

BRIXTON ROAD & ANGELL TOWN CONSERVATION AREA (CA No.6)

CHARACTER STATEMENT



Christ Church Brixton Road



121-131 Brixton Road



St John's Church Angel Town



195-211 Brixton Road



RC Lady of the Rosary



154-160 Brixton Rd

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REPORT SUMMARY

The Brixton Road & Angell Town Conservation Area is one of Lambeth's premier conservation areas in terms of its rich history, wealth of historic buildings surviving from an early chapter in the development of settlement of the borough and its contribution as a major green artery and set of public open spaces. In the 1980's the Council was at the forefront in rescuing a significant part of this heritage, refurbishing many of the elegant late Georgian terraces, reinstating railings lost in the Second World War, planting trees and laying out green areas. This was some recompense for the architectural vandalism it inflicted upon the heritage of North Brixton and Stockwell in the 1960's and 70's when vast areas comprising of solid and attractive C19th villas and terraces were laid waste to build the Angell Town and Stockwell Park estates.

This Character Statement aims to identify not only the architectural jewels of Brixton Road and Angell Town which survived these mass clearances, but also the contribution that these individual buildings make to the overall character of the conservation area. This character is also composed of the landscaped open spaces, the groups of trees, the different uses of the buildings and the vistas within the conservation area. It also seeks to identify the individual sites that harm this character so that in time they can be redeveloped or neglected buildings restored to heal those fragmented parts of the townscape.

The Brixton Road & Angell Town Conservation Area is created by the amalgamation of two existing conservation areas - Brixton Road (CA No.6) and Angell Town (CA No.30) together with the easternmost part of the Stockwell Park Conservation Area (CA No.5).



Nos. 248–254, The Crown & Anchor PH and Nos. 236-244 Brixton Rd c1905

Cllr Andrew Sawdon - Executive Member for Community Renewal
Cllr Clare Whelan – Executive Member for Environment
Cllr Brian Palmer – Chair of the Planning Committee

1. Introduction

A detailed assessment of this amalgamated Conservation Area has now been completed in accordance with English Heritage guidance *Conservation Area Appraisals* issued in 1997. The compilation of a Character Statement is important for the purposes of providing a sound basis for the designation. This assists the making of consistent and informed development control decisions and provides clear information to applicants, owners, developers and their agents as to the value of the area, the opportunities offered for any new development and also the constraints. The assessment of the area's character is derived from the different elements that contribute to its special character - this criteria includes:

- (i) the origins and development of the topographical framework,
- (ii) the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of historic buildings and their style and materials, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area,
- (iii) the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges and other natural elements to the character of the proposed conservation area,
- (iv) The relationship of the built environment to the landscape including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas,
- (v) The extent of loss, negative or neutral factors which affect the overall character of the area.



The Crown & Anchor Public House (c1880)



Georgian houses at Nos. 209-211 Brixton Road

2. Origins & urban development of Brixton Road and Angell Town

2.1 The character of this conservation area is clearly defined by the arterial nature of Brixton Road - large terraced, detached or paired townhouses set back from the main road behind generous front gardens. In the middle section this character changes markedly with later C19th and C20th buildings extending to back of pavement or set back behind later bungalow shop units. This is the local shopping area which occupies four blocks on the west side of Brixton Road. The large houses set back from the road resume again on the western side to the south, but the road has a more unkempt character in marked contrast to the generally well-maintained properties in the northern part of the conservation area. The original streetscape is more damaged along this southern stretch with ugly intrusions such as the Esso garage, the bulky 1960's block at Nos. 336-338, the 1970's local authority housing and St Helen's Primary School (the estates and the school are excluded from the CA). Little remains of the early to mid C19th townscape on the eastern side south of Loughborough Road with the notable exception of Nos. 309 - 313 - a small group of late Georgian houses. The remainder were redeveloped in the late C19th (e.g. Bar Lorca and the two pairs of late Victorian villas Nos. 249 - 255) and the post-war years to make way for the Angell Town Estate, Leys Court (1960) and Max Roach Park.



Loughborough House – from a watercolour by Yates, 1825.

2.2 Brixton Road to this day forms part of the main route from London to Brighton that may date back to Roman times. This manor formed a part of the original Manor of Lambeth acquired by the Archbishop of Canterbury – Hubert Walker - from the Prior of Rochester, in exchange for estates in North Kent. From the end of the 13th century, the Manor of Lambeth Wick was administered separately and from 1480 it was let to various tenants. By the C17th London's growing demand for timber meant that the local woodlands in this area were felled leaving a landscape of largely open fields. During the Civil War, Parliament lead by Oliver Cromwell seized the Archbishop's estates and sold them off, but they were returned to the Church after the Restoration. On the east side of Brixton Road stood a magnificent country mansion – Loughborough House. It was built at the beginning of the C17th and named after Henry Hastings, 1st Baron Loughborough, becoming an academy for young noblemen in 1785. It was demolished in 1854.

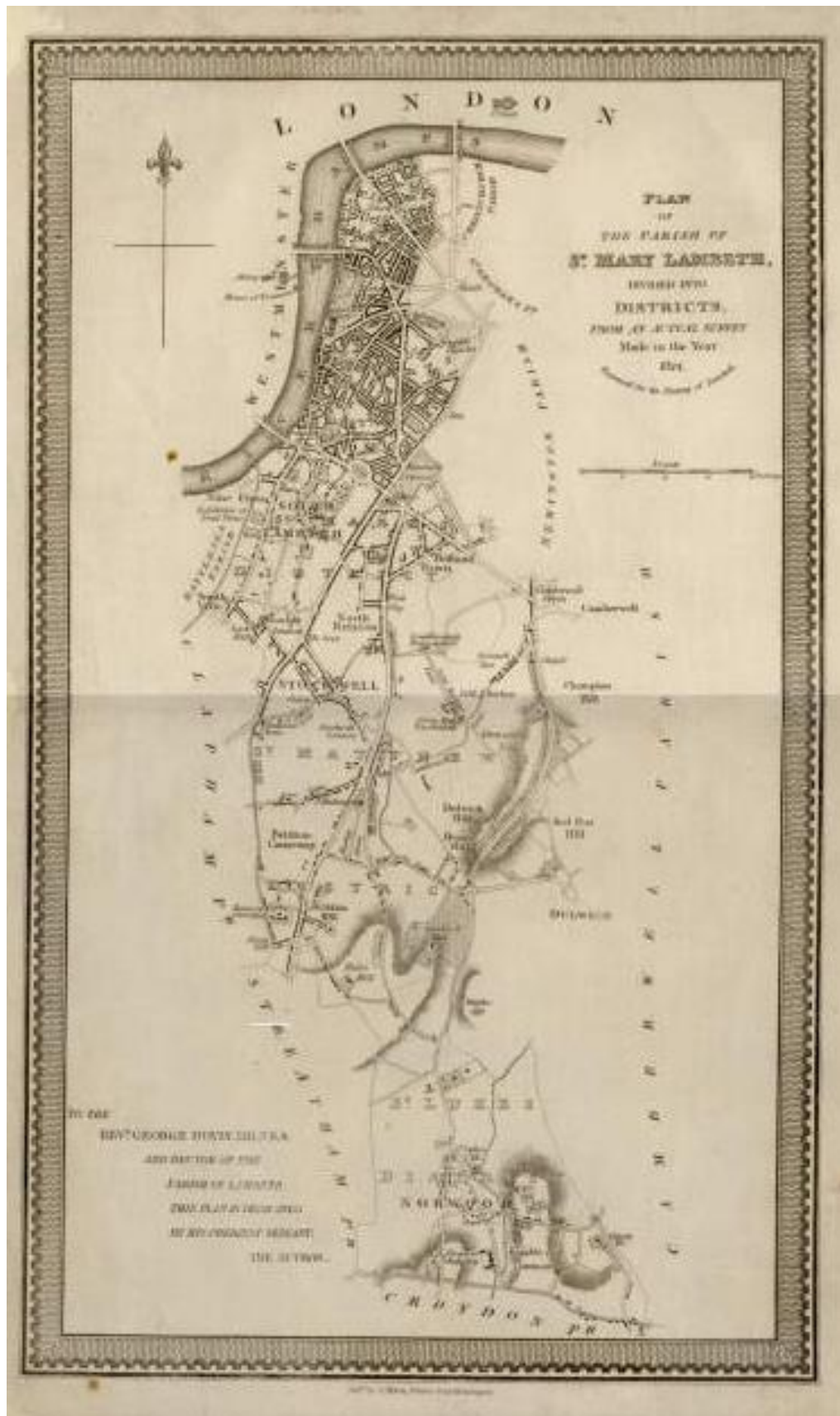
2.3 There were patches of common land where tenants of each manor could graze their animals or gather firewood – interspersed with a handful of cottages, coaching inns, manor houses and farmsteads. This long history of settlement is reflected in the status of Brixton Road as an Archaeological Priority Area



