

Sun in the Sands Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Adopted 26 September 2007



The Sun Inn - 1830's watercolour

Contents

Introduction

1. Executive Summary - Definition of Special Historic Interest

2. Explanation: Conservation areas and Article 4 Directions

What Is A Conservation Area?

Which properties are in the Conservation Area?

What restrictions are there within a Conservation Area?

The Planning policy framework

3. Character Appraisal

1. Location and Setting
2. Origins and historical development
3. Archaeological significance
4. Character and relationship of spaces
5. Townscape features and setting
6. Former and current uses
7. Architectural and historic qualities of buildings
8. Contribution made by key unlisted buildings
9. Local details
10. Prevalent and traditional building materials
11. Contribution made by greenery and spaces
12. Extent of loss or intrusion or damage to the conservation area
13. Neutral areas and buildings within the Conservation Area
14. Problems, pressures and capacity for change
15. Consultation

4. Contacts and Further Advice

5. Glossary

Introduction

The Sun in the Sands Conservation Area is a small residential area which grew up around the Sun Inn, an 18th century pub. This *Sun in the Sands Conservation Area: Character Appraisal* comprises

- An executive summary defining the Conservation Area's Special Historic and Architectural Interest;
- An explanation of Conservation Areas and a **list of the properties covered**;
- A **character appraisal** identifying the main elements that contribute towards the special architectural or historic interest of the Conservation Area.

There is also a separate Sun in the Sands Conservation Area Conservation Area Management Strategy which makes recommendations to promote conservative repair and to provide detailed guidance (separately) on the protection of the character of the area – in particular on how refurbishment, repair and upgrading of the properties can be achieved whilst minimising losses of the character of the houses and other buildings. Appropriate maintenance techniques, reinstatement of

architectural features, well-judged repairs and minor alterations can preserve or enhance the area's special architectural or historic character as far as possible. This document also draws on the Appraisal to identify types of development where planning requirements and policies guiding more substantial changes need to be spelled out.

I. Executive Summary - Definition of the Conservation Area's Special Historic and Architectural Interest

The special character of the area is its origin and development as a 19th century hamlet based on the Sun in the Sands PH. Since Rasmussen (1934)¹ London has many times been characterised, appreciated and considered as a series of villages each with individual character – as opposed to an amorphous sea of suburbia.

The special characteristics of the area include

- The survival of a substantial number of buildings from the 1840s – these have both individual historic interest and group value
- The survival of a good selection of buildings from each subsequent period of development
- A diversity of uses including a pub, garages and shops as well as different classes of residential accommodation
- The survival of a large number of trees on both streets and in large gardens
- The survival of much of the original grain and plot boundaries - preserving plots which are relatively large compared to adjacent streets outside the Conservation Area. Most of the original street plot and building layouts survive – at a density which is relatively low in this part of the Borough
- The 20th century buildings in the middle of Hervey Road make a contribution to the character of the area, both in terms of their architectural quality and interest as buildings (compared to others to the south), and importantly due to the fact that the 20th century houses in Hervey Road were laid out to the original 19th century street grid

2. Explanation of Conservation areas

What is a Conservation Area?

Conservation Areas were first designated in England following the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Local planning authorities are obliged to designate and review

¹ Steen Eiler Rasmussen London: The Unique City 1934

conservation areas under the provisions of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. These are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. There are now more than 8000 throughout England and Greenwich has 20 Conservation Areas. The Sun in the Sands Conservation Area was designated in August 1995 in recognition of its special quality and distinctiveness.

Which properties are in the Conservation Area?

The following properties fall within the Sun in the Sands Conservation Area:

Sun Lane – 5-15, 10-28 (complete including any unbuilt plots e.g. 2-8 and 25-)
Delacourt Road – 1-19 (not including no2 and 21-25)
Eastbrook Road – 1-12 (complete)
Shooters Hill Road – Sun in the Sands Pub, 90-142; 125-163
Hervey Road – 24-28, 62-110; 37-83, 83a (complete except for 85-123 & 112-120a)
Old Dover Road - 50a, 50-68,

What restrictions are there throughout the Conservation Area?

In all Conservation Areas Planning applications are judged against stricter design criteria. Within conservation areas, all proposals must seek to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the area. Conservation Area status will also affect the decisions taken when it is judged expedient to take enforcement action. The following additional controls are automatically applied:

The complete or substantial demolition of any building or free-standing structure over 115 cubic metres in volume requires an application for Conservation Area Consent. Conservation Area Consent is also required for the substantial or complete demolition of a garden wall.

Planning Permission is normally required for all alterations to the external appearance of a building; however in the case of single family occupied houses, there are permitted development rights to make minor changes. The following works require Planning Permission in Conservation Area:

- a. The cladding of any part of the exterior of a house with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
- b. The installation of satellite TV antennae on chimneys or front facing walls.
- c. An enlargement of the front, rear or side roof slopes, of a house including the installation of dormer windows.
- d. The provision of any building, swimming pool or enclosure where the cubic content exceeds 10 cubic metres.
- e. Trees are protected by special controls requiring notice of pruning, lopping or felling works to trees within a Conservation Area. The Council's Tree Officer should be contacted for details of these controls.

Proposals for development on land outside but affecting the setting of the Conservation Area will be assessed for their impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and may be refused if this is judged to be detrimental.

Although permission is required to undertake the above works, it should be emphasised that the exercise of these controls is not intended to prevent change. It is rather to ensure that changes preserve or enhance the area's established character.

The Planning Policy Context: Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In policy terms, this Conservation Area Character appraisal is a supporting document, relating to, and to be read with, current national and local planning policy. The key planning policy documents are:

The Mayor of London's London Plan. The Mayor undertakes to work with strategic partners to protect and enhance London's historic environment (Policy 4B. 10) and expects Boroughs to ensure that the protection and enhancement of historic assets in London are based on their special character (Policy 4B. 11). The London Plan (2004) also contains proposals for protecting and managing strategic views, including those of central London from Greenwich Park and Blackheath Point.

Greenwich Planning policy. Greenwich Council has started work on a new type of statutory plan, the Local Development Framework (LDF). This will be a suite of documents that will eventually replace the current Greenwich Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The Council formally adopted the Replacement UDP on 20th July 2006. The more relevant development planning policies in the Greenwich UDP are its design policies. The most relevant UDP Policies are: Urban Design (D1 & D2), Trees (D 8), Residential Extensions (D9 & D10), Telecommunications (D11), Satellite Antennae (D12), Shopfronts and Signs (D13), Street Furniture (D14), Advertisements (D15), Conservation Areas (D16 & D17); Listed Buildings (D18-22); and Buildings on the Local List (D23). All these UDP policies can be found on the Council's website.

Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance. In addition to Development Plan policies, decisions on planning applications should take into account relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) produced under the new LDF regime. The most relevant are Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Extensions, on Shopfronts and on Conversions.

Designation of Conservation Areas. There is a legal duty for all local authorities to keep under review and designate as conservation areas those parts of its area of "special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) (PPG 15)*, sets out current government guidance on Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

Listing. English Heritage lists buildings of special architectural or historic interest on behalf of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Secretary of State is also responsible for the scheduling of ancient monuments and the registering of historic parks and gardens.

