

Willesden Green Conservation Area boundary extension

Character Appraisal



Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	
	Purpose of this document	5
	Why is an extension to the conservation area being considered?	6
	What is a conservation area?	7
	What does it mean if your property is within a conservation area?	8
	Article 4 Directions	9
2	WILLESDEN GREEN CONSERVATION AREA	
	Location and context	11
	What is significant about Willesden Green?	12
	Willesden Green historical development	13
	Summary of defining architectural and historic interest	17
3	REVIEWING THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY	
	Areas for review	21
4	EXTENSION TO WILLESDEN GREEN CONSERVATION AREA: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST	
	Background	23
	Appraisal: Rutland Park Mansions	25
	Appraisal: Chatsworth Road	27
	Appraisal: Dean Road	28
	Appraisal: Brondesbury Park	31
5	CONCLUSION	
	Recommendations	37
	Maintaining the special architectural and historic interest of the area	38
	Image credits and authorship	39

1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 The London Borough of Brent has undertaken a review of its conservation area boundaries as well as assessing for additional new areas that might merit designation.
- 1.2 It is a statutory requirement under Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires that local planning authorities must review their conservation areas from time to time. A review was also recommended by Brent's Historic Environment Place-making Strategy, May 2019.
- 1.3 The conservation of the historic environment is the process of managing the inevitable changes that will take place to an area in a way which best sustains its historic value for the present and future generations as well as for regeneration and place-making. Without an understanding of what are sometimes subtle qualities of an area, its local distinctiveness and character may be easily lost.
- 1.4 The assessment and identification of Brent's heritage for conservation areas is undertaken by the use of character appraisals.
- 1.5 Conservation area character appraisals identify and describe the features which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area.
- 1.6 On 28 May 2024, Brent Council's Cabinet Committee adopted this Character Appraisal as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). As such it is a material planning consideration in the determination of future planning decisions.

Introduction

Why is an extension to the conservation area being considered?

- 1.7 The conservation area survives today as a commercial centre largely developed between 1881-1906 following the opening of the Metropolitan Railway. The mix of Victorian architectural styles supplemented by the prominence of a number of listed buildings create an area of attractive character which is worthy of retention and enhancement.
- 1.8 The existing conservation area includes the linear High Road with its Victorian shopping parades as well as its commercial and religious buildings. Also included are some of the residential buildings that were built on the Heathfield Park Estate. In addition, Walm Lane with Rutland Park Mansions, and the residential Metropolitan Railway villas of the Willesden Park Estate.
- 1.9 An initial assessment of the Willesden Green Conservation Area boundary was undertaken as part of the Local Plan review in Brent's Historic Environment Place-making Strategy 2019. It recommended and identified a number of streets off the High Road that might merit inclusion within the conservation area. These roads included St Paul's Avenue, Rutland Park and Brondesbury Park.
- 1.10 Beyond this designation it also suggested a number of residential streets which were built for the Willesden Park and the Brondesbury Park Estates. These estates include residential properties which are of extremely high architectural quality and merit being included in the Willesden Green Conservation Area.

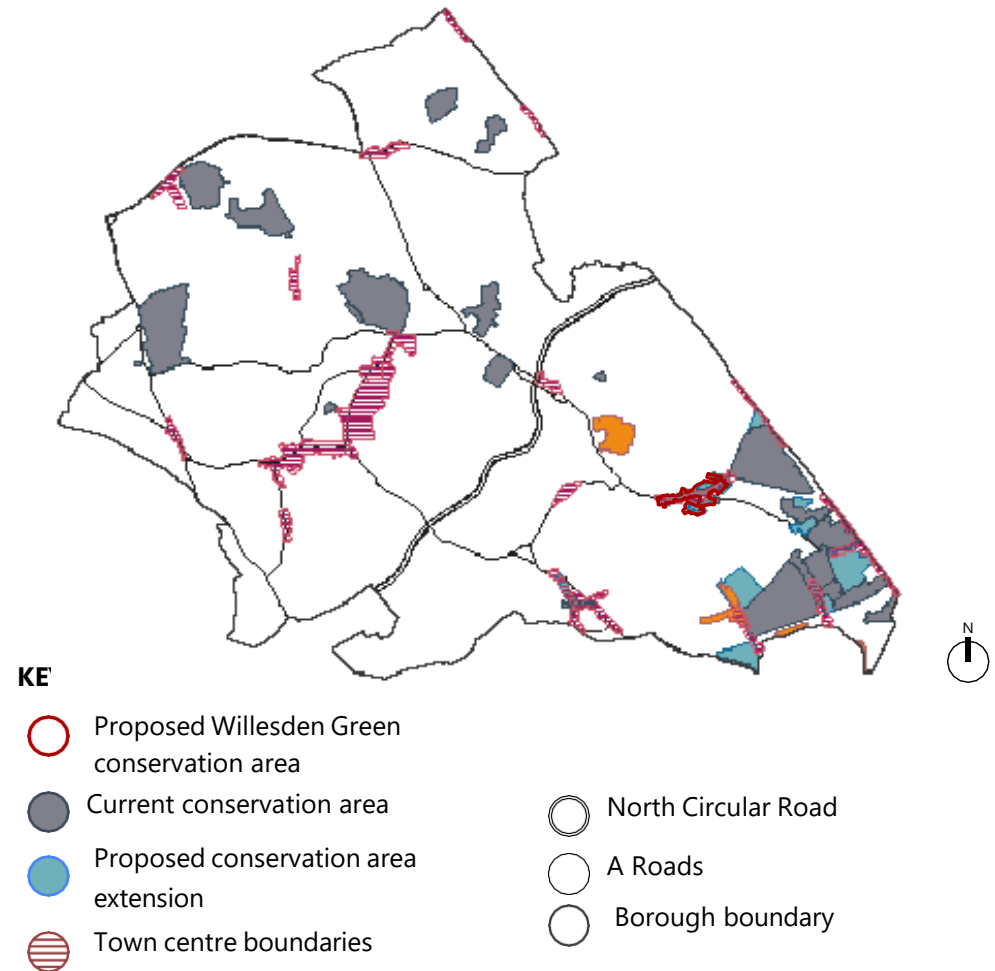


Figure 1: Conservation Area designations in borough context

Introduction

What is a conservation area?

- 1.11 Conservation Areas were first introduced into legislation under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 to protect the wider historic environment. Section 69 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation as an *'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.
- 1.12 However, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains that when considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. Conservation area designation therefore needs to be carefully considered.
- 1.13 It is the protection of the quality and special interest of the neighbourhood or area as a whole that is intended, rather than specific buildings. For example, the characteristic building design and materials of the area, the mix of different uses, and the design of shopfronts may all be taken into account when deciding whether an area has a particular special architectural or historic interest. It also includes the street layout, boundaries, roads, vistas and viewpoints, trees and green features.
- 1.14 Conservation areas foster local identity, involve communities in their management, enable a broad view of what heritage can mean in a diverse society, and can be catalysts for social and economic regeneration. They are extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life.

