

Caroline Gardens

Conservation Area Appraisal

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Caroline Gardens Conservation Area

1. Introduction

1.1. The Conservation Area Appraisal: Purpose

- 1.1.1. The purpose of this statement is to provide both an account of Caroline Gardens Conservation Area and a clear indication of the Borough Council's approach to its preservation and enhancement. It is intended to assist and guide all those involved in development and change in the area, and will be used by the Council in assessing the design of development proposals.
- 1.1.2. The statutory definition of a Conservation Area is an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance." Conservation Areas are normally centred on listed buildings and pleasant groups of other buildings, open space, or an historic street pattern. A town space or features of archaeological interest may also contribute to the special character of an area. It is, however, the character of an area, rather than individual buildings, that such a designation seeks to preserve or enhance. The most recent legislation dealing with Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Guidance to the legislation is given in Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS 5) and the related Historic Environment Planning Practice Guidance, published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2010.
- 1.1.3. Planning legislation requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. In doing this the emphasis will be on control rather than prevention, to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with its special architectural and visual qualities.
- 1.1.4. This statement has been prepared following guidance given by English Heritage in their note "Conservation Area Appraisals".

1.2. Arrangement of this document

- 1.2.1. Following the Introduction, Section 2 provides a brief history of the area and its development. Section 3 starts with a broad appraisal of its character and appearance, with reference to the range of materials, details and building types to be found in the area. Section 3 then goes on to describe the area with specific reference to architectural and historic qualities, views and townscape, the character and relationship of public and green spaces, and any elements that detract from the Conservation Area. Section 4 provides an audit of the features of special interest of the area, including listed buildings, particular groups of unlisted buildings, and trees, planting and other streetscape elements. Section 5 provides guidelines for future management and change in the conservation area.

1.3. Caroline Gardens Conservation Area

1.4. Location

1.4.1. The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area is situated in North Peckham, on the west side of Asylum Road. Asylum Road leads off the southern side of the Old Kent Road and forms the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. The southern and western boundaries respectively are formed by the rear of properties facing onto Studholme Street and Naylor Road. These are relatively quiet residential streets in comparison to the Old Kent Road (A2), which provides one of the main routes through South East London. The Conservation Area boundary is tightly drawn around the complete almshouse development, which is physically defined, by its enclosing railings and walls.

1.4.2. The area is relatively flat, with a gentle slope towards Asylum Road from the Old Kent Road. The grounds in which the almshouse buildings are situated are gently undulating. In the original laying out of the development the central gardens were sunken with steps leading up to the pathways in front of the buildings. Over time the ground has been raised but not evenly throughout the site and there is still a discernible height difference between buildings and garden.

1.5. Planning History

1.5.1. The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area was originally designated in July 1978 under the Civic Amenities Act 1967. All of the buildings within the Conservation Area were added to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, Grade II, in February 1962.

1.6. Unitary Development Plan Policies

1.6.1. The Development Plan for Southwark is the Southwark Plan (UDP) July 2007, which was adopted by the Council on 28 July 2007, superseding the Unitary Development Plan adopted in 1995. The new Plan contains the following policies relating to Conservation Areas.

Policy 3.15 – Conservation of the Historic Environment

Development should preserve or enhance the special interest or historic character or appearance of buildings or areas of historical or architectural significance. Planning proposals that will have an adverse effect on the historic environment will not be permitted.

The character and appearance of Conservation Areas should be recognised and respected in any new development within these areas. Article 4 directions may be imposed to limit permitted development rights, particularly in residential areas.

In this policy the term historic environment includes Conservation Areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected London Squares, historic parks and gardens and trees that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, trees that contribute to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area and ancient hedgerows.

Policy 3.16 – Conservation Areas

Within Conservation Areas development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

New Development, including Alterations and Extensions

Planning permission will be granted for new development, including the extension or alteration of existing buildings provided that the proposals:

- *Respect the context of the Conservation Area, having regard to the content of Conservation Area Appraisals and other adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents; and*
- *Use high quality materials that complement and enhance the Conservation Area; and*
- *Do not involve the loss of existing traditional features of interest which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and*
- *Do not introduce design details or features that are out of character with the area, such as the use of windows and doors made of aluminium or UPVC or other non-traditional materials.*

Where appropriate development in Conservation Areas may include the use of modern materials or innovative techniques only where it can be demonstrated in a design and access statement that this will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Demolition

Within Conservation Areas, there will be a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings that contribute positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Planning permission will not be granted for proposals that involve the demolition or substantial demolition of a building that contributes positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless, in accordance with PPG 15 or any subsequent amendments, it can be demonstrated that:

- *Costs of repairs and maintenance would not be justified, when assessed against the importance of the building and the value derived from its continued use, provided that the building has not been deliberately neglected; and*
- *Real efforts have been made to continue the current use or find a viable alternative use for the building; and*
- *There will be substantial planning benefits for the community from redevelopment which would decisively outweigh loss from the resulting demolition; and*
- *The replacement development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and has been granted planning permission.*

Implementation

Submission of details demonstrating that a contract for the construction of the replacement development has been let will be required prior to implementation of the development.

Policy 3.18 – Setting of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites

Permission will not be granted for developments that would not preserve or enhance:

- *The immediate or wider setting of a listed building; or*
- *An important view(s) of a listed building; or*
- *The setting of a Conservation Area; or*
- *Views into or out of a Conservation Area; or*
- *The setting of a World Heritage Site; or*
- *Important views of or from a World Heritage Site.*

1.7. PPS5: Planning and the Historic Environment

Introduction

1.7.1. Planning Policy statements set out the Government's national policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England. PPS5 sets out the planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The policies in PPS5 are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions where relevant.

1.7.2. PPS5 sets out that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets. Some heritage assets possess a level of interest that justifies designation and particular procedures apply to decisions that involve them. Designated assets are:

- World Heritage Sites;
- Scheduled monuments;
- Listed Buildings;
- Protected wreck sites;
- Conservation Area;
- Registered Parks and Gardens;
- Registered battlefields.

1.7.3. PPS5 also covers heritage assets that are not designated but which are of heritage interest and thus a material planning consideration.

