



Nevern Square Conservation Area Appraisal

Draft

August 2018



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Adopted: XXXXXXXXXX

Note: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document but due to the complexity of conservation areas, it would be impossible to include every facet contributing to the area's special interest. Therefore, the omission of any feature does not necessarily convey a lack of significance. The Council will continue to assess each development proposal on its own merits. As part of this process a more detailed and up to date assessment of a particular site and its context is undertaken. This may reveal additional considerations relating to character or appearance which may be of relevance to a particular case.

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1 Introduction

What does a conservation area designation mean?

1.1 The statutory definition of a conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The power to designate conservation areas is given to councils through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Once designated, proposals within a conservation area become subject to local conservation policies set out in Chapter 34 of the Council’s Local Plan and national policies outlined in part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Our overarching duty which is set out in the Act is to preserve or enhance the historic or architectural character or appearance of the conservation area.

1.2 A conservation area appraisal aims to describe the special historic and architectural character of an area. A conservation area’s character is defined by a combination of elements such as architecture, uses, materials and detailing as well as the relationship between buildings and their settings. Many other elements contribute to character and appearance such as the placement of buildings within their plots; views and vistas; the relationship between the street and the buildings and the presence of trees and green space.

1.3 This document has been produced using the guidance set out by Historic England in their document, *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016)*. This appraisal will be a

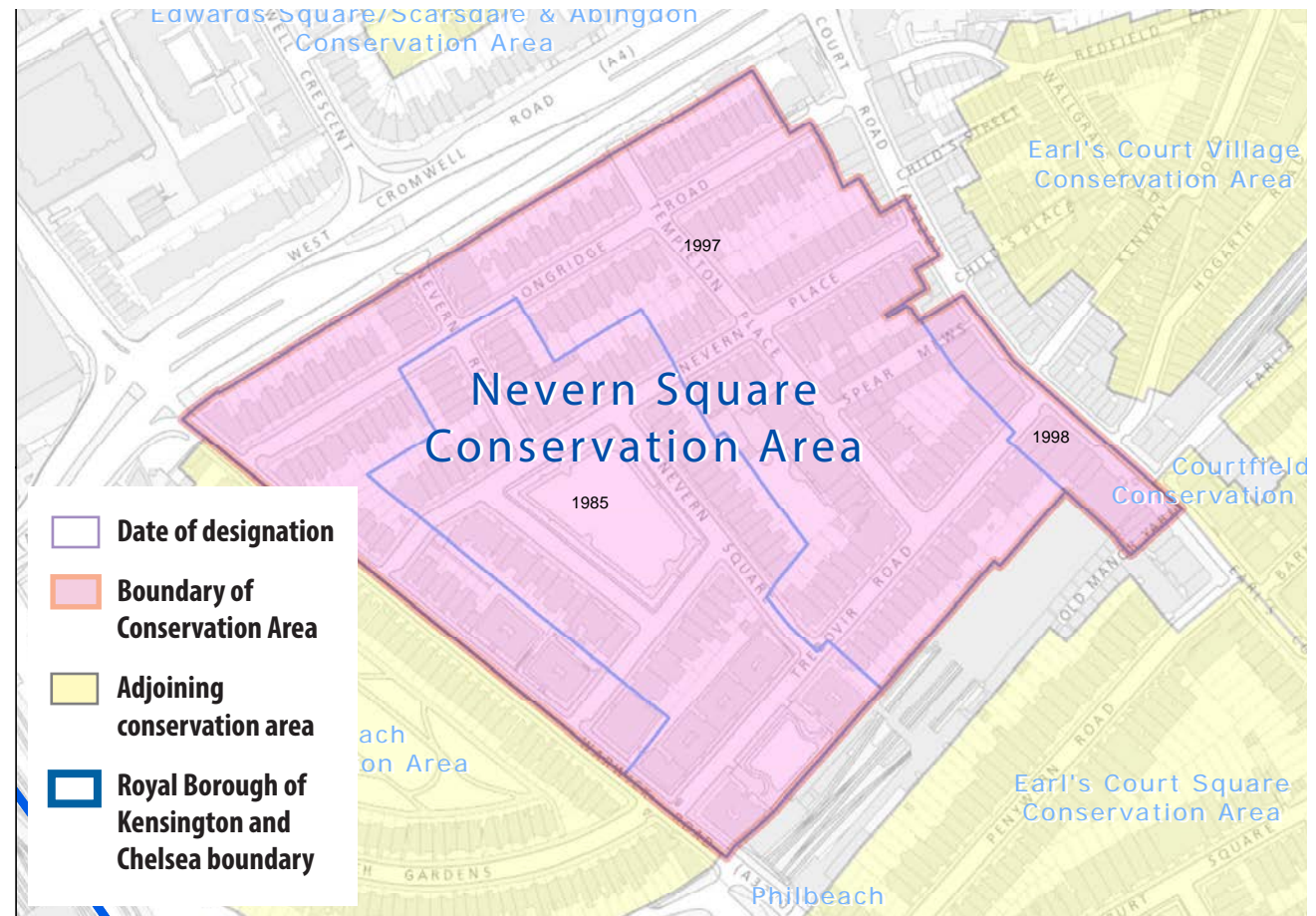


Fig 1.1: Conservation area boundary map

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material consideration when assessing planning applications.

Purpose of this document

1.4 The aims of this appraisal are to:

- describe the historic and architectural character and appearance of the area which

will assist applicants in making successful planning applications and decision makers in assessing planning applications

- raise public interest and awareness of the special character of their area
- identify the positive features which should be conserved, as well as negative features which indicate scope for future enhancements

Summary of Character

1.5 Nevern Square Conservation Area was first designated in May 1985 to include just the square with the southern half of Nevern Road and Kensington Mansions on Trebovir Road. A major extension taking in the remainder of Nevern Road, Trebovir Road, Longridge Road, Templeton Place and the east side of Warwick Road was made in February 1997. **Nos. 188-244 (even) Earl's Court Road** including the Earl's Court Road Station frontage were added in April 1998. The many Welsh street names in the area come from the nineteenth century landowners, the Edwardes family, who hailed from Pembrokeshire.

1.6 The conservation area is made up of mid-late Victorian terraced houses and mansion flats (all built between 1873-1886) as well as a grade II listed railway station (1871-1906), a former mews (1875-76) and a good amount of trees and greenery. The focus of the area is Nevern Square, a well planted and maintained private garden square for the use of the surrounding homeowners.

1.7 The area displays the changes in architectural style that took place in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Development began in the well-established Italianate style, but changed to the 'new' Domestic Revival style around Nevern Square - both using the terraced house format - but ending with the construction of mansion flats, a daring departure from houses to continental style flats.

1.8 Many builders worked on this area and their houses can clearly be distinguished from each other whilst still forming a coherent and



Nos. 5-7 (odd) Nevern Place

harmonious whole. The architect Walter Graves designed Nevern Square which was constructed between 1880-86, mostly by builder, Robert Whitaker with the south-western side being completed after his death to a different design by George Graves. The Italianate houses (1873-1886) were designed by their builders on specifications from Lord Kensington's surveyor, Martin Stutely and the mansion flats were designed by William Cooke. These were all



Nos. 40-42 (consecutive) Nevern Square

mainly local people who worked predominantly in this part of London.

1.9 Gardens play an important role in creating the setting to the houses and the area is unusual in having 'green corridors' in which an uninterrupted series of gardens and trees create a strip of vegetation that is important to wildlife as well as the character of the conservation area. The grid pattern of streets allows the short vistas to other streets that gives the area its self-contained character.

Location and Setting

1.10 Nevern Square Conservation Area is situated in Earl's Court Ward and in postcode area SW5. It is surrounded on all sides, except the north, by other conservation areas which denote a high quality historic environment. These include: Earl's Court Village, Earl's Court Square, Courtfield, Edwardes Square, Scarsdale and Abingdon conservation areas.

1.11 The surrounding area consists substantially of Victorian residential terraces, but there are notable exceptions that add to the diversity of the setting. To the south lies Brompton Cemetery, an area of green space; and to the west is the site of the former Earl's Court Exhibition Centre which is being redeveloped for flats at the time of writing in 2017.

1.12 The conservation area is contained on three sides within heavily trafficked roads and to the south-east, the two railway lines covered by a large historic partly glazed roof create a hard boundary. There is a green corridor of mature trees in between Longridge Road and Cromwell Road, a welcome barrier to the traffic; and the trees in the gardens of Trebovir Road perform a similar function.

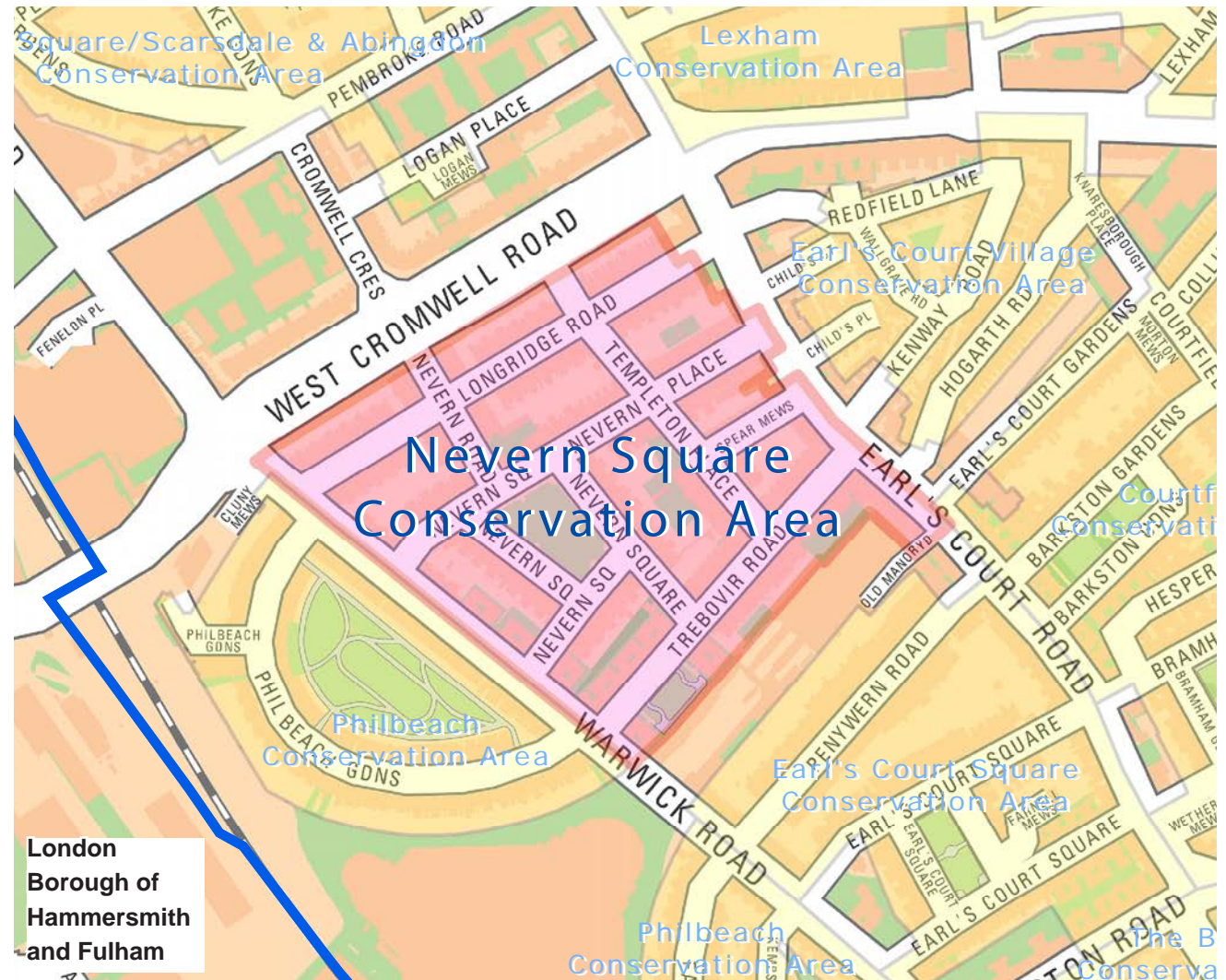


Fig 1.2: Conservation area context map

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2 Townscape

Urban Form/Street Layout

2.1 The street layout dates from 1872 when Lord Kensington's surveyor, Martin Stutely submitted his plans to the Metropolitan Board of Works. The railway had opened in 1871 closing the south-eastern boundary of the land whilst Earl's Court Road to the north-east was already in existence being an old road leading from Notting Hill to Fulham Road.

2.2 The grid layout is filled predominantly with four storey, late Victorian terraced houses of narrow individual plot-widths with small open spaces (front areas) to the front and small open spaces (yards or back gardens) to the rear. The largest open space is Nevern Square which is also the focal point in the conservation area having roads leading into it at all four corners as well as from Nevern Road in the north.

2.3 The streets formed the boundaries of the developer's plots and so the detailing for each terrace changes after every street junction rather than in the middle of a terrace as happens in longer terraces. Despite different detailing, the urban form has a strong coherence.

2.4 The bulk of the built form changes in the south of the conservation area where mansion flats were constructed, but as the frontages have similar horizontal and vertical emphases as the terraced houses, they do not appear out of scale.



Fig 2.1: Road hierarchy map

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Land Uses

2.5 The conservation area comprises predominantly residential terraced housing with mansion flats only appearing at the southern corner. The railway, which predates the houses, is largely outside the conservation area, although its northern frontage is within the conservation area, as are some of the shops on either side of it. Other than buildings, land is taken up by small private gardens and two private garden squares: Nevern Square, which gives its name to the conservation area; with the other being the garden to Kensington Mansions on Trebovir Road.

2.6 Since the area was developed, hotels have moved into some of the houses and many have been converted to flats. One of the strengths of the conservation area is that there is no outward difference between the privately owned houses and flats and the low-rent social accommodation which has a strong presence. Regrettably, the same cannot be said for the appearance of the hotels which have a desire to be more eye catching and hence harmful to the architectural and historical character of the conservation area.

2.7 The main roads to the north and south have heavy traffic that not only reduces the charm of the area, but also has a knock-on effect on their state of preservation. For example, houses are painted in a bid to make them look clean and shop frontages have been replaced in eye catching colours to attract fleeting trade.

