



Woolwich Common Conservation Area Management Strategy

REVISION NOTE - August 2014

On 27TH March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF supersedes previous national planning policy; see Annex 3 of the NPPF for a list of previous policy documents replaced by the framework.

The London Plan 2011 supersedes the London Plan 2008 (with consolidated alterations 2004).

On 30th July 2014, the Royal Borough of Greenwich adopted the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies.

The Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies supersedes the Greenwich Unitary Development Plan 2006 (UDP).

Please note, the Woolwich Common Conservation Area Management Strategy remains a valid and endorsed document pending the review of the document under the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 69. The references to UDP and London Plan 2008 policies in this document are now redundant but the policies within the NPPF and the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies are very similar and the intent is the same. This conservation area appraisal remains almost entirely relevant and useful in the application of the NPPF and the Core Strategy.

For Further enquiries, please email building-conservation@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

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Royal Artillery Barracks

Woolwich Common Conservation Area Management Strategy



Paul Sandby c 1770 view of Woolwich Common -
Jolly Shipwrights area showing Government House and windmill

Contents

	Page Number
Executive summary.....	3
1. Review of conservation area boundaries.....	4
2. Listed buildings and locally listed buildings review.....	17
3. Management plans for green space.....	17
4. Guidance on the protection of views.....	18
5. Trees within the conservation area.....	19
6. Streetscape character and works.....	20
7. Monitoring and review.....	20
8. Contacts, further information and advice.....	21

Executive summary

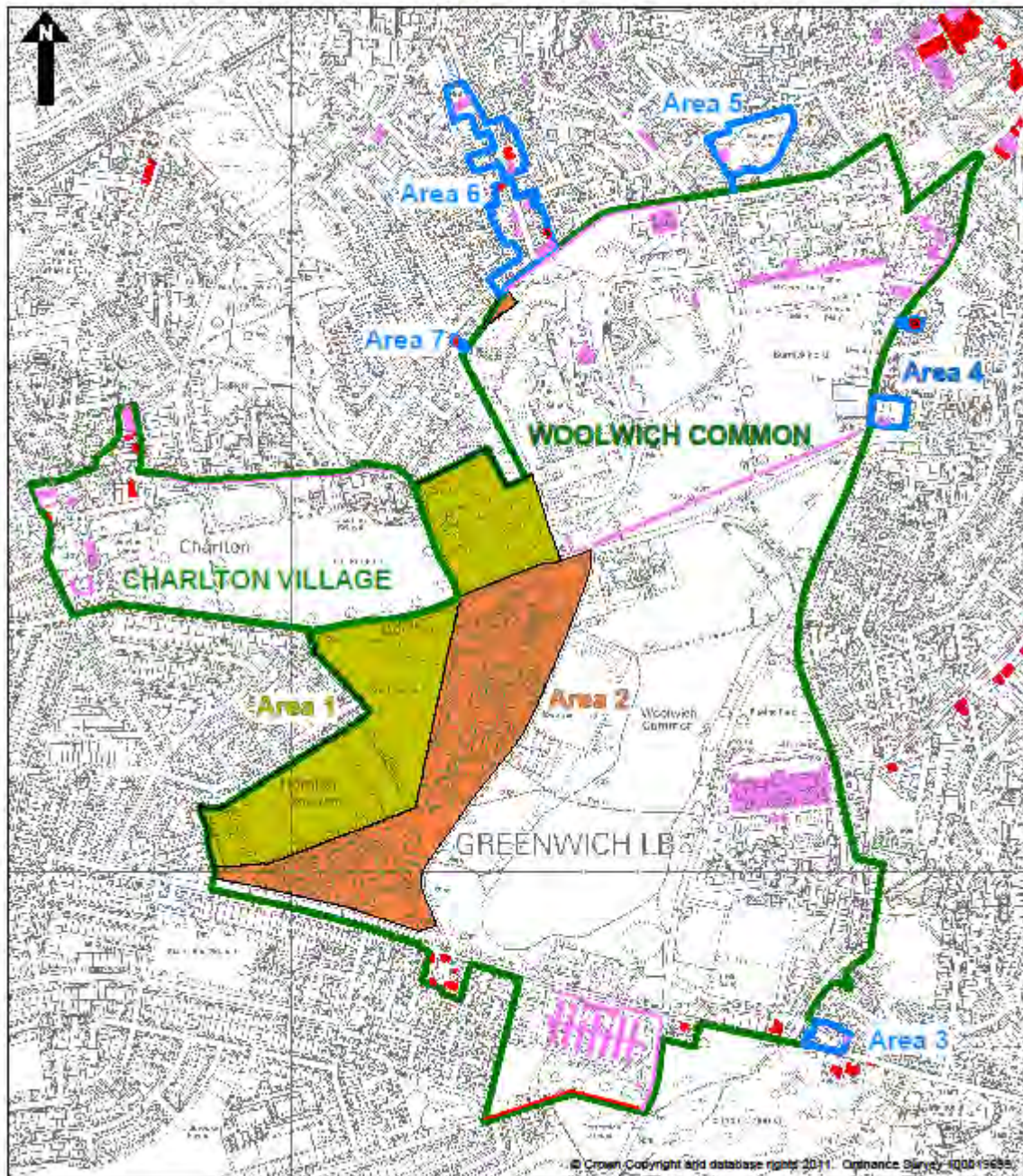
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, places a general duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish 'proposals' for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas. Further guidance is given in *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation Appraisal and Management* (2011).