View showing a small holding sited near the junction of Brixton Road and Burton Road in 1784, with the River Effra in the foreground (etching by R. Laurie)

2.4 By the C18th, the district either side of the Brixton Road was changing due to the proximity of London – more land was required for market gardening to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for London's markets. Hay was required for horses which formed the principle means of transport, and grazing land was in far greater demand to support animals being herded to the meat markets (e.g. Smithfield). Demand also grew for housing as the wealthy city merchants were attracted by the rural aspect of North Brixton and its proximity to their workplaces in the city. In 1717 an Act of Parliament set up Turnpike Trusts to maintain good roads (tolls continued until their abolition in 1865) - Brixton Road formed part of the route from Southwark to East Grinstead. After the construction of Westminster Bridge in 1750 and Vauxhall Bridge in 1816, Brixton Road assumed even greater importance and soon houses began to be built along this road on the dairy pastures and former market gardens. The earliest surviving houses on Brixton Road are Nos. 309–313 – built in 1801-02 at a slight angle to the road. In his book *A History of Brixton* author Alan Piper attributes their siting as possibly due to a curve in the River Effra which ran in front of the houses.

2.5 On the east side of the road – below the pavements flows the River Effra which runs from the Norwood Hills to the Thames at St George's Wharf, Vauxhall. The Effra was once an open stream running under small bridges at the gates of the long gardens of houses which used to line this side of the road before the highway was widened, however by the 1840's it had become an open sewer due to the new houses emptying their waste directly into the stream. So in 1847 the local Commissioners for Sewers built a culvert which has hidden it from view for over 150 years.



An engraving of the Plan of the Parish of St. Mary Lambeth from a survey made in 1824.

Brixton Road spans the centre fold of the map to the right of the annotation *Stockwell*, running between Kennington Common (now Kennington Park) to the crossroads at the heart of Brixton where it is joined by Stockwell Road, Acre Lane and Coldharbour Lane. The map shows that by the mid 1820's, houses lined much of the length of Brixton Road and were already being developed in Holland Town just to its east, on Vassal Road. Copyright London Borough of Lambeth

2.6 One of the most important figures at this time was Henry Richard Vassall, third Baron Holland to whom was let the whole of the Manor of Lambeth Wick. Between 1820 and 1824 the Baron let small parcels of land to builders and speculators for terms of 80 years - the area became known as Holland Town. The terms of the leases required that new houses should be kept in good repair, that the outside wood and ironwork were to be painted every four years and that offensive trades were prohibited. This policy of piecemeal letting resulted in unrelated groups of villas and terraced houses that gave Brixton Road a rich variety of charming properties of different heights, size and alignment. By the 1830's ribbon development of large houses was well underway along the length of Brixton Road as Brixton was transformed from a rural district to an upmarket residential suburb. (see map of 1824 on previous page).



Nos. 152 - 160 Brixton Road that date from c1828 and were converted into flats in 1960
When this photograph was taken – named after Herbert Morrison. Born in Lambeth,
Morrison was Minister of Transport in 1929, Home Secretary during World War II
and was made a life peer, Lord Morrison of Lambeth, in 1959.

2.7 At the same time side roads branching off to the east and west of Brixton Road were laid out, to be lined with new detached and semi-detached villas designed in a restrained Regency manner. The consecration of St Matthew's Church in 1824 provided the new suburb with a new focus. The southern part of the amalgamated conservation area comprises of Angell Town - an estate of houses for the wealthy laid out in the 1850's and 1860's with Wiltshire Road its main axis. The road pattern has partly survived but most of the grand Italianate style houses were cleared to create the Angell Town Estate in the 1970's.

2.8 It was the coming of the railways in the 1860's and the trams in the 1870's that were to change the character of the district even more. The gaily painted horse-drawn buses that had served the Brixton Road since the 1830's were supplanted first by horse-drawn trams running on rails in the road, and by the 1890's by double decker cable drawn trams running between the



Horn's Tavern in Kennington and Streatham. This system was relatively short lived and by 1904 electric trams were bowling down the Brixton Road (see photograph above of a tram on the Blackfriars to Brixton service in c1905).

2.9 The district was also served by new railway lines – Brixton Station opening in 1867, followed by the City & South London Railway (now the Northern Line) underground to Oval and Stockwell in



1890. This prompted the development of new terraced housing for the skilled working classes attracted by the good access into the City and West End, thus signalling the beginning of the very gradual decline of Brixton as a wealthy suburb, only half a century or so after its creation in the 1820's.

Train at Loughborough Junction Station in c1900

2.10 By the 1900's an increasing number of larger houses along Brixton Road and in Angell Town were being sub-divided as boarding houses (or as we term them today – houses in multi-occupation). These were popular particularly with entertainers and theatre folk, and with shop workers – attracted by the ease of access to the West End. This trend accelerated in the inter-war years as people had smaller families and relied far less on servants. By the early C20th Brixton had become a fashionable shopping centre and a mecca for entertainment. This was mostly concentrated to the south of this conservation area, but in 1910 a popular greyhound racing track was built on Brixton Road to the north of what is now the Catholic Church of the Rosary (where now stands St Helen's Primary School) which attracted the crowds for nearly 30 years until its closure in 1938.

3. The prevailing and former uses within the conservation area

3.1 The general pattern of land-use along Brixton Road was fundamentally altered by the waves of redevelopment starting in the 1920's and accelerating in the post-war years. The construction of the Angell Town Estate in the 1970's resulted in the mass clearance of most of the eastern side of Brixton Road south of Mostyn Road. Before the 1970's there was a vibrant shopping parade just south of Loughborough Road (including a bank) and Georgian villas set back behind generous front gardens. Similarly the long line of villas on the eastern side of Brixton Road - between Normandy Road and Vassal Road - were demolished in the 1950's to make way for the six blocks of council flats which stand at right angles to Brixton Road in front of the 1930's Cowley Estate.



This map extract from the 'Plan of The Parish of Lambeth' drawn up by surveyor Hugh McIntosh in 1876 shows the southern half of the Conservation Area (south of Mostyn Rd and Lorn Rd). The railway lines built in the 1860's through Brixton and Loughborough Junction have carved up the once open farmland and the land either side of Brixton Road is fully developed with housing. To the west of Brixton Road is Angell Town, which was laid out in the 1850's, with St John's Church as its focal point. Although a few of the original Angell Town Villas survive, most of the area was redeveloped for social housing in the post war years.

3.2 The residential use of the majority of properties in the conservation area has remained constant since the day they were built – the main change being the subdivision of almost all of the C19th villas into flats which occurred in the early to mid C20th. Most of the public houses evident on Ordnance Survey maps of the 1900's survive to this day and the shopping parade on the west side of the central portion of Brixton Road has been well established for over a century. In recent times a few buildings that had been taken over by commercial uses earlier in the C20th have reverted back to their original residential use – one example being No.220.

4. The architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and the contribution they make to the special interest of the conservation area

West Side of Brixton Road

4.1 At the northern gateway to the conservation area stands perhaps the most striking historic landmark in this conservation area - the Grade II* listed **Christ Church**. This monumental edifice replaced an earlier chapel. It was built between 1899 and 1902 and designed by the well-known late Victorian architect Professor Beresford Pite, brother-in-law of the then vicar, and for many years head of architecture at the Brixton School of Building. The tall octagonal tower dominates views from the south up the Brixton Road – its two-sided clock perched half way up the tower is an important local landmark. Along the frontage are railings and seven brick and stone piers, five of them surmounted by elegant lanterns in the Art Nouveau style.



Christ Church Brixton Road (1902)

4.2 It is of yellow stock bricks broken by bands of purple bricks and red brick window arches. Stone dressings adorn the Brixton Road frontage. The style is a bold and flamboyant example of Byzantine Romanesque - it is of a cruciform plan with narthex, capped octagonal tower at the east end flanked by lower square towers and a dome over the crossing. The apsidal chancel at the west end has an ambulatory. The more restrained side elevations are of layered brickwork with two tiers of windows within an intricate series of arches on different planes.

