Note: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document but due to the complexity of conservation areas, it would be impossible to include every facet contributing to the area’s special interest. Therefore, the omission of any feature does not necessarily convey a lack of significance. The Council will continue to assess each development proposal on its own merits. As part of this process a more detailed and up to date assessment of a particular site and its context is undertaken. This may reveal additional considerations relating to character or appearance which may be of relevance to a particular case.
Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 4
Summary of Special Interest
Location and Setting

2. TOWNSCAPE 6
Street Layout and Urban Form
Gaps
Land Uses
Green Space
Materials
Key Dates

3. ARCHITECTURE 14
Housing
Brompton Square
Brompton Road
Cheval Place
Ennismore Street
Montpelier Street
Rutland Street

Shared Features Of Houses 19
Architectural Details
Rear Elevations
Roofs
Front Boundaries and Front Areas
Gardens and Garden Trees

Other Building Types 25
Places of Worship
Pubs
Shops
Mews
Recent Architecture

4. PUBLIC REALM 28
Street Trees
Street Surfaces
Street Furniture
Views and Landmarks

5. NEGATIVE ELEMENTS 32

APPENDIX 1 History 33
APPENDIX 2 Historic England Guidance 36
APPENDIX 3 Relevant Local Plan Policies 37
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 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 Conservations Areas) Act, 1990 (Sections 69 to 78). Once designated, proposals within a conservation area become subject to local conservation policies set out in Chapter 34 of the Council’s Local Plan and national policies outlined in part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). 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 A conservation area appraisal aims to describe the special historic and architectural character of an area. A conservation area’s character is defined by a combination of elements such as architecture, uses, materials and detailing as well as the relationship between buildings and their settings. Many other elements contribute to character and appearance 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.

1.3 This document has been produced using the guidance set out by English Heritage in their document, Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016). This appraisal will be a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

Purpose of this document

1.4 The aims of this appraisal are to:

- describe the historic and architectural character and appearance of the area which will assist applicants in making successful planning applications and decision makers in assessing planning applications
- raise public interest and awareness of the special character of their area
- identify the positive features which should be conserved, as well as negative features which indicate scope for future enhancements
Summary of Special Interest

1.5 Brompton has grown from a rural area to the west of central London to an important cultural and globally important shopping district. The conservation area is small but contains a diverse range of building styles of different periods beginning with high status Georgian houses on Brompton Road, through a late Regency London square surrounded by classically inspired housing; to the grand London Oratory facing majestically down Brompton Road. But there are also more ‘ordinary’ historic buildings such as cottages, mews, a former underground station and shops.

1.6 Such heritage creates a sense of place for all who live, work or pass through the area; and that ‘genius loci’ is different to anywhere else. The buildings were constructed using traditional techniques and hand tools and materials were sourced or made locally rather than being transported across the globe as they are today. The positive buildings discussed in this appraisal all play an important role in making the area special and contributing to its significance.
2 Townscape
Street Layout and Urban Form

2.1 The street pattern evolved from ancient lanes which linked London with what were then the isolated villages of Knightsbridge, Brompton and Earl's Court. At the time of Rocque’s map (1741-45) the ancient Brompton Road was called Bell Lane and continues to be a major thoroughfare today containing the tallest buildings in the area.

2.2 Today, Brompton Square is a cul-de-sac, although the developer intended an access road at the north end which was blocked in the mid-nineteenth century. Pedestrians can only walk towards Hyde Park through Holy Trinity’s churchyard or through the ‘hole in the wall’ in Rutland Street created by WWII bombing.

2.3 The grand 3-5 storey houses of Brompton Square and those on Brompton Road are contrasted by the smaller two storey cottages and former mews in the back streets. The urban grain is mostly tightly packed with some buildings having been built back to back, except behind the crescents to the north end of Brompton Square which have generous back gardens.

2.4 Despite the dense architecture there is a lot of green space in the conservation area, both publicly and privately accessible. The private garden square creates a sublime setting for the classical houses surrounding it as well as offering a short swathe of greenery to Brompton Road. The churchyard to Holy Trinity is a wide and flat open space that is private but available to the public and dotted with mature trees and views of the surrounding buildings.
Gaps

2.5 The conservation area is solidly built without space between buildings. The gaps that exist within the conservation area are provided by entrances to small streets such as Cottage Place, Cheval Place and Rutland Mews South. There is more spaciousness in the west of the conservation area with the churches and Oratory House being surrounded by green space.

2.6 The gap between houses to the north of Brompton Square harms the character of the conservation area in its current form. It was originally intended that a road would lead through from here towards Hyde Park, but this was blocked soon after the square was completed. Both widening and enhancing the gap, or closing and enhancing the architectural design of the houses in this location could improve the appearance of this crescent.
Land Uses

2.7 For such a small area, the land uses are highly diverse. One third of the conservation area is taken up by religious uses and over a third is occupied by housing, which is either in its original use, as constructed, or through conversions from mews which were originally intended for stabling and carriage storage. The reverse of this has taken place in Brompton Road, where houses that were built in the eighteenth century have since been converted to business uses including offices or shops and cafes at ground floor; with residential remaining to the upper floors of some buildings. In Cheval Place, land that was developed as gardens and stables behind Brompton Road, has become a densely built-up mixed use area now containing residential and businesses units.
Green Space

2.8 Partly due to the dense architecture and busy urban environment; and partly due to their own intrinsic significance, the green spaces make a hugely important contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Brompton Square

2.9 Despite being privately owned, the garden square is an important part of the public realm and an urban form that is special to London. The London square has its roots in the eighteenth century and by the time Brompton Square was laid out in the 1820s as an ornamental garden for the residents of the square, the form was at its apogee and an essential selling point for houses of quality and status.

2.10 The garden square is designed to bring a piece of the countryside into the town (or ‘rus in urbe’) and here it takes an elongated form running on a north to south axis. It has a continuous path running around the perimeter with lawn to the inside and shrub beds between the path and railings. Brompton Square is unusual in having a very open and permeable character which allows attractive views and glimpses across the garden and through trees to houses on both sides. It is entirely green and contains no structures or play equipment which is another of its pleasing historic characteristics.

2.11 Like many London squares, Plane (Platanus x hispanica) and Lime (Tilia species) are the dominant tree species and some probably survive from when the garden was first laid out and planted. There is a particularly good example of a Beech (Fagus sylvatica) growing in the centre of the garden and other more ornamental trees grow around the periphery. The beauty of having mature trees in such a garden is that they change throughout the year, appearing green and fresh in spring, changing colour in autumn and taking on a sculptural / architectural form through the winter.

2.12 Interestingly, there is a separate group of mature London Plane trees planted away from the main garden in a small enclosure at the north end of Brompton Square. This creates the appearance of more space in front of the crescents and adds to their visual importance.
2.13 The square lost its formal entrance consisting of railings, pillars and gates giving access from Brompton Road during road widening between 1893-94. The railings surrounding the garden today are modern, but have a sympathetic design. The reinstatement of a historically accurate entrance way and railings would be an enhancement to the square, although the current situation is not unattractive.

**Holy Trinity Churchyard**

2.14 This land was bought by St George’s Hospital of Hyde Park Corner in 1749 for alternative burial space for the benefit of the sick and poor. In 1826-29, the present church was built and in 1854 the churchyard was closed but 100 years later the dead and their gravestones were removed. The history of the site demonstrates its long and continuous use as green space with the purpose of quiet contemplation which it retains today. The churchyard has a very open character without dense planting that allows views of the historic architecture all around.

