EXTENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Sub Area 26 is divided into 26A, within the Conservation Area; 26B, the part of the western side of Edge Hill outside the Conservation Area; and 26C, Worple Avenue, to the south-west of 26A and also outside the Conservation Area. Sub Areas 26B and 26C were included in this assessment to determine if the architectural and historic qualities of areas adjoining this part of the Conservation Area made them worthy of inclusion.

SUB AREA 26A:
RIDGWAY GARDENS AND EDGE HILL (NORTH), within the Conservation Area

EXTENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Sub Area 26A extends from Sub Area 15, Ridgway, in the north, to the northern arm of Darlaston Road, in the south. In the north it includes Nos. 1 to 9 Ridgway Gardens, and on the western side it takes in the Nos. 33 to 43 Edge Hill, the west and south borders of these properties forming the boundary of the Conservation Area. On the east side of Edge Hill it includes Wimbledon College, the four houses to the north and the Sacred Heart Church and Parish Hall to the south, the eastern border to Area 26A not only following the natural boundary to Berkeley Place and Hillside in Sub Area 25, within the Conservation Area, but also Thackery Close and Savana Close (Sub Area 23) and the northern arm of Darlaston Road (Sub Area 27), beyond the Conservation Area.

The Sub Area does not include Nos. 1 to 15 Edge Hill, to the south, even though these properties were added to the Conservation Area in June 1987, because they have a greater affinity with those in Darlaston Road than the ones in the northern part of Edge Hill, and are therefore included in Sub Area 27.

HISTORY

Much of the information on the history of this part of the Conservation Area is taken from Two Wimbledon Roads: The Story of Edge Hill and Darlaston Road by Richard Milward, who explains how the present arrangement of roads still reflects the medieval field pattern. In 1848 the meadows below the Ridgway were owned by Edward Berkeley Phillips. He leased the upper ones to a local butcher, James Oakham and the lower ones to a farmer, Thomas Watney, but in the mid nineteenth century he sold the land to various developers, including John Brackenbury, resulting in the erection of Wimbledon College on the east side of Edge Hill, several large detached houses to the west and, later, Darlaston Road. The top half of Edge Hill first appeared on a map in 1869 [Milward 1991, pp. 5-8]. Ridgway Gardens is included in this Sub Area because of its historical associations with Wimbledon College, having been built on the site of the cricket field to the College.

CHARACTER

Ridgway Gardens is different in character from the rest of the Sub Area, consisting of a short cul-de-sac off the Ridgway containing imposing detached early twentieth century houses along both sides. It is a pleasantly landscaped street, although the blank rear wall to Block E of Wimbledon College compromises the view south from the Ridgway.
Map of Sub Area 26A: Ridgway Gardens and Edge Hill (North)

The upper part of Edge Hill is one of the most attractive roads in west Wimbledon because of its setting on the top of the escarpment between the Ridgway and Worple Road, its broad views to the south, the way in which this vista opens out as it descends from the fairly narrow defile at its northern end to the unobstructed panorama of Wimbledon College sports fields to the east and the grounds of Donhead Lodge, Oakhill Court and Edge Hill Court to the west, and finally because of the dramatically designed Sacred Heart Church at the culmination of this sequence. The descent is further enhanced by the subtle curve in the road and the mature trees and attractive landscaping on each side. Even though the estates of Oakhill Court and Edge Hill Court are not regarded as of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify their inclusion in the Conservation Area, their grounds are sufficiently well laid out not to diminish the high quality of the adjoining landscape.
Buildings

Of the forty or so buildings (or parts of groups of buildings) in Sub Area 26A, six are grade II, twelve are locally listed, the effect of nineteen of them on the character of the Conservation Area tends to be neither positive nor negative, and four tend to have a negative impact. Of the ones which form parts of Wimbledon College, five are grade II, nine are neutral and two tend to have a negative impact.

The view from Edge Hill

RIDGEWAY GARDENS

Consecutive numbers, east side, north to south

No. 1: A two storey detached early twentieth century house of white render with red brick quoins and window surrounds, with a large red brick bay to the front, ornamental eaves and a central chimney to the hipped roof.

Nos. 2, 3 and 4: Three similar detached double fronted two-and-a-half storey houses of red brick with ornamentally detailed central entrance porches, and large front gables accommodating the top floor. They were built between 1900 and 1910, and vary in their materials and detailing. No. 2 is locally listed and has a rendered first floor and gable, a ground floor bay window, a pitched roof to the porch and a curved roof to No. 3, which is also locally listed, extends to enclose the front porch; and the gabled wing to No. 4 projects, the upper floors being supported on brackets.

Nos 6 to 8 Ridgway Gardens

Consecutive numbers, west side, north to south

No. 5: A single storey traditionally constructed detached house built in 1953 whose low profile is inappropriate in this context.

No. 6: A locally listed detached double fronted two-and-a-half storey house built at about the same time and to a similar design as Nos. 2, 3 and 4. Individual features include a projecting gabled wing with “half timbering” to the gable, a similar porch to No. 2, and first floor oriel windows.

Nos. 7 and 8: Two locally listed detached two-and-a-half storey houses built at about the same time as Nos. 2, 3 and 4. They are also similar in design and detailing except that they present two gables to the street, one of the gables to No. 8 being hipped.

No. 9: A locally listed detached two-and-a-half storey house built at about the same time as Nos. 2, 3 and 4 and very similar in design and detailing to No. 2.