

WIMBLEDON NORTH CONSERVATION AREA



A CHARACTER ASSESSMENT SUB AREA 1: THE HISTORIC CORE

Post Consultation Draft November 2006

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11.0 SUB AREA 1. 'THE HISTORIC CORE'

11.1 EXTENT AND BOUNDARY REVIEW

- 11.1.1 The boundary of this most historic part of the Conservation Area is mainly defined by the alignment of Church Road to the west, St. Mary's Road to the south and Arthur Road to the east, while Wimbledon Park *and the gardens of houses on the east side of Home Park Road*, (within Sub Area 2), abut it to the north.
- 11.1.2 Arthur Road is transgressed in part to include the properties that front it and are outside of the adjoining Sub Areas. *The land and buildings at Nos. 14 –20 Arthur Road (including the present Vicarage), and the part of Arthur Road that they front, are now included. This is to ensure that the entire alignment of the road, together with adjoining land and buildings that contribute to its character and appearance, are given Conservation Area status.*
- 11.1.3 The boundary also crosses Church Road, in part, to include a Locally Listed Building and its well planted grounds, now partly developed.
- 11.1.4 The Sub Area therefore includes properties on the east side of Church Road, located to the south of the junction with Somerset Road, as well as those buildings on the west side adjacent to the junction; those on the north-east side of part of St Mary's Road; most of the properties on both sides of the southern end of Arthur Road; and those within Rectory Orchard and Steeple Close.

11.2 BUILDINGS WITHIN THE SUB AREA

- 11.2.1 **Arthur Road:**
North-west side:
Nos.1 (Stag Lodge), 3, 9, The Artesian Well House, 21, 23

South-east side:
Nos. 2, 6, 12 (1-7 Oaklawn Lodge), *14 (Vicarage), 16, 20*
- 11.2.2 **Church Road:**
East side:
Nos. 76, 78, 80, 82, 84 (The Old Rectory House), 86 (Arborfield)

West side:
No.157 (1-10 Renshaw Court)
- 11.2.3 **Rectory Orchard:**
Nos.1- 11
- 11.2.4 **St. Mary's Road:**
St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's Garden Hall and Church Hall, all at No. 30, 36 (1-6 Steeple Court), 38, 40

11.2.5 **Somerset Road:**
Nos. 224, 226

11.2.6 **Steeple Close:**
Nos. 1, 2, 3

11.3 OPEN SPACES WITHIN THE SUB AREA

11.3.1 St. Mary's Road: Church Field
St. Mary's Churchyard
Area around Church Halls

11.3.2 The Churchyard and Church Field are included in the London Inventory - 'Historic Green Spaces in Merton', published by the London Parks and Gardens Trust.

11.4 STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS

11.4.1 **Grade II***
Church Road:
The Old Rectory House

St. Mary's Road:
Parish Church of St. Mary

11.4.2 **Grade II:**
Arthur Road:
No.1 (Stag Lodge), including flanking walls and corner piers;
The Artesian Well House

St. Mary's Road (within Churchyard of Church of St. Mary):
Churchyard walls to south;
Ker vault, 15 yards to south of chancel;
Grosvenor Tomb, 5 yards to south of chancel;
Tomb 1 foot to north of Grosvenor Tomb;
Savage Tomb, 15 yards to south of south porch;
Bingham Tomb, 12 yards from Savage Tomb;
Tomb of Georgina Charlotte Quin, 1 yard south west of Savage Tomb;
Tomb of John Tompkins, 3 yards to west of Savage Tomb;
Headstone to Little family, 6 yards to west of Savage Tomb;
Tombstone of Thomas Lowick, 1 yard to west of south porch;
Hopkin (Mansel Philipps) Tomb, 25 yards to south west of church tower;
White Tomb, 5 yards to south west of Hopkins Tomb;
Tomb of G.S.Newton, 20 yards to north west of Tower;
Headstone, 2 yards to south of Tower;
Tomb of Gerard de Visme, 10ft. to north of west tower of chapel;
Tomb of Elizabeth Johnson, 50 yards to north west of Tower;
Tomb 5 yards to south of Tomb of Gerard de Visme;
Tomb 5 yards to east of Tomb of Gerard de Visme;

Hatchett Tomb, 8 yards to east of Tomb of Gerard de Visme;
Table tomb, 4 yards to east of Tomb of Gerard de Visme;
Tomb of John Lawson, 6 yards to north of chancel;
Johnson Tomb, 1 yard to north of Tomb of John Lawson;
Mausoleum of Sir Joseph William Bazalgette, 20 yards to north east of chancel;
Bankes Tomb, 4 yards to north west of Bazalgette Mausoleum;
Tomb of Joshua Ruddock, 3 yards to north east of chancel;
Jennings Tomb, 5 yards to south of Bazalgette Mausoleum;
Tomb of John Teymme, 6 yards to east of chancel.

11.4.3 Statutory Listing Descriptions of the Listed Buildings are attached as Appendix 1. The buildings are indicated on Figure 11.1. Buildings that are recommended for possible inclusion on the Statutory List are identified in paragraph 11.21.8.

11.5 BUILDINGS ON THE LOCAL (NON STATUTORY) LIST OF BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

11.5.1 **Arthur Road:**
Nos. 2, 9.

11.5.2 **Church Road:**
No. 157

11.5.3 Descriptions of the Locally Listed Buildings are attached as Appendix 3. The buildings are indicated on Figure 11.1. Buildings that are recommended to be investigated for possible inclusion on the Local List are identified in paragraph 11.21.7 and on Figure 11.1.

11.6 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

11.6.1 **Arthur Road:**
The Merton (No. 8) Tree Preservation Order 1974 ‘Arthur Road “St. Mary’s”’ Contains 77 preserved trees, all within this sub area.

11.6.2 **Church Road:**
The Merton (No.12) Tree Preservation Order 1975 ‘Welford Place’ includes many trees within the grounds of No.157 Church Road and 224 – 226 Somerset Road.