1.7.4. Guidance to help practitioners implement these policies, including the legislative requirements that underpin it, is provided in Planning for the Historic Environment practice Guide. The policies and guidance under PPG15 have now been replaced by this PPS5 and the Practice Guidance.

The Policies

1.7.5. The value of the historic environment, and the contribution it makes to our cultural, social and economic life, is set out in the Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010. PPS5 comprises policies that will enable the Government's vision for the historic environment as set out in this statement to be implemented through the planning system.

1.7.6. The relevant policies to this designated heritage asset are set out below:

- Policy HE1: Heritage Assets and climate change;
- Policy HE2: Evidence base for plan-making;
- Policy HE3: Regional and local planning approaches;
- Policy HE4: Permitted development and article 4 directions;
- Policy HE5: Monitoring indicators;
- Policy HE6: Information requirements for applications for consent affecting heritage assets;
- Policy HE7: Policy principles guiding the determination of applications for consent relating to all heritage assets;
- Policy HE8: Additional policy principle guiding the consideration of applications for consent relating to heritage assets that are not covered by policy HE 9;
- Policy HE9: Additional policy principles guiding the consideration of applications for consent relating to designated heritage assets;
- Policy HE10: Additional policy principles guiding the consideration of applications for development affecting the setting of a designated heritage asset;
- Policy HE11: Enabling Development;
- Policy HE12: Policy principles guiding the recording of information related to heritage assets.

1.8. Further Information

1.8.1. This document is not exhaustive, and further advice and information can be obtained from the Planning Department, London Borough of Southwark.

1.8.2. Information on the Southwark Plan, including electronic versions of the plan and supplementary planning guidance, can be found on the Council's web site at www.southwark.gov.uk.

2. Historical Background

2.1. General

Origins

- 2.1.1. The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area is situated in North Peckham, off the Old Kent Road. It was located within the parish of St Giles, Camberwell. The area was predominately agricultural, and remained so until the 1700s. The Old Kent Road is one of the earliest urban areas along the main roads from London and is believed to run close to the Roman Watling Street. This highway ran from Richborough in Kent to Chester via London and St Albans and formed an important part of the Romano-British transport system.
- 2.1.2. Development of the Licensed Victuallers' Almshouses began in 1827 and at that time it was situated in an area known as Peckham New Town. North of Peckham High Street most of the land was used for market gardens and growing crops. However, houses lined parts of the Old Kent Road and some houses existed in Peckham New Town, the area surrounding what is today Peckham Park Road. The New Town was the first local example of planned development and was promoted by the Hill Family who owned the land.
- 2.1.3. By the 1870's North Peckham, which had begun life as a middle-class suburb of the New Town but then became a poorer area, was crowded with houses and other buildings - including churches and schools. Work for local people was found in heavy and light industry.

The Licensed Victuallers' Benevolent Institution

- 2.1.4. The Licensed Victuallers' Benevolent Institution was founded in 1827. A board of management was formed following a meeting of licensed victuallers to consider 'the advisability and feasibility of establishing an asylum in which aged or infirm members of the trade might pass the evening of life in peace and quietness'. In December of that year, they purchased the freehold land on the west side of the Old Kent Road. The appointed architect, Henry Rose, prepared plans for the erection of 101 dwellings. Each residence was to contain 3 rooms and the usual conveniences. HRH Duke of Sussex, who became patron of the institution, laid the first stone on 28th May 1828. The institution not only provided homes but other benefits including weekly money allowances, coal, medical advice and medicine.
- 2.1.5. In the Peckham area there were a number of workhouses set up following the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834. Those in need also received aid from charities, for instance in 1834 the Peckham Pensions Society was founded, and housing was provided by charitable organisations. As well as the Licensed Victuallers, there was the Girdler's Company who built fine almshouses in Albert (now Consort) Road in 1834 and the Metropolitan Beer and Wine Trade Society built an asylum on the north side of Nunhead Green.

Development of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum

- 2.1.6. The architect of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum, Henry Rose, is not particularly well known and indeed, the asylum development is his principal surviving work. He practised primarily in the Southwark area and other works include the Licensed Victuallers' School, Kennington Lane, 1835-6, now renamed Imperial Court, and the Borough Market, 1851, rebuilt 1863-4. He also rebuilt the nave of Southwark Cathedral in 1839-40 in a feeble Gothic style that was criticised in Pugin's 'Contrasts'; Sir A. W. Blomfield subsequently rebuilt this in 1890-7.
- 2.1.7. The first building contract at the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum was for the central portion of 43 separate dwellings around a green. The general body of subscribers elected prospective occupants. The south wing with 29 dwellings was ready for occupation in 1832 and the north wing with the same amount of accommodation in 1834. This phase of construction was followed in 1839 by the erection of the north and south entrance lodges.
- 2.1.8. Notable and extensive building additions were made from 1849-50 including 23 dwellings at the rear of the grounds known as the Ladies' Wing and the first stone laid by the Prince Consort. During this time a chaplain's residence, boardroom and a courtroom were also constructed.
- 2.1.9. The Asylum's fine Chapel was constructed in 1850. Several costly tablets were placed on the walls to the memory of benefactors, the most conspicuous being those to the Duke of Sussex and the Prince Consort. Impressive stained glass side windows were commissioned from the studio of Messrs Lavers, Barraud and Westlake and a magnificent altar window by Gibbs.
- 2.1.10. In 1858 arrangements were made for the construction of the Albert Wing along the western boundary of the site. This comprises 24 dwellings and the Prince Consort laid the foundation stone. The institution received royal charter in 1842 and in 1843 Prince Albert became its patron. Following his death in 1863 a statue was erected in his memory within the asylum grounds. The unveiling of the Prince Albert Statue took place on 9 August 1864 by the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII) who took up the role of royal patron.
- 2.1.11. The Duke of Edinburgh laid the foundation stone for the Smalley Wing on the northern extremity of the site in 1866. This wing comprises 10 dwellings in memory of the late secretary of the Incorporated Society of Licensed Victuallers, William Smalley. The layout and the plan form of the buildings is shown in detail on the 5 ft. to one mile Ordnance Survey plan of 1873-6.
- 2.1.12. The final phases of construction took place in 1904 with the construction of 6 houses on land formerly occupied by the chaplain's residence and in 1914 with the erection of offices for the institution in the grounds by FE Harford.



