

Dulwich Village Conservation area appraisal

Regeneration Department

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1. Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1. The Purpose of the Appraisal

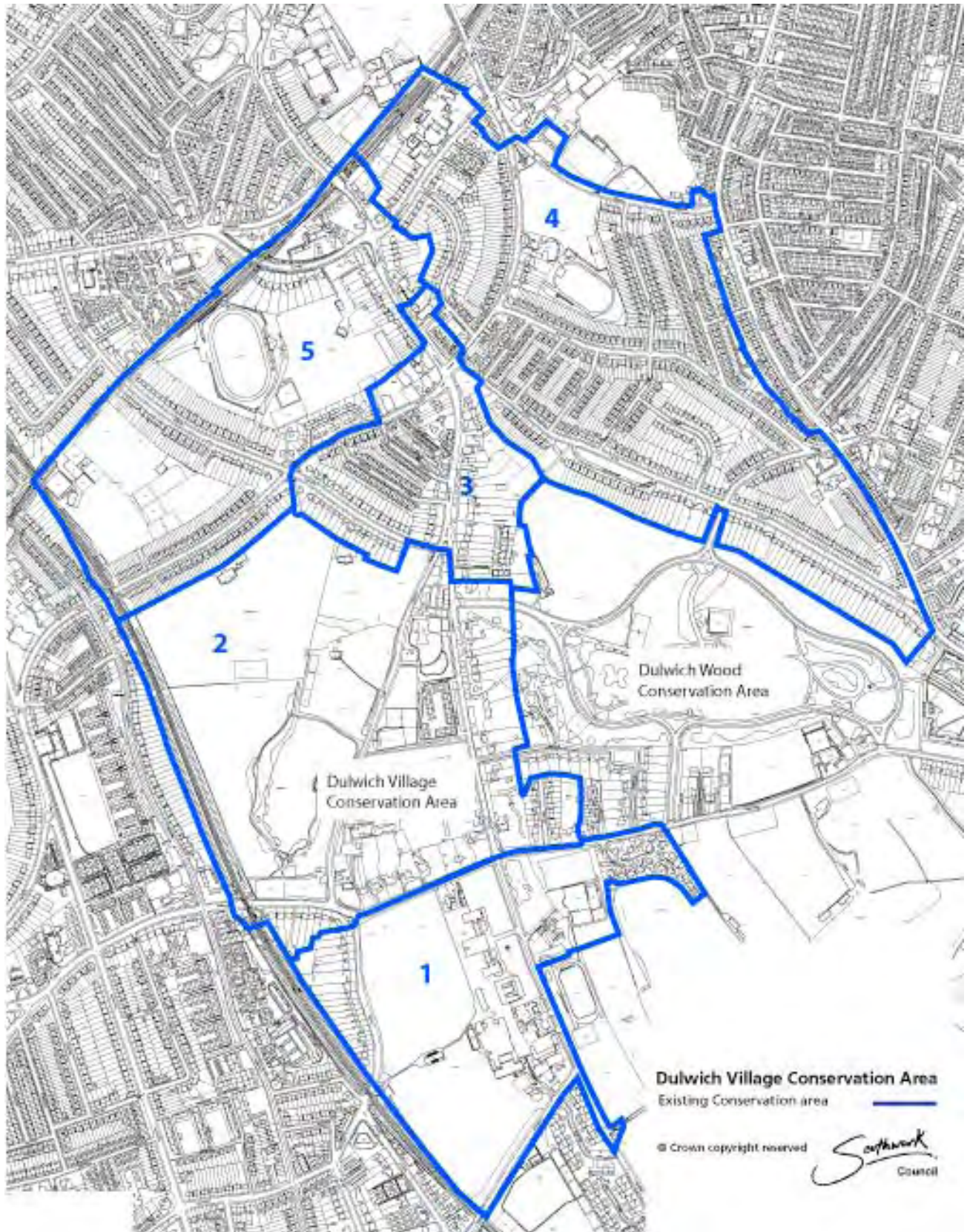
1.1.1 This document forms the basis of a Conservation Area Appraisal for the area of Dulwich Village. It is by no means exhaustive, and merely outlines some of the history and qualities of the Conservation Area. Its intention is to draw out those characteristics that make the Dulwich Village conservation area special. It is also to provide a clear indication of Southwark's approach to its preservation and enhancement, and guide future development.