11.6.3 The Merton (No. 226) Tree Preservation Order 1996 ‘76 Church Road’ includes one false acacia tree.

11.6.4 The locations of Tree Preservation Orders are indicated on Figure 11.1.












- | | |
|--|---|
|  Current Sub Area Boundary |  Suggested Extension to C. Area |
|  Statutory Listed Building: Grade II* |  Possible Addition to Local List |
|  Statutory Listed Building: Grade II |  Tree Preservation Order |
|  Local List |  Other Building making a positive contribution |
|  Listed Group: Vault, 21 tombs, 2 headstones, tombstone and Mausoleum within Churchyard | |

Figure 11.1: Sub-Area 1: The Historic Core - Listed Buildings and TPOs
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11.7 ARCHAEOLOGY

- 11.7.1 Almost the entire Sub Area lies within Archaeological Priority Zone 7 'Wimbledon Village, Historic Settlement'. Recovery of archaeological information relating to the historic settlement will contribute to the Borough's history and assist the study of the region's development.
- 11.7.2 The part of the Sub Area to the south-east of Arthur Road and adjoining the former Park House Middle School grounds adjoin Archaeological Priority Zone 19 'Wimbledon Park House, Garden Archaeology'. This is of interest with regard to the historic Manor House gardens and their relationships with the sites of the first, third and fourth Wimbledon Manor houses.
- 11.7.3 The small triangle of land including No.157 Church Road and Nos. 224 and 226 Somerset Road does not lie within an Archaeological Priority Zone.

Archaeological Priority Zones are indicated in Part One of this document, Figure 7.0.

11.7.4 **Archaeological finds:**

- Arthur Road: Nos. 2 – 6 were investigated in 1992:
Finds of 11th – 17th century date were found, and one Roman potsherd. Parts of gravel path associated with the 17th century formal garden attached to the Elizabethan manor house were shown to survive.
- St.Mary's Road: St. Mary's Church Hall (Garden Hall) investigated 2001:
No features or deposits of archaeological significance found. However, during construction works, a subterranean circular brick shaft was exposed. This was investigated in 2002:
The nature of the bricks appears to be 18th Century. The brick dome seems to be contemporary with the construction or partial rebuild of the church boundary wall in the 19th Century. The brick structure was probably originally a well or soak-away and the later dome addition ended its functional life.
- Home Park Road: No.124 Home Park Road investigated in 1992:
Clarified that pieces of the western boundary of the 16th. Century Elizabethan garden wall to the Elizabethan Manor House can be seen in St.Mary's Church yard, and a remnant some 9.5 m. long and 2.5m. high remains as part of the western boundary of the plot at 2 – 6 Arthur Road.

11.8 NATURE CONSERVATION

Site of Local Importance:

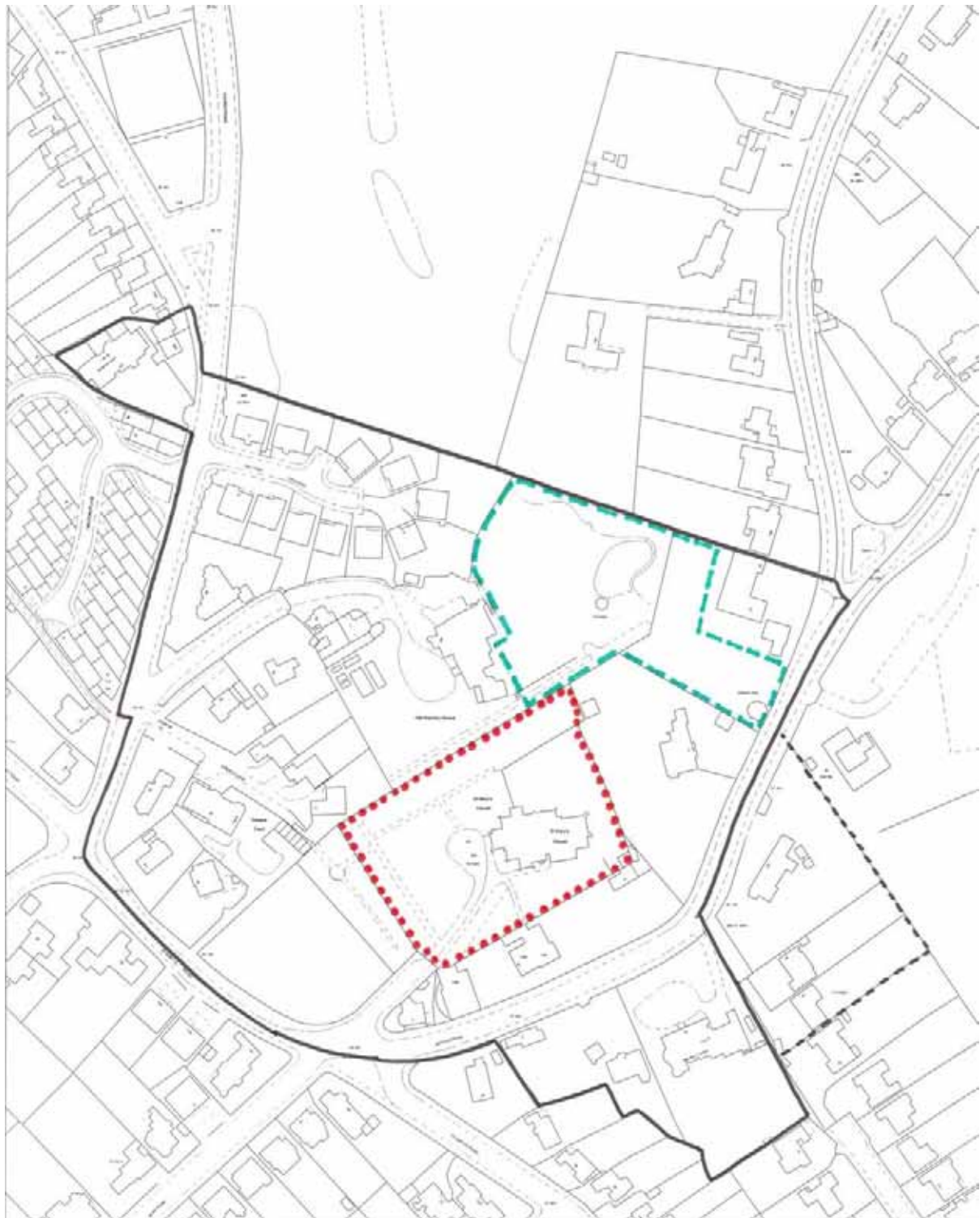
- 11.8.1 St. Mary's Churchyard is identified within the London Borough of Merton Unitary Development Plan as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation' (policy NE.6). It is indicated on Figure 11.1.A.
- 11.8.2 The London Ecology Unit has identified St. Mary's Churchyard as a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance.
- 11.8.3 It is the many mature trees that are the main focus of this site. Prominent among these are a large Cedar-of-Lebanon, many old Yews, some Limes and mature Hollies. Shrubs include Elder and Buddleia, and there is some bramble.
- 11.8.4 Much of the area around the gravestones is covered in a grassland composed mainly of meadow grass. In this there is a range of common wild flowers, such as Yarrow, Cat's-ear and Dandelions. Few plants survive from the rural past, but there are some species of interest, including Cow Parsley, Cuckoo flower, Pendulous Sedge, Field Wood-rush, Oxeye Daisy, Foxglove, a range of Primulas and a fine display of Bulbous Buttercup in the early Spring.
- 11.8.5 The mature trees here and in the surrounding gardens bring in a range of birds including Long Tailed Tit, Blackcap, Jackdaw and Winter Thrushes.

