

Lancaster Avenue Conservation Area Appraisal

The character appraisal below is reproduced from the Council's original designation report of 17 October 1994. It is reproduced here to provide guidance on what the Council believes makes the area worthy of its conservation area status and should be consulted by anyone wishing to undertake development affecting the conservation area.

2. Justification

Location

2.1 The proposed Conservation Area is situated in the south of the borough in Norwood to the east of Norwood Road (A215). The attached map shows the boundary of the proposed conservation area including the additions accepted by committee on 13 October 1993.

History

2.2 Norwood derived its name from its location on the edge of the "Great-North-Wood. The area where Lancaster Avenue stands today was originally part of an area known as lower Norwood. From maps of the day (1563) this area comprised fields, coppices and woodland.

2.3 During the second -part of the eighteenth century the area became part of Knights Hill Farm owned by Edward Thurlow who became Lord chancellor in 1778. on his death in 1806 the trustees sold or leased the land, however it was not until 1844 that plans were drawn up for Lancaster Avenue, Rosendale Road, Park Hall and Thurlow Park Road. To make them more attractive proposals allowed for 60 feet road widths instead of the usual 40 feet. Development of the road started in the 1840s.

Character Description

2.4 The history of the road mirrors the history of London's development - how the parkland and meadows of a large estate was transformed in the 19th century into a suburban road.

2.5 By the end of the 1840s 4 houses had been constructed. The first main group of houses built (1-12 Lancaster villas) shows the use of stucco and stone on London stock brick in a plain style reflecting the influence of the earlier 19th Century classical revival. When they were built they would have overlooked meadows and the River Effra.

2.6 The houses built in the 1880s demonstrate changing tastes. They have a more intimate appeal and illustrate the Victorians' enthusiasm for natural foliage ornamentation with just enough formality to suit the needs of architectural form. Cast iron work is also present in a variety of styles on canopies and verandas.

2.7 Two houses constructed in 1892 reveal how the latter ornate decoration had fallen from favour to be replaced by a plainer (heavier) style.

2.8 By 1906 the road was virtually completed by a series of stepped terraces which in their turn are typical of the Edwardian era.

2.9 Several houses were destroyed during the Second world War. Replacement houses were constructed in the 1960s.

Purpose of Designation

2.10 The purpose of designating Lancaster Avenue as a conservation area is twofold. Firstly to enable the council to bring greater development control powers to bear on insensitive and inappropriate development in the area, in an effort to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of an area of special architectural or historical interest. Secondly, to enable the council to take positive steps towards preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the area. For example, issuing guidance to property owners explaining the effects of designation and/or publishing a preservation and enhancement plan for the area.

Reason for Designation

2.11 In 1987 the Lancaster Avenue Residents Association prepared a detailed report (this information has been used to prepare this report) proposing the designation of Lancaster Avenue as a Conservation Area. This report was considered by the Conservation Area Advisory Committee who recommended that a report be submitted to the Town Planning Committee for consideration. Although a report was submitted to this committee in 1987 it was deferred pending further information; the report was never re submitted.

2.12 The Lancaster Avenue Residents Association since that time has pressed for the designation together with the support of the Norwood Society. The Association considers "The value of suburban heritage- has long been underestimated and can be irretrievably lost through unsympathetic modernisation and thoughtless redevelopment," They wish to "preserve the varied and distinctive character of the road and are convinced that this can best be achieved within the context of a conservation area."

2.13 The Lancaster Avenue proposed conservation area as shown on plan DES/TS/328 is considered to an area of special architectural and historical interest (paras 2.2-2.9). it is unusual to find a road which exhibits such a good example of a series of architectural styles and which has retained unspoilt, so much of the original ornamentation.

