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Town Hall Road Conservation Area Appraisal

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INTRODUCTION

This document identifies and appraises the special architectural and historic characteristics of the Town Hall Road Conservation Area and it also gives practical guidance on the implications of Conservation Area status. It is in two parts: a Character Statement and a Management Strategy.

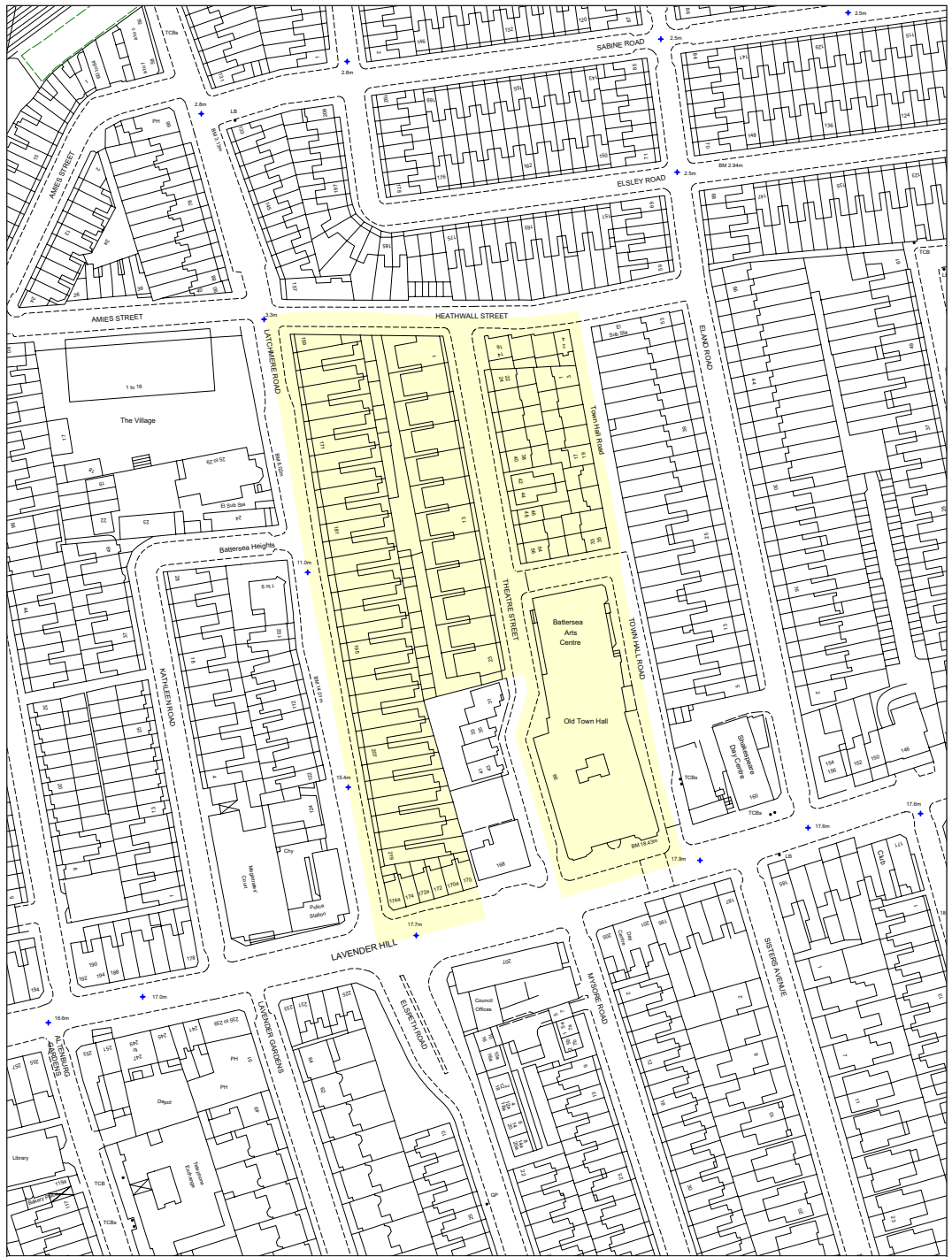
The Character Statement provides factual information regarding the Conservation Area, describing the features which give it its special character including the history, architecture and layout of the Conservation Area. The Management Strategy gives specific planning guidance and enhancement proposals.



Conservation areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 to safeguard areas of “special architectural or historic interest.” Town Hall Road Conservation Area was designated in 1989.

This Appraisal has been produced in accordance with government guidelines set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15), and the English Heritage Guidance Notes of August 2005. These state that local planning authorities need to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their care.

The intention of this Appraisal is to provide a clear analysis of the character and appearance of Town Hall Road Conservation Area, which can assist in development control decisions, and which can help to support the Council’s decisions in the event of appeals. In addition, the Management Strategy addresses issues which have been identified in the character appraisal for the enhancement and preservation of the Conservation Area. The Appraisal has been through public consultation, amended accordingly and approved by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th March 2006.