Green Corridors:

- 11.8.6 The gardens of The Rectory and Nos. 21 and 23 Arthur Road are identified within the Unitary Development Plan as part of a network of 'Green Corridors' (policy NE.8, see Appendix 4). These are relatively continuous areas of green space leading through the built environment, which link to each other and to larger green spaces. They help to ensure the maintenance and movement of plant and animal species through the Borough. Those within the Sub Area are indicated on Figure 11.1.A.

11.9 OTHER UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 11.9.1 None for this Sub Area.



 Current Sub Area Boundary

 Suggested Extension to C. Area

 Green Corridor (Policy NE.8)


 Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance (Policy NE.6)

Figure 11.1A: Sub-Area 1: The Historic Core - Unitary Development Plan Designations

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11.10 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

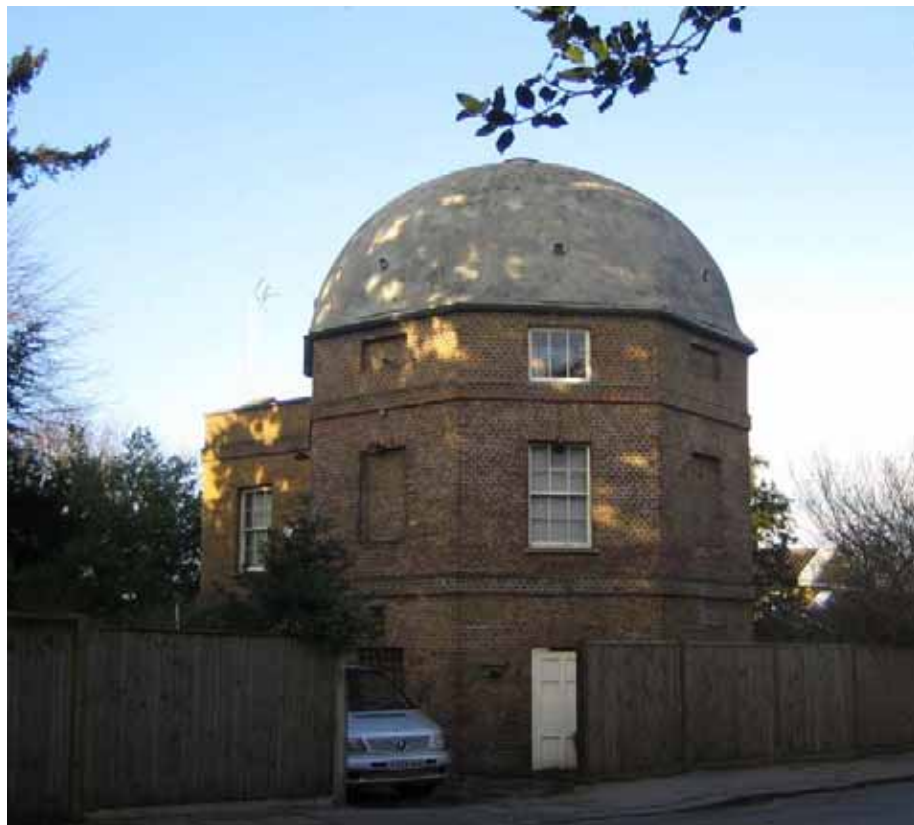
11.10.1 The gradual development of the Sub Area over the centuries has resulted in a rich mix of building ages, types, styles and materials, irregularly laid out in a spacious and mature landscaped setting. Buildings range from ancient to contemporary; from the rambling Old Rectory House mansion to modest semi-detached house; from the flint and stone dressed church through stucco gate house to the modern stone and glass St. Mary's Garden Hall.

Up to the end of the 17th Century

- 11.10.2 There has been a church on the site of the present **St. Mary's Church** since around 950 AD, when the building was probably a small wooden structure. It is likely that this was the church of Mortlake manor, mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086.
- 11.10.3 By the late 13th Century the church had been rebuilt in stone with a wooden tower. Part of a wall and window of this second church building survive inside the present Grade II* Listed Church, as well as a stained glass window, depicting St. George, added in the 15th Century. (The church has subsequently been rebuilt a further two times. See paras. 11.10.8, 11.10.10, 11.10.15 and 11.10.18)
- 11.10.4 Wimbledon's oldest remaining and first brick building, the Grade II* Listed **The Old Rectory House**, was built to the north west of the church in about 1500. It was then known as 'The Parsonage House', and was probably the house of the parish priest. It was in the style of a magnificent mansion, had extensive outbuildings and a large garden. Following the Reformation it became of great significance to the physical and social development of Wimbledon. It and the Manor of Wimbledon were owned for a time by King Henry VIII and leased to his courtiers. Henry VIII rested there when travelling from Nonsuch back to London, shortly before his death in 1547.
- 11.10.5 Sir William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, leased the rectory as a country retreat. It is thought that he planted Fig Walk, which still survives in the garden. After 1558 it became the residence of his eldest son, Thomas Cecil, first Earl of Exeter, who, in 1588, began to build the first of the four Wimbledon manor houses, later known as The Elizabethan Manor House, to the east of The Rectory. This was located within Sub Area 2 'Wimbledon Park', on the site of houses at the southern end of Home Park Road, but archaeological studies have shown that parts of its garden were within this Sub Area. Parts of the western boundary garden wall can still be seen in St. Mary's Churchyard and in part of the western boundary of the plot at Nos. 2 – 6 Arthur Road. Once the Manor House was built the Rectory became of less social significance. In the 17th Century it was used as servant's accommodation.

18th Century

- 11.10.6 During this Century half of The Old Rectory House was demolished and the remaining part used as a farmhouse.
- 11.10.7 The earliest map of the area, John Rocque's plan of 1741 – 45, indicates part of Church Road and the northern part of St. Mary's Road. A tree-lined way is shown to extend past the church, roughly in the direction of Arthur Road.
- 11.10.8 In 1788 the nave of St. Mary's Church was rebuilt for the third time. It was widened, in grey brick with a bowed entrance, and supported a square wooden tower with copper spire at the western end. Much of the nave has survived, under the later Victorian covering. A subterranean, circular shaft of apparently 18th Century bricks was discovered during construction works of The Garden Hall in 2001. It was probably a well or soakaway.
- 11.10.9 In 1798 Earl Spencer, Lord of the Manor, built **The Artesian Well House** (now No. 19 Arthur Road) in order to improve the water supply to his new Wimbledon Park House. (Built on the site of the former Park House School and Ricards Lodge School playing fields. See Sub Area 3.) He had an existing well deepened from some 40 to 563 ft. The well was still in operation in 1815 but slowly silted up and was then abandoned. This is the only surviving Spencer building in Wimbledon and is now Listed Grade II.



