



John Innes (Wilton Crescent) Boundary Assessment

ASSESSMENT OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE JOHN INNES (WILTON CRESCENT) CONSERVATION AREA.

At designation in 1984, the Conservation Area included the following properties:

- 195-201 (odds) Kingston Rd
- Telephone Exchange, Kingston Rd
- 1-19 (consec) Spring House, Kingston Rd
- 205a, 205b, 205c and 207 Kingston Rd
- 209-217 (odds) Kingston Rd
- 219-253 (odds) Kingston Rd
- 1-71 (odds), 1a and 1b Kingswood Rd
- 2-60 (evens) Kingswood Rd
- 5, 7, and 7a Mayfield Rd
- 2a, 2b (Norlands) and 2-24 (evens) Mayfield Rd
- 9-51 (odds) Wilton Grove
- 2-26 (evens), 28 and 28a Wilton Grove
- 1-4 (consec) Lynwood Terrace, Henfield Rd
- XXXX 20 XXXX and 24-68 (evens) Henfield Rd
- 84-88 (evens) Henfield Rd
- 2-32 (evens) and 38-50 (evens) Wilton Crescent
- 1a and 1-43 (odds) Wilton Crescent
- 39 Fairlawn Rd
- 1-11 (consec) Sherwood Rd

These remained unchanged at the time of initiating this Character Appraisal (November 2004).

Assessment of properties within the existing Conservation Area boundary

The properties within the Conservation Area which lie in Wilton Crescent, Wilton Grove, and Sherwood Rd, together with the one house in Fairlawn Rd possess a strong feeling of coherence and unity. The cohesive architecture of the buildings, and the distinctive planting all act together to give each street a distinct character and sense of place, which is markedly different from the surrounding areas. These considerations are felt to provide ample justification for their inclusion in the Conservation Area.

Mayfield Rd has a rather different feel to the streets referred to above. While coherent architectural styles still apply to some extent, here there are also individual one-off buildings of considerable architectural appeal. Building layouts are on the whole rather more informal here than they are in the other streets in the Conservation Area. The landscape characteristics of this street are spectacular. It is in this street that the distinctive characteristics of the Conservation Area may be said reach their fullest expression.

Kingswood Rd has a more mixed character. To the north-west of its junction with Mayfield Rd its character is quite similar to streets such as Wilton Grove and Wilton Crescent. Architectural contributions here include some distinctive buildings from architects associated with other streets within the John Innes Estate development. By contrast the south-eastern part of the street has a character more typical of the traditional late Victorian bye law terraces, which are common throughout many parts of London, (including areas to the east of the Tramlink tracks). There are also some unusual and attractive Victorian gothic terraces and semi detached houses. Despite

this split personality it is felt that the whole street should be included within the Conservation Area because of its unity as a space, and as a supplementary reason because even the areas which are less influenced by the John Innes culture are good examples of their type, as well as being relatively old.

Kingston Rd forms the southern boundary of the Conservation Area, the boundary runs along the centre of the road. To the south of Kingston Rd the area is designated as the John Innes Conservation Area, and has many common associations with the development of the Wilton Crescent Conservation Area.

Kingston Rd itself is however rather different, being a much older road, originally a country lane, and the spine of the rather strung out mediaeval village of Merton. Nothing of this early village history remains within the Wilton Crescent Conservation Area, though the character of the original country lane can (with some imagination) still be discerned in today's traffic choked artery.

Kingston Rd has a rather charming informal alignment, meandering like a stream, at one point widening out, and then narrowing noticeably. Many mature trees line the road within the adjacent front garden areas. The traffic engineer has not had the opportunity to straighten the alignment, or to form perfect radii for the curves of the road. This very informal character provides a reasonable basis for keeping the area within the Conservation Area.

In addition to this there are a number of quite striking one-off buildings which strengthen the unique character of the road. These include the 1930s Telephone Exchange, together with its very different later extension (not universally admired, but highly distinctive).

Fairlawn Villas are a striking run of 9 pairs of large Victorian semi detached houses in the western section of Kingston Rd. They date from the early 1860s, and as such represent the earliest surviving large block of development in the area, the first suburban encroachment into an older village environment. Unfortunately time has not been kind to these houses, with many small-scale unsympathetic changes having undermined their original architectural quality and their unity as a group of buildings. However enough remains of their character and group value for them to have been emulated in the recent development at 255-263 Kingston Rd (outside the Conservation Area).