It is important to note however that no appraisal can be completely comprehensive and the omission of a particular building, feature or open space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.



 <p>THE BRIGHTER FUTURE Wandsworth</p>	<p>This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wandsworth Council LA 100019270 2007</p>	<p>Date: 21/06/2007 Scale: 1:1750</p>	 <p>N W E S</p>
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Designation map

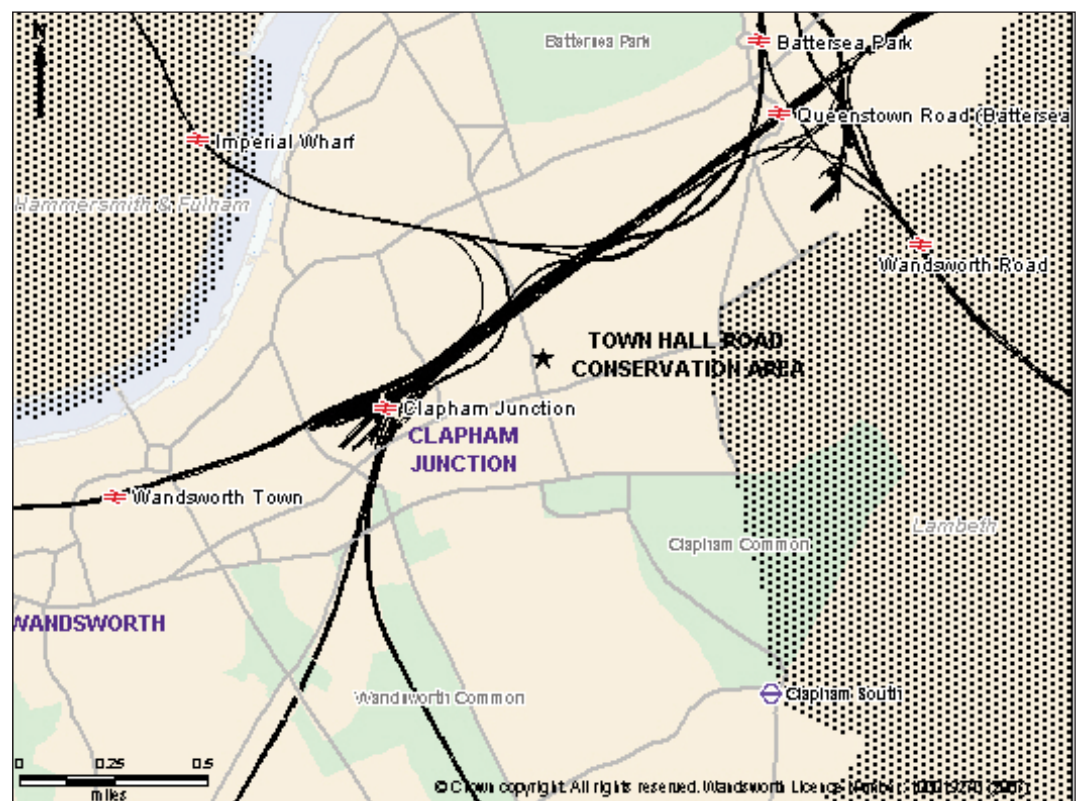
CHARACTER STATEMENT

1.0 Character analysis

The special appeal of the Town Hall Road Conservation Area is as a contemporary mixed townscape group within which the key building is the Battersea Arts Centre (BAC), formerly Battersea Town Hall, a fine Grade II* Listed Building and an important arts recreation facility in Clapham Junction town centre. The adjacent shops and residential buildings form a coherent contemporary setting enhanced by the dramatic oblique landscape.

2.0 Location & Context

The Conservation Area is located within Battersea and is 2 miles from central London. It covers a relatively small area incorporating commercial, residential and cultural development. The commercial development is on Lavender Hill – a vibrant street stretching between Clapham Junction mainline station to the west, and the London Borough of Lambeth to the east. Most of the commercial development on Lavender Hill is made up of cafes, restaurants and estate agents; the main shopping area is based in St Johns Road/Northcote Road. The residential development within the conservation area is situated behind Lavender Hill; it consists of three streets of compact terraced housing. The Conservation Area abuts the Shaftesbury Park Estate, which was built from 1873 to 1877 by a housing co – operative; the Artisans, Labourers and General Dwelling Company (this residential area was designated a conservation area in 1976).



Location map

2.1 Town Hall Road Conservation Area is very close to excellent public transport links in and out of Central London. Clapham Junction mainline station has over 50,000 passengers passing through the barriers a day, there are also 17 bus routes servicing the station which bring in 4,000 buses per day. As A roads both Lavender Hill and Latchmere Road suffer from a high volume of traffic.

