

ARTISTS' STUDIOS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

This Guidance is non-statutory guidance which supplements the policies of the UDP, adopted on 25th May, 2002. Only the policies in the Unitary Development Plan can have the special status afforded by s54a of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, in deciding planning applications.

However, the Government advises that the supplementary planning guidance may be taken into account as a material consideration, the weight accorded to it being increased if it has been prepared in consultation with the public and has been the subject of a Council resolution.

PRINCIPAL AUTHOR

KATE ORME

SENIOR CONSERVATION AND DESIGN OFFICER



INTRODUCTION

"A large bare room, with no furniture, but a divan or a camp-bed, a couple of chairs, an easel, and a model-stand made of a big box that holds a few coats and hats and coloured silks that do duty in a dozen pictures; a big window slanting up across the roof, with blinds to temper its light; canvasses and old paintings without frames leaning against walls; the artist, his coat off ready for work, strolling up and down with a cigarette between his lips, looking critically and lovingly at the canvas on the easel, and now and again pulling out his watch: that is a fair picture of a studio at about half-past ten on a workday morning." (1)

A significant number of artists' studios were constructed in Kensington and Chelsea between about 1850 to 1914. They were the result of an improved status of the artist during that period, which was partly due to a new perception by Victorian society of art and design, the help that advances in technology could provide and self-promotion by artists and their representative bodies. The fashion for studios centred on London and, in particular, on certain artistic 'enclaves' which were to be found in areas such as Kensington and Chelsea. The artists' studio, in terms of built form and use, represents a characteristic and important element of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The aim of this Guide is to describe the types of studio found in the Royal Borough and their importance; to assess the current threats to the form and use of these buildings and to provide guidance as to the best manner in which they can be effectively protected for the future. The Guide will concentrate on studios built in the Victorian and Edwardian periods when the fashion for purpose-built studios reached its height.



118 Campden Hill Road.

THE CHANGE IN STATUS OF THE ARTIST

In general terms, life and work in the Victorian painters' studios did not change during the nineteenth century. However, the professional status and conditions for artists changed significantly from the 1860s onwards.

Prior to the middle of the nineteenth century, very few artists had the education of a gentleman or had the means to live like one. Many of the best-known English painters of the first half of the nineteenth century could only afford to live in modest houses and were forced to use the back bedroom as their studio. Artists generally had a low social and professional status and were effectively considered to be tradesmen.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the margins of London were becoming increasingly popular to artists as it was considered that such areas were preferable to the congested central area and as they were still relatively cheap. One of these semi-rural areas to the west was Kensington, which began to represent a popular option for artists in the late 1820s.

During the second half of the Victorian period social change, combined with improved wealth of a booming population, provided a market for all manner of consumer goods including works of art. The status of art also improved considerably during this period for a number of reasons. The 'pro-art' political climate due to support by Disraeli, Gladstone and the Royal Family, improved awareness through the publication of periodicals and magazines, the founding of a significant number of public galleries such as the Tate Gallery (1897) and the establishment of art schools were some of the contributing factors to this change of status. This change in social and financial status allowed artists more choice in the form and location of studio accommodation.

The fashion for semi-rural areas, which had begun during the first half of the century, continued. Kensington, Chelsea, Hampstead and St. John's Wood became increasingly popular. The popularity of Kensington had been further enhanced by the development of the South Kensington Museums complex during the 1860s and 1870s.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The vast majority of purpose-built artists' studios in Kensington and Chelsea were built in the architectural style known as 'Queen Anne Revival'.



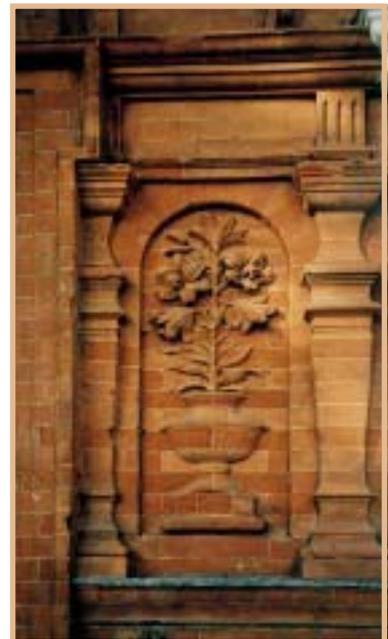
Pont Street

'Queen Anne' is the name attributed to the style which was popular from the 1870s until the early years of the twentieth century. It was widely used during that period, particularly for private dwellings and is characterised by the contrast between red-brick and white painted sash windows. In addition to red-brick, this style also often utilised gables, bay and oriel windows, conspicuous chimney-stacks, cut-brick decoration and wrought iron railings.

The concept of 'Sweetness and Light' during this period represented the appreciation or creation of beauty, coupled with the desire to recognise and learn the truth. It was perceived as representing an opportunity to remove the ugliness of buildings and cities,

to reduce intolerance and narrow-mindedness and to improve the lives of the less fortunate. There was also a general rejection of the previous creed that a 'correct' style should be followed and theories of beauty or proportion were distrusted. It was considered that originality came by sympathetically mixing different styles rather than by attempting to produce something completely new.

Closely associated with the principles of 'Sweetness and Light' was the 'Aesthetic Movement', which in turn was closely associated with artists such as Whistler and Rossetti. The guiding principle of the aesthete was to cultivate artistic sensibility and to try to live beautifully in beautiful surroundings (2).



'Queen Anne' houses and studios provided the perfect environment for such a lifestyle and emphasis.

Examples of influential buildings of this style found locally are 1 Palace Green (1868-73) which was designed by Philip Webb and Richard Norman Shaw's Lowther Lodge on Kensington Gore (1873-5). A number of houses on the Chelsea Embankment, such as Swan House by Shaw (1875-7), represent further examples of this style and again were influential in raising the profile of 'Queen Anne'.

