Parkfields
Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy
# Parkfields Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy

## CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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## MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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1 Introduction

1.1 This document identifies and appraises the special architectural and historic characteristics of the Parkfields Conservation Area and it also gives practical guidance on the implications of conservation area status. It is in two parts: a Conservation Area Appraisal and a Management Strategy.

1.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal provides factual information regarding the Conservation Area. The Management Strategy gives specific planning guidance and enhancement proposals. Conservation areas are areas of "special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" (1) and were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Parkfields Conservation Area was designated on 1st August 1969.

1.3 A conservation area appraisal aims to define the qualities that make the area special. This involves understanding the history and development of the place and analysing its current appearance and character. An appraisal is not a complete audit of every building or feature, but rather aims to give an overall flavour of the area. It provides something against which the effects of change can be assessed and the future of the area managed. It also identifies problems that detract from the character of the area and potential threats to the quality of its appearance.

1.4 This appraisal has been produced in accordance with government guidelines in PPG 15 (2), and the English Heritage Guidance notes of August 2005. These state that local planning authorities need to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their care. The intention of this document is to provide clearly defined analysis of the character and appearance of the Parkfields Conservation Area that can be used when making decisions about applications for planning permission and support the Council’s case on appeal. In addition, the Management Strategy addresses issues, which have been identified in the character appraisal, for the enhancement and preservation of the conservation area.

1.5 This document was made available for public consultation in October 2007 and was approved by the Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 February 2008 and the Executive on 3 March 2008.

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1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 s.69
2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (DOE 1994)
2 Location and Setting

2.1 Parkfields Conservation Area is situated in the district of Putney, which is in the west of the Borough of Wandsworth, lying approximately 2 miles west of Putney town centre. The Conservation Area is either side of the Upper Richmond Road, the main road leading from central Wandsworth to Richmond and is surrounded by Victorian and Edwardian suburban houses.
3 The Character of the Conservation Area

3.1 The conservation area consists of two main areas, Parkfields and the cottages and commercial premises on Upper Richmond Road, and the so-called Nelson Houses along the north side of Upper Richmond Road. The two areas actually have little common history or character, apart from a very superficial coincidence of date and rough similarity of building type. The conservation area is therefore divided into two sub areas: Sub Area 1: Parkfields Cottages and; Sub Area 2: The Nelson Houses.

Map 2 The boundary of Parkfields Conservation Area. Parkfields is to the left and the Nelson Houses are at the top.
4 Sub Area 1: Parkfields Cottages

Summary of Special Interest

4.1 Parkfields is different to the surrounding suburban Putney. This narrow lane, lined by pairs of small cottages is an intimate, quiet backwater in stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of the traffic on Upper Richmond Road. A cluster of small cottages and shops frame the entrance to Parkfields from the Upper Richmond Road. Within Parkfields there is a strong sense of enclosure reinforced by the generous planting in what remains of the cottage’s tiny front gardens. That sense of enclosure is punctuated by the small but significant breaks in development allowing views to the rear and to the flanks of some of the cottages.

4.2 There is a unity to the appearance of the cottages in both design and materials. Most have been extended with two storey side wings, some more successfully than others but generally the extensions have eroded the spatial quality of the original semi-detached pairs of cottages. There is little evidence of the original front boundary walls and most have now been replaced with a variety of either inappropriate or poor quality boundary treatments that have tended to detract from the unified appearance of the cottages.
Historic Development and Archaeology

4.3 Those parts of the common fields of Putney that flanked the Upper Richmond Road retained their medieval strips the longest. Their proximity to the town, the river, and later the railway, as well as their better soil conditions (well drained gravels), made them valuable for market gardening, dairying and nurseries, as well as building. They were held in smaller plots than earlier enclosed areas of the fields. Piecemeal development of individual plots along the highway, and of small strips just off the highway, was therefore easier and earlier in this area than in most of West Putney.

4.4 By the early C19, there were modest villas and groups of cottages at intervals all along Upper Richmond Road. The terraces (Milan Place and Alfred Place) at the north end of Parkfields may be the oldest buildings in the conservation area. Although parts have been rebuilt, their origin is c.1830 with later alterations and additions. They, together with Parkfields itself, were built, or rebuilt, by Henry Scarth (1807-1871), a local solicitor, property owner and developer. The west side of Parkfields was built by 1850, the east side between 1850 and 1865.

4.5 This was one of the earliest integrated developments in Putney, but still on a small scale. Because of the limited land available Parkfields was laid out on a single strip enclosed from the open field. This accounts for the form of the street, the narrowness of the road, and the limited front garden areas. The narrowing of the entrance to Upper Richmond Road, and the slight change in direction, are also features that result from the old field layout, and the earlier development of the cottages along Upper Richmond Road. The land slopes gently to the north.