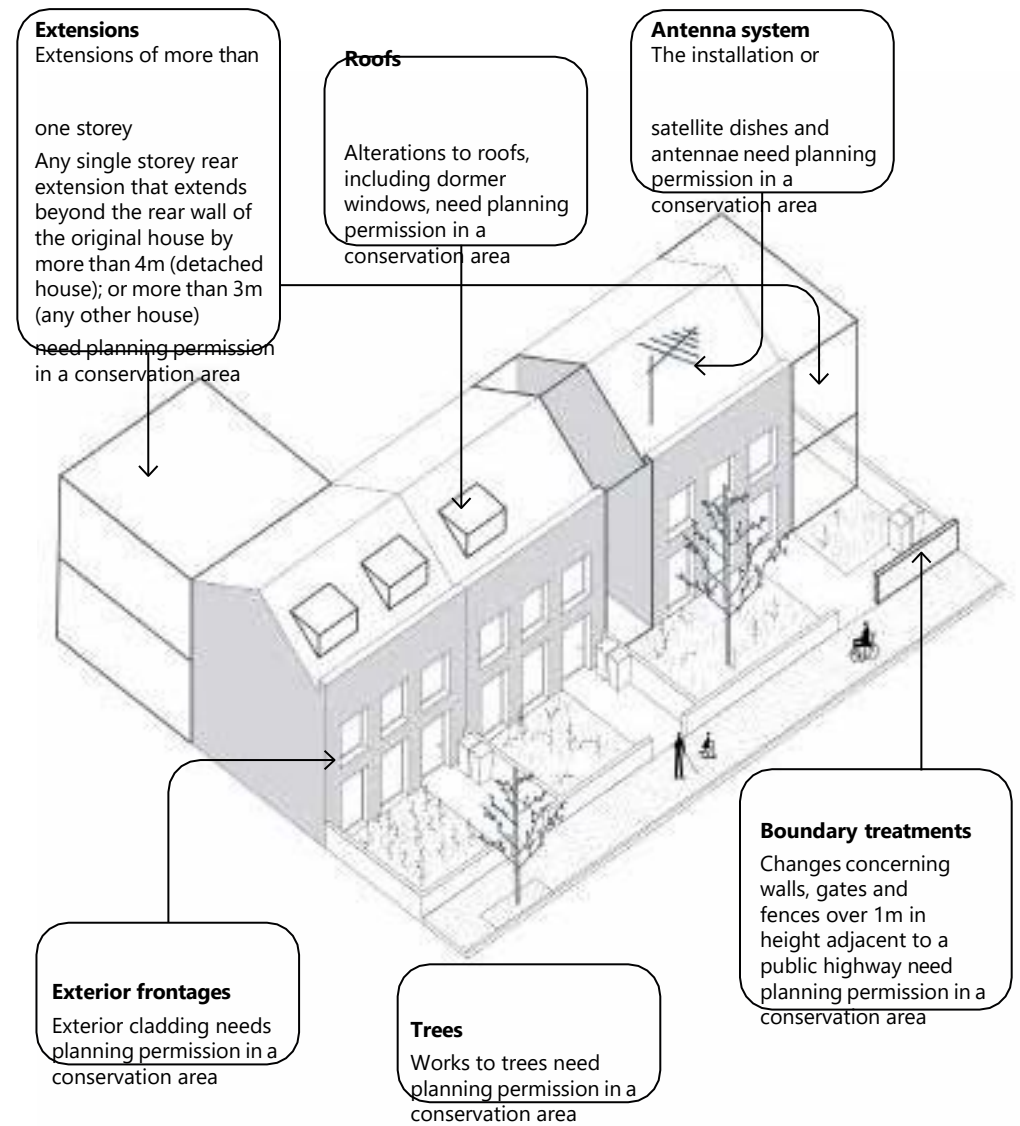
Introduction

What does it mean if your property is within a conservation area?

1.15 Designation results in greater control over the demolition of buildings and the size and design of extensions. This means that the Council gains additional planning control compared with areas that are not designated which, in turn, allows for the greater retention of characteristics and features that make a place special and unique.

1.16 Therefore, the following works need planning permission in a conservation area:

- cladding the exterior of a house;
- any side extensions or rear extensions of more than one storey;
- any single storey rear extension that extends beyond the rear wall of the original house by more than 4m if a detached house; or more than 3m for any other house; alterations to roofs, including dormers;
- the installation or satellite dishes and antennae;
- demolition or erection of walls, gates and fences over 1m in height adjacent to a public highway; and



Introduction

- works to trees.

Figure 2: Conservation area designation can protect and positively influence the property features included in the above diagram

Introduction

Article 4 Directions

1.17 An Article 4 Direction is a special control which gives extra protection to a conservation area by removing some of the owner's planning development rights. These relate to works such as:

- changing windows and doors to the front elevation;
- painting the front of the house;
- paving over the front garden;
- removing or building front garden walls;
- replacement roof tiles;
- removal of chimneys; and
- erecting sheds and outbuildings in rear gardens.

1.18 The Willesden Green Conservation Area does not currently have such Directions in place. This has left the residential parts of it vulnerable to harmful alterations. It is therefore intended to make use of such Directions to protect and manage the features that make the conservation area special and worthy of designation. An Article 4 Direction is proposed for the existing conservation area as well as the extended parts.

