# EALING COMMON CONSERVATION AREA Character Appraisal



**MARCH 2009** 



# EALING COMMON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

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#### 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The definition and purpose of conservation areas

According to Section 69 of the *Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, a Conservation Area (CA) is an "area of special architectural or historic interest the character and the appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance". It is the duty of Local Authorities to designate such areas and to use their legal powers to safeguard and enhance the special qualities of these areas within the framework of controlled and positive management of change.

# 1.2. The purpose and status of this appraisal

The CA was first designated in 1982 and extended in 2004 to include Hamilton Road.

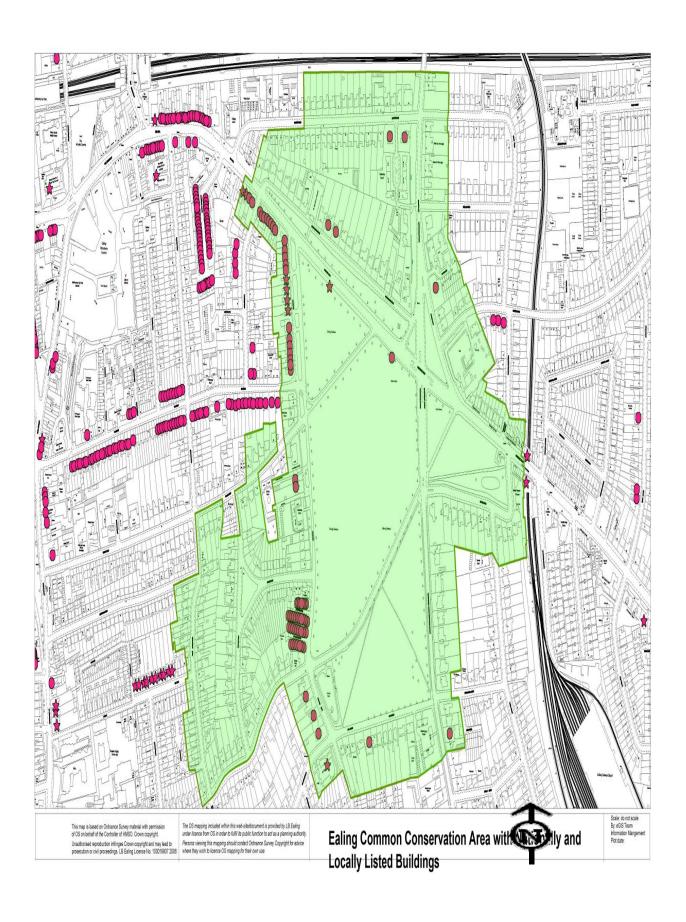
The scope of this appraisal is summarised in the following points:

- Assessment of the special interest of the architectural heritage of Ealing Common CA highlighting elements of special merit, which contribute to the character.
- 2. Assessment of the actions needed to protect and enhance the special qualities of the CA.
- 3. Assessment of the need to revise the boundaries of the CA.

This document replaces the existing appraisal published in 1999. However, it is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. Omission of any specific building, space or feature or aspect of its appearance or character should not be taken to imply that they have no significance.

The methodology of the CA Character Appraisal for Ealing Common follows the guidance provided by the Planning Policy guidelines 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994); the Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals by English Heritage (2005); and the Guidance on Management of Conservation Areas by English Heritage (2005).

The analysis has been conducted on the basis of visits to the area, the involvement of local associations, and with consultation of primary and secondary sources on the local history and architecture.





#### 1.3. Summary of special interest

- Ealing Common CA is situated in the former historic County of Middlesex, in the central part of today's London Borough of Ealing. Ealing Common is part of Ealing Common Ward.
- The land-form is strongly defined by the presence of Ealing Common and by the residential roads surrounding it.
- Ealing Common has existed as common land since medieval times. However edification only started during Victorian times.
- Four areas of development can be distinguished within Ealing Common CA: The areas north, east, south and west of the Common.
- The CA has a mainly Victorian and Edwardian character with construction of some of the buildings going back to the time when Ealing started to expand and flourish as one of London's more desirable suburbs. Building types are residential, transport (Ealing Common Station on the edge of the CA), parades of shops, religious buildings, public houses and restaurants.
- The CA has a mix of uses. Retail and transport dominate in the northeast section of the CA, while public houses and restaurants dominate the southwest section of the CA. The remaining areas are mainly residential. All with the large expanse of the Common acting as a major public recreational space.
- Ealing Common is the core and the main recreational space of the CA. Avenues of trees across the common and along the streetline, as well as green fences around properties are an important part of the suburban and leafy character of the CA.
- A variety of construction materials and details stock and red bricks laid in Flemish bond, stucco trimming, low pitch or high pitch roofs covered with slate or tiles - are predominant within the CA. The fenestration consists mainly of white painted timber sash. Corbels still survive along the parades of shops.

#### 2. Location and setting

#### 2.1. Location and context

Ealing Common CA is situated in the former historic County of Middlesex. The CA is within the Ward of Ealing Common in the London Borough of Ealing.

Ealing Common CA is 4.8 Km² in area and it is in the central part of the modern borough. It mainly evolves on the southern side of the Uxbridge Road. The CA is centred on the open area of Ealing Common, a large green space bounded by Hanger Lane to the east and Uxbridge Road to the north. Smaller areas of the Common extend to the east of Hanger Lane, including Leopold Road and to the north of the Uxbridge Road up to North Common Road. The western boundary includes the Common (Road)and Warwick Dene, with Elm Avenue to the southwest of the Common; the CA also includes the northern section of Warwick Road and Grange Park Road as well as the eastern most section of the Mall, extending towards Ealing Town Centre CA.

Ealing Common CA is surrounded by other CAs that influenced its historical development and still provide its immediate setting: Ealing Town Centre CA to the west, Creffield CA to the north east and Acton Town Centre CA to the south east.

The rail tracks that run west of the CA are the physical barrier between the Ealing Common CA and the surroundings on the west side.

Ealing Common CA is part of the historic parish of Ealing (see Parish Map of 1777) 10 km west of Hyde Park Corner, and was originally bounded by the Old Parish of Acton to the east, the Parish of Perivale and Greenford to the north. The southern boundary of the old parish followed the Thames eastward. From a point slightly east of Kew Bridge it turned inland to Chiswick High Road, which it followed eastward before turning north and then east to Bollo Bridge Lane. The eastern boundary, with Acton, ran along Bollo Bridge Lane and east of Ealing Common and Hanger Lane. Thence it turned westward almost to Hanger Lane and followed it to the river Brent, which formed the northern boundary with Harrow, Perivale, and Greenford. The western boundary, with Hanwell, ran southward to the west of the modern Argyle Road and Northfield Avenue to meet Boston Manor Road near Boston House.1



The Common



View of the Uxbridge from Ealing Common Station looking east



The Uxbridge Road looking west towards Ealing Broadway



**Gunnersbury Avenue** 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Victoria History Online. A History of the County of Middlesex, Vol VII, 1982

#### 2.2. General character and plan form

The plan-form of the central part of the CA is determined by the presence of the Common. This provides a welcome and peaceful episode in contrast with the busy environment of the Ealing Broadway to the west. The Common also provides the open setting for the Victorian & Edwardian properties along the surrounding streets. The Uxbridge Road and Gunnersbury Avenue cross the Common east-west and north-south respectively. The busy and heavy traffic led environs of the Uxbridge Road and Gunnersbury Avenue, are in contrast with the peacefulness of the Common and are an alien intrusion into the calm and rural setting of parts of the CA.