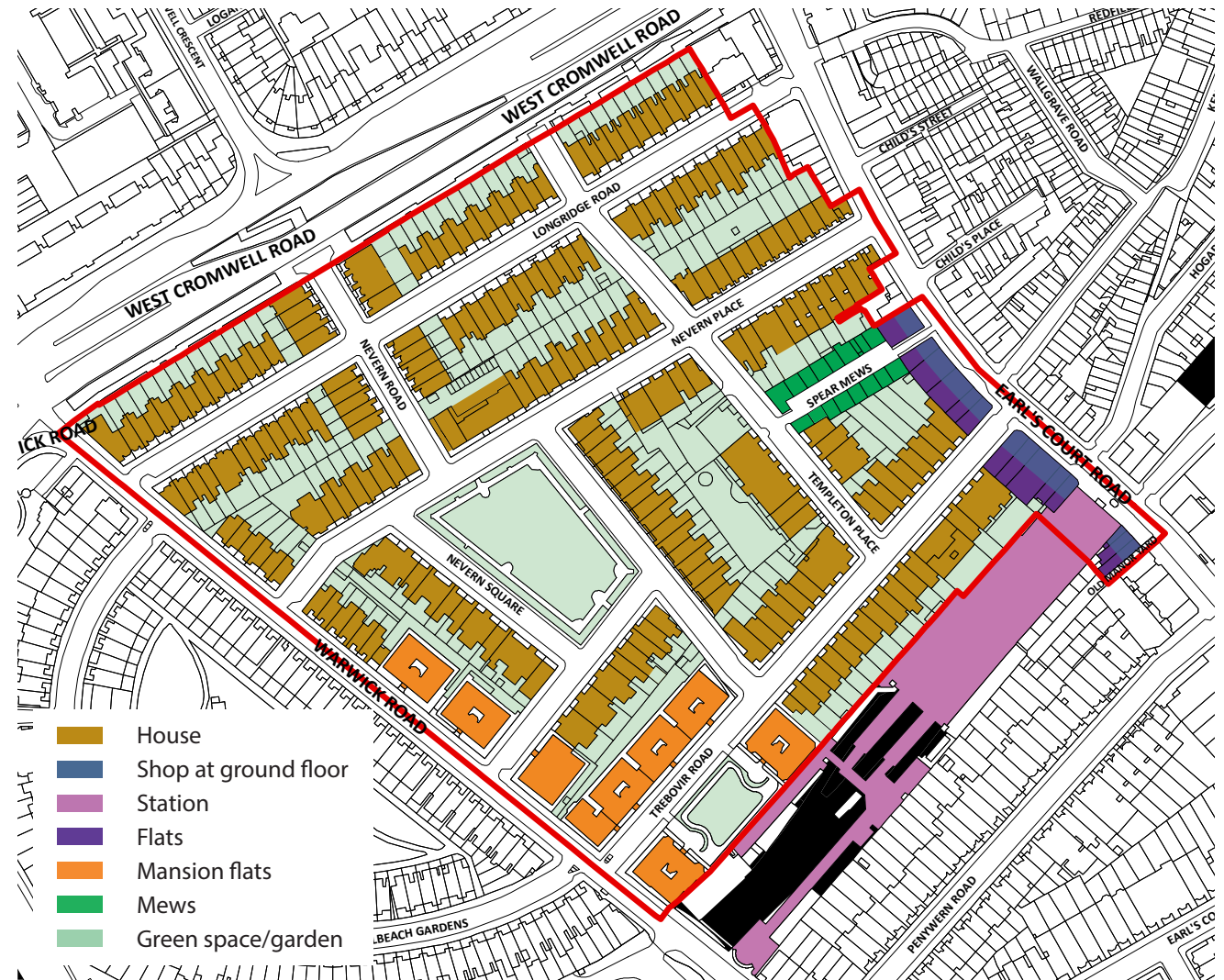


Fig 2.2: Historic land use map

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Fig 2.3: Present day land use map

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Green Space and Communal Gardens

2.8 In July 1877, Lord Kensington's surveyors, Martin Stutely and Daniel Cubitt Nichols, applied to the Metropolitan Board of Works for permission to vary the simple grid of streets which had previously been approved and to add a garden square. The revised development with Nevern Square was commenced three years later.

2.9 The garden square is an important feature of Georgian and Victorian urban design in London and this one is typically placed at the centre of a group of houses giving them a high status setting, but needing to be accessed through front doors and across a road. It was created for the exclusive use of the residents at a time when people were beginning to realise the need for clean air and exercise for good health.

2.10 Today, reproduction railings enclose the square but these are largely concealed by a thick privet hedge which has a pleasant green presence in the street scene. There are three entrances into the garden, each with a decorative cast iron gate.

2.11 The attractive garden contains lawn, trees, planted beds and paths and has an enormous value to the character of the conservation area as well as for the present-day residents and of course for its ecological value. The layout is characteristic of garden squares where there is a circular path and mature trees around the periphery which provide excellent visual amenity to users of the garden, those who overlook it; and people walking past.



Fig 2.4: Green spaces aerial photo (2015)

© Getmapping PLC 2015

2.12 In addition to the majestic London Plane trees (*Platanus x hispanica*) so typical of Victorian development, there are good examples of Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*) and Tree

of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). There is a relatively unusual tree on the western boundary which is a mature specimen of one of the Southern Beech (*Nothofagus family*) in its weeping form.

2.13 The second communal garden is to Kensington Mansions on Trebovir Road and is unusual in being enclosed by the railway on one side with the mansion blocks facing onto it at both ends. Again the garden has trees and lush planting and is an asset to the conservation area.



Kensington Mansions communal garden



Nevern Square communal garden



Back Gardens



Back gardens of Longridge Road



Trees in back gardens

2.14 Elsewhere, the houses mostly have small to medium sized back gardens, some of which also contain trees and their contribution to the pleasant character and appearance of the conservation area cannot be underestimated.

2.15 The conservation area contains two green corridors which are features almost unique to this part of the Royal Borough. The longest one is located where back gardens adjoin behind Longridge Road and Nevern Place/Nevern Square; whilst there is a shorter one behind Trebovir Road and Nevern Square. These corridors contain a mix of mature tree species and provide a sense of calm, alleviating some

of the effects of the surrounding Earl's Court one way system. Some of the mature trees found in these corridors include excellent Horse Chestnut, Common Lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Common Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and London Plane.

Gaps

2.16 The map shows many of the gaps between buildings that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area. The grid-like street pattern creates gaps at the ends of roads where one terrace abuts the rear garden of another. These spaces allow views to trees, garden greenery, rear elevations, sash windows and sky above, and have a softening effect on the surrounding hard architecture.

2.17 Gaps without any development make the greatest contribution to the special character of the conservation area, but views over garages or single storey buildings are also valuable. On the section of Nevern Square leading to Trebovir Road one of the rear garden gaps contains an attractive original gateway in the Domestic Revival style.

2.18 Some of the mansion blocks such as Nevern Mansions on Warwick Road, have space between them which emphasises their character as individual detached buildings and this effect is accentuated on Trebovir Road where Kensington Mansions are divided by a communal garden.

2.19 Next to **no. 46 Warwick Road** there is a small lodge-like building that has been added to infill a gap in the townscape. The Lodge on Trebovir Road also fills a gap but has the advantage of being an original, attractive building of great interest. The gaps above these small buildings remain important to the character of the conservation area.

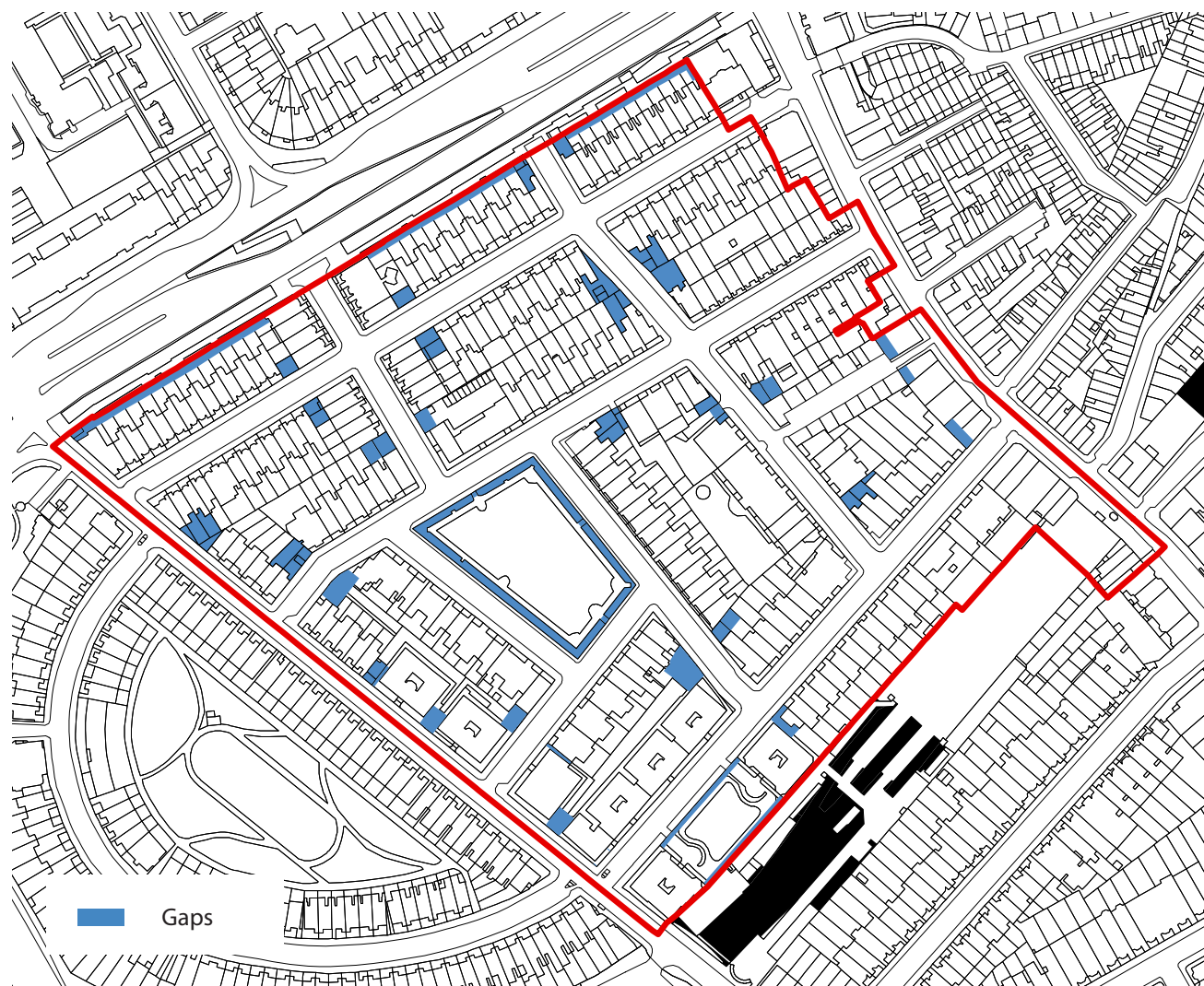


Fig 2.5: Important townscape gaps map

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Gap between Kensington Court Hotel and no. 1 Nevern Square



Gap at Templeton Place



Gap behind no. 58 Warwick Road



Gap behind Kensington Mansions



Gap between no. 16 Nevern Square and no. 33 Trebovir Road

Materials and Finishes

2.20 Materials that make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area are either natural ones such as slate or traditionally and locally manufactured ones such as brick, stucco and glass. Their original method of manufacture results in a finish that is typical of traditional building materials. The imperfections in cylinder glass and folds/wrinkles in hand made bricks, along with the natural process of ageing and weathering, give the buildings their authentic historic character and charm that makes the conservation area so special.

2.21 Traditional materials used here include:

- Brick (some of the Italianate houses have pale gault bricks to the front and flanks fronting streets; and yellow stocks to rear elevations, others are all stocks) and the Domestic Revival houses are yellow stock brick with red brick dressings)
- Stucco (architectural ornamentation and dressings)
- Stone (steps, paving slabs, coping stones to walls)
- Lime (mortar and stucco)
- Slate and lead (roofs)
- Painted timber (windows and doors)
- Painted cast iron (railings, balconies, pot guards, boot scrapers)
- Terracotta (station frontage (buff, glazed), chimney pots (red/buff, unglazed))
- Glass (thin crown or cylinder glass)
- Quarry/mosaic tiles (covering to steps)



Fig 2.6: Materials map (front elevations)

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Stock brick



Red brick



Stucco



Gault brick



Mosaic tiles



Terracotta

Buildings Audit

2.22 The buildings audit map shows the contribution made by buildings to the historic and architectural character of the area. For all buildings identified here as positive buildings, change must be managed to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance in accordance with national and local planning policies. Where particular sites, buildings or additions to buildings are harmful or out of keeping with the broader character of the conservation area as outlined in this appraisal, the Council will support proposals and where possible, take opportunities to make improvements and enhancements in line with Policies CL1, CL2 and CL3 of the Local Plan.

Listed Buildings

2.23 A listed building is a building designated by the Government on the advice of Historic England as a building of special architectural or historic interest, which local authorities have a statutory duty to preserve or enhance.

Positive Buildings

2.24 These buildings make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area. They are a key reason for the designation and significance of the conservation area.

Neutral Buildings

2.25 These buildings may blend into the townscape by virtue of their form, scale or materials, but due to their level of design quality, fail to make a positive contribution.



Fig 2.7: Buildings audit map

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Negative Buildings

2.26 Negative buildings are those which are out of keeping with the prevailing character of the conservation area.

3 Architecture

Housing

3.1 All the housing in the conservation area was built between 1873-86 under the speculative development system whereby land was leased to a developer or builder who would erect a house whilst paying a peppercorn ground rent. The builder needed to build his houses and sell them on to be fitted out or occupied before the low rent expired. The houses therefore had to be attractive and fashionable to attract buyers or the builder would not recoup his costs.

3.2 In 1872, Lord Kensington's surveyor, Martin Stutely gained permission from the Metropolitan Board of Work to lay out the grid of roads and in 1873 building commenced at the Earl's Court Road end of Longridge Road in the Italianate style using stock/gault brick and stucco. The Italianate houses in the conservation area were completed by 1881.

3.3 In July 1877, Martin Stutely and his son in law Daniel Cubitt Nichols (who was probably gradually taking over from Stutely as Lord Kensington's surveyor) gained permission to alter the approved plans to construct Nevern Square and houses surrounding it in the newly fashionable Domestic Revival style. Nevern Square was built between 1880-86.

3.4 This change has resulted a clear contrast of styles with the square being built in red and yellow brick with cut and moulded red brick details, whilst houses to the north and east were built in the enduring Italianate stock brick and stucco style. Despite this outward change in

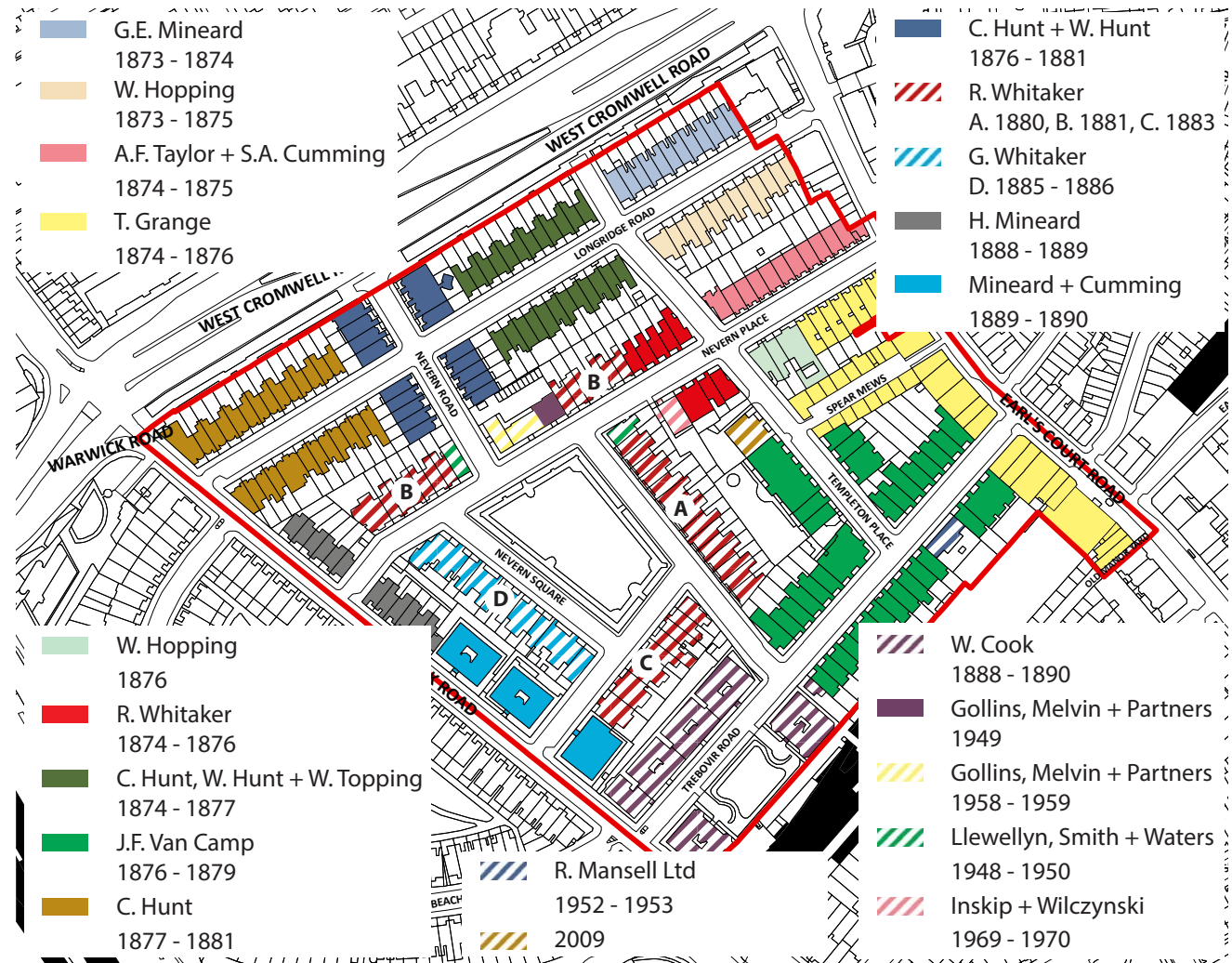


Fig 3.1: Historic Development map

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appearance, the houses are of similar size and accommodation with similar shared features such as sash windows, projecting porches, closet wings and roofs hidden behind parapets.