Finally there are 2 Statutorily Listed buildings, immediately outside the Conservation Area boundary, on the south side of Kingston Rd (Dorset Hall and a "K6" type telephone box). Both are listed Grade II, and both benefit from the protection of their setting which the Wilton Crescent Conservation Area affords.

Taking all of these considerations into account the case for retaining Kingston Rd within the Conservation Area is strong, and therefore no reduction in the Conservation Area is proposed in this area.

In Henfield Rd no significant buildings address it along its northern side. Here the houses are aligned to streets which run at right angles from Henfield Rd (Cliveden Rd and Wilton Crescent).

On the south side of Henfield Rd (west of Wilton Crescent) there has been total recent development, on a piecemeal basis, of the former back gardens of Fairlawn Villas (which themselves face towards Kingston Rd). These developments took place during the later 1980s and early 1990s.

Short terraces of small scale, very narrow fronted houses have been crammed in with minimal spaces between. Frontages areas here are almost entirely given over to car parking. There is therefore very poor definition of the edge of the street, and almost no landscaped setting for the buildings. This form of development has a quite different feel to the spacious and landscaped character of other streets in the Conservation Area. The closest parallel to the new houses in Henfield Rd is the Victorian by-law terraces in the south eastern part of Kingswood Rd. However this parallel can not be taken very far, and the Kingswood terraces are much more successful than their later counterparts in terms of their feeling of greater spaciousness and width to each house, the quality of the frontage spaces of each house, and the better quality to the elevational detailing on each house.

These recent developments on the south side of Henfield Rd post-date the designation of the Conservation Area. It is therefore proper that the substantial changes that have occurred should re-open the issue of whether this area should remain within the Conservation Area.

The conclusion is decisive, that with the exception of the two easternmost properties (2a Wilton Crescent and 68 Henfield Rd) these new houses in Henfield Rd should be taken out of the Conservation Area. The retention of the two easternmost properties within the Conservation Area can be justified on the grounds that there is a fine tree at the junction of Henfield Rd and Wilton Crescent which contributes significantly to the street scene in Wilton Crescent, that the corner properties are just as much a part of the street scene in Wilton Crescent as they are part of that of Henfield Rd, and finally because it is desirable in this situation to maintain continuity of Conservation Area status along the whole length of Wilton Crescent.

At the eastern end of Henfield Rd, to the east of the Wilton Crescent junction, the quality of the buildings on the south side of Henfield Rd is decidedly mediocre. Nos. 84-88 Henfield Rd have a "mews-like" character which is quite different to anything else in the Conservation Area, and the back of 217 Kingston Rd is a substantial and distinctive building with a traditional industrial or warehouse character. It is however concluded that this area should remain within the Conservation Area. There are several reasons for this view. Firstly on the north side of the street there is the pleasantly landscaped open space of the Wilton Tennis Club, which provides a pleasing break in the suburban built form. Secondly a recent planning permission has been granted for the development of land at 217 Kingston Rd, which forms a prominent part of the southern edge of Henfield Rd. This scheme would, if implemented, comprise a high quality contemporary development which would greatly enhance the appearance of the area. Thirdly to delete this area from the Conservation Area would create a small island of non Conservation Area surrounded by the Conservation Area, which would mean the boundaries would be unduly contorted.

Assessment of properties outwith the existing Conservation Area boundary

To the north-east of the existing Conservation Area boundary there is the Tram line, and beyond areas of predominantly Victorian bye law residential terraces and semis

These areas are considered to be quite separate from the Wilton Crescent area, both in terms of their distinctly different and generally inferior residential character and their clear severance by the tram lines. There is therefore no case for extending the Wilton crescent Conservation Area into these areas.

To the north-west of the existing Conservation Boundary there is:

- the residential streets of Fairlawn Rd and Dundonald Rd,
- the public Dundonald Recreation Ground

While the residential streets are contiguous with the Wilton Crescent Area, the connection in terms of public access and continuity of building frontages is limited to Fairlawn Rd alone. The residential properties in this area are mainly attractive Victorian semi detached houses, particularly those in Fairlawn Rd, but their character is distinctly different to the John Innes influence that pervades the majority of the area of Wilton Crescent. Here there is a return to the more commonplace Victorian speculative housing which is to be seen throughout great swathes of London. This difference in the character of this street compared to the Wilton Crescent area, combined with the lack of any substantial distinguishing features here that make the place special or unusual in its own right mean that there is no good case for extending the Conservation Area in this direction.

