



Dunmore Road Character Assessment

DUNMORE ROAD
CONSERVATION AREA

Character Assessment

London Borough of Merton
2004

INTRODUCTION

Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas were first introduced in 1967 and are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Dunmore Road Conservation Area is one of 28 such areas within the Borough, and was designated by Merton Council in 1990. A Design Guide to the Conservation Area has already been produced.

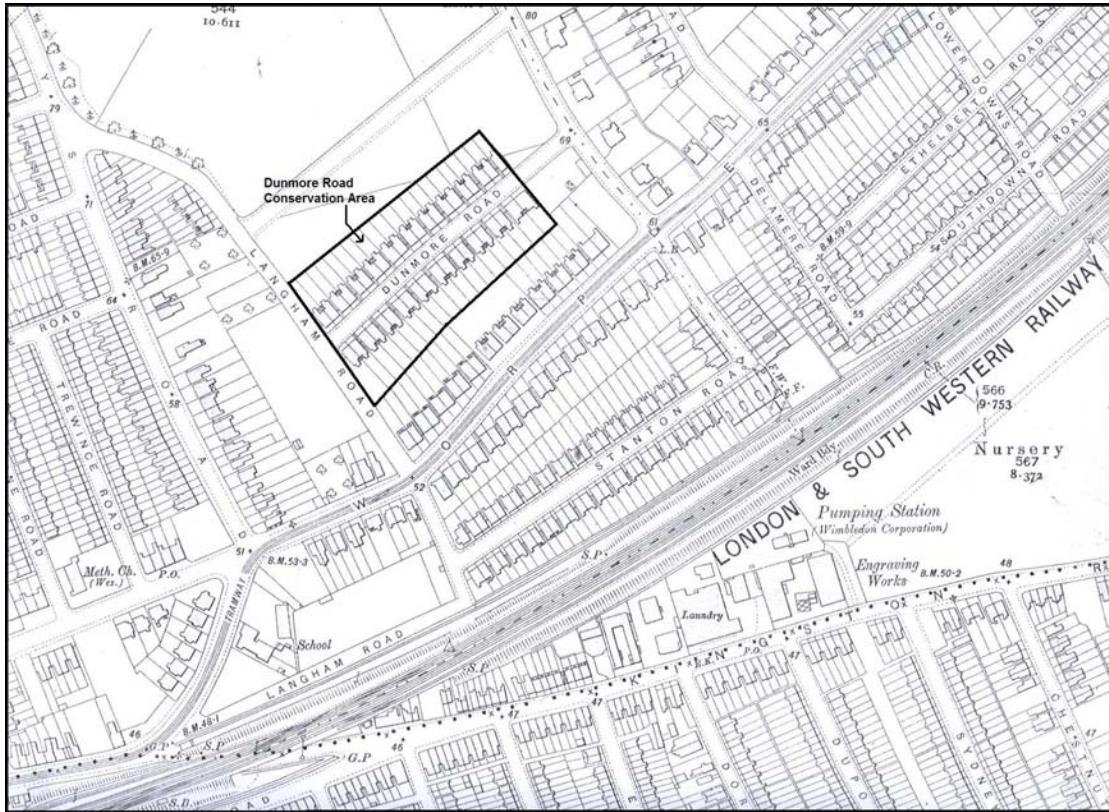
Character Assessments

The Council is required to undertake character assessments of the conservation areas it has designated. It has already produced assessments of many of the Borough's conservation areas and this Assessment forms part of that programme.