The ideal terrain for a successful growth of 'Queen Anne' combined genuine early eighteenth century houses with existing artistic or literary associations. "These two were often found together because of the tendency of cheap and old-fashioned neighbourhoods to attract artists and writers." (2) Kensington and Chelsea were both areas which accommodated such characteristics.



1, Palace Green

COMMUNITIES WITHIN KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

A significant number of artist colonies were formed within the confines of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea during the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Studios were constructed through the adaptation of existing buildings, the commissioning of studio houses or speculative development. Artists' studio development occurred throughout Kensington and Chelsea. However, there were a number of neighbourhoods which effectively became artistic colonies.

Kensington and surrounding neighbourhoods were the first areas to attract significant numbers of artists. One of the first known studios, located on the corner of Douro Place and Victoria Road, was in the form of an extensive workshop built to the rear of the house of the sculptor John Bell. Bell moved into the property in 1843.

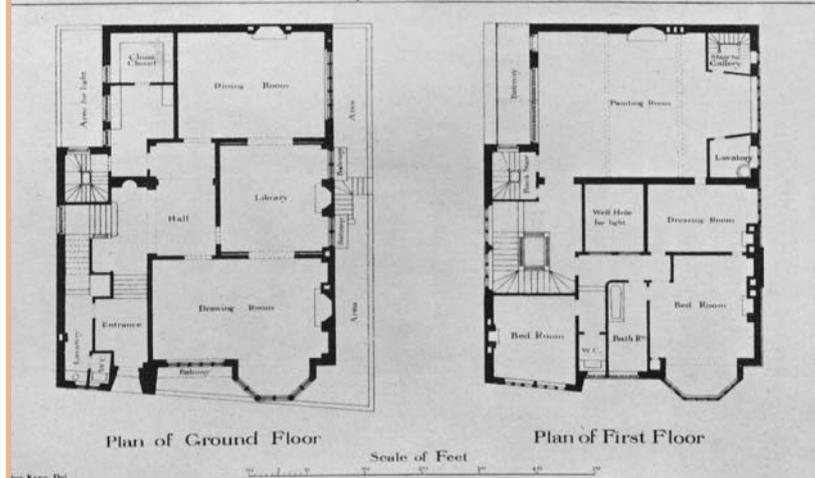
KENSINGTON NEW TOWN AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Kensington area had been a popular location for a number of artists from the beginning of the nineteenth century and this popularity extended to 'Kensington New Town', located to the south of Kensington High Street, when it was developed in the 1840s and 1850s. In addition, the Campden Hill area became well established as a residence for artists during the 1860s and 1870s, including Matthew and Ridley Corbet at 80 Peel Street and George Broughton at West House, 118 Campden Hill Road.

118 Campden Hill Road (The Survey of London)



House at Campden Hill Kensington.



HOLLAND PARK

The studio homes of the most successful artistic figures of the second half of the nineteenth century were erected in the Holland Park area in the 1860s and 1870s. The painter Val Prinsep commissioned Philip Webb in 1864 to build a studio house on a plot of land located on what is now Holland Park Road. Next door, at no. 2 (now 12) Holland Park Road, another studio house was constructed at almost the same time. "No. 2 was a brazen red brick upstart; it even had red mortar." (3)

This property was designed by George Aitchison for the classical painter Frederick Leighton, who was later to become the President of the Royal Academy.

In 1875, Marcus Stone commissioned Richard Norman Shaw to build a studio house at 8 Melbury Road and in the following year Shaw began designing a studio-house for No. 11 (now no. 31) Melbury Road for Luke and Fanny Fildes. The resultant red-brick building is described in the Survey of London as "one of Shaw's most assured compositions." (4)



Above:
Leighton House from the garden

Below:
Leighton House
from Holland Park Road





Above:
31, Melbury Road
(*The Survey of London*)



Above:
8, Melbury Road

Below:
2a, Melbury Road

Below right:
Artists' houses, Melbury Road
(*The Survey of London*)



Two additional artists' studio houses which were designed by the architect John Belcher were built in 1876 at 2 and 4 Melbury Road. Both houses were commissioned by the engineer sculptor Thomas Thornycroft. The sculptor Sir William Hamo Thornycroft designed the attached group of studios which were built at the same time. In 1891 Hamo Thornycroft had a studio-house designed by Belcher built next door to no. 2. This property became no. 2a and incorporated a large ground floor studio.

The importance of the area is reflected by the construction of a house at no. 9 Melbury Road (now no. 29) between 1875-81 by William Burges to be used as his own home. It was built in red-brick in Gothic style and incorporated a graceful four-storey circular tower located on the southern frontage. There was, however, no provision of a studio within the house.

Melbury Road represented the artistic Establishment and to live here often appeared to lead directly to membership of the Royal Academy. The existence of Leighton was influential in creating this reputation for the area.

To the south, Chelsea was evolving into an area which was to become known as the art centre of London.



CHELSEA

In the 1850s and 1860s Sloane Street accommodated a significant number of artists. At the same time, there was a 'resurgence' of interest in the riverside streets between the Royal Hospital and World's End. An increasing number of artists began to move into the area with J M W Turner retiring to 119 Cheyne Walk, for example, in 1850. Two of the new residents were James McNeill Whistler and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Whistler moved into Lindsay Row in 1863. Rossetti moved into 'Tudor House', a genuine Queen Anne house, in 1862.

