

# Camberwell Green

Conservation Area Appraisal

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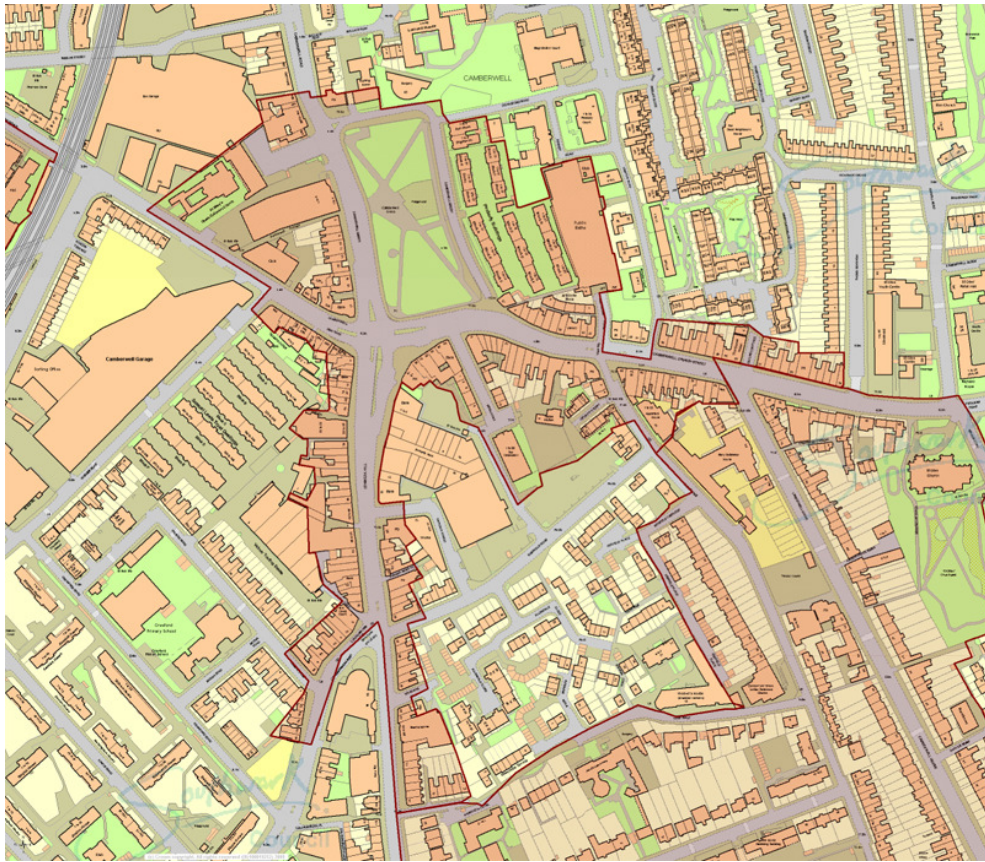






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Camberwell Green Conservation Area

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The Conservation Area Appraisal: Purpose

- 1.1.1. The purpose of this statement is to provide both an account of Camberwell Green Conservation Area and a clear indication of the Borough Council's approach to its preservation and enhancement. It is intended to assist and guide all those involved in development and change in the area, and will be used by the Council in assessing the design of development proposals.
- 1.1.2. 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." Conservation Areas are normally centred on listed buildings and pleasant groups of other buildings, open space, or an historic street pattern. A town space or features of archaeological interest may also contribute to the special character of an area. It is, however, the character of an area, rather than individual buildings, that such a designation seeks to preserve or enhance. The most recent legislation dealing with Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Guidance to the legislation is given in Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS 5) and the related Historic Environment Planning Practice Guidance, published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2010.
- 1.1.3. Planning legislation requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In doing this the emphasis will be on control rather than prevention, to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with its special architectural and visual qualities.
- 1.1.4. This statement has been prepared following guidance given by English Heritage in their note "Conservation Area Appraisals".

### 1.2. Arrangement of this document

- 1.2.1. Following the Introduction, Section 2 provides a brief history of the area and its development. Section 3 starts with a broad appraisal of its character and appearance, with reference to the range of materials, details and building types to be found in the area. Section 3 then goes on to describe the area with specific reference to architectural and historic qualities, views and townscape, the character and relationship of public and green spaces, and any elements that detract from the Conservation Area. Section 4 provides an audit of the features of special interest of the area, including listed buildings, particular groups of unlisted buildings, and trees, planting and other streetscape elements. Section 5 provides guidelines for future management and change in the conservation area.

### **1.3. Camberwell Green Conservation Area**

#### **1.4. Location**

- 1.4.1. The Camberwell Green Conservation Area is situated in the area of the original Camberwell village, now the junction of the A202 (Camberwell New Road/Camberwell Church Street), the route between Kennington and Peckham, and the A215 (Camberwell Road/ Denmark Hill), which links Dulwich and Herne Hill with Elephant and Castle. The railway runs across Camberwell New Road and the bridge is a visual boundary to central Camberwell to the west. The point at which Camberwell Church Street becomes part of Peckham Road, at its junction with Vicarage Grove, marks the end of the Conservation Area and the eastern side of the original village.
- 1.4.2. Camberwell Green Conservation Area adjoins Camberwell Grove Conservation Area to the east.

#### **1.5. Topography**

- 1.5.1. Topographically the dominant feature of the Conservation Area is Denmark Hill, which rises up to the south. The village of Camberwell grew up along the lower, level area to the north, while wealthy families moved in to the land on the hill itself. Although the development over the last two or three centuries has partly disguised small changes in levels, the hill still makes a significant impression on the Conservation Area.

#### **1.6. Planning History**

- 1.6.1. Camberwell Green Conservation Area was originally designated in February 1981 under the Civic Amenities Act 1967.

#### **1.7. Unitary Development Plan Policies**

- 1.7.1. The Development Plan for Southwark is the Southwark Plan (UDP) July 2007, which was adopted by the Council on 28 July 2007, superseding the Unitary Development Plan adopted in 1995. The new Plan contains the following policies relating to Conservation Areas.

### **Policy 3.15 – Conservation of the Historic Environment**

*Development should preserve or enhance the special interest or historic character or appearance of buildings or areas of historical or architectural significance. Planning proposals that will have an adverse effect on the historic environment will not be permitted.*

*The character and appearance of Conservation Areas should be recognised and respected in any new development within these areas. Article 4 directions may be imposed to limit permitted development rights, particularly in residential areas.*

*In this policy the term historic environment includes Conservation Areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected London Squares, historic parks and gardens and trees that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, trees that contribute to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area and ancient hedgerows.*

### **Policy 3.16 – Conservation Areas**

*Within Conservation Areas development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.*

### ***New Development, including Alterations and Extensions***

*Planning permission will be granted for new development, including the extension or alteration of existing buildings provided that the proposals:*

- *Respect the context of the Conservation Area, having regard to the content of Conservation Area Appraisals and other adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents; and*
- *Use high quality materials that complement and enhance the Conservation Area; and*
- *Do not involve the loss of existing traditional features of interest which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and*
- *Do not introduce design details or features that are out of character with the area, such as the use of windows and doors made of aluminium or UPVC or other non-traditional materials.*

*Where appropriate development in Conservation Areas may include the use of modern materials or innovative techniques only where it can be demonstrated in a design and access statement that this will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.*

### ***Demolition***

*Within Conservation Areas, there will be a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings that contribute positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that involve the demolition or substantial demolition of a building that contributes positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless, in accordance with PPG 15 or any subsequent amendments, it can be demonstrated that:*