4.3 An unusual feature of Christ Church is the charming outdoor pulpit with a domed copper clad canopy, which projects forwards over the forecourt (see photo to right). To the rear is the church hall by the same architect built slightly earlier between 1897 and 1899 - it has a bold round arched north window divided by vertical buttresses and a prominent bell housing in the Art Nouveau style.

The original church frontage is now flanked by extensions erected in the 1990's in a contextual style, designed by architects Peter and Bridget Ansdell-Evans. They represent a truly exemplary approach to providing much needed new community space and a popular local meeting point – the Café Van Gogh, by extending a historic building in a sympathetic manner utilising high quality materials and workmanship.



4.4 Immediately to the south lie **Nos. 98-108** (formerly known as Elizabeth Place) - a Grade II listed three-storey terrace built in 1823 by William Bird - the houses are well raised above stuccoed basements and have concealed roofs. Nos. 98 and 100 are a pair connected to the others by a two-storey link which has a grand entrance incorporating a patterned fanlight. Attenuated Greek Doric columns flank the entrances. *Photo—doorway to No.100*

4.5 **No. 110** is a plain three-storey house with incised stuccoed ground floor and semi-basement - until 2002 it was slightly lower than the remainder of the terrace but listed building consent was granted for the erection of a mansard roof which has raised the height. The individual front gardens have been combined to create a linear garden shaded by a line of trees. **No 112** is a neat two storey villa with wide over-hanging eaves and slate roof, dating from 1821. The central entrance and ground floor windows are set in shallow elliptical arched recesses, the doorway has a fluted surround and a delicate fanlight. A rendered annex with dual pitch slate roof has been added to the rear on Caldwell Street.

4.6 At the junction of Brixton Road and Caldwell Street stands **The Russell Hotel** - an 3 storey Edwardian public house built in 1906 which is an important local landmark. Its imposing façade has three bays with projecting square bay windows, black marble columns, a steeply pitched tiled roof with prominent chimneys and outstanding Art Nouveau signage and lamp fittings. The pub closed in c2000, consent for the refurbishment of the upper floors as flats and a side extension was granted in 2003. *(the photo below was taken in 1973)*



4.7 Grey flats which forms part of the Caldwell Gardens Estate to Lambeth Borough Council. Whilst it respects the established building line it makes no attempt to take any regard for the historic context of Brixton Road. This replaced Nos. 120- 124 - a late Georgian terrace demolished by Lambeth in 1955.

4.8 **No. 130** is a Grade II listed three-storey stucco fronted house, two windows wide with a projecting porch supported on columns, It has a two storey annex (**No. 130A**) and a detached cottage (**No.3 Southey Rd**) to the rear fronting Southey Road. **Nos. 132-138** (formerly known as St George's Place) form a terrace of two storey houses dating from 1824 with semi-basements. These properties of are some of the very few from this era that have yet to be listed – *the photograph is of No.134*. They also have attics in mansard roofs with modest lead clad dormers and large chimneystacks extending almost the full depth of each house. The front doors are round-headed and the front garden railings are imbedded into a stone plinth with pineapple and spear finials. **Nos. 140 & 142** are a Grade II listed pair of 3 storey houses with channelled stucco to semi basement and ground floor. Built in 1824 by the Honourable James Abercromby of Spring Gardens, their original doors, ornamented with Maltese Crosses survive.





154 - 160 Brixton Road (1828) – Grade II listed (*see photo on p.7 taken 40 years earlier*)

4.9 Nos. 148 - 160 (originally known as St Ann's Terrace) were built in 1828 – Nos.148 & 150 were destroyed in the Blitz, and No. 152 was demolished in the 1950's. **County House (No.144)** was built in c1960 on the site of Nos. 148 – 152 – an uninspired brown brick four-storey block of no architectural merit. The surviving four townhouses (**Nos. 154 - 160**) of the original seven house terrace comprise of four stories with semi-basements and stucco fronted raised ground floor frontages. Cast iron balustrades with anthemion and wave ornament enclose the semi-basement area and guard the first floor windows. These properties were refurbished and converted into flats in 1960 and renamed Herbert Morrison House in recognition of the well known Labour politician of the post-war Atlee administration who, before the war, was an energetic and progressive leader of the London County Council. They slid into dereliction in the late 1990's but in 2003 consent was granted for another remodelling for key-worker housing including a new L shaped wing of 2 stories extending into the rear garden.

4.10 No. 162 Brixton Road is a most attractive Grade II listed two-storey villa dating from 1823 with stucco-fronted semi-basement and attic mansard. Above the cornice and blocking course are three dormer windows with ornamental pediments in the mansard roof. The ground floor windows in arched recesses have anthemion patterned cast iron guards. The ground floor impost string continues across the imposing coach house to the left-hand side with the carriage doors below and a lunette above. **Nos. 164 & 166** (Grade II listed) date from 1824 and are a plain three storey semi-detached pair with channelled stucco to ground floor, arched front doors and ground floor windows in shallow recesses – the latter having radial head glazing bars. Above these the incised bands form voussoirs below the blocking course. The upper windows have flat gauged brick arches below a stucco frieze. The shallow pitch roofs are concealed behind the parapet but a tall row of chimney stacks extends much of the depth of the house.



4.11 No 168a is a charming early C19th Grade II listed detached residence - similar to No.162 but with a fine Tuscan prostyle porch with mutuled cornice. The classical proportions are enhanced by the round headed gauged brick arches to the sash windows on the ground floor set in arched recesses with impost string. This property dates from 1823-34.

No.168b is a neo-Georgian style extension built in c1990 – its quiet contextual façade and subservient scale a worthy addition to the listed villa.

4.12 Hillyard House follows a similar building height to many of the Georgian properties built some 170 years before. It has a strong palette of traditional materials – hipped roofs of slate, yellow facing brick, and red brick dressings - used in an innovative, confident and contemporary manner which respects and enhances its historic context (*see photo below right*). Imaginatively designed boundary walls and railings enclose a well landscaped front garden which provides an effective screen for this sheltered housing development from the traffic on Brixton Road and has assisted the new building to blend into its context. **Nos. 180 - 184** stands slightly forward of the established building line along this part of Brixton Road – and dates from c1930 (*see photo below left*). It is a pleasant three-storey property with incised render ground floor, red-brick upper floors, canted corner and a slated mansard roof – of a neo-Georgian design popular in the inter-war years for banks, railway stations, post-offices and other public buildings. It is now a place of worship.



Nos. 180 – 184 Brixton Road



Hillyard House

4.13 The middle section of Brixton Road comprises of properties laid out by the **Jackson Estate** between 1810 and 1840. Randle Jackson was a barrister-at-law and an expert on Indian affairs, and began developing the land for housing - laying out a group of two terraces of six houses between what later became Groveway and Lorn Road. These were each flanked by two pairs of houses at the north and south ends, all three storeys with attics and semi-detached townhouses known originally as **Grove Place**. With the exception of two semi-detached properties south of Lorn Road pulled down in 1928, and No.186 demolished in c1955, the **Grove Place** development survives to this day. **No.184a** is an elegant Grade II listed two-storey detached villa dating from the early C19th. It has a projecting porch above a flight of steps leading up to the entrance and the raised ground floor.

4.14 **No.186 (Willow Court)** is a very dull 4-storey block of flats erected in c1960. It was built on the site of one half of a pair of semi-detached late Georgian townhouses sadly demolished in the 1950's, without any attempt to respect the character, massing or design of the surviving No.188. The ground floor is faced with lavatorial blue ceramic tiles and plastic window units inserted recently have further degraded the appearance. This photograph was taken in 1973 – only 13 years after its construction - it is already looking dated and tired. It is interesting to compare the lack of detail, articulation or any semblance of visual interest or decoration evident here, with the simple elegance and pleasing appearance of the C19th properties illustrated below and on the next page. Such an economical and dull design may have been excusable in the years of austerity immediately following the Second World War but by the late fifties Britain had a booming economy and had 'never had it so good' - a far higher quality of architecture might have been expected.



4.15 **Nos. 188 and Nos. 190-192** (all Grade II listed) are linked by their coach houses and each has a segmental bay projection at the rear. Although their attractive verandahs have long since been removed, they retain their delicate lattice guards to the first floor windows. Traditional front boundary railings and solid brick piers were re-erected in the 1970's to enclose the front gardens. This photograph of No.188 illustrates the typical late Georgian hierarchy of the fenestration and the piano nobile – the principal floor at first floor level denoted by the tall windows. The other half of the pair to No.188 was demolished in c1959 to build Willow Court (see above). Ideally the unfortunate Willow Court should be demolished and No.186 rebuilt to its original design to regain the symmetry with the surviving No. 188, thus restoring the overall harmony to the pair.



