

CONSERVATION AREA STUDY

Barnes Common no.32 & Mill Hill no.14



Conservation areas were introduced in the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as areas of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and the felling or lopping of trees above a certain size.

The objective of a conservation area study is to provide a clearly defined analysis of the character and appearance of the conservation area, defensible on appeal, to assist in development control decisions. Further, to address issues, which have been identified in the character appraisal process, for the enhancement or preservation of the conservation area.

It is hoped that the process of the study and the finished document will stimulate public participation.

BARNES COMMON

Location, Landscape and Population

Barnes Common is situated in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, to the south east of Barnes, and was formerly within Surrey. Its boundaries are well defined by Vine Road to the west, Beverley Brook to the north west, Ranelagh Avenue and the Rythe (a raised bank separating the Common from Barn Elms) to the north, an historic ditch separating it from adjoining Putney Lower Common to the east and to the south by the Upper Richmond Road. It was originally designated a conservation area in 1982 and extended in 1988 to include Beverley Road.

Barnes Common comprises a series of open spaces separated by roads and railway lines. It is designated Metropolitan Open Land, 48 hectares of which were designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 1992, following denotification of the site as an SSSI in 1989. It was drained in the second half of the C19, before which it was virtually marshland. The Common extends to more than 100 acres and forms part of a green chain of related open spaces, a swathe of land which runs south from the former Barn Elms Reservoirs (now the Wetland Centre) to Richmond Park and beyond. The population of the Common is concentrated around the margins, and many residents work outside the area, predominantly in London. The surrounding streets are, for



Ordnance Survey map published 1913 extract showing Barnes Common with the Station.

the most part, well tended, quiet areas with many trees and flowering shrubs. It appears from the very few recent alterations to the buildings that most of the residents are aware of the architectural qualities of their homes and are caring for them.

The land is almost uniformly flat, the highest point being Mill Hill, which is only 27 feet above flood level. The landscape comprises a mixture of acid grassland, scrub, woodland, wetland and 'wasteland' vegetation. Over much of the Common the soil is thin and sandy with outcrops of gravel and pebbles. The areas of acid grassland, which are rare in London, are of special interest, being rich in unusual flora and fauna, including the burnet rose and the speckled wood butterfly. The variety of habitats from grassland through scrub to birch and finally oak woodland, give Barnes Common great potential as an educational site, although it is not used much by schools at present. This diversity is maintained by careful management to prevent the whole site developing into woodland. The focus of the management, therefore, is to keep the grassland areas open by cutting wherever possible, and removing encroaching scrub on a regular basis.

Origins of Development

The area has been used as common land for hundreds of years, both for strip farming and grazing, as part of the Manor of Barnes under the ownership of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral. In 1894 it came under the custodianship of the new Urban District Council of Barnes, while still being owned by the Church. This scheme empowered the Council to plant trees and shrubs and generally improve the Common for exercise or recreation purposes, but on condition that no alteration should be made to its natural features and that unhindered public access should be ensured. The creation of the football and cricket pitches, the bowling greens and tennis courts were thus permitted, but no permanent fencing was allowed anywhere on the Common apart from around the Recreation Ground, for safety reasons. In 1965 Barnes was incorporated within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, who now manage the site on behalf of the Church Commissioners.

The earliest recorded building on the Common was the mill, first mentioned in the mid C15. The Gate House and boundary ditch were introduced in the C16, to keep livestock within the parish after a dispute between Putney and Barnes



Railway Station Barnes Common 1857

commoners. After the gate was removed, the cottage became the residence of a Common keeper. The small, single storey, red brick building now known (erroneously) as the Toll House is a listed building. As early as 1796 the Vestry, concerned for the protection of the common ground, gave responsibility to the Common Keeper for ensuring that commoners constrained their hogs from ranging freely, paid 3 pence a head for every horse or cow turned out to graze, and that no-one exceeded his limit of ten free loads of sand a year. Apparently pigs, cows and geese roamed the Common at will, "and in the corner, near the cross-roads, there used to be a pound, which was always full on Sunday morning of animals waiting to be claimed." The Common was a favourite promenade location for the young Queen Mary and her mother, the Duchess of Teck, who were driven over from Kensington Palace.

Barnes Workhouse was built in 1778 on the extreme south eastern edge of the parish on a triangular piece of land

enclosed from the Common between Queen's Ride and the Upper Richmond Road. The 30 inmates were moved on in 1836 to the Richmond Union Workhouse in Grove Road. The site became a market garden and private house, then the Manor House Hotel, and the site is now occupied by houses and flats. The money raised by the original sale was invested and is still managed by the Barnes Workhouse Trust, which funds a variety of causes strictly within Barnes parish.

'The Cedars', a fine colour washed detached villa, is the only Georgian building within the conservation area. This was built in 1780 on land enclosed from the Common and is a listed building. The C18 carved Portland stone milestone, which was previously situated on Rocks Lane, now on the Upper Richmond Road and is also listed. It states that Hyde Park Corner is less than 6 miles distant, which is difficult to imagine from the rural setting of the Common. (An analysis of the buildings on Mill Hill is presented in a separate study to be found later in this document.)



General view of Barnes Common

Until 1827 most goods traffic from Barnes to London was by boat. At this time the Common, known as the Waste, was virtually uninhabited, remote and periodically the haunt of highwaymen. This changed with the building in 1827 of the first Hammersmith Bridge, which, with Bridge Road (now known as Castelnau) and Rocks Lane (then a cart track), provided a direct link with London. The arrival of the railway in 1846 meant the end of Barnes as a tranquil village. Once Barnes Station was built on the Common, there was a flurry of development. The few houses on the former Mill enclosure were sold into private ownership at auction in 1858, and all houses within walking distance were in great demand. The new residential developments around the outskirts flourished between 1875 and 1914. The railway was, and remains, one of the busiest sections in the national network and was among the earliest to be electrified in 1915-16.

The orchards, nursery and market gardens of Barnes were famous for their exotic produce for over 300 years until the pressure for building land offered a greater return. Gipsy encampments were common in the C19, probably because of the casual labour offered by the market gardens. The Common was a famous rallying point for cycling clubs, microscopical societies and natural history groups in the late C19.

A favourite subject for postcards was the quaint wooden bridge, with its latticework of rough branches, which once took the footpath from opposite no. 10 Ranelagh Road across the Rythe to the Common and Mill Hill, but no trace of it remains.