- *Costs of repairs and maintenance would not be justified, when assessed against the importance of the building and the value derived from its continued use, provided that the building has not been deliberately neglected; and*
- *Real efforts have been made to continue the current use or find a viable alternative use for the building; and*
- *There will be substantial planning benefits for the community from redevelopment which would decisively outweigh loss from the resulting demolition; and*
- *The replacement development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and has been granted planning permission.*

### ***Implementation***

*Submission of details demonstrating that a contract for the construction of the replacement development has been let will be required prior to implementation of the development.*

## **Policy 3.18 – Setting of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites**

*Permission will not be granted for developments that would not preserve or enhance:*

- *The immediate or wider setting of a listed building; or*
- *An important view(s) of a listed building; or*
- *The setting of a Conservation Area; or*
- *Views into or out of a Conservation Area; or*
- *The setting of a World Heritage Site; or*
- *Important views of or from a World Heritage Site.*

## **1.8. PPS5: Planning and the Historic Environment**

### **Introduction**

- 1.8.1. Planning Policy statements set out the Government's national policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England. PPS5 sets out the planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The policies in PPS5 are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions where relevant.
- 1.8.2. PPS5 sets out that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets. Some heritage assets possess a level of interest that justifies designation and particular procedures apply to decisions that involve them. Designated assets are:
- World Heritage Sites;
  - Scheduled monuments;
  - Listed Buildings;
  - Protected wreck sites;
  - Conservation Area;
  - Registered Parks and Gardens;
  - Registered battlefields.
- 1.8.3. PPS5 also covers heritage assets that are not designated but which are of heritage interest and thus a material planning consideration.
- 1.8.4. Guidance to help practitioners implement these policies, including the legislative requirements that underpin it, is provided in Planning for the Historic Environment practice Guide. The policies and guidance under PPG15 have now been replaced by this PPS5 and the Practice Guidance.



## **The Policies**

1.8.5. The value of the historic environment, and the contribution it makes to our cultural, social and economic life, is set out in the Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010. PPS5 comprises policies that will enable the Government's vision for the historic environment as set out in this statement to be implemented through the planning system.

1.8.6. The relevant policies to this designated heritage asset are set out below:

- Policy HE1: Heritage Assets and climate change;
- Policy HE2: Evidence base for plan-making;
- Policy HE3: Regional and local planning approaches;
- Policy HE4: Permitted development and article 4 directions;
- Policy HE5: Monitoring indicators;
- Policy HE6: Information requirements for applications for consent affecting heritage assets;
- Policy HE7: Policy principles guiding the determination of applications for consent relating to all heritage assets;
- Policy HE8: Additional policy principle guiding the consideration of applications for consent relating to heritage assets that are not covered by policy HE 9;
- Policy HE9: Additional policy principles guiding the consideration of applications for consent relating to designated heritage assets;
- Policy HE10: Additional policy principles guiding the consideration of applications for development affecting the setting of a designated heritage asset;
- Policy HE11: Enabling Development;
- Policy HE12: Policy principles guiding the recording of information related to heritage assets.

## **1.9. Further Information**

1.9.1. This document is not exhaustive, and further advice and information can be obtained from the Planning Department, London Borough of Southwark.

1.9.2. Information on the Southwark Plan, including electronic versions of the plan and supplementary planning guidance, can be found on the Council's web site at [www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk).

## 2. Historical Background

### 2.1. General

#### Origins

- 2.1.1. The name Camberwell has a variety of possible meanings. However the place had a reputation as a spa with health-giving properties, so its most likely meaning is that of camber as 'crooked' referring to water from a well that could cure crippled (crooked) people.
- 2.1.2. One of the first references to Camberwell is in the Domesday Book (1086) as a village or manor with its own church and land for ploughing and growing corn, and with meadows and woods. The recorded Lord of the Manor was Haimo, Sheriff of Surrey. Later it was passed by marriage to the Earl of Gloucester and then in the 1400-1500s to the Duke of Buckingham. The first local government of Camberwell was formed in 1674, when The Vestry was appointed. This lasted until 1900 when the Borough Council replaced it.

#### Medieval economic base

- 2.1.3. The village had its own mill and supported itself from the surrounding fields. Barley was grown and there was a brew-house in what was to become Peckham Road. It had trade from London supplying the city with fresh fruit and vegetables and milk, and many market gardens grew up in the area. St Giles, the parish church of Camberwell is mentioned in the Domesday Book, although the medieval church was replaced by the present buildings in 1844 following a fire that destroyed the original church in 1841.
- 2.1.4. Camberwell is well known for its fair, which originated in 1279 and was held on Camberwell Green at the end of August, finishing on the feast day of St Giles. Such autumn fairs were important commercial occasions: often for the hiring of the workforce for another twelve months following the summer harvest. Camberwell Fair was held for three weeks originally, but by the 1700s it lasted only 3 days and was for entertainment only. It was eventually abolished in 1855 and the site was handed over to the Vestry to make sure that the green stayed an open space.

#### 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century – transportation and urbanisation

- 2.1.5. Camberwell began to develop from a country village during Georgian times because of its reputation for clean air, and improvements in transport. The most significant of these advances was the construction of new bridges over the Thames to bypass the congestion of London Bridge which in turn led to the construction of a new local road network. Camberwell New Road, for example, was opened in 1818 to link Camberwell with Vauxhall Bridge, which was built in 1816. Other roads constructed or improved at this time include Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell Road, and Peckham Road.
- 2.1.6. By 1800 two firms each ran coaches 7 times a day from Camberwell to Gracechurch Street in the City. This was a relatively expensive form of transport as tolls had to be paid. In the mid 1800s the horse-drawn bus was developed and began to come into use in Camberwell: the first buses were used in 1851 and transported people to the Great

Exhibition. The original bus company, Tillings, were very successful and eventually became incorporated into London Transport.

- 2.1.7. In 1862 a railway line was opened to Camberwell, followed by stations at East Dulwich and later Denmark Hill. This advance allowed less wealthy people to commute to London. The service was very popular, and in 1871 it attracted competition from the tram companies using lines in the street. By the early 1900s at peak times around Camberwell Green as many as 250 trams passed every hour on 14 different routes.
- 2.1.8. Continued increase in available transport led to further change in the character of Camberwell from a semi-rural village to an inner city suburb. This urbanisation attracted new business and in 1899 the London County Bank erected its impressive turreted building on the north corner of Camberwell New Road. The curving north side of Camberwell Church Street is part of one of the Victorian redevelopments undertaken in the 1880s when the road was widened for the trams. The Camberwell Vestry opened Camberwell Baths (now Camberwell Leisure Centre in Artichoke Place) in 1891. The Father Red Cap, recently renamed Nollywood and formerly the Redstar, was opened in 1853 as a music hall.
- 2.1.9. Significant middle class suburbs were built during the Victoria era, for example, De Crespigny Park, but ease of access and the development boom in Camberwell undermined its exclusivity, and wealthier people moved away from the area. The older, large family houses steadily underwent conversion into multiple occupancy, and areas of much denser housing were developed for the new class of people coming in. In time, the worst of this development fell into decline, with unsanitary and overcrowded conditions.

## **20<sup>th</sup> century – housing improvements**

- 2.1.10. In response to the worsening public health problems in Camberwell associated with high density slum housing, philanthropic organisations that had been working to improve housing in the inner areas of Southwark began to take an interest in the area. In 1910 flats were erected on Camberwell Green by the Peabody Trust followed by the Samuel Lewis Trust Buildings in 1915. Further redevelopment of the area was necessary following World War II when air attacks destroyed some 5,650 houses in the area.

