# Contents

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- Purpose & Objectives
- Summary of Character
- Context Map
- Location and Setting of Conservation Area
- Historical Summary

## 2. TOWNSCAPE

- Urban Form
- Street Layout
- Gaps
- Land Uses
- Communal Gardens
- Materials
- Buildings Audit

## 3. ARCHITECTURE

- Terraces and Crescents
- Groups and Palace Fronts
- End of Terraces and Side Elevations
- Semi-Detached Villas Pairs
- Detached Dwellings
- Mews
- Architectural Details
- Roofs
- Rear Elevations
- Boundary Treatment and Lightwells
- Places of Worship
- Pubs
- Shops

## 4. PUBLIC REALM

## 5. VIEWS

## 6. NEGATIVE ELEMENTS

## 7. APPENDIX 1

- Historic Development
  - Early History
  - 19th Century
  - 20th Century

## 8. APPENDIX 2

- Historic Maps

## 9. APPENDIX 3

- Checklist used in the identification of heritage assets and their contribution to the character of the conservation area
Ladbroke Conservation Area Boundary
1 Introduction

What does a conservation area designation mean?

1.1 The statutory definition of a conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The power to designate conservation areas is given to councils through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conserved Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Once designated, proposals within a conservation area become subject to policies outlined in part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as regional and local policies outlined in the London Plan and the Borough’s Core Strategy. Our overarching duty which is set out in the Act is to preserve or enhance the historic or architectural character or appearance of the conservation area.

1.2 The Council’s Core Strategy sets the local planning policy framework for development within the Royal Borough. Chapter 34, Renewing the Legacy, is of particular importance for conservation and design issues. The policies contained in this chapter deal with key themes in conservation such as; context and character (Policy CL1), design (Policy CL2) development in conservation areas (Policy CL3), changes to listed buildings (Policy CL4), small scale alterations and additions (Policy CL6). Appraisal documents aim to provide an evidence base for decision makers when applying these policies to development proposals in specific conservation areas.

1.3 A conservation area appraisal defines the special historic and architectural character of an area. A conservation area’s character is defined by a combination of architecture, materials and detailing as well as the relationship between buildings and their settings. Many other elements contribute to character such as the placement of buildings within their plots; views and vistas; the relationship between the street and the buildings and the presence of trees and green space.

1.4 This document has been produced using the guidance set out by English Heritage in their document, Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2011). This document will be a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

1.5 The aims of the Appraisal are to:

- define the historic and architectural character and appearance of the area
- identify what is worthy of conservation
- raise public interest and awareness of the objectives of the conservation area designation
- encourage public involvement in the protection of the area necessary to safeguard the character or special interest of the area
- identify opportunities for enhancement

The appraisal aims to be comprehensive but it would be impossible to identify every facet contributing to the area’s special interest. The omission of any particular building, feature or space should not imply that it is of no interest.
**Summary of Character**

1.6 The Ladbroke Conservation Area was designated in 1969, one of the Royal Borough’s earliest designations. The area was developed speculatively from south to north by a number of different architects, developers and builders between the 1820s and the mid 1870s. Early plans were drawn up by Thomas Allom whose ideas for a circus and communal gardens were progressed by other architects who added the crescents and placed the gardens behind the houses. Architects who worked on the estate included James Thomson, Thomas Allom, William Reynolds and Thomas Pocock.

1.7 The buildings in the area make up a large and vital part of the character of the conservation area. In Ladbroke many terraces were designed around the contours of the hill so that the parapets remained continuous and unbroken. The types of housing built are highly significant and distinctive to Ladbroke. The terraces are either half or fully stuccoed with elaborate detailing; and pairs of villas are of key special interest to the area. The setting of these houses is created by the gardens around them and the space in between them. A very special feature of the Ladbroke Estate are the terrace ends that were often designed to have the appearance of a symmetrical detached house.

1.8 However, the great innovation at Ladbroke were the communal gardens situated behind the houses and therefore accessed directly from the owner’s rooms rather than by crossing a road into a central square as was usual at that time. Rather than providing a formal architectural set piece, this was simply more practical and must have played a part in the subsequent garden suburb movement and the evolution of the British back garden from service yard and vegetable patch to a place of leisure. The fact that many rear elevations onto the communal gardens are well designed in their own right creates a relationship whereby each creates the setting for the other.


1.9 Ladbroke (W11) covers a fairly large area in the north of the Royal Borough and straddles four different wards. A large proportion of the conservation area is within Norland Ward (west of Ladbroke Grove), roughly a quarter of the area (south-east) is within Pembridge Ward and a quarter of the area (north-east) is within Colville Ward. A very small part comprises one or two streets in Notting Dale ward.

1.10 The setting of the conservation area is characterised to the west by another historic housing estate, Norland, dating from the 1840s and 1850s. In between these two planned estates is the historic Pottery Lane and Portland Road. These streets consist of tightly packed terraces on small plots.

1.11 To the north-east, development dates from the post war period and is characterised by social housing and a more irregular and fragmented street pattern. North of the Westway, long streets of late Victorian dwelling houses, constructed in stock brick, form part of the Oxford Gardens Conservation Area.

1.12 The eastern boundary is formed by Portobello Road, a street of commercial activity, which contrasts with the primarily residential character for much of the rest of the Ladbroke Estate.

1.13 Colville and Pembridge Conservation Areas stretch to the east of the Ladbroke Conservation Area, while Kensington Conservation Area is located to the south.
**Historic Development Summary**

- **Mid 1700s**: Ladbroke family acquires land
- **1820s**: Thomas Allason produces first plan for the area. Includes large circus and ‘paddocks’. Houses built on Holland Park Avenue
- **1836-1841**: Hippodrome Race Course located where St John’s Church now stands.
- **1840s**: Plans for the area revised by various architects. James Thomson takes forward idea of ‘paddocks’ (today’s communal gardens) and suggests crescents
- **1840s**: Parcels of land developed speculatively by different developers
- **1850s**: Church of St John the Evangelist built with villa pairs to south-west (1844-5)
- **1860s**: Ladbroke Grove tube station opens (1864)
- **1868**: Estate largely complete (except some streets to the north and Ladbroke Gardens now named ‘Coffin Row’)
- **1870s**: Fruit and vegetable market established in Portobello Road
- **1900s**: Area run down. Flats and bedsits.
- **1948**: Antique sellers colonise Portobello Road
- **1964**: Notting Hill Carnival begins following race riots in 1958
- **1969**: Ladbroke Conservation Area designated (one of RBKC’s earliest)

---

**Fig 1.2 Historic Development Map**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100021668
2 Townscape

Urban Form

2.1 The Ladbroke Conservation Area has a spacious urban form overall, which is almost wholly due to the communal gardens behind many of the terraces. These gardens create green space between the terraces’ rear elevations but also create soft green areas in the streetscape between the house frontages.

2.2 The centre of the Ladbroke Conservation Area is located at the peak of Notting Hill. The topography of the conservation area is integral to the estate’s original design and layout. The concentric crescents, terraces and communal gardens of the estate fan out from the summit following the contour lines of the hill. This creates a contrast of urban and soft elements as you move around the estate.

2.3 The majority of the area is made up of terraced housing, but there is a large area of semi-detached villas to the south-west part of the area. Space around these has been compromised in some places but generally the important relationship of green space to built form is strong in the conservation area. Clarendon Road has a particularly spacious townscape.

