



# Livesey

## Conservation Area Appraisal

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 What is a Conservation Area?

1.1.1 The purpose of this statement is to provide both an account of Livesey Conservation Area and a clear indication of the 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. Once adopted by the Council, this appraisal will be a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

1.1.2 The statutory definition of a conservation area as laid down in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'

1.1.3 Under the Act the London Borough of Southwark ('the Council') has duty to decide which parts of the borough are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate these parts as Conservation Areas. The Council has designated 53 Conservation Areas to date, of which one is Livesey.

1.1.4 Conservation areas are normally centred on historic buildings, open space, or an historic street pattern. It is the character of an area, rather than individual buildings, that such a designation seeks to preserve or enhance.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Appraisal: conserving what's special

1.2.1 The control of change to buildings within the Livesey Conservation Area is via the normal planning system. All planning applications to the Council (including for small scale changes such as changing windows) will be judged as to whether they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

1.2.2 This appraisal therefore:

- describes special architectural and historic interest of the area, and
- defines its special character and appearance

in order that it is clear what should be preserved or enhanced.

## 1.3 Using this document

1.3.1 The appraisal is intended to assist and guide all those involved in development and in making changes to buildings within the area. By laying down what's special about the area it will allow anyone applying for planning permission to judge whether their proposal will meet the legal test of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It will also be used by the Council when making its judgement on planning or listed building applications.

1.3.2 The appraisal is organised into several chapters, each with a summary of what's special. It concludes with Chapter 5 which lays down detailed planning guidelines for owners, occupiers and developers who wish to make changes to their building or to the area.

1.3.3 This appraisal has been prepared in line with the Historic England guidance *Understanding Place: Designation and Management of Conservation Areas* (2011).

## 1.4 Livesey: Location, description and summary of special interest

1.4.1 The Livesey Conservation Area is centred around the junction of Old Kent Road with Ethnard Road. It runs along Old Kent Road from the Livesey Museum (at its southern end) to the junction of Old Kent Road with Peckham Park Road (north).

1.4.2 It was designated as a Conservation Area by the Council on 02 November 2021 under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967.

1.4.3 The area was first developed at the beginning of the 19th century as the northern limits of 'Peckham New Town,' with street layouts remaining from the area's pre-industrial history (before 1850). It was subsequently redeveloped in the 1890s.

1.4.4 The Camberwell Library (now Livesey Museum) and Christ Church form a civic focus to the area and give it its name. These were provided by the Livesey family- the Victorian owners of the South Metropolitan Gasworks (on the opposite side of Old Kent Road and still with a single gasholder, now listed)

1.4.5 The Conservation Area also includes fine terraces of flats above shops, of which the Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS) building is preeminent on account of its very fine and ebullient architecture. It is of some historic significance in itself as an early example of the offices and flats of an early 'Friendly Society'. These societies existed to enable working class people to afford decent housing and were to become the Building Societies we know today.

1.4.6 Other terraces are rather more plain and don't have quite the degrees of decoration, sophistication and ambition. They are nevertheless well detailed and proportioned buildings from the very late Victorian era.