4.16 Nos. 194-204 were erected later than the remainder of the development in c1840 to a slightly different design. This Grade II listed group of six five-storey semi-detached townhouses (including semi-basement and attic floors) is also joined by two-storey link-blocks. The link between Nos. 200 and 202 was presumably added after the properties were converted into flats as it now forms a single entrance above a grand flight of steps to both of these properties. These houses are of stock brick with stucco basement and ground floor. **Nos. 194 & 196** have rusticated stucco plinths (*see photo taken in 1973 to left and a 2003 photo*), the other four having a simpler incised stucco plinth. All have the same cornice, blocking course and mansard roofs with dormers. The windows are set within moulded architraves, No.194 has a prostyle Ionic porch and fanlight above its 4 panel front door. At the time of their refurbishment in the late 1970's traditional railings mounted on brick plinth walls, were reinstated, over 30 years after the removal of the originals during World War II.



4.17 No.204A is of a very similar design to Willow Court (see previous page – the same appraisal applies) and was built at a similar time – 1961. It is of plumb colour brick, with a blue glazed-tile ground floor frontage and vehicular access beneath the building leading to a car park at the rear.

4.18 Nos.206 - 220 comprise of a Grade II listed three storey (plus attic and semi-basement) terrace built in c1810 - with Greek Doric porches to the entrances and delicate bowed cast-iron window guards of lozenge pattern on the first floor. No.206 was erected for Randle Jackson's own occupation with a wing with rounded corners projecting forward of the building line. They have slated mansards with dormer windows, gauged flat brick arches to the sash windows (mostly with glazing bars or margin lights) and tall windows to the first floor with patterned cast iron balconies. The ground floor windows have patterned stucco tympana under elliptical gauged brick arches. The doorcases are exceptionally fine with fluted columns and fanlights under a round gauged brick arch. The group has suffered from incremental railing replacement during the last half century with a whole host of different designs – the most appropriate design being the double fleur-de-lis pattern, imbedded into the low plinth wall, erected in 2001 at No.218.

4.19 No.220 (*see photos below*) had been altered in the c1900's when a bungalow shop unit was added extending out to the pavement - this was thankfully removed in 2001 when the property was de-converted and returned to its original status as a family house. The long flank wall on the return up Lorn Road had been stolen brick by brick and was reinstated, new front boundary railings were erected and a front garden laid out.



No.220 in 1973 – note late C19th ‘bungalow shopfront’



No.220 following its restoration in 2001

4.20 The character of the conservation area changes markedly south of Lorn Road - instead of the elegant late Georgian townhouses, the west side of Brixton Road between Nos. 222 and 306 takes on a commercial character more akin to an inner-city high street. **Nos. 222 - 228a** comprises of a three storey shopping parade of dark red brick with stone dressings, and dual pitch tiled roof. This was built in 1926 in the neo-Georgian style popular at the time - it replaced two pairs of semi-detached properties which formed part of the Grove Place development of the 1820's (see parag. 4.13). Continuing south are several blocks of later C19th and C20th commercial properties. **Nos. 230 – 234** is a two-storey building occupied by the British Red Cross, in the 1920's it was a popular Times Furnishings store but lost its curved parapet and historic shopfront in the post-war years. It is a now very dull building of no interest, is under-scaled (one storey too low) and is considered to make a negative contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. **Nos. 236 – 244** comprise of a small group of C19th properties of two or three storeys. Their poor quality shopfronts and a clutter of excessive advertisement signage significantly damage the character of these properties, and the streetscape within this part of the Conservation Area.



4.21 The Crown & Anchor Public House (No. 246) is a most impressive four storey mid Victorian corner building with a steep French mansard style roof embellished by a heavy parapet complete with decorative urns, a long four bay return on Ingleton Street and elaborate facades emblazoned with the crown and anchor symbols. The original ground floor frontage and long return up Ingleton Street with its painted timberwork and leaded lights is of particular interest – an increasingly rare survivor in an era of frequent pub rebranding.

4.22 No.248 is a simple C19th property – three storeys high with an additional mansard floor lit by three dormer windows. The plain brick façade has 2 over 2 sash windows set in deep reveals. The ground floor is marred by a shopfront of poor quality.

See photograph of this block taken in c1905, on page 2.

4.23 Nos. 252 – 262 are a later Victorian parade of five shop units which project forward of the building line of the upper floors – the shopfronts are again of very poor quality. **Nos. 264 - 272** comprise of a range of very plain narrow properties, except for the taller building on the corner of Robsart Street, they appear under-scaled – an impression not helped by the clutter of excessive advert signage.

4.24 No.2 Robsart Street on the other hand (to the rear of No. 272 Brixton Road) is an exemplar of contemporary architecture – it was reconstructed in 1994. It is a tall and distinctive three storey commercial property with a most attractive façade of stock brick with elaborate red-brick dressings.

The façade on Robsart Road is divided into 3 arched bays and topped by a corbelled cornice and half-hipped slate roof – note the three-storey stepped oriel window of dark stained wood reminiscent of the balconies of C19th houses in Lima, Peru. Even the security grills to the ground floor are of an interesting bespoke design (*see photo to right*), a world away from the ugly standard metal shutters that afflict commercial properties on Brixton Road.



4.25 Immediately to the west lies **Slade Gardens**, which, although outside the conservation area, forms its immediate setting. This 11-acre public open space was opened in 1962 – named after Robert Slade, the landowner who built many of the early C19th houses along this stretch of Brixton Road. The Council bought up the leases and freeholds of the houses piecemeal throughout the 1950's and the terraced houses in Ingleton Street, Clark's Row and Ingleborough Street demolished.

4.26 **5.18** **Nos. 274 – 282** is an unexceptional parade with flats over erected in the 1960's, although it does at least attempt to echo the rhythm of solid to void of the unadorned late Georgian character of much of Brixton Road. Again it is blighted by a plethora of advert signage and poor shop frontages – this parade exerts a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area's character. **Nos. 286-288** Brixton Road are a pair of properties with simple brick facades and projecting shopfronts – the latter of no architectural interest. **Nos. 290 – 292** another pair of properties, the facades of which have, unfortunately, been painted over. **No.294** is a modest three storey Mid-Victorian building of stock brick with red brick dressings and usual projecting bungalow shop unit.

4.27 **Nos. 296-298** is one of the least attractive development on this stretch of the Brixton Road. It was erected in 1971 for a supermarket with a warehouse on the 1st floor and flats above. The stark dirty pale-yellow brick façade lacks any articulation or interest – its five storeys are excessive in height and its sheer bulk looms over its neighbours either side. It resembles a typical block from the Projects in a US American city. **Nos. 300-302** is an equally uninspired building, though mercifully far less prominent given its much lower height of 2 storeys, nonetheless it has a monotonous dead frontage of opaque glass blocks that contributes nothing to the streetscape. In the 1920's this site had been occupied by Dougharty's House Furnishers, Storage & Removals and was covered with a plethora of adverts (see photo page 20). Whilst Dougharty's building survives to this day, it has been remodelled so many times in the post-war years it has lost any interest it may once have had. Both Nos. 296-298 and Nos. 300-302 are undistinguished buildings which exert a negative impact upon the Conservation Area and would benefit from demolition and a more appropriately scaled replacement development of a much higher quality.

4.28 No 304 however is a delightful contrast – the richly decorated mid-Victorian **former Eagle Printing Works** (*see photos to right and below*) – its date of construction proudly displayed above the well detailed cornice (1864). The central entrance to this grand three-storey edifice is crowned with heraldic sculpture – a rare surviving gem of mid C19th commercial architecture in this borough. **No.306** dates from a similar era, following the same cornice height as No.304 – unusually the piano nobile is at a 2nd floor level – distinguished by a Venetian window set within a bold arch. Unfortunately the brick façade has been over-painted and a large illuminated hoarding disfigures the flank elevation.



Nos. 300 – 312 Brixton Road in c1920. From left to right – Nos. 308-312 with its fine gothic shopfront that survives to this day (see modern-day photo on p.21), No. 306, No. 304 - the Eagle Print Works (see above for photo of No.304 taken 80 years later), and Nos. 300 – 302 Brixton Road then occupied by Dougharty's Storage & Removals premises - festooned with advert signage.