Common Keeper's House formerly The Gate House

In 1940 a number of high explosive bombs landed in the area, including one, which killed one and injured seven at Barnes Station. With the encouragement to 'dig for victory', large areas of the Common were used as allotments during the two World Wars. The Common was dotted with air raid shelters and the iron chains used to define pathways were removed to be melted down and reused in the war effort.

A number of trees were planted on the Common in 1969 and some of these have now reached maturity. In September 1976, over a third of the grassland was razed to the ground in fires, and local residents had to be evacuated from their homes.



Postcard of Rustic Bridge c.1910 by kind permission of Barnes & Mortlake History Society

Since then little development has taken place, the only new buildings being individual houses and small blocks of flats to the south east of the conservation area. It remains an area predominantly of residential and recreational use. Despite being dissected by roads and the railway, the Common has retained its overall character as an ancient managed open space, and it is remarkable that, despite strong pressures to build in the vicinity, so much of the Common has survived unspoiled.

Archaeological Significance

There is evidence of long-term occupation of the Common, including flint tools from the Mesolithic period found near Mill Hill. A lowland hillfort dating from the Middle Iron Age stood at Barn Elms, and several Roman discoveries have been made. A burial urn containing cremated human bone, either Late Iron Age or Romano-British, was found immediately below the modern surface on Mill Hill.

Two man-made features remain. Firstly, the Rythe on the northern edge of the common, recorded in 1433 as le ryth, meaning little stream, which was filled in around 1904, and built up in 1958 to contain floods. It is rich in foliage, crowded with trees and wild flowers, and presents a picturesque boundary to the north. Secondly, the mediaeval ditch across the Common, which marks the Parish boundaries and keep grazing animals from straying. This is still discernible, although much overgrown, and delineates the eastern boundary.

Architectural and Historic Qualities, and their Contribution to Special Interest

The buildings facing onto Barnes Common are grouped in small clusters of distinctive style and character. With few



Barnes Workhouse 1885

exceptions, the buildings date from the period between 1850 and 1914. For the most part they are well maintained with few modern alterations. The areas will be considered in a clockwise direction starting in the south west corner.

Vine Road area

Vine Road has some of the earliest and most attractive development in the area, with a variety of substantial two-storey Victorian villas and a few red-brick Edwardian detached houses set in mature grounds. Most have been designated Buildings of Townscape Merit. They stand behind walls, fences or hedges which provide a strong boundary line to the wide grass verge beside the road, and, unusually, some of the original gateposts, railings and gravel driveways survive. These roadside verges (which are technically part of the Common), are in part protected by wooden posts. They are well tended and regularly mown, sometimes voluntarily by local residents, and, together with the narrowness of the road and the level crossings, give the feel of a country lane. There are some open views into the Common and a fine mixed row of mature trees borders the cricket pitch.

It is proposed that Woodlands Road, leading off Vine Road, should be incorporated into the conservation area, and the three-storey semi-detached villas designated Buildings of Townscape Merit. Woodlands Road is named after the large house (no longer standing) in the grounds of which it was developed. It is a wide and tree-lined avenue, with mature front gardens and low walls, which incorporate some original gateposts. Most properties have garages or hardstandings and some bicolour tiled entrance paths remain. The houses are of ornate buff brickwork with red brick details. Some have been colour washed in white or cream and no. 19 has its moulded stone foliage picked out in colour. The slate roofs are brick fronted with slate-cheeked dormers.



Vine Road south of the railway

The Vine Road Recreation Ground is also to be incorporated within the conservation area. It is set on a wedge of land between the two branches of the railway line and relates strongly to the Common, of which it was once a part. It is bounded to the west by the dense foliage which follows the meandering course of the Beverley Brook, and offers a contrast to the wild nature of the wasteland with its mown playing fields and semi-formal planting. The buildings present a variety of architectural forms from cottage ormees sheds, which are used for storage, to a rendered bowling pavilion. The buildings are used on a regular basis by a nursery school. The south of the site, on the rising bank to the railway, is planted with some fine trees. The absence of any sign of vandalism may be due to the fact that a resident groundkeeper lives in the cottage fronting on to Vine Road. Generally, the site is green and tidy with the almost constant presence of young children during daylight hours. By bringing it within the conservation area any future development or alteration to the Recreation Ground can be monitored.

Two buildings on Vine Road are presently in an unsightly condition and detract from the gentle rural atmosphere of the area. The old electric powerhouse of the Railway Company is an imposing dark red brick building of classical design. It appears that its present use is for warehousing. The two-storey signal box is a modern, flat roof structure, with stock brick to the lower floor and cladding in plastic panels to the upper level. It was once unsuccessfully considered for listing by English Heritage. It appears to be unused at present, with boarded-up broken windows. The whole is contained within unattractive chain link fencing with concrete posts and would benefit from some attention. This site is ugly when viewed from the railway and it may be that some low planting of shrubs would help to screen this. This land belongs to Railtrack so any improvement would be effected by them.

Scarth Road contains an impressive row of detached three-storey Victorian houses of various styles, all of which are Buildings of Townscape Merit. They are distinctive in their



