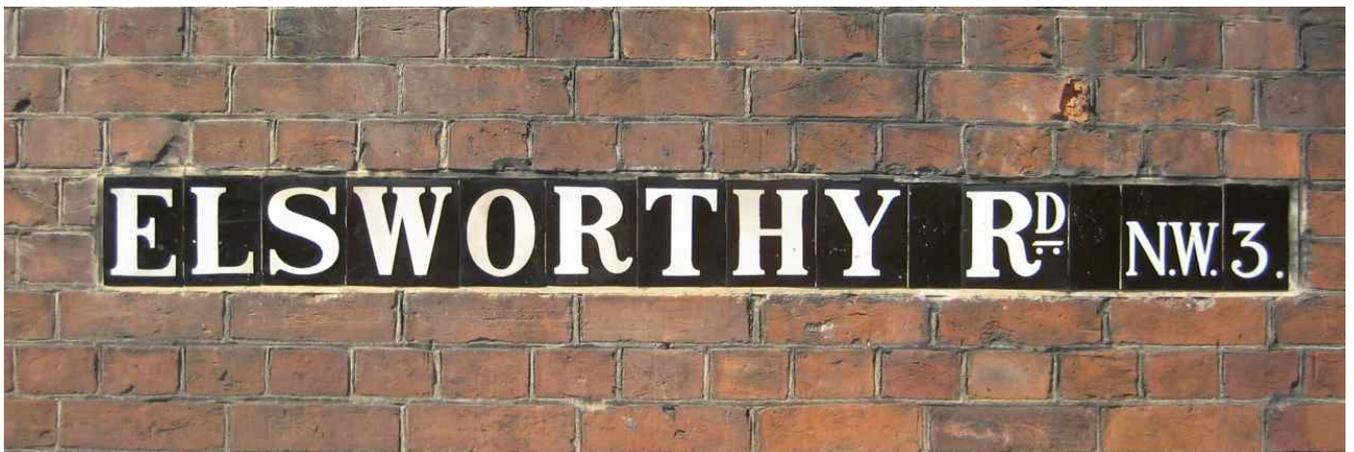


# Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

Adopted 14 July 2009



## **CONTENTS**

### **PART 1: CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Purpose of the Appraisal  
Designation

#### **2.0 STATUTORY AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **3.0 SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

Context and Evolution  
Spatial Character and Views  
Building Typology and Form  
Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials  
Characteristic Details  
Landscape and Public Realm

#### **4.0 LOCATION AND SETTING**

Location and Context  
Topography  
General Character and Plan Form  
Prevailing and Former Uses

#### **5.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

Pre 1750  
1750-1800  
1800-1850  
1850-1900  
1900 onwards

#### **6.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS**

Land use, activity and the influence of former uses  
Building Character and Qualities  
Townscape Character

#### **7.0 HERITAGE AUDIT**

Introduction

### **PART 2: MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

#### **8.0 INTRODUCTION**

Background  
Policy and Legislation

#### **9.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Monitoring  
Review

#### **10.0 MAINTAINING CHARACTER**

General Approach

#### **11.0 BOUNDARY CHANGES**

Additions and deletions considered

#### **12.0 CURRENT ISSUES**

#### **13.0 MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE**

Investment and Maintenance  
Listed Buildings  
Unlisted Buildings  
Control over New Development  
Basements  
Demolition  
Control of Advertisements  
Development Briefs and Design Guidance  
Public Realm Strategy  
Enforcement  
Article 4 Directions

#### **14.0 OTHER ISSUES**

Promoting Design Quality  
Potential Enhancement Schemes/Programmes  
Resources

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

#### **LIST OF MAPS**

#### **APPENDICES: PART 2**

Appendix 1: Conservation Area Boundary

Appendix 2: Designation Area Boundaries & Dates

Appendix 3: Urban Grain

Appendix 4: Topography

Appendix 5: Historic Plans

i) OS Map 1871

ii) OS Map 1894

iii) OS Map 1914

iv) OS Map 1935

Appendix 6: Sub-Areas within the Conservation Area

Appendix 7: Built Heritage Audit

Appendix 8: Built Heritage Audit Plan

## **PART 1: CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Elsworthy Conservation Area covers an approximately 16.4 hectare area extending from Primrose Hill Road in the east to Avenue Road in the west, marking the boundary between the London Borough of Camden and the City of Westminster. Its northern edge runs along King Henry's Road while its southern boundary follows the northern edge of Primrose Hill around to St. Stephen's Close and Rudgwick Terrace (See Appendix 1).

### **Purpose of the Appraisal**

- 1.2 This appraisal has been prepared on behalf of the London Borough of Camden to define the special interest of the Conservation Area in order that its key attributes are understood, can be protected and measures and a Management Strategy can be put in place to ensure its appropriate enhancement. It replaces the Elsworthy Conservation Area Statement which was adopted by the Council on 16 June 1999.
- 1.3 Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies are recognised as being of considerable importance in providing a sound basis for guiding development within conservation areas. The purpose of the documents is to provide a clear indication of the Council's approach to the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area. The appraisal is for the use of local residents, community groups, businesses, property owners, architects and developers and is an aid to the formulation and design of development proposals and change in this area.
- 1.4 The assessment generally follows draft guidance on appraising conservation areas published by English Heritage in March 2005. It is based on survey work undertaken in early 2009. The sources of information are credited in the Bibliography.
- 1.5 It is important to note that whilst the appraisal seeks to provide a summary of the special interest and character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it would be impossible to identify all of the detailed characteristics and appearance of every street and area or highlight every facet that contributes to the areas special interest. Accordingly, future development proposals must be considered not only in the context of this character appraisal but also with a thorough assessment at the time of the specific character and appearance of that part of the Conservation Area.

## **Designation**

- 1.6 The Elsworthy Conservation Area was originally designated on 27 February 1973. There were two subsequent extensions on 12 November 1985 and 5 November 1991 (See Appendix 2).

## **2.0 STATUTORY AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 2.1 Camden has a duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (section 69 and 72) to designate as conservation areas any “*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or historic interest of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*” and pay special attention to the preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of those areas. Designation provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance the special interest of such an area. Designation also, importantly, introduces greater control over the removal of trees and more stringent requirements when judging the acceptability of the demolishing unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of the area.
- 2.2 Government Policy on Conservation Areas is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1995).
- 2.3 English Heritage has also produced detailed Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas (August 2005) and Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (August 2005) which set out the rationale and criteria for designation and the way in which information should be presented in order to best support the preservation and management of designated areas.
- 2.4 The Council’s policies and guidance for conservation areas are currently contained in the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (June 2006) and reflect the requirements of national policy. This document will be superseded by the Local Development Framework, which is due to be adopted in 2010.

### **3.0 SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

#### **Context and Evolution**

- 3.1 The Elsworthy Conservation Area is situated in an area immediately to the north and west of Primrose Hill. Prior to the nineteenth century the land occupying the current Conservation Area was farmland owned by the Eton College Estate and the Eyre Estate. The Conservation Area designation covers entirely Eton College Estate dating back to the fifteenth century, with the exception of Avenue Road which was within the Eyre Estate.
- 3.2 The first nineteenth century development close to the present boundary of the Conservation Area and intrusion into the otherwise agricultural character of the Eton Estate was the construction of the London-Birmingham railway line in the 1830s. This through route for long distance travel provided London with its first long distance tunnel, running just south of the future course of Adelaide Road. The entrance to and course of the tunnel can be seen on the 1837 map to the north-east of Primrose Hill.
- 3.3 Urban development of the area occurred between 1840 and the early 1900s as major roads were built to provide links with central London. Finchley New Road and Avenue Road, running north-south, were laid out in the late 1820s with the construction of large detached upper middle class dwellings starting on Avenue Road in the 1840s. Adelaide Road running east-west was laid out in 1840, effectively dividing the Eton Estate in two, and by 1853 there was considerable development of houses along both sides of the street. By 1856 the first local public omnibus service ran along Adelaide Road. Shortly after the principal roads had been laid out, in 1842, Primrose Hill was acquired for public recreation as an addition to Regent's Park, increasing the attractiveness of the location for residential development.
- 3.4 The years 1840 to 1914 saw a large amount of speculative residential development of an affluent nature. Terraced townhouses, large semi-detached villas, and latterly large detached houses following a 'garden suburb' pattern were built for well-to-do families wishing to live in spacious, pleasant, leafy surroundings within easy reach of central London.
- 3.5 This character as a wealthy residential suburb has remained to the present day. There is no real ingress of other uses, with commercial activities being located to the north-east in Swiss Cottage.
- 3.6 There are no Archaeological Priority Areas within the Conservation Area.

## **Spatial Character and Views**

### *Spatial Qualities*

- 3.7 The area's spatial character derives from the spacious leafy streets and generously laid out plot sizes, complemented by areas of semi-private communal amenity space (see Appendix 3). Terraced development is predominately of four storeys in the Conservation Area and two to three storeys where detached houses and semi-detached villas predominate. Buildings are set back from the street and the original boundary treatments of small walls, privet hedging and wooden gates and gateposts were designed to increase the green, leafy environment of the quiet residential streets.

### *Views and Vistas*

- 3.8 The most notable views are to and from local landmarks seen from moving around the Conservation Area. The highest point in the vicinity is the summit of Primrose Hill, one of London's royal parks, which has spectacular panoramic views of the capital over Regent's Park to the south-west, and over the Elsworthy Conservation Area to the north and north-west. In the foreground, there are views of the backs of properties along Elsworthy Road and Avenue Road. An important part of the character of the Conservation Area derives from its relationship with the higher ground of Primrose Hill, which is appreciated in views into and out of the area. Other notable views are of the residential tower blocks forming part of the Chalcots Estate north of Adelaide Road, and the of the Swiss Cottage development to the north-west.
- 3.9 Other notable views and landmarks within the Conservation Area include:
- i) The views of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin to the west and north-west along King Henry's Road and Primrose Hill Road respectively.
  - ii) The view west along Elsworthy Road.
  - iii) The view west along King Henry's Road.
  - iv) The view out of the Conservation Area towards the summit of Primrose Hill from the end of Elsworthy Terrace.
  - v) The view into the Conservation Area looking south-east along Harley Road.
  - vi) The view looking into the Conservation Area looking north-east along Elsworthy Road.

### **Building Typology and Form**

- 3.10 Although a range of building types is evident across the Conservation Area, the common building types are terraced townhouses, semi-detached villas and freestanding detached houses set back from the road. These are predominantly

terraces and pairs of villas of three and two storeys in height respectively, the higher density terraces and pairs of villas being located in King Henry's Road along the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, and at the eastern end of Elsworthy Road close to the Church of St Mary the Virgin. The terraced and semi-detached properties tend to have basements, while the larger freestanding houses frequently do not. Purpose-built attic accommodation is widespread among all building types; dormer windows and fenestrated gables are abundant.

- 3.11 Despite the size of the larger houses they were not generally provided with mews and stabling accommodation for horses and carriages in the immediate vicinity, with the exception of No 19 Wadham Gardens (see paragraph 6.64 with regard to No 1 Lower Merton Rise which was built as a coach house and stables for this house). Instead the larger houses were provided with two sets of mews, which were located a short distance to the north, between Adelaide Road and King Henry's Road (outside the Conservation Area, and demolished to make way for the later 20<sup>th</sup> century Marriott Hotel and the Chalcots Estate).
- 3.12 More recent development shows less attention to elevational treatment, and the scale, bulk and massing of buildings does not always respect the traditional forms and rooflines of the Conservation Area.

### **Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials**

- 3.13 Yellow London stock brick and red brick are the predominant materials used across the Conservation Area. Other materials are employed as contrasting features on the late Victorian and Edwardian buildings and different combinations of variously coloured brick, stone, tile, stucco and timber are used as contrasting detail in the treatment of facades across different parts of the Conservation Area.
- 3.14 In Avenue Road grand detached houses are prevalent in dark red or brown brick, or in painted stucco finishes echoing carved stone buildings.
- 3.15 King Henry's Road is mostly made up of large semi-detached villas built in yellow London stock brick, with contrasting colours of brick to create string courses and quoins. Additional detailing is created by using painted stucco and carved stone detailing on capitals, keystones, arches, lintels and boundary walls. The exception is No 91a which makes considerable use of decorative wood and tile to create a bespoke detached house.

