BATHGATE ROAD DESIGN GUIDE

This guide has been prepared to explain the powers and policies of the council in relation to development in the neighbourhood and to explain how you, as a resident, can contribute towards the preservation and enhancement of the area. The guide aims to highlight the important features of the area that contribute to its character and how improvements can be carried out in such a way as to preserve or enhance its character.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

A Conservation area is an area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Bathgate Road Conservation Area was designated as a Conservation area by the Council in June 1989.

The Council can control some changes in the Conservation Area through the use of its planning powers. However, "permitted development rights", which allow for householders to undertake some changes without formal permission, may result in small scale changes which cumulatively may have a large impact on the character of Bathgate Road Conservation Area.

Although many of the recommendations included in this guide are advisory only, they provide a reference for good design practise, and as such will be taken into account when any planning applications are considered. Permission will not normally be granted for developments or proposals which would harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Examples of good and bad development proposals are emphasized throughout the guide. Sensitive alterations and careful maintenance will also help to preserve the character of the area as well as enhancing the values of properties.

If you are in any doubt as to whether Planning Permission is required for alterations to your property, or whether you require any advice on design matters, please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Services Department at the address given in the back of this guide.
PROPERTIES WITHIN THE BATHGATE ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

The Bathgate Road Conservation Area covers a number of properties, not only in Bathgate Road, but also in the surrounding roads, as indicated on the map below.

LOCAL HISTORY

Bathgate Road is situated on land that once formed part of the Wimbledon Park Estate. The estate covered a large area extending from Parkside to Dunsmoor Road, and was originally enclosed about the time of the Armada by Thomas Cecil, the builder of one of the great Elizabethan manor houses. It was originally known as 'New Park', the old park being on the other side of the common where the Royal Wimbledon Golf Course is today.

In the mid 18th Century, the then owner of the park, Earl Spencer, employed 'Capability' Brown to make the park an ornamental one. This resulted in the creation of a large lake and several tree lined avenues. However, the estate did not see any major developments until 1846 when John Augustus Beaumont bought the park and its large mansion from the Spencer family. Beaumont planned to turn Wimbledon Park into 'a site for villa dwellers' which 'would have no rival in England'. Soon after he had
brought it, he began selling plots of land along its western edge by the Common. As a result, a number of large architect-designed mansions began to appear, all within their own spacious grounds. The first of these buildings went up along Parkside and in newly laid roads behind it, such as Somerset Road.

At about this time, 'Aurham Road' was laid out. However, its name was later changed to Queensmere Road, named after Queensmere Lake which was dug out in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

In 1870, Beaumont began to develop the rest of the estate to the east, where Arthur Road now lies. The map overleaf shows how the area looked around 1873-4 with Bathgate Road having only just been laid out. It was intended that this road should go right across the park to the new railway line on the eastern edge of the park, although this never happened. This road too, had a different name when it was first laid out. Originally named New Park Road, it was later renamed in the honour of Alderman Bathgate, three times mayor of Wimbledon.

The map shows the area surrounding Bathgate Road in 1873-4. Large houses and lodges in spacious grounds were a characteristic of this area and time, especially alongside Wimbledon Common.

(Reproduced from Ordnance Survey map)
**LOCAL HISTORY**

Major developments in the area occurred when the District Railway was extended from Putney Bridge to Wimbledon in 1889, and a new station built at Wimbledon Park. This resulted in the eastern part of the Wimbledon Park Estate being engulfed in new residential development, around the Vineyard Hill area. Only the central area of the estate which included the lake was preserved, mainly thanks to the efforts of Beaumont's daughter, Lady Lane.

Queensmere House, the large Victorian stone-built building set in spacious grounds adjoining Bathgate Road, also falls within the Conservation Area. This building is very detailed, exhibiting period features of the early 1900's.

The buildings at the northern end of Bathgate Road, and a few at the southern end were built between 1913 and 1930, whilst those in the central area were constructed after 1930. However, both Bathgate and Queensmere Roads remained quiet and the surrounding areas largely undeveloped until 1959 when the first of many small roads and closes were created in the surrounding area. Nevertheless, the area still retains some of this unique country atmosphere.