3.5 At the end of the 1880s mansion flats were built to the south of the conservation area and, these not only looked different, but offered different accommodation, and are dealt with in **Other Building Types**. All were built under the speculative development system.



Nos. 6-12 (even) Longridge Road



Nos. 50-70 (even) Longridge Road

Italianate Houses

3.6 The stock brick and stucco terraces were designed in the Italianate style which was used across much of the Royal Borough. This was a style that had been popular since the 1840/50s and had evolved from Georgian terraced house design with inspiration from the elevations of sixteenth century Italian palazzi with detailing emulating that found in Classical Greece and Rome. Building Regulations had evolved by this time so much of the structure such as the depth

of window reveals, the use of stucco or brick for parapets and so on was standardised.

3.7 The most important characteristic of terrace design is its uniformity. Vertically proportioned features such as windows and porches are repeated in replica across the whole terrace and visually linked by horizontal elements such as string courses and parapets to give the impression of one large and important building rather than a series of individual houses.

3.8 The map on the previous page clearly reveals the parcels of land taken up by each

different builder and the number of builders who worked in the area. Despite the specifications of the landowner and the Metropolitan Board of Works each builder had a measure of independence in adding their own stamp on their houses in terms of the ornamentation and, to a certain extent, the floorplan. Hence the differences seen between the terraces that will be outlined in this section.

3.9 The standard Italianate terrace form seen in the conservation area is as follows: They are mostly of four storeys over half-basement (with the exception of those to the east end of Longridge Road which have three main storeys);



Nos. 1a-21 (odd) Nevern Place



Nos. 26-34 (even) Nevern Place

they are all built in stock brick (and sometimes the paler gault brick) with canted, stuccoed bays that rise to first floor in the four storey houses (or just ground floor where there are three storeys). All the terraces are finished with a continuous stucco parapet which conceals the roof form behind to unite the individual houses in the terrace and provide a clean, Classically inspired finish. All of the Italianate houses have stucco porches with Roman Doric columns and most are paired although single porches can be seen in some roads. Many of the front doors are of a four panelled design in painted timber with some being double leaved (ie. a grand pair of doors);

and most of the windows are white painted, timber framed, sliding sash windows, often with a single glazing bar and all of these are set in stuccoed surrounds.

3.10 Building began at the Earl's Court Road end of Longridge Road. The first two blocks on **Longridge Road** (ie. **nos. 1-25** (odd) and **2-24** (even)) are of only three storeys over half-basement and retain many of the original stucco bottle balustrades above the parapet, although mansard roof extensions have been built behind these. They are very similar to the next two blocks (ie. **nos. 26-48** (even) and **27-49** (odd)) although these have an additional storey. In fact

these four blocks were built by three different builders, demonstrating the regularity of design that could be achieved despite different builders being involved.

3.11 Nos. 50-76 (even) and **nos. 51-75** (odd) **Longridge Road** are the only houses in the conservation area to have fully stuccoed frontages. The raised ground floor level is channelled to look like ashlar blocks and rusticated at lower ground floor to give the impression of a solid and grand stone base. The decoration has been kept simple with moulded cornices running along the parapet, below the top windows and below the first floor windows,



Nos. 1-9 (odd) Nevern Road

but there are no ornamented architraves to the windows themselves. This makes the decorative ironwork to the tops of the bays and porticoes all the more surprising and valuable.

3.12 Nos. 1a-23 (odd) Nevern Place are unusual in having attractive barley-twist columns and highly decorative Ruskinian (with foliage) capitals to the shared porches. At the upper levels the ornamentation consists of alternate arched and plain windows, with those to the first floor having further cast foliate decoration. The parapet cornice has a dentil moulding and a smaller version runs along the top of the upper ground floor windows. The stucco band



Nos. 2-10 (even) Nevern Road

between the first and second floor windows has an unusual zig-zag detail making these a particularly interesting and highly decorative group in the conservation area.

3.13 Opposite, the terrace at **nos. 2-24 (even)** share some of the details, even though they were by a different builder, but lack the barley-twist columns and have suffered greatly from the painting of full elevations that were built as brick.

3.14 Nos. 25-31 (odd) and nos. 26-34 (even) Nevern Place were built by Robert Whitaker who also subsequently built Nevern Square in the Domestic Revival style. However, his

Italianate houses here are well proportioned with fine, well considered detailing. A stucco bottle balustrade runs under the first floor windows and around the individual porches and these are the only houses in the conservation area to have this particular detail. The first floor windows have an idiosyncratic entablature above which consist of a broken, segmental pediment with flower roundels in the frieze. A deep dentilled cornice underlines the third floor windows and only a narrow cornice completes the parapet, above which dormers have been added.

3.15 The houses in Nevern Road all have the same design which is slightly different again.

In particular, the first and second floor windows are 'aediculated' (set in a niche-like surround) and grouped into three with a series of pilasters supporting a plain entablature above. Most, but not all, the houses have a tiny pediment above the windows. Stucco balustrades are used here but confined to the tops of bays and porches which are single. Houses in the middle section of Longridge Road were by the same builder and share similar details, but without the Corinthian pilasters. **Nos. 1-9** (odd) and **nos. 2-10** (even) **Nevern Road** have retained their fine stucco balustrades at roof level which are a great asset to the group, as are the fine iron panels to the entrances and the tiled steps that survive.

3.16 The terraces in Trebovir Road and Templeton Place are the most highly ornamented Italianate houses in the conservation area. Windows at every level have decorative surrounds and the terminating cornice at roof level is deep and decorated with brackets and panels as well as a stucco balustrade above which has regrettably been lost in places. The cast ironwork is elaborate and includes a continuous balcony balustrade with an anthemion (honeysuckle) design which matches the panels to the entrances; and sturdy boundary railings with a zig-zag dog rail. These ostentatious terraces have suffered very badly from having their whole brick frontages painted which reduces the contrast between brick and detail and removes the appearance of the attractive Victorian bricks with their patina of age and gentle colouring.

3.17 Regrettably all the streets have undergone some level of alteration that has



Nos. 16-32 (even) Trebovir Road

harmed the character of the conservation area. Some of the brick elevations have been painted which harms the unity of the terrace and obliterates the attractive historic appearance of the patinated (aged) brick. Hotel use has caused doors to be blocked and changed, lifts to be added and modern signage to be added. In places, original railings have been removed and replaced with non-original designs and steps

have often been recovered in modern tiles or even bitumen.

Domestic Revival Houses

NEVERN SQUARE

3.18 Nevern Square was designed by architect, Walter Graves and built by Robert Whitaker with the exception of most of the south-west side which were built after he died by George Whitaker. All were constructed between 1880 and 1886 and are of architectural significance as they represent an attenuated, reticent form of the 'new' Domestic Revival designs pioneered by eminent architects J.J. Stevenson, E.R. Robson and R.N. Shaw. The square has an overarching character of integrity and uniformity and the communal garden (which is contemporaneous with the houses) creates a very attractive focus and a fresh green foil to the surrounding architecture.

North-east side: Nos. 1-16 (consecutive)
South-east side: Nos. 17-27 (consecutive)
North-west side: Nos. 43-63 (consecutive)

3.19 These three sides were built by Robert Whitaker and all have the same design. Each house is three bays wide and of four main storeys plus basement, constructed in yellow brick with red brick decoration and finished with a continuous parapet above which many roof extensions have been added later. The houses have paired shallowly projecting brick porches with leafy capitals and key-bricks to the open arches and these add movement and rhythm to the otherwise flat frontages. As well as being united by their matching features, the terraces



Nos. 1-12 (consec) Nevern Square

are tied together visually by a continuous wrought iron balustrade at first floor level whose wavelike patterns, would not have been out of place in the Vienna of Gustav Klimt.

3.20 The frontages are all decorated in matching cut and moulded red brickwork that projects in low relief from the yellow brick

walls. The main focus is a broad centrepiece, surrounding the central windows of the first and second floor, which is topped with a raised pediment and flanked by two ends of a broken pediment of matching design. Beside this, the first floor windows also have raised red brick pediments and all of these are filled with floral and geometrical patterns. All openings are



Nos. 18-23 (consec) Nevers Square



Nos. 45-50 (consec) Nevers Square

surrounded by moulded red brick architraves and all the sash windows have shaped brick aprons. In between the pediments and the window heads are brick panels containing terracotta flower roundels.

3.21 The decorative brickwork was executed in fine red 'rubbers' with joints so fine they could only be scantily pointed with a slick of pure lime putty. This resulted in a fine finish for which the joints were meant to be hardly visible. Red rubbers are made from clay that is finely sieved to give a very pure and soft brick that can literally be rubbed or cut to various shapes, such as for the window architraves, and fitted together

with the tiniest of joints. Such clay was also packed into shaped moulds to create the surface decoration such as those seen in the pediments.

3.22 These carefully crafted details are an essential feature of the Domestic Revival style and ethos and the character of the conservation area is harmed where they are lost, overpainted or badly repointed.

3.23 The windows are all timber framed, sliding sash windows painted white, except for the first floor windows which are French doors with delicate glazing bars and large hoppers above. Many of the windows are plain glazed with

others having single glazing bars. This plainness is a feature of the speculative type of Domestic Revival architecture as the leading architects in this design generally specified windows with many glazing bars creating small panes inspired by old English cottages.

South-west side: Nos. 28-42 (consecutive)

3.24 Robert Whitaker died in January 1885 shortly after starting this side of Nevers Square so the remaining houses here were assigned to George Whitaker, probably a relative, who built them between 1885-86. George amended the



Nos. 31-39 (consec) Nevers Square

original designs so that this side of the square is markedly different from the other sides. He added square openings above the arches of the porches and larger brackets beneath the balconies. In the upper storeys thin pilaster strips divide the elevation of each house into regular bays and the windows have stone or stucco keystones. The brick panels between the windows have simpler moulded decoration and the aprons are smaller. This group is the only one in which the end houses are emphasised by an additional attic storey with a bottle balustrade above the parapet line that is broken by a single

dormer window and the pilasters are terminated by ball finials.

3.25 For Rupert House, see *Recent Architecture*



Nevers Square (south-west side)

NOS. 46-68 (EVEN) WARWICK ROAD

3.26 These two terraces were built between 1888-89 by Harry Mineard, George Edward Mineard's son, who had together built almost all of Philbeach Gardens in the neighbouring conservation area, including houses in this style. Next to **no. 46** is a small lodge-like building that has been added and infills a gap in the townscape.

3.27 The houses form a stylistic bridge between those in Philbeach Gardens and those in Nevern Square. They are built in yellow stock with red brick dressings and much detailing is the same as that on the Philbeach houses, including the red brick pilasters that link the middle windows vertically, the pediments to the first and third floor windows and the tiny round pediments to the parapet that divide each house.

3.28 However, the Warwick Road houses have porches of a similar (but not matching) design to those in Nevern Square and they do not have balconies. There is a small amount of moulded brick detailing under the first floor windows, but generally, the detailing is simpler than both Philbeach Gardens and Nevern Square.

3.29 The Warwick Road houses have suffered a great deal of unsympathetic alteration including the replacement of sash windows with aluminium and uPVC ones of different designs; the overpainting of brick elevations; loss of original decorative ironwork over porches and tiled paths; as well as extraneous additions such as pipework and aerials.



Nos. 58-68 (even) Warwick Road

Shared Features of Houses

Architectural Details

3.30 The houses in Nevern Square display a wealth of architectural ornamentation and detailing giving them a great richness that forms an important part the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.31 Victorian houses followed a rigid hierarchy and this is reflected clearly in the external decoration as well as the size of rooms and their decoration internally too. The most important rooms which were used by the family for their activities and entertaining were located on the upper ground and first floors. Hence the windows to these floors were the tallest and had the most elaborate ornamentation with the first floor or '*piano nobile*' (the 'noble' floor) often having the added pretention of a balcony. The half-basements were occupied by kitchens, sculleries and other service rooms; whilst the upper floors were occupied by bedrooms; so all these floors had smaller openings with less decoration.

3.32 As each terrace was designed to have one unified appearance, all the decorative elements match in every house in a terrace with different builders having used different details for separate terraces. The elements of the houses are drawn together by horizontal elements such as the parapet roofline, brick or stucco string courses, balconies and boundary railings. Changes to these elements interrupt the essential uniformity of the terraces and harm the character of the conservation area.



Domestic Revival porches

3.33 Despite their different styles, the Italianate and Domestic Revival houses share the characteristics of proportion, hierarchy and repetitive ornamentation as well as both having projecting porches, decorative ironwork and parapet rooflines. However, the detailing on the facades in the Domestic Revival houses is carried out in cut, moulded and rubbed brick with very fine lime joints whereas the ornamentation to the Italianate houses is carried out in stucco with a variety of designs.



Italianate porches

3.34 For both styles, the way porches appear to march down the street allowing views through them and creating a grand entrance to each house, is a defining feature in the conservation area.

3.35 Steps up to entrances have often been altered. Some may have been stone originally, particularly to the Italianate houses. But many two-colour geometric tiled steps survive which were probably the original finish to the Domestic Revival houses, but added to the Italianate house towards the end of the nineteenth century.



Barley twist columns and Ruskinian detailing



Rusticated basement bay window



Moulded brick flower and fleur de lys decoration

Many attractive historic tiled steps survive and make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Twentieth century replacements often fail to reproduce the same tile dimensions or design complexity as their earlier counterparts making them of much less historic value.

