

1.9 In line with the guidance given by both the Government and English Heritage, therefore, 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:-

- the origins and development of the street patterns, the lie of the land;
- archaeological significance and potential of the area, including any scheduled monuments;
- the 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;
- the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality;
- prevalent and traditional building materials for buildings, walls and surfaces;
- the contribution made to the character of the area by greens or green spaces, trees, hedges and other natural or cultivated elements;
- the prevailing (or former) uses within the area and their historic patronage, and the influence of these on the plan form and building types;
- the 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;
- the 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 The Sands End Conservation Area was designated in 1991. The conservation area was designated because of the importance of protecting the riverside from unsympathetic development and to encourage the preservation and enhancement of the riverside itself, ensuring that new development is of a good and appropriate design.

3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

3.1 The area is in the southernmost part of the borough, fronting and incorporating the River Thames between the Chelsea Railway Bridge and the Hurlingham Conservation Area.

3.2 To the north and west, the conservation area boundary extends from the railway bridge at Battersea Reach along Townmead Road and Carnwath Road to Broomhouse Lane. This includes the slipway to the river at Broomhouse Dock. The south and eastern boundary follows the Borough Boundary along the centre of the River Thames.

3.3 The conservation area boundary can be seen on the plan on page 14.

4 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AREA

4.1 The land comprising Sands End was part of the Town Meadows in the Fulham area. It was liable to flooding and generally open, dissected by creeks. The land was gradually developed through the 1890's taking advantage of the river frontage and was a fully developed industrial area by the time of publication of the 1916 ordnance survey. These industrial areas were accessed by Townmead and Carnwath Roads which run parallel with the river frontage, with numerous points of access to the river.

4.2 The River Thames provided the impetus for the extensive industrial and storage development in the Sands End area. Although development prompted by the River had been concentrated to the eastern side of London, the addition of towing paths and improved navigation in the late eighteenth century ensured that development as far west as Fulham became practicable. Delivery of raw materials by river, particularly coal, stimulated the development of Fulham Power Station and a gas works. By 1916 extensive residential areas to the north of the designated area were also complete.

4.3 The land remained predominantly in industrial use until the 1980's when the decline of traditional industries and uses led to the dereliction and clearance of many sites. From this time a variety of redevelopment schemes have diversified activities within the Sands End Conservation Area.

5 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

5.1 The river frontage is the focal point of the Sands End Conservation Area. The riverside location provides important panoramas both outwards from the conservation area and inwards towards the conservation area. It is of strategic importance in defining the character of the River Thames, forms part of the river walk and is within the Riverside Area of Special Character.

5.2 The Sands End Conservation Area is a narrow strip of land sweeping along the river from Broomhouse drawdock down towards Chelsea Harbour. The western part of the conservation area, by Broomhouse Lane, is designated an archaeological priority area in the Unitary Development Plan.

5.3 The main feature within the conservation area, and the principal elements in defining its character, are the river itself, the river bank and views along and across the Thames. The current

water-borne uses of the river itself are important elements in the character and appearance of the conservation area as are the foreshore and river bank.

5.4 The sweep of the river, particularly from Wandsworth Bridge to Battersea Reach forms an important characteristic of the topography and means that development along the north bank of the River Thames impacts on views well beyond the immediate vicinity. The southern river bank offers views of light industrial and warehouse developments as well as recent residential development.

5.5 Sands End Conservation Area is an area in transition. There is a marked contrast between derelict sites, underused industrial properties (due to the decline of riverside industrial uses), and recently constructed developments. The extent of clearance and redevelopment in the Sands End Riverside area has led to a townscape which exhibits variety in the scale and types of buildings and the materials used.

5.6 Wandsworth Bridge is a key feature in the conservation area providing views along the Thames in both directions. The bridge standing today was completed in 1939 and was designed by the London County Council Chief Engineer, Mr T. Pierson Frank in collaboration with the London County Council architect Mr E P Wheeler. This replaced a metal lattice work bridge designed by Mr J H Tolme which opened in 1873. The earlier bridge could not cope with the traffic and encountered structural problems.

5.7 Some industry remains in the conservation area though residential, retail, business and leisure uses have been introduced in recent years. Uses adjoining the designated area include the Hurlingham Club to the west and Chelsea Harbour mixed-use development to the north. Northwest of Carnwath and Townmead Roads is predominantly residential consisting of two storey terraced properties built between 1870 and 1910.