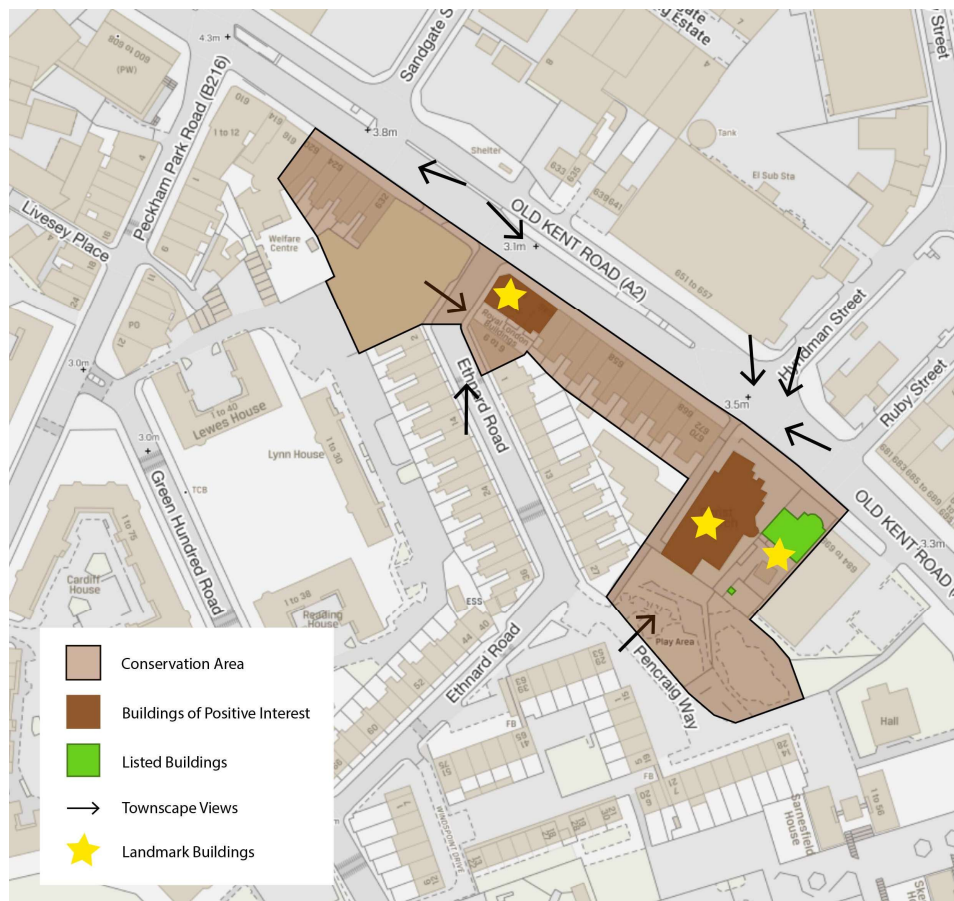


Figure 1 Location of Livesey Conservation Area, Landmark buildings (starred), and key view

# 2 History and archaeology

## 2.1 Early history and archaeology of the Old Kent Road

2.1.1 The Old Kent Road's origins are well known as it follows the alignment of Roman Watling Street, linking London with Canterbury and the Kent coast.

2.1.2 The Old Kent Road frontage of the Conservation Area lies within the 'North Southwark and Roman Roads' Tier 1 Archaeological Priority Area (APA). The APA in this area is significant for two reasons: first, the major Roman road of Watling Street; and secondly, the late-glacial lake or channel, known as 'Bermondsey Lake', which once occupied a large area to the north of the Old Kent Road. A range of important prehistoric sites, including some of the most significant Mesolithic sites in the borough and deeply buried late Neolithic and Bronze Age wooden platforms and trackways lie to the north of the Old Kent Road.

2.1.3 Within the general Conservation Area setting there is a significant variation in the underlying geology, and for much of its early history the area would have been mainly uninhabited open pasture with marshy zones. The formation of the Earl's Sluice, one of London's 'lost' rivers (now subterranean), and the River Peck have also affected the local landscape. Excavations within the conservation area in 1994 at the rear of 360–372 Old Kent Road revealed waterlain deposits possibly representing the south-eastern edge of the floodplain of the Earl's Sluice.

2.1.4 Watling Street was one of the most important roads in Roman Britain and the Old Kent Road remained an important transport connection throughout the medieval and into the post medieval period. Many sites in the area have produced evidence for Roman roadside settlement and land management, particularly retaining evidence of Roman drainage systems, although there has been little investigation within the Conservation Area or the immediate streets.

2.1.5 In the 13th century, the Camberwell area was divided into eleven estates. That within the Old Kent Road area was Peckham Manor (also known as Camberwell Manor, or Camberwell and Peckham Manor).

2.1.6 Peckham itself had become popular as a wealthy residential area by the 16th century and there are several claims that Christopher Wren had local links. By the 18th century, Peckham was a small commercial centre and attracted industrialists who wanted to avoid paying the expensive rents in central London.

2.1.7 Until 1800, the specific area around Ethnard Road was marshland, farmland and, latterly, market gardens serving the capital. Peckham was the nearest centre of habitation for this stretch of the road, albeit still a small settlement.

## 2.2 'Peckham New Town'

2.2.1 The prompt for further development was the opening of Vauxhall, Waterloo and Southwark bridges, all between 1800 and 1820, and roads — such as Camberwell New Road — that increased access to the area.

2.2.2 The Shard family began to develop the market gardens between Peckham Park Road and Asylum Road, in effect creating Peckham New Town as genteel suburb with Georgian villas and

terraces for London's middle class. This development encompassed the Old Kent Road/ Ethnard Road area.

2.2.3 Traffic of goods improved dramatically with the cutting of the Surrey Canal to Camberwell, begun in 1801. Originally carrying market garden produce, it turned to the transport of road metal, building timber and coal.