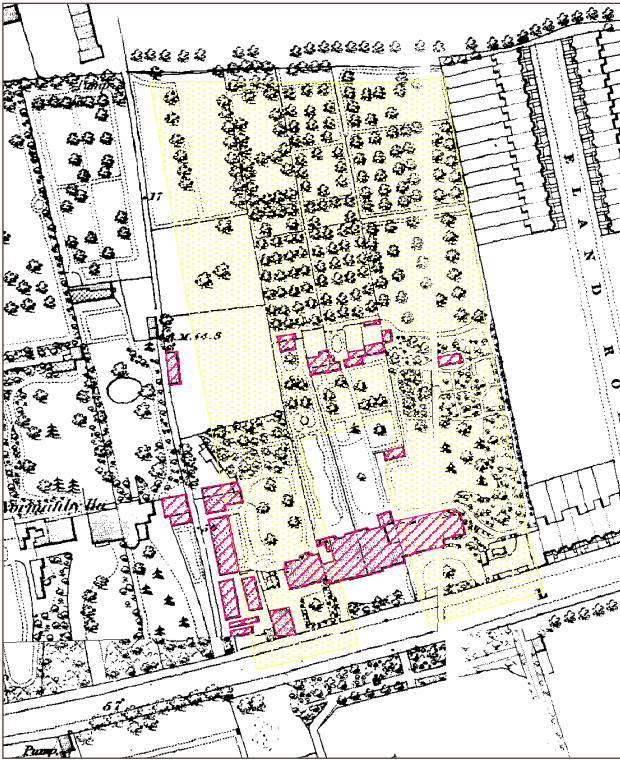
2.2 A private landlord owns and lets out the majority of Theatre Street, and as a result the resident population is transient. In economic terms, the buildings in the conservation area perform variably and so are in variable physical condition. The Council-owned BAC is well maintained and so are the Council owned houses in Theatre Street and Town Hall Road. The tenement flats on Latchmere Road are uniformly drab and dowdy.

3.0 History

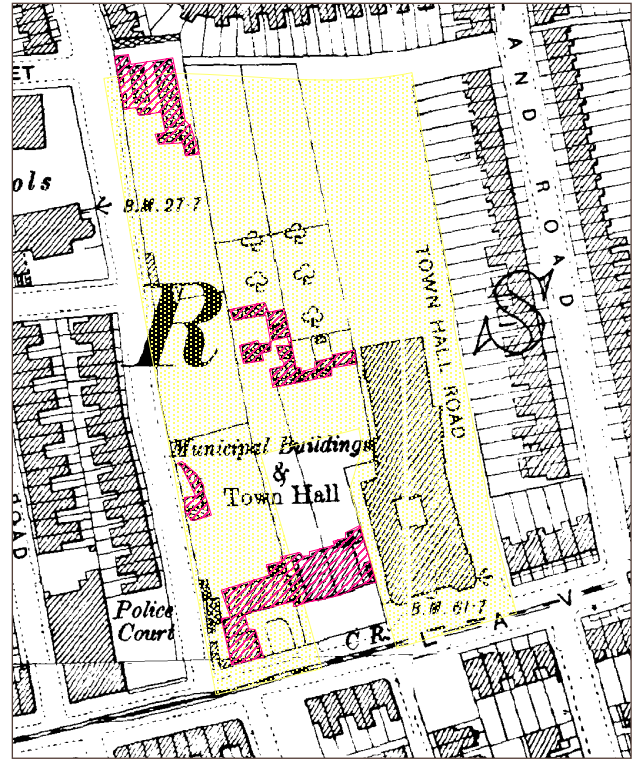
John Rocque's map of 1746 shows that Battersea was predominantly a rural area, with small farms and a village core which is now Battersea Square and Battersea High Street. Lavender Hill takes its name from the Lavender Fields that were cultivated here to produce perfume. The 19th century saw the development of large villas around Lavender Hill.



John Rocque map - 1746



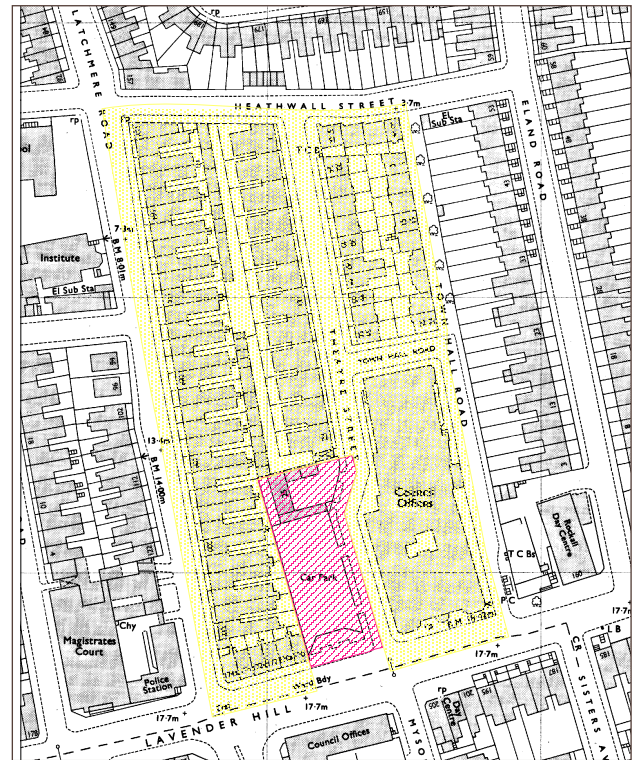
1869-1874



1896





1916-1919



1951-1978

Legend:

-  Buildings now demolished (in or adjacent to Conservation Area)
-  Town Hall Road Conservation Area

3.1 The London to Southampton line was the first railway line through the Battersea area, opened in 1838. Battersea was still very rural at this time, interspersed with large villas built for rich merchants. Four more railway lines were built before Clapham Junction Station was opened in 1863. When the station was built Clapham was a more fashionable area than Battersea and so to attract middle and upper class clientele the railway companies choose to call it Clapham Junction although it was in South West Battersea. The construction of the railway station sparked mass development and by 1895 most of the area surrounding Clapham Junction had been developed.

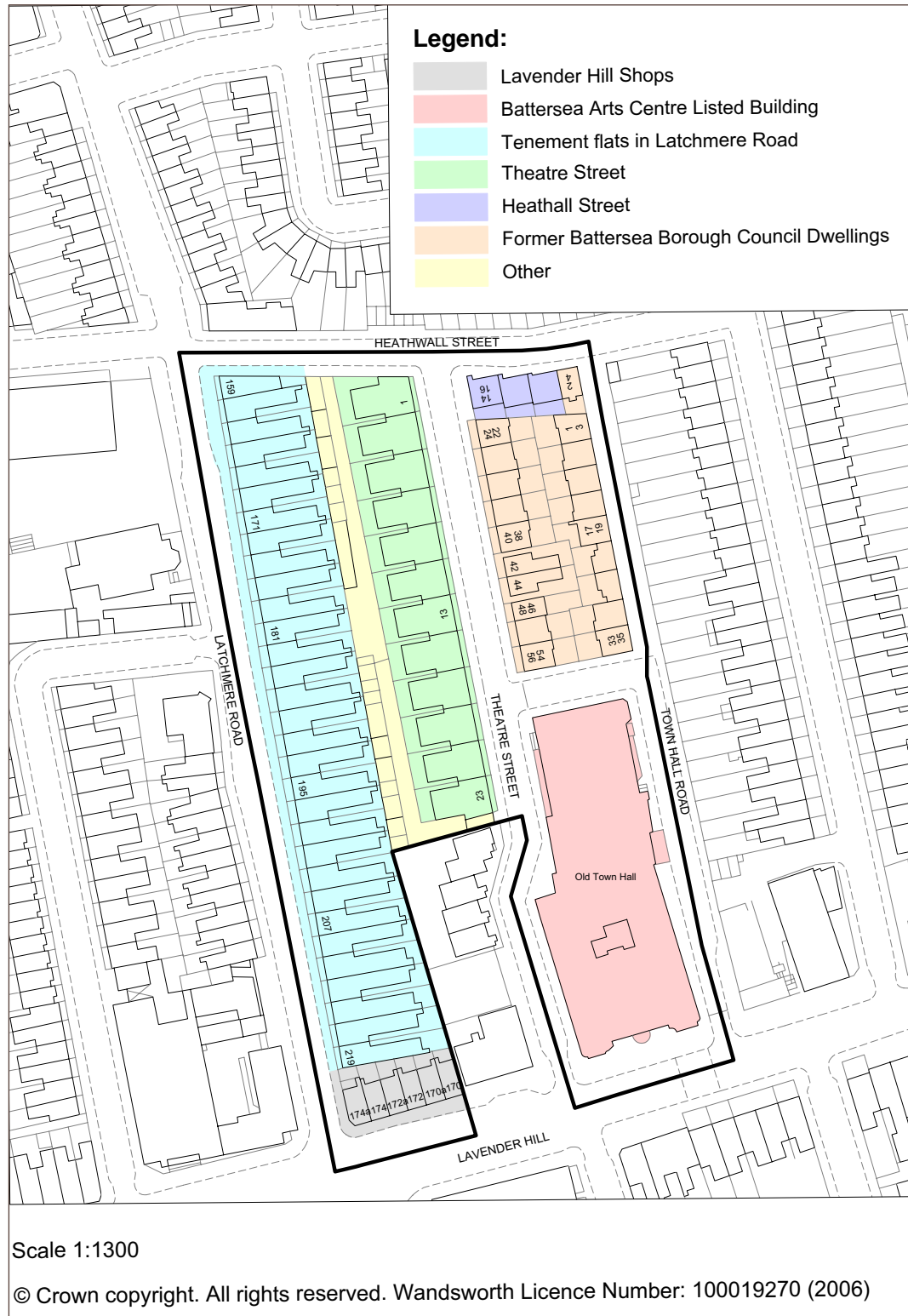
3.2 The 1869 – 1874 London OS map shows that on the land that is now the Conservation Area there were several large villas facing onto Lavender Hill, farm buildings set back behind the villas, and an orchard to the north. The Battersea Town Hall was built in 1893 replacing one villa; the other two villas were demolished to make way for the Picture Theatre. By 1916 the whole area had been developed. The Picture Theatre, by then renamed the Shakespeare Theatre, was bombed in the Second World War. It has been replaced with a four storey mixed development, which is not included in the Conservation Area.