- 3.16 The northern part of Harley Road employs a similar range of materials, although the brick employed is darker in colour. Stuccoed pediments, lintels and corbels are prevalent.
- 3.17 The eastern part of Elsworthy Road and Elsworthy Terrace continue the use of contrasting brick treatments forming decorative lintels and string courses, while stucco decoration takes on Greek and Islamic forms. The use of timber cladding on the northern side of Elsworthy Road is notable, and this is carried through to decorative gables and figurative decoration on window frames.
- 3.18 The rest of Elsworthy Road, together with Wadham Gardens, contains well-detailed buildings using a rich mix of materials. A combination of brick and decorative tiling creates a strong architectural vocabulary on many properties, while others with large expanses of stucco add contrast to the streetscape. The quality and level of detailing in wood, stucco and stone is high. Each building has unique features, but shares a common form and style with its neighbours to produce strong group value influenced by the Free Style of the 1890s (whereby architects could pick and mix features from classical, Gothic, English and Scottish 16th century, or Italian and French Renaissance in any combination of building materials they chose).

### **Characteristic Details**

- 3.19 Although the area was developed in stages over a relatively extended period of seventy years, there has been little subsequent alteration of building frontages. Furthermore, new development during the twentieth century was limited to instances where plots unusually came up for development. The area has also retained its residential character, and as a result much of its architectural detail and character.
- 3.20 While the terraced houses and semi-detached villas draw their significant character from the proportions of facades, fenestration pattern, spacing and style of entrances, and other architectural detailing, it is the wide palate of complementary traditional materials and details employed by houses in Wadham Gardens and the western stretch of Elsworthy Road which adds to their special character. The buildings share common architectural language, but are each uniquely designed which adds to the group value.
- 3.21 The majority of original timber sash and casement windows, in a variety of styles, have been preserved. In general, replacement windows have been of a scholarly design finished to a high standard. There is a variety of entrance door designs, ranging from arched openings in stone, to porches and porticoes comprising flat roofs with brackets or columns, sometimes pedimented. Other elevation details include

high quality tile cladding, stucco detailing, the use of stone banding and decorative masonry, and intricate timber gable and window decoration. At roof level, the detached houses are terminated by impressive chimney stacks and pots, fine clay tiles and gables in Dutch or Queen Anne Revival styles.

- 3.22 A notable characteristic of the area are the clear differences in the building styles and materials of each sub-area of the Conservation Area. This includes the styles and materials of the individual boundary treatments of properties in each sub-area, which are especially important as they create uniform and defining frontages that separate the pavement from front gardens, and act as a setting for the built form behind.
- 3.23 The predominance of low walling combined with hedges, usually in privet, creates a strong landscaped theme in front gardens which is complementary to the tree-lined streets. This characteristic is particularly evident in the western section of the Conservation Area which is home to an estate of houses built by William Willett, and designed as a garden suburb strongly influenced by the Bedford Park development of the architect Richard Norman Shaw and his pupil Sir Ernest Newton, built in Chiswick (see also paragraph 6.13). Here the boundaries were originally planted with privet hedges interrupted by wooden gates and posts.
- 3.24 Traditional nineteenth-century boundary treatments, including railings and walls, show considerable detail. Gateposts in wood, brick, decorative tile, stucco and stone are banded and textured, contributing to the streetscape. The accompanying low walls, topped by railings or hedges, retain an important linearity at street level, the loss of which would damage the character of the Conservation Area.
- 3.25 While few railings are original, due to the removal of metalwork as part of the World War II effort, replacements are largely sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Details include foliage and classical motifs. Nos 9, 11 and 11a Elsworthy Road have impressive canopied porches crafted in wrought iron with twists and spirals, and containing stained glass with delicate painted foliage.
- 3.26 Generally, later developments adhere to plainer architectural styles than older properties. Their greater bulk and density tend to be less subtle than the more ornate style of their nineteenth-century neighbours. Some newer buildings break the established rhythm of development, detracting from the quality of the streetscape and the Conservation Area generally.

## **Landscape and Public Realm**

- 3.27 The Conservation Area has a spacious layout of residential character, with many street trees, and planting in public and private open space, reinforced by the proximity to the green of the Royal Park at Primrose Hill, which is defined in the London Borough of Camden *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* June 2006 as Metropolitan Open Land and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.
- 3.28 What survives of historic interest in terms of the surfacing and character of the public realm is limited to certain areas. More interesting features include the low walls and privet hedges in the western end of Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens, together with the rarer survivals of original wooden gates and gateposts that once characterised the boundaries of the Willett development of the 1890s and early 1900s, some of which have been replaced with scholarly replicas. The original late nineteenth and early twentieth century electric street lighting has been lost. Retained features of the historic public realm include York stone paving, granite kerbs, cobbles, historic bollards and post boxes.

## **4.0 LOCATION AND SETTING**

### **Location and Context**

- 4.1 Elsworthy Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 16.4 hectares and is located in an inner residential suburb approximately 2 miles to the north of central London, mainly within the Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill. It is on the south-western edge of the London Borough of Camden, adjoining the City of Westminster to the south and west. The nearest Underground Station is Swiss Cottage some 500 metres to the north-west.
- 4.2 The southern edge of the Conservation Area is immediately north of Primrose Hill royal park and immediately east of Avenue Road which runs north to Swiss Cottage and south to Regent's Park. To the east of the Conservation Area is Primrose Hill Road and beyond that Chalk Farm. The northern boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by King Henry's Road, flanked to the north by housing estates.

### **Topography**

- 4.3 The area has an almost flat topography in contrast to the notable rise formed by Primrose Hill some 300 metres to the south-east. The portion of the Conservation Area north of Primrose Hill is between 45 and 50 metres AOD (Above Ordnance Datum), while Avenue Road has a slight slope from north-west to south-east dropping from around 40 metres to 45 metres AOD (see Appendix 4).

### **General Character and Plan Form**

- 4.4 The 'suburban' morphology comprises a fluid pattern of generously laid-out streets that centre around the 'tear-drop' shape formed by Wadham Gardens and the western and central sections of Elsworthy Road. This area was developed by William Willett on the land between Primrose Hill and the already developed surrounding streets. The surrounding layout dates from two principal phases, the earliest being the development along Avenue Road from the 1840s onwards and the later development being the layout of King Henry's Road and eastern Elsworthy Road and Elsworthy Terrace from the 1850s to the 1880s.
- 4.5 The essential pattern of the Conservation Area is of terraced townhouses and semi-detached villas in the north and east, and larger detached houses in the west. The urban grain comprises a spacious layout of streets and buildings. There is a degree of linearity but it is softened by the curve of Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens, and by the regular spaces between the semi detached villas. The detached houses

comprise wide buildings that fill their plots, boasting a strong relationship with the gardens which make up their curtilage.

- 4.6 The area is relatively densely developed with a generally fine grain of mainly semi-detached and detached Victorian and Edwardian villas of three or four storeys. Developments of the mid to late twentieth century have tended to be similar in bulk, but incorporating a different scale and proportion due to the employment of reduced storey heights.

#### **Prevailing and Former Uses**

- 4.7 The area has retained its status as a fashionable residential neighbourhood with large single family dwellings set back from the tree lined streets in substantial gardens. Although a larger number of houses were sub-divided into flats during and in the post-war period, they have since reverted to family houses. The area is therefore principally residential in character, with other building uses representing activities that are secondary or ancillary to the residential whole.
- 4.8 The general absence of commercial development adds to the neighbourhood's quiet appeal, but the area benefits from its relative proximity to busy commercial districts in Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road.

## **5.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Pre 1750**

- 5.1 Prior to the middle of the eighteenth century the land within the present Elsworthy Conservation Area was entirely agricultural and some distance from the edge of London. Since the fifteenth century, the majority of the land had been owned by the Eton College Estate. Until the nineteenth century, the land was principally farmed as pasture providing hay and manure. The area is too far north to be included on John Roque's 1746 Map of London.

### **1750-1800**

- 5.2 'Cary's New and Accurate Plan of London and Westminster' dating from 1795 shows Primrose Hill as a local landmark, illustrated as open 'grassland' farmed by the Eton College Estate. The nearest development was a cluster of five small buildings at St John's Wood to the south-west.

### **1800-1850**

- 5.3 By the turn of the nineteenth century, although the area was still farmland, the northward advance of London and the development of outlying villages were becoming more marked.
- 5.4 By 1820, 'Pigot & Co's Miniature Plan of London & Vicinity' shows Regent's Park laid out, built development in the southern part of St John's Wood, and landmarks such as St John's Chapel and Lords Cricket Ground. The early route of the London and Birmingham Railway was developed to the north of the current Conservation Area and is shown turning south-east as it passes the developing village of Chalk Farm.
- 5.5 The 1834 'Topographical Survey of The Borough of St. Marylebone' and the 1837 'Two-Penny Post Delivery' map published by John Cary show the area around Primrose Hill and to the north as open ground beyond the limit of the delivery boundary (Foxell, S. *Mapping London*, pg. 166-7). The only development in the area consisted of large houses along the western side of Avenue Road to the north (from its junction with the old Primrose Hill Road, now Prince Albert Road, running round the northern edge of Regent's Park). The route of the London and Birmingham Railway is now shown as being tunnelled between Swiss Cottage and Chalk Farm. Other structures of note were the Shooting Ground and the Reservoir at Barrow Hill (to the south-east).

## 1850-1900

- 5.6 The mid 1800s saw increasing development around Avenue Road and St. John's Wood to the west. 'Cross's London Guides' of both 1844 and 1851 show the majority of land occupied by the Conservation Area as open ground, but Primrose Hill was shown as public open space. Large houses occupied parts of the eastern side of Avenue Road to the south of the present location at the junction with Elsworthy Road.
- 5.7 By the issue of 'Cross's New Plan of London' in 1861, Avenue Road had been completely developed with large houses set in substantial gardens, the earliest ones being described as Woodstock Villas. The most notable development is the layout and construction of buildings along Adelaide Road, north of the tunnelled railway line. The principal land of the Conservation Area remains undeveloped, bar a cricket ground on the current site of the east end of Elsworthy Road.
- 5.8 By 1865 a plan for the layout of the current Conservation Area and was illustrated on 'Whitbread's Map of London'. While the design is similar to that of today, parts of the layout were never realised in its illustrated form. While King Henry's Road and Harley Road remain, in part due to early development at their north-eastern ends, the planned Bolingbroke Road and Wellesley Crescent (which largely followed the course of the modern Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens respectively) were never built and King's College Road (a reference to the Etonian origins of the land) was lost completely to development in 1901.
- 5.9 The first Ordnance Survey Map of the area was produced in 1871; the substantial houses and gardens along Avenue Road were shown in detail. The northern half of Harley Road and the western end of King Henry's Road were developed, while the eastern end of the Conservation Area was still home to the Eton and Middlesex Cricket Ground (see Appendix 5).
- 5.10 The 1877 Ecclesiastical Boundaries map published by Edward Stanford shows much of the area south of King Henry's Road undeveloped. The land of the Elsworthy Conservation Area was split between the parishes of St Paul, Avenue Road and St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill (as yet unconstructed), both within Hampstead (see Foxell, S. *Mapping London*, p104-5).
- 5.11 By 1894 the Ordnance Survey map shows the church (1873) and the remaining semi-detached properties on King Henry's Road completed (see Appendix 5). The eastern end of Elsworthy Road and Elsworthy Terrace were also finished, the Eton and Middlesex Cricket Ground having albeit briefly relocated to the area now occupied by

Wadham Gardens and the western end of Elsworthy Road (as seen on 'Stanford's Map of Central London' of 1897 though (see Appendix 5)).

