SUB AREA 7:  
SOUTHSIDE COMMON

Extent and Justification

Sub Area 7 stretches along the southern side of the Common from No.1, at the eastern end, to No.12, Rushmere, at the western end. It does not extend along the whole of Southside because of the change in character west of Clifton Road. Nos.1 to 12 Southside form a comparatively narrow strip of development whose rear gardens adjoin the later development to the south along The Grange and Murray, Lauriston and Clifton Roads. While the part of Southside within Sub-Area 7 is occupied by residential property, the part further west is fronted mainly by Kings College School, whose grounds stretch southwards as far as the Ridgway, and which forms Sub Area 10.

History

The original mansions along Southside were described as an assemblage of gentlemen’s houses, most delightfully situated with good gardens from whence is a pleasant prospect over the luxuriant vale beneath. The original houses were built by John Hopkins, who had purchased much of the land along Southside in the 1720s, [Milward & Maidment p.21] and until 1759 Southside was no more than a pathway. Hopkins’ estate was inherited by Benjamin Bond (who changed his name to Bond-Hopkins) and thence to his daughter Caroline Phillips, whose children and grandchildren gradually sold off the land to developers after she died.
Milward considers that Wimbledon Lodge was the only house on Southside of any architectural distinction, the rest being plain:

None of the old houses survive. Their estates were sold to developers between the late 1850s and the early years of the present century, and the mansions were pulled down. [Milward, 1989 p.142]

The extensive grounds to the houses along Southside, which stretched down to the Ridgeway, were separated by the present parallel road system and many of the houses along Southside were redeveloped, the earliest being Lingfield Road, nearest The Village.

Character:

As with Southside, a generously wide double belt of trees separates the properties in Southside from the road and, because of their short front gardens, provides an attractive setting for the houses. Although the belt is interrupted regularly by the roads which run southwards from the Common, these roads provide attractive vistas southwards because of the high architectural quality of most of the houses and their Arcadian setting.

Buildings

There are about seventeen properties in the Sub Area, of which one is listed grade II and eleven locally listed. Three of the remainder make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, two have a neutral effect and one, the house which has recently replaced Mannermead, tends to make a negative contribution.

No. 1: A two-and-a-half storey detached dwelling dating from 1904 immediately west of Lingfield Road, on the site of Lingfield House (which is shown on 1745 map). The original house was built and occupied by Benjamin Hayes and purchased by Benjamin Bond Hopkins in 1787. It was vacated in 1878 after the development of its garden for building purposes and was presumably demolished soon after. The distinctive design of the present house, which was locally listed in June 1997, includes ornate timber brackets, leaded glass, a long dormer window, rounded headed windows and a prominent porch.

“The Grange”: Nos 2 and 3 Southside were built on the site of the house of the same name and date from 1889. Although now demolished, “The Grange” played a significant part in the history of this part of Wimbledon. The house, which was built in 1747 by Thomas Lewis, was three stories high and five bays wide, with a central doorway flanked by Ionic columns within a projecting bay. The estate, which reached as far as the Ridgeway, comprised a garden, pleasure grounds and a meadow [Norman-Smith, p.1]. Benjamin Bond Hopkins and his descendants retained the freehold.

The occupants included: Thomas Lewis and family (1747-1786); Henry, 2nd Duke of Newcastle (1791-1794); Elizabeth Countess of Bristol, wife of Frederick 4th Earl (1796-1800); Sir Francis Burdett (1801-1812); George Brown Esq. (1822-1825); Arthur Eden Esq., Assistant Controller, HM Exchequer (1826-1833); Mrs Caroline Phillips (1835-1841); Rev. Richard Leonard Adams (c.1843-1859); Richard Garth MP, Lord of the Manor of Morden and Chief Justice of Bengal (c.1861-1866); Howard Warburton Elphinstone and family (1867-1879); Captain Thomas Maud Roxby (1880-1882); Sir Richard Mansel Mansel (c.1882-1885).

