



Supplementary Planning Document  
London Borough of Merton



# Kenilworth Avenue Boundary Assessment



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## **ASSESSMENT OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE KENILWORTH AVENUE CONSERVATION AREA.**

At designation in 1990, the Conservation Area included the following properties:

- 1 – 33 (odds) Kenilworth Avenue
- 2a and 2 – 36 (evens) Kenilworth Avenue
- 1 – 25 (odds) Waldemar Rd
- 2 – 26 (evens) Waldemar Rd
- 1 – 25 (odds) Landgrove Rd
- 2 – 28 (evens) Landgrove Rd

These remained unchanged at the time of initiating this Character Appraisal (February 2005).

### **Assessment of properties within the existing Conservation Area boundary**

The properties within the Conservation Area which lie in Kenilworth Ave, Waldemar Rd and Landgrove Rd possess a strong feeling of coherence and unity. The great majority of the properties within the area follow one of only 2 different architectural designs. The first being the semi detached houses on both sides of Kenilworth Rd, and the second being the terraces of houses on both sides of Waldemar Rd and Landgrove Rd.

These two designs therefore are fundamental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The handful of buildings which do not follow either of these designs are so few as to have little diluting effect.

Without doubt the dominant building type in Kenilworth Rd is, from an architectural point of view, the best to be seen within the Conservation Area. The pairs of semi-detached houses are imposing, and they have a strongly symmetrical elevation. However despite this they are not when viewed individually of outstanding architectural value. However it is their group value which substantially reinforces the character and appearance of Kenilworth Rd. Seen along the length of the road, the series of strong gables which face to the road give a highly distinctive appearance.

The architectural quality of the dominant building type in Waldemar Rd and Landgrove Rd is not of an especially unusual or distinctive character. Their architectural quality is decidedly inferior to that of the grander houses in Kenilworth Rd. Indeed if seen in isolation they would go unnoticed. However their group value, and their concentration in these 2 roads lend added value.

The two dominant building types have clearly evident common detailing, which lends unity to the Conservation Area as a whole. These common details comprise things like foliage decoration carved into the stone lintels and stone capitals used in conjunction with window and door openings, stone bracket detailing at window sills and at the eaves, stone tablets used between the upper and lower bay windows, and ornate ridge tiles.

High quality street design, including stone kerbs, rows of setts within the gulleys, and some street trees add to the overall appearance of the area.

The few houses which do not follow the 2 dominant designs, (at 2a Kenilworth Rd, 21/23/25 Waldemar Rd, and 2/4/6 and 26/28 Landgrove Rd) constitute relatively small and isolated pockets, which are not sufficiently intrusive to warrant their

exclusion. Furthermore if they were to be excluded the resultant boundaries in terms of their defining a coherent area, would be adversely affected.

These few houses are for the most part not damaging to the character of the area, but rather, their effect is neutral.

The one location within the Conservation Area where negative features do exist is at the lower end of Landgrove Rd. Here a vacant and derelict site exists adjacent to no 25, and the building at no 26/28 is sufficiently at variance with the overall character of the area as to be seen as having a negative influence on character and appearance. However these two situations can be seen as opportunities for Conservation enhancement, and for this reason it is felt that they should remain within the Conservation Area.

It is therefore proposed that no properties within the 1990 Conservation Area boundary should be excluded from it.

### **Assessment of properties outwith the existing (1990) Conservation Area boundary**

To the north-east of the existing Conservation Area boundary there are terraces and detached and semi-detached houses in Strathearn Rd and Kenilworth Ave.

The houses in Kenilworth Avenue are far less cohesive in their architectural character than is the case with those within the Conservation Area. Some of these houses do share some common design detailing (for example on window sills and lintels etc at nos. 38 and 40 Kenilworth Ave) with the houses within the Conservation Area, but the overall architectural design is much more disparate. Furthermore there are some buildings which are wholly out of scale and character when viewed in their context, most notably no. 40a Kenilworth Ave. Numbers 35 to 41 have a somewhat unusual design, but they are by no means closely related from a design point of view to the houses within the Conservation Area. They have also suffered from insensitive alterations.

