No. 34: A detached two storey double fronted mid nineteenth century house in stock brick, with a semi-circular arched entrance porch in white stucco and ground floor canted bays each side. The carefully landscaped garden is fronted by ornamental security gates and railings divided by brick piers.

Positive and Negative Features

The curve to Thornton Hill, as viewed from the northern end, is less pronounced that those of the roads to the east, but the wealth of mature trees and garden landscaping considerably enhance the vista. The need for parking spaces has however somewhat eroded the road’s attractive character by the conversion of front gardens of about a dozen properties to hardstanding, particularly on the west side at the southern end, and by the construction of garages in the rear gardens of Nos. 19 and 18-20. The growing need for security is also increasingly evident with the gates and railings to Nos. 12, 14 and 34. By far the greatest discordant features are the blocks of flats on the east side.

Preservation and Enhancement:

Although a significant proportion of the houses have been subdivided into multiple occupation, most of them have retained their historic character, and the Council should not only pursue its policy of discouraging their redevelopment, but also resisting the erection of rear garages and high security fences, and discourage the conversion of front gardens into car parks by means of an Article 4 Direction.

SUB AREA 24: DENMARK ROAD

Extent and Justification

Sub Area 24 covers the whole of Denmark Road except for the buildings at the far north and south, which lie within Sub Areas 15C, The Ridgway, and 21, St. John’s Road. Since No. 31 Denmark Road forms
part of a semi-detached pair with No. 6a St John’s Road, it is included in Sub Area 21.

Like the majority of roads within the Conservation Area, Denmark Road is a self-contained entity, the back gardens adjoining those of the southern part of Murray Road (Sub Area 19) to the east, and Thornton Road (within Sub Area 25) to the west.

**Location Map of the Sub Area, & the east side, looking south from No.1 Denmark Road**

**History**

Denmark Road and Thornton Road were the first roads to be laid out as far as Worple Road (then Worple Lane). The houses on the eastern side and those on the west side towards the southern end were built around 1860. Most of the remainder (Nos. 47 to 73) were designed by the architect SS Teulon and are listed grade II. The list descriptions are vague about when they were built, dating them as mid to late nineteenth century, but Denmark Road may have been developed later than the roads on each side, to judge from the way it appears to have been squeezed between them.

**Character**

Denmark Road is unlike any other parts of the Conservation Area, being of far greater density than any of the other streets, except for the terrace of cottages adjoining Oldfield Road (Sub Area 17A), the plots are minimal and the houses small in scale. Almost all of them are two storey, and are arranged either in pairs or short terraces. The layout of the houses designed by Teulon is unusual, with some of them facing on to small landscaped courts which take up the full depth of the plots. The Wimbledon Cottage Improvement Society was founded in about 1859 to help finance their construction at a cost of £125 each.

Such cottages were badly needed to deal with “the overcrowding of the poorer population” which had greatly aggravated “the evils of defective drainage and ventilation in most local cottages”….These homes were then offered at very moderate rents to “applicants of good character and cleanly habits”. [Milward 1989, p.153]

The VicSoc report described the road as: Composed almost entirely of excellent Victorian cottages of great charm…The entire road (less Belgrave Hall and 74 & 75) unquestionably merits statutory listing for its group value.

As with other parts of the Conservation Area, the Wimbledon Society has produced an environmental assessment map, which goes into considerable detail about the street’s features. It has also produced a brief description, parts of which state: The character of the street is enhanced by the variations between neighbouring pairs of houses but is held together by the general uniformity of the size of the building blocks and
their spacing along the street. Although the majority of the houses are not listed, many of them are of very good quality or of interest…. The predominant building material is London Brick but in some cases this has been painted or rendered. The roofs are of slate.

Alterations to some of the buildings (including unauthorised alterations to the listed buildings) particularly the introduction of replacement windows of inappropriate design, scale or profile, the replacement of the original front doors or the erection of unsuitable boundary walls, have lowered their quality. The narrowness of the road means that such details are very visible and critical.
The road and the pavements on either side are tarmacadamed and the original kerb and setts gutter have been lost from the west side, south from No. 71. The existing density of the residential development of the street dictates that there is no scope for new development. The quality of the existing buildings merits their retention and enhancement.