George Price Boyce commissioned Philip Webb to build him a studio house on Glebe Place. West House was completed in 1870. Although this property remained Chelsea's sole studio house for nearly ten years, local garden studios had preceded it. The sculptor, Giovanni Fontana, had, for example, built a studio behind the eastern Glebe Place and King's Road corner in 1865. This area, again, very quickly became populated by artists. (3)

In the 1870s, the Metropolitan Board of Works released land after embanking the Thames up to the far end of Cheyne Walk. The land fronting onto the Thames sold very quickly and was, in the main, developed in the favoured 'Queen Anne' style. Edward Godwin designed 4, 5 and 6 Chelsea Embankment and Phene Spiers built no. 7 in 1878-9 for the judge Sir Robert Collier. No. 7 contained a north-lit studio room and a self-contained painter's flat for Collier's son.

In 1877, Whistler commissioned E.W. Godwin to design and build for him a studio house on a double plot on Tite Street close to the river "since he wished to start an 'atelier' for students, with large and small studios and living accommodation for himself and his mistress." (5) The White House was influential with its emphasis on simplicity and whitewashed brick. This property has now been demolished.



West House, Glebe Place (1870)
by Philip Webb



Chelsea Embankment

Individual artists' houses continued to be built between Old Church Street and The Vale for another 30 years. This was stimulated in part by the local presence of the Chelsea Arts Club which had been founded in 1891. The only other enclave which accommodated artists' houses towards the end of the century was on Cheyne Walk. "Otherwise the district was overrun by studio groups and flats - an indiscriminate phenomenon dating from the late 1870s when the hard boiled Philistine spectators first saw the gilded, lint headed Aesthetes coming." (3)

During the latter decades of the nineteenth century, speculative studio development evolved to take advantage of the generated demand for this form of accommodation. It proved attractive to artists who wished to have the right address but could not afford to build their own studio.

SPECULATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDIOS

For every custom-built studio in London there would have been another two or three speculatively built ones that could be rented from a landlord.(3) This provision meant that, from the 1870s onwards, artists without the means to build their own houses could rent a studio or studio flat which met their particular need.

Rooftops to the Fulham Road showing
Studio skylight arrangement



A limited number of single units were erected speculatively but these were greatly outnumbered by multiple studios which represented a more profitable option for the developer. By 1914, approximately 150 multiple studios existed in London, ranging from pairs to groups of as many as thirty.(3) These studios were spread throughout the Royal Borough but tended to be located within or close to the established enclaves.

Examples of multiple studios include the first set of purpose-built, flatted studios at 76 Fulham Road which are known as 'The Avenue' (1870), 75 and 77 Bedford Gardens which were constructed in the late 1870s and 'St Alban's Studios', South End (1911).



Access to flatted studios -
76, Fulham Road

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

During the early part of the twentieth century there was a strong drift of artists away from the Royal Borough to areas such as Central London and Camden Town. Subsequently, over the last forty years, the East End of London has been colonised. There were an estimated number of 10,000 artists working there in 2004. However, a limited number of artists' studios continued to be built in the Royal Borough during the latter part of the 20th century. Examples include the mid-twentieth century studios on Milman's Street and the modern studios on Blechynden Street in North Kensington which were constructed during the 1990s.



75 - 77, Bedford Gardens

TYPES OF STUDIO AND CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

Artists had to wait until the mid-nineteenth century for a specific type of building to be evolved to meet their needs. Prior to the Victorian period, the form of accommodation had been rudimentary. The appearance of purpose-built studio houses in the 1860s and of studio flats in multiple blocks a decade later reflected the change in status of the artist and the financial clout that they now possessed.

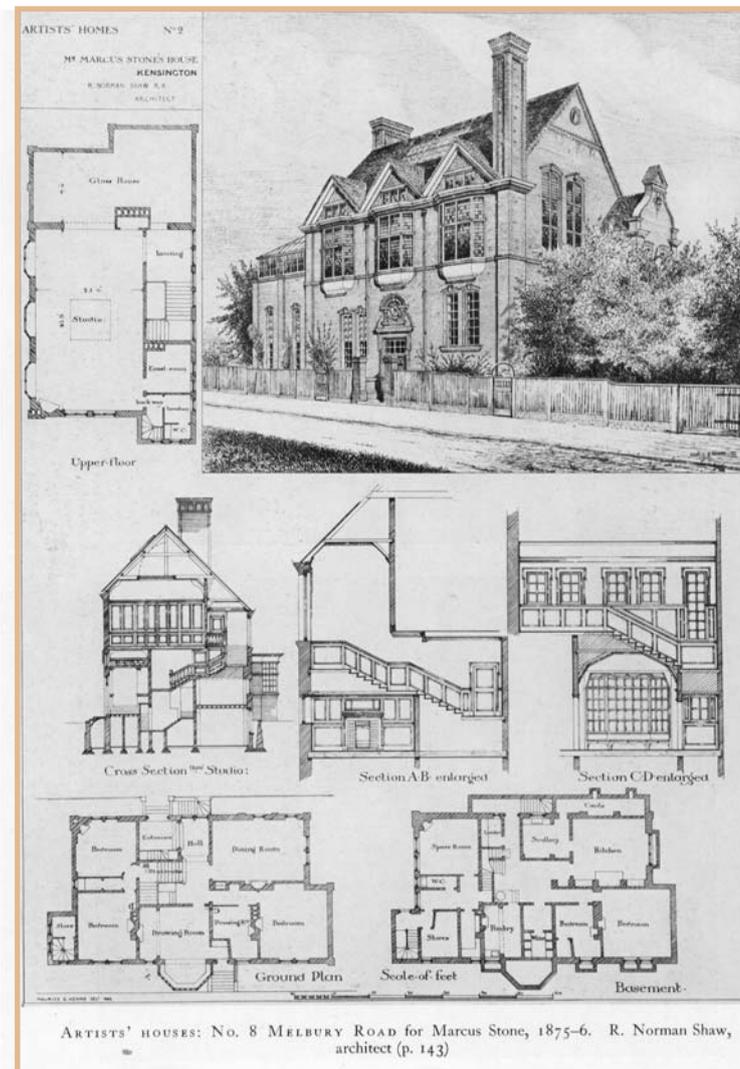
Artists' studios can be found either as a single isolated property or as a group of units. Single studios exist in the Royal Borough in the form of a studio house, ancillary space, as an extension on to an earlier property, through the provision of a garden pavilion or adaptation of an existing house. Multiple studios will usually be found in the Royal Borough as low rise developments or stacked above each other in multi-storey blocks.