4.6 The origin of the area is further reflected in the survival along the west side of the conservation area of the narrow nursery strip, preserving both the form and something of the use of the area before development.

4.7 Parkfields is residential throughout. Mixed commercial and domestic properties front Upper Richmond Road with, in addition, the Arab Boy public house and the office building for the Atlas Works builders’ yard to the rear.
Building and Materials

4.8 There are two main groups of buildings in this sub-area: Upper Richmond Road and Parkfields itself.

Upper Richmond Road

4.9 This group of buildings are short early/mid-C19 cottage rows, stock brick and slate with timber joinery, of two stories with hipped roofs, and with inserted shopfronts - the late-C19 examples of some quality, the C20 inserts less so. The two larger buildings in the terrace are contemporary with the cottages and good quality examples of their type. Their use and form is integral to the history of the area (the Arab Boy was built by Scarth for the area, the firm of S.W. Aries of the Atlas Works probably built the whole development).

4.10 Alfred Cottages (to the west of Parkfields) has small brick walls enclosing front gardens. These rows are simple main-roadside terraces in character, but requiring enhanced boundary treatment to the main road and footpath.

Parkfields

4.11 Parkfields itself is a narrow lane developed with semi-detached cottage pairs. It retains the small scale and style of Regency cottage developments rather than the large suburban villa character of most of the surrounding area. The cottages are two stories high with variety of elevational detail such as plinths, projecting pilaster quoins, recessed panels. All have boxed eaves to hipped roofs with central stacks; two window width, with glazing bar sashes throughout in variety of recessed arched surrounds, gauged headed surrounds or moulded surrounds.

4.12 Entrances in side elevations, most of which are now contained in 20th century extensions, usually with integral garages, and not generally in sympathy with the character of the buildings. Exceptions to this standard pattern are no.24, which has an early, possibly contemporary corner shop, with timber shopfront (now in domestic use);
nos.10/12, which have been rendered, probably from an early date; nos.1/3, which is a gabled pair; and nos.2/4 and 6/8, which are taller, larger and rendered, with some Arts and Crafts overlay on no.4.

4.13 Materials used are stock brick with slate roofs. The narrow, enclosed entrances at both ends of the street and the very much narrower road width mark this area out from its surroundings, with a greater sense of enclosure. Cottages are arranged in pairs and almost all have now been extended with two storey side wings, which have in-filled the gaps between pairs and reduced their detached appearance, spaciousness and created a terraced effect. There are still some breaks between cottages and these are now all the more precious. The most notable of these are at nos. 3, 16 and 17.

4.14 There is a variety of boundary treatments, with some timber fencing, some hedging, some inappropriate metal railings. The original treatment appears to have been low brick walls with flat stone capping, and with large piers (in stone in some cases), with higher brick party walls.

Locally Listed Buildings

4.15 Numbers 1-23 and 2-24 Parkfields; number 289 Upper Richmond Road (Arab Boy Public House); and 299-305 (odd) and 409-413 (odd) Upper Richmond Road are on the Council’s Local List. This is a local designation used for buildings that are of particular interest in the borough.

Spatial Analysis

4.16 The narrow, enclosed entrances at both ends of the street and the very much narrower road width mark this area out from its surroundings, with a greater sense of enclosure. The street narrows and changes direction just before meeting the Upper Richmond Road. Here, the high side walls and fine set of outbuildings to Gerholds (no.279) are critically important to closing the vista looking north.

4.17 The spatial arrangement of the cottages has been significantly changed form their original design. Originally arranged in pairs, the cottages have mostly been extended to the sides. This has had the effect of giving a sense of enclosure and dense development that was not Scarth’s intention. The breaks between cottages where they survive (nos. 3, 16 and 17) are now all the more precious.

4.18 Because of the contemporary Atlas Building works (in the adjoining West Putney Conservation Area), there are important views of the rears of the Upper Richmond Road and the east side of Parkfields, so that the surviving rear wings and outbuildings, many of them original, have a significant impact on the appearance of the area.
Public Realm and Green Elements

4.19 The shop forecourts on the Upper Richmond Road are generally poorly enclosed from the main road frontage, but some good tiled surfaces survive. There is also a good granite sett surfaced entrance drive to the Atlas Building works site to the rear of Milan Place.

4.20 In Parkfields the front gardens are very small, all hard surfaced but with much shrubbery and even small/medium-sized trees, which provide a welcome foil to the expanses of brick. The rear gardens are somewhat larger with mature trees set within high brick walls. There are no street trees.