1.1.2 Once adopted by the Council this appraisal will be a material consideration when assessing planning applications. It will assist and guide all those involved in development and change in the area.

1.1.3 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 centered on listed buildings and pleasant groups of other buildings, open space, archaeological interest or an historic street pattern. It is, however, the character of areas, 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 provided in Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 [PPG15]: Planning and the Historic Environment, published by the Departments of the Environment and National Heritage in September 1994, section 4 of which deals with conservation areas.

1.1.4 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, visual and townscape qualities.

1.1.5 This statement has been prepared following guidance given by English Heritage in their note "Conservation Area Appraisals". For the purpose of this statement, the Conservation Area is divided into five sub-areas shown on figure 1.



1.2 The Dulwich Village Conservation Area

Location

1.2.1 Dulwich Village is located at the southern end of the London Borough of Southwark. Denmark Hill, Camberwell, East Dulwich, Herne Hill and Sydenham loosely border it.

Topography

1.2.2 Dulwich is a low-lying area that historically was contained by natural features such as Denmark Hill and Sydenham Hill. The River Effra once flowed nearby, however today it is confined to Belair Park. The land around Dulwich was cleared and drained to create common fields that were used for grazing.

Planning History

1.2.3 The Dulwich Village Conservation Area was designated on 7th September 1968 and was one of the first to be designated in Southwark. It was extended in September 1971 to include land to the south of College Road and Dulwich Common. In July 1975 it was accepted by the Secretary of State for the Environment that the area was of “outstanding architectural or historic interest”. A further extension was designated on 15 March 2005 to include the playing fields on the west and north west sides of the village; part of Village Way and Red Post Hill up to North Dulwich station; Alleyn’s School, James Allen’s Girls’ School and St. Barnabas church; and streets to the north of Dulwich Park, including Court Lane and Court Lane Gardens, Dulwich Library, Woodwarde Road and Dovercourt Road. The Dulwich Wood Conservation Area, designated 30.09.1985, is immediately adjacent to the south east and the Stradella Road Conservation Area, designated 26.09.2000, adjoins the extended area beyond the North Dulwich railway viaduct.

Sub Area 1: Dulwich College

Sub Area 2: Dulwich Picture Gallery, College Road & Gallery Road

Sub Area 3: The Old Village of Dulwich

Sub Area 4: Court Lane, Calton Avenue, Woodwarde Road & Alleyn’s School

Sub Area 5: The Velodrome, Griffins Sports Field & North Dulwich Station.

Figure 1: Dulwich Village Conservation Area and sub-areas.

Unitary Development Plan Policies

1.2.4 The Unitary Development Plan for the London Borough of Southwark was adopted in 1995. There are three policies in the Plan that relate to the conservation, protection and enhancement of areas of character, buildings, ancient monuments, historic areas, parks and gardens of environmental quality, architectural interest and historical importance.

POLICY E.4.1: Conservation Areas

1.2.5 Where appropriate, the Council will designate new Conservation Areas and extend existing Conservation Areas. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Council will prepare guidelines to identify their special qualities. Identification of the special architectural and historic qualities of an area will be based on detailed analysis of the area. This will include the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the buildings and the contribution which they make to the special interest of the area.

POLICY E.4.2: Proposals Affecting Conservation Areas

1.2.6 Conservation Area Consent for demolition in Conservation Areas will not normally be granted except where certain conditions are met. These conditions are as follows:

- i) Consent will not normally be given for the redevelopment of, or demolition or partial demolition of buildings, or parts of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- ii) There are acceptable and detailed plans for the site of the building to be demolished or partially demolished. Demolition is not to be undertaken before a contract for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment has been made, and planning permission has been granted for the development.

