

**MERTON HALL ROAD**

**CONSERVATION AREA**

**DESIGN GUIDE**



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

Wavy teal decorative line at the top of the page.



2 Wavy teal decorative line at the bottom of the page.



# INTRODUCTION

The Merton Hall Road Conservation Area was designated by the Council in April 1987. It consists mainly of residential and commercial properties of the late Victorian or Edwardian period. Most of the area was developed over a short period of time from the 1880's to 1903. In addition to its houses and shops, the area possesses the Grade II Listed building Long Lodge of the eighteenth century. There are several other interesting buildings of later periods, such as the Old Leather Bottle Public House of 1924, the early twentieth century Nelson Hospital, and a number of open spaces of widely differing character.

This design guide covers the whole of the Conservation Area which is shown on the plan. The Council aims to control harmful changes in the area when considering applications for planning permission and Conservation Area Consent (for demolitions). 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 planning applications are considered. In this area the Council would not expect to see any major redevelopment, and the emphasis of this guide is therefore on retention and enhancement.

This design guide therefore highlights the important characteristics of the buildings and their settings and suggests ways in which improvements can be carried out without destroying the character of the area. If in any doubt as to whether planning permission is needed for alterations to your property, please contact the Development Control Section of the Council's Development Department.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The development of Merton Hall Road on the Merton Hall Estate began in 1884 when George Palmer and his architect Francis James Smith together with Charles D. Tuftin and his surveyor Percy H. Clarke commenced building. These were largely responsible for introducing the lively variety of the Queen Anne revival detail which gives the street its character.

Many of the buildings are finely detailed with patterned brickwork, ornate fenestration and porches, interesting gables and turrets. These features give the area its special character. Over the years alterations to the buildings have taken place, such as replacement of the original glazing bars and painting of the brickwork, etc. which, if continued, could eventually destroy the pleasing, homogenous character of the street.

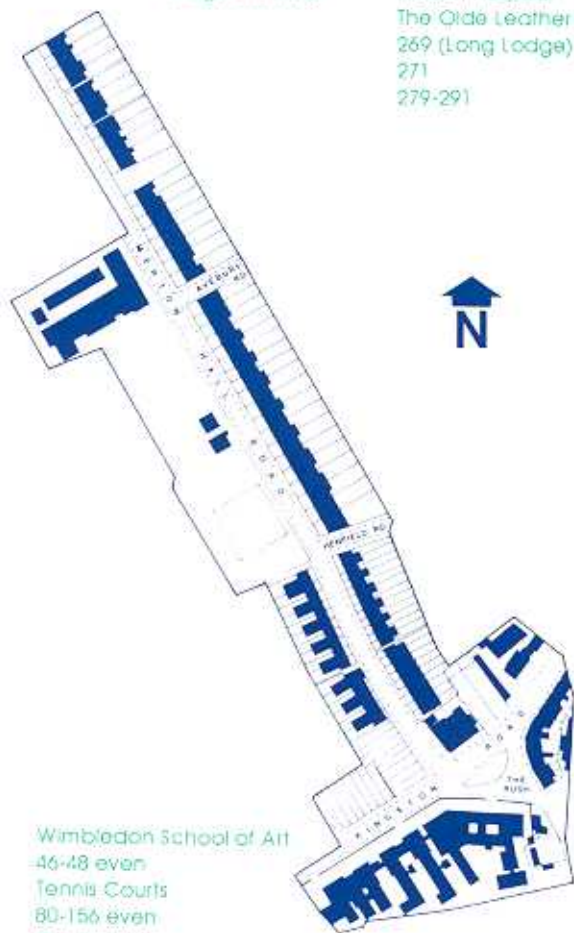




PROPERTIES IN THE MERTON HALL ROAD  
CONSERVATION AREA

Kingston Road

Nelson Hospital  
The Old Leather Bottle  
269 (Long Lodge)  
271  
279-291



Merton Hall Road	Wimbledon School of Art 46-48 even Tennis Courts 80-156 even 25-141 odd
Merton Park Parade	1-12 consec. 14
The Rush	10



