

of a Building Preservation Notice in 1974, after demolition had begun. The houses which had already been demolished (Numbers 54, 56 and 58) have since been rebuilt, and the whole terrace refurbished.

The passionate concern felt by many for these simple dignified Victorian houses would have seemed inconceivable twenty years earlier and graphically illustrates the great change among informed public opinion since the brave new world of the 1960's.

THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM AND ST. WILFRIDS CONVENT

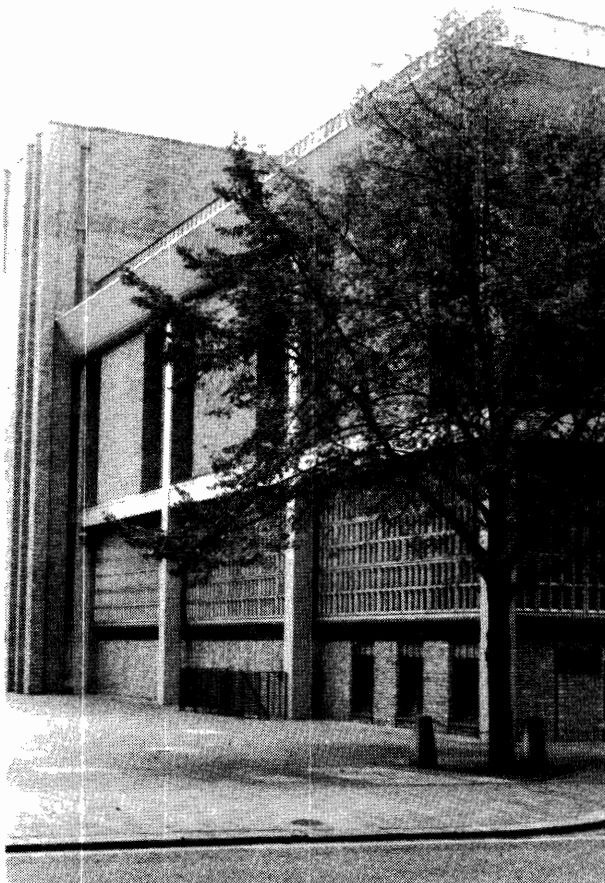
The National Army Museum's distinctive building was designed in the 1960's by Lord Holford and stands on the site of the bombed Royal Hospital Infirmary. The later extension was designed by Carl Fisher and Partners. Immediately to the west is the Convent of St. Wilfrid incorporating accommodation for the nuns of the Daughters of the Cross and old people's flats.

For one hundred years, this order of nuns had been established at Cale Street until, in 1968, the Ministry of Health required their site for a post-graduate medical

centre. The congregation of nuns was offered a site on the corner of Tite Street and Royal Hospital Road where the Victoria Hospital for Children was situated incorporating the remains of Gough House. Planning permission was refused for the proposed convent as housing was the preferred option for the site, and the Council wished to know the Ministry's proposals for Cale Street. At the subsequent public inquiry David Widdicombe, Q.C. counsel for the nuns commented that his clients were caught in a "nutcracker" created by the dispute between the Royal Borough and the Ministry.

By 1978 the problems had been resolved so that the present building for nuns and old people was built, and subsequently opened by Cardinal Hume. Designed by W.J. Gregory and Partners, some consider that the convent is a rather dreary composition clad in dull grey concrete panels, sadly unrelated to the neighbouring Army Museum. Taken together these buildings represent the apparent difficulty which our own time finds in designing harmonious urban architecture.

The future history of the Royal Hospital Area will depend on careful conservation of buildings and places and the sensitive introduction of new buildings as welcome neighbours to an established scene.



National Army Museum



St. Wilfrid's Convent



Chelsea Pensioners with the Royal Hospital main building behind



TOWNSCAPE

TOWNSCAPE

Approaching the conservation area from either the King's Road or the Chelsea Embankment, the tranquility of this primarily residential area strikes a welcoming note after the continual noise and bustle of the two thoroughfares. Apart from the Royal Hospital itself, the area contains few buildings which are great works of art, yet the terraces are undoubtedly attractive and in most cases the buildings are well maintained and worth conserving for many years to come.

The heart of the conservation area is the Royal Hospital itself which, with its extensive grounds, stretches almost from the King's Road through to the Embankment. The adjoining terraces and streets are generally earlier and more formal than those further to the west and can be considered together: likewise the later terraces which are more domestic in scale can be discussed as one section.

Royal Hospital Road forms a natural divide within the area, the buildings along this road and to the south west being very mixed and more individual in character, and this area includes some of the earlier (for example Swan Walk) and also some of the more modern buildings (for example the National Army Museum). It also contains the Tite Street Studios which both architecturally and historically are probably the most important group of buildings in the area, second only to the Royal Hospital.

INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

The Royal Hospital and The Duke of York's Headquarters

The three storey dark brick blocks which make up the main Royal Hospital building are imposing yet not forbidding; their somewhat austere appearance is mellowed

by the slate roofs with their dormers and by the surrounding, immaculately tended, gardens and courtyards. The building, which is devoid of unnecessary external decoration, has a peaceful and unassuming dignity which is reflected in the quiet and dignified presence of its inhabitants. The grounds stretching down to the Embankment and up to St. Leonard's Terrace offer a feeling of spaciousness which is most welcome in this highly built up area.

Much smaller in composition, but nevertheless impressive in its own right, is the Duke of York's Headquarters which stand sideways on to the King's Road and would have originally looked across to the Royal Avenue. The main block has a sturdy portico of simple design, this simplicity being reflected in the style of the whole building. The courtyard and open space in front of the building are attractive and particularly welcome here, adjoining the King's Road.

FORMAL COMPOSITIONS

Royal Avenue, Wellington Square, Walpole Street, Cheltenham Terrace, St. Leonard's Terrace

The first impression gained of the Royal Avenue, particularly when standing at the King's Road end, is of the width of the avenue itself — an open space which is loose gravelled and lined with two rows of lime trees. Because of the width of the avenue, the flanking terraces do not impose themselves on the central open space and appear almost secondary in composition. The dominance of the avenue itself may be further accentuated not only because the eye is automatically drawn down its length towards Burton's Court and beyond but also due to the lack of unity of the flanking terraces. The west side was laid out first, in blocks from the Royal Hospital northwards, but even the individual blocks now lack the



Royal Avenue – west side

symmetry which was originally intended through, for example, the addition of attic storeys to Numbers 32 and 34 within the terrace of Numbers 26-48 (even). The whole western terrace is stucco to the ground floor and basement with brick above, which lends some unity, but each block also has attractive individual detailing: the stucco balustrade at Numbers 2-8, the stucco pilasters at first and second floors to Numbers 10-24 and the wide arched ground floor windows to Numbers 26-48. The east flank appears more uniform in height and detailing: Numbers 1-15 are post-war replicas. Yet even here individual features appear, such as the addition of porticos to Numbers 39-43.

Wellington Square, a step away from the bustle of the King's Road, was laid out as, and still appears as, a single composition. The terraces form three sides of a rectangle, the fourth side being open to the King's Road. From the King's Road the view is predominantly of the central enclosed garden area, the terraces being set back to maximise the privacy of the residents. In contrast with the simplicity of many of the surrounding terraces, there is considerable ornament on these buildings. The vertical line to these four-storeyed stucco fronted buildings is balanced by the horizontal detailing which includes a triglyph and metope frieze at third floor level and main and secondary cornices.

