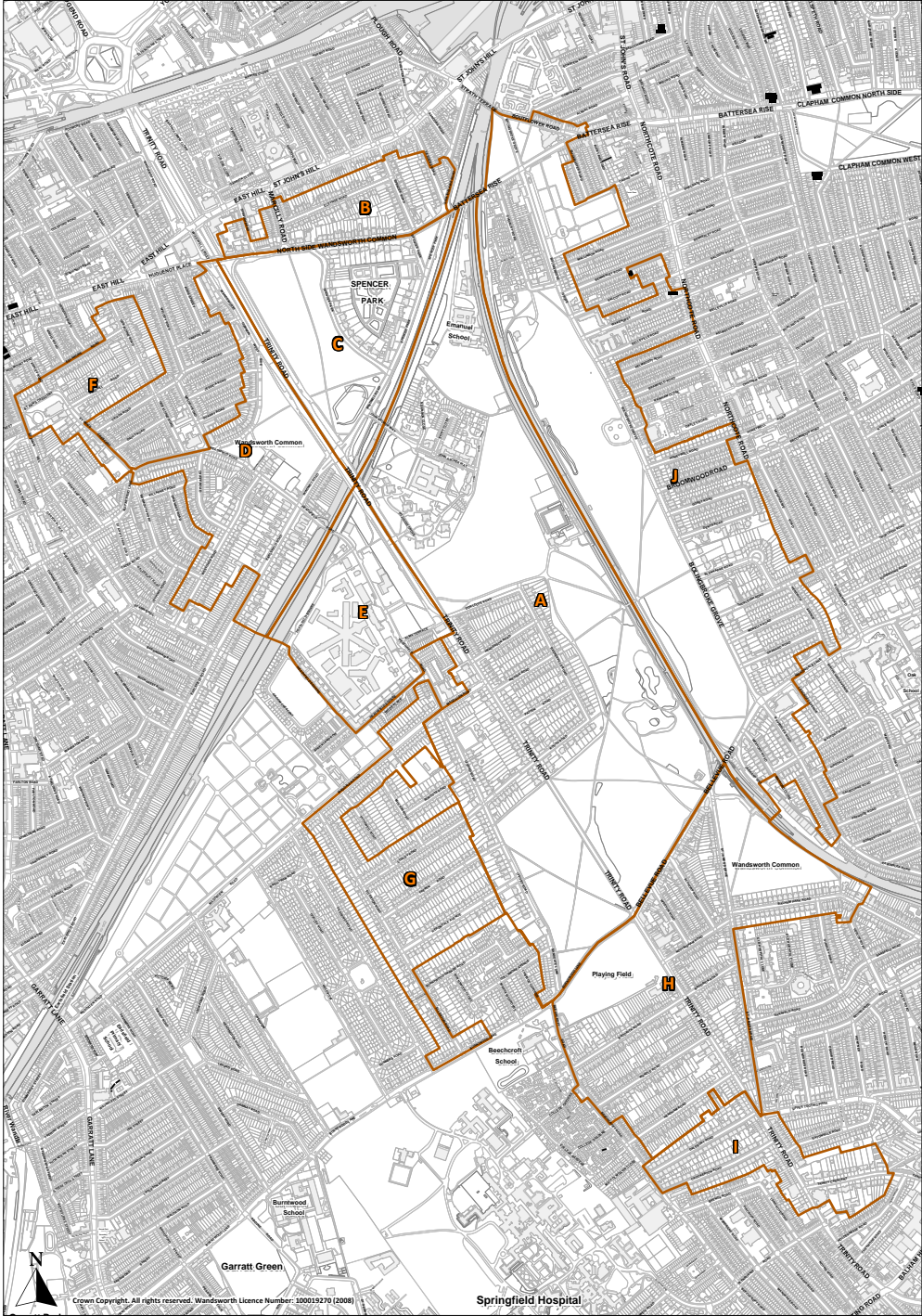


# WANDSWORTH COMMON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL - Introduction



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# 1 Map of the conservation area



