



LARK HILL

Conservation Area Appraisal

September 2017



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01 Introduction

The Lark Hill Conservation Area was designated in 1980 and is an area of 5.5 hectares located approximately 1 km southeast of Worcester City Centre. The designation recognises the high quality early 19th century architecture, the consistency of building style, and the density of listed buildings. Of equal importance to the character of the conservation area are the grounds to their foreground (providing views across the southern part of the City to the Malvern Hills) and the ancillary buildings to their rear.

A Conservation Area is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 69 of the Act places a duty on the local authority to designate conservation areas and to review their extent. Section 71 places a further duty 'to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of conservation areas. Designation, review and appraisal helps to ensure that an area which has been identified for its special architectural and historic significance continues to be protected and managed appropriately.



Nos, 38-40, Lark Hill



Conservation is the management of change to a significant place in a way that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations. The conservation area appraisal is a means of assessing the special architectural and historic interest of an area and how this contributes to the character of the place. The appraisal will be a material consideration in planning applications and should be read in conjunction with the management proposals for the conservation and enhancement of an area.

National planning policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), draws attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance which subject to appropriate assessment and justification, can include adaptation and change. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that 'local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas...to enhance or better reveal their significance'. Development proposals that preserve elements which make a positive contribution to the conservation area, or which better reveal the significance of heritage assets, should be treated favourably.

Local planning policy is contained within the South Worcestershire Development Plan (adopted 2016). SWDP 6 and SWDP 24 are the policies most relevant to the Lark Hill Conservation Area. Historic England's Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management is the national conservation area guidance to support this document.

Over time the pressures and demands of development can result in changes within a conservation area, and as such, local authorities are required to review these areas and their boundaries periodically. This appraisal forms part of a systematic review of all 18 conservation areas within Worcester City and is intended to be used by planning officers, developers and landowners alike to ensure that the character is preserved and enhanced, not eroded. This appraisal will define the special character and appearance of the Lark Hill Conservation Area.

The character of the Lark Hill Conservation Area is one of a planned Georgian development set in landscaped grounds. The distinctive stuccoed houses and large number of mature trees create a picturesque eutopia within a busy wider townscape. The conservation area is relatively small and is bounded to the east by Perry Wood and the rear gardens of Silverdale Avenue (both at higher ground level). To the south is the busy London Road, one of the primary routes to and from the city, and to the north lies the modern development based around Woodside Close and Perry Wood Close.



Lark Hill Conservation Area Map

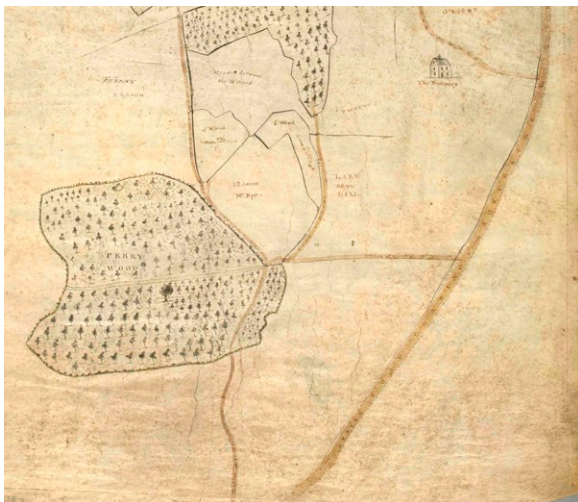




02 Historic Development

The Lark Hill development forms part of the suburbanisation of the area in the 19th century, and is typical of the trend at the time to site upper middle class suburban development away from the industrial and commercial centre of the city where those who could afford it chose to live removed from the city.

Prior to its development, the Lark Hill area was an area of open farmland, largely as part of the estate of the Brown Wylde Brown family at the Commandery and the Sebright family of Battenhall. Kite's map of 1790 shows the London Road flanked by rural fields and Perry Wood to the west.



Kite's Map, 1790

In the early 19th century the Wylde and Sebright families exploited their estates, selling off land, and in 1818 part of the Lark Hill area, including a large field known as "Old Woman's Field", and a smaller plot called "Balls Garden" was sold to John Knapp, a local Methodist glover with interests in property in Lowesmoor and Sansome Fields. By 1819 a carriageway had been formed (now Lark Hill Road) along with two roads to the east of the area, to enable development. Mainley's map (1822) clearly shows the early road layout of the Lark Hill development. During the 1820s the land was divided and sold-off as individual building plots to a number of local upper-middle class citizens, with a series of semi-detached properties built between c.1819-24, followed by the larger scale villas a little later, c.1823-28.