The residential sections of the CA contain distinguished areas of character in terms of architectural language and spatial qualities: The area west of the Common includes the small early/mid Victorian properties tightly arranged along Common Road, these were developed in small sections and offer significant variety. The CA evolves west of the Common Road in the form of a more conventional ensemble of Victorian and Edwardian houses arranged as detached, semidetached or row of terraces.

The area north of the Common contains late Victorian and Edwardian properties lined along North Common Road and Hamilton Road. These properties are of more generous size, have larger interspaces between them and have a more uniform architectural expression.

The southern section of the Common is characterised by some substantial detached houses built between 1910 and 1930, seated on very generous plot. The architectural character is varied. Along Gunnersbury Avenue are conventional double fronted Edwardian detached houses well set back from the streetline.

#### 2.3. Landscape setting

Much of the land in the Ealing Parish is flat, rising gently from the Thames to reach 30m near the Uxbridge Road where Ealing Common CA is situated. The ridge of higher ground is at Castlebar Hill north-west of the CA and reaches Hanger Hill in the north east of the CA.

Most of the higher ground north of Uxbridge Road is covered by London Clay, with claygate beds on the slopes and gravel on the east side of Castlebar Hill. Brick earth lies along the CA along Uxbridge Road.



Common (Road)



**North Common Road** 



**Warwick Dene** 

# 3. Historic development and archaeology

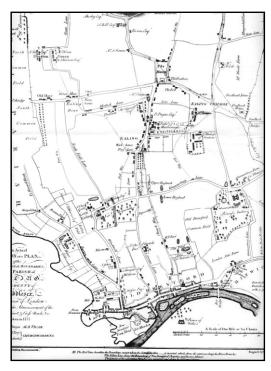
#### 3.1. Historic development

Much of present day Ealing was agricultural land up to the mid-nineteenth century, and Rocque's map of 1746 gives a clear indication of the pattern of land use, with village settlements clustered around churches along the Uxbridge Road. By the 1840s most of the common land in this part of Middlesex had been enclosed, leaving only small remnants at Ealing and Hanwell commons. In 1866, the Metropolitan Commons Act, inspired by the battles to save Hampstead Heath and Wimbledon Common, provided for commons within the Metropolitan Police District to be preserved for the public. The new Act enabled the Ealing Local Board to subsequently buy approximately 47 acres of Ealing Common and other small areas of common land, such as at Haven Green and Ealing Green. More recently, the land was registered under the Commons Registration Act 1965.

A small number of surviving houses date from between 1820 to 1840, but most of the residential development around the Common took place in the late-nineteenth century, following the coming of the railways to Ealing, firstly the GWR, and then the Metropolitan District railway, with stations at Haven Green.



Station Parade 1920c.



Parish Map, 1777



Ealing Common Station 1925c.



Ealing Common Station 1930c.



Floods at Ealing Common 1940c.

#### 1865 OS Map

On the 1870 OS map the Common already had very much of today's configuration: in particular the expanse of the green land was crossed by the two diagonal roads running from north east to south west that we can still perceive today. Yet, one element that immediately attracts the attention is that today's section of Hanger Lane (which takes the name of Gunnersbury Avenue) was little more than a narrow path flanked by the Common on the western side and woods on the eastern side.

The western side of the Common was already partially edified with some of the Victorian properties in the northern section and in the southern section around St Marks and St Mathews Road.

Elms Avenue running along the southern edge of the CA had not been created. Similarly, the western part of the CA occupied by Grange Park Road was still occupied by orchards. North Common Road was yet to be created.

#### **1890 OS Map**

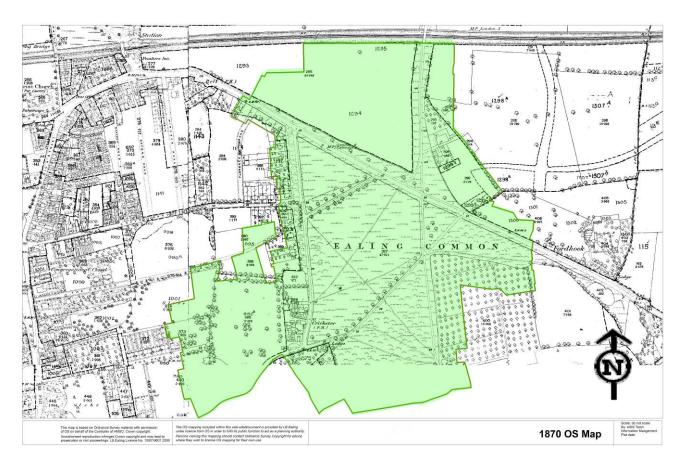
The main changes to record on the 1890 OS Map are the opening of North Common Road and the opening of Grange Road. Properties along North Common Road display very much their present configuration together with St Mathew's Church. The western side of the Common appears more densely edified together with properties along the southern section of the Mall (between no 32 and 43 The Mall). At the crossing of Hanger Lane and the Uxbridge Road, Victorian villas together with the Hanger Lane Farm appear. Certainly the most important change occurred to the topography and recorded by the OS Map of 1890 is the railway. The rail tracks of the Metropolitan District Railway run along the eastern edge of the CA. The Ealing Common & West Acton Station is clearly marked.

#### 1910 OS Map

On the 1910 OS Map Gunnersbury Avenue and Leopold Road appear in their present configuration flanked by houses on the eastern and southern side respectively. In particular Gunnersbury Avenue is clearly depicted lined by chestnuts trees on its western side. These still survive today. Elms Avenue has been created but mainly free of constructions. The All Saints church appears at the crossing of Elms Avenue and the Common.

#### 1930 OS Map

The most relevant change on the 1930 OS Map are the houses along Elms Avenue.









### 3.2. Archaeology

The area around Ealing Broadway has a very strong archaeological significance. The Ealing Plan for the Environment (UDP) identifies the area south of the Uxbridge Road in particular as "Area of Archaeological Interest" (A11).