4.21 The street has been the subject of a late-20th century integrated highways engineering programme, with grey herringbone paviour roadway, granite sett gutters, granite kerbstones, red brick pavements and granite set crossovers; the latter have been designed as double width entrances, despite the fact that they are bisected by the party walls between properties. Low reproduction Victorian style streetlamps have been installed. Parking on the street is restricted and all properties have off street parking.

Picture 3 Parkfield's public realm
Negative Elements

4.22 Some cottages have over dominant side extensions, which obscure the original shape and plan form of the original buildings. There is also some evidence of inappropriate, unsympathetic alterations to the style and pattern of original timber sash windows. Painting and rendering of original brickwork, although not much in evidence remains a threat to the harmonious appearance of the area. Simple low brick walls marked original front boundaries but many have now been replaced with arbitrary designs. Metal railings are particularly inappropriate.

4.23 The narrow footways and carriageways have been treated with brick paviour blocks. The footways in red brick with crossovers in granite setts are reasonably successful but the grey herringbone blocks to the carriageway are less so and could be an opportunity for enhancement.
5 Sub Area 2: The Nelson Houses

Summary of Special Interest

5.1 This group of elegant, well-proportioned villas provide a noticeable contrast to the surrounding buildings along Upper Richmond Road. There is a superficial resemblance between all the houses: all are of two storeys, stock or possibly Gault brick; in a late Regency domestic classical style; with typical shallow pitched hipped roofs. There is a degree of formality about their general arrangement that provides a unified and cohesive character.

Historic Development and Archaeology

5.2 Those parts of the common fields of Putney that flanked the Upper Richmond Road retained their medieval strips the longest. Their proximity to the town, the river, and later the railway, as well as their better soil conditions (well drained gravels), made them valuable for market gardening, dairying and nurseries, as well as building. They were held in smaller plots than earlier enclosed areas of the fields. Piecemeal development of individual plots along the highway, and of small strips just off the
highway, was therefore easier and earlier in this area than in most of West Putney. By the early C19, there were modest villas and groups of cottages at intervals all along Upper Richmond Road.

5.3 The buildings in this sub-area derive their name from the family connections of the Pettiward family (the developers) with the Earls Nelson. There is no connection with Nelson of Trafalgar. At least three landowners were involved with development. The oldest building is no.232, built by 1849, and appears to predate the building of the railway (c.1845). The rest of the row (some at the west end have been redeveloped) developed between 1859-1870.

5.4 The originally slow development of these plots was accelerated by the railway cutting off these roadside plots from the rest of the field system. Today, the buildings have a mixed domestic and professional uses such as doctors' and dentists' surgeries.

Picture 5 A similar Nelson House as seen today
Building and Materials

5.5 The buildings are all detached or semi-detached villas. All are of stock or Gault brick, and although some have been painted or rendered in the past, this should be resisted in the future. All have or had natural slate roof. All are two stories with plinths, plat bands, overhanging bracket eaves to hipped roofs, stacks either central or symmetrical to left and to right.

5.6 They are in a late Regency domestic classical style, with moulded door and window surrounds, glazing bar sashes, and tri-partite glazing bar sashes and French doors to ground floor. All have side or rear extensions, usually set back from the frontage, with hipped roofs and similar but simpler details to the main blocks.

5.7 The Nelson Houses proper are at the west end of the row, much more box-like with somewhat more constricted forecourts, less tree growth and similar detailing, with blind boxes and canopied verandas.

5.8 Front boundaries are in a variety of materials and treatment, reflecting in part the different origins of the buildings. Uniformity should be avoided, but related groups of properties should be recognised. Thus brick walls with piers predominate at the east end of the row, while most of the row originally had timber panel fencing, timber intermediate posts, timber gates, and large brick piers terminating the party walls. Some timber fencing with hedges survive, but there has been a variety of 20th century rebuilding, little of it consistent or of quality, including rendered walls, high brick walls and metal railings, the last of which is particularly inappropriate.

Locally Listed Buildings

5.9 Numbers 328-354 (even) Upper Richmond Road are on the Council’s Local List, these buildings are of architectural or historic interest to the borough as a whole.

Spatial Analysis

5.10 To the west of the town centre, the Nelson Houses sit on a curve on the north side of the Upper Richmond Road. At this point there is a more spacious feel to the street as the buildings are lower and set well back from the road. Generous front gardens support substantial trees and shrub planting which provide an attractive green edge to this part of the busy Upper Richmond Road.