**THE LANDSCAPE**

Bathgate Road is characterised by a variety of mature trees and informal grass verges, which give the road a semi-rural appearance. The topography of the area is also a distinctive feature, with noticeable changes in ground levels, providing much visual interest.

There is some 20 metres difference in height between the highest point at the southern end of Bathgate Road, near Wimbledon Common, and its central section near its junction with Queensmere Road. This section of Bathgate Road is on a hill, overlooking the All England Lawn and Tennis Club to the east. However, what could be dramatic views into and out of the area are restricted from the street by the dense tree cover and mature vegetation.

The design of the houses, their positioning, and the spaces between the buildings, the extensive tree cover and the mature landscaped frontages all create an attractive townscape which is worthy of Conservation Area status.
THE BUILDINGS

Whilst the majority of the buildings are of comparatively modern construction compared with some of the Borough's other Conservation Areas, they are nevertheless good examples of their time. The properties along the street are mainly large detached family houses, many of which were built in the 1920's and 30's. All of the houses are set back from the road and most have mature landscaped front gardens which contribute immensely to the character of the area. The generous spaces between buildings are also an important feature, helping to create a unique rural atmosphere.

The houses in the area vary considerably in terms of architectural styles, ranging from flat roofed modern designs through to more traditional designs using pitched roofs and a variety of traditional architectural features. The majority of the dwellings are attractive, and few insensitive alterations have been carried out. Those buildings at the northern end of Bathgate Road are all of a similar style, having been built at the same time. These buildings feature steeply pitched roofs with hipped ends or half gables, usually with hanging tiles at first floor level and white rendered walls at ground floor level. Large porches with pitched roof's are a prominent feature of these houses.

The rest of the houses in Bathgate Road vary, with each building exhibiting its own architectural style and built of differing materials. However, many of the dwellings have large, interesting porches of differing styles, many of which form the focal point of each building. Windows with leaded glass are also a common feature, as are patterned brick panels between timber frames. Garages are incorporated into most of the house designs and all have large front and rear gardens, most of which have mature vegetation within them, thereby enhancing the setting of each individual house.

Queensmere House, (Southlands College) and its immediate surroundings, also falls within the Conservation Area. The main Victorian building, which is included on the Council's Local List of Buildings of Historical or Architectural Interest, is set in extensive and attractive grounds, contributing to the open nature...
THE BUILDINGS

of this Conservation Area. The other buildings that lie within these grounds, which are of the inter-war and post-war period are of limited architectural merit, but are also set in well landscaped areas, surrounded by open space and woodland.
GARDENS

The front gardens are particularly important in contributing to the character of the area, as together with the mature trees and wide, informal grass verges that line the road, they are important in the softening of the street scene, creating a very rural, informal atmosphere. Both front and rear gardens also contribute significantly to the nature conservation and ecological value of the area. The green setting contributes to the character of the houses. Where possible the planted hedges in the front garden area should be retained and where appropriate regularly trimmed, bearing in mind the informal nature of the area. Where boundaries have been removed, consideration should be given to reinstating them with hedging. This can not only improve the appearance of the area, but also increase security and privacy of individual buildings. The use of mature plants should be encouraged for immediate effect.

Brick walls or fencing should be avoided as they will detract from the rural nature of the area. If absolutely necessary, wooden slatted fencing would be most appropriate, supplemented by substantial planting either side. The planting should then be allowed to grow through and over the fence, and thereby eventually obscure it. The paving of front gardens should be avoided as the landscape setting contributes considerably to the character of the houses. Wherever possible, shrubs, trees and hedges should always be retained. Whilst there is the pressure to use front gardens for the parking of cars, this will unfortunately involve the loss of vegetation, and should be avoided. However, if absolutely necessary, and with careful planning, the impact can be minimised. It should always be possible to retain a considerable amount of soft landscaped area with shrubs and trees adjacent to the houses and front boundaries. When considering new landscaping schemes for either front or rear gardens, a balance should be maintained between native and non-native trees and plants.
Trees contribute much to the character of the streets throughout Merton, but particularly in the Bathgate Road Conservation Area which is a very well-wooded area. For this reason a number of Tree Preservation Orders have been made in the area to prevent unauthorised trimming, lopping, cutting down or uprooting of those trees that are considered to be of special importance. The main species of trees that are typical of this area and which contribute to its unique character include cypress, birch, hawthorn, beech, pine and oak. A large number of these trees outdate the houses and it is important to ensure that the woodland atmosphere that they create, is maintained.