5.8 Traditionally, the nineteenth century industrial buildings appear to have been constructed of red brick, in some cases with stone detailing. A single late-nineteenth century warehouse, Mill House, of four storeys still remains on a prominent location on the river bank, opposite Bagley's Lane and consent was granted for demolition in December 1996. It is however much altered and of undistinguished quality. Archive photographs and plans suggest that this type of development is typical of the original industrial development in the area. Other nineteenth century buildings are generally remnants of industrial uses such as gate houses. However there are two facades of note which provide references to the history of the area and a sense of continuity.

5.9 There is an Electric Substation on Townmead Road opposite the junction with Althea Street. This is the former Fulham Borough Council Electrical Department and dates from 1936. Of particular note is the Townmead Road facade which is monumental in its scale with large doorways and simple detailing. The well proportioned facade is constructed of stone with a simple frieze and deep cornice. The windows have been bricked in though the elegant proportions of the facade are still evident with the arched doorways and full height pilasters.



The former Fulham Borough Council Electrical Department building

5.10 On Townmead Road opposite the junction with De Morgan Street is Fulham Wharf Warehouse. Part of the facade of Fulham Wharf

Warehouse is also of note providing a solid and relatively ornate facade to the second floor level facing Townmead Road. The stone detailing includes pilasters, arches and columns to the windows, and a frieze finished with a well profiled cornice. This bold framework is filled in with brickwork and they collectively provide a facade of depth and interest.



Fulham Wharf Warehouse

5.11 The substantial bulk and massing of the distribution centre of the redundant Fulham Power Station complex is in particular contrast to the domestic scale of dwellings to the north. Fulham Power Station was built in 1897 and at the time was the largest municipally owned generating station in the country. Most of it was demolished to make way for the Harbour Club and the Sands Wharf development but the remaining part is used as an electricity substation.

5.12 The survival of plot boundaries and boundary walls fronting Townmead Road provide reminders of the first phase of development. In many situations this remains the only surviving element of the traditional industrial development, exhibiting a variety of walling materials and entrances.

5.13 Most of the industrial development from the twentieth century is single-storey workshops and two storey warehouses sited predominantly close to Townmead Road. This development tends to leave the river frontage as urban fallow, unused and lacking management.

5.14 The redevelopment opportunities of Sands End Riverside have yielded a number of recent schemes which have introduced a range of new uses including residential apartments, a business centre, the Harbour Club sports centre, retail development and Carnwath Road Industrial Estate.

5.15 The residential apartments at Regent on the River to the east of William Morris Way are substantial in scale, dominating the Fulham Power Station behind. Their bulk and massing is now seen to be unsympathetic, though they reflected the scale and massing of the main building of the former Fulham Power Station, the site of which they stand on. The development consists of four similar eight storey blocks, three of which are linked with a further storey within the steeply pitched roof. A new open space, adjacent to the river walk, allows views of the river, though the majority of the surrounding landscaping remains private.

5.16 The J Sainsbury Superstore is predominantly a single storey development in the 'house' style with banded brickwork and false porticoes. The Retail Park at the corner of Wandsworth Bridge Road and Carnwath Road and associated riverfront housing, are another riverside development of a contemporary 1990's style.

5.17 It is important to consider the length of the river front within the conservation area as a whole, particularly in the light of the height of development along it. There is currently a variety in the height of building and this should be maintained as an important element in the townscape providing relief and an interesting skyline.

5.18 The Belvedere Tower at Chelsea Harbour dominates the foreground views at the northern end of the area as well as extensive views from the south bank of the river.



Chelsea Harbour and the Belvedere Tower

5.19 The green edge of the riverside of the Hurlingham Club Grounds, a rare survival of an eighteenth century 'gentleman's park' in central London, is an important feature to the west, as are views of it. Views from Townmead and Carnwath Road of the river are precluded by boundary walls, the massing of development or the depth of open sites where industrial premises have been cleared.



The green river edge of the Hurlingham Club

5.20 The riverside walk which runs along parts of the embankment where sites have been developed in recent years, is a valuable component of the conservation area in townscape terms. It affords views to and along the river and allows contact with the river. New development could provide additions to this, strengthening links between the built up area of the conservation area and the river and continuing the route to link with the adjacent Borough.

5.21 A co-ordinated approach has been taken to the use of street furniture along the riverside