Public Realm and Green Elements

5.11 The properties are set in large grounds with large front forecourts. Most are used for car parking in some way, but all retain some planting, with many large trees, both native deciduous and garden exotics. The inappropriate complete clearance of front gardens, or creation of hard standing has so far been limited. Although most of
the properties have substantial rear gardens, there is limited impact on the street scene of any large trees to the rear, because of the tendency for extensions to the buildings to have taken up the entire width of the plots. The plots at the east end are much smaller; nos.228/230 and 232 virtually abut the railway.

**Negative Elements**

5.12 There has been pressure in conversion for parking space in the forecourts and for often large extensions to the villas, which have in some cases competed with the main buildings. There are also some examples of poor quality or inappropriate boundary treatments.

![Picture 6 A Nelson House with a beautiful Cedar tree in the front garden](image-url)
1 MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

1.1 This Management Strategy is not only about what the Council can do to use its planning powers to help preserve the special character of your conservation area. It is also concerned with what you, as residents or business people can do to help to keep the conservation area looking good and make it an even more attractive place.

1.2 The Management Plan together with a Conservation Area Appraisal has been produced in accordance with government guidelines that require local planning authorities to define and record the special interest of all conservation areas and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

1.3 The Council does not wish to stop all development, but to manage change in a sensitive way, to ensure that those qualities that warranted designation are sustained and reinforced rather than eroded.

2 Summary of Issues

2.1 The appraisal has raised a number of issues that threaten the character of the Parkfields Conservation Area. This document aims to address these issues by aiding the understanding of the important features of the conservation area through the information given in the character appraisal. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the Council must consider the preservation or enhancement of a conservation area's special architectural or historic interest when determining planning applications.

- Side extensions
- Alterations to roofs
- Rendering and painting brick elevations
- Alterations or removal of original sash windows
- Trees

3 Enhancement

Repair or reinstate original features

3.1 Whenever possible repair or reinstate original features such as timber windows and doors rather than replace them in modern designs or materials. It is possible to replace rotten components, draught-proof or install secondary glazing at a fraction of the price of replacing original windows. Repair work does not require planning permission.
Removing paint and render from brickwork

3.2 Where individual dwellings have been visually emphasised by having their brickwork painted or rendered or other inappropriate treatments, the result has been seriously damaging to the appearance of the whole street. Removing these elements and restoring the original brickwork improves the uniformity and appearance of the conservation area enormously.

Grants and Advice

3.3 The Council offers grant assistance to help with the cost of certain enhancement work, particularly restoration of lost features. The council can also offer advice and give details of specialist contractors. Painted brickwork can now easily be cleaned and even render and pebbledash can be removed.

3.4 Information on Conservation and Enhancement Grants can be found at:
http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/514/building_conservation_and_design/230/conservation_and_enhancement_grants

4 Supplementary Guidance

Council Guidance

4.1 The following supplementary planning guidance has been produced by the council and is available on the website www.wandsworth.gov.uk or on request.

- Do it in Style – a guide to the care, repair and adaptation of your home.
- Making More of your Loft – design guidance on converting your loft
- What is a Conservation Area? – information on Conservation Areas in general
- Tree Strategy for the Borough – the action plan for trees in the borough
- Shop front design guide – design guidance on shopfronts

Government Guidance

4.2 This has been published by central government and is available on the planning portal www.planningportal.gov.uk or on request from the council.

- Planning A Guide for Householders -What you need to know about the planning system; a guide to permitted development rights.
- A Householder’s Planning Guide -installation of antennas and satellite dishes

Further reading

Period House: How to Repair & Restore Your Home (English Heritage & Collins) 2005
5 What will I need Planning Permission for?

5.1 Additional planning controls exist within conservation areas and this section explains what works will require consent. Most ‘material alterations’ to buildings that are not houses require planning permission. Some works to houses will require permission from the Council. For further information on these or any other planning matter please contact us using the contact details given at the end of this document.

Works to maisonettes, flat blocks and houses converted to flats:

5.2 These buildings do not benefit from permitted development rights and therefore most external alterations will require planning permission, including:

- Changing windows and front doors
- Reroofing and altering chimneys
- Cladding or rendering external walls
- Laying out a hard surface in the front garden
- Altering boundary treatments

Works to houses that require planning permission in the conservation area:

5.3 This list is intended as a guide and is not exhaustive. Works not mentioned here may nonetheless require planning permission and you are therefore advised to check with the planning service at an early stage to avoid delays to your project or even enforcement action.

5.4 You may also apply to the Council for a Certificate of Lawful Development which will confirm that planning permission is not required.