The Artesian Well House

19th Century

- 11.10.10 Further rebuilding of the church took place in 1843, in order to accommodate four hundred extra people. The nave was lengthened to the west, a new tower and steeple reaching 196 ft. high was added, and both the remaining Georgian nave and the new building were covered in knapped flints to look of one period.
- 11.10.11 A time of major change in Wimbledon began in 1846, when the fourth Manor House and Park, which then included the Old Rectory House, was purchased by the property developer J.A.Beaumont. His development was to shape the built landscape of much of Wimbledon, where he aimed to develop a site for villa dwellers with no rival in England. (See also para. 11.10.14.) In 1850, when Arthur Road was still a tree lined way, Beaumont had **Stag Lodge** erected as a gate lodge to Wimbledon Park House. The lodge lost its function when it was later sold, in 1872, and probably then became a private residence. The ornamental stag above the parapet was not part of the original building. The present stag was erected in 1988. It replaced an earlier version, erected in 1881, which was damaged.
- 11.10.12 The Vicarage, now known as **Steeple Court**, was built early in the second half of the 19th century.



Steeple Court. Rear view

- 11.10.13 The 1865 Ordnance Survey Map, (reproduced in Part One of the document), shows all of the existing buildings, (**as identified in bold type in paras 11.10.2 to 11.10.12**), apparently within park land. Church Road and St. Mary's Road are shown on this map but are named Church Street and Hothouse Lane, respectively. The large, now locally listed, house at No.157 Church Road is also shown, but as part of a row of four large houses (the other three remained until around 1970). Arthur Road is still indicated as a partially tree lined way. There is a small group of buildings on and adjacent to the site of today's No.3 Arthur Road, and Steeple Court is named 'The Parsonage'.
- 11.10.14 J.A.Beaumont laid out several local roads between 1870 and 1872, including Arthur Road, partly within this Sub Area. Arthur Road linked the Stag Lodge entrance to the Park to another in Durnsford Road. It is said to be named after Arthur, Queen Victoria's third son, who was a friend of Beaumont's daughter.
- 11.10.15 The church boundary wall was constructed or partially rebuilt during this century, and the subterranean shaft (see 11.10.8) capped off with a brick dome. The clock tower was added to St. Mary's Church in 1887.
- 11.10.16 The 1896 Ordnance Survey Map, (reproduced in Part One of the document), shows the large houses at Nos. 9 and 12 (Oaklawn) Arthur Road, together with the gate lodge of the latter that now forms part of the present No.2 Arthur Road. Council records indicate that the plans for these large houses were approved in 1886 and 1875, respectively. The Well House at no.23, approved in 1883, is also shown. *Another plot shown to be developed with a large house in spacious grounds is 'St. Mary's', (since redeveloped in part as Nos. 14 -20 Arthur Road. See 11.10.18 and 11.10.20). St Mary's was bought by Sir Joseph Bazalgette C.B. chief engineer to the Metropolitan Board of Works 1856 – 1888.*

20th Century

- 11.10.17 The 1916 Ordnance Survey map, (reproduced in Part One of the document) shows little change since that of 1896, apart from the large house at No 86 Arthur Road, 'Arborfield', for which plans were approved in 1901.
- 11.10.18 In 1920 the Warriar Chapel, vestry and choir room were added to St.Mary's Church. *In 1930 the site of the 19th century house at St.Mary's was partially redeveloped with the present house of the same name at No.20 Arthur Road.*
- 11.10.19 The only other change evident on the 1934 Ordnance Survey map, (reproduced in Part One of the document), is the diminished plot of No.157 Church Road, due to the development of houses in Somerset Road.
- 11.10.20 In the middle of the 20th Century the pace of change within the Sub Area quickened. The 1952 Ordnance Survey map shows a replacement house at No.23 Arthur Road, *and the two backland houses at Nos 14 and 16,*

behind No.20 Arthur Road. The large houses at No.12 Arthur Road, Steeple Court, and Nos. 86 and 157 Church Road were all converted into several flats, in 1946, 1949, 1951 and 1956, respectively. Plans were approved for the erection of five houses within the grounds of Steeple Court in 1949. These appear as Nos. 76 Church Road and 38 and 40 St. Mary's Road on the 1962 Ordnance Survey map, and Nos. 78 and 80 Church Road on the 1969 Ordnance Survey map.

- 11.10.21 The three detached houses in Steeple Close were approved in 1961.
- 11.10.22 Little change then occurred within the Sub Area until 1980, apart from the extension and conversion of The Artesian Well House into a dwelling in 1975, and the erection of the church hall. In 1980 planning permission was granted for the erection of the eleven detached houses in Rectory Orchard, which, as the name suggests, was built on part of the grounds of The Old Rectory House.
- 11.10.23 A new house was built at No.6 Arthur Road in 1987, within the grounds of No.2 Arthur Road, (previously part of the plot of the adjacent building at No.12), and No.2 itself was altered and much extended in the early 1990's. In 1993 planning permission was granted for the extension of No.157 Church Road to provide a total of ten flats, and for the erection of the two semi-detached houses within its grounds, now Nos. 224 and 226 Somerset Road. Permission was granted for a staff bungalow to be erected within the grounds of The Old Rectory House in 1999. Other developments in the area were small scale, mainly in the form of extensions to existing houses and alterations to front boundaries.

21st Century

- 11.10.24 The new Century began with the erection of a new church Meeting Hall (St.Mary's Garden Hall) built in an award winning contemporary style, in St. Mary's Road fronting onto Arthur Road, in 2002. (See also 11.12.8). Little other change has taken place.



St. Mary's Garden Hall



Figure 11.2: Sub-Area 1: The Historic Core - Age of Buildings

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11.11 EXISTING PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Church Road, St.Mary's Road and Arthur Road

11.11.1 This part of Church Road forms a straight and steep incline from north to south, where it joins the gently curving St. Mary's Road, which in turn links across in a south westerly direction to join Arthur Road. Arthur Road then forms a sweeping curve to the north, across the eastern half of the Sub Area. These roads form a strong 'u' shaped pattern.