Mainley's Map 1822

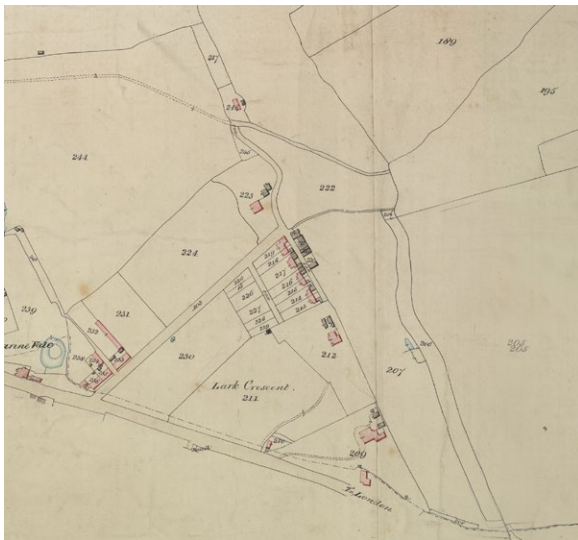
Following John Knapp's death in 1823 no more semi-detached houses were built and the adjacent land was sold to Captain Herbert Brace Powell who built "Heron Villa," later becoming the well-known Heron Lodge. By the time of Crisp's map of 1832, Heron Lodge and the early layout of the Lark Hill development can clearly be seen; the lane to the front of the terraces is clearly marked as a crescent, most likely intended for more houses.

In the 1830s Powell bought two lots of land below Heron Lodge which included part of "Old Woman's Meadow" and "Ball's Garden." Acquisition of this land not only gave Captain Powell direct access to the main

road, but also prevented unwanted development and ensured that the view over the city continued uninterrupted (Hughes, 1992). By the time of the St. Martin's Tithe Map of 1839 a driveway can be seen leading up to Heron Lodge from the London Road, along with a gate house which housed the gardener. A further two large villas had also been built by this time; Elmbank adjacent to Heron Lodge, and Woodside to the northwest of the Lark Hill properties.



Crisp's Map 1832



St. Martin's Tithe Map 1839

The Lark Hill location came with the benefit of the offer of a large house with private gardens and ancillary buildings on the opposite side. The houses were located at the upper north eastern ends of the plot, leaving large tracts for the gardens with extensive views, and lower gardens and allotments beyond.

The front facades of the houses were designed for display whilst the rear areas were more functional. However, as the properties could be reached more easily from the back lane, the rear facades were also designed to be relatively formal. The ancillary buildings, built slightly later than the main house c.1830s, were sited to the rear, across the back lane and included stables, coach house and out-buildings.

In 1846 part of the orchard beyond the lower gardens of the Lark Hill properties was purchased by the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway under a compulsory purchase order. The railway was subsequently cut through the south western section of the Lark Hill area in 1847. The landscape around Lark Hill was still fairly rural at this time and the coming of the railway may have made the area slightly less attractive to the local upper middle classes.

Following the death of Captain Powell in 1857, Heron Lodge was left to Edward Brace and his wife Kate. After Brace's death in 1871 Kate continued to live in Heron Lodge until her death in 1891 and Heron Lodge was subsequently put up for sale. Sale particulars from 1892 describe the property as 'one of the most charming residential properties anywhere near the City of Worcester'. The substantial grounds of Heron Lodge were identified in the particulars as "perfectly unique" ornamental pleasure grounds comprising extensive and well-kept lawns, a paddock in front of the house, and an orchard. In addition the grounds included a kitchen garden complete with vinery and gardener's hut and large greenhouse.

Both Heron Lodge and Woodside were converted to office use in the 20th century; Woodside served as the offices of the Heart of England Tourist Board but has now reverted to residential use. In the 1950s Heron Lodge was being used as offices and a showroom for the Metal Box Co. Ltd and more recently as offices for a bus company. Having stood empty for a number of years the house has recently been converted into four dwellings. Elmbank also stood empty for a number of years before eventually being demolished in the 1980s.