2.15 There is a very good collection of mature trees. Along with the large numbers of London Plane and Lime often seen elsewhere in London, there are good quality examples of Horse Chestnut (Aesculus hippocastanum) and Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus). Although often maligned, the Sycamores here are excellent specimens and show what beautiful trees they can be when given the space needed to grow to their full size and shape.

2.16 The access road to Holy Trinity from the Brompton Road is planted with an upright cultivar of Norway Maple (Acer platanoides ‘Columnare’) along both sides, offering an appropriate formal entrance as well as fantastic bright yellow autumn colour for a few weeks each year. An avenue of trees here was originally planted here c.1831 and although the trees have been replaced, those present provide an important historical feature in the conservation area.

2.17 The sandstone arch at the north entrance to the churchyard was originally located at this southern entrance. The grass verge here is another important and welcome green element, but is regrettably often damaged by dog walking and bikes.

**Oratory House and Garden**

2.18 The courtyard to the front of Oratory House contains a particularly fine mature London Plane tree which, when surrounded by buildings of great architectural quality and enclosed by a boundary wall to the south, creates a space of enormous charm.

2.19 There are also a number of excellent mature London Plane trees growing in the grounds to the rear of Oratory House, some of which are also outstanding specimens, as well as other more ornamental trees, including some good Magnolias.
Materials

2.20 Materials used to construct the historic buildings in the conservation area are either natural materials such as slate and stone or ones that were traditionally manufactured close to the building site, such as brick, stucco and glass. Their original method of manufacture results in a finish that is typical of traditional building materials. The imperfections in crown and cylinder glass and the wrinkles in hand made brick, along with the natural processes of ageing and weathering, give the buildings their authentic historic character and patina of age that makes the conservation area so special.

- Stone (steps, coping stones, dressings)
- Brick (brown, yellow, red)
- Stucco (house frontages and decorative elements)
- Lime (main constituent of mortar and stucco)
- Slate and lead (roofs)
- Clay tile (roofs)
- Painted timber (windows, doors, shopfronts)
- Painted cast iron (railings, balconies, pot guards, boot scrapers, bollards)
- Buff and red terracotta (ornamentation, chimney pots)
- Glass (thin crown or cylinder glass, stained glass)
- Quarry / mosaic tiles (covering to steps)
- Granite setts (mews surfaces and kerb stones)
**Historic Development**

**Key building dates**

1766-68  | Biscoe's Buildings erected - nos. 132-188  
          | Brompton Road

1821-26  | Most of Brompton Square built

1826-29  | Holy Trinity Church built (much altered subsequently)

1830-39  | Stables and cottages built in Rutland Street

1834-35  | Stuccoed crescent at north end of Brompton Square built

1839     | Buildings present in Cheval Place

1853     | Oratory House built

c.1854    | Nos. 36-38 Ennismore Street constructed to block access from Brompton Square

1867-71  | Montpelier Street terrace redeveloped

1884     | The London Oratory consecrated

1893-94  | No. 61 Brompton Square, gate piers and lamps demolished for road widening

[1850s]  | Rutland Mews South built

1906     | Brompton Road Station opened

1920     | Nos. 2-4 Ennismore Street built. Rebuilt in 1950
Buildings Audit

2.21 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. Where particular sites, buildings or additions to buildings are harmful or out of keeping with the broader character of the conservation area as outlined in this appraisal, the Council will support proposals and where possible, take opportunities to make improvements and enhancements in line with Policies CL1, CL2 and CL3 of the Local Plan.

Listed Buildings

2.22 A listed building is a building designated by the Government on the advice of Historic England as a building of special architectural or historic interest, which local authorities have a statutory duty to preserve or enhance.

Positive Buildings

2.23 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.

Neutral Buildings

2.24 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.

Negative Buildings

2.25 Negative buildings are those which are out of keeping with the prevailing character of the conservation area.
3 Architecture

3.1 Information in this section has been taken from The Survey of London, volume 49 (Southern Kensington: Brompton) which can be consulted for further details.

Brompton Square

3.2 Brompton Square was developed by William Farlar (originally an ironmonger), James Bonnin (a prolific local builder) and John Henry Goodinge (a local lawyer and developer) between 1821-1835. The layout was probably planned by Robert Darley, an obscure architect based in Jermyn Street, who might have also designed the houses. All (but two of) the houses in the square are grade II listed which confirms their heritage significance both as part of an architectural set piece as well as individually.

3.3 The square is a fine late Regency architectural set piece with houses laid out around a central private garden square, an archetypal London urban form, containing lawns, planting and mature London Plane trees around its perimeter. The north end of the square is unusually finished in a semi-circular fully stuccoed crescent around a separate round garden containing more mature Plane trees and enclosed with railings matching the main garden.

3.4 Most houses in the square are of the same simple design, typical of the late Regency period, in pale yellow-pink bricks with stuccoed ground floors except for those in the crescents to the north which are fully stuccoed and more decorative. Nos. 2-9 and 54-61 were constructed by James Bonnin, a prolific local builder who also built houses in Hans Town and Alexander Square; whereas nos. 10-27 and 36-53 were built either by Farlar himself, or others to whom he granted head leases including William Barratt, William Farren and for the drains: Robert Darley.

3.5 The square had largely been built by the time of the national slump in house building in 1826, with the west side complete and occupied by that time; and the east side (except nos. 36-38) being completed more slowly by 1830. The original garden wall of 1826 can be seen from Holy Trinity churchyard, and retains two original date stones.
West and East Sides

3.6 These houses were designed in a style that endured and evolved over the years in the Royal Borough which consists brick frontages of two windows wide over channelled stucco to the ground floors with steps up to arched entrances over very narrow front areas. The west and east sides do not have projecting porches, but the houses in the crescents do. The upper windows are Georgian styled six-over-six paned sashes and at first floor, French windows with elegant margin lights linked in pairs by short balcony railings. Many ground floor windows have been changed for casements of varying quality and there are several types of front door, but despite these changes the ground floors retain a uniform appearance, at first glance, thanks to all the stucco being painted white.

3.7 Decoration is restrained and mainly reserved for the balcony railings which have a simple Gothic design, the area railings which are plain uprights with small arrow heads; and the fanlights which display several different, but usually simple, designs. Otherwise, the parapets are unadorned and only gauged yellow flat brick arches top the windows.

3.8 Bonnin’s houses towards the south of the square were built with two storeys over half-basement and dormer windows in the mansard roofs. However, those further north were built to three storeys over basement but to the same simple design.

3.9 Sadly there have been alterations in the square that are harmful to its delicate, uniform character and fine design as an architectural set piece. The worst of these are roof extensions above the parapet line and the colouring or overzealous cleaning of brick. Other negative features include alterations to fenestration (including arched windows which have been added to one house), pipework on front elevations, security shutters on windows and unsympathetic surfaces to front steps. No. 26 was refronted in a pleasant Queen Anne Revival style in 1889-90 by architect, Frederick Horton and its painted brick makes it stand out further in the terrace as do the mid-twentieth century flats at nos. 10-12 by their height and ill-advised detailing.