2.4 Detached buildings in the conservation area are rare. St John’s Church, Kensington Temple, the artists’ studios (Lansdowne House) and nos. 28-36 Elgin Crescent are rare forms of fully detached properties. Others have been built as detached or symmetrically fronted properties, yet are attached physically to their neighbours. These include several churches and houses, such as 53 Blenheim Crescent and 14 Ladbroke Road.
2.5 Mansion blocks are not a strong feature of this conservation area, but they do exist on Kensington Park Road. The mansion blocks, along with other more recent blocks of flats, have a much larger footprint and built form compared to the surrounding terraces. Such blocks generally have more tightly contained space around them.

2.6 The mews have a tightly packed urban form set in narrower streets without pavements. The mews have no space around them other than the gardens of the houses they back on to but their entrances create openings in the street scene.
Gaps

2.7 The combination of buildings and the space around them combine to give the conservation area its characteristic form. There are many gaps between and around buildings in Ladbroke which are an essential part of its significance, although some have been lost over the years through lack of understanding of their importance.

2.8 The important gaps include:

- Space around detached buildings;
- Gaps between semi-detached pairs (both at ground floor and upper levels);
- Space between groups of terraced houses;
- Space that is created where a back garden abuts a street;
- Gaps in the streetscape where the ends of the communal gardens meet a street.

Fig 2.3 Important Townscape Gaps Map

© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100021668
2.9 There are two historic routes through the conservation area. These are Holland Park Avenue which was previously called Uxbridge Road and one of the country’s oldest highways into London. The other is Portobello Road which is not so old but led from Holland Park Avenue to Porto Bello Farm. Their form follows their original function in so far as Holland Park Avenue is a wide straight main road that carries much traffic whereas Portobello Road is a narrow road that meanders left and right, up and down, no doubt winding around former trees and field boundaries as it travelled northwards.

2.10 Three substantial roads were planned to run north-south through the estate: Clarendon Road, Ladbroke Grove and Kensington Park Road. The architects often made good use of end elevations fronting these main roads and designed them as principal frontages. Several excellent examples can be seen on Ladbroke Grove.

2.11 The rest of the estate was designed so that the crescents ran around the contours of the hill and semi-detached pairs stepped up and down the hill. Many streets were designed to have a vista at the end with the best example being Stanley Gardens which has vistas at both ends of the street. The grand circus that was originally planned has ended up as a much smaller pair of mismatched crescents with the houses facing outwards, and gardens in the hemispheres.

2.12 The mews are the smallest streets in the area and due to their function were not designed to have pavements. The mews in Ladbroke are either cul-de-sacs or, as in the south of the area, long open ended alleys.
Land Uses

2.13 The building uses in the conservation area have largely remained as originally planned. However, there are other important uses that contribute to the character of the area.

2.14 Churches were seen as a vital function in Victorian development and St John’s was given a key position at the top of the hill. Three other Victorian churches were also built on the estate.

2.15 Service uses such as public houses and shops, which would only have been frequented by the servants in the area, and not the home owners, were kept to the extremities of the estate. These uses are concentrated along Holland Park Avenue; Portobello Road; the northern sections of Ladbroke Grove and Kensington Park Road; and short sections of Westbourne Park Road, Elgin Crescent and Westbourne Grove. The Elgin Hotel and the Clarendon Hotel were probably built as drinking establishments (and lodgings) for the local gentry due to their more elaborate design and their position within the estate.

2.16 Mews were built to provide stabling to serve the houses, but were not built evenly across the estate and are mainly found in the south of the conservation area.

2.17 Other notable early uses include the Horbury Chapel School (1851, now a dwelling), the Victoria Hall theatre (1863, now the Twentieth Century Theatre) and the fire station (1870, now residential). Unusually a building contractor was based on the outskirts from c.1880-90s (Clarendon Works) which has also now changed from its original use.

Fig 2.5 Land Uses Map © Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100021668
2.18 The underground railway was ultimately a key factor in the success of the estate with Ladbroke Grove station being opened in 1864 as Notting Hill Station (outside the conservation area). Holland Park Station, then on the Central London Railway, was not opened until 1900. Both stations are still in use today.

2.19 Around the turn of the twentieth century a variety of other uses were added including North Kensington Library (1890-1), the police station (1906) and the Electric Cinema (1910-11). Interestingly these buildings have all remained in the same use.
Communal Gardens

2.20 Highly significant features of the Ladbroke Conservation Area are the 16 private communal gardens that are located between the terraces to the rear of the houses. The gardens are all registered Historic Parks & Gardens (Grade II) and each one has a slightly different character. The original idea for these is attributed to Thomas Allason, a distinguished architect and specialist in landscape design, but the concept was refined by James Thomson, (who was a pupil of J.B. Papworth who had designed the Montpellier Estate in Cheltenham) and others. At this time in London, private shared gardens were being built at the centre of formal squares which were accessed from the front door of each house, and across a road. Rear yards were accessed from the servants’ quarters and used as service areas.

2.21 The Victorians were discovering the health benefits of fresh air and this may have prompted this innovative design. The communal gardens in Ladbroke were designed to be accessed directly from the rear of the house and many of them were designed to have a private garden or yard. They were intended only for use by the families living in the surrounding houses but servants in charge of the families’ children could enter when supervising the children.

2.22 The gardens were an integral part of the estate and were a selling feature of the area. They were intended to have an Arcadian parkland feel rather than a domestic garden. The map of 1862-5 best shows the layout of the gardens, many of which still have their gravel paths encircling the garden which turn in figure of eight patterns in the larger gardens.
2.23 The backdrop of the gardens is provided by the rear elevations of the houses that surround them. These are often as finely detailed as the frontages. Many houses have their own private garden area and this is separated from the communal garden with cast iron railings. Private rear gardens play an important role in softening the transition from the hard urban feel of the houses to the communal gardens. A good number of original railings survive and they follow the same pattern in each garden with the pattern changing from garden to garden. Unfortunately, some private rear gardens, and their boundaries fronting the communal gardens, have suffered from visually insensitive and historically inappropriate alterations or additions.

Trees

2.24 In some gardens it appears that a line of trees were planted just beyond the private gardens in a similar way that trees were often planted in front gardens. Another common feature was a shrub bed immediately behind the private gardens in what is known as no man’s land or the buffer zone. Trees and shrubs gave privacy to the private gardens, whereas the central lawns were intended to be more open with groups of trees planted at intervals.

2.25 Some of the gardens retain a few of the original trees and many of these trees such as the mature London Planes of Arundel and Ladbroke Garden should continue to thrive for decades more. Other original trees are now coming to the end of their natural life spans and will require replacement to ensure the characteristic wooded appearance of many of the gardens is retained.
Materials

2.26 The Victorian houses in the conservation area were built of natural and locally made materials such as stock brick, stucco, timber and cast iron. Welsh slate and stone were brought in from further afield with stone being only used in the highest status buildings such as churches.

2.27 Stucco was used to imitate stone and the crescents towards the centre of the conservation area were fully stuccoed. Usually money was saved by only covering the front elevation in stucco, but a number of houses in Ladbroke have their rear elevations stuccoed as well. Stucco was also used for decoration that varied from simple pediments and cornices to elaborate capitals and balustrades.

2.28 Originally stucco was not painted and an example of this can be seen at the detached house at 14 Ladbroke Road (1843 by developer, William Chadwick). No. 68 Elgin Crescent is almost unique in the area in having been painted this same Bath stone colour. Today the best presented fully stuccoed terraces are those that are entirely painted the same off-white stone colour (such as Gardenia) whereas terraces with a mixture of greys, whites and creams can look ill-coordinated. Some terraces are entirely painted white which presents a suitably unified scheme.