#### 4. Spatial analysis

### 4.1. The character and interrelationship of spaces within the

The layout of the CA stayed unchanged over the years and still consists of the Common and the residential roads surrounding it. The railway running along the east and north is a physical and visual barrier that interrupts the connections with the areas east of the Common and north of Hamilton Road.

The Common is a large open space with mature chestnut threes. Since its creation the Common was traversed diagonally by 2 diagonal avenues from the south-west to the north-east. The Common is not only the geographical centre of the CA, but is the very bonding element of the various residential areas evolving around it.

The central part of the Common still maintains its peaceful and tranquil character, whilst toward the edges, in the proximity of the surrounding roads to the north and east, the peaceful and amenity aspect gives way to the noise and traffic of a very busy environment.

The Uxbridge Road and Gunnersbury Avenue run across the CA on the northern and eastern sides respectively. Uxbridge Road connects the CA with Ealing Town Centre to the west and Acton to the west. Gunnersbury Avenue continues north into Hanger Lane leading to the North Circular and Western Avenue. Those are major distributor roads with heavy and busy traffic. Their harsh character is at odds with the peaceful and rural atmosphere of the Common and of the residential areas to the west and south of the Common.

A small area of the Common extends north of the Uxbridge Road and acts as a buffer for the houses along North Common Road. These properties in fact, in spite of their vicinity to the busy Uxbridge Road and Hanger Lane, benefit of this additional green filter that allows to retain a more residential, tranquil and less exposed feel.

On the contrary, properties along Gunnersbury Avenue are heavily affected by the noise and harsh traffic environment and, although close to the Common, suffer the physical barrier of the road and are very exposed to harsh intrusions. This diminishes their amenity, their sense of intimacy and their actual connection with the open space.

Properties on the western and southern side maintain their protected and intimate aspect and have a much

stronger visual and physical relationship with the Common.

Properties display diverse spatial qualities along the four sides of the Common:

North — Properties are of substantial size mainly detached; they are set back from the street line with generous front and back yards. They are normally 3-storey in height. Some of the original interspaces between properties remain offering a rather open character to the street. East of North Common Road, some of the properties along the Uxbridge Road, opposite to Ealing Common Underground Station, have a more tight appearance, they are normally arranged in row of terraces and are much closed to the streetline.

West – Properties along the western side of the Common and the eastern end of the Mall display a rather disparate ensemble as they have clearly been developed independently in small groups. The plots are generally more modestly sized, and buildings are arranged as small terraces or semidetached – yet, in most cases, the interspaces between properties have been in filled resulting in a more unbroken terracing effect. There are also a few later intrusions of much larger footprint and of more substantial height that interrupt a somewhat coherent townscape. In the southern section St Mathew Road, St Marks and the Vine Place display a particularly tight grain. Houses here are only 2-storey cottages arranged as terraces. They virtually have no front garden and sit on very small plots.

The residential area extending west of the Common including the Warwick Road and Grange Park Road displays a variety of arrangements. Along Warwick Road and the southern part of Grange Park, houses are mainly detached and are set in substantial plots, set back from the street line. Whilst in the northern part of Grange Park Road the pattern is made mainly of terraces or semidetached that are arranged a lot more tightly on smaller plots.

**South** - The southern side properties are mainly detached and sit on very large plots with substantial front yards. The continuity along the streetline is assured thanks to well kept boundary treatments.

**East** – Properties along Gunnersbury Avenue are mainly double fronted detached. The continuity and compactness of the streetline has been rather compromised as front plots have been converted to hardstanding and many of the boundary walls have been demolished.

This results in the lack of definition in the street frontage and lack of a clear edge between public and private space.

Apart from a few episodes along the western side of the Common, residential areas of the CA have a rather open character. Buildings are set back from the streetline and sit in very generous plots with interspaces between them allowing glimpses through. The historic spatial relationship between public spaces (the Common, streets or other public areas) and the privacy of domestic properties is recognisable only in parts. Boundary walls, trees and hedges played an important role in defining the character of the streetscape and not always have been correctly preserved.

#### 4.2. Key views and vistas

The absence of any natural high vantage points within the CA, it is not possible to obtain a comprehensive view of the Ealing Common CA.

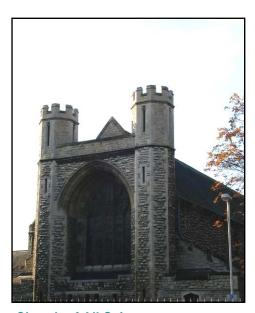
Nevertheless, there are a number of significant long vistas along the residential streets and close views that include prominent landmarks; there are also a number of wide views that contain the large expanse of the Common.

Views across the Common are a welcome and restful episode that balances the traffic and noise of the main roads. The view of the ample expanse of the Common constitutes the unique setting for this part CA. The Common provides a filter and a means of transition between the dense commercial core of the Ealing Town Centre more urban in character, and the domestic and calm character of the residential sections of the CA north, east, west and south of the Common.

Views across the Common towards the Church of St Mathews and the Church of All Saints

Views across the Common containing the profile of the houses along the northern, western and southern edge are particularly suggestive.

Close views of the small enclaves of St Mathews and St Marks and Vine Place offer a very suggestive piece of townscape.



**Church of All Saints** 



View od the large expanse of the Common



View of St Mathews Church from the Common



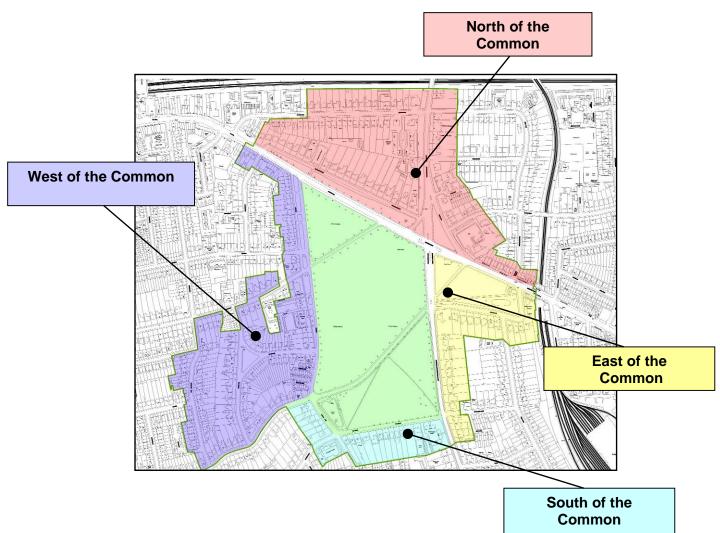
View of St Marks Road

# 5. The character of the conservation area

## 5.1. Character Areas and the quality of architecture

This section deals with the value and location of prominent historical buildings within the boundary of the CA. It includes structures and areas that represent important architectural and natural landmarks in Ealing Common A and that significantly contribute to its character. This section has been subdivided to reflect the fact that the character of the CA changes slightly within its boundary:

- 1. North of the Common
- 2. West of the Common
- 3. South of the Common
- 4. East of the Common



#### 5.1.1. The Common

The Common is a large open space with fine avenues of mature chestnut trees, most of which were planted in the late Victorian period following the purchase of the land by Ealing Local Board. Since its creation, the Common was traversed diagonally by avenues running from south-west to north-east, which allows pedestrian circulation. While Gunnersbury lane – Hanger Lane and the Uxbridge Road allow for vehicular circulation. The Common is not only the geographical centre of the CA, but also the bonding element of the residential areas. On the east and northern side, the Common is bounded by the rail tracks. The open space provides the setting for residential development, mainly of large detached houses north, west, south and east of the Common.