### **1900 onwards**

- 5.12 The last three years of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century saw the layout of the Elsworthy Conservation Area in its current form. William Willett's development of Wadham Gardens and the remaining section of Elsworthy Road commenced between 1896 and 1911. Ordnance Survey maps of both 1914 and 1935 show this layout little altered.
- 5.13 The area suffered minor bomb damage during World War II, leading to the loss of one Willett house at No 43 Elsworthy Road which was replaced in the 1950s by a block of flats out-of-keeping with surrounding development.
- 5.14 Additional infill development has continued sporadically in more recent years mainly comprising extensions, conversions and sub-division of larger properties into smaller units.

## 6.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

6.1 The following describes the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area.

6.2 The historic development of the Conservation Area can be divided into three relatively distinct phases which in turn geographically form clearly defined sub-areas. The sub-areas aid the understanding and description of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The first is Avenue Road, developed in the 1840s. The second is King Henry's Road and the eastern part of Elsworthy Road developed from the 1850s to the 1880s. The third phase is the development of Wadham Gardens and the western part of Elsworthy Road developed by William Willett in the 1890s and early 1900s (see Appendix 6).

### *Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road - The Eyre Estate*

6.3 This was the first part of the Conservation Area to be developed. Henry Eyre bought the estate, part of St. Marylebone parish, in 1732. It was the construction of the Regent's Canal (begun in 1812) that triggered major development on the Estate. The first houses were built at the southern end of Avenue Road, close to the canal and continued north to Swiss Cottage. The area was developed as spacious middle class housing, desirable because it was close to Regent's Park and Primrose Hill. The development was directed by John Shaw, a young architect inspired by the town planning ideals of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The 1871 map shows the east side of Avenue Road completely developed with detached houses.

### *Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

6.4 Prior to the start of urban development there were only around half a dozen houses on the entirety of the Eton College Estate as it was principally used for farming. The College was slow to see the potential of its land for development, only becoming interested in building speculation in the 1820s by which time development was already progressing further north on land east and west of the college estate. In 1825 John Shaw, the developer of St. John's Wood, was appointed principal surveyor, with John Shaw the Younger succeeding in 1832. The land was released to individual builders on 99 year building leases obtained by an Act of Parliament in 1826.

6.5 One of the principal builders involved with this sub-area in the 1840s was Samuel Cuming, a property developer. He constructed Primrose Hill Road and created the

regular layout of semi-detached villas on King Henry's Road in the 1860s, building similar villas on the northern end of Harley Road in 1866 (see 1871 OS Map).

- 6.6 Cuming also created the Eton and Middlesex Cricket Ground on the northern edge of Primrose Hill. The grounds were moved in the mid 1870s because of the development of the eastern end of Elsworthy Road and the terraced townhouses on Elsworthy Terrace. The Grade II listed Church of St. Mary the Virgin was built in 1873 and by the end of the 1880s the developed parts of this sub-area of the Conservation Area were King Henry's Road, the northern end of Harley Road and Elsworthy Road, from Lower Merton Rise to Primrose Hill Road.
- 6.7 The London-Birmingham railway line, first built in 1838, was extended in 1879 to provide another tunnel on the south side of the original Primrose Hill Tunnel. The 1894 Map does not show the line of the tunnel but its presence is noticeable from the brick airshaft located in the back garden of No 10 Wadham Gardens. It runs under St Mary's Church and the rear gardens of the north side of Elsworthy Road, under Nos 1, 2 and 4 Lower Merton Rise, and under the rear gardens between Wadham Gardens and King Henry's Road. The land above is made up: hence the gap adjacent to Compton Lodge, No 7 Harley Road.

#### *Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

- 6.8 The remainder of the Conservation Area was developed in the late 1890's by the speculative builder William Willett, who along with his son ran one of the most successful building firms in London in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Their work has been studied in depth by David Prout who comments:

*"The success of the firm was not based on labourer's cottages, It specialised in increasingly expensive upper middle class housing. The Willett's had a reputation for building to the very highest standards. Their workmanship was impeccable, as were their sanitary provisions, and their houses realised the ideals of late Victorian and Edwardian family life." (Prout, 1989)*

- 6.9 The initial agreement was for the development of 11 acres to build some 125 properties. The development was slow to commence and it was decided, probably due to the state of the then housing market, to build fewer but more expensive houses; thus in 1895 the proposed number was reduced to 60 and the houses were constructed between 1896 and 1911.
- 6.10 Prior to the Willett development, Elsworthy Road, Harley Road and Kings College Road had ended at the boundary of the Eton and Marylebone Cricket Club. The shape of the cricket ground gave Willett the freedom to lay out the roads as he

wished. The new development linked Primrose Hill Road to Avenue Road by extending Elsworthy Road which became the south side of a 'tear drop shaped' section of land, with Wadham Gardens forming the northern half. Harley Road was extended to meet Wadham Gardens and the whole development was originally called the Avenue Road Estate.

- 6.11 The development was widely recognised to be of the highest standard, Raymond Unwin acknowledged his debt to Willett in 1909 stating:

*"the pioneer of garden suburb development, as practised by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Development Company, is undoubtedly Mr William Willett, who has laid out the roads of Elsworthy and Wadham Gardens. All the houses in 'Elsworthy Village' are designed by architects, are of excellent construction with which Mr Willett's name is synonymous, are grouped so as to obtain a uniformity of effect in the road, and they have a little wayside green".*

- 6.12 and Thompson (1974) states that the development:

*"was the effective beginning of twentieth century suburban architecture, on a grand scale".*

- 6.13 Indeed, William Willett was strongly influenced by the architect Richard Norman Shaw, and his pupil Sir Ernest Newton, and their Bedford Park development dating from the 1880s. Willett's architect, Amos Faulkner, worked with Ernest Newton on Willett's Camden Park Estate, Chiselhurst, in the early 1890s. Willett did not champion the Arts and Crafts Movement, but adapted it and developed the Free Style and the eclectic 'Queen Anne' Style which was, 'An attractive medley of picturesque features including Dutch gables and irregular windows with small panes and white glazing bars' (Michael Jenner, *London Heritage*). His developments and those that copied them elsewhere became known as 'Willett style'. As such, the Willett development forms an important and unmistakable group within the Conservation Area that cannot be understated.

### **Land use, activity and the influence of former uses**

- 6.14 The character of the Elsworthy Conservation Area is strongly influenced by its initial development in the mid to late Victorian and Edwardian periods as a middle class and upper middle class residential suburb. The area has remained a middle class stronghold and the subsequent lack of social and economic change has supported the retention of the original buildings, with only minor changes in the patterns of use and occupation. Subsequent changes in architectural tastes and styles are expressed in some parts of the Conservation Area but largely the physical fabric and pattern of occupation of the area have remained relatively unchanged.

- 6.15 The speculative nature of each of the subsequent phases of the area's development resulted in a variety of styles of buildings; these were not only a product of changing architectural fashions but also reflected contemporary needs, aspirations and social changes.
- 6.16 Activity varies little along different streets within the Conservation Area. Unlike more commercial areas where activity tends to depend on the mix and types of uses along streets, the overwhelming use here is residential. The busiest streets, in terms of traffic and pedestrian activity in the Conservation Area are Avenue Road, which is a principal route north from Regent's Park, and King Henry's Road which provides a subsidiary route for overflow traffic travelling parallel along Adelaide Road to the north and links to the busy Primrose Hill Road. Other streets within the Conservation Area are much quieter, being used largely for access to residences and for parking.

*Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road*

- 6.17 The large detached houses of Avenue Road reflect the desirability and importance of this main thoroughfare as a route north from Regents Park; its ambience is distinct from the rest of the Conservation Area. Most of the villas are replacements, the originals having been demolished and rebuilt, in some cases more than once, with noticeable rebuilding taking place in the post World War II era. Plots have also been amalgamated to create more extensive villas with larger grounds, as can be seen in the cases of Nos 34, 40 and 52 each of which were originally two plots in the 1840s layout. As such, the current pattern of development along Avenue Road is less dense than the original plot layouts illustrated by the historic plans from 1871 and 1894. Notably, one villa was lost at the time of the Willett development when Elsworthy Road was linked to Avenue Road.
- 6.18 The southern end of the Conservation Area on Avenue Road has also suffered considerable losses. None of the original buildings survive south of the entrance lodge at No 28 (the plot of the former house is occupied by gardens and a disused tennis court); these have been replaced with buildings that are substantially out of scale with the Conservation Area, notably Nos 22, 24 & 26 Avenue Road and Nos 1-5 Rudgwick Terrace.
- 6.19 Avenue Road contains the most considerable number of non-residential uses in the Conservation Area. Before its demolition, No 40 contained office accommodation, although the site is currently being redeveloped with two detached three-storey single family dwellings raised on basements (Nos 38 and 40 Avenue Road).

### *Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

- 6.20 The repeated four-storey, semi-detached townhouse forms, often raised on semi-basements, along King Henry's Road and parts of Elsworthy Road and Harley Road, reflect a slightly denser pattern of development for a growing middle class population, still demonstrating a firm approach to social order and the division of society between principal family and their household staff. These streets have frontages set back from the street, comparatively wide rectangular plots, with limited front gardens but more generous back gardens. The repetitive built form creates a rhythm of elevational articulation that is carried in the pattern of fenestration, entrances and storey heights. At roof level there is a consistent pattern and rhythm of parapets, repeated chimneys and to lesser extent dormer windows.
- 6.21 On King Henry's Road, while the overall effect is one of unity though detailed design and materials, there is a degree of variation in architectural treatment. The section between Harley Road and Lower Merton Rise was built first from west to east leaving a space between plots Nos 151 and 153 for the planned extension of King's College Road (see Historic Plan 1871). The buildings are a mixture of detached and semi detached townhouses that while different in proportions, are similar in bulk, massing and overall design so as to form a coherent group. The semi-detached run of townhouses from Nos 115-129 (odd) have common characteristics with the later development of Nos 91-113 (odd) which forms a strictly coherent group. The principal difference between the two phases of townhouses is that Nos 91-113 (odd) have open porches with decorative capitals in stucco while Nos 115-129 (odd) have enclosed porches with simpler detailing in brick.
- 6.22 Notable exceptions to the pattern of development include No 91a, a unique late nineteenth-century detached house constructed from stock brick but with timber horizontal boarding at first floor. In some respects the property is more akin to the quality of the Willett development, and it appears to be more associated with the development of Nos 2-20 (even) Elsworthy Road than to King Henry's Road generally. Nos 151a and 151b King Henry's Road and their associated rear studio houses are recent structures dating from 2004. These modern replicas have sufficient attention to detail to blend in well with the overall streetscape and represent a modern development that enhances the character of the Conservation Area. They were built on a strip of land which was originally kept vacant to provide a southern extension to the former King's College Road. But from 1901 the site was home to the studio of the stained glass artist, Leonard Walker, with two small studios at the rear. Following the

decease of Walker in the mid-1960s, they became photographic studios, and were demolished to make way for the current development.

- 6.23 Built in the 1880s the eastern end of Elsworthy Road has a greater variety of styles of architecture. The block formed by Nos 2-20 (even) differs from the rest of the area as they have their ground floors at street level. They are semi-detached with a set-back link at ground floor between the pairs of houses. Built on slightly wider plots, they are double-fronted and originally had half-timbering at first-floor level with peaked dormer windows and flat gable topped bays. Some properties retain carved timber figures on the window frames. Unfortunately many original features have been lost, and the group has been spoilt by over dominant roof extensions that break the rhythm of the roofline, most notably at Nos 18 & 20 which is visibly positioned on the eastern corner of Elsworthy Rise. The original eaves line of this pair of semi-detached houses has been lost and the top floor walls are a continuation of the lower walls which, with the flat roof result in a box-like appearance.
- 6.24 The remaining houses at the eastern end of Elsworthy Road largely follow the pattern of development as found in King Henry's Road. These residences are generally of three storeys with semi-basements and raised ground floors approached by impressive front boundary steps. However individual detailing creates a different effect and includes gothic, ecclesiastical and carved relief elements on various buildings.
- 6.25 Nos 17-19 (odd) Elsworthy Road were redeveloped in 1995, the original Victorian houses having been demolished in 1973 prior to the Conservation Area's designation. The replacement consists of a brick-built, five-storey block of nineteen flats which echoes the style of the neighbouring Victorian residences but is bulkier and deeper than the original detached properties they replaced. It is therefore of neutral value to the Conservation Area. Another exception is No 25, built in 1876 before the Willett development; it is a red- brick detached house designed by Batterbury and Huxley, featuring a central tower.
- 6.26 Elsworthy Terrace has different architectural styles on each side, but in streetscape terms retains a strong rhythm through coherent height, bulk and mass and uniform plot widths with generous front gardens. The end blocks, Nos 1 and 15, are much larger, in plot size and built form, and benefit from end of terrace windows which orientate the buildings more towards Elsworthy Road than Elsworthy Terrace.