A recent survey has identified 465 known artists' studios of all forms in the Royal Borough which include 45 purpose-built individual studio houses and 134 individual studio houses which are the result of extension, alteration or garden pavilion. There are 54 purpose-built groups of multiple studios and six multiple groups which are the result of conversion and/or extension. The multiple studios provide 293 individual studio units.

SINGLE STUDIOS THE STUDIO HOUSE

Studio houses are purpose-built properties where form and purpose are dominated by the studio element. The domestic function of these houses was secondary to studio use. Bedrooms, for example, would often be located on the ground floor in order to free up the upper floor for the studio. Such buildings were the result of a commission and they were popular with the artists who could afford them as they represented a useful tool for self-promotion. "An artistic and prosperous exterior, an impressive ascent to the studio, and the final discovery of the artist surrounded by his pictures in a richly tasteful setting all helped in the bid for custom." (2)

No. 8 Melbury Road represents a grand example of a single studio house. The house was designed by Richard Norman Shaw for the painter Marcus Stone and was constructed between 1875-6. It was designed in the 'Queen Anne' style, with the characteristic use of red brick, dominant gables and tall chimneys. It was expensive as it cost over £5000 to build. (6) The first floor of this property was dominated by the studio and an attached glasshouse.



(Taken from the Survey of London)

The studio was extensive with a floor area of 1120 square feet (104 sq. metres). The adjacent glass-house almost doubled the size of the studio and was effectively the first en suite 'winter studio'. (3) The studio was lit by three large oriel windows in the northern elevation, by two double-height sash windows in the western elevation and by rooflights in the northern slope of the main roof. A separate models' staircase provided access up to the studio from the basement. The main living areas of the house, including the bedrooms, were located on the ground floor. The service areas and servants' quarters were located within the basement.



32, Campden Grove

32 Campden Grove is an example of a more modest studio house. This red brick property adopts a utilitarian form of 'Queen Anne' style and was constructed in 1878. The studio element occupies most of the upper ground floor. It is lit by a large north facing window which dominates the front elevation. The bedrooms are located on the first floor and the kitchen and service areas are located within the lower ground floor. Access to the studio is from the hall area located directly next to the front main entrance. Models would not, therefore, have had to pass through other areas of the house to gain access to the studio. The floral motif in the cut-brick panels is evident on the first floor.

GARDEN

PAVILION

Garden pavilions provided studio accommodation which was physically separate from the house and associated domestic activities. It was usually provided in a one or two storey building which was often located at the bottom of the garden. Pavilions ranged from modest lightweight structures through to large buildings which almost represented studio houses in their own right.



18, Melbury Road

No.18 Melbury Road is a red-brick, semi-detached property which was constructed in 1877. The painter William Holman Hunt is reported to have lived in this property between 1903 and 1910. (4) A single-storey garden pavilion which accommodates a studio is located to the rear outer corner of no. 18. Studios of this type had limited sub-division as they were serviced by the main building. The main requirement would be for changing facilities for the models. The studio is lit from the north by a large dormer window.



18, Melbury Road
The single storey garden pavillion

EXTENSION

Another means of providing a studio to an existing property was through an extension, usually to the rear. The studio to 49 Addison Road has been provided through the erection of a rear extension to an earlier house. The parent building was constructed in the 1850s but it would appear that the extension was erected in the 1880s. The two storey studio is advertised by the decorative large north facing window.

49, Addison Road



ANCILLARY

Studios were also provided within houses as an ancillary room. The inclusion of a studio within a family house was considered important as it demonstrated that the residents were suitably aesthetic. In such cases the studios were not given a prominent location and they did not influence the plan form of the whole house as was the case with studio houses.



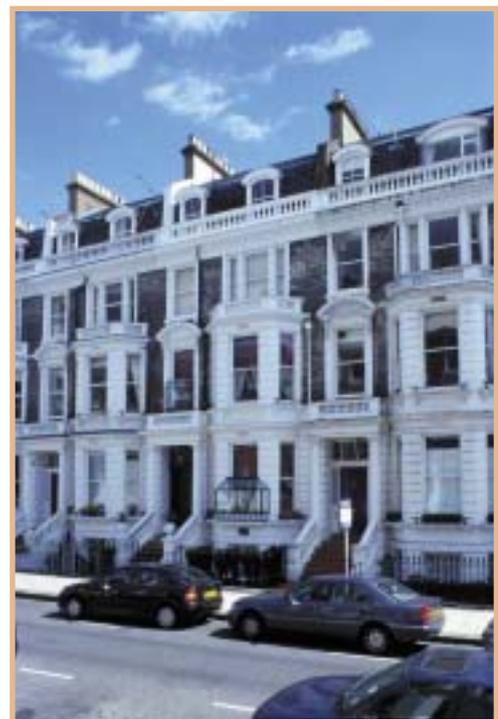
84, Cadogan Square

No. 84 Cadogan Square is known as Stuart House and was constructed in 1880 for Oscar Leslie Stephen, a director of the Great Northern Railway. It is a large red-brick detached house and is in the 'Queen Anne' style. The studio room was located on the first floor and had a limited floorspace of approximately 237 square feet (22 sq. metres). The ancillary nature of the studio room is demonstrated by its positioning in a secondary location towards the rear of the property. The large window in the northern elevation, had the double role of lighting the studio and of advertising the artistic nature of the residents of this property.