APPRAISAL STUDY

OF

PROPOSED
LANCASTER AVENUE
CONSERVATION AREA

UNDERTAKEN
BY
LOCAL RESIDENTS

1 AREA BACKGROUND

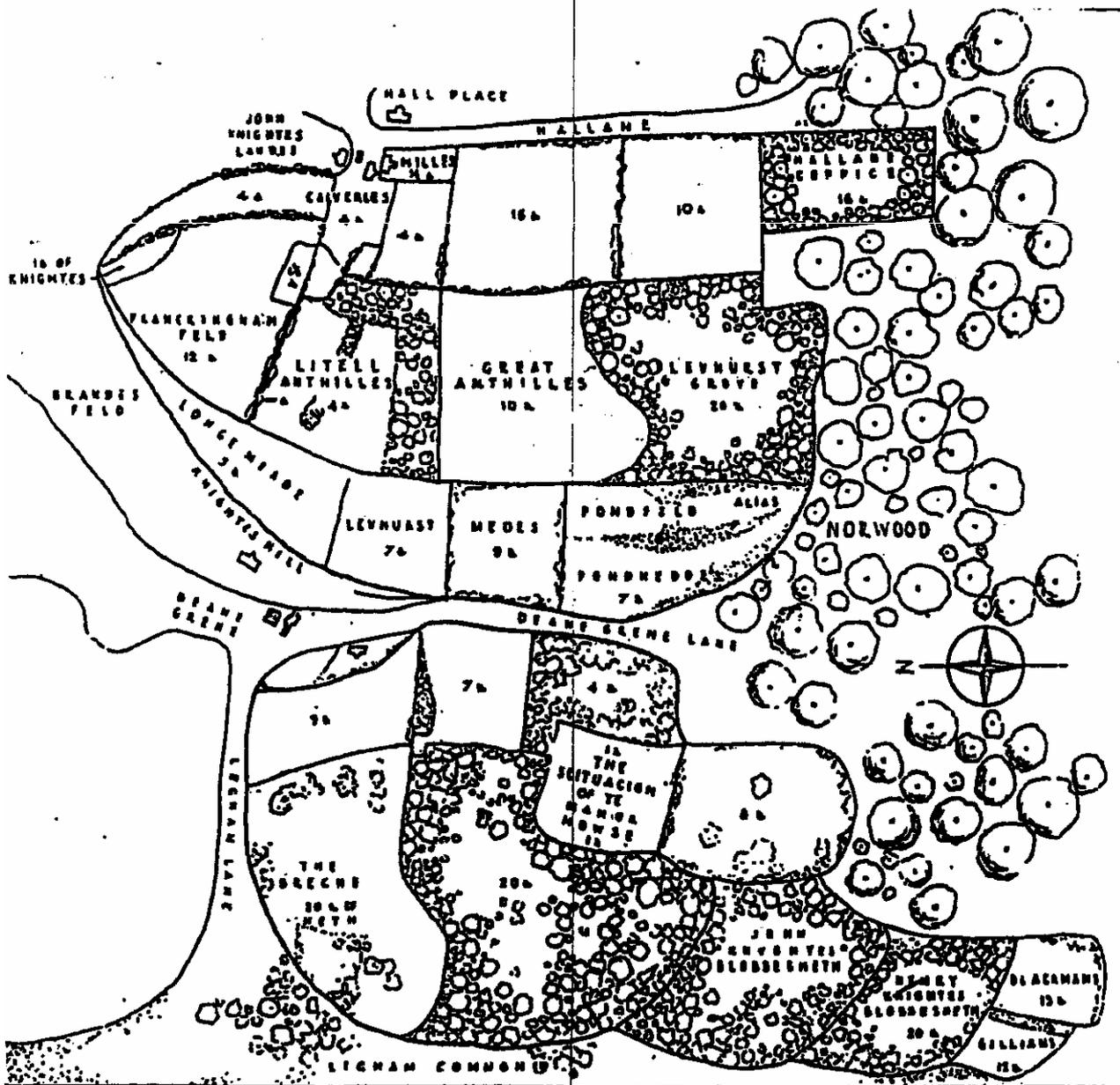
Norwood derived its name from its location on the edge of the Great North Hood. This was a wild, unfrequented place and gipsies encamped on the wooded slopes giving their name to Gipsy Hill.

The part of Norwood which includes the area contained in this study was known as Lower Norwood, a name which continued until 1885. Lower Norwood was more open and from the map of Lovehurst Manor prepared in 1563 the land can be seen as divided into parcels of fields, coppices and woodland, with few scattered buildings over a wide area.

John Rocque's map of 1745 shows the cluster of buildings round the Horns Tavern, the nucleus of the future Lower Norwood. To the North is Knights Hill Farm near which, a century later, Lancaster Road was to be laid out.



John Rocque's Map 1745



Levehurst Manor in 1563; re-drawn from a map in the Public Record Office

2 HISTORY

During the second part of the eighteenth century Edward Thurlow, who became Lord Chancellor in 1778, gradually acquired a large estate around Knight's Hill Farm. Lord Thurlow commissioned Henry Holland to build a large mansion which stood close to where St. Cuthbert's Church now is, but after a dispute with Holland who had exceeded the original estimate by £12,000 it is said that Lord Thurlow refused to live in the new house and remained at Knight's Hill Farm. On his death in 1806, the land was devised to trustees to sell but despite its proximity to London it did not prove popular and no purchaser was forthcoming.

The trustees obtained an Act of Parliament in 1809 allowing them to demolish the mansion, sell or lease the land and to lay out new roads to encourage building. This led to the development of roads around Gipsy Hill and Norwood High Street.

The rest of the land did not sell quickly however and in 1844 the trustees of Lord Thurlow paid £2,845 for the enfranchisement of the remaining 156 acres of the estate, and plans were drawn up for the building of Lancaster Avenue, Rosendale Road, Park Hall and Thurlow Park Roads. In order to be more attractive and gracious in proportion for prospective buyers, the proposals allowed for the new road widths to be 60 feet instead of the more usual width at that time of 40 feet.

The proposed road which was to become Lancaster Avenue is shown in a hand bill advertising an auction at Garraway's Coffee House in Exchange Alley in the City on 22nd July 1845 (see overleaf).