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan (to be replaced by the 'local development framework'), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises the London Plan, the Greenwich UDP (currently the second deposit draft) and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

Conservation Guidance Document. The Council is plans to produce a generic Borough-wide Guidance Document on good practice methods for carrying out in minor repairs and alterations. It is intended that this will be read together with this appraisal and that together these documents will encourage and provide support to residents and local business to preserve and enhance the appearance and character of the conservation area.

3. Character Appraisal

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 emphasises the need for local planning authorities to assess the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas. In order to define these issues it is desirable to prepare an appraisal of each conservation area. The format of the following appraisal employs the 14 appraisal criteria recommended in English Heritage's guidance note "Conservation Area Appraisals".

1. Location and Setting

The Sun in the Sands Conservation Area straddles Shooters Hill Road, just to the east of the Sun in the Sands roundabout and the A 102(M) Blackwall Tunnel approach road. The latter forms a recent landscape scar in what was previously a relatively level area extending from the Blackheath plateau. The Blackheath Conservation Area lies to the west of the A102 (M) and the Rectory Field Conservation Area abuts the Sun in the Sands CA on its north boundary.

2. Origins and historical development²

The area encompassed by the conservation area boundary has developed in phases, beginning with the 1840s development of the 5-acre plot, then known as 'Sunfield' around the older Sun in the Sands Public House, and finishing with the completion of Hervey Road in the interwar period of the 20th Century. The development was

² This section of the appraisal is assisted by Neil Rhind's book "*Blackheath Village and Environs Vol. 2*"

based on the Sun in the Sands road junction, a highway rest stop, and one possibly used by drovers taking livestock from Kent to the markets in central London.

There have also been a few small infill developments in the latter part of the 20th Century on small plots often detached from larger gardens.

18th c origin of Sun in the Sands PH: A building on this site appears on Rocque's 1745 map, and this appears on Hasted's Plan in his 1778 History of Kent. The first reference to a public house appears in the 1790s rate books, the 'Sun Ale House' is recorded as such in 1812. This building seems to be the same as that illustrated in the 1830 watercolour reproduced above on the front page. The present Sun in the Sands Public House is said to date from 1842 – and is believed to have been substantially rebuilt at the end of the 19th century. However comparison of the photos below of the present building with the 1830 drawing shows that the pub retains the same form - wide gable ends and 5 bay width which were there and already 'old' in 1830. This suggests that, whilst no doubt much altered and rebuilt, the building frame predates the 1840s and is likely to be substantially the 18th century one seen in the 1830s watercolour. The name "Sun in the Sands" refers to the sand pits formerly around the pub.



Figure 1: Sun in the Sands public house today **Figure 2: Gable end of pub**

1840's development of Sun Lane and Old Dover Road. This land, formerly belonging to the Sun PH, was developed in the 1840s as workmen's cottages on Sun Lane, and 50-68 Old Dover Road (originally 12-30 Sun Garden Cottages). Then two more substantial semi detached pairs of substantial two floor Georgian houses at 133-9 Shooters Hill Road were built to the west of the pub and named Sunfield Terrace. In the mid 19th c a solicitor, an architect and a surveyor occupied these middle class houses.

Shooters Hill Road – this was the main road in the 19th century. The bow fronted Listed terrace at 141-155 was built in 1846 and formerly known as Waterfield Terrace perhaps because the Sunfield gravel pits by then were full of water. At nos. 157-63 Content Cottages were built in 1840 and appear to be the earliest surviving houses in the Conservation Area.

The tall substantial 19th Century houses facing north onto Shooters Hill Road (90-142) were built in 1862-4 and reflect the importance of this thoroughfare at this time. This favoured location attracted relatively better off residents to establish many large middle class houses. Nos 132 – 42 are a group of individually designed detached houses purpose built for specific owners.



Figure 3: Locally Listed building – Shooters Hill Road

Delacourt Road. This street was called Woodlands Road up to 1901. The row of substantial semi-detached houses dates from the 1850s and was called Woodlands Villas, the villas received their bungalow shop extensions in the 1880's – though some traded as shops and workshops from the 1860s. A parallel row of shops on the west side was erected in the 1860s – but was demolished in 1970 as part of Rochester Way dual carriageway road construction. No 21-25 (not in the Conservation Area but worthy of inclusion within it) was constructed just before World War I and retains both a good early 20th C shopfront and a matching garage - both with leaded clerestorey windows. It is believed by its owner to have been an Express Dairy depot with stabling and horse tethering rings surviving in the rear.



Figure 4: Delacourt Road

Eastbrook Road – the eight 19th century houses were built before 1869 and are typically of three stories plus basement. They are bay-fronted, with garden walls, strong eaves. The upper ground floor is gained by external front steps.



Figs 5 & 6: 3 & 5 Eastbrook Road in 1979 and in 2006

Hervey Road – the oldest houses in this street are located at the southeast and west ends. Nos. 75-83, Mayfield Terrace, was built in 1879. Nos 100-110 opposite (originally Park Villas) were built in 1868. Nos 37-55 and 24-28 were built between 1896 and 1916. Most of the remaining houses date to the 1920s.



Figure 7: Interwar houses, Hervey Road

3. Archaeological significance

The area immediately adjacent to both Shooters Hill and Old Dover Road, which amounts to approximately half of the Conservation Area is an Area of Archaeological Interest as defined within the Unitary Development Plan for the borough. This designation responds to the proximity to the original route of the Roman Road, whose line along Shooters Hill Road and Old Dover Road has been maintained as an important route. Such areas indicate a level of archaeological awareness that there would be the potential for archaeology to be affected if significant ground disturbance was to occur. Any permission involving works disturbing the ground should acknowledge archaeological importance by a condition requiring an archaeological assessment.

Greenwich Park to the west includes important archaeological remains including the site of a Roman period shrine that was positioned on high ground and in line with Watling Street, represented along the northern boundary of the Conservation Area by Old Dover Road. It is not known if there was a road passing through the

northern area of the park towards the present day buildings of the former Royal Naval College, but even if there was, the main route is likely to have changed direction to cross Blackheath and on towards the ford at Deptford Bridge, passing through the Conservation Area on the line of Shooters Hill Road.

Although no structural remains or earthworks survive within the Conservation Area, the layout of the modern development has been unwittingly influenced by the two former Roman roads that have become fossilised within the present road system.

4. Character and relationship of spaces

There are no public green spaces in the area. The main spaces in the area are:

- The enclosed front gardens,
- The different streetscapes which reflect the history and character of the area's development (see section 11 below)
- The back gardens, which should be retained as the only sizably significant green spaces in the area. There is a noteworthy significant green space and tree group formed by the square group of large back gardens behind Eastbrook Road, Shooters Hill Road, and Hervey Road



Figure 8 : Aerial photo showing tree mass between Shooters Hill Road & Hervey Road, magenta buildings are Listed, red buildings are Locally Listed

5. Townscape features and setting

The Conservation Area is defined by three principle roads running east west. Each has a different streetscape, reflecting the history and character of the buildings – the enclosure of Old Dover Road by small cottages, the wider Shooters Hill Road defined by its large houses, and the its suburban character of Hervey Road. As a

smaller street, the traditional winding and narrow character of Sun Lane complements Old Dover Road.



Fig 9: streetscape Sun Lane Road



Fig 10: No 20 Sun Lane



Fig 11: streetscape Hervey

The streetscape character is made up of a variety of factors including the width of the street, the character of the enclosure – urban or sylvan, the height of the enclosure, the materials of the street and street furniture, the character of enclosure by gardens and garden walls, etc.