## 2.3 Development of the area post 1850

2.3.1 In line with the 19<sup>th</sup>-century growth of London as a whole, Peckham's population (including the area up to Old Kent Road) grew from c. 6000 in 1820 to 12,500 in 1841, 42,000 in 1871 and 93,000 in 1901.

2.3.2 The encroachment of industry upon the area, facilitated by the Canal and later the railways, would transform genteel Peckham New Town into a dense, busy city district. The South Metropolitan Gas Company completed their first gasworks just off the Old Kent Road in 1833.

2.3.3 Under the leadership of the Liveseys, father and son, the Company led the way in technical innovation and improving the lot of employees. The Livesey Museum (former Camberwell Library) and Christ Church, both within the Conservation Area, were both gifted by the Liveseys to the community.

2.3.4 However, the inevitable smoke and smell produced by a gasworks of this scale must have had immense environmental impact. The Old Kent Road and Peckham New Town were now no longer a place for the genteel, only those who needed to be close to the works or had little choice would live nearby.

2.3.5 By the 1870s, much of the Old Kent Road was wholly lined with small scale shops. Many of these shops were set into the front gardens of Georgian houses that had been adapted for the purpose (numerous examples still survive today). In other places, including the proposed Conservation Area, Victorian tenements with shops replaced earlier Georgian development.

2.3.6 Electric trams were introduced along Old Kent Road by LCC in 1904. This brought modern transportation to an area that was largely passed by in the railway boom of the 1840s–60s).

2.3.7 Despite the environmental conditions, the Old Kent Road at this date was clearly a thriving, interconnected community. This is evidenced by the Post Office street directories of the period as well as the information given in the 1901 census.

## 2.4 Ethnard Road

2.4.1 The name is unusual with no clear derivation, but is possibly a corruption of Ethnam in Kent (linking to Old Kent Road). The houses in the upper part of the road (to the corner) were built around 1894/5 when the Old Kent Road at this point was redeveloped with the new shopping parade, the alignment of the new road partially covering the gardens of the former Georgian houses.

# 3 Appraisal of special character and appearance of the area

## 3.1 Historic significance

3.1.1 The Old Kent Road frontage of the Livesey Conservation Area has some fine tenements set above shops including some by the Royal London Mutual Insurance Company Ltd (one of the first working class mutual societies) as well as a fine former public library and church provided by the Liveseys —philanthropists and owners of the nearby gasworks. Collectively these tell the story of the social improvements and developments of the late Victorian era.

## 3.2 Character

### What's special?

- High quality working class tenement housing above shops in fine terraces with largely intact original detailing, materials and architecture.
- Landmark buildings and architectural set pieces of the Camberwell Library (now Livesey Museum) and Christ Church on Old Kent Road.

### Shops and tenements

3.2.1 The Old Kent Road section of the Livesey Conservation Area features three distinct rows of tenements with shops below, from west to east: Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road, Huxley's Terrace; Nos 644–648, Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS); and Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road. Each row forms a coherent architectural set piece in itself, with the uniformity of the architecture of each resulting in an imposing and impressive character.

#### *Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road*

3.2.2 Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road is the plainest and has flat frontages, whilst the other two feature projecting bays and gable ended roofs which collectively give a powerful and distinct character to his part of Old Kent Road.

3.2.3 Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road is a three storey terrace of flats with shops situated to the north of the Ethnard Road junction (Figure 2). A plaque between Nos 622 and 625 says 'Huxley's terrace, 1890'. It may have been built by William Huxley who in 1882 was the landlord of the nearby Shard Arms (No. 610 Old Kent Road, demolished 2003) — affluent publicans often being the promoters of speculative building.

3.2.4 Each building within the terrace features paired windows at the upper levels with exaggerated round headed stone arches; those on the first floor are rather more decorative than those on the top (second floor). Curiously the row is built out of yellow London stock brickwork although Nos 620 and 622 are built of contrasting red brick, despite detailing which is the same as the rest of the terrace in all other respects.



Figure 2 Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road



Figure 3 Nos 644–648 Old Kent Road, Royal London Friendly Society

3.2.5 The top of the row of buildings is finished with a common parapet line built out with corbels and a dogtooth course. They are all flat roofed (Nos 628–632 have modern mansard roofs which project into the skyline somewhat). The rear of the buildings are not easily visible from surrounding streets. They appear to have an odd mansard slope to the top floors. The rear façades do not form a part of the special character of the conservation area.