Woodlands Road



Beverley Road

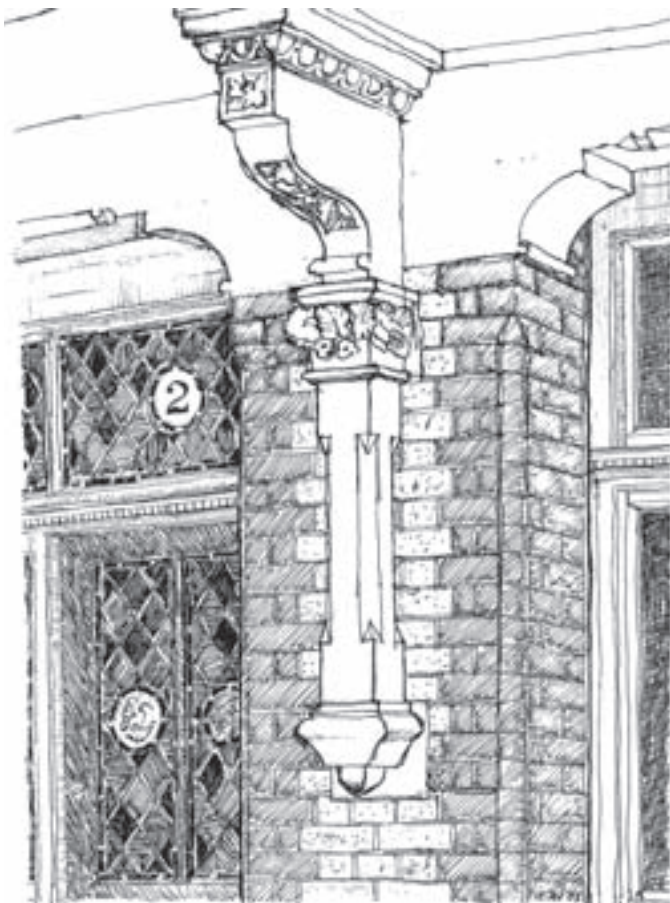
variety of roof forms, which include half-hipped, gables and plain eaves with dormers. All are steeply pitched, with some plain and some fishscale slates, and appear to have some French influence. The houses are mainly stock brick with red and blue brick and painted render details. The wide variety of ornament and the survival of many original features, including almost all of the original windows, make them an important and unusual group. They do not appear to be under threat of any inappropriate alterations and are well looked after. They are separated from each other by brick walls and are fronted by walls and railings. The unmade gravel road with wooden gated entrances which serves the properties is presently in rough condition but this adds to the rural feel of the area. The houses are separated from the main road and Common by a deep grass verge in a natural state. It is full of small trees and wild flowers, and edged by post and chain. The views into the Common are, at this point, screened by mature trees. Key trees in the front gardens include a lime on the corner at no.7.

Around the corner on Station Road stands a row of smart, three-storey early Victorian semi-detached town houses of a very different character. They are of grand appearance, of stock brick with white painted stucco details, shallow

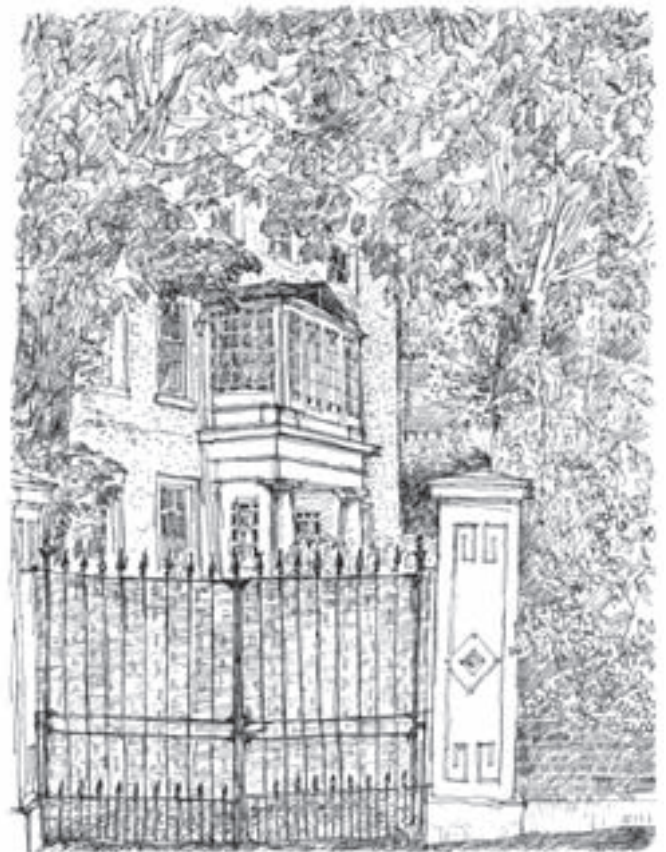
slate roofs and imposing classical porches. All have gravel driveways and garages, and, unusually, the original walls and gate piers to the street. Being near the station, the road is effectively narrowed at this point to a single lane by the parked cars of commuters.

Beverley Road Area

Beverley Road, on the other hand, is wide, with much mature foliage in deep front gardens. A few front walls have been opened up to permit gravelled or brick-paved parking spaces, but overall the impression is of pretty, leafy gardens, well planted and well tended. The area is tranquil and the view down is terminated by a row of 3 poplar trees. The Victorian houses to the south side of the road are Buildings of Townscape Merit and it is proposed to similarly designate those to the north for their scale and quality. For the most part, low front walls of brick or stucco define boundaries but fences separate individual properties. Some original gate piers remain, but all the original gates have gone. Some attractive polychrome tile entrance pathways are still intact and almost all windows appear to be original. All the houses are semi-detached, of two and three storeys, with various combinations of red and stock bricks, stone and stucco details and some grand porches supported by columns. Some of the stonework is very elaborate and of mainly foliate design. The houses to the north side of the road have



2 Cedars Road



The Cedars

large dormers in mansard roofs, and 1, 2 and 4-7 have some fishscale slate decoration. Many rooflights have been added but do not detract from the character of the houses. 19 is modern but has two key trees in the front garden, which contribute greatly to the view down Beverley Gardens.

The Edwardian houses in Brook and Beverley Gardens are of more modest scale. Those in Brook Gardens are terraced with decorative stained glass windows, while in Beverley Gardens they are semi-detached in pairs of 2 alternating styles. The front gardens are small and colourful and some polychrome entrance paths survive. The buildings are of red brick with render details to the front, cheaper stock bricks to side and rear, and some have been colour washed. Almost all the windows and slate roofs are original, with only one or two added rooflights. The whole of this area appears quiet and well tended, with remarkably little modern alteration.

Cedars Road

Cedars Road is wide with trees closing the view at either end; it is a tranquil enclave just off Barnes Green, to which it is linked by a footbridge. At the entrance to the road, Georgian 'The Cedars' is set back in its own grounds behind tall fences. The small group of houses, most of which are terraced, were built in its grounds in 1896-1901. Some are



4 Ranelagh Avenue

Buildings of Townscape Merit. They are in a variety of styles and scale, in red or stock brick with various brick and painted render dressings. Most have small strips of front garden, and some open directly on to the street. The roofs are of slate with decorative brickwork chimneys and ornate timber balconies at first floor of nos.2-8 (evens). With a couple of exceptions, most of the windows are original and in good condition.