The North Crescents

3.10 Nos. 28-31 and 32-35 were built 1834-35. It had probably been Farlar’s intention to build a large villa here, perhaps for himself, but instead it was decided to build further terraces and create an access from Brompton Square northwards towards Hyde Park. Farlar leased the land to William Aslat, a bricklayer and builder, who no doubt started the houses, but they were almost certainly completed by local architect, John Blore who worked fairly widely in this part of the borough.
3.11 Two matching fully stuccoed crescents of four houses each were built with space between them for the future road. The houses have Greek detailing including projecting Doric porches with fluted columns, entablatures and cornices over the windows, a balustrade at roof level and anthemion designs to the balconies. The central and end houses have a pair of Composite pilasters to the first and second floors which frame an ornamental cartouche in the place of the balustrade at roof level.

3.12 John Elger, the principal promoter to the north wished to ensure the exclusivity of Ennismore and Rutland Gardens and blocked access across his land by building nos. 36-38 Ennismore Gardens and 31a Brompton Square c.1854. In 1981-82 no. 31a was refronted and extended further into the gap as part of the rebuilding of nos. 36-38 for the Government of Malaysia but the ground floor detailing and roofline in particular do not match the remainder of the crescents.

3.13 This elegant pair of crescents has been greatly harmed by the buildings either side of the gap, the raising of rooflines (which is particularly excessive at no. 32) and the loss of parapet balustrades. It would not be impossible to unite these two groups in a dignified terminating feature, but the disparities between the buildings on either side of the gap would mean this might be difficult without losing accommodation.

South ends

3.14 The southern ends of the square have both been altered for different reasons. Nos. 1 and 2 (west) were demolished in 1881 to make way for a bank building. The bank was itself demolished for road widening in 1968, and after a number of years in 1979-81, no. 2 was built to match the rest of the square (designed by Heber-Percy Parker Perry Associates). The flank to this and no. 60 are in red brick, presumably to match the Brompton Road frontages, with channelled stucco to the ground floor and an arch feature in brick containing two windows (to no. 2) and blind windows (to no. 60). No. 2 has an odd chamfered corner elevation and no chimneys, whilst no. 60 has chimney pots without chimney breasts giving a squat finish.

3.15 No. 61 was demolished when the road was first widened in 1893-94. Sadly the entrance to the garden square with its lamps and gate piers were also removed at this time. When the road was widened further in 1968, the Greater London Council finished the flank to no. 60 in a neo-Georgian style which was copied subsequently at no. 2.
Brompton Road

3.16 Brompton Road forms the southern boundary of the conservation area and this section has a diverse character that starts at the west end with Oratory House set back from the pavement behind a high wall and courtyard with trees. Next to it, the London Oratory is closer to the pavement and presents a prominent face to Brompton Road which curves away from it. Next to this are red brick flanks joined by the mature leafiness of the Brompton Square trees and planting, before meeting the tightly packed parade of shops and cafes on a raised pavement leading into the fashion shops of the remainder of Brompton Road in Hans Town Conservation Area.

3.17 For the Oratory and Oratory House see Places of Worship

3.18 Nos. 132-188 were first built on land bought for development by Elisha Biscoe, a prosperous attorney and speculator between 1766 and 1768. Today they have all been altered and many demolished, but some retain their historic structures as described later. The Georgian row was originally known as Biscoe’s Buildings and constructed by various builders including Joseph Clark (a carpenter and builder) who built nos. 158-188 (only some of which remain). Biscoe’s Buildings were the most substantial of the terraced houses built in Brompton during the boom of the 1760s. They were raised above road level on a high pavement as they still are today and were inhabited by people of some prosperity. In 1790 they became known as Brompton Row.

3.19 Front gardens of the Georgian houses were curtailed when the road was widened in 1893-94 and it was probably at this time that shops were added to the ground floors. (See Shops)

3.20 No. 132 Brompton Road forms the corner with Montpelier Street and was built as the Crown and Sceptre public house, but is now a sandwich shop. This was, as was typical for pubs, the first building to be leased in this row in 1766. It was built by William Rose, carpenter,
3.21 Nos. 156 and 170 retain their four storey eighteenth century brick frontages (multi coloured and red respectively) with gauged brick lintels over the long window openings. Both parapets are unadorned and the frontages have no decoration. Some windows may be original (for example the upper casements with glazing bars) but generally both buildings would benefit from judicious reinstatement of Georgian paned sashes where lost (for example at first floor level in particular). These frontages are extremely valuable as they are good survivals from the area’s earliest development in the 1760s that has been lost elsewhere. No. 138 is similar but has had plain sash windows added.

3.22 Nos. 132, 134, 136, 172 and 174 retain their Georgian three storey form (plus dormers) but were refronted in the Victorian period. These houses are also three windows wide with no. 134 having retained six-over-six Georgian paned windows with the others having plain sashes in accordance with their now, Victorian appearance. The buildings have matching continuous moulded parapets and architraves and cornices to the windows. These too make a positive contribution in their Victorian format although Georgian features may survive inside.

3.23 No. 168 was also rendered at a later date and frontage is devoid of detailing, but this was the residence of scientist, philanthropist and domestic reformer, Count Rumford from 1798-1802/7 (see History).

3.24 No. 154 was designed by W.E. Battley, Sons and Holness and built in 1905 and is a fine Edwardian red brick building that has retained its original features and presents a unique and attractive frontage in this mixed streetscape. The building is of four storeys and topped with a Baroque-style broken pediment in stone, with egg and dart mouldings and modillions, and containing an oculus. The windows are all six-over-one paned sashes that are typical of this period and flanking the shop window are two nearly matching original polished oak doors with oculi above and copper light glazing. There is a rare first floor shop display window with a moulded stone architrave, cornice and keystone. The original sun blind remains.

3.25 The other buildings interspersed between these are all from the late twentieth century and are described in Recent Architecture.
Cheval Place

3.26 The short north-south section was named Cheval Place in the 1820s and in 1910 the name was extended to the former Chapel Row (or Place) which was the access to stabling to the rear of the houses on Brompton Road. These two sections both contain smaller buildings than on Brompton Road, but the western section comprises only mews (for which see Mews) whereas the longer stretch contains residences and business premises. Today, the east-west section has become a street with a mixture of building types, dates, uses and architectural styles and has a less well defined historic character overall.

North Side

3.27 Buildings of historic interest, built on Farlar’s land, include nos. 50-56 which in 1839 included cottages, stables, coach houses, ‘police and engine stations’ and at no. 56-58, a ‘national school’. At no. 60, accessed through a passage, and presumably originally, from the mews, Farlar had his own works premises. (See also Mews).

3.28 Today the cottages are regrettably painted, but their historic features include their multi-paned Georgian sash windows, cambered brick lintels and arched entrances (some with decorative fanlights). No. 50 has an original style door with beaded flush panels and a fanlight whilst both this and no. 48 have a stucco balustrade to the parapet, probably a later gentrifying feature to this simple terrace. The buildings at both ends of this terrace have been rebuilt, but without copying the prevailing historic format of having only one window per floor, leaving blank masonry above the front door, an important feature of this type of house and period.

South Side

3.29 The variety of architecture on this side of the street contributes to the character of the conservation area, not least the varied roof shapes and building heights that do not rise above three storeys - appropriate for such a back street location. There are few buildings of historic interest and these include nos. 7, 9, 41 (built 1888 and had earlier been Count Rumford’s stables) and 43 (rebuilt 1935). No. 7 could be the last mews surviving from the Georgian Biscoe’s Buildings and has an important gabled frontage of low height that has since been lost in the rest of the street. However, what was originally a service alley running behind houses, has evolved to become a formal street today with business and houses on both sides.