4.29 Nos. 308-312 is a Grade II Listed Building. The paired shopfronts are dated 1879 – designed in a rich Gothic style with diagonal compound piers of red sandstone at angles below gabled tops, and a narrower similar central pier. The two shopfronts are each divided into 3 bays and have doors under flattened ogee heads with fleur-de-lis finials, a wrought iron stallriser and door grills. This shopfront was restored in the 1990's when the conservation team insisted on the removal of unsightly external metal roller shutters that disfigured the frontage. It is probably the best-preserved example of its time in the whole borough (*see archive photo of c1920 on previous page*).



No.308-312 Brixton Rd (Grade II listed)

Behind the shop frontage block (now offices) stands a much older house dating from the early C19th – the shops having been built on their former front gardens some half a century after the houses were built. The 3 storey house is fronted by a stucco façade with incised lines and pedimented gable end to the road. A cill band runs at first floor level – the sash windows follow the usual Georgian hierarchy – the ground floor having round-arched windows. A two-storey side annex has been built to the left hand side overlooking the attractive well landscaped front garden to the side of the later Victorian shop additions.

4.30 Nos. 314 - 316 form a pair of fine Grade II Listed late Georgian townhouses dating from c1828 – three storeys with a stuccoed basement floor. They are of stock brick with a stucco frieze, cornice and blocking course and a first floor painted band. Above the sash windows with six over six glazing bars (set within stucco-lined reveals) are gauged flat brick arches. Six stone steps lead up to the raised ground floor level – the entrances are distinguished by Greek Doric porches in antis leading to half-glazed 4 panel doors with patterned rectangular fanlights. Short screen walls at the sides hold subsidiary doors.

4.31 Nos. 318 – 320 were a matching pair built at the same time and to the same specification (see parag. 4.30 for architectural description) as Nos.314 - 316. For over 100 years they formed an imposing group of four townhouses, but during the Blitz, No. 318 was largely destroyed. The bomb site ruin remained for 60 years – blighted by a huge advert hoarding, however in 2003 No.318 was painstakingly reconstructed. **No.320** is Grade II listed and the rebuilding of **No.318** to match its listed neighbour completes this most attractive ensemble. These four properties stand in an elevated position set well back from the highway behind generous front gardens – sadly the railings were removed needlessly during WWII and need to be reconstructed between the tall boundary piers



Nos. 314–320 Brixton Road in 2000
(advert on site of No.318)



No. 318 rebuilt and nearing completion in 2003

4.32 No. 322 is a two-storey C19th building south of Wynne Road (this road was truncated in the



1960's with the construction of the sprawling Stockwell Park Estate to the west). In the 1890's when this picture was produced, it was known as The Church House and was part of the Brixton Independent Church a few blocks to the south (*see page 24*). Meetings and classes held in these premises included Sunday Classes, a meeting place for teachers, a 'Young Men's Parlour' and a 'Young Women's Parlour'. These activities were organised by members of the congregation and the Reverend Bernard Snell. In the Edwardian period an elegant shopfront was built in front of the villa – this survives today, extending the full width of the property but is sadly now very shabby and in dire need of restoration – the open forecourt is

plagued by flytipping and illegal parking. There is also a hideous advert hoarding on the flank elevation.

4.33 Nos. 324 and 326 are also in need of refurbishment - two late Georgian properties somewhat altered. **No. 324** lost part of its front garden in the usual manner in the later Victorian era when a bungalow shopfront was erected – a crude porch now extends in front of this shopfront. The façade has been unfortunately rendered over and the roofscape has been ruined by the addition of a most inappropriate additional floor – the sole window cutting into the original cornice. **No. 326** retains its original unpainted stock brick elevations though is marred by a jumble of side additions, graffiti on the rendered semi-basement plinth and an unsightly tarmaced car park where once was a front garden.

4.34 No.328 is a fine detached three-storey villa dating from c1840 with a later C19th side addition. It reached a point of dereliction in 2000 but in 2003 underwent refurbishment with the addition of a traditional dual-pitch mansard roof and a columned entrance porch. Permission was granted to develop a mews-style terrace of two storeys (plus mansarded attics) in the former rear gardens of the villa which by the post-war years had become an unsightly concrete yard with ugly storage sheds.



Nos.340, 336-338 (1966), Nos. 332-334 (c1830) & No. 330 (petrol station) Brixton Rd

4.35 The site of **No. 330** is now occupied by an Esso filling station and a mini market. It is hoped that one day this site can be redeveloped and the petrol station will be replaced by a more worthy development of 3-4 storeys on the same building line as No.328, to a design in keeping with the character of the conservation area. **Nos. 332–334** is much altered 4 storey (including semi-basement and attic) property dating from c1830. Now combined to create one office building, it was formerly a pair of semi-detached villas, remodelled in 1994 with a new central entrance replacing the original individual recessed entrance porches. Its forecourt is sadly dominated by parked cars. **Nos. 336-338** built in 1966 in the Brutalist style, is probably the ugliest and most obtrusive building on Brixton

Road, inflicting enormous harm upon the character of the conservation area. It is woefully out of scale with lumpen, top-heavy proportions reminiscent of a second rate example of soviet architecture in eastern Europe. The frontage is dominated by a forecourt is crammed full of cars and a long ramp.

4.36 No.340 is an elegant 4 storey Grade II listed early C19th detached villa with central Ionic style porch and stuccoed basement. Built by Evan Roberts in c1826, the dignified façade comprises of gauged brick arches to the sash windows – the first floor having a round arched window over the porch, the ground floor having elliptical arched recesses with a moulded linking stone impost string. Eight steps with curved cast-iron handrail lead up to the four panel half glazed front door which has a cornice head and plain fanlight. In the 1960's this property was the home of the District Register Office. Sadly its matching sister property to the south (No. 334) was demolished in c1970 to make way for part of the Stockwell Park Estate.



4.37 At the southern gateway of the conservation area stands an impressive mid Victorian landmark – the **Church of Our Lady of the Rosary**. It has been a Catholic Church since 1953 - before the World War II it was a Congregational Church known as the Brixton Independent Church, seating 1200 worshipers. The church, designed by A.J. Phelps was opened in 1870 and is built of redbrick interspersed with vitrified bricks that give a striped appearance to the pointed door and window openings.

It has stone dressings and demonstrates an Early English Gothic influence. The bold three stage tower of a rectangular plan was originally topped by a solid brick chisel spire, but following damage in the blitz, this was replaced in 1953 by a crown of battlements. The high altar stands at the west end of the church in an apse which is lit by six long lancet windows, with short transepts on either side.

4.38 A hall and presbytery were built at the rear in 1955 to serve the new Catholic congregation. These buildings are typical of their time – utilitarian, 2 and 3 storeys in yellow brick with a tile hung panel over the entrance door and copper clad roof. They make a neutral rather than a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and the setting of the church itself, and are included within the designated area by virtue of their relationship with the church.

Photograph to right – interior of the church in c1917 when it was known as the Brixton Independent Church (prior to its remodelling by the Roman Catholic Church in 1953)





Friendly Almshouses – Nos. 157 – 163 Stockwell Park Road (1863)

4.39 Immediately to the west of the church complex lie a charming row of almshouses now known as **Victoria Cottages** (Nos. 157 – 163 Stockwell Park Road) with a small 1940's block of flats known as Colville House which replaced the almshouses destroyed by enemy action in 1941. The surviving Victorian cottages were erected in 1863 by the Female Friendly Society (founded in 1802) for elderly women, with donations from a W. Dent of Streatham and other subscribers. They consist of a pair of two storey semi-detached cottages designed in a most attractive vernacular style – having pale yellow brick facades with darker yellow brick surrounds to the windows, a distinctive diaper work of patterned brickwork below the first floor windows, and elegant timber and slate dual pitch porches. The historic front garden railings and solid Victorian-gothic style timber gates complement the arcadian character of the almshouses (see 1910 photo below). A plaque on Colville House (a plain two and three storey building reflecting the Austerity years of the mid 1940's) records the destruction of Nos. 165 – 167 and their reconstruction very soon after the war ended, in 1947, assisted by a grant from the Lord Mayor's National Air Raid Distress Fund. Beneath this plaque is a much older tablet of stone inscribed 'Female Friendly Society 1802' presumably relocated here from another site.