The gate-house to the side of the open space, fronting Asylum Road



The Chapel at the centre of the composition, fronting the open space



The dwellings to the side of the main horse-shoe composition



The dwellings to the rear, fronting the open space at the back of the horse-shoe

20th century

2.1.13. In 1959, when the Licensed Victuallers decided to move their old people to new homes at Denham, Bucks, Southwark Council acquired the property. This was when the present name was adopted. Caroline Sophie Secker had lived at the asylum until she died in 1845 at the age of 57. She was the widow of James Secker who was engaged as a royal marine at the battle of Trafalgar and is believed to have caught Nelson in his arms after he received his fatal wound. The estate is made up of 175 dwellings in total which are let to the 'over 50's', the vast majority of these are one bed houses on two floors. The former Board Room at the end of the south wing is now Southwark Council Social Services Day Centre for elderly and handicapped persons. 12A Asylum Road is the Social Services Day Centre and the East Peckham Consortium uses 12B Asylum Road as offices.

2.1.14. The Asylum Chapel has suffered the most within the complex over the years and is currently included on English Heritage's national register of buildings at risk. The chapel was bomb damaged during the Second World War and the temporary roof erected after the war has yet to be properly replaced. The interior of the building has largely been gutted although many of the stone tablets and stained glass windows are still in place, albeit in need of attention. The building was used in its present shell form for much of the 1990's by local artists but is now empty. The setting up of a building preservation trust is being investigated to develop a possible scheme for the repair and refurbishment of the Chapel as a community facility for residents.

3. The Character and Appearance of the Area

3.1. Broad Context

- 3.1.1. The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area boundary is drawn tightly around the extent of the Licensed Victualler's Asylum development and takes in the section of Asylum Road directly in front of it. It is in many respects an architectural set piece and is referred to as 'the only grand composition amongst the many almshouses of Camberwell' in Pevsner's guide to South London.
- 3.1.2. The setting of the Conservation Area is dominated by what appears to be remnants of the Peckham New Town in the form of early and mid-19th Century houses on Asylum Road and Commercial Way, some of which are listed; more modest and monotonous late 19th Century terraced houses; the large commercial premises on the Old Kent Road; and the oppressive 1960's point blocks on Commercial Road. The large converted former Carlton Works alongside the Conservation Area on Asylum Road also features prominently.
- 3.1.3. There are a number of attractive early Victorian villas and cottages just outside the Conservation Area along Asylum Road and on Commercial Way with strong architectural and townscape qualities, a number of these properties are Grade II listed. It is not considered appropriate to include these buildings within the Conservation Area due to their rather fragmented locations and more importantly, they would dilute its cohesive character.

3.2. Materials and Details

- 3.2.1. The scale, form, architecture and materials of buildings in The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area are consistent. The main phase of construction took place over a forty-year period and although the architect, Henry Rose's initial instruction was for 101 dwellings and there are now 175, the almshouse development has the feel of a carefully planned complex. The non-residential buildings, namely the chapel, the gate lodges, the day centre and the adjoining office building, provide exceptions in building form and detailing. The unifying features of the residential ranges are:
 - Yellow London stock brick as the basic construction material;
 - Stucco dressings in the form of cornices and string courses;
 - Detail also provided by gauged, cambered brick arches to sash windows and stone pilasters that define slightly projecting sections;
 - Slate roofs with shallow pitches set behind stuccoed parapets with prominent stock brick chimneys, each with four terracotta pots on top;
 - Timber sash windows painted white in a six over six configurations and timber double doors painted black in plain reveals with oblong over lights.

- 3.2.2. The gate lodges and day centre follow the same simple, neo-classical style but are more ornate. The gate lodges are typically designed for their time with a greater proliferation of stucco dressings than the dwellings including a stucco frieze over a pedimented centre.
- 3.2.3. The Day Centre is a rather grand and substantial building in the context of the complex and particularly, next to the modest gate lodge. Prominent features include its double doorway facing into the development with flanking pilasters supporting a profiled entablature with ornate blind arcading above, and its enormous stone pediment onto the street elevation.
- 3.2.4. Attached to the day centre is an annexe to the Licensed Victuallers' offices by FE Harford and designed to harmonise with Henry Rose's work. It is constructed in Flemish bond London stocks with stone trim and ornament in a restrained Baroque style.
- 3.2.5. The Chapel forms the centrepiece of the development with its fine Ionic portico and cupola. It provides the grand focal point for the range onto Asylum Road. War damage has left its originally fine interior destroyed. However, externally it retains much of its former glory and its form and detailing contribute strongly to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

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| <p>Yellow London stock bricks and white timber sash windows add to the consistency of the Conservation Area</p> | <p>The gate lodges with ornamental ironwork denoting 100 years of the Licensed Victuallers' Benevolent Institution</p> |

3.3. Building form and layout

- 3.3.1. The main block of Caroline Gardens facing onto Asylum Road is a U-shaped range with lanes at each corner through to the grounds at the rear; it has houses facing out both ways and at the ends. The range is set around a generous green with stone paved walkways directly in front of the dwellings and a circular tarmac driveway surrounding it. A strip of green with a continuous range of mature trees is set behind the front railings onto Asylum Road. The rear building range comprising the Albert and Ladies Wings wraps around the rear boundaries of the site, also following the U-shape. The grounds between the front and rear ranges consist of islands of green spaces with tarmac driveways separating them. The slightly raised stone paved walkways in front of the dwellings are continued. The Smalley Wing is a little out on its own, set apart from the much larger Ladies' Wing and tucked behind the eastern part of the range facing Asylum Road. It is rather hidden and can only really be viewed from the southeast corner of the development. The complex layout allows a high density of development with the wide central greens providing a feeling of spaciousness.
- 3.3.2. Each dwelling has a modest two-storey addition facing into a communal courtyard. As a result, there are distinct public and private faces of the development. The communal courtyards are an ingenious means of allowing residents useful, private space in a relatively confined site area.