3.36 Ironwork makes an important contribution to the character of the conservation area and is used for railings, entrance landings, balconies, boot scrapers, pot guards to window cills and decoration above bays and porches. Small details are especially susceptible to loss, for example much balustrading over porches, plant pot guards and bootscrapers have regrettably disappeared over time.



Plant pot guard and railing tips



Tuck pointing and fine lime pointing

Windows and Doors



Domestic Revival sashes with single glazing bar

3.37 Painted timber windows and doors are key features of historic houses and reflect their architectural period and style, making an essential contribution to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

3.38 All the houses in the conservation area were originally given single glazed sliding timber sash windows which were painted. Sash windows were an important British invention that allowed a room to be aired without the window projecting outwards and breaking the carefully designed Classically inspired building line. Where French windows are used, these open



Plain timber framed, single glazed sash windows in Italianate channelled bays

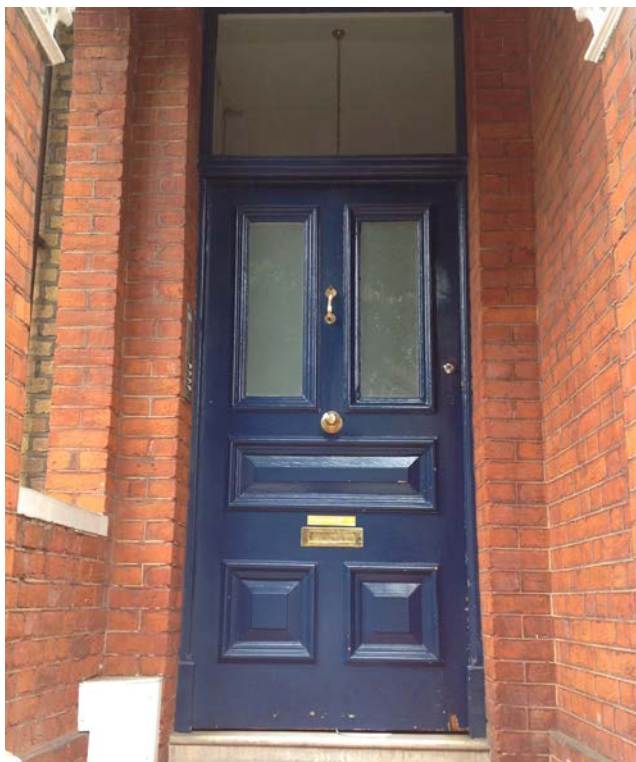
inwards for the same reason. Bay windows are a typical Victorian feature which allowed more light and air into a room and were often used for the principal rooms to the ground and first floors.

3.39 Windows are the same uniform design and appearance across a whole terrace with their size getting smaller as they rise up the house. Originally, many probably had a single glazing bar dividing the panes emphasising the verticality of the houses inspired by the golden proportions used for Classical buildings, but only some of these survive and most sashes



are plain glazed. The sashes also had horns to strengthen the frame required by the larger sheets of heavier glass made in the Victorian period. These details are essential to the character of the conservation area.

3.40 The houses with balconies generally have inward-opening French windows for access and these usually have one or two horizontal glazing bars and hoppers above them. The Domestic Revival houses have sashes with single vertical glazing bars to the ground floors but plain sashes to the top windows.



Domestic revival door

3.41 Matching windows in a terrace form an important part of the uniform character of the conservation area and it is regrettable where glazing bars have been lost. In some cases whole windows have been replaced by new units in unsympathetic materials and designs. Some houses in Warwick Road have had sash windows replaced by casements in uPVC or aluminium and these are very harmful to the character of the conservation area.

3.42 Historic doors were made of good quality, slow-grown pine which was meant to be painted to protect the wood and conceal the fact that



Door with pediment over and sidelights

they were made of pine rather than an exotic wood. Original door furniture was always brass, hence varnished doors and stainless steel door furniture are anachronistic and harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.43 Many of the Italianate houses have four panelled doors, usually with the top two panels glazed and ogee mouldings around the recessed lower panels. The grand houses in Trebovir Road and Templeton Place have pairs of doors with each leaf having two raised panels with deep mouldings and a glazed pane above.



Typical Victorian four panelled door with glazed panes used for Italianate houses

The Domestic Revival houses have single doors with three deeply moulded raised panels and two glazed panels above with centralised door furniture.

3.44 Many original doors survive and these are of the greatest heritage value to the conservation area adding richness, integrity and retaining the historic and architectural character of the conservation area. Where lost their reinstatement would enhance the character of the conservation area.



A selection of original doors and windows

Roofs



Plain parapet and cornice concealing roof, Longridge Road



Classically inspired parapet with balustrade and bracketed cornice, Nevern Road

3.45 Continuous parapet rooflines and tall chimney stacks are a key feature of the houses in the conservation area. The terraces, both Italianate and Domestic Revival, were built to look like a single unit with the whole terrace being united by a long shared parapet finished with a decorative cornice either in brick, stucco or finished with a balustrade (or a combination of these). The object of this elegant roofline was to conceal the roof behind and provide a clean, flat finish to the frontages. This treatment makes a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.46 Many roofs have been changed to flat roofs, but originally they were often hipped

and covered in slate, some of which survive in Trebovir Road. These original roof forms have great heritage significance for their contribution to the historic integrity, character and appearance of the conservation area and because historic roof forms are becoming increasingly rare.

3.47 Chimney stacks are the highest point of each house and create an important feature along the rooflines. Matching terracotta chimney pots are particularly attractive in rooftop views.

3.48 Other roofs have been changed to mansard roofs so that both the new roof and its windows can be seen above the parapet.

Where the whole terrace has been extended in this way, uniformity (but not appearance) has been preserved. However, where not all roofs have been extended and gaps are left in a roofscape, such as the north-eastern side of Nevern Square, there is harm to the character of the conservation area and uniformity could be reinstated by infilling the gaps. Some mansards notably on Templeton Place and at the north end of Trebovir Road are oversized and of very poor design which result in harm to the character of the conservation area.

3.49 Nevern Road has two excellent complete runs of stucco balustrading at parapet level, but sadly in other streets many have been lost and



Classically inspired parapet with balustrade and bracketed cornice, Trebovir Road



Stock brick parapet with red brick pediments and detailing, Warwick Road

their reinstatement would greatly enhance the character of the conservation area.

Rear Elevations



Rears of nos. 2-24 (even) Nevern Place



Rears of nos. 1a-23 (odd) Nevern Place

3.50 Rear elevations make an important contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area. As with the frontages, rear elevations of terraces were designed as a piece with their neighbours albeit using less ostentatious designs and details.

3.51 The backs of houses are brought into the character of the conservation area by being visible across garden walls, in gaps between houses, from rear windows and from back gardens. Features of rear elevations that contribute to the character of the conservation area include their original design (eg. closet

wings, chimneys), materials (eg. stock brick and painted timber) and features (eg. sash windows, brick arches).

3.52 Most of the houses were built with closet wings to the rear which are a key feature of Victorian house design and the relationship of projection and void creates rhythm and uniformity to the rear which contributes greatly to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

3.53 Most of the closet wings are paired and built across roughly half the width of each house, usually rising to the penultimate floor

level, but never to eaves level. A few houses have single (unpaired) closet wings such as in Nevern Place; whilst others have very small ones as do some houses in Trebovir Road. Houses on Nevern Road are unusual in having no closet wings at all leaving the houses with flat rear elevations.

3.54 Houses at **nos. 2-24 (even) Nevern Place** have flat backs with shallow stuccoed canted bays to the ground floor, which is an unusual and attractive feature. The houses on Nevern Road also have flat rear elevations without any historic rear additions. Both forms contribute to the character of the conservation area.



Rears of nos. 26-34 (even) Nevern Place



Rears of nos. 69-75 (odd) Longridge Road

3.55 To the rear of **nos. 1a-23 (odd) Nevern Place** the houses have been extended completely and this has created a solid block-like effect which has harmed the primacy of the closet wings and their pattern of solid and void.

additions which spoil the uniformity and rhythm such as rendering, replacement windows (as well as changing their size or location) and disproportionate extensions can all harm the historic characteristics outlined here.

3.56 The sash windows to the closet wings are often smaller and set lower than those to the main rear wall and this is an important characteristic that further contributes to the character of the conservation area. Where uniformity and original form such as this survive it is important that they are conserved.

3.57 Rear elevations can be harmed in similar ways to other elevations, that is to say, that

Side Elevations

3.58 The grid-like street layout means that many side elevations rise up from the back edge of the pavement, but were treated in different ways by the different builders.

3.59 Some side elevations contain the main entrance and these have a level of decoration in accordance with an entrance frontage which make an interesting contribution to the character of the conservation area. These are a particular feature of the Domestic Revival style around Nevern Square and can be seen at **nos. 17, 28 and 42**, but also to some Italianate houses such as at **no. 24 Nevern Place**, and **nos. 15, 17 and 33 Trebovir Road**. The latter three having been extended at a later date which has harmed their original design.

3.60 Other front elevations were left blank and their unpierced patinated brickwork creates a fine but recessive blank expanse that is appropriate to such lesser elevations and creates a counterfoil to the decorated frontages. Good examples of these can be seen at **nos. 46 and 56 Warwick Road**, **nos. 190 and 192 Earl's Court Road** and **nos. 1 and 2 Trebovir Road**. These make a very positive contribution to the character of the conservation area in their original state, but others have had windows added such as **no. 23 Nevern Place** and these have harmed the elevation.



No. 17 Nevern Square



No. 24 Nevern Place

Boundary Treatments and Front Areas



Front area with four panel door

3.61 All the houses in the conservation area have front areas which were originally the location for the coal cellars (under the pavement) and the entrance to the servants' quarters via a door under the steps to the main entrance. These areas were meant to remain open and uncluttered as most do today, creating the historic setting to the houses and contributing positively to the character of the conservation area.



Original basement door and traditional cast iron door knob

3.62 Front area doors were simpler than the main entrances, but usually of four panelled design, painted black and the coal cellar doors were usually plank doors, ledged and braced on the inside. Originally the steps down to the areas were stone with a simple D-section handrail, but many of these have been replaced with modern materials and designs and would benefit from the reinstatement of original copies.

3.63 The railing designs are consistent to each group of houses or terrace as each builder



Original cast iron railings, Longridge Road

used the same design for his development. This usually results in the design of railings changing at road junctions where one builder's plot finished and other's began. A selection of original railing designs used in the area is illustrated here. The cast iron posts are always individually planted into a low stone plinth and where the design is more elaborate, often alternate posts are planted and this is a historic detail that is often not replicated in modern railing design. Even the Domestic Revival



Domestic Revival railings

railings with their characteristic wavy patterns have posts that are individually planted in the plinth stone.

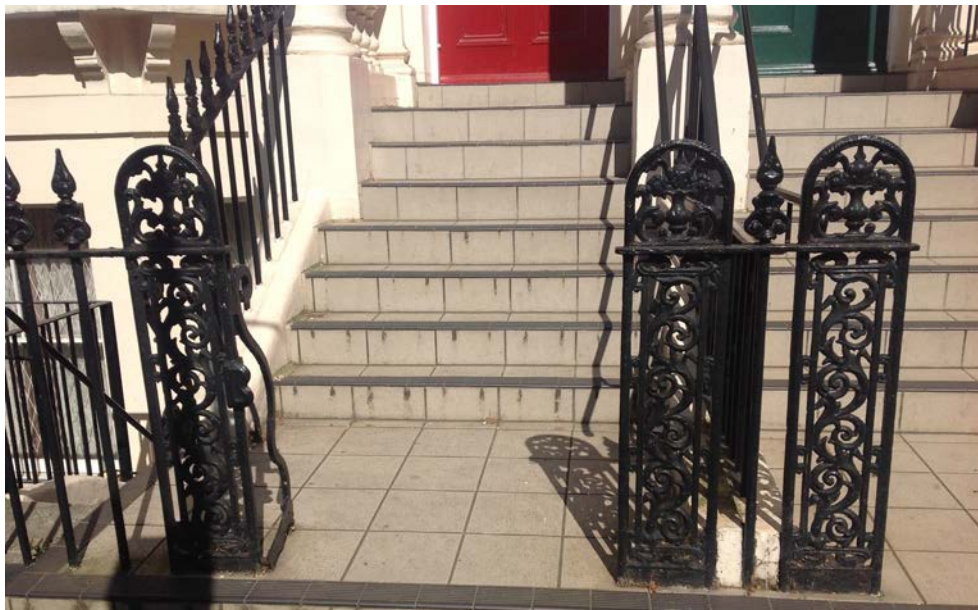
3.64 Many original railings here survived the World War II effort to melt down railings for aircraft because they serve the purpose of preventing people falling into the lightwells. However, some originals have regrettably been replaced with unsympathetic plainer and cheaper versions. Houses in the central section of Longridge Road have low boundary walls, stuccoed entrance piers but many original railings in this section have been lost and the street would benefit from their reinstatement to an original design.



Entrance pillars, Longridge Road

3.65 Another important feature is the creation of a grand entrance which is created by having steps up to the main front door that is set behind a grand projecting porch. All the main entrances are open to the street and some have decorative cast iron panels framing them in line with the railings. But the steps down into the front areas are always closed off by a gate to match the railings.

3.66 Uniform original boundary railings are one of the great characteristics of the terrace houses and their reinstatement where lost would enhance the character of the conservation area.



Entrance ironwork, Longridge Road



Iron panel to entrance, Nevern Place



Iron railings with twisted posts, Nevern Place



Iron railings, Warwick Road

Other Building Types

Mansion Flats

KENSINGTON MANSIONS, TREBOVIR ROAD NEVERN MANSIONS, WARWICK ROAD

3.67 Both Kensington Mansions (six related blocks beginning on Trebovir Road) and Nevern Mansions (three related blocks beginning on Warwick Road) were built between 1888-1891 (each having their name and date in a plaque above the porch) and were designed by William Cooke who had recently designed York Mansions on Earl's Court Road (in neighbouring Courtfield Conservation Area) to similar designs. They make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area and demonstrate the evolution in domestic accommodation and architectural style in the late Victorian period.

3.68 They have very similar designs and are four or five storeys high (plus attics and half-basements). They are imposing buildings that copied the fashion of apartment living from the continent and were designed to emulate large mansion houses with a single main entrance. The two Nevern Mansions on Warwick Road are detached, symmetrically designed and evoke a single mansion house particularly well. Being aimed at the fashionable middle classes, the apartments within were spacious and had accommodation for servants.

3.69 **The Lodge, Trebovir Road** was also designed by William Cooke, a charming single storey Jacobean style lodge. It has a large bay window surmounted by a most elaborate curved



Kensington Mansions

and stepped gable. A panel above the bay gives 1888 as the date of construction.

3.70 These buildings display features typical of late Victorian mansion blocks such as the Dutch gables, canted bays, cheerful brick and stucco banding, long balconies with wrought ironwork of curving designs and timber framed sash and French windows. The frontages are symmetrical, but not slavishly, so that the entrance porches

are either centrally placed or just off-centre and of distinctive design. Each porch has in idiosyncratic design in which banded brick and stucco pilasters are topped with Corinthian capitals and in between these are two shorter polished red granite columns with Ionic capitals supporting a round arch. The doors are panelled timber doors painted black with sidelights and overlights to light the hallways. The sashes are plain glazed with horns but there are French



Kensington Mansions communal garden

windows to the first floors with hoppers above. The French windows to Kensington Mansions have elegant cambered heads.