5.5 The following works require planning permission:

- Any roof extension
- Any side extension
- Any extension to the front of a house
- All rear extensions over one storey and beyond the rear wall of the original house
- Cladding a house in stone, artificial stone, pebbledash, render, timber, plastic or tiles
- Installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue, soil or vent pipe to an elevation fronting a highway or to a side elevation
- Installation, alteration or replacement of an antennae or satellite dish on a part of the house that is visible from a highway
- Garden buildings, enclosures or pools built in the front garden or within 2 metres of a boundary or over 2.5 metres high or takes up over 50% of the curtilage
- Hard surfaces in front gardens, unless they are less than 5 cubic metres or are porous or water runs off into a porous area
• Boundary treatments (fence, wall, railings, etc) over 1 metre adjacent to a highway or 2 metre elsewhere.
• Air source heat pumps
• Wind turbines

**Works to commercial buildings**

5.6 Buildings that are not houses do not benefit from householder permitted development rights. This means that most external alterations will require planning permission. As an example, some common alterations requiring planning permission are given below:

• Any alteration or extension to a building including roof extensions and windows, where a material alteration is involved.
• All changes to shopfronts require planning permission. This includes any external security shutters.
• Advertisements to shopfronts may require planning permission depending on size. All illuminated advertisements will require consent.

**Conservation area consent is required to:**

• Demolish a building or substantial part of a building in a conservation area as well as to demolish boundary treatment (eg fence, wall, railings, etc) that is over 1m adjacent to a highway or over 2m elsewhere.

**Works to trees**

• All trees in conservation areas are protected and the Council must be notified of any works, including pruning and felling.
• The notification procedure applies to trees which are subject to tree preservation orders.

Further information can be found at

[www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

or contact Wandsworth's Planning Service on 020 8871 6636

or the Conservation & Design Group on 020 8871 6646 or 6612
6 How do I apply for permission?

6.1 This is a brief guide to applying for planning permission. Planning officers are available to answer simple queries between 9.00 - 5.00 at the One-Stop counter on the 5th floor of the Town Hall Annexe on Wandsworth High Street.

Application forms

6.2 All application forms are available on the webpage given below or on request from the planning service (see Contacts at the end).

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/EnvironmentandTransport/PlanningService/Planningapplications/plappforms.htm

Making your application

6.3 For all but the simplest alterations, you are advised to appoint a qualified architect with experience and understanding of conservation issues.

6.4 To apply for planning permission you must the correct application form (often the householder application form alone) and submit scale drawings showing the existing and the proposed. Each application form gives guidance on what basic plans are required. For applications to replace doors or windows, it is possible to include a photograph to show the existing, but the drawing for the proposed must be to scale of 1:50. It must show how the window will open and close this is best shown in a cross section.

6.5 All applications for works in conservation areas should be accompanied by a Design & Access Statement which should set out the process by which your development or alterations have been designed and how they conserve the special interest of your property and the area. Guidance is available on our website.

Planning policy

6.6 All applications are determined in accordance with Council policy as set out in our Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). The character appraisal and guidance given in this document will also be taken into consideration when determining applications. The overarching policy set by the Government is that development or alterations should preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area. The UDP and LDF are available on our website:

6.7 www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/EnvironmentandTransport/PlanningService/DevelopmentPlan/default.htm
Pre-application advice

6.8 We welcome and encourage discussions before you submit your application. Simple enquiries can be dealt with by telephone or at the One Stop counter, but it is likely that to discuss extensions and significant changes to a property, officers will need to see photographs and sketches. A pre-application meeting may be granted following the receipt of photographs and sketches if the matter cannot be adequately dealt with over the telephone.

How long does it take?

6.9 It takes eight weeks to process most planning applications. If the correct information is not provided the application cannot be validated and your agent or you, the applicant, will be notified of this within 10 days. The 8 week period only starts when the application has been validated.

6.10 When the application is received it is allocated to a planning officer who will be your case officer and main contact. You, the applicant, or your agent can contact your case officer at anytime. If you have an agent, correspondence will be automatically conducted with the agent unless otherwise requested. The case officer will be responsible for consultation on the application which includes consulting neighbours and liaising with the Conservation and Design Group.

Building control

6.11 Approval under the Building Regulations is a separate requirement and you should check with Building Control if this is required before carrying out your works. See Contacts at the end.
7 Contact List

Wandsworth Council
Technical Services Department
Town Hall Extension
Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU

Development Control (020) 8871 6636
Conservation and Design (020) 8871 6612 or 6646
Enforcement (020) 8871 8418
Building Regulations (020) 8871 7620
Website: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning
Email: boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk
This document was approved by the council’s executive on 3 March 2008. Further copies are available from: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning/conservation