3.30 For west side see Mews.
**Ennismore Street**

3.31 Only the south side of Ennismore Street and Ennismore Gardens are in the Royal Borough and therefore in Brompton Conservation Area. These form a quiet back street with only a few buildings. Most of the south side is made up of back garden walls and the edge of Holy Trinity’s churchyard.

3.32 Nos. 2-4 have an interesting history. They were built on the site of stabling at the end of Rutland Mews South in 1920 in a Tudor style by architect, Alfred Matthew Cawthorne. He also built no. 1 (opposite) in a similar style and houses in Upper Cheyne Row in Chelsea. They were both damaged beyond repair in World War II and rebuilt in 1950 in replica by two different architects, Morris De Metz (no. 2) and Leslie C. Norton (no. 4). The two houses have the appearance of one medium sized detached house, cleverly disguised by having a separate entrance on Ennismore Street and another on Rutland Mews South. They are rendered with exposed stone quoins, mullions and window surrounds and four centred arches over the doors. The dormers in the steeply pitched roof were also part of the original design and the windows have square leaded panes.

3.33 Nos. 6-8 were also designed by Cawthorne as a disguised pair of rendered houses in 1922. This time the design is symmetrical with an entrance at both sides of the building. The whole building is three storeys over a half basement with mullioned windows. The original design shows two symmetrical box dormers on the roof, an odd design that detracts from the gabled roof shape and has been severely increased in size on the east side.

3.34 Nos. 36-38 Ennismore Gardens were built c. 1854 by developer, John Elger, to block the hoped-for passage from Brompton Square across his estate. These tall stucco fronted houses look adrift when viewed as part of this street, but they follow the pattern of terraced houses in Rutland Gate and provide a vista at the end of Ennismore Gardens.

**Montpelier Street**

3.35 This was originally called Rawsthorne Street and renamed around 1825. The original buildings here were demolished to make way for those seen today, probably between 1867-71.

3.36 This is a well maintained terrace in gault brick with simple stucco dressings to the windows and full height pilasters dividing each property. These pilasters, along with the perfectly unbroken modillioned cornice, the shops’ fascias and the string course linking the second floor windows, create a perfectly uniform grid pattern to the front elevation. The windows are all two-over-two paned timber sashes and the shopfronts are traditional timber designs.
that complement the terrace. Only the central two properties have pediments to the first floor windows. No. 11 on the corner has an original shopfront (see Shops).

**Rutland Street**

3.37 The west side of Rutland Street was built between 1830-39, probably by bricklayer, William Aslat, on land bought by Farlar from the neighbouring Montpelier Estate in 1830.

3.38 Nos. 1-9 were part of a plot that included the west section of Cheval Place, but here the houses are mostly three storeys high with simple detailing. Several alterations detract from their historic character including the roof top railings, shutters, upvc windows and painted brick.

3.39 Nos. 11-29 were probably built as cottages originally and despite having undergone many alterations, these houses create a particularly charming part of the conservation area. The terrace is formed of simple two storey stock brick houses, two windows wide, with the front door set in an arched entrance. They are extremely unusual in being just one room deep over two main floors and a half basement. All details are very simple and include cambered brick lintels, chimney stacks on every other party wall and a simple unadorned parapet. There is a continuous stucco band running the length of the terrace under the first floor windows. The latter have all been replaced by modern lattice designs rather than the originals which would have been six-over-six paned sashes. The boundary treatments are also very characterful whereby a stock brick wall is topped by a deep stone coping supporting timber posts.

3.40 No. 31 was built as part of the Rutland Mews South. When the mews were built behind, mention was made that these houses were allowed no rear gardens which remains the case today. The railings chosen are not designs that would have been used originally and perhaps the timber posts should be copied in future. It is also regrettable that so many of the houses have pipework on their front elevations that detract severely from their cottage charm. The lightwells in the front gardens are an intrusive feature that would be better concealed behind planting or hedging.
Architectural Details

3.42 Architectural detailing along with original windows, doors and decorative finishes make a vital contribution to the area’s appearance, integrity and historic character. The houses in the conservation area are mostly based on Georgian designs that were inspired by classical buildings of antiquity in which regularity, proportions and elegance were of the utmost importance.

3.43 Brompton Square in particular followed these principles and employed little decoration to openings, save for the arched entrances with fanlights and the unusual Gothic style railings to the balconies. Windows here, as in some houses in Brompton Road were painted timber Georgian style six-over-six paned sashes, with the exception of those to the first floor which were French windows with glazing bars opening on to the balconies. This style relies on simple gauged brick flat arches over windows and a single stone coping to the parapet whilst the ground floor is stuccoed and rendered as was the fashion in the 1820s. Even the lowlier houses in Cheval Place use similar simple details and eight-over-eight paned sashes.

3.44 Not all historic doors have survived but in Brompton Square original examples would appear to be divided into six panels with the bottom two beaded and fitted flush, whilst the four panels above are recessed with mouldings. A central bead gives the impression that they are doubled leaved doors.

3.45 The slightly later houses forming the crescents at the north end of Brompton Square are fully stuccoed and have low relief stucco moulded patterns at parapet level and idiosyncratic Ionic capitals to the pilasters. This fully stuccoed style, with projecting columned porches, is unusual in the conservation area, but seen widely in surrounding streets.

3.46 Houses built later still, such as the 1920s houses at the east end of Ennismore Street were designed to have metal paneled leaded light windows, stone window surrounds and polished oak doors to enhance their Tudor style.

Rear Elevations

3.47 Rear elevations make an important contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area, being an original part of the house design with their own typical characteristics. Rears are visible across garden walls, through gaps between buildings, across the churchyard as well as from rear windows. As with the frontages, rear elevations of terraces were designed as a piece with their neighbours, and builders employed matching, albeit less ostentatious, designs and details across the whole terrace.

3.48 Features of the rear elevations that contribute to the character of the conservation area therefore include their original design (eg. closet wings, chimneys), materials (eg. stock brick and timber) and features (eg. sash windows, brick lintels). Elements that detract include render / paint covered brick, disproportionate window sizes, poor window design, disruption of rhythm and extensions that are out of scale with the main house.
3.49 The houses in Brompton Square were built with closet wings that projected across half the width of the house and rose from two to three storeys. They were added to the house singly, rather than in pairs and originally left the typical recessed yard in between each closet wing resulting in a rhythm that is so characteristic of the backs of London terraced houses and a positive feature in the conservation area. Much shallower closet wings were given to the crescent houses at the north end of the square.

3.50 As the closet wings are accessed internally from the stair landing, the windows are at a lower level than the windows into the main body of the house and they are usually smaller, but have the same glazing pattern as the other rear windows. These are important details that enhance the historic character of the houses and in turn, the whole area. A highly unusual and interesting rear elevation is one seen from the churchyard which has Gothic windows and stone dressings.

3.51 Other elements that have harmed the character of the rear elevations are painted brickwork, mismatched fenestration and glazing patterns and unsympathetic and intrusive or oversized modern extensions.

### Roofs

3.52 Historic roof form makes a key contribution to the character of the conservation area. Key features of roofs include:

- Original form (e.g. butterfly, pitched, hipped)
- Original materials (e.g. slate, lead, stucco)
- Original details (e.g. chimneys, cornices, balustrades)

3.53 Houses in Brompton Square were built with either London butterfly roofs or mansards from the outset, but many have been altered. Over-developed roofs are one of the most disfiguring features of the conservation area. Nevertheless, some original roof shapes remain and these are of great conservation value. For example, there is an unaltered run of butterfly roofs on the east side of Brompton Square that is a very positive feature in the conservation area, but where single roofs remain unaltered these leave a gap-toothed effect that is unattractive.