## **Late 20<sup>th</sup> century**

- 2.1.11. The main threat to the physical character of the area has through much of its history been under-investment because of low incomes and property values. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, increasing affluence started coming to neighbouring residential areas, and the potential to raise the quality of the facilities, services and buildings that Camberwell Green offers. Both public and private money can assist in the area's regeneration – Jephson Street has been restored by a Housing Association for example. It is important that its architectural and townscape heritage continues to be a beneficiary of such improvements.

### 3. The Character and Appearance of the Area

#### 3.1. Broad Context

- 3.1.1. The Camberwell Green Conservation Area essentially covers the Green and the main streets, at the centre of Camberwell, with primarily commercial frontages (shops, pubs, banks and other services). It is a significant location in the geography of South London, where key routes through the area intersect. It is a meeting point for routes and a centre for its local neighbourhood but not a primary destination in itself; and most people's experience of it is of passing through.
- 3.1.2. To the north lies the main route into central London, and extensive areas of post-war housing redevelopment. To the south, rising up Denmark Hill and extending eastwards to Peckham, are leafy areas of 19<sup>th</sup> century housing that have become some of the more desirable parts of Southwark to live in. Immediately adjacent to the area, to the east and west, are the late Victorian mansion dwellings constructed by philanthropic Trusts to replace slum housing.

#### 3.2. Materials and Details

3.2.1. Most of the Conservation Area was constructed between the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, using a relatively limited range of materials to classical and later, revivalist architectural styles. The common material palette for the earlier buildings is

- Yellow London stock brick, or occasional red facing bricks;
- Portland/ artificial stone or stucco designs
- Slate roofs to shallow pitches, with over hanging or parapeted eaves, or:
- Slated mansard attic storeys.

In later buildings the palette varies to:

- Brickwork decorated with coloured banding in blue, buff and red engineering bricks;
- Dressings in stone or stucco and widespread use of rubbed red brick.

#### 3.3. Buildings

##### Commercial Buildings and Shops

- 3.3.1. The Conservation Area is distinctive for its three and four storey blocks of buildings, which typically have finely detailed upper storeys repeated the length of the street frontage to create very strong architectural rhythms. The construction of facades out of modules based on the shop and upper storeys in this way creates a strong horizontality, which is extended in most cases to the roofline by cornices and parapets, and emphasised by string courses. This impression is maintained even where gabled designs are used, as at Nos. 20-24 Camberwell Green.
- 3.3.2. Many purpose-built commercial premises extended these basic classical themes into sometimes elaborate revivalist designs, e.g. the baroque detail of the former London and County Bank.



3.3.3. The success of Camberwell Green as a shopping environment depends to a large extent upon shop fronts and advertisements. The form and design of shop fronts and advertisements strongly influences the character of the Conservation Area. The pedestrian's main view is below first-floor level but the quality of the Conservation Area is marred by badly designed shop-fronts. Many are out of keeping both with the building of which that are part and those neighbouring in the street scene, and by the proliferation of large illuminated box and fascia signs, often obscuring architectural details.





Camberwell Road: Inappropriate modern fascias can detract from the overall quality of a building

### Residential Buildings

3.3.4. The main residential elements of the Conservation Area are the Peabody tenement buildings, and the Samuel Lewis Trust Dwellings (just outside the Conservation Area). They provide a very strong built form that emphasises the urban quality of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area also includes short terraces of 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in Wren Road and Jephson Street, the only elements that do not directly form part of the main street frontages.

## Corner Buildings

- 3.3.5. The street layout of the Conservation Area, in which all the principal roads converge at Camberwell Green, gives particular prominence to street corners, and buildings generally exploit the architectural potential of such locations distinctively. The Hartnell's building (No. 2 Camberwell Church Street) and the former London and County Bank (No. 17 Camberwell Green), for example, are elaborate in their design, with turrets, cupolas and chamfered bays to carry elevational rhythms around the angle of the building.
- 3.3.6. Original ground surfacing materials have been lost throughout the Conservation Area. The most significant surviving element is the broad, flat granite kerbstone, which are still widespread. Stone flags remain in Camberwell Passage. Iron railings, although not original, are a feature of Camberwell Green that help to define it as a distinct space from the street environment that surrounds it.

 A photograph of the former London and County Bank building, a large, ornate, multi-story structure with a prominent turret and a cupola, situated at a street corner. The building features red brickwork and white stone accents. The street scene includes traffic lights, a street lamp, and a few pedestrians.	 A photograph of Hartnell's Building, a large, ornate, multi-story structure with a prominent turret and a cupola, situated at a street corner. The building features red brickwork and white stone accents. The street scene includes traffic lights, a street lamp, and a few pedestrians.
<p>Former London and County Bank (No. 17 Camberwell Green) an impressive turreted Grade II Listed corner building built in 1899</p>	<p>Hartnell's Building (No. 2 Camberwell Church Street) is an important Grade II Listed corner building which helps create a strong edge to the central space of Camberwell Green</p>

### **3.4. Sub Area 1 – Camberwell Green**

- 3.4.1. Camberwell Green forms the obvious core of the Conservation Area, and includes buildings on all four sides.
- 3.4.2. At the north end of the Green, The Nollywood Pub is a local landmark, facing down the length of the space. A recent 4 storey residential block (with an additional mansard storey) adjoins its eastern side. Viewed along the Green, the mass of the buildings makes an effective closure of the space, but at close range the building line and architectural details of the new block are uncoordinated with The Nollywood.
- 3.4.3. On the eastern side, the front buildings of the Peabody Estate form an excellent edge to the space. Their height ranges from 4 storeys with a mansard roof storey, to 6 storeys in sections of the most southerly facade (Blocks A to C): such height is appropriate and necessary relative to the scale of the Green itself. The facades are designed in simple rhythms using regular modules of doubled and trebled sash windows in uncomplicated brickwork. The narrow accesses between the buildings barely break the continuity of the building line, which is essential to its strength as a development frontage. The residential use of the buildings promotes a quiet character to this side of the Green and low boundary walls and hedgerows in front of a shallow frontage set back provide a buffer between the buildings and the road. Areas of the Peabody estate behind the buildings fronting the Green are less distinctive.
- 3.4.4. Activity on Camberwell Green concentrates at its southern end. The shopping frontage of Denmark Hill and Camberwell Church Street extend into Camberwell Green and their junction is a complex interchange of both traffic and pedestrian movements. Buildings on this south side again make an excellent edge to the space, particularly the corner building at No. 2 Camberwell Church Street and those adjacent to it, and the 4 storey gabled group between Nos. 20 and 24 Camberwell Green. The upper storeys of these groups provide a regular visual rhythm, often with subtle idiosyncrasies (e.g. the change between No. 21/22 Camberwell Green and 23/24, from a single group of four windows to two groups of two). The ground floors have in some instances, however, lost its rhythm, with intrusive, garish and uncoordinated shop fronts.
- 3.4.5. While the western side of Camberwell Green retains the original building line of the street, significant elements have been lost and damaged. Furthermore, the area between Camberwell Green, Camberwell Passage and Camberwell New Road, notwithstanding the importance of St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church and the remaining older frontage buildings on Camberwell Road, detracts from the overall quality of the sub-areas townscape. South of Camberwell Passage the street scene is lively with shop fronts extended to the pavement from the ground floors of the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century houses, The former London and County Bank is a key 3-storey landmark at the end of this group on the corner of Camberwell New Road, in an ebullient baroque style using stone, red brick banding, and a welter of classical devices and carvings borrowed from renaissance architecture.