3.71 The two Kensington Mansions on Trebovir Road face each other across a private communal garden so that it is their side elevations that front the street. One of the features of mansion block design is that all elevations which are visible from a public place were designed to be seen as formal frontages so that the sides fronting Trebovir Road form a series of attractive bays and chimney breasts finishing in a series of tall, offset chimney stacks. This can also be seen where two Nevern



The Lodge, Trebovir Road

Mansion blocks have principal elevations on Nevern Square and side elevations on Warwick Road. Interestingly, Kensington Mansions which forms the corner of Trebovir and Warwick Roads has three public frontages, with the one facing Warwick Road having the same matching bays as the garden front but without the long balconies joining them.

3.72 The rooflines are an important feature of mansion flats with those to Nevern Mansions having attractive curved Dutch gables linked by a stucco balustrade. Chimneys stacks are prominent. Most of Kensington Mansions have

plain rendered gables instead of Dutch gables and this was probably a post-war repair.

3.73 The iron boundary railings have the distinctive curving designs that are characteristic of mansion flat architecture and the rear elevations are composed of bays but built in stock brick.



Nevern Mansions

Earl's Court Station

3.74 Only the station front on Earl's Court Road is within the conservation area, but the whole structure from here to the Warwick Road entrance of 1937 is grade II listed. The list description says it is one of the "*most interesting of the complex, multi-period stations, with features of architectural interest from three principal eras of underground development*".

3.75 Earl's Court Station opened on the West Brompton Extension of the Metropolitan District Railway on 30 October 1871 and the Piccadilly line was added in 1902.

3.76 The train shed (1878) was designed by John Wolfe Barry and the Earl's Court Road façade by Harry W. Ford in 1906. The frontage is a highly accomplished design with a central entrance flanked by two shops at ground floor. The shop to the left of station retains original shop windows with a recessed entrance and curved plate glass whilst the others are copies. All of these are of high significance to the character of the building and the conservation area. The whole elevation is faced in buff coloured, glazed terracotta with five Diocletian openings containing original multi-paned windows with intricate dentil and bracket detailing.

3.77 Between the windows are engaged columns with Ionic capitals that support the green faience frieze containing the name of the station and the railway lines that run from it; and above this a complete bottle balustrade and segmental pediment over the entrance.

3.78 There is a lot of street clutter to the front of the station and in particular the views to



Earl's Court Station

the station are marred by a number of things including the police box, kiosk, traffic lights, signs and a variety of bins, large and small. The fascias to the shops are the same narrow dimensions but it is a great shame that they are unattractive due to their modern materials, lettering and design.

3.79 From the outside, the roof has a plain pitched form that is partly glazed and is seen

externally from neighbouring windows. But viewed from the platforms the impressive cast iron structure can be fully appreciated and is one of the key features of the station and, due to its public accessibility, part of the character of the conservation area.



Earl's Court Station roof

Buildings with Shops, Earl's Court Road



Nos. 192-200 (even) Earl's Court Road



Nos. 204 and 206 Earl's Court Road

3.80 The flank walls of the first houses on Nevorn Place (now numbered **nos. 178 and 180a Earl's Court Road**) front onto Earl's Court Road and have consequently had shops added. These buildings have suffered many alterations including rebuilding in red brick and the loss of windows and doors on Nevorn Place caused by the shops and these are very harmful to the character of the conservation area.

3.81 Nos. 188-214 (even) Earl's Court Road were built by Thomas Grange (as were Spear Mews and part of Nevorn Place) between 1875-76. These are two fine stock brick terraces with attractive aediculated windows (ie. having a

Classical niche-like surround) at first floor and architraves reducing in decoration as they rise up the elevation. The continuous unaltered cornice finishes both groups well.

3.82 The shops are less attractive. All are modern with large fascias and some take up more than one unit without attempting to relate to the unit width of the house above. **Nos. 204-206** turn into Trebovir Road and both buildings have chamfered corners so that the shops can have an entrance addressing both streets and this also frames the entrance into Trebovir Road. **No. 206** has a blank wall on the Trebovir Road elevation which is an unappealing feature in the

conservation area. **No. 204** has a cornice and console brackets suggesting there was a shop here once, but this has been infilled with stucco blockwork and several unattractive openings.

3.83 No. 216 has a completely different design. The building turns the corner onto the station with a chamfered corner. The windows have gault brick architraves with those to the second floor being given further emphasis by arched architraves of which the tympanum (the part between the window and brick arch) being filled with a leafy design.



Nos. 216-218 (even) Earl's Court Road

3.84 Again, the shopfronts let the building down and here two separate frontages of dissimilar design (both unsympathetic) have been squeezed into this narrow space.

3.85 Nos. 238-242 (even) Earl's Court Road are of similar date and appearance but with less detailing. The first floor windows only have cornices above and the rest of the architraves are flat stucco, however the attic windows are



Nos 238-242 (even) Earl's Court Road

separated by a cornice above and below and the roofs are concealed behind the parapet as originally intended.

3.86 Many pilasters, console brackets and cornices survive, some might also survive underneath the large fascias and it would enhance the conservation area if these were on display and any lost ones reinstated.

Spear Mews



Entrance to Spear Mews on Templeton Place



Nos. 2-12 (even) Spear Mews

3.87 Spear Mews was laid out between 1875-76 by builder, Thomas Grange who was also building **nos. 188-224 (even) Earl's Court Road** at the same time. Although there has been much alteration the original format of the stock brick buildings can still be discerned. Each unit originally had two double doors at ground floor level – one giving access to the stables and the other for the carriage; as well as one single-width door leading to the carriage/groom's quarters upstairs.

3.88 The roofs were originally largely concealed by a parapet finished with a stucco cornice and brick dentil course to the eaves and

today these survive although modern mansard roofs are now visible above. The timber framed sash windows with single glazing bars survive to the upper floors, all with single glazing bars, keystones and modillions below the cills. At ground floor level tripartite sash windows have been added in place of one of the double doors, but the second double doors usually survive with their long cast iron hinges.

3.89 From Earl's Court Road, the entrance is squeezed between two four storey terraces with plain flank walls, however, the entrance from Templeton Place was designed to have more presence in the street scene. The end units

are still only of two storeys but the windows are divided by stucco blockwork giving them a more imposing appearance. The right hand unit has unfortunately been painted, but retains a pair of swags (which have been lost from the units on the left), a round bullseye window to the first floor and an arched window to the ground floor. Ghosting from the swags can be seen on the left-hand building and alterations to the brickwork perhaps suggest that the ground floor might once have had three arches. This entrance could be improved by removing the paint from brickwork and reinstating original-style fenestration.



Nos. 1-5 (odd) Spear Mews



No. 16 Spear Mews

3.90 Within the mews the surface is covered in granite setts which drain to the centre and have been rubbed smooth with years of use. The setts are a key feature of mews as is the fact that there is no pavement here. The mews are enhanced by pot plants but their uniformity and historic appearance are harmed by the painted brick elevations.

Recent Architecture



Rupert House

3.91 A bomb fell on the north-west side of Nevern Square in World War II and the sites were filled with buildings that respect the form and materials used in the square, but without copying the detail so that they fit in unobtrusively. The first to be rebuilt were nos. 56-57 in 1949 which are part of **Rupert House**, with the remainder of the block only being built between 1958-59. The architects were Gollins, Melvin and Partners. The whole building has an

additional storey below the parapet compared to the Victorian terraces and above the parapet there is a mansard with a further storey over part of the roof which appears excessive in some views. The windows to the front and side elevations are a mixture of single and tripartite timber sashes with multiple glazing bars, painted white and there are low relief terracotta mouldings of a minstrel above each entrance.



No. 1 Nevern Square

3.92 Nos. 1 and 51 Nevern Square (destroyed by the same bomb) were rebuilt to the modern but sensitive designs of Llewellyn Smith and Waters between 1948-50. Both of these buildings are plain, but are constructed in materials to match the rest of the square and their windows are the same in number and proportions to the other front elevations. The side elevations are less successful when compared to the flamboyance of that to **no. 17**



Nos. 5-17 (odd) Templeton Place



Orpen House

Nevern Square or the narrower unpierced flank walls elsewhere.

3.93 An excellent scheme to complete the terrace at **nos. 1-17 (even) Templeton Place**, The K.K. George Hotel sees all the details of the existing terrace reproduced (bar the lower ground floor) including porches, stucco decoration and unpainted brickwork to the upper storeys. This hotel extension (ie. **no. 17**) was built in 2009. It is a shame that the roof extension to this whole terrace is of very poor design and the original buildings are painted rather than displaying the attractive original brick.

3.94 Other late twentieth century buildings have not been so thoughtfully designed and these include: Kensington Court Hotel, Nevern Place (by Inskip & Wilczynski, 1969-70), the extension to **Mary Smith Court, nos. 17-21 (odd) Trebovir Road** (seen on Templeton Place), and **Orpen House, nos. 10-14 (even) Trebovir Road** (R. Mansell Limited, 1952-53). All of these fail to follow the storey heights of the historic terraces, or their materials, fenestration or other characteristics of the conservation area. They have a neutral impact on the character of the area at best, but would benefit from replacement by more sensitive designs.

4 Public Realm



Green corridor



London Plane trees on Trebovir Road



Longridge Road

Street Trees

4.1 Street trees were not planted around Nevern Square as they were planted instead in the communal garden. The only mature street trees that were probably planted by the Victorians are the London Planes (*Platanus x hispanica*) in Trebovir Road which add to the character of the street, particularly at the southern end.

4.2 Elsewhere, street trees are restricted to a few pavements where planting has been made possible by the absence of utility cable runs or coal cellars below the footpath. Possibly the best example of modern-day street tree planting is the row of Himalayan Birch trees (*Betula utilis 'jaqmonteii'*) in Longridge Road which were planted around 2006.

4.3 Nevern Place and Templeton Place contain less formal planting of Cherry trees.

Street Surfaces

4.4 The pavements within the residential streets are surfaced with modern concrete paving slabs and historic granite kerbstones. Earl's Court Road however, has been relaid with modern York stone slabs and granite kerbs which is a more traditional treatment that is sympathetic to the character of the conservation area.

4.5 An interesting feature of the street surfaces are the cast iron coal hole covers which have survived despite the resurfacing. These have a variety of designs and are usually from local foundries. They make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.

4.6 Spear Mews is surfaced with hard wearing square granite setts laid to a central gulley that could withstand the wear from metal cart wheels and horses metal-shod hooves. There are no pavements and the setts drain to a central gulley. These are important features of mews that contribute strongly to their significance and the character of the conservation area.



Granite setts, Spear Mews



Modern concrete paving



Coal hole covers





Coal hole covers

Historic Street Furniture



Pillar box outside no. 25 Longridge Road



Pillar box outside no. 75 Longridge Road



Pillar box outside no. 1 Nevern Square

4.7 Historic items of street furniture are of design and historic interest in their own right as well as enriching the character of the conservation area. Red painted pillar boxes are a feature of particular interest that were made from the Victorian period onwards and continue to function today. There are three in the conservation area:

- Outside **no. 25 Longridge Road** (no cipher)
- Outside **no. 75 Longridge Road** (ER II)
- Outside **no. 1 Nevern Square** (no cipher)

The pillar boxes without a cipher are known as 'anonymous boxes' because the manufacturer forgot to add the cipher to the door and these are rare nationally.

Views

4.8 Views make an important contribution to the way the conservation area is experienced from within and without. Views of buildings outside the conservation area provide the setting to the conservation area whilst views within create a sense of enclosure and enhance the sense of place and special character of the area.

4.9 There are views to the garden square and from it to the surrounding houses. The grid-like street pattern has meant that in some places a view to the end of one street is stopped by a vista of houses in a neighbouring street and this can be seen for example, from Nevern Square and Templeton Place when looking towards Trebovir Road.

4.10 Another important characteristic of the gridded layout is the way gardens and rear elevations are visible from lateral streets and rear windows. In both cases these views are important to the character of the conservation area as they reveal other historic parts of the houses (such as closet wings and valley roofs) as well as important green space and trees.

4.11 Earl's Court Station is the only landmark in the area. Although not visible from a distance it is an aid to navigation and a key infrastructure building that has a distinctive appearance that relates strongly to its function. Both elevations onto Earl's Court Road and Warwick Road have a special presence in views.