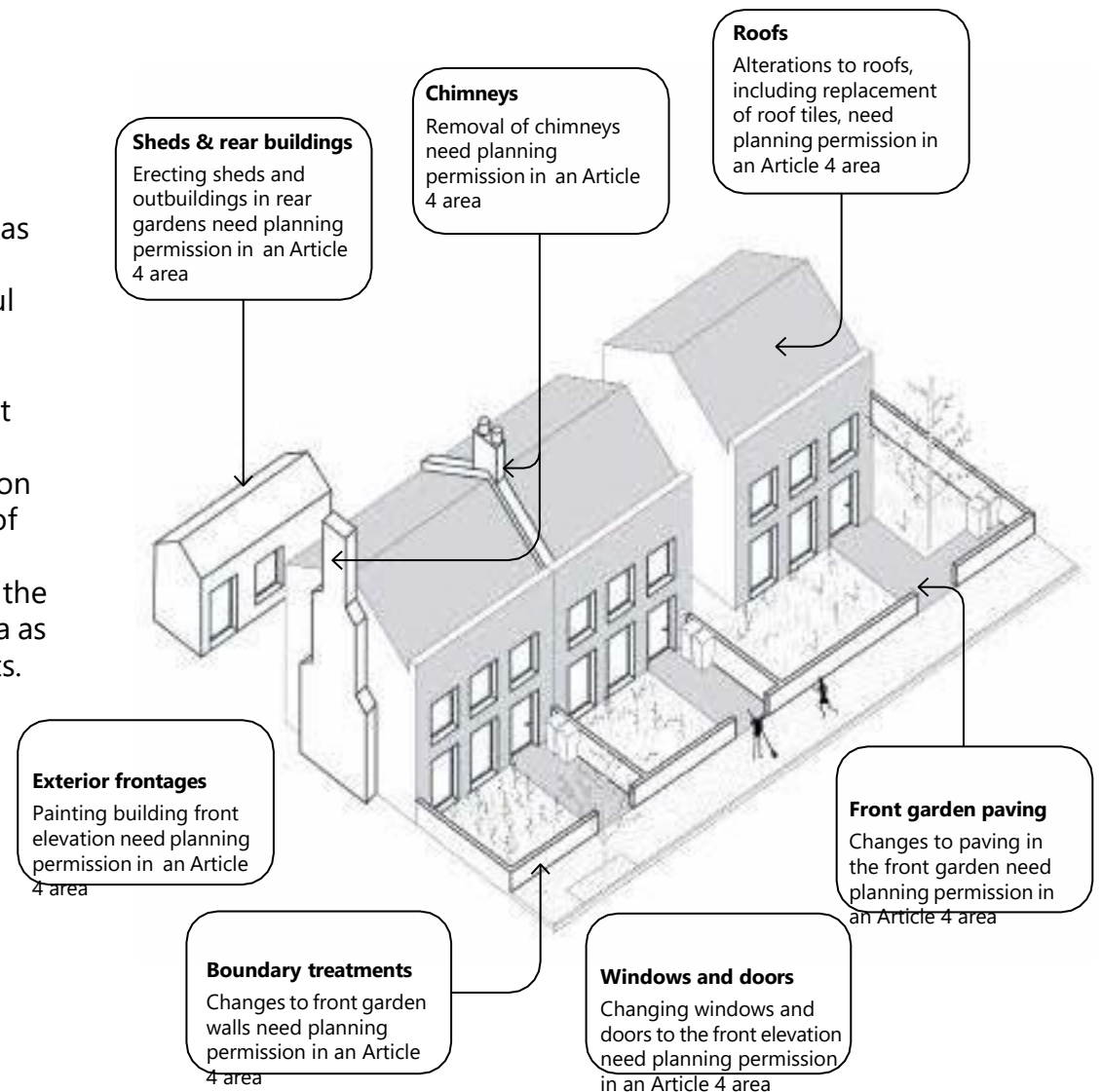


Figure 3: Diagram showing property features that may be affected by Article 4 Directions

2

WILLESDEN GREEN CONSERVATION AREA

Willesden Green Conservation Area

Location and context

- 1.19 Willesden Green is an area of northwest London. It is historically a parish in the county of Middlesex that was incorporated as the Municipal Borough of Willesden in 1933, and has formed part of the London Borough of Brent since 1965.
- 1.20 The existing conservation area includes the Victorian shopping district of Willesden Green including the south side of Walm Lane, the top end of Willesden Lane and the High Road. It also includes a small residential area called Heathfield Park.

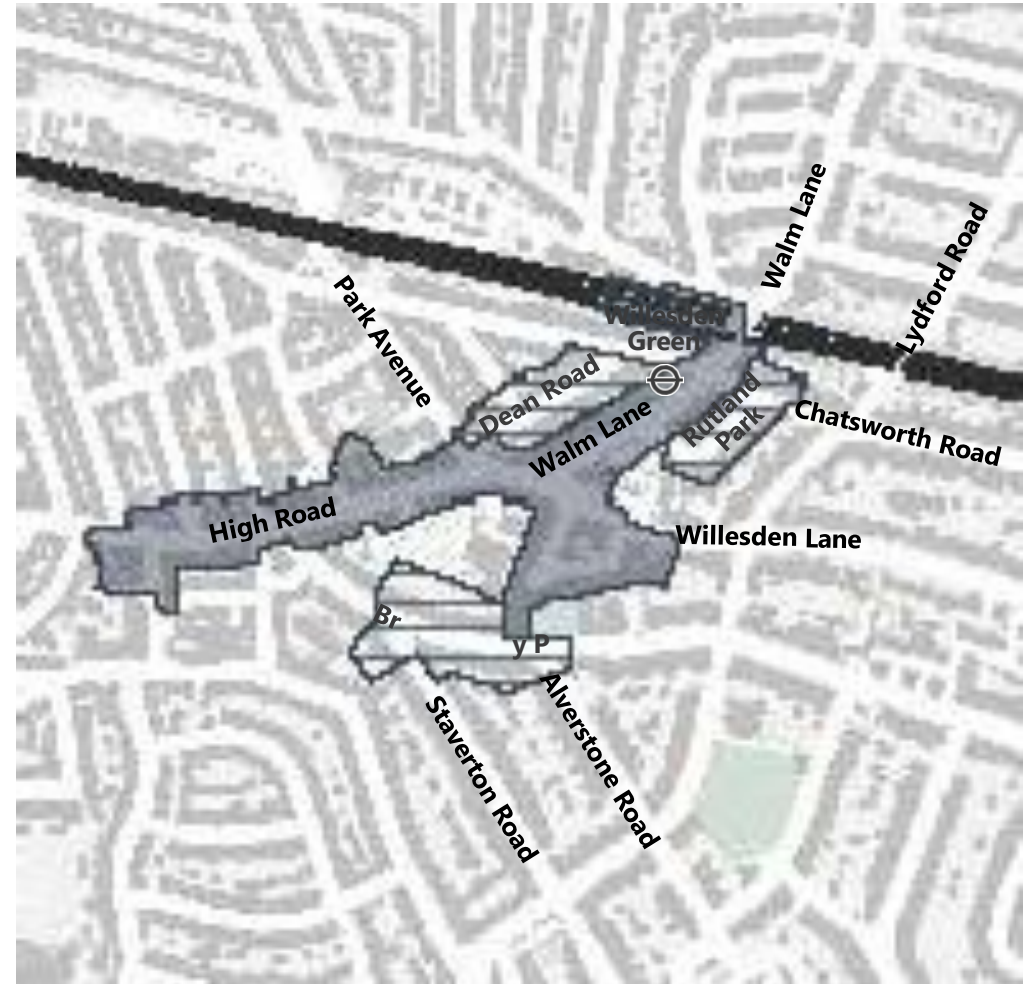
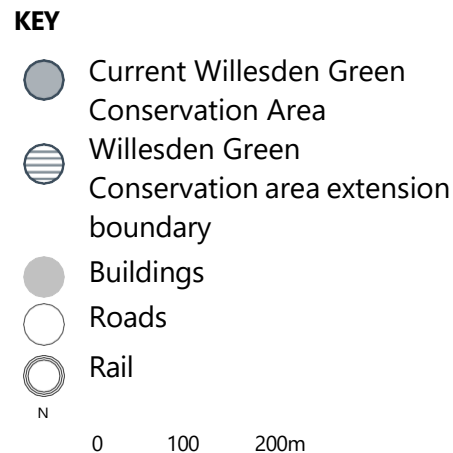


Figure 4: Location plan of Willesden Green Conservation Area boundary

Willesden Green Conservation Area

Willesden Park

Brondesbury Park



Willesden Green Conservation Area

What is significant about Willesden Green?

- 1.21 The special character of the Willesden Green Conservation Area is defined as shopping parades forming a linear centre over one mile in length occupying the High Road and its tributary roads from Church End in the west to Willesden Green Station in the east.
- 1.22 The conservation area is a mixed use centre but is marked by a common, distinctive retail based architectural vocabulary. The whole estate was originally laid out around Willesden Green though this has since disappeared.
- 1.23 The Willesden Green Conservation Area can be divided in two in terms of its topography. The High Road is flat whereas Walm Lane is on an incline leading up to Willesden Green Tube Station. Heathfield Park is also built on a small hillside.
- 1.24 A good amount of original buildings have been retained on both sides of the road throughout the conservation area. Many of these are of high quality design and as a result it is architecturally rich [see Figure 5].
- 1.25 Although the conservation area is essentially a town centre, Willesden Green has a relatively high proportion of trees within its streetscape.