POLICY E.4.3: Conditions for Planning Permission in Conservation Areas

1.2.7 'Planning permission for proposals affecting Conservation Areas will not normally be granted except where certain conditions are met. These conditions are as follows:

- i) The design of any new development or alteration demonstrates that a high priority has been given to the objective of positively preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- ii) Proposals should pay special regard to historic building lines, scale, height, and massing, traditional patterns of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, plot widths and detailed design e.g. the scale and spacing of window openings, and the nature and quality of materials;
- iii) Schemes should be drawn up in detail (outline applications will normally not be accepted);
- iv) Drawings of the proposals should show the proposed development in its setting and indicate any trees to be retained, lost or replaced,
- v) A proposal for a site adjacent to or outside a Conservation Area will be unacceptable if it would have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- vi) The proposed use will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.'

1.2.8 The Unitary Development Plan is currently under review. A first Draft of the new plan has been placed on deposit. It is expected that the new plan may be adopted in 2006. The new draft Unitary Development Plan, also known as The Southwark Plan, is supported by a number of supplementary planning guidance documents relating to different themes – including design and heritage conservation – and for different areas.

Heritage Conservation Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Section 4, Conservation Areas: Section 4.3, Preservation and Enhancement:

Paragraph 4.3.1 “In exercising its powers under the Planning Acts and Part 1 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953, the Council must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of its conservation areas. In Southwark this requirement is satisfied in a number of ways including the formulation of conservation policy, production of supplementary guidance and character assessments, and in assessment of applications for planning permission and conservation area consent.”

Paragraph 4.3.2 “ The Council is required from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas, and to undertake local public consultation on such proposals.”

Section 6, Planning Applications Affecting Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings:

Section 6.2: Information Requirements:

“Outline proposals are not acceptable for any applications affecting listed buildings or conservation areas. Design statements will be required with all applications affecting listed buildings or conservation areas. The statement should describe how the proposals will preserve or enhance the conservation area or listed building. More information on design statements is available in the Council’s design and sustainability SPGs. Consent will not be granted for any demolition or alterations without detailed proposals for

- The protection or any retained fabric;
- An acceptable replacement scheme;
- Work requiring listed building consent without a detailed statement setting out the justification, design approach and methods for the work.”

Further Information

1.2.9 This document is not exhaustive, and further advice and information can be obtained for the Planning department, London Borough of Southwark.

1.2.10 Information on the review of the Unitary Development Plan, including electronic versions of the plan and supplementary guidance, can be found on the Council’s web site at www.Southwark.gov.uk/udp.

1.2.11 All the properties in the conservation area, including the extensions to it, are within the area subject to the Dulwich Estate’s Scheme of Management. Under the Scheme of Management, the most recent version of which is dated November 1999, most categories of work to the properties, including works to trees and verges and works of repair and maintenance, as well as any alterations to the external appearance of properties, require the Estate’s approval in addition to the Council’s planning requirements. Further details of the Scheme can be obtained from the Estate’s office at The Old Grammar School, Burbage Road, Dulwich SE21 7AF Telephone: (020) 8693 2400.

2. Historical background

2.1.1 The ancient manor of Dulwich is first mentioned in the records of AD967 as a tiny hamlet, granted by King Edgar to one of his thanes. Later, in 1127, in the reign of Henry I, the land was granted to Bermondsey Abbey, and remained in their possession until the Abbey's dissolution in 1540.

2.1.2 In 1605 the Crown sold the land for £5000 to Edward Alleyn, a noted actor –manager of the day, who founded his “College of God's Gift”, invariably known as Dulwich College, in 1619, for the welfare of the old and the education of the young. The endowment of his estate was consequentially a major influence on the development of the area. Under the terms of Alleyn's endowment of his college and its estate, the Foundation of Edward Alleyn exercised control over development on the estate. Through the Scheme of Management, referred to in 1.2.11 above, it continues to this day to exercise that control, and has therefore been in large measure responsible for the present appearance of the conservation area.

2.1.3 The original hamlet consisted of ribbon development from North to South along a medieval route, which formed the High Street, and is now known as Dulwich Village. The mediaeval routes are still evident and include not only Dulwich Village but College and Gallery Roads, Red Post Hill and Village Way. Court Lane and Calton Avenue were probably no more than paths. This historic pattern of routes can be seen on John Rocque's map of 1762 (figure 2). Right up until the 18th Century, Dulwich remained a very small place, however at this time it started to attract affluent visitors and residents. A number of properties remain from this time, most notably Bell House, dated 1767, and 103 and 105 Dulwich Village from the same period.