11.11.2 The alignment of parts of Church Road and St. Mary's Road were evident by the mid 18th century, and by the mid 19th century they were laid out. Arthur Road was laid out by the local developer, John Augustus Beaumont, between 1870 and 1872. (See also 11.10.11, 11.10.14)

Central and Eastern Parts:

11.11.3 The ancient and visually dominant St.Mary's Church, and its surrounding, rectangular shaped churchyard, lie at the heart of the historic core. They are encircled to the north, east and south-east by a series of large properties set in large, spacious, landscaped, and mostly irregular shaped plots, either set back from Church Road or fronting, but at varied angles to, both sides of the curving Arthur Road. These were built at various times in styles typical of their period and include The Old Rectory House, which is the oldest extant house in the Borough. Dating from 1500, this provides a link with the area's manorial historic past. It's siting, however, being well set back from Church Road, down a long access drive, makes it barely visible from the street. In contrast, the very distinctive The Artesian Well House, dating from a more recent 1798, and built for Earl Spencer, Lord of the Manor, has a prominent roadside site in Arthur Road. (see para.3.10 and Sub Area 2. 'Wimbledon Park' for information re. Wimbledon Manor.)



Rear view of Old Rectory House

- 11.11.4 To the south of the church, within its grounds fronting Arthur Road, are ancillary buildings of modest size in a predominantly open setting. These include the Church Hall and the contemporary Garden Hall building. The latter is set close to Stag Lodge.
- 11.11.5 Stag Lodge, the Garden Hall, Church Hall and the extended gate house, (opposite, at No.2 Arthur Road), form a tight group of mainly single storey buildings, close to the road edge. Their proximity to the road reflects the siting of the nearby Artesian Well House, but otherwise the form of this cluster contrasts with the more spacious layout of surrounding development.



Garden Hall, 2 Arthur Road and Stag Lodge form a cluster

- 11.11.6 On the south-east side of Arthur Road, modest infill development dating from *the 1930s, 1950s and 1980s* has taken place, *both behind and* alongside more established buildings, but a sense of spaciousness pertains. This is due to the remaining wide plot frontages, set backs from the road and spaces between buildings.

Western Parts:

- 11.11.7 The western side of the Sub Area is mainly more densely developed, but is also predominantly irregular in layout. Here there are smaller and, in the main, more modern, detached houses on modest plots, fronting onto St. Mary's Road, set back from Church Road along the drive to The Old Rectory, within the Steeple Close and Rectory Orchard culs-de-sac, and fronting the southern tip of Somerset Road. These developments closely surround the larger Victorian buildings at Steeple Court, (the old

Vicarage), and Nos. 86 and 157 Church Road, all in use as flats since at least the 1950s. There are frequent glimpses of St Mary's Church through gaps and over rooftops.

- 11.11.8 Church Field is an extensive green which fronts onto St. Mary's Road, providing a transition of open space between the contrasting forms of the western and eastern parts of the Sub Area, as well as allowing extensive views of St. Mary's Church.



Church Field in front of Church, forms transition of open space

- Steeple Close**
11.11.9 This row of three detached houses off a narrow drive is discreetly located to the rear of houses fronting Church Road. When they are viewed from within Church Road and St. Mary's Road, (across Church Field), the buildings in and around Steeple Close appear to nestle together in a harmonious group.

- Rectory Orchard**
11.11.10 This prominent cul de sac of eleven houses of uniform appearance is built on part of the grounds of the Old Rectory House. The size, layout, and uniform appearance of the development presents a detrimental contrast to the irregular and varied layout and appearance of surrounding development, when viewed from within the Sub Area.

- 11.11.11 The main elements described in this section are indicated in a graphic form on Figure 11.3 'Character Analysis'. Negative issues relating to the pattern of development are summarised in 11.20.2.

11.12 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

- 11.12.1 This Section describes the predominant characteristics of the buildings and materials used. The Statutory Descriptions of the Listed Buildings are given in Appendix 1. Descriptions of the Locally Listed Buildings are given in Appendix 3. The buildings are identified on Figure 11.1.

Buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and/or are suggested for inclusion in the Local List are also identified on Figure 11.1, and in section 11.20 of the document. Negative issues relating to building types and materials are summarised in 11.20.2.

Arthur Road:

11.12.2 This part of Arthur Road contains a mix of buildings of individual design, ranging from the 18th century Artesian Well House, through Victorian Tudor Gothic to contemporary. The strong design elements and decorative details used in the different building types combine to create a sense of place and harmony in the street.

11.12.3 Design features include the use of turrets, towers and a cupola; domed, gabled, hipped, parapet and pediment roofs; a variety of window types and styles including mullioned, vertical sash, round, casement and the use of stained glass: a variety of decorative details including eaves details, gothic arches, ornate chimneys, decorative brick banding and tile hanging, decorative porches, and curved window arches. Buildings are one, two or three storeys high, depending on their siting within the area.

11.12.4 Materials used include stucco, render, stone, various colours of brick, tile hanging, glazing, concrete and clay roof tiles, as well as slate, cement and copper.



Detail of No.2 Arthur Road

Church Road:

11.12.5 This part of Church Road also contains a mix of buildings of individual design, here ranging from the 14th century Old Rectory House mansion, through Victorian Classical at No.157, to Arts and Crafts influences at

No.76. Some have strong design elements, which combine to create a distinctive character in the street.

11.12.6 Design features include the use of: gabled and hipped roofs, decorative eaves, banding and parapet details; a mix of window types and sizes including bay windows, small panes, vertical sash and curved arches; decorative porches; and chimneys. Buildings are a mix of two and three storeys high.

11.12.7 Materials used include; render, stucco, brick, painted brick, clay pantiles, concrete tiles, slates, stone and tile hanging.



No. 157 Church Road (Renshaw Court)



No 76 Church Road



No 86 Church Road (Arborfield)

St. Mary's Road:

- 11.12.8 The few buildings within this part of St Mary's Road are again of a mix of individual design, ranging from the Church itself (see Appendix 1 for statutory listing description), through the bold Victorian styling of the three storey Steeple Court, the quite plain, 1960s design of No.40, to the more modern, single storey, asymmetrical original Church Hall and now the award winning, contemporary, simple geometric styling of the recent Garden Hall. (Winner of both the RIBA and London Borough of Merton/Civic Trust design Awards.)
- 11.12.9 Design features include the use of a variety of gabled roofs, bay windows and chimneys, as well as the contrasting flat roof, uncompromising blank walls and projecting box-like features of the Garden Hall building.
- 11.12.10 Materials include a variety of brick types, including painted; slate; concrete roof tiles and white stone with translucent glass.