All of the trees in the area greatly improve landscape amenity and enhance the setting and appearance of buildings. They also provide a valuable habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. It is vital therefore, that care is taken to protect and maintain existing and new trees, both in front and rear gardens, as well as any street trees.

Before undertaking any type of work to a tree within a Conservation Area you usually need to make a written application to the Council at least six weeks in advance of the proposed works. Only in a few exceptional cases is prior notification not required. You should therefore always check with the Council if you are planning to carry out any works to trees. If a Tree Preservation Order is made, or if one already exists, then you also need the Council's permission before doing any work to that tree.

The Council operates a Volunteer Tree Warden Scheme, which encourages members of the public to become involved in the care of trees within their locality. The scheme is also a way of alerting the Council to any damage to trees, such as vandalism, disease or bad management. A contact telephone number is given at the end of this guide.
GRASS VERGES

There are no pedestrian footways or solid kerblines for the majority of the length of Bathgate Road. In their place are grass verges which are important in creating the special character of the area. Whilst these verges are privately owned, usually by the owners of the adjoining property, there is however a public right of access over them. It is also likely that there are public lighting cables running under the grass verges.

Residents are encouraged to maintain these verges in keeping with the nature of the area. Where grass verges have already been removed, either completely or partially, or where they are in a poor condition, then consideration should be given to reinstating them, preferably to the greatest possible width. The provision of car parking spaces in these areas should be avoided, as this will encourage on-street parking which will, in turn, detract from the amenity of the street scene. Concreting over of the verges will also have the effect of widening the road and perhaps increasing traffic speeds. Thus any hard surfacing of these areas should be avoided.

The use of formal edging, concrete bollards or kerbstones should also be avoided. Small wooden posts or rocks are a far more appropriate and attractive way of preventing the parking or driving of vehicles on the verges.

If all residents were to consider protecting their verges in this way, then the entire length of Bathgate Road would be protected from the problems associated with on-street parking such as the deterioration of the verges. In any case, most properties already have sufficient room within their own curtilages for off-street parking for both occupiers and any visitors.

CAR PARKING

Bathgate Road is a partly private, residential street, which is limited in width making it difficult to allow two vehicles to pass. The potential for parking on-street is restricted due to the relatively narrow width of the winding road, and the attractive grass verges and street trees. However, the majority of the houses in the area have some form of off-street parking as well as a garage.

The informal grass verges are an important feature of this area, and every attempt should be made to retain and look after them wherever possible. Where front gardens are used for car parking, then not only will vegetation be lost from within the curtilage of the property but the grass verges and some of the street vegetation will also be lost as a result of the need to create a crossover, to allow vehicular access to the property.

Any materials used for surfacing should be selected with care, to ensure that they complement the building and its surroundings. The use of ‘informal’
materials such as hoggin is often more appropriate than a uniform concrete or bitumen surface, although careful attention should always be given to boundaries, to ensure that any overspill of surface materials is prevented. Where the removal of any part of the front boundary is absolutely necessary, then it should be restricted to a minimum width so as to just allow a vehicle access into the property.

The diagram below shows a recommended layout to accommodate a car parking space in a front garden. It should always be possible to retain some soft landscaped areas with trees and shrubs adjacent to the houses, front boundaries, or along the sides of the hardstanding or garage. Any proposals should seek to retain all existing trees, since most trees in a Conservation area are afforded statutory protection. Permission from the Council will be required if any trees are to be removed.

If necessary, consideration should be given to installing appropriate low-level gates across the opening.

In some cases it would be desirable to improve the existing parking facilities in front gardens, especially to provide better landscaping, in line with the recommendations above, whilst still maintaining the informal nature of the area. The Council has also produced a guide on Car Parking in Front Gardens. Please contact the Environmental Services Department if you would like a copy.