**Wandsworth Common Conservation Area: whole conservation area and all character areas**

## 2 Introduction

**2.1** Wandsworth Common Conservation Area was designated in 1986 and was extended first in 1989 and then again in 1999. This document introduces Wandsworth Common Conservation Area as a whole giving the history and general information for the whole area. The conservation area has been broken down into nine separate character areas as follows:

- A) The Common / Trinity Road / the Toast rack;
- B) Elsynge Road;
- C) Spencer Park / Wandsworth Common North Side;
- D) Wandsworth Common West Side / Allfarthing Lane.
- E) Alma Terrace;
- F) St. Ann's Crescent area;
- G) Ellerton Road area;
- H) St. James's Drive / Bellevue Road / Brodrick, Wandle & Hendham Roads;
- I) Dalebury / Crockerton / Trinity Roads / Trinity Crescent (Holy Trinity);
- J) Bolingbroke Grove area.

**2.2** This document has been produced to provide an overview and introduction to the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area as a whole and detail on each character area is given in separate documents. Each document contains two parts: a Character Appraisal and a Management Strategy. The Character Appraisal provides information on the special architectural or historic interest of that particular character area whereas the Management Strategy gives specific planning guidance and enhancement advice.

**2.3** These documents have been produced in accordance with government guidelines in PPG 15, and the English Heritage Guidance notes of August 2006. 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 the appraisal is to provide clearly defined analysis of the character and appearance of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area, which can be utilized in development control decisions and is defensible on appeal. The Management Strategies address issues identified in the character appraisals with the aim of preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area.

**2.4** These documents have been through public consultation, amended accordingly and approved by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **3 Summary of Special Interest**

**3.1** The special character of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area relies upon the relationship between the fine-grained pattern of development surrounding the common and the open space of the common. The pattern of streets is mainly in the form of grids, essentially of two to three storey terraces, and semi-detached buildings of Victorian and Edwardian origin. The exceptions are the landmark buildings that punctuate the skyline around the common notably St Mark's, Holy Trinity and St Ann's Churches as well as the Royal Victoria Patriotic Building. The common is dissected by railway cuttings, but otherwise is mainly open grassland, with stands of trees around the perimeter, and lakes in proximity to Bellevue Road and Bolingbroke Grove. The combination of perimeter buildings and common gives the area a 'village green' setting, most apparent in Bellevue Road and around St Mark's Church.

### **4 History**

**4.1** Wandsworth Common was referred to in the Domesday Book as the common land of the Manor of Battersea and Wandsworth. It was known as Battersea West Heath and Wandsworth East Heath. The Common is clearly identified on Rocque's map of 1741 and is referred to as Wandsworth Common. At that time it occupied all the land between Bolingbroke Grove and Trinity Road, and from St. John's Hill to south of Burntwood Lane. Between 1794 and 1866 there were some 53 enclosures involving the transference of common land to a variety of other uses.

**4.2** The main enclosures were those taken for the Royal Victoria Patriotic Asylum, the industrial school of St. James, Allfarthing Piece, McKellar's Triangle (Trinity Road/Bellevue Road/St James's Drive), the Justices of Surrey, and the land taken for the construction of railways.

**4.3** The 'Allfarthing Piece' was appropriated by the Manor of Allfarthing in 1642. Magdalen College, Oxford were the landlords in the nineteenth century, and they leased it for use as a plant nursery. Part of this land was developed for housing in the late-C19 (the "Toast Rack"). The Royal Victoria Patriotic Building was built from patriotic funds set up in 1854 in aid of the many orphans of the Crimean War. The architect was Major Rhode Hawkins. Queen Victoria laid the foundation stone in 1857. The building was used as a hospital during the 1914-18 war, and for a variety of purposes subsequently until it eventually became vacant and derelict. It was restored in the 1980s. Part of the grounds of the RVPB was developed in 1871 for a boys' school, and then sold to Emmanuel Hospital in 1880. Part was used by a Mr Neal, using farm buildings for storage of materials. This land was acquired by the London County Council in 1912 to

restore it back to common land. The Parish of St. James, Westminster was granted 20 acres of land for the industrial school by the Lord of the Manor (Earl Spencer) around 1850.

