Guidance and Character Assessments for each Conservation Area. These will indicate to prospective applicants and owners the type of development which is appropriate and likely to be acceptable. Character Assessments are set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance, and development proposals will be judged for their effect on the character and appearance identified in the SPGs.*

4.39: *In considering schemes and proposals in Conservation Areas, the Council may be prepared to avoid the rigid application of relevant planning and highway standards if these would act to the detriment of the area's character or appearance. In such cases proposals will be expected to be of particular quality, and must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.*

Policy **BE.2** explains that any development that involves the total or substantial demolition of a building that makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation will not normally be permitted. (Those unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the West Wimbledon Conservation Area are indicated in yellow in the Sub Area maps.) Under policy **BE.3**, development proposals adjacent to a conservation area are also expected to preserve or enhance its setting, and not detract from views into or out of the area.

Listed Buildings

Statutorily listed buildings are identified in the Assessment, and under policies **BE.5, BE.6 and BE.7** the Council will encourage the maintenance, repair and restoration of listed buildings, and resist their demolition and unsuitable alteration or extension. Under Policy **BE.9** the Council will encourage the continuation or reinstatement of the use for which a listed building was originally designed, but will permit a change of use if the original use is not viable and the proposed use will not be detrimental to the building's character.

Under policy **BE.8** the Council will have special regard to protecting the setting of listed buildings, ancient monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens and the wider historic landscape, and the setting of such features, including the grade II* Cannizaro Park, are considered as part of this Assessment.

Policy **BE.10** requires that the remains of buildings of intrinsic historic or archaeological interest which are to be demolished or altered are to be recorded.

Locally Listed Buildings

The Council has developed a local list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, based on their architectural style, their age and history, their architectural and historic integrity, their group value, their detailing, and the use of unusual or innovative building materials. Under policy **BE.11** the Council will normally resist their total or substantial demolition, and permit their an alteration, extension or change of use if the proposal is sympathetic to their character and setting and will not detract from their historic interest. And under policy **BE.12** the Council will seek to have a locally listed building upgraded to the statutory list if it is threatened with demolition. This Assessment identifies locally listed buildings and recommends both additions to the list and upgrading to the statutory list where appropriate.

Archaeology

Most of the West Wimbledon Conservation Area lies within an Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ), the boundary of which is shown on the extract of the UDP map above and on Sub Area maps, as well as adjoining the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of Caesar's Camp. Policy **BE.13** explains that there is a presumption in favour of the preservation of SAMs and other nationally important archaeological sites and their settings. The Council will not grant permission for development that failed to comply with this presumption, and may require a preliminary archaeological site evaluation and archaeological impact assessment before proposals for development within the APZ are considered, as well as on other sites of archaeological potential, in accordance with policy **BE.14**.

New Buildings and Extensions

Policy **BE.15** requires that all new buildings and extensions should be designed and oriented to ensure that adjoining property retains adequate daylight, sunlight and privacy, and be protected from visual intrusion, noise and disturbance.

Urban Design

Policy **BE.16** explains that development proposals need to respond and reinforce the local patterns of development and landscape, distinguish between private and public areas, and create attractive, distinctive, adaptable, varied, safe and accessible public spaces that provide adequate circulation; and policy **BE.17** explains that, to help towards these objectives, the Council may be prepared to apply planning and highway standards flexibly.

Gardens

Under policy **BE.24** the Council seeks to protect rear gardens and other open space which contribute to the quality of the area, and resist off-street car parking in forecourts and gardens where it would result in the loss of trees of amenity value, significant front boundary walls or the greater part of the existing front garden space, or where it would adversely affect the local amenities. A significant number of the front gardens in the Conservation Area have been largely given over to car parking, and many original front garden walls have been lost; the Assessment identifies their location and recommends that Article 4 Directions be used in some areas to strengthen the Council's ability to resist such changes.

High Buildings

Under policies **BE.19** and **BE.21**, the Council will normally resist proposals for high buildings and structures which have an impact on such sensitive locations as conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, listed buildings, and important local views, panoramas and prospects..

