

RICHMOND HILL CONSERVATION AREA

A Guide to Design

The Richmond Hill Conservation Area - better known as the Garden Village - played an important role in the development of the town as a military garrison in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The construction of the barracks provided a distinctive and high quality range of buildings high above the old town and the legacy of this period of Richmond's history remains as the very tangible core of this special area.

The late Victorian buildings used a limited range of materials and strong architectural detailing in the then popular style to create the barracks. The subsequent C20 development of the area has generally followed this high quality lead. The rigidly defined layout of the site is important, as is the uniformity of detailing particularly in regard to windows and doors.

This guide aims to explain to owners the designs appropriate to the Conservation Area, methods of repair and replacement which will enhance the historic setting and - where appropriate - provide guidance on size, mass and styles for minor new buildings, extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Planning Permission - When is it Needed?

In general, owners of 'dwelling houses' can undertake a range of 'minor' alterations without the need to apply for planning permission. These are generally called 'permitted development rights'.

However where it is felt that such alterations could have a detrimental effect on the character of a Conservation Area these rights can be removed by the Council. On some of the properties in the Garden Village this has happened - the list in the appendix summarises the position. Flats and maisonettes do not benefit from these rights.

In each of the design elements that follow an indication is given as to what the Council considers appropriate to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This covers where a Planning Application is required for alterations - but equally applies where not, in order to encourage the most sympathetic design solution.

Windows and Doors

Within the Conservation Area there is a strong degree of uniformity across both the larger historic buildings and the modern developments on the site. This regimented appearance is a critical part of the character of the Conservation Area. A key component is the treatment of windows and doors with an established range of timber windows and doors used which reflect the individual character of each type of building or group of buildings - but which when taken together create a united approach appropriate to the character of the Conservation Area.

Windows

Windows are almost without exception set in timber frames painted either gloss white or cream in colour. The earlier buildings on the site have in many instances retained their original form of windows, mostly sliding sashes with box hung weights to a variety of sizes and designs.





The arrangement of individual panes and window designs are important to the buildings as in many cases they indicate the original status of the building, establish and maintain the uniform approach across the site and are usually considered part of the overall architectural design.

It is important that where original windows and doors, on both the original buildings and the modern developments, remain they are maintained and kept in good condition. On important elevations which form an essential part of the character of the Conservation Area (as identified on the Design Guide Plan) where replacements are essential, they should accurately

replicate both the general design of the windows and the detailed sections of the timberwork. This work would not require an application for planning permission. On other elevations, where the contribution of each individual building to the character of the whole is less significant, variations to the original window designs mainly through the use of other materials (such as UPVC) may be considered acceptable. Proposals may need Planning Permission and these elevations are shown on the Design Guide Plan. The most important frontages are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, however all public faces of buildings can contribute to the character of the area.



Double glazing has been incorporated into the modern buildings and some of the recent conversion schemes as part of their original specification. In the interests of energy efficiency similar measures are often sought in older properties. It is possible to successfully incorporate modern designs of secondary double glazing into historic windows and these measures will improve the thermal efficiency of the building. This is the most appropriate solution for the Listed Building, Nightingale Hall. It is not as easy to successfully use current 28mm double glazed units within replacement sashes or fixed panes as the units are heavier, with thicker glass, two panes and additional seals and spacers. Their construction requires thicker glazing bars, deeper sash boxes and heavier weights all of which combine to distinctly alter the original design. Alternative designs such as spring balance weights have similar impacts, all of which affect the appearance of the window, and thus break up the uniform character of the group of buildings to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area. It is possible to obtain a 12 mm double glazed unit which can go a long way to replicating the constructional details of the original/existing windows. On Hulse House and Howard House (as shown on the Design Guide Plan) where planning permission is required, the latter may be a solution which retains the character of the whole building and the Conservation Area. It may also be a good solution on other properties such as Luttrell House and Hillside.

The use of UPVC window units in visually prominent positions is not acceptable within the Conservation Area (as shown on the Design Guide Plan). They do not respect the style, form, proportions, operation or material of the original historic or later designed window arrangements and detract from the character of the buildings and the wider area. The material from which they are manufactured is flat and lifeless with very little detail when compared to correctly maintained timber windows. Applied detailing on UPVC units is almost always inaccurate and of poor proportion and the position at which the windows are set within the wall does not respect the original design, leaving the modern replacements close to or flush with the outer face of the wall.



There may be locations within the Garden Village that can accommodate less traditional styles of windows without having an impact on the character of the area. These elevations have been highlighted on the Design Guide Plan. In these cases the general pattern of the windows or doors should reflect those of the original design.