#### 5.1.2. North of The Common

The most extrovert houses with decorated gables, turrets and balconies, high pitched roofs, patterned brickwork and elaborate pillared porches, are in North Common Road and date from the development of the Wood Estate in the 1880s, as does St Matthews Church (1883-4) by Alfred Jowers.

The Church (Grade II Listed) is the focal point of the streetscape along North Common Road but also a focal point within the CA as it is visible from most points from the Common. It is a 'capacious red brick basilica' with apsed east end and west gable with tracery. The Church boasts much stained glass, the most unusual to the north aisle window by Reginald Hallward, 1919 and 1924 in a typical post war Arts & Craft manner. (Pevsner).

Houses in North Common Road set a pattern of 'gothic style' development which is repeated in a more modest form to the east of Hanger Lane (e.g. in Creffield and Inglis Roads which are now part of the Creffield CA). Of particular note are **nos 9-10** North Common Road **(Locally Listed)**. These are two substantial double-

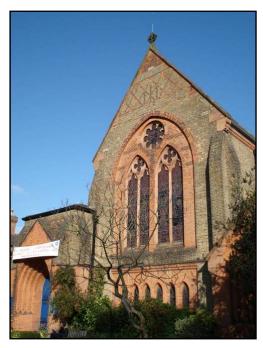
(Locally Listed). These are two substantial double-fronted detached houses now merged together as YMCA by a clumsy in-fill link-extension. The 2-storey plus attic houses display most of the Victorian gothic features common to the other houses along North Common Road, but in a more exuberant and refined version. The entrance is marked by a projecting porch with a steeply pointed roof with decorative timber bargeboards, side pilasters and white painted timber embellishments. A 2-storey side canted bay is a prime feature of the well articulated elevation: The long and thin sashes across the canted bay impress a strong vertical rhythm. In no 10 the canted bay is surmounted by an outward front gable with bargeboards and other open timber embellishments, whilst at no 9 the front gable has been stuccoed forming



Avenue of chestenut trees across the Common



North Common Road from west looking east



St Mathews Church

a projecting element supported by timber brackets. Here timber decorations appear in a more traditional mock-Tudor idiom. Terracotta and stucco decorations define the eaves and the canted bay. The steeply pitched roof is intercepted by tall chimney stacks and a proud turret capped by a squat spire. The richness of this decorative repertoire is complemented on the roof by the tiles forming a well distinguished rhomboidal pattern.

The north-east part of the CA is visually dominated by the harsh forms of the Ramada-Jarvis Hotel which replaced a group of older houses in the 1970s. Continuing eastwards, along the Uxbridge Road are semidetached Edwardian houses followed by a terrace of the same time.

Fielding terrace are actually semi-detached but lined close enough to be read as a continuous terrace. The 2storey houses sit fairly close to the streetline with small front yards. Elevations are very much defined by a 2storey canted bay surmounted by a pitched roof gable with timber embellishments. The entrance timber porch is open and it is covered by a single slope roof intercepted by a small front gable. Further east, the Wolverton Mansions is a 3-storey terrace in red bricks with white stucco trimming. The rhythm of the elevation is assured by squared, 2-storey projecting bays with stucco decorations. Projecting bays are linked by cast iron balconies. A cast iron balcony also surmounts the top floor parapet which probably hides eider a flat of a very low pitch roofline. Multi-pane original sash windows still remain adding texture to the pattern of the elevations. Wolverton Mansions is rather close to the streetline as well, yet original portions of a rather unusual original boundary treatment made of rouble and bricks remain.

#### **Hamilton Road**

Hamilton Road runs north of North Common Road and links the Mall on the west side with Hanger Lane on the east side. The western end of Hamilton Road has a rather fragmented appearance with several later development. The central and eastern sections are more coherent in terms of architectural character. The street is lined with late Victorian detached houses. Of particular merit are no 36 and 38 Locally Listed.



No 10 North Common road



No 9 North Common Road

#### 5.1.3. West of The Common

The mid-Victorian character of the northern edge, along the Uxbridge Road, is still visibly intact. In the north-west corner of the CA, the Mall leads from the Common into the Victorian heart of Ealing Town Centre. On the south side, nos 42-43 The Mall are a 'handsome mid c19 stuccoed pair of villas with giant pilasters' (Pevsner). Nos 42 and 43 (Grade II Listed) are two early 19<sup>th</sup> Century pair of stuccoed houses of 2-storey plus basement. Six double-hung sashes, seven granite Doric pilasters and first floor stringcourse define the main elevation. Ground floor windows have architraves and entablatures and cast iron balcony railings. Panelled timber doors with fanlights are set into plain recessed porches. The eaves are decorated with paired receded brackets. Welsh slates cover the hipped roof.

The west side of the Common is of mixed architectural quality, but nevertheless provides a good backdrop to the open space. The northern end contains a group of attractive c1840 stuccoed houses with a later terrace (1864-68) of larger somewhat 'Italianate' houses immediately to the south (nos 10-16).

Nos 6 to 9 (consec) dating from the late 1790's, are **Listed Grade II**, Nos 6 and 7 form right hand pair in this long 2-storey row. Each one and a half bays with each division defined by giant Doric pilaster. Houses are stuccoed under hipped slate roof. To the right of no 6 is a single storey parapetted extension with a central canted bay. Two-storey linking wing to left of 2 bays with panelled and pedimented parapet. Nos 8 and 9 form left hand pair - 1+1/2+1+1+1/2+1 bays. Each division defined by a giant Corinthian pilaster. Stucco under a hipped slate roof. Entrance doors to each house in half bays.

Further along The Common are St Marks Road and St Matthews Road, two pretty artisan cul-de-sacs of c1880, and the Grange Hotel/ Public house on the corner with Warwick Road.



View of the eastern end of the Mall leading to Ealing Common



Nos 42-43 the Mall



View of the Common (Road) from the north looking south



Nos 6-9 the Common

West of the Common Road of the CA includes Grange Park and the part of Warwick Road.

