

When the enlargement of a house is being considered the roof may seem the direction in which to extend.

Rooflines are extremely sensitive to change, and any alteration in a group of uniform design can be visually detrimental. Even in cases already characterised by variety among neighbouring properties much harm can be done by insensitive changes of scale, the inappropriate choice of materials, 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 Development and the Law).

When considering applications for alterations to buildings at roof level, and additional storeys, the Council will adhere to the categories set out on the map on p 61 as amplified by the text on p.59-62. *

Category 1

A few of the streets within the three conservation areas defy policy on additional storeys and other roof alterations because of the individual nature of the buildings they contain, for example Numbers 1-61 **Kensington High Street** and parts of **Victoria Road**. Most of the properties in these streets have already been subject to a variety of alterations, and proposals for further change will be considered on their merit, and in relation to the factors set out within the policy on p53.

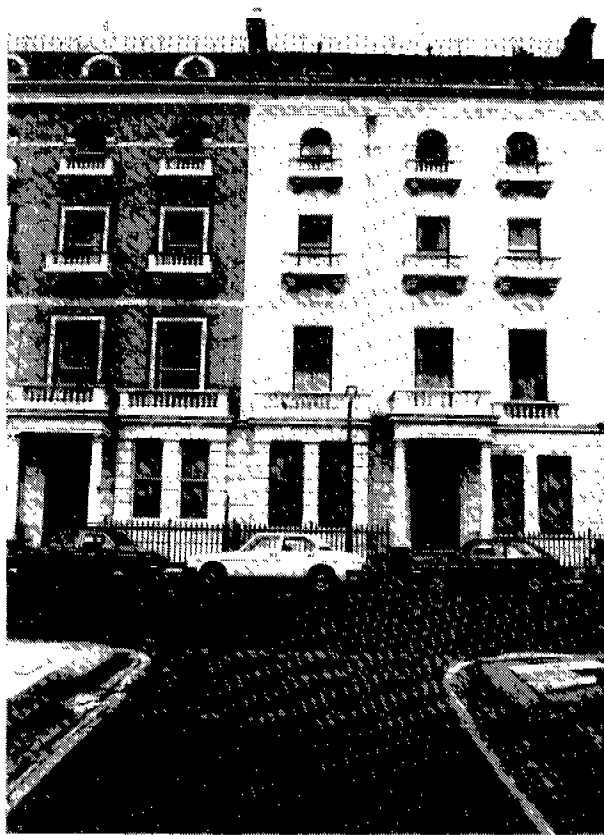


Kensington High Street

Category 2

On houses with a parapet hiding a shallow pitched roof or central valley 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. Most of the terraces in this category, for example Numbers 36-54 (even) **Stanford Road** and 37-47 (inclusive) **Emperor's Gate** have not yet been subject to any alteration at roof level, and as so few examples of original rooflines remain in these

conservation areas, or even within the Borough as whole, it is important that future proposals for change should continue to be resisted.



Emperor's Gate

Category 3

There are a number of terraces and groups, however, where alterations to the roofline may be acceptable. Where there are existing dormers in pitched roof spaces, the addition of further dormers to match others in the terrace or in the roof slopes may be considered relatively harmless, for example in **Albert Place** and **Grenville Place**.

Although **Launceston Place** and **Canning Place** have been included under category 3 it is only the addition of roof windows to the REAR roof slopes which would be acceptable in these streets, and proposals to remove the existing dormer windows on the front of 29 Launceston Place and 3 Canning Place would be welcome.

The dormers in **Victoria Grove** are now unfortunately rather varied in scale and style and detract from the uniformity of these otherwise extremely attractive terraces. One of the most recent additions at Number 13 appears considerably more obtrusive as built than in plan form, and will not be considered an acceptable precedent when applications are received for new dormers or changes to existing dormers elsewhere in the street. Number 19 is a more acceptable precedent.



Victoria Grove — dormers

Category 4

The final category comprises those terraces within this area where the addition of an extra storey might be acceptable, for example, **Cornwall Gardens**. A number of roof extensions have already been built in these terraces, and carefully designed roof additions to the remaining properties may help to reintroduce a greater degree of uniformity to the roofline. A number of the existing extensions are in poor physical condition and detract from the attractiveness of the terraces. Proposals to improve these extensions to be more in keeping with the scale and style of the terraces are encouraged.

This fourth category also includes a number of individual cases where a suitable storey may add to rather than detract from the streetscene.