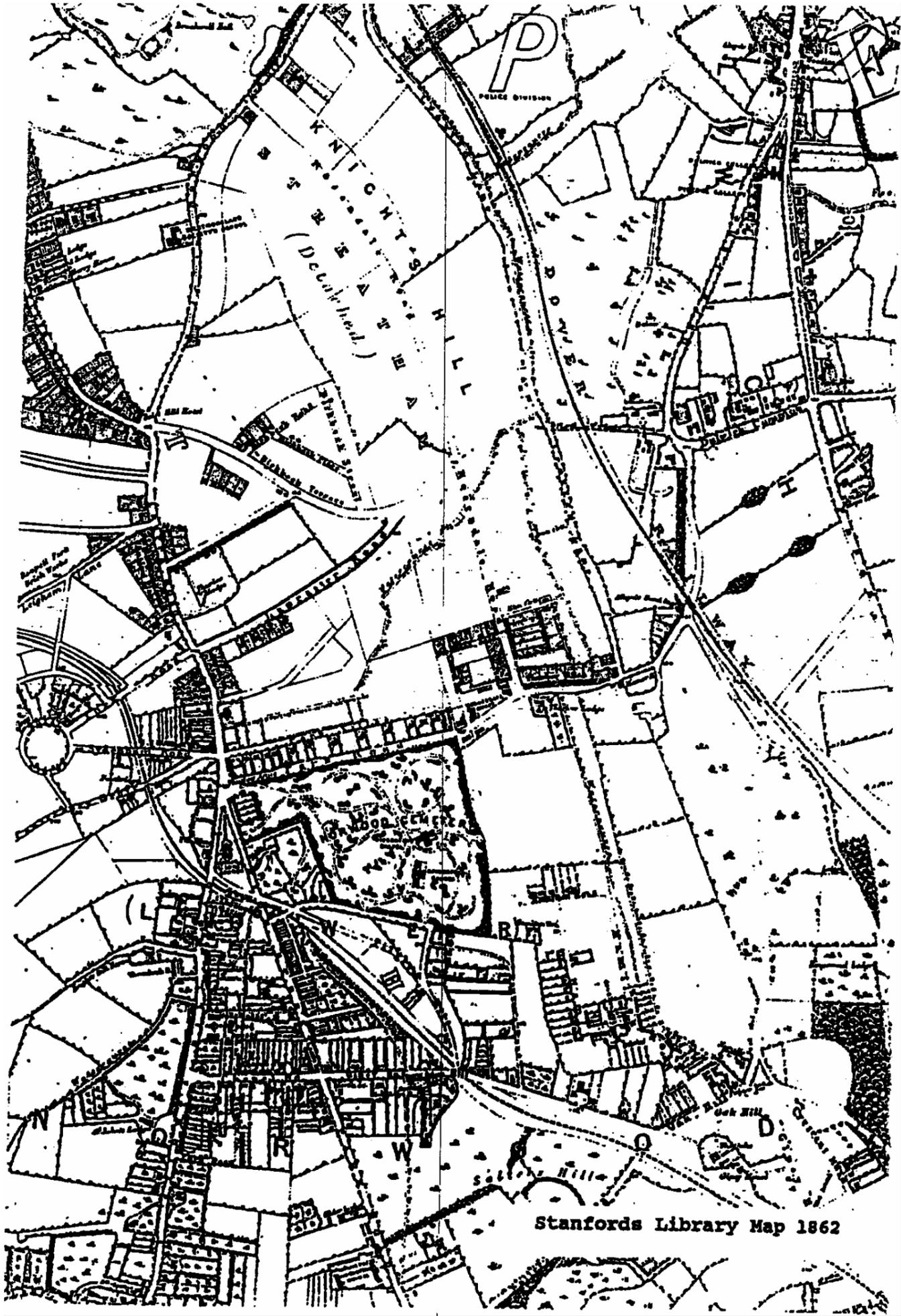
Knight's Hill Farm, near Norwood in Surrey. The Seat of Edwd. L Thurlow Lord Chancellor.

The land changed hands over the next 15 years being divided into smaller plots. By 1864 a large part was owned by Charles Blake, a solicitor of 22 College Hill in the City, who in 1851 was living with his first wife in Thurlow Place, which is now part of Norwood Road at the end of Lancaster Avenue. By 1855 Blake has moved to park Villas which is no Chestnut Road.

Blake was aware of the effect on land prices of the arrival of the railway; Lower Norwood station was opened by 1858 and Tulse Hill Station on the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway was opened in 1863.

Another interesting aspect of the history of the area's development is that it provided a good example of how disenchantment with the unhealthy environment of the inner suburbs, combined with the improvement in transport as the railways were established, encouraged those who could afford it to move to the less crowded parts of Lambeth. For many years in the 1860's and 70's the Medical Officer's reports state that Norwood was one of the healthiest districts in Lambeth. This was important in a period when epidemics of cholera and smallpox occurred with alarming frequency.

In 1864, together with John Davies of Pilgrim Hill, Blake began his development of what became known as the Blake Estate. By the 1880's this was to include Chatsworth Way, Idmiston Road and Ardlui Road, known at that time as Baldstone Road.



Stanfords Library Map 1862

4. THE FIRST DEVELOPMENT

Charles Blake's first development in what was then Lower Norwood, was to build Lancaster Villas. This was a row of twelve paired houses built in a plain formal style with the front door and main rooms raised to overlook the meadows to the South, through which the River Effra ran. It appears from the deeds that the twelve houses were built over a period of twelve to eighteen months from 1864-5.

It has not been possible to discover who the architect was or if one was appointed at all. It seems that the usual practice at the time was for the architect to design the exterior of the house while it was left to the builder to adapt the inside as he saw fit. This could account for the minor variation of the internal arrangements of these houses.

For fourteen years after their completion, Lancaster villas enjoyed an outlook over meadowland towards Park Villas in Chestnut Road; from the upper floors it would have been possible to glimpse the towers of the Crystal Palace.

It is interesting to note that the only other houses of the same design in the district are the pairs which remain in Auckland Hill close to where Blake's associate John Davis lived in Pilgrim Hill.

Four houses dating from the late 1840 's were already in existence at the south west end of what was then merely the "new road to Dulwich", but the road was not made up nor were drains laid. The principal commercial area of Lower Norwood at that time was around and beyond St. Luke's Church.

Although Chatsworth, Idmiston and Chancellor Roads were gravelled and the footways paved in 1866, it was 1871 when road works in Lancaster Road are first mentioned in the Lambeth Vestry Report. New kerbs and tar paving were put down and the roadway reformed, made and metalled at the expense of the estate owner.