### *Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

- 6.27 The pattern of development changes quite dramatically with the event of the Willett development, which reflected a revolution in housing design as well as in the street environment. The rigid design of Victorian terraces gave way to greater emphasis on landscape and layout to create a new type of housing estate that heralded the beginnings of suburban architecture. The change in attitudes was not limited to the streetscape. William Willett Jnr was an innovator who campaigned for Daylight Saving, and as such he responded to late-Victorian changes in attitudes to servants and lifestyle which then influenced house design. The Willett houses clearly show this change with their ground floor kitchens and better working and living conditions for servants. The only accommodation below ground was for cellars and boiler rooms.
- 6.28 The scale of development along the Willett designed streets reflects the characteristic pattern of principally two and sometimes three storeys for larger detached houses. The Willett houses are of a consistently high standard.
- 6.29 While there has been little change in the social status of the area, patterns of living have altered. Some of Willett's family houses became too big for efficient modern living, resulting in sub-division into smaller units. This is evident externally by the introduction of additional entrances, extensions to buildings and in some cases external stairs or blocked up doors. Despite these elements, some of which detract, many interesting and original details remain on the frontages. The traditional pattern of frontages, with boundaries defined by hedges and wooden fences, rather than metal railings, has largely been retained although not always in their original form.

### **Building Character and Qualities**

- 6.30 The buildings of the Conservation Area record the prevailing architectural style of their time (mid to late Victorian and Edwardian) and comprise principally residential building types (terraced and semi-detached townhouses and detached villas). The distinction in architectural tastes and styles is clear from the mid Victorian villas on Avenue Road, to the townhouses of the mid-to late Victorian period and the later Victorian and Edwardian Willett residences, inspired by the later 19<sup>th</sup> century Free Style; they form the basis of the division of the sub-areas. The frontages, and indeed the general character of most buildings in the Conservation Area, have been retained. Departures from the norm are usually the result of exceptional losses, such as from bomb damage, or through inappropriate alterations and extensions in the post-war period.

### *Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road*

- 6.31 The larger detached houses on Avenue Road relate more to St John's Wood in scale and character than the rest of the Conservation Area. Their spacious grounds are characterised by long back gardens. The houses are set back from the road with strong well defined front boundaries either with high walls or gates. The houses have differing styles but similar form, height and size. The northern portion of Avenue Road in the Conservation Area has a block of five detached houses, Nos 42-50, originally built in the mid-1840s in the Italianate style. Three original houses survive: Nos 42, 44 and 48, although even these have been altered and extended over the years. They are stucco two-storey villas of classical detailing with stucco front walls and pillars, central door and porch, with slated mansard roofs and ground floors raised above semi-basements. The house at No 40 has recently been demolished, and at the time of writing construction work is under way for two three-storey detached houses with basements.
- 6.32 There are a number of post-war houses of architectural quality, set in grounds of original houses. They retain the bulk and massing of Avenue Road but vary in overall quality, ranging from making a positive to a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area. No 46 is an ornate neo-Classical example of three storeys, with a symmetrical stuccoed and pedimented front, set behind taller metal gates. It dates from the mid-1960s and was designed by the architect Lionel Stirgess. Another good twentieth century example is the neo-Georgian red brick house at No 50, which is double-fronted with a central, double-height, bowed entrance bay, a steep clay tile roof and dormer windows. The property at No 52, on the southern corner of Elsworthy Road, is a twentieth-century house set back from the road in generous grounds behind trees. The property is currently empty and the Council is considering proposals for its demolition and redevelopment. Further south, No 38 is a 1970s red brick house of a rectilinear form, which is of neutral value.
- 6.33 Rudgwick Place has lost all its historical character, while Primrose House on St Stephen's Close is overwhelmed by its surroundings of inappropriately scaled modern development. Radlett Place feels isolated, although it retains its context within the street frontage. Radlett House has recently been demolished and rebuilt in replica with a slightly larger rear extension and the addition of a third floor. Similar redevelopment is planned for the No 1 Radlett Place, though in this instance planning permission is granted for six separate houses.

### *Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

- 6.34 The principal building of interest in sub-area 2 is the grade II listed Church of St Mary the Virgin at the eastern end of Elsworthy Road, located at the junction with Primrose Hill Road. Designed in 1871-72 by Michael P Manning, it is built in a late Victorian eclectic style in red brick with freestone detailing. Its effect is softened by the surrounding small gardens which contain hedging and some mature trees.
- 6.35 The Victorian townhouses of King Henry's Road are typically built in a yellow brick and are of either three or four storeys fronting the streets, depending on whether they possess basement or attic accommodation. Although the majority of properties are semi-detached, there is a scattering of detached residences in the western stretch of the street. Flights of steps lead up to the raised ground floors and highlight the front doors, porches and bay windows. The buildings are distinct because of their light gault brick and contrasting darker brick courses that delineate the floor levels. The windows and doors have decorative keystones and the ground-floor bays have decorative cornices and wrought iron railings. The majority of properties retain these features, although there has been some localised damage and losses. Generally the brick has darkened but some brickwork has recently been cleaned. The rooflines are relatively well preserved, although some roof forms have been altered. Some houses have non-original dormer windows to the front, rear or side, which tend not to be over-dominant. However, the insertion of roof terraces in the past has caused harm to rooflines. The backs of properties boast upper- and lower-ground floor bay windows in brick or stucco, creating a pleasing contrast with the darker brickwork. The frontages are relatively uniform although the detailed pattern of fenestration varies along the street. The sash windows are vertically proportioned comprising a range of patterns of windows above the front bays, with a variety of single, double and tripartite windows.
- 6.36 The eastern end of Elsworthy Road displays a wealth of detailing on the different groups of buildings. The houses within this group (Nos 2-20 (even) are sited very close together giving the impression of a terrace. The properties display a number of features of detailing and form common to others in the group. There is a consistency in height, building line, window form and proportions which, despite many alterations, give these houses an attractive and cohesive quality. However, many of the original half timbered houses have suffered from dominant dormer extensions, often to both front and rear effectively forming another floor which detracts from the overall consistency of the group. Of these, Nos 18 and 20 positioned prominently on the eastern corner of Elsworthy Rise, are the most affected to the extent that it could be

considered that they no longer positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (see Appendix 7); they have lost both their original roof form and their half-timbered façade treatment., and their boundary treatment consists of crude concrete 'Californian walling'. An English Heritage blue plaque at No 4 commemorates a former resident, the musician Sir Henry Wood (1869-1944).

- 6.37 Nos 9-15 (odd) Elsworthy Road are in yellow brick with decorative brick arches above doors and windows, with further detailing on keystones and carved faces on each corner of the single storey bays. The windows have strong vertical proportions and the properties have small dormer windows and decorative hanging cornices, although some of these have been unsympathetically replaced. Nos 11 and 13 are notable for their ornate wrought iron and stained glass porches which unify the two blocks.
- 6.38 Nos 21 and 23 are similar in design to the buildings on King Henry's Road with string courses in dark bricks marking each floor level and the use of contrasting bricks to pick out detailing on the bay windows. No 23 has a wrought iron porch although it is simpler in design than those at Nos 11 and 13.
- 6.39 Nos 22-40 (even) show a more ecclesiastical style; incorporating gothic arches, and pilasters, lintels, gables and dormers with relief decoration. The raised entrance steps are impressive and draw attention to the painted stucco work around the doors against the darker brick. At the end of the row, No 42 is a single detached house built in 1880 in a dark brick. The house occupies a large plot, on which Nos 2 and 4 Lower Merton Rise were built in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. No 42 shares a similar scale to No 25 Elsworthy Road, situated diagonally opposite. Built by the architects Batterbury and Huxley prior to Willett's developments, it is marked by contrasting red brick and painted stucco. These two properties form part of Sub-Area 2, because they adhere to the formal Victorian style of this area rather than to the looser Free Style of Willett's houses.
- 6.40 Elsworthy Terrace has a pleasing eclectic mix of foreign architectural influences and traditional Victorian styles. For instance, Islamic pointed arches and Greek motifs on porticoes co-exist along side geometric decoration in contrasting colours of brick, to create interest and enhance the special character of the buildings on both sides of the street. An architectural element of note is the gargoyle which hangs down from the corner turret of No 1 Elsworthy Terrace. Another feature is the continuous balcony with cast iron railings which until recently adorned the ground floor level of the entire rear elevation of Nos 2-6 on the east side of Elsworthy Terrace (the balcony of No 6 was recently removed as part of the construction of a new basement extension). The balconies are offset by curving walls connecting to the garden level.

6.41 Later developments in this sub-area include a mirrored pair of detached two-storey brick-built houses on the east side of Lower Merton Rise, Nos 2 & 4, built in 1997-98 in a pastiche neo-Victorian style. The garages built in the rear garden of No 15 Elsworthy Terrace (adjacent to No 25 Elsworthy Road), detract from the otherwise well managed streetscape because of their poor quality and lack of maintenance. The Elsworthy Road frontage of No 15 Elsworthy Terrace, prior to the development of the garages some time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, would have resembled the brick boundary wall of No 1 Elsworthy Terrace.

*Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

6.42 Willett's layout created broad curved roads, originally with greens and generous grass verges at the side, which have given way to more structured pavements and broader carriageways for parking. Wadham Gardens and Elsworthy Road form a tear-drop shape at the heart of the estate, enclosing a private communal garden. Nos 53, 55 and 57 originally shared a communal garden at the rear, which has been subdivided for the benefit of individual owners.

6.43 Each house in the development has a different design, although the architect for the majority of houses was Amos Faulkner (1867-1940) (verified by David Prout's research). The exceptions are No 33 Elsworthy Road (designed by Stephenson and Redfern) and No 2 Wadham Gardens (designed by Horace Field, 1861-1948). Faulkner evolved a suburban Free Style influenced by Richard Norman Shaw and Sir Ernest Newton, which in the late 1890s was both innovative and unusual. The ground-floor layouts were generous and the houses were detached with small front gardens. There were no rigidly defined brick boundary walls or railings. The houses were not built with basements or mews accommodation. A small number of houses have been extended with subterranean garages accessed by ramped driveways, which detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as found at No 5 Wadham Gardens. Other properties have had ground-floor rooms converted and extended to provide garage accommodation, as found at No 11 Wadham Gardens and No 31 Elsworthy Road.

6.44 A predominant characteristic are low, two- or three-storey red brick buildings, with a horizontal rather than a vertical emphasis, a preference for which developed at the turn of the twentieth century. The combination of brick and vertically hung clay tiles can be seen in the earliest houses of the Willett development in Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens, which progressed to include half timbering, roughcast rendering and neo-Georgian styles as the development progressed. The influence of the Free

Style is strong in the cottage style of the residences and the artistic detailing. Key features of the style are borrowed from Dutch and Queen Anne architectural styles, including roof gables and canopied porches, tile hung gable ends, a wide variety of window types (many with small paned windows), bay windows, decorative brickwork and plasterwork, bespoke white stone dressings and white painted woodwork. The roof line of individual houses varies, but generally the roof is a dominant feature with a steep pitch and tall prominent brick chimneys.