On elevations where the contribution to the character of the Conservation Area is small (as shown on the Design Guide Plan) the design of the windows is unlikely to impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Doors

The same importance in terms of the contribution of an elevation to the character of the Conservation Area is true for the design and colour of doors. The schedule with this Design Guide indicates the type of door appropriate for each building group. On the elevation shaded dark blue and red on the Design Guide Map the original design of timber door needs to be maintained. On the elevations shaded green, the original form of timber door should be maintained. On the elevations shaded light blue there is more flexibility in the design of a door but the material should remain timber. On the elevations shaded yellow and orange the design of the door does not have an impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Garage doors form an integral part of the design of modern developments. Each group of houses has a garage door design which unifies the group, with colour playing an important role. It is important that these garage door designs and their colours are maintained.

Stonework and Pointing

The majority of buildings in the Conservation Area are faced in natural stone and the stone boundary wall is a very important feature. Three main types of stone are used - the original locally sourced sandstone which has often weathered to a pale grey in colour, the orange/brown iron rich random stone used for the modern development on the former parade ground, and the homogenous pale yellow facing stone of the properties to the south of the barracks block. It is important when making alterations or repairs to buildings that this variation and range is recognised and that appropriate stone is selected for the work.



Detailing of stonework is a specialist trade and the historic styles and details used on older properties should be correctly and accurately reproduced in undertaking restoration work. The detailing on modern buildings is less ornate and often coarse in comparison to the historic workmanship, however it is appropriate to ensure that new work matches that on the rest of the building.

Re-pointing of stonework is a specialist job if a good result is to be achieved. A correct mortar mix incorporating an appropriate range of sand colours and textures will help repair work blend more rapidly into the established finish. On the older Victorian buildings it is likely that a lime mortar mix was originally used and this will provide a distinctive pale, gritty finish to joints. This should be replicated in any repair work. Areas of older, poor quality pointing have been noted around the site, however these may be very hard and their removal can be damaging to the surrounding stonework. Care should be taken if dealing with these areas to protect the face of the original stonework from further damage. Sometimes if the pointing is not too obtrusive it may be better to leave it in place.



Different styles of finish can be applied to pointing and it is seldom appropriate to leave the mortar with a finish straight from the trowel. It is usually best to leave the mortar back slightly from the face of the surrounding stonework and brush it off (bash it) with a stiff bristle brush to reveal the larger aggregate in the mortar and remove trowel marks but not leave any brush strokes. Once cleaned off this should leave the stone as the prominent element in the wall with the mortar only visible on close inspection.

There are instances where alternative pointing styles have been used extensively, particularly on the main barracks block where a form of strap pointing exists across large areas of the building. In such cases it is essential to understand why and when this method was used and whether it remains appropriate to the building. In general, strap pointing in hard cement mortar is inappropriate on historic buildings and should be resisted in the Conservation Area. Given the range of materials and pointing forms within the Conservation Area each repair should be assessed on a case by case basis and a method appropriate to each site should be selected depending on the existing and historic finish.



Roof Alterations

The roofs of the early military buildings were exclusively covered in natural grey slate, probably Welsh in origin, establishing a form of roofing which persisted throughout the development of the site. There are exceptions to this - however these are few and their now weathered appearance has helped assimilate the modern materials better within the Conservation Area. In general, where a roof is covered in natural grey slate, this should be retained even where re-laying is required to repair life-expired fixings. Grey slate has a very long lifespan and much of the slate in use on a roof can often be re-laid on new battens, saving money and materials and retaining original roof coverings on the building. Where new buildings are proposed these should also be roofed in natural grey slate to match the predominant roof coverings and care should be taken to match the material exactly where appropriate. If later 20th century roofs with modern tiling systems need to be recovered, consideration should be given to re-laying them in slate as it is a more long lived material and would visually compliment its setting better than a modern replacement.



Consideration must be given to neighbouring buildings - particularly where works are proposed to one element of a terrace - as the replacement roofing should work both visually and physically with the remaining concrete tiles.

Dormers and roof lights are very scarce within the Conservation Area, the most notable examples being the roof lights on Rowan House. Roof lights break up the simplicity of the roofscape which within the Conservation Area is dominated by large expanses of slate. It is unlikely that roof lights could be accommodated without impacting on this important characteristic - and certainly on the principal elevations identified in the appraisal and on key historic buildings roof lights are unlikely to be acceptable. Smaller roof lights on secondary elevations and in discrete locations may be accommodated but it will be essential to examine the visibility of such installations across the whole of the Conservation Area.