3.54 Some roofs in the square were originally built with mansards and there is a complete run of these on the west side between nos. 2-9. Houses in the crescents at the north end were built with pitched roofs to the front, which later had windows added, and extensions to the rear, and again, two have been extended with walling rather than roofing to ruinous effect.

3.55 The Tudor style houses in Ennismore Street were built with steeply pitched, clay tiled roofs. The one to nos. 2-4 remains with small dormer windows in accordance with the original designs which completes the houses in an attractive and appropriate way, but the roofs to nos. 6-8 have unsightly box dormers that obliterate the distinctive triple-gabled roof form.

3.56 The pitched slate roofs to houses in Rutland Street are regularly punctuated by chimneys and party walls thus retaining their historic character and although the roof lights are not attractive, they are not visible from the street here.
Front Boundaries and Front Areas

3.57 Front boundaries have an important function in demarcating parts of the property that are private whilst allowing them to be viewed as part of the public realm and enjoyed by all. As with all other elements of the conservation area, authenticity and uniformity make a positive contribution to the character.

3.58 The houses in Brompton Square have narrow front areas with steps down to what was originally the servants’ entrance. This allows stone steps up to the main entrance to emphasise the importance of the owner’s front door whilst iron railings allow the whole to be visible, despite remaining private. Most original railings remain in the square creating an appearance of uniformity and uniting all the houses. Their design comprises square section posts (with a gulley to the front) planted in a low stone coping, linked by a top rail and finished with arrow headed tips. On rare occasions the tips have been painted a contrasting colour or gold, which would never have been done historically and is entirely inappropriate in a Classical design where uniformity and good taste are quintessential.

3.59 The open character of front areas is an important feature. Many have historic stone slab steps with simple iron ‘D-section’ handrails. Basement doors were designed as part of the house as a whole and were often painted black with four panels and of smaller proportions than the main door. Many original doors have been lost, but where they remain they can provide templates for more suitable replacements and are of high historic value in themselves. Coal cellar doors were usually ledged and braced plank doors painted black.

3.60 The Rutland Street houses have small front gardens and their original medium height brick walls with stone copings remain, although the railings were undoubtedly given for the WWII effort. Some houses have installed timber gates and posts which add to the cottage character of this terrace, but the installation of walls with red brick and thin modern metal railings appear less successful. The front gardens are further harmed where the projecting skylights, which light the basements, are visible rather than hidden behind hedges or other planting.

Gardens and Garden Trees

3.61 Private back gardens are a rare feature of the conservation area with most houses having originally had either no private space to the rear (as those in Rutland Street) or a tiny yard. The grand stuccoed houses to the north end of Brompton Square are therefore highly unusual in having large gardens which increase their status in the square and provide them with grand settings.

3.62 A row of Lime trees in the rear garden of nos. 33-34 has the advantage of looking like a row of street trees and adds welcome greenery in the area.

3.63 For Brompton Square see Green Space.
**Other Significant Buildings**

**Places of Worship**

**Holy Trinity Church, Brompton Road**

3.64 Grade II. Built 1826-29 to the designs of Thomas Leverton Donaldson with funds from the Commissioners for Building New Churches. Materials used were stock brick with Suffolk facings, Bath stone dressings and Bangor slate roofs. The original design however, was extremely plain and from the outset critics pushed for more decoration which was duly added over the years. In 1843 John Blore installed Decorated / Geometric Gothic tracery to the aisle windows and replaced an entrance porch on the south side with a matching window.

3.65 In 1879-82 the church was more extensively altered by Blomfield senior and junior. In 1879 Arthur William Blomfield extended the chancel and in 1886 designed a new west window with stained glass by Heaton, Butler and Bayne. They also designed stained glass for the aisle windows which was added c.1900. In 1906 Blomfield’s son, Arthur Conran Blomfield designed and added a new polygonal, crenellated south-east porch in a later Curvilinear Gothic style. Similar porches were added in 1913 (south-west), 1924 (north-west) and in 1926-8 a north transept was added with a further porch.

3.66 The gateway on the north boundary was originally located at the south end of the avenue to Brompton Road. It was designed in 1881 by architect, H. D. Shepard and built in red Dumfries stone but it was moved to its current site in 1908. The churchyard is surrounded by plain square section iron railings with arrow finials on a ground level coping. These give a pleasant open character to the ground and allow views through from the mews to the church and vice versa. The original rear wall to the houses on the west side of Brompton Square can also be seen from here.

**The London Oratory, Brompton Road**

3.67 Grade II*. Consecrated in 1884 and built to the designs of architect, Herbert Gribble as the London Oratory of St Philip Neri and Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Oratory is a magnificent Baroque landmark, occupying a large plot and being visible from public places in all sides. The commissioning Fathers wanted an Italianate design and Gribble’s intention was that “those who had no opportunity of going to Italy to see an Italian church had only to come here to see the model of one” and so it remains today. Quite apart from the outstanding marble interior and Baroque frontage, glimpses of the dome can be seen from side streets giving the impression that one is indeed in Italy.

3.68 Gribble specified best brown Portland stone, Duchess slates from North Wales, Baltic timber and best Swedish wrought iron for the church. The south frontage was only built in 1891-92 to new designs by Gribble in 1890 under the supervision of the then Clerk of Works, Peter Shaw. The wide ground floor elevation contains a recessed entrance fronted by four Ionic columns ‘in ants’ and two flanking pavilions that had originally been designed to
have towers above. The narrower upper level is the piece-de-resistance with Corinthian pilasters supporting a wide pediment topped with four urns and the Virgin Mary at its pinnacle.

3.69 A steel framed lead covered dome with cupola and gold ball finial are the tallest crowning parts of the building, but were only erected in 1895-96 after Gribble’s death (in 1894) and designed by George Sherrin and his assistant E.A. Rickards.

3.70 The charming, diminutive lodge immediately to the left of the Oratory was designed by the then Clerk of Works, Peter Shaw in 1896, who also laid out the sweep of paving in front of the building which was reduced when the road was widened in 1971-72.

3.71 The monument to Cardinal Newman (grade II listed) on Brompton Road to the west of the Oratory was unveiled in 1896 and was designed by Bodley and Garner with Newman’s statue being modelled by L.J. Chavalliaud. Newman established the Birmingham Oratory in 1848 and the London Oratory the following year. The statue is set in a niche flanked by two Ionic columns and topped with a palmette frieze and a figure of the Virgin and Child above.

3.72 There is a historic red brick wall to the right of the Oratory.

Oratory House, Chapel and Halls, Brompton Road

3.73 Grade II*. Designed by J. J. Scoles in 1853 as the headquarters, private chapel and library of the Oratorian fathers. The buildings are attached to the Oratory and together form a courtyard effect that is enclosed by the boundary wall to the front.

3.74 The main house (to the north) is a large four storey Italianate villa with gault brick to the upper floors and blocked stone to the ground floor. The windows are plain timber sashes with margin lights and simple stone architraves and bracketed cornices. The roof is hipped and the tall chimney stacks project above the roofline with a complete set of square, buff, terracotta pots. The rear elevation is also well designed and is visible across Oratory Gardens.

3.75 The brick private chapel, to the west, has a channelled ground floor with red bricks above, arched first floor windows and high level sash windows. In 1858 the roof was raised to accommodate a large organ. It is finished with a stone balustrade, but the tympanum facing south remains blank, the papal arms intended, never having been carved.

3.76 St Wilfred’s and St Joseph’s Halls, in front of the chapel, were added in 1872-73 by an unknown architect and forms the backdrop to Cardinal Newman’s memorial. This building was partly faced in stone in 1911.
Shops

3.77 Shops make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area as well as to its vitality and daytime economy. Historic fabric associated with shopfronts that is of significance includes traditional materials and detailing (usually timber elements and plain glazing), narrow fascias, the absence of lighting, console brackets and pilasters which divided the frontages from each other, stallrisers and recessed entrances. There is only one true historic shopfront in the conservation area, but others retain some of the traditional elements cited and therefore contribute to the character of the conservation area as a group.

154 Brompton Road

3.78 This building was designed by W.E. Battley, Sons and Holness and built in 1905. It has original shop windows both on ground floor and first floor. The stone frame to the ground floor window is particularly fine and has been purposely designed as part of the building, rather than being a later feature as so many shopfronts were. The window is separated from flanking doorways by pilasters that have fluting and collars to their upper sections. The fascia is narrow and is surmounted by a dentilled cornice and a sun blind above that. The window is divided into two by a wide timber transom and the low stallriser is made of marble. The first floor window has a simple stone architrave with a cornice and keystone above that gives the effect of a picture frame for displaying goods. Console brackets to either side define the extent of the property which ends neatly against the neighbouring buildings without the need for pilasters.

11 Montpelier Street

3.79 This historically styled shopfront is located at the north end of the terrace and also has a small frontage on Cheval Place. It was installed in 1993. The shop has a delicate and elegant design with a central recessed entrance created by two curved shop windows. The glazing bars are fine and the stallriser is low. The half-glazed door matches the glazing pattern of the shop window with an overlight and lamp lighting the entranceway. The frontage makes a strong contribution to the historic appearance of the conservation area.

3.80 All the fascias in this terrace match in size and pairs of console brackets remain between each.

Mews

3.81 The streets to the east of Brompton Square were built with mews for horses, carriages and their grooms. They were mostly converted after WWI when trains and cars became the accepted mode of transport. Characteristic features of mews include wide stable and carriage doors with sash windows above lighting the grooms’ accommodation. Mews do not have pavements, but open directly onto a street surface that is typically laid with granite setts and drains to gullies at either side. The small and discreet scale of mews is one of their defining characteristics.
William Farlar’s freehold for Brompton Square was restricted and allowed little room for stabling or mews and although he had built nos. 62-72 Cheval Place by 1825, the others in Rutland Mews South were built after his death by Elger, the developer of Ennismore Gardens and Rutland Gate to the north.

Cheval Place

Farlar once had his own works in the mews at what is now no. 60 Cheval Place. Here he had a smith’s shop, workshop, warehouse and an engine intended for pumping water to his estate and the vicinity.

Nos. 62-72 on the western side of Cheval Place were built as mews by 1825 and have retained their character as such. In particular, nos. 66-68 have retained their wide stable openings, their plain pitched roofs and multi-paned timber framed windows. No. 66 displays the street name on a plaque and there is a historic street lamp fitted to their party wall.

Rutland Mews South

This mews was built on land that Elger bought from Batty in 1849 following Farlar’s death, and they were controversially built hard-up against the rear elevations of the cottages on Rutland Street leaving neither building with any garden or yard at all (one rear elevation can be seen looking left on entering the mews).

Today the buildings have been much altered. They have been rendered, painted, refenestrated and extended upwards so that they appear as houses rather than the stabling they were originally. Some historic features remain and these help retain the historic character of the group, along with the granite setts that fall away to shallow gullies at both sides and the lack of pavements or front areas / lightwells. Another characteristic is the slight change in the direction of the mews towards the south causing some buildings to be stepped back causing some buildings to be angled or have corners projecting and adding to the informal back-street charm.

No. 31 Rutland Street appears to have been built as part of this mews, as were nos. 2-4 Ennismore Gardens although they were rebuilt after WWI.

Mews Arch, Ennismore Gardens

Grade II. This arch was built in the mid nineteenth century and is formed by an undecorated frieze supported by two stone Ionic columns in antis with one Ionic pilaster being built into a mews house, whilst the other size is free standing. The Ionic volutes are decorated with leaf-like motifs.
Former Brompton Road Underground Station

3.90 This station was designed by Leslie Green and opened in 1906 by the Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway for the Piccadilly line, but closed in 1934 and remains disused today. During World War II it was used as the Royal Artillery’s anti-aircraft operations room for central London. The Brompton Road entrance was demolished in 1972, and the building above ground is no longer owned by London Underground.

3.91 The remaining elevation is faced in ox-blood glazed tiles, so typical of Green’s stations. The parapet has a deeply projecting modillioned cornice and there are two large Diocletian windows at first floor level, flanked by two oculi with curved cornices over. The ground floor has lost its original windows and the second floor is probably a later addition. The building is an important historic remnant of transport and wartime history as well as an interesting and attractive contributor to the conservation area.

Recent Architecture

3.92 For a small area, Brompton Conservation Area has a large number of modern buildings and in fact Brompton Road was added to the conservation area in 1983 to stop further demolitions of the Georgian houses there.

3.93 On the whole the large blocks built in the 1960s and 1980s did not greatly respect their surroundings and used contrasting materials (sometimes even polished marble) and alien features such as curved bays or projecting balconies. The appearance of Brompton Road has been severely compromised by these behemoths.

3.94 The pastiche design at the north end of the crescent in Brompton Square has been carried out badly and the awkward side structures, poorly proportioned windows and additional height has provided an inappropriate finish to what should be an elegant terminating crescent. Even the flats at nos. 10-12 Brompton Square could have been built to match the terrace and not in the weak (and oversized) design seen today.

3.95 Interestingly none of these recent developments have the excuse of being infills following Second World War bomb damage except for no. 176-178 Brompton Road which was built to a restrained form and size.

3.96 Two modern buildings, however, are worthy of mention: nos. 45-47 Cheval Place (by architects, Flanagan Lawrence 2013) and no. 9 Cottage Place (architect, David Chipperfield, 2009). Both of these are built in pale brick and have been designed in a contemporary way that does not conflict with the surrounding historic architecture, but sits comfortably within the prevailing building heights and lines.
4 Public Realm

Street Trees

4.1 The only street trees in the conservation area are the mature London Plane (Platanus x hispanica) trees along the raised pavement on Brompton Road which create an attractive screen between the buildings and the road. They are managed by Transport for London and not the Council.

Street Surfaces

- Three rows of granite setts to gutters in Cheval Place
- Crossovers made of granite setts in Chevel Place in front of no. 9
- Triple rows of granite setts leading into the gulleys in Rutland Mews South where the setts cover the whole of the mews surface
- Historic York stone in Cottage Place
- Original York stone immediately around the garden in Brompton Square

Street Furniture

Kensington Vestry Street Lamps:

4.2 There is a variety of historic street lamps in the area, some of which have square lanterns and others having pentagonal lanterns. Some in Cottage Place have acanthus leaf designs on the columns and the one in Rutland Street has a round lantern.

Other

- Historic letter box (no cipher), outside 180 Brompton Road
- Traditional cast iron and timber slat benches, Brompton Road
- Hitching posts to the rear of houses on Brompton Square and Ennismore Gardens.
- Historic coal hole covers in paving
- Granite guard stones protecting wall masonry for example at the south end of wall to the east of the churchyard
Views and Landmarks

4.3 Views within, through and from the conservation area form an important part of its setting and character. There are also be views from windows that are enjoyed by residents but not necessarily seen from public viewpoints.

