

Barons Court



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The Barons Court Conservation Area Character Profile was approved by the Planning Applications and Transport Sub-Committee on 14th December 1998 as supplementary planning guidance. The conservation area boundary was amended on 14th July 2004 and again on 23rd February 2005, and the profile updated. Chesterton were the consultants for the first draft of the profile. If you have any queries regarding this profile or wish to carry out works in the conservation area please contact Environment Department reception on 020 8753 1083.

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FOREWORD

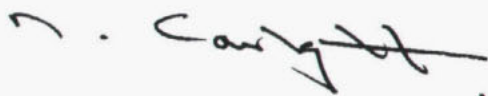


The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is fortunate enough to have 45 conservation areas covering almost half the Borough. These have been designated in recognition of the importance of the historic and architectural heritage in our Borough.

As Deputy for Environment and Contract Services, I am committed to the preservation of these areas with the help of residents and local groups, so that they continue to enhance the quality of life in the Borough and so that they survive as good examples of our heritage for future generations.

This profile describes the special character of the Barons Court Conservation Area identifying buildings of note, interesting historic facts and showing how the buildings, open spaces and streets work together to create an environment worthy of protection.

I would like to thank all local groups who helped to prepare these profiles, in particular the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group under the dedicated leadership of Angela Dixon and the Fulham Society. Through the consultation process the documents have evolved to represent not only officers' assessments of the conservation areas, but those of the local amenity societies and residents groups active in each area. I hope these profiles will now provide extra assistance in the stewardship and preservation of what is best in the Borough.



Councillor Michael Cartwright
Deputy for Environment and Contract Services

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:-

"Every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas."

The Borough has 45 such areas designated over 31 years, of which Barons Court Conservation Area is one.

1.2 Under section 71 of that Act, once an area has been designated:-

"It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas."

1.3 The Council is doing this in stages. The first stage is this document, which is called a Conservation Area Character Profile. The "profile" is an appraisal, which aims to give a clear assessment of the special interest, character, and appearance that justified the designation of the area as a Conservation Area. It also includes some broad design guidelines that will aid all concerned in their efforts to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area.

1.4 It is intended that each profile document will provide a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for the development plan policies and development control decisions, and for the guidance of residents and developers.

1.5 It will also form the groundwork for subsequent Conservation Area Studies. The next stage will be the production of more detailed design guidelines where necessary in consultation with Councillors,

the Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group, Fulham Society, Hammersmith Society and other local groups. These will be followed by the preparation of policy documents for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area, which will be the subject of local consultation.

1.6 The profiles and subsequent design guidelines will form supplementary planning guidance and will support the Council's statutory Unitary Development Plan which sets out the planning policy framework for the development of the borough and development control decisions. Policy EN2 relates to conservation areas and makes specific reference to the Character Profiles. They will constitute material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications.

1.7 The Government's document (PPG 15) "Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment" advises local authorities on how to operate the legislation, emphasising that:-

"It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. There has been increasing recognition in recent years that our experience of a historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings - on the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular 'mix' of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shopfronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces between buildings. Conservation area designation should be seen as the means of recognising the importance of all these factors and of ensuring that conservation area policy addresses the quality of townscape in its broadest sense as well as the protection of individual buildings."

1.8 This intention is reinforced by English Heritage in their document "Conservation Area Practice" which recognises that:-

"As the number of conservation areas continues to grow, the criteria for their designation are being looked at more critically."

It is, therefore, even more important than before that there should be a clear definition, recorded in some detail, of what constitutes the special architectural or historic interest that warranted the designation of every conservation area.

1.9 The designation of an area as a Conservation Area has other benefits beyond the protection of buildings and the design of the area. It enables other policies such as biodiversity and smarter streets to be developed for the conservation area, and acts as a focus for the formation and development of Residents' Associations and Neighbourhood Watch.