With the strongly developed symmetry of buildings on the site it is unlikely that dormers could be added to a property without disrupting the character of the area. No dormers currently exist at Richmond Hill and proposals for dormers will be resisted as they could significantly jeopardise the character and quality of the Conservation Area.

Extensions and Porches

There are very few opportunities for extensions within the Conservation Area. In general extensions should be restricted only to the non-public elevations of buildings, usually the rear, and should respect the dominance of the existing house. Building materials should reflect the quality and style of the Conservation Area in general - and the host building in particular - and detailing should compliment the host building in terms of windows, solid to void ratio, and roof styles and pitches. Where a new addition is proposed it should generally be set back from the main elevation of the property to remain subservient to the host building. Identified architectural features should not be obscured or removed by an extension and care must be taken to assimilate any new structure into the character of the Conservation Area.

With regard to proposals for porches these will generally not be acceptable on front elevations as they will disrupt the symmetry of the development which forms an important element of the character of this Conservation Area. Porches may be acceptable on secondary elevations in discrete locations but their design should be considered in detail to ensure that they reflect their setting and position within the area.

Conservatories by their nature are of a different form of construction to a house and they are only likely to be acceptable on elevations that do not form important frontages in the Conservation Area - in particular on the rear elevations shown orange and possibly, with planning permission, on the rear elevations shown in light blue on the Design Guide plan. Any conservatory design should reflect the form of the main house using details such as gabled or hipped roofs and the proportions of the windows.

Chimneys

Chimneys are important in creating an interesting vibrant roofscape within the Conservation Area. They are part of the original design of most of the older buildings, and on the more modern developments care has been taken to repeat this feature. Historically the status of a building can be gauged by the number of chimneys it has as each chimney usually related to a heated room - the higher the status of the building, the more heated rooms it tended to have. Chimneys also reflect the value of the building to the original owner and this was often expressed in particularly large or ornate stacks. Within the Conservation Area the retention and reinstatement of chimneys is therefore strongly encouraged and their removal will be resisted as this would impact on the historic value of the buildings and the wider Conservation Area. Where a chimney is redundant it is important to ensure it is well maintained, vented at the top and bottom of the stack and appropriately supported within the building. Where chimneys have been reduced in height or removed altogether they should be rebuilt to their original height with the correct detailing wherever possible.



Outbuildings

Small incidental buildings such as garages and stores feature within the Conservation Area and in general these have been constructed in an appropriate material to their setting. The requirement for garaging and car parking in the 21st Century puts significant pressure on historic environments. However within Richmond Hill this has been ably handled through the creation of garage courts and discrete blocks.





There is little opportunity to add to the number of garages and any proposals for additional garaging should take into account the identified characteristics of the Conservation Area, the materials used in the vicinity and the amount of open space around the proposal. Other smaller incidental structures such as bin stores or sheds should take similar account of their surroundings in order to remain in character with the Conservation Area. A good example of well designed bin stores can be found near Rowan House.

Pipework, Flues, Vents, Satellite Dishes, Alarms and Meter Boxes

There is a wide range of modern day additions and requirements for houses and many of these require external fixing and positioning. Pipework, guttering, flues and vents should all be provided in appropriate materials - cast iron being the most commonly found in the later Victorian period. Invariably this is painted black to remain as unobtrusive as possible. The modern developments all use plastic rainwater goods which are generally all black and these do give uniformity in the area.

Satellite dishes and aerials should be positioned as unobtrusively as possible to ensure they do not impact on the identified important frontages. It is not appropriate to site satellite dishes on front elevations - preferably they should be on rear elevations or within service courtyards. It may be possible to locate aerials within roof spaces in certain locations.

Alarm boxes are designed to be visible, however consideration should be given to their siting and colouring to ensure that they do not dominate front elevations or obscure architectural features. Where new meter boxes are required they should be provided in discrete locations, preferably within a building or recessed box to ensure they do not distract from the appearance of the building.



Floorscape

The existing floorscape is mostly in good condition and comprises a traditional blacktop tarmac finish to the road surfaces with parking areas detailed in either cobbles or modern sets. Kerbs tend to be good quality granite. It is important that this standard is maintained within the Conservation Area by any utility companies or others undertaking works within the highway.



Boundaries

A significant element of the character of the Conservation Area is the lack of formal boundaries separating individual properties. Railings have been provided and retained to provide guarding to edges of high drops. Around the listed Officer's Quarters the boundary wall and established hedging make an important distinction to this building. The majority of the modern housing has no defined boundary treatment and this ensures that the openness of the site is retained. It is important that boundaries and random garden features do not disrupt this open character as it is fundamental to the open sweeping vistas of the principal routes through the site and is appropriate to the uniform institutional character of the former barracks block.