- 6.45 The development is singled out for its high standard in *Hampstead, Building a Borough 1650-1964* (Thompson 1974),

*“The Willetts in effect put Norman Shaw on the production line, going for gables, tiled roofs, bay windows, red brick exteriors, and above all abandoning decisively the near uniformity of town housing”*,

*“...the estate is one of Willett’s most interesting. There is a great variety of ornament and outline, and every house is different. This modest simple variety was Faulkner’s great achievement. Its most notable features were variety of roof line, prominent chimneys and wide, welcoming doors, protected by low porches with pitched roofs”*.

- 6.46 Later additions to the Willett Estate include the white-painted rendered property at No 1 Lower Merton Rise, designed by Faulkner in 1911 as a coach house serving No 19 Wadham Gardens. Subsequent changes to the estate were minimal until after World War II, when in the 1950s the site of No 43 Elsworthy Road, that had suffered substantial bomb damage, was cleared and replaced by an unsightly and bulky four-storey block of flats constructed from a buff brick, which detracts from the Conservation Area, which had an additional storey added in the 1980s. Further redevelopment occurred in the 1960s when No 27 Elsworthy Road was redeveloped with a terrace of four three-storey houses, finished in white render and with barn-like roof forms, which are of a similar mass and bulk to the neighbouring Willett house; they constitute a neutral element in the streetscape. In 1991 the large garden of No 19 Wadham Gardens was sub-divided, allowing the construction of a new house in the Willett style at No 21 Wadham Gardens.

### **Townscape Character**

- 6.47 The Conservation Area is relatively uniform in its pattern of development, and while the earlier street layouts tend to be straight and at right angles to one another, the contrast created by the wide, curved, semi-rural streets of the later Willett estate is a feature of the area’s special character, typifying the changing attitudes and style of town planning towards the end of the Victorian period.

6.48 There are differences between the streets of the sub-areas of the Conservation Area in terms of building types, the style of development and the nature of the streetscape. The following paragraphs describe the characteristics of different types of streets in the Conservation Area.

#### *The Main Thoroughfares*

6.49 The principal road within the Conservation Area is Avenue Road, which runs along the western boundary, forming a link between Regent's Park in the south and Swiss Cottage in the north. King Henry's Road is used by through traffic, although the predominant residential character of the area means there is little difference between the building types found on the primary and secondary roads.

#### *Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road*

6.50 Avenue Road is notable for the greater variety of building heights, styles and materials along its frontage. As it marks the boundary between Camden and Westminster, on its southern stretch the buildings on the western side fall within the City of Westminster portion of the St John's Wood Conservation Area.

6.51 The prevailing height is two to three storeys (often with a mansard roof or dormer windows at third floor level). There is a general pattern of horizontally proportioned buildings on wide plots with well-defined boundaries to the street.

6.52 The style is broken at the southern end of the Conservation Area where Nos 22 and Nos 24-26, 'The Pavillions', are taller at six and four storeys respectively. While these buildings employ similar materials to the surrounding area, any positive effect is lost as the buildings detract from the group because of their added height, bulk and mass.

6.53 Of particular interest in the street scene are the decorative façades of Nos 42-48 (even) which form a pleasing group of Italianate style villas with white stucco frontages set back from the street with gardens containing mature trees that complement the already imposing lines of street trees.

6.54 The remaining properties along Avenue Road are of a later period. No 52 is a stuccoed villa, although of a long, low form, which is currently abandoned. Nos 30, 34 and 50 are constructed in red and yellow stock brick and try to replicate the historic scale, bulk and detail of earlier villas. Unfortunately, No 50 is out of keeping due to its excessive bulk makes it appear overbearing in the Conservation Area context.

6.55 Nos 36 and 38-40 Avenue Road are more modern designs which while respecting the scale and massing of the streetscape are noticeable different in terms of their overall

effect. No 36 has a particularly rigid boundary treatment in the form of a vertically slatted wooden fence and gates which break up the more traditional pattern of high brick walls and gateposts that characterise the rest of the street. The original gatepost of No 36 does survive at the junction of Radlett Place and as a historic feature that enhances the streetscape should be retained. Although in red brick No with a central door, tall windows and low Georgian 'style' roof the building does not positively contribute to the streetscape and can only be regarded as a neutral element.

- 6.56 Nos 38-40 is the amalgamation of two original plots; there is a modern development on the plot of No 40, with No 38 retained for gardens and parking. It is of the correct scale and massing with a balustraded parapet that attempts to add historical character to its otherwise modern design. While appropriate bricks have been used in its construction the angular bays that attempt to reflect historic design do not quite work and the building represents at best a neutral element in the streetscape. The building is vacant, as indicated by the harsh metal roller shutters over the windows, padlocked gates and security signage.

*Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

- 6.57 While the buildings within the Conservation Area on King Henry's Road are of consistently high quality, the overall streetscape is affected by the more modern post-war housing estate to the north of the Conservation Area. The south side of the street east of Elsworthy Rise has not been developed, giving a sense of openness and allowing views through trees to the backs of houses in Elsworthy Road. Further west, the frontage on the south side comprises low walling, finished in white-painted stucco to contrast with the brick houses. The walls traditionally had iron railings, although many are missing and several properties combine railings with hedging and other planting that enhances the streetscape. The high steps of the terraced houses contrast with the basement areas below. However, basement areas and boundary walls have been lost to create sloped parking spaces at Nos 135 and 139, and a similar design has been adopted at the new build at Nos 151a and 151b. There are no street trees but many of the properties have mature trees in both their front and rear gardens and these add considerable interest to the streetscape.
- 6.58 The eastern end of Elsworthy Road has a spacious layout but possesses a greater vertical emphasis than the Willett development at the western end. Here the buildings are taller and set slightly closer to the street, with the majority raised on basements and approached by flights of steps. The street possesses considerable interest in terms of boundary treatments with short square gateposts capped with pyramidal tops

and bands of decorative stucco. Low walls are a feature and cast iron railings are also commonplace, though hedges are also prominent and add to the greening of the streetscape. However, some properties on the north side of the street have been affected by the introduction of forecourt parking. The gardens of Elsworthy Terrace have been maintained and there is no off-street parking. Road side trees are present but not characteristic of the streetscape and more trees are found within the front gardens, softening the townscape.

- 6.59 The upper part of Harley Road retains original gateposts in front of many of the houses, but the original low, white-washed walls the walls have in most cases been replaced with inconsistent heights or using out-of-keeping materials. Hedges are commonplace and replace railings lost as a result of World War II metal collections. The street is spacious and contains several mature trees in the front gardens of the terraced and semi-detached houses, and in the grounds of the imposing St John's Lodge, a detached double-fronted brick house from the later 19<sup>th</sup> century which stands diagonally on a corner plot at the junction with King Henry's Road. An English Heritage blue plaque commemorates the singer, Dame Clara Butt (1873-1936), who lived in the ornate, white-rendered house at No 7 Harley Road from 1901 to 1929. The utilitarian nature of the three-storey red brick terrace of Nos 3, 3a & 5 detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The consistency of the streetscape is stronger in the south and tends to disintegrate towards the edge of the Conservation Area, as the concrete architecture of the Frank Barnes School and the over-dominant hotel at the corner of King Henry's Road and Adelaide Road dominate views out of the Conservation Area. Views to the north-west are dominated by a distinct tall, modern, residential tower at Swiss Cottage, designed by Terry Farrell, which immediately draws the eye away from the smaller historic buildings.

### *Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

- 6.60 The western section of Elsworthy Road is wide and spacious, forming a fluid link from Avenue Road into the older sections of the Conservation Area. The vernacular style of the architecture set back from the road by ample gardens is complemented by the predominance of mature street trees and hedges and other planting within the gardens themselves. The boundary treatments are formed by low walls, topped by hedges, combined with wooden gates and gate posts to form the predominant features in the division of street and garden which greens the streetscape considerably and softens the view. It is particularly the combination of hedges and wooden gates that defines the special character of the streetscape in the Willett area. However, only No 62 retains original wooden gateposts, with other properties having

replaced original frontages with harder wearing and out-of-keeping materials such as brick gateposts and metal railings, or having allowed the hedges to form a less structured natural boundary. Where front gardens have been removed completely for car parking and refuse containers, the boundary treatments and character have diminished.

#### *The Quiet Residential Streets*

- 6.61 These streets are not principal routes through the Conservation Area, but are used largely by residents for access and parking. The style and variety of the streets varies according to sub-area and creates a varied and pleasing mix of historic character, thereby enhancing the Conservation Area as a whole.

#### *Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road*

- 6.62 There are no quiet residential streets in Sub-Area 1.

#### *Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

- 6.63 In Sub-Area 2, the quiet residential streets, which include Lower Merton Rise and Elsworthy Terrace, are of a very different character. Elsworthy Terrace has a strong uniformity resulting from the tall terraces of Victorian townhouses. These are set back from the road and raised on basements. Historic elements of the streetscape include granite kerbs, York stone paving and the low boundary walls combined with hedges to create a softer streetscape than more traditional Victorian frontages with iron railings. The terrace possesses a complete line of mature trees on its eastern side which adds considerable interest to the streetscape. An original Edward VII post box is of historic significance.
- 6.64 Lower Merton Rise is less densely developed and contains only four properties, three of which are modern additions but are well matched in terms of style and materials. The one original building, No 1 Lower Merton Rise, was built to the designs of Amos Faulkner in 1911 as a coach house and stables serving No 19 Wadham Gardens. It has since been converted into a residence in its own right. It was the only example of mews accommodation which William Willett allowed on the estate, as it was tucked around the corner from the main street and was not on view. Willett considered the houses too grand to be aesthetically spoiled by stable blocks. Today the streetscape retains historic paving and kerbing and the low wall and hedge at No 1 share common characteristics with the Willett boundary treatment. The streetscape contains trees and views of trees in the gardens of neighbouring properties and is considerably

softened by the large hedge and pollarded trees in the garden of No 21 Wadham Gardens.

#### *Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

- 6.65 Wadham Gardens is much quieter than the neighbouring section of Elsworthy Road found in Sub-Area 3 as it does not form a natural thoroughfare for passing traffic. The street is wide and tree-lined, creating a pleasant, spacious atmosphere and the semi-rural feel is carried through into the boundaries of the properties where low walls, hedges, wooden fences and gateposts predominate. No 5 Wadham Gardens retains its original timber gateposts and No 11 has scholarly replacement versions for both pedestrian and vehicle access, which enhance the overall streetscape.
- 6.66 Positive boundary treatments exist at Nos 7, 10, 13, and 30 Wadham Gardens and several have replica gateposts in addition to hedged boundaries. Nos 8 and 19, while retaining hedges, combine these with cast iron railings which do not strictly fit the original design of the Willett development. No 1 retains original gateposts but the sections of fence have been replaced with modern materials and there is no hedge.
- 6.67 Wadham Gardens also possesses an on-street access to the communal gardens shared by the surrounding properties, which is a Private Open Space as set out in the London Borough of Camden *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* June 2006, and is designated a London Square under the London Squares Act 1931. The gardens are bounded by a high hedge and iron gate with brick posts, which does not appear to be original but does not detract from the streetscape. The gardens themselves are not visible from the street but are exceptionally well maintained and create an oasis of peace entirely screened from the outside world. The gardens contribute to the Conservation Area as they create an area of mature trees and open sky in long views from the east along Wadham Gardens.

#### *Secondary/ Residential Access Streets*

- 6.68 The secondary/residential access streets include Radlett Place, Rudgwick Terrace, St. Stephen's Close and Elsworthy Terrace. These streets are in residential use but have few properties and are essentially *cul-de-sacs*, meaning they are primarily used for access to dwellings rather than as thoroughfares.

#### *Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road*

- 6.69 Radlett Place, off Avenue Road, is a long, narrow access road which boasts special character by way of York stone paving and historic features such as date stones in

boundary walls. The high walls of Nos 34 and 36 Avenue Road give Radlett Place an increased sense of enclosure which is framed by the backdrop of mature trees in the nearby gardens and by the boundary between the street and Primrose Hill Park at the end of the street. The road surface and some of the paving is in a poor state of repair and this detracts from the overall impression of this small-scale street.