Steeple Court



No. 40 St. Mary's Road

Rectory Orchard:

- 11.12.11 A cul de sac of two storey detached houses of uniform appearance, with neo-Georgian style influences.
- 11.12.12 The houses have ridged, gable end roofs, projecting porches, columns, shuttered windows and integral garages. There is a strong horizontal emphasis to their appearance from the street.
- 11.12.13 They are of red brick with corrugated concrete roof tiles.



Rectory Orchard

Steeple Close:

11.12.14 A small cul de sac of two storey houses of similar, but not uniform, appearance. They have ridged roofs with asymmetrical gable ends, are of a mellow honey colour brick with clay tile roofs and tile hanging.



Steeple Close

Somerset Road:

11.12.15 This pair of semi-detached, two storey houses has a ridged, slate roof with front gable projection, and is of brown brick with red brick detailing.



Somerset Road

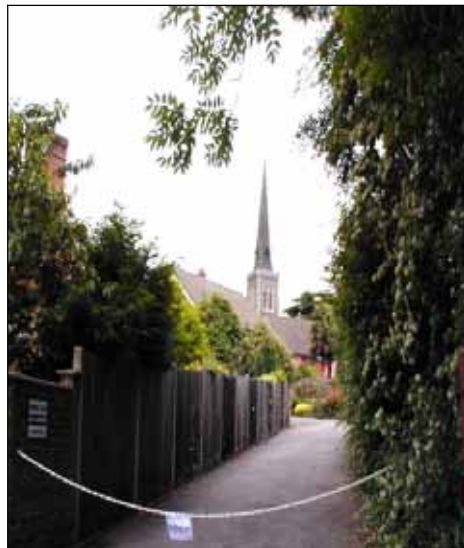
11.13 TOPOGRAPHY

11.13.1 The land within this Sub Area is predominantly high and flat, being at or close to the top of a hill, although there is a steep drop in level within Church Road and alongside the northern boundary of the Sub Area, where the ground falls away to the north. There are less prominent undulations within the area to the east of Church Road, where Rectory Orchard and Steeple Close rise to the east. Contours are indicated on Figure 6.0 in Part One of the document.

11.13.2 The high ground allows extensive views out of the Sub Area, particularly to the north, across Wimbledon Park. The hill, and the Church upon it, also form an important part of the landscape, particularly when viewed from the north, from both within (particularly from Sub Areas 4 and 6) and outside of the Conservation Area. It offers the famous view of St Mary's Church from the All England Lawn Tennis Club grounds in Church Road.

11.14 VIEWS

11.14.1 The many views and glimpses of St. Mary's Church are a very distinctive feature of the Sub Area. There are the uninterrupted views from within St. Mary's Road and Arthur Road, as well as views of the spire over rooftops from within Church Road, Steeple Close, Rectory Orchard and further east along Arthur Road, with the Artesian Well House in the foreground.



View of spire, Steeple Close



View of spire, from Church Road



Two views of the Spire, Arthur Road

11.14.2 From within Arthur Road there are also views of the woodland on the former Park House School Site, and down Home Park Road to Wimbledon Park and beyond.

11.14.3 Other long views from within the Sub Area are mostly out to the north and west, facilitated by the vantage point created by high ground. There are fine views from St Mary's Churchyard over Wimbledon Park, with London in the distance. Another aspect over the Park is from within Rectory Orchard. There is another long view towards London from the top of Church Road, at its junction with St.Mary's Road.



Long view over Wimbledon Park from Rectory Orchard

- 11.14.4 There is a view of The Old Rectory House from within the churchyard – the only public place within this Sub Area from which it can be seen, apart from a glimpse of one of its turrets from within Rectory Orchard.



View of The Old Rectory House from within the Churchyard

- 11.14.5 Views are indicated on Figure 11.3

11.15 OPEN SPACES

The churchyard of St. Mary's Church.

- 11.15.1 This offers a quiet backwater, reached through small, quite hidden gateways off the church access road and Arthur Road. The mature trees and other planting within the churchyard contribute to the greenery of the Sub Area, and it is a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. (See paras.11.8.1 – 11.8.5) It is also included in the London Inventory - Historic Garden Spaces in Merton, published by London Parks and Gardens Trust.
- 11.15.2 All Wimbledonians were buried here until 1882, when the Gap Road cemetery was opened. A few 1714 headstones survive, and there are many tombs and graves from the Georgian and Victorian periods. Many are now Grade II Listed Buildings, notably that of Gerard de Visme who died in 1797, which is a pyramid of blocks of vermiculated rustication with corner acroteria to the base, and the Mausoleum of Sir Joseph William Bazalgette. The tombs also include those of William and Hannah Wilberforce, Joseph Marryat, and Sir Theodore Janssen, one time Lord of the Manor.



Some planting in the Churchyard



Mausoleum of Sir Joseph William Bazalgette

The Church Field

- 11.15.3 This important green open space adjoins the churchyard and fronts onto St.Mary's Road. It allows views across to the Church, it's grounds and surrounding buildings. (See also 11.11.8) The Tithe Barn was once sited here. It too is included in the London Inventory – Historic Green Spaces in Merton, published by the London Parks and Gardens Trust.

Other Spaces

- 11.15.4 Many of the buildings, particularly those to the east of the area and fronting Arthur Road, are set in spacious plots and gardens. The irregular

spaces between and around the buildings make an important contribution to the spaciousness and ecology of the Sub Area. (See 11.8.6 'Green Corridors'.)

11.16 TREES AND GREENERY

- 11.16.1 The mature trees and other planting within the St. Mary's Churchyard contribute to the greenery of the Sub Area, and it is a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation.(See paras.11.8.1 – 11.8.5.)
- 11.16.2 The Sub Area includes much other tree planting and greenery, which offers a leafy character, especially in summer, and contributes to the quality of views into, out of and within it. There are mature street trees in St.Mary's Road and Arthur Road, as well as the many mature trees within private gardens and other spaces around buildings. Section 11.17 refers to the planting to highway boundaries, which includes the distinctive holly hedges in part of Arthur Road.
- 11.16.3 There is a small area planted with trees and shrubs at the rear of the pavement in Church Road, a planting bed of incongruous roses within the pavement in Arthur Road, and a small amount of grass verge in St Mary's Road.
- 11.16.4 Negative issues relating to trees and greenery are summarised in 11.20.3.



Distinctive holly hedges in Arthur Road

11.17 HIGHWAY BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- Arthur Road:**
- 11.17.1 Plots on both sides of the road, close to the Church, have distinctive holly hedges and other planting to their front boundaries. These emphasise the curved alignment of this part of the road.