2.29 A typical feature of the 1830s and 1840s in London was the use of stucco to the lower and ground floor only, forming a visual base to the terrace, and this is widely seen in Ladbroke. In its finest form, the ground floor render is deeply channelled to imitate courses of large
stone, but elsewhere it may only be thinly lined to imitate fine ashlar. Houses treated this way exist throughout the conservation area, for example to terraces in Ladbroke Square, Blenheim and Cornwall Crescents as well as pairs of villas in Clarendon and Lansdowne Roads. At these houses, the stucco base and details are usually painted white or off-white (ie. Gardenia). Coloured detailing is fortunately rare and looks extremely out of character where it does appear.

2.30 Some stucco fronted houses have been painted in pastel colours with white detailing. Although this was not the original intention, it could be said to suit some of the smaller groups of less grand houses such as those with arched windows on Elgin Crescent or Dutch gables on Ladbroke Road. Where this has been most successful, a palette of similar pale tones has been used and the continuous details (such as balustrades to the parapets and boundaries) have been painted white, thus tying the group together visually.

2.31 Some houses were built entirely of stock brick with only the detailing in stucco. This is also the case with many mews buildings. The fair-faced brick and its patina of age contribute strongly to the character of the conservation area and where this has been lost to painting, the appearance of the area is harmed.

2.32 Most houses in the area have some black painted cast ironwork either to guard the lightwells or the first floor balconies. Today, ironwork is always painted black and this continuity unifies the terraces. Where ironwork is of different design or colour or has gold tips, this is harmful to the character of the area.
Buildings Audit

2.33 The Buildings Audit Map shows the contribution made by buildings to the historic and architectural character of the area. For all buildings identified here as positive buildings, change must be managed to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance in accordance with national and local planning policies.

Listed Buildings

2.34 A listed building is a building designated by the Government on the advice of English Heritage as a building of special architectural or historic interest, which local authorities have a statutory duty to preserve and enhance. Great weight is given to their conservation.

Positive Buildings

2.35 These buildings make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area. They are a key reason for the designation and significance of the conservation area. Demolition or unsympathetic alterations will normally be resisted.

Neutral Buildings

2.36 These buildings may blend into the townscape by virtue of their form, scale or materials, but due to their level of design quality, fail to make a positive contribution. Improvements to these buildings would be welcomed.

Negative Buildings

2.37 Negative buildings are those that are clearly harmful to the character of the area. Their removal and redevelopment would be welcomed subject to the highest quality design.
3 Architecture

3.1 The housing in James Weller Ladbroke’s estate was designed by a number of different architects and builders who varied their designs whilst using a common palette of materials and details. The area was developed speculatively over a long period with houses in Holland Park Avenue being built in the 1820s, Stanley Gardens being built in the 1850s and the last terraces to the north being completed in the mid 1870s.

3.2 The design of many terraces, groups, and pairs is usually unique to that particular group. Features seen on one group may not appear on another. Some buildings are not mentioned in this text, but that does not mean they have no value and for this the reader should consult the Buildings Audit Map to ascertain if a building makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.¹

¹ For more information, please consult the ‘Survey of London volume 37, North Kensington’.
The predominant building type in Ladbroke Conservation Area is the terraced house with its rhythmic design and features. This well established house type resulted in uniform streetscapes despite having different builders and they were easy to adapt to the curving crescents being only two bays wide. Another key feature of the estate was the use of the land contours to ensure that the terrace had a shared and unbroken roofline. The houses range from three storeys over basement (the most prevalent) to five storeys over basement for the largest houses in Ladbroke Gardens and Stanley Crescent.

The conservation area has an interesting range of terrace designs including the smaller Regency houses in the south of the area as well as the more highly decorated mid Victorian terraces further north. Many of the crescents have elaborate stucco fronted houses with some having equally elaborate stucco rear elevations. The unified features to all elevations of the terraces, such as windows, stucco details, doors, porches, make an essential contribution to the area’s character and it suffers where these have been lost or replaced unsympathetically.

Many of the historic houses on Holland Park Avenue were built in the 1820s and 1830s before Allason and Thompson’s plans were produced. They were therefore not developed to unified schemes as in other parts of the conservation area but their varied heights and sizes as well as their leafy front gardens make this a very charming and distinctive area. The terraces are stucco fronted, have parapets with cornices, Georgian paned sash windows and some have delicate original wrought iron balconies and verandas.

Some particularly unusual terraces are those with bow frontages at nos. 23-29 Clarendon Road and 21-26 and 31-38 Lansdowne Crescent; and those with Dutch gables at nos. 68-102 and 79-117 Lansdowne Road. Nos. 23-29 Clarendon Road were designed by Allason in 1845. They have channelled stucco to the ground floor with smooth stucco on the rest of the elevation. The sash windows are divided into three panes by vertical glazing bars and these are remarkably well preserved throughout the terrace. Both the bow fronted and Dutch gabled houses tend to be painted in pastel colours.

In Lansdowne Crescent, nos. 21-26 and 31-38 have shallower curves and a greater level of detailing. They were designed by architect Henry Wyatt (1860-2) with more opulent detailing including the entablatures over the windows, cast iron balcony railings and ionic porches (unusually without a front section). These are predominantly painted white.

Nos. 68-102 and 79-117 (probably by William Sim, builder and architect c.1852) Lansdowne Road with the Dutch gables are in a yet higher Victorian state of opulence with arched windows and canted ground floor bays with the whole front and back stuccoed. Many stucco bottle balustrades (square section) to the
boundaries have been lost as have much of the balustrading to the parapets (joined rings) and the bays (interlaced joined rings). However, this opulent house design is particularly rare in the borough and is therefore highly significant.

3.9 The architect Thomas Allom designed some of the most important work of his career here: the high Victorian terraces on Stanley Gardens (1853-4) and Stanley Crescent (nos. 1-13 built 1853-4 and 14-23 built 1862-3) and nos. 10-22 Kensington Park Gardens (1853-1858) amongst others. These are fully stuccoed and illustrate beautifully how each floor is given the appropriate treatment for the internal uses. On the ground floor, the deeply channelled stucco, portico entrance and arched windows are followed by French windows opening onto a continuous balcony at first floor level. These are the principal floors used by the family for entertaining. The arched windows to the third floor are smaller but still elaborate as they denote the family bedrooms. The fourth floor windows lighting the children’s and servants’ bedrooms are the smallest and least detailed. Each terrace is finished with a gently curving full height bay. These buildings form one of the most accomplished set pieces in the conservation area with planned vistas of St Peter’s to the east and nos. 10 and 11 Stanley Crescent to the west.
Groups and palace fronts

3.10 Many terraces were designed as a group to have a ‘palace’ or ‘temple’ frontage in which the group may have a central feature and / or be bookended by pavilions that are more dominant. This can be seen at the delightful nos. 11-19 Ladbroke Grove (1833-c.1838 by Drew) and 2-6 & 24-28 Holland Park Avenue (by architect / builder Robert Cantwell, 1828) as well as many others. The two Holland Park Avenue example are quite magnificent Palladian buildings designed to contain three houses each and have giant Doric engaged columns to the central sections which are topped with a pediment over a perfectly proportioned attic storey. This certainly justifies the term ‘temple front’.

3.11 Kensington Park Terrace North (nos. 126-184 Kensington Park Road, by Pocock, 1852) is an extremely long group of properties with a palace frontage. It displays its name in a central pediment which provides the vista to Arundel Gardens as well as having shallow projecting end sections at nos. 126-134 and 172-184. Further good examples are nos. 54-62 Chepstow Villas (including the side of 74 Kensington Park Road) and several groups on Elgin Crescent (between Rosmead Road and Ladbroke Grove).

3.12 The essential feature of these houses is that they were designed as a group with certain elements matching, ie. the end pavilions match each other and the individual houses within the group are uniform. The structure should be seen as a whole even though it is actually a number of separate houses. Some individual houses in the area are painted different colours making it hard to read the composition as a whole and this detracts from the appearance of the area.
3.13 Another distinctive and important feature of Ladbroke Conservation Area is the well designed ends of terraces. This feature is particularly strong in Thomas Allom’s area with particularly fine end / side elevations fronting Kensington Park Road from Lansdowne Crescent, Stanley Gardens and Kensington Park Road. These elevations were designed to look like pairs of villas or detached houses and give the main road and the interior streets fine frontages. This effect is also seen on Ladbroke Grove and to a lesser extent in other streets.

3.14 Elsewhere side elevations are neatly finished either with a plain brick elevation as that to the former Clarendon Hotel or with a simple amount of detailing or array of blind windows. No. 22 Ladbroke Square has a particularly good display of nine blind windows that offer an elegant counterpoint to the clear-windowed front elevations.
Many semi-detached villa pairs are located in the south-west corner of the conservation area and around Lansdowne Crescent. They were built by a number of different builders in the 1840s. They have perhaps the most varied designs in the conservation area which include gothic, classical / Italianate, stucco and brick examples. Some terminate vistas such as nos. 11 and 12 Stanley Crescent, others were built around a curve such as those on Lansdowne Crescent. The longest row of semi-detached villas occupy around half of Clarendon Road.

The defining feature of a semi-detached pair is that they share only one party wall and have space all around them. The objective of their design was to give the appearance of a single villa that was larger and grander than the two dwellings they actually were.

The semi-detached pairs were built in a variety of designs and materials according to their builder and date of construction. The front doors are either handed or paired. When they are handed, they are often set back from the main body of the building and when they are paired, they often share a porch.

Unfortunately in many places ill-considered alterations to one half of a pair have had a harmful effect. Some pairs in the conservation area have been painted on one side thus wrecking the effect of a single unit. In Ladbroke Road alterations to pairs have been particularly harmful to the character of the street as a whole.
3.19 This is the highest status house type in the area and the type that the semi-detached house seeks to emulate in its design. Few truly detached houses were built in Ladbroke but some were built to look detached and symmetrical even though they are physically attached to their neighbours. The largest detached houses in the area are nos. 1-3 Lansdowne Road by Drew (1845).

3.20 No. 41 Clarendon Road (by Reynolds, 1845) terminates the west view from Lansdowne Walk. Although a fine design, it shares the characteristics of terraced houses with its parapet roof, rows of equally spaced windows, canted stucco bay and entrance to one side. A detached house with a similar but subtly different design is 55 Clarendon Road by the same architect.

3.21 An unusual group of detached houses exist at nos. 28-36 Elgin Crescent (c.1860s) which again, emulate the features of terraced houses being only two bays wide with fully stuccoed front elevations, engaged porches, ground floor canted bays and simple detailing.

3.22 No. 53 Blenheim Crescent (by builder Richard Crowle, 1863) is not fully detached, but designed as a symmetrical double fronted house with central porch and pair of small stuccoed dormers to the hipped roof. No. 14 Ladbroke Road (by developer, William Chadwick, 1843) is a fully detached classically designed house.

3.23 Clearly, these houses rely on the space around them to retain their character as high status detached houses.
Mews

3.24 Mews are small streets of former stabling for horses and carriages to serve the houses around them. There are several short mews in Ladbroke Conservation Area and their built form and historic character form an important part of the character of the conservation area. Some mews buildings have been rebuilt over time and in these cases it is likely to be their uniformity and relationship with the rest of the street that contributes to the character of these distinctive areas. Some historic mews buildings remain and these have great historic and architectural significance to the conservation area even where their original features may have been changed. Most mews have been converted to dwellings.

3.25 Some mews in Ladbroke can only be accessed from one end whereas three (Lansdowne Mews, Boyne Terrace Mews and Ladbroke Walk (c.1860s) are open at both ends. Formal arches and gates are not characteristic of the mews in Ladbroke, however the views from the street into the closed mews have particular charm. Most mews are paved with granite setts to their full width. These were necessary to withstand heavy use and central gutters were needed so that waste could be swept away from the stables. Original setts have regrettably been lost from Lansdowne Mews and Boyne Terrace Mews.

3.26 All the mews were originally two storeys with no attics or basements. The ground floor was used for stabling with the first floor being the groom’s accommodation. This gave rise to the external appearance that remains characteristic today of sash windows to the first floor and to the ground floor: two large stable doors (one for the horses, one for the carriage), often with Collinge strap hinges. Two examples of original external steps up to the first floor accommodation exist in Wilby Mews and Codrington Mews.

3.27 Horbury Mews (1877) and Wilby Mews (c.1840s-60s) both have gabled central bays with dentilled brick parapets which in Horbury are picked out in red brick. Often the bressumer (timber lintel) over the ground floor opening remains. Windows are often Georgian
paned sashes and sometimes casements, but characteristically matching throughout the same mews. Window lintels are often red rubbed brick flat arches (sometimes stock brick) but those in Horbury Mews have prominent key stones and those in Ladbroke Walk have pointed heads. Where elevations are painted this detail is sadly lost to view.

3.28 Where individual mews buildings have been painted this harms the uniformity of the group and detracts from the beauty of the aged brickwork. Codrington Mews, however, has been entirely painted and this has reinstated uniformity. Two mews have been substantially altered and have lost their heritage significance. These are Boyne Terrace Mews (with the exception of no. 7 which is probably of inter-war date) and Lansdowne Mews which has lost both historic buildings and uniformity.
Historic details were designed by the architects and builders of the estate and represent features that are special to the Ladbroke area. Architectural detailing is an essential part of the significance of the buildings and the character of the conservation area and as they are no longer common today, these features are a finite resource and of high heritage value.

Timber sash windows with delicate glazing bars, sometimes with crown or cylinder glass, are key features to front and rear elevations and often (but not always) side elevations. Windows in Ladbroke always follow a hierarchy with the largest windows being on the main floors (ground and first) and smaller ones higher up.

A variety of original front doors survive across the conservation area. In the grander houses they imitate a pair of doors and in other houses they are simpler but all are panelled and painted, sometimes with stained glass to the top lights. One of the most striking features of the whole estate is the long rows of equally spaced porches appearing to march down the pavement giving each house its own miniature grand porticoed entrance.

Original steps may be in stone or mosaic tile and railings to the landings tend to be of different design to other ironwork on the houses. Each terrace displays a variety of ironwork (decorative boundary railings, simple handrails to basement, decorative balcony railings, landings, pot guards, footscrapers) and although each element has a different design, they all match across the terrace or group of houses.

The stucco detailing is highly characteristic of the Ladbroke Estate and can be found to parapets, elevations, window surrounds, porches, both to the front and rear as well as many side elevations. Such detailing was generally intended to be finished in the same stone colour as the rest of the stucco and not picked out in another colour. Much of the stucco render is lined or channelled to give the appearance of coursed stone.

Some of the details that are important to the character of the conservation area are outlined in this section. This list is not comprehensive. These details may feature on all parts of the buildings (ie front and rear). Other details (rooflines, boundaries and painting) are dealt with in separate sections.
Roofs

3.35 Due to the size of the area it is not possible to describe every roof form in the conservation area. All original roof forms have heritage value. Many original and sympathetic roof forms remain that contribute strongly to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

3.36 Key features of roofs that contribute to character include:

- Original form (butterfly, hipped, etc)
- Original materials (slate, lead, stucco, etc)
- Original details (cornices, balustrades, finials, urns, etc)
- Chimney stacks and pots

3.37 The terraces were designed to line the contours of the slopes so that the houses would have a continuous and unbroken roofline which is key to their classical unified design. The actual roof structures were finished differently across the area. Many were ‘M’ shaped (two hipped roofs pitched from front to back) which was more suited to the curving crescents than the usual butterfly roofs which sloped from side to side with the valley to the centre of the individual property. These roofs were concealed by a continuous parapet which was usually finished in a deeply moulded cornice and very often a balustrade.

3.38 Many balustrades have been lost which has harmed the beauty and continuity of this roof finish. The balustrade design varies from one group or street to another and care needs to be taken to reinstate the correct design. Some groups have been subjected to different styles of roof addition and this differentiation from what should be a uniform finish is harmful.
3.39 Portobello Road, Kensington Park Road and Holland Park Avenue follow a different pattern whereby the parapets are stepped as the houses rise up the hill. This pattern is a distinctive part of the design of these terraces and is also sensitive to change.

3.40 Some houses have particularly decorative rooflines. These include those with Dutch gables, small stucco dormers and some pairs which are finished with a pediment (43-45 Clarendon Road) or urns (13-15 Clarendon Road). Some terraces have original canted dormers (e.g. Ladbroke Gardens) which were no doubt meant to be concealed behind the balustrades, but due to the higher ground, can easily be seen.

3.41 The villa pairs have a shared roof form which may be a simple shared hipped slate roof, but can also be matching elements such as the gables on Lansdowne Crescent. A feature of the hipped roofs is their deeply projecting eaves and matching slopes. Some have been severely harmed by alterations and additions to one side of the shared roof.

3.42 The mews were built with plain pitched roofs which was appropriate to this small type of building. Roof extensions have been added to many mews and those with small dormer-style windows set back from the principal building line have been the most visually successful.
Rear Elevation design is a particularly special feature of the Ladbroke Estate. Many of the rear elevations that are seen from communal gardens were designed with elevations that strongly echo the front elevations. The houses on Stanley Gardens have fully stuccoed rear elevations of similar design to the fronts with pilasters, capitals and cornices as well as the addition of curved bays. The houses with Dutch gables to their frontages on Lansdowne Road also have the same Dutch gables, arched windows and decorative finishes to their rear elevations. Fittingly some of the largest houses in the area (Kensington Park Gardens) overlook the largest garden (Ladbroke Square) with suitably elegant rear elevations.

These rear elevations combined with the communal gardens are a highly significant feature of the heritage and character of the Ladbroke Conservation Area. These elevations were designed to be appreciated in the same way as the front elevations with matching details and finishes. Many houses have small gardens to the rear with continuous matching railings. This gives the same appearance as a front garden with railings or a parkland enclosure.

Some rear elevations fronting communal gardens are less detailed but nonetheless clearly designed as a set piece with shared features and a high degree of uniformity. Examples of these are the brick and stucco elevations looking onto Arundel-Ladbroke Gardens from Arundel Gardens; and fully stuccoed groups looking onto Rosmead Garden from Elgin Crescent.

Other rear elevations, both overlooking communal and private gardens follow the traditional format of stock brick rear with projecting closet wing. The height and projection of the closet wings vary from one street to another but their unifying characteristic is that they all follow the same pattern.

Various alterations have taken place to the rears, some of which are harmful to the uniformity of the terrace. Some additions to the rear elevations that have the appearance of front elevations have harmed the group and its prestige. In other locations, extensions have been added sometimes with balconies that are harmful to overall appearance of the group.
Boundary treatments, lightwells and front gardens

3.48 Front open areas and gardens are characteristic features of the housing in the Ladbroke Estate. These gardens and areas form the setting for the houses and keep them physically (but not visually) away from the street. Front areas are a vital component of the area’s significance. They combine with steps up to the raised ground floor and porches to give importance to the front elevations as well as tying the street scene together at pavement level.

3.49 The only buildings that do not have such gardens or areas are mews (not originally housing) and businesses (although shops and pubs often have a narrow paved area to the front). Most houses on the Ladbroke estate were built with basements but a few were built without, such as nos. 21-55 Ladbroke Grove (built by William Wheeler 1853-4).

3.50 The size of the front garden or area is a mark of status whereby the highest quality houses had the largest areas and the cheapest ones had the smallest. The stucco fronted houses usually have stucco balustrades whereas the brick houses had railings.

3.51 Front areas contained the coal cellars with timber plank doors and little else. Steps down from the pavement were made of stone and cast iron handrails consisted of simple square section uprights with ‘D’ section handrails. Many of these survive today. Front doors to basements were simpler and smaller than the main entrance, but were often timber four panelled doors painted black.

3.52 Some front areas have space for planting such as to nos. 8-30 (William Chadwick, 1848) and 56-70 (Thomas Pocock, 1851-2) Kensington Park Road and the shrubs and greenery make a welcome contribution.

3.53 Elements that harm the character of the front areas, and therefore the conservation area include using non-original designs for boundaries, doors, paving and steps; as well as the construction of intrusive structures.

3.54 The emphasis on large trees being planted in the communal gardens has resulted in only smaller groups of trees being planted sporadically in the private gardens both on the street and to the communal garden frontages.

3.55 Trees located in front gardens tend to be more short lived ornamental species than the larger forest sized trees species found in the communal gardens to the rear. Tree genera such as Magnolia, Prunus (Cherry), Betula (Birch) and Sorbus are all found in large numbers in streets such as Elgin Crescent, Clarendon and Lansdowne Roads where planting space is available in front gardens.

3.56 Houses with only lightwells to the frontages, particularly where these are very small, do not have space for any planting other than potted plants.
Places of Worship

- Church of St John the Evangelist, Ladbroke Grove (Grade II) 1844-5. Architects: John Hargrave Stevens and George Alexander.
- Kensington Temple, Kensington Park Road (Grade II) 1848-9. Architect: John Tarring.
- Church of St Peter, Kensington Park Road (Grade II*) 1855-7. Architect Thomas Allom.
- Former Peniel Chapel, now Notting Hill Community Church, Kensington Park Road c.1871.
- Former church meeting hall, converted to synagogue in 1900 and now a business, Kensington Park Road.

3.57 Churches were a key part of planned Victorian developments. Developers donated their land for the purpose and the churches were usually designed by architects rather than speculative builders and built using the highest quality materials. Places of worship therefore have high significance in the conservation area.

3.58 The principal churches are sited in key positions. St John’s sits in its own plot at the top of the hill and is viewed along Kensington Park Gardens; Kensington Temple (built as Horbury Congregational Chapel) has a similarly prominent position with its own plot overlooking the junction of three main roads. St Peter’s sits between housing but was sited to be a key part of Allom’s carefully planned townscape in Stanley Crescent and Stanley Gardens.

3.59 The churches share similarities in their architecture and all except St Peter’s and the synagogue are early gothic in style. The Victorians thought this was the correct style for religious buildings and St Peter’s was one of very few Victorian classical churches to be built in the whole of London, harking back to Georgian tastes. The gothic churches were mainly built of Kentish ragstone but the former Peniel Chapel was built in stock brick and St Peters again is unique in being finished in colourwashed stucco.

3.60 All original features contribute to the character of these buildings. The pointed windows with plate tracery, cusping and stained glass; the columns with their small foliate capitals and their gabled roofs and spires. Churches were designed with the utmost attention to detail and were often detached buildings where all elevations were treated using similar decorative detail. Where original features have been lost, for example the windows at the former synagogue and the painted elevation of the Notting Hill Community Church, there is a significant level of harm to the character of the individual building and the conservation area.
Public Houses

- Ladbroke Arms, 54 Ladbroke Road, c.1840s.
- Prince Albert, 11 Pembridge Road. By developer William Chadwick of Southwark in 1841.
- Former Clarendon Hotel, 85 Clarendon Road. Grade II listed. Built after 1845 by William Reynolds. Ceased to be a hotel in 1919.
- Portobello Gold, 95 Portobello Road. Interwar pub within terrace of 1848-9 by Pocock.
- The Elgin (originally the Elgin Hotel), 96 Ladbroke Grove (Grade II). Mid-nineteenth century.
- Former Portobello Public House, 138 Portobello Road, now a restaurant. 1893.
- Former Colville Public House, 186 Portobello Road, now a restaurant. Mid-nineteenth century.
- Former Golden Cross public house. (Now Shannon’s), 240 Portobello Road. 1892 by George English.
- Former Warwick Castle (now just The Castle), 225 Portobello. Probably designed by architect, Pocock. 1853.
- Kensington Park Hotel, 139 Ladbroke Grove c. 1870s.
- The Mitre, 40 Holland Park Avenue. Interwar.

3.61 The significance of public houses derives from their architecture and their historic use. They were usually the first building in a street to be constructed and often built on street corners. As they were built to be noticed they were designed with a wealth of detailing and usually larger than their neighbours. Today they create focus in the street scene and make a great contribution to the character of the conservation area both in their architecture and their use as a centre for gathering and socialising locally.

3.62 To make the pubs attractive and clearly visible in the street scene, signs and external glass lamps were added which have now become particularly special features. Many of the pubs in Ladbroke have old glass lanterns hanging outside, usually attached to the building over the entrances. The Clarendon Hotel has a square lamp in a free standing arched overthrow in front on the front door. Such lamps light the pub at night and contribute to the active appearance of the area in the evening. Timber hanging pub signs are often unique and works of art in their own right being hand painted with an image that illustrates the pub name and tied brewery or owner. Another common feature of corner pubs is where the corner is chamfered or curved and rendered so that an advert for the pub can be painted vertically. This can be seen at several pubs in the area including Shannon’s on Portobello Road.

3.63 As the Ladbroke Estate was designed as a high quality estate to attract wealthy people,
it seems that public houses were not planned for the heart of the area. Most pubs are situated at the borders and notably three are located in Portobello Road alone. With the exception of the two interwar pubs (The Mitre and Portobello Gold) most pubs were built in the middle of the nineteenth century before the height of opulent pub architecture really took hold. The architecture of the Ladbroke pubs echoes the materials and detailing of the terraces, for example The Elgin, The Castle and The Kensington Park Hotel are built in stock brick to match their neighbours but with slightly more elaborate stucco window surrounds.

3.64 The ground floor elevation and treatment of the doors, windows and decoration is key to the character of public houses. Corner pubs often have double doors at the street corner, although other doors usually exist as pubs were originally divided into separate bars for different classes of people. An excellent frontage survives to The Ladbroke with wide sash windows and original stained glass to the transom lights, although the stock brick has sadly been painted. The Kensington Park Hotel also has a high Victorian carved timber frontage in a polished red granite surround with stucco capitals. The Elgin has a colonnade of Doric polished granite columns. The Mitre, although later in date, is a well designed interwar pub with original features such as the polished grey granite surround to the doors and windows and the words “Off Licence” to the Ladbroke Grove frontage – a reminder that pubs also sold beer to be taken away. Where original pub frontages remain, these are of the highest heritage value.

3.65 Not all pubs were part of a terrace and the former Clarendon Hotel, The Prince Albert and to some extent, The Ladbroke were built as detached buildings. The Prince Albert has two principal elevations, the first with a slightly projecting central bay fronts Pembridge Road and the second has two elegant full height shallow bow fronts onto Ladbroke Road. The Clarendon Hotel has four giant-order Corinthian pilasters and tall Georgian pane sash windows to its main frontage with smaller pilasters to the ground floor.

3.66 All the pubs in the area are finished cleanly with parapet rooflines although the interwar Mitre has a prominent clay tile hipped roof with dormer windows which contribute to its slightly vernacular style.
Shops

3.67 There are a number of shops in the conservation area which make an important contribution to the vitality and daytime economy of the area. A number of timber shop frontages survive in the area and these have historic and architectural significance in their own right as well as making a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.68 Portobello Road is the oldest and longest shopping street in the conservation area and one of London’s most famous street markets. A fruit and vegetable market was established here in the 1870s with antique sellers arriving in 1948. Today bric-a-brac and antiques stalls and arcades form an important use that contributes strongly to the vibrant character of the conservation area. The terraces are distinctly plainer and smaller than the rest of the Ladbroke Estate with the middle section (from Elgin Crescent to Kensington Park Road) having been developed in the 1850s in line with neighbouring streets to the west. These three and four storey terraces step up the hill with breaks in their parapet roofs in contrast to the crescents with their unbroken rooflines. Later stock brick terraces are situated to the north of Portobello Road, but to the south, the terraces are painted bright colours. Some shops have significant historic parts but much of the lively character in this street is derived from the traders’ stock festooning the frontages and the tables on the street.

3.69 The north of the area has the highest concentration of shops in their original locations (ie. terraces built to have shops at ground floor level). These are found in the terraces between Portobello Road and Kensington Park Road (ie. Blenheim Crescent, Elgin Crescent and Westbourne Grove) as well as the north of Kensington Park Road and Ladbroke Grove. The shop units are divided by console brackets with scrolls and acanthus leaf decoration and the narrow fascias sit below a moulded and sometimes dentilled cornice. No. 25 Kensington Park Road is a good example of the historic shopfronts seen in the area. It has moulded stallrisers with matching pilasters and the shop window is divided into three large panes with three narrow transom lights above. The entrance is within a canted recess.

3.70 Nos. 101-109 Ladbroke Grove display a long interesting shop frontage which was added some time after the terrace was built as houses.

3.71 There is another parade of shops in Holland Park Avenue and these are distinctive because they were built in the front gardens of earlier houses which are now largely obscured. The historic shopfront to Daunts Books, with its arched glazing bars, and the butcher’s historic frontage make a particularly good contribution to the historic character of the conservation area. The loss of cornices above the fascias, however, detracts from the attractiveness of the street.
Other Significant Buildings

There are many other buildings throughout the conservation area that have been added at different dates. These buildings have heritage significance in their own right and contribute to the evolution and diversity of the conservation area.

- Electric Cinema, Portobello Road (Grade II*) Architect, G.S. Valentin. 1910-11.
- Twentieth Century Theatre, 291 Westbourne Grove. (Grade II). Built 1863.
- North Kensington Library, Ladbroke Grove (Grade II) 1890-1 by architects, T. Phillips Figgis and H. Wilson.
- Notting Hill Police Station, Ladbroke Road. Opened October 1906 (probably designed by John Dixon Butler).
- Cabmen’s Shelter in road outside nos. 8-10 Kensington Park Road (Grade II) 1909.
- Salvation Army Hall, Portobello Road. 1924. Designed by architect Oswald Archer.
- Former Horbury Chapel School, 2a Ladbroke Road. 1851. Architect: John Tarring.
- Former St Peter’s Church Hall,
- Salvation Army Hall, Portobello Road. Mid nineteenth century. Built as school.
- St John’s Vicarage, 69 Ladbroke Grove.
- 269 Portobello Road. London School Board school added to ground floor c.1900
- Mansion flats, Kensington Park Road. Nos. 44-6, Matlock Court (1936) and 50, Princes House (1935) by Edifis. Others probably by same company.
- Bowden Court, Ladbroke Road. Designed as a hostel in 1935 by Bowden Son & Partners.
- Crescent Mansions, Elgin Crescent (originally Elgin Mansions). Designed by architects Palgrave & Co in 1900.
- 5 Kensington Park Gardens, mansion flats c.1880s-90s.

- 16 Ladbroke Walk, Mews building converted to art deco house. Built c.1930.
- Lansdowne House, Lansdowne Road. 1900-01. Artists’ studios designed by William Flockhart (Grade II).
- 43 Blenheim Crescent. Has artists’ studio style windows, possibly added later.
- 15 Clarendon Road. Artist’s studio added c. 1867.
- 93 Ladbroke Road. Artist’s studio.
- 14 Ladbroke Grove. Artist’s studio added c. 1904.
**Recent Architecture**

3.73 There are a number of modern buildings in the conservation area which contribute to its character in different ways. The recent buildings that contribute positively do so because they fit in well with the scale, form and character of the conservation area and / or because they are of high quality design or innovative architecture in their own right. Where a modern building’s original detailing survives, this adds to its significance and in turn contributes positively to the wider area. Examples of good post-war buildings exist at 121-123 Lansdowne Road (WDS McNaney, 1956), Hudson House on St Mark’s Place and 65 Ladbroke Grove (Grade II listed, by Maxwell Fry, 1938), amongst others.

3.74 Very few buildings can be said to be absolute eyesores that are harmful to the conservation area but a handful of neutral buildings are scattered through the area that cannot be said to be positive contributors. Such buildings include flat blocks that are either of low design quality or have lost their original form, features and detailing to such an extent that their integrity has been compromised. For example, Bartok House at the junction of Ladbroke Grove and Ladbroke Walk is dominating and fails to achieve the same design quality as the surrounding historic architecture.

3.75 In some places very recent buildings have replaced earlier negative buildings in a contemporary and contrasting design. Where this has occurred the design has generally been an improvement on the previous building, although the character of that part of the conservation area had already been compromised.
4 Public Realm

Formal green spaces

4.1 There is no formal public open space in the conservation area, although the small garden around St John’s Church is publicly accessible and of course, the communal gardens are accessible to residents, giving them the same character and appearance as open space despite not being publicly accessible.

4.2 The communal gardens make a very positive contribution to the appearance of the conservation area as experienced from public places. Each road that cuts across a garden has a pattern of solid architecture (end / side elevations) alternating with soft greenery at the end of each garden. These spaces are characterised by dense green planting (or climbers on railings) and mature trees.

Trees

4.3 The Council manage many street trees of differing species throughout the Ladbroke Conservation Area. From the beautiful Victorian avenues of Plane trees on Holland Park Avenue and the south of Ladbroke Grove to the closely planted cherry trees in Blenheim Crescent, there are many different species of trees growing in the streets.

4.4 The Victorians had a smaller selection of pollution tolerant trees than enjoyed today and tended to plant streets with single species of tree. This uniformity of species complements the uniformity of the terraces and today planting is managed to reinstate this uniformity.
4.5 Notably two churches are surrounded by trees. St John’s Church is surrounded by Plane trees, planted in the pavement; whilst the land in front of Kensington Temple is bordered with tall Lime trees.

4.6 Street trees are pruned regularly with some needing more frequent and seemingly drastic pruning, due to the clay soil conditions. Pollarded trees are therefore a feature of the conservation area that change in appearance according to the seasons and the management regime.

Street furniture

4.7 The conservation area contains various items of historic and reproduction street furniture that are of design and historical interest in their own right as well as enriching the character of the conservation area. Authentic original features are of the highest heritage value.

4.8 Original pillar boxes:
- Arundel Gardens (by Kensington Park Road) (GR)
- Blenheim Crescent (GR)
- Clarendon Cross (GR)
- Clarendon Road (by Elgin Crescent) (ER VII)
- Clarendon Road (by Lansdowne Walk) (VR)
- Elgin Crescent (outside no. 36) (GR)
- Elgin Crescent (outside no. 86) (ER)
- Holland Park Avenue (ER VII)
- Kensington Park Road (ER VII)

4.9 Outside St John’s church is an item of street furniture that is very rare in London. The drinking fountain was funded by a local doctor who lived at 40 Ladbroke Grove and is inscribed: ‘The gift of John Waggett M.D. 1882.’ It is a circular form and made of polished granite with the water dispenser in the form of an urn. It replaced one that had been installed within the railings of the church.

4.10 There are no historic telephone boxes in the conservation area. Very few historic lamp posts remain although some exist in Wilby Mews. The rest of the lamp posts in the conservation area are in a traditional style which enhance the character of the area. Other modern items such as telecommunication cabinets are intrusive and detract from the historic character of the streets.
Street paving

4.11 Most streets have been repaved with York stone paving with their original granite kerbstones. Most of the mews are paved with their original granite setts. Original stone paving is very rare, but can be found to the front of St Peter’s Church, along the western edge of Stanley Garden North on Stanley Crescent and to the front of some shops and pubs. Some areas in front of shops are covered with mosaic tiles. Where original paving survives it is of high heritage value.

4.12 An important feature that contributes strongly to the area’s historic character are the many original cast iron coal hole covers in the pavements and these often give the name of the local foundry that made them.
5.1 When the estate was built, St John’s Church would have been the most important building and consequently there are views to it from all sides. The main views are from Kensington Park Gardens and St John’s Gardens, but lesser views are from the terrace to the south and from Stanley Crescent.

5.2 One of the most prominent views in the conservation area is the view from the south of Kensington Park Road to Kensington Temple which proudly addresses its surroundings and signals the entrance to the estate from its prominent corner site. Other views from outside the conservation area can be enjoyed from roads to the south of Holland Park Avenue, with the best vista being from Campden Hill Square to the temple fronted nos. 24-28 Holland Park Avenue.

5.3 The Ladbroke Estate was designed to be inward looking with closed views or vistas at the end of some streets. They are key features of the area and serve to showcase particular buildings that are carefully centred in the vista. Some of these include:

- Stanley Gardens vista to St Peter’s Church in the east and to nos. 1-11 Stanley Crescent with their fine pair of towers.
- Lansdowne Rise vista to nos. 9-10 Lansdowne Crescent. (The vista to nos. 73-75 Clarendon Road has been ruined by a great number of alterations to this former pair of villas).
- Lansdowne Walk vista to detached house, no. 41 Clarendon Road.
- Arundel Gardens vista to nos.
148-158 Kensington Park Road
(Kensington Park Terrace North)

5.4 Stanley Crescent and Lansdowne Crescent offer some of the most exciting views due to the houses facing outwards from the crescent which requires the viewer to keep travelling to discover what is hidden further around. Conversely the inward curving crescents west of Ladbroke Grove offer elegant views and give the impression of streets without an end.

5.5 An unusual and very attractive view is created by the topography of Portobello Road. Descending the road from the north, the road curves, dips and then climbs again which, for a while, gives a charming view of the curving terraces with St Peter’s spire above.

5.6 Views into the mews are usually pleasant with those into Wilby, Horbury and Codrington Mews being amongst the best.

5.7 Views out of the conservation area include four southwards across Holland Park Avenue even though these are obscured by very large trees in some places. On Ladbroke Grove the view out of the area northwards is framed by the railway bridge with its colourful public painted artwork.

5.8 Other views that are important in the area include glimpses through the gates into the communal gardens and wide ranging views across rear elevations and even rooftops from high level windows in the houses. High level views can be important in this respect.
6 Negative Elements

6.1 Although this is a very high quality conservation area, some parts, notably to the north, are rather neglected and recall the area’s low point in the 1960s. The lists below highlight some of the negative aspects of the area, but it should not be forgotten that many houses have been greatly improved over the last 30 years and the Council’s objective is to help foster continued enhancement.

6.2 Negative features affecting buildings:

- Buildings that are of extremely poor design.
- Infilling of gaps between buildings (in particular semi-detached pairs).
- Loss of original features.
- Loss of balustrades and cornices to parapets (front and rear).
- Loss of boundary balustrades / railings.
- Installation of non-original designs for boundaries, doors, windows, etc.
- Loss of gardens, planting and boundaries to hard standings for cars
- Structures in lightwells.
- Bitumen to steps.
- Garages within house structures.
- Poorly designed roof additions.
- Modern guard railings to roofs.
- Stucco houses painted dark colours.
- Stone colour stucco terraces painted a variety of stone colours.
- Poorly designed rear extensions.
- Pipework and wiring on front elevations and rear elevations of formal design.
- Loss of historic shopfronts and their surrounds.
- Loss of retail from shopping streets (in particular Portobello Road).

6.3 Negative features affecting communal gardens:

- Poorly designed extensions on rear elevations facing the communal gardens.
- Unsympathetic alterations and additions to formal rear elevations.
- Light pollution from oversized basement skylights, large areas of glazing and raised conservatories.
- Change in garden / patio level.
- Loss of boundary railings and use of non-original boundaries, such as timber fences
- Removal of trees and planting.
- Loss of original landscape design intent eg privacy planting.
- Installation of structures such as garages and sheds or hardstanding.
- Similar issues to front elevations, such as loss of historic detail to rooflines, windows, painting not conforming to the group, infilling of gaps, etc.
- Use of unsympathetic materials such as tarmac.
- Paving over private gardens bordering the communal gardens.
7 Appendix 1: History

7.1 The Ladbroke Estate Conservation Area was designated in 1969 and incorporates most of the estate as it was originally developed in the nineteenth century.

7.2 Before it was developed the area was popular as open country for riding, walking and its marvellous views until well into the nineteenth century. By 1705 it had become a fashionable local spa due to the discovery of mineral water springs close to Notting Hill. In 1794 the first Artesian Well in Britain was successfully sunk in Notting Hill and produced water for the locality until the new waterworks were built at Campden Hill in the 1820s. There were two important farms in the area: Porto Bello Farm in the east and Notting Barns in the west. The area to the west was called Notting Dale and occupied by brickmakers and potters.

7.3 The Ladbroke family probably acquired 170 acres of the original estate in the middle of the eighteenth century and these were the largest of three parcels of land which the family owned in North Kensington. In 1819 the estate passed to James Weller Ladbroke, who had changed his name from Weller in order to inherit the estate from his uncle, and decided to lease it for residential development.

7.4 Development was speculative: J.W. Ladbroke leased smaller areas to developers, of whom Pocock, Blake, Dr. Walker, Cantwell and Reynolds were the most active. Building was carried on over fifty years from 1821 to the 1870s, but the most intensive activity was between 1840 and 1868. It was a risky enterprise as there was a serious depression between 1853 and 1858, and the location of the area, then on the outskirts of London, was at that time relatively inaccessible. The estate therefore had to be particularly attractive to overcome these disadvantages.

7.5 There was little demand for the housing until the opening of the Hammersmith and City Railway in 1864, and many properties remained empty for years. Another reason contributing to this was the condition of the adjacent pottersies, where pig keepers had joined the population of potters and brick-makers, and where the worst slum conditions in London were to be found. In the end it took nearly 50 years to find buyers for all the houses and the succession of grinding halts brought ruin to the main developers.

7.6 Building began to the north of Holland Park Avenue in the 1820s, based on a series of layout plans by Ladbroke’s surveyor, Thomas Allason, which had probably been inspired by Nash’s work in Regent’s Park as well as earlier crescents in Bath and Cheltenham. His original concept of a spine road – Ladbroke Grove – bisecting a Grand Circus of spacious villas with communal gardens to the rear was altered and adapted in subsequent plans by James Thompson, Thomas Allom, Reynolds and others. Land to the east of Ladbroke Grove was developed to separate plans, but with roads joining each other.

7.7 As development spread northwards it engulfed the former site of the Hippodrome Race Course. This had opened in 1837 in the vain hope that it would prove a more lucrative venture than housing had so far been: but the enterprise lasted only 3 years. The summit of Ladbroke Mount (or Notting Hill) where St John’s Church now stands had been the vantage point from where the spectators watched the horses race below.

7.8 The church was the first development on the hill (1845) and became the pivot of all subsequent residential development along with the ‘circus’ that ended up as the mismatched Stanley Crescent and Lansdowne Crescent. A series of crescents were laid out to the west of Ladbroke Grove around the contours of the sloping land. East of Ladbroke Grove, a series of straight roads were laid out, with Allom’s plans making use of various vistas and creating the grandest houses in the centre of the area. Streets to the north of the area were completed by approximately 1880. It is notable that the layout was carefully designed so that building lines would run along contours, avoiding the problem of stepped development up and down the slopes to which the classical concept of grand design did not lend itself.

7.9 Considerable departures were made by the later architects from Thomas Allason’s original plan, principally for profit motives, but all of them remained loyal to his concept of a spacious classical design. The pairs of villas Allason had envisaged were built in the earlier development in the south west, although terraces were introduced later for economic reasons. The idea of communal gardens was an adaption of the Georgian Square and revolutionary in design, allowing residents access without having to cross a road, and
creating an Arcadian parkland between the houses. The layout anticipated the Garden City and Garden Suburb movements which were to gather momentum half a century later.

7.10 The final townscape clearly reflected that all three principal architects (Allason, Thompson and Allom) had had additional experience in either landscape design or painting.

7.11 Much of the inspiration for the individual developers came from Cheltenham, where the street names Lansdowne and Montpelier were first used. (Lansdowne Rise was called Montpelier Road until 1937). J.B. Papworth, the architect involved in much of the early Victorian development in Cheltenham, had worked on occasion with both Allason and Cantwell, who very much admired him, and James Thompson was one of his pupils. Cantwell’s work particularly belongs very clearly to Nash’s age of metropolitan improvements; he was also the surveyor for the Norland Estate as well as being responsible for some of the Ladbroke developments along Holland Park Avenue and Ladbroke Terrace.

7.12 The 1851 census gives some insight into the people who first moved into the new Estate. Of the 40 houses completed in Lansdowne Road (now 2-44 even and 0-43 odd) 2 were empty and 2 other occupied only by caretakers. In the remaining 36 houses there were 273 residents, 90 of whom were servants. The average number of residents in each house was thus 7.6 of whom 2.5 were servants. Householders included eleven landed proprietors, five merchants, three lawyers, two army officers, two coach builders, two civil engineers and one surgeon (with four resident patients), one commercial clerk and one iron and tin manufacturer. Three houses were used as girls’ schools with a total resident staff of nine mistresses. The social composition of this street seems fairly representative of the rest of the completed development but contrasts with the terraces built later to the north-east of Ladbroke (Colville/Tavistock areas) which were sub-divided from the very beginning because the speculation failed and wealthy people were not attracted to the area.

7.13 More information on the history of this area can be found in various local history books as well as the Survey of London Volume 37 (North Kensington) and the Ladbroke Association’s website: www.ladbrokeassociation.info
8 Appendix 2: Historic Maps

Fig 7.1 Historic Map 1841 Map
Fig 7.2 Historic Map 1869 Map
This checklist has been taken from English Heritage’s publication, Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2011). The checklist has helped to identify the buildings that make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

- Is the building the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape eg a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

Additional criteria set by the Council:

- Does the building have architectural, historical, archaeological, evidential, artistic or communal significance that contributes to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- Has the building retained its original design, materials, features and setting or ones that are appropriate to its style and period?
- Does it contribute to the evolution and diversity of the conservation area?
- Was it built by an important local builder or one who also built other significant buildings in the area?