Aerial view of Lark Hill area 1938

No. 40 Lark Hill and No. 163 London Road were converted into flats in the late 20th century and although once a pair of semi-detached villas, No. 42 Lark Hill is now in single occupancy. Whilst some retain

modern ancillary functions (garaging etc.), other rear ancillary buildings have been converted to separate residential use.



Lark Hill 1950s

Modern development in the conservation area consists of some late 20th century housing on Wych Elm Close in the southeast, which is a lot denser and more suburban in character, and a development of six subterranean houses in the grounds of Woodside. More recent development in the area has seen Heron Lodge and adjoining Coach House converted into four homes, and two dwellings erected on the approach to Heron Lodge from the London Road. A further two dwellings have recently been built in the former cottage gardens of Heron Lodge.

Archaeology

Earthwork holloways in Perry Wood provide evidence of an earlier routeway, running eastwards from the city, which passed just to the north of the conservation area.

A hoard of medieval silver coins and rings was found at Lark Hill in 1854; although, unfortunately, the exact location of the find is not known. Further medieval evidence survives in the ridge and furrow earthworks covering much of the area.

The area witnessed heavy fighting during the Civil War in the Battle of Worcester (1651).

03 Townscape Character

Although the area is bordered by the busy London Road and the railway, its character is one of a peaceful and secluded residential area with distinctive stuccoed villas creating landmarks in the townscape. Set on rising ground, with a woodland back-drop, the houses cluster onto the ridge of Lark Hill and can be glimpsed through gaps in the denser urbanisation of southern Worcester, and from further vantage points.

Overall, the atmosphere is one of tranquility and space away from the noise, activity and denser urbanisation of London Road. There is no through traffic through the conservation area and the dense, extensive vegetation goes some way to provide screening and shelter from the busier surroundings. Principal views are linear along Lark Hill and Lark Hill Road, with glimpse views throughout, and views back into the Conservation Area, eastward along Lark Hill Road are similarly important, in establishing the secluded nature of the area.

A characteristic of this type of 19th century suburban development was to site the buildings on elevated ground to take advantage of long ranging views. The key view remains that as was originally intended when the development took place: to the west, across the southern part of the City, to the countryside and Malvern Hills beyond. Although this has now been disrupted and partially obscured by the overgrowth of vegetation, it is still the primary aspect.



View from Lark Hill Road towards the Malvern Hills

The absence of noise is an important contributory factor to the area's character, especially noticeable once leaving the busy London Road. This is enhanced by the peaceful nature of Perry Wood as the other key boundary to the area. The only interruption of this is the occasional noise from the railway traversing the south western corner of the area.



Views along Lark Hill

Lark Hill itself is a 'back lane' created to provide rear access to the large semi-detached villas. The villas have a common plan within their plots, being pushed right back at the rear end of the plot to give maximum size to the front gardens. The lane is quiet and retains a quality created through the more 'polite' rear elevations of the properties and their lower scale brick-built ancillary buildings. The views along Lark Hill establishes the prestigious character of the Lark Hill development, with the road flanked on one side by the large dwellings, on the other by the associated stables and coach-houses; only the modern day intrusions of cars interrupt this setting.

Sharing a family similarity of general scale, form and material, the general layout is of prominent 3-storey main blocks, running parallel to the road and set to the front of the 'ridge'. The ancillary blocks are of two storeys and run perpendicular to these, with terminating walls contiguous with the rear

boundaries. Surfacing materials play an important part in the character of the area and evidence of historic surfaces are found along Lark Hill. In the foreground to the ancillary buildings the red- and blue-brick courtyards are particularly evocative. It is also evident that the original cobbled surface of Lark Hill survives beneath the modern tarmac.

Opposite the back lane of Lark Hill sits Woodside, a detached villa which fronts Lark Hill Road. Set back behind a substantial red brick wall and hedging, Woodside has a large driveway and side gardens which offer uninterrupted views across to the Malvern Hills. Opposite Woodside the stepped red brick wall which bounds No. 38 Lark Hill is of good quality with stone copings, dentilled brickwork and blue brick detail and is recognised in the Grade II listing of No. 38 Lark Hill.