Shakespeare Theatre

4.0 Buildings and townscape

There are five distinct groups of buildings: the parade of shops on Lavender Hill; the tenement flats in Latchmere Road; the tenement flats in Theatre Street; the former Battersea Borough Council dwellings in Theatre Street and Town Hall Road; and the Battersea Arts Centre which was built as the Battersea Town Hall.



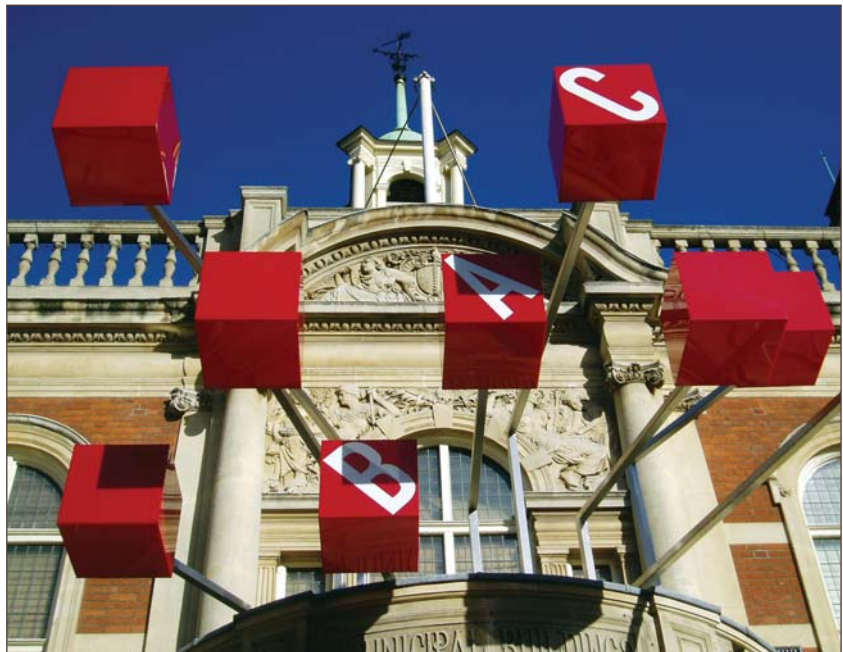
Building type map

4.1 Battersea Arts Centre

The former Battersea Town Hall is a very impressive Grade II* Listed building now housing the Battersea Arts Centre. It was designed by EW Mountfield in 1891 and first opened in 1893. Mountfield went on to design The 'Old Bailey' - the Central Criminal Court in 1907.

4.2 Battersea Town Hall was used for over 70 years as council chambers, holding borough meetings, elections and discussions - it was a key focal point essential to the legislative activities within the borough. The Grand and Lower Halls were used to stage talent contests. It was used as a recruiting station during both World Wars. In the First World War it was also used as a conscientious objectors tribunal site and in the Second World War it was the distribution centre for gas masks, and ration books and the lower hall was used as an air raid shelter. After the bombing of the Shakespeare Theatre, the Grand and Lower Halls were used a music hall venue.

4.3 The building lost its role as a Town Hall in 1965 after Battersea Borough became part of Wandsworth, following the 1963 London Government Act, which reformed London's 83 Metropolitan boroughs, dissolving them into the Greater London Council and 32 London Boroughs. The Grand and Lower Hall continued to be used to hold dances, shows, wedding receptions and lots of other community events, the rest of the building became redundant.



4.4 In 1967 Wandsworth Council announced plans to demolish the building's Victorian frontage so that a recreation centre and library could be built. The Battersea and Victorian Societies supported by local residents and the general public pressed for the building to be listed, and it was added to the statutory list in 1970. The building was reopened in 1974 as a community arts centre, run by Wandsworth Council providing a variety of adult education classes and space for local theatre groups to use for rehearsals and performances. In 1979, plan were announced to close the Arts Centre due to the high cost of running the venue. Representatives from the arts world and the local community mounted a major campaign to prevent closure.

4.5 In 1980 it was agreed that the Battersea Arts Centre would become an independent organisation with Wandsworth Council providing an annual grant to cover part of the costs of operating the centre. The building was renovated and the council chambers were made into a theatre, studio, workshop and gallery spaces. In 1993, the buildings centenary year marked with a weekend of celebrations.