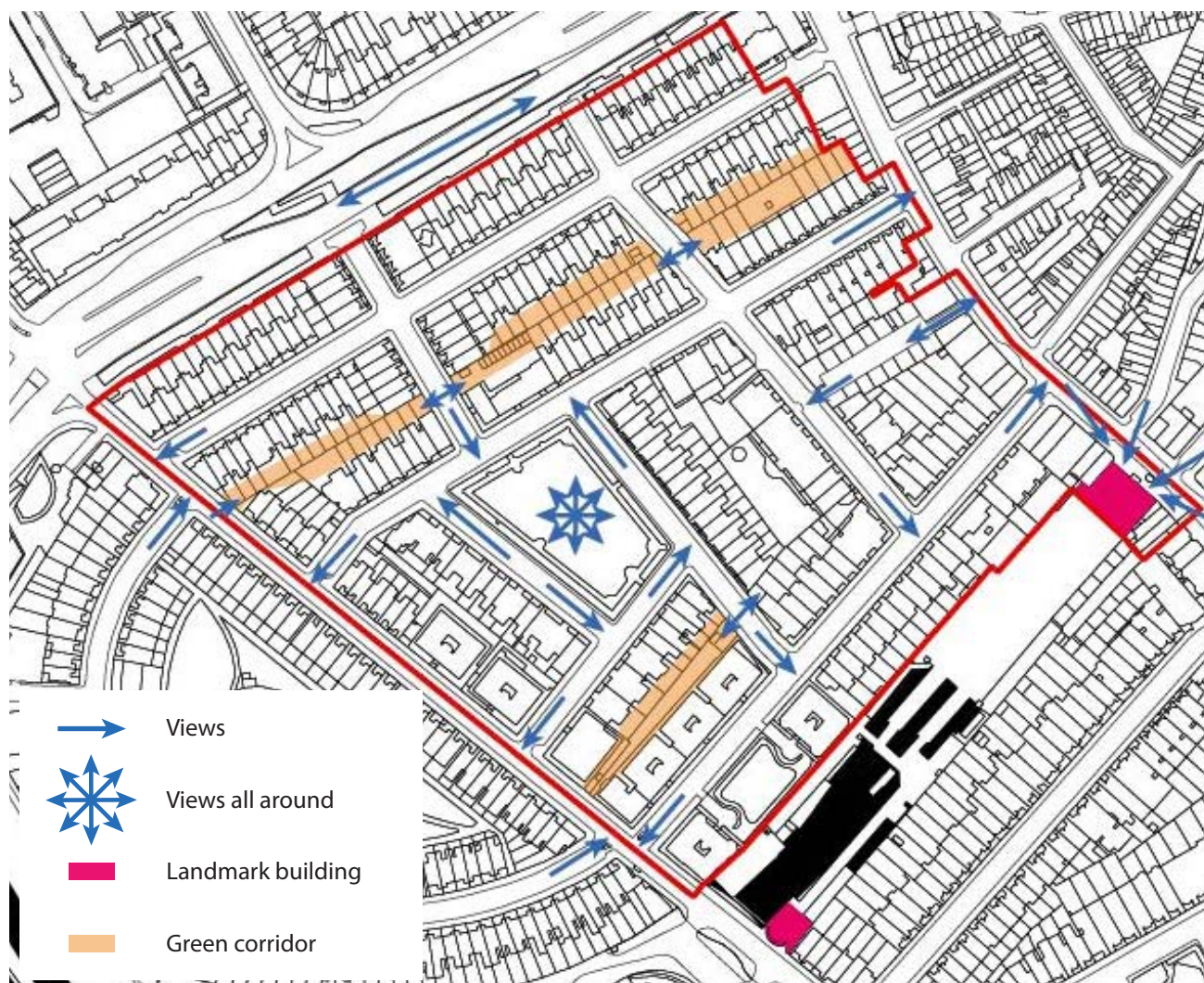


Fig 4.1: Views map

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Views to Earl's Court Road



Views to Earl's Court Road

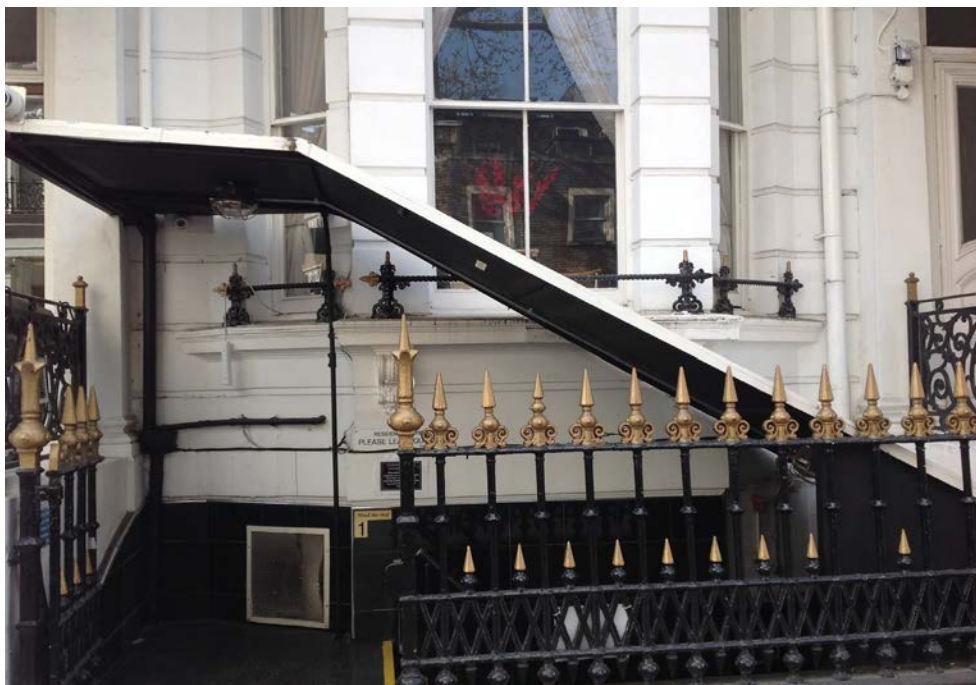


View to West Cromwell Road



View to Warwick Road

5 Negative Elements and Opportunities for Enhancement



Intrusive canopy into front area



Unsympathetic roof additions

5.1 This section itemises some of the alterations that cause harm to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area. The National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's policies require opportunities to be taken to enhance the character of conservation areas when opportunities arise and this includes the removal of the negative elements given in this section.

5.2 Historic areas are sensitive to change. Once a historic feature is lost it can only be reinstated in replica and never in authenticity, so the loss of historic features is a loss to the historic integrity and character of the conservation area as a whole. The terraces in

Nevern Square Conservation Area rely on their uniformity for their attractive appearance and historic character and where this is interrupted by changes to one individual house, the wider character of the conservation area is harmed.

5.3 The removal of historic elements such as sash windows, original doors, stucco decoration, cornices and balustrades to parapets, railings and other original or characteristic features causes great harm to uniformity, integrity and overall historic character. But the insensitive addition of modern items can be just as harmful. This includes the painting of brickwork as can be seen in a number of locations; pipework to front elevations; mansard additions (especially

where they are in a variety of designs) and unsympathetic surfacing to steps.

5.4 Painting brick frontages is particularly harmful to the character and uniformity of the terraces, but is regrettably seen throughout the conservation area. Where brick has been painted the contrast between the texture and colour of the brick against the smooth/moulded stucco (or against a different colour or brick) is lost and the houses and conservation area lose part of their historic design and character. The only houses where painting does not harm their character are at the western end of Longridge Road as these are stucco fronted and mostly painted shades of cream to imitate limestone.



Painted brick frontage

5.5 Several houses have been converted to hotels and this has brought about a clutch of interventions that harm the character of the conservation area. They too are often painted, but in addition, original front doors have sometimes been removed and replaced with glass doors. There are some instances of ugly lifts up to entrances. Signage can be oversized and unsightly. Steps have often been recovered in modern materials and in at least one instance tile cladding has been added to columns in



Out of keeping front entrance

complete contrast to the stucco columns that are characteristic of the Italianate houses.

5.6 Another feature that is regrettably common in the conservation area is the hard standing for car parking. These are peppered through the area where a garden meets a street and they create an ugly expanse of bare concrete and sometimes metal posts that causes the loss of green space and harms the character of the conservation area.



Wheelchair lift at hotel

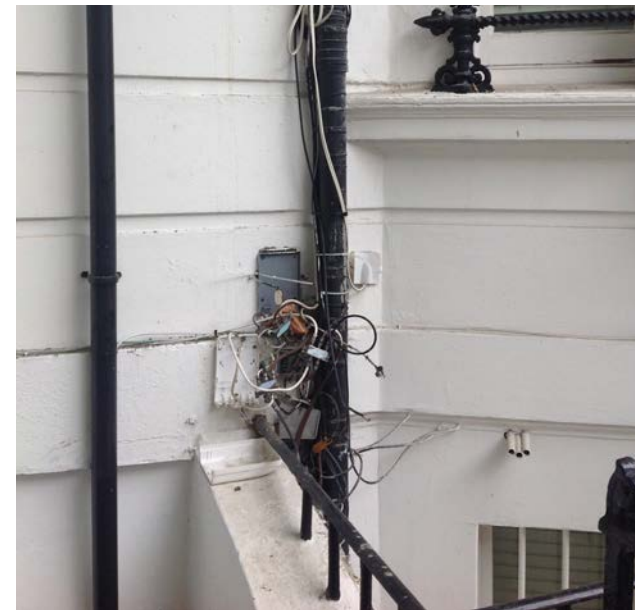
5.7 All of the shopfronts on Earl's Court Road have been replaced with modern units that have failed to preserve the historic character and appearance of the conservation area. The worst offenders have two units, plus access to the flats squeezed into the width of one house. All make use of modern materials, lettering, signage and large plate glass windows and some have especially oversized fascias and bright colours. Street clutter on Earl's Court Road is also visually harmful.



Hard standing for car parking



Modern window



Pipework and exposed wiring



Modern railings



Signage, blocked window and extraction unit



Street clutter, Earl's Court Road

Appendix 1: History

THE EDWARDES' ESTATE

6.1 At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Edwardes' estate was the largest in Kensington, consisting of three adjoining parcels of land and amounting to some 250 acres. The largest parcel was rectangular in shape and ran from the Hammersmith turnpike (now Kensington High Street) in the north; to what became Richmond Road and is now Old Brompton Road in the south; and from Earl's Court Lane (now Earl's Court Road) westwards to the parish boundary, then running along Counter's Creek.

6.2 The land was once part of the manor of Earl's Court which, as the manor of Kensington, had been granted after the Norman Conquest to Aubrey de Vere, one of the followers of William the Conqueror. The manor was bought by Sir Walter Cope in 1610, and after his death it passed into the Rich family, Earls of Warwick and Holland. Remains of the manor and medieval bridge may survive as archaeology. On the death of Edward Henry Rich in 1721 the estates were inherited by his aunt, Elizabeth, who had married Francis Edwardes of Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire. Their third son, William, inherited the Kensington property in 1738. He married Elizabeth Warren of Longridge in Pembrokeshire in 1762 and was created Baron Kensington in 1776. The Pembrokeshire connections account for many of the street names in the subsequent development of the Kensington estate.

6.3 In 1821, the parish of St Mary in Kensington had a population of 14,428 and

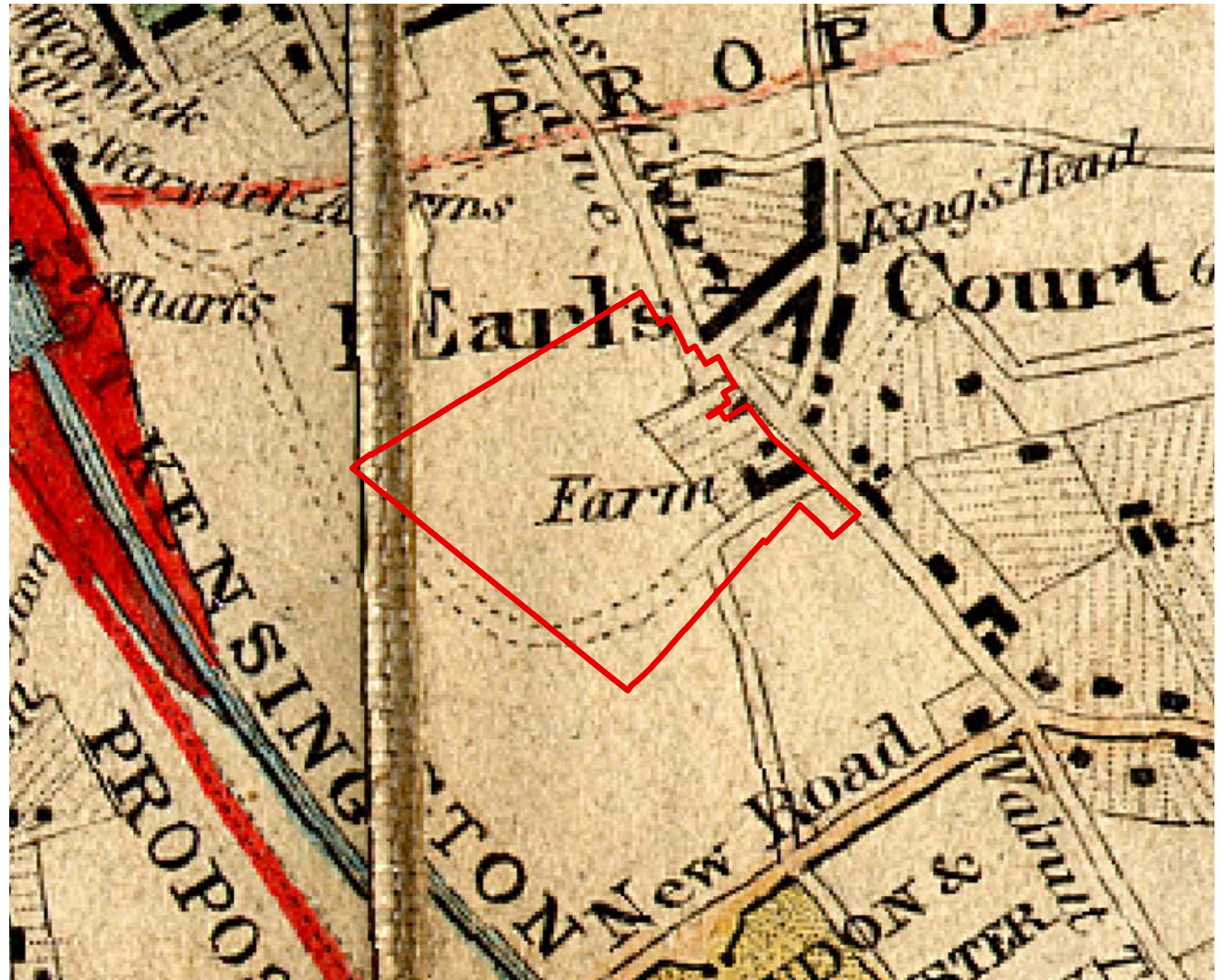


Fig 6.1: Davie's map of 1841

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agriculture was the dominant land use. To the north, there was grazing and haymaking and to the south nursery and market gardening. Ground rents were around £2 per acre. Of the estate's 210 acres to the north of what is now Old

Brompton Road, over 190 acres were occupied by Earl's Court Farm which was let to Samuel Hutchins whose family had been tenants since 1720. The Manor House and farmhouse were located roughly where Earl's Court Station's

main/north entrance today.

6.4 The Edwardes' estate underwent mixed fortunes during the first half of the nineteenth century and even before the second Lord Kensington succeeded to his title in 1801 he was in debt. He continued to borrow heavily using the estate as security. Despite a modest increase in building activity during the 1840s, together with higher agricultural rents, he could not meet the demands of his creditors. He appears to have suffered from a combination of poor judgement and bad luck, his unsuccessful speculation at Edwardes Square setting the pattern for most of his other business ventures during his lifetime. This may be one reason why the estate remained so rural for so long. The 1850s were, in any event, a volatile period for the London building industry. In 1853 the peak of a spectacular boom was recorded, but this was followed by a dramatic slump which had its trough in 1857. Despite this activity in other parts of the capital and nearer to home in other parts of Kensington, the Edwardes' estate remained virtually untouched by development. According to the Survey of London, this was perhaps partly due to the third Baron's difficulties in gaining full legal control over the estate after the settlement made by his father in 1833. Most of the building work in his lifetime took place in the area to the north of Pembroke Road.

6.5 In 1872, Lord Kensington's surveyor, Martin Stutely was granted permission by the Metropolitan Board of Works for a grid of terraced streets in the well-established Italianate style. Building in this style commenced in 1873 and finished in 1881 and covers the streets to

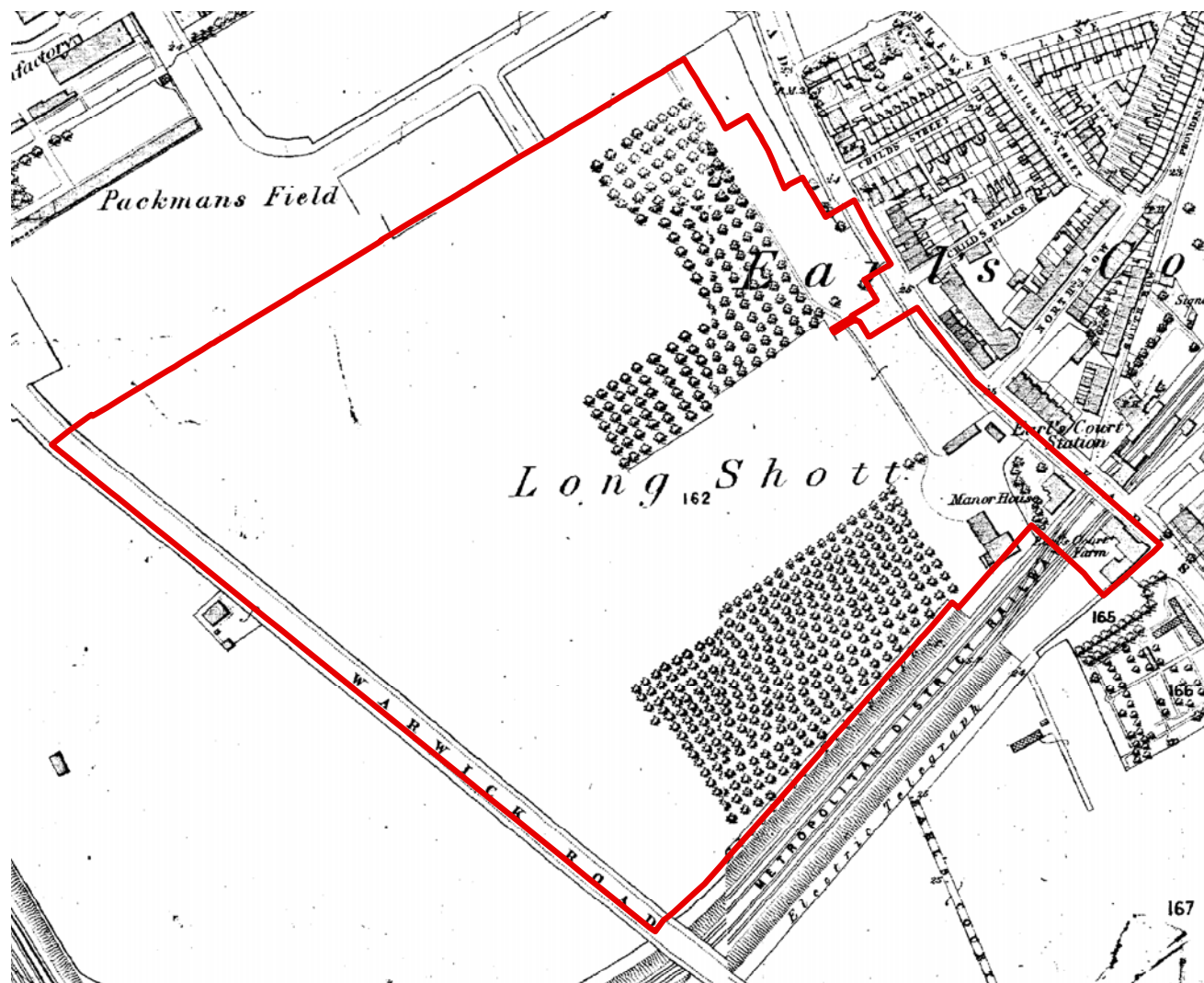


Fig 6.2: Map of 1869

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the north of the Nevern Square.