Historic Surfaces, Lark Hill



Stepped brick wall with good detail, Lark Hill Road



Glimpse views of Lark Hill properties from lane

To the front of the Lark Hill properties an un-surfaced lane links Lark Hill Road to Heron Lodge to the southwest, and provides access from the properties to the garden areas and orchard beyond. The extended garden areas beyond the lane to the properties are a significant design feature of the development and, whilst some are no longer in the ownership of the houses, they hold value through historic association. Originally intended to form a Crescent for the development, this quiet and secluded private lane has an informal, enclosed character from which glimpse views are afforded up towards the villas. Lined with trees and shrubbery, low brick walls and a variety of styles and ages of iron railings and gates form boundaries to the fore gardens of the properties. Several good examples of decorative ironwork also survive, particularly at the divisions between the garden spaces.



Lane to the front of Lark Hill properties

Heron Lodge is a grand villa which sits adjacent to the Lark Hill properties in its own extensive foregrounds which are mostly retained and contain a



number of mature trees. Approached via a gateway from the London Road along a sweeping, curved driveway bounded with estate style iron railings, glimpses of the property can be gained through the trees and vegetation and across the large associated foregrounds. Original iron gas lamps are an outstanding survival and a distinctive feature along the main drive up to the villa. To the immediate grounds of Heron Lodge a section of brick and stone wall with carved stone balustrades adds to the character of the area and an historic retaining wall survives to the foregrounds.



Iron gas lamps and railings on approach to Heron Lodge



View of Heron Lodge and grounds from London Road

Surrounding No.163 is the modern development on Wych Elm Close. Built in the grounds of Elmfield, following demolition of the villa in the 1970s, the development retains a number of mature trees and is set loosely around the historic road layout but is distinctly late 20th century in appearance.

Set behind a red brick wall with its side elevation to London Road, No. 163 London Road is of a similar scale to the other villas, but stands unique in its use of materials. Built of brick faced with Bath stone, the house sits in its own grounds set against a backdrop of trees, facing in to the Lark Hill development.



Streetscape Map





04 Built Environment and Architecture

The built environment is predominantly one of detached 'villa' houses set within their own large grounds and large semi-detached houses with fore gardens and rear ancillary buildings accessed via a 'back lane'; Lark Hill itself. The area contains ten Grade II listed buildings and a number of undesignated heritage assets which contribute positively to the character of the conservation area. The buildings hold significance individually and also have a strong group value as part of this small historic development.

The distinctive character of the area derives from the consistent building style, layout and appearance of the buildings. Georgian in architectural style, and representative of suburban residential development of the early 19th century, the buildings are elegant and display the classical proportions so fashionable in this Period.

The semi-detached houses along Lark Hill are grade II listed, of brick with stucco front elevations, the family similarity evident in the overall scale and form of the architecture; although the houses were built to a design code for the location, size and overall appearance, it is very rare for any two to be the same, and details do vary. Built c.1822, it is the fronts of the houses which make the dominant statement, the



Detached 'villa' house

rears being purely secondary. A number of the original houses were altered and extended in the later 19th century, with, in three cases, bow-fronted additions.



Bow front additions and window details to Lark Hill properties

Roofs are of slate, low-pitched and hipped with projecting eaves. Surmounted by brick chimney stacks carrying a variety of polygonal, terracotta pots, the slopes are generally uninterrupted, the exception being No. 42 Lark Hill, which has dormers to the rear slope.

The ground floor of Nos. 48-50 Lark Hill has cut-in rustication, surmounted by giant Doric pilasters. The other buildings on Lark Hill possess verandas of varying degrees of decoration in fine ironwork, with French windows leading out, and cornices run throughout. The stepped brick wall to the west boundary of No.38 Lark Hill, with its dentilled relief panels, is of some local character and note, demonstrating the craftsman-like skill of the builders.

Windows to the front elevation are uniformly 8/8 sashes to first floor and 4/4 sashes at second floor level;

many retain canopies to their window heads at first floor level, and No. 50 Lark Hill also retains its shutters. Doors and door cases are predominantly formal Georgian to the front elevations.

Rear wings are less grand with both painted and bare brick and there is a lack of a regular bond to the construction, although some rear blocks carry a dentil course decoration at eaves level. There is greater variation in window style and detail to the rear, most likely due to alterations and extensions over the years. Predominantly windows are 6/6 or 8/8 with window heads largely of segmental arches, some with rubbed brick voussoirs, and sills are predominantly of stone, although there are some brick examples. Simple panelled doors mark the rear entrances to the properties along Lark Hill creating a marked contrast with the much greater front elevation entrances.