Warwick Road is lined by double fronted late Victorian detached houses. These are well set back from the streetline with substantial front yards, trees and boundary treatments assure the continuity of the streetscape. Houses are 2-storey and are normally built in pale stock bricks with red brick detailing. A projecting, full-height side bay, contains a 2-storey canted window. A front gable intercepts the pitched roof together with a pitched roof front dormer. Front gables are often traded with tile hanging. Roofs are normally covered with flat clay tiles.

Along Grange Park Road are a number of similar properties to Warwick Road but also some earlier Victorian terraces. In particular facing the small green nos 33-40 and 40 to 48 are 3-storey plus half basement properties in stock bricks with the typical stucco trimming and canted bays of the time.



Nos 28 the Common



Nos 1-17 St Marks Road



The Grange PH



**Grange Road** 

#### 5.1.4. South of the Common

The south side of the Common starts with All Saints Church (**Grade II Listed**), at the corner of Elm Grove Road at no 1 Elm Grove Road. The church was designed by W. Alfred Pite in 1903-5 in 'conventional stone Gothic' externally but with fine Art Nouveau influenced interior details. The exterior is rock faced squared and coursed rubble with a north- west tower under which is the main entrance. The nave and lean-to aisles are castellated.

The houses in Elm Avenue date mainly from the early twentieth century and they constitute a rather diverse ensemble. Most of them in fact display very distinguished individual features, but of particular interest is no15, in Cape Dutch style, designed in 1928 for Sir Michael Balcon (head of the nearby Ealing Studios). Also of interest are no 19 and no 21 both with very distinguished timber embellishments. No 19 has an idiosyncratic gambrel roof intercepted by a centred first floor gabled bay with bold half-timber details. The protruding bay is supported by bricks columns at ground floor which form the entrance porch to the house. Other two properties of interests are no 1 and 3 Elm Avenue. No 1 in particular is a proud, double fronted property, with two side 2-storey bow windows and very intricate brick patterned decoration, like the herringbone motif above the entrance porch. The hipped roof has very projecting eaves supported by brackets and is intercepted by very tall and elaborate chimneystacks which confer to the property a very strong arts and craft feel. Nos 1 and 3 are unfortunately vacant at the moment, therefore their potential contribution to the character of the area and their good architectural qualities are not displayed at their best.

A few houses along Warwick Dene are also included in the CA. Houses along Warwick Dene are very much independently designed thus following the character of individual houses along Elms Avenue.

No 2 (Locally Listed) is a substantial detached red brick, double fronted house. The bright red bricks are interrupted by very bold white stucco mouldings that together with the white timber joinery define the pattern of the elevation. The volumetric articulation of the elevation is assured by a 2-storey canted bay finished with a parapet decorated with a stucco medallion. The side bay is finished with a front gable intercepting the hipped roof. The entrance porch is a particularly exuberant feature with side stuccoed columns topped by a lunette pediment.



No 1 Elm Avenue



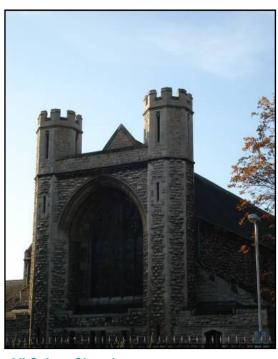
No 3 Elm Avenue



No 15 Elm Avenue

No 4 is also **Locally Listed**. The double-fronted house is in red brick with similar characteristics of no 2. Here the side bay is finished with a crenellated Flemish gable with a more elaborate profile. Also the joinery is very distinguished with large multi-pane sashes. Another distinguished feature are 2 decorative horizontal bands running across the elevation at ground and first floor level where a thick stucco course encloses a motif made of diagonally arranged bricks.

No 6 Warwick Dene (Locally Listed) is the corner property with a distinguished Queen Anne feel. The house is built in purple bricks with stone dressing. The two front-facing Dutch gables are a distinguished feature in the townscape. The volumetric articulation of the main elevation with its gabled front is further augmented by the 2-storey canted bay on one side of the house which is all dressed in stone.



**All Saints Church** 



No 19 Elm Avenue



**No2 Warwick Dene** 



No 4 Warwick Dene

#### 5.1.5. East of the Common

The character of the east side of the CA is particularly affected by the heavy traffic of the North Circular Road, and the associated conversion and redevelopment of the original houses along the main roads. The CA extends northwards as far as the railway, and includes the large, character Victorian houses on the east side of Hanger Lane.

The north-east part of the CA is visually dominated by the Ramada Hotel which replaced a group of older houses in the 1970s.

Despite the North Circular Road traffic along its east side, Ealing Common is still a large and pleasant open area with many fine trees that provides an excellent setting for the varied architecture, much of it of interesting quality, dating from the mid-Victorian period onwards.

#### 5.2. Key unlisted buildings

A number of unlisted buildings in Ealing Common A contribute positively to the character of the area despite not meeting the criteria for statutory or possibly local listing. They reflect the age, style and material of a substantial number of buildings in the CA and are a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement. The following buildings already mentioned in the previous sections are considered a positive contribution to the character of the CA.

All the unlisted Victorian houses along North Common Road are of particular architectural merit and make a well established ensemble testifying the architecture of that time. In particular:

- No 28 The Common
- The Grange PH
- No1 and 3 Elms Avenue



**Leopold Road** 



No 3 Gunnersbury Avenue



No 6 Gunnersbury Avenue

### 5.3. Building materials and local details

Buildings around Ealing Common display a variety of materials and architectural details as they developed at different times and in different styles.

#### North of the Common

A mix of red and stock bricks laid in Flemish bond with terracotta detail, tile hangings, highly decorative timber embellishments are the predominant material found in the houses lining North Common Road.

The roof-form is mainly formed by very steeply pitched roofs. Rooflines are very articulated with projecting full-heights bays topped by prominent front gabled and tall and elaborately finished chimney stacks. Roofs are mainly covered with flat tiles and are finished with terracotta ridge tiles. Full-height canted bay windows and the prominent front gables are often embellished with tile hanging or timber embellishments which are contradistinctive features.

Front porches designs are varied. Some of the houses have projecting timber hoods with tiled pitched roof, decorative bargeboards supported by decorative brackets. In most cases timber pitched hoods cover a recessed porch with side marble columns and classical capitals supporting a gothic pointed arch (A). Other houses along North Common Road boast a slightly different design with a projecting porch with side marble columns but surmounted by a broken stuccoed pediment (B). In other examples porches are recessed but still quite exuberant in their design with rounded stuccoed pediment surmounted by a spherical finial (C).

Panelled timber doors with leaded glass insets are typical.

Terracotta decorations forming a stringcourse at eaves level are a particularly pleasing detail of some of the property along North Common Road.