LONGRIDGE ROAD

6.6 In January 1873, Lord Kensington agreed to let the entire length of the projected Longridge Road to a builder called Charles Hunt from Kensington. In addition, he leased to Hunt the adjacent frontages of Earl's Court Road and Warwick Road together with two cross streets now named Nevern Road and Templeton Place. The building agreement was a standard one and required Hunt to construct roads and sewers at his own expense. At least one hundred houses were to be built with rack-rental values ranging between £80 in Earl's Court Road and £50 at the western end.

6.7 In Longridge Road, building began at the eastern end later that year although Hunt initially left building to others. The easternmost range on the north side of the street was built by G.E. Mineard, who was later to build most of Philbeach Gardens; the facing terrace was leased to William Hopping from Kilburn and both terraces were complete by 1875.

6.8 The two terraces between Templeton Place and Nevern Road were built by Charles Hunt himself and another builder between 1874-77. These two ranges are larger and grander than those at the east end of Longridge Road, with four storeys above semi-basements.

6.9 To the west of Nevern Road, Hunt finished the development of Longridge Road between 1877 and 1887 with stucco fronted houses. The westernmost houses of Longridge Road were still incomplete in 1881 but the census shows that the occupants of the completed

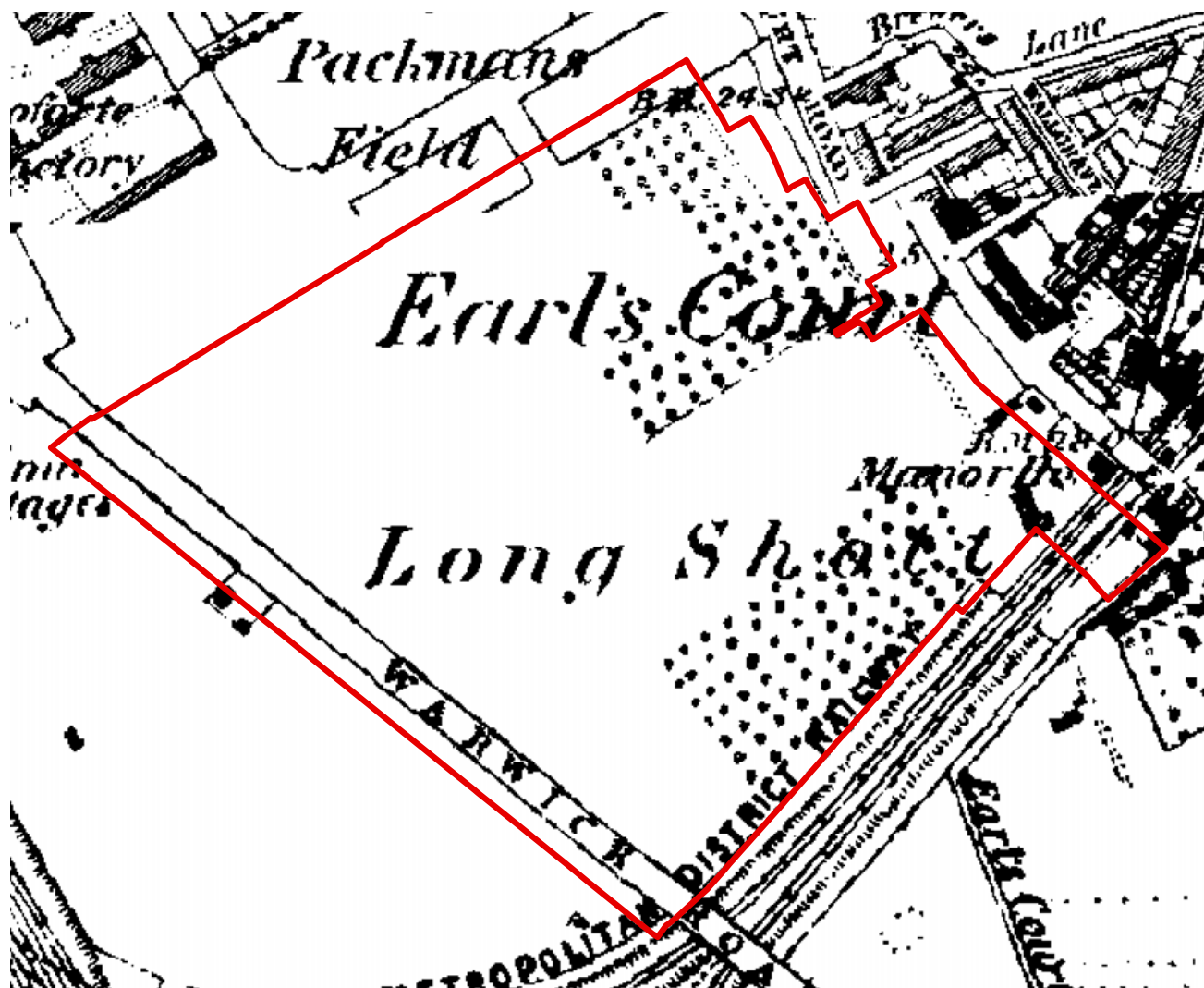


Fig 6.3: Map of 1874

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houses were a mix of middle and upper class residents including professional people such as clergymen, lecturers, music teachers, private tutors, solicitors and barristers, civil servants, merchants, clerks, company secretaries or

agents, several army officers and at least ten widows living off investments. All households employed servants, mostly three but some with four. As an indication of things to come, two houses were already subdivided, two more were

already boarding houses and other families also took in boarders. In Nevern Road one house was subdivided while another had boarders with servants to look after them. On the other hand three households in this road had five servants.

6.10 The actress Ellen Terry lived at **no. 33 Longridge Road** from 1878 until 1889 when she moved to Barkston Gardens. D.S. MacColl, a noted art critic and Keeper of the Tate Gallery, lived at **no. 36** as a boy and remarked in his memoirs on the contrast in the 1880s between the drabness of the street with its houses '*of sad-coloured brick, with columned porticoes and window surrounds in gritty stucco*' and the liveliness of its inhabitants. He especially recalled the impact Ellen Terry made each morning as she went to rehearsals. '*She appeared upon the steps like April morning, lifting wide eloquent lips, hooded eyes and breathless face to the light. She raised and kissed two little tots, greeted the next-door neighbours, family of a Rabbinical scholar, who had promptly become slaves of her apparition, and stood ready on the pavement. Her cushions were brought out, placed and patted in the open carriage; herself installed; the air became tender and gay with wavings and blown kisses; the wheels revolved, and greyiness descended once more on Longridge Road.*' It is interesting to note that both MacColl and Mrs Yeats, in nearby Eardley Crescent, found their streets and houses drab if not distasteful so soon after completion. It should be remembered that the original stucco work would have been a dull stone colour in contrast to today's range of whites and creams, and the London air would quickly have made them very grimy.

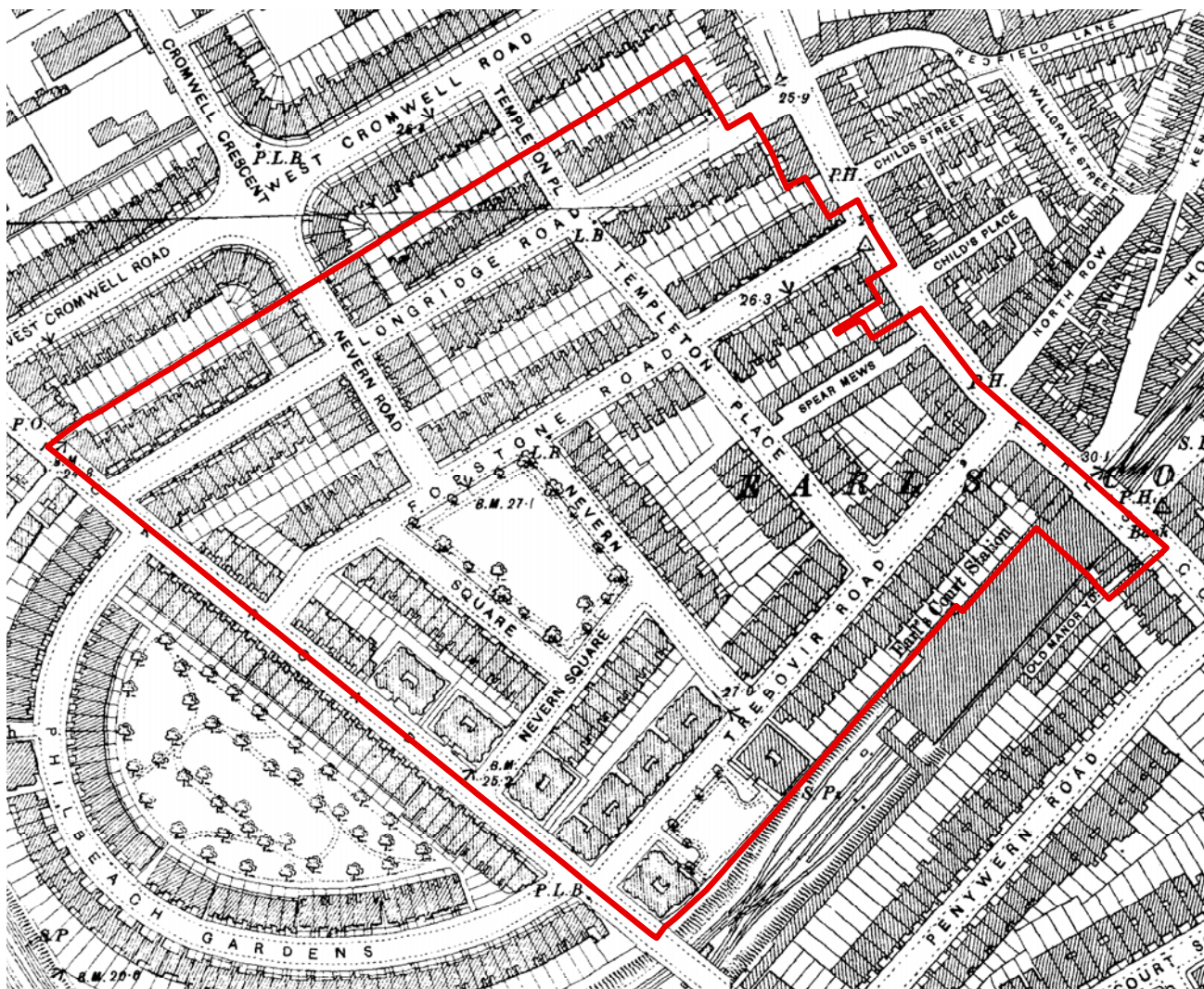


Fig 6.4: Map of 1896

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TREBOVIR ROAD AND TEMPLETON PLACE

6.11 In 1874, Lord Kensington concluded an agreement with the builder Thomas Grange to develop the frontage of Earl's Court Road between Hunt's ground in Longridge Road and the District Railway together with a substantial part of the estate stretching westwards from Earl's Court Road. In the end the houses were erected in 1876-79 not by Grange but by the Van Camp family who were originally Belgian but had become naturalised British citizens, settling in Kilburn. At the time Jean François and Edouard Van Camp were building very similar houses in Hogarth Road and the top of Knaresborough Place (now in Earl's Court Village Conservation Area) with florid stucco ornament of a type found in French eighteenth century architecture which brings a Continental flavour to their facade design.

6.12 Kensington Mansions at the west end of Trebovir Road were built in 1888-90 by William Cooke of Upper Phillimore Place and his designs were similar to those he had just employed at York Mansions on Earl's Court Road.

NEVERN SQUARE

6.13 In 1874-76 the builder, Robert Whitaker had begun to build Nevern Place; his houses there were of the typical classically inspired, brick and-stucco type. However, Martin Stutely and his son in law Daniel Cubitt Nichols applied in July 1877 for permission to alter the permitted plans to construct what was to become Nevern Square, and by 1880 Stutely was probably being

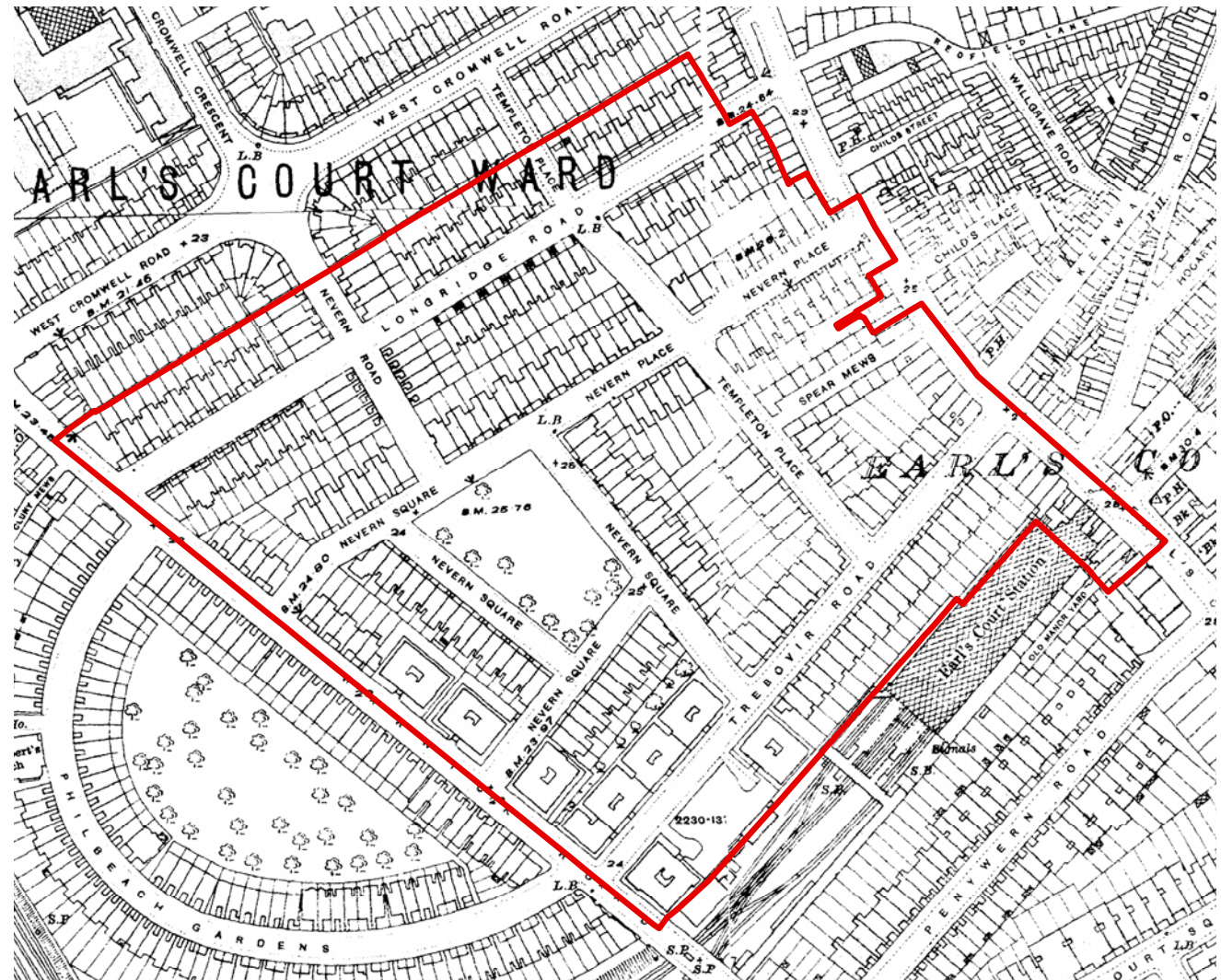


Fig 6.5: Map of 1915

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replaced by his son in law as Lord Kensington's adviser. Daniel Cubitt Nichols favoured the new Domestic Revival style pioneered by leading architects, J.J. Stevenson, E.R. Robson and R.N. Shaw elsewhere in the Royal Borough, and

it was therefore this style that was chosen for Nevern Square.