1.10 So, in line with the guidance given by both the Government and English Heritage, this conservation area profile will aim to define the character of the conservation area on the basis of an analysis of all or some of the following criteria :-

- origins and development of the street patterns, the lie of the land;
- archaeological significance and potential of the area, including any scheduled ancient monuments;
- architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the buildings, both listed and unlisted, and the contribution which they make to the special interest of the area;
- character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality;
- prevalent and traditional building materials for buildings, walls and surfaces;

- contribution made to the character of the area, and to biodiversity, by greens or green spaces, trees, hedges and other natural or cultivated elements;
- prevailing (or former) uses within the area and their historic patronage, and the influence of these on the plan form and building types;
- relationship of the built environment to landscape / townscape including definition of significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas, where appropriate;
- extent of any loss, intrusion, or damage that has occurred since designation;
- existence of any opportunity sites;
- unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area according to English Heritage's criteria.

2 DESIGNATION

2.1 Barons Court Conservation Area was designated on 10th April 1989. It was extended on 2nd July 2002 to the west to include Gledstanes Road and part of Greyhound Road, and to the east to include Beaumont Crescent and part of North End Road. The southern boundary of the conservation area was rationalised on 14th July 2004 by the transfer of properties in St Andrews Road and Greyhound Road to the adjoining Queen's Club Gardens Conservation Area. Further minor amendments took place on 23rd February 2005.

3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

3.1 The boundary of the Barons Court Conservation Area can be seen on the plan on pages 14 & 15. The northern boundary

follows Talgarth Road to include West Kensington and Barons Court Tube Stations and the listed properties to the north west, but is defined by the District Railway north of Barons Court Road. The eastern boundary is roughly defined by Beaumont Crescent and includes part of North End Road. The western boundary includes Hammersmith Cemetery and the adjoining terraced development of St Dunstan's Road and Margravine Gardens.¹ The southern boundary includes the north side of Claxton Grove and follows the boundary between the cemetery and the Queen's Club as far as the rear of the properties on the west side of Gledstanes Road, extending to the south to include the properties in Perham Road.

4 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

4.1 The name of Barons Court is believed to have been devised by Sir William Palliser, who owned and developed the land, formerly part of a large agricultural holding. Use of the name to attract potential house buyers may have been suggested by nearby Earls Court or possibly in allusion to the Court Baron² held by the Lord of the Manor, the Bishop of London. The 1865 Ordnance Survey Plan shows that most of the Barons Court Conservation Area was in agricultural use, although the main arterial thoroughfares of North End Lane (upgraded and renamed Talgarth Road), North End Road and Old Greyhound Road (renamed Greyhound Road), existed at this time.

4.2 By the time of the publication of the 1894/5 Ordnance Survey Plan much of the residential road framework was in place with the majority of the residential development having already occurred. Significant developments which had taken place since the earlier Survey are the construction of the over-ground District Railway and Barons Court and West

Kensington Stations, and the laying out of Hammersmith Cemetery, then known as Margravine Cemetery.

4.3 The 1916 Survey shows very little change to the road layout, although a second phase of residential development had taken place. For example, to the west of the conservation area, Margravine Gardens had been extended to give access to St Dunstan's Road facilitating further residential development creating an enclosed residential street block. Furthermore, at this time the remainder of the properties on Claxton Grove and Beaumont Crescent had been completed and the two mansion blocks on Palliser Road were built.

4.4 A number of significant developments subsequently took place within the area. In the 1920s & 30s the green space between Barton Road and Barons Court Road was replaced by residential accommodation, including Barton Court. In the 1970s the area between Barton Road and Comeragh Road, fronting onto Palliser Road, was developed for a residential women's hostel (Ada Lewis House).

5 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

5.1 The character of the Barons Court Conservation Area is defined by the variety of residential developments which form cohesive groups within the conservation area, the open space of Hammersmith Cemetery, and the Barons Court and West Kensington Underground Stations. The streets form an irregular grid pattern. There are several statutory listed buildings and locally listed Buildings of Merit (BoMs). Few alterations have taken place and the area as a whole retains its original character.