St. Leonard's Terrace is undoubtedly one of the principal delights of the conservation area. Numbers 1-6 and 7-13 are two separate three and four storey blocks: the first one has lost its original symmetry through alteration, but the second all-stucco block is well maintained and deserves its location overlooking Burton's Court. The absence of formality to the older brick built houses (Numbers 19-32) contrasts well with the later blocks and surrounding terraces. The front gardens to these houses are particularly attractive although it is a pity that there is not greater conformity to the pattern of front garden walls and railings. The gardens afford these houses a greater degree of privacy, although Numbers 14-18 are also fortunate to be set back from the road with a small communal parking area in front.

Despite the newer post-war development at the King's Road end, the terraces of Walpole Street also still appear as a set composition. The central blocks of the four storey terraces are stepped forward, a frequently used technique of the earlier period to emphasise the unity of the terrace and also to break the monotony of the facade. The treatment of the eastern block further emphasises this point, with the entire front of the central block being of stucco in comparison with the stucco and brick fronted blocks on either side. Detailing and decoration is generally in good order throughout the terrace.

Similar to Walpole Street, the materials used in Cheltenham Terrace – stock brick with stucco rusticated ground and basement floors – are those of the Georgian period, as are many of the architectural details. The central panel is emphasised this time by the addition of flat pediments to the first floor casement windows.



Wellington Square



Cheltenham Terrace

There is a sudden jump in scale from the three storey terrace to a small single storey studio. Its stucco fronted facade is dominated by a large arched window and the addition of a dormer with a small round window provides unusual detailing which adds to rather than detracts from the classical composition of the terrace.

LATER TERRACES:

Smith Street, Radnor Walk, Shawfield Street, Flood Street, Redesdale Street, Redburn Street, Christchurch Street, Caversham Street, Tedworth Square, Ormonde Gate

Walking further west along the King's Road, Smith Street marks the divide between the earlier and more formal terraces and the domestic scale of much of the rest of the conservation area. Smith Street, Radnor Walk and Shawfield Street show a gradual reduction in scale of building — Smith Street's terraces are mainly three-four storeys (with the anomaly of Easton Court with its six storeys) compared with two storeys of the original terraces in Shawfield Street.

Most of these streets have undergone substantial changes and the much altered facades of Numbers 6-16 (consecutive) Smith Street are a reminder that change is a continual process, not just a feature of the last few

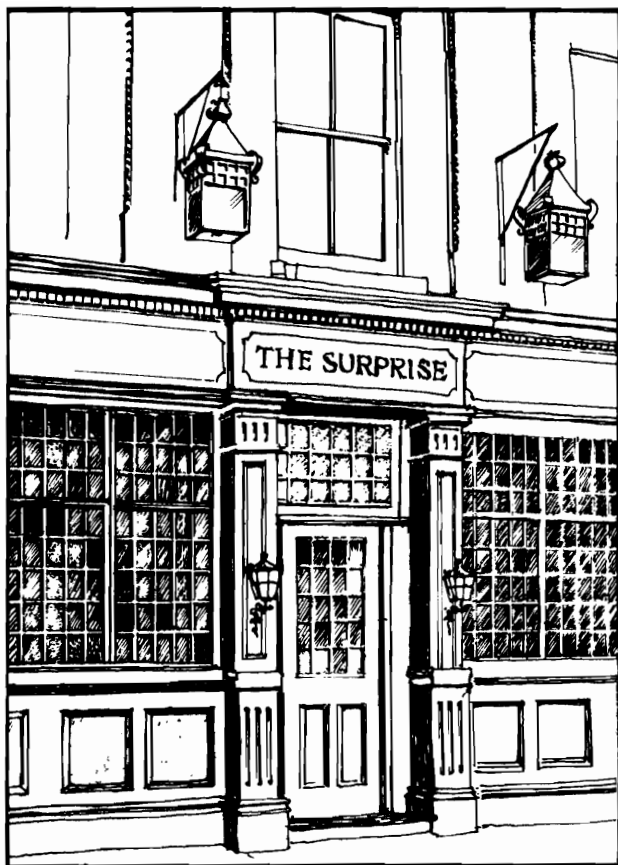
decades. More fundamental changes have been noticeable in both Shawfield Street and Flood Street — the streets now lack cohesion and appear more as small blocks of independent terraces, none of which are long enough to dominate the street scene. The four new developments in Shawfield Street (one design being repeated in Flood Street) all show different attempts at overcoming the problems of incorporating off-street car parking. The railings at Numbers 34-46 (even) are a valiant attempt at continuing a local feature and also serve to reduce the impact of large forecourt areas being used for car parking.

Radnor Walk has undergone a considerable amount of superficial alteration but it retains its unity through a simplicity of scale and overall style. Visual interest is added by the curve to the street, which comes as a welcome break after the straight terraces which prevail in much of the area.

Redesdale and Redburn Streets are similar in style with somewhat unrelieved three-storey terraces, which are brick built with stucco to the basements and ground floor bay windows and doorways. Redburn Street is made slightly more attractive by the addition of a cast iron balcony at first floor level. Visual relief from the repetitive pattern of the terraces of Redesdale Street is achieved by the pub — the Coopers Arms — which stands on the corner with Flood Street. The green painted stall-risers and pilasters to the ground floor, the overflowing window boxes and hanging baskets at ground and first floor and its well-integrated advertising all add a welcome splash of life and colour to this part of the conservation area.



Flood Street and 'The Coopers Arms'



Bounded by Christ Church and the local school at one end and the pub – The Surprise – at the other, Christchurch and Caversham Streets with Christchurch Terrace were planned as and still appear as a small neighbourhood complete in itself. The Christchurch Street terraces are particularly attractive and well maintained, although Numbers 41-59 (odd) appear somewhat austere in comparison with the terrace on the other side of the road which is made more delightful by its small scale and well kept front gardens. The simple unity to the terrace has unfortunately now been spoilt by a number of unsympathetic alterations, especially to the elevations. The ground and first floor side extensions to Number 78 are effective in further enclosing the street, and shielding the view of the backs of the houses in Flood Street.

Caversham Street by comparison appears rather bleak – Number 49 is the only remaining example of the original houses on the south side of the street, the rest were destroyed during the war. The pre-fabs which replaced them have now outlived their useful life, and most of the terraced houses opposite are in a poor state of repair. The modern houses in Christchurch Terrace are conservative in design, whilst those facing them form a modernised, mid-Victorian terrace of the same design as the houses on the south side of Christchurch Street.

A variety of building styles front onto the attractive enclosed gardens of Tedworth Square. There are three distinct architectural styles, the earliest being on the

western side; a well maintained four storey terrace of stucco and brick. The southern and eastern sides have substantial five storey red brick terraced houses dating from the late nineteenth century. Their imposing presence is matched by the mass of the new development on the north side of the Square, which has successfully added visual interest with such local features as flights of steps to the front doors. Car parking facilities are well hidden at the rear but the large arch in Radnor Walk, providing vehicular access, creates a regrettable dead area on this corner. These flats replaced an earlier terrace, comparable in age and partly in style to the terrace on the west side of the Square. A remnant of this formerly impressive terrace has been saved and is linked to the flats near the north eastern side of the Square.

The contrast between the old and the new provides the most recent example in the conservation area of the substantial impact that a major development can have on the character of an area. Despite the lack of architectural unity to the Square and the fact that some of the terraces run on into adjoining streets, the integrity of the Square remains, maintained by the maturity and charm of its well kept central gardens.