Ranelagh Avenue Area

The part of Ranelagh Avenue, which sits in the conservation area, faces the tall trees bordering the Common. The smart, three-storey, red brick townhouses form a distinctive group of Edwardian buildings, and most are Buildings of Townscape Merit. They are set within well defined front gardens bounded by low walls and mature hedges, giving the effect of elegant formality in juxtaposition to the informal nature of the Common. The houses in the quiet, residential side streets Bellevue Road, Rectory Road and Elm Grove Road are more modest in design and relate strongly to the Common. They are set in tree-lined avenues and have, for the most part, well



Bellvue Road

planted and well tended mature front gardens. The terraced houses are of various degrees of ornateness, and offer a coherent group, which have been little altered over the years. The bridges which cross Beverley Brook are attractive features and form the northern boundary of the conservation area.



Marc Bolan shrine

Queen's Ride Area

A row of six substantial detached houses, set back from the road behind high fences, walls and hedges, fronts onto Queen's Ride. Only two of the original Victorian villas remain but all have sweeping driveways and mature gardens. Further along the road, across the railway bridge, a row of later houses fronts the Common behind a much older, tall wall of stock brick. This wall is full of interesting arches, piers and capstones, and may well be part of the wall of the old workhouse, or, if not, of the Manor House which took its place. An old cattle trough situated alongside the wall is a reminder of the previous function of the Common, although, on this busy approach to the road junction, it is difficult to imagine it in use. It is to be designated a Building of Townscape Merit.

Around the corner, St Mary's Grove is a wide avenue lined with mature lime trees. The gravelled road is in fair condition (with a few potholes), and has a timber gated entrance, as in Scarth Road, which adds to the quiet residential character of the area. The Victorian houses, which are all to Buildings of Townscape Merit. They are a coherent group of similar large detached villas of three-



storeys (including attics), built of stock brick with red brick string courses. The roofs are tiled, with some dormers and the decorative chimneys are of red and stock bricks. An unusual feature is the gauged brickwork with keystones above ground floor windows. All the houses have their own in/out driveways, some of gravel and some of asphalt, and a few harbour unattractive carports. Some original gatepiers remain but all railings have gone.

To the south, nos. 8 - 11 Gipsy Lane are of similar scale and character, set off their own gravel road. It is proposed they should also be brought into the conservation area and designated Buildings of Townscape Merit. This is a very special corner of the Common, set behind tall trees, with an isolated and private atmosphere. A shrine on the bank between the buildings and the road marks the spot at which Marc Bolan of T-Rex was killed when his car crashed into a tree in 1977. The place is well tended and regularly visited. Colourful mementoes of photographs and ribbons hang from the branches of the mature trees which offer shade to the area and give a sense of enclosure and privacy. Still further south, 442 - 458 (evens) Upper Richmond Road are Buildings of Townscape Merit, and stand on the site of the old workhouse, i.e. on the original common, and it is, therefore, proposed that they should also be incorporated into the conservation area. Some are in multiple use, and others incorporate a combination of residential and office uses. All have parking areas to the front. The proximity of these houses to the trunk road puts them under pressure from noise, dirt and litter. With a few exceptions, the gardens are either completely paved over, neglected or poorly managed. There are some



Rocks Lane toilets

trees and shrubs, which link them visually to the Common, but the overall impression, compared to the gardens in other residential groups, is that they are not well cared for and could be more attractively and more abundantly planted. They are at the gateway to the borough and could be a positive feature. The houses themselves, however, do not appear to have been much damaged by insensitive or inappropriate alterations.

Rocks Lane Area

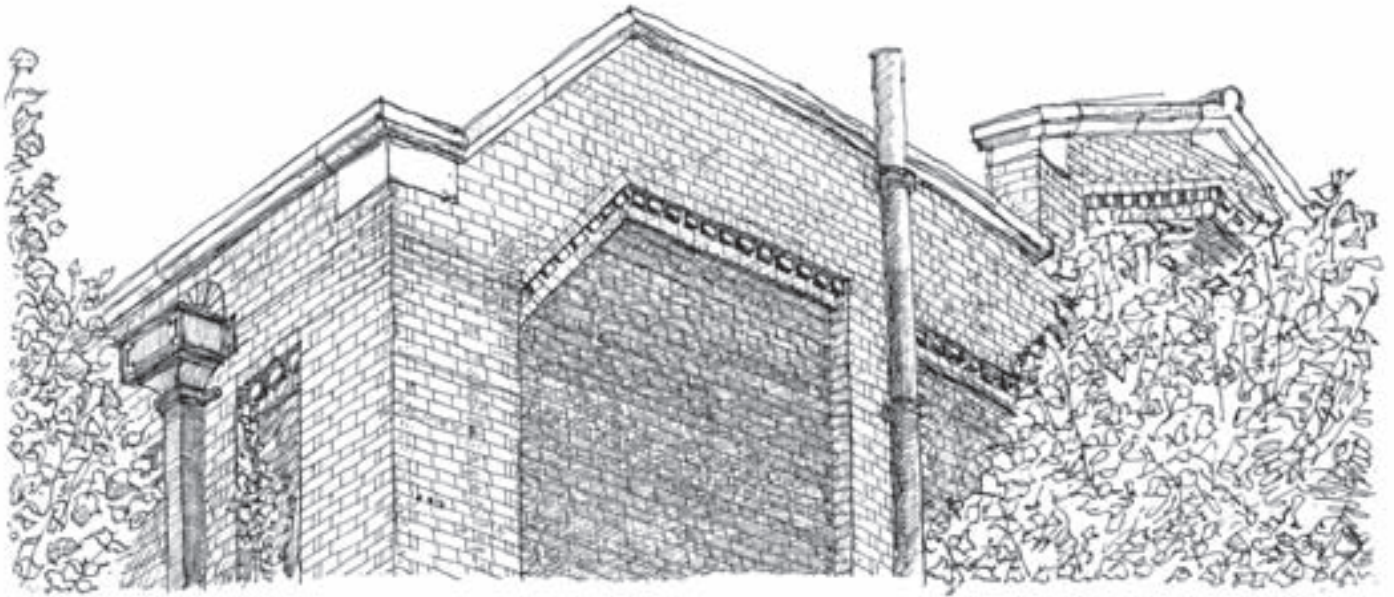
The old public conveniences on Rocks Lane are housed within a single storey red brick building with shallow pitched roof and decorative timber framing. Although unused at present, it is charming little building in the Arts and Crafts style. It is a local landmark, and, as such, proposed for Buildings of Townscape Merit designation.

