

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that every local authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural character or appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate them as conservation areas. The Borough has 43 such areas designated over 22 years, of which the Sedlescombe Road Conservation Area is one.

1.2 Once an area has been designated, certain duties fall on the local authority; in particular under section 71 of that Act whereby the local authority must from time to time formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of those 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” aims to give a clear definition of what constitutes the special architectural or historic interest which warranted 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 Each profile document is intended to form a sound basis, justifiable on appeal, for development control decisions and for the guidance of residents and developers

1.5 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. Policy documents for the preservation and enhancement of individual conservation areas may be prepared and will be the subject of local consultation.

1.6 The profiles and subsequent design guidelines will be 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 has given guidance to local authorities on how to operate the legislation in their Planning Policy Guidance document (PPG15), entitled “Planning and the Historic Environment”. Here we are reminded that the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas is the quality and interest of areas rather than that of individual buildings. 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. This would include the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; a particular ‘mix’ of uses; characteristic materials; appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; the quality of advertisements, shopfronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; vistas along streets and between buildings and the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces between buildings. The Secretary of State therefore intends that conservation area legislation 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 being designated continues to grow their designation is increasingly 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 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 Sedlescombe Road Conservation Area was designated in March 1981. The designation of the conservation area was made on the initiation of English Heritage as recognition of the work of Walter Cave and the development by the Gunter Estate.

3 BOUNDARIES

3.1 The conservation area boundary can be seen on the plan on page 13.

3.2 The Sedlescombe Road Conservation Area includes the curtilages of the properties in Sedlescombe Road, Racton Road, Anselm Road, Tamworth Street, Halford Road, Micklethwaite Road and Farm Lane. The boundaries of the area have been drawn to include the development by Walter Cave and to exclude redeveloped sites.

3.3 The area lies to the east of North End Road and is close to the commercial centre of Fulham Broadway. To the north is a Peabody estate, the Beaufort Primary School ¹ and the Paragon Hotel which adjoin the rear boundaries of Sedlescombe Road properties. The area is bounded on the east by residential streets. The Farm Lane industrial estate adjoins the area to the south.

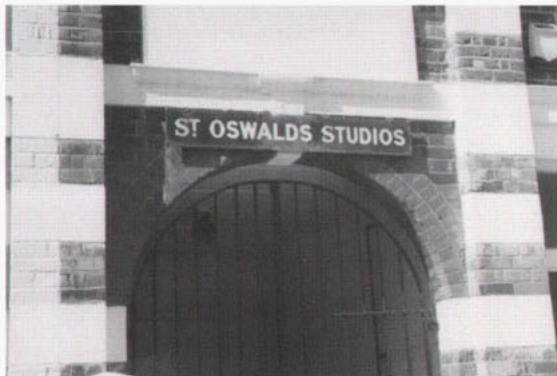
4 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AREA

4.1 Sedlescombe Road Conservation Area was formerly part of a large farm holding in the Walham Green area of Fulham. The 1894-6 Ordnance Survey map shows much of the road network in place, including Halford Road, Ongar Road, Hildyard Road and part of Anselm Road. At the date of publication of the 1916 Ordnance Survey map, the first cycle of development was substantially complete.

4.2 The 'Beaufort House Estate', to give the area its correct title, consisted of about 370 houses and was commenced around 1900 ². The development consisted of; Sedlescombe Road, including the artists accommodation, 'Oswald Studios'; east end of Anselm Road; Racton Road, including St Oswald's Vicarage ³; east end of Halford Road; east side of Farm Lane and Micklethwaite Road. The principal road appears to have been Tamworth Street which had a bakery, dairy and two shops ⁴.

4.3 The freehold of the land the 'Estate' was built on was held by the Gunter family. Of Welsh extraction, they had from the late 18th Century, acquired land in Fulham, Chelsea, Earl's Court and Kensington, mainly for market gardening⁵. Sedlescombe and Racton Roads and the north end of Tamworth Street occupy the site of Beaufort House which was demolished following the expiry of the last lease in 1902⁶.

4.4 The 'Estate' architect was Walter Cave who designed and planned the houses. However, there was not one single developer but several small speculative builders. As a result, although Cave oversaw the development, the builders did not stick entirely to his designs. This development, that was a cut above the surrounding streets, is an estate of distinctively designed houses in a plain Arts and Crafts style.



The entrance to the locally listed St Oswalds Studios, Sedlescombe Road

4.5 The mixture of housing types, corner shops, infant school, vicarage (Church demolished) and artist's studios is influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and by the philanthropic model developments typical of this period.

4.6 The first development phase remains substantially intact and no major redevelopments have been implemented within the designated area, although a number of minor extensions and alterations have taken place.

5 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

5.1 The conservation area has a genteel charm. The initial impression is of coherence created by the simplicity of the buildings, repetition of details and a limited pallet of building materials. The street pattern forms an irregular grid with roads leading off at right angles from the North End Road. Generally, the properties are two storey terraces with short front gardens, although a few terraces have raised ground floor access with self contained basement flats.

5.2 The plan form and appearance of the area which is derived from the nature of the terraced development is important in defining the character of the area. Consideration should also be given to the views of the rear of the terraces, both in terms of their appearance and the open aspect which remains where two street terraces meet.



Terraced property in Racton Road showing typical materials and detailing

5.3 The area consists predominantly of residential terraces with the exception of a few corner shops in Tamworth Street. Originally,

many of the properties were developed as single family dwellings and most remain as such. A notable exception is the development of purpose built flats on the eastern side of Tamworth Street which respect the form and scale of the surrounding development. Within the terraced development there are other buildings of note. These are sympathetic in scale and appearance to the surrounding development and are important features within the conservation area.

5.4 The character and appearance of the conservation area is primarily formed by the Arts and Crafts style of the terraces. The materials used in the construction of the houses were mainly Boxground stone and a sand-faced red brick with wide weather-joints, on the facades. The wood-work was painted white and the doors dark green (the contractor for these works was T. Bendon).

5.5 The detailing of the properties is simple and constructed from natural materials. The colour, texture and grain of these various detailing materials provides interest and includes yellow and red London stock bricks, pebbledash, and Stucco and dressed stone features such as copings and keystones.

5.6 Properties differ within the terraces, which in turn are different to one another. The resulting townscape provides a richness of detail which is rare in development of this type. The variety of detailing and features including bays, gables, windows and finishes are key in defining the character of the individual street and the conservation area as a whole.



View east along southern side of Sedlescombe Road

Sedlescombe Road

5.7 In Sedlescombe Road some properties are set forward of the main building line and have pediment details. This provides further variety and helps capture the street space. There are paired entrances with decorative surrounds and string courses at eaves level and first floor level. The brick window arches have keystone details. Throughout the terraces there are a variety of original timber sash and casements windows.



Entrance to former school at Nos. 44-46 Sedlescombe Road

5.8 Of particular interest are the recessed gated entrances to Beaufort House School inscribed above as being for 'Boys' and 'Girls and Infants' within the terrace at Nos 44-46. There is a 1902 date plaque at high level on the front elevation of Nos. 33/35.

5.9 St Oswald's Studios are Buildings of Merit (BOM's) and were designed by Walter Cave. They are still occupied today as artists studios. The entrance to the picturesque studios is via a covered passage way situated between no. 80 and 82 Sedlescombe Road. None of the building is visible from the roadside except for the wrought iron entrance gates.



East side of Tamworth Street

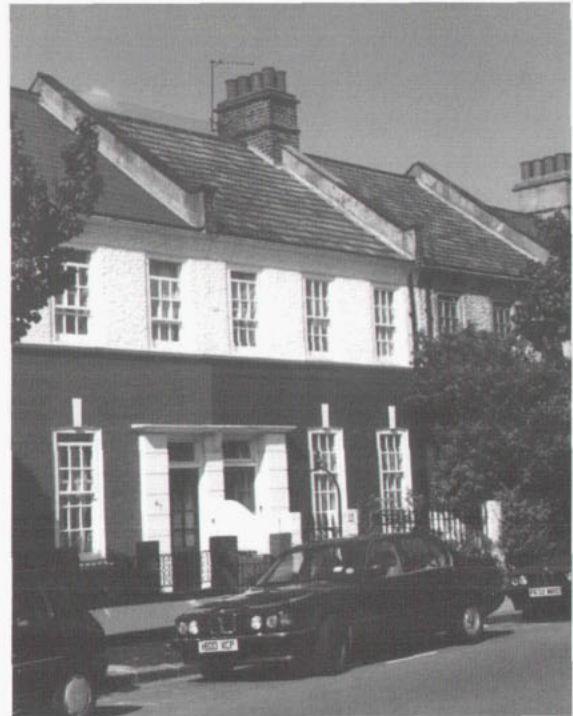
Tamworth Street ⁷

5.10 Nos. 2-112 Tamworth Street form the longest and most uniform terrace in the conservation area and all the original details remain intact. Fortunately none of the facing brickwork has been painted. The terrace consists of purpose-built flats with raised ground floor access above the self contained basement flats and is more imposing than the surrounding properties. The rear elevation remains mainly unaltered and is visible from Sedlescombe Road and Halford Road.

5.11 They have red stock brick facades with projecting flat fronted gabled bays on either side of paired entrance doors. Stone quoins alternate with every fourth course of brickwork to give a chequer board appearance. The uniformity of the fenestration is very pleasing. At ground level there are white painted timber casement windows with sash bars, two equal mullions and a single transom which have sprung soldier course brick arches above with distinctive white keystones. The first floor windows are similar but without the transom, and have flat brick arches.

5.12 All of the properties have black fleur-de-Lys wrought iron railings, built on white rendered brick dwarf walls. Most of the properties have been reroofed with the original clay tiles replaced by interlocking concrete tiles. There are no roof extensions or roof lights visible from the street. A strong vertical rhythm to the skyline is achieved by the gables, roof parapets and chimney stacks.

5.13 Nos. 25-41 Tamworth Street form a symmetrical two storey terrace of seven houses,



North side of Racton Road, Nos. 47 & 49

flanked at both ends by a single three storey property originally accommodating a corner shop with flats above. They have mellow red stock brick facades (although a number have since been painted) with rendered ashlar pilasters to paired entrance doors with fan lights and flat portico above. There is a concealed gutter behind a rendered fascia incorporating moulded relief keystones. The central, and both end properties have gables, and chequer board rendered quoins. Few of the properties retain their original clay roof tiles and there have been dormer extensions to nos. 31 and 39, which spoil the roof line. Nos. 11-23 Tamworth Street forms a similar terrace but the casement windows with intermediate sash bars subtly change the fenestration.

Racton Road

5.14 The properties on the north side of Racton Road form an exuberant terrace of varying two storey houses. Walter Cave employs every detail in his repertoire, but cleverly maintains a coherence to this long terrace. The terrace has mellow red facing bricks with brick pilasters and chequer board quoins to approximately every fifth property intensifying the vertical rhythm to the street facade (unfortunately a few properties have been painted).