The aim of the Conservation Area Management Strategy for this area is the protection of the special character of the area as defined in the accompanying appraisal document, focusing on the area's grand Georgian buildings and their setting in parkland open space. The management strategy makes the following recommendations:

1. The Conservation Area's boundaries are reviewed, and the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital and a modern housing estate are to be deleted, whilst several small extensions are proposed;
2. The schedules of Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings are reviewed with recommendations for additions to the latter, and that an application be made to English Heritage to add Engineer House to the Statutory List;
3. The open spaces of Woolwich Common should be managed in accordance with the recommendations of the Defence Estates' adopted Management Brief;
4. More detailed guidance should be prepared on the identification and protection of locally significant views;
5. The tree cover of the area is one its special characteristics and the strategy proposes maintaining and enhancing the tree cover by protecting common, street and other trees by encouraging new and replacement planting
6. The preservation and enhancement of the character of the street scene
7. Monitoring and review

I. Review of Conservation Area boundaries

Several boundary changes are recommended. These are described starting at Charlton Lido and going anti-clockwise - see map below:



Map I: Woolwich Common Conservation Area proposals.

Key

- Bold green line-** Existing boundaries to Woolwich Common and Charlton Village Conservation Areas
- Area 1 -** Proposed reallocation to Charlton Village Conservation Area
- Area 2 -** Proposed removal
- Areas 3 to 7 -** Proposed additions
- Magenta shading -** Listed Buildings
- Red shading -** Locally listed buildings

1. Transfer of Charlton Cemetery and Hornfair Park from Woolwich Common Conservation Area to Charlton Village Conservation Area.
2. Removal from the Woolwich Common Conservation Area of the three Master Gunner estates and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which are urban and dense and do not fit well into the Conservation Area.
3. Addition of the Red Lion Public House and environs including 35-57 Shooters Hill, and Red Lion Place complete.
4. Addition to the conservation area of Government House on the corner of Nightingale Place and Woolwich New Road and Engineer House also on Woolwich New Road.
5. Addition to conservation area of Rushgrove House and Mulgrave Pond north of Artillery Place.
6. Addition to the conservation area of the former officer houses at 40-49 Hillreach, with associated buildings (50 -60 Hillreach), converted warehousing at no 64-65 Woodrow, with a substantial part of Woodhill (nos: Hillreach 40-60, Woodrow64-65, 1213-203 odd, Woodhill 72-144 even & Woodhill School).
7. Adjustment of Conservation Area boundary where it runs through flats in Little Heath (removal of nos 126-136), and inclusion of locally listed building at 70 Little Heath.