- 6.70 All that remains of Rudgwick Terrace and St Stephen's Close is their historic layout. All historic buildings have been lost. While Rudgwick Terrace retains pleasant gardens on the south side, the street itself is now little more than a car park for the surrounding residences including the somewhat dominant flats at No 22 Avenue Road.

*Sub-Area 2: King Henry's Road*

- 6.71 Elsworthy Rise is a short street retaining some historic stone paving and granite kerbs. There is one disused residence over garages housed in the simple two-storey, flat roofed, later twentieth century building to the rear of No 20 Elsworthy Road. There are further garages on the opposite side of the street to the rear of No 91 King Henry's Road and No 22 Elsworthy Road. The character of the street is formed by the views of the rear of buildings on King Henry's Road and Elsworthy Road and the mature trees visible in the rear gardens of these streets. The garages and single residence form neutral rather than detracting elements as they are not overbearing in the street scene and respect the scale, massing and materials of the surrounding buildings.

*Sub-Area 3: Willett Development*

- 6.72 The small cul-de-sac to the front of Nos 45-51 Elsworthy Road is the only secondary/residential access street in Sub-Area 3. It has no street name and is essentially a service road for Nos 41-51 divided from the main road by a broad planted and grassed area with flowering trees and a beech hedge screening the houses. This makes a significant contribution to the green, leafy open aspect of the area, to the context of the houses, enhancing their setting, and is an integral part of the character of the Conservation Area.

## 7.0 HERITAGE AUDIT

### Introduction

- 7.1 An audit of the fabric of the Conservation Area has been undertaken to identify listed buildings, unlisted buildings and streetscape elements that contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Buildings and streetscape and other elements that detract from its character and appearance are also identified. The built heritage audit is set out in Appendix 7 with a plan showing the location of listed buildings, positive contributors and detractors in Appendix 8.
- 7.2 There is a strong presumption to retain buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Detractors are elements of the townscape that are considered to be so significantly out of scale or character with their surroundings that their replacement, with something of a more appropriate scale and massing or detailed architectural treatment, would benefit the character and appearance of the area. Detractors may also include gaps in frontages that disrupt the prevailing street pattern. Elements that are neutral broadly conform with the overriding scale, form, materials and elevational characteristics of their context. The integrity and nature of the context are consequently influential in making this judgement.

### *Listed buildings*

- 7.3 Within the Elsworthy Conservation Area there is only one listed building, the Grade II listed Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill Road. This building is not considered to be at risk (see Appendix 7 & 9).

### *Buildings and groups of buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area*

- 7.4 In addition to the buildings that are on the statutory list there are a large number of individual buildings and groups of buildings that contribute to the character of their immediate surroundings and the Conservation Area as a whole (see Appendix 7). Whilst some of these buildings may have experienced minor alterations over the years, they contribute as part of a group. The criteria suggested by English Heritage in their guidance on conservation area appraisals has been applied<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 2 of English Heritage's Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, February 2006

*Elements of streetscape that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area*

- 7.5 The character and the appearance of the Conservation Area are not solely a function of its buildings, use and activity. Elements within the public realm, such as original paving materials, traditional bollards and street furniture of historic interest (e.g. lamp posts, post boxes and bollards) contribute greatly to the area's quality, character and appearance. It should be noted that the survey may not be exhaustive and any works should seek to retain elements of streetscape interest, whether listed or not (see Appendix 7).

*Buildings and features that detract from the character of the area*

- 7.6 Inevitably there are buildings that detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (see Appendix 7). This may be due to a building's scale, materials, relationship to the street or due to the impact of alterations and extensions. There are also structures and elements of streetscape that impinge on the character and quality of the Conservation Area. In addition, there may be unsympathetic and prominent features that detract from a building such as inappropriate additions (e.g. excessively large dormer windows)

*Opportunity sites*

- 7.7 There are no opportunity sites identified within the Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan adopted June 2006.
- 7.8 Where buildings currently detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area, sensitive redevelopment may provide an opportunity for the enhancement for example the following buildings are sites that have been identified:
- No 43 Elsworthy Road
  - Garages between No 15 Elsworthy Terrace and No 25 Elsworthy Road
  - Nos 22-26 (even) Avenue Road
  - Nos 1-5 (consec) Rudgwick Terrace
  - Nos 3, 3a & 5 Harley Road
- 7.9 There are also, in other of parts of the Conservation Area, buildings which neither preserve nor enhance the area and are considered neutral and their redevelopment may be considered appropriate, subject to an acceptable replacement coming forward.
- 7.10 These neutral elements include:
- Elsworthy Road          Nos 17-19 (odd), 18 & 20

Elsworthy Rise	No 15
Lower Merton Rise	Nos 2, 3 & 4
Elsworthy Road	Nos 27a-d
Harley Road	St. John's Studios, No 26a
King Henry's Road	Studio Houses at rear of Nos 151a & b
Avenue Road	Nos 36
Radlett Place	No 1 and Radlett House
St. Stephens Close	Primrose House

**PART 2: MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

## **8.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

- 8.1 English Heritage Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas advises that following an appraisal of the Conservation Area, a strategy for its management in the mid to long term should be developed to address issues identified through the appraisal.
- 8.2 The Character Appraisal and this associated Management Strategy seek to provide a clear basis for the assessment of proposals and identify an approach to addressing issues that have the potential to impact on the special interest of the Elsworthy Conservation Area.
- 8.3 The aims of the Management Strategy are to:
- i) inform interested parties of how the Council intends to secure the preservation and/or enhancement of the Conservation Area;
  - ii) set out an approach to consultation on the management of the Conservation Area;
  - iii) confirm how issues identified through the character appraisal will be tackled;
  - iv) identify specific policy or design guidance that is relevant to the Conservation Area to support the development control function and those preparing applications for planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent;
  - v) identify areas where the overview provided by the Conservation Area Appraisal suggests that site-specific Development Brief would assist the management of the Conservation Area and decision-making processes;
  - vi) identify areas that may benefit from specific enhancement proposals should funding become available; and,
  - vii) identify the management tools available to the Council through legislation.

### **Policy and Legislation**

- 8.4 Recent revisions to the planning system mean that the currently adopted UDP (*London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan*, adopted June 2006), which forms the basis of decision-making for development proposals in the Borough, will be replaced by a new Local Development Framework in 2010. There is a requirement for greater public consultation as part of this revised policy framework including conservation policy (both general and specific) which

will in part meet the objective of there being greater consultation on the management of the Conservation Area.

- 8.5 Detailed policies that are currently applicable in the Elsworthy Conservation Area are listed in Appendix 6 together with a link to the relevant section of the adopted UDP.
- 8.6 In the review of planning policy to be undertaken as part of the LDF process the Council will consider the objectives of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of Elsworthy Conservation Area. The Council will maintain a policy framework that seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas in the context of the most up to date Government Guidance and strategic policy set out in the London Plan. The Council will identify any areas that are under pressure of significant change and consider the need for, where appropriate, more targeted spatial policy in the form of Area Action Plans.

## **9.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

### **Monitoring**

- 9.1 The Council will monitor the listed building within the Conservation Area (and any newly designated) to ensure that it does not become 'at risk'. Action will be taken as necessary to safeguard the listed building and its special interest.

### **Review**

- 9.2 The Council is required to undertake periodic review of the Elsworth Conservation Area to ensure that the special interest is being maintained and protected to re-evaluate boundaries and see whether there are areas which justify inclusion or whether there are areas which have deteriorated to such an extent that their special interest has been lost.

- 9.3 As part of the review process the Council will:

- undertake a visual appraisal;
- maintain a searchable photographic record of listed buildings within the area on the Council website, ensuring that this is updated as new buildings are added;
- record the character of streets and areas;
- maintain and update a record of other aspects of interest within the Conservation Area including the historic fabric of the public realm; and,
- consider current issues impacting on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 9.4 As part of the Conservation Area Appraisal, the following has been reviewed: current issues, conservation area boundaries, positive contributors to the Conservation Area, negative elements and elements of streetscape interest.

## **10.0 MAINTAINING CHARACTER**

### **General Approach**

10.1 The following approach to maintaining the special interest of the Elsworthy Conservation Area will be adopted as part of the strategy for its effective management:

1. the Elsworthy Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy will be subject of public consultation and will be periodically reviewed to ensure that these documents remain sufficiently current to enable its effective management and decision-making on new development within the area;
2. the list of buildings and other features which, in addition to those already included on the statutory list, positively contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, will be kept under review to aid decision-making and the preparation of proposals;
3. applications for development will be determined having regard to the special interest of the Conservation Area and the specialist advice of conservation officers;
4. in accordance with the relevant legislation most applications for development within the Conservation Area are required to include a Design and Access Statement. This will be required to adequately explain the design approach and context of the proposals and be accompanied by sufficient, accurate drawings of the existing site, its context as well as the proposed development;
5. where relevant and possible further supplementary planning documents including design guidance and planning briefs will be produced;
6. in undertaking its development control function the Council will ensure that the historic details which are an essential part of the special architectural character of Elsworthy Conservation Area are preserved, repaired and reinstated where appropriate;
7. the Council will seek to ensure that the departments responsible for the environment (highways/landscape/planning/conservation and urban design) work in an effective, co-ordinated and consultative manner to ensure that historic interest within the public realm is maintained and enhanced where appropriate; and,
8. the Council will continue to consult the Conservation Area Advisory Committees and local amenity societies on applications which may impact on the special interest of the Elsworthy Conservation Area and seek their input in relation to ongoing management issues.

## **11.0 BOUNDARY CHANGES**

11.1 The boundary of the Conservation Area has been reviewed as part of this study, consideration has been given as to whether there are any areas that should be added into or de-designated from the Conservation Area.

### **Additions and deletions considered**

11.2 Owing to the location of the Conservation Area bounded to the south-west by the City of Westminster, the south-east by the Royal Park at Primrose Hill and to the north by an area of mainly twentieth century development of no historic interest, there is limited scope to extend the Elsworthy Conservation Area.

11.3 While we would currently not strongly recommend that any further areas be included within the Conservation Area we suggest that the Council may wish to consider the merits of the upper part of Avenue Road which includes a number of detached houses in neo-Georgian and vernacular classical styles of the inter war and mid twentieth century (property Nos 56-64 (even), 65, 69, 71, 75 & 77-87 (odd) Avenue Road). While the merits of this architecture have in the past been overlooked, the properties here present a coherent group of similar style, scale and character that reflect aspects of properties already included within the Elsworthy Conservation Area and the Avenue Road section of the St John's Wood Conservation Area in Westminster. Properties in this area and along other parts of Avenue Road are currently undergoing renovation, while others notably No 64 Avenue Road has recently been granted planning permission for redevelopment. Some degree of foresight in protecting coherent areas of currently less well appreciated types of properties that adjoin the Conservation Area may be prudent and would provide additional protection in the future from undesirable change.

11.4 There is an area of development at the south end of the Conservation Area that appears to have no architectural or remaining historic interest. This area includes Primrose House, the whole of Rudgwick Terrace and the associated gardens and Nos 22 and 24-26, 'The Pavillions', Avenue Road. These areas are entirely modern in character and the buildings are of a design and scale that are at odds with the surrounding character of the Conservation Area. Consequently the

Council may wish to consider the merit of deleting this area from the Conservation Area boundary. A map of the proposed deletion is included in Appendix 10.

## 12.0 CURRENT ISSUES

12.1 Developments over the recent decades have had limited influence on the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area. There is likely to remain only minimal pressure for change as the area is likely to remain a predominately residential suburb. The principal factors that could influence change in the character and appearance of the area include extensions and alterations to properties or alterations to boundary treatments as well as any changes in street furniture or other aspects of the public realm.

### *New Development*

12.2 Where re-development has not been successful in terms of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, this has generally been due to one of the following:

- The use of inappropriate materials or detailing
- Inappropriate scale, bulk, height, massing and proportions
- Inappropriate relationship to the street and neighbouring properties

12.3 As such, new development within the Conservation Area should show special consideration to the elevational treatment, scale, bulk and massing of buildings and where possible respect the traditional forms and rooflines of the Conservation Area. Future additions and development must take care not to break away or detract from the traditional alignment and elevation of the existing building typology and form.