4.6 The building has a long symmetrical front with a central cupola and a semicircular porch. There are carved figures in the pediment and spandrels by Paul Montford. On the pediment, Labour, Progress, Art and Literature are depicted instructing a youthful figure of Battersea. The interior is equally lavish and contains a public hall capable of seating over a thousand people. The quality of this building far exceeds that of its neighbours, although it could be said to be peripheral to the character of the conservation area, since it faces away from the rest in some splendid isolation. The double canopy over the Grand Hall Entrance makes for an impressive east elevation. The rear part of the building offers none of the flamboyance of the front, and looms rather austere over Town Hall Road and Theatre Street.



4.7 The parade of shops on Lavender Hill

The shops were built after the Town Hall, completing the development along Lavender Hill. The terrace of shops is three storeys high with usable space in the roof. The corner shop now an estate agent has a distinctive hexagonal turret with weather vane on top. Most of the original shop fronts have been lost.



The small shop on Latchmere Road leading from the shops on Lavender Hill is an asset to the Conservation Area

4.8 The tenement flats in Latchmere Road

Built in the late 19th century, the tenement flats on Latchmere Road face out to the west. They are three storeys and are built in red brick with two different variations projecting bays (see below). They are architecturally only modest, with for their time fairly routine decorated lintels and stuccowork but importantly have retained their original front walls and red brick piers. Many have good privet hedges and some have fragments of original railings. Most have original sash windows and matching pairs of entrance doors within a common porch, which provides consistency and a robust quality; some original front path tiles remain but are mostly in need of repair and separating railings have been lost. Most significantly, in townscape terms this terrace provides a strong visual emphasis to the steepness of the slope as it steps relentlessly up the hill.



- Canted Bay windows with, timber sliding sash with one horizontal glazing bar, thin meeting rail, and astragal horns. Decorative lintel.



- Bay window; with a set of three timber d sliding sash windows, with a thin meeting rail divided by plaster mullions.



Original pillars.

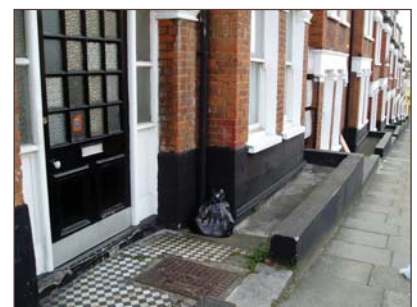
Matching front doors, and privet hedge.

4.9 The tenement flats in Theatre Street

The buildings on the west side of Theatre Street are three storey red brick tenements, which rise almost directly from the back of the footway. These buildings have a somewhat overbearing impact on the street, reinforced by their austere appearance. Most of the original timber sliding sash windows remain, important as it makes the terrace consistent and maintains its original character. Entrances with their small chequered tiled thresholds and large door-sets are the only relieving decorative features. Some buildings have patches of surviving tuck-pointing. Front boundary walls are ugly painted concrete. The street pattern with its tight crowd of buildings gives this conservation area a very urban character.



Looking southwards



Front entrances



- Original timber sliding sash window.



- Large original doorway

- Tuck pointing

4.10 The former Battersea Borough Council dwellings in Theatre Street and Town Hall Road

The detailing of the block of housing on the eastside of Theatre Street built by the former Battersea Borough Council has some robust charm. Both here and in Town Hall Road, the style and appearance are similar to the Latchmere Estate and differ only in the introduction of imposing crow-stepped gables at the bottom of which are found (as at Latchmere) four matching front doors crowned by a bracketed corniced canopy. Rather than stepping down closely following the street, the terrace is stepped flat by flat so that the ground floor windows at the top of the hill are very close to the ground, and at the bottom of the hill the ground floor windows are eight brick courses (about 600mm/two feet) from the ground.

4.11 There is one pair of houses that is different in style to the rest of the terrace. This pair was built with ground floor castellated bays and one has miraculously retained its original iron railings.

4.12 The most distinctive feature of this block is the extension of Town Hall Road north to Heathwall Street, which is a pedestrian walkway with no access for vehicles. This part of the street has a particularly attractive character because it is free from traffic and has a number of trees.



- Crow stepped gable.



- Timber sliding sash windows with Georgian bars.





- Castellated bays and sliding timber sashes.
- Crow stepped gable.
- Original iron railings.



4.13 Heathwall Street

These houses probably built in the 1930's were the last to be built in the Conservation Area. They too have the timber sliding sash windows with the Georgian glazing bars. The strength of this terrace comes from the fact that most of the houses have their original features in tact.



Brick arched window surrounds, and original timber sliding sash windows and doors.