5. East Side of Brixton Road

5.1 **Nos. 91 - 141** is a long three-storey terrace built in 1823 – Grade II listed, it is one of the finest groups of late Georgian townhouses in the conservation area. The whole terrace was rescued from neglect by Lambeth Council in the 1970's and refurbished as flats (see photo on next page taken shortly before the renovation). The Council added mansard roofs with two lead-clad dormers per property, also modifying the entrance steps and amalgamating the former individual front gardens to form a pleasant linear landscaped garden promenade on a raised terrace above road level, enclosed by traditional railings and planted with a line of trees. All of the houses have first floor cast-iron window guards with anthemion and wave ornament, and have entrance fanlights of a radiating pattern.



Nos. 121-131 Brixton Rd (compare with photo in 1973 on p.25)

5.2 Nos. 91 – 93 the houses are of 3 storeys with basements and are of stock brick with a rendered parapet. Nos. 95 - 103 comprise of five houses – the two outer houses project slightly with set-back entrance links to the adjacent houses, all with semi-basement and attic floors. The ground floors are faced with rusticated stucco with round-headed recessed windows and deep-set entrances. Nos. 105-109 are a symmetrical terrace – the central house set back slightly – the stuccoed basement and ground floor has rustications that form voussoirs to the round arched doorways and window recesses. The front doors have 6 ornamental panels with cornice head and patterned fanlight. Nos. 111 to 119 comprise of five properties with incised stucco facades which have full height pilasters rising through a first floor cill band to a plain parapet. The 6 panel doors have reeded heads and patterned rectangular fanlights.



5.3 Nos. 121 - 141 (formerly known as Minerva Terrace) form a three storey terrace constructed in 1823 – also refurbished in the late 1970's when the mansard roofs were added. The ground floor windows and doorways have semi-elliptical arches, delicate patterned amber-glass fanlights and fluted quadrant pilasters. The doors have four panels and the first floor windows again have very elegant decorative cast-iron guards of anthemion pattern. The central property (No.131) is stuccoed with ground floor rustications forming window voussoirs. Continuous stucco cill bands run below the first and second floor windows which have flat gauged brick arches. *This photo is of Nos. 129 – 131 in 1973 prior to refurbishment.*

5.4 The site of No. 145 has been occupied by a 'temporary' Nissan-hut type building housing a popular community centre. The aspiration must be to re-house this centre within a much more appropriate building on this site which responds much better to its historic context and gives the centre larger facilities. Grade II listed No.147 is the sole survivor on this stretch of Brixton Road – now the Cowley Estate Management Board Office, it is a charming 2-storey villa built in 1822 with over-hanging eaves and slate roof. The ground floor windows and central doorway have round headed arched recesses. *See photograph to right of No.147 taken in 1973.*





5.5 Nos. 149 – 189 comprised of villas of a similar design – some of these were bombed but most were demolished by the London County Council in the mid 1950's. They were replaced by six dull 4 storey blocks of maisonettes built in 1958 aligned perpendicular to Brixton Road (these are been excluded from the conservation area). This redevelopment scheme extended the large inter-war Cowley Estate, built between 1934 and 1936 to house 3, 000 people in over 600 flats.(*see photo taken in 1972 during a storytelling session on the estate organised by Lambeth Libraries*). The block on the corner of Brixton Road and Normandy Road, which included a small post-office, was also destroyed.

5.6 The Conservation Area extends a short distance to the east to include a surviving line of interesting Nineteenth Century properties on the south side of **Normandy Road** (*see photograph below*).



Nos. 4–12 are charming late Georgian two storey houses (formerly known as Addison Place). They form a terrace with the end houses set slightly forward (No.4 having an old shopfront) – each house has a central square-headed doorway and round arched ground floor window. They are reminiscent of the scale and form of the Lambeth Estate centred on Roupell Street in Waterloo, all fronting onto the street on the back edge of the pavement.

No.12 is of a similar design, though it has a rendered façade. The former **Cowley Arms Public House** is a taller red-brick late C19th building with stucco dressings, now vacant and in a deteriorating state. **Nos. 22 & 24** Normandy Road are modest two-storey properties dating from 1824 – No.22 has a brick cornice and parapet with a central round-headed doorway and one window each side. No.24 is narrower and has lost its brick cornice.

5.7 **Nos. 195 - 203** (formerly known as Alfred Place) form a three-storey Grade II listed terrace of five properties built in 1824, the ground floor being faced with lined stucco (*see photo below*). The centre and end houses are set forward slightly and are flanked on the upper storeys by pilasters incised with a key ornament; the centre house has a continuous cast-iron balcony on the first floor, while those on the intermediate houses are separate. Traditional railings along the front boundary were reinstated in the 1980's and the front gardens are now well landscaped. The flank wall to No.195 fronting Normandy Road has a well-detailed elevation of pilasters and blind windows – an exemplary way of enlivening what would otherwise have been a blank featureless end wall.



Nos. 197-203 Brixton Road

5.8 **No. 205** is a two-storey villa (just visible in the above photograph on the extreme right) with windows set in segmental arches on both floors – the first floor windows have pretty sunblind boxes with saw-tooth edging. **No. 207** is another two-storey villa but it has an attic storey in the mansard roof, and a two storey projecting square bay on one side. These houses were both designed as detached properties, but were built on such narrow plots that they are actually joined together.

5.9 Nos. 209 - 211 (built in 1823) are a Grade II listed pair of imposing three storey houses with semi-basements and two-storey side annexes, which in the case of No. 211 contains the entrance. Each house is three windows wide and the fronts are finished with a cornice and blocking course. The windows to the raised ground floor have charming sunblind boxes of a most unusual and elegant curved design. (see photo to right →)

Between Nos. 211 and 213 is the truncated remains of the approach road to **Melbourne Square** – a sad loss in the clearances of the 1960's when the Regency villas were destroyed to build the Myatts Fields Estate. The stub end of this road is now a residents car park.



5.10 Nos. 213 - 225 Brixton Road comprise of a Grade II listed group of seven townhouses of 3 storeys plus basement – a symmetrical composition dating from the c1830's – two outer pairs and an inner group of three. They are all of stucco with a first floor stringcourse. The tripartite windows on the raised ground and first floors are sashes with moulded architraves and console-bracketed cornices on the raised ground floor only. The unusual front doors have six panels – the upper two glazed, with cornice head and rectangular fanlight under a heavy bracketed cornice. The doorcase to No.219 has an attractive Ionic pilaster – it is also the only house to have had a mansard roof (with three dormers) added, presumably in the C20th. The properties are set well back from Brixton Road behind a line of mature trees and a gently sloping landscaped bank behind retaining walls and railings (again reinstated in the 1980's) to the back of pavement.



Nos. 217-221 Brixton Road

5.11 Nos. 227 –231 comprise of an attractive trio of mid Victorian properties with concealed roofs and a facade of stock brick which follows the building line and parapet height of the residential properties to the north. They have tall shopfronts – the ground floor retail use spilling out onto the generous forecourt. The corner building has a return to Mostyn Road. The tripartite windows to the first floor are an stylish feature of this property. An original cast iron street lamp survives on the forecourt, albeit clumsily boxed in with timber plywood. Also in the Conservation Area are three fine detached villas (**Nos. 3, 5 & 7 Mostyn Road**) which are all shown on the Ordnance Survey map compiled in 1871 and probably date from the 1860's. All have two storeys with semi-basements, and are of stock brick and stucco dressings. **No.7 (Mostyn House)** is the most elaborate with a grand Palladian style entrance complete with Corinthian columns, a decorative stucco band at first floor level and a fine balustrade along the street boundary. They are all that remain of this once elegant thoroughfare, the remainder demolished in the 1970's.



Mostyn House (No.7 Mostyn Rd)

5.12 Between Mostyn Road and Peckford Place, the original streetscape has been almost totally destroyed – an area of well-landscaped public open space lies between Mostyn Road and an unsightly filling station and at **No.245** a two-storey former car tyre centre dating from c1938. The open space, the garage and the tyre depot are added to the conservation area as they form an important and highly visible part of the Brixton Road frontage and are therefore integral to the overall character of the conservation area. A high quality contextual redevelopment of both the petrol garage and the tyre centre would greatly enhance this neglected stretch of Brixton Road. **No 247** Brixton Road is now a ruin - it was already vacant and sliding into dereliction when it was listed in 1981 and had not been considered worthy of inclusion in the Survey of London or Pevsner's Buildings of England.