## HOUSES SOUTH OF HENFIELD ROAD

South of Henfield Road, each house type has a number of characteristic features which contribute to the overall character of the area. The smaller two-storey houses on the east side of Merton Hall Road are in long terraces. They have distinctive two-storey square bay windows, usually with hipped roofs over. The main features in detail are:

- Two main types of porch, both quite ornate.
- Two tone brickwork, usually yellow stock with red brick arches and quoins and dog tooth detailing under main eaves.
- Stucco/plaster work over some bay windows.
- Party walls projecting through originally slated roofs, and simple chimney stacks.
- Elaborate original front doors.
- Sash windows with small panes at the top and some coloured glazing.
- Decorative wall panels in coloured tiles or rendered with incised patterns.
- Tiled front paths.
- Small front areas.



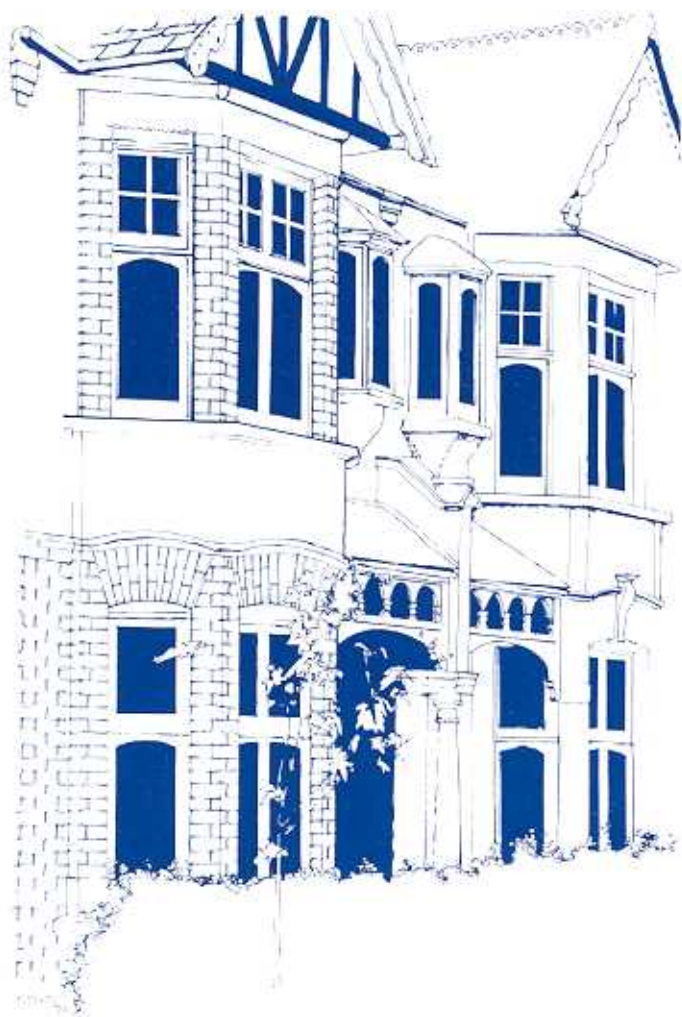


*Wwwwwwwwwww*



*Wwwwwwwwwww*<sup>7</sup>

WAVE



8 WAVE



# HOUSES SOUTH OF HENFIELD ROAD

On the west side the two-storey houses appear larger and more ornate, actually being built as flats with two front doors under an open porch. Main features on this side are:

- Elaborate brick Dutch gables over square bays.
- Complex arches to the windows with plaster and stucco work.
- Tiled lean-to roofs over the open porches, with elaborate wooden decorative arches.
- Sash windows with small panes on the top sashes.
- Party walls projecting through roofs and complex chimney stacks and pots.
- Tiled front paths.
- Low brick walls with coping stone enclosing small front areas.
- Tiled main roofs with decorative ridge tiles.