5.0 Layout, topography green elements and open areas



Lavender Hill runs along a ridge above the Thames flood plain. To the north the land drops steeply, dropping some 15m. down to Heathwall Street. The conservation area lies on this slope and results in a dramatic articulation of the terraces which descend Theatre Street, Town Hall Road and Latchmere Road turning fairly ordinary terraces into distinctive townscape. The impact of this is seen more clearly looking from a moderate distance from the north. The strong lines of the different roof slopes can be seen from afar.

5.1 There are few green elements; the privet hedges in Latchmere Road provide welcome softness against the hard brick elevations. The small front gardens of eastside of Theatre Street are delightful. Buildings dominate the townscape, and there is generally insufficient space for significant planting. The trees that are there are therefore very important.

5.2 The closest open area is Falcon Park the entrance is off Latchmere Road.

6.0 Public realm

The public footpath in front of Battersea Art Centre is paved with York stone slabs and granite setts, forming a distinctive forecourt. Artificial stone (concrete) slabs and brick paviours are used in the remainder of the area. There are original streetlights with ornate bases and double lamps on the Battersea Arts Centre forecourt. The bases match the uprights of the canopy over the Grand Hall entrance on the east elevation. There are two red telephone boxes on Town Hall Road just out of the Conservation Area which add to the visual interest of the street.



York stone slabs



Original phone boxes



Granite setts



Original street lamps

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

7.0 Introduction

This document is not just about the Council preserving the special character of you Conservation Area through planning controls, but is also about how you as a resident or a business can make it a more attractive place.

8.0 Enhancement

Please read this in conjunction with the Character Appraisal.

8.1 Parade of shops on Lavender Hill

With the possible exception of the estate agents, the shop front details are poorly related to the surviving original pilasters and corbels.



8.2 There are numerous inappropriate additions e.g., projecting signs, canopies and air conditioning equipment. Either an overall enhancement scheme or an incremental programme of improvements through individual planning permissions, could resolve these problems. It is not suggested that all shop fronts must revert back to their original form, however a more sympathetic approach to the original building would bring about a great enhancement to the street scene. This is especially important giving their contribution to the setting of a listed building.

8.3 Tenement flats in Latchmere Road

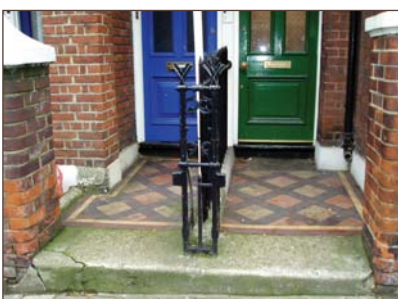
The strength of this terrace lays in consistency of details especially the pairs of front doors. Planning Permission is required to change these details unless you are changing like for like. Windows and doors should be retained and refurbished if they are original. There are many specialist companies that can easily do this work (ask the Council for contractors list), and draught proof at the same time which will help sound proof the windows.



- The windows proportions and opening mechanism is very different to the original and would require planning permission.
- The meeting rail is much thicker than the original and open outwards rather than up and down. This window would require planning permission.

8.4 Tiles at front entrances can also be repaired or renewed to match if badly damaged or replaced, again contact the Council for a list of contractors.

8.5 The design of the original railings, removed during the Second World War, is not known but could be established through research as there are remnants still existing. Authentic restoration could receive grant aid. If railings are not to be reinstated it is vital to retain the original low brick walls with the traditional privet hedges. The council will help you get guidance on how to grow and maintain hedges.



Remnants of original dividing railings



Tiles



Rubbish

8.6 Tenement flats in Theatre Street

As with Latchmere Road it is important to retain and refurbish original windows and doors. This street would benefit particularly from enhancement to the common entrances: there is scope for restoration of tiled thresholds, boundary walls and a more imaginative and cheerful colour scheme. There is also space for greenery in tubs or containers.

8.7 Former Battersea Borough Council dwellings in Theatre Street and Town Hall Road

There is potential to enhance the pedestrianised section of Town Hall Road, possibly by introducing contrasting paved areas adjacent to the windows, which could promote enhancement by residents, e.g. with greenery in containers as has been done elsewhere in the Borough.

8.8 Public Realm

The bright pink tactile paving by the traffic lights at the entrance to BAC contrasts unhappily with the natural stone paving on the rest of the forecourt.

8.9 The concrete seating area to the right of Town Hall Road on Lavender Hill, although out of the conservation area provides part of the setting for the BAC. It would benefit from new street furniture and planting.

8.10 Recycling bins behind BAC, although extremely important, are not attractive in themselves so have an unfortunate impact on the setting of the listed building. The feedback from public consultation has shown that both local residents and BAC are keen to find a more suitable location for the recycle bins.



Recycle bins

9.0 Supplementary guidance

The following supplementary guidance has been produced by the council and is available on the website www.wandsworth.gov.uk or on request please call (020) 8871 6646.

Do it in Style – a guide to the care, repair and adaptation of your home.