Cornwall Gardens — fourth storey

Where a roof extension or alteration is acceptable in principle or does not require specific consent residents will be expected to adhere to the guidelines set out below, which are applicable in most situations:

- a. Where dormer windows are introduced for the first time, they should in most cases line up with the windows on the floor below, or alternatively relate to the symmetry of the elevation below.
- b. Although some existing extensions may be far

CATEGORIES FOR ROOF EXTENSIONS MAP

Category 1

All the buildings in this category are individual and defy general policy. A number are statutorily listed and the presumption on these is against change. There may, however, be a precedent for change, and each application will be considered on its merits, in relation to the architectural style of the property itself and of neighbouring rooflines, and in the light of any intended improvements to existing alterations.

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Category 2

Absolutely no change to the roofs. In most cases within this category either the buildings are listed and are of uniform design or a roof extension or dormer window would constitute an extra storey on a terrace with a comparatively or largely unaltered roofline.

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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 subject to detailed design approval to match others in the terrace or the positioning of dormers on the rear of houses with pitched roofs.

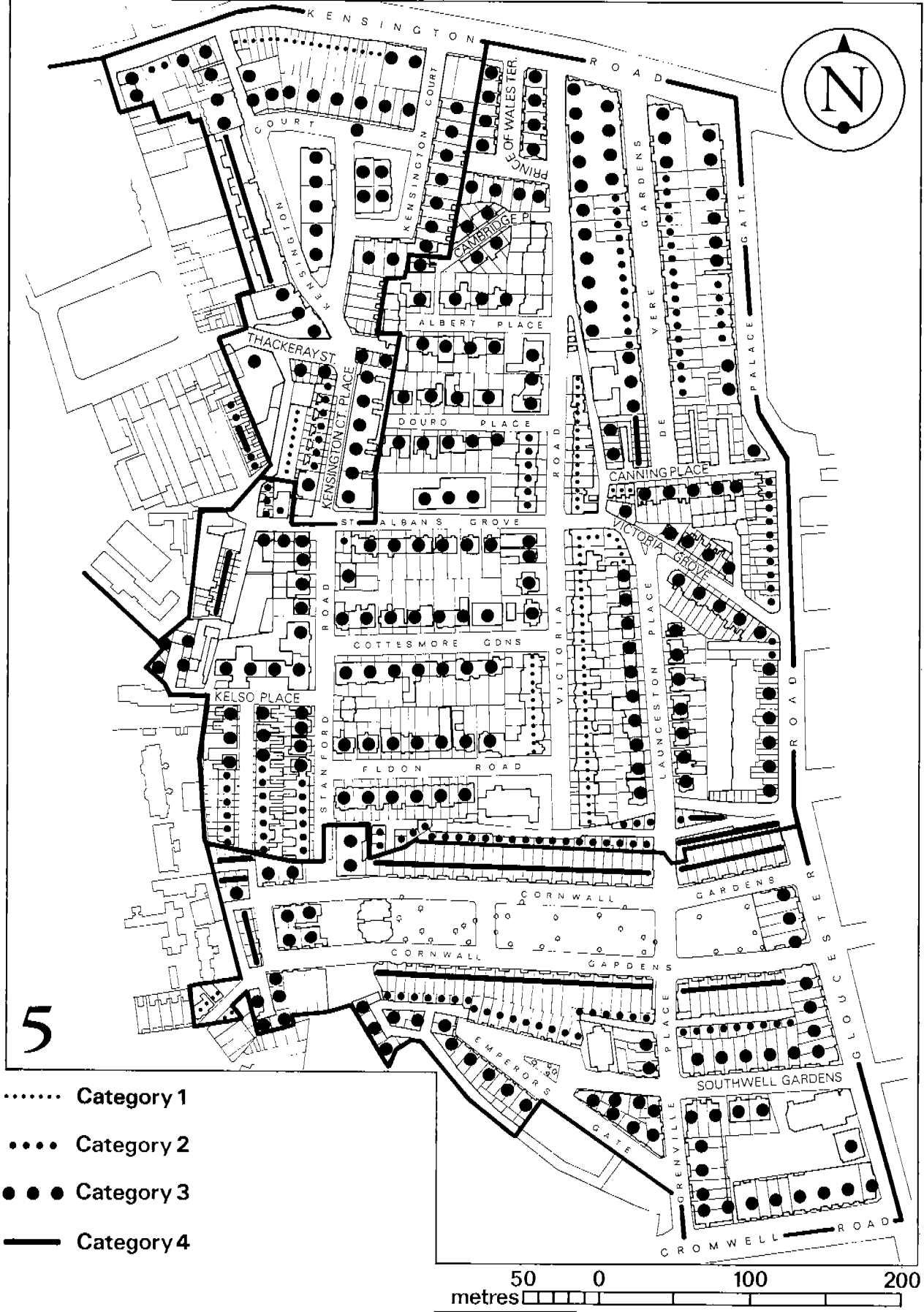
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Category 4

Additional storeys might be acceptable where not already introduced, 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 the design). This category principally includes terraces where uniformity has been lost due to diverse roof extensions and where carefully designed roof additions to the remaining properties would help to reunite the terrace.