The retention or replacement of these features together with regular maintenance, will preserve the character of the area and hence retain value of the properties.



## HOUSES NORTH OF HENFIELD ROAD

The houses on the east side are larger, more flamboyant in design than those to the south. Usually semi-detached, most have a second floor storey partly in the roof. Although various detailed features reoccur in various combinations, these houses are highly individualistic, and it is only possible to draw attention to certain of the detailed features such as:

- Bay windows of varying design including semi-circular on plan.
- Two tone brickwork in some cases plus rendering, mock timbering, stucco work.
- Elaborate gables/ cantilevered windows to roof rooms.
- Complex and very attractive wooden porches.
- Elaborate cantilevered canopies over front doors.
- Original front doors and sash windows with coloured glazing in some cases.
- Quite large front gardens which have led in many cases to use for car parking.

It is worth noting the special corner houses which occur at Henfield Road, and the entrance to the recreation ground. Again the retention or replacement of these interesting original features will enhance the appearance and value of the area. Although many of the houses have been altered in detail, and have lost original features in the process, the closely built up terraces and semi-detached houses do tend to mitigate against any major extension or alterations.

*Wavy teal decorative line*



*Wavy teal decorative line*





A parade of shops facing onto Merton Hall Road and continuing along the Kingston Road frontage are probably contemporary with the adjoining flats. Many of the same decorative features reoccur, but the brick gables are even more elaborate and there are important three-storey corner buildings to emphasise the junctions with Merton Hall Road with Kingston Road and Kingston Road with Quintin Avenue.



The Old Leather Bottle Public House, also a corner building, has large gabled roofs, half timbered gables, rendered first floor with cantilevered windows and a balcony at the corner. The ground floor is in various coloured brickwork with large arched windows.

A two-storey curving parade of shops facing onto The Rush is not architecturally distinguished, but as a block makes a positive contribution to the enclosure of The Rush open area. The Nelson Hospital has interesting three-storey facades facing into Kingston Road, less so to The Rush.

On the north side, the two-storey Long Lodge is the most elegant building in the Conservation Area in a pleasantly landscaped setting.

The other public building of note is the Wimbledon School of Art, which is a good example of its date with a sensitively designed modern extension.

When proposals for new shopfronts are made, these should include restoration of original fascias, corbels, pilasters, cornices, etc., where these are damaged, decayed or missing. Fortunately all the above buildings are in use and generally they are in good order. Only the elaborate gable facades of the shops which do need considerable maintenance are in some cases in rather poor condition. The shop fascias in some cases have been unsympathetically altered.



## FRONT AND REAR GARDEN AREAS

The front gardens of the houses are important in contributing to the character of the area. The brick walls with their coping stones make an important contribution to the street scene, they define the boundary between public and private space and provide the privacy and protection associated with Victorian residential areas.

If a taller enclosure is required then a railing on top of the wall or hedge planted behind it would be suitable. Many of the walls and piers have been removed and replaced with boundaries of an alternative design. Where original walls remain they should be repaired and retained. Where they are missing consideration should be given to rebuilding them to match the original design. Many of the larger semi-detached houses appear to have been converted to flats. In order to provide additional parking spaces it has often been necessary to demolish the front wall. Where this happens brick piers should be retained where possible.

A landscape setting compliments and contributes to the character of the houses. Where possible the planting in the front garden area should be retained. Mature trees in the front garden make a significant impact on the street scene and should be retained. If removal is necessary replacement trees should be planted. Any work on or felling of trees in a Conservation Area requires authorisation from the Council's Development Department.



*Wavy teal decorative line*



*Wavy teal decorative line*

*Wavy teal decorative line*



16 *Wavy teal decorative line*

## FRONT AND REAR GARDEN AREAS

Some of the villas still retain the original front paths consisting of a pattern of small coloured tiles. These have an interesting feature which is contemporary with the style of the houses. Where these paths remain they should be maintained and where they have been removed consideration should be given to repaving the paths in tiles or other small-element paving materials when the need arises.