Other Areas of Special Character

Barnes Common station house stands to the south of the Common. Its setting is remarkably rural, surrounded by woodland and apparently little changed since it was built in 1846. It was singled out for special mention by Pevsner in his 'Buildings of England' series. The walls of the Tudor Gothic building, which is one of the earliest station buildings remaining in Greater London, are stone quined and decorated in a zig-zag diaper pattern with blue bricks. The windows are mullioned, and very tall chimneys with hexagonal tops rise above the dormers and steep slate roof. It is believed to have been designed by Sir William Tite (1798-1873), who was also responsible for a number of other stations, including that at Windsor. Attractive and meandering footpaths lead out from here to all the groups of settlement around the common. Some have tarmac surfaces in poor condition, but others are gravel-topped or even earthen trackways. The large goods yard



Disused graveyard



Power house

is surrounded by tall trees and shrubbery which partially screen it from view, but is currently unused and effectively a stretch of untidy wasteland. As long as the site is unused it will be subject to pressure, and already two major battles with developers proposing residential use on the site have been won, thanks to the power of objection from local residents and the desire of the Council to see it reinstated as commonland.

The Common has been able to accommodate a limited number of other uses such as sports grounds and Barnes Cemetery, which have remained visually subordinate to the Common because they have been contained in small pockets. Barnes Cemetery, which is two acres in extent, has been consumed by natural vegetation and now forms its own area of nature interest. It has a number of late C19 and early C20 memorials, which, together with the heavy undergrowth and mature trees, create an evocative atmosphere of decay and seclusion. Most of the angels have been beheaded but there is little evidence of graffiti in the cemetery. The cemetery was first opened in 1854 and closed exactly 100 years later. Several celebrated interments took place here, including that of Sir Francis Palgrave (1824-1897), compiler of *The Golden Treasury of English Verse*. As a result of vandalism, the associated chapel, lodge, wall and railings were all demolished after the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames took responsibility for the cemetery in 1966.



The most remote part of the Common is that between the eastern end of Queen's Ride and Mill Hill Road to the east of Common Road. Well-trodden earthen tracks meander in all directions and it is here that a flavour of the Waste before the arrival of the road and the railway can be felt most strongly.

PROBLEMS & PRESSURES

The Common land

- The problem with the greatest visual impact on the Common is the proliferation of graffiti. The recycling area off Rocks Lane is much used and containers frequently emptied but graffiti and litter in this area of the Common is abundant, probably because it is remote and not overlooked. The information boards on the Common, together with almost everything else that does not move, including the trees, are covered in graffiti
- The fragile nature of the acid grassland means that it is easily damaged by enrichment of the soil by the deposit of garden or household waste and dog litter. The rare fauna can also be threatened by the introduction of garden plants; leftover garden plants should not be planted on the Common. It should be noted that species monitoring is carried out on a voluntary basis by the Friends of Barnes Common
- Many of the paths across the Common are in poor repair as the old metalled surfaces break up
- Trees threaten to overwhelm the areas of acid grassland, so scrub should be removed on a regular basis in order that potentially large trees do not get chance to establish a foothold in such areas
- The cemetery, while an atmospheric and romantic place, is becoming increasingly overgrown. In places the brambles are so dense it is not possible to navigate the paths with a wheelchair or a pushchair

- The Rocks Lane Recycling Area is unattractive and rubbish is strewn over much of the vicinity

Railway

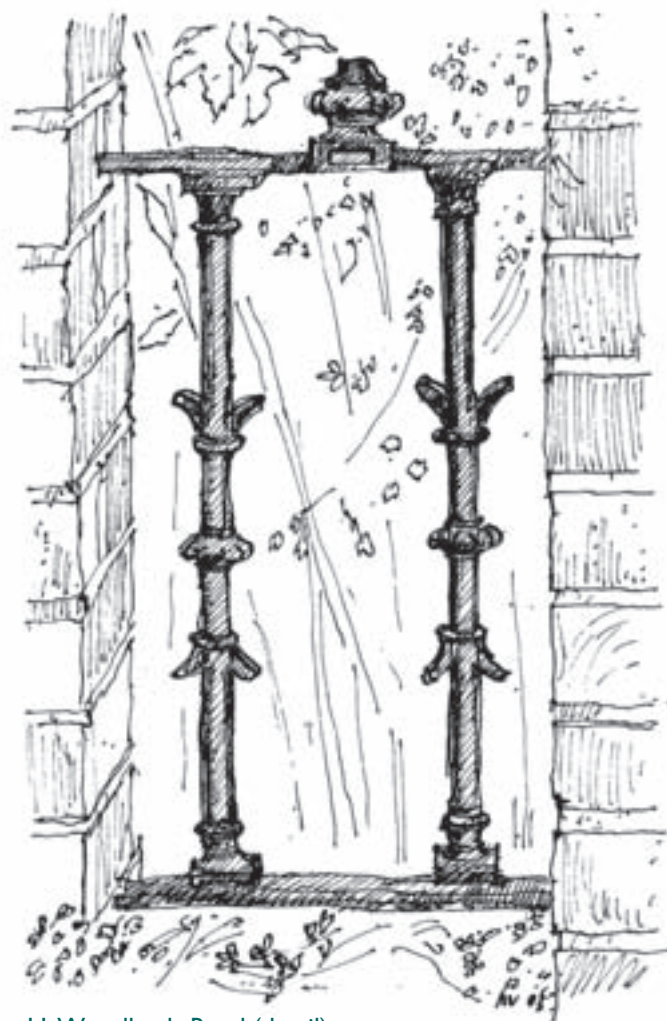
- The railway bridges are lined with tall sheets of steel bolted on to the framework – these are ugly and an invitation to graffiti. The view up Gipsy Lane is lined with greenery but terminated by these dominant expanses of steel. The fences, which line the approaches to the bridges, are unattractive chain link and some of the concrete posts are broken
- The triangle of land between the railways in Vine Road which houses the old signal box and powerhouse is very untidy and appears derelict from both road and railway
- Wheelchair access to the centre platform at the station is difficult

The Roads

- The bus stop on Rocks Lane outside the station is in a dangerous position; it is well used and often crowded. Apart from the obvious danger of persons falling into the busy road, the traffic congestion caused by stationary buses is also a factor. Visibility from the bus stop is very poor for persons wishing to cross the road
- Away from the traffic lights at junctions, it can be difficult for pedestrians to cross the road safely. This is particularly true at the Station exit across Rocks Lane, from Mill Hill and Cedars Road across Mill Hill Road, and across Queen's Ride from Gipsy Lane, as in all cases visibility is poor
- Traffic congestion can be a problem particularly at the Rocks Lane/Mill Hill Road junction as there is no left/right hand turn lane
- On street parking relating to the railway is a problem in Station Road. At the station end, the parking is mainly to the west side, but some of the protective posts, which had been placed to stop verge parking, have been removed and the cars are once again churning up the ground
- Visibility is poor for vehicles pulling out at the junction between Ranelagh Avenue and Rocks Lane