Sir Francis Burdett, who was married to the daughter of the banker, Thomas Coutts, is perhaps best known for being imprisoned in the Tower of London for conducting a duel with James Paull on part of what was then Wimbledon Common in 1807. [Norman-Smith, pp.2-8]

Grangemuir, No.2 Southside: No.2, and its mirror image on the other side of The Grange (No.29 The Grange and No.3 Southside), form a pair of nearly matching locally listed detached houses of up to three storeys dating from 1889 flanking the northern end of The Grange. Pevsner refers to them as two presumptuous turreted mansions. Although the
“Grangemuir” (No.2 Southside), and “Canisbay” (Nos.3 Southside & 29 The Grange), built on the site of “The Grange” on each side of the northern end of The Grange

Norman-Smiths describe the style of No.2 as Pond Street Dutch, it might be regarded (as indicated by its name) as somewhat Scottish Baronial in style. It was designed by Wetherall & Green and built by Robert Thomson with a great wealth of interesting detail, including ornate gables, towers and moulded rendered, brick and terracotta panels. A servant’s sitting room was added in 1904, a billiard room and other additions in 1909, and a conservatory in 1910 [Norman-Smith pp.23-26]. Despite these alterations and the later division of the house into three units, the exterior retains much of its original character and the building was added to the local list in June 1997. Because of its outstanding interest, it is recommended for statutory listing.

West of No.2 lies the road named The Grange, which was built through the grounds of the house of the same name.

**Canisbay, Nos. 29 The Grange and 3 Southside:** Also designed by Wetherall & Green and built in 1889, the house was extended on the south side in 1909 and divided into three parts
in 1953 and re-numbered No.29 The Grange and Nos.3 and 3C Southside. At the same time No.29 was divided into flats, although the exterior has since been restored to its original appearance. The building was added to the local list in June 1997 and, because of its outstanding character, it is also recommended for the statutory list.

**No.3C, Pond Cottage:** A charming locally listed single storey building with a Dutch gable facing on to the road.

**No. 4, Sidlaw:** A two storey detached house in the classical style built by E.J. May in 1900 in the grounds of Wimbledon Lodge. Pevsner regards it as too much altered to be enjoyable (window frames all replaced) [p.457] and it was rejected for local listing.

Between Nos. 4 and 5 lies Murray Road, built on the line of Margaret Hays (shown on the 1776 map) and Wimbledon Lodge (shown on the 1865 map). It was built in 1792 (or 1797) by Gerard de Visme for his daughter, the wife of the distinguished General, Hon. Sir Henry Murray. Occupants included Lord Bathurst and the Rt. Hon. Ladies Ashburnham, and the Murrays lived there from 1824 until the house was demolished in 1904 and the land sold to The British Land Company [Norman-Smith, p.5]. According to Milward the house was designed in the latest Greek Revival style:

>The entrance gates were flanked by lodges, looking like small temples. The two-storied house had round-headed windows on the ground floor and an elaborate pillared porch, flanked by coad-stone lions…..Above the porch were statues, with others on a large pedestal on the roof. The garden front was equally elaborate with a decorated balcony, supported by large Greek caryatids. [Milward 1989 p.142]

In 1904 the estate was sold to the British Land Company, the house demolished and the land divided into small plots. The original estate extended beyond the Ridgway, which is why Murray Road extends from Southside as far as the escarpment above Worple Road.

**No.5 Southside**

**No. 5:** A two storey white rendered detached house dating from 1910. Its plain facades, small paned windows, and particularly its interesting E-shaped plan form, with a projecting central
entrance porch, show the influence of the then popular the Tudor style, and it was added to the local list in October 1998.

**Mannermead:** Planning permission was granted in 2000 for the replacement of the modest 1958 detached house by a much larger detached dwelling of two storeys plus a basement and attic in red brick and tiled roof in a somewhat anonymous period style, comprising attached giant brick pilasters with stone capitals, a stone surround to the central entrance and lead covered semi-circular dormers.

**Greenways:** A modest 1950s detached two storey house typical of its period on the site of Lauriston House and Laurel Grove (shown on the 1745 map). William Wilberforce lived in Lauriston House in the 1780s, and allegorical paintings by Angelica Kaufmann later lined the walls of the staircase. It was demolished in 1957.

**No. 5x, Mullards:** A modest 1959 detached two storey house also on the site of Laurel Grove.

**Nos. 6 & 6a, Lauriston Cottage:** Lauriston Cottage, on the corner of Southside and Lauriston Road, is listed grade II and dates from the seventeenth century. It probably formed the stable block to the former Lauriston House, which was leased to wealthy families by the son of the third Duke of Marlborough in the early 1820s and survived at least until the First World War. This long low two storey block of stock brick with projecting wings sits at right angles to Southside and, together with its high wall surrounding a courtyard and outbuildings, provides charming counterpoint to the later more assertive architectural compositions to the east and west. The east elevation, which is rendered, contains a central pedimented feature which presumably originally linked it to Lauriston House.