5.2 The conservation area can be split into sub-areas for the purposes of the character assessment in order to distinguish areas of similar character and similar periods of development as shown on the plan on pages 14 and 15.

These are defined as:-

- A Talgarth Road and Barons Court Station
- B Hammersmith Cemetery and the terraced residential development
- C Lanfrey Place, Beaumont Crescent and North End Road

A Talgarth Road and Barons Court Station

5.3 This sub-area is bounded to the south by a branch of the District Line LUL Railway with Barons Court Station, and to the north by Talgarth Road, both major west-east transport routes into London that are busy with traffic. However, it also consists of a series of key buildings and groups, most of which are listed, which are important components of its character and appearance.

5.4 The area is characterised by a mix of land uses on Talgarth Road including residential, fine art studios, and the premises of the former Royal Ballet School (now LAMDA).

5.5 These properties, closely bounded by the railway and road, are generally of three storeys and are predominantly of brick with slate roofs. Their windows vary in style, but are consistent within



groups of buildings, and remain in their original form as important features of the buildings.

5.6 Nos. 135 to 149 (odd) Talgarth Road (1 to 8 St Paul's Studios), form a picturesque terrace of artists studios designed in 1891 by Frederick Wheeler for "bachelor artists" with housekeeper apartments in the basement. They are Grade II listed buildings, and form a very decorative composition with touches of Flemish influence, particularly to the wrought iron railings. Their original north outlook, prior to the westward extension of Talgarth Road, was across the playing fields of St Paul's School.

5.7 Built of red brick with buff terracotta detailing, the terrace remains externally much in its original condition, though over the years some internal changes have taken place. Dame Margot Fonteyn, the prima ballerina of the Royal Ballet from the 1940s to 1960s, was well placed for the adjoining Royal Ballet School whilst living for many years at No. 149, during which a mezzanine floor was installed at the rear of the first floor studio. The properties have a distinctive hipped roofline broken by north facing barrel vaulted studio windows extending from the first floor into the exposed roof structure. The curved glazing to the tall barrel vault type windows must have been technologically advanced for its time and is a valuable characteristic of this group.

5.8 Colet House, No. 151 Talgarth Road (BoM), is a purpose built studio with living quarters, designed by Fairfax B Wade in 1885 for Sir Coutts Lindsay of the Grosvenor Gallery and originally known as Barons Court Studio. It became an important attracton for Arts & Crafts and Pre-Raphaelite artists, and led to the development of the adjoining terrace of St Paul's Studios. It is two storeys of red stock brick construction with pink stone dressings. The first floor, with its large

studio windows, is set back behind a roof terrace with a timber balustrade³.

5.9 The Royal Ballet School occupied a number of properties on this linear site on Talgarth Road, which have been taken over by the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA). No. 153 Talgarth Road is a stark red brick building from 1959, while No. 155 is an elegant late Victorian building in a Queen Anne style built in 1894 by John Salmon Quilter. It is built of red brick with rubbed brick pilasters and window reveals and has a very grand carved door case with segmental pediment. It has a panelled entrance hall and staircase, and first floor assembly hall with side gallery. Both are Buildings of Merit.

5.10 Another Building of Merit is located between No. 153 Talgarth Road and Colet House, but only the roof line and complex chimney breast composition of this Late Victorian building can be glimpsed from street level beyond the high boundary wall. This is believed to have been built as a kindergarten for the Froebel Educational Institute and was linked to No. 155, built as a training college for the Institute.



5.11 Barons Court Station (listed Grade II) by architect Harry Wharton Ford (1875 - 1947) is an overground station built for the District Railway in 1905, but is now operated by London Underground Limited. It is designed as a single storey pavilion and is located in a prominent

position above the railway cutting that runs beneath it. It is an important feature in views north along Palliser Road, and together with the parade of shops opposite, which were built in 1926/1927, forms a focus of activity.