Area 1. Charlton Cemetery and Hornfair Park: Proposed allocation from Woolwich Common to Charlton Village Conservation Area; extension to include Charlton Lido & west end of Hornfair Park

The removal of the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital and the three Master Gunner estates from the Conservation Area would leave Hornfair Park physically separate from the rest of the Woolwich Common Conservation Area. Hornfair Park together with Charlton Cemetery, Queen Elizabeth’s Hospital and the Master Gunner Estate were all originally part of Charlton Common. Charlton Common was contiguous with Woolwich Common divided from it only by the Parish Boundary – see Map 2 (Barker 1748) and Map 5 (Hasted 1778) in the appraisal. It is considered that it would be sensible to retain the Conservation Area status of Hornfair Park and Charlton Cemetery but to reallocate these areas to Charlton Village Conservation Area – which already includes Charlton Park. Charlton Lido is a building of historic significance; it is undesignated at present but worthy of Conservation Area Status. Similar considerations apply to the adjoining west end of Hornfair Park¹

Area 2. Master Gunner Estate and Queen Elizabeth’s Hospital: Proposed removal from Conservation Area

Master Gunner Estate: This area has been developed as three separate estates. They are located north of a strip of land running east west between Shooters Hill Road and Hornfair Park, it is composed of three separate post-war developments. First, at the western end of the site, are a group of four point block towers clad in prefabricated concrete panels – illustrated at Figures 1

¹ The Charlton Lido on Shooters Hill Road is a surviving unheated lido. One of only five surviving working London Lidos, it was originally opened on 6 May 1939, and was the last to be built by the London County Council (LCC). Its landscaped setting is parkland – specifically the west end of Hornfair Park. It has character and the potential for inclusion in a designated Conservation Area; assessment of this issue can appropriately be considered with Charlton Common in the preparation of the Charlton Village Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.

to 4. These blocks are visible from afar and dominate the outlook from the Lido / Hornfair Park. Two blocks are within the Conservation area and two are outside the boundary – all are recommended for exclusion from the conservation area.



Second, the middle development of low rise grey brick terraces is less obtrusive and fits in better, but is, nevertheless, undistinguished architecturally, see below.



Third, the eastern part of the estate consists of a three floor group of apartment blocks.



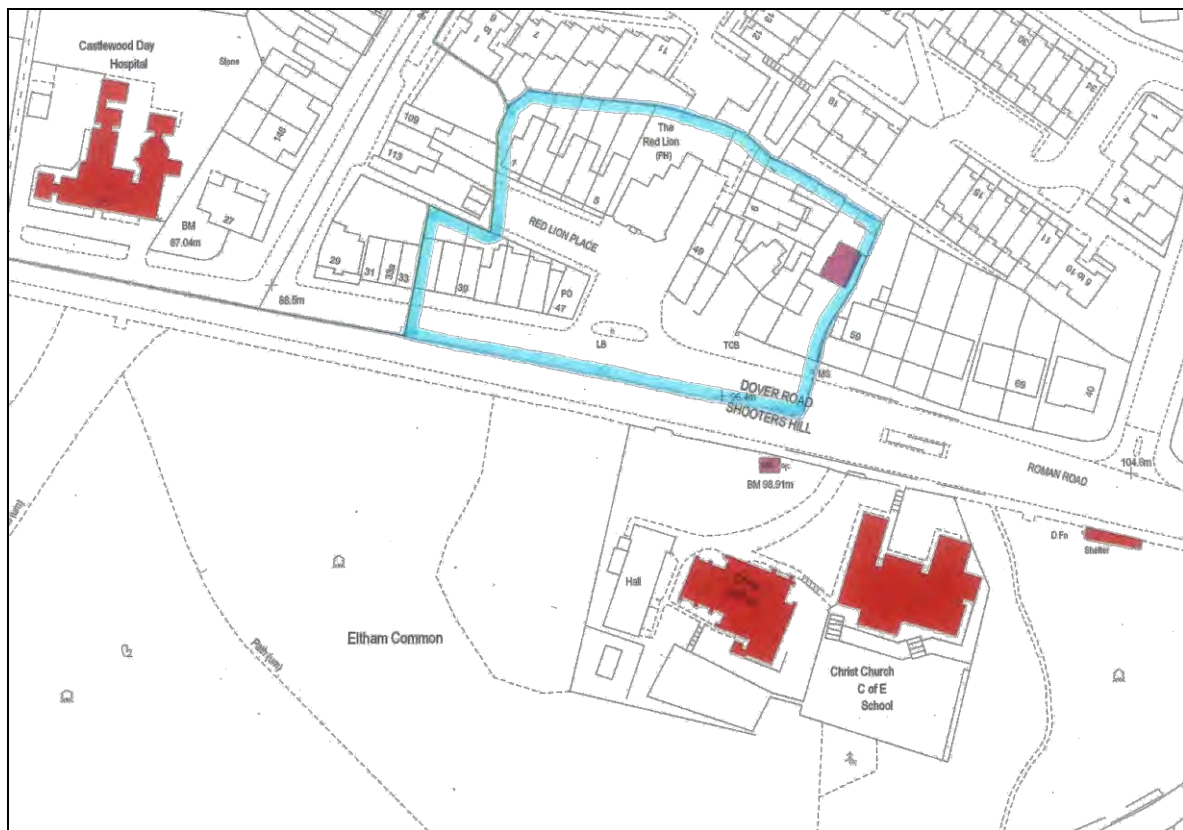
None of these developments are considered to be in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area, or worthy of Conservation Area designation and the estate as a whole is recommended to be removed from the Conservation Area.