12.4 New development should reflect and reinforce the original rhythm and density of development of the streetscape. Subdivision of existing plots will be discouraged where it interrupts the rhythm and form of development of both buildings and boundary treatments or results in the loss of features that contribute to the character of the area. Where original plots have been amalgamated to create larger units the Council will look favourably on proposals to reinstate the historical layout of the plots which restore the original rhythm and character.

### *Alterations to Existing Buildings*

- 12.5 Alterations and extensions can have a detrimental impact either cumulatively or individually on the character and appearance of the area. Examples within the area include:
- External painting which varies from a uniform approach, cleaning and pointing of brickwork;
  - The replacement of historic fabric with materials or details that do not match the originals, such as inappropriately detailed or proportioned doors, windows, downpipes, tiling or railings;
  - Extensions that negatively affect the scale, symmetry, or relative dominance of parts of existing buildings;
  - Basement extensions and associated lightwells
  - Roof level alterations and extensions that interrupt the consistency of a uniform terrace or the prevailing scale and character of a block, are overly prominent in the street;
  - Prominent roof level fencing or railings;
  - Satellite dishes and aerials visible from the street;
  - Air conditioning units;
  - External security measures, including floodlighting; and
  - Loss of original details such as traditional boundary treatments, frontage railings, chimneys and chimney stacks.
- 12.6 As such alterations and extensions to existing buildings should be carefully considered. Extensions should be subsidiary to the existing building and not detract from its character by becoming over-dominant.
- 12.7 Where alterations and extensions of a sympathetic scale are appropriate, attention to detail and an imitative, historicist approach are to be encouraged without allowing pastiches of historical features that may reflect current tastes, but are less appropriate to the style and detailing of the original building and which may detract from the overall integrity of the group.
- 12.8 Where original features and key details have survived they should be retained and preserved in all but the most mitigating circumstances and good maintenance and repair rather than replacement is the most appropriate action to retain the original historic character of the area. Outright replacement would only be appropriate when no other reasonable alternative is available.

12.9 Where original features and details have been lost their replacement with appropriate high quality reproductions that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is to be encouraged.

12.10 Alterations to and the loss of original boundary treatments are to be discouraged and the removal of boundary treatments to create areas of hard-standing for parking is in most cases inappropriate.

#### *Changes of Use*

12.11 The Elsworthy Conservation Area retains substantially its original residential character and few changes in uses have occurred over time. It is the current uniformity of scale, lack of division of property and nature of use that contributes to its character. Changes that could impact on the character of the area include:

- Unsympathetic division of buildings to accommodate multiple residential units or varieties of use;
- Interruption or removal of the pattern of boundary treatments along the villa frontages or the addition of unsympathetic boundary treatments or gates;
- Development of a variety of uses that would detract from the uniformity that characterises this area; and
- Loss of trees either within property boundaries or more particularly from along the streets that make-up the Conservation Area and contribute to the pleasing look and character of the streetscape.

#### *Small scale developments within /changes to the public realm*

12.12 Building frontages, roads and pavements are all important elements of the public realm. Small scale development can cumulatively have a detrimental impact on the character of the area overall. Such changes can include:

- Loss of original streetscape elements of merit;
- Unsympathetic surfacing materials;
- Clutter of street furniture, unnecessary new bollards etc; and
- General visual clutter from excessive signage (i.e traffic signage).

#### *Telecommunications*

12.13 The increase in the number of mobile phone users is leading to an increased demand by operators for telecommunications equipment. Erection of masts

should be avoided where they could potentially be prominent within the Conservation Area or in views from it.

## **13.0 MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE**

### **Investment and Maintenance**

- 13.1 The appraisal has indicated that the character of the Elsworthy Conservation Area is generally of a high standard, though could be vulnerable to negative change from incremental unsympathetic development or additions by individual householders. Even the smallest of changes can have a cumulative adverse and negative impact on the character and appearance of the area. Other potential threats, though not currently prevalent, include deterioration of the built fabric arising from neglect and lack of maintenance of buildings.
- 13.2 The quality of the public realm and particularly the pedestrian and amenity spaces can make an important contribution to the character of the area. The quality of these spaces can be adversely affected by a range of factors including the proliferation of visual clutter (e.g. signage, posts, bollards), inappropriate surfacing, covering/removal of historic surfacing.
- 13.3 The Council will seek to ensure that its own investment in the public realm in the Conservation Area respects and enhances its special character and will look for opportunities to make specific, appropriate enhancements to the public realm and particularly to the pedestrian environment as one way of supporting the preservation of the area's distinctive character through the streetscape manual and internal consultation.

### **Listed Buildings**

- 13.4 Within Elsworthy Conservation Area there are a number of fine buildings which arguably have special architectural or historic interest. However, only one of these, the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, is protected by statutory listing. It forms a very important part of the historic quality and character of the area.
- 13.5 To view the location of the listed church please check the plan at Appendix 9 and the Council's website. For Listed Building advice contact - [www.camden.gov.uk/planning/listed-buildings](http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning/listed-buildings) or [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

### *Maintenance and Repair of Listed Buildings*

- 13.6 None of the buildings in the Conservation Area are identified as being at risk on the 2008/2009 English Heritage *Register of Buildings at Risk in Greater London*. The Council will keep the condition of properties under review to inform English Heritage of any that may need to be added to the Register. Owners will be encouraged to maintain their buildings regularly to ensure their condition is improved or appropriately and adequately maintained so that important historic buildings and their architectural features are preserved. The Council will support owners by providing advice and links to available resources provided by other organisations via the website to assist with this (e.g. The Victorian Society/Society for the Preservation of Historic Buildings /English Heritage/maintainyourbuilding.org).
- 13.7 Owners will be encouraged to keep listed buildings occupied and in an appropriate use. The most appropriate use will be to retain a listed building in its original use. Other uses may be considered if it can be demonstrated that the original use cannot be viably maintained and any other more sympathetic uses are unviable. Most new uses will require planning permission and should not harm the integrity of the building. Listed building consent will be required for any internal alterations to listed buildings.

### *Listed Building Enforcement Powers*

- 13.8 Listed building enforcement powers will be used to secure essential urgent works or repairs to secure the preservation of the building.
- 13.9 In the most extreme cases of deliberate neglect of listed buildings the Council will exercise its powers to undertake the work at the owner's cost or compulsorily purchase the property ensuring that there is provision for the subsequent repair of the building.

### **Unlisted Buildings**

- 13.10 The great majority of the buildings within the Conservation Area are unlisted. Investment and maintenance of all buildings within the Conservation Area will be encouraged to help ensure the preservation of its special character and appearance.

13.11 The following measures will be considered to stimulate maintenance and care of unlisted buildings:

- information will be provided on the importance of regular maintenance and other organisations/websites providing advice on these matters will be highlighted on the Council's website;
- initiatives that will enhance the character or appearance of Elsworthy Conservation Area will be encouraged;
- information on current funding sources will be provided and if appropriate the Council will apply for funding through special schemes; and,
- the Council will keep under review the condition of buildings and consider, in conjunction with English Heritage and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether any urgent works notices should be served to secure emergency or immediate repairs to arrest deterioration of any unoccupied parts of unlisted buildings.

#### **Control over New Development**

13.12 It is clear from the Conservation Area Appraisal that the area has a well established residential character and there is little pressure for major redevelopment or new development across Elsworthy Conservation Area. Any pressure towards new development is likely to be on a small scale from individual property owners wishing to make additions or alterations to their properties, grounds and boundary treatments or from changes of use or subdivision of villas. These can be categorised as follows:

- viii) a range of small scale change that can, cumulatively, have a significant impact on the character of an area (e.g. roof extensions, rear extensions, conservatories, basements, satellite dishes and aerials, air conditioning, security measures including floodlighting, removal of trees);
- ix) changes of use; and,
- x) subdivision of properties.

13.13 New development, involving the loss of existing buildings which positively contribute to the character of the Conservation Area is very unlikely to be supported by the Council. To secure appropriate new development the Council has adopted a number of detailed policies (in Appendix 11) with which development will need to comply. An appropriate level of information will also be required as part of the application submission to enable the Council to determine the effect of any development proposal on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

*General*

- 13.14 Development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area. This requirement applies equally to developments which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.
- 13.15 High quality design and high quality execution will be required of all new development at all scales. It will be important that applications contain sufficient information to enable the Council assess the proposals.
- 13.16 Proposals which seek to redevelop those buildings that are considered to have a negative impact on the special character or the appearance of the Conservation Area with appropriate new development will be encouraged.
- 13.17 Design and Access Statements accompanying applications will be expected specifically to address the particular characteristics identified in the appraisal including the scale and character of the repeated terraced forms, the prevailing scale, mass, roof line and rhythm created by the historic pattern of development.
- 13.18 The appearance of all buildings of historic interest (listed and unlisted) within the Conservation Area is harmed by the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials. For example, the loss of original joinery, sash windows, porches and front doors, can have considerable negative impact on the appearance of a historic building and the area. Insensitive re-pointing, painting or inappropriate render will harm the appearance and the long-term durability of historic brickwork.
- 13.19 The Conservation Area retains many diverse historic rooflines which it is important to preserve. Fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations, poor materials, intrusive dormers, or inappropriate windows can harm the historic character of the roofscape and will not be acceptable. Of particular interest are original tiles, dormer windows, parapets, finials, chimneystacks and pots and expressed party walls.
- 13.20 Within the different sub-areas of the Elsworthy Conservation Area there are many interesting examples of historic rear elevations. The original historic pattern of rear elevations within a street or group of buildings is an integral part of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such rear extensions

will not be acceptable where they would compromise the special character. This is especially true of the buildings surrounding and sharing an outlook into the private amenity space in Wadham Gardens. The properties in Elsworthy Terrace and parts of Elsworthy Road directly back onto Primrose Hill, which although outside the Conservation Area is a Royal Park and Metropolitan Open Land and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance as defined in the London Borough of Camden *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* June 2006. The integral visual relationship with the complementary, open rural aspect of Primrose Hill is a marked characteristic of the Conservation Area. Any rear extensions or harmful alterations in the locations cited will be strongly discouraged.

- 13.21 The boundary walls, gate posts and fencing whether in stone, wood, or iron along the majority of frontages are an important facet of the character of the area overall and of the different sub-areas specifically. The Council will resist the loss of original boundary treatments and the iron and wooden elements and planted greenery associated with them where this forms part of the area's character.
- 13.22 Prominent external telecommunications apparatus and electrical equipment, including cable runs, satellite dishes and inappropriate light fittings and security systems, can harm the appearance of an historic building. Efforts should be made to find discrete solutions appropriate to the character of the area. Guidance on the installation of telecommunication equipment including mobile phone masts, satellite dishes and aerials can be found in the Camden Supplementary Design Guide or by contacting the Planning Services above.
- 13.23 In all cases the Council will expect original architectural features and detailing to be retained, protected, refurbished in the appropriate manner, and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair.
- 13.24 Fire escapes should be located internally. If external means of escape cannot be avoided they should be located in a position that does not detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area. If they any element is visible from the public realm particular attention will need to be paid to the materials, colour and detailing.

### *Changes of Use*

- 13.25 The Council will keep under review changes of use to see whether particular policies are required to protect the character of the area.