The Dundonald Recreation Ground provides pleasant open views to the west, from the junction of Wilton Crescent and Avebury Rd (in the Conservation Area). To this extent the open space does benefit the Conservation Area. The Recreation Ground is however quite flat and apart from some trees around the periphery, relatively featureless. The great majority of the area is laid out as playing fields. Its landscape value is therefore minimal, though trees line some of its edges. The space is owned and managed by the Council, so control of its appearance is in any event subject to more than just planning control.

On this basis it is felt that there is no good case for extending the Conservation Area in this direction.

To the west of the existing Conservation Boundary there is:

- the residential streets of Avebury Rd, Cliveden Rd and Rayleigh Rd.
- the new development of flats at 255-263 Kingston Rd.

Cliveden Rd and Rayleigh Roads are relatively remote from the Wilton Crescent area, being linked only by areas of backland gardens, or linked indirectly by Avebury Rd and Henfield Rd. Avebury Rd and the northern side of Henfield Rd do not have any significant buildings which front them, (the southern edge of Henfield Rd has already been considered above).

The residential properties in this area are mainly quite attractive Victorian semi detached houses, but their character is distinctly different to the John Innes influence that pervades the area of Wilton Crescent. Here there is a return to the more commonplace Victorian and Edwardian speculative housing which is to be seen throughout great swathes of London. The area is not unattractive, and it does benefit from views of the open land to the north, but it is not considered to have a special or distinctive character which sets it above many other places in London.

In conclusion there is no good case for extending the Conservation Area to include this area.

Turning to the recent development of flats at 255-263 Kingston Rd, this area was until quite recently occupied by an unattractive petrol filling station. It has now been redeveloped as a block of flats, whose design is clearly influenced by the adjacent Fairlawn Villas, which are themselves included within the Conservation Area.

The pressures for making the maximum use of the development site, coupled with the advantages derived from the removal of the previous use, have inevitably meant some compromises in terms of the extent to which the new scheme has followed the built form and character of the adjacent Fairlawn Villas. Nevertheless the completed scheme achieves some degree of success, and when the frontage planting matures, it will knit reasonably well with its surroundings.

To extend the Conservation Area here would, if no 265 Kingston Rd were to be added to the Merton Hall Rd Conservation Area, mean that all the properties on both sides of Kingston Rd would lie within one of 3 Conservation Areas, from the tram line level crossing in the east and the Nelson Hospital in the west. Such an extension would therefore consolidate the Conservation Area boundaries.

The Character Appraisal for the Merton Hall Rd Conservation Area does in fact recommend the incorporation of 265 Kingston Rd into that Conservation Area.

It is a matter of fine judgement as to where the balance lies in the case of the possible addition of 255-263 Kingston Rd, but it is felt that the case for extension of the Conservation Area marginally exceeds that of leaving the boundary where it is at present.

To the south of the existing Conservation Boundary there is the existing John Innes (Merton Park) Conservation Area. There is therefore no scope for extending the Wilton Crescent Conservation Area in this direction. While both Conservation Areas have the common influence of John Innes, there are clear differences between the two, which warrant them being separate areas. No change to the Conservation Area boundary is therefore proposed in this area.

Overall Conclusion on Conservation Area boundaries

The proposed boundary changes are illustrated on plan no. D/LU/2137. The only places where any changes from the existing Conservation Area boundary are recommended are:

- on the south side of Henfield Rd, to the west of its junction with Wilton Crescent, where (apart from nos 2a Wilton Crescent and 68 Henfield Rd) all the properties should be taken out of the Conservation Area, and
- at 255-263 Kingston Rd, which should be incorporated into the Conservation Area.

The Character Appraisal is written on the basis of the boundary alterations recommended above.



Area proposed to be deleted from the Conservation Area

Area proposed to be added to the Conservation Area

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John Innes (Wilton Crescent)
 Conservation Area
 (Plan No DLU/2137)

Scale: 1/2500

Date: 11/3/2005



Albanian

Nese deshironi me shume informacion ne gjuhen tuaj, ju lutemi te na kontaktoni ne adresen e dhene ne kutline me poshte.

Arabic

إذا أردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان المدون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

Bengali

যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লেখা আরও তথ্য চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, উল্লার বক্ সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

Chinese

如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯系。

Farsi

اگر مایل به اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً با ما از طریق آدرس زیر تماس بگیرید.

French

Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Gujarati

જો તમને તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં વધારે માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને નીચે અંતમાં આપેલા ખાનામાં દર્શાવેલા સરનામે અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish

Si usted desea mas informacion en su propia lengua, por favor contactenos en la direccion al pie del formato.

Tamil

உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக்குள் தரப்பட்டிருள்ள விவரத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu

اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے بکس میں درج ہے۔