

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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**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 43 such areas designated over 22 years, of which Hammersmith Grove Conservation Area is one.

**1.2** Under Section 71 of the 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 which justified the designation of the area as a Conservation Area. It also includes some broad design guidelines which 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 or

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 EN1 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, emphasizing 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 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 which warranted the designation of every conservation area.

**1.9** 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 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;
- the 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.

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## **2 DESIGNATION**

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**2.1** Hammersmith Grove Conservation Area was designated on 8th September 1982. There have been no extensions to its boundary since that date.

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## **3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY**

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**3.1** The conservation area boundary can be seen on plan on pages 10 and 11.

**3.2** The area includes most of the buildings on Hammersmith Grove; extending north from Nos. 32 to 244 (even) and Nos. 39 to 215 (odd). Its width is delineated by the present plot boundaries of these buildings.

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## **4 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AREA**

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**4.1** So far as is known, there is no archaeological record for this conservation area. The earliest map (Rocque 1741-45) shows open fields and a tree lined lane.

**4.2** The road was laid out and the earliest development took place in the 1830s or 1840s, when the properties Nos. 39 to 81 (odd), Nos. 181 to 215 (odd) and Nos. 234 to 244 (even) were built as substantial semi-rural residencies.

**4.3** The former Kensington and Richmond Rail Line was constructed on the eastern boundary of the present conservation area in the 1850s. It has been a major restraint to the development of an east west street pattern.

**4.4** The bulk of the remaining buildings in the conservation area were constructed in the 1880s to form the existing well proportioned, tree lined, mainly residential street.

**4.5** There has been one infill development since the 1880s, at Essex Court, a block of eight flats built in 1951 on the site of Nos. 167-169.



## 5 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

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**5.1** Hammersmith Grove forms part of a major Early 19th Century residential development between King Street and Goldhawk Road which was laid out prior to the introduction of the railway system. Its overall character differs slightly from the surrounding area in that the street dimensions are more generous, and it is also one of the few to have a good avenue of mature trees. These trees are important in helping to define the character of the conservation area.

**5.2** The straightness of the road reflects the formal nature of the early (1840s) development and the intention to develop a new residential quarter in this area.

**5.3** The conservation area was developed originally as a series of semi-detached villas, and later as terraces.

**5.4** 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 10 and 11. These are defined as:-

- A** Woolmer Cottages
- B** Grove Mansions
- C** Verulam Terrace
- D** Albion Terrace
- E** Hammersmith Grove Terraces

### **A Woolmer Cottages (Nos.39 to 81 odd)**

**5.5** These early Victorian semi-detached villas appear on the 1853 map and are included in the local register of Buildings of Merit published within the adopted Unitary Development Plan.

**5.6** The buildings originally formed a group of identical symmetrical pairs. They are of unusual design in that the main body of the houses are three storeys, but the front doors and main staircases are contained within four storey additions at the sides and rear. The three storey

sections have a slate roof oversailing the bracketed eaves cornice at the front and sides. The side additions are approached by a long flight of stone steps up to the main entrance doors at first floor level. Behind the entrance doors the main staircases are contained within towers which have their own oversailing hipped slate roofs with bracketed eaves cornice. Many of the houses have later covered entrance porches extending over the steps to a doorway at ground floor level in line with the front of the main building. These are in a wide range of classical or semi-classical designs.

**5.7** The houses are of brown brick with channelled stucco on the ground floors, stucco string courses, long and short quoins, and door and window dressings. Each house has two round headed windows on the second floor and a large splayed bay through ground and first floor. The first floor bays have french windows and small balconies with metal Roman style crossed panel decorative railings. The second floor windows also have decorative metal balconettes. Many of the houses have retained their original stucco boundary walls which have moulded copings, interlocking openwork circles, plinths and gate piers.



*The locally listed Nos. 53 and 55*

**5.8** There have been many pre-designation alterations including roof extensions, changes in glazing bar pattern and opening of boundaries to provide on-site parking. In the main these do not seriously detract from the character of this group, and, together with the retention of many original



features, result in a pleasing variety based upon a common theme, and an air of faded grandeur.

**5.9** These buildings were all originally single family dwellings, but some are now converted to multiple occupation.

#### **B Grove Mansions (Nos.234 to 244 even)**

**5.10** This group was originally three pairs of early Victorian three storey semi-detached villas, but was infilled in a matching style at around 1900 to form a single terrace. They are included in the local register of Buildings of Merit published within the Unitary Development Plan.



*The locally listed Grove Mansions, Nos. 234 - 244(even)*

**5.11** The buildings are brown stock brick, with recessed side bays containing the entrance doors behind Ionic porches. They have stucco parapets, full height pilasters, and window surrounds with curved and pointed pedimented hoods at ground and first floor level. The windows now have a variety of designs, ranging from some surviving original sashes divided by glazing bars into small Georgian style panes, some with marginal glazing bars, no glazing bars at all, to some casement french doors opening onto porch roofs. The original front doors have large sheets of coloured glass set in glazing bars and two bolection moulded panels.

**5.12** Because the infilling of the gaps between these buildings has been carried out in matching style and materials, it has resulted in a confused elevation in which the original is no longer distinguishable from the new. Simplified infills of reduced height subordinate to the original

structure would have given a better contrast, and retained the identity and quality of the original buildings. Much of the original stucco detail has been skimmed off. In particular, the parapet cornice, pilaster capitals, and some window hoods are missing, as are the original boundary walls and/or railings.

**5.13** The character of this group has suffered as a result of the extent of changes which have taken place. Reinstatement of missing features is encouraged as a way of improving the quality of the buildings and the local environment.