Queen Elizabeth II Hospital - Proposed removal from Conservation Area: Evaluation of the contribution of the QEH has to acknowledge the architectural interest of the building and its construction by a progressive and important firm of architects. However the building complex is large and does not blend well with either the Common or its associated buildings. On balance there is too much contrast with the green and Arcadian character of the Common and it is considered that the QEH buildings are detrimental and negative to setting.

Area 3: Red Lion Public House area

35-57 Shooters Hill; Red Lion Place Complete

The Red Lion area is a small compact area of attractive buildings lying between Woolwich Common, the Royal Military Academy and Shooters Hill. The area appears to have grown up around the Red Lion Public House and now includes several rebuilt early 19th century cottages set back from Shooters Hill in Red Lion Place, a listed old mile stone, and a range of later 19th century and early 20th century houses.



Map 2: Proposed Red Lion Conservation Area Extension.

Red Lion area – proposed extension to Woolwich common Conservation Area



Figures 12 -14: The Red Lion Public House – Edwardian vernacular revival style



Figures 15 & 16 (to left): Listed cottage, Red Lion Place dated 1806 - rebuilt 1886.

Figures 17 & 18 (to right): Listed milestone on Shooters Hill marked “7 MILES TO DARTFORD”.

Area 4: Government House & Engineer House - Woolwich New Road

Government House is Grade II listed and the rear part is probably 18th century or perhaps early 19th century and is the only building in the vicinity to survive from this time. The building has been closely associated with the Common and has for many years formed a local landmark. Engineer House was formerly the Office of the Royal Engineers and is now a community centre for military families, and is locally listed.



Figure 19: Government House.



Figure 20: Engineer House.

Area 5: Rushgrove House, Artillery Place & Mulgrave Pond

Rushgrove House is a fine Listed Georgian house of 1815, enlarged in 1839 and 1855, formerly the Artillery Commandant's house. It is possible that the pond is named after Henry Phipps Earl of Mulgrave (1755-1831) who was Master-General of Ordnance from 1810-1818. The garden backs onto Mulgrave Pond – see below and includes a separately listed garden house and old garden walls. The house is physically and historically associated with military institutions on the Common.



Figure 21: Rushgrove House.



Figure 22: Rushgrove House – old garden building.



Figure 23 (left): Rushgrove House - old garden building.



Figure 24 (middle): Rushgrove House – garden wall and gate.



Figure 25 (right): part of south garden wall showing original 'hoop' shape.

The large pond to the east of the house, Mulgrave Pond, formerly provided water to the Artillery Garrison and the Arsenal. Both are historic features closely associated with the Army's 18th and 19th century involvement in Woolwich Common. English Heritage were consulted about the land in 2002 and supported designating the land as a small conservation area. The pond is an attractive feature and is currently unused. Greater public access to the pond is desirable, but this would require agreement of the current owners and would present management challenges.



Figures 26 & 27: Mulgrave Pond.

Area 6: Hillreach, Woodrow and Woodhill

Former officer houses at 40-49 Hillreach: Nos. 40-49 Hillreach were built in about 1845 as a group of ten houses for army officers and was constructed close to and north of John Nash's relocated Rotunda, and facing the north boundary wall of the Barracks. The group has high quality architectural detailing as well as strong historical associations with nearby military institutions on the Common and is Listed Grade II. Together with associated buildings, they form a good group well worth including in the Conservation Area.