The small area between Tedworth Square and Royal Hospital Road is varied in scale and composition. The tree-lined streets leading south from the Square follow a similar building style to the south side of the Square with tall red-brick blocks. This style is again repeated in Ormonde Gate, these blocks having additional stucco ornamentation in honour of their position overlooking Burton's Court. The short brown brick and stucco terrace of Durham Place, which again faces onto Burton's Court, is from a much earlier period but it was completely refaced last century, and has undergone further and detrimental change in recent years. Between these blocks the domestic scale of the 1930s houses, which are reminiscent in style of the Garden City Movement, makes an attractive contrast with their tiled gables and leaded lights, and well stocked front gardens.



Ormonde Gate

INDIVIDUAL STREETS

Royal Hospital Road, Tite Street, Swan Walk

In Royal Hospital Road, the vehicle once more dominates, and the change in scale is felt all the more sharply when emerging from the smaller residential streets either of Swan Walk or Christchurch Street. There is no particular architectural style in this road, nor even a unity to the uses, with a number of small retail, restaurant and commercial uses on its south side. Twentieth century taste clearly appears on the buildings along this road, with the striking white tile clad facade of the house at Number 45, and the modern uncluttered mass of the National Army Museum. Further along, near the junction with the Embankment, the attractive wall of the Physic Garden successfully ensures that continued privacy to the garden and its activities is maintained.

The lofty red and yellow brick buildings of the Tite Street Studios are dominated by their large studio windows. Each building has its own individual and original style and this unusual group stands somewhat aloof from the surrounding turn of the century development, this feeling of isolation being accentuated by the blank wall running along the eastern side of Tite Street enclosing the convent grounds. The street, today, unfortunately has a somewhat desolate air and perhaps lacks the splash of colour and life associated with its original inhabitants.



Tite Street Studios: Nos. 46 & 48

The small street of Swan Walk bounded on one side by the wall of the Physic Garden is unique to the area with its four spacious detached Georgian houses. Apart from Number 2 which is more open to the street, the houses jealously guard their privacy and glimpses of their attractive facades can only be snatched over the tops of walls and fences. Number 2 has a particularly fine stucco front porch with Corinthian columns.



Woodfall Street

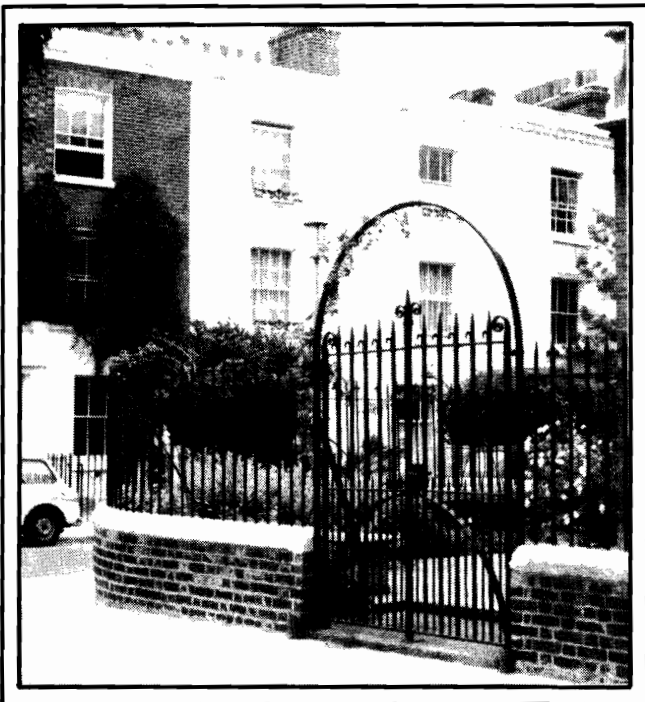
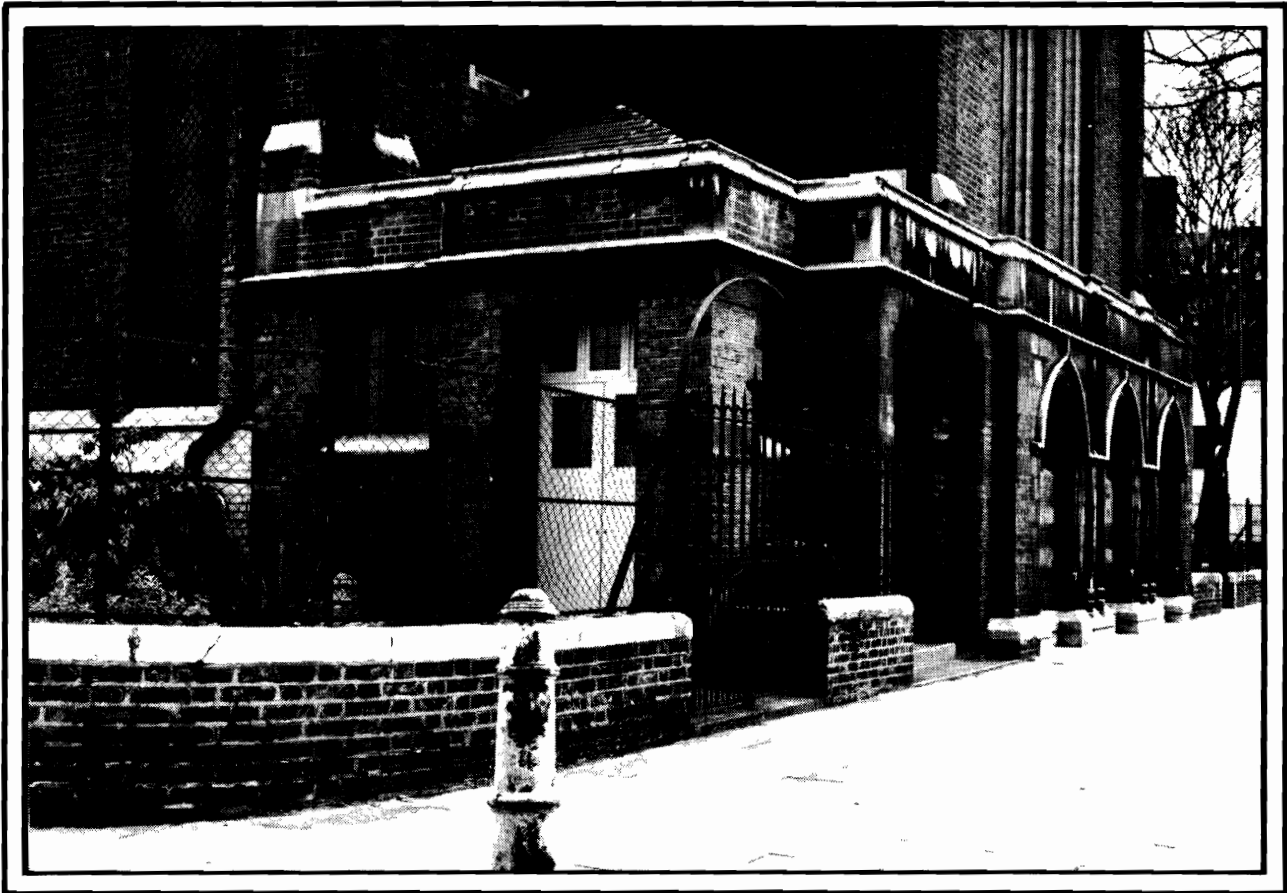
SMALL SCALE STREETS AND MEWS

Smith Terrace, Woodfall Street, Paradise Walk, Clover Mews

Smith Terrace, with its bohemian atmosphere, is one of the more colourful streets in the area. The two-storey houses were originally of simple decoration reflecting their use as workers' cottages but have now undergone a number of alterations – the variety of facades is now almost as plentiful as the range of colours used to paint them. The disused entrance to the warehouse is a reminder of the commercial heritage of this part of the conservation area. In February 1984, permission was granted for the retention of the building's facade to Smith Terrace with redevelopment behind for residential use. This forms part of a larger scheme to provide residential, retail, office, design and photographic use over the whole site, (Number 77 King's Road), but no work has yet been started.