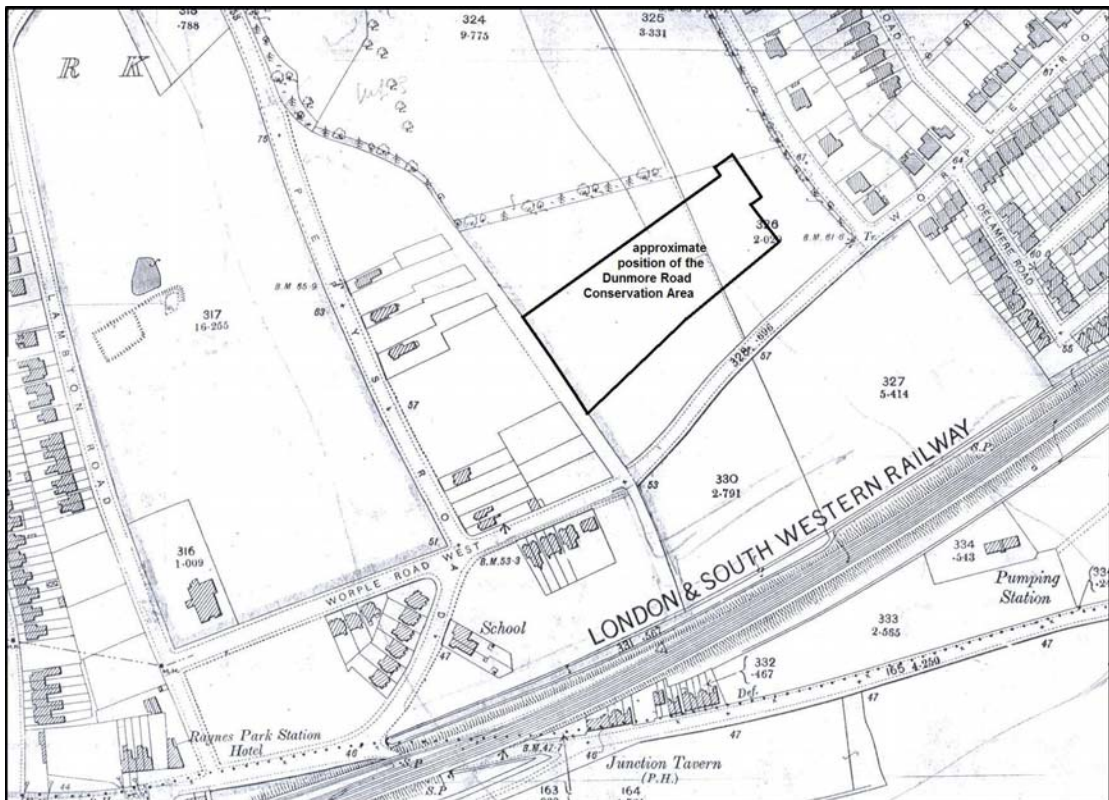
The purpose of a character assessment is to set out the specific characteristics which merited the Area's original designation and which make it worthy of protection against unsuitable alterations or development. The assessments provide a tool to help the Council assess the impact of development proposals, and a guide for property owners and developers when designing new development, considering alterations to buildings and work to trees in a conservation area, by explaining the context to which any proposal will need to relate.

A typical view of Dunmore Road showing the north side, looking east.





The OS Maps of 1898 and 1913 showing the position of the future Dunmore Road as open fields.



Location:

Dunmore Road Conservation Area is situated immediately north of and parallel to Worple Road, the main road connecting Raynes Park and Wimbledon. It lies east of Cottenham Park and south of Wimbledon Common and the Ridgway. Despite its close proximity to a major Distributor Road, the B235, and to Raynes Park shopping centre, it forms a secluded enclave of residential properties and adjoins other residential roads of similar character.

Extent

At 1.7 hectares, Dunmore Road is one of the smallest conservation areas in the Borough. It contains 41 houses, 21 (Nos. 2 to 42, even) on the north side, and 20 (Nos.1 to 39, odd) on the south. It adjoins the considerably larger Wimbledon Conservation Area immediately to the east, and is close to Lambton Road Conservation Area to the west.