Chas. Blake.



Ordnance Survey 1863-70

5 THE SECOND PHASE

In 1879 Blake began his next phase of development on the south side of Lancaster Road, to the east of the houses built in the 1840's which he already owned and let at rack rents.

The new houses were built in pairs, some by Henry Somerford and his son of Manor Street, Clapham. Unlike Lancaster Villas the front door was at ground level, and the earlier plain style gave way to the Victorians' developing taste for elaborate foliage decoration which can be seen on capitals and over doors and windows.

This decorative work was carved in Bath stone probably by a team of stonemasons who followed the builders round the site, although by that time better transport and increasing mechanisation meant that ornaments and accessories could be prepared off the site; some stone was dressed at the quarry and delivered ready for use. Certainly catalogues show that terracotta tiles and decorative panels, which often resembled carved stone were made in quantities for applying to new buildings.

In the case of this part of the Blake Estate the leases were not made out 'en bloc' to one builder as previously, but for the most part to individual leaseholders.

Between 1880 and 1882 the land between Thurlow House at the Norwood Road end of the road and Lancaster Villas was built over (Nos. 1,3,5,6,7) as was the land between Lancaster Villas and Thurlow Park Road. William Potier of Thurlow House granted leases for the building of 1,3,5,6,7 on the land he had bought from Hemione Wilhelmina Waller in 1861. These houses were built by James Duncanson for Janes Bradnock (No. 5), and for George Shrewsbury (Ho. 7), a gas engineer, who lived in Sydenham Place nearby and who was a member of the Lambeth Vestry which preceded Lambeth Council.

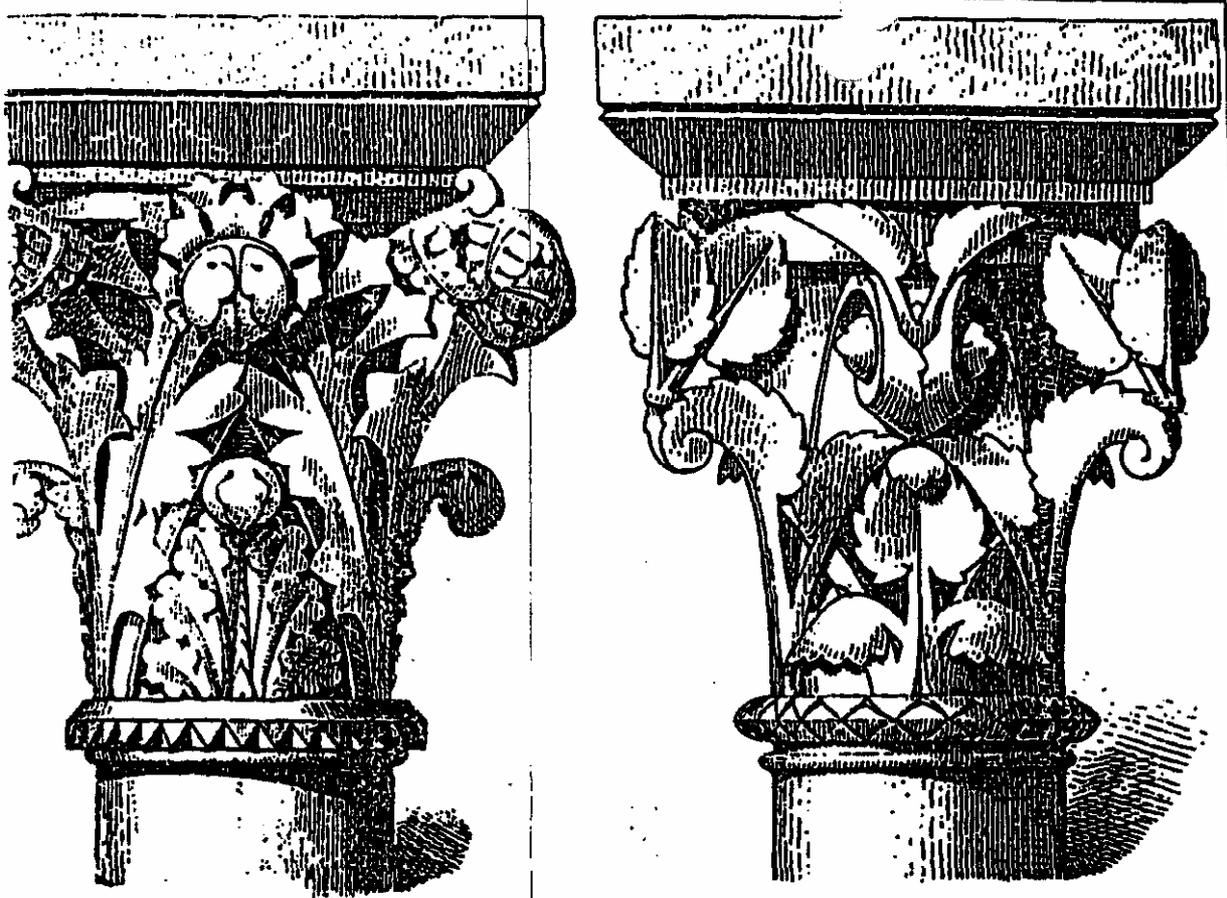
At the other end, Henry Somerford the Elder and Henry Somertord the Younger were building 47 and 49, and all the houses from 37 to the end data from 1880/81 although all the builders cannot be identified.