ADAPTATION

Artists did not always require purpose-built studio houses or extensive levels of adaptation or extension in order to create adequate studio space. Linley Sambourne, the leading Punch cartoonist, moved into his typical 1870s terraced house at 18 Stafford Terrace in 1874. (4) He worked on his illustrations in this property but did not carry out any associated works. A more contemporary example of this is at 7 Reece Mews, where Francis Bacon lived and worked from 1961 to 1992. The only alterations which he carried out during this period were the installation of rooflights in the rear main roofslope.

18, Stafford Terrace



MULTIPLE STUDIOS

Multiple studios were generally the result of speculative development and were, therefore, usually located within or close to the three main established centres of artistic activity within the Royal Borough. They were usually manifested in one of two types. The first of these forms is low-rise, with two-storey studio buildings usually arranged as a terrace or around a courtyard or garden area. The second form of multiple studio development is that of a stacked block. The examples of this type in the Royal Borough range from three to nine storeys. Both forms of multiple studio always had ancillary living space. As in the case of single studio developments, multiple studios can also be differentiated by their scale of grandeur, according to the wealth of the occupiers.

TERRACES AND COURTYARDS

The terraced or courtyard-based studios were typically two-storeyed. These groups of studios are often located in backland locations and are, therefore, usually hidden behind neighbouring buildings. The studio element of these properties could be located on either the ground or first floor.

A modest example of a terrace of studios can be found at Cedar Studios, Glebe Place (1885-6). This simple group of studios are two-storeyed and accessed by a path to the east of 45 Glebe Place. The studio element is located on the ground floor and is lit by the glazed north facing front elevation. The accommodation is typically rudimentary.



Far left:
The entrance to
Cedar Studios from
Glebe Place

Left:
The access passage
past the studios



Pembroke Studios, Pembroke Road

A more substantial group of studios is Pembroke Studios on Pembroke Road (1890-91). This group of twelve studios is set around a central courtyard area. The group are enclosed to the south by an ornamental gatehouse which housed a caretaker. The presence of a caretaker, who vetted comings and goings from the studio group, may have been a useful feature for the growing numbers of female painters during this period. The axis of the central courtyard and enclosing studio buildings run in a north-westerly direction. The corners of the studios have, therefore, been chamfered and large windows installed in the resultant bay in order to gain true north light.

STACKED STUDIOS

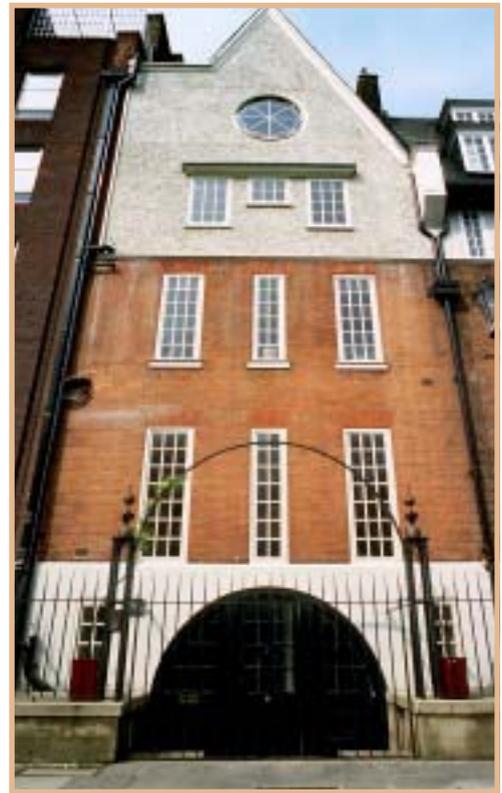
Stacked studio blocks were a popular means of gaining high-density development on a plot of limited size. This type is generally found in mid-terrace locations and stands out by virtue of its differing height and style.



Lansdowne House, Lansdowne Road

An example of an extravagant form of stacked studio development came in the form of the nine-storey Lansdowne House, which was constructed in 1900-1. It was designed by Brangwyn and Conder for the art lover Sir Edmund Davis. When completed this building accommodated two studios, four large studio-flats, a common smoking room, a squash court, hydropathic baths and a passenger lift. The run of large windows on the northern elevation is particularly prominent on this conspicuous building.

A more typical stacked studio development is at 38 Cheyne Walk, which was designed by C.R. Ashbee. It is a four storey property, plus basement, built in the 'Queen Anne' style and originally accommodating three studios. This property had shared servants' quarters in the basement. The three self-contained studios above incorporated a large double height studio space and adjacent bedroom, dressing room and bathroom. The studios are located on the northern side of the property and are served by large windows. This block is an example of modest accommodation with relatively basic living quarters and illustrates that even this type of studio might be designed by eminent architects.



38, Cheyne Walk

STUDIO FEATURES

There are a number of features which frequently appear in all forms of artists' studio, although the detailing and style of these features can differ. These features contribute to the unique character of the studio as a building type.

The most important and defining element of this form of development is the studio or painting room itself. This room had to be substantial in size. It needed an adequate width to utilise side lighting effectively, an adequate length to aid assessment of work from a distance and adequate height to accommodate both tall windows and large sculptures or paintings on a stand or easel respectively. These dimensions had to be kept in proportion to each other in order to provide a pleasant working space. Studios also had to be large enough to accommodate furniture and the fabrication of outsize canvasses flat on the floor. Studios were often also used as entertainment and sale rooms and, therefore, had to be large enough and impressive enough for these purposes. The expanse of studio space, as illustrated in Leighton House, for example, is large enough for working and entertaining purposes and is suitably grand to reflect the success of the artist.