3.2.6 Shopfronts project about a metre beyond the façades above. Fine joinery pilasters complete with console brackets above remain between altered shopfronts and are a key feature to preserve. The shopfronts between the pilasters are all modern.

#### *Nos 644–648 Old Kent Road, Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS)*

3.2.7 Further east and across Ethnard Road to the south are Nos 644–648 Old Kent Road, built for the Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS) — a short terrace of three buildings containing commercial premises on the ground floor and three storeys of flats above (Figure 3). Behind and across a very narrow yard is a further residential building built as a part of the same complex.

3.2.8 The RLFS was established in April 1861 as an insurance society for working people. It insured for funeral costs, death, sickness, unemployment and endowment policies for children. The firm remains, as Royal London, one of the leading mutual societies today.

3.2.9 The RLFS buildings at Old Kent Road, built 1898–1900, is one of a series of purpose built branches that incorporate residential accommodation above which were built in London and in other places between 1900 and 1908. All the RLFS buildings share common architectural features although it seems they were not designed by a single architect or firm. Based on similarities with their design for the Royal London Offices at 32 Junction Road, Hornsey, the Old Kent Road buildings may however be attributable to architects Holman and Goodram. These were a London based practise who seem to have been designed many commercial buildings in London- their most famous building was probably the National Hall at Olympia of 1923 (listed grade II).

3.2.10 The ‘High Street’ version of the RLFS branch buildings have many characteristics in common. These include a ground floor distinguished by ornamental stonework and/or terracotta and flamboyant baroque detailing, especially around the doorcase which is typically on the corner and features both columns and a decorative cartouche (usually with an RLFS monogram).





Figure 4 Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS), Corner of Old Kent Road and Ethnard Road



Figure 5 Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS), side view



Figure 6 Royal London Friendly Society (RLFS), rear

3.2.11 Above the corner doorway, RLFS branches often boasted a distinctive corner turret with tripartite windows to each floor, the turret being surmounted by a copper or leadwork dome, as is the case with the Old Kent Road building which has a corner turret at the Old Kent Road/ Ethnard Road junction (Figure 4).

3.2.12 As is the case with the Old Kent Road premises, RLFS branches generally had three storeys of residential accommodation and an attic story, and decorative sweeping Dutch gables (Figure 5). Other decorative details include stonework, pargetting and — on the Old Kent Road building — decorative terracotta panels featuring floral garlands. Aside from decorative stonework details, materials on the Old Kent Road buildings are red brickwork plus red clay tiles on the roofs giving a unified appearance. Large chimneys front and rear are conspicuous townscape features.

3.2.13 The provision of separate, ornate entrances for the flats and the nomenclature of these floors as 'Mansions' suggests that the flats were for built speculatively for tenants rather than for staff accommodation. In fact, the RLFS at Old Kent Road features two distinct blocks of the tenement type: one above the branch office and a separate range across a yard, facing Ethnard Road. This arrangement appears to be unique.

3.2.14 The rear Ethnard Road building has the same flamboyant bays and windows as the frontage buildings, but simplified and without the stone detailing (Figure 6). Its position on a wedged shaped site created by the 'kink' in Ethnard Road gives it dramatic 'flat iron' appearance. A yard between the front and rear blocks is equally dramatic on account of its narrow and tall proportions. The architecture of the façades facing this yard also features decorative brickwork and windows with the thick glazing bars typical of the Queen Anne/ Arts and Crafts style.

## Mutual Insurance companies.

The last years of the 19th century were a boom time for the insurance industry. This possibly reflects improved working conditions and status for skilled working people, and the rising power of unions and trade associations influencing wages. Between 1897 and 1902 the Royal London's income almost doubled from £380,727 to £695,179, while its accumulated funds rose during the same period from £561,000 to £1,103,683. The society evidently underwent a considerable expansion programme at this time, of which investment in real estate and premises was an important element.

The surviving Royal London buildings, (including those at Old Kent Road) are all important local landmarks and positive contributors to their street scenes. The Archway, Hackney and Southampton Row buildings are listed Grade II. A comparable RLFS building in Wigan is also listed Grade II, while the Hammersmith building is included in the Brook Green Conservation Area. Historically, the buildings are significant as the manifestations of an important time of improved worker benefits, through contributory schemes that were the precursors to national social security.

3.2.15 In summary, Nos 644–648 Old Kent Road and the rear building on Ethnard Road are interesting as exuberant commercial buildings with decorative flourishes typical of the 'Queen Anne' movement. The complex remains generally unaltered and intact although a modern shop front has been installed at No. 648. Parts of the original shop front may still be intact under the modern replacement.