6. Prevailing and former uses

The uses in the area derive from the 19th century character of the area as a hamlet around the Sun in the Sands Public House near London on the main Roman road to Canterbury. The predominant uses in the area remain derivative of this 19th century hamlet character: the rebuilt 18th century Public House, a few garages for example in Sun Lane, perhaps originating in workshops for the repair of vehicles passing on the main road, shops on Delacourt Road, and the bulk of development being various classes of residential housing from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Residential use in the area originates in the 1840s with the small cottages on Sun Lane and on Old Dover Road, and larger houses on Shooters Hill Road. This early pattern influenced the later development in the area on Hervey Road, the third principle road running parallel to Shooters Hill Road.

The row of villas on the east side of Delacourt Road lost their original front gardens to ground floor shop units in the mid 19th century and these shop units have remained to form the principle sector of commercial activity in the conservation area.

7. Architectural and historic qualities of the buildings

Statutorily Listed Buildings: 141-155 Shooters Hill Road (odd nos)

Locally Listed Buildings: 90-142 (even), 129-139 (odd), 157-63 (odd).

The original and definitive period of development was the 1840s – this continued in the 1850s, the 860s, in 1880 – 1916, and being completed with infill development in Hervey Road in the 1920s. The periods and architectural styles of the buildings

within the conservation area vary, but there are common features and groups of buildings forming distinct zones where similar types predominate.



Fig 12: Shooters Hill Road – Listed terrace with characterful bow shaped bays

Fig 13: Individually designed house on south side of Shooters Hill Road

The older property is found around the Sun in the Sands in the northern part of the conservation area. Originally Middle Class large houses along **Shooters Hill Road** dominate this zone. On the north side of Shooters Hill Road the houses are mainly terraced with low hipped and pitched roofs in slate. They are mainly two or three storeys in brick and stucco, and some have an attic floor with round-headed dormers. The best group (141-155) is

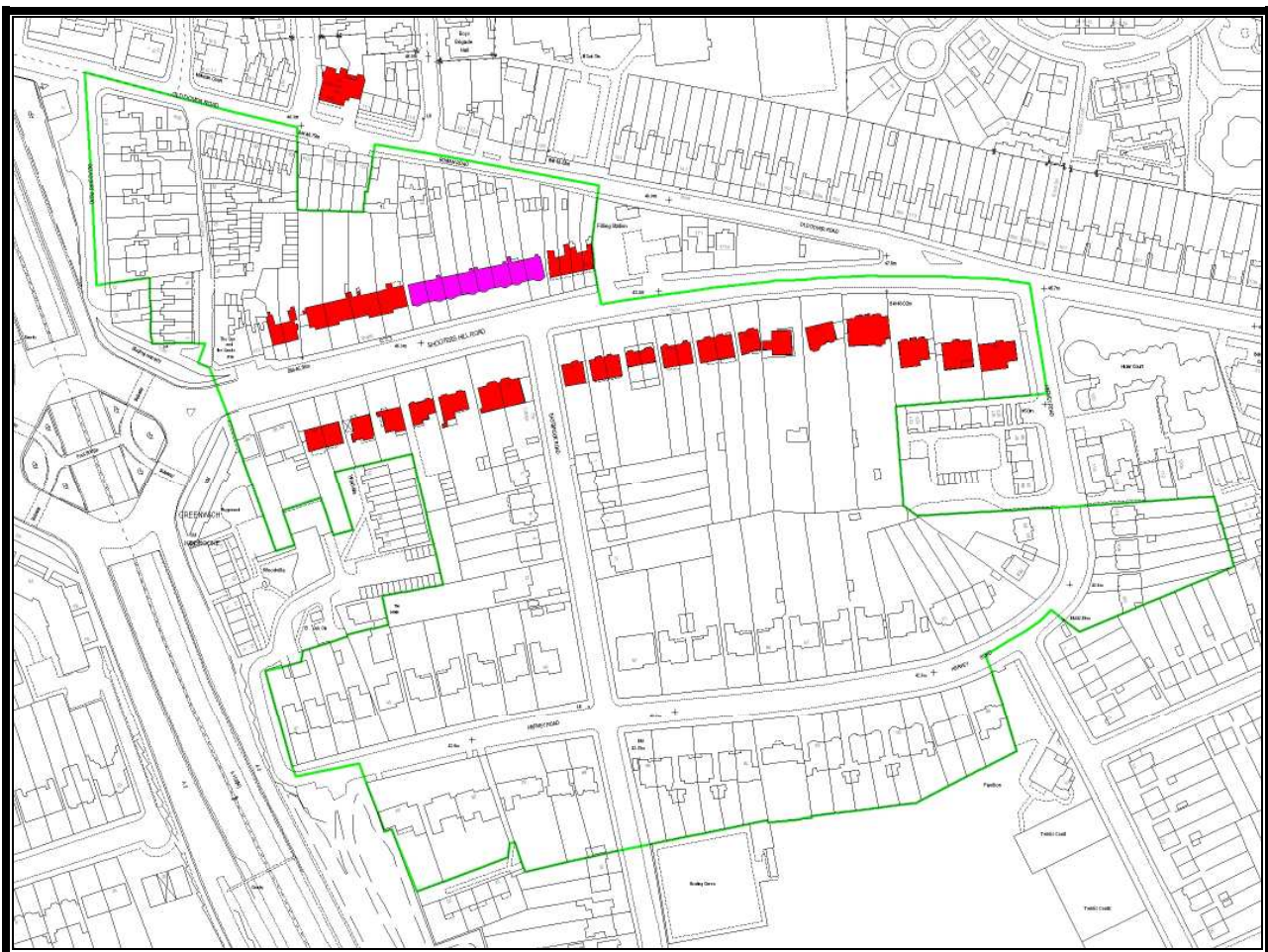


Figure 14: OS Map of Conservation Area with Statutorily Listed buildings (magenta) and Locally Listed buildings (red). The Conservation Area boundary is in green.

statutorily listed and also mentioned in Pevsner (*Buildings of England: London 2 South* (1983) p 276) who comments on their as “*unusual rhythm of rounded bays*”