The Residential Areas

- The pedestrian bridge crossing Beverley Brook at the end of Woodlands Road linking it with Rosslyn Avenue is in poor repair. The low brick pier is broken, the chain link fence is unattractive, and graffiti covers the walls



11 Woodlands Road (detail)

Generally

- The abundance of such a variety of road signage and street furniture, including bins, benches and street lights, over a long period of time and by different agents, has meant that there is no uniform appearance. It looks untidy and incoherent
- Graffiti is a problem throughout the conservation area
- Flytipping is an increasing problem on remote parts of the Common

PROPOSALS

The following proposals include suggested environmental improvements, some of which fall outside the Council's control. It should also be noted that current financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement. However the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the environment, in co-operation with local groups and businesses.

Various revisions to the conservation area boundary are considered appropriate, to include the following: -

- 1-11 (odds) and 2-16 (evens) Bellevue Road
- 8-11 Gipsy Lane

19-23 Queen's Ride
1-13 (odds) and 2-18 (evens) Rectory Road
442-458 Upper Richmond Road
The Vine Road Recreation Ground
7-21 and 25-31 (odds) and 2-22 (evens) Woodlands Road

The following are to be designated BTMs, due to their aesthetic value and contribution to the area:-

1-11 (odds) and 2-16 (evens) Bellevue Road
1-14 Beverley Road
2 and 4 Cedars Road
93-111 (odds) and 100-122 (evens) Elm Grove Road
8-11 Gipsy Lane
6, 21 and 22 Queen's Ride
Cattle drinking trough outside 21 Queen's Ride
1, 2, 3 and 4 Ranelagh Avenue
11-21 and 25-31 (odds) and 2-22 (evens) Woodlands Road
Public Conveniences on Rocks Lane

The following buildings are to lose their Buildings of Townscape Merit status, as they have been replaced by new buildings:

19 Beverley Road
The Pavilion (opposite junction with Ranelagh Road and serving bowling green)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Commonland

- 1 The prompt removal of dog litter and refuse (including the illegal tipping of garden rubbish) should be encouraged by informing common users of the dangers of enriching the soil, and also possible damage to flora and fauna by the introduction of garden plants or seeds

Council/FoBC

- 2 Maintenance of the paths across the Common, including the resurfacing of old metalled tracks with gravel finish, taking care that no lime or other alkaline material should be introduced, as this may damage the acid grassland

Council

- 3 The potential threat of ecological damage caused by encroachment of the scrub is kept under control thanks to efforts by contractors and numerous volunteers including members of the Friends of Barnes Common and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. Maintenance of the Common is grant aided by the Forestry Commission under their Small Woodland Management Scheme and MAFF under the Countryside Stewardship

Council/Voluntary Groups

- 4 Maintenance of the paths in the cemetery by the depositing of new gravel and cutting back the brambles and ivy which threaten to engulf them, so that access may be encouraged and use ensured

Council

- 5 Tidying up of the parking area at the recycling centre near the tennis courts by surfacing the raised area with a hard surface topped by gravel and imposition of screens to contain the rubbish which gets blown about the Common

Council

The Railway

- 6 Replacement of the ugly bridge panels and chainlink fences, with another form of fencing which would provide a through view and deter graffiti. Alternatively,



the bridge panels should be repainted in a mid-toned paint, which is less attractive to the 'artists' than very light or very dark surfaces. This should be done as and when the level of graffiti demands

Network Rail

- 7 The further greening of the Goods Yard, as it is the entry point into the Borough from the railway; the sight of the Common makes a dramatic contrast from the built-up residential approach through Putney and it would be beneficial to introduce trees or other greenery at this point. Proposals have been made that an area of the Yard be set aside for car parking in a manner which makes it appear to belong to the Common, in order to help free up the neighbouring residential roads, and the remaining portion be returned to the Common

Council/Private

- 8 The reuse of the old signal box and power house on Vine Road. This site, although unattractive and apparently abandoned from the road, is most unsightly from the railway. Piles of rubble and heaps of stored materials make this island between the railway lines an eyesore. If the site is required to continue in its present use, some low-growing shrubbery may help to obscure it. The boarded-up broken windows of the signal box are particularly unsightly and should be repaired

Network Rail

- 9 Removal of ugly Network Rail temporary buildings when no longer required as they are an invitation to vandals and graffiti artists

Network Rail

- 10 Repair of the Amco barrier at the Gipsy Lane/Queen's Ride junction. Clearly this is the victim of numerous collisions with vehicles as it stands just over the brow of the railway bridge on a corner. Visibility is very poor at this point

Network Rail

- 11 Provision of safe cycle storage at, and dedicated cycle tracks to, the Station

Council/Network Rail

- 12 Improved access to centre platform for disabled/ wheelchair users

Network Rail

The Roads

- 13 The bus stop on the west side of Rocks Lane beside Barnes Station should be resited for safety reasons and to ease road congestion. In the meantime, the introduction of a narrow pavement on the west side of the road on the bridge would assist passengers to leave the buses and enter the station in safety. The bus stop at the east side needs a recessed area offering shelter from the weather and traffic

Network Rail/London Buses/Transport for London

- 14 Improvement of interchange facilities including pedestrian and cycle access, cycle parking and bus information systems at the station. Access for people with disabilities should be provided or improved

Network Rail

- 15 An additional cycle route is being considered via Vine Road, Cedars Road across Beverley Brook and into Laurel Road

Council

- 16 Improvements at the junction of Mill Hill Road and Rocks Lane to reduce congestion are being considered

Council

- 17 Announcing the approach. As Barnes Common is the entry point into the Borough from Putney, there is an opportunity to advertise the fact by introduction of signboard

Council



- 18 Prevention of parking along the east side of Station Road (station end), which should be further discouraged by the introduction of more permanent posts

Network Rail

- 19 Street tree planting outside Roehampton Court on Queen's Ride to visually link it with the Common

Council

The Residential Areas

- 20 Retention of traditional paving slabs in residential streets. These form an important part of the character of the area