### *Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road*

3.2.16 Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road are co-joined to the Royal London buildings and form part of the same terrace. Like the Royal London buildings they are imposing four-storey purpose built apartments of c.1890 date with shops at ground floor (Figure 7). The buildings replaced a Georgian terrace of houses that had become shops.

3.2.17 The design features Tudor revival paired bay windows to first and second floor, and, almost matching those of the Royal London buildings, paired gables above. Like the Royal London buildings they are constructed of red brick with stone dressings on the façades and with red clay tiles on their roofs, although they have a rather simpler composition. Overall this terrace is a less accomplished architectural companion to the RLFS building next to it. It should be noted however that these two sets of buildings with their matching materials and the powerful townscape features of their gable ends and large chimneys make for a fine extended composition.

3.2.18 As with the adjacent RLFS apartment buildings, most features on the front façades remain intact, although modern shopfronts spanning between remaining pilasters have generally replaced the originals. Unsympathetic rear dormer extensions have been installed at Nos 670 and 672 Old Kent Road.

3.2.19 The rear of the buildings remain largely in their original configuration and is of some interest (Figure 8). Apartment entrances are at the rear and the original rather stubby outriggers extend upwards for three storeys (a storey below the main frontage building). They are each topped with a roof terrace and a very tall chimney stack. Good views can be had towards these rear façades from the small park behind Christ Church.



Figure 7 Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road

Figure 8 Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road, rear

### Working class housing

The quality of the new buildings reflects the relative affluence of the area and the improved conditions in the lives of the working classes. The South Metropolitan Gas Works (opposite) had reached its position of dominance in the area.

Many gasworks employees lived in the terrace. As recorded in the 1901 census, occupations listed include Gasworkers and Gasman alongside Tailoress, Domestic Servant, Carpenter's boy, Cashier, Omnibus Conductor, & Dressmaker. Richard Boulter, Machine Making, had a Scalemaking Shop at No. 666. Samuel Beal, brassfounder and Edward Deane, gas engineer, shared premises at No. 676. This may indicate workshops behind the flats as the current shop numbering stops at 672. No. 672 was for many years a bank in the 20th century, while No. 654 was the People's Co-operative Society Ltd in 1898, another signifier of working class prosperity and progressive co-operation.

### Landmarks

3.2.20 To the east of Nos 650–672 are two very fine landmark buildings: The former Camberwell Library (now the Livesey Museum) and Christ Church. Both were paid for by the South Metropolitan Gas Company whose gas works were just opposite. Together, they amounted to a de-facto new civic centre mid-way down the Old Kent Road, a testament to the power and wealth of the Gas Company.

#### *Nos 676–680 Old Kent Road, Christ Church*

3.2.21 Nos 676–680 Old Kent Road, Christ Church was designed by E Bassett Keeling 1867-8, an important High Victorian gothic revival architect who designed a number of churches in London, and was consecrated on 1st July 1868 by Bishop Ryan on behalf of the Bishop of Winchester who was suffering from ill health. The building replaced a church of thirty years earlier that stood on the opposite side of the road, and stood in the way of the Gasworks expansion. The Gas Company paid for the erection of the new church opposite the works gates.

3.2.22 The church was burnt by fire bombs in October 1940. Restoration work began twelve years later and the unusual domed spire was reinstated in time for its centenary. Christ Church is the oldest Anglican church building in Peckham still being used by the C of E.

3.2.23 The building has a solid Victorian gothic style mainly in London stock brickwork with stone tracery to its windows, complemented by elements of polychromatic brickwork to its window arches

and forming string courses (Figure 9). It has an unusual sprawling and slightly picturesque layout in which its tall square faced bell tower is prominent in the street scene as part of a determinately asymmetric composition (Figure 10).

*No. 682 Old Kent Road, Livesey Museum*

3.2.24 No. 682 Old Kent Road, Former public library (now Livesey Museum) Livesey Museum was designed by R P Whellock and opened on 18 October 1890 (Figure 11). It was the gift of George Livesey, chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, to Camberwell Vestry. Bombed during WWII, it reopened as Livesey Museum on 30 March 1974.

3.2.25 Camberwell's first public library, the building typifies a paternalistic belief in education as a tool of social improvement in the last quarter of the 19th century. Like the London Board Schools, it adopts the "Queen Anne" revival style with robust red brickwork and terracotta detailing to represent enlightenment and a freedom from censorious mid-Victorian morality. (Figure 12).