Proposed Hillreach extension



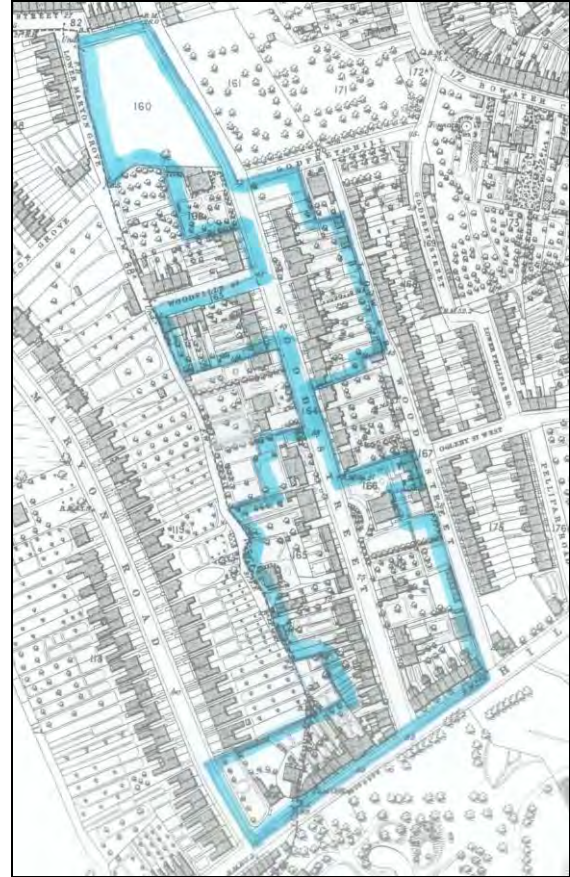
Figures 28 - 30: Former officer houses at 40-49 Hillreach & side wall to 49 Hillreach (in Woodhill).



Figure 31 (left): Woodman public house on north side of Hillreach. Figure 32 (middle): No. 50 Hillreach – much altered now a shop. Figure 33 (right): No. 64 Woodrow – originally residential, converted to industrial warehouse in mid-19th century.

In Woodrow nos 64 and 65 are proposed for addition – no 64 was originally residential, converted to industrial or warehouse in mid 19th c. In Hillreach nos. 50-60. No 60 is the Woodman Public House. 50-59 are a row of Victorian houses above shops with much altered shopfronts.

Woodhill area: This exceptionally fine street, arguably the best in the whole Woolwich area, was developed in the early 19th century to provide accommodation for army officers and associated users. In spite of some redevelopment, possibly associated with WWII bomb damage, it includes a splendid variety of surviving fine early 19th century classically styled houses. Ten are listed and seven are locally listed – and there are a number of surviving other houses which are now proposed to be added to the local list for their contribution to the area, for their intrinsic and for their group value. Much of the original development appears to have been complete by 1850 and the area is well established on the 1870 OS Map reproduced below.



Map 3: Hillreach / Woodhill proposed conservation area extension (Listed buildings in magenta, locally listed in red)

Map 4: Hillreach/Woodhill proposed conservation area extension - 1870 OS map showing extent of development at this time -

Woodhill - Listed Buildings:

106-110: 1848 Italianate, originally called Eliza cottages, including wall and railings, former officer housing

153-159 – four early 19th c. houses,

173-175 – early-mid 19th c. 3 storeys plus basement

118-120 – early 19th c with two storeys plus basement

Woodhill School – probably by ER Robson

NB The Schoolkeeper's cottage in grounds of Woodhill School is a curtilage building and thus should be treated as a Listed Building

Woodhill Townscape - East Side from Lower Left Side Upwards



Figures 34 - 36: east side nos. 123-127 & 129-131 (lowest buildings on east side), Coat of arms to 127. All recommended for local listing.



Figure 37: Woolwich Evangelical Church.



Figure 38: 145-147 & 159-161 - locally listed.



Figures 39 & 40: nos. 163-169 - listed.



Figure 41: Victorian pair.



Figure 42: Lower east side of Woodhill, 173-175 Woodhill Court, listed.



Figures 43 & 44: upper East-Side of Woodhill.



Figure 45: 187-203 close up of doors to 189-191



Woodhill's townscape - West Side - from upper left side going down



Figure 46: upper part of Woodhill townscape.



Figures 47 & 48: 122 & 124, recommended for local listing.



Figure 49 & 50: 118 & 120 Woodhill: Late regency semi-detached houses c.1835 (listed)



Figure 51: Listed Nos. 106-110



Figure 52: early mid-19thc. Semi-detached gabled pair (one with painted bricks) – recommended for local listing.