Figure 5: View from St Pauls Avenue towards Walm Lane

Willesden Green Conservation Area

Willesden Green historical development

1.26 Willesden Green was the largest hamlet in the parish of Willesden. It started as a settlement in a woodland clearing. This clearing became a large green in the middle of the parish. Soon there was a significant group of houses around the green. Several of these were farms, one of which dated back to the 1300s. The area of Willesden Green remained very rural, and most of the population would have consisted of agricultural labourers, right up to the 1800s.

1.27 Willesden Green has a long history with the area being recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as 'Wellesdone'. The name derives from the Anglo-Saxon Willesdune, meaning the Hill of the Spring. By the 14th Century a small settlement had formed. By the middle of the 18th century the village had grown and had its own pub, 'The Spotted Dog' [see Figure 6].

1.28 Much of the land in the area belonged to St Paul's Cathedral. A large portion of land to the south was the property of All Souls' College, Oxford. There were two manors called Bounds and Chambers. Bounds bordered Willesden Lane. Chambers was named after Richard de Camera, an early 13th century cleric, and owned tenements at Willesden Green.

KEY

- Current Willesden Green Conservation Area
- Willesden Green area extension



Figure 6: OS Map 1874. Area prior to the Metropolitan Railway development

Willesden Green Conservation Area

1.29 The 19th Century saw the growth of Willesden Green, through the expansion of the Metropolitan Railway. Construction on the railway began in 1860. The extension from Baker Street began in 1868, and Willesden Green Station opened in 1879. The railway brought professional middle management to the area who built large town houses alongside farms supplying hay, milk and horses to London. Poorer quality cottages had been and were also being constructed during this period. In the 19th century, the Spotted Dog pub [see Figure 7] was famous for its pleasure gardens and, by the 1920s, its dance hall.

1.30 A huge amount of housing development occurred in the 1890s, virtually covering all the available land south of the railway. The houses were aimed at the lower middle classes. Willesden became the fastest growing district in Greater London. For example, in 1877, Mrs Catherine Nicol sold Bramley's farm to the United Land Co. Within two years the company laid out streets south of the railway on each side of High Road, selling plots to small builders who built crowded terraced houses. In 1898, developers built Rutland Park Mansions. The houses opposite were soon converted into shops.



Figure 7: Spotted Dog Pub now

Willesden Green Conservation Area

- 1.31 The rapidly increasing population were served by St. Andrew's Church and St. Gabriel's Church. St. Andrew's also facilitated a school, a men's club, a parish library and a soup kitchen. At the same time, the High Road turned into an impressive town centre with many shops. Local employers had become much more varied. In the 1870s, there had been mostly stables, job masters (people who lent out horses) and horse dealers.
- 1.32 The 20th Century saw the suburbanisation of Willesden Green as farmhouses were replaced by villas and houses and Willesden Green was joined up with Brondesbury, Cricklewood, Chapel End, Harlesden and Kensal Rise [see Figure 8]. This process meant that by around 1910 most of the original Green disappeared and the High Road had become a retail centre.

KEY

- Current Willesden Green Conservation Area
- Willesden Green area extension

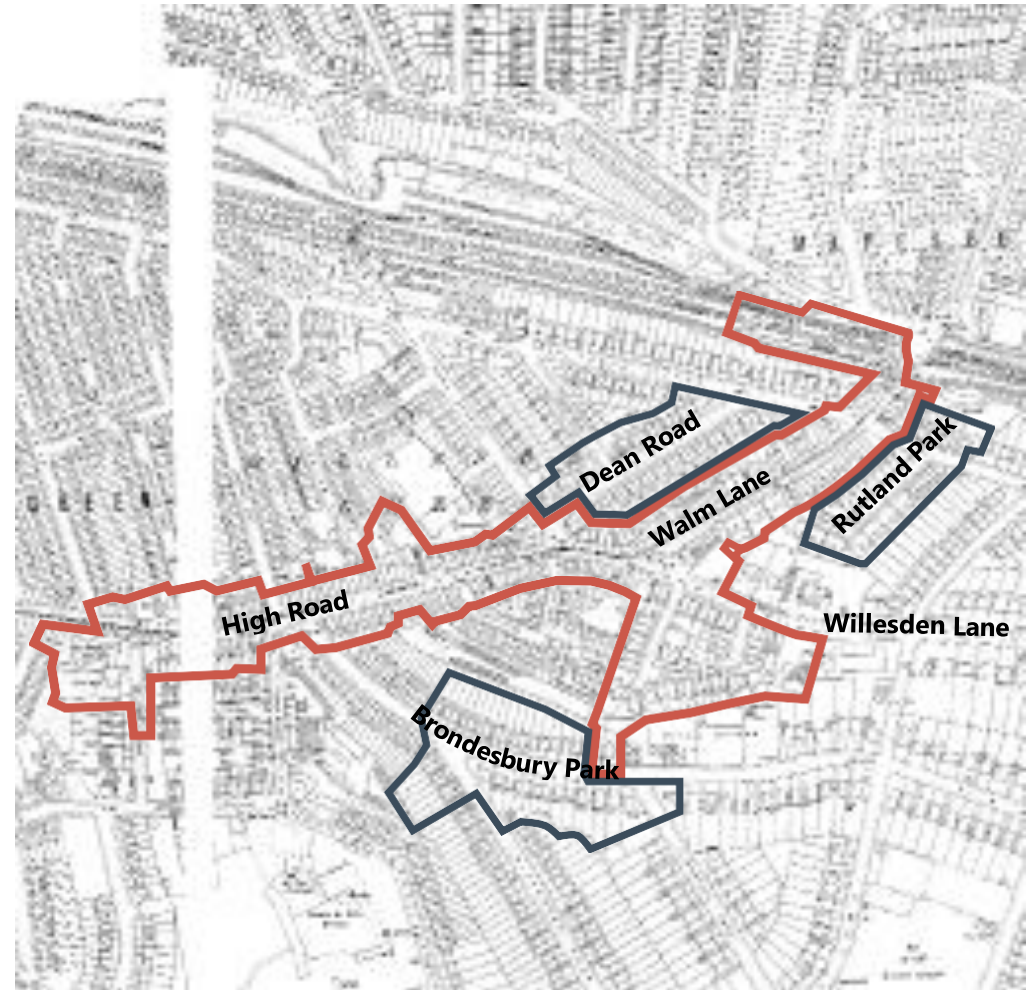



Figure 8: 1935 OS Map

Willesden Green Conservation Area



Figure 9: Aerial view plan of the area, 1944



Figure 10: Aerial view plan of the area now with street pattern unchanged

Willesden Green Conservation Area

Summary of defining architectural and historic interest

1.33 The Willesden Green Conservation Area is a well defined and architecturally consistent Victorian town centre. Walm Lane and the High Road are the principal roads through the area and are lined with commercial and retail buildings. There is a consistency in the quality of the architecture and the heights of the shopping parades. Furthermore, there is a great deal of intricate architecture employed providing an attractive high street. Many of the parades retain their original pilasters and corbels as well as basic shopfronts.

1.34 The conservation area is predominantly a retail and commercial centre with office and residential spaces above ground floor shop units. The exceptions to this are Rutland Mansions, Willesden Green Library Centre, the former Police Station, the churches and the Underground Station.