3.2.26 The Livesey statue (1909) that formerly stood at the entrance to the gasworks is by Pomeroy, celebrated sculptor of the Statue of Justice on the Old Bailey and the statues on Southwark Bridge.

3.2.27 Together the Church and the former library stand out as civic landmarks along the overwhelmingly commercial frontages of Old Kent Road. The frontage of the Museum is largely obscured in summer by a large London Plane tree that stands within its forecourt.



Figure 9 Christ Church



Figure 10 Christ Church, Old Kent Road



Figure 11 Livesey Museum (former Camberwell Library)



Figure 12 Livesey Museum (former Camberwell Library)

## Paternalism: The South Metropolitan Gas Company

From its opening in 1833, the South Metropolitan Gas Company was one of the largest gasworks in London. Its main gasworks was at Old Kent Road opposite the Conservation Area. With the opening of a second site at Lower Sydenham, the firm became the premier supplier of domestic gas south of the River Thames.

Under the inspired leadership of the Liveseys, father and son, it led the way in technical innovation and improving the lot of its employees. It pioneered the partnership model of profit sharing, and offered a range of leisure facilities from an educational institute to a cycle track and on-site allotments, in addition to the library and church.

As the area's largest employer the gasworks had a huge influence on local working lives and the economy. It employed a large range of workers from skilled tradesmen, foremen and managers to unskilled labourers. It was also an early employer of women.

## Other buildings

### *No. 636 Old Kent Road, Asylum Motors*

3.2.28 No. 636 Old Kent Road, Asylum Motors, on the corner of Ethnard Road and Old Kent Road opposite the RLFS buildings, was built around 1929 as 'Bartonian Filling Station' subsequently 'Barton's Filling Station'. It stood out in the streetscape on account of its different form and function but has recently been demolished and permission given for a block of flats on the site.

## Open spaces

### *Open space at Pencraig Way*

3.2.29 Behind and to the west of Livesey Museum and Christ Church is a small park fronting onto the estate road of Pencraig Way. The 1896 OS maps show a small triangle of open space in this location surrounded by buildings. A 1911 tax map shows a metal works with the triangular space as a yard. By the 1940s this space had been built over with a joinery works. The works were

subsequently demolished along with other properties to make way for the council houses and open spaces of the Livesey Estate.

3.2.30 Although not historic, the present rather larger space is a pleasant one that affords interesting views towards the picturesque rear façades of the Livesey Museum and Christ Church and into the backs of Nos 650–672. It is worthy of inclusion within the Conservation Area for this reason. It is the location of a children’s play area.



Figure 13 Back street views of Christ Church and a remaining gasholder on the former Gasworks site



Figure 14 Christ Church and Livesey Museum from open space at Pencraig Way

# 4 The conservation area today

## 4.1 Audit of designated and undesignated features

### Listed buildings within the Conservation Area:

- Livesey Museum — former public library

### Key Unlisted Buildings and Building Groups

4.1.1 The main elements of the Livesey Conservation Area are groups of buildings that combine into frontages that define streets, spaces and views. This group value is as important as the individual characteristics of buildings. The following groups are of particular note:

- Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road — Huxley’s Terrace,
- Nos 644–648 — Royal London Friendly Society,
- Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road.

### Other features

- Christ Church and the Livesey Museum stand out as landmarks.
- Pencraig Way open space

## 4.2 The Conservation Area today

4.2.1 The buildings within the Livesey Conservation Area remain reasonably intact with many historic features still in place. This adds to the special character and appearance of the area. Nevertheless, there have been some unsympathetic alterations:

- Near universal replacement of historic shopfronts with modern replacements. However, pilasters remain between the shopfronts to give a modicum of historic detail and to maintain a sense of rhythm along the street.
- Traditional sash windows have been replaced on the façades of Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road with uPVC casements. Similarly, some traditional casement windows on Nos 650–672 Old Kent Road have been replaced with uPVC equivalents although heavy stone window surrounds make this replacement less obvious than it might be. uPVC windows are beginning to creep into the rear elevations of all buildings.
- The roof extension at the rear of Nos 670 and 672 Old Kent Road

4.2.2 The Council’s policy is to stop the loss of further loss of original features and to refuse permission for unsympathetic alterations.