Council

- 21 Repair and improvement of the pedestrian bridge crossing Beverley Brook in Woodlands Road by rebuilding the wall and replacing the chainlink fencing with railings or other suitable material

Council

- 22 Ensuring that original windows, chimneys and rooflines are respected and that any alterations are made sensitively and sympathetically. This is particularly important in the roads which lead off Ranelagh Avenue as houses here are under pressure for extensions and loft conversions. Several of the front boundaries have been changed in Beverley Road to allow off- street parking and future proposals of a similar nature should ensure that the project is handled sensitively and that sufficient land left for planting of trees and shrubs, which are a strong feature in the front gardens of this area

Council

- 23 More regular pruning of trees on public land

Council

Generally

- 24 The Council produces a leaflet about graffiti, suggesting simple measures which may reduce the likelihood of attack and what action to take should one be affected. Richmond Council's graffiti squad will remove graffiti from public and private property if requested. This can be accessed via the Graffiti Hotline: 020 8891 7053. The utility companies have their own graffiti removal services, and Railtrack have a priority system for removal of any particularly offensive script

Council/Utilities/Network Rail

- 25 Co-ordination of the colours of the abundant street furniture in the Conservation Area suggested colour dark green BS 14C40. This would enhance the conservation area by 'tidying-up' the visual appearance of the signs, bins and benches.

Council

- 26 Replacement of concrete lamp columns in the conservation area with dark green steel columns.

Council

- 27 Tidying up the proliferation of road signage by car park off Rocks Lane and at the Queen's Ride junction with Upper Richmond Road by standardisation of posts an elimination of any regarded as unnecessary

Council/Transport for London

- 28 A 'hot line' for speedy notification of fly tipping to the Council

Council

- 29 The encouragement of an occasional police presence at the station

Metropolitan Police



MILL HILL

The Mill Hill Conservation Area was designated as a small group of houses of architectural and historic interest on 14.1.69.

Location and Population

Mill Hill Conservation Area is an isolated settlement of ten houses on Barnes Common, adjacent to Mill Hill Road, which connects Barnes with Putney. Pevsner refers to it as an island of houses. The mill was a popular subject for romantic paintings during the C18 and C19.

It is a unique island site containing a variety of building types set on mainly irregular plots within a clearly defined boundary. The site is greened by garden foliage and many mature trees, some of which carry Tree Preservation Orders.

Origins of Development

Mill Hill was once known as Roundhill, which has been taken to mean an ancient earthwork or barrow. The historic finds in the area reinforce this opinion. The earliest reference to a mill at Barnes is in the Court Rolls for 1443, which record a Milhyll. The land was enclosed in 1763, when Thomas Yend, miller, was given an extra piece of Waste, 260 x 267 feet in all. The area covered has not increased since this date. After the disastrous hurricane of 1758 the post mill of 1740 was overturned and a smock mill was built in its place. The tower mill which succeeded this was finally demolished in 1838. The mill was, supposedly, surrounded by a moat at one time. The existing houses largely date from the C19 except for Mill Hill Lodge, which contains part of the miller's cottage from the C18. It has been recorded that Oliver Cromwell once hid in Mill Hill House. The C19 auction

particulars of Trocks Mill Cottage refer to it as 'an ideal town and country hideaway'.

Architectural and Historic Qualities, their Landscape Setting and their Contribution to Special Interest

The C18 site of the mill enclosure has left its legacy in its square boundary, part of which is still walled. Situated at the highest point of Barnes it acts as a focus for views along Mill Hill Road and across Barnes Common, although views both in and out are restricted by mature trees. The character has remained rural with the boundary treatment on the Common side being thick hedge, close board fencing, or a combination of the two. The road boundary is strongly defined by a weathered brick wall to Mill Hill Lodge. Mature trees are an integral part of the landscape, providing enclosure and a backdrop to the buildings, which gives a sense of containment within the natural landscape of Barnes Common. The access road, which is of asphalt in poor condition, acts as an informal border to the conservation area. It was a popular subject for the many paintings and drawings, which show the various mills (the post mill replaced by a smock mill) in romantic settings.

The main historic interest is on the western side of the area, on the site of the old mill. Most of these buildings are listed. They form a group of charming dwellings united by their scale and restricted range of materials and finishes. The Mill Hill, an austere plain rendered gothic villa, with characteristic steep slate roof, has a three storey octagonal tower with leaded dome. Mulberry Lodge has a Dutch gable and Mill Hill Lodge, which incorporates the C18 miller's cottage, is finished in weatherboarding. The use of lancet windows, drip moulds, other decorative embellishments and steep slate roofs pulls the group together and creates a distinctive roofline enhanced by the presence of the original chimneys.



Mill Hill from the east



Post Mill on Barnes Common Engraving circa 1750

The buildings to the eastern side are later, from the late C19 and early C20 with the exception of Trock's Mill Cottage, which is a low built grange finished in weatherboard. Brooklyn Lodge and Bracken View date from 1899. They are larger three-storey detached red brick houses with decorative painted timber frame gables and elaborate timber porches. The tile roofs have cresting to the ridge. The single modern building is Princes View, which has shutters and a copper-topped full width verandah. The Coach House is mainly three-storey Victorian stock brick with an extension linking it to an older two-storey colour washed and tile hung building. Some old boundary wall of the mill enclosure survives at this point.

There are a number of key trees within gardens. The view into the Common is framed by small oak and silver birch trees. Mill Hill is an island of fascinating and attractive buildings, unique within the borough, and possibly because none of the buildings fronts the main road, relates totally to the Common itself. It is cut off visually from any distant views by tall trees and no other building is visible from many of the houses at Mill Hill, which must be unique in such an urban area.

PROBLEMS & PRESSURES

- The informal boundary road, which encloses the area on three sides, is narrow. When two vehicles meet one is obliged to move on to the bordering turf of the

Common to allow the other to pass; this, and the parking of residents' cars off the road, has led to unsightly muddy patches and degradation of the edge of the road surface

- Occasional appearance of graffiti on the boundary fences

PROPOSALS

The following proposals include suggested environmental improvements, some of which fall outside the Council's control. It should also be noted that current financial constraints on the Council mean that proposals for which it is responsible may take longer than is desirable to implement. However the Council will continue to encourage improvements to the environment, in co-operation with local groups and businesses.