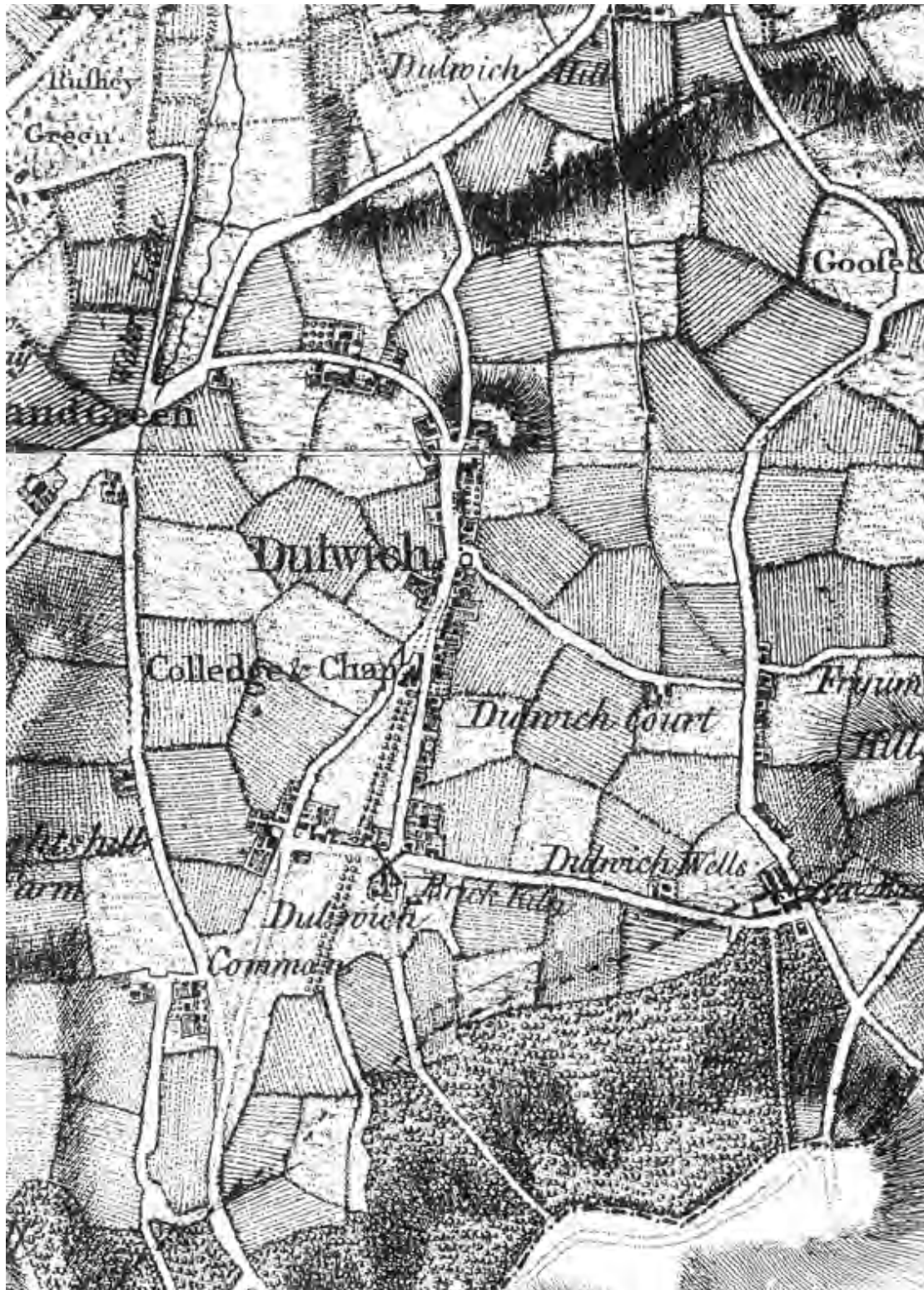


Figure 2, Extract from John Rocque's Topographical Map of the County of Surrey of 1762.