Woodfall Street appears small in scale by virtue of its short length rather than because of the scale of the buildings themselves. The buildings are again colourful but show a range of individual styles, the porch to Numbers 28 and 30 being particularly attractive.

Clover Mews is the only mews still remaining in the conservation area: and has retained its original setts as well as some of the louvre ventilators on the roofs, these features contributing to the period character of this street. The small houses in Paradise Walk have retained their brick facades and leaded fanlights above the front doors, and their attractiveness is enhanced by the painted shutters and colourful window boxes. The centre of the terrace on the east side is surmounted at roof level by a decorative stone urn.



Christ Church railings — Environment Award Scheme winner 1980



STREETSCENE

INTRODUCTION

The townscape chapter concentrated on examining the character of the Royal Hospital area, principally through a study of its buildings. Although of major importance, the buildings are but one element which influence the character of a street or area, which is as much governed by such features as planting and railings, and even small details, including footscrapers and coal hole covers. Most of the comments made in this chapter are of general application to the whole area, although proposals for specific locations are also identified.

TREES AND PLANTING

The area surrounding the Royal Hospital is perhaps more fortunate than many parts of Central London due to its heritage of generous stretches of open space which, even if not open to the general public, create a welcome open aspect.¹ These spaces should be fiercely protected, * especially where they form a buffer between the residential terraces of the conservation area and the surrounding commercial streets: for example the grounds in front of The Duke of York's Headquarters on the King's Road.^{2,3} *

Most of these spaces, for example Ranelagh Gardens and Burton's Court, are characterised by large numbers of mature trees. The smaller pockets of trees within the area's squares, such as in Tedworth and Wellington Squares, also make an attractive contribution to the visual amenity of the streetscene and soften the continuous built up vistas of surrounding streets. Individual trees have also been planted along the lengths of some of the streets, for example in Tite Street (north of Royal Hospital Road) and more recently along part of Christchurch Street. There are therefore few places within the area from which it is not possible to glimpse a view of attractive groupings of mature trees.

There will be a general presumption in favour of the retention of all trees unless they are potentially a public danger. New planting will be encouraged during the next decade so that semi-mature trees will be established when older ones have to be removed.¹ *

All trees in conservation areas are subject to controls requiring notice of any proposals to remove, lop or prune them to be given to the Council. As well as this general provision, many trees which are in a sound condition and add to the general amenity of the streetscene are covered by Tree Preservation Orders: the Council's arboriculturist can give further details. (The correct procedures for works to trees is set out in an appendix). An updating of Tree Preservation Orders (which in some cases date back to 1955) is currently taking place throughout the Borough.

These Orders do not cover street trees since the Council itself owns and maintains them. The presence of underground services and cellars and the abundance of trees on private property have restricted the planting of additional street trees. Recent surveys have, unfortunately, shown that there are no further sites where it would be possible to plant more street trees.

The trees found in back gardens are rarely covered by Tree Preservation Orders, for although they may be very important to the owners of nearby properties, they do not contribute to the appearance of the streetscene, or any areas generally frequented by the public. It is still, however, the responsibility of the property owner or occupier to care for them, and (within the conservation area) notice must still be given to the Council of any work proposed. The Council is very conscious of their importance and that of other planting in back gardens. When controlling development, garden spaces and trees are a major factor in decision making.

1. DP 7.3.7.
2. DP 7.3.10.
3. DP 4.4.5.

1. DP 4.14.2.



Burton's Court — looking towards St. Leonard's Terrace

In addition, the attractive leafy front gardens which are so characteristic of some of the streets, in particular St. Leonard's Terrace and Christchurch Street, contribute significantly to the streetscene. The health and maintenance of planting of all kinds of course determines whether it contributes to or detracts from the immediate environment. Overgrown front gardens conceal even the finest building condition, and unclipped hedges can obstruct the footway and look incongruous fronting buildings of formal style. Climbing plants can be beautiful supplements to buildings when controlled or curious interruptions to their character when unrestricted.

FOOTWAYS AND ROAD SURFACES

Throughout the Royal Borough, the need to provide hard wearing and economic road surfaces has tended to dictate the use of standardised materials. The Council recognises however that the surfaces of carriageways and footways are major elements in the appearance of a conservation area, and so replacement and maintenance policies seek a balance between economy, safety and engineering standards and visual amenity.¹

When first paved, most of the area's footways would have been covered with York Stone slabs of various sizes. This extremely expensive material is of high townscape value, but unfortunately only a few scattered patches of the original slabs still remain, the largest expanses being around Burton's Court, and in Wellington Square.

Most of the footways are now surfaced with precast concrete paving slabs, sometimes with localised areas of mastic asphalt or in situ concrete where vehicular damage has been a problem, for example in Smith Terrace and around Tedworth Square. Where mastic asphalt or in situ concrete have been extensively used due to repeated damage from vehicles mounting the footway, the surface is not as attractive visually as the texture of a slab or block surface. However, they have been necessarily used as a means of providing a safe

walking surface at a more reasonable cost than, say, interlocking blocks which would be a functionally acceptable alternative. This conflict between creating a visually attractive pavement surface whilst providing a hardwearing and economic surface is well illustrated in Paradise Walk. The problem of service vehicles needing to mount the kerb to pass along the street, and the use of pavements for parking meant that the York Stone paving, whilst attractive, needed frequent repair. The concrete surface which is now there is less visually exciting but is extremely hardwearing.

The carriageways are surfaced either with bituminous macadam or hot rolled asphalt, the only exception being in Clover Mews where an example of an older paving material remains, namely brick setts. *

A number of pavement crossovers are still covered with stone setts, for example the entrance and exit to the shared private access serving Numbers 14-18 St. Leonard's Terrace. In nearly every case these crossovers enhance the properties which they serve as well as the general streetscene, and the gradual re-use of setts on more crossovers will be considered. *

FORECOURT PARKING

As most of the properties in the Royal Hospital area open straight onto the pavement via a short flight of steps, there is little opportunity for the introduction of forecourt parking. A small number of individual properties, for example in Swan Walk, and of course in Clover Mews, have their own garages, and Numbers 14-14-18 St. Leonard's Terrace and Durham Place in Ormonde Gate are fortunate in that they are set back from the road, both blocks enjoying a shared private access and parking area. There are only a few streets where there are front gardens of an adequate size for the introduction of forecourt parking, notably St. Leonard's Terrace (Numbers 19-32) and Christchurch Street (Numbers 16-78 even). The front gardens to these streets are, however, particularly attractive and contribute significantly to the streetscene, and whilst it is appreciated that parking remains a problem within this area, their use for forecourt parking will be resisted in every possible way.¹ *



Paradise Walk — the need for hardwearing pavement surfaces

1. DP 10.4.25.

1. DP 4.12.2.



Shawfield Street — forecourt areas on new developments

Another means of overcoming the problem of parking, but one which should also be strongly resisted, is the conversion of the ground floor room of a house into a garage. This is a physical possibility where the houses open onto the street at pavement level with no front access to a basement level, for example in Radnor Walk or Smith Terrace. This type of conversion is considered totally unacceptable as it destroys the scale of the property and breaks the unifying features of the terrace. Further, the loss of a main room within the house may add greater pressure for the addition of a rear or roof extension, and the erection of the latter, in particular, may be to the further detriment of the streetscene.¹

In order to comply with current highway requirements, off-street parking is required on most redevelopment schemes. The new development on the north side of Tedworth Square has succeeded in concealing the parking spaces at the rear of the site and underground, presenting an unbroken frontage to the Square. The four smaller redevelopment schemes in Shawfield Street have all incorporated integral garages with forecourt parking, but not all the schemes have been successful in creating an attractive forecourt area with a clear demarcation between the forecourt area and the pavement. An attempt has been made at Numbers 34-46 (even) to integrate the traditional feature of railings with the requirement to provide off-street parking. Some may consider the railings over-dominant in the streetscene but they do achieve the objective of demarcating boundaries and help to reduce the impact of the cars parking on the forecourt.²

FRONT BOUNDARIES

The extensive use of railings rather than walls or balustrades to demarcate site boundaries is a particular characteristic of this conservation area. The Victorian terraces were all originally bounded by railings, the only exceptions being Paradise Walk and Clover Mews, where the properties open directly onto the street. Walls as a form of boundary demarcation are used for a few individual properties, the longest stretch being outside the 1930s houses in Flood Street.