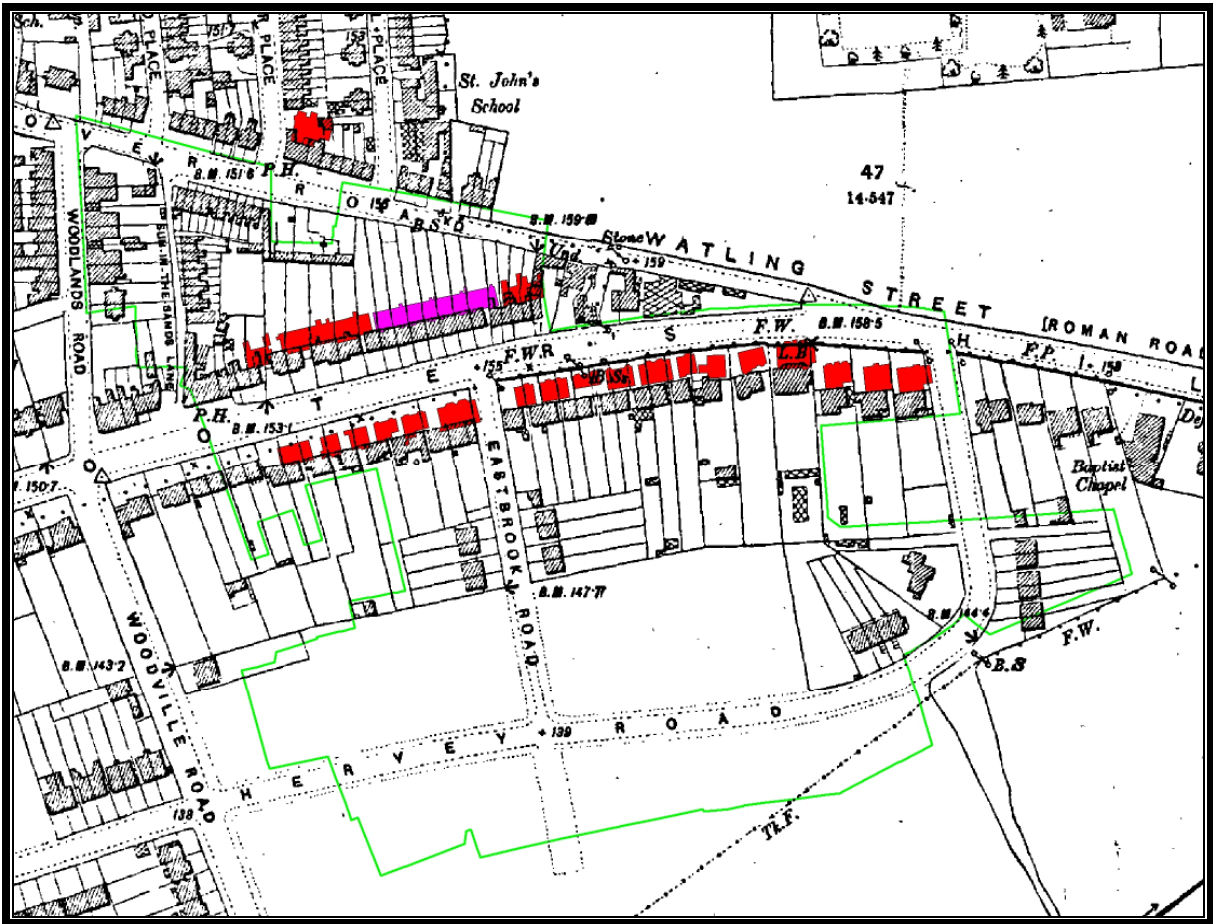
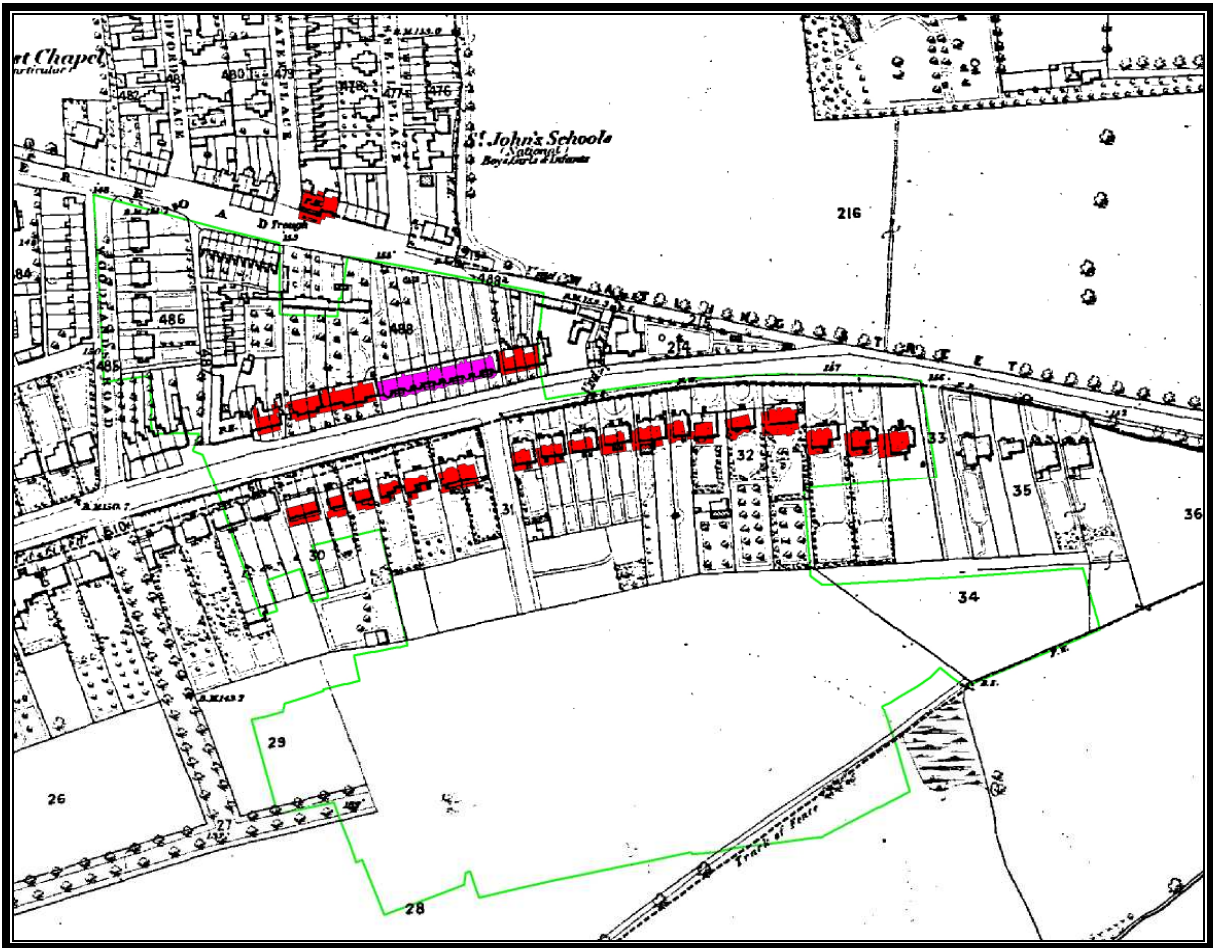


Fig 15 & 16: 1870 and 1890 OS Maps with Conservation Area boundary superimposed, Statutorily Listed buildings (magenta), Locally Listed buildings (red).

beneath deep eaves". At the eastern end there is a small terrace of two-storey houses with low-hipped slate roofs, stucco fronts and a wooden loggia to the front elevations (*Content Cottages 157-163*). In general, all properties tend to be in the original configuration with few alterations.

On the south side of **Shooters Hill Road** the buildings are individually designed, larger, detached and semi-detached villas, mainly three storeys plus basements. There are a mix of pitched and hipped slate roofs, and brickwork with stucco window/door surrounds and string-courses. Some houses have decorative masks on the brackets under the eaves. The majority of the buildings remain much in their original form, although most have been sub-divided into flats and the spacious front gardens have made way for communal car parking areas. A few have insensitive extensions to the side or rear.