3.4. Ground surfaces and furniture

- 3.4.1. A strong attribute of the Conservation Area is the continued use of original paving materials in the form of York Stone pathways in front of the dwellings with granite kerbstones. Unit sizes vary from the traditional 900mm x 600mm to enormous original slabs, presumably re-laid, in front of the Albert Wing in particular. Unfortunately, there is increasing evidence of concrete replacement slabs, which erode the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of the Listed Buildings.
- 3.4.2. The Asylum development has retained its original cast iron railings and gates with associated stone gate piers and lanterns on top. Such elements are valuable in supporting the set-piece quality and historic character of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of the Listed Buildings. There appears to be a mixture of original cast iron lampposts with lanterns lights throughout the site as well as replica posts with globe lights. A number of cast iron lanterns on brackets have also been fixed to buildings throughout the Conservation Area. There is clearly a high level of consistency although the globe lanterns appear out of place.
- 3.4.3. There is a number of timber benches placed randomly throughout the grounds, particularly in the green fronting the rear ranges. Old images of the grounds show cast iron benches with timber-slatted seats.
- 3.4.4. The statue erected in memory of Prince Albert is believed to have been removed to Denham in 1960 following the Licensed Victuallers' departure. It was 16 feet high and carved from Carrara marble set on a Sicilian marble base and granite slab (designed by Thomas Earle of Vincent Street, Brompton at a cost of between six and seven hundred pounds). It sat in the centre of the grounds in front of the Chapel and appears to have been a striking and positive contribution to them.

3.5. Buildings

- 3.5.1. The special character of the Caroline Gardens Conservation Area is largely derived from its set piece quality. Many buildings appear relatively unchanged from original construction and despite the somewhat neglected appearance of the grounds, the site has a grand and imposing feel. This is provided through its substantial size and its coherent appearance as dictated by quality of materials, built form and architectural detailing.
- 3.5.2. The front and rear ranges although constructed in a fragmented way over several decades, appear part of the greater whole. The modest scale and simple architectural treatment of each particular dwelling is elevated to a grand composition through the careful creation of palace-fronted facades providing a generous scale. Devices such as pilasters and slight projections then break this down. The simple repetition of each three bay dwelling in the ranges with their six over six sashes, centrally positioned door and simple surface mouldings creates a pleasing rhythm with careful proportions. It is therefore imperative that unsympathetic repairs or alterations do not mar the architectural integrity and careful appearance of each property and the asylum development as a whole. The public face of the built form relies heavily on simple, traditional elements and details remaining unaltered.
- 3.5.3. The Gatehouses, Chapel and Day Centre range provide variety and focal points within the complex through their different scale and more ornate decoration. They add grandeur to the public face of the Almshouses onto Asylum Road. Again, it is vitally important that they are well maintained and protected from insensitive alteration or repair.
- 3.5.4. The classically ordered and pristine public face of the development contrasts with the more functional and utilitarian treatment of the rear elevations and the associated communal courtyards and pathways. Although less architecturally distinguished, a characterful pattern of development is evident. This fact combined with the confined spaces in these areas means that additions to the built form or any other kinds of accretion are not only undesirable but also impractical.
- 3.5.5. The grounds and landscape setting to the buildings have been less well maintained than the built form. The clear connection that must once have existed between dwellings and gardens for the general well being of occupants has been lost. The original formal layout of lawns, flowerbeds and shrubs to create a 'strolling garden' has been eroded through a basic maintenance regime and changes made to accommodate the car (Fig.10). This has clearly had a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of the Listed Buildings.
- 3.5.6. The Asylum development could easily be considered one of the most impressive yet unknown pieces of Southwark architecture. Its unexpected location and general setting including its own landscape and railing boundary enclosure allow this hidden feel to prevail. Clear, long views of the complex cannot easily be achieved and it is only really at close range that its existence becomes apparent.

3.5.7. The continued use of the complex as homes for the elderly and the associated umbrella management that this requires, contributes to the special character of the Conservation Area. It has also clearly helped to ensure that the buildings have been maintained over the years and that their architectural integrity has remained intact. The desire is to ensure that the complex can be repaired and adapted sympathetically to ensure the successful continuation of this use.

3.6. Views and Townscape

3.6.1. The Caroline Gardens Conservation Area is a discrete entity set within substantial planting onto Asylum Road. Views of the complex cannot easily be afforded from the surrounding Studholme Street, Naylor Road or Commercial Way. From longer views such as from the Old Kent Road, the complex is largely hidden behind the boundary railings and trees with only the Chapel cupola peeking through the upper branches of the trees. It is really only at close range on Asylum Road that the existence and extent of the almshouse development can be appreciated. The most prominent buildings directly addressing the street being the day centre and attached office building with their fine stone pilasters and pedimented frontages.

3.6.2. From within the Conservation Area, views out and above the buildings are dominated by the 1960's point blocks on the estate off Commercial Way to the north and west of the Conservation Area. From within the grounds fronting the main range onto Asylum Road, the large converted Carlton Works also features prominently. From within the grounds of the rear ranges, the four point blocks are very visible and the top of the large gasholder of the former South Metropolitan Gas Works can also be seen.

3.6.3. Asylum Road itself, particularly in the immediate context of Caroline Gardens, has a pleasant townscape quality. There are a number of attractive early and mid-Victorian buildings including the neighbouring listed early 19th Century semi-detached villas, the Queen Elizabeth Public House on the corner of Asylum Road and Gervase Street and the converted school to the south east of the almshouses. However, not being part of the formal, self-contained almshouse layout, they have not been included in the designated conservation area.