**Nos. 6 Southside, Lauriston Cottage**

West of Lauriston Cottage lies Lauriston Road, which was constructed on the alignment of South Lodge. The age of South Lodge is unclear, since it is shown on the 1865 map, but appears to pre-date the 1776 map, on which the site is labelled “site of South Lodge”. According to the 1776 map, Oliver’s House originally occupied the land to the west of Lauriston Road, and has been replaced by Nos. 7 to 10 Southside.

The house on the north-west corner of Southside and Lauriston Road consists of a complex of one and two storey buildings of Georgian proportions in stock brick.
No. 7 Southside Lodge

No. 7, South Lodge: According to Milward the present South Lodge is the third house of that name on the site and dates from the 1840s [Milward, 1989 p.146]. The present two storey building, which was added to the local list in February 1991, is of stock brick with stone surrounds to the windows and projecting entrance porch. The driveway is reached through ornamental cast-iron gates between brick piers with pedimented stone cappings.

No. 8: No. 8 is a detached two and three storey house in yellow brick with stone window surrounds dating from 1883 in what has been described as a Jacobean classical style, and was added to the local list in October 1998. Both the eastern three storey section and the western two storey bay are pedimented, and the semi-circular arch to the porch is surmounted by an ornamental stone panel.

Nos. 9a, 9 & 9b: A house in a mixture of vernacular and classical styles which was probably built by E.J. May in 1884 and named Oliver’s House, and has since been divided into three houses, all of which were added to the local list in October 1998. No. 9a, "Cheyne": The two storey eastern wing, which appears to be significantly older than the other parts, is of brick with stone surrounds to the some of the windows and a brick gable and tall chimney facing the road. It appears to have undergone many alterations and at present suffers from a garage inserted into the projecting gabled section. No. 9: The three storey central section is dominated by a pastiche ornamental timber-framed gable accommodating the top floor, the remainder being of red brick. No. 9b: A miniature version of the central section, with the first floor within a similar gable, fronted by a single storey extension with an over-large box dormer. The front boundary wall is of stock brick with modern security gates to Nos. 9 and 9b, contrasting with a much earlier charming timber braced gate to No. 9a.

No. 10, Clifton House: Clifton House is a detached two storey building plus basement and attic, of yellow brick with red rubber brick string course and window surrounds. The entrance door is approach through a classical portico and the front basement area is surrounded by a classical balustrade. It apparently dates from 1883, but its conversion into four flats in 1956 appears to have involved considerable restoration if not rebuilding.
To the west of Clifton House lies Clifton Road, which was constructed on the alignment of Oliver’s House, and to the west of Clifton Road are Nos. 1 to 48 South View, four blocks of modern flats facing on to Clifton Road, in Sub Area 12.

Positive and Negative Features

Nos. 9 and 9b Southside Common

The greatest townscape asset of Southside is the view of the row of imposing houses seen from the Common through the mature trees. Not only does this vista make a major contribution to the Conservation Area but it is an important feature in the setting of the Common and of this part of Wimbledon. Any erosion through the demolition of the more significant houses and their replacement with architecturally inferior examples in pastiche period styles should be strongly resisted.

Preservation and Enhancement:

Southside should be considered in conjunction with West Side, since they both face out on to the Common along its south and west boundaries and are separated from it by bands of mature trees. The quality of any infill development therefore needs to be considered here just as much as on West Side. The opportunities for redevelopment are less than along West Side because a greater proportion of the buildings are of obvious architectural and historic distinction and none of the three most recent buildings, between Nos. 5 and 6, have substantial rear gardens. The style and density of the recent redevelopment of Mannermead with a “safe” pseudo period design should not form the basis for any possible replacement of its neighbours, Greenways and Mullards.

The possibility of development of the rear of the historic houses via The Grange, Murray Road or Lauriston Road poses a greater potential threat and should be discouraged because the present arrangement reflects the long-standing pattern of historic development in this part of Wimbledon, as outlined above, and because of the maturity of the natural features within these backland areas. As with Westside, stringent controls should continue to be exercised to ensure that the wild and informal character of the generous margin between the Common and the properties along Southside is preserved. The landscape review suggested for Sub Area 2 should be extended to include this part of the Conservation Area.

SUB AREA 8: LINGFIELD ROAD & HOMEFIELD ROAD