(left and right) Rear ancillary buildings, converted and unconverted, Lark Hill

The rear ancillary buildings, separated from their main buildings by Lark Hill, also share a similarity with each other. Constructed slightly later than the main houses, the buildings are of a simple brick construction with hipped roofs of slate or tile. Historically accommodating stables and coach-houses, some ancillary buildings have now been converted to residential dwellings with conversion seeing the introduction of additional windows and openings. Casements are the most appropriate window style here, and window heads are consistently segmental arches with sills being of brick. Traditional boarded doors remain in those buildings which have not been converted, adding character to the lane.

Outside the family similarity of Lark Hill are three prestigious, detached villas, Woodside, Heron Lodge and No.163 London Road, each possessing distinct characteristics of scale and details.



Woodside, Lark Hill Road

Woodside is grade II listed located at the northern end of Lark Hill Road. Although contemporary with the Lark Hill 'family', Woodside is a grander villa, with a Doric porch as its entrance, and grand 8/8 sashes at first floor. The decoration is classical, but simple:



a cornice runs at high level, supported by flat Doric pilasters on the side elevations. Extensive outbuildings to the north side of the property were sympathetically converted into residential dwellings in the early part of the 21st century.



Heron Lodge

Heron Lodge (Grade II listed), to the south of Lark Hill, is a later build, of c.1823-8, but shares many of the architectural features of these others: stuccoed walls; classical features (plinth, Doric pilasters, and cornice to its north side); a decorative veranda, here running on two sides. The bays on the southern elevation are a later addition.

Both Woodside and Heron Lodge had their own stable blocks and other ancillary buildings within their more extensive grounds; in the case of Heron Lodge these include a stuccoed stable block with cupola and, further from the house, a brick lodge rebuilt and extended now known as The Apple House. A late-19th century greenhouse, also in the grounds, was

demolished in 2015 and subsequently rebuilt in 2016. Some recent development on the site of the former walled garden has compromised the setting of Heron Lodge somewhat.



No. 163, London Road





No. 163 London Road (Grade II listed), whilst similar in style is an anomaly to this 'family' of buildings. Being constructed of Bath stone ashlar over brick, it stands out from the other buildings in the conservation area. Built slightly earlier than the other villas, c1800, at its raised entrance is a pedimented door case with Doric pilasters encloses a six-panel door with semi-circular fanlight over. The sash windows are 4/4 to topmost floor and cellar, with 8/8 to the two storeys between.

No.159a London Road is a single-storey, rendered lodge with tiled roof and mock-timber gables. Built in the late 19th century, the building marks what was the formal entrance to Heron Lodge.



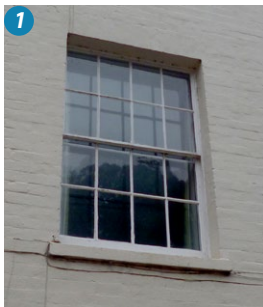
Buildings Map



-  Listed buildings
-  Positive buildings (including curtilage listed)
-  Neutral buildings
-  Areas of new development



05 Architectural Features



1. Sash window, No. 40 Lark Hill

2. Cast iron rain hopper, No. 46 Lark Hill

3. Original opening, ancillary building

4. Chimney pots and stacks, Lark Hill Road

5. Iron work details, No. 50 Lark Hill

6. Rear access gate, Lark Hill

7. Stepped brickwork, No. 38 Lark Hill

8. Doorway, No. 38 Lark Hill

9. Doorway, Heron Lodge

10. Door bell, Heron Lodge

11. Iron work details, Lark Hill

12. Iron gas light

13. Iron railings, off Lark Hill Road



06 Landscape Character

A significant part of the character of the Lark Hill Conservation Area is determined by its planned landscape form, natural topography and large number of mature trees. Much of the open space creates welcomed areas of greenery in the surrounding built environment.

Positioned to the east of the city on slightly higher ground, the topography of the area was a key factor in the positioning of the Lark Hill development. Sited on an escarpment below a ridge, with the dense woodland of Perry Wood as a backdrop, the topography of the setting allows for significant panoramic views across tree tops and buildings towards the Malvern Hills.

The grounds to the fore of the semi-detached villas, including the lower gardens of the properties and orchards beyond, slope gently down towards the London Road and survive, to a large extent, in their original plan form and layout. Whilst a number of the lower gardens are no longer in the ownership of the Lark Hill properties, and are currently untended in the main, it is clear that these grounds are integral to the buildings and formed part of the original landscaped grounds.