Figure 53: No. 98 (locally listed) double fronted with pebble dash over bricks and Georgian fanlight.



Figure 54: 98A Pastiche infill.



Figure 55 & 56: west side Nos. 82-84-86.

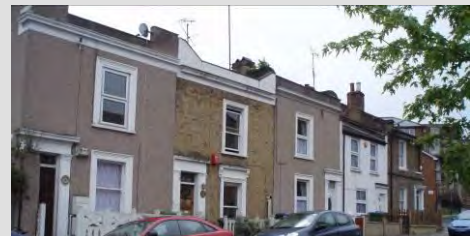


Figure 57: cottages in Woodville Street.



Figure 58 - 60: Woodhill School (listed).



Woodhill - Locally Listed Buildings

143-147 - two storeys plus basement, c. 1840

149-151 – three storeys plus basement

98 – pebble-dashed - The Limes

Although they do not meet national designation criteria, the following buildings in Woodhill and the wider area make significant contributions to the overall character of the Conservation Area, and local streetscape, and fall within the adopted criteria for local list designation and are thus worthy of addition to the Royal Borough's Local List:

- 123-127: gabled two-story each with coat of arms,
- 129-131: 3 stories early-mid 19th century style, substantial and characterful, with stuccoed pedimented gables, stuccoed pedimented window heads, window railings and stuccoed rustication,
- 76-86: six similar characterful surviving mid-19th century cottages, cornices, semi-basement and well, variation and some alterations; make a contribution to the CA.

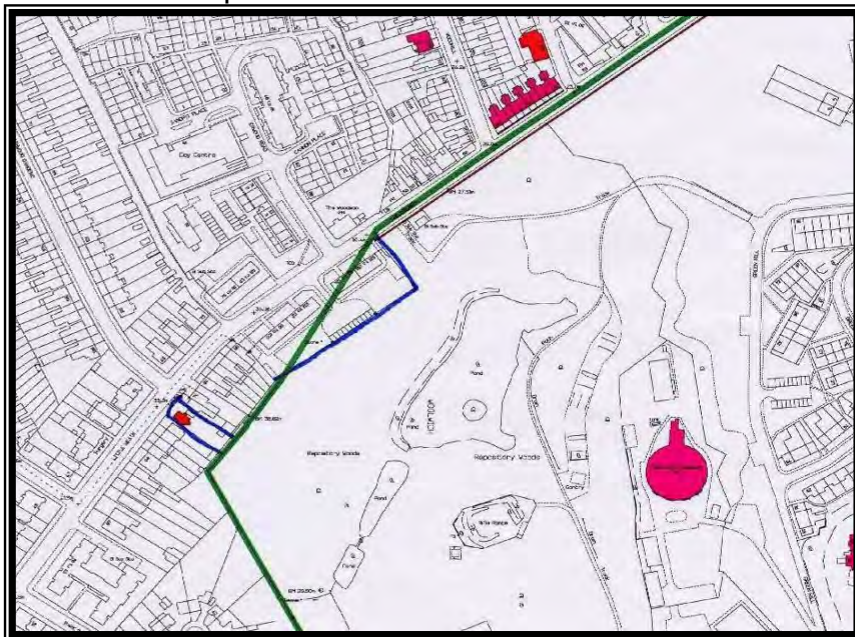
- 122-124: pair of single bay, two floor, plain yellow stock 1840 cottages with eaves, low pitched slate roofs and side entrances, well worthy of addition to local List;

Woodville Street is a side turning of Woodhill and architecturally part of it. Nos 1-5 are similar to, contemporary with, but smaller than the nearby 76-86 Woodhill, mid 19th c terraced parapet fronted cottages simple, characterful, some altered, most of these smaller houses in the area have been demolished, and rare survivals make a contribution to the Conservation Area.

Area 7: Little Heath area - boundary anomalies

There are two boundary anomalies in the Hillreach - Little Heath part of the Conservation Area:

1. The current boundary of the Conservation cuts through a group of flats at 90-128 Hillreach. These flats do not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area and the anomaly is proposed to be rationalised by the exclusion of the flats See below map 5.
2. No 70 Little Heath is a much older building than its late Victorian neighbours and a survivor of the early-mid 19th century. It is proposed to include this house within the Conservation Area. See map below.