#### **C Verulam Terrace (Nos.181 to 215 odd)**

**5.14** These buildings are included in the local register of Buildings of Merit published within the Unitary Development Plan and consist of two distinct developments; Nos.181 & 183 a pair of early Victorian semi-detached villas, and Nos.185 to 215(odd) an early Victorian terrace.

**5.15** Nos.181 & 183 are a pair of brown brick semi-detached two storey houses with stuccoed semi-basement and a hipped slate roof which oversails the eaves. The central two bays of the pair have full height Tuscan stucco pilasters with a simple entablature running the full length of the eaves. Each house has a recessed side bay containing the front door which in turn is recessed within a simple Tuscan stucco porch. Two vertical timber sashes each, subdivided into small panes by glazing bars in the Georgian style, with stucco surrounds, the ground floor ones surmounted by bracketed pediments with the glazing bars retained on the first floor. The semi-basement windows project forward in square bays which provide small balconies at ground floor level which have simple metal cross panels.

**5.16** The original boundary railings and dwarf wall survives at No.181, but has been removed from next door. This loss, and the addition of a modern side extension at No.181 somewhat detract from what is otherwise a charming pair of houses which make a valuable contribution to the character of the area.





*The locally listed Verulam Terrace Nos. 197 - 205 (odd)*

**5.17** The terrace, Nos.185 to 215 (odd) was originally built as a symmetrical neo-classical, stucco set piece. It is a three storey composition of raised ground and first floors above semi-basements, given architectural expression by the use of an attic storey at second floor level above the main cornice line to emphasize the central range of four houses and intermediate and terminating pavilions, between each of which are three storey ranges of three houses.

**5.18** The four central houses and the pavilions all project forward of the building line, with the two centre-most houses projecting again to emphasize the articulation of the terrace. All of the four storey houses have projecting porches with rusticated pilasters supporting semi-circular openings with keystones and roundels in the spandrels, and central raised ball finials.

**5.19** All houses in the terrace originally had a high blocking course above the parapet cornice which contained a recessed panel with elaborate Adam style guilloche decoration, but most of these have now been altered.

**5.20** Unfortunately, the northern end of the composition has been destroyed by the demolition of four houses prior to designation of the conservation area.

**5.21** All houses have two cambered headed sashes on first floor, and one large sash with bracketed hood and a round headed entrance doorway with six panelled front door on ground floor. The sashes were all originally of vertical

sliding timber construction subdivided into small panes by glazing bars in the Georgian style, but some on the ground floor have since been replaced with casements.

**5.22** Most properties have retained the original decorative metal balconettes on ground floor window sills and metal boundary railings, dwarf walls and stuccoed piers with ball finial cappings, behind which are small front gardens.

**5.23** Some front boundaries have been breached and hard standings provided to allow for off street parking, and some roof extensions have taken place. These tend to have been carried out in a way which is unsympathetic to the carefully balanced architecture of the terrace, and have marred the overall effect.



*View southwards of locally listed properties including The Grove Tavern*

#### **D Albion Terrace (Nos.83 to 115 odd)**

**5.24** This handsome three storey parade of shops (built by Richard Albion Halliday around 1870) has always had retail use on the ground floor and residential on the upper floors.

**5.25** The terrace is yellow brick, now mostly painted, with stuccoed parapet and bracketed cornice. Sliding sash windows, with stucco surrounds, round headed on the second floor, and with bracketed hoods on first floor.

**5.26** The Grove Public House (originally Grove Tavern) occupies the southern-most unit, which like the northern-most, was built to larger



proportions, and the front elevational treatment is carried round to the flank elevations to terminate the terrace.

**5.27** Several units have recent mansard roof extensions each with two dormers, and approximately half the retail units have had their original shopfronts removed. Reinstatement of traditionally designed timber shopfronts will be encouraged.

#### **E Hammersmith Grove Terraces (Nos.32 to 232 even & Nos.117 to 179 odd)**

**5.28** This group consists of the remaining series of fine Victorian terraces in the Conservation Area.



*Hanging bracket and traditionally detailed fascia intact on No. 95*

**5.29** The buildings are located on either side of Hammersmith Grove, and are visible over a long distance because the street is wide and straight, so their visual impact upon the character of the conservation area is considerable.

**5.30** They are mainly yellow stock brick, some gault and some red brick, three storey terraces, some with semi-basements, which were developed at different times to slightly different styles, but architecturally they share many common features. Several have modern mansard roof extensions which generally detract from the character and appearance of the buildings.

**5.31** They were all built as residential properties



*Nos. 160 - 180 (even)*

with ground floor splayed bays, some extending through to first floor or semi-basement. Most have stucco window surrounds or lintels and doorcases or porches of varied classical detail. Originally all had timber sliding sash windows with glazing bars, but some have since been altered.

**5.32** Unfortunately, very few of the original brick or stucco boundary walls remain, and the resulting loss of enclosure to the small front gardens detracts from what are otherwise attractive and well proportioned buildings. Overall the impression is of variation on a theme which gives harmony to these terraces of similar scale and design.

**5.33** Essex Court (Nos.167 to 169) a four storey brown brick block of flats is the only modern building within the conservation area. This is an unfortunate change to the area's original character as it does not reflect the design features found in the other properties. It does, however, respect their overall scale and height.

## **6 BROAD DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**6.1** The previous section described the character of the conservation area looking at groups of buildings and the general townscape. This section identifies key components which define the character, or those which affect it, suggesting broad design guidelines to deal with each one.