2.1.4 Acts of Parliament passed in 1805 and 1808 permitted the enclosure of common land, and as a result the village expanded. The grass verges on either side of Dulwich Village are the remnants of the common land. The shops were built in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, and as suburban London spread, so the village grew, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The origins of the rural village can still be appreciated in the urban grain of present day Dulwich.

2.1.5 Dulwich tried to meet the needs of the poor by providing small, inexpensive housing to rent. This led to small pockets of development, of which Dekker Road is a good example, and also to the housing provided by 'The Dulwich Cottages Company' who retained Charles Barry the younger to design buildings that would complement the local context. The cottages, set in small gardens, were built in the late 1870s. There are examples remaining at Turney Road and Boxall Road, and at the south end of Calton Avenue.

2.1.6 The College governors, like many of the local gentry and bourgeoisie, were not enthusiastic about the arrival of the railways, but were able to take advantage of the competition to bring passengers into the capital in the 1860s to sell 100 acres of their land to the railway companies at £1000 per acre. This windfall helped the governors in establishing new College buildings in 1870 on land half a mile south of the original buildings. The London, Chatham & Dover Railway's main line (through West Dulwich station) was built in 1860-3. The London, Brighton & South Coast Railway's line, serving North Dulwich station, followed in 1864-8. The embankment and viaduct on which these lines run, create strong boundaries to the north and west sides of the area, the more so as the governors insisted that the railway structures should be built to designs of the College's architect, so as to be worthy of the area's character and dignity. The viaduct and a

number of the bridges display the initials of Alleyn's College.

2.1.7 With the arrival of the railways came a huge growth in housing and the population rose from 1,632 in 1851 to 10,247 in 1901. The farms and market gardens of East Dulwich became suburban streets and late Victorian and Edwardian roads were built up towards Herne Hill and West Dulwich. To cater for this expansion, in 1894 St. Barnabas' church was opened as the parish church for the newly formed parish of Dulwich, prominently located on the ridge between the old village and East Dulwich. At the same time the provision of schools was also being expanded. The Alleyn Foundation was reorganised under the provisions of an Act of Parliament of 1882, one consequence of which was the building of the new Alleyn's School in Townley Road in 1887 and the provision of new premises for James Allen's Girls' School in East Dulwich Grove. The London School Board was also active, erecting new blocks in their distinctive junior school style in Turney Road. Another notable public building from this period is Dulwich Library, funded by the philanthropist J. Passmore Edwards on land donated by the Estate Governors and erected in 1896 to the designs of Charles Barry the younger. These changes can be seen by comparing Dewhurst's plan of Dulwich of 1842 with the third edition of the 25" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey plan of 1916 (figures 3 and 4).