1.35 The significant change in the character of the area is Heathfield Park [see Figures 9 and 10]. This is an independent residential area of large and architecturally significant town houses and villas that is completely separated from the high street by the junction with Walm Lane.

1.36 The predominant character and special architectural and historic interest of the buildings and the roads is summarised as follows:

- Willesden Green Station is a landmark at the top of the road. Its cream faience and projecting canopies a marker in the openness seen against the sky.
- Looking down Walm Lane, the area is enclosed with the red brick and stone gabled shopping parades. Opposite, the attractive half-timbered Metropolitan Railway villas of the Willesden Park Estate (1881) which were converted into shops at ground floor level between 1907 and 1913. Further down, Rutland Park Mansions (1898), an impressive example of residential Victorian architecture.
- At the junction of the High Road, the edge of the Heathfield Park Estate, which was largely developed in accordance with plans approved for Knight and Company in 1884. Opposite, Electric House, built on the site of the former electric showroom, it reflects the original building's Art Deco design, incorporating a clock feature and a curved edge to the front.
- Barclays Bank, originally for the London and South Western Bank, stands out as a glorious baroque building in the middle of a classically designed shopping parade. Alongside, 13-33 (odd) High Road sport attractive pediments above their windows. Built around 1883, they were constructed for the landowner, James Ellis, topped with a balustraded parapet.

Willesden Green Conservation Area

- Opposite, huge gabled purpose built mock-Tudor shops and apartments with pargeting.
- The main high road was formed by purchasing and developing former country houses and their estates. It is evidenced by 147-151 (odd) High Road built on the Gowan Lea Estate in 1898; 52-64 (even) High Road built on the Peacock House estate for Cowley and Drake (1894) and 35-43 (odd) High Road built on the frontage of The Poplars for Lilley and Skinner in 1895. These fine shopping parades crowd the street and are in a mixture of classical styles. Each parade using different architectural motifs and building materials to provide a coherent whole of a similar scale.
- St Andrew's Church, Willesden Green Baptist Church by E Harding Payne from plans drawn in 1902 and the former police station by Higgs and Hill (1896) stand out from the shopping parades. Also, the original Willesden Green Library (1893) [see Figure 11] and the former Spotted Dog Public House (now Costa).



Figure 11: Willesden Green Library

- 1.37 Architecturally the best buildings are now statutory listed and locally listed.
- 1.38 Willesden Green Station [see Figure 12] is listed Grade II. The station opened in 1879 on the Metropolitan Railway. The main station buildings, which date from the reconstruction of 1925, are fine examples of the work of Charles Walter Clark, the Metropolitan Railway's architect, who used cream faience in their construction.
- 1.39 St Andrew's Church and vicarage as well as its former school are listed Grade II. They are by the prominent Victorian architect James Brooks. The Church dates from 1886 and is in early English style. Its central roof spire is complemented by its picturesque vicarage (1888) and former Church Schools (1889).

- 1.40 The original Willesden Green Library [see Figure 11], by the architects Newman and Newman, is locally listed. It was built in 1893 in an Arts and Crafts and mock-Tudor style with an unusual roof configuration and pargetting. The new library attached opened in 1989.
- 1.41 The former Spotted Dog Public House (now Costa) is locally listed. It was rebuilt in 1881 by H W Sexton. It features ruby red faience and pedimented window surrounds. Behind lies GA Sexton's Stevens Cottages, from about 1840, and originally called Spotted Dog Cottages.
- 1.42 Barclays Bank (locally listed) was designed by E. Gabriel in 1893, originally for the London and South Western Bank.



Figure 12: Willesden Green Station

3

REVIEWING THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

Reviewing the conservation area boundary

Current boundary

- 1.43 The conservation area boundary [see Figure 4] has not changed since the Willesden Green Conservation Area was originally designated in 1993.
- 1.44 The existing conservation area includes the linear High Road with its Victorian shopping parades together with its commercial, social and religious buildings. The conservation area survives today as a commercial centre largely developed between 1881-1906 in the quarter century following the opening of the Metropolitan Railway.
- 1.45 Also included were some of the Heathfield Park estate buildings which were largely developed in accordance with plans approved for Knight and Company. In addition, Walm Lane with Rutland Park Mansions, and the residential Metropolitan Railway villas of the Willesden Park Estate on the west side of Walm Lane.

Areas for review

- 1.46 The Historic Environment Place-making Strategy (2019 identified that some of Victorian and Edwardian Willesden remains virtually unaltered. It is these residential streets off the High Road and Walm Lane that should now be considered as an extension to the conservation area.
- 1.47 Most of what survives in the area dates from the 19th Century which saw the growth of Willesden Green, through the expansion of the Metropolitan Railway.
- 1.48 The boundary of the conservation area was reviewed along Brondesbury Park, Alverstone Road, Staverton Road and Rutland Park. Also roads to the north of Walm Lane, such as St Paul's Avenue, Park Avenue, Dean Road and Grove Road.

Approach

- 1.49 The boundary review was undertaken using the methodology in Historic England's advice note on Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019).
- 1.50 A comprehensive visual survey of the area was undertaken in July 2021. Previous visits were undertaken to assess the area throughout 2018 and 2019 in preparation for the Historic Environment Place-making Strategy.
- 1.51 To ensure a consistent approach, the areas proposed for designation were identified on the basis that they shared a common character, quality and architectural significance with the existing conservation area. The objective is to understand and articulate exactly why the new areas are special and what elements within the area contribute to this special quality, conveying this succinctly.
- 1.52 A visual survey was undertaken by the Heritage Officer. Undertaking a visual survey of the conservation area is a fundamental part of understanding those elements of character or appearance that are desirable to preserve or enhance. This has determined what contributes positively to its character or appearance (and in particular how these features are connected with the area's special interest) and what detracts from it or presents an opportunity for enhancement.

4

EXTENSION TO WILLESDEN GREEN
CONSERVATION AREA:
SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Background

- 1.53 The Victorian shopping centre provides a highly attractive area of commercial design - worthy of protection and enhancement. The accommodation above the shops possess rich decorative and impressive architecture incorporating detailing such as window mouldings and ornate terracotta brick panels. The special character still remains. Compare Figure 13 with 14.
- 1.54 Individual commercial, cultural, transport and religious buildings of high architectural quality further contribute to this special interest. The small Victorian residential enclave built for Heathfield Park Estate adds attractive dwellings to the significance of the conservation area. So too does the Edwardian mansion blocks.

- 1.55 Beyond this designation are a number of residential streets which were built for the Willesden Park Estate and the Brondesbury Park Estate. There are also a number of high quality mansion blocks. These residential properties are of extremely high architectural quality and merit being included in the Willesden Green Conservation Area.
- 1.56 Therefore, possible extensions to the boundary have been considered to include Brondesbury Park, Alverstone Road, Staverton Road and Rutland Park. To the North of Walm Lane, extensions could include St Paul's Avenue, Park Avenue, Dean Road and Grove Road.



Figure 13: Willesden Green High Road c1900s



Figure 14: Willesden Green High Road now

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

1.57 The following map diagram indicates properties that are mentioned in this appraisal. The map diagram should aid the reader to locate the buildings in the area and should be read in conjunction with the appraisal text.

1.58 The predominant character, special architectural and historic interest of each road considered worthy of inclusion is set out in the following pages.