During the following three years Blake filled in the vacant sites between Osborne Lodge and Shirley Lodge and Castlemaine, houses built in the 1840' a before Blake acquired the land.

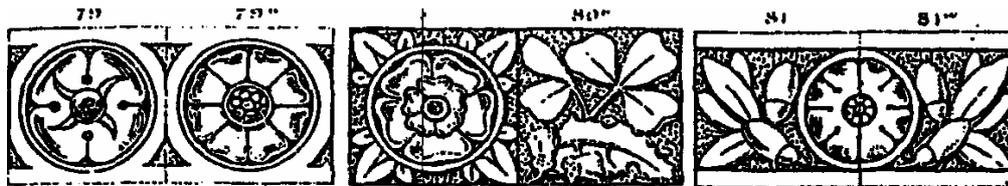
Wolfigton House School was by then established at No. 16 and the land adjacent kept as a playground.

A. W. Easton built Nos. 4,6 6 10 in 1883 together with a large part of Chatsworth Way. Nos. 2 and 2A were built in 1892 by James Robert Haley who was also the builder responsible for the stables in Dalton Street, and the Broadway in Norwood Road.

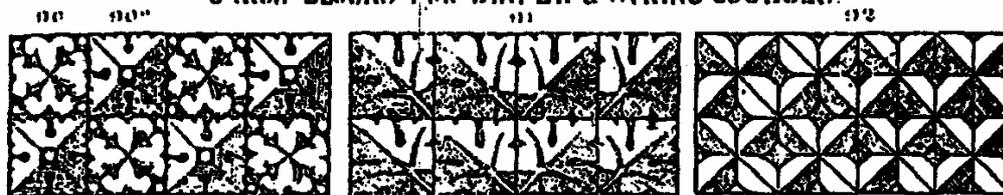
Designs for Stone Capitals 1865



STONE CAPITALS.



6 INCH BLOCKS FOR DIAPER & STRING COURSES.



6 THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In 1906, A.E. Kervern built the terraced houses from the corner of Ardlui Road to No. 92 to complete the development of Lancaster Road. In this case, as public legislation now demanded, plans for the drainage system had to be submitted when the houses were built.

In 1922, Nos. 14, 14a and 14b were built on the land which had been the playground of the school at no. 16 for many years. They formed a later part of the Blake Estate which since Blake's death in 1897 had been administered by family trustees.

The Second World War:

The Second World War and the air attacks of 1940-41 brought about the next major changes in the road. Incident reports from September 1940 to June 1941 give some indication of the number of bombs which fell on Lancaster Avenue during the blitz on London. Fortunately there were few serious casualties because many of the residents had left London. Fires from fractured gas mains were a frequent occurrence. On 7th October 1940, no. 53 was hit and the front collapsed and on 11th May of the following year a stick of bombs caused so much damage to nos. 11 and 13 that they had to be demolished and left 9 and 15 as detached houses. It was in this same raid that the School for Blind Girls on the Elmcourt site behind No. 9 was demolished with the loss of four lives.

Ho, 12, one of the original 1850 houses, was also lost at this time. The rubble was pushed towards the front and an allotment made in the large back garden. Later, this site and the one opposite on the north side were filled with two cul-de-sacs of temporary prefabricated houses called Lancaster Way which remained until replaced by permanent houses in 1965.

Post-War:

Further changes took place in 1954-55 when the grounds of the bombed School for Blind Girls were used to build a school for handicapped children. To extend the site/half of the gardens of nos. 11-27 were acquired by the London Borough of Lambeth.