- 30 To resurface the boundary road with a gravel finish, insert bollards to protect the boundaries where necessary, and introduce passing places, one on each of the three sides, with clear signage to indicate 'passing places only'. This will help to safeguard the edge of the surface where it meets the Common
Council
- 31 Encourage the prompt removal / obliteration of graffiti on fences
Council

32 Encourage the painting in dark colour of unsightly garage doors and seek the replacement of concrete lamp columns with painted steel

Council/Owners

33 The front garden to Brooklyn Lodge presents a gateway view into the conservation area and would benefit from some improvement. Encourage the planting of colourful shrubs / small trees

Council/Owner

GENERAL GUIDANCE

For the study to be successful everyone involved in property ownership, tenancy, and management in both the public and private sector needs to contribute to achieving the proposals. The Council will strictly apply Unitary Development Plan policies and also the detailed proposals listed in the study in order to preserve or, where possible, enhance the special interest of the conservation area.

The proposals generated by this study affect the following:

- Public areas including common land, parks, highways and paths owned by the Council or other statutory bodies



Hedley House



Trocks Mill roof

- Private houses. Some alterations may require planning permission and are therefore ultimately controlled by the Council but some alterations will be classed as 'permitted development' and will be under the control of the householder. The Council issues a number of design guides which can be helpful when alterations or extensions are being considered

NOTES TO OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS OF BUILDINGS

Under present legislation residents are entitled to carry out some minor works to their houses as 'permitted development'. This freedom places a great responsibility on owners to consider the overall quality of the street and the area when considering alterations to their property. There is plenty of opportunity to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area by paying attention to small details on houses. Without care, even apparently minor alterations, accumulating over time, can dilute the quality of the area. Examples of such changes include the installation of PVC-u windows, changes to roof materials, alterations to chimneys, rendering, painting or cladding in an otherwise brick faced street, removal of boundary walls and the use of front gardens for parking.

What constitutes 'permitted development' can be a complex matter and residents should contact the Council in the first instance if in any doubt. Importantly, local residents and local groups, in particular, can help preserve or enhance the conservation area by helping to record original features and passing on useful information about local crafts people and suppliers of local materials.

When considering undertaking works which do require planning permission, the best approach is still to contact the Environment Directorate for advice. Of particular concern are proposals for dormer windows (see below)

and extensions, both of which can have a negative impact on the street scene. In this context it should be noted that rear elevations are also often visible from the public domain. Of equal impact is the breaking down of front boundaries and the destruction or adaptation of front gardens for car parking. Design guidance leaflets are also available on these subjects from the Council and are free of charge.

DORMER WINDOWS

Dormer windows, if used inappropriately, can have a detrimental impact on a building's original form, and collectively may affect the quality of the overall group. The use of dormer windows and rooflights to the front elevations both detract from the already intricate detailing of the façades and compete with the gable roofs. Flat roofed dormers are particularly unsympathetic when adjacent to the steep gabled roofs. If dormers or rooflights are to be built, they should be positioned to the rear of the roof and designed in keeping with the building.

FORECOURT PARKING

The creation of hardstandings is in many cases achieved without consideration of its effect on the surrounding environment. With a little thought the visual impact of such parking can be reduced. London Borough of Richmond upon Thames provides a leaflet entitled 'Design Guidelines for Car Parking in Front Gardens' upon request.

LANDSCAPE AND PLANTING

Trees above a certain size in conservation areas which are not already subject to a Tree Preservation Order, are protected automatically by the requirement that six weeks' notice must be given to the Council before any proposed work is carried out. Generally this requirement applies to trees with a trunk



East side of Mill Hill

diameter greater than 75mm at a point measured 1.5m above ground level. The Council has published Planning Information and Design Guidance leaflets regarding landscape and trees which are available free of charge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The co-operation and input of all individuals and organisations who took part in the consultation process for this study is gratefully acknowledged by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

The illustrations were produced by Howard Vie.

Sources

Publications by Barnes and Mortlake History Society, publishers Hendon Publishing Company Limited

Barnes and Mortlake As it Was 1977
Vintage Barnes and Mortlake 1979
Glimpses of Old Barnes and Mortlake 1984
Barnes and Mortlake Past 1997
Highways and Byways of Barnes 1992

This study was approved by the Council's Environment Committee 10 05 2002.

The illustration on the front cover is Barnes Station



Roofscape

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has also published the following information:

Supplementary Planning Documents

Borough Tree Strategy
Design Quality
Public Space Design Guide
Small and Medium Housing Sites
Sustainable Construction Checklist

Conservation Area Studies and Appraisals

Studies and Appraisals for the other conservation areas in the Borough are available or are in preparation.

Planning Information Leaflets

- no.1 Conservation Areas
- no.2 Listed Buildings
- no.3 Historic Buildings
- no.4 Historic Buildings: Maintenance & Repair
- no.5 Trees: Legislation & Procedure
- no.6 Buildings of Townscape Merit

Design Guidance Leaflets

- no.1 Shopfronts and Shopsigns
- no.2 Car Parking in Front Gardens
- no.3/4 External Alterations to Houses & House Extensions (combined)
- no.5 Trees: Landscape Design, Planting & Care
- no.6 Small Housing Sites
- no.7 Siting of Satellite Dishes and other Communications
- no.8 Wildlife in Gardens
- no.9 Nature Conservation & Development
- no.10 Security by Design
- no.11 Shopfront Security

These leaflets and documents are available from the Environment Directorate reception on the 2nd floor of the Civic Centre.

Planning Information & Design Guidance leaflets can be viewed on the public website: www.richmond.gov.uk



Gardener's shed from allotment site



Post Mill on Barnes Common. Engraving circa 1750
(detail)

If you need this leaflet in Braille,
large print, audio tape,
or another language,
please contact us on 020 88917322
or minicom 020 88316001

Civic Centre 44 York Street
Twickenham TW1 3BZ
website: www.richmond.gov.uk

اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکلی دارید لطفاً به مین پذیرش
در آدرس قید شده در زیر مراجعه نمائید تا ترتیب ترجمه
تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود:

Farsi

إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في
العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية
هاتفية.

Arabic

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ
ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ ਜਿੱਥੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ
ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰਿਟਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Punjabi

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

Environment Directorate
2nd Floor Civic Centre
44 York Street Twickenham
Middlesex TW1 3BZ

Tel: 020 8891 1411
Fax: 020 8891 7702
Minicom: 020 8891 7349

Produced by Urban Design and Conservation

Published May 2007