The Nollywood, formerly the Redstar, is a local landmark, facing down the length of the central green space



The proportions employed in the Peabody buildings respond well to the scale of the Green itself



Camberwell Green (west): South of Camberwell Passage (south of the 3 storey Job Centre building) the street scene improves with shop fronts of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century former houses extended to the pavement



St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, Camberwell New Road: an important marker building



## **Views and Townscape**

- 3.4.6. Because the Conservation Area is primarily based on streets, most views are contained vistas between street frontage rather than broad prospects. In this context Camberwell Green, a location of prime geographical importance in the south Southwark area, makes an important contrast. Approximately 60m in width and 145m in length, it is a significant space with wide views across it from all sides. Buildings ranging from 3 to 6 storeys in height provide an almost continuous frontage, helping to define and contain the space.
- 3.4.7. The views in and out of Camberwell Green from the two adjoining shopping streets of Camberwell Church and Denmark Hill are notable. Corner buildings at the junction where the two main shopping streets meet create a strong development form and are an important reference point in the local street pattern. The former London and County Bank is a particularly important corner building which functions as a local landmark, a focal point in views westwards along Camberwell Church Street and northwards along Denmark Hill. In a similar way, No. 2 Camberwell Church Street performs a role as a marker building, dominating views southwards over the Green.
- 3.4.8. The Nollywood pub, with a dominating position over the north end of the Green, effectively closes the “gateway” of Camberwell Road onto the Green. When looking towards the pub from Camberwell Green, St. Paul’s Cathedral can be seen in the distance, an important view to protect and enhance.
- 3.4.9. The view from the junction down Camberwell New Road towards central Camberwell is important with the railway bridge defining the extent of the Camberwell Green area. St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church, also on Camberwell New Road, is a further local landmark, an important local reference point at the western end of the Conservation Area.

## **Key spaces**

- 3.4.10. The curving facades of the shop buildings, and the railings and trees at the edge of the Green define it as a strong street space. The crossroads at Camberwell Green is spatially part of the Green, but its separate function as the intersection of major routes in the area gives it a secondary identity. The pedestrian space at this intersection has, however been severely compromised by highway impacts, with narrow footways hemmed in by kerbside barriers, causing congestion amongst shoppers, passers by, and pedestrians waiting at street crossings.
- 3.4.11. The southern building frontage to the Green is broken by Wren Road which forms an enclosed space headed by the end of The Colonnades, and defined by the tight street elevations on each side.

	
<p>Camberwell Green crossroads: pedestrian space at the intersection has been compromised by highway interventions</p>	<p>Wren Road: an enclosed street space headed by the gable of The Colonnades</p>

### Landscape elements

3.4.12. In the dense urban character of much of Camberwell, Camberwell Green is an extremely important recreation space as well as a feature of historic importance as the original site of Camberwell Fair. Indeed, there are no other green spaces in the area that remotely challenge its significance and distinctiveness. The Green, containing several mature trees which heighten the sense of enclosure and the space's significance as a public park, is large enough to provide some mitigation of traffic noise from the road junction. Its railings give sufficient separation to make it feel secure whilst at the same time it has good visibility and surveillance through the railings and from overlooking buildings. These attributes make it a well used recreational amenity space and it provides an important pedestrian route through the centre of Camberwell away from traffic. Elsewhere, a large London Plane tree is also a prominent landscape feature within the curtilage of St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church on Camberwell New Street.



## **Negative elements**

3.4.13. The history of Camberwell is one of significant social change, and over a long period of time it suffered from a loss of affluence. Inevitably against this background, a lack of investment has led to a loss and damage to the physical fabric of the place. The issues are general ones, like poor shop conversions and alterations; and the decay of buildings. Some particular areas of loss and change are very apparent.

- The boundary of the Green suffers from a lack on consistent street furniture and railings that lead to an unclear delineation of the space
- Street furniture in other parts of the Sub-Area is also inconsistent and places an emphasis on the Highway, detracting from the character of the Green.

## **Proposal sites**

- Frontage of Camberwell Green from No. 6 Camberwell Green to No. 294 Camberwell Road (Job Centre) – poor buildings, open yards, gap sites, and dereliction of older buildings;
- 1-22 Grove Lane – including Appleford House and the adjacent area to the south (also within the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area)

## **Possible proposal sites**

- Former Club adjacent to Camberwell Passage and fronting Camberwell New Road;
- The north-east corner of the Green – containment lost to open planning for the Magistrates' Court and more recent development; and
- Nos. 1-23 Denmark Hill – shopping centre with low quality frontage onto Denmark Hill

3.4.14. The Conservation Area has also suffered from poor and inappropriate development when new building has taken place. Some of the worst elements neighbour the Conservation Area, and are rightly excluded from it. They still have an impact on it; however, such as the 1960s redevelopment to the north east of Camberwell Green that includes the magistrates' Court. Here, the urban forms and the multi-storey block of the Magistrates' Court are unrelated to the urban and architectural form of Camberwell Green. They fall outside the Conservation Area, but they leave a serious gap in its north east corner.

3.4.15. North of the recent brick block at 1-6 (Job Centre) Camberwell Green is a gap in the street frontage now occupied by yards. The new building at No. 304 Camberwell Road is vacant, and the adjacent shop units are in temporary use or are vacant. This section of the street is very run down with little attraction or activity on the frontage.

3.4.16. Traffic is a major intrusion directly into the Conservation Area, particularly where it becomes congested at Camberwell Green. Its impact is exacerbated by the dominance of the highway engineering, signage and signalisation that goes with it. Street elements such as phone boxes, bus shelters, lamp standards and highway signs all add clutter in this environment.

	
<p>The Athenaeum is a key corner building in need of refurbishment</p>	<p>No.6 Camberwell Green – No.294 Camberwell Road: group of buildings and gap sites requiring comprehensive redevelopment / enhancement</p>



### 3.5. Sub Area 2 – Denmark Hill

- 3.5.1. Denmark Hill is busy and lively, with numerous local retail businesses, cafes and pubs and some national stores and services. At the northern end, the buildings themselves are varied in 2 and 3 storeys. On the upper floors many 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural features remain, but in varying stages of preservation. With one or two exceptions, ground floor shop fronts and fascias have been lost to cheap modern fronts and signage.
- 3.5.2. Further up Denmark Hill towards its junction with Coldharbour Lane, the building form is a much more consistent 3 storeys, and three blocks at Nos. 37-43, 45-57 and 59-61 are to the same design of arched first floor windows and square second floor windows, below a simple dentilled cornice. The 3 storey block at Nos. 71 – 81 is also intact, and has a mansard attic floor in addition. Original shop front details appear to remain in many places behind modern facades.
- 3.5.3. The two blocks on the north side of Coldharbour Lane also provide strong and consistent street frontages, in three storeys at Nos. 2-8a, and three storeys plus mansard between Nos. 10 and 16.



Denmark Hill (north): just off Camberwell Green, Denmark Hill is dominated by a carriageway which is 4 lanes wide. Most traditional ground floor shop fronts have been lost to cheap and modern fronts and signage

The shops fronting Denmark Hill with original details still visible and top storeys mostly intact

### **Views and townscape**

- 3.5.4. Denmark Hill is no more than 20 metres wide, until it broadens to meet the Green, compared with an average 3 storey building height. This creates a street width to building height ratio of approximately 2:1, a proportion which presents a good level of enclosure and a human scale. The townscape of the street is characterised by the regular form of the buildings that line it and the slight southward incline. The junction created by Coldharbour Lane which forks off Denmark Hill in a south-westerly direction represents a visual full stop for views southwards and a weakening in the otherwise tightly defined townscape of the street.
- 3.5.5. The corner turret of the former London and County Bank on the corner of Camberwell Green is a landmark at the end of views northwards down Denmark Hill. Camberwell Green can similarly be viewed from midway up Denmark Hill although a gradual bend in the road means that this view is lost from the most southerly point of the street.
- 3.5.6. Looking south-westwards up Coldharbour Lane, Denmark Place Baptist Church, a marker building lying just outside the Conservation area, terminates the view.