12 Lancaster Avenue destroyed by enemy action during
the Second World War

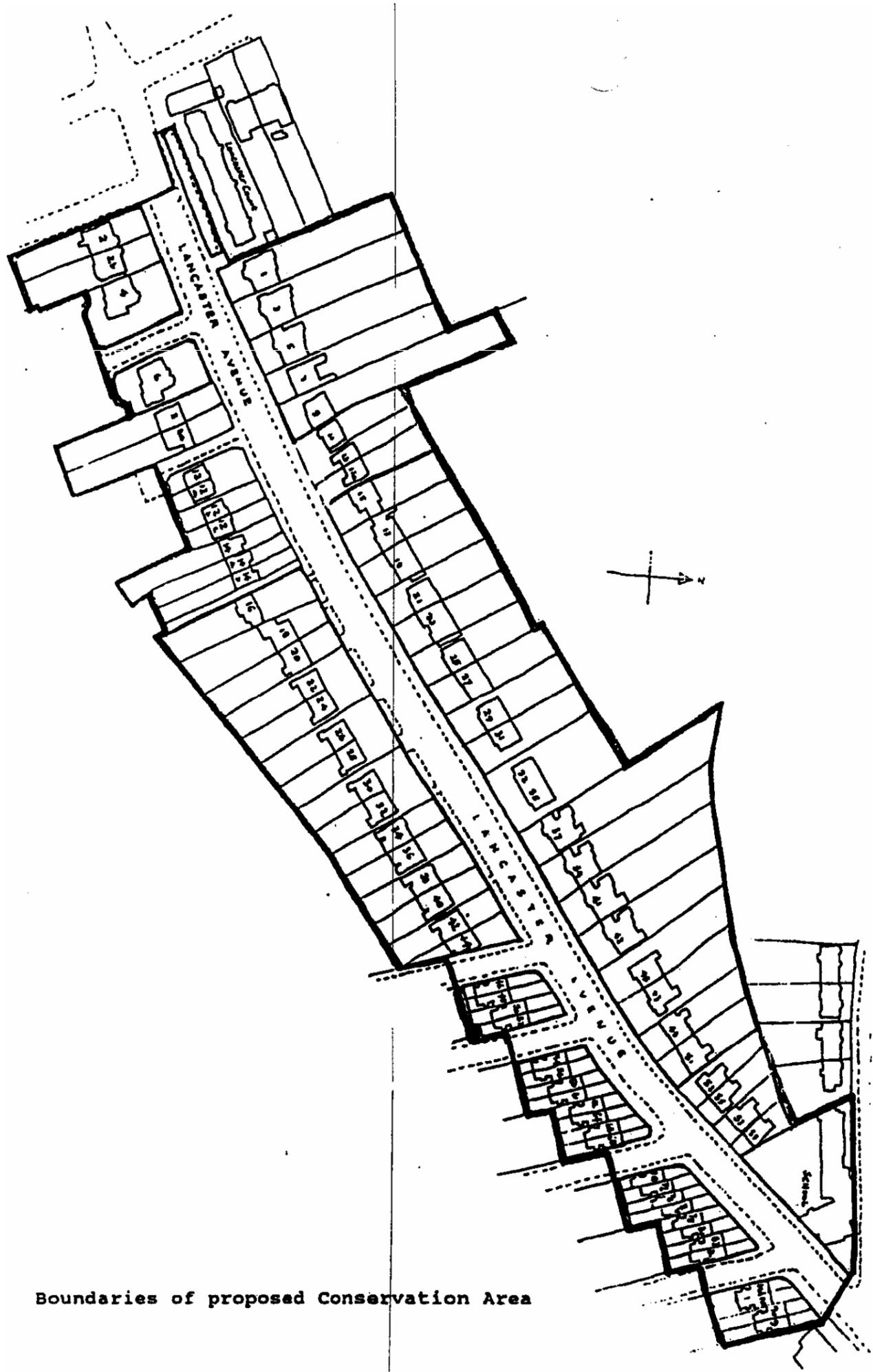
9 DETAILED DESCRIPTION

As previously stated almost the whole of Lancaster Avenue is included for consideration as a Conservation Area with certain exceptions.

Lancaster Court, the block of flats at the North West corner is excluded apart from the six nature trees between the building and the Lancaster Avenue boundary wall. The small pockets of infill housing built after 1910 whilst not of conservation interest and not included, would nevertheless affect the balance of the road if altered or redeveloped.

These properties are: -

53 - 59	Lancaster Avenue	- North side
8 - 14B	Lancaster Avenue	- South side
	Hawkley Gardens	- South side



Boundaries of proposed Conservation Area

North side

HOUSES NOS. 1, 3, 5, 37, 39, 41 & 43

Three storey detached double-fronted family houses.

Roofs: Slate.

Walls: The front elevation is of red brick. The sides are London stock brick with coloured brick banding. No. 37 has quoins in London stock brick and side elevations in red brick. The gables are finished with turned wooden crockets and finials, nearly all of which are intact, and have barge boards in a variety of designs.

Windows: The windows are flush with the wall on one side of the front door and are in the form of two storey bays to the other side. The stonework above the windows is in chamfer and stop with leaf decoration and an incised flower (or applied terracotta) decorates the lintel both of the bay window and the flat window. Above the three faces of the bay are sat terracotta panels, similar to those illustrated in the catalogue page opposite,

Doors: The front door is glazed and panelled and enclosed by a porch which repeats the style of the gable with similar barge boards and finial. Above the doorway is a three centre or basket arch enriched with foliage decoration carved in Bath stone. This is supported by three-quarter pilasters, many of which in this group show the shaft rings common in 12th and 13th centuries.

Porch: The floor tiles in many of the porches appear to be original and demonstrate the Victorians' interest in medieval patterns.

Variations:

No. 3 was partly rebuilt due to war damage. It exhibits the same features but is slightly lower.

No. 37's arch over the front porch is narrower than in the other houses.

The particular value of these houses lies in the remarkable state of preservation of the decoration, barge boards, stone work richly ornamented with innumerable varieties of plants and leaves, turned finials and terracotta panels. These have been consistently maintained over the years and little has been done to alter their original character, apart from the picking out in white or cream paint of some of the carved stonework and terracotta panels. There is some evidence that this was popular when the houses were first built.

HOUSE NO. 7

Built 1881

Detached house built in an individual style for the original owner.

Roof: Slate and the red brick chimneys are decorated with ornamented brickwork.

Walls: The front elevation is of red brick and the sides are of London stock brick. Dark brick stringing decorates the facade; a single line towards the top and bottom of the upper windows, and level with the sills of the lower windows; and a double string halfway up the lower storey. Between the upper and lower storeys is a double string enclosing chequered brickwork, the whole forming bands of restrained decoration.

Windows: The windows are plain with stone lintels. The stone sills are supported by moulded brackets.

Doors: The door and porch are inset into the front elevation with a small window in one side. A Broad band of stucco completes the bay and continues over the porch to the adjacent window.

An interesting feature of this house is that deeds show that the existing garage was built at the same as the house, presumably as a stable, although its function is not mentioned in the deeds.

HOUSES NOS. 9 & 15-31

Built 1864-65 as Lancaster Villas.
Nos. 11 & 13 destroyed in 1941 by bombing.

Three-storey paired houses with entrance and main rooms at first floor level.

Roofs: Slate and the original raised party walls, built to slow down the spread of fire, have been retained. The eaves are supported by cantilever brackets in cast stone.