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DE VERE, KENSINGTON COURT AND CORNWALL



Roof lines

from ideal in detailed execution, the retention of a profile and positioning similar to neighbouring roof additions can help to retain or restore uniformity in a terrace. There is always the opportunity for improved detailing.

- c. Chimney stacks and pots should be retained even if they need to be raised to a higher level.
- d. Party wall parapets should be restricted to the minimum dimensions necessary to comply with the London Building Acts. They should be kept back from the front parapets, and sloped at a uniform angle throughout any particular terrace.
- e. The materials used should relate to those used on the rest of the building and within the terrace or building group.
- f. Water tanks, lift housings and other roof structures should be located within the roofspace whenever possible.

Section 17.4 of the District Plan should also be consulted.

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.

Rear Extensions

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

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. Reproducing 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).

Retention of communal garden space is also important. No further development will be allowed in St. Stephen's Church Garden other than the Church Room which has already been approved.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION

The Council will encourage residents to adhere to the guidelines set out in the following sections when carrying out routine maintenance, repairs or undertaking new building works. *

If grants were to become more readily available, preference would be given to the restoration of those features of most impact, especially stucco detailing. *



Stucco work — Garden House Cornwall Gardens

Stucco

An important townscape feature of the Victorian architecture in the area is the stucco work, most of which is generally in good repair, but there are examples from nearly every street where restoration would significantly improve the appearance of both the individual building and a whole group. *

Originally, stucco was used as a cheap substitute for stone, and was either left unpainted or colour washed to resemble Bath stone. There are now few unpainted examples within the area, although most of the mews arches remain in their original unpainted state.

The main value of stucco decoration, especially in terraces which are of a formal composition, is to emphasise the continuity of a building group, 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 **Prince of Wales Terrace** when viewed from **Kensington Road**.

Stucco rendering and cornices have an important practical function as well as being visually attractive. The stucco acts as a weatherproof 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. *

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

The Council will publicise information on the care of stucco. *

Paint and Brickwork



Painted mews houses

Similar to stucco ornamentation the main objective of painting should be to emphasise the uniformity of each terrace, or group buildings, rather than the individuality of the houses within them. *

Facing brickwork has the advantage that its visual appeal generally increases with age and it is therefore regrettable in most cases if it is painted and its attractive appearance masked from view. Once painted it requires regular redecoration. Proper maintenance does require periodic repointing, and the older the brickwork the more important it is to consider carefully the speci-

cation for the work, in order to avoid introducing an unfortunate range of tones to the brickwork, or too dense a mix of mortar in relation to the porosity of the brick. It is also advised that a crude weather-struck joint should be avoided, in favour of a traditional flush or slightly recessed joint. *

On a house with a brick facade, it is only any stucco ornament which should be painted, perhaps highlighting the detailing in white or a light stone colour. Uniform balconies on terraced groups such as 3-25 **Kensington Court** should be painted in the same colour to emphasise the unity of this group of listed buildings. *

One type of property where this general rule has been consistently broken is in the mews found in the De Vere conservation area. The brickwork of the majority of these small scale houses has been painted, the variety of colour introduced is now a characteristic of these mews, and may be considered attractive in perhaps otherwise rather architecturally unexciting building groups.

There are several groups, as well as individual houses where the facades are of painted stucco, including **Prince of Wales Terrace, Launceston Place, Albert Place** and **Cornwall Gardens**. Painting stucco terraces and groups in a uniform shade enhances their character and an overall colour scheme agreed by the residents of a terrace could over time greatly improve some streets. As a general rule, pastel or brighter colours are ill-advised, but sandy and other natural shades do look attractive with contrasting (white) stucco details. *

Proprietary spray coatings are now increasingly popular, but there is a danger that these coats can quickly become dirty, and may even crack and are then hard to repair. Although not immediately noticeable, a more serious long-term disadvantage is that these coatings prevent the underlying material from 'breathing' causing problems of damp to set in. A further drawback is that most of them provide a finish which is rough textured, whereas stucco work should have a smooth appearance. They are particularly inappropriate when carried over delicate mouldings, obscuring their profile. *