Shawfield Street (Numbers 34-46)

RAILINGS

Railings serve not only to restrain passers-by from falling into basement areas or intruders from entering garden squares but also as a form of demarcation of area emphasising unity in a building group without masking it from view. For this purpose a railing is ideal, being physically impenetrable, defining boundaries well and yet easily seen through and not bulky.

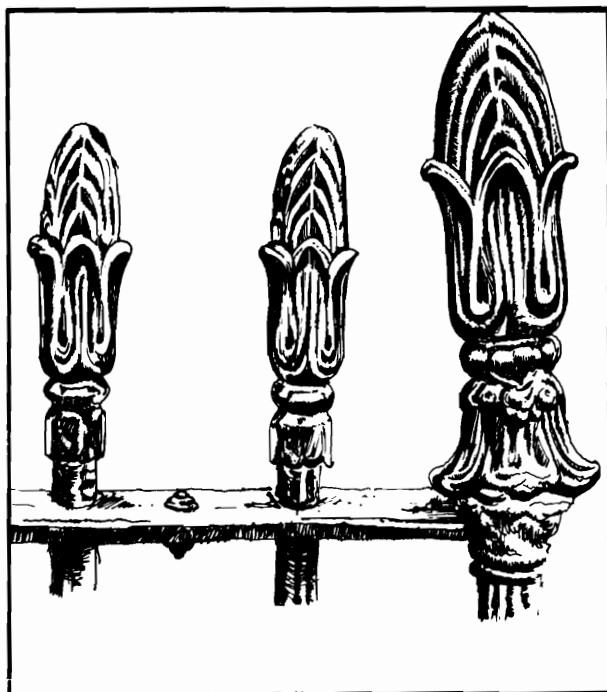
There is considerable variety to be found in the type of railings used in the conservation area, although only one pattern is usually retained for the length of a terrace of any one style. One exception is the western flank of Royal Avenue, particularly Numbers 26-48 where almost every property has a different style of railing head. The repetitive geometry is the most distinctive feature of railings and one or two missing heads or broken railings can easily destroy their effect as part of the uniform linked details of a building group. For the same reason poor painting shows up badly, especially where highlighted against a stucco background. Their impact on a building group is further emphasised when matched by a continuous cast iron balcony at first floor level. The terraces in Walpole Street well illustrate this point.



Walpole Street (east side)

1. DP 4.12.3.

2. DP 10.7.8.



Royal Avenue railing heads

In general, the railings to most properties in the area are intact, and the expense may therefore be warranted to restore a gap in an otherwise continuous run of railings. In 1980 the railings around Christ Church (Christchurch/Caversham Street) were reinstated with the help of a Council grant and they have made a significant contribution to the attractiveness of the street scene.

Whilst desirable, the cost of restoration to original patterns means that it can only be justified in selected locations. One street where the effect of accurate reinstatement of the railings would greatly outweigh the cost is as Numbers 19-32 St. Leonard's Terrace. Number 19 has recently replaced its railings to the same pattern as in the pre-war period. The reintroduction of railings would achieve a greater degree of continuity to these frontages without masking the attractive front gardens from general view. This will be considered a priority for any grant aid which may become available. *

In addition, the reintroduction of railings to the front boundary walls of Durham Place (Ormonde Gate) and Numbers 14-18 St. Leonard's Terrace will be encouraged. The restoration of railings to the low boundary walls would not only add to the attractiveness of the two terraces but also help to emphasise the private nature of the forecourt parking area directly in front of the properties. *

A longer term objective is the gradual reintroduction of railings to both Radnor Walk and Smith Terrace. The continuous run of railings to the terraces in these streets have now disappeared, and the forecourts to these properties are at present bounded by a diverse range of railings, walls and fences, and a few even open straight onto the pavement. The restoration of railings to a *

standard pattern would make a significant contribution to the appearance of the streetscene, and add to the cohesion of these small scale terraces.

STREET LIGHTS

Due to their deteriorating condition and high replacement and running costs, the cast iron lamp columns and old style lanterns which have such a distinctive Victorian flavour have been replaced long ago in the conservation area with polygonal lanterns of post war design. Attractive Victorian lamps can still be seen in the grounds of the Royal Hospital in the immediate vicinity of the main buildings. A number of the individual properties in the area, for example Number 2 Swan Walk, have fine lanterns either hung from the front facades or within the front gardens. The introduction of more lamps of a style sympathetic to the period character of the area would be welcome. *

A new lantern was specially developed a few years ago to reconcile up to date technology with design characteristics appropriate to the ambience of the Royal Borough. Most residents will have seen it in Markham Square and it will be introduced into the conservation area in due course.



Number 2 Swan Walk — attractive gate with lantern and fine porch behind



Careful consideration needs to be given to the location of dust bins — unsightly examples from Radnor Walk and Smith Terrace.

DUST BINS

Dust bins or bin stores can be unattractive if allowed to dominate a front garden, and this may be particularly likely with paved forecourts and railings. Properties in Smith Terrace and Radnor Walk show an interesting variety of ways of coping with this problem — some solutions being more successful than others. Some dustbin enclosures within the curtilage of single family houses are permitted development and do not require planning permission. Where permission is required, for example where the enclosure would be in front of the building line, applicants will be expected to design them in such a way as to reduce their potential obtrusiveness — figure 17.5 of the District Plan illustrates some acceptable solutions. All bin stores are expected to comply with the code of practice produced by the Directorate of Works Services. *

COAL HOLE COVERS

The variety of coal hole covers in the pavements add much interest to the footpaths. While the Council is obliged to offer the service of removing them on request, it is to be hoped that property owners will consider

other ways of curing whatever damp penetration problems they may have resulting from pierced covers or leaking rims which allow water to seep into under-pavements vaults. Old covers can be rebbed in the footway surface over blocked-in openings and replacement unpierced coal hole covers can be purchased from stocks held by the Director of Engineering and Works Services at the Council's Central Depot.