### **Basement Development**

- 13.26 Elsworthy Conservation Area is characterised by residential properties set in large gardens with an abundance of trees. Although some houses in Elsworthy Road, King Henry's Road and Harley Road are raised on semi-basements, large portions of the Conservation Area contain buildings constructed without basements, which were set back from the road behind generous front gardens. This is a particular feature of the Willett Estate, where for social reasons kitchens were located on the ground floor to provide better working and living conditions for servants.
- 13.26 In recent years Elsworthy Conservation Area has seen a growth in new basement development and extensions to existing basement accommodation, together with excavation of associated lightwells. The Council is concerned to ensure that such development does not harm the recognised architectural character of buildings and surrounding area, including gardens and nearby trees, and that Conservation Area character is preserved or enhanced. The creation of new lightwells can harm the relationship between the building and the street, can harm the appearance of the building and the streetscape, and may result in the loss of garden. Railings around lightwells can cause a cluttered appearance to the front of the property. The inclusion of rooflights designed within the landscaping of a front garden can result in illumination and light spill from the subterranean rooms and harm the appearance of a garden setting.
- 13.27 As such the Council will normally resist basement development fronting the highway due to its impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 13.28 To check whether you need planning permission for basement works, please visit the Council's website at [www.camden.gov.uk/planning](http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning) and refer to the Council's *New Basement Development and Extensions to Basement Accommodation* Guidance Note (February 2009). Alternatively, please contact the Council's Duty Planner on tel 020 7974 1911.

## **Demolition**

### *Buildings*

- 13.29 The total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area requires conservation area consent. In accordance with relevant Government guidance, the Council will normally expect all buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area to be retained. Any proposals for the demolition of an unlisted building would need to be fully and robustly justified in terms of the requirements set out in PPG15 (*Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*, published September 1994). The Council would need to be convinced of any case for demolition.
- 13.30 Demolition of a building is unlikely to be permitted without an appropriate redevelopment scheme and some certainty that this would be implemented.

### *Boundary Features*

- 13.31 Walls, gates and fences in conservation areas are also protected from demolition where they exceed 1 metre fronting a highway or are 2 metres and above elsewhere.

## **Control of Advertisements**

- 13.32 The predominant residential character of the Conservation Area offers limited scope or necessity for the installation of a wide range of signage. Any large scale signage, particularly illuminated signage, would be entirely inappropriate and would certainly require advertisement consent. A proliferation of signage, even of an appropriate design, could harm the character of the Conservation Area.
- 13.33 The proliferation of estate agents boards is an ongoing concern. The legislation concerning the display of advertisements is contained principally in the Town & County Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 1992. One control mechanism is the use of Regulation 7. It is not considered that a Regulation 7 Order is justified at the present time but this will be kept under review.

### **Development Briefs and Design Guidance**

- 13.34 The Conservation Area Appraisal has not identified any sites that would be appropriate for large scale new development and so the need for development briefs for individual sites is distinctly limited.
- 13.35 Where any development proposals were to come forward, developers will be encouraged to work with the Council to prepare development briefs appropriate for the Conservation Area.
- 13.36 A range of guidance on development control issues is set out within the Camden Planning Guide (adopted December 2006) and should be considered by applicants and their advisors. This is available on the Council's website and will be applied in decision-making when appropriate.
- 13.37 Other guidance includes guidance on sustainable development in conservation areas which can be found on the Council's website. Further guidance in relation to listed buildings and their repair and maintenance is available from English Heritage and organisations such as The Victorian Society.
- 13.38 The Council will seek to maintain and update specific design guidance

### **Public Realm Strategy**

- 13.39 The appraisal has identified elements of historic streetscape interest within the Conservation Area. These include granite kerbs, York paving stones and slabs, cast iron bollards, cobbles and other increasingly rare examples of historic street furniture add interest and character to the public realm within the Conservation Area. It should be borne in mind that these lists may not be exhaustive and in any streetscape proposals consideration should be given to the value and retention of any elements of historic streetscape interest.
- 13.40 The Council has produced the Streetscape Design Manual to raise the standard of street works consistently throughout the Borough. Reference should be made to this document and consultation with conservation officers undertaken.
- 13.41 The planning authority will seek to encourage improvements to the public realm including the reduction of street clutter and improved street lamps, wayfinding and signage design. Information and advice can be found in the Council's

Streetscape Design Manual. English Heritage guidance '*Streets for All*' should also be reviewed.

#### *Landscape Elements*

- 13.42 Advice on street trees can be found at [www.camden.gov.uk/streetscape](http://www.camden.gov.uk/streetscape).
- 13.43 The Council's free publication 'A Guide to Trees in Camden' contains information on the benefits of trees and the law relating to trees in conservation areas.

#### **Enforcement**

- 13.44 In addition to listed building enforcement powers, the Council has adopted an Enforcement Policy for handling complaints of unauthorised development and will investigate and where necessary take enforcement action against unauthorised works and changes of use. In operating that policy special attention will be given to preserving or enhancing the special qualities of the Conservation Area.
- 13.45 Guidance regarding enforcement issues can be found in PPG18: Enforcing Planning Control and Circular 10/97: Enforcing Planning Control: Legislative Provision and Procedural Requirements (published by DETR).
- 13.46 The Council will, if necessary, utilise powers under sections 214 and 215 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure that appropriate action is taken against sites that detract from the amenity of the Conservation Area.
- 13.47 The Council will consider the efficacy of using Completion Notices to secure the completion of any unfinished works which are impacting on the area's appearance.

#### **Article 4 Directions**

- 13.48 An Article 4 Direction would remove permitted development rights to protect aspects of the area's character where buildings are not directly protected by statutory listing. In Elsworthy Conservation Area, these might include:
- i) permitted development rights for single dwelling alterations;
  - ii) erection of fences, walls or other means of enclosure, and creation of hard-standing in gardens (minor operations).
- 13.49 A review would need to be undertaken to assess the level of loss and erosion to the built form, and whether existing boundary treatments, including privet hedges

on the Willett Estate, contribute sufficiently to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area to justify the use of an Article 4 Direction in the case of (ii) above.

## **14.0 OTHER ISSUES**

14.1 There are a number of issues that the Council may wish to consider in relation to the management of the Conservation Area.

### **Promoting Design Quality**

14.2 The Council will ensure continued consultation with the local Conservation Area Advisory Committee and other local interest groups.

14.3 Design awards and environment champions will be used by the Council to encourage high quality design.

### **Potential Enhancement Schemes/Programmes**

14.4 The Council will make applications for funding as appropriate. Applications for funding under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative and English Heritage's Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas must include a Management Strategy (or an update of this Management Strategy) to include:

- the heritage value of the area and problems posing a threat to it;
- planning policies;
- proposed planning measures;
- a framework for design standards; education and training;
- community consultation and involvement; and
- putting the Management Strategy into practice

### **Resources**

#### *Publications and Guidance Notes*

14.5 The Council will make available via its website a range of resources to assist businesses, occupiers and developers in making applications that will meet the objective of preserving or enhancing the special interest of the area.

#### *Human Resources*

14.6 In the context of limited financial and manpower resource available to the Council there is a need for consideration to be given to the best focus of resources to secure the appropriate management of the Conservation Area.

14.7 Given the nature of the Conservation Area with little pressure for change and development, resources will therefore be focussed towards development control

when it arises, site specific policy guidance and enforcement action where this will deliver results.

- 14.8 The potential opportunities for the funding of physical enhancement works will however be kept under review.

## **Bibliography**

Barrett, H. & Phillips, J. (1992) *Suburban Style: The British Home 1840-1960*, Little, Brown & Co.

Foxell, S. (2007) *Mapping London: Making Sense of the City*, Black Dog Publishing.

Jenner, Michael *London Heritage*, Michael Joseph.

Prout, D (1989) *Willett Built*, Victorian Society Annual.

Lawrence, R.R. & Chris, T (1996) *The Period House - Style, Detail and Decoration 1774-1914*, Phoenix.

Thompson, F.M.L. (1974) *Hampstead: Building a Borough 1650-1964*, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Whitfield, P. (2006) *London: A Life in Maps*, The British Library.

Victorian History of the County of Middlesex - Volume IX.

## **Maps**

Referred to:

1795 - Cary's New & Accurate Plan of London and Westminster;

1820 - Pigot & Co.'s Minature Plan of London & Vicinity;

1834 - Topographical Survey of The Borough of St. Marylebone;

1837 - John Cary's 'Two-Penny Post delivery map' (Foxell, 2007; 166-7);

1844 - Cross's London Guide (Whitfield, 2006; 156-7);

1851 - Cross's London Guide;

1861 - Cross's New Plan of London;

1865 - Whitbread's Map of London;

1871 - OS Map;

1877 - Ecclesiastical Boundaries Map (Foxell, 2007; 104-5);

1894 - OS Map;

1897 - Stanford's Map of Central London;

1914 - OS Map;

1935 - OS Map.

Included in Appendix

1871 - OS Map;

1894 - OS Map;

1914 - OS Map;

1935 - OS Map.

**Appendix 1: Conservation Area Boundary**

**Appendix 2: Designation Area Boundaries and Dates**

**Appendix 3: Urban Grain**

**Appendix 4: Topography**

## Appendix 5: Historic Plans

- i) OS Map 1871
- ii) OS Map 1894
- iii) OS Map 1914
- iv) OS Map 1935

**Appendix 6: Sub-Areas within the Conservation Area**

## Appendix 7: Built Heritage Audit

### *Listed Buildings*

Primrose Rose Hill Road Church of St Mary the Virgin

### *Positive Contributors*

Avenue Road Nos 28-34 (even), Nos 42-50 (even).

Radlett Place N/A.

Rudgwick Terrace N/A.

King Henry's Road Nos 91a, 91-113 (odd), 115-151 (odd) & 153-157 (odd).

Elsworthy Road Nos 2-6 (even), 7-16 (consec), 21-26 (consec), 28-42 (consec), 44-68 (consec).

Elsworthy Terrace Nos 1-15 (consec).

Elsworthy Rise N/A.

Wadham Gardens Nos 1-10 (consec), 11-21 (odd).

Harley Road St. John's Lodge, Nos 1, 7, 9, 14-24 (even), 26, 28.

Lower Merton Rise No 1.

### *Elements of Streetscape Interest*

Avenue Road Granite kerbs, cobbled road drainage channels, mature trees, decorative wrought iron boundary treatments;

Radlett Place Granite kerbs, York stone paving, mature trees, date stones in wall;

Rudgwick Terrace Granite kerbs, mature trees;

Primrose Hill Road Granite kerbs, cobbled crossovers, mature trees;

King Henry's Road Granite kerbs, cobbled crossovers, cobble-set mini roundabout, some cobbled drives, cast iron bollards, tiled street-markers, metal street-markers, many original gate posts and boundary walls, many iron railings, mature trees, Edward VII pillar box (outside CA);

Elsworthy Road Granite kerbs, cast iron bollards, York stone paving, cobbled crossovers, cobbled road drainage channels in places, some cobbled drives, tiled street-markers, metal street-markers, some original fence and gate posts, low boundary walls and decorative stone gate posts, hedged boundaries, mature trees;

Elsworthy Terrace	Granite kerbs, cast iron bollards, some York stone paving, mature trees, Edward VII pillar box;
Elsworthy Rise	Granite kerbs, some cobbled road drainage channels and drive markers;
Wadham Gardens	Granite kerbs, tiled street-markers, metal street-markers, mature trees, some original fence and gate posts, hedged boundaries, original brick gate posts and iron railings, wooden benches, Edward VII pillar box;
Harley Road	Granite kerbs, some York stone paving, some cobbled drive, some cobbled drives, low boundary walls, some original stone gate posts, wooden bench, partial tiled road marker, mature trees;
Lower Merton Rise	Granite kerbs, cast iron bollards, cobbled guttering, cobble-set mini roundabout, cobbles under tarmac, York stone paving, and semi-mature trees.

*Detractors*

Avenue Road	Nos 22 & 24-26 (even), No 52.
Rudgwick Terrace	Nos 1-5 (consec)
Primrose Hill Road	N/A.
King Henry's Road	N/A.
Elsworthy Road	Garages between No 15 Elsworthy Terrace and No 25 Elsworthy Road, No 43.
Elsworthy Terrace	N/A
Elsworthy Rise	N/A
Wadham Gardens	N/A
Harley Road	Nos 3, 3a, 5.
Lower Merton Rise	N/A

**Appendix 8: Built Heritage Audit Plan**

**Appendix 9: Listed and Historic Buildings**