The leafy character of Asylum Road

3.7. Landscape elements

- 3.7.1. The key spaces and landscape elements within the Conservation Area are simply the grounds fronting the front and rear ranges. Their formal layout as a Victorian 'strolling garden' has been lost over the years and planting has been confined to medium sized shrubs and trees that form no particular pattern. Each range has paved pathways with a green strip in front. The gardens only really act as a green 'breathing space' for the buildings and wide tarmac vehicular driveways have significantly reduced their extent. Nonetheless, they give the complex a generous and open feel albeit rather dominated by the car.
- 3.7.2. On another level, the private and hidden spaces and pathways throughout the complex add to its charm. Arched openings lead through to stone paved walkways, often with cast iron arches and lanterns, that link the front and rear ranges and lead through to the back of the rear ranges. Each dwelling range has a communal rear courtyard and pathway. Such spaces, though more humble in character and utilitarian in function, form part of the character of the Conservation Area.
- 3.7.3. Mature tree planting on a green strip set behind the boundary railings on Asylum Road provides a privacy screen for the development. This allows glimpses of the complex, particularly when the trees are in full leaf, and provides an attractive frame for the Conservation Area.



Mature trees within the open space to the rear of the main horse-shoe building



Private routes connecting the different spaces of the Conservation Area

3.8. Negative elements

- 3.8.1. On first appearances, the Conservation Area seems relatively pristine. This impression is created by the scale and relative grandeur of the architecture. However, closer inspection reveals that many of the buildings are in need of attention. This ranges from cornice work in need of repair, for example, to the empty gatehouse and properties in the north eastern section of the Conservation Area that are suffering from serious structural problems, not to mention the Chapel.
- 3.8.2. The Chapel has been included on English Heritage's national buildings at risk register since the early 1990s. As the centrepiece of Caroline Gardens, its poor condition and disuse detrimentally affects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area not to mention the impact on its special interest as a Listed Building. The proposals to form a building preservation trust aimed at repairing and refurbishing the Chapel for community use by residents is to be fully supported.
- 3.8.3. There is evidence of inappropriate and potentially damaging repair work having been carried out in unsympathetic materials and to a poor standard. This can be seen in the cementitious rendering of the rear façade of the Chapel, which harms the appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the special interest and well being of the listed building. Care needs to be taken to ensure that repairs to the buildings are carried out in a like for like manner, i.e. in the same materials, construction technique and to the same design. Also that advice is sought from the Council's Conservation Department and confirmation, as whether listed building consent is required prior to repairs being undertaken.
- 3.8.4. There have been a number of small-scale, yet damaging additions and alterations to buildings throughout the Conservation Area. These range from crudely designed grab rails and satellite dishes attached to buildings to the erection of pergola structures and fencing at the rear of properties. Clearly, there is a need to provide guidelines on which alterations are unacceptable in principle and how others could be accommodated sensitively.
- 3.8.5. The existence and re-use of the original pathway surfacing in the form of York stone paving and granite kerbs are strong contributing factors to the quality of the Conservation Area. This has been undermined by the use of crude, concrete slabs in miscellaneous repair work and the uneven and poor laying of some sections of paving which then become unsightly and can cause trip hazards.
- 3.8.6. The grounds themselves no longer add much more than a breathing space for the buildings. They originally formed part of the greater planned whole and added to the visual appearance of the complex as well as the well being of residents. The well-preserved buildings and the basically maintained grounds now jar with each other.

3.8.7. The accommodation of the car has been carried out insensitively and has caused harm in a number of ways. Wide tarmac driveways that can accommodate two cars passing as well as parking in some instances dominate the grounds. This is not only unsightly but must surely discourage residents from using many parts of the grounds. Parking signs have also been prominently positioned on buildings to their detriment. There would appear to be potential to re-position these off the buildings and onto lamp posts, which are well dispersed.

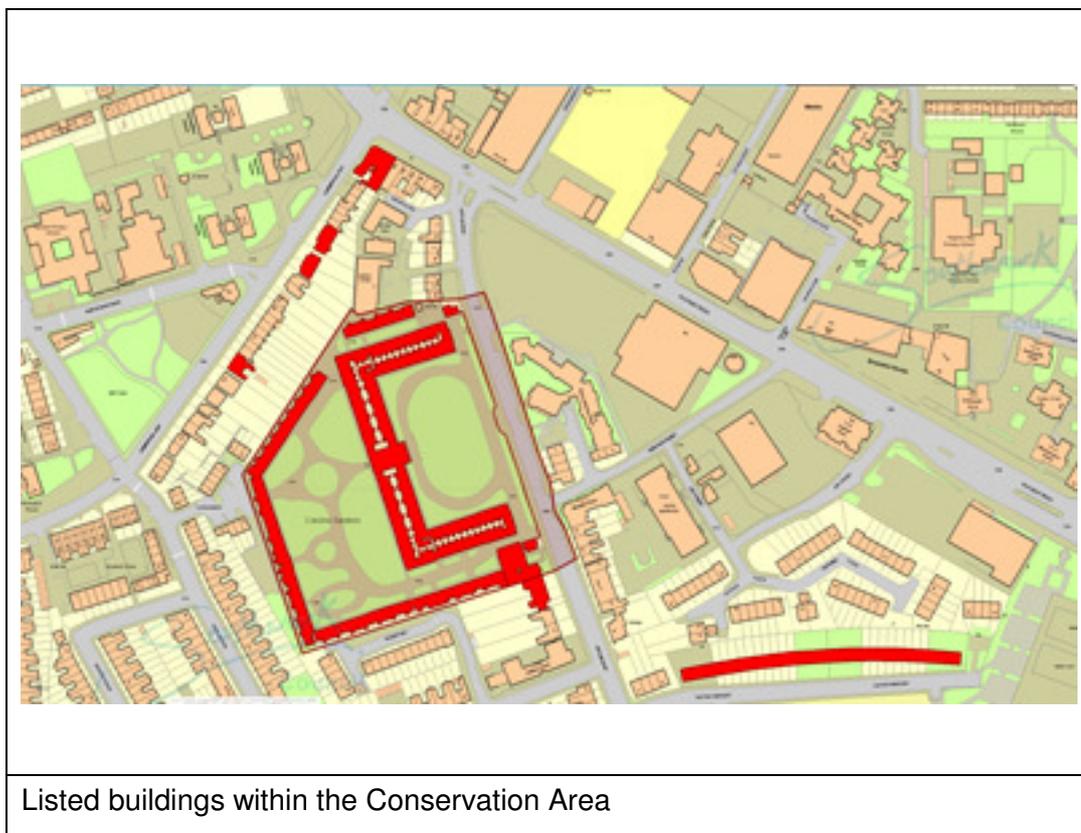


Parked areas are very visually obtrusive

3.8.8. The tall buildings along Commercial Way intrude upon the tranquillity and visual harmony of Caroline Gardens as a Conservation Area and as a group of Listed Buildings. Future proposals for buildings tall enough to intrude upon views out of the Conservation Area should be resisted.