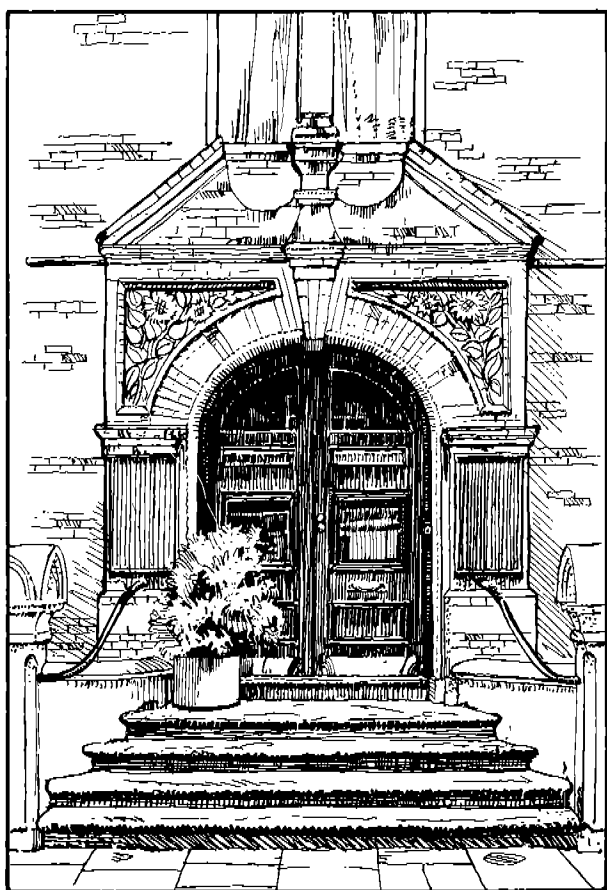
Launceston Place — east side

Ideally terraces should be painted simultaneously to an agreed colour scheme, as paint ages rapidly and communal schemes may also save money. If this cannot be arranged, the individual properties should follow a unified paint scheme, agreed by all residents in the terrace, or at the very least the colour scheme for any one building should be compatible with neighbouring properties. *

With the exception of one property, all the houses in **Cornwall Gardens** are painted, but unfortunately a range of colours has now been introduced, which detracts from these undoubtedly impressive and mostly listed terraces. The introduction of a unified paint scheme would do much to enhance and unify the composition. *

Doors

There is considerable variety to the styles of doors found in the conservation areas, but, unfortunately, only some of these are now original and only a few of the replacement doors manage to reflect the architectural style of the building in which they are set (see p.67 and 68).



Entrance door – Kensington Court Place

It is important when replacing doors to retain the proportions if not the original pattern of the door. Throughout the Victorian period, two, four and six panelled timber doors kept elongated rectangular proportions of the frames. Some good examples can be found in the terraces on the south side of **Victoria Grove** *

(two panels), numbers 37-54 (incl.). **Stanford Road** and numbers 6-17 (incl.) **Kensington Court Place** (four and six panels).

Unless used in the original doors, glass panels should be avoided since they do not respect the function of existing fanlights and can destroy the elegance of the doorway. * Some modern panelled doorways have been misnamed "reproduction Georgian" and have integral fanlights: these are inappropriate.

Nevertheless, the Edwardian period produced some elegant doors using glass intermixed with heavy wooden panels and these stand out in strong relief, especially where the door acts as the centrepiece of an elaborate stone entrance, a variety of examples of these types of doors can be found in **Kensington Court**.

Original internal panelled doors are sometimes lost when upgraded fire resistance is required.

Windows



Stanford Road

Windows and in particular the pattern of their glazing bars make a significant contribution to the appearance of the elevations of an individual building, and can enhance or destroy the unity of a terrace, especially when the terrace is viewed at close proximity. The

conservation areas reveal a number of window styles but it is important that a single pattern of glazing bars should be retained within any group of uniform design. *

Until the 1840's crown glass was used for windows and this limited the size of individual panes to about one square foot. As a general rule, in the early and mid Victorian terraces, each half of the sash was usually wider than it was high, but its division into six or more panes emphasised the window's vertical proportions. Such glazing patterns are found in **South End Row** and **Cambridge Place**, for example.