AN EXAMPLE OF A FRONT GARDEN LAYOUT TO ACCOMMODATE SPACE FOR THE PARKING OF VEHICLES

- hedging as a boundary and in front of windows as security
- informal surfacing of paths using hoggin
- ample room for trees, shrubs and grassed areas in the front garden
- retention of grass verges outside property (with wooden posts)
- gates across openings for both amenity value and security
GARAGES

The construction of new garages will generally require the Council's permission. Applications for the erection of a garage or garages will be considered on their merits with regard to individual circumstances, the impact that the development will have on the neighbouring properties and the loss of open space and vegetation involved.

Many of the garages in the area are of good design and build, most having been incorporated into the original design of the house. However, if you are considering replacing or building a new garage, then attention should always be given to its relationship with adjacent buildings. They should preferably be recessed behind the building line of the houses and materials should be used that match or compliment the existing dwellings. For example, flat roofed garages can look out of place, pitched roof forms are far more appropriate.

The doors to garages should also be of a design that is sympathetic to, and in keeping with the design of the house. A garage door covers a large area and therefore brightly coloured or metallic doors can detract from the visual amenity of the area. The impact of a garage door can be minimised by using wooden doors, or by painting them a colour that blends in with the surroundings. Similarly, by ensuring that there are small windows incorporated into the design of the door then not only will the visual amenity be improved, but it will also allow natural light into the garage.

Although garages may not always require planning permission, it will be necessary to obtain Building Regulations Approval. For further information you should contact the Environmental Services Department.
ROOF FORMS AND COVERINGS

Due to the topography of the area, the rooflines of many of the houses are a prominent feature in the local landscape. The buildings in Bathgate Road mainly have red or grey, plain tiled roofs with a mixture of hipped roofs, gable ends and tall decorative chimneys. It is important that these features are retained.

The retention of the original roof forms and coverings on all the houses is desirable and the use of materials or treatments which replace or disfigure the traditional coverings should be avoided.

RE-ROOFING

If re-roofing works are to be carried out, existing sound tiles or slates should, if possible, be salvaged and re-used. This should help reduce the cost of the work. If this is not appropriate then a material should be selected that is compatible with the style of the house and the neighbouring dwellings. Some materials, particularly heavy concrete tiles can also affect the structure of the roof.

Flashings should be in lead, and should be installed by an experienced contractor; sand and cement flashings around chimney stacks should be avoided.
LOFT CONVERSIONS

Generally, Planning Permission will be required for any roof extension that would result in an alteration to the roof form. Large projections beyond the roof slope should be avoided. Dormer windows can have a damaging effect on the appearance of a dwelling and if they are absolutely necessary then they should not alter the shape of the roof-line as seen from the street but should be carefully blended into rear roof pitches. Rooflights, where the glazing is in the same plane as the roof tiles, are a far more acceptable way of providing natural light to any roof extension. These should be of a flush style design, of modest dimensions, appropriately positioned and finished to match the colour of the existing roof materials. All types of loft conversion also require Building Regulations Approval, so if you are planning any modifications to the roof, then in the first instance you should seek the Council’s advice.

CHIMNEYS

Chimney stacks should be retained, even if the flues are not used. Pots on disused chimneys can be capped with lead, slate or a ridge tile. However, care must be taken to allow ventilation whilst minimising the penetration of water. In many cases, the chimneys are an important architectural feature of the dwelling. It is important therefore that they are retained and maintained in a reasonable condition.

EXISTING BRICKWORK

Any external brickwork on the houses is an attractive feature which is in keeping with the original design of the dwellings. It should not therefore be painted, rendered, pebble-dashed or clad in stone or reconstituted stone. This may, in any event, increase the amount of maintenance required and the application of paint layers or other covering can reduce the value of the houses. It is possible to remove paintwork from original brickwork, but this should only be undertaken by a specialist contractor with a proven expertise in this field. Sand blasting is not recommended as it is likely to damage the face of the bricks.
REPOINTING

Careless or unnecessary repointing can spoil the appearance of the original brickwork. The old pointing has weathered to blend in with the bricks, and unless badly deteriorated to a point where repointing is essential, it should not be altered. If it does become necessary to repoint, then it should be undertaken by an experienced contractor.

RENDERED WALLS

Where the brickwork has been rendered or pebbledashed as part of the original design of the house, this should be retained and maintained in a reasonable state of repair, and may be painted to protect it further against weathering.