Shop Front Design Guidance – on the importance of original features

Making More of your Loft Space – design guidance on altering your roof

What is a Conservation Area? – information on Conservation Areas in general

Tree Strategy for the Borough – the action plan for trees in the borough

Government Guidance

This has been published by central government and is available on planning portal www.planningportal.gov.uk or on request from the Council.

Planning A Guide for Householders -What you need to know about the planning system; a guide to permitted development rights.

A Householder's Planning Guide – for the installation of Antennas, including satellite dishes.

10.0 Planning applications/Council policy

10.1 Application Forms

All application forms are available on the website www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/EnvironmentandTransport/PlanningService/Planningapplications/plappforms.htm or on request, just contact the planning department (see contact details below). To make a planning application it is necessary to complete the form and submit scale drawings showing the existing and the proposed elevations. For applications to replace doors or windows, it is acceptable to provide a photograph to show the existing, but the drawing for the proposed must be to a scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. It must show how the window will open and close, which is best shown in a cross section.

10.2 Planning Applications – Council Policy

Any development, large or small, should be carried out in a way that does not harm the area's special character. This means understanding and respecting what makes the Town Hall Road Conservation Area special in the first place; see Section 1.0.

To help with this we welcome and encourage discussions before you submit your application. A planner will be available at the One-Stop reception on the 5th floor of the Town Hall to discuss, with any resident of the borough or local business, proposals to alter or extend their property and, if planning permission is required, how it can be obtained. Simple enquiries can be dealt with by telephone. Confidentiality within the council will be respected.

Planning applications are determined using national and local policy. Wandsworth Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 2003 sets out the Local policies used to determine planning applications. Policies TBE10 & TBE11 apply specifically to Conservation Areas. Policy H4 is also important as it relates to proposals to extend or alter residential properties. Battersea Arts Centre and the shops next door are within Clapham Junction Town Centre as defined in the UDP and are subject to policies TCS1, TCS5, TCS7, TCS9 and BIN3.

10.3 How long does a planning application take?

It takes eight weeks to process a householder planning application, Conservation Area Consent or Listed Building Consent. When the application is received it is allocated to a planning officer in Development Control, this planning officer will be your case officer. You as the applicant, or your agent can contact your case officer at any time. If you have an agent, any correspondence will be automatically conducted with that agent unless otherwise requested.

If the correct information is not provided (see 10.1) the application will not be validated, your agent or you, the applicant, will be notified of this within 10 days of the case officer receiving the application.

The 8-week period starts on the date of validation. Within this time the application will be advertised and anyone can comment on your application. If applicable, other departments of the Council will also be consulted; this often includes Conservation and Design.

10.4 Building Control

If you want to carry out any new building work you will probably need building regulations approval. If you require advice on this phone (020) 8871 7620, please see 12.0 for all contact details.

11.0 How to apply for planning permission, conservation area consent or listed building consent.

Any development, large or small, should be carried out in a way that does not harm the area's special character. This means understanding and respecting what makes Town Road Conservation Area special in the first place.

11.1 To help with this, we welcome and encourage discussions before you submit your application. A planner will be available at the One-Stop reception on the 5th floor of the Town Hall to discuss, with any resident of the borough or local business, proposals to alter or extend their property and, if planning permission is required, how it can be obtained. Simple enquiries can be dealt with by telephone. Confidentiality within the council will be respected.

11.2 Advice notes are available on how to make a planning application, together with copies of the council's planning policies and other relevant documents, as well as general leaflets on the development control system. Work to the listed Arts Centre is subject to very detailed control, whether inside or outside. Pre-application discussions are always advisable. All forms can be sent out on request, or can be picked up from the town hall or downloaded from the website, or you can also submit your application on-line.

12.0 Contact list

Development Control (020) 8871 7657

Conservation and Design (020) 8871 6646

Building Regulations (020) 8871 7620

Website: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning

Email: boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk

Address: Wandsworth Council
 Technical Services Department
 Town Hall Extension
 Wandsworth High Street
 London
 SW18 2PU

This character statement is intended to give an overview of the development and current character of the conservation area; it is not intended to be prescriptive, nor to be a summary of planning constraints or an inventory of individual buildings or other features whether listed or otherwise.

If you have difficulty understanding this in English, please contact:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 English

যদি আপনার এটি ইংরেজিতে বুঝতে অসুবিধা হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে এখানে যোগাযোগ করুন: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Bengali

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Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 પર સંપર્ક કરો. Gujarati

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Se tem dificuldades em compreender isto em Inglês, por favor, contacte: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Portuguese

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ, ਇਸਨੂੰ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ:
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Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Somali

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Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Spanish

இதை ஆங்கிலத்தில் புரிந்துகொள்வதில் சிரமம் இருந்தால் நீங்கள் தொடர்புகொள்ள வேண்டியது: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Tamil

اگر آپ کو انگریزی میں اسے سمجھنے میں دشواری کا سامنا ہو تو براہ کرم رابطہ کریں:
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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE