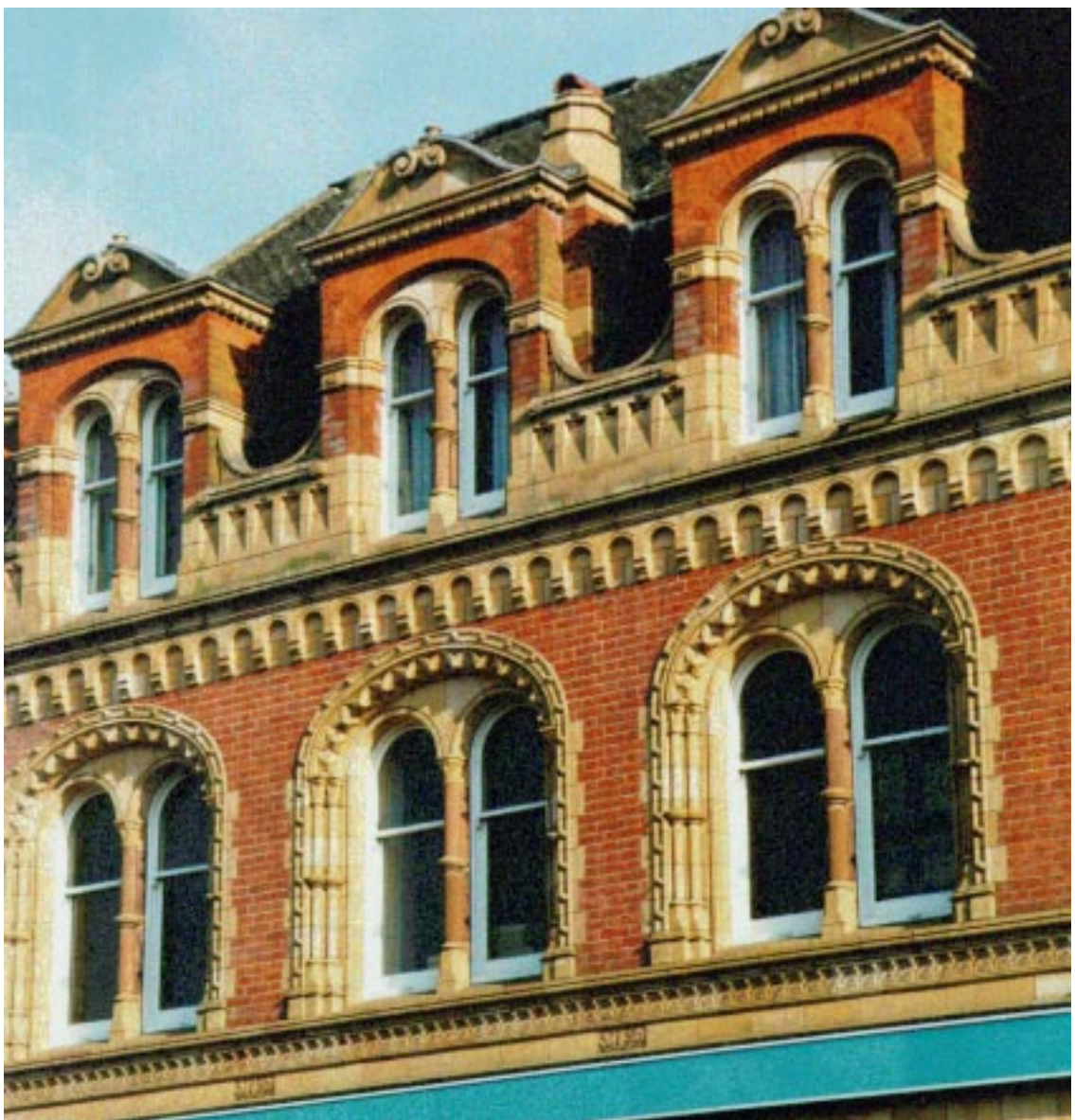


# **ST. HELEN'S ROAD**

## **LOCAL AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER**

### Supplementary Planning Guidance



LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

*This document provides non statutory planning guidance which supplements the policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted on the 30th January 1997. The UDP is the Development Plan for the London Borough of Croydon and sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the use of land in the Borough.*

*Only the policies in the development plan can have the special status afforded by section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990(as amended) in deciding planning applications. However, the Government advises that supplementary planning guidance (SPG) may be taken into account as a material consideration, the weight accorded to it being increased if it has been prepared in consultation with the public and has been the subject of a Council resolution. This document has undergone public consultation and was adopted by the Council at its Planning and Environment Committee on 25th March 1998*

*This guidance supplements the UDP Policies in Chapter 3 (Design and Layout of Development) and Chapter 4 (Urban Conservation). The Council has also produced Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Extensions, Residential Conversions, Residential Alterations and Shopfronts and Signs.*

## St.Helens Road LASC

### Introduction

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- 1.1 *There are twenty-four Local Areas of Special Character (LASC) around the Borough which are designated (Policy UC6) in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). They are predominantly older areas of the Borough which, although unlikely to meet the criteria for designation as Conservation Areas, possess sufficient architectural, townscape and environmental quality to make of significant local value. These areas may be important because of the age or quality of buildings, homogeneity, architectural style, landscape and layout.*
- 1.2 *The Council, working with building owners and interested parties wishes to encourage the retention and restoration of buildings contributing to the character of these areas.*
- 1.3 *Whilst there will be emphasis on the preservation of existing character the Council will also seek to alleviate environmental problems such as traffic congestion, inadequate parking facilities, lack of trees or inappropriate advertisements.*
- 1.4 *This leaflet aims to provide background information which will be of interest to the general reader; as well as detailing historical development and possible improvements. The information contained within this leaflet is intended to discourage inappropriate development and promote sensitive change.*



**LOCATION PLAN : ST.HELENS ROAD LASC.**

**not to scale**

## History and Context

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- 2.1 In “Yellow Face”, a short story published in 1893, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, described Norbury as “very countrified”. This is confirmed by contemporary maps and photographs which show a largely undeveloped area. Norbury Railway Station opened in 1878, but development did not gather speed until the close of the nineteenth century. By the outbreak of the First World War a new community had grown up, centred around London Road. This ancient and important transport route, possibly dating back to Roman times, had been transformed by the arrival of electric trams in 1901. Several of the commercial blocks and the three banks, dating from the first decades of the twentieth century, are impressive in terms of scale and architectural detailing, reflecting the prosperity of the new area.
- 2.2 The LASC also includes the houses and flats around the triangular green at St. Helen’s Crescent; these include 2 to 8 St. Helen’s Rd. which are amongst the oldest houses in Norbury and several interesting examples of Arts and Crafts inspired designs.
- 2.3 St. Helen’s Road (see the map on page 2) was designated a Local Area of Special Character in 1992. No. 1434 London Road is Listed Grade II. Nos. 1393, 1428-32 (even) and 1433 are on the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. Nos. 1384 - 1434 (even) and 1433-1493 are designated as main retail frontages in the UDP and 1327 - 1423 (odd), 1495-1525, 1341 to 1432 (odd), 1374 and 1448-1468 (even) are designated as secondary retail frontages.



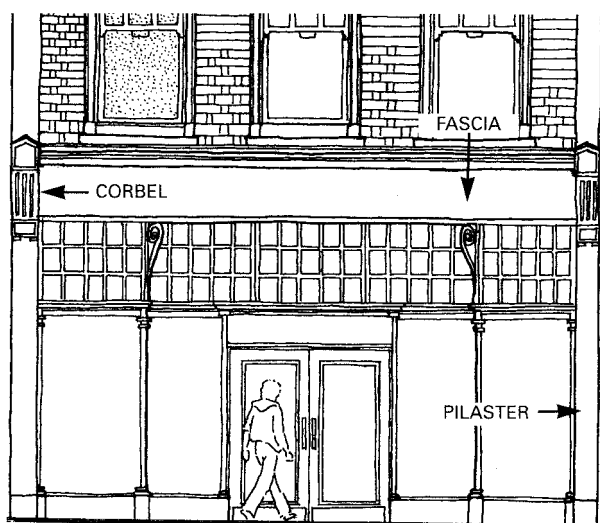
## Design Advice

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- 3.1 This leaflet does not aim to stifle change or discourage innovative design but rather to ensure that the best of the past survives in order to enrich the present and provide an attractive background, against which future development can take place.
- 3.2 Some of the more interesting buildings within the LASC are described later in this document

## Shopfronts

- 3.3 Few, if any original shopfronts survive along the stretch of London Road included within the LASC, but many individual original features remain such as the decorative corbels and pilasters which divide the shops (see diagram); these should be retained. Replacement shopfronts should take into account the appearance and proportions of the upper floors. The qualities of workmanship and materials are important factors in determining the success of any new shopfront. Those considering installing replacement shopfronts are advised to consult the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance "Shopfronts and Signs."



**Shopfront features**

## Shopfront Fascia Signs and Projecting Signs

- 3.4 The fascia signs (see diagram of shopfront) of the shops within the various Parades were designed with consistent fascia sizes which were related to the proportions of the building as a whole. The resulting strong horizontal feature succeeded in unifying disparate shopfronts. In most cases, this unity of fascia depths has been lost, to the detriment of the appearance of the LASC. Generally externally illuminated fascia signs are preferred, with painted lettering or individual pin mounted lettering.
- 3.5 On commercial premises which do not have shopfronts such as banks, the design of signs requires particularly sensitive handling. It is important that the signs do not obscure original architectural features.
- 3.6 Projecting signs have a great impact on long views down London Road. In order to create an ordered appearance they should preferably be positioned at the same height as the shopfront

fascia sign. Externally illuminated projecting signs present a more satisfactory appearance than internally illuminated box signs.

## Shopfront Security

- 3.7 Toughened glass or internal roller grilles are the least visually intrusive methods of providing shopfront security. Grilles should be of an open design to allow views into the interior of the shop. External grilles or shutters and externally mounted, shutter boxes are discouraged. It is important that the provision of security shutters is considered at an early stage in the design process so that any shutter box can be incorporated into the design of the shopfront. The installation of security shutters/grilles requires planning permission.

## Awnings

- 3.8 Fixed plastic “Balloon” or “Dutch” blinds are generally inappropriate and quickly deteriorate to the detriment of the character of the area. Traditional retractable straight canvas awnings are much more durable. Awnings should not be fitted to upper floor windows. This photograph shows retractable canvas awnings on London Road shops at the turn of the century.



## Hoardings

- 3.9 Further advertising hoardings within or affecting the setting of the LASC will not be permitted because of their adverse impact on visual amenity, particularly where they obscure original architectural features. When appropriate the Council will use available powers to require the discontinuance of existing advertisement hoardings which are considered to be visually intrusive and detract from the appearance of the area.

## Walls

- 3.10 Brick is the dominant building material within the LASC. It is important that original facing bricks are not painted or covered with render or pebble dash as this destroys colour and texture and causes later maintenance problems. When repointing is undertaken, skilled contractors



should be employed as poor repointing can spoil the appearance of buildings and result in damage to the brickwork. Other building materials found within the LASC include stone and terracotta which were often used as decorative dressings, for example around windows; materials such as these should not be painted. The cleaning of these materials is a specialist job.

- 3.11 Most of the houses around the green at St. Helen's Crescent incorporate areas of roughcast; care should be taken to match the surface texture of the original roughcast when any repairs are undertaken. Roughcast is traditionally painted. Tiles were sometimes hung on the gables or upper floor of houses as a decorative feature, examples can be seen on Norbury Crescent; it is important that the original tiles are reused when undertaking repairs. Coloured concrete tiles are inappropriate.



## Windows

- 3.12 Most of the properties within the LASC were built with sash windows. Many sash windows incorporate glazing bars and some include coloured glass; some of the frames are shaped to fit arched openings. On several buildings including the National Westminster Bank the sash boxes are exposed and not covered by brickwork in order to create an early eighteenth century appearance. Particularly interesting sash windows can be seen on 1428 and 1430 London Road. It is important that wherever possible original timber sashes are retained as they are an important part of the original fabric; they should be painted regularly. The installation of crudely designed PVCu windows has been particularly damaging to the appearance of several properties within the LASC. The installation of inappropriate windows on one building can damage the appearance of many properties.



## Roofscape

- 3.13 Roofs within the LASC are mainly covered with plain red tile or purple slate although other original roofing materials include green slate, pantiles and stone flags. Every effort should be made to reuse existing materials or to match them, in terms of both tile size and colour, particularly on roofs visible from public areas. Decorative features such as ridge tiles should be reused. The use of profiled coloured concrete tiles rather than the original plain red clay tiles have been detrimental to the appearance of several properties within the LASC.
- 3.14 The rows of gables which are a characteristic feature of the centre of Norbury and corner turrets such as those on 1341 and 1371 London Road should be retained. Chimney stacks are an important decorative feature of many of the buildings within the LASC, examples include the striped portland stone and red brick stacks of 1374 London Road and the roughcast covered stacks of 12 St. Helen's road; these should also be retained. Regular maintenance is essential if exposed rooftop features are to survive.



## The Green at St. Helen's

- 3.15 The open space bounded by St.Helen's Crescent, St.Helen's Road and Norbury Crescent is the focal point of the residential section of the LASC, providing an attractive setting for the surrounding houses and flats. It is hoped that, in the future, the Council will improve some of the less satisfactory features of this valuable local amenity such as the neighbourhood recycling centre.

**FOR GENERAL ADVICE ON WHAT REQUIRES PLANNING PERMISSION etc. CONTACT PLANNING CONTROL (NORTH TEAM) Tel.: 0181 760 5403**  
**FOR FURTHER DESIGN ADVICE CONTACT THE URBAN DESIGN TEAM Tel.: 0181 686 4433 EXT.2251.**

# Buildings of interest within the St. Helens Road Local Area of Special Character

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*The commercial and residential areas of the LASC have distinct characters. The three and four-storey turn of the century buildings lining much of London Road are the distinctive feature of Norbury District Centre; the Edwardian houses around St.Helen's Crescent are an attractive contrast.*

*[London Road was given its present numbering system in the 1920's; before that date addresses were identified by the name of the Parade].*

## **1341-1371 London Road (King Edwards VII Parade)**

The block was completed in 1906, plans were submitted to the Council by Mr.C.Spencer, builder. The centre of the block was reserved for a public hall, originally named King Edward Hall and later the Palais de Luxe, it served as a skating ring and later a Cinema. The front of the hall has been altered and it is now a furniture store. One early plan indicates two arcades which were never built. The window surrounds and architectural details of this impressive parade are of buff terracotta. The gables and turrets along the roofline are particularly attractive features.



## **1393 London Road (National Westminster Bank)**



The plans for this very attractive corner building are dated 1912. The building was designed by Frederick Hall Jones. Two colours of brick are used on the upper floors above a portland stone and granite ground floor. The bold projecting eaves and green slate roof give the building an air of distinction. The bank was extended at a later date, the extension matches the original section. This building forms the start of a fine group of red brick classical buildings that stretches to 1437-1441.(Local List.)

## **I411 - I423 London Road (Stanford Parade)**

This parade, completed in 1908, was designed by C. Stanley Peach, a notable Edwardian architect, whose works included the Centre Court at Wimbledon, the interior of the Haymarket Theatre and many early electricity power stations. The drawings are unusually detailed and the care taken over the design is evident in the planning and the well proportioned, elegantly detailed, red brick and stucco facades, particularly the recessed London Road facade. The rear facade is also of interest.



## **I433 London Road (Lloyds Bank)**

Designed by H. Field and opened in 1925. This impressive building is a good example of the style adopted by Lloyds in the inter war years. Typical features of the style include the neo Georgian sashes and rusticated brick ground floors. The pantile roof is original. The porch, cornice and stone first floor window surrounds are particularly attractive features. The only major changes on the external elevations would appear to be the installation of an illuminated fascia and projecting sign and cash dispenser. (Local List.)



## **I437-I441 London Road**

Opened in 1927 as a branch of the South Suburban Cooperative Society Ltd., to the designs of Bethell, Swannell and Durnford this building incorporates elegant stone window surrounds which are very similar to those on the adjoining Lloyds Bank, keystones as on the Nat West Bank (1393 London Road) and carved plaques as on Stanford Parade (I411-I423 London Road). The building forms the end of the group of properties that stretches from the National Westminster bank.



### **1447 - 1465a London Road**



The “black and white” gables and heavily ornamented bay windows of the original semi-detached houses built in the early 1900’s survive above the single storey projecting shops, built on the front gardens in the 1920’s.

### **1374 London Road**



This distinctive building was opened in 1914, as show rooms and offices for the Croydon Gas Company. The pride of the early utility companies is reflected in expensive features such as the green slate roofs, striped chimneys and well-detailed gables and dormer windows. The first floor of the building originally accommodated a Lecture Hall incorporating gas stoves for demonstration purposes. Berney and Son were the architects.

### **1384 - 1400 London Road (part of Victoria Parade)**



The single storey parade of shops was erected in 1926; the date is recorded on the decorative stonework. The shops were built on the gardens of “Shadowbush” and “Westview” which survive above the shops. These tall detached houses were amongst the first to be built in Norbury.

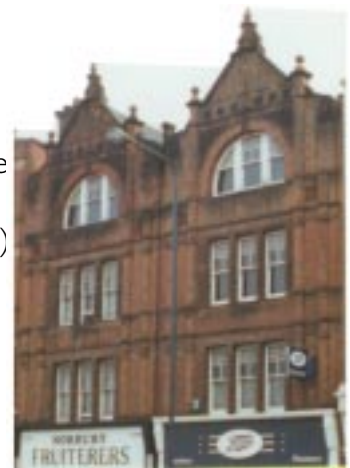
## **1414 - 1426 London Road (part of Victoria Parade)**

Tall gabled properties, completed in 1903. Plans were submitted by C.Spencer for “seven houses and shops”. The properties are divided by buttresses of white glazed bricks which emphasis the narrowness of the facades. The decorative sash windows and their cement surrounds are particularly interesting. This Parade forms a fine group with Barclays Bank and Norbury Parade (1448-1464 London Road).



## **1428-1430 London Road (part of Victoria Parade)**

Plans were submitted in 1902 for this pair of tall gabled “houses with shops” built of red brick with sandstone dressings. The architect was P.H.Adams. The sophisticated facades of these two structures incorporate many attractive features including the arched window on the upper floor and the decorative features on the gable creating an intricate skyline. Brick ribs are used to give vertical emphasis. (Local List.)



## **1432 London Road (part of Victoria Parade)**

Now incorporated into Barclay's Bank, this property was built to house a branch of J.Sainsbury's. It was designed by P.H.Adams, the architect of nos.1428-1430, plans were submitted in the same year, 1902.(Local List.)



## **1434 London Road (Barclays Bank)**



Plans were submitted by “E.J.Saunders, Builder” of Croydon for a branch of the London and South Western Banking Company in 1901. The upper floors included living accommodation for the branch manger which included a drawing room and library. The building prominently sited on a splayed corner is a Norbury landmark; decorative elements include the bold terracotta ornamental work around the windows, dormers and eaves. The original entrance to the bank was on the corner. (Listed Grade II.)

## **1448 - 1464 London Road (Norbury Parade)**



This distinctive parade of tall narrow shops topped by shaped gables was completed in 1900. The architects were Chesterton and Sons. Built when most of the area was open country, the scale of this Parade illustrates the ambition and confidence of the early developers of Norbury.

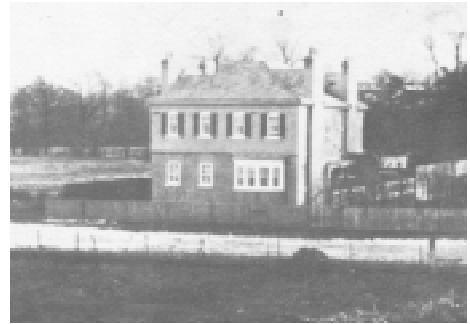
## **2 to 8 (even) St. Helen's Road**



These four houses are shown on the 1894 OS Map, they are amongst the oldest in the area. The tall gabled brick semi detached properties contrast with the other slightly later Arts and Crafts inspired houses around the green.

## 10 St. Helen's Road

Plans were submitted for this "Detached Residence at Norbury" in 1899. The Architects were Chesterton and Sons. The front elevation is very attractive and still retains its original window frames and shutters. The architect's drawings show tapering Arts and Crafts chimney stacks which were apparently not built. The photograph shows the house in 1901.



## 12 St. Helen's Road

Plans were submitted for this "Cottage at Norbury" in 1900 by Mr. W. Hawkes. The house is a fine example of Arts and Crafts architecture displaying white painted roughcast walls and deep bracketed eaves.



## 16 St. Helens Road

This prominent detached house dates from the turn of the century. The roof tiles inset around the windows and doors contrast with the white painted roughcast surface to give a decorative appearance. The porch has striking decorative iron brackets. The garage is an attractive feature.



## 5 & 7 St. Helen's Crescent

Plans were submitted in 1896 for this pair of houses on the "Norbury Manor Estate" for H.W. Carter Esq. J.P. Chestertons were the Architects.