**4.4** The construction of the railways had a major impact on the Common by physically dividing it up. Lord Spencer sold land to the London and South Western Railway including part of Wandsworth Common. The Act of Parliament was approved in 1834 for the railway's construction. The West End and Crystal Palace Railway was promoted as a tourist line to serve Crystal Palace. Because the Common was being developed with middle class villas, a station was opened on the present site to the south of the Bellevue Road bridge. In 1895 the line was quadrupled and the station re-built, with a reconstruction in 1907.

**4.5** In 1851 the Surrey County Prison had been established on land adjacent to the Common to the west of Trinity Road. Nearby a small community had developed with Alma Terrace, the County Arms and a few villas fronting on to Trinity Road. There were also a number of estates, Burntwood House, Burntwood Lodge, and Burntwood Grange. West of Trinity Road to the north of the London to Southampton railway Heathfield Cottages had been established prior to 1830. In the vicinity were a number of isolated villas and market gardens and on the common a large lake with islands known as the Black Sea. To the south of the lake was the Windmill. Rocque's map of 1741 shows a large mansion on the north-east of the common surrounded by parkland. It was leased in 1829 from Earl Spencer who was Lord of the Manor, by William Wilson, the founder of Price's Candle factory. The Black Sea was admired as "one of the most picturesque and ornamental waters near London".

**4.6** In May 1868 the Vicar of Battersea hosted a meeting of people seeking to rescue the common from incremental development by appealing to the Metropolitan Board of Works to take over responsibility for it under the Metropolitan Commons Act of 1866. This action did not succeed and in 1870 further meetings were held and a Common Defence Committee was formed. Adjoining owners had erected fences around Plough Green in an effort to assert his(their) rights over the land and in April that year an attempt was made to remove them. This effort to keep Plough Green open was a tumultuous affair with crowds and bands. Further meetings ensued and funds were raised. In July 1870 two members of the Preservation Society, Mr Buckmaster and Mr Ransome, petitioned the Lord Mayor to hold a public meeting, which he agreed to, attended by ten Members of Parliament. Resolutions of support for action to preserve the Common were made. Eventually Lord Spencer acceded to public pressure and offered to transfer the whole Common, minus the Black Sea, to the Defence Committee (later the Wandsworth Common Preservation Society).

**4.7** The funds that had been raised were used to sponsor a bill through Parliament and on 10 July 1871 the Wandsworth Common Bill was enacted and the control of the Common passed to the Conservators. Land already enclosed remained so, but the Conservators were given the opportunity to buy back the land which would then revert

to Common status. In 1887 the duty to maintain the Common was transferred to the Metropolitan Board of Works, which was in turn superseded by the London County Council in 1898 and eventually Wandsworth Borough Council. The area of the common is 73 hectares (around 180 acres).



## Supplementary Planning Guidance and Reading List

### Council Guidance

The following supplementary planning guidance has been produced by the council and is available on the website [www.wandsworth.gov.uk](http://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.
- Making More of your Loft – design guidance on converting your loft
- What is a Conservation Area? – information on Conservation Areas in general
- Tree Strategy for the Borough – the action plan for trees in the borough
- Shop front design guide – design guidance on shopfronts

### Government Guidance

This has been published by central government and is available on the planning portal [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://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.

### Further reading

- Period House – How to Repair and Restore Your Home (English Heritage, Collins) 2005
- Cherry, B & Pevsner, N (1983) The Buildings of England London 2: South; Penguin

## Contact List

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Development Control	(020) 8871 6639
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Enforcement	(020) 8871 8418
Building Regulations	(020) 8871 7620