Terracotta decorative details



Early boundary wall in Hamilton Road



Prominent front gables, pitched roofs, 2-storey canted bays and timber embellishments





Various examples of front porches in North Common Road



Imposing stucco pediment with spherical finial



Interlocking tiles paving at entrance porch

#### **West of the Common**

Victorian houses along the eastern end of the Mall mainly display yellow stock bricks with Italianate stucco surrounds, some with bold decorative patterns.

Stucco trimming, ornate window surrounds, columned entrance porches define the character of these Canted bay-windows add properties. volumetric articulation to the facade. Timber sash windows 1/1 or 2/2 are the prominent window type. Some of the properties still retain their original entrance pathway with interlocking tiles. The terrace at nos 6-9 is rendered in white but probably built in stock bricks as well. Traditional roof form of Victorian properties along the west side of the Common is mainly low pitch - hipped, covered with slates. Roofs have very prominent eaves with brackets. Sections of original boundary treatments still remain, this consist of a low brick wall (about 7/8 courses in stock brick) with stone coping and piers aliened with the pathway leading to the entrance.

St Mathews Road with Vine Place and St Marks Road display the typical simple details of workman cottages: stock bricks with red brick window arches, timber sashes, and hipped stale roofs.



Typical door hood in Grange Park Road



Harringbone motifs, red brick and terracotta details



Typical Victorian entrance porches with stuccoed columns



Entrance pathways with early interlocking or mosaic tiles



Typical boundary wall of Victorian houses along the Common



Early boundary wall along Grange Park Road

#### **East of the Common**

On Gunnersbury Avenue a mix of red and stock brick is to be found. The handsome Edwardian properties are double fronted often with projecting bays on either side of the main elevation. Side bays are finished with front gables treated with tile hanging and timber bargeboards. The most common brick bond is Flemish. Prominent brick porches with pitched roofs and gothic entrance arch, are the recurrent pattern of these residential properties. Terracotta details are a common feature in the residential properties. Roofs are pitched intercepted by front gables and are covered with tiles.

Very limited sections of original boundary treatment remain.

#### South of the Common

Architectural expression of houses along the southern section of the Common is varied and this is reflected in the different materials and details used.

Nevertheless, houses are all built between 1910 and 1930 and display some of the recurrent features of that time. Dark red/purple bricks with herringbone patterned motifs add refined texture to the brickwork. Roughcast or stucco render sometime break off the brickwork adding variety and empathising architectural elements. Front gables are very boldly treated with half-timber decorations or with very ornate profile.

Bold stucco mouldings bands and insets add interest to the elevation. Entrance porches are in most cases a distinguishing feature of the properties and are of disparate designs.



Projecting soffits supported by brackets



Elaborate decorative brick work with herringbone motif



Prominent front bay with distinctive hattingbone motif and projecting pitched gable with half-timber decorations



Free-standing Dutch gables at no 15 Elm Avenue



Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century boundary wall in Elms Avenue

# 5.4. Contribution of open spaces, trees and landscape

The green spaces of Ealing Common is the core of the CA. Together with Ealing Green to the south west of the CA and Haven Green to the north west of the CA, Ealing Common is a formal recreational space for residents and visitors to the CA. Ealing Common is listed as Ealing Borough's Public Open Spaces; this status recognises the value of the open space also for cultural and social activities.<sup>2</sup>

The presence of healthy and mature broadleaved trees along the streets – in the proximity of residential areas – is critical to the character of the CA and is intrinsic to the very historical image of Ealing as a green suburb. Trees along North Common, Elm Avenue, Gunnersbury Avenue, Grange Park Road, are particularly significant. In the residential areas, mature trees and green hedges complement the architecture and frame views within the CA.



Ealing Common hosting the Chinese Circus in the autumn 2008



**Ealing Common** 



Cast iron post on the northern side of the Common along the Uxbridge Road



Elms Avenue lined by mature trees



**Grange Park Green** 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> UDP, Vol 1, p. 45, policy 3.4, Vol 2, p. 12

# 5.5. The extent of intrusion or damage (negative factors)

As mentioned previously in this text, the heavy traffic of the North Circular is major element of intrusion in the peaceful and rural character of the Common.

Recent developments or later replacements of earlier buildings have had a detrimental impact on the CA. Poor and/or undistinguished design acts as an intrusion within the CA's townscape and creates visual disturbance in the views within the CA.

The Ramada Hotel is a major eyesore and disrupts views within the CA; other negatives are other later developments as Hawthorne Court, Woodside Court, on the western side of the Common, and Gunnersbury Manor, at the southern boundary of the CA along Elms Avenue, display a rather undistinguished design that does not reflect the scale massing, materials and patterns of the CA.

A number of other threats to the special character of the CA are due to inappropriate development or alterations of the original fabric or properties' layout.

The loss of front garden trees and fences together with loss of garden walls, constitutes a threat to the area's character. Boundary walls between properties were an important element of the character of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. However, large portions of original boundary walls and fences have been demolished and replaced inappropriately. This has resulted in a significant loss in definition of the streetscape and a loss of the original spatial hierarchy between public and private spaces within the CA.

Later boundary walls have been executed with materials, design or technologies that are inappropriate with respect to their context. The thinning of trees and hedges along properties' boundaries also contributes to the creation of an undistinguished and neglected feel.

The CA is under a number of other threats that include:

- Single-storey detached later garages that act as a gap sites and create unsightly fractures within the streetscape
- Extensions that are disrupting the traditional spatial relationship between buildings and sometime producing a terracing effect where properties where originally detached or semidetached
- Bulky dormer windows at the rear, at the front and at the side of properties that disrupt the original



Single storey later garage along Uxbridge Road



Ramada Hotel



Boundary wall constructed with inappropriate materials and design



Detrimental closed porch constructed with alien materials and inappropriate design

proportions and character of historic properties as well as the roofscape of the CA.

- Rooflights on front slopes
- Each house period identified within the CA displays a very distinct character reflected in the design and quality of the joinery. The loss of the traditional fenestration patterns, together with later doorways where materials, design and decoration patterns are not in keeping with the character of the property is a major concern for the quality of the architecture in the CA. Inappropriate replacements weaken the finish of the houses and give them a bland look.

#### 5.6. Public realm and street furniture

Pavements in the CA are mostly covered with tarmac or with concrete slabs and finished with granite kerbs. The tarmac coating is not in very good condition and does not visually contribute to the quality of the streetscape as it does not create enough distinction between the central section of the street, open with vehicular traffic, and the pedestrian sections. A more suitable paving material should be sought. In addition redundant railings and service cabinets create visual clutter and obstruct pedestrian movements.

Ealing Common has heritage lampposts (Victorian style), which are appropriate for the traditional "village green" character of this section of the CA.