To the west of the area, **Delacourt Road** has a row of once elegant three storey semi-detached villas in brick with hipped slate roofs, stucco window surrounds. The ground floors were obscured by shop additions in the late 19th century, and these have now become historically established features with any surviving original elements of these old shop-fronts now having interest in their own right. **Sun Lane** to the rear consists of two storey terraces in brick, with a mixture of tiles and slate. The older properties from the 1840s have parapet fronts concealing the roofs and emphasising the style facades designed in a formal and classical character. This thoroughfare is characterised by the narrow carriageway. A further terrace of two storey cottages is located in **Old Dover Road**. These feature brick, render with slate roofs.

Eastbrook Road represents a continuation of the character of Shooters Hill Road, on a reduced scale. Each side of the road features pairs of semi-detached houses, four storeys in height with slate pitched roofs and brick or stucco frontages and three storey bays. Generally, most of the original features to these properties remain. There are also a few detached houses in this road of varying styles and finishes.

The character of the later southern part of the conservation area is more domestic and the roofs make a stronger stylistic contribution to the architecture, reflecting the period of its development. The predominant form of building is detached two storey houses on the north side, and two storey semi-detached and detached houses on the south side. Those on the north side feature consistent projecting bays to the ground floors. They are finished in a combination of brick and render with tiled, hipped roofs.

To the eastern end of **Hervey Road** there are two terraces of four storey houses, one with stucco finish and the other in brick with stucco surrounds to windows/doors and slate roofs. There is greater variety to the architectural style of the houses on the south side of Hervey Road, although red brick, render and tiles are the predominant materials. There is a range of detached and semi-detached styles and many feature attractive canopies and front door details with prominent curved front bays.

In spite of a number of minor regrettable changes, most of the buildings in the conservation area retain their original character and individual architectural style.

Equally, though most of the original building plots remain intact there are just a few instances where they have been compromised.

8. Contribution made by key unlisted buildings

Unlisted buildings divide naturally into the following groups:

The locally listed buildings in the area – these comprise almost all the unlisted buildings on Shooters Hill Road - on the south side 90-142, and on the north side nos. 129-139 and 157-63. Those on the south side are fine large houses and those on the north also worthwhile and constructed in the 1840s early period of development.

The 1840's Sun in the Sands Public House and associated small cottages on Sun Lane and Old Dover Road. The early cottages are typical of small early 19th c workmen's cottages in Greenwich and its environs – and by virtue of age and style make a significant contribution to the character of the area – this would be diminished by ill considered alterations.



Figure 17: small cottages in Sun Lane

The larger mid 19th century houses in Delacourt Road, Eastbrook Road and Hervey Road – mostly constructed for sale in small terraces or groups.

The late 19th and early 20th century houses mainly on Hervey Road – often rendered and with art deco or moderne suburban features. These well-detailed and well-constructed houses make their own architectural contribution to the area giving a suburban character.



**Fig 18: No. 80 Hervey Road in 1979;
Hervey Road today**

Figure 19: 20th c. house in

The remaining small number of infill houses is of variable period and quality, indicating that some might be replaced, provided that the replacement is well designed and small enough to fit in to its plot and the streetscape.

Nearly all of the other buildings within the area are judged as making a valued contribution to its character. The consistency of various building styles is a significant feature of all periods of development in the conservation area. In particular the locally listed buildings in Shooters Hill Road compliment the statutory listed terrace on the north side in materials, features and design. The houses in the southern zone are generally of interesting architectural character with stylish features and materials in the now appreciated early 20th Century domestic and suburban idiom.

Number **134 Shooters Hill Road**, was reputedly owned by Fanny and Johnny Craddock and formed the location for live recording of the early TV cookery series featuring the wife/husband duo.

There are few buildings that detract from the character of the conservation area. Mostly, these tend to be relatively modern infill developments that in both their architecture and detailing lack the quality of earlier buildings. These include 74-78 Old Dover Road and 2 Eastbrook Road. Some make only a neutral contribution to the area's character, such as 92/94 Shooters Hill Road.

Were any of these buildings to become subject to redevelopment proposals, the Council's requirement would be for high quality architectural replacements in scale with and fitting in to the character of the area.

11. Contribution of local details and their conservation

In this conservation area, traditional porches with front doors, traditional sash windows, low pitched slate roofs and yellow stock brickwork make an important

contribution to area character – however this character can be seriously damaged by insensitive alteration. Other significant local details and features include: -

- Old garden walls, and gates;
- Various architectural details such as pargeoted wall and door case mouldings, mouldings and window dressings, blind windows, arched windows with margin lights;
- Floorscape, for example the survival in granite sets in gullies in Hervey Road;
- Survival of simple former small workmen’s cottages,



Figure 20: two blind windows on a flank elevation to Shooters Hill Road

Porches: There was a continuous attention to detail in the design of porches from the 1840’s onwards that makes the variety and interest of the area’s porches a particularly interesting and distinctive feature of the Conservation Area. A small minority of houses have had their porches filled in, or exterior doors added to their individual porches in order to create a private hallway, this has introduced a highly visible and unsympathetic modern door and produces a clumsy and incongruous addition to the house.

Several porches and front doors are illustrated below to show their variety and interest.



Figs 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30: Some porches in Shooters Hill Road



Figure 31: pair of porches – Eastbrook Road



Figures 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 & 38: Porches in Hervey Road



Figures 39 & 40: Doors and porches in Sun lane

As with other external joinery, piecing in new material is the way to repair a damaged original porch screen. Regular maintenance, including painting, is needed to guard against the need for extensive repairs. Elements, which require renewal, need to follow the original pattern exactly, particularly with regard to the shape of glazed

panels, the division of panes into small lights and the cross-sectional profile of the timber mouldings above open doorways.

Doors: The area's original doors are a particular design feature of the original house. Replacement of old doors with modern 'off the peg' designs has often detracted from the character of the individual property and its contribution to the street scene as a whole. It also results in the loss of distinctive door furniture such as letterboxes and door knockers.

The repair of original doors is important and cost effective. Because decayed timber can usually be replaced with a matching piece, replacement will rarely be necessary. Where it is, the new door needs to carefully match the design and detailing of the original, paying particular attention to the glazing configuration and panel mouldings, and reusing original ironmongery such as door knockers and letter boxes.

Windows: Old windows are an important element unifying the character of the Sun in the Sands Conservation Area. Their design and detailing are a significant element in the original design of the buildings. In a row or terrace of similar houses, the repetition of a particular style adds rhythm to the composition and unity to the street scene. However windows are also one of the most vulnerable elements in this area. Small alterations in design or material have a detrimental impact upon the whole façade and affect the area's character. The replacement of traditional timber windows with PVCu or aluminium alternatives has resulted in glazing patterns which differ from the original design and lack the detailing and quality of original timber sashes. The thicker framing and glazing bars associated with modern alternatives have offered only a crude approximation of traditional styles and false glazing bars only pay lip service to authentic designs. Plastic or metal windows have frequently employed very different opening mechanisms, for example, top-hung or tilt and turn, which also harm the historic character and harmony of this Conservation Area.

To preserve local character timber windows need to be retained, and this means regular maintenance and small-scale repairs. There is a widespread misconception that signs of ageing in timber windows are a symptom of irreversible decay. Where a small section of the window has decayed, for example at the bottom rail or cill of the sash, a new wood section treated with an organic preservative can be carefully pieced into existing fabric – an inexpensive process. Compared with replacements, regular maintenance and small scale repairs are preferable, usually cheaper, maintain the value of the property better, and is more durable. Where sashes are loose, timber fillets can be added to fill gaps or draught-proofing strips can be installed as a sensitive, simple and inexpensive means of providing noise and thermal insulation.

To avoid clashes, replacement windows and doors need to be like-for-like, following the exact dimensions and mouldings of the original item as a pattern. New window frames need to be constructed of well seasoned softwood (kiln dried softwood rots quickly) or sustainable hardwood and painted white. The success of the replacement will depend on following the exact glazing pattern, particularly where the window is divided into small lights – following the width and profile of glazing bars and other design features such as sash horns.

Replacement windows are often marketed upon the basis that traditional sash windows are old fashioned, ill-fitting, draughty and lack the thermal efficiency of

modern alternatives. But English Heritage analysis and guidance indicates that only 20% of a home's heating is lost through the windows, and most of that escapes through the gaps around the windows rather than through the individual panes. Secondary glazing can be employed behind the existing window without detracting from their design and is an inexpensive alternative to sealed double-glazed units. Energy savings can be made combining draught proofing and secondary glazing with loft insulation, fitting heavy curtains and the replacement of old and inefficient boilers. The cost of installing double glazing or modern PVCu windows represents a considerable financial outlay, an expense that is often not recouped through energy savings, even in the longer term. Claims for energy efficiency need to be qualified by circumstance. UPVc windows have a limited lifespan and are not biodegradable and disposal can be problematic. Where UPVc windows are insensitive and unsympathetic to the character of the area, the investment is frequently not reflected in the resale value of a property.



Fig 41: low pitched slate roofs **Fig 42: Traditional setts for gully and crossover in Hervey Road**

Roofs: The natural slate roof coverings in this area are an attractive and highly visible element within the street-scene. Where they have been replaced with artificial slate or concrete roof tiles this has added a bulky and uneven profile that detracts from their original design and imposes an increased weight on the roof of the property, and can cause structural defects. Buildings originally surfaced with clay tiles were designed to be finished in this way and this too is a part of the area's character.

Roof repair and replacement needs to be carried out sensitively if the character of the area is to be preserved. A first consideration should be the careful removal and reuse of the old slates and clay tiles. This will significantly reduce the cost differential between re-use and replacement. Old slates should be reused on the front and other elevations visible from the street. A traditional roofer working with care may be able to recover for reuse up 90% of the slates. The percentage of slates recoverable will vary considerably according to the skill of the roofer – and this will be a guide to the contractor's ability. New materials, even at the rear, should match the original. Natural slate is the best choice and fibre cement slates are strongly discouraged. Reconstituted slates are often considered to be better value than natural products. However, the price differential between good quality reconstituted products and natural slate (for example Spanish slate), is small and natural slate is far superior in terms of weathering abilities, lifespan and appearance. Similar considerations apply to the conservation and re-use of clay tiles.

Chimneys and stacks make a fundamental contribution to the historic streetscene. The character is damaged where a chimney has been reduced in height or the pot lost. Redundant chimneys perform an important task of ventilating the dwelling structure.

Brickwork & Pointing: The yellow stock brickwork in the Sun in the Sands Conservation Area and its weathered appearance are significant elements in its local distinctiveness. Stone dressings appear in the area for example around mid and late 19th century doorways and windows and as decorative colonettes and door surrounds. Many of the properties have had these dressings painted white. The walls of the houses were originally constructed with flush pointed lime mortar joints. The fine pointing carried out by 19th c and early 20th century craftsmen avoids touching the edges of the bricks and gives a building a quiet harmonious regular patterned appearance. The passing of time results in an aged patinated weathered brick surface, which has added character – and which has been unnecessarily removed by brick cleaning.

The major cause of damage to brickwork and its appearance stems from the ingress of moisture, through degraded mortar joints or localised water saturation due to defective rainwater goods, copings and mouldings. Water within the brickwork of a building can cause damage such as *spalling* and decay of the brick face, either as a result of the migration of salts to the brick surface or frost damage. Minor cracks in the brick face can be sealed with coloured mortar to match to avoid further water penetration.

Pointing: Surviving old pointing makes an important contribution to the character of the area. On the other hand, repointing with modern cement rich mortar joints has both damaged the appearance of traditionally constructed buildings leading in the longer term to serious problems. This is because cement mortar is hard, impermeable and rigid, and moisture trapped within the fabric of a building tends to evaporate at the brick face – resulting in concentration of any frost or salt damage here rather than at the more easily replaceable joints. Builders' repair specifications usually go beyond what is desirable or needed. Good quality pointing is a skilled task, but nevertheless much modern work is undertaken by bricklayers without experience of traditional pointing. To avoid the frequently seen spoiling of brick edges, unnecessary raking out of good old lime mortar and re-pointing with hard cement it is necessary to employ a builder with the necessary skills and to require and approve a test panel.

Brickwork is often unnecessarily repointed. Mortar only needs to be replaced when the joints have weathered back so far that water is seeping into the brickwork. Sound original mortar should always be retained. Visually, new pointing should be subservient to the surrounding brickwork and should aim to replicate the original flush, or slightly recessed, finish. The more modern examples of weather struck or ribbon pointing can ruin the appearance of a historic building and are damaging to appearance. To achieve this care should be taken when removing old mortar so as to avoid damaging the edges of the bricks. The use of angle grinders to remove soft mortar is unnecessary, damaging and should be avoided. Traditional buildings are constructed of porous materials, which allow moisture within the structure to evaporate. The traditional lime mortar used is deliberately weaker and more porous than surrounding brickwork – allowing bricks to move and sucking out moisture. A mix of 1 part cement to 3 parts lime (preferably lime putty) to 12 parts sand matches the traditional composition.

10. Prevailing and traditional building materials

19th century buildings are mainly constructed from yellow stock bricks under slate roofs with timber sash windows and front doors. Rainwater goods were originally in cast iron. Later in the 19th century and in Edwardian buildings use was made of stucco or render to walls and artificial stone, natural stone or render for doorcases, window surrounds and decorative features. In the late 19th and 20th century the Queen Anne and Vernacular revivals lead to more use of clay tiles for roof coverings.

The prominent buildings along Shooters Hill Road feature a mixture of brick types, ranging from multi-coloured stocks, and yellow stocks on the north side, to predominantly yellow/cream Gault bricks on the south side. Stuccoed facades are common throughout the area, and stuccoed detailing is also common

On the more modern buildings in the southern part of the area different materials predominate. Red brick is predominant in combination with painted rough or smooth cast rendering. Some buildings feature decorative timbers to the gables. Clay tiles, or modern concrete tiles are the predominant roofing material in this zone of the conservation area.

Unfortunately more recent or contemporary repairs may have used synthetic artificial products – for example ill considered use of synthetic slates, UPVC windows, and pebbledash. Painting or rendering of external brick surfaces has also taken place. The framing of the replacement windows in particular tends to display heavy and obtrusive proportions.

11. The contribution made by natural features – greenery, trees and hedges.

There are no significant green public open spaces within the conservation area. However, the area is generously covered with mature tree planting set within large private gardens, both to the front and the rear of houses. In particular, the area bounded by properties in the east side of Hervey, Eastbrook and Shooters Hill Roads is particularly verdant in tree coverage in the rear garden area.

12. Changes leading to loss, intrusion or damage.

Whilst there is a consistency of architecturally interesting buildings throughout the conservation area there are some changes, which detract from the area's overall character.

Parking in front gardens: Many of the houses, particularly along Shooters Hill Road have been sub-divided into flats. Often the result has been loss of the front garden wall and garden to a bleak, poorly designed, tarmac parking areas where the loss of the walls encourages in-blown windswept rubbish.



Figure 43, 44, & 45 : parking in front gardens



Figure 46: a better front garden layout

Front garden character: The front garden boundary walls, which are common in the area, are a characterful component within the streetscene. The setting of historic buildings is an important element of their character and the retention of this boundary wall signifies and preserves the character of the barrier between the public and private realm. Front walls help retain traditional character. Reinstatement of original boundary walls and iron railings, using the original pattern shown in typical old photographs, would enhance the character of the area. Some photographs showing suitable designs may be available in books dealing with local history. The Greenwich Heritage Centre has an excellent library of copies of old postcards showing original boundary treatments.

A significant proportion of the soft landscaping within the Conservation Area appears in private front gardens. This greenery was originally designed to make an important contribution to the character of the area, complementing and softening the buildings. Original tiled paths appear occasionally in the area and are another attractive characterful original feature.

In Sept 2005 the Greater London Authority published a useful leaflet on conservation of front gardens and encouraging people to be less ‘crazy’ about paving over – *Crazy Paving: the importance of London’s front gardens* – this is currently available for reading or download on line at their website:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/environment/frontgardens.pdf>

Creation of hard-standings for off street parking: Because front gardens within the Conservation Area are part of its character, the creation of hard-standings for vehicles has usually detrimentally intruded upon the setting of individual houses and upon the overall coherency of the street-scene.

Part of the problem is due to permitted development. Planning Permission is not required for the creation of a crossover unless the road is a trunk road or a classified road (a crossover is an alteration to the footway ramping it to enable a vehicle to cross over to the front garden). However a front garden parking scheme requires Conservation Area Consent if there is a wall that would need demolition (Conservation Area Consent is required for the substantial or complete demolition of a wall or fence).

Hard standings and associated parking in a specific front garden have normally become established as a lawful change, and so are difficult to reverse. However, wherever the opportunity for change occurs, improved landscaping of these front gardens will enhance the character of the area. For example in the case of proposed reversion of a house back into single family occupation, it may be helpful to the area's character for the Council to remove permitted development rights by condition and to seek reinstatement of the front garden and garden wall.

For some large houses divided into flats with large front gardens, a carefully landscaped scheme retaining the original garden walls may allow a limited amount of off street parking without undue detriment to the character of the area. But to achieve this it will be helpful to seek to preserve or reinstate the original character of enclosure – reinstating lost walls and gates in the original style and materials. This may be facilitated by looking for surviving examples nearby, and from old photographs. UDP Planning Policy supports this approach (UDP Policy H6 and M24) where the proposal emanates from a planning application for provision of housing, for example by conversion.

In Shooters Hill Road on the south side the very large gardens may enable parts (but not all) of the gardens to be used for well designed well screened parking. The unfortunate examples of ugly hard standings and broken or demolished front garden walls should not be treated as a precedent for further change of this nature.

Where off street parking may be in principle acceptable, and a gap is to be made in the fence for a vehicle to enter, it is best if a gate in appropriate materials and style should be introduced to restore continuity to the boundary wall. The aim should be to retain as much of the boundary wall as possible. The Council's Highway Service rules for a crossover require that it cannot be installed unless it is safe (for example there are no problems with sightlines) and has a width of at least 3.9 metres and no more than 5.4 metres.

Large or ugly side and rear extensions: There are a few examples of side or rear extensions in the conservation area, which are overly large and detract from the character of the host buildings. Most were constructed before the designation of the conservation area and would not likely be permitted today. Most of the original spaces between buildings still remain intact and these contribute to the area's character.

Roof Extensions: The character of this Conservation Area has also been damaged by roof extensions where they are not subordinate in character and do not follow existing established design styles and details. Planning permission is not always required in a Conservation Area for a loft conversion. It is required if the appearance of the roof is changed and property is divided into flats or does not have permitted development rights. Planning permission is also needed if there are permitted development rights but the work involves work such as the insertion of a roof light or dormer which changes the profile or shape of the roof.

Large rooflights and those that incorporate balconettes are more likely to be damaging to local character. Conservation rooflights, which lie flush with the profile of the roof, rather than those, which project above the plane of the roof, help minimise detrimental impact on the conservation area.

Dormer windows on the front slope of the roof are generally obtrusive - unless they have an appropriate architectural precedent within the Conservation Area. Rooflights to the front roof slope have had a lesser negative impact when sited unobtrusively and kept to minimal size.

Rear roof extensions have damaged the character of the house or building where they take the form of mansard roofs or full width extensions designed to add substantial extra loft space. These forms have been particularly visually damaging where the brick party wall between properties is raised, disturbing the rhythm and appearance of rear elevations. Designs which avoid raising the roof ridge will less likely damage the character of the street scene. A small rear dormer or a pair of small dormers is much less intrusive. Dormers were subordinate to the roof in terms of size and scale and situated away from the roof ridge and eaves, following the detailed design, materials, character and appearance of the building's existing windows and roof. The use lead cladding rather than felt and painted timber double hung sliding sash windows is an important traditional local detail.

Other poorly designed housing alterations and repairs. Some of the more common disfigurements include:

- Windows – in some cases replacement with UPVC or other unsympathetic materials has been inappropriate because of the change in the traditional glazing bar widths or plastic looking appearance
- Roofs – relaying with unsympathetic materials
- Porches – out of keeping new designs, enclosure of characterful porches
- Brickwork – overlaying with render, pebble dashing or paint

Poorly designed or out of keeping new development: The Conservation Area has been tightly drawn to exclude re-development sites and there are in consequence few opportunities for major change or redevelopment in the area. However, two areas in Sun Lane present opportunities for change and improvement, namely the rear yards of the properties in Delacourt Road, fronting onto Sun Lane, and the Sun Lane Garage site. Also the rear of Nos. 145 to 163 Shooters Hill Road, fronting onto Old Dover Road, present an opportunity to improve boundary presentation.

Poorly located Satellite dishes – these have added a cluttered appearance and detracting from both the architecture and the street scene where placed in conspicuous locations on the front elevation.

13. Neutral parts of the conservation area

There are a few places in the conservation area where the architectural standard falls below the norm. These include the bland architectural style of some of the smaller more recent infill houses in Eastbrook Road and at the eastern end of Hervey Road – these neither complement nor detract from the overall character of the area.

14. Problems, pressures and capacity for change.

Although in substance intact, the Conservation Area has, like most others, been subject to some unfortunate minor changes perhaps driven by the need for economy – for example

- Poor or inappropriate standards of repair and replacement (especially insensitive window replacement),
- Painting and pebble dashing bricks. A few properties in the area have had their original brick elevations painted and others within the conservation area have been pebble-dashed, both of which create disharmony within the uniform terraces and compromise the original character, which depends upon the predominant use of brick. Painting brickwork is not only visually damaging but can also result in long-term damage to brickwork.
- commercially driven alterations to shop-fronts,
- parking in front gardens
- loss of quality street surfacing materials and details

Associated with these, there are obvious enhancements which when resources become available might beneficially be undertaken. These include -

- Reinstatement of timber sash windows using original timber profiles;
- Removing paint from bricks is encouraged and need not be expensive. A discreetly located patch should be assessed first. The work should be undertaken by a specialist, as this process involves the choice of the right concentration of acid and its application. Sandblasting of the bricks must **not** be carried out, as this will cause permanent damage to their surface.
- The presentation of the terrace of 19th century houses in Old Dover Road has been spoilt by the sporadic application of external cladding. The overall composition of this terrace nevertheless remains intact so the net contribution of this terrace to the conservation area's character can be judged as positive but meriting more sensitive restoration;
- Redesign of front gardens where parking has been introduced.
- There is a potential for street surfacing works using traditional materials – for example, natural stone setts for gutters and channels;
- Redesigning garden frontages to those large houses whose front gardens have been insensitively laid out for car parking space,
- Restoration of traditional shop-fronts.

Shopfronts on Delacourt Road: The only parade of shops in the area are the bungalow units fronting onto the mid 19th c. villas of Delacourt Road. Here many of the units appear to be Victorian, dating from the 1870s and 1880s exhibiting

surviving chunky classical frames, whilst the actual shop fronts have been much altered. These shopfronts are early and unusual, and any surviving original shopfront frames or parts of shopfronts would be of great historic value and the area will benefit from their preservation. Preservation will also help adjoining owners design authentic restorations. The best approach to preservation and enhancement of the character of the area would be to retain all surviving original fabric in the shopfront surround or frame and to take opportunities to reinstate lost features and details. A good restoration may need to await the advent of a niche market trader who whose business can benefit from and can afford the enhancement of the building.

The shop building at the garage at no 21- 5 is outside the Conservation Area, but this is an original turn of the century garage reputedly a former Express Dairy depot with horse stabling and an early 20th century shopfront with leaded glass clerestory. This building may be treated as within the setting of the conservation area. It may also be considered for addition to the Conservation Area when boundary changes are being reviewed.

Sun in the Sands pub frontage: this has been altered and is out of keeping with façade, but is nevertheless good quality joinery and it would be beneficial to retain it – unless a better replacement proposal can be designed to integrate the character of the buildings a whole. The shop next door would benefit from a new shopfront more in keeping.

15. Consultation on the character appraisal

Public consultation has been an important feature in the preparation of Greenwich's Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals. In the Sun-in-the-Sands Conservation Area this included: -

- A mail drop of 300 letters to local residents and business, advertising a 'drop-in' session and explaining the appraisal.
- Letters were sent to the Blackheath Society and the Greenwich Conservation Group.
- The appraisal was published on the Council's website with an advertisement;
- A press release was issued had resulted in a short article on the consultation in the Greenwich Mercury.
- The character appraisal was made available for reading in the local library and in the Council's Planning Office.
- A Public (drop in) Meeting, as proposed by Section 71 of the 1990 Act was held in the Blackheath Library on the 20 February 2007 from 3.00-5.30 p.m. Conservation officers were in attendance. Two laptop PCs were available for the public to browse a prepared special 'powerpoint' version of the Sun-in-the-Sands Conservation Area appraisal. During the drop in session about 15 people visited the stand.

Comments and views received from the Public: Twelve written responses were received. Six gave explicit support for the document. The Blackheath Society were pleased to see the document but had a number of detailed comments. Six argued for inclusion of the sports field behind Hervey Road within the Conservation Area. The general tenor of the public meeting was supportive and appreciative of the research which had gone into the appraisal. Several people had read the appraisal in detail and wanted to discuss finer points of historical detail. One resident had

obtained the 1901 census for her street (Sun Lane) and forwarded this to the Council by email. Visitors included the author of the standard history of Blackheath.

Response to Consultations: The sports field is designated in the UDP as Community Open Space with accompanying site schedule. It is neither integral to nor associated with the character of the Conservation Area and its inclusion is not supported. The document was amended taking on board as far as possible all the other comments. Some matters mentioned are covered elsewhere in the planning process and are not appropriate to a Conservation Area Appraisal (for example, residential conversions). Others, for example garden waste disposal, lie further outside the remit of the appraisal.

4. Contacts and further advice

Conservation Team
Development Town Planning
First Floor
Peggy Middleton House
50 Woolwich New Road
London SE18 6HQ
Tel: 020 8854 8888

5. Glossary

Bay and bow windows – these are windows projecting out from the wall. A **bow** window has a single curve – viz the double height bow fronts on the north side of Shooters Hill Road. A **bay** window is canted and has an elongated hexagonal plan form.

Casement window – a window that opens on hinges.

Dado – a moulded section, which runs around the wall at approximately waist height.

Dentilation – an ornamental feature consisting of a series of rectangular or cubic projections, resembling teeth.

Dormer – a projecting window inserted vertically into a sloping roof with its own roof and sides, known as cheeks.

Double hung sash window – a window with a weights and counter-weights mechanism, which allows both panes to move up and down.

English bond – bond refers to the pattern in which the bricks of a wall are laid. English bond is where bricks are laid with alternate rows of headers (where the brick is laid with the short end visible) and rows of stretchers (laid lengthwise).

Flemish bond – the pattern created where a brick wall is laid with alternate headers and stretchers (see above), which are aligned, in each alternate row.

Gable – The end wall of a building where the roof reaches its peak. A pointed gable follows the slope of the roof against it. A Dutch gable is one with curved or scrolled sides.

Glazing bars – a light piece of timber, which divides a sash window into smaller compartments. Glazing bars have different designed profiles according to the curvature – some of the most common being called *ovulo*, *ogee* and *cyma*. Glazing bars are also used on casement (hinged side-opening) windows.

Leaded lights – window where the glass is held in place by strips of lead usually arranged in a grid or diamond pattern.

Oversailing brick courses – a decorative technique where each ascending layer of bricks protrudes slightly above the previous layer.

Permitted Development – development that can be undertaken without needing to apply for planning permission. The different permitted development rights are defined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. There is also a government leaflet explaining householder permitted development rights.

PVCu – refers to the material which mass produced modern window units are constructed from. The plastic used is subjected to a chemical process, which hardens it to make it rigid. PVC stands for PolyVinylChloride.

Raised and fielded – a timber panel sunk into the body of a door whose raised centre portion is reached by tapered edges.

Roughcast – a render coating containing coarse aggregate.

Sash horns – refers to the small shaped piece of timber beneath the extreme left and right hand corner of the upper pane in a sliding sash window.

Soffit – the underside of a door or window architrave or lintol

Spalling – decay process whereby layers of stone flake away from the surface.

Speculative builder – a builder or investor who purchases one or more individual building plots as leasehold from a landowner in order to build individual houses. This was the most common way in which London's residential streets were developed during the 19th century where houses were built for unknown potential tenants rather than custom built for a particular client.

Stock brick – the term 'stock' refers to the name of the mould in which these bricks were originally handmade. The term now refers to the traditional bricks made from London clays, which were produced in a range of yellow and brown tones.

Stone dressings – the finishes, mouldings and ornaments that surround door and window openings as well as the ornamentation at the tip of gable roofs.

Terrazzo – a decorative floor or lower wall finish made from marble chips set in concrete, which is then ground down and polished for a smooth and durable finish.

Timber fillets – in carpentry this term refers to a small piece of timber, which can be pieced into joinery to repair and restore it.

Timber fretwork – regular and repeated decorative timber pattern which often appears on the front of porches.

Voussoir – a wedge shaped stone or brick forming part of an arch.