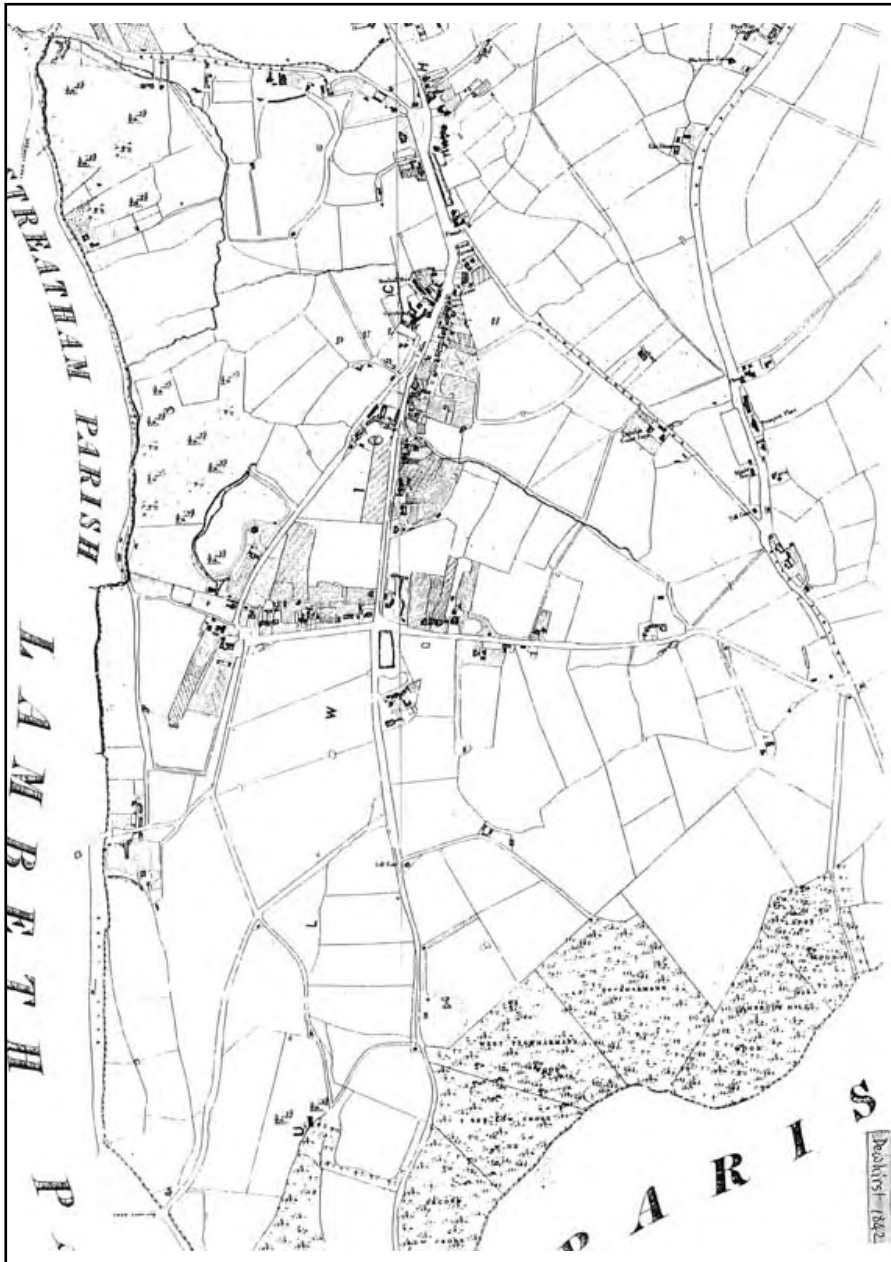


Figure 3, Dewhurst's plan of Dulwich of 1842.



Figure 4, Third edition of the 25" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey plan, published in 1916.

2.1.8 By the middle of the 20th century the character of the present conservation area was essentially established. The contributions of the second half of the century have mostly been of a relatively small-scale, infill nature. Prominent positive interventions have included the new St. Barnabas' church, consecrated in 1997 following the destruction of its predecessor by fire, with its innovative glass spire by HOK Architects; Rick Mather's sensitive additions to the Dulwich Picture Gallery; the new buildings for the Dulwich Village C. of E. Infants' School in Dulwich Village and the new housing development of circa 2000 on the former Woodyard site backing on to Dulwich Park.

2.1.9 Less beneficial have been the (fortunately few) cases where houses and villas with large gardens have been replaced with more intensive residential developments. The worst example is the redevelopment of most of the garden of the grade II listed Pond House, but other cases that should be mentioned include Hambledon Place, where an interesting mid 19th century stuccoed villa was replaced with an assemblage of undistinguished executive dwellings; and College Gardens, where three pairs of mid-Victorian villas were demolished for the development of a much denser group of new houses.

3. The Character and Appearance of the Area.

3.1 Broad Context

3.1.1 When defining the character of a Conservation Area, one should take into account both the built environment and the area's ambience. The character is established by the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares, the sense of openness and greenery, the street furnishings and hard and soft surfaces, routes through the area, views along streets as well as between buildings and other townscape characteristics. All of these make a positive contribution to establishing the special interest of Dulwich village.

3.1.2 The key townscape characteristic of the Conservation Area is its relationship of the north-south mediaeval route with the houses and the secondary roads that run from it. It is not until one starts to move away from the medieval heart of the Village that one becomes aware of the strong sense of openness. This is largely due to the numerous playing fields, parks, tree-lined roads and large gardens. The scale of open space is often not apparent from the street, as many fields are not readily visible from public viewpoints, but are concealed behind existing terraces or dense shrubbery. Dulwich is often referred to as 'leafy Dulwich' - a characteristic worthy of preserving.