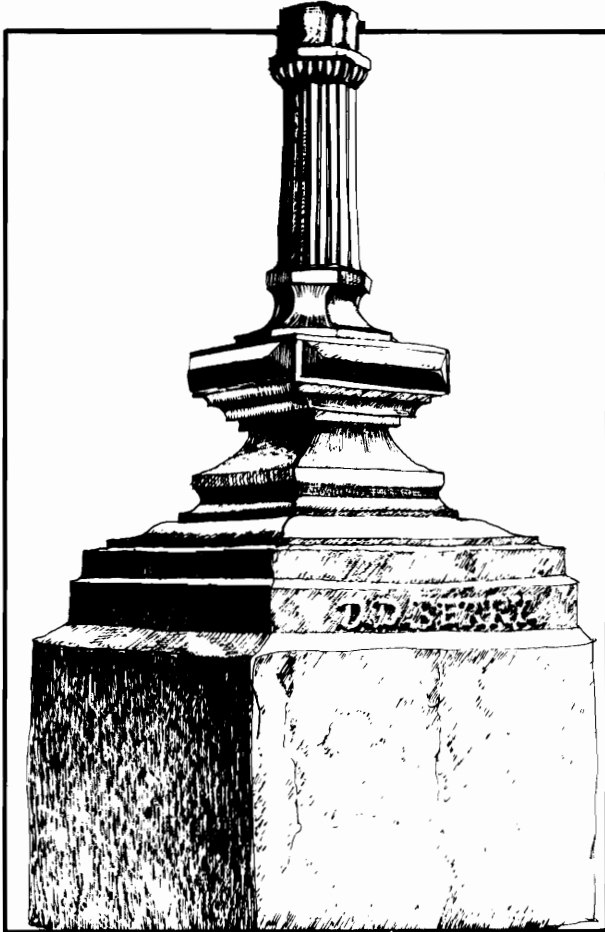
MISCELLANEOUS

Perhaps surprisingly, there is little incidental street furniture remaining in the area — there are only a few old bollards, for example, including one on the corner of Swan Walk and Royal Hospital Road and one in Christchurch Street, near the church. Where road obstruction is a problem in some of the narrower streets, for example, in Smith Terrace and Paradise Walk, consideration will be given, having regard to the Council's adopted policy, to the introduction of bollards at appropriate locations. *

An interesting, (and now listed) Victorian octagonal pillar box still stands in St. Leonard's Terrace on the corner with Smith Street, and on the plinth of the steps to Number 27a Smith Street, there is the base of a cast iron lamp standard. Another unusual feature of interest is the "two-way" letter box at the east entrance to Royal Hospital in Royal Hospital Road. It would be a pity if such attractive features which add to the charm of these streets were ever to disappear. *



St. Leonard's Terrace — attractive Victorian pillar box



Smith Street (Number 27A) — base of cast iron lamp standard

STREET SIGNS

The location of traffic and parking signs, street name plates and similar signs is governed by very detailed Department of Transport regulations. Its manual aims at a balance between safety and amenity — with the latter gaining ground in recent years. There is, however, little room for change but fortunately there are no particularly unsightly examples of badly located signs within the area. Occasionally signs on posts could with visual advantage be fixed to nearby walls or railings if the owner would permit: Tedworth Square garden may be one such location.

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ADVERTISING

Apart from a few shop fascias and pub signs, there is appropriately very little advertising in this primarily residential area and excessive advertising, especially internally illuminated signs will continue to be resisted.¹ Particular care needs to be exercised in restraining unsympathetic designs for shop fronts and advertising for those shops along the King's Road which also front on to streets within or leading into the conservation area. The Coopers Arms on the corner of Redesdale Street and Flood Street is a good example of how careful Advertising can contribute positively to an area,

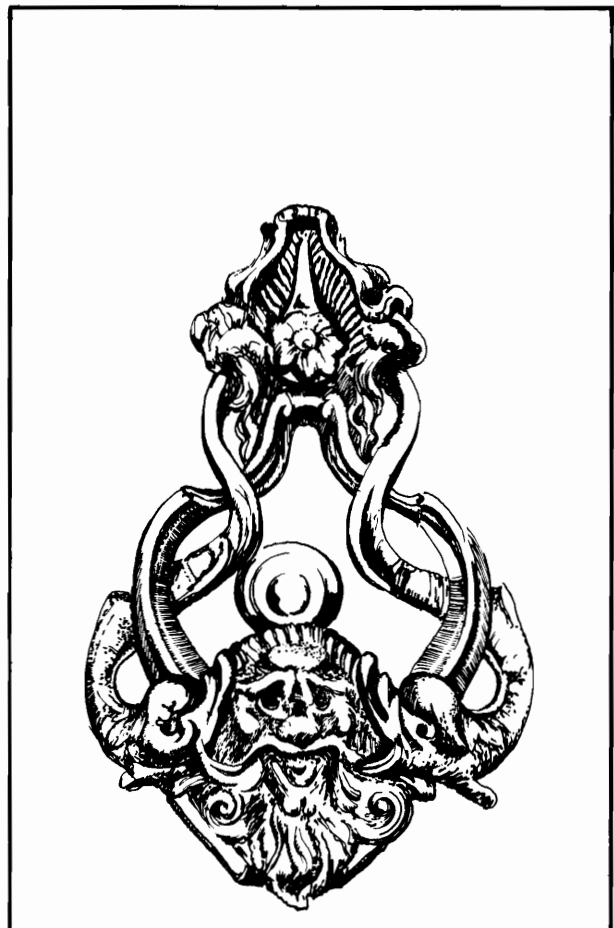
PARAPHERNALIA

Footscrapers, doorknockers, pot guards and balcony rails represent some of those delightful details which not only complete the appearance of a building but also contribute to the period character of an area.

Footscrapers and pot guards are unfortunately now rarely seen, although Royal Avenue and Walpole Street have retained a number of both. Once broken or lost, these features are difficult to repair or replace. However, the recent availability of reproduction door knockers, letter flaps and door knobs has encouraged many to decorate their front doors.

The simplicity of the Georgian and Victorian doors can be complemented both by elaborate or simple designs. Furniture for later Edwardian doors deserves some careful selection since the styles from this period are less common, and usually larger than preceding eras to complement often extravagantly proportioned doorways.

Clear numbering of houses is encouraged by the Post Office and the Borough Council. On period houses numbers look well when painted, in a typeface sympathetic to the design of the house, on the fanlight where they can be seen, backlit, at night.



An example of an attractive Victorian doorknocker



ENHANCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Georgian theme of reflecting the vertical nature of individual houses within the horizontal framework of a terrace was continued into the Victorian period. The proportions of the door and window openings all emphasised verticality, as did those of the door panels, and individual panes within the window sashes. The vertical emphasis of individual houses was, however, subordinated to the horizontal lines of a long terrace, vertical lines were not continuous from roof to ground whilst horizontal cornices, parapet lines and rooflines were constant along the length of the terrace.

A fine balance was thus created between the length and height of a terrace. The loss of any of the vertical detailing removes the balancing vertical emphasis, which can then spoil the overall proportions of a terrace. Whilst this can be seen quite easily in the simple Georgian terraces, the more decorated style prevalent in Victorian period may camouflage the importance of the careful proportions of the architecture. This has unfortunately led to some insensitive changes and to the removal of important details.¹

The significance of some of the vertical details such as door treatment and window openings, is increased when the building line abuts the pavement. Where the houses are entered (even over basements) straight from the street the eye is drawn more particularly to elevational details up to the first floor level such as fenestration, footscrapers and door fittings.

Where a longer view of any group is available across a square or where there are front gardens, the importance of continuous details is emphasised. Cornices, parapets and roof lines, repeated uniform details on architraves and chimneys are all seen in the context of a group of buildings rather than in isolation.

