SUB AREA 10: MURRAY ROAD (NORTH)

Map and Location Map of Sub Area 10, Murray Road (north)

Extent and Justification

Murray Road is in two parts: the northern half, between South-side and the Ridgway, comprises Nos. 28 to 70 and 47 to 81, and the southern section, in Sub Area 19, contains the remainder. The road forms part of the sequence of development resulting from the demolition of the estates along Southside, and the northern section was inserted after the construction of most of the houses along The Grange, to the east and Lauriston Road, to the west.

Although several of these houses are situated in the section of Murray Road south of the Ridgway, and were built at about the same time, it is more appropriate to consider the southern part of Murray Road in relation to the sequence of roads between the Ridgway and Worple Road.

History

Murray Road was developed after the sale and demolition of Wimbledon Lodge, on Southside, and its estate in 1905. Wimbledon Lodge was also known as Murray House after the name of the owners, hence the name of the present Road. It was designed by Aaron Henry Hurst and built in 1797 and its grounds stretched beyond The Ridgway as far as what
is now St. John's Road. The house was demolished in 1904 following its purchase by the British Land Company. Most of the houses were built between 1908 and 1911 [Milward 1989 p.146], their development depriving those living in The Grange, to the east, of their fine vistas westward over open country, and there were attempts by the owners of Nos. 23, 24 and 26 The Grange to preserve their views by purchasing the adjoining plots in Murray Road. However, these were later sold off for development. All the houses on the east side and those on the west southwards towards The Ridgeway were originally intended to have 50 ft frontages, but compromises were subsequently made during and after the sale of the plots [Norman-Smith, pp.55 & 111-112].

Character

According to the VicSoc report: The majority of its houses are late Victorian and Edwardian, reddish brick predominating. They exhibit great variety, from sensible, unexciting houses (e.g. 35 – 41) to much showier specimens with elaborate brickwork (e.g. 16 and 53). Its many Queen Ann, Neo-Dutch and Georgian variations make Murray Road a notable showcase of Edwardian architectural fashion.

Murray Road is similar in character to The Grange, but the buildings are not of quite the high level of distinction as its neighbour, nine of the 36 houses being locally listed (several of which are recommended for statutory status), compared with 13 of the 24 in The Grange (plus one grade II listed building). Overall, however, the northern section of Murray Road continues the attractive Arcadian character of its easterly neighbours.

Buildings

Of the thirty-four properties in the northern section of Murray Road, nine are locally listed, twenty-one make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, and the effect of the other four is neutral.

Even numbers, east side, south to north (there are no Nos. 52, 56, 58 or 60 and Rockwell Court - Nos. 28 Murray Road and 48 Ridgeway - is included in Sub Area 15D):

Nos. 30 and 32: A pair of semi-detached two storey houses with wide projecting bay windows and hipped roofs dating from 1907 whose general proportions and features anticipate the suburban ribbon development of the 1920s and ’30s. They were considered as not quite of sufficient quality for local listing.

Nos. 34 and 36: A pair of two storey semi-detached houses built in 1908 with large canted bay windows, projecting porches and substantial dormers in the hipped roof, which where were considered as not quite of sufficient quality for local listing.

Nos. 38 and 40: A pair of two storey semi-detached houses built in 1908 with large canted bay windows, projecting porches and substantial dormers in the hipped roof, which were also considered of not quite of sufficient quality for local listing.

No. 42: A detached double fronted house of two storeys plus basement, built in about 1905 and added to the local list in October 1998. The gable to the projecting north wing is decorated with an attractive arched truss.
Nos. 44 and 46: A pair of semi-detached two story brick and render houses built in 1907-8 with canted bays and substantial dormers in the hipped roof which were not quite up to local listing standard.

No. 48: A detached two storey double fronted house of 1909, with a substantial dormer in the hipped roof. The canted bay to the north and the square bay to the south are both topped by parapet walls.

No. 50: A modern detached house.

Nos. 54 and 66 Murray Road

No. 54: A carefully articulated modern two storey detached house in red brick with a hipped roof and projecting canted bays of dark stained timber set to the back of the plot with a brick forecourt behind a high wall and a screen of mature trees.

No. 62: A detached house built in 1912.

No. 64: A crisply detailed two storey detached house built in about 1983 in red brick with sliding metal windows and a continuous first floor balcony across the front facade.

No. 66: A detached single storey flat roofed patio house which was considered but rejected for inclusion on the local list because of its Miesian influence. While a good example of its type, it appears somewhat incongruous among its more traditionally designed neighbours. Its low profile provides views eastwards towards the houses on the west side of The Grange.