Because of the narrowness of the road and the short front gardens, Denmark Road is more urban in character than most of the Conservation Area - Homefield Road, in its very different way, being the only other comparable area. The urban character is compounded by the inability to accommodate substantial areas of planting, and by those houses designed by Teulon which face on to the street being immediately adjacent to the back pavement line. This does not mean that there is a lack of greenery, since many gardens contain shrubbery, and even the front walls of many of the houses are adorned with climbing plants. Although the Wimbledon Society complained of unsuitable boundary walls, there is a fairly consisted use of white picket garden fences of uniform height. Because of the density of development, few of the front gardens can accommodate vehicle parking spaces, and where the side entrance is too narrow, cars are parked in the street, resulting in considerable congestion.

Buildings

**Belgrave Hall:** A two storey community hall of stock brick with semi-circular windows to the first floor and ornamental brick eaves and pediment to the street. The building’s dignified simplicity is undermined by the addition of a staircase to one side of the façade.

**No. 1 to 20:** Ten pairs of simple semi-detached two storey cottages of about 1860 in either exposed stock brick or white paint or render, most of them having front door porches decorated with ornamented semi-circular or flat arches, white picket fencing to the front gardens, and either pairs of first floor sash windows or two storey canted bays. They exhibit many variations on this theme, including recent alterations. If these changes were not so widespread, the houses might be worthy of local listing. The variations are as follows:

**Nos. 1 and 2:** White rendered façades with semi-circular arched porches and curved bay windows to the ground floor. No. 1 has painted brick walls to the front garden and the façade to No.2 is covered in climbing plants. **Nos. 3 and 4:** No. 3 has a stock brick façade with a wide picture window and a trellis to the entrance porch. **Nos. 5 and 6:** Both houses have retained earlier shop front windows and corner doors. No. 5 has a stock brick façade and a trellis to the front porch, and No. 6 a white rendered facade. **Nos. 7 and 8:** Stock brick
façades with climbing plants. No. 7 has a single discordant wide window to the first floor, a similar bowed window to the ground floor, a modern porch and a brick garden wall. No. 8: The first floor windows are blocked out, and there is a casement window to the ground floor and a modern porch screened by a modern front door. The alterations to these two houses seriously erode the architectural unity of the street. Nos. 9 and 10: No. 9 has a cream rendered façade with climbing plants, and No. 10 a white rendered façade with shutters to both floor windows, and a trellis to the front porch. Nos. 11 and 12: White rendered façades with rusticated quoins. Nos. 13 and 14: Stock brick façades with two storey canted bays and a flat arched porches. Nos. 15 and 16: White rendered facades with false shutters to the windows. Nos. 17 and 18: White rendered facades with two storey bays. No. 18 has a white rendered façade with a two storey canted bay and a two-storey infill joining it to No. 19. Nos. 19 and 20: White rendered façades and two storey canted bays. No. 19 has plastic windows and a stained timber fence.

Above: the original shop fronts to Nos. 5 & 6, and the unfortunate alterations to 7 & 8. Below: Nos. 19-22, with the two-storey extension to No. 18, and part of the terrace of Nos. 25-30

Nos. 21 and 22: A pair of locally listed semi-detached two-and-a-half storey houses dating from about 1860, No. 21 being rendered in pale blue and No. 22 in white, with three storey canted bays topped by small dormers, and semi-circular arched porches reached by flights of steps. The garden to No. 21 is bordered by railings and that to No. 22 by a hedge.

Nos. 23 and 24: A pair of semi-detached two-storey white rendered houses similar in design to Nos. 1 to 20, and with stained picket fences to the front gardens.

Nos. 25 to 30: A terrace of six two-storey houses in stock brick stepping slightly down the southern slope, with doors and single sash windows to each floor having rendered surrounds. The front picket fences to Nos. 28 to 30 are stained. No. 30 is an exception, in being rendered white with a heavy pediment over a ground floor curved bay window.