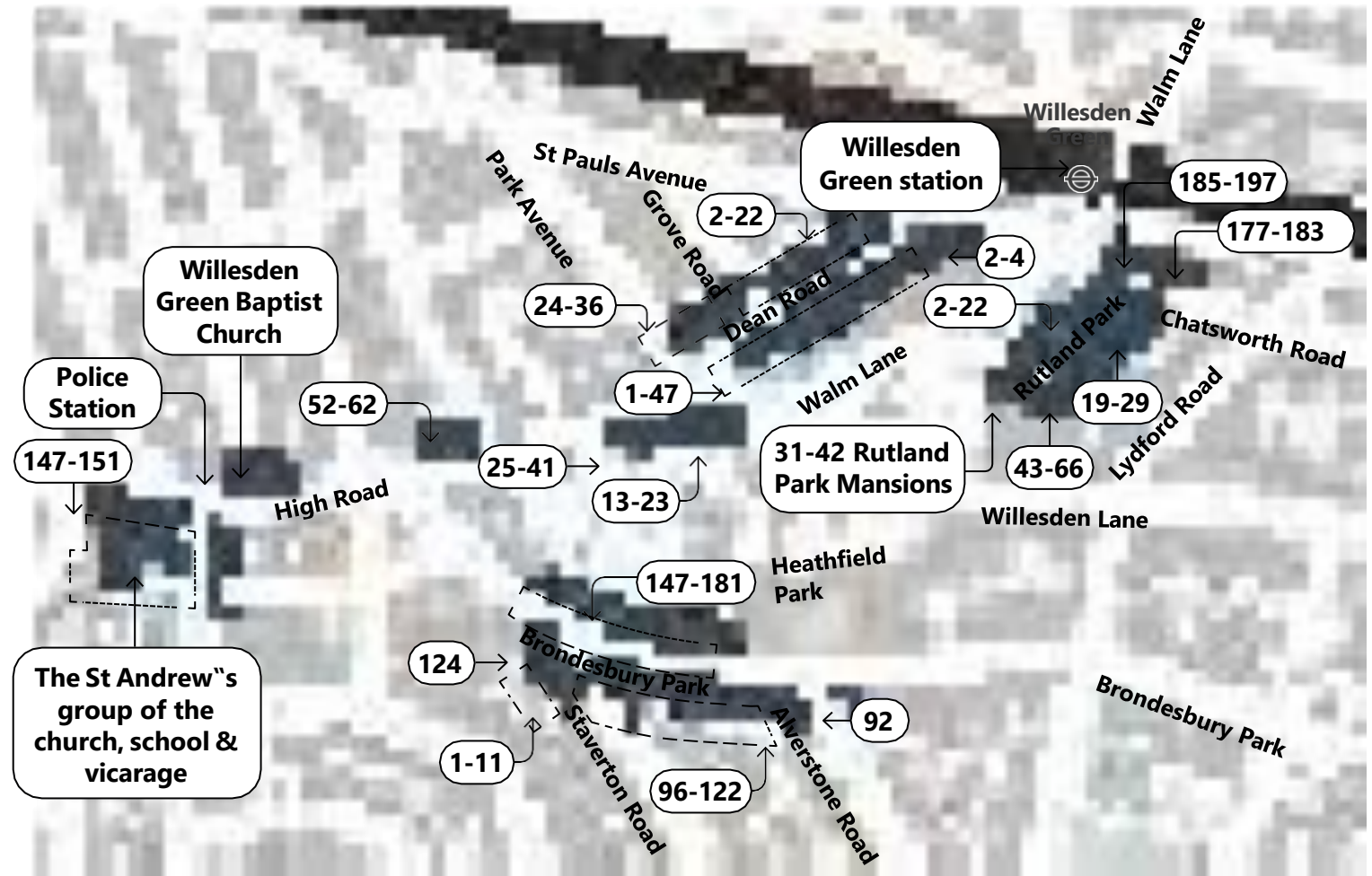
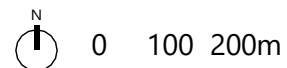


Figure 15: Map diagram locating properties that are mentioned in this appraisal



Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Appraisal: Rutland Park Mansions

- 1.59 The existing Willesden Green Conservation Area includes 1-24 (cons) Rutland Park Mansions that face Walm Lane. These were designed by G.A. Sexton in 1898 and are highly attractive with brick and stone façades. They were built for the managers of the Metropolitan Railway line.
- 1.60 Identical mansion blocks were constructed in Rutland Park. They were built in various stages between 1900 and 1910 also by G.A. Sexton. The blocks are equally architecturally impressive and are well preserved as those on Walm Lane [Figure 16].
- 1.61 They provide an extremely attractive linked group worthy of addition to the conservation area.
- 1.62 31-61 (odd) Rutland Park Mansions form a group. Two storeys high plus one storey in steep mansard roof. Five bays wide. End bays have squared triple height bay windows and double height canted bays to the middle. Generally, a symmetrical façade around pedimented front entrance.
- 1.63 They are all constructed of red brick and a riot of stone dressings including string courses, cornices and capitals. Corner blocks are finished with pavilions. Mansards are in slate and red tile with crested ridges. Massive triple height pitched outriggers to the rear and small courtyard gardens. Substantial trees to the rear provide a verdant environment. Small front courtyards with red brick boundary walls and hedges complete the streetscene.



Figure 16: Rutland Park Mansions

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

- 1.64 19-29 (odd) Rutland Park [see Figure 25] were constructed in 1900 by G.A. Sexton. The terrace of properties are three storeys in height [see Figure 16] with a prominent overhanging front gable on brackets.
- 1.65 They were constructed in London stock brick and have double height canted bay windows with stucco and stone dressings. A small pitched roofed front dormer completes the composition.
- 1.66 The builder was E Cave. Most retain their attractive double-hung, timber, sliding sash windows, which are divided by glazing bars to the upper sash. The front entrance porticos feature stylised stone bracketed pediments, with the entrance recessed to reveal tiled dados and timber panelled doors.
- 1.67 The roofs are in natural Welsh slate with bracketed raised parapets dividing each property. Tall chimneys and two storey pitched roofed outriggers are also a feature. Small courtyard front gardens, with front boundary walls and piers provide a simple curtilage.
- 1.68 Opposite, 2-22 (even) Rutland Park Gardens, are two storey purpose built flats designed to look like pairs of semi-detached houses. The builder was A Bretzfelder and present an alluring and coherent street frontage. The terrace of Edwardian flats were the last to be constructed in Rutland Park. They have extremely and well executed construction detailing [Figure 17].
- 1.69 The front elevations are in red brick with stone keystones. The ground floor square bay window continues up to first-floor bay which is topped with an individual gabled roof with white decorative wooden panels and bargeboard roof top [see Figure 17]. Between the bay windows, paired timber panelled entrance doors and porch. Each slightly different around a main theme. Some with attractive front facing chimney stacks and first floor balconies.
- 1.70 Windows are a mixture of timber sliding sashes or timber multi-paned casements. All retain their small front gardens with original front boundary, red quarry tiled pathways and hedge as well as planting beds behind. The roofs are now finished in concrete tiles. Huge hipped outriggers to the rear and verdant back gardens.