5.12 The building, which is cleverly planned to accommodate both ticket office and retail units, is a freestyle design incorporating both Classical and Art Nouveau features. The frame construction is clad with glazed buff terracotta tiling with glazed brown terracotta trim to voussoirs and pediment copings. The exterior was recently restored to its 1906 appearance.

B Hammersmith Cemetery and the terraced residential development

5.13 The character of this sub-area is derived partly from the open nature of the cemetery to the west, and partly from the terraced development that forms the main body of the conservation area to the east, including some buildings that are important local landmarks.

5.14 The residential area is mostly laid out in a regular grid developed as housing for the middle classes in the Mid and Late 19th Century. The acute junctions with Barons Court Road have resulted in an opening up of the otherwise tightly built fabric and the creation of a small open space within the eastern terraced development. An open feeling is also created at the junctions with Vereker Road where Post-War flats have been built set back from the main building line.

5.15 Throughout the conservation area footpath surfaces are generally in good condition, and although not all of traditional materials, are of an appropriate and sympathetic appearance. Many granite curb stones remain in place as do areas of York stone paving.

East of Hammersmith Cemetery

5.16 The area of terraced development to the east, particularly east of Vereker Road, is noticeably grander than much of the locality and is more reminiscent of the urban terraces of Kensington than the more suburban feel of development to the west of the cemetery.



5.17 The terraces are four storeys or three storeys with semi-basements. They follow a regular building line and are generally of the same height, but differ in character from street to street. The overall character of the area lies in the uniform appearance of the different terraces and the retention of their original detailing.

5.18 Barons Court House, Nos. 2 to 60 (even) and 23 Barons Court Road; Nos. 1A to 51 (odd) & 2 to 34 (even) Castletown Road; Nos. 15 to 43 (odd) & 18 to 56 (even) Charleville Road; Nos. 1 to 29 & 43 to 71 (odd) & 2 to 18 & 24 to 48 (even) Comeragh Road; Nos. 1 to 43 (odd) & 2 to 34 (even) Fairholme Road; and Nos. 1 to 41 (odd) & 2 to 42 (even) Perham Road are terraces of typical Kensington grandeur developed by W H Gibbs and Co., one of the major developers of West Kensington. They are all included in the Council's register of local listed Buildings of Merit. Development progressed from the east, so the terraces up to Vereker Road are built in a similar style to, and as a final flourish of, the stucco tradition so ubiquitous in Kensington, Bayswater and Paddington. However, the later development to the west of Vereker Road abandoned this

grand style and replaced it by plainer red brick terraces.

5.19 Detailed components of the designs vary between streets. The gault brick terraces with stucco detailing generally have paired entrance porticoes with free-standing columns as their dominant features. These are linked to a ground floor bay window to form a balcony with decorative railings above. The large windows above dominate the facade with their bold classical surround detailing. The original sash windows remain in place in most properties, as do the first floor French doors.

5.20 Much of the brickwork above the first floor remains in its original unpainted form. Where, unfortunately, painting of facades has been undertaken, the most successful are either white or cream coloured though they still break the uniformity of the terrace. In most of the terraces the roof is hidden by a strong balustraded parapet cornice, providing regularity to the skyline. Unfortunately, this has now been interrupted in places by later roof extensions.

5.21 There are several retail premises in Comeragh Road built from materials and designs similar to the surrounding residential terraces. Although the shopfronts retain many of their Victorian features such as fascia boards and console brackets, their appearance has been detrimentally affected by the introduction of the occasional modern shopfront and the use of Dutch blinds and internally illuminated advertising boxes.

5.22 To the west of Vereker Road, the stucco elements are abandoned in favour of plainer red brick terraces generally of three storeys, some with basement flats or dormer windows in the roofs. They are substantial houses with balconies with timber balustrade detailing, some of which have been replaced with metal