History

The land on which Dunmore Road was laid out previously formed part of the estate of Thomas Devas, a leading member of nineteenth century Wimbledon society. Following his death in 1900 the estate was sold off in separate lots, and the houses in Dunmore Road were constructed in about 1907, and the OS map of 1938 shows that it wasn't until later Montana Road and the other properties to the north were developed. Dunmore Conservation Area was designated in 1990.

Character

Dunmore Road merits protection mainly because of the elaborate detailing of the houses, their consistency of character, and the extent to which that character has been protected against incremental alterations. Dunmore Road is straight and is lined on each side with similar two storey properties of the same period and style, all but one of which are semi-detached. The front gardens are shallow and the rear access ways are not wide enough to construct side extensions or to provide enough space for car parking, but because the road is not subject to through traffic, the extent of on-street car parking is not particularly obtrusive.

Streetscape

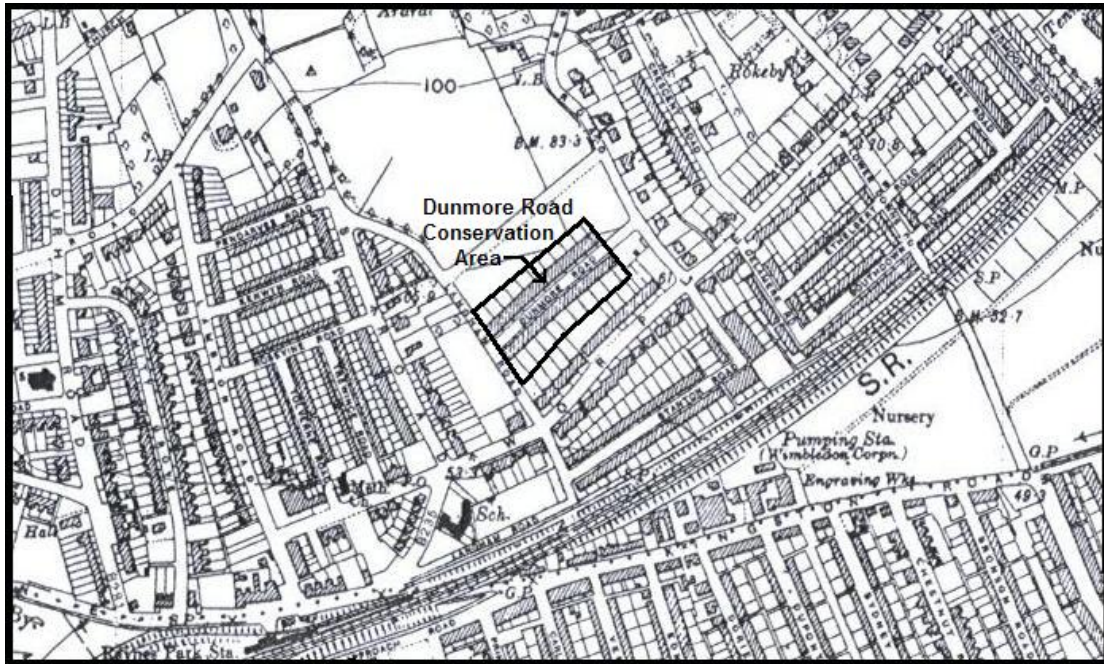
The road is of bitmac and the pavements of concrete ASP slabs with a strip of bitmac between the paving and the kerb to accommodate the trees. The granite kerbs are laid flat side upwards and the gutter is formed of four rows of granite setts, some of which have been partly obscured by the bitmap road finish. It is important that these traditional details are retained, and that the setts obscured by the bitmac be exposed.

Landscaping

A significant element of its character is the Lime and Plane trees which line both sides of the road. They have been planted at regular intervals at the divisions of the plots along the front of the pavement and, to prevent them overshadowing the narrow front gardens, they have been heavy pollarded. However, because of the narrowness of the road, pavements and front gardens they do make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and serve to shield the views in each direction from the undistinguished buildings which terminate the vistas at the ends of the road, in Langham Road to the west and Arterberry Road to the east.