Along Grange Park and Warwick Road old cast iron gaslamps survive. Those are precious remains and should be refurbished and retained. The heritage lampposts and traditional gas- cast iron lamps co-exist with a number of other examples of more utilitarian lampposts within the CA.

Cast iron bollards with connecting top rail surround part of the Common. Those should be maintained and preserved. A few wooden benches are scattered across the Common.

There are a few traditional post-boxes in the CA, cast iron and painted bright red. They should be preserved.

The shopping and commercial areas of Ealing Common CA adjoining Ealing Common Station retain an attractive Edwardian feel; yet shopfronts would benefit from improvements and better maintenance.



Roof extension destroyinng the rhythm onf the roofscape





Cast iron post-box and early cast iron gas lamp



Cast iron bollards along the northern border of the Common



Service cabinets cluttering the pavements of the CA

#### 5.7. General condition

The overall condition of most of the fabric in the CA is sound, although the state of neglect of some properties' front yards, cluttered with fly tipping is a concern for the CA. In particular several properties within the CA have been converted from single family houses into flats, has led to poor maintenance of the front yards and the construction of unsightly refuse storing brick build in front of the properties. Pavements are in poor condition and could be improved through repaving with high quality stone.

# 5.8. Problems, pressures and capacity for change

In the residential areas within the CA there is little capacity for major change. Over the course of the years, all plots have been developed in a reasonably sensitive manner. Further intensification could detract from the traditional layout of properties, which has been identified as one of the elements of special interest. The proliferation of inappropriate roof developments should be stopped as it creates a severe disturbance to the architectural and townscape quality of the CA. Further control of replacements in historic properties should be exerted, as they are a harsh threat to the character of the area.



Shopping parade opposite to Ealing Common station (outside the CA)



Refuse facilities outside properties aling the Common. They are detrimental the the appearance of the properties as well as of the CA



Very utilitarian appearance of the side elevation of the Station buildings as seen from Leopold Road

#### 6. Suggested boundary changes

The Appraisal of Ealing Common CA and of its immediate surrounds has shown no need to revise the extent of its boundary. Significant areas in the surroundings are already protected by the CA status (i.e. Ealing Common CA, Ealing Town Centre CA and Mount Park CA)

#### 7. Community involvement

In accordance with English Heritage guidance, the Council has involved key stakeholders during the appraisal process, a list of which is appended. This initial consultation process has been undertaken in a number of on site meetings with representatives of local amenity groups and in the form of a questionnaire sent to key stakeholders based in and around the CA. The questionnaire called for careful consideration. Due regard to the questionnaire responses has been paid in this text.

#### 8. Summary of issues

- Loss of front garden trees and fences
- Loss of front yard walls to create parking for cars
- Gap site that disrupt the urban grain and the townscape quality and cohesion.
- Uncoordinated street furniture
- The general inappropriate design of recent developments:
  - New boundary walls with inappropriate material and design with the addition of out of character decorative railings
  - 2. Changes to the fenestration
  - 3. Continuous porches
  - 4. Bulky dormers that disrupt the roofscape
  - 5. Rooflights on front slopes

#### 9. Planning and Policy framework

A summary of the principal legislation and policy guidance applicable to Ealing Common CA is set out below:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the process of assessment, definition, or revision of boundaries and formulation of proposals for CAs as well as the identification and protection of Listed Buildings. Authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, or in case of Listed Buildings, to have special regard for their preservation in the exercise of their powers under the Planning Acts.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 15, for local and other public authorities, property owners, developers, amenity bodies and public, sets out Government polices for the identification and protection of historic buildings, CAs, and other elements of the historic environment. Ealing Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) or Local Development Framework (LDF) includes its statutory policies for implementing the Acts and apply the PPG. This Appraisal should be taken into account when considering planning or listed building applications within the Conservation Area.

The prime objective of the relevant legislation and guidance is the preservation and/or enhancement of character or appearance of CAs. Any proposed developments which conflict with that objective should be normally expected to be refused. PPG 15 and local policy also support a presumption in favour of preservation of any buildings or objects which are considered to make a positive contribution to the character of a CA. At the same time, it is recognised the need to accommodate changes which respect or reinforce the character of the area in order to maintain its vitality.

Many local planning policies – not only those for design and conservation – can affect the developments in a CA. For instance polices on sustainable development, meeting housing needs, affordable housing, landscape, biodiversity, energy efficiency, transport, people with disabilities, employment and town centres can all influence development and the quality of the environment in CA. However, policies concerned with design quality and character generally take greater importance in CAs. The adopted UDP's section on Urban Design includes policies dealing with:

- Design of Development (4.1)
- Mixed Use (4.2)
- Landscaping, Tree Protection and Planting (4.5)
- Statutory Listed Buildings (4.7)
- Conservation Areas (4.8)
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Interest Areas (4.9)
- Commercial Frontages and Advertising Signs (4.10)

Throughout the Urban Design section, references are made after each policy to further relevant documents and policies, including:

- SPG 5: How to Prepare an Urban Design Statement
- SGP 12: Greening Your Home
- Ealing LA21: Keeping Your Front Garden Alive
- PPG 15: Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas
- PPG16: Archaeology and Planning
- PPG 19: Outdoor Advertisement Control
- "By Design Urban Design in the Planning System: towards a better Practice" (CABE & DETR, 2000)
- "By Design Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG 3" (CABE, 2001)
- The London Plan, Policy 4B.5, 4B10, 4B11, 4B12, 4B14

#### Policy 4.8 for CAs states:

- The Council will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of CAs and their setting.
- New developments, built or otherwise within or adjacent to the CA, will be permitted provided that they are well related to the existing character of the area in terms of its historic and architectural quality and green setting. The Council requires that any development proposal adheres to the Council's specific CA guidelines.
- The council will refuse planning permission and CA consent for development of existing buildings, unless the proposed replacement development will preserve or enhance the character of the CA. Where appropriate, the Council will also make Article 4 Directions that restrict development rights granted by the General Permitted Development Order.
- It is the Council's intention to create new and extended CAs in the Borough, in areas which merit this status, having regard to the individual quality of the area as a whole.

The criteria for further designation or extension of CAs are sets out as:

- The area concerned must be the setting for one or more of the following:
- 1. Listed Buildings, or a group of buildings of good design from any period especially when they create an attractive townscape.
- 2. Urban open spaces or historic village greens.
- 3. Features of historic or archaeological interest including industrial or transport heritage.
- 4. Landscape features including, water, trees, and gardens of value for their plant, wildlife or their amenity of the surrounding area.
- 5. An historic street pattern.
  - The area should have some cohesion of character worthy of preservation.
  - The benefit of preserving that character must be considered to be greater than the loss of certain permitted development rights having regard to the financial and resource implications of such action.