4.2.3 The Conservation Area is largely built out with few development opportunities although there is some scope for rear extensions and well-designed mansard roofs

4.2.4 The public realm (road, pavements etc.) is in reasonable condition. Traditional granite kerbs remain throughout the Conservation Area and are an important part of its character and

should be retained. Pavements are covered with a mixture of concrete paving slabs or tarmac. Street trees outside No. 636 and No. 650 Old Kent Road are worthy of preservation.



# 5 Management and development guidelines

## 5.1 What changes can you make to your building or your development site? What about trees?

5.1.1 This section lays down guidelines to ensure that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is maintained. Building owners and the Council in its capacity as Highways authority and other stakeholders will be expected to follow these guidelines.

## 5.2 What needs permission?

5.2.1 The control of change to buildings within the Conservation Area is in most cases via the normal planning system. Planning permission is not needed for all changes although the regulations in Conservation Areas are stricter than elsewhere:

- Only very small extensions can be built at the rear of a house without the need to apply for planning permission. There are restrictions on roof lights and satellite dishes.
- Replacement windows and doors to houses do not require planning permission as long as they are similar in appearance to the existing windows. However, you should note that the Council interprets this rule very strictly in Conservation Areas — i.e. uPVC windows and doors are not similar in appearance to original timber windows. Even double-glazed timber sash windows often have a different appearance than that of single-glazed originals. Planning permission will be required for these items and will not be forthcoming for uPVC windows.
- Small changes, such as changing shop fronts, windows or doors almost always require planning permission.
- In addition, 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.

5.2.2 The list above is not comprehensive. Further advice on what requires planning permission is available: <https://interactive.planningportal.co.uk/>

**If in doubt, check with the Council before carrying out any work.**

If work is carried out without planning permission, the Council can take legal action to require the work to be removed or put right. In the case of listed buildings, owners and builders can be prosecuted. Always check before starting any building project — even replacing windows or doors.

## 5.3 How will be the Council judge planning applications?

5.3.1 In accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, all changes that require planning permission will be judged as to whether they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. It should be noted that even small changes such as replacing windows can affect character and appearance.

5.3.2 In line with the Government's National Planning Policy Guidance (the NPPF) the Council will ask three questions about your proposals:

- a) What is important about your building(s)? How does it/they contribute to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area?
- b) How does your proposal affect the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area?
- c) If your proposal causes harm to the character and appearance of the area, can it be justified when weighed against the public benefits of your proposal? (Public benefits may include alterations to make your building more usable such that it has a long term future).

5.3.3 When you submit a planning application, you should provide a Heritage Statement along with drawings that answers the three questions above.

## 5.4 Advice on common building projects

5.4.1 The following guidance provides an indication of the most appropriate approach to common problems and development pressures within the area.

### New development, extensions

5.4.2 There is little scope for new development in the area. Existing buildings are all worthy of retention in their present form. The only exceptions are Nos 620–636 Old Kent Road- Huxley's Terrace, where rear extensions would be acceptable. Well-designed mansard roof extensions set behind existing parapets may also be acceptable with regard to this set of buildings.

5.4.3 Nos 670 and 672 Old Kent have unsympathetic dormer roof extension on their rear façades. This is not regarded as setting a precedent for similar extensions 650–668 Old Kent Road.

5.4.4 The area is within an area of archaeological potential. You may have to carry out an archaeological assessment before submitting an application for a new extension to your building. Contact the Council archaeologist at [design.conservation@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:design.conservation@southwark.gov.uk) for further advice.

### Alterations and repairs

5.4.5 The survival of original features plus the uniformity of detailing are key characteristics to preserve.

#### *General*

5.4.6 Original doors, windows, roof coverings and other historic details should all be repaired wherever possible, rather than replaced. Artificial modern materials such as concrete tiles, artificial slates, and uPVC windows generally appear out of place, and may have differing behavioural characteristics to natural materials. Where inappropriate materials have been used in the past, their replacement with more sympathetic traditional materials will be encouraged.

#### *Windows and doors*

5.4.7 Double-glazed windows may be allowed on non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area. These should match original patterns and should have matching materials (i.e. timber). Features like glazing bars (which divide each sash into smaller panes) should have a similar profile to existing single-glazed windows.

5.4.8 Original doors and doorframes should always be retained. Where repair is impossible, or where modern doors are to be replaced, the replacement should exactly match original doors within the streets. This will in general demand bespoke joinery rather than off-the-shelf items.

5.4.9 All external joinery should be painted, which is the traditional finish. Window frames should normally be painted white although darker colours may be acceptable where there was previous evidence of this. Darker 'heritage' colours should be considered for doors and shopfronts- navy, maroon, dark green, black, etc.