Map 5: Map extract showing existing and proposed Conservation Area boundary in Little Heath area - note existing green boundary running through flats and in blue suggested new boundary.



Figure 61: No. 70 Little Heath locally listed) and proposed to be added to the Conservation Area.



Figure 62: shows the townscape context of No. 70 Little Heath. The house at 45 Little Heath on the corner of Kinveachy Gardens is one of a group of attractive late Victorian houses which may be appropriate for inclusion in an expanded Charlton Village CA.

2. Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings review

No buildings are proposed for addition to the Statutory List.

The following currently unlisted buildings are of significant historic interest and specifically contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. For photos of proposed buildings see Woodhill townscape in section 1 area 5 above. These proposals comply with the Royal Borough's adopted criteria for the Local List and are proposed for addition to this List:

Red Lion Place

Red Lion PH – c. 1886

Woodhill

123-127: gabled two-story each with coat of arms

129-131: 3 stories early-mid 19th century style, substantial and characterful, with stuccoed pedimented gables, stuccoed pedimented window heads, window railings and stuccoed rustication

76-86: six similar characterful surviving mid-19th century cottages, cornices, semi-basement and well, variation and some alterations;

122-124: pair of single bay, two floor, plain yellow stock brick, probably 1835-1845 cottages with eaves, low pitched slate roofs and side entrances;

Woodville Street - nos 1-5 – similar to, contemporary with, but smaller than the nearby 76-86 Woodhill, mid 19th c terraced parapet fronted Cottages simple, characterful, some altered.

3. Management Plans for green space

Defence Estates manage the majority of the open space on Woolwich Common. An adopted Management Brief guides the management of the area and takes account of the effects of the 2012 Olympic shooting event, and the introduction of the King's Troop all weather exercise area. Following the 2012 Olympic event the Management Brief will be reviewed by Defence Estates.

Military Land: Defence Estates (DE) is the section of the Ministry of Defence responsible for land in military ownership. An important public interest function of Defence Estates is to manage public access and make Managed Access Area strategies² which provide significant opportunities for public access. DE should be encouraged to review public access arrangements to all the open spaces under their management within the Woolwich Common area including the Repository Woods and Gun Park areas, the Barrack Field and the Woolwich Barracks Parade Ground. This could include a review of the security requirements on each site and an ensuing tailored access plan, of the object of which should be maximising public enjoyment of the land whilst retaining necessary military security restrictions.

² See DE <http://www.defence-estates.mod.uk/> website provides details of these access strategies; for example the [Aldershot & Minley Training Area, Hampshire \[pdf 77kb\]](#) Heathland and woodland habitats, Site of Special Scientific Interest. Access along Public Rights of Way and open access in the area designated as Managed Access on the OS 1/25,000 Explorer Map.

Royal Artillery Barracks: Public access across the Woolwich Barracks site has recently improved due to the construction of a dedicated footpath in front of the new parade ground boundary fence.

The Rotunda Area would benefit from defined and limited free public access – like the concessionary walk in front of the Royal Artillery Barracks parade ground.

The Royal Military Academy field and parade ground is now within the private ownership and the management company for this site will be encouraged to produce a management strategy for the site addressing both the buildings and the open space which forms their setting. As the Royal Military Academy is a grade II* Listed Building, this could be achieved by way of a conservation management plan or as listed building management guidelines³.

The character of **Woolwich Common** is primarily that of a common i.e. grassland and open space fringed by trees. This character is potentially detrimentally affected by all intrusive manufactured structures. At present man made structures are largely limited to seating, sporting and recreational structures. **New buildings** even of a recreational nature should be avoided and if needed should be discreetly located and designed in complementary materials to avoid creating detrimental aesthetic. Removal of unnecessary encroaching buildings will be welcome. A standard pattern of fencing for each type of space is recommended.

Mulgrave Pond: This interesting and potentially attractive water space is identified as a proposed extension to the Conservation Area (see section I of the appraisal which considers its history and character). The area would benefit from a management strategy and potentially has the capacity for public access. Its ownership is not known.

4. Guidance on protection of views

The UDP identifies local views out (D27) and views of, or over local features worthy of conservation (D29).