No. 70, Holly Tree House: A traditionally designed modern two storey detached house in red brick with a hipped roof and a central arched entrance porch. A detached double garage is located in the paved forecourt.

Nos. 49, 51 and 53 Murray Road

No.72: A recently built traditionally designed two storey detached house with a hipped roof and a projecting central entrance bay topped by a circular window in the gable.

Odd numbers, west side, south to north (There is no No. 7 and No. 47 is in Sub Area 15D)

Nos. 49 and 51: A semi-detached pair of three storey houses built in 1909 in what the VicSoc report refers to as Queen Anne or Neo-Dutch with distinctive prominent Dutch gables on the projecting side wings and tall chimneys to the end elevations. They were added to the local list in October 1998 and, despite a
projecting garage to No.51 which has marred the attractively articulated symmetrical composition, the houses are recommended for statutory listing.

No. 53: A detached two storey house built in 1907 which the VicSoc also regarded as being in the Queen Anne or Neo Dutch style. The elaborate composition includes two gables to the front façade in striped brickwork. The main central one is of three storeys, and the other two storey projecting one is stepped and is surmounted by a chimney; there are also two hipped projecting wings, of one and two storeys. The semi-circular arches to the first floor windows above the central single storey projecting entrance are decorated in carved brickwork. The house was added to the local list in October 1998 is also recommended for statutory listing.

No. 55: A detached two storey house with similar detailing and features to No. 53 and built at the same time, although slightly less elaborate, and added to the local list at the same time. Since the two houses appear to have been designed as a pair, No. 55 is also recommended for statutory listing.

Nos. 57 and 59: A semi-detached pair of two storey houses built in 1907-8 which matched Nos. 44 and 46 opposite and, like them, were considered of not quite good enough for local listing, possibly because of the various alterations which appear to have been made, including plastic windows without reveals and the rusticated ground floor in white and off-white stripes.

No. 61: A detached two storey house built in 1909 with neo vernacular influences in red brick and pebbledash with a curved pitch to the roof slope and a tile arch to the side porch. It was considered but rejected for local listing. Extensive but not unsympathetic alterations have recently been carried out.

No. 63: A detached two storey house built in 1909 in the Arts and Crafts manner with bay windows and a prominent projecting gable, similar in style to Nos. 53 and 55, and added to the local list in October 1998.

No. 65: A detached two storey house built in 1906 in the Arts and Crafts manner with large dormers in a mansard roof and a dominant projecting gable, which was added to the local list in October 1998. The gable and panels beneath the bay windows give a striking Tudorbeaten character with the application of black and white vertical “half timbering” and dominant chimneys to the projecting wing and end elevation.

No. 67: A detached two storey house built in 1908 showing an Arts and Crafts influence with a double pile hipped roof on to the street, ornate eaves and a recessed side wing, and added to the local list in October 1998.

No. 69: A detached two storey house built in 1906 with a hipped roof and rendered slightly projecting bays.

No. 73: A detached two-storey house on a wide plot built in 1906 with a Dutch classical style influence. As with No.65, the projecting gable is decorated in a Tudorbeathen style. It was considered for local listing but rejected because of a significant roof extension.

No. 75: A detached two-storey house dating from about 1900 with ornamental eaves to a hipped roof, a projecting gable and bay windows each side of a dominant chimney of ornamental brickwork.

No. 77: A substantial detached two-storey house built in 1909 with ornamental eaves to a hipped roof showing Arts and Crafts influences, and added to the local list in October 1998.
A wide Dutch gable containing a Palladian window at second floor level dominates the front façade.

**No. 79:** A detached two-storey house built in 1906 with tile hanging to the dominant second floor gable facing the street and half hip gables to the side elevations. It was considered of not quite sufficient quality for the local list.

**No. 81:** A detached house built in 1906.

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### Positive and Negative Features

**Nos. 75 to 81 Murray Road from the north**

This part of Murray Road contains many buildings of architectural distinction, as is reflected in the number included in the local list. However, several of the original houses have been replaced by modern ones of variable quality and appropriateness, particularly at the northern end. The road contains a high degree of mature planting, as is indicated by the tree preservation orders imposed on a high proportion of the properties. However, a significant proportion of the front gardens have been given over to hard standing, and there is an increasing tendency, particularly where redevelopment has occurred, to separate the houses from the road by high walls or fences, thereby reducing the unity of the street scene.

### Preservation or Enhancement

The existing character of the Sub Area should be retained, and redevelopment of any of the more historic buildings resisted, particularly those on the local list. The construction of high walls or fences, and the substitution of mature landscaping for car parking areas, should not be allowed to proliferate, as has occurred in roads nearer the Village.