### **Key Spaces**

- 3.5.7. Coldharbour Lane and Denmark Hill form a wedge-shaped street space in front of the new development at No. 88 Denmark Hill. It is defined by the three storey blocks on the northern side of Coldharbour Lane and the eastern side of Denmark Hill. It is a 'nodal' location that has local identity as a focal space.

### **Negative Elements**

- 3.5.8. The street suffers from badly designed shop fronts, out of keeping both with the building of which they are a part and those neighbouring in the street scene, and by the proliferation of large illuminated box and fascia signs, often obscuring architectural details.
- 3.5.9. Traffic is a major intrusion. In Denmark Hill, just off Camberwell Green, the carriageway is 4 lanes wide, becoming 5 lanes at the junction, reducing pavement widths so that pedestrian congestion is a problem. As at the Green, the impact of traffic is further exacerbated by the dominance of the highway engineering, signage and signalisation.

### 3.6. Sub Area 3 – Camberwell Church Street

3.6.1. Camberwell Church Street is a particularly good example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century busy main street and it retains a strong and consistent character.

3.6.2. The façade of Nos. 3 to 23, which includes Camberwell library, is notably consistent, in four storeys with a strong parapet line, arrayed in bays of 3 windows above each shop front and divided by fluted pilasters, to create a very rhythmic curving elevation. Opposite, between Nos. 4 and 20, the design of the block incorporates very elaborate segmental arches that continue the detail of the listed corner former bank building at No. 2. Elaborate stone second floor windows and corbelled cornices, with a steep mansard attic roof complete a very distinctive elevation.



Camberwell Church Street: the curving north side of Camberwell Church Street is part of one of the Victorian redevelopments undertaken in the 1880s when the road was widened for the trams



Nos.4-20 Camberwell Church Street: the distinctive elevations continue the detail of the listed Hartnell's building (No.2) with elaborate segmental arches, corbelled cornices and steep mansard attic roofs.

### Views and townscape

3.6.3. The street width is a fairly constant 18 metres and development each side is 4 storeys (including a mansard storey in some instances) giving the street a strong vertical proportion and a good level of enclosure. The curving alignment of the street is followed faithfully by the building frontages, creating distinctive townscape and perspectives in views along the street to St. Giles' spire eastwards and Camberwell Green westwards. The view from Camberwell Church Street southwards up Camberwell Grove is notable as is the one into Artichoke Place to the former public baths, a key marker in the sub-area.

## Key spaces

3.6.4. Camberwell Church Street is a vibrant public space in its own right with the street activity that its buildings generate being a key part of its character. There are two notable secondary street spaces off Camberwell Church Street. Artichoke Place, well contained by 3 and 4 storey flanking buildings, with the distinctive striped brick and artificial stone Netherlandish Renaissance style and elevation of the former public baths (circa. 1891) addressing the space is a relatively quiet public street space. Jephson Street is a quiet private close enclosed by a listed group of 2 storey (with basement and half dormers) Victorian houses of stock brick with stucco dressings and slate roofs, separated from the main road by walls and railings.

	
<p>The Grade II Listed former Camberwell Public Baths with red brick in Flemish bond with rubbed brick and terracotta and artificial stone dressings is a distinctive building that defines the street space of Artichoke Place</p>	<p>Formerly known as Wilby Road, Jephson Street is a pleasant space defined by the elegant Grade II Listed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century houses</p>

## Negative elements

3.6.5. Again the carriageway is dominant in the street scene. Pavement widths are narrow for pedestrians, and traffic barriers and waiting vehicles impinge on pedestrian comfort.

3.6.6. Shop fronts are in many cases unsympathetic with the high quality of architectural facades above them, with garish and boxy signs.



## 4. Audit



Listed buildings and key unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area

#### **4.1. Listed Buildings and Features**

4.1.1. The list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for Southwark was updated in 2010. Detailed list descriptions are available from the Council. Listings in the area fall into the following groups:

1. Victorian commercial corner buildings which address Camberwell Green and are significant landmarks:
  - No. 2 Camberwell Church Street (Hartnells Solicitors' Offices); and
  - No 17 Camberwell Green (former London and County Bank).
2. Surviving late 18<sup>th</sup>, early 19<sup>th</sup> century remnants at No. 323 Camberwell New Road (A regency building which originally faced east towards the Green, until the development of buildings in front of it and No. 15 Camberwell Green).
3. Group of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century 2 storey (with basement and half dormers) houses in stock brick with stucco dressings and slate roofs that make up Jephson Street (Nos. 1-9).
4. The now restored former Camberwell Public Baths (circa. 1891) in Artichoke Place. The striking Netherlandish Renaissance style elevation of the building to Artichoke Place comprising 30-storey wings with 4 storey centre ranges strongly defines the character of the street.
5. No 15 Camberwell Green and attached railings, an 18<sup>th</sup> century house with ground floor shop.
6. Camberwell Police Station and attached lamp bracket, in Camberwell Church Street.
7. Telephone kiosk at south end of Wren Road.
8. No Tree Preservation Orders are recorded.

#### **4.2. Key Unlisted Buildings and Building Groups**

4.2.1. The main defining elements of the Conservation Area are groups of buildings that combine into frontages to define streets, spaces and views. Often this group value of buildings is as important as the individual characteristics of listed buildings, and the scale, containment and background character that they provide is essential to the character of the Conservation Area. In the Camberwell Green Conservation Area, the street frontages formed by shop buildings are essential to its distinctive urban form. The following descriptions include key unlisted buildings:

### **Sub Area 1 – Camberwell Green**

- East side of Camberwell Green (Peabody Buildings – Blocks A,B,C,K,L and M): 4-6 storey Victorian mansion blocks that provide containment to the east side of Camberwell Green and a backdrop to the tree planting in it.
- North side of Camberwell Green: a 4 storey Victorian pub (The Nollywood).
- West side of Camberwell Green (7-17 Camberwell Green): a mixed group of 3 and 4 storey 18th/19th century former houses now converted to shops that provide containment to the west side of the Green. This group is compromised by the intrusive 3 storey Job Centre development, a gap side and a number of vacant units north of Camberwell Passage.
- South side of Camberwell Green: a group of 3 storey Victorian buildings around Wren Road, notably the Tiger Pub at No 18-19 Camberwell Green and the listed Hartnells Building at No. 2 Camberwell Church Street.
- Denmark Hill/Camberwell Church Street junction: frontages defining significant lengths of the crossroads.
- St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Camberwell New Road: Red brick church with a small cloister facing the road.
- No. 334 Camberwell New Road: a former street corner pub known as the Athenaeum, with a chamfered corner mirrored in the building on the opposite side of Warner Road.

### **Sub Area 2 – Denmark Hill**

- No. 2 - 8a Coldharbour Lane: a 3 storey parade of shops that define street shape and the junction space at the apex with Denmark Hill.
- Mixed frontages to Denmark Hill: though some are recent and intrusive they emphasise the view up to Camberwell Green and the turret of the London and County Bank.

### **Sub Area 3 – Camberwell Church Street**

- Nos. 3-75 and Nos. 2-58a Camberwell Church Street: 3 to 4 storey repetitive frontages emphasising the curves of the street and providing strong definition of street form. Nos. 25-33 are not in the Conservation Area but contribute positively to its setting.
- Nos. 1-14 Wren Road: 3 storey buildings which direct the eye to the gable end of The Colonnades, a new 4 storey development at the end of the street.
- Nos. 2-4 Grove Lane: mid 19<sup>th</sup> century building with shop frontage.