The views section of the Woolwich Common character appraisal considers these policies and (see 3.6) identifies views in this Conservation Area worthy of protection. The UDP policies are considered to provide adequate support for this, and this management strategy recommends the appropriate protective use of these UDP policies – having regard to the character appraisal and the statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

In a visually diverse area like this it is not feasible to exhaustively identify all local views of interest. The following can however be identified:

- Views of the front of Royal Military Academy – particularly from the j/w Academy Road, Herbert Road and Circular Way. Also, from Herbert Road and the Green Chain footpath network.

³ Listed Building guidelines and conservation management plans are produced by independent historic building specialists to identify what is important and why. The plan or guideline then provides an agreed framework for managing and protecting the heritage character of the site addressing both development and maintenance. This will give the developer and the planning authority confidence and help streamline the Listed Building Consent Process. The benefits of producing listed building guidelines are reviewed in a government report commissioned by English Heritage and the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on streamlining listed building consent.

- Views over the Royal Artillery Barracks Parade Ground and the front of Royal Artillery Barracks – particularly from Ha-Ha Road near the junction with Circular Way. Also, from Grand Depot Road outside St. George’s Church, and from points along Repository Road.
- Views of the Rotunda – especially those from public realm currently obscured by fencing, such as Repository Road and Hillreach.
- Views over the Common where buildings cannot be seen, or do not intrude, and the skyline boundary is substantially composed of trees or greenery – from the Green Chain footpath network.
- Views of significant landmark buildings – old water tower on the Brook Hospital site, the old Shooters Hill Police Station and Royal Herbert Pavilions from Shooters Hill and the Green Chain footpath network. Also, Government House from the common in the vicinity of Circular Way

There are other panoramic views of, and across the common from vantage points on Shooters Hill such as Constitution Rise and Donaldson Road. All of these views should be protected in the context of relevant UDP policies.

5. Trees within the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area Management Strategy proposes maintaining and enhancing the tree cover of the area by protecting trees on the Common and in open spaces, street trees and other trees and by encouraging new and replacement planting. **Trees on Woolwich Common** are managed by the Ministry of Defence (Defence Estates).

Conservation Area Controls: A person wishing to prune, lop or cut down a tree within any conservation area must notify the Royal Borough of the proposal allowing at least six weeks before the work is carried out and providing details of the location, species, size of tree and the work proposed.

Street Trees: There are also a number of street trees in the area. The planting and management of Street Trees is carried out by the Royal Borough’s Highways Department, to whom any queries should be addressed. The aim is to maintain a healthy tree stock for future generations, which will be achieved by selective removal and replacement of trees that have become “old and large enough to cause significant problems”. The Royal Borough’s policy is that trees will not be removed unless they are

- in the way of development where there is no alternative for access for traffic and services
- causing damage to a property and pruning is unlikely to halt the damage
- causing a hazard to highway users

The interpretation of this policy should take into account conservation area designation and the contribution the existing tree makes to the character of the area.

6. Streetscape character and works

The area retains features of a traditional street scene such as those in the Red Lion area. Although largely not subject to planning control, these features are nevertheless an important part of the character of the conservation area. Their preservation is recommended and this is in line with the criteria set out in English Heritage guidance. Every effort should be made to preserve these in situ by repair and reuse; they should be retained to protect the character of the street even when no longer required.

This strategy proposes preservation and enhancement of the character of the street scene by encouraging highways works to be sensitive to and prioritise the conservation and repair of features contributing to local character. When resources are available a survey should be made of the historic features and their presence identified in a schedule of streetscape features.



Figure 63: Red Lion Lane - granite channel and kerb outside Royal Military Academy.

7. Monitoring and Review

This guidance should be reviewed and updated after five years on the following criteria:

- Development pressures (numbers of planning applications and their spatial distribution)
- Annual English Heritage survey of Buildings at Risk

Further Reference: In this large and historically complex Conservation Area there are a number of source documents providing more detailed information to which resort may be helpful, including the following:

- *Royal Artillery Barracks Archaeological and Historic buildings assessment prepared by Oxford Archaeology for Defence Estates.* This is a substantial report on the wider Royal Artillery Barracks site and includes a detailed gazetteer of all buildings.
- *Royal Military Academy - Heritage and Townscape Assessment* and also *Heritage Assessment* prepared by RPS for Durkan Homes 2006
- *Records of the Woolwich District* Vincent 1897, the standard history of Woolwich, Vincent was also a founder of the Woolwich and District Antiquarian Society.
- *Discover Woolwich and its Environs* Darrell Spurgeon 1996, pp. 48-57.

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