Above: 52, Tite Street



Above: 44, Tite Street



The handling of light within the studios was crucial. North light was preferred as problems associated with sunshine did not then have to be addressed. The studios, consequently, had to be served by large windows with limited numbers of glazing bars in order that sufficient light could permeate. Bay windows were also used for this purpose. Cills to studio windows would also sometimes be raised in order to ensure that natural levels of light entered the room through the oversized windows. Roller blinds were also used to direct and control light. Where possible, overhead lighting was utilised in order to balance light within the studio. A window joined to an inclined skylight, a 'broken-backed' combination, was also very popular as it provided both top and side light. (3)

In order to respect Victorian propriety two forms of access were usually required to a studio. One access was for the models as they were not considered to be respectable. "A Victorian wife might tolerate a girl taking off her clothes for her husband, but she did not want to meet her on the stairs." (6) The separate access also gave anonymity to the models. Models, therefore, often used a separate entrance and staircase or sometimes used the servants' entrance. The second staircase was sometimes also used to provide access to an easel room or painting store. (6) The main access to the studio had to be as grand as possible in order to impress visitors and possible clients.

An important ancillary element to the studio would often be the floor slit or trap door in order to remove canvasses from the upper floor studios to the floor below without the need to navigate staircases and normal sized doors. Millais had a large trap door in his

Left: Broken back window - Pembroke Studios

studio at 2 Palace Gate, for example. In contrast, More House at 52 Tite Street had a floor slit in the centre of the studio area, which allowed large canvasses to be brought directly from the hall below.

Adjacent rooms which provided storage space or a changing area for models were also common. A models' changing room, for example, is again illustrated in the plans to More House.

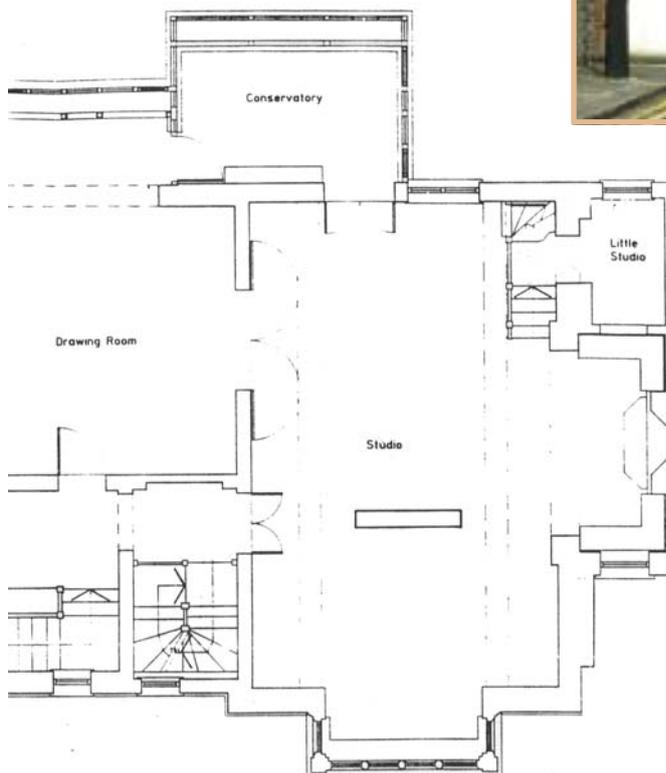
A gallery over the studio area was also a popular feature. They were used to provide living accommodation in early forms of studio such as at 'Avenue Studios', Sydney Close, for storage of canvasses and materials or were added as a later decorative element which could be used by visitors to view works.



The Gallery - 75 Bedford Gardens



Above: West House, Glebe Place showing, from left to right, the Trade, Main and Models' entrances to the property.



Left: First floor plan of More House, 52, Tite Street showing access from the ground floor for large canvasses and the adjacent models' changing room. (Bowerbank, Brett and Lacey)

PRESSURE FOR CHANGE

There is a high concentration of artists' studios within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. However, pressure for development is threatening the form and use of these studios.

Given its location in central London, property prices and rental values in Kensington and Chelsea are extremely high and there is constant pressure for development in this area. Consequently, this results in significant pressure for alternative uses of artists' studios which can command a higher rental value or purchase price such as offices or residential use. Therefore, the availability of affordable studio accommodation in the Royal Borough has become increasingly limited and since the 1960s artists have been increasingly forced to locate in less expensive parts of London such as the East End.

In addition, to the threat to use, there is significant pressure for physical change to artists' studios. Such changes include redevelopment, extensions, alterations and internal works. The proposed changes are usually associated with the introduction of a replacement use. In particular, residential use can be damaging as it often necessitates sub-division of the main studio area and the introduction of new windows to meet the requirement of additional domestic rooms. Other common proposed works include the carrying out of alterations to the large studio windows in order to reduce the extent of glazing and the introduction of double-glazing or replacement glass. Such incremental changes erode the original character of these buildings and remove the clues to their artistic associations.

WHY RETAIN USE AND FORM?

There are a number of reasons as to why it is important to preserve both the use and physical form of the artist studio. Firstly, studios represent purpose-built accommodation for artists and are, therefore, designed to meet their specific requirements. The particular requirements of artists, such as appropriate levels of light and adequate space, have not changed significantly over the years despite contemporary artists' use of different materials and media and these properties are still suitable for their originally intended

use. The inherent character and spirit of studio buildings is defined by the artistic use which operates within them. The use is as important as the characteristic physical elements, such as the large windows, in determining what constitutes an artists' studio building. In addition, this use contributes to the distinctiveness and continuing tradition of a number of areas with artistic associations within the Royal Borough. The retention of artistic uses in these buildings is also important as it limits the necessity for further alterations.