Figure 17: A house on Rutland Park

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Appraisal: Chatsworth Road

1.71 On Chatsworth Road, 185-197 (odd), are properties built in 1897 by G. A. Sexton. They are similar to those seen in the Mapesbury Conservation Area and just as grand. For the most part they still retain their decorative features. They were constructed in red brick with stone dressings and slate roofs [see Figure 18].

1.72 They feature tall corbelled chimneys on the projecting dividing parapet wall. They also feature intricate detailing, decorated bargeboards, double height canted bays and small front hipped dormers. The grand porticoed stone entrances set them apart from those seen in Mapesbury, once with stone balustraded balconettes above. Most have their timber casement windows and wide timber front doors.

1.73 The front courtyards, boundaries and highly decorative black and white tessellated tile pathways also survive. To the rear, large two storey outriggers and small hipped roof dormers are part of the original design.

1.74 Alongside, 177-181 (odd) Chatsworth Road, former town houses by Alexander McBain. The front elevations are in red brick with stone dressings. The ground floor canted bay window continues up to first-floor bay which is topped with a pitched roof breaking forward of an individual gabled roof. Between the bay windows, paired windows with timber porches giving access at the side. The roofscape is especially attractive with slate, terracotta cresting, tall stepped stacks and clay finials. Huge hipped outriggers to the rear and verdant back gardens. Neat clinker boundary walls are a feature enclosing the front gardens.



Figure 18: Houses on Chatsworth Road

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Appraisal: Dean Road

1.75 The best preserved of the streets, running parallel to Walm Lane (to the east), is Dean Road. The area was developed as part of the Willesden Park Estate. Although St. Pauls Avenue, Grove Road and Park Avenue have grand and substantial properties, it is Dean Road that survives very much intact and would be worthy of adding to the existing conservation area. Its tree lined street and attractive properties of high architectural quality are desirable for protection.

1.76 2-4 St Paul's Avenue and 1-47 (odd) Dean Road [see Figure 26] are by the builders, T W Knight and H W Wilson. Seven pairs of imposing four storey town houses. Two pairs are in the highly decorative Gothic style [see Figure 19]. Huge gabled façade in red brick and stone window surrounds and stone dressings.

1.77 Window tops with Gothic tracery and crenelated stone parapets. Gables decorated with floral motifs. Steep slate roofs and crested ridges. The tessellated pathways led to the timber panelled front doors. The front courtyards have low walls and piers and verdant shrub planting. Ribbed flanking chimneys and gables to the rear. Flat roofed outriggers style provide a rhythm to the rear of the properties, despite conversion to terraces. The roof form remains a feature and very much intact.

1.78 The rest of the properties are more robust simple red brick town houses. Huge overhanging roofs sail the flanking gables beneath double height canted bay windows. Otherwise, orange-red bricks and stone dressings provide an imposing semi-detached façade.



Figure 19: Gothic style houses on Dean Road

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

- 1.79 Timber panelled doors are sometimes raised to nearly first floor level. All include pretty details such as brick dentil courses, timber sliding sash windows and tall chimneys. To the rear, huge outriggers and verdant rear gardens.
- 1.80 Opposite, 2-22 (even) Dean Road [see Figure 27], were constructed by Cowley & Drake. Generally they form an attractive group and streetscape using similar Tudorbethan stylised themes. All two bays, with gabled fronts and decorative bargeboards. Each pair either three or four storeys high. Upper floor jettied and half-timbered from curved corniced projecting eaves [see Figure 20]. London stock brick and red brick and moulded red brick dressings used throughout the façade.
- 1.81 Projecting string courses including foliated decorative band at second floor. Timber double-hung sashes are a feature along with casements at first floor. Attractive panelled timber front doors are also a feature.
- 1.82 The front courtyards retain brick walls and piers and some shrub planting. More gables to the rear, tall chimneys, ridge cresting and a number of two storey pitched roofed outriggers. Verdant rear back gardens provide a green backdrop to these substantial town houses.
- 1.83 24-36 (even) Dean Road [see Figure 27] were constructed by H W Wilson and are slightly less imposing, but of a similar design. 24 and 26 with double height canted bays and rendered panels between.



Figure 20: Houses on Dean Road

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

- 1.84 Central entrances share scalloped timber and red tiled porch. 28-32 (even) is a small terrace of Victorian cottages featuring recessed porches with foliated brick pilastered porticos [see Figure 27]. Designed as a set piece, they also feature huge corniced curved eaves with red brick dentils, Acanthus brackets to the party walls red brick quoins and tall stepped chimneys. Small front courtyard with timber fences face the street.
- 1.85 34 and 36 are corner properties with rendered and half-timbered gables facing the two roads [see Figure 22]. Massive chimney also facing the road and stone foliated motif panels raised from the brickwork to the double height bay windows. Attractive double pitched entrance canopy on stone and timber brackets. All enclosed by timber and brick boundary.



Figure 21: Dean Road c1905



Figure 22: Dean Road now

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

Appraisal: Brondesbury Park

- 1.86 Suburban residential development in Willesden Green continued north and south of the High Road. Heathfield Park is already included within the conservation area as it was the earliest residential estate in the area. It is a definite independent domestic area of large well designed town houses and villas that is completely separated from the high street by the junction with Walm Lane.
- 1.87 By 1914, town houses had also been constructed on the fields (south of Heathfield Park) belonging to Mount Pleasant Farm. The roads, Brondesbury Park and Staverton Road, had already been established and became lined with substantial town houses. The best preserved of these merit inclusion in the current conservation area as outlined below.

- 1.88 96-122 (even) Brondesbury Park were by the builder Callow & Wright. It starts, at 96, with a massive L-shaped gabled fronted detached house in red brick with canted bay windows a feature. A corner plot, the upper parts are in roughcast facing Brondesbury Park. Its neat hedge and curtilage provide an attractive composition at the corner. Its steep overhanging bargeboard roofs providing an interesting profile in the streetscene. Opposite, 92, an attractive and well preserved interwar property.
- 1.89 Alongside, 98 & 100 [see Figure 23], a pair of gable fronted detached houses. They are similar in style to 96 but are jettied on brackets above ground floor level over a pair of bay windows. The upper floors are finished in roughcast with half timbering a feature within the apex of the gables.