### **4.3. Trees and planting**

4.3.1. The dense urban development of the Conservation Area hampers much planting outside Camberwell Green. In addition to a children's play area, this comprises open grassed areas interspersed with mature trees. The largest of these specimen trees date to at least the early 20<sup>th</sup> and possibly to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A map of neighbouring Camberwell Grove dated 1750 shows an avenue which may have been planted at or around the same time, when London Plane trees were first cultivated and introduced into the planting design of public squares, parks, gardens and boulevards.

4.3.2. New and replacement planting must therefore have regard to the historical context of the site and in particular the date of plant introductions. The form, growth habit and colour of trees and shrubs need to be carefully chosen so as not to detract from the character of the park, with its high central canopy and boundary trees.

4.3.3. However, there are elements of "secondary" planting that contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area other than in Camberwell Green:

- Coldharbour Lane: semi-mature street trees from its junction with Denmark Hill;
- Denmark Hill junction: introduction of street trees to the central traffic island and widened footway to the south east;
- Denmark Hill (immediately south of the Conservation Area): strong avenue of mature street trees.
- Denmark Hill open space outside Nando's restaurant: A well placed group of semi-mature trees which help define and enhance the appearance of the crossroads.
- Camberwell Church Street junction with Grove Lane: Recent planting opposite the Hermit's Cave public house.

### **4.4. Environmental improvements**

4.4.1. The busy commercial character of the Camberwell Green Conservation Area has inevitably led to uncoordinated and often poor quality changes to the environment. Possible improvement schemes in the Conservation Area to bring together traffic management issues, street design quality and building redevelopment potential include work to be undertaken by private owners, by the local authority, and possibly in partnership. Property redevelopments should include the improvement to the adjacent public realm whenever possible. Elements that might be incorporated into a comprehensive environmental improvement programme for the area include:

#### **Camberwell Green junction**

4.4.2. Tightening of highway geometry at the Camberwell Green junction to reduce the visual impact of the carriageway area and to increase pedestrian areas and ease of crossing the road.

#### **Orpheus Street/Denmark Hill junction**

4.4.3. New ground surfaces and street furniture to create a usable pedestrian space related to the Post Office.

### **Denmark Hill**

4.4.4. Widening of pedestrian footways using appropriate paving materials wherever carriageway widths permit, to increase pedestrian comfort and the introduction of new trees. The redesign of intrusive shop fronts in accordance with design guidance should be encouraged in parallel with these public realm improvements.

### **North side of Camberwell Green**

4.4.5. Street and boundary improvements around The Nollywood and the adjacent buildings could create usable outdoor space related to the pub. The footway currently used as a recycling point has been extended into the road with sufficient space available to allow for greening of the streetscape.

### **Camberwell Church Street and Camberwell New Road**

4.4.6. The heavily congested traffic red route across the centre of the conservation area could be improved with street trees where these would have historically been present along the route between The Oval and Peckham.



### **Improvements to buildings**

4.4.7. *No. 334 Camberwell New Road, The Athenaeum*: a vacant and deteriorating corner pub of some architectural interest, and associated upper storeys of shops from No. 336 to No. 344. Renovation could provide significant residential space, improved shop fronts and associated widening and improvement of the pavement and pedestrian environment in Camberwell New Road.

4.4.8. *Nos. 294-304 Camberwell Road*: vacant buildings that detract from the western frontage to the Green should be refurbished or redeveloped as part of a possible development package for the area north of Camberwell Passage.

### **4.5. Potential development sites**

4.5.1. The Conservation Area includes several buildings in need of re-use and/or repair. In the main, the buildings themselves should remain, and any changes considered in the light of the guidance set out above. In some instances there is a case to be made for new buildings, either to fill gaps in the urban fabric, or to replace poor elements with more appropriate design. In certain cases this may potentially require the assembly of a number of ownerships.

4.5.2. The following examples are noted:

#### **Sub Area 1 - Camberwell Green**

- North-east corner of Camberwell Green: the corner of D'Eynsford Road and the Green is very poorly contained in front of the Magistrates' Court and the new doctors' surgery adjacent to it, to the detriment of both the Green and the environs of the Court. New building could help to redefine the Green, improving continuity between the Peabody buildings and the north side of the Green.
- Camberwell Green/Camberwell Road: a major redevelopment opportunity exists in the area between Camberwell New Road and Camberwell Green, presently occupied by HSS Hire. Incorporating shops between No. 294 and 304 Camberwell Road, there is the potential to recreate good quality built frontage on the west side of Camberwell Green, including shop frontage renovations, to St. Mary's Church in Camberwell New Road, and should preserve the original York stone paving of Camberwell Passage.
- Texaco Garage, Camberwell New Road: the site is outside but adjacent to the Conservation Area, and adjacent to a good renovated 3 storey terrace of Victorian houses at Nos. 298-314. The site could accommodate sympathetic residential infill, and would enhance the setting of St. Mary's Church (Grade II Listed), opposite.

#### **Sub Area 2 – Denmark Hill**

- Kwik Save, Denmark Hill: presently a single storey shop front that could be rebuilt to fit in with 3-storey buildings either side.

#### **Sub Area 3 – Camberwell Church Street**

- Nos. 4a-6 Grove Lane: disused single and two storey shop/workshop that could be redeveloped in three storeys to link with the listed building in Jephson Street and the frontage of Grove Lane.

#### **4.6. Proposed extension to the Conservation Area**

##### **Nos. 25-33 Camberwell Church Street**

- 4.6.1. This short terrace fronts Camberwell Church Street and is consistent with the predominant typology in the area, consisting of a three storey building with commercial properties at ground floor level. No. 25 is a traditional corner pub, albeit much changed; now called the Funky Monkey.
- 4.6.2. The terrace seems to have been built as one building, and has consistent windows surrounds and continuous string courses. Recent alterations to the building's appearance have caused it to read as three separate buildings through the use of different colours on the separate bays of the facade.
- 4.6.3. The building is part of the setting of the Conservation Area and is conspicuous by not being part of it. It backs onto the car park for the listed former Public Baths, now the Camberwell Leisure Centre, and its protection will thereby contribute to the protection of the setting of the Baths themselves.

## 5. Guidelines

### 5.1. Introduction

#### Purpose of this guidance section

- 5.1.1. This section of the report draws out from the appraisal those themes that are essential to the Conservation Area's historical character, to which new development and improvement should pay heed. It is not intended to provide a perspective methodology for new design in the area or to exclude innovation.
- 5.1.2. It should also be noted that architectural style, in terms of the design of elevations, selection of materials, detailing and so on, is only part of the concern. Equally important are townscape issues of mass, overall form, building placement relative to the public realm, creation and presentation of views and vistas, quality of boundary treatments, and visual impacts of utility areas such as parking, servicing and site access.
- 5.1.3. In the Camberwell Green Conservation Area the main development pressures relate to changes of use of buildings and the renovation and re-use of architecturally valuable, but currently redundant, buildings. There should be no objection in principle to good new building design in the Conservation Area in contemporary styles and the following guidance seeks to promote modern design of quality, and to preserve and reflect the historical character of the area.

#### Consulting the Council

- 5.1.4. The Council's conservation officer should be consulted prior to undertaking any alterations to the exterior of buildings within the Conservation Area and it is likely that planning permission and /or Conservation Area consent to demolish will be required for most significant works. Where a building is listed, there are stricter controls on what the owner can and cannot do. Most works to a listed building, whether internal or external, will require listed building consent where they are considered to affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Replacement of listed structures will usually prove unacceptable, and replacement of unlisted structures will normally only be entertained where existing buildings do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the proposal can be shown to positively preserve or enhance that character and appearance. If unauthorised work is carried out the Council can enforce against it.
- 5.1.5. The following guidance provides some indication of the most appropriate approach to common problems and development pressures within the area. It is always wise to seek advice from the Council's planning and conservation officers before considering any building work.