Walls: London stock brick with decoration in carved Bath stone, or stucco on a brick core.

Windows: At the second floor these are semi-circular headed in pairs, with plain decorated stone arches. The first floor windows are surmounted by a flat moulded pediment.

The bay on No. 15 (which was also on Ho. 13) was added between 1870 and 1890. Panels of vermiculation are set below the bay.

Doors: The main door, a generous 3'10" wide, is panelled and glazed. The surround is plain stucco on brick and the flat moulded pediment is supported by ogee brackets.

The door is approached by reconstituted stone steps with a flight eleven reconstituted stone steps with a wide landing at door level.

It is clear that the builder intended to build a house of quality and paid careful attention to the restrained detail in mouldings and brackets.

The rear elevation of these houses, though not visible from the road, shows detail of equal quality.

Internally, the wide entrance hall with curving staircase is of interest. The cast iron balusters are of a different pattern in each house.

Several of these houses 1864. In the late 19th built (No. 19 & No. 27) (Ho.25) have been added to over the years since Century, stables and coach houses were. Later (1908) a 'motor house' was added.

It is remarkable however that most of these additions have been entirely sympathetic to the overall design, and the regular architectural rhythm, produced by the arched windows and raised front doors, has retained its original impact.

Outside No. 19 is a pillar box with the initials V.R.

HOUSES NOS. 33-35

Built 1865.

A four storey pair of plain semi-detached houses with entrance and main rooms at first floor level. The two houses have been used as flats for some time. In the 1920's they were used as a school for 200 pupils

Roofs: Slate.

Walls: London stock brick. Line of party wall shown by arched reveal.

Windows: The top windows are rectangular sashes.

The two middle floors have round topped windows without decoration or moulding but demonstrate good quality cut and rubbed brick arches. Similar windows are in the side elevation. There is also fine jointing over the box basement windows.

Doors: Little of the original decoration remains. The front doors have been replaced and are undistinguished but -the stucco balustrading up to the doors is still intact.

It has been suggested that this pair of houses was intended to form the centrepiece of the North side of the road. It would have been possible to repeat the twelve Lancaster Villas to the East of Nos. 33/35 and to round off the grand design with the school at the junction of Thurlow Park Road which was also built in 1865 in a similar style. Blake did not acquire the land between No. 35 and the school but whether this was by choice cannot be ascertained.



HOUSES NOS. 45-51

Built 1881.

Four semi-detached double-fronted two storey houses.

Roofs: Slate.

Walls: The front elevation is in red brick and the sides in London stock brick. Gables are finished with carved and pierced barge boards and turned wooden finials.

Windows: The upper windows are flush with the wall. On the ground floor a bay window is to one side of the front door and glazed doors leading to a veranda are at the other side. All windows show decorated chamfer with unsupported capitals at the upper floors. The bay is supported by pilaster-like piers with capitals in foliage form.

Doors: The front door has pilasters to each side and a porch is formed by the extension of the veranda across the doorway.

The cast iron veranda is an attractive feature of these four houses and visually balances the bay on the opposite side of the front door. The design of the ironwork varies from house to house and is in very good condition, making a charming addition to the appearance of the road.



ROSEMEAD SCHOOL

Built 1864/5.

A three-storey detached building occupying a commanding site on raised ground at the junction of Lancaster Avenue and Thurlow Park Road.

Roof: Slate

Walls: The Lancaster Avenue elevation is London stock brick with stucco banding below roof topped by triangular stucco gable end. Stucco bands dividing first and second, and second and third storeys. The ground floor is stucco rendered and the banding between this and the first floor includes a line of key pattern moulding. The front elevation is as above with exception of gable.

Windows: Second Floor - paired round topped windows with stucco moulding to either side of rectangular window surmounted by triangular pediment with stucco moulding. The first floor has rectangular sash windows with overhanging lintel in stucco supported by ogee brackets. A similar pattern of windows is repeated on front elevation except that the central window spaces are bricked in.

Porch: Inset into front elevation, rendered in stucco in plain gently arched lintel. The double door is glazed and panelled and appears to be in the original style.

The school was built at the same time and by the same builder as nos. 9-31 Lancaster Avenue and although additions and alteration; have been made over the years, the building has retained the essential features which link it visually to the former 'Lancaster Villas'.

HOUSE NOS. 2 and 2A

Built 1892.

A semi-detached pair of three-storey, double fronted houses.

Roof: Slate

Walls: Front and side elevations in red brick. Gables over second and third storey are undecorated apart from a turned finial at no. 2a.

Windows: Plain sash to one side; to the other side there is a bay at ground and first floors with a plain sash above. The roofs of the bays are supported by carved wooden brackets.

Doors: Plain glazed and panelled.

Porches: Inset with cantilever canopy supported by shaped brackets.

These houses are plainer than many houses of the period, and show none of the elaborate decoration seen on earlier houses in the road. They convey rather than impression of plain solidity.

HOUSE NOS. 4 and 6

Three storey detached double-fronted family houses in the same North Side described in detail on style as Nos. 1, 3, etc. on the Page 14.

South side

HOUSE HO. 16

Built C. 1849

It has not been possible to establish the exact date of this house but the rate book of 1849 describes it as a building plot.

A detached three storey double-fronted house in plain style with central front door raised above ground level.

Roof: It is of shallow pitch and was originally slate but has been replaced with tiles.

Walls: London stock brick. Below the eaves is a broad band of stucco with a narrower stucco band separating the main storeys. These bands emphasise the horizontal proportions of the house and counteract the impression of height.