Figure 23: Houses Brondesbury Park

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

- 1.90 Windows in are casements and the roofs are finished in clay tiles with pretty clay cresting. Timber panelled front doors remain with flat canopied porches on decorative cast iron hanging supports. These properties form a group with their front gardens. The rear and sides are gables with single storey rear extension. Long rear verdant gardens add to this attractive grouping.
- 1.91 102-116 Brondesbury Park are pairs of similar semi-detached properties in the same style. Huge front gabled properties, most featuring a profusion of half timbering at upper levels. Timber double-hung sash windows are a feature set within reveals. They were constructed in red brick, but with roughcast and half timbering a feature to most. Decorative panelled front doors remain under bracketed porches.
- 1.92 Steep red clay tiled roofs with tall chimneys provide a handsome unaltered roofscape. Deep front gardens with shrub planting adds to the original layout. A characteristic of the rear roofs are twin gabled dormers. Single storey rear extensions. Shorter, but nevertheless, verdant gardens rear adds to this attractive grouping. 118 & 120 are identical but detached.
- 1.93 122 Brondesbury Park is a corner plot and is the most elaborate. It features many architectural attributes seen on the other properties. At the corner, an octangle turret is a feature, whereas the return to Staverton Road has a complex roof form of half-timbered gables and tall chimneys. Decorative timber brackets above the bay window is especially pretty. The front hedge provides exuberant greenery.
- 1.94 Views to the rear from Staverton Road are important as there is clear unaltered rhythm of rear façades, dormers, chimneys and lush greenery.
- 1.95 Opposite, 147-153 (odd) [see Figure 28] detached town houses by the builders of the Mapesbury Estate, Callow & Wright. The basic house form is characterised by relatively large red brick two storey houses, set back from the pavement with a generous forecourt. The front façades are replicated compositions that are articulated with extensive moulded rubbed brick detailing including string courses at storey heights and at the cornice. The key stones are also in rubbed brick and of foliated relief patterns. Double height canted bays with framing brick pilaster details are topped with half-timbered gables on projecting
- timber brackets. Windows are generally double-hung timber sashes with the upper sash divided into six by glazing bars. The front doors are timber panelled, originally protected by a decorative mono pitch lean to porch with a mixture of Classical and Gothic mouldings and fretwork. The hipped roofs are covered in red clay tiles and clay ball finials. The chimneys are detailed with rubbed brick in relief. To the rear, two storey hipped roof outriggers are an attribute. Substantial, lush, long rear gardens contribute to the setting of these properties.
- 1.96 Continuing alongside, 155-169 (odd) [see Figure 28], is a group of substantial three storey town houses with highly attractive geometric half-timbering. Three pairs based on the same theme. 167&169 are the most decorative.

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest

1.97 The front elevations feature oversized gabled dormers above large double height canted bay windows. Red brick and roughcast construction contrasts against the red tiled roofs and half-timbering. Projecting porches and timber front doors are a feature. Small verdant front gardens and substantial, lush, long rear gardens contribute to the setting of these properties.

1.98 Opposite, 1-11 (odd) Staverton Road and 124 Brondesbury Park complete this small enclave of well-preserved substantial town houses that were part of the Edwardian expansion of Willesden Green. These large semi-detached properties were designed by Brown & Humphreys and feature huge flanking gables between which the front doors are placed [see Figure 24].

1.99 All have projecting canted clay tile bay windows at ground. Above, four linked timber sash window project out with a deep cornice. Upper sashes are divided by glazing bars and the front doors are timber panelled also with glazing bars. Sloping porches supported on timber pilasters are replicated on each. Oversailing gables are on timber brackets with vertical half-timbering. Plain clay tiles roof and long mono pitched outriggers form an L-shaped wing. Small courtyard gardens and substantial, lush, long rear gardens contribute to the setting of these properties.



Figure 24: Staverton Road

Extension to Willesden Green Conservation Area: Summary of Special Interest



19-29

Figure 25: Panorama of 19-29 Rutland Park



1-41

Figure 26: Panorama of 1-41 Dean Road



Figure 27: Panorama of 2-36 Dean Road



Figure 28: Panorama of 147-181 Brondesbury Park

5

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

- 1.100 A statutory requirement under Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 directs local planning authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time. Brent's Historic Environment Place-making Strategy (2019) recommended and identified a number of streets off the High Road that might merit inclusion with the conservation area. These roads included St Paul's Avenue, Rutland Park and Brondesbury Park.
- 1.101 The conservation area survives today as a commercial centre largely developed following the opening of the Metropolitan Railway. The existing conservation area includes the linear High Road with its Victorian shopping parades as well as its commercial and religious buildings. Also included are some of the residential buildings that were built on the Heathfield Park Estate.
- 1.102 In addition, Walm Lane with Rutland Park Mansions, and the residential Metropolitan Railway villas of the Willesden Park Estate.
- 1.103 The Willesden Green Conservation Area includes 1-24 (cons) Rutland Park Mansions that face Walm Lane. These were designed by G.A. Sexton in 1898 and are highly attractive with brick and stone façades. Identical mansion blocks were constructed in Rutland Park. They were also designed by Sexton. The blocks are equally architecturally impressive and provide an extremely attractive linked group worthy of addition to the conservation area.
- 1.104 The best preserved street, running parallel to Walm Lane, is Dean Road. The area was developed as part of the Willesden Park Estate. Its tree lined street and properties of high architectural quality are desirable for protection and inclusion in the conservation area.
- 1.105 Suburban residential development in Willesden Green continued north and south of the High Road.
- 1.106 Heathfield Park is already included within the conservation area as it was the earliest residential estate in the area. By 1914, town houses had also been constructed on the fields (south of Heathfield Park) belonging to Mount Pleasant Farm. The roads, Brondesbury Park and Staverton Road, had already been established and became lined with substantial town houses. The best preserved town houses on these roads merit inclusion in the current conservation area.

Recommendation

- 1.107 It was recommended that consultation be undertaken on the proposed boundary changes to the Willesden Green Conservation Area as set out in this report.
- 1.108 This was undertaken and Brent's Cabinet approved the extension to the Willesden Green Conservation Area on 28th May 2024.
- 1.109 The consultation responses were given the fullest consideration, and amendments made to the new boundary of the Willesden Green Conservation Area as deemed reasonable and necessary.
- 1.110 This report forms a character appraisal for the Willesden Green Conservation Area.

Maintaining the special architectural and historic interest of the Willesden Green Conservation Area

1.111 One of the defining elements of the Willesden Green Conservation Area is the quality of design composition, construction detailing and the execution of the work. It is this attention to detail that will protect quality at all scales of interventions into the historic environment. To ensure the preservation of character and special architectural and historic interest, quality should be maintained throughout the whole process of any proposed change. The Council will ensure that a standard of quality is maintained to the following elements of development and alteration.

1.112 Quality of materials: The Council will, where possible, require that materials proposed are submitted as part of the application and not as a condition.

1.113 Detail: Where appropriate to aid in the assessment of an application, the Council may require the submission of large scale construction detail drawings with clear labelling. This enables officers to check the quality of what is proposed and ensure that on site design is not left to the builder.

1.114 The quality of the Willesden Green Conservation Area can be significantly damaged by the loss of historic detail, layout and setting. The protection of the following elements of the historic environment will be a high priority:

Roof form and covering

Special care will be taken to ensure the original roof form including any outrigger is maintained in the management of roof and recovering.

Chimneys

Chimneys are a particularly important element of the conservation area and should be maintained where they are a significant feature.

Front plots

The preservation of front gardens, soft landscaping and their boundary walls, fences and hedges is critical in preserving the character of streetscape. The careful management of these elements will be a significant issue.

Windows and doors

Original windows and doors are important in conservation areas because they contribute to the historical charm of buildings and maintain the architectural interest of the area. When replacing windows and doors in conservation areas, replacement windows and doors should match the original architectural style, design and materials of the building. This helps to preserve the original character and appearance of the building and the conservation area.

Image credits

Cover: Brent Council

Images @ Brent Council unless stated

Figure 6: ©Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group

Figure 8: ©Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group

Figure 9: Historic England Archive (RAF photography)

Figure 10: Google Maps imagery

Figure 14: Google Street View imagery

Figure 22: Google Street View imagery

Figure 28: Brent Council

Authorship

Project lead and main author: Mark Price, Principal Heritage Officer

Survey and street analysis: Jordan Henderson

Special thank you to Alison Harman of the Willesden Green Library Archive team for the research support.