5.13 Nos. 249 - 255 are imposing later Victorian semi-detached properties (seen to the right of the photograph at the bottom of this page) built on a large and commanding scale with prominent mansard roofs. They too had become largely vacant and in disrepair by the late 1990's but were refurbished as flats in c1999. Their setting is however severely compromised by hideous advert hoardings and inappropriate suburban style close-boarded fencing enclosing unkempt front gardens. An original brick



.Burton Road in c1921 - before the clearances of the 1970's

pier still stands on the corner of the front garden plot to No.251. Another stub of an old street survives between No. 251 and 253 – **Burton Road**. Although the easternmost third of this street survives (including No.80 - home to **John Major [Prime Minister 1990-1997]** in the 1960's before his election to Lambeth Council in 1968), over sixty solid Victorian semi-detached villas were destroyed in the early 1970's to make way for the sprawling Myatts Field South Estate.

5.14 The site of Nos. 257 - 259 lies empty and awaiting redevelopment. **Ye Olde White Horse Public House** (now known as **Bar Lorca**) is an attractive late C19th pub of warm red brick and stone dressings with a large pair of oriel square-bay windows at 1st floor level supported by stone pillars and canted bays at ground floor. The building has a tiled roof and is set back behind a cobble stone courtyard enclosed by railings in c 2000. A single storey function room is attached to the left-hand flank wall. There has been a public house on this site for some 250 years, though the present building was erected in the c1890's.



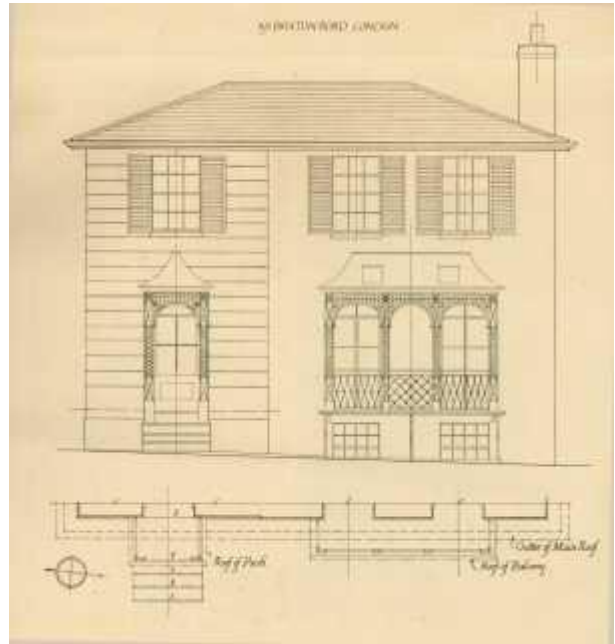
Photograph of c1910 showing from left to right: Nos. 249-251 and 253-255, 257-259 (now demolished), Ye Old White Horse (now Bar Lorca) and Nos. 263-265 (demolished in c1970)

5.15 To the south of Loughborough Road there existed a parade of shops and a bank - Nos. 263-283 Brixton Road. In this photograph taken in 1967, **Nos. 263-267 Brixton Road** can be seen shortly before their demolition as part of the clearances for the Angell Town Estate. The attractive three storey mid Victorian buildings are shown, complete with a good example of a 1930's black faience art-deco style shopfront on the corner. In the background on the left hand side are houses in Loughborough Road which survive to this day – thankfully spared from the bulldozer in the 1970's and protected by the Minet Estate Conservation Area designation in 1980.



5.16 To the south east of this parade comprises part of the once extensive mid C19th planned suburb of **Angell Town**. It was built on land previously occupied by Stiles Farm - one of several small estates held by the Angell family since the late C17th. A prosperous suburb of Italianate houses was laid out in the 1850's bisected by the long principle thoroughfare - Wiltshire Road and connected by linking roads to Brixton Road (see map of 1876 on page 9). The layout was influenced by Repton - a carefully planned arrangement of wide curving streets lined by grand mostly semi-detached villas of three storeys over semi-basements. They were often stuccoed or of grey brick liberally dressed with stucco quoins, porches and window surrounds. The detailing includes Jacobean crests, Italianate pediments, guilloche balconies, Doric entablatures to bay windows and vermiculated spandrels. The streets were contrived to give effective cross vistas, often focusing on the fine St John's Church. Sadly this elegant residential suburb was largely razed to the ground to make way for the Angell Town Estate in the 1970's, but the dozen or so villas on the south side of St John's Crescent within the adjoining Brixton Conservation Area survive to give a flavour of the appearance of this neighbourhood.

5.17 Returning to the land fronting Brixton Road, to the south of the shopping parade at Nos. 263 – 283 Brixton Road – the ‘ribbon development’ of the late Georgian era continued with grand detached or semi-detached villas (**Nos. 285 - 307 Brixton Road**) set back behind large front gardens. An example from the c1820’s is illustrated here - **No. 295 Brixton Road** which was destroyed in the Blitz and replaced 20 years later with a most uninspired block of flats - Leys Court - a typically drab late 1950’s design, completed in 1960. Leys Court is excluded from the Conservation Area. Another example of the Georgian properties along this frontage that sadly have been destroyed is shown in this advertisement of 1910 for Sandown Hall (No 299 Brixton Road). It was a boarding house in the Edwardian era, becoming the Ivy Leaf Sports Club & British Legion by the 1950’s. Nos. 289–295 were bombed in the Second World War but Nos. 285-287 and Nos.297-307 which survived the blitz were all swept away in the early 1970’s as part of the comprehensive redevelopment. This land is now laid out as two areas of soft landscaped public open space (comprising of the linear islands that make up Max Roach Park) either side of Leys Court.



FOLDING MOTORING AND CYCLING MAP.

SANDOWN HALL Boarding Establishment,
299, BRIXTON ROAD, S.W.

A country house close to town. Easily accessible from all parts of the city. Handsome rooms, comfortably furnished and homelike. Every modern convenience. Excellent cooking. English meat only used. Full particulars and terms on application to Mrs. H. J. Wix.

5.18 Grade II listed **Nos. 309 - 313 Brixton Road** (see photo below) are probably the oldest historic buildings in the Conservation Area, they date from 1802 and are set at an oblique angle to Brixton Road with a slightly curved frontage. They may form the southern section of a crescent-shaped layout that was never completed - interestingly a new proposal for such a crescent of houses is now being considered, building on a corner of Max Roach Park. Nos. 309 - 313 are of stock brick with a semi-basement, two storeys and a mansard attic. The middle house (No. 311) is set forward slightly and elaborated on the ground storey, so that the other houses have the appearance of being wings. It has an entrance set in a grooved frame with wing lights at each side. Foliated blocks at the head of the frame support a delicately festooned cornice, with vases over the heads, and a mutule transom. The doorway, and the similarly detailed window of three lights to its north, are set in elliptical-headed recesses which spring from anthemion-ornamented impost blocks and have keystones with crowned and bearded male masks. The entrance to No. 309 is on the flanking elevation, which suggests there was never any intention that the houses should have a continuous façade. This entrance is set tightly against a semi-circular two-storey projecting bay and has a neat wooden doorcase with engaged acanthus-headed columns at each side. There are vases to the frieze blocks above. The doorway has a simple patterned fanlight and panelling to the linings and arch soffit. No. 313 lost its original entrance when additions were made at the south end of the terrace. The properties were renovated by the Council in c1982. **South of Nos. 309 - 313**, the original townscape has been obliterated - until the early 1970's it comprised of Nos. 315-335 (elegant C19th semi-detached villas and terraced townhouses) but these were demolished to create Max Roach Park.



Nos. 309 - 313 Brixton Road – Grade II – c1802



5.19 The later Victorian terraced houses on the north side of **Villa Road** which front onto the park date from the c1880's. The terrace survived the clearance schemes in part thanks to the resistance of squatter groups to comprehensive redevelopment proposals. They now form an attractive backdrop to the green spaces of Max Roach Park. Note the left hand block with two bay windows (**No. 5 Villa Road**) – this is a painstaking 1999 re-creation of the Victorian terrace with a commendable attention to detail. It faithfully replicates the chimneys, bay windows with wooden sashes, corbels and other decorative details of the originals.

5.20 At the east end of Villa Road, another new housing development which also respects the scale, height and building line of the original terrace, albeit in a contemporary design, were completed in 1999. This was a joint initiative taken by Lambeth Housing Department and Metropolitan Housing Trust - knitting back the damaged townscape most successfully.