The basement walls are stucco rendered.

Windows: Rectangular sash. Those on the hall floor are surmounted by triangular pediments. Photographs seem to indicate that similar pediments were above the windows of the upper floors at one time.

Doors: The main door is above ground level and approached by ten steps.

Porch: The present porch replaced a previous one which was not original and it cannot be determined whether a porch was part of the original design.

This house is of interest as the oldest remaining house in the road. It was used as a school for the latter part of the 19th and early 20th Century but its early history is obscure.



HOUSES NOS. 18-44

Built in 1879.

Two storey double-fronted houses built in pairs with entrance at ground level. The houses are distinguished by a pillared porch to the front door.

Roofs: Slate with chimney stacks of red brick.

Walls: The front elevation is red brick. The side elevation is London stock brick with quoins in red brick. It is interesting to note that from 34-44 the quoins are in London stock brick with a red brick front elevation. This minor change in pattern marks the boundary between Blake's development and the property built in the same style but under a different freehold.

Windows: At the first floor, windows are mounted by a flat lintel decorated in chamfer and stop with leaf decoration. This is supported by central pilaster with foliage design capital and ornamented by similar capitals without pilasters to each side.

Below: bay windows and glazed doors to either side of porch, each decorated chamfer and stop, and supported by pilasters and capitals.

Doors: These are panelled and glazed. Many are original.

Porch: Decorated chamfer and stop in leaf design supported by Bath stone pillars with elaborate foliage design capitals showing great variety from house to house,

Denticulation below moulding on entablature.

Some pillars have been removed from porches (32, 36 & 38) and two pillared porches have been replaced by gabled porches (32, 42).

In some cases front gardens still retain the original plan (shown on map of 1894) of shared front garden and carriage drive emphasising the gracious horizontal proportions of the house.

These houses are of particular interest in that they show the Victorians' developing taste for foliage decoration over porches and doors and on capitals. It is an excellent example of the trend away from formal 'Classical' decoration (exemplified by Nos. 15 to 31 Lancaster Villas) toward more flowing designs.

The influence of Gothic architecture and decoration was strong at this time and a large number of books were written to encourage architects, stone masons, and other artisans to respect the rules governing the design of pillars, mouldings, capitals and other decoration. Other books were written and comprehensively illustrated on the subject of architectural foliage. These contained a wealth of designs which, while respecting the natural form, were adapted to the shape of the decorated arch and capital.

The houses at 18-44 and 37-51 and Nos. 1,3,5,4 and 6 provide excellent examples of well preserved foliage decoration.

HOUSES NOS. 46-92

Built 1906.

Roof: Slate with pierced ridge tiles.

Gables: Barge boards, circular pierced with trefoil.

Walls: Front elevation and quoins are red brick. Side elevation is London stock brick with red brick banding.

Windows: Bays with central stone pilaster; two side pilasters in red brick all with decorated capitals in a variety of foliage designs. Oriel windows over front door.

Although these terraced houses which are stepped in pairs are somewhat less impressive than some of the other buildings in the road, nevertheless they demonstrate features typical of their period. They adhere far less closely to the strict rules of earlier styles showing the influence of the arts and crafts movement in the over-sized circular gable ends, and of rustic Tudor in the applied beams on the gable. Capitals are frequently seen without pilaster. However, they provide as a group a well-preserved example of the Edwardian terraced house. They have been little altered over the years and many of the front porches have the original glazing and tiles.



The history of the road mirrors the history development - how the of London's development – how the parkland and meadows of a large estate was transformed in the 19th century into a suburban road. The houses perfectly ' illustrate the domestic architecture from 1849-1906.

The road itself is of a generous width, emphasised by a building line which is well set back, and enhanced by the imaginative planting of trees along the verges.

The first main group of houses to be built shows the use of stucco and stone on London stock brick in a plain style reflecting the influence of the earlier C19 classical revival.

Those built in the 1880s demonstrate how tastes were changing as the century moved on. They have a more intimate appeal an enthusiasm for the Victorians' enthusiasm for natural foliage ornamentation with just enough formality to suit the needs of architectural form. As well as foliage decoration in carved Bath stone, delicate well-preserved cast iron work in a variety of styles seen on canopies and verandas are a pleasing feature.

Two houses built in 1892 reveal how the latter ornate decoration had fallen from favour to be replaced by a plainer heavier style.

By 1906 the road was virtually completed by a series of stepped terraces which in their turn are typical of the Edwardian era. These, although not included in the original Lambeth proposals, are nevertheless part of the story of the road as well as being good, well-preserved examples of their period.

It could be argued that there are many other suburban areas equal in merit to the one under consideration, but is unusual to find a road which exhibits such a good example of a series of architectural styles and which has retained unspoilt so much of the original ornamentation.

10 SUMMARY

These points alone would be sufficient justification for declaring a conservation area. Conservation fosters a sense of pride, a feeling of stability and a heightened awareness of the merits of a particular area as it becomes more carefully looked after. This is of benefit not only to residents, but to passers by, the local neighbourhood and the borough in general. This has been particularly apparent in the Park Hall conservation area where from a series of decaying houses a superb terrace has emerged to brighten the whole neighbourhood.

The value of the suburban heritage has long been underestimated and can be irretrievably lost through unsympathetic modernisation and thoughtless redevelopment. It is for this reason that the residents of Lancaster Avenue are united in wishing to preserve the varied and distinctive character of the road and are convinced that this can best be achieved within the context of a conservation area.