Most of the buildings within the two areas were built in the second half of the nineteenth century. Sheet glass and plate glass, in place of crown glass, was becoming commercially available by the mid-Victorian period. The



Cambridge Place

size of the panes became progressively larger, and by the 1870's one sheet of glass per sash was more common, especially on the fronts of the grander terraces. This simple pattern is found in **Emperor's Gate** and in **Southwell Gardens**. Some of the terraces introduced slight deviations, for example, in **Stanford Road**, each sash is vertically divided in two. It is inappropriate in these later terraces to introduce the more detailed glazing pattern which is found in the earlier Victorian terraces. *

Window frames should be in timber to match the original material and such materials as aluminium or plastic are out of character in buildings of this period. When restoring glazing bars it is important to use the correct cross section which may be so slender as to require hardwood and not one of today's rather heavier softwood sections. *

Generally glazing bars should be painted white, or in a light colour to match other painted detail on the house. * One exception are the listed properties in **Launceston**

Place, Victoria Grove and **Canning Place**. Here the majority of the window frames and glazing bars are painted black, which corresponds with the other architectural detailing on the front elevations, and contrasts well with the white painted stucco. The terraces would appear much improved if all the owners were able to agree on the same colour scheme for the glazing bars. *



Victoria Grove

Plumbing, Wires, Aerials and Burglar Alarms

Even the most attractive buildings, which are in good state of repair and decoration, can be completely spoilt by the modern predominance of wires and aerials. Their unsightliness can be attributed solely to poor workmanship on installation, and this problem appears to be particularly common where properties have been divided into flats. Any pipework or wires required when a property is converted and which cannot be accommodated internally should be routed down a rear or side elevation. The Council will seek to avoid external * pipes and wires on principal elevations.

Wires are particularly intrusive when there are few architectural features to hide them, and on stucco facades where they are contrasted on a colour background. This is emphasised where the wires cross the cornice line, destroying its continuity. The colour

contrast may be due to the wire not matching the facade or to its attraction of dirt. All wires are particularly unsightly when they trail unfixed across the frontage.

If wires do have to be fixed to a front elevation, their effect may be minimised by running them vertically along the line of downpipes and horizontally along gutters and string courses and by matching cable colour to the background. Wires are rarely obtrusive if fixed securely and, unlike many improvements discussed in this chapter, tidying up wires is both cheap and quick. *

Where aërials are placed on the roof, they should be as far to the rear as possible, behind the parapet line on low pitched roofs and on the back pitch of pitched roofs so that they are screened from the street.

Dish aërials to receive signals broadcast by satellite may shortly become familiar features in residential areas. As they may well be up to 900mm diameter their indiscriminate erection could easily detract significantly both from individual buildings and from entire areas. Local residents will share a common concern with the Council to avoid harming either the character or the appearance of the conservation areas by their introduction.

To the extent that they are subject to specific planning control the Council in their response to proposals for the erection of dish aërials will attach great weight to visual amenity. *

Many residents consider that burglar alarms are one of the most intrusive of modern features: the brightly coloured boxes are usually displayed predominantly as a deterrent. Placing the same boxes behind the balustrade of balconies, above cornices, or on the sides of houses and painting them to match the elevation does much to camouflage and nullify their intrusiveness. Even with these corrective measures, the alarm boxes will be obvious enough to those with an interest in them. *

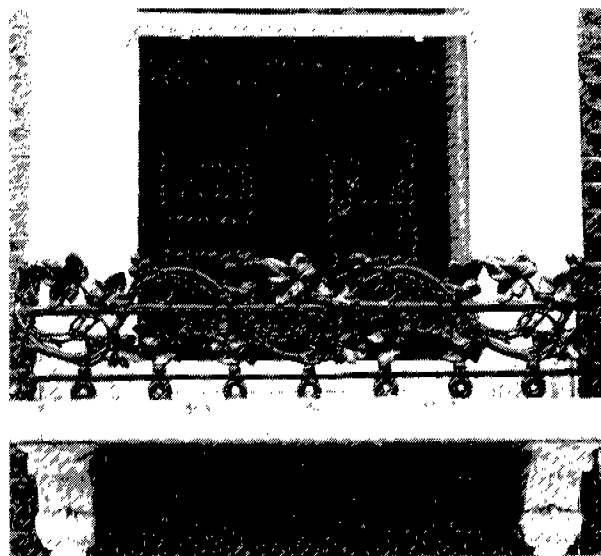


Pipes on Mews

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 examples of both do remain in the area, for example the pot guards in **Cambridge Place**. Once broken or lost, these features are difficult to repair or replace. However, the recent availability of



Pot guard — St. Albans Grove

reproduction door knockers, letter flaps and door knobs has encouraged many to decorate their front doors, although styles need to be chosen with care. *

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

Balcony railings are important features which contribute to the group composition of terraces, for example in **Prince of Wales Terrace**. Any restoration or repairs should be in replica with the rest of the terrace. *

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. In **Kensington Court** there is a novel instance of wrought iron numbers designed as part of the railings of the property. *