3.8.9. In general, it would seem that there is an inconsistent approach to the maintenance, repair and management of Caroline Gardens. There is clearly a need to reconcile the access needs and other genuine needs of the residents with the requirement to preserve or enhance this valuable heritage asset.

4. Audit



4.1. Listed Buildings and Features

- 4.1.1. The list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for Southwark was updated in September 1998. Detailed list descriptions are available from the Council.
- 4.1.2. All of the buildings within the Caroline Gardens Conservation Area were added to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest in 1962 as Grade II. This comprises Nos. 1-100 including the Chapel (1827-33), Nos. 101-110 (The Smalley Wing, 1866), Nos. 111-176 including the Day Centre (1849-66), the office building at No. 10 Asylum Road (1913-14) and the North and South Lodges (1839).

4.2. Trees and planting

- 4.2.1. The formal, planned landscape that originally worked in harmony with the buildings has largely become unrecognisable. All that remains of the gardens shown on the 1870s Ordnance Survey plan (Fig. 2) are the slightly raised paved walkways in front of the dwellings and the range of trees set behind the boundary railings onto Asylum Road. The rest of the grounds consist of islands, of differing sizes, that wide tarmac driveways dissect. The original landscaping has been particularly eroded in the rear grounds. Medium sized trees, shrubs and planted beds have been randomly positioned throughout the grounds, and they relieve the monotony that lawns alone would create.
- 4.2.2. The only mature trees of note are those that sit behind the boundary railings onto Asylum Road. They provide a pleasant frame for the Conservation Area and contribute positively to its character and appearance. There is also a carefully manicured, attractive box hedge set behind railings in front of the Day Centre and office building on Asylum Road.

4.3. Environmental improvements

- 4.3.1. The Conservation Area and the setting of the Listed Buildings would benefit greatly from a more attractive and better thought out landscaping scheme that could accommodate the car more sensitively and partially re-instate the former Victorian 'strolling garden'. Part of this scheme should include the repair and re-instatement of York stone paving and granite kerb stones where appropriate.
- 4.3.2. Such a scheme could include the rationalisation of the design of lamp posts and lanterns throughout the complex. Other street furniture, sensitively designed, in the form of benches for example would benefit the appearance of the grounds greatly.
- 4.3.3. Bags containing household waste are often left outside the front of properties and this detracts considerably from the Conservation Area's appearance. Wheelie bins are accommodated within the space at the rear of properties in the communal courtyards. Greater care needs to be taken to ensure that household waste is confined to this area and that it is only on public display when bins need to be left out for the Council's waste disposal services.

4.4. Improvements to buildings

4.4.1. Steps to remedy the buildings, which are suffering from disrepair and disuse within the Conservation Area, clearly need to be taken as a priority. These are most importantly the Chapel and the properties in the north east corner of the complex including the North Lodge:

- The Chapel - the building is currently weather-tight and secure, however, works are required to reinstate the roof and repair remaining original fabric internally and attend to the external elevations. This clearly needs to lead on to a long-term, sustainable new use for the building. The proposed building preservation trust to facilitate such proposals should enable this to happen;
- The buildings in the northeast corner of the complex including the North Lodge are suffering from significant structural problems. The proposed remedial work includes under-pinning works, tying in and potentially partial reconstruction. Clearly, care needs to be taken to ensure that the architectural and historical integrity of the buildings are preserved throughout the works.



Boarded windows in the North Lodge

5. Guidelines

5.1. Introduction

Purpose of this guidance section

- 5.1.1. This section of the report draws out from the appraisal those themes that are essential to the Conservation Area's historical character, to which new development and improvement should pay heed. It is not intended to provide a perspective methodology for new design in the area or to exclude innovation.
- 5.1.2. It should also be noted that architectural style, in terms of the design of elevations, selection of materials, detailing and so on, is only part of the concern. Equally important are townscape issues of mass, overall form, building placement relative to the public realm, creation and presentation of views and vistas, quality of boundary treatments, and visual impacts of utility areas such as parking, servicing and site access.

Consulting the Council

- 5.1.3. The Council's conservation officer should be consulted prior to undertaking any alterations to the exterior of buildings within the Conservation Area and it is likely that planning permission and /or Conservation Area consent to demolish will be required for most significant works. Where a building is listed, there are stricter controls on what the owner can and cannot do. Most works to a listed building, whether internal or external, will require listed building consent where they are considered to affect the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Replacement of listed structures will usually prove unacceptable, and replacement of unlisted structures will normally only be entertained where existing buildings do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the proposal can be shown to positively preserve or enhance that character and appearance. If unauthorised work is carried out the Council can enforce against it.
- 5.1.4. The following guidance provides some indication of the most appropriate approach to common problems and development pressures within the area. It is always wise to seek advice from the Council's planning and conservation officers before considering any building work.

5.2. Development form and urban morphology

- 5.2.1. Opportunities for redevelopment in the area are in reality non-existent. Given limited space within the site and the strong pattern of development which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, not to mention the listed status of all buildings, additions of any form to the dwellings are likely to be unacceptable.

Building frontages and form

- 5.2.2. The character of the Caroline Gardens Conservation Area is created primarily by its set-piece quality. It is dependent on the continuity of building frontage treatment in the form of the repeated three-bay dwellings with their sash windows, central doorways and simple detailing. It is important that the architectural integrity of building frontages is protected from insensitive alterations or inappropriate repairs.

5.2.3. The distinctive pattern of development is dictated by the two-storey dwelling ranges with their two-storey rear additions and communal courts set out in two U-shaped ranges. Given this layout and the limited amount of free space within the Conservation Area, there is no scope for building additions.