3.1.3 Dulwich Village is primarily a residential area, with shops, restaurants and a village pub at its heart. The character is residential based on the initial framework laid out by Alleyn in the 17th Century. Dulwich continued to develop, and today it is characterized by buildings of the mid 18th to the 21st centuries, with excellent examples of domestic architecture ranging from grand houses to humble terraces. Substantial Georgian houses and fine Victorian and Edwardian terraces sit comfortably alongside 1930's family homes. There are also good examples of 1960s architecture as well as more recently approved, high quality modern developments. Housing development has generally followed the mediaeval routes described above. Most house types are set within generous front and rear gardens. There are many mature trees, which also contribute to the area's character. The predominant building materials used are either red/brown or yellow stock bricks, and slated or tiled roofs.

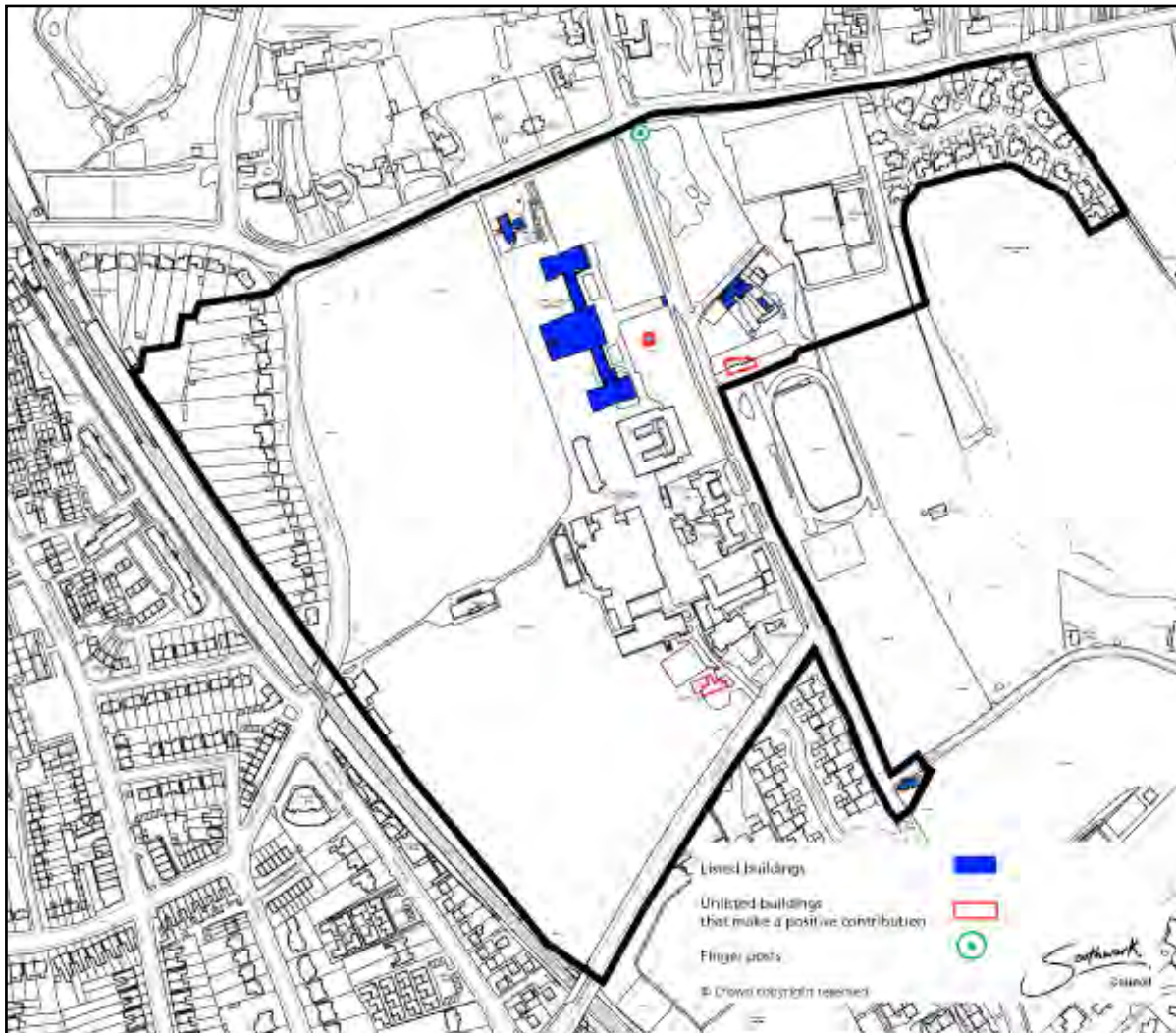
3.1.4 Dulwich also has some extremely fine Victorian and Georgian institutional buildings, designed by such noted architects as Charles Barry the younger, and Sir John Soane. The contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of the conservation area is particularly significant.