### *Roofs*

5.4.10 Where possible, original roof coverings should be retained and if necessary repaired with materials to match existing.

5.4.11 The greater weight of concrete tiles can lead to damage and deterioration of the roof structure and will usually be unacceptable.

5.4.12 Where they exist, original chimney stacks and pots should be retained and repaired if necessary.

### *Brickwork*

5.4.13 Brick is the predominant facing material in the conservation area, along with stonework details on some buildings. 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.

5.4.14 Some buildings in the area have suffered from the unsympathetic repointing of brickwork. This should only be done where necessary, and only following with advice from a conservation officer at the Council.

5.4.15 Cleaning of brickwork and stonework 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. Advice should be sought from the Council.

### *Rainwater goods*

5.4.16 Gutter and downpipes are of a standard style, originally in cast iron. Repairs and renewal should preferably be in cast iron (or cast aluminium) on the 19th- and 20th-century buildings. This is readily available and provides a better long-term investment than fibreglass or plastic.

### *Shopfronts*

5.4.17 The uniformity and traditional detailing of the shopfronts along Old Kent Road is a key characteristic to preserve. This should be preserved. Planning permission is required to make even small changes and will not usually be granted.

5.4.18 Similarly, the installation of roller shutters to the outside of shopfronts is discouraged.

### *Satellite dishes*

5.4.19 Satellite dishes on buildings, particularly on front façades, can harm the appearance of the Conservation Area.

5.4.20 Planning permission is always required if you wish to install an antenna or satellite dish that exceeds 70cm in diameter and which will be placed in a visible location to the front elevation or on the chimney. To minimise the visual impact of the equipment on the Conservation Area, the acceptable locations for siting a satellite dish are as follows:

- concealed behind parapets and walls below ridge level;
- set on side and rear extensions;
- set back on rear roofs below ridge level; or
- located on the rear elevation.

### *Renewable Energy*

5.4.21 Most renewable energy installations (solar or photovoltaic panels, micro generators) require planning permission. Panels and other equipment will not be acceptable on the front elevations or front facing roof slopes of buildings. Wiring and pipework should be kept to a minimum.

### *Trees*

5.4.22 Where trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or have a positive impact on the character of the area they should be retained.

5.4.23 The growth potential and increase in size of adjacent trees should be taken into consideration when determining the location of any equipment, including the presence of tree roots where heat pumps are proposed.

## Old Kent Road Area Action Plan and development sites

Together with the Greater London Authority, the Council is preparing a new plan for the Old Kent Road and surrounding area. This follows the Mayor of London formally designating the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area in the London Plan. The plan provides a vision and objectives as well as policies on:

- a strategy for growth in business and industry including doubling the number of jobs
- locations for 20,000 new homes, including new council homes
- a revitalised high street with shopping and town centre facilities
- the design and heights of buildings and spaces
- improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, including new links and making existing routes safer
- public transport improvements, including an extension to the Bakerloo Line and new underground stations
- the infrastructure needed to support growth such as schools, open space and public realm, health and other community facilities

Development sites are likely to come forward that would affect the significance of the conservation area or the setting. Applications are required to be informed by a heritage statement and understanding of the significance of heritage assets, including their setting and any important views and experiences of the assets. In particular:

- The junction of Dunton Road and Old Kent Road includes a number of civic buildings of high quality architecture. Development at the junction should respect shoulder heights and present a positive civic character to this important historic area. Views and vistas of the existing buildings in this area should be preserved and enhanced. There is scope for decluttering of the street.
- Future development along Mandela Way should also note the sensitive setting of the Waleran and Dover Flats, and take account of views in the area.
- Infill sites, and sites to the rear of the Old Kent Road frontage are expected to take account of the scale, massing, bulk and appearance of the neighbouring buildings and hierarchy and the proposals' impacts on the conservation area and its setting.
- Demolition of buildings of significance within the conservation area are likely to be harmful to the significance of the conservation area and would be resisted unless public benefit outweighs the harm.
- Any proposals need to consider National and London Plan policies, and New Southwark Plan policies including London View Management Framework and Borough views and design and conservation policies.

## Consulting the Council

For small inquiries email [designconservation@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:designconservation@southwark.gov.uk) .

If you are planning a more major project — for example a new building or an extension — you can use the Council's pre-application advice service <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/pre-application-advice-service> There is normally a small charge for this service.