Public Realm

5.2.4. In this context the public realm includes everything visible from publicly accessible areas and comprises the stone pathways and landscaped grounds in front of the front and rear ranges. The essential components of the public realm that development and improvement should address are:

- Boundaries and frontages that define its edges;
- The surfaces and design of the space itself
- Trees, street furniture and other artefacts in the space.

Boundaries

5.2.5. In the Conservation Area, front boundary railings and planting to the complex define the extent of the public realm and the quality of such boundaries is therefore of paramount importance. Loss of boundaries is unacceptable and it is expected that railings, gates and boundary greenery be kept in good condition.

Ground Surfaces

5.2.6. The Conservation Area retains much of its original pathway surfacing in the form of York stone flags and granite kerbstones. Repair work has largely entailed re-laying and repairing these materials. However, there are instances of concrete paving which is considered unacceptable due to its damaging impact on the character and appearance of the area. There are also sections of poorly re-laid stone paving which has led to uneven wear and the premature appearance of weeds in joints. Improved specification and supervision of maintenance works are required.

Trees and street furniture

5.2.7. Trees are of importance in defining boundaries and softening the transition between open spaces and buildings. There may be some scope for new street trees in relation to public realm improvements. Semi-mature specimens planted with tree guards are to be preferred to saplings, as having greater resistance to damage and a stronger visual impact.

5.2.8. Reinstatement of traditional benches within the grounds would help strengthen the character of the area. Where replacement of existing street furniture is necessary a co-ordinated approach should be taken to ensure consistent and appropriate design throughout the area.

5.3. Improvements and repairs

Materials

- 5.3.1. Choice and use of materials can have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and indeed, the special interest of the listed buildings. It is therefore important that materials are appropriate both for the buildings and for the Conservation Area. Care should be taken to ensure that original materials are retained wherever possible, and if replacements are necessary because of decay or damage, materials are chosen to match the originals as closely as possible in both appearance and performance.
- 5.3.2. The use of natural, traditional materials will be encouraged and expected, particularly given that all buildings within the Conservation Area are listed. Artificial modern materials such as concrete tiles, artificial slates, UPVC windows etc., look out of place, and often have differing behavioural characteristics to natural materials. Some materials, such as concrete tiles, can lead to problems with the building's structure as their weight may exceed the loading for which the roof members and internal walls were designed. Where such inappropriate materials have been used in the past, their replacement with more sympathetic traditional materials and detailing, where possible, will be encouraged.

Maintenance

- 5.3.3. Repair works can prove costly and may require authorisation, which can cause delays. It is therefore far better to ensure that regular maintenance is undertaken, thus preventing unnecessary decay and damage and the resultant costs and problems. Works such as the regular opening of woodwork and timber, clearing out of debris in rainwater pipes and gutters, cutting back of vegetation in close proximity to buildings, repointing of failed mortar and re-fixing of loose roof slates are all in themselves relatively minor tasks that will not require authorisation but which may lead to much more complex and expensive works if left unattended.

Windows and Doors

- 5.3.4. Where originals exist these should be retained in situ wherever possible and repaired. It appears as though the vast majority of properties have retained traditional, although not always original, timber framed double hung sash windows. Similarly most properties have retained their traditional original timber panelled front doors. Windows and doors that remain in reasonable condition require no more than regular maintenance. In cases where joinery has deteriorated through neglect and subsequent decay, more drastic solutions may be required. In most instances, however, it will be possible for a suitably skilled carpenter or joiner to repair damage and prolong the life of the window or door.
- 5.3.5. Replacement windows to listed buildings need to match the original glazing bars and detail of the originals. Where the existing windows or doors are however later alterations that detrimentally affect the character or appearance of a building, the Council will require their replacement to the original design. The use of modern materials such as aluminium or UPVC is inappropriate and not acceptable on historic buildings.

- 5.3.6. As the traditional window within most of the area is the double hung sliding sash in a six over six configuration, other designs such as hinged casements, tilt and turn, and various double-glazed sealed units are invariably unacceptable. Listed building consent is required for window replacement and it is expected that the original design and materials be faithfully reinstated when this is the case.
- 5.3.7. Similarly, original front doors were timber panelled, in many cases with a simple oblong over light, and replacements will be expected to follow the traditional design. Modern details such as doors with integral fanlights (i.e. where the fanlight is within the design of the door) are completely unacceptable. Again, replacement doors would require listed building consent.
- 5.3.8. All external joinery should be painted. Stained or varnished timber finishes are inappropriate in the conservation area, as the wood would traditionally have been painted. Most window frames are painted white, although white may not have been their original colour: however repainting in garish colours would be inappropriate and unlikely to receive the necessary listed building consent. It would appear as though doors are primarily painted black and this should be followed.

Roofs

- 5.3.9. Where possible, original roof coverings should be retained and if necessary repaired with slate to match the existing. Where re-roofing is unavoidable because of deterioration of the existing roof covering or inappropriate later works, the use of natural slate will usually be required. The use of more modern materials such as concrete tiles and artificial slate is unacceptable, and the greater weight of the former can lead to damage and deterioration of the roof structure if inappropriately used. Natural roof slates should be used on the listed buildings. Natural slates have a better appearance and weather gradually and evenly over time: most artificial slates weather badly with streaking and leaching of colour and adverse effects on the overall appearance of the building. Although the replacement of slipped slates is permitted the wholesale replacement of a roof and the introduction of ventilators would require listed building consent.
- 5.3.10. Given the uniform and unaltered roofscape of the listed buildings within the Conservation Area, roof extensions and changes to the basic roof form are generally likely to be intrusive and unacceptable.
- 5.3.11. Where they exist, original chimneystacks and pots should always be retained and repaired if necessary. The reinstatement of appropriately designed replacement chimney pots where these have been lost will be encouraged.
- 5.3.12. Originally all rainwater goods would have been in cast iron. Where these remain then repairs should be carried out on a like for like basis, matching all original profiles and dimensions. Listed building consent would be required for the introduction of new sections of pipe work or reconfiguration of existing runs. Listed building consent would not be granted for the replacement of cast iron with plastic or aluminium. Where inappropriate repairs have been carried out in the past the reintroduction of cast iron would be welcomed.