Where pebble-dashing rendering or stone cladding has been added to the original brick walls, then there is no real possibility of restoring the original finish. Consideration in these cases should be given to rendering the facade with a smooth finish, and to paint it a colour that matches the adjacent brickwork. Stone cladding can be removed although it will not generally be possible to restore the brickwork to its original condition, however it can be rendered and painted in a similar manner.

Different types of pointing
GUTTERS AND EXTERNAL FIXINGS

Cast-iron is generally more durable than plastic and should be considered when gutters and down-pipes are replaced. Other materials that are available include powder-coated aluminium, which looks very similar to cast-iron and can be cheaper. Whatever material is used, it should always be black in colour. Consideration should be given to using cast-iron or aluminium pipework on more prominent elevations even if plastics are used on rear or secondary elevations. However, the installation of additional pipework on the front elevation should be avoided.

Possible locations for telecommunications equipment.

Apparatus should, wherever possible, be located at the rear of the property and should be as unobtrusive from the street and other public places. The following locations are identified in descending order of acceptability, with A being the most acceptable.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

The installation of satellite dishes, burglar alarms, lighting fixtures or solar panels on the elevations of houses can have a harmful visual effect on both your own as well as your neighbours houses. They can also have a detrimental effect on the character of the Conservation area. Television aerials and other telecommunications equipment should, whenever possible, be sited on the rear of property and mounted below eaves level. In some situations planning permission will be required for the installation of a satellite dish.

LIGHTING

Lighting fixtures should be of a suitable design and carefully located so as not to detract from the character of the house. They should also be positioned in such a way as to ensure that lighting does not adversely affect neighbouring properties. This is especially important in respect of security lighting, which can be very bright and wide ranging.
DOORS AND WINDOWS

The original windows and doors, where surviving, are generally well made and seldom deteriorate if well maintained. Renovation is preferable to replacement. Sills or bottom rails, which may have perished due to exposure to the weather, can be cut out and replaced with new matching pieces joined to the existing in a traditional way.

REPLACEMENT DOORS AND WINDOWS

Where windows or doors have deteriorated to a point that replacement is essential then consideration should be given to new units made to the original design. Timber frames are preferable to other materials. Generally it is difficult to obtain a suitable standard pattern from commercial stockists, although occasionally a standard window or door can be found which can be reasonably modified to fit in with the existing house design. In any case, the glazing bars on
the new windows should follow those of the original design. When replacing the front door, again the replacement should, if possible, be of a similar style as the original to blend in with the entrance porches. Modern replacement windows and doors of different styles, patterns or materials, tend not to blend in well with the existing architectural style and should be avoided.

**NEW DOOR AND WINDOW OPENINGS**

New door and window openings at the side and rear of properties will not normally require the Council's permission. However, they should where possible be carefully designed to copy the original details, and the sizes should be of a scale appropriate to the whole house. For changes to the front elevation you should contact the Council for further advice.

**DOUBLE GLAZING**

If the windows are draughty and you are considering some form of insulation, the best solution is to fit secondary glazing to the insides of the existing windows. This avoids altering the appearance of the elevations yet still achieves the required improved standards. Any divisions can follow the glazing bars of the existing windows. However, where there is no other alternative than double glazing, the design of the windows should match that of the original as far as possible, so as to preserve the character of the houses. Timber frames are preferable to other materials. Aluminium and UPVC replacement windows should be avoided. The Council can assist with advice on the design of windows and suitable suppliers. Care should always be taken to provide opening windows to ensure that adequate ventilation is maintained and that some means of escape is available in case of emergency.
PORCHES

Porches are often constructed from unsympathetic materials and often appear out of character with the house, although a successful porch can be achieved with sensitive design, using traditional materials and incorporating a pitched roof. The addition of porches or bay windows to the fronts of houses may require planning permission and will always require Building Regulations Approval. The closing in of recessed porches can often adversely affect the character of a dwelling and should therefore be avoided. If absolutely essential, they should be in the form of a glazed screen that has been designed with care. Glazing bars and frames should be constructed of timber and should be set back slightly from the building frontage.