No. 31 is situated in Sub Area 21, St. John’s Road. There is no No. 32.

Consecutive numbers, west side, from south to north
Nos. 33 to 40: Four pairs of locally listed semi-detached two storey houses built in about 1860, of similar in design to Nos. 1 to 28 opposite, in stock brick and white render and, unless otherwise indicated, a white picket fence along the front boundary. Detailed variations are as follows: Nos. 33 and 34: A pair on stock brick with squared ground floor bays. The façade to No. 33 is covered in planting and the front boundary wall consists of open trellis-type concrete blocks, which conflicts with the character of the other boundaries in the street, and No. 34 has a stock brick front boundary wall. Nos. 35 and 36: A pair with stock brick façades, semi-circular arched porches, a hedged front boundary and a centrally placed gothic style tablet at first floor level. Nos. 37 and 38: The façade to No. 37 is white rendered and that to No. 38 is of stock brick. Both have semi-circular arched porches and that to No. 38 has a stained wooden trellis. Nos. 39 and 40: A locally listed pair with white rendered and scored façades, alternately vermiculated stone quoins, ground floor canted bays, ornamental window architraves and semi-circular arches to the porches.

Nos. 33 to 36, showing the unfortunate Trelliswork concrete block wall to No. 33

The south-east section of Denmark Road showing the consistent picket fences

Nos. 41 to 43 and 45 to 46: Five two storey houses of similar design to Nos. 1 to 20 and 33 to 40. Nos. 41 to 43 form a terrace. They all have white rendered facades, canted bays to the ground floors, semi-circular arches to the entrance porches, and white picket fences.

Nos. 44 and 44a: Two cottages situated to the rear of Nos. 41 to 46 against the west boundary of the Sub Area and reached from a pedestrian way between Nos. 43 and 45.

Nos. 47 to 73: Twenty-seven houses in either stock brick or white render, arranged either as terraces at the back of pavement or facing on to three small landscaped courtyards, as follows: Nos. 47 to 51 and 52 to 53: A terrace of five houses facing north and a semi-detached pair facing south onto the southernmost of the landscaped courts. Nos. 53 to 59: A terrace of six houses facing on to Denmark Road. Nos. 60 to 61 and 62 to 63: Two pairs of semi-detached houses facing north and south on to the central landscaped courtyard. Nos. 64 to 71: A terrace of eight houses facing on to Denmark Road. Nos. 72 and 73: A pair of semi-detached houses facing north onto the northernmost courtyard.

The landscaping of the south and central courtyards is particularly attractive, that to the north court being less so because it is partly given over to car parking. No doubt because of their unusual layout, all the houses are listed grade II, the list descriptions being arranged in seven groups with the following features in common:

Mid to late C19. Attributed to SS Teulon. Brick with contrast dressings, including some decorative tumbling-in to the gables (Nos. 47-51 and 54-59). Tall Welsh slate roofs with tall corniced transverse brick stacks. Each two storeys one wide bay (Nos. 47-51, 54-59, 64-71) the upper window rising into the cross gable....Gables of end houses larger (Nos. 47-51, 54-59). Alternate gables half hipped (Nos. 52, 53, 60-63, 66, 69, 70) Two and three light transomed casements (some altered) under segmental gauged brick arches. Pointed arches to the boarded doors with fancy ironwork. First floor band.
The list description for Merton was published in 1988, and since then further alterations appear to have taken place, since Nos. 50, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, and 71 have been partly or wholly painted white.

**Nos. 74 to 76:** A group of three cottages, Nos. 74 and 75 forming a semi-detached pair, and No. 76 situated to the rear.

**Positive and Negative Features**

The houses in Denmark Road are remarkably unified in their size and scale. This consistency is reflected in the front boundary treatments, most of which are of white picket fences about three feet high. There are, however, exceptions which erode the general character, such as changes to Nos. 7 and 8 and the block boundary wall to No. 33.

**Preservation and Enhancement**

In view of the street’s considerable charm, historic interest, and uniformity of scale and character, an Article 4 Direction should be applied to control the type of fencing, alterations to the doors and windows and painting or rendering the facades.