Where hard standing for cars is required in the front garden area the materials for surfacing should be chosen with care so that they compliment the building. The use of block paving is more appropriate than cast concrete slabs or black tarmac. Alternatively cobbles or setts may be used. Gravel provides an attractive finish but may cause problems if the edges and levels are not designed with care, because of the tendency to spill over onto paths or adjacent roadways.

It should always be possible to retain some soft landscaped area with shrubs and trees adjacent to the actual houses or the front boundaries to improve their setting. Parking to the rear of properties will be resisted.

It is recognised rear gardens contribute significantly to the nature conservation/ecological value of the area. When considering landscaping of the gardens a balance between native and non-native trees and plants is desirable.



## EXTENSIONS

Rear extensions which are permitted development should be sympathetically designed and not rise above eaves level. In most cases, the finish of the materials should match that which is existing. Extensions beyond permitted development will be stringently assessed in terms of whether they enhance or preserve the character of the Conservation Area. If you are considering extending your property you should consult the Council's published guidelines on residential extensions.

Rear extensions may be acceptable as long as they are sensitively designed. Generally, they should not project more than 3m back from the rear main wall of the house. Any rear or side extensions on the larger houses should be subordinated to the main house and side extensions should be recessed behind the frontage of the house. All new additions to the houses should respect the original design in terms of window proportions, building materials and details.

Flat roofed extensions should be avoided; pitched roof forms integrating with existing roofs are more suitable. Loft conversions should not alter the shape of the roof-line as seen from the street. Small dormer windows may be acceptable on the rear elevation providing that they are sensitively designed. Any dormer should be set back from the line of the rear elevation and roofing materials should match the existing roof cladding, and on vertical surfaces finished requiring high maintenance, such as tongued and grooved boarding, should be avoided.

Wavy teal decorative line



Wavy teal decorative line

*Wavy decorative line*



20 *Wavy decorative line*





## ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

The architectural features of the housing should be retained and where they have been removed or altered they should be restored when the opportunity arises. The brickwork of the houses is attractive and is out of character with the area as well as increasing the amount of maintenance required. Where the front facade has already been painted consideration should be given to cleaning the brickwork using high pressure water or possibly a weak acid cleaner. The aim should be to render the facade with a smooth facing and painted a colour that matches the original brickwork.

The roofline of the houses is important, particularly the different roof forms of the house types. Many of the three storey villas have characteristic gable ends often emphasised by wooden barge boards and finials. These should be restored where necessary and preferably painted white. The smaller two storey villas have distinctive roofs over the bay windows often with finials and decorative ridge tiles.

Where these details are missing or damaged, consideration should be given to their reinstatement or repair. If repairs to roofs are necessary, the use of natural slates or clay tiles is preferred to artificial slates or concrete tiles. In the event of a slate substitute being used, a textured finish should be selected. Where the sash window frames have decayed the original should be repaired where possible and any replacement should be made of wood to match the existing style.

## RADIO AERIALS AND SATELLITE DISHES



These and any other telecommunications apparatus should be sited at the rear of the property. However, proposals that have a detrimental effect on the Conservation Area will be refused in those cases where planning permission is required.

## STREET TREES AND OPEN SPACES



The street trees make an invaluable contribution to the character of the area. Trees are generally planted on party wall lines. Where such trees are missing, as at the southern end of Merton Hall Road, the Council will give consideration to new planting if technically possible.

The Rush is a busy urban open space, but one in which additional tree planting on the centre island could be very advantageous in townscape terms.





For further information about the  
Merton Hall Road Conservation  
Area please do not hesitate to  
contact the Development  
Department of Merton Council at  
the address below:

Development Department  
London Borough of Merton  
Crown House  
London Road  
Morden  
Surrey SM4 5DX

Telephone 081-545 3074  
or 081-545 3053