11.17.2 There is a stretch of stock brick wall, some 2 metres high, at the south western end, which is in part a continuation of the distinctive old wall fronting St Mary's Road, (within Sub Area 4 'Belvedere Estate'. 14.17.6)), and a more modern matching section to Nos. 2 and 6. Gates within the wall are timber, and it's appearance is softened by mature planting in the gardens behind.

11.17.3 To the east of the church grounds, on both sides of the road, the boundaries are predominantly high, close boarded timber fences, in the main also softened in appearance by the mature planting behind.



Timber fences in Arthur Road

11.17.4 **Church Road:**
Here there are a mix of boundary treatments. On the east side these include high timber and low picket fencing, low posts and chains, the decorative, imposing style of the metal gates to The Old Rectory House and a high, staggered brick wall alongside Rectory Orchard. On the south side there is an incongruous, fussily detailed yellow brick wall with railings and metal gates to No.157, a timber fence with a hedge behind curving round to Somerset Road.



Low picket fencing, Church Road



Gates to The Old Rectory House

11.17.5 **St. Mary's Road:**
The boundary alongside Church Field is formed by a low timber picket fence. That to the houses at Nos. 38 and 40 is a high timber fence, much of it covered in climbing Ivy.

11.17.6 Negative issues relating to boundary treatments are summarised in 11.20.5.

11.18 HIGHWAY SURFACE TREATMENTS AND STREET FURNITURE

11.18.1 Throughout the Sub Area the road surfaces and footways are predominantly of black/grey tarmac. Exceptions are the vehicular crossovers to properties in Rectory Orchard, which are concrete, and the gravel driveways to The Old Rectory House and to other houses set back from the Church Road frontage.



Gravel drive to The Old Rectory House

11.18.2 Kerb stones are predominantly wide and of granite, and sometimes return across the footway to edge vehicular entrances. Entrance drives to some properties in all three main roads are delineated by granite setts to the road edge.

11.18.3 Small, metal bollard of a traditional style are used at the kerb edge in St. Mary's Road/Arthur Road around Stag Lodge and the Church entrance. Traditional style lampposts are also used in this area. There are a few benches within the pavement in St Mary's Road and Church Road.

- 11.18.4 Negative issues relating to highway surface treatments are summarised in 11.20.5.



Kerb stone in Arthur Road

11.19 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE: A SUMMARY

- 11.19.1 Many of the factors and features described in this chapter combine together to contribute to the character and appearance of this Sub Area of the Conservation Area. This summary is an attempt to define the significant factors but it may not be exhaustive, and is not intended to put forward any order of importance.
- 11.19.2 **The development of the area over time:**
A summary of the history of the Sub Area is given in section 11.10.
- 11.19.3 **The historical and archaeological significance as an early settlement, and the manorial past:**
Part One and Section 11.10 of this document give a summary of the historical significance, while Section 11.7 summarises the archaeological importance of the Sub Area.
- 11.19.4 **The significance of St. Mary's Church as the focal point:**
The ancient Parish Church offers a distinctive identity to the Sub Area and forms an important focal point within the Conservation Area as a whole.

- 11.19.5 **The special tranquillity provided by the churchyard:**
The churchyard is described in Sections 11.8 re. nature conservation and 11.15 re. open spaces.
- 11.19.6 **Topography:**
This is described in Section 11.13.
- 11.19.7 **The many views within, into and out of the Sub Area:**
See Section 11.14.
- 11.19.8 **Spaciousness:**
There is a sense of spaciousness within the Sub area, created by the pattern of development, as described in Section 11.11, and by the varied open spaces (Section 11.15).
- 11.19.9 **The existing pattern of development:**
This is described in section 11.11 of this document.
- 11.19.10 **Building Types and materials:**
The area is characterised by a variety of buildings in styles typical of their period, many with decorative detailing, as described in Sections 11.12, and Appendices 1 and 2.
- 11.19.11 **Trees and Greenery:**
The open spaces of the Sub Area, including the private gardens, host a mature landscape which offers a lush appearance, further enhanced by the mature street trees. (Section 11.16)
- 11.19.12 **Ecological value:**
See Section 11.8 ‘Nature Conservation’.
- 11.19.13 **Highway Boundary and Surface Treatments:**
The established boundary and surface treatments, as described in Sections 11.17 and 11.18
- 11.19.14 Figure 11.3 presents an indication of the character of the Sub Area in a graphic form.