### 5.2. Development form and urban morphology

- 5.2.1. Renewal of the area is required through the redevelopment, alteration and renovation of buildings. In some cases poor development in relatively recent times will give the opportunity for redevelopment that can respond more sensitively to the special character of the Conservation Area. New development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area.

## **Street and plot patterns**

5.2.2. It is important that the overall form of development remains in keeping with the morphological characteristics of the area. The urban form of the Conservation Area is key to its character and any change must consider the basic principles that have determined it. As the appraisal discusses, the pattern was shaped during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when it became a key transport node in south London and is typified by building frontages positioned directly onto the street and following its alignment.

5.2.3. Development can therefore respond by:

- Maintaining the established or historic building line on the street – in most of the Conservation Area this means building on the boundary line between the plot and the street;
- Keeping utility areas behind the street frontage, accessed from the rear or through narrow passages under and between buildings – this includes car parking, garaging, service areas and private amenity space;
- Designing facades to echo the narrow module of the traditional building plot, creating strong rhythms with architectural elements along the street and expressing verticality.

## **Building form**

5.2.4. The common building forms in the Conservation Area also determine the way development and changes can take place. Through much of the area the dominant building type is 19th century shop frontages, both where the former houses have been converted and where they were purpose built. In most cases there remains a domestic scale, related to residential use of the upper floors. This generates a visual rhythm in the street or relatively narrow frontages, 5 to 6 metres, that gives a strong verticality to elevations even though they may be only two or three storeys high. Wider or doubled plots fit into the scene where they retain this verticality. Particular characteristics which should be observed in conversion and new design are:

- Heights of three or four storeys and not less than two – in each situation buildings should remain within the range of heights of the block of buildings in which it is sited;
- Roof lines are typically seen as parapets behind which the roof structure is not visible from the street level. Extensions and changes to the basic roof form are generally unacceptable even where set back from parapet lines;
- Relatively narrow plot widths that give strong verticality to elevations are important in maintaining the visual rhythm of development blocks; and
- Regular residential patterns of fenestration and a strong verticality in upper floors.

## **New design in the Conservation Area**

5.2.5. The commercial character of the Conservation Area places particular pressure on its appearance. Shop fronts are the most sensitive element, and are often the subject of poor design or alteration. Section 5.2.7 sets out guidance for the design of new shop fronts, and improvements whenever they can be made.

5.2.6. Frequently upper floors fall into disuse or change to office uses. New uses for upper floors are to be encouraged, but the residential scale and details of upper level elevations should always be retained. Should redevelopments be considered, it is important that upper floors are designed to the same scale, even though the planned use is not for living accommodation.

### **Shop front design**

5.2.7. The objective is that shop fronts and advertisements should harmonise with and enhance the character of the street as well as the buildings in which they are contained; it is not the intention to inhibit imaginative and sensitive design, but to offer a general guide illustrating solutions that have been found acceptable. Non-shopping commercial frontages, as well as retail shops, pose similar problems at ground floor level. The following design principles relating to shop fronts should be adopted:

- Some fine old commercial fronts should be preserved in their entirety (e.g. the former bank buildings)
- Wherever a framework of pilasters, columns, piers, fascias or frieze and cornice remains, this should be preserved and the new shop front inserted within it. Important architectural or historic features of the building should not be altered, defaced or obscured.
- Any new fronts should be contained within the width of the building and if any premises occupy more than one existing building, the front should be divided to reflect the divisions of these buildings and the traditional plot sizes of the street.
- In traditional Georgian, Victorian or Edwardian buildings with regular window openings, the front should be made up of traditional elements: pilasters and frieze, incorporating a fascia. Within this framework the window should be constructed of mainly traditional forms, with a brick, panelled, or rendered stall riser at least 45cm high, materials should be mostly traditional: shiny, reflective material or lurid colouring should be avoided.
- In new buildings that include shop or commercial fronts some of these principles can be adapted: architectural elements of the building should be brought to ground, with a firm frame defining the shop front or the area of commercial frontage, at ground level. The traditional appearance of shop fronts at ground floor should be continued.
- Where a new building occupies more than one original plot, the building itself and the ground floor frontage should be subdivided to reflect the width of the individual plots.

## **Advertisements**

5.2.8. Signage is a key component of shop fronts and the shopping street.

- In a traditional building, the existing fascia or a timber fascia is most appropriate. Fascia signs should convey the name or trade of the premises and should not carry any extraneous advertising. Fascia signs might be externally lit from a concealed source or other discreet form of lighting.
- The preferred form of projecting sign is a traditional hanging sign, possibly externally illuminated. Fascia or projecting signs that consist of large internally illuminated boxes are not acceptable, especially where they obscure architectural features or are too visually dominant for the overall elevation.
- The use of upper floors for businesses should not be allowed to result in a proliferation of signs on the elevation: however, simple lettering perhaps on a screen behind the window or affixed direct to the window pane, need not spoil the elevation.
- The continued use and introduction of signage should not conflict with adjacent trees or those on streets where site lines are not currently available.

5.2.9. The standard company signs of national retail and service businesses may not be appropriate either to individual buildings or the setting of the conservation area. Suitability for the building and the conservation area is considered more important than uniformity between branches of a firm, and company motifs can usually be successfully adapted with a little thought.

## **5.3. Public Realm**

5.3.1. In this context the public realm includes everything visible from publicly accessible areas, including both street spaces and any areas up to the front elevations of buildings. The essential components of the public realm that development and improvement should address are:

- Boundaries and frontages that define its edges;
- The surfaces and design of the space itself
- Trees, street furniture and other artefacts in the space.

## **Boundaries**

5.3.2. In most parts of the Conservation Area, the boundary of the public realm is the building façade, and the quality of design is of paramount importance. Interesting places are generally characterised by “active edges”, i.e. where there is stimulus and interaction between the public realm and buildings. This can be by direct access or through visual connection (windows, and shop fronts for example).

## **Ground Surfaces**

5.3.3. There are no comprehensive enhancement schemes for ground surfaces in the Conservation Area at present. The original materials are now seen in just a few locations with for example the natural flagstone pedestrian walkway at Camberwell Passage. Granite kerbs continue to be a widespread element in the local streetscape and should be retained.



## **Trees and street furniture**

- 5.3.4. Trees, important in greening the public realm, softening hard built edges and enclosing spaces, are for the most part confined to Camberwell Green itself. There is scope for new street trees in relation to new development and public realm improvement. Where space allows, semi-mature specimens planted with tree guards are to be preferred to saplings, in order to have greater resistance to damage and a stronger visual impact. Elsewhere a minimum size is required to ensure successful establishment. The type of tree needs to reflect and complement building elevations and have regard to both historical precedent and future climate change effects.
- 5.3.5. A more co-ordinated approach to the design and siting of street furniture, such as bus shelters, lamp standards and highway signs, is required. Simple designs appropriate to the Conservation Area's heritage, whilst avoiding "Victoriana" clichés, would be appropriate.