These points are well illustrated by comparing Walpole Street or Radnor Walk with St. Leonard's Terrace which is distanced from the pavement by the addition of front gardens. Christchurch Street is one example of where the simple unity of the terrace has now been damaged through a combination of minor alterations to the elevations. Further changes to this and the other late Georgian and Victorian terraces, especially to those which are listed, will continue to be discouraged. *

Regular inspection should be made to ensure that decorative features are not rotting from above or within and also to ensure that these features are well weather-sealed. One good opportunity to do this is when a builder is carrying out routine redecoration.¹ If grants were to become available, preference would be given to the restoration of those features of most impact, which will clearly vary from street to street.² *

Any development for which consent is granted in this area will be required to respect the analysis in this chapter, and sympathetic repairs will be encouraged. A summary of proposals included in this report is given on pages 56 – 57 but it does not represent a complete listing of all possible improvements.

EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS

Despite its generous stretches of public open space, this area has been developed at a very high density, and most households unfortunately have access to no more than a small amount of private open space. From time to time, nearly every family is faced with the difficult problem of considering whether to move house or to adapt the existing one in order to meet changing requirements. Because of the high amenity of the Royal Hospital area, the adaptation of the existing dwelling may present a more attractive proposition than finding a new property which may entail a move out the area.

1. DP 4.3.2.

1. DP 4.3.19.

2. DP 4.3.21.

However, the opportunity to extend any one property without a resultant loss of amenity, daylight and privacy for neighbouring residents is severely restricted because of the high density of buildings in the area and existing shortage of private open space. Whilst possibly providing a less attractive choice the physical constraints of extending a property within this area may mean that moving house becomes a more viable solution to the problem of meeting changing family needs.

ROOF ALTERATIONS

When the enlargement of a house is being considered, the roof often offers the easiest but also unfortunately the most obtrusive direction in which to extend.¹

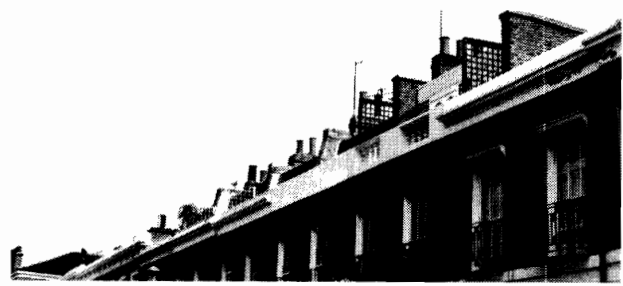
Rooflines of buildings are extremely sensitive to change, and when part of a group of formal design, any alteration can be visually detrimental. Even in cases already characterised by variety among neighbouring properties, much harm can be done by the inappropriate choice of materials, insensitive changes of scale, or the removal of such relatively small features as, for example, chimney pots.

There is an important distinction to be made between additional storeys (which require planning permission) and alterations and extensions to existing pitched roof spaces (which may not in every case require planning permission — see page 7–8. Development and the Law).

A few of the streets within the Royal Hospital area defy general policy on additional storeys and other roof alterations because of the individual nature of the buildings they contain, for example the houses in Swan Walk or studios in Tite Street (category 1 on the accompanying map). With the exception of Woodfall Street, all the properties in this category are listed and the general presumption will therefore still be against change.

On houses with a parapet hiding a shallow pitched or central gutter roof, any new accommodation at roof level will require the erection of an additional storey, and this will usually be totally unacceptable on architectural and townscape grounds (Category 2).

Most of the terraces in this category have not yet been subject to any alteration at roof level, and as so few examples of original rooflines remain in the conservation area, or even within the Borough as a whole, it is important that future proposals for changes should continue to be strongly resisted. The aim to retain examples of original unaltered rooflines explains the inclusion within this category of some of the later unlisted Victorian terraces, such as Redburn Street, as well as the earlier, more formal, terraces — for examples Wellington Square.

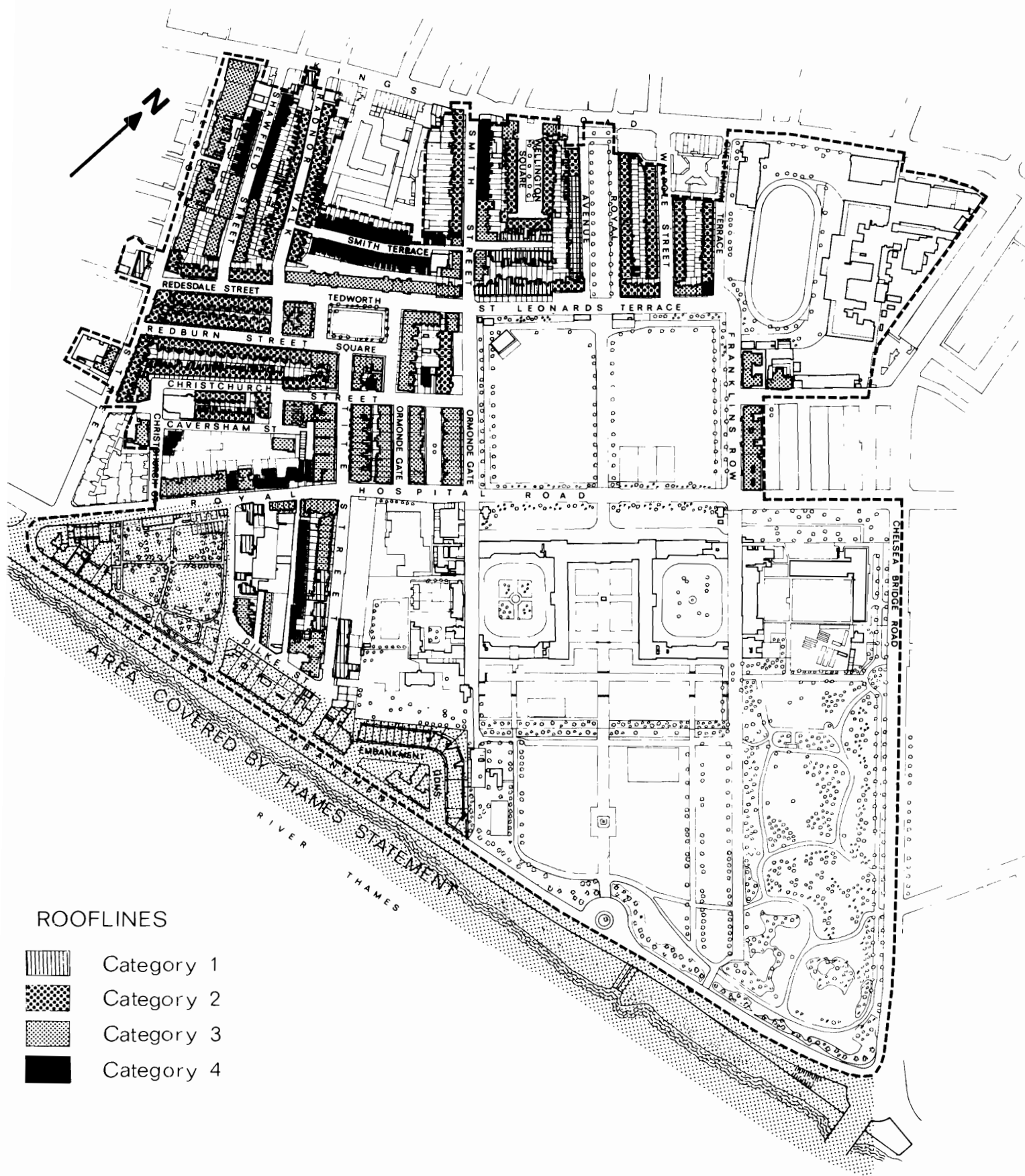


Shawfield Street — roof additions

ROOF EXTENSION MAP

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- Category 1** All the buildings in this category are individual and defy general policy. Many are listed, and the presumption on these is against change, especially where they date from the 18th and early 19th centuries. (e.g. Numbers 19-32 St. Leonard's Terrace). There may be a historic precedent for change, however, and each application will be considered on its merits and in the light of any proposed improvements to existing alterations.
- Category 2** Absolutely no change to the roofs. In most cases in this category either the buildings are listed and of uniform design (e.g. Christchurch Street) OR a roof extension or dormer window would constitute an extra storey on a terrace with a completely or largely unaltered roofline (e.g. Redesdale Street).
- Category 3** No additional storeys. This allows for the removal of storeys and dormers added to the original design, or their alteration; the building of dormer or roof (velux) windows to match others in the terrace or the positioning of dormers on the rear of houses with pitched roofs (e.g. Ormonde Gate).
- Category 4** Additional storeys might be acceptable on these properties but each proposal would be judged on its merits within the constraints of the Royal Borough's usual restrictive policy (especially as to the details of its design). This category includes terraces where uniformity has been lost due to diverse roof extensions and where the completion of roof extensions might be desirable to reunite the terrace (e.g. Paradise Walk and Smith Terrace).