Design of Development

Policy **BE.22** explains that applications for new development will need to include design statements showing how the proposals have been designed to a high standard that complements or enhances the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding buildings, and respects their siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height, materials and massing, as well as being safe, and secure against crime. And policy **BE.23** requires alterations and extensions to respect or complement the design and detailing of the original building, be sympathetic to its form, scale, bulk, proportions and its external materials, respect its special relationship to adjoining buildings, and complement the character and appearance of the wider setting. Also, policy **BE.24** requires roof extensions and dormer windows to be compatible with the existing roofs in size, design and materials.

Advertising

Under policy **BE.29** the Council considers making orders for Areas of Special Control of advertising panels and displays where a stricter degree of advertisement control is considered essential to the preservation of the special character and appearance of an area, such as conservation areas. Under policy **BE.28** they would not normally be permitted in the West Wimbledon CA, which does not appear to suffer from inappropriate advertising.

Shop Fronts

Under policy **BE.30** shop fronts that contribute to the local character should be retained and features of historic value preserved or reinstated, solid security shutters resisted, and separate upper floor access to be retained or restored. Policy **BE.31** requires the design of new shop fronts should be related to the scale and character of the building and enhance the street scene, and under policy **BE.32** advertising on shop fascias should enhance the street scene, approval not normally being given for internally illuminated signs in conservation areas. (See also policies **TC.12** and **TC.13**.)

Street Furniture and Materials

Under policy **BE.33** the Council will endeavour to ensure that the street environment, including street furniture, is designed to a high standard and is appropriate to the character of the Conservation Area and of any nearby listed buildings. Also, when implanting environmental improvements the Council will endeavour to retain and re-use traditional materials, provide more trees and install more appropriate street furniture.

One of the sources of information used in this Assessment is the Areas Character Survey of eight parts of the Conservation Area produced by the Wimbledon Society, which identify such features as street lights, street name plates, traffic signs and paving surfaces where the Society regard them as inappropriate. The Society might be asked to complete its survey of these features and to recommend appropriate replacements as a guide to future road improvements.

Telecommunications (policies BE.49 and 50)

Under policies **BE.34, 35, 36 and 37**, the Council will consider the impact of telecommunications development and apparatus on environmentally sensitive buildings and areas.

Leisure and Recreation

Open Land

Urban Green Space is defined as *open space to which public access is restricted or not formally established but which meets or is capable of meeting recreational or non-recreational needs within an urban area*. It not only includes areas of over 0.4 hectares (1 acre) listed in Schedule 2 of the UDP, such as Wimbledon Common, Cannizaro Park, the Royal Wimbledon Golf Club, Wimbledon Park Golf Course, Wimbledon College, and Cannizaro Park allotments, but also smaller areas not included in the Schedule. Under policy **L.5** development will only be permitted on such spaces not only where the land has no significant recreational, nature conservation, social, cultural or educational function or potential, but also where it has no significant historical, structural or amenity value, and provision can be made for equivalent open space in the same locality.

The loss of any public or recreational open space will not normally be permitted under policies **L.6** and **L.7**, and under policy **L.10** the Council will not normally grant permission for development that would result in the loss of allotments, such as those to the north-west of Cannizaro Park, unless they are surplus to requirements and their development would lead to community benefits.

Arts Culture and Entertainment Facilities

Wimbledon is an important cultural centre and some of the smaller cultural facilities, such as church halls, schools and historic buildings, are located within the West Wimbledon Conservation Area. Under policies **L.13** and **L.15**, the Council will encourage provision of cultural facilities and resist normally development that would result in their loss.

Community and Religious Meeting Places

The Conservation Area and its immediate environs contain church buildings which make a significant contribution to the local townscape. Under policy **L.14**, the Council will favourably consider applications for community and religious meeting places.

Public Houses

The Conservation Area also contains a couple of public houses which form communal focal points, and under policy **L.16** the Council will not normally permit their redevelopment.

Town Centres and Shopping

Development Outside Town and Local Centres

Policies **TC.2** and **TC.10** state that large developments for retail, leisure, entertainment, office or other town centre uses will normally be permitted outside the town centres of Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden, or within local centres, only if there are no suitable sites within or adjoining these centres.