## **5.4. Improvements and repairs**

### **Materials**

- 5.4.1. Choice and use of materials can have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is therefore important that materials are appropriate for the building and for the Conservation Area. Care should be taken to ensure that original materials are retained whenever possible, and if replacements are necessary because of decay or damage, materials are chosen to match the originals as closely as possible in both appearance and performance.
- 5.4.2. The use of natural, traditional materials will be encouraged and expected particularly on listed buildings. Artificial modern materials such as concrete tiles, artificial slates, UPVC windows etc. generally look out of place, and may have differing behavioural characteristics to natural materials. Some materials, such as concrete tiles, can lead to problems with the building's structure as their weight may exceed the loading for which the roof trusses and internal walls were designed. Where such inappropriate materials have been used in the past, their replacement with more sympathetic traditional materials and detailing, where possible, will be encouraged.

### **Maintenance**

- 5.4.3. Repair works can prove costly and may require authorisation, which can cause delays. It is therefore far better to ensure that regular maintenance is undertaken, thus preventing unnecessary decay and damage and the resultant costs and problems. Works such as the regular opening of woodwork and timber, clearing out of debris in rainwater pipes and gutters, cutting back of vegetation in close proximity to buildings, repointing of failed mortar and re-fixing of loose roof slates are all in themselves relatively minor tasks that will not require authorisation but which may lead to much more complex and expensive works if left unattended.

## **Windows and Doors**

- 5.4.4. Where original elements exist they should whenever possible be retained in situ and repaired. All external joinery should be painted, which is the traditional finish. Stained or varnished timber finishes are inappropriate in the Conservation Area. Most window frames are painted white, although white may not have been their original colour, however repainting in garish colours would be inappropriate.
- 5.4.5. At the same time, there is the opportunity to introduce more colour, in the repainting of doors, shop fronts and retained mechanical features. Subdued and darker shades of red, green or blue can provide a highlighting theme, without being garish.
- 5.4.6. Replacement windows to listed buildings need to match the original glazing bars and detail of the originals. Where the existing windows or doors are however later alterations they determinally affect the character or appearance of a building, the Council will consider their replacement with appropriate traditional design. The use of modern materials such as aluminium or UPVC is inappropriate and not acceptable on historic buildings.

## **Roofs**

- 5.4.7. Where possible, original roof coverings should be retained and if necessary repaired with slate to match the existing. Where re-roofing is unavoidable because of deterioration of the existing roof covering or inappropriate later works, the use of natural slate will usually be required. The use of more modern materials such as concrete tiles and artificial slate is unacceptable, and their greater weight can lead to damage and deterioration of the roof structure if inappropriately used. Natural roof slates should be used on listed buildings and wither natural or good quality reconstituted slate on unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area. Natural slates have a better appearance and weather gradually and evenly over time: most artificial slates weather badly with streaking and leaching of colour and adverse effects on the overall appearance of the building.
- 5.4.8. Where they exist, original chimney stacks and pots should always be retained and repaired if necessary. The reinstatement of appropriately designed replacement chimney pots where these have been lost will be encouraged.

## **Brickwork**

- 5.4.9. The painting or rendering of original untreated brickwork should be avoided and is usually considered unacceptable. Where damaged bricks are to be replaced or new work undertaken, bricks should be carefully selected to match those existing on texture, size colour and should be laid in an appropriate bond to match the existing.
- 5.4.10. The most dominant visual components of the brick façade are the bricks themselves, rather than the pointing. Traditional bricks were a slightly larger format than metric bricks and were often laid in softer lime based mortar in a thinner bed, which reduced the appearance of the joints relative to the bricks. Repointing should only be undertaken where necessary to prevent further damage to a building's structure and should be kept to a minimum. Usually, lime based mortar mix no stronger than 1:1:6 (cement: lime: sand) is recommended and this should be coloured with sand to march the original mix. Joints should be flush or slightly recessed (not weather struck or raised) finished neatly and cleanly with the mortar brushed back to expose the edges of adjacent bricks.

5.4.11. Cleaning of brickwork is a specialist task, which may dramatically alter the appearance of a building. If undertaken incorrectly cleaning may lead to permanent damage to the bricks and ultimately the structure of a building. Advice should be sought from the Council before attempting such a task.

### **Stucco and render**

5.4.12. It is of particular importance that stucco render is kept in good repair and that regular maintenance takes place. Stucco is lime based, and it is important that any repairs are made in material to match, taking care to avoid the use of hard cement renders. If the surface is damaged, stucco may deteriorate quickly through water ingress possibly leading to further damage to the structure behind. Early localised repairs of the problem areas are usually the most appropriate approach when damage occurs. Major repair works can be expensive and difficult to carry out and are best undertaken by experts.

5.4.13. Stucco requires regular repainting for appearance and to maintain weather resistance, taking care not to obliterate decorative features. The stucco would originally have been a stone colour, and paint should be chosen carefully with this in mind and to respect the unified character of the area. Listed Building consent is required where painting significantly alters the appearance of a listed building and the use of unusual or contrasting colours (e.g. to highlight decorative details) is unacceptable. Generally the use of the colours *buttermilk*, *parchment*, *ivory* and *magnolia* are acceptable under British Standard Colours: BS 4800, these are BS 10B15, BS 08B17 and BS 08B15 respectively. Use of a gloss or eggshell finish that allows the masonry to 'breathe' is recommended and will not require consent. Textured or highly glossy paints and '*brilliant white*' should be avoided.

5.4.14. Where features such as capital, pilasters and porches have been lost, the Council will encourage their reinstatement using traditional materials following the design and detailing of those originals remaining on other properties.

### **Extensions**

5.4.15. Where rear extensions are proposed, they should normally be no more than one storey in height, be low key in design and as unobtrusive as possible. Full width rear extensions will normally prove unacceptable. Extensions should be clearly subservient to the main part of a building and not add appreciably to the building's bulk. In some cases it may not be possible to devise an acceptable scheme to extend a property, although each case will be judged on its individual merits.

## 6. Useful information

### General advice

General advice concerning works in conservation areas and the planning process can be obtained by visiting the Southwark Council website at

[http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200023/design\\_conservation\\_and\\_archaeology](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200023/design_conservation_and_archaeology)

### Useful telephone numbers

General Planning Enquiries	0207 525 5438
Conservation & Design Team	0207 525 5448
Planning Enforcement	0207 525 5419
Building Control	0207 525 5582
Urban Forester	020 7525 2090

### Other useful contacts

- English Heritage  
0870 333 1181 <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
0207 377 1644 [www.spab.org.uk](http://www.spab.org.uk)
- The Victorian Society  
0208 994 1019 <http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk>
- The Council for British Archaeology  
0190 467 1417 <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/>
- The London Tree Officers Association  
020 7974 4124 <http://www.ltoa.org.uk/>
- Ancient Monuments Society  
0207 236 3934 <http://www.ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk/>
- The Georgian Group  
087 1750 2936 <http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk/docs/home/index.php>
- The Twentieth Century Society  
020 7250 3857 <http://www.c20society.org.uk/>

## Further reading

- Ashurst, J and N – *Practical Building Conservation, Vols. 1 to 5* (1988)
- Brereton, C – *The Repair of Historic Buildings: Advice on Principles and Methods* (English Heritage, 1991)
- Cambell-Culver, M – *The Origin of Plants* (2001)
- Cherry, B and Pevsner, N – *The Buildings of England, London 2: South* (1983)
- Department for Communities and Local Government - *Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment* [2010)
- Department for Transport - *Manual for Streets*  
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/>
- Dyos, H.J. - *Victorian Suburb, A study of the growth of Camberwell* (1961)
- English Heritage – *Streets for All* (2000)
- Institute of Historic Building Conservation [IHBC] – *A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your Property makes Good Sense and Saves Money* (2002)
- London Borough of Southwark – *Neighbourhood History No. 4: The Story of Walworth* (1993)
- Reilly, L – *Southwark: an Illustrated History* (London Borough of Southwark, 1998)