Studio interior - 8, South Bolton Gardens © Crown copyright.NMR

Artists' studios, even in their most modest forms, are unique buildings which reflect the cultural concerns of the late Victorians. These studios were usually built in the favoured 'Queen Anne' style and responded to the emphasis on 'Sweetness and Light' as they actually accommodated the creation of 'sweetness' and the finding of truth and light. These distinctive buildings physically reflect the artistic tradition of parts of the Royal Borough. The buildings punctuate the street scene as a result of their distinct forms and styles and, consequently, add visual interest within the townscape.

In addition to their use and characteristic form, studios are also important through historical association. Many influential architects of the late Victorian period were responsible for designing a significant number of studio buildings. These buildings, therefore, often reflect the work of notable architects such as Philip Webb, Richard Norman Shaw and E.W. Godwin. In addition, these buildings also provided workspace for the major artists such as John Singer Sargent who lived and worked at 31 Tite Street. The interiors of studios are also sometimes included within the paintings which were created within them. Whistler's grey-walled studio at the rear of 2 Lindsey Row, for example, forms the backdrop to the famous portrait of his mother 'Arrangement in Grey and Black'.

(7)



'Unitary Development Plan and reasoned justification

Artists' Studios

Artists' studios represent a distinctive building type which emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century. They are characterised by a number of features including large windows and expanses of studio space behind. They exist in many forms from grand studio houses commissioned by famous artists of the day to more modest and utilitarian speculatively built groups. There are significant numbers in the Royal Borough which make an important contribution to its character and appearance. There is considerable pressure both for the introduction of new uses and the carrying out of alterations. This pressure is threatening the essence and character of these studios and, consequently, undermining the artistic traditions of the Royal Borough (See Policy LR37 of the Leisure and Recreation Chapter).

CD56 To resist the loss of, and inappropriate alteration and extension to artists' studios.'

GUIDANCE

This section is intended to provide guidance with regard to the use and the carrying out of physical alterations to artists' studios.

USE OF ARTISTS' STUDIOS

Artists' studios are usually found in one of two situations. The studio can either be the dominant element within a property or it can be subservient and ancillary to residential use.

Studio units are often ancillary to residential accommodation. This is usually the case with studio houses, purpose-built extensions and garden pavilions. In this situation, the studio unit is classed as having residential use. Policies relating to residential use, as outlined in the Housing Chapter of the Council's Unitary Development Plan, would therefore apply. The following guidance is not relevant to the use of such studios.

Where the studio element is dominant, such as within the units of the purpose-built studio block at Avenue Studios, then the use of the property is Sui Generis under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1997. Any change of use away from a studio use in this situation would constitute development and would, therefore, require planning permission.

The Council acknowledges the importance of artists' studio use and seeks to resist its loss. This aim is supported by relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan. In addition, whilst each case will be judged on its merits, it should be noted that proposals for use of an artists' studio for office (including architects and interior designers), residential, storage or retail purposes will normally be resisted.



Studio interior - Beaufort Street

Artists' studios often accommodate a number of elements, such as the studio area with ancillary residential or office floorspace. However, it is sometimes difficult to assess which constituent element is dominant. The office use, for example, may have begun to dominate. In which case, planning permission would be required for the change of use. In addition, there is sometimes confusion as to whether the dominant use of a studio can be classed as 'artistic', that is, predominantly involving the creation of art. In order to assess which element constitutes the dominant use and to determine whether such a use could operate within an artists' studio without the requirement for planning permission, the Council will consider the following criteria:

1. The proportion of floorspace given over to producing/making art.
2. The balance of uses within the unit.
3. The intensity of use of the unit.
4. The level of associated activity.

As stated above, change of use from artists' studio to other uses will normally be resisted.

PHYSICAL ALTERATIONS TO ARTISTS' STUDIOS

The carrying out of external alterations to an artists' studio will usually require planning permission. However, certain works to the studios which form part of a single family dwelling may represent permitted development as defined by the Town and Country Planning (General Development Order) 1995 and will, therefore, not require planning permission.

In addition, listed building consent is required under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for the carrying out of external and internal alterations to listed buildings. Conservation area consent is also required under the same Act for substantial works of demolition to unlisted buildings within conservation areas.

It is advised that the Planning Information Office is contacted on 020 7361 2079 for application forms, information and advice as to the requirement for consent.

This Council seeks to resist the carrying out of inappropriate alterations and extensions to artists' studios. This aim is supported by relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan. Whilst, in some cases, consent may not be required for certain works, the following guidance sets out good practice which may be followed whatever the circumstances.

All original and later features of interest in artists' studios should be retained and repaired in situ, wherever possible.

If lost features are being reinstated or if it can be demonstrated that the replacement of certain features must occur, then the new works should match the original with regard to the methods used and in detail. Materials used for alterations and repairs should match the original in terms of colour, texture and quality.

EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS

Generally, alterations should preserve the structure, character and appearance of an artists' studio building. The overall form and proportions, coupled with the characteristic elements such as large window openings or model access doorways should be maintained. In addition, artists' studios may form part of a group. Purpose-built groups of studios, such as Pembroke Studios, often have a formal composition which should be respected. It is also vital to consider the way in which the studio building fits into the wider context of the surrounding townscape and/or Conservation Area. Any alterations should preserve or enhance this relationship.

Proposed modern extensions should not dominate the studio building in either scale, material or situation. A sensitive handling of design and detail will be required in order to protect the unique character and appearance of these buildings. All schemes involving proposed extensions will be assessed in relation to relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan.

Any proposed external works to the residential sections of a studio building will be considered in accordance with relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan and guidance contained within the English Heritage document “[London terrace houses 1660 - 1860 A guide to alterations and extension](#)”.

WINDOWS

Existing windows, in particular the studio windows, should be retained and repaired unless they are in a very poor condition or a later replacement of an inappropriate design. Old glass should be protected, retained or reused.