Front Boundaries

The front boundaries are lined with a variety of fences and walls, with white picket fencing predominant. Although the gardens are shorter than the length of a car, a couple of the front gardens have been opened up on to the pavement to provide vehicular access. Variations in treatment are given below.



The OS Map of 1938 showing the area north of Dunmore Road still undeveloped.



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The present arrangement of the Dunmore Road Conservation Area.

Buildings

The front elevations of the houses in Dunmore Road are all basically the same. The main variations are Nos. 1 and 3, which are double fronted, and No.2, which is detached.

FORM

Each of the other single-fronted semi-detached pairs consists of canted bay windows on the ground and first floors each side of the party wall and topped by a steep gable, beside which is a front door within an overhanging porch on the ground floor and a single window above. The roofs are topped by chimneys on the line of the party walls. Both the gable end and party walls project above the roof line and are capped with red tiles.

MATERIALS AND ORNAMENTATION

Roofs

The tiled roofs have red ornamental finials to the ridges to the main roof and the roof to the projecting gables.

Front Facades

The facades are a mixture of brick, render and ornamental tile. The lower part up to the height of the first floor window cills is of red brick with rendering above including the gables, which are framed in timber bargeboards.

Bays

The canted bays are enlivened by panels of red ornamental tiles below the first floor windows, the ground floor windows have small keystones, and there are simple capitals to the rendered corner piers to the ground floor bays.

Porches

The roofs to the wide projecting entrance porches are of red tiles, and the top rail and bottom panels of the openwork timber porches contain ornamental trelliswork. The glazing to the front doors and windows are of decorated leaded glass. The original timber white painted panelled front doors include a circular glass panel above the letterbox which reflects the circular motif to the porches and the panel to the sidelight.

Windows

The sash windows are of timber, painted white, with ornamental frames to the top lights.

VARIATIONS

The main variation is to the gable over the bays which alternately projects as far as the front of the bays, or is recessed, lining up with the front façade, with a separate lead roof over each bay, and vertical timber slats to give the impression of half-timbering, many of which have been painted to blend with the gable panels. Some of the houses also have vertical brick slips each side of the first floor bays and brick corner piers to the ground floor bays. **proportion** Some of the original front doors have been replaced, and small 'Velux'-like windows have been inserted into many of the main roofs. Individual variations are set out below.

SOUTH SIDE (odd numbers, from east to west)

Nos. 1 and 3: Double fronted, each house having the main bay against the end wall and a smaller gable over pairs of windows against the party wall, the ground floor pair being larger than those above. Otherwise the design is similar to the single-fronted houses. The main gables are recessed, the front boundary wall has been removed and the front gardens are extensively paved. The pair of houses are used as a nursing home.

Nos. 5 and 7: Projecting gables over the bay windows. The piers to the ground floor bay of No. 5 are of brickwork and the ornamental tiles under the first floor bay window to No. 7 have been painted over. The front boundaries consist of the low rendered brick wall surmounted by a fence to No. 5 and a hedge to No. 7.

Nos. 9 and 11: Recessed gables, a low brick boundary wall. The gable windows to No. 9 have been replaced with plain two-light sashes.

Nos. 13 and 15: Projecting gables, vertical brick slips and brick piers to No. 15, and front boundaries of a low rendered brick wall topped with a white picket fence to No. 13 and a low rendered wall to No. 15. The ground floor brickwork to No. 13 has been covered in cream render.



Nos. 29 and 31, showing the typical details of projecting gables, ornamental windows and door details, the band of tile hanging under the first floor windows, vertical brick slips each side of the first floor bays and brick corner piers to the ground floor bays, and white picket fencing above a low rendered brick wall. A typically pollarded tree is shown in line with the party wall, but the one lining up with the rear access way has been removed to allow a lamppost to be erected.