3.1.5 The centre of Dulwich Village has retained its character as “rus in urbe”, as a historic village that has become embedded in the metropolis. This is mainly derived from the setting of the area’s fine Georgian buildings with their well-established front gardens. The wide grass verges, posts and chains, shops and generally quiet atmosphere make Dulwich Village unique in London. The area’s large number of mature chestnut trees and its playing fields, together with the occupation of the large houses as single-family homes (instead of being sub-divided into flats), contributes to the village atmosphere. These generous front garden spaces with boundary walls and railings or planting are one of the most prominent characteristics of the area. Paving over front gardens to allow the parking of motor vehicles can seriously erode this character.

3.1.6 The open spaces formed by private, large rear gardens have generally been preserved. There are a few examples of gardens being developed for housing, but this has largely been at the cost of the Village’s open character, as can be seen, for example, at Pond Mead. There will be a presumption against permitting any infill schemes which detract from this open character.

3.2 Sub Area 1 Dulwich College

Detailed Character



3.2.1 Figure 5 is a plan of this Sub-Area. The dominating feature of the south end of the Village is Dulwich College (1866-70), designed by Charles Barry the younger at the height of his career (figure 6). Barry was instructed to design a new college 'worthy of our aspirations and resources'. It consists of three blocks linked by arcades in ornate North Italian Renaissance style, using details derived from the Charterhouse at Pavia. The generous lawns enhance the warm red brick and terracotta decoration. The building is grade II* listed. Decorative gates dating from 1870 frame the main entrance and are listed Grade II. Mature Chestnut trees line the perimeter and mature yews frame the front entrance.

Figure 5: Plan of Sub-Area 1 – Dulwich College.



Figure 6: Dulwich College from Alleyn Park.

3.2.2 The Old Library is located at the rear entrance of the College (now the main entrance for boys and vehicles). The Library is surmounted by statues of Minerva, Mars and Justice. It was built as a memorial to old boys killed in the Boer War and was designed by the local architect Edwin T. Hall. Again, the building is set within generous grounds and mature trees.

3.2.3 The Toll Gate is the only surviving toll gate in London. It was established in 1789 by John Morgan, Lord of the Manor of Penge, who made up the road to give access to grazing land he leased from the College. His lease expired in 1809, whereupon the College took over responsibility for the road and the toll keeper. The toll-keeper's cottage (listed, grade II) was erected circa 1821. The present barriers and toll booth were installed in 1993.

3.2.4 On the opposite side of the road is the Mill Pond, which may have been a flooded claypit. It is an attractive feature which contributes strongly to the rural character of the Village.

3.2.5 Nearby is a terrace of small cottages, known as Pond Cottages (figure 7). These buildings date from the 18th and early 19th centuries. They may have originally housed brick makers who worked in the nearby brick field. It is important to respect the small scale of these buildings and their setting.



Figure 7: Pond Cottages in 1952. Photograph from Southwark Local History Library.

Views and Townscape

3.2.6 The grounds of Dulwich College and the many views and vistas that are created by the formal setting out of trees are important to retain. The view of the College and playing fields from Alleyn Park is particularly fine in the late afternoon when the low sun illuminates the red brick and terracotta of Barry's buildings. The grounds have the added protection of being designated as metropolitan open land and it is important that the open aspect here is retained.

Key spaces and Landscape Elements

3.2.7 The open aspect and finely maintained playing fields make a strong contribution to the setting of the College and the rural character of the Village. The mature chestnuts are beginning to die off, and it is important that they are replaced in order to retain the character and appearance of the area.