4.4 There is one landmark building in the conservation area and that is the London Oratory which defines the start of the conservation area and is seen from locations to the south as well as from the north and east. It is the largest and most dominating building in the conservation area and sits majestically in its site with views to it from all around, such as from Brompton Road to the south; from Holy Trinity’s churchyard and especially in the delightful and highly valuable view of the dome from Cheval Place.

4.5 There are many attractive framed views and vistas in the area, including the view of the Oratory’s dome framed through the arched north entrance to Holy Trinity churchyard; and the view of the mews framed by the Ennismore Gardens mews arch (although the view to Imperial College’s Queens Tower from Ennismore Gardens Mews is unfortunately blocked by university development in Princes Gardens). Other framed views include the one looking into Rutland Mews South and east along Ennismore Street to the houses on Montpelier Walk.

4.6 Green space has an important and ever changing role in views, as plants and trees change colour and appearance throughout the seasons. In winter, terraces in Brompton Square and Brompton Road can be glimpsed through the bare tree branches whilst in summer the view focuses on the green leaves of the trees.
themselves. Holy Trinity churchyard allows views across to the mews houses; east to the rear elevations of the Brompton Square houses; and back from these to the church itself as well as the chancel of the Oratory.

4.7 Views to buildings outside the conservation area include various views to the tower of Imperial College such as the one along Ennismore Street or views across Brompton Road to buildings opposite (in Thurloe Smith’s Charity Conservation Area) or east to Harrods (Hans Town Conservation Area). Parts of the Victoria and Albert Museum such as the M shaped roofs and one of the cupolas can be seen from the churchyard and the front of Oratory House.

1 View looking west along Cheval Place, framing the domed roof of the Brompton Oratory
2 View looking west along Ennismore Street towards the tower of Imperial College
3 View of St Saviour’s Church along Walton Place
4 View across the Holy trinity Churchyard and Oratory House and Garden toward the dome of the Oratory
5 View towards the Victoria & Albert Museum across the churchyard
6 View towards the rear of Brompton Square
5 Negative Elements and Opportunities for Enhancement

5.1 The conservation area has suffered a number of alterations to buildings that have caused visual harm and disrupted uniformity as well as historic character. The worst of these include the varied roof extensions in Brompton Square that have detracted from its simple and well-proportioned, Classical design. In a small number of cases, whole brick elevations have been painted, cleaned or washed in red dye which makes them stand out deleteriously from the rest of the houses.

5.2 The list below itemises some of the alterations that cause harm to the historic and architectural character of the conservation area. The National Planning Policy Framework and the Council’s policies, in particular, CL1, CL2, CL3 and CL4, require efforts to be taken to enhance the character of conservation areas and listed buildings when opportunities arise and this includes the removal of the negative elements given in this section.

- Painted masonry elevations where this was not the original intent. Rutland Mews South has been almost completely painted so that this has regrettably become part of its modern character, but this was not the original intent.
- Inappropriate replacement window and door designs. Many original doors have been lost as well as an alarming number of ground floor windows in Brompton Square in conjunction with wider openings. Where designs and materials fail to match the originals in the street, the character of the wider area is harmed.

Residential
- Domestic extensions including oversized rear extensions and roof additions.
- Repointing brickwork using modern finishes such as projecting weather-struck or ribbon pointing draws the attention away from the beauty of the brick. Cement mortar is also harmful to historic brickwork over time.
- There is an unsightly concrete wall behind Brompton Square on Ennismore Street that fails to reflect the surrounding traditional materials and would be better in stock brick.

Commercial
- The commercial properties have their own issues including tables and chairs blocking the pavement, rubbish sacks being left on the pavement.
- Modern shopfronts using metal and plastic finishes and standard off-the-shelf designs, as well as oversized fascias can be seen along Brompton Road.

Other
- Holy Trinity Churchyard contains unattractive sheds that are unsuitable in the setting of two important listed buildings as well as harming the character of the conservation area.

5.3 Other than rectifying the harmful interventions listed above, a positive improvement could be the reinstatement of a historically accurate entranceway and railings to Brompton Square.
Appendix 1: History

When Pimlico and Belgravia were still snipe shooting bogs, this was the market garden area of London on the way to Brompton or Broom Town with its heath land. Before 1855 Cromwell Road did not exist, and even up to 1863 Brompton Road was an unofficial name for the road connecting Knightsbridge with Brompton Lane. It is called Bell Lane on John Rocque’s map of 1741 and Brompton Row on Davies’ map of 1841. Walled nursery gardens lay to the north side of the road and among these were cottages and roadside inns such as the Hoop and Toy.

Some 25 acres stretching from Knightsbridge Green to east of Brompton Square had been owned by the Tatham family since 1630. In the eighteenth century they sold off plots which later became Brompton Row, Holy Trinity, The Oratory, Brompton Square, and Cheval Place. Waves of building development covered the area on the nineteenth century so that Croker remarked in 1860 “Now is Brompton all built or being built over, which makes the precise locality of crescents and rows puzzling to old gentlemen.”

Speculative Development

The houses in Brompton were developed speculatively without having guaranteed purchasers for the houses when they were completed - unlike the churches which were commissioned by the end user. The leasehold system allowed for building plots, and subsequently the houses, to be sold for a set period of time following which they would revert to the land owner’s family to ensure their future income and wealth. An architect or surveyor was generally employed for grand schemes, such as Brompton Square (but not for small areas) to specify the design of the houses and the materials to be used.

Land was leased to a builder who would have just a few years paying a peppercorn ground rent whilst he used his own funds to build the number of houses agreed before the low ground rent period expired. Builders might build just one or two houses, particularly if they were men of other trades, such as ironmongery or plumbing or they might build many, as did Bonnin, here and in South Kensington. When the house was built, the builder sold it to recoup his costs and make a profit whilst the land owner still retained the head lease.

For the houses to be a success, they had to be attractive and in a desirable area. A garden square helped, as did a fashionable Classical design which conveyed a sense of high quality and desirability. Vast sums of money could
be made from this building process, but many speculators ended their days in debt having overextended their finances in this business, as did Farlar in Brompton Square.

**Brompton Road**
The first houses along Brompton Road were built in the 1760’s boom and called Biscoe’s Buildings and until the highway was widened, they were protected from the dust and noise of the road by front gardens, trees and shrubs. From Montpelier Street westwards they were raised above the road, resulting today in a split level pavement. Most of the houses were quickly built between 1766 and 1768 with the Crown and Sceptre pub being the first building to be leased.

No. 168 was the experimental residence, from 1798-1802/7, of Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, who inaugurated the Royal Institution. His futuristic alterations aimed at making his house a model of modern domestic convenience were carried out with architect, Thomas Webster, whom he had employed at the Institution. They generally concealed the services, so that the kitchen ovens were hidden behind panels of sheet iron, and unusual ‘close stoves’ in chimney breasts were hidden behind panelling in summer with their chimney breasts being disguised by cupboards and hinged tables to either side. The beds could be converted to sofas; the dining room had a screen to make the room larger or smaller; and the front windows had double glazing consisting of three-sided projecting glass cases in which plants could be grown. The house was thoroughly altered c.1831 when his daughter (or her executors) auctioned the contents.