The double-fronted house at No. 3, showing the paved forecourt.

Nos. 17 and 19: Recessed gables, brick piers to No. 19, and low rendered brick walls to the front boundary with picket fences. The façade to No. 17 has been painted cream.

Nos. 21 and 23: Projecting gables, vertical brick slips, brick piers, and low brick walls to the front boundaries. The upper floor of No. 23 is in cream render.

Nos. 25 and 27: Recessed gables, brick piers to No. 27, and boundaries of a high hedge to No. 25 and a lower rendered wall topped by a picket fence to No. 27.

Nos. 29 and 31: Projecting gables, brick piers, and boundaries of a low painted brick wall topped by a picket fence.

Nos. 33 and 35: Recessed gables, brick piers to No. 35, and low painted front garden walls, that to No. 35 being topped by a low fence. The first floor of No. 35 is in pebbledash, exposing the "half-timbering" to the gable.

Nos. 37 and 39: Projecting gables, brick piers to No. 37, and boundaries of a low painted brick wall topped by a painted picket fence to No. 37 and a high hedge to No. 39 which is carried around the corner to screen the garden from Langham Road. The exposed gable to No. 39 is of London Stock brick rusticated with the use of red brick slips every ten courses or so. The arrangement of the fenestration to the gable presumably reflects that of the other houses, since no attempt has been made to provide a symmetrical or elegant composition.

NORTH SIDE (even numbers, east to west)

No. 2: The only detached house in the road has a projecting gable and a two storey flat roofed side extension containing a garage at ground level, which has been rendered to blend with the original building, the brickwork of which has also been rendered. The front boundary wall has been replaced by shrubbery.

Nos. 4 and 6: Recessed gables, brick piers to No.6, and a boundary of a low brick wall to No. 4 and a low rendered wall to No. 6 topped with a painted wicket fence and hedge.

Nos.8 and 10: Projecting gable, the ground floor rendered cream, and a boundary of a low rendered wall topped by a picket fence.

Nos. 12 and 14: Recessed gables, the ground floor rendered white, and a boundary of a low rendered wall topped with a picket fence.

Nos. 16 and 18: Projecting gables, the ground floor rendered white, and a boundary of a low rendered wall and picket fence to No. 16.

Nos. 20 and 22: Recessed gables, the ground floor rendered cream, and a boundary of a low rendered and white picket fence, plus a hedge to No. 22.

Nos. 24 and 26: Projecting gables, vertical slips to No. 24, and boundary of a low rendered wall topped by a low fence. The façade to No. 24 has been pebble dashed and the ornamental tiles to No. 26 have been painted pale blue.

Nos. 28 and 30: Recessed gables, brick piers to the bays, and a boundary of a low rendered wall topped with a picket fence.

Nos. 32 and 34: Projecting gables, brick piers to the bays, and a boundary of a low rendered brick wall topped with a picket fence to No. 32 and a hedge to No. 34.

Nos. 36 and 38: Recessed gables, and a boundary of a low rendered brick wall topped with a picket fence to No. 36 and a stained shiplap fence to No. 38.

Nos. 40 and 42: Projecting gables, and a boundary of a low brick wall with piers topped by a picket fence. The façade to No. 40 has been pebble dashed and that to No. 42 rendered white. No. 42 also has a single storey side extension behind a sloping parapet wall.

Preservation and Enhancement

Because of the lack of inappropriate alterations and the high level of maintenance, there is little need for additional measures to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. Rendering and pebble-dashing the facades and painting the ornamental tiles should be avoided, the low white rendered boundary walls should be retained and topped whenever the opportunity arises with white painted picket fencing, while box dormers should continue to be limited to the rear roof slopes.



Above, the gable end to No. 39, showing the rusticated brickwork, the informal fenestration and the screening to the side boundary, and below, the rear of the houses on the north side showing the large box dormers which have avoided at the front.