Energy Issues

Harnessing alternative energy such as solar or wind power involves substantial equipment. This can be harmful to the character of an area and individual buildings especially where there is such a balanced symmetrical design to the layout of the site. Proposals which dramatically change the character and appearance of buildings within the Conservation Area, such as solar panels and small domestic turbines, will be resisted where planning permission is required - particularly where they impact on principal elevations or are visible from main vantage points. There are likely to be very few locations which will be able to accommodate such equipment without having a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Where they are required externally, new heating flues should be sited at the rear of buildings away from principal elevations and in as discrete a location as possible.

Colours

The use of colour within the Conservation Area is important. The historic military use would have tended to limit the range of colours on the buildings. In general the colours used are white for window frames, black for all ironwork such as gutters, down-pipes and railings, and white or traditional solid colours for individual doors - with all garage doors on building groups being the same colour. This arrangement works well and provides a strong uniformity of character. The unity of the whole area is lost when one garage in a block is painted a different colour - it stands out discordant with the character of the group.

APPENDIX

Permitted Development Rights Status

Address	
1,2,3,4 Luttrell House, Lyons Road	Have permitted development rights
Earl House, Lyons Road	Flats. No permitted development rights
1 - 12 The Hawthorns	
14,15,16 The Hawthorns	Have permitted development rights
1 - 7 Rowan House	No permitted development rights
Hillside House	Has permitted development rights
Howard House	Flats. No permitted development rights
Hulse House	
1 - 12 Atkinson Avenue	No permitted development rights
24,26,28 Lyons Road	No permitted development rights on the south, west and north elevations
8,10,12,14,16,18,20,22 Lyons Road	No permitted development rights on the front elevation
15,17,19,21,23,25,27 Lyons Road	
2,4,6,8,10 Dresser Close	
1,3,5,7,9, Dresser Close	
8,6,4,2 Seagrim Crescent	
5,7,9,11 Lyons Road	
Stonewaite House	No permitted development rights
1,2,3,4,5,6 Chestnut Close	Have permitted development rights
Nightingale Hall	Listed Building Alterations require Listed Building Consent
Headmasters House	Has permitted development rights

Doors Schedule

Address		
1,2,3,4 Luttrell House, Lyons Road	Timber panel doors - should be maintained	
Earl House, Lyons Road		
1 - 12 The Hawthorns	Single entrance timber modern flush door. No specific requirements.	
14,15,16 The Hawthorns	Timber vertically boarded doors with small light - should be maintained	

Address		
1 - 7 Rowan House	Timber four panel door, two upper panels glazed, all panels rectangular, solid colours - Should be maintained	
Hillside House	Timber panel door - should be maintained	
Howard House	Timber four panel door, two upper panels glazed, painted white - should be maintained	
Hulse House		
1 - 12 Atkinson Avenue	Timber panel doors , four or six panels, painted solid colour, where no fanlight two upper panels in six panel door may be glazed - should be maintained	
24,26,28 Lyons Road	White timber and glass multi pane door - should be maintained	
8,10,12,14,16,18,20,22 Lyons Road	Timber panel doors , four or six panels, painted solid colour, where no fanlight two upper panels in six panel door may be glazed - should be maintained	
15,17,19,21,23,25,27 Lyons Road	Timber panel doors , four or six panels, painted solid colour, where no fanlight two upper panels in six panel door may be glazed - should be maintained	
2,4,6,8,10 Dresser Close	Timber panel doors , four or six panels, painted solid colour, where no fanlight two upper panels in six panel door may be glazed - should be maintained	
1,3,5,7,9, Dresser Close	Timber panel doors , four or six panels, painted solid colour, where no fanlight two upper panels in six panel door may be glazed - should be maintained	

Windows

Should be white, off white or cream



- Conservation Area
Planning permission required for alterations. Original timber design of windows and doors should be maintained (no permission required). On Howard House and Hulse House it may be possible to use a slim double glazing unit provided the frame and glazing bars details replicate the existing (planning permission will be required).
- Planning permission required for alterations. The form of the windows should be maintained but the materials could alter.
- Listed building consent required for any alterations. Original timber window design should be maintained. No planning permission required for alterations. Original form of timber windows should ideally be maintained, though double glazing with a slim glazing unit which retains the existing joinery sizes will be able to be accommodated.
- No planning permission required. Ideally the form of the original windows should be maintained but materials could alter.
- No planning permission required. No specific requirements but a preference would be to repeat the original design form.

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