Rumford also invented the register grate (or ‘Rumford grate’), a revolutionary fireplace design that didn’t smoke and improved heating. It became almost ubiquitous in houses from the nineteenth century.

In 1826-9 Holy Trinity Church was designed by T.L. Donaldson and built in what had been a flower garden. The design was very plain and it was later improved and extended by Arthur Blomfield (in 1879-82) and others.

Oratory House, a private chapel and library were built in 1853 as the head quarters of the Oratorians with a temporary public church to the east. When the Oratorians first proposed Brompton as the site for their church, their founder, Cardinal Newman commented that the area was “essentially a suburb … a neighbourhood of second-rate gentry and second-rate shops”. It was to be some time before the Oratorians set out to build a permanent church. In 1875 a design was
proposed by a Mr Ferguson and a Mr Moody from the Science and Art Department next door in the South Kensington Museum. In March 1876 Herbert Gribble (aged 29), who also had connections with the museum, put forward a design. In 1878 a competition was run, vetted by the eminent Alfred Waterhouse (architect of the Natural History Museum) and the fathers chose Gribble’s design. In 1894 Gribble died aged 47 before his work was finished, and E. A. Rickards, assistant to George Sherrin, completed the dome to a silhouette that was higher and steeper than shown on Gribble’s drawings.

**Brompton Square**

The Square was developed by William Farler, ironmonger, James Bonnin, prolific local builder and John Henry Goodinge, a local lawyer and developer between 1821 and 1835. The three of them also did work in Beauchamp Place from 1824.

The land had earlier been called Oldfield, and was a copyhold of Earls Court Manor. From 1700 the general area was held by the Tatham family and retained after they had sold off the sites of Holy Trinity and the Oratory in 1749 and 1786. The family had strong Irish connections - the husband of the elder Mary Tatham became Dean of Cork and the father of the younger was the last Prime Sergeant of Ireland.

The architect/surveyor was Robert Darley, probably one of the family who had built widely in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and who were involved with building Trinity College, Dublin in particular. Darley was regularly Farlar’s representative between 1822 and 1828, but the Irish connection prompts the possibility that he acted originally on behalf of Mary Tatham Browne.

Farlar secured a private Act of Parliament in 1824 for the management of the square itself. The houses in the square were built quickly with all largely complete by the time of the national building slump in 1826.

By 1825 nos. 62-72 (even) Cheval Place had been built as stabling behind houses on the east side. Farlar then built stables and other buildings northwards in what was formerly called Chapel Place (now Cheval Place) and Rutland Street which in 1839 included police and fire engine stations, as well as a National School at nos. 56 and 58 Cheval Place; and Farlar’s own workshops at 60 Cheval Place. The houses forming the formal quadrants at the head of the square were built about 1834-5. They were designed by a young local architect, John Blore.

Originally a north exit road was proposed for the top of Brompton Square between two crescents of houses, to connect through to the
next development to the north – via what is now Ennismore Gardens – to reach Prince of Wales Gate. Exhibition Road had not yet been opened up as a way northwards. However, the developer to the north, John Elger, objected.

A battle over the proposed road north raged and was even promoted by a Bill in Parliament in 1854 which failed. The editor of the journal, “The Builder” championed the southern residents in the controversy in their desire to re-establish lost links with “the aroma of the Serpentine and other verdant influences of the Hyde”.

Farlar went bankrupt in 1848 but was discharged from it the following year having sold his land interests. After his death and that of his successors, the outstanding land interests including the gap between the crescents, was bought by William Batty in 1849. The access was finally and permanently blocked when Elger secured the land from Batty in 1854 and built nos. 36-38 Ennismore Gardens and 31A Brompton Square, blocking forever the desired route northward out of the square.

Among those who brought the leases was the well-known comedian, William Farrar. He was the first of a long line of Victorian actors and performers to live in the square, including:

- John Baldwin Buckstone
- Robert and Mary Ann Keeley
- Louise Simeon Chatterley
- John Liston
- John Payne Collier (critic)
- George H B Rodwell (composer)
- George Colman the younger
- James Vining
- Fanny Elizabeth Fitzwilliam
- E F Benson, the writer, lived at No 25

As well as actors, there seem to have been a number of educational establishments in the square. Other influential residents were Francis Place, the social reformer, and (very briefly), Stéphane Mallarmé, the French poet.

Several houses have been heightened and many extended to the rear, but only nos. 10-12 and no. 26 have been wholly rebuilt, although a “Gothic” rear elevation was added to no. 27.

The south end of the square was heavily mutilated when two houses (nos. 1 and 2) were pulled down in 1894-98 for road widening, and in early twentieth century most of Cottage Place came down. In 1968 the broken end of the square at no. 60 was tidied up by Greater London Council Historic Buildings division. In 1979-81, no. 2 was rebuilt and its flank follows the pattern set by no. 60 to balance the other side of the square.

Cheval Place

The holding of some 25 acres, which included Cheval Place, stretched from near Knightsbridge Green to East of Brompton Square. This passed to Philip Moreau from the Tatham Family. Moreau lived where the Caltex House entrance now is (the house is shown on the 1741-45 map) and he owned the area up to 1759.

In 1824 T. W. Marriat, an ironmonger, bought the Cheval Place land and between 1825 and 1830 he leased it to small tradesmen for development. The section west of Rutland Street was developed by William Farlar after 1830.

Nos. 2-10 Cheval Place on the north side (in the borough of Westminster), were built between 1873-75. By the 1930s cottages in Rutland Street were being turned into bijou residences.

Archaeology

The survival of early archaeology in the Brompton Conservation Area is largely dependent on the underlying geology, which is a mixture of well-drained fertile Kempton Park and Taplow Gravel, pitted in parts with dense clays. The gravels indicate potential for the survival of deposits relating to prehistoric activity and Roman-period settlement. In the medieval period the area was characterised by heathland and marshy ground, which was later utilised for fruit and market gardens. To date no archaeological finds have been recorded within the boundary. However, this may be due to a lack of archaeological investigation, rather than reflecting a meaningful pattern.

The next period of archaeological interest in the conservation area is the nineteenth century, when a significant population increase necessitated the building and consecration (in 1829) of the Church of Holy Trinity and the last burial ground to be opened in London. The ‘new’ graveyard was actually built upon the site of an earlier burial ground belonging to St George’s Hospital (then located at Hyde Park Corner and now in Tooting). It is therefore possible that numerous unknown burials could be present around the church.

Buried archaeological features and deposits relating to London Oratory (1884) and Oratory House, chapel and library (1853-1873) could also survive.
Appendix 2: Historic England Guidance

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016)

This guidance sets out ways to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances historic areas through conservation area designation, appraisal and management.


The checklist below has been taken from this publication and 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?

Conservation and Energy Efficiency

Historic England have produced useful guidance on how homeowners can improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions whilst still respecting the historic and architectural significance of their properties. For more information follow this link:

https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/saving-energy/
Appendix 3: Relevant Local Plan Policies

The table opposite indicates those policies in the Royal Borough’s Local Plan, which have particular relevance to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area. These policies are the primary means through which the Council ensures that proposed development within designated conservation areas preserve or enhance the area’s character and appearance.

This list is not comprehensive and any development proposals will have to take account of the whole suite of policies contained within the Council’s Local Plan. Please consult the Council’s website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 33: An Engaging Public Realm</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CR4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CR5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CR6</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Chapter 34: Renewing the Legacy</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CL1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CL 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy CL3</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Policy CL 4</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Policy CL 6</strong></td>
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