Detailed advice on policies contained in the UDP, on restrictions on Listed Buildings, residential and commercial properties in Conservation Areas, and for guidance on the procedure to apply for permission, can be obtained from the London Borough of Ealing, Planning and Surveying Services, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, London, W5 2HL, Tel 020 8825 6600, email: <a href="mailto:planning@ealing.gov.uk">planning@ealing.gov.uk</a>, or, alternatively, from the Council's website at www.ealing.gov.uk.

#### 10. Glossary

Ashlar hewn blocks of masonry neatened and laid in horizontal courses

**Arch** the spanning of an opening by means other than a lintel. Most commonly arches are curved and made up of wedge shaped blocks. Numerous variations exist e.g. Blind, Triumphant, Vernacular

**Band** an unmoulded, projecting string course, often delineating a floor/storey

**Bargeboards** projecting boards set against the incline of the gable of a building

Bay the vertical division of the exterior, (or interior) of a building marked by a window opening. They may be Round, (or Canted) or Square

**Bond** style of laying Headers, (bricks laid with the long side at right angles to the face of a wall), and Stretchers, (bricks laid with the long side along the face of the wall), within masonry courses. Flemish Bond is where alternate Headers and Stretchers are used in the face of the wall. English Bond is where alternate courses of bricks in the facing wall are either Headers or Stretchers

**Buttress** a mass of masonry or brickwork projecting from or built against a wall to give additional strength

**Capitals** the top or head of a column, pier or pilaster, which relate to Classical architecture

Casement a window hinged vertically to open like a door

**Cladding** an external covering applied to a structure for protective/aesthetic purposes

**Coade Stone** an artificial cast stone used from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century for decorative keystones

**Column** an upright, often supporting, structure either, round, square or rectangular in form

**Coping** a capping or covering found on top of a wall. They can be flat or sloping to discharge water

**Cornice** a projecting, decorative moulding found along the top of a building refers to a cornice made up of a series of small square blocks **Dentil Cornice** 

**Corbel** a projecting block, usually stone, supporting a horizontal beam

**Course** a continuous layer of stones or bricks found in a wall. Referred to as String, (horizontal) or Soldier (vertical)

Cupola a dome that crowns a roof or turret

**Curtilage** the available space attached to a property which forms a singular enclosure

**Door** hood a projected moulding above an exterior door designed to through off the rain

**Dormer** window a projecting window placed vertically in a sloping roof with a roof of its own

**Dressings** a decorative feature made of stones, most commonly set around windows

**Eaves** the underpart of a sloping roof overhanging a wall, (Oversailing), or flush with it

Elevation the external wall or face of a building

Façade commonly the front face of a building

**Fanlights** a window, often semi-circular with radiating glazing panels, found over a door in Georgian buildings

Fenestration the arrangement of windows in a building

Finial a formal ornament, (usually in Fleur-de-Lis) at the top of a gable, pinnacle or canopy

Footprint the total area over which a building is situated

Gable the triangular upper part of a wall found at the end of a ridged roof

Grain refers to the arrangement and size of buildings in the urban context

Hardstanding an area of hard material used for parking cars within the curtilage, (often front garden space) of a house

**Hipped roof** a shallowish pitch with sloping at the vertical ends

**Keystone** central wedge-shaped stone at the crown of an arch

Mortar mixture of cement, (or lime), sand and water laid between bricks as an adhesive

**Lintel** a horizontal supporting element of timber, metal or stone found across the top of a door or window

**Mansard roof** has a double slope where the lower part is steeper than the upper part

**Moulding** a continuous projection or groove used decoratively to throw shadow or rain water off a wall

**Mullion** a vertical element (glazing bar) that divides a window into two or more lights

Pantile a roofing tile with a curved S shape designed to interlock

Parapet a low wall used as a safety device where a drop or edge exists

**Pediment** a low pitched Gable above a Portico

**Pier** a solid vertical masonry support (or mass) found in buildings and walls

Pilaster a shallow pier projecting slightly from a wall

Pinnacle a small pyramidal or conical shaped crowing element

**Pitched roof** the most common type. Gables exist at each end of the pitch

Plinth the projecting base of a wall or column

**Pointing** the exposed mortar finish to brick or masonry joints

Polychromatic multi-coloured brickwork

**Portico** a roof supported by columns, usually attached as a porch to a building

Quatrefoil a set of decorative openings, often leaf shaped cut into an arch

**Quoins** dressed bricks found at the corners of buildings, usually laid so that the brick faces are alternately large and small

**Ragstone** rubble masonry, rough building stones or flints, generally laid in irregular courses

**Recess** space set back in a wall, often the setting for an entrance porch

Render plaster or stucco applied to a wall

Rooflight a window set flush into the slope of a roof

**Rusticated** masonry cut in huge blocks, often in its original hewn state, that is normally found on the lower half of buildings

**Sash window** a window that is double hung with wooden frames (sashes) that slide up and down with pulleys

**Sepulchre** a recess with Tombchest designed to receive an effigy of Christ

**Sett** paving slabs

**Sills** the horizontal element found at the base of a window or door frame

**Stucco** a form of plaster used internally or externally to decorate or protect

**Transom** a horizontal bar of stone or wood across a window

#### 11. Bibliography

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# 12. Appendix - Stakeholder consultation

#### 12.1. List of stakeholders consulted

**Ealing Civic Society** 

**Ealing Common CA Planning Advisory Panel** 

**Central Ealing Residents' Association** 

#### **Ward Councillors:**

- Ian Potts
- David Scott
- Anthony Young

# 12.2. Ealing Common Conservation Area Appraisal Questionnaire sent to stakeholders

- 1. Please list any special qualities, distinctive features or areas, which you consider a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
- 2. Can you identify any key features within the built or natural environment that you feel have been eroded over time?
- 3. Can you identify any development that has taken place since designation, which you feel had a negative impact of the character of the conservation area? If yes, why?
- 4. Can you identify any areas on the attached map that you consider should be included or excluded from the Conservation Area? Please give your reason.
- 5. How effective do you consider the present controls over development to be? Please explain.
- Apart from the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, are there any buildings or structures that you consider are of architectural or historical significance? Please give details.
- Can you identify any open spaces, significant trees or hedges that you feel make a significant contribution to the special character of Conservation Area? Please list

- 8. What would you say were the most significant views, vistas or panoramas, within, into or from the Conservation Area? Please give details.
- 9. In your opinion, what impact does road traffic have upon the Conservation Area?
- 10. Do you think there are any areas that would benefit from being car-free? If so please describe.
- 11. Are the streets and public areas generally appealing and easy to use? Please comment.
- 12. Do you think that street furniture is in character with the Conservation Area? If not, what improvements could you suggest?
- 13. Do you have any concerns about personal safety within the area? Please give details.
- 14. Do you feel that sufficient Conservation Area direction exists to guide development proposals? Please give details.