Where new windows are required, particular consideration should be given to ensuring that the pattern and dimensions of the reinstated glazing bars match existing. Standard factory-made windows in timber, aluminium, plastic or galvanised steel are not acceptable. Such replacements are almost always damaging to the character and appearance of the existing building as the proportions and cross sections of the individual members are invariably different from the originals. In addition, double-glazed sealed units should also be avoided. Carefully designed secondary glazing can sometimes offer an acceptable alternative provided that it does not compromise panelled window reveals or other internal details. Weather-stripping and draught-proofing are also less visually intrusive, can improve thermal efficiency and are much cheaper than replacement of existing windows. The existing depth to which windows frames are recessed should be respected.

Studio Window
44, Tite Street



INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

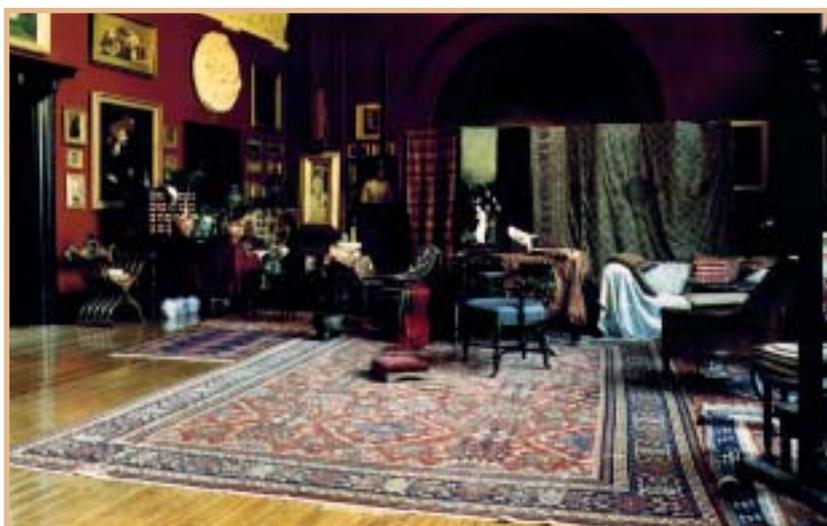
Interiors should always be considered and, in the case of listed buildings, consent will be required for alterations which affect their special character.

The plan form of studio buildings contributes to their character and special interest.

The subdivision of the floor area or introduction of a new level into studio space will be resisted. Such intervention can detrimentally alter the character of these properties as it results in a loss of the sense of height and space. Both elements contribute to the character of these studio spaces. In addition, a new floor which cuts across a large studio window will, typically, be visible externally. The junction between the two usually appears clumsy and reads as a physical sub-division of the expanse of window opening.

If the original studio and gallery survive intact then the presumption will be against the carrying out of alterations. The addition of a gallery area may, in certain circumstances, be appropriate if the studio space has already been altered extensively and if associated works would allow for a significant improvement in the character of the studio. Any new gallery should be subordinate to the studio space, should be unobtrusive by virtue of its size and design and should be set away from studio windows. A simple stairway or ladder should afford access to the gallery.

Characteristic elements, such as the models' staircase, trap doors, model changing rooms and store areas adjacent to studio, should be retained.



Studio at
Leighton House

REFERENCES

1. Ransome A,
Bohemia in London,
Oxford University Press 1984
2. Girouard M,
**Sweetness and Light
The Queen Anne Movement 1860-1900**,
Mark Butler and Tanner Ltd 1984
3. Walkley G,
Artists Houses in London 1764-1914,
Scolar Press 1994
4. **Survey of London Volume XXXVII
North Kensington**
The Athlone Press/University of London
Published for the Greater London Council 1973
5. Lambourne L,
The Aesthetic Movement,
Phaidon Press 1996
6. Saint A,
Richard Norman Shaw,
Yale University Press 1983
7. Holme T,
Chelsea,
Hamish Hamilton 1972



CONSULTATION

Eight external organisations were specifically consulted with regard to the Guidance. These included English Heritage, The Victorian Society, The Chelsea Society, The Kensington Society and The Royal Society of Sculptors.

In addition, a notification letter was included within the weekly list of planning applications sent to subscribing bodies.

Copies of the draft SPG were also made available for inspection at the Town Hall.

Responses were received from two external consultees.

A summary of the responses received and the Council's response to the representation is contained in a **Key Decision Report** dated 14 June 2004, reference **01547/04/P/A**

Copies of the **Key Decision Report** may be obtained from the Council's web site at **www.rbkc.gov.uk** or email the Cabinet Coordinator at **cabinet.coordinator@rbkc.gov.uk**

NOTES.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin brown border, occupying the central portion of the page. It is intended for the user to write notes.

LEIGHTON HOUSE MUSEUM AND LINLEY SAMBOURNE HOUSE

Leighton House Museum and Linley Sambourne House are two fine artists' studios in the Holland Park area. They are managed by the Royal Borough and are open to the general public.

Leighton House Museum

Location: 12 Holland Park Road, London, W14 8LZ

Tel: 020 **7602 3316**

web: www.rbkc.gov.uk/leightonhousemuseum

email: museums@rbkc.gov.uk

Linley Sambourne House

Location: 18 Stafford Terrace, London, W8 7BH

Tel: 020 **7602 3316 ext. 305** Monday to Friday

Tel: **07976 060 160** Saturday and Sunday

web: www.rbkc.gov.uk/linleysambournehouse

email: museums@rbkc.gov.uk

For further information or additional copies contact

Location: **The Planning Information Office**

Third Floor

The Town Hall

Hornton Street

London W8 7NX

Tel: 020 **7361 2080**

web: www.rbkc.gov.uk

email: planning@rbkc.gov.uk