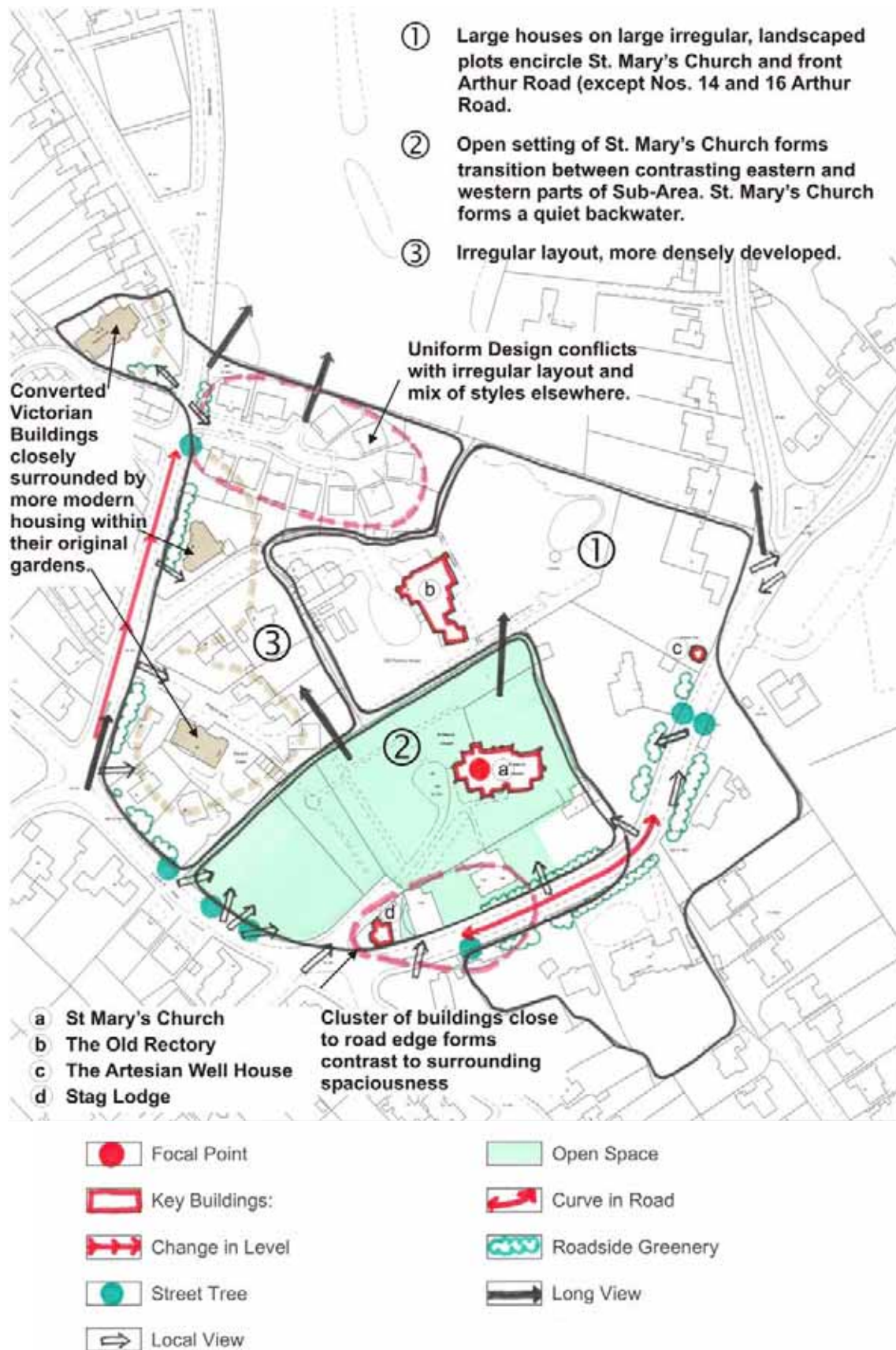


Figure 11.3: Sub-Area 1: The Historic Core - Character Analysis

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11.20 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES

Positives:

11.20.1 The main positive features are those described in the previous paragraphs re. this Sub Area. Elements that are considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, but are neither on the Statutory or Local Lists of buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest, are identified in Figure 11.1. They are:

Arthur Road: Part of the western boundary wall of the plot at Nos. 2 – 6, Nos. 12, 20, 21 and 23.
St. Mary's Road: St. Mary's Garden Hall, Steeple Court, the walls to the east, west and north of the Churchyard.

Negatives:

11.20.2 Issues relating to the existing pattern of development, spaciousness and building types and materials:

- The unsympathetic, uniform, design of the Rectory Orchard development when viewed from the street;



Rectory Orchard

- Nos. 224 and 226 Somerset Road have a poor relationship with adjacent locally listed building and poor choice of materials



Nos. 224 and 226 Somerset Road

- Unsympathetic extensions to buildings eg. Two storey, flat roofed side extensions at Nos. 76 and 78 Church Road;
- The loss of original features, eg. Window replacements
- Pressure to diminish gaps between buildings that have allowed views through to garden land

11.20.3 Issues relating to trees and greenery:

- Cumulative loss of trees and greenery, particularly through the erection of new development, extensions and creation of hardstandings areas.

11.20.4 Issues relating to ecology:

- Churchyard nature conservation area in need of better management.

11.20.5 Issues relating to highway boundary and surface treatments:

- The use of unsympathetic boundary treatments, including: inappropriate brick walls, the use of austere, concrete posts within otherwise appropriate timber fences; metal gates where timber would be more in keeping; elaborate lanterns to gate piers;
- The covering of original granite setts with tarmac;
- Poor design of some pavement 'improvement' schemes;



Poor pavement 'improvement'

- Traffic management and calming measures. Eg. Unsympathetic road traffic islands and road markings (painted roundabouts, 'keep clear' sign);



Intrusive road marking in Church Road

11.20.6

Other Issues:

- The impact of Wimbledon fortnight on the appearance of the area, including the use of Church Field as a car park, which is harmful to its appearance.
- **Concern that any temporary car parking on Church Field does not**

unduly harm the appearance of the locality.

11.21 OPPORTUNITIES

- 11.21.1 Prepare Design Guide to appropriate development.
- 11.21.2 Promote historical importance of the Church site and of The Old Rectory House. Eg. Name board for Church Field.
- 11.21.3 St. Mary's Churchyard:
Better management of churchyard to enhance its grassland value and the setting of the gravestones. Also, the gravestones should be surveyed to determine their condition and repairs undertaken as necessary.
- 11.21.4 Seek more appropriate street management measures.
- 11.21.5 Seek improvements to the condition of highway surfaces.
- 11.21.6 Seek the identification and protection of historic trees and other trees of significant amenity value.
- 11.21.7 Investigate the possibility of adding St. Mary's Garden Hall, Steeple Court, the Churchyard walls to the east, west and north, all within St. Mary's Road, to the Local List.
- 11.21.8 Identify the remaining parts of the western boundary of the garden to the Elizabethan Manor House and investigate their potential for Listing.
- 11.21.9 The preparation of a Conservation Area Management Plan will provide an opportunity to address issues raised by this Character Assessment.**

11.22 ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONTROLS NEEDED:

- 11.22.1 Many alterations, such as the removal of boundary treatments, the installation of replacement windows and doors, and the removal of chimneys, are 'Permitted Development' and can be carried out without the need for Planning Permission. It is suggested that some Permitted Development rights be removed, in order to help preserve the character and appearance of the Sub Area. This is done by means of placing an Article 4(2) Direction on residential properties. The alterations suggested to be brought under planning control through the making of an Article 4(2) Direction are:-
- 11.22.2 The demolition and erection of boundary treatments fronting the highway up to 1.0 metre in height, including gates. To ensure appropriate boundary treatments.
- 11.22.3 The formation of hardstanding areas. To ensure the retention of soft landscaping in gardens that contributes to the character and appearance

of the area and in the interests of nature conservation.

- 11.22.4 Alterations to windows and external doors. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.22.5 The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.22.6 The painting of masonry including brickwork. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.22.7 The removal and replacement of roofing materials. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.22.8 The removal of hedges fronting the highway. To preserve the character and appearance of the area.
- 11.22.9 The proposed Article 4(2) Directions will be subject to the procedures set out within the Town and Country Planning (General Procedures) Order 1995.**

11.23 SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS/ PLANNING CONDITIONS

- 11.23.1 These could be used in appropriate circumstances to ensure the fulfilment of Opportunities identified in 11.21 above, and/or those identified elsewhere within this Character Appraisal.

11.24 ADJACENT AREAS OF QUALITY:

- 11.24.1 The All England Lawn Tennis Club grounds should be surveyed to consider possible separate Conservation Area or Area of Distinctive Quality status.

Wimbledon North Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Sub Area 1: The Historic Core Post Consultation Draft

November 2006