ROYAL HOSPITAL

There are a number of other terraces within the area where alterations to the roofline may be acceptable, and in a few situations even desirable. Where there are existing dormers in pitched roof spaces, the addition of further dormers or Velux windows to match others in the terrace, or on the rear roof slopes, may be considered relatively harmless, for example in Ormonde Gate (Category 3). In a few cases, the complete removal of a roof extension would result in the enhancement of the conservation area.

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The final category (Category 4) comprises those terraces where the addition of an extra storey might be acceptable, for example Paradise Walk and Smith Terrace. A considerable number of roof alterations have already been undertaken in these terraces, and carefully designed additions to the remaining properties may help to bring about a greater degree of uniformity to the roofline. This category also includes a number of individual cases where a suitable additional storey may add to rather than detract from the streetscene — for example at Number 1 St. Leonard's Terrace.

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Design guidelines can never be comprehensive enough to cover all the variations of individual properties, but where a roof extension or alteration is proposed, and is acceptable in principle, residents are encouraged to adhere to the following general advice, which is applicable to most situations:

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- 1 Where dormer windows are introduced for the first time, they should in most cases line up with the windows on the floor below.
- 2 Chimney stacks should be retained even if occasionally they need to be raised to a higher level.
- 3 Party wall parapets should be restricted to the minimum dimensions necessary to comply with the London Building Acts.
- 4 If a dormer or extension is installed into a pitched roof, any slates or tiles used should match those existing on the main roof.
- 5 Although existing extensions may be far from ideal in execution or style, the retention of a similar profile, positioning and detailing to neighbouring roof additions can help to retain uniformity in a terrace.

The Council's Design Officer will be pleased to give more detailed advice on individual cases, whether or not planning permission is required for the proposed alteration.



Radnor Walk — rear extensions

REAR EXTENSIONS

Where these require planning permission (which, as page 7–8 explains, is not always the case) proposals will be judged in relation to their effect upon:

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privacy, daylighting and sunlighting in neighbouring gardens and houses¹

and

the character and appearance of the backs of the terraces or street as a group, especially where these are visible from a number of other properties or open to general view from surrounding streets.

Maximum retention of garden space will generally be considered a higher priority than reducing the height of extensions.²

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In considering applications for extensions, the Council has to be mindful that the purpose of planning is to regulate the development of land in the public interest, not to protect the property rights of one person against the activities of another, particularly where there may be a remedy under common law.

In all new building works, materials — especially any brickwork — should match the original building. Reproduction window styles to match the original, continuing cornice lines onto new buildings and other efforts to retain the original style may be rewarded by handsome buildings and have featured highly as recent Environment Award Scheme winners. (The Environment Award Scheme is an annual competition run by the Royal Borough for new building works and environmental schemes).³

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More detailed advice on individual proposals can be sought from the Council's Design Officer.

1. DP 4.10.2.

2. DP 7.3.8.

3. DP 4.6.2.

STUCCO

An important townscape feature of the Victorian architecture in the area is the decorative stucco. The stucco work to many of the terraces, especially those which are of more formal composition, is generally in good repair but there are examples from nearly every street where restoration would significantly improve the appearance of the building groups.

Originally, stucco was used as a cheap substitute for stone and was either left unpainted or colour washed to resemble Bath Stone. There are no unpainted examples within the conservation area, but most of the houses with stucco work retain the incised lines intended to simulate stone blocks.

The main value of stucco decoration is to emphasise the continuity of a terrace, either through the line of the cornice or through the repetition of such features as the window architraves. Continuous features of this kind are especially noticeable where a view of the terrace from some distance is possible, for example the impact of the stucco work to Cheltenham Terrace when viewed from the King's Road.

The powers of the Council do not extend to enforcing the reinstatement of cornices or repair of stucco, but much can be achieved by emphasising the virtues of restoration and offering grants to specific schemes when funds are available.

Stucco rendering and cornices have an important practical function as well as being visually attractive. The stucco acts as a waterproof skin to the building and the cornice, overhanging the top of the facade, throws the rain away from the wall. Prompt attention to stucco repairs will save expensive reinstatements which would be necessary if the stucco were left to decay. The deterioration of stucco is a continuous process and regular maintenance is required to keep it in good order. Existing stucco cornices may be repaired but it is essential that the upper surface is well weather and water-proofed especially where impermeable gloss paint is used on the lower surfaces.

An order of priority for stucco repair is detailed below and suggests the minimum standards which should be attained by the various terraces:

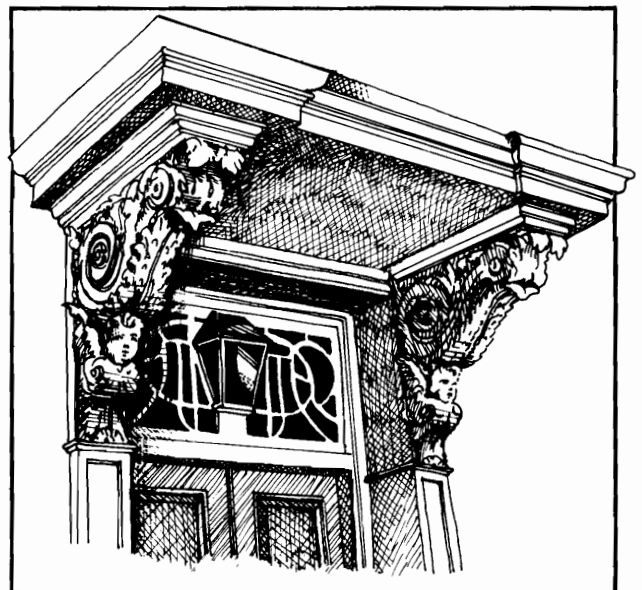
- 1 Where money is short in minor terraces a basic rendered cornice retaining the horizontal line of the original avoids an unsightly gap without unacceptable loss of authenticity. The appearance of the terraces in Radnor Walk and Smith Terrace would be greatly improved by the reinstatement of cornices.
- 2 A preferable alternative is the use of replica glass-fibre cornice sections, which impose less weight and strain on old parapet walls.



Radnor Walk — missing cornices

- 3 Full detailing, including dentils ('teeth') is again a considerable improvement on the basic section but its reinstatement may only be justified on listed terraces and major building groups, for example Numbers 7-13 St. Leonard's Terrace, Wellington Square and Royal Avenue. Single dentils may be plugged and screwed to the wall as a separate operation apart from repairing or replacing the main cornice.

A list of stucco repairers and glass moulding manufacturers is available from the Planning Information Office.



Number 28 Woodfall Street — attractive stucco porch