5.21 **Nos. 41 & 43 Villa Road** and the adjacent new homes which turn the corner into Wiltshire Road continuing round to Peckford Place. They are a contemporary reinterpretation of the Victorian houses with attractive patterned brickwork. The only regrettable feature is the lamentable use of front gardens for parking—an absurd use of potential green space where there is plentiful on-street parking. Only the new blocks which form the setting of the Church are included in the Conservation Area.



Nos. 41 & 43 Villa Road (1999)

5.22 The park is dominated at its north-eastern corner by an impressive early Victorian landmark - the **Church of St John the Evangelist**. This Grade II Listed Building lies at the eastern extremity of the conservation area - St John's is described by Pevsner as 'a good church by Benjamin Ferrey of 1852-3'. It is of Kentish rag and in the Perpendicular Gothic style, faced with Kentish ragstone and Bath stone dressings



The substantial three-stage tower at the west end has octagonal pinnacles and battlements of a chequer-work pattern of white and cream-coloured stone. The arcades have octagonal piers - the north transept is of a slightly later date - 1876. The church was designed to accommodate over 1100 people and was consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester in 1853. The church was severely damaged by fire in 1947 but was restored. A more recent restoration commenced in 2003 by architects Thomas Ford, who refurbished Lambeth Town Hall in 2001. The **vicarage (No. 49 Wiltshire Road)** is an attractive 3 storey mid Victorian property set in a large well-tended garden enclosed by walls (see photos below).



6. The contribution to the character of the conservation area made by green spaces

6.1 The northern half of the conservation area is characterised by linear development of villas with no public open spaces however glimpses of their gardens through gaps between the properties, the generous front gardens and street trees all contribute to a sense of a leafy thoroughfare with plenty of greenery, as the photograph below illustrates. Historic railings or walls enclose most of the front gardens which together with the generous planting of trees, hedges or shrubs create a protected sense of green space at least partially screened from the roar of the traffic along the main road.

6.2 The middle section is characterised by the dense development of the back-of-pavement shops and business on the west side of Brixton Road and has a much more inner urban feel. It is virtually devoid of greenery, although there are important views of the tree lined side roads, particularly those to the west which form part of the adjacent Stockwell Park Conservation Area. However this unrelieved



Closely planted trees in front of Nos.217-222 Brixton Road

hard urban landscape is compensated by the landscaped green spaces on the east side at either end of this commercial strip afforded by the islands of green spaces that make up the four parts of the linear **Max Roach Park**. Initially known as Angell Park, it was re-named after the Black American Jazz drummer in the 1970's. The park takes on a much stronger presence in the southern third of the Conservation Area with more substantial green areas south of Leys Court. The open space really comes into its own south of Villa Road – this an attractive green open space providing a play-centre, adventure playground, shrubbery and a circular walk.



The well landscaped Max Roach Park looking towards the Academy mural – the sheer size of this mural dominates this vista within the park and is reminiscent of murals in overseas countries such as Cuba or within Latin America

6.3 A profusion of trees shade many of the walks which form part of the Brixton Tree Trail path which extends along Rush Common up Brixton Hill. They include mature deciduous trees such as the Lime and the Chestnut and also smaller examples of Hawthorn, Elder, Sweet Bay and Lilac. An interesting aspect to this park is that it incorporated many of the trees that had stood in the gardens of the mid C19th villas that were destroyed in the 1970's – planted by the wealthy Victorian owners who sought out exotic species from all over the world.



At the south-western corner of Max Roach Park stands a memorial to the children who died in Soweto in 1976. The two iron figures stand on a plinth with a plaque commemorating the dedication of the statue by the Bishop of Croydon and its unveiling by his Excellency Happy Mahlunga, Deputy Commissioner for South Africa.

The mural painted on the rear elevation of the Academy depicting Brixton – a community of many peoples - forms a colourful and vibrant background.



St John's Angell Town c 1910

7. The relationship of the built environment to the landscape including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas



A background consultation area protecting strategic views to the Palace of Westminster from Parliament Hill bisects the Conservation Area. Significant landmarks include the red-brick tower of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church at the southernmost end (*see photo p.24*) and the Byzantine domes of the Church of England Christ Church at the northernmost point in the conservation area (*see photo above right*). There is a classic vista of St Michael's Church standing proudly at the end of Lorn Road, terminating the long view down this straight thoroughfare from Brixton Road (*see photo to left*). Similarly the vista from Brixton Road down Hillyard Street is closed effectively by the tall Durand Primary School (built by the London School Board in 1888 – *see photo above left*). Attractive views of St John's Church Angell Town (*see photo p.40*) are also evident through the foliage of the trees in Max Roach Park. There are also fine views south, along Brixton Road from the edge of Max Roach Park, of the tall Lambeth Town Hall clock tower (1906), the copper dome of the General Post Office on Ferndale Road and the ornate pediment of the former Bon Marché Department Store.

8. The extent of neutral areas or loss, intrusion or damage to the special character of the Conservation Area

The boundaries of this proposed conservation area exclude the areas of the wholesale redevelopment of the interwar era and the post-war years (i.e. the Cowley Estate, the Angell Town Estate and the Stockwell Park Estate) that lie to the east and west of Brixton Road, however a few individual buildings of poor quality which form part of the Brixton Road streetscape are included. These include the following:

Apollo Court, County House (No.144 Brixton Rd), Willow Court (No.186) and No.204A – all dull blocks of 4 storey flats of no historic or architectural interest dating from c1960.

Nos. 230-234 (commercial use), **Nos. 274-282** (shops with flats above), **Nos.296-298** (shop with flats above) and **Nos. 300-302** (early C20th but remodelled so extensively little character remains)

No. 330 (filling station and food-market) and **Nos. 336-338** Brixton Rd (lumpen 1960's office block)

No. 145 Brixton Rd ('temporary' community hall hut – reinstatement of a 2 storey villa is encouraged)

Nos. 243 & 245 Brixton Rd (filling station and adjacent former car tyre premises)

Site of Nos. 257-259 Brixton Rd (new development under negotiation Autumn 2003)

High quality redevelopment proposals which respect the scale, height, massing, character, materials and general context of the part of the conservation area in which they are located will be encouraged.

There are other properties which are of historic interest and important to the character of the conservation area but whose **condition** is so poor that their appearance is harming this character. The restoration of these buildings is therefore strongly encouraged – such properties include:

Russell Hotel (public house closed in c2000 – now vacant, small empty site immediately adjacent to north)

Cowley Arms Public House – Normandy Road (vacant and in disrepair)

No. 322 Brixton Rd (fine Victorian shopfront in serious disrepair – property vacant)

Nos. 324 & 326 Brixton Rd (insensitive alterations in recent decades have harmed the character of these early C19th properties and a comprehensive restoration is needed including the removal of the accretions to the façades, reinstatement of appropriate fenestration and other lost features, removal of front parking yards and the reinstatement of the front gardens and railings).

There has been a total loss of original **shopfronts in the linear commercial district south of Lorn Road** between Nos. 222 and 306 Brixton Road. The reinstatement of shopfronts of a much higher quality than currently exist will therefore be required when applications for new shopfronts are submitted.

The use of the former front gardens of **Nos. 322-324** for parking has significantly harmed the setting of this historic property and the reinstatement of its front gardens is strongly encouraged. There are also several **advert hoardings** all of which severely harm the character of the conservation area and should be removed. There is also considerable scope for the reinstatement of appropriate traditional **railings** to front boundaries.

9. Background Documents

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1991

Department of the Environment & Department of National Heritage: Planning Policy Guidance (PPG15): Planning & the Historic Environment (September 1994)

English Heritage: Conservation Area Practice (October 1995)

English Heritage - Conservation Appraisals - March 1997

Survey of London Volume XXVI Parish of St Mary Lambeth: Part II Southern Area (LCC 1951)

The Buildings of England - London 32: South - Sir Nikolaus Pevsner & Bridget Cherry (Penguin 1994)

DCMS- Register of Listed Buildings for the London Borough of Lambeth (issued 1981 with later additions)

Ordnance Survey 1896, 1916, 1951, 1962-67 & 1974 editions

Brixton Heritage trails – Ken Dixon (The Brixton Society 2001)

A History of Brixton – Alan Piper (The Brixton Society 1996)

Brixton & Norwood In Old Photographs – Jill Dudman (Lambeth Archives & Alan Sutton Publishing 1995)

Archive photographs from the Lambeth Archive Landmark imaging project – Minet Library - Knatchbull Rd



The Old White Horse Inn in 1785 – the present Bar Lorca occupies a late Victorian public house on the same site (see inset photograph c1905), at the junction of Brixton Road and Loughborough Road.