For these reasons a clear view emerges that no alterations in the boundary of the Conservation Area should be made in respect of the NW edge of the Conservation Area in this part of Kenilworth Ave.

Also to the north east of the Conservation Area, in Strathearn Rd, there is a terrace of 4 houses (numbers 1 – 4 consec) which are built to exactly the same design as the majority of the houses in Waldemar Rd and Landgrove Rd. They therefore extend the principle of an area defined by a shared architectural group value. These 4 houses however occupy a quite independent position in relation to the rest of the Conservation Area. They are not really seen in the context of the rest of the group, but are rather a small semi-independent outlier. Beyond those 4 houses the architecture changes markedly, and not for the better.

The balance of advantage in the situation of these 4 houses is a very fine judgement, but overall the view is taken that they should be left out of the Conservation Area. The degree of separation from the rest of the Conservation Area, and (as with most houses in the Conservation Area) the lack of outstanding individual architectural interest is not such as to warrant their inclusion.

On the north-western boundary of the existing Conservation boundary there are back gardens of houses which front towards Dora Rd. This area constitutes a separate

physical entity from that of the Conservation Area, linked, as far as public appreciation is concerned, only by means of Leopold Rd. Furthermore the architectural character of properties in Dora Rd are very different to the tight knit and cohesive architectural groupings we see in the Conservation Area. It is therefore concluded that no boundary alteration should be made on this side of the Conservation Area.

To the south-west of the existing Conservation Area boundary there are terraces of shops and flats, and semi detached houses which front to Leopold Rd.

The shops and flats already lie within a separate Conservation Area (Leopold Rd Conservation Area), and given that the character of the buildings and the land uses, are very different from that of the houses in the Kenilworth Ave Conservation Area, it is right to keep the distinction of two separate Conservation Areas, and leave the Conservation Area boundary unchanged.

Numbers 34/36, and 38 – 56 Leopold Rd are currently not within a Conservation Area. They site on either side of the junction of Kenilworth Ave and Leopold Rd. They are a run of semi detached houses, whose design does not relate closely to that of any of the Conservation Area properties. There are no other features which are considered to be of such interest as to warrant their inclusion in the Conservation Area.

To the south-east of the existing Conservation Area boundary there is Strathearn Rd. The boundary of the Conservation Area runs down the middle of the road.

Strathearn Rd is unusual in that it has houses only on one side (within the Conservation Area). Beyond the road there is the railway line. The houses within the Conservation Area offer only their flank walls towards Strathearn Rd, so this street as a public space, has only an indirect relationship to houses in the Conservation Area.

Strathearn Rd has one very positive townscape feature, and that is a regular row of fine plane trees which are planted along the footway on the SE side of the road. These are all mature trees, though they have been regularly pruned. They are planted at very regular intervals, which gives a strong rhythm to the street. All the trees appear to lean slightly towards the SE, which creates a distinctive appearance when looking along the length of the road. The presence of these trees provides a positive feature for the Conservation Area in that they help to enclose views down the length of both Waldemar Rd and Landgrove Rd.

Given that the trees are within the public highway, and are therefore directly under the control of the Council, there seems no clear reason to extend the protection of a Conservation Area to them.

It is therefore concluded that there should be no extension of the Conservation Area in this direction.

### **Overall Conclusion on Conservation Area boundaries**

No boundary alterations are recommended as a result of this assessment.

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The Character Appraisal is therefore written on the basis of the current Conservation Area boundary being unchanged.



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON  
Environment and Regeneration**

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**Kenilworth Ave Conservation Area  
Plan 2 - Conservation Area Boundary  
Plan No DLU/2159**

Scale: 1/1250

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