Neighbourhood Parades

The row of shops forming 65 to 87 Ridgway is classified as a neighbourhood parade, and under policy **S.4** permission for uses outside Class A.1 will normally be permitted. Details of the present uses of these shops are given in Sub Area 15. Environmental improvements to neighbourhood parades, such as landscaping, tree planting, seating and other street furniture is sought through development proposals under policy **S.7**. Such proposals for this part of the Conservation Area might be included in any survey carried out by the Wimbledon Society. The Council will normally permit a range of uses and changes of use in the floors above shops, and support proposals to bring upper floors back into use, as explained in policies **TC.12** and **TC.13**. Policy **S.6** may permit new or extensions to small-scale retail development, such as the replacement of an existing shop, and policy **S.8** imposes strict limitations on the development on A3 food and drink uses.

Transport (policies PT.1 and 4)

As explained under part 1.1 of this Assessment, West Wimbledon suffers from considerable congestion from private cars, and it suggests ways should be investigated to reduce this problem. One way would be to improve public transport through the area, to reduce the need for transport by car. Although the Conservation Area is conveniently close to Wimbledon Town Centre, with its rail, underground, Tramlink and bus connections, the walking distance from the westernmost part of the CA is about 30 minutes. The only other public transport is the bus routes around the Conservation Area through Wimbledon Village to the west and along Worple Road to the south, and the 100 bus route along the Ridgway as far as Atkinson Morley Hospital. There is no bus route through the area which links Wimbledon Village with other centres further west. Under policy **PT.1** the Council is committed to pressing for improved public transport, including adequate accessibility,

The Road Network and Traffic Restraint

The Ridgway is the only Local Distributor Road in the Conservation Area, the others being Local Access Roads and since the Council is committed to supporting modifications that achieve local environmental and safety benefits under policy **RN.2**, part 1.1 of the Assessment suggests that various improvements to the road network might be introduced to reduce traffic flow and congestion through the Local Access Roads.

Walking and Cycling

The Conservation Area contains a significant proportion of educational buildings and facilities, and policy **WC.2** explains that the Council intends to implement a programme of safer routes to schools to reduce car journeys, reduce accidents and encourage walking. According to policy **WC.3**, new developments such as schools or housing will need to provide facilities or cycle parking.

The Conservation Area contains two cycle routes, one along Southside Common and the other along The Grange and Ridgway Place, and under policy **WC.5** the Council intends to continue its contribution to the London Cycling Network.

Parking

Some residents' parking spaces in Wimbledon are already subject to metered controlled parking zones and controls are being extended to Wimbledon Village. Further extensions should form part of the suggested traffic survey of the Conservation Area. Policies **PK.2**, **PK.3** and **PK.4** provide controls related to new development.

Land Use/Transport Integration

The UDP explains that the Council will consider the impact of new development on the environment and the transport infrastructure under policies **LU.3** and **LU.1**, its accessibility to public transport under policy **LU.2**, and the way in which it improves conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport uses under policy **LU.4**.

Schedules 2, 3, 5 and 5

The UDP includes schedules of sites designated for various purposes. The following, most of which are also referred to elsewhere, relate only to those within or immediately adjoining West Wimbledon Conservation Area.

Schedule 2: Open Spaces

Metropolitan Open Land: Wimbledon Common (333.2 h.)

Public Open Space (over 0.4 h.): Cannizaro Park, Westside Common (13.95 h.)

Urban Green Space (Over and above 0.4 h.): Royal Wimbledon Golf Club Wimbledon Common (60.70 h.); Wimbledon Common (165 h., excluding Royal Wimbledon Golf Club)

Educational Open Space: Wimbledon College, Edge Hill SW19 (4.29 h.)

Allotments: Cannizaro Park, Westside Common, SW19 (0.76 h.)

Schedule 3, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings

Conservation Areas: Details of adjoining conservation areas are given on para. 1,2, Context.

Historic Parks and Gardens: Cannizaro Park

Listed Buildings: Details of listed buildings in the CA are given in the relevant Sub Areas.

Schedule 4, Other Sites

Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation: Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath

Sites of Borough (Grade 1) Importance for Nature Conservation: Cannizaro Park, Royal Wimbledon Golf Course south

Schedule 5, Archaeological Priority Zones and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Archaeological Priority Zones: Wimbledon Common, Wimbledon Village

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Caesar's Camp, Wimbledon Common