Porches such as this one, where the entrance is the main architectural feature of the house, should be retained unaltered.
CONSERVATORIES

Conservatories or verandahs should be lightweight, constructed of painted timber with plain, untinted glazing. They should preferably be located to the rear of the house and be of an appropriate scale and style to the rest of the dwelling.

EXTENSIONS

The houses in Bathgate Road are of considerable size and it is therefore considered that in most cases there will unlikely to be the need to extend them further. However, there is scope for extending some of the houses if absolutely necessary, although this will obviously depend upon the location of the house in relation to the surrounding properties and the space available. Extensions to the sides of properties are generally unlikely to be acceptable, as they will reduce the spacing between buildings and on a cumulative basis would establish a more ‘built-up’ street character, therefore damaging the informal atmosphere which the well spaced buildings currently create. In all cases careful consideration must be given to the effect that any proposal will have on the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring properties and on the general character of the street scene. Where an extension is considered to be acceptable it should respect the original design of the house in terms of window style, proportions, building materials and details. It should be subordinate to the main house, with a pitched roof that follows the style of, or integrates into the existing roofline. Flat roofed extensions should be avoided as they are generally visually unattractive and are more likely to give rise to maintenance problems.

PLANNING ADVICE

Certain extensions will require Planning Permission and will be assessed on their particular merits, taking into consideration their affect upon the amenities of adjoining residents, whether or not they complement the existing building, and whether they have any impact upon the appearance of the area. All extensions require Building Regulations Approval. If you are considering extending your property you should consult The London Borough of Merton’s published guidelines on residential extensions. These are available from the Merton Civic Centre and local libraries. Alternatively you should contact the Development Control Section of the Council’s Environmental Services Department.
NEW BUILDINGS

Any Planning Applications for new buildings will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that the new development blends in with its surroundings in terms of design, scale, massing and materials. New buildings that are visually intrusive, or those that adversely affect the character and atmosphere of the street scene will not be permitted.

All new development will be expected to meet Merton Council's published guidelines for development and commitment to ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are catered for. The Council is also keen to ensure that any new development takes into account personal safety and security issues. Reference should be made to the Council's "Designing Out Crime" publication which is available for inspection at the Borough's libraries and from Merton Civic Centre.

QUEENSMERE HOUSE

The character of the Conservation Area is considerably enhanced by the original stone-built Queensmere House and the open space in front of it. The buildings and grounds have been used as a college for many years by the Roehampton Institute of Education, but there is the possibility that at some stage in the future the existing use may cease and the site vacated. In order to ensure that prospective purchasers have some idea of the appropriate land uses and/or development opportunities for the area, Merton Council has produced a Planning Brief for the site. This was approved by Committee in September 1991 and gives the Councils detailed requirements as to what changes will or will not be permitted.
THE STREET SCENE

All development proposals will also have to adhere to the policies contained with the Borough's Unitary Development Plan and should retain Queensmere House. A large number of trees on the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and these will also need to be retained. Whilst the Planning Brief allows for some new development, it will nevertheless ensure that the open character of the area is maintained in keeping with the characteristics of the Conservation Area.

The Council will endeavour, wherever possible, to maintain the road for which it is responsible in keeping with the characteristics of the Conservation Area. However, the majority of the road is a Private Street, which is a privately maintained highway. Thus it is primarily the responsibility of the residents in Bathgate Road to ensure that both the road and the grass verges are maintained in an appropriate and sympathetic way.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any plans to alter your property, and are in any doubt as to whether Planning Permission is required, or you would like some further information regarding the contents of this brochure, then please do not hesitate to contact the Environmental Services Department of the Council at the following address:

Environmental Services, London Borough of Merton, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX

or by telephone;
Conservation Area Advice (0181) 545 3171

Trees (0181) 545 3815

Development Control (0181) 545 3117

Building Control (0181) 545 3124
TRANSLATION SERVICE

If you need to understand this publication in your own language, please contact Merton Translation Service, 9th Floor, Merton Civic Centre.

Tel: 0181 545 3397.

私たちの手配は、下記の指定ウェブサイトをご利用いただけます。

如果你需要中文譯本，
請聯絡設在市政中心九樓的美敦翻譯服務處。

電話：0181 545 3397