5.3.13. The introduction of measures such as pigeon protection and safety wire installations onto the parapets of buildings within the Caroline Gardens Conservation area would also require prior listed building consent.

Brickwork

5.3.14. The painting or rendering of original untreated brickwork should be avoided and is usually considered unacceptable. Where damaged bricks are to be replaced or new work undertaken, bricks should be carefully selected to match those existing on texture, size colour and should be laid in an appropriate bond to match the existing.

5.3.15. The most dominant visual components of the brick façade are the bricks themselves, rather than the pointing. Traditional bricks were a slightly larger format than metric bricks and were often laid in softer lime based mortar in a thinner bed, which reduced the appearance of the joints relative to the bricks. Repointing should only be undertaken where necessary to prevent further damage to a building's structure and should be kept to a minimum. Usually, lime based mortar mix no stronger than 1:1:6 (cement: lime: sand) is recommended and this should be coloured with sand to match the original mix. Joints should be flush or slightly recessed (not weather struck or raised) finished neatly and cleanly with the mortar brushed back to expose the edges of adjacent bricks.

5.3.16. Cleaning of brickwork is a specialist task, which may dramatically alter the appearance of a building. If undertaken incorrectly cleaning may lead to permanent damage to the bricks and ultimately the structure of a building. Advice should be sought from the Council before attempting such a task.

Stucco and render

5.3.17. It is of particular importance that stucco render is kept in good repair and that regular maintenance takes place. Stucco is lime based, and it is important that any repairs are made in material to match, taking care to avoid the use of hard cement renders. If the surface is damaged, stucco may deteriorate quickly through water ingress possibly leading to further damage to the structure behind. Early localised repairs of the problem areas are usually the most appropriate approach when damage occurs. Major repair works can be expensive and difficult to carry out and are best undertaken by experts.

5.3.18. Stucco requires regular repainting for appearance and to maintain weather resistance, taking care not to obliterate decorative features. The stucco would originally have been a stone colour, and paint should be chosen carefully with this in mind and to respect the unified character of the area. Listed Building consent is required where painting significantly alters the appearance of a listed building and the use of unusual or contrasting colours (e.g. to highlight decorative details) is unacceptable. Generally the use of the colours *buttermilk*, *parchment*, *ivory* and *magnolia* are acceptable under British Standard Colours: BS 4800, these are BS 10B15, BS 08B17 and BS 08B15 respectively. Use of a gloss or eggshell finished is recommended and will not require consent. Textured or highly glossy paints and '*brilliant white*' should be avoided, as should paints that do not allow the masonry to 'breathe'.

5.3.19. Where features such as capital, pilasters and porches have been lost, the Council will encourage their reinstatement using traditional materials following the design and detailing of those originals remaining on other properties.

Ornamental Ironwork

5.3.20. Original iron railings should be retained and protected through regular painting (black) and maintenance. The reinstatement of missing ornamental ironwork with good quality replacements of similar and appropriate design will be encouraged.

Satellite Dishes

5.3.21. The General Development Order (GDO) requires planning applications for certain types of development in conservation areas that are elsewhere classified as permitted development. This includes the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs and chimneys fronting a highway. Listed building consent is also required for satellite dishes on listed buildings as they could have an adverse affect on the character of the building.

5.3.22. A balance needs to be struck between the legitimate needs of residents and the desire to avoid damage to the visual amenity and clutter on the skyline and street frontage, especially within conservation areas and on listed buildings.

5.3.23. Equipment should be carefully chosen and positioned to minimise its visual impact, especially as seen from the street, or other public spaces. Planning permission and/ or listed building consent may be refused for equipment, which will harm the character or appearance of a conservation area or the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building. Equipment, including any supporting structures, should be the smallest possible size and should be coloured to blend with its surroundings. A domestic satellite antenna can be painted with a quality exterior emulsion paint to match the colour of that part of the building to which it is to be attached. Feed cables should be tacked back into a recess wherever possible and, where appropriate, painted to match the background. In order not to damage the fabric of the building it is recommended that heavy-duty plastic plugs with coach bolts be used to hold the equipment. Heavy duty expanding bolts can crack brickwork and result in structural problems.

5.3.24. Equipment should be located at the rear of properties and be as unobtrusive as possible. If installed at the front or on a roof, it should be hidden from view by a parapet or otherwise suitably screened. Technological clutter should be avoided and redundant equipment should be removed. Also the possibility of providing communal equipment should be investigated to reduce the number of sites required. This will require a Telecommunications Act Licence from the Office of Telecommunications.

6. Useful information

General advice

General advice concerning works in conservation areas and the planning process can be obtained by visiting the Southwark Council website at

http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200023/design_conservation_and_archaeology

Useful telephone numbers

General Planning Enquiries 0207 525 5438

Conservation & Design Team 0207 525 5448

Planning Enforcement 0207 525 5419

Building Control 0207 525 5582

Tree Protection Officer 020 7525 2090

Other useful contacts

- English Heritage
0870 333 1181 <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
0207 377 1644 www.spab.org.uk
- The Victorian Society
0208 994 1019 <http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk>
- The Council for British Archaeology
0190 467 1417 <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/>
- Ancient Monuments Society
0207 236 3934 <http://www.ancientmonumentssociety.org.uk/>
- The Georgian Group
087 1750 2936 <http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk/docs/home/index.php>
- The Twentieth Century Society
020 7250 3857 <http://www.c20society.org.uk/>

Further reading

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- Cherry, B and Pevsner, N – *The Buildings of England, London 2: South* (1983)
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- English Heritage – *Streets for All* (2000)
- Dyos, H.J. - *Victorian Suburb, A study of the growth of Camberwell* (1961)
- Institute of Historic Building Conservation [IHBC] – *A Stitch in Time: Maintaining your Property makes Good Sense and Saves Money* (2002)
- London Borough of Southwark – *Neighbourhood History No. 4: The Story of Walworth* (1993)
- Reilly, L – *Southwark: an Illustrated History* (London Borough of Southwark, 1998)