6.14 Nevern Square was designed by architect, Walter Graves and built by Robert Whitaker. It

was commenced in 1880 and several houses were occupied by 1882 with others attracting occupants on completion. The garden square was formed at an early stage of building, with the occupants paying an annual rental of two guineas for its maintenance. Whitaker issued a prospectus in 1882, advertising houses for sale at £2,200 or to let; rents ranged from £150 to £180 for houses in the middle of terraces to as high as £250 to £275 for corner houses. Due to the garden square, each house had to bear a relatively high ground rent of £25. However, Whitaker's pretensions seem to have been equalled, and in some cases exceeded.

6.15 Robert Whitaker lived at **no. 3 Nevern Square** from 1881 until his death when his wife continued to live there. In January 1885, Robert Whitaker died shortly after starting the south-west side of Nevern Square. The administration of his estate was granted to his widow as he had left no will. Building work on the south-west side of the square was assigned to George Whitaker, probably a relative, who built the remaining houses there between 1885-86. George modified the architect's designs with the result that this side of the square is markedly different from the other sides and from Graves's perspective drawing.

6.16 Considerable bomb damage at the junction with Nevern Road during the Second World War has been rectified with the redevelopment of **nos. 1 and 51** (to the modern but sensitive designs of Llewellyn Smith and Waters (1948 50)); and by the erection of the adjacent Rupert House which was built in two stages between 1949-59.

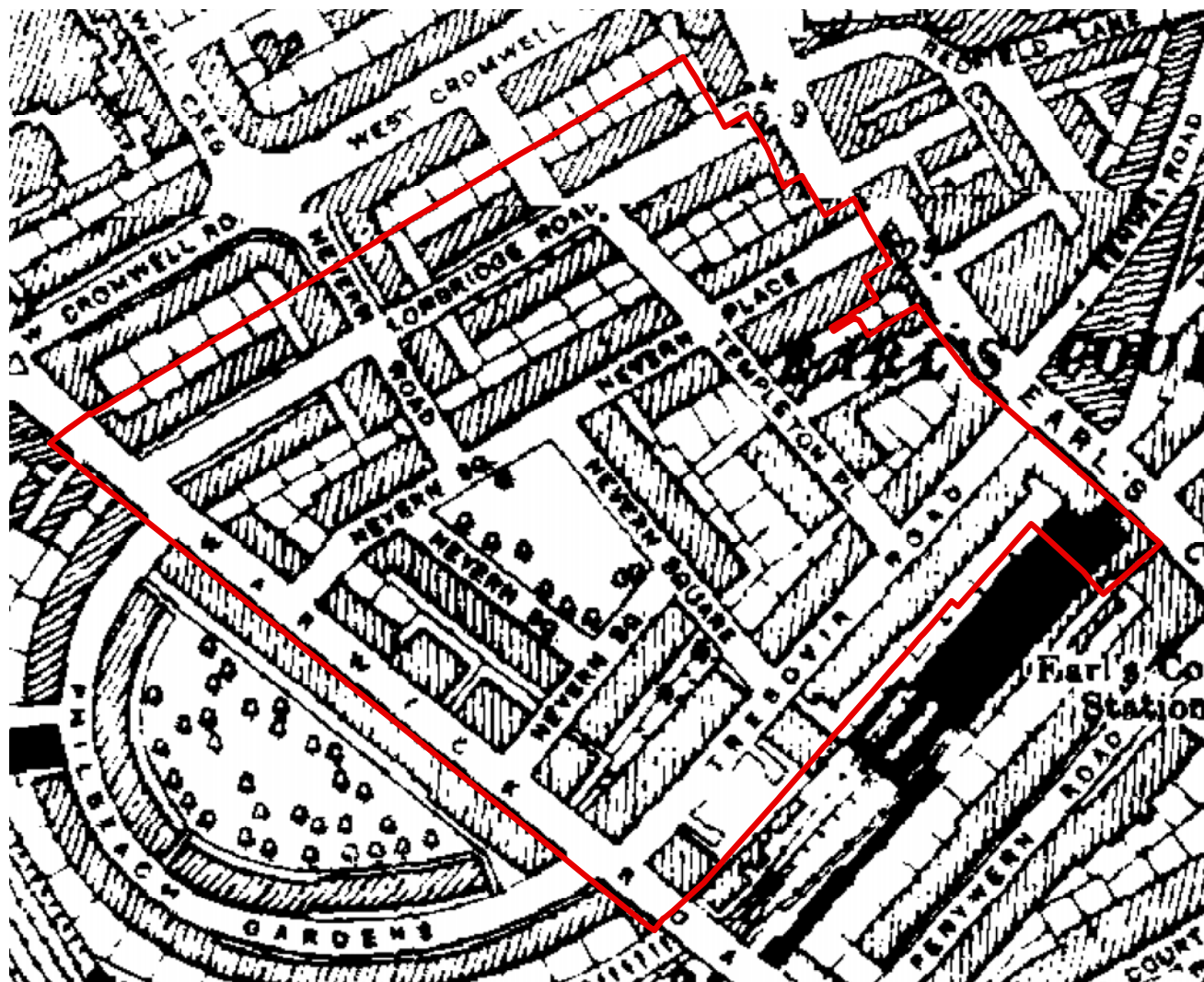


Fig 6.6: Map of 1920

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THE LATE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

6.17 The mid-1870s and 1880s marked the height of house building in the conservation area but by 1881 there were already a few boarding-houses in most streets. Long after one would have expected them to be occupied, several of the large newly built houses in Trebovir Road were standing empty. By the end of the 1880s house prices and rents were moving significantly downwards. For example, Compton Mackenzie, the famous writer, lived as a child at no. 1 Nevern Square. His father bought the house in 1901 for £2,000, almost half the price that had been paid for it 20 years earlier.

6.18 This downturn was well before the Edwardian property slump in London as a whole. The process of converting into flats the large houses built only a short time previously for single families began its long and unstoppable course well before the century ended. By 1939, very few houses in the southern half of the former Edwardes Estate remained in single-family occupation.

6.19 This process of social change was accelerated by the dislocating effects of the 1939-45 war, after which marked differences between the fortunes of the northern and southern parts of the estate emerged. North of Pembroke Road the prevalence of smaller and varied house types helped to promote a return to stability while the southern part suffered the problems which arose from a highly transient population.

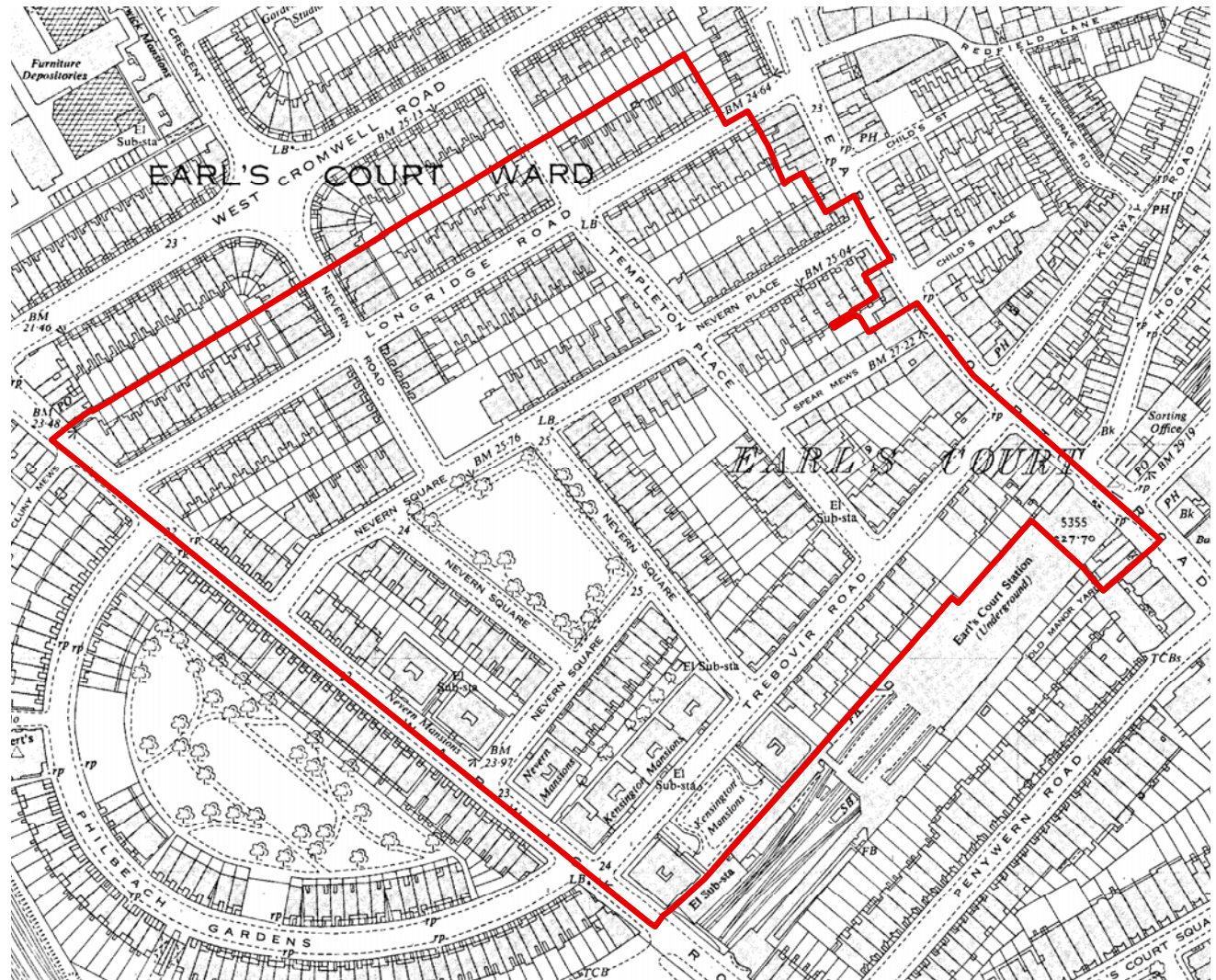


Fig 6.7: Map of 1955

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6.20 Immediately after the war immigration began with the arrival of Polish refugees who were followed by students from the former colonies. These groups were then overtaken in the 1950s by the large numbers of South

Africans, Rhodesians and Australians who came to the area with the establishment of the Overseas Visitors Club initially in Templeton Place and later in Nevern Place. It was this

migration that caused the characteristic images of rootlessness associated with Earl's Court.

6.21 By the end of the 1960s, this tide of people from the old Commonwealth was ebbing only to be replaced by incoming Arab, Iranian and Filipino migrants. This population movement was to produce further deterioration in the building fabric which had already suffered from neglect during the war. Houses were further subdivided into bedsitting rooms whilst small hotels and hostels multiplied.

6.22 Since the mid 1970s, there have been signs that this has slowed down or even stopped. There have also been indications of greater stability with the formation of a number of residents' associations able to exert pressure to improve the appearance and amenity of the area. The conservation area designations of Earl's Court Village in 1973 and Earl's Court Square in 1975 were important events in the history of the neighbourhood. Further designations including Nevern Square Conservation Area in 1985 and Philbeach Gardens (1993) have reinforced the slow upturn in the fortunes of the locality since.

6.23 In 2013 Sir Terry Farrell's masterplan for the redevelopment of land occupied by the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre fronting Warwick Road was granted outline planning permission. This will see the development of a new residential area with associated regeneration of the surrounding neighbourhoods and bring a new phase of history to the area.

Appendix 2: Historic England Guidance

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016)

This guidance sets out ways to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances historic areas through conservation area designation, appraisal and management.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-designation-appraisal-management-advice-note-1/>

The checklist below has been taken from this publication and has helped to identify the buildings that make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

- Is the building the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?

- Is it associated with a designed landscape eg a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

Additional criteria set by the Council:

- Does the building have architectural, historical, archaeological, evidential, artistic or communal significance that contributes to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- Has the building retained its original design, materials, features and setting or ones that are appropriate to its style and period?
- Does it contribute to the evolution and diversity of the conservation area?
- Was it built by an important local builder or one who also built other significant buildings in the area?

Conservation and Energy Efficiency

Historic England have produced useful guidance on how homeowners can improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions whilst still respecting the historic and architectural significance of their properties. For more information follow this link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/saving-energy/>

Appendix 3: Relevant Local Plan Policies

The table opposite indicates those policies in the Royal Borough's Local Plan, which have particular relevance to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

These policies are the primary means through which the Council ensures that proposed development within designated conservation areas preserve or enhance the area's character and appearance.

This list is not comprehensive and any development proposals will have to take account of the whole suite of policies contained within the Council's Local Plan. Please consult the Council's website.

Chapter 33: An Engaging Public Realm

Policy CR4

Streetscape

Policy CR5

Parks, Gardens, Open Space and Waterways

Policy CR6

Trees and Landscape

Chapter 34: Renewing the Legacy

Policy CL1

Context and Character

Policy CL 2

Design Quality

Policy CL3

Heritage Assets – Conservation Areas and Historic Spaces

Policy CL 4

Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeology

Policy CL 6

Small Scale Alterations and Additions

Policy CL7

Basements

Policy CL8

Existing Buildings – Roof Alteration/Additional Storeys

Policy CL9

Existing Buildings – Extensions and Modifications

Policy CL10

Shopfronts

Policy CL11

Views

Policy CL12

Building Heights