There is a planned form to the grounds of Heron Lodge and a noticeable survival of a number of design elements of 19th century 'English Garden' style landscapes. Formerly cultivated fields, parts of



Foregrounds to Heron Lodge

the grounds to Heron Lodge were terraced up in the mid-19th century to create formal lawns, with the lower level slope left as a pasture field separated from the house by a high brick wall. The wall possibly served as a ha-ha which was a key design feature of the landscaped grounds of the time, intended as an invisible boundary to keep livestock away from the house. The design and layout of these once formal grounds is a significant feature of Heron Lodge, identifying it as a building of high status.



Lower slopes of grounds, Heron Lodge

There remains some evidence of ridge and furrow on the lower slopes of the Heron Lodge grounds which border the London Road, likely dating to medieval times when the area was farmed. The grounds themselves have become heavily overgrown since the original development but have significant landscape value in both form and layout, and through historic association to Heron Lodge. The grounds remain a key area of green space in an otherwise built up environment, not only as part of the character of the conservation area but in Worcester itself, and as such is recognized as an area of green space in local planning policy.

The significance of the grounds not only adds historic value to the conservation area but also enables open views across the grounds towards the orchard area and up to Heron Lodge itself. The character of this open green space provides a pleasing contrast to the enclosure of the lanes and roads elsewhere in the

conservation area and survives as a reminder of this miniature landed estate.

An element of 19th century landscape design encouraged the planting of a range of evergreen and exotic specimens of trees, and a significant amount of tree and shrub planting was carried out as part of the Lark Hill development. Now mature examples of trees and shrubs contribute to the natural green and leafy surroundings providing a haven for wildlife, enhancing the setting of the listed buildings, framing views, and providing screening from modern development and busy modern roads.

Trees in the area are generally in good condition and their significance is recognized by the large number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Both individual specimens and groups are included, with native and non-native species represented and ranging from the imposing, 'structural', examples, such as cedars and oaks, to the smaller, more ornamental specimens such as the flowering cherries.

Some of the most notable trees are found in the grounds of Heron Lodge which boasts several mature oak trees and a range of cedars, pines and yews. To the garden plots and orchard to the fore of the Lark Hill terraces are two Hornbeams and the most impressive sight is the large Cedar of Lebanon which stands in the grounds of Woodside, a focal point that defines the northern conservation area boundary.



Cedar of Lebanon, Woodside

In addition there are a number of individual and groups of trees which make a considerable contribution to the character of the area, either as screening or in their own right. The hedgerows and trees flanking Lark Hill Road, and the density of trees in the former orchards, gives the area a lush, natural environment. Such rich vegetation provides good habitat for a variety of flora and fauna. These trees are protected through the conservation area designation, and were they to come under threat, specific Tree Preservation Orders may be considered.



Giant Redwood, Wych Elm Close

Despite the demolition of Elmbank to the southeast of the conservation area, its former grounds, now part of Wych Elm Close, retain a number of significant trees which would have been integral to the landscape setting of the former villa. The retention of these trees, which include pines, giant redwoods, cypress, cedar and yew, not only contributes to the established character of the area but many serve to screen the development from the surrounding listed buildings thus protecting the setting.



Landscape Character Map





07 Management Proposals

The management proposals set out a framework for managing change in, and the conservation and enhancement of, Worcester's conservation areas, to ensure that they retain the special qualities that led to their designation. It helps to fulfil the Council's duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. These proposals are particularly relevant where there is pressure for development and where cumulative minor changes may be affecting the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Planning applications affecting conservation areas will be determined with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012), the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), and the approved conservation area management proposals, and having regard to advice from the Council's Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The NPPF is supported by the Government's Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014).

The key factors that give Lark Hill Conservation Area its special interest are identified in the Character Appraisal. These are the things that make up the character and appearance of the area "which it is desirable to preserve and enhance" through management action. Development opportunities which preserve the character and enhance, or better reveal the significance of, the conservation area will be looked upon favourably by the council. Those proposals that threaten the identified character of the area will be resisted.



In recent years a number of small developments in the conservation area, most notably in the grounds of Woodside and Heron Lodge, have either been built, are in the process of being built or have planning permission. The buildings and proposed buildings are of a contemporary architectural style with a number of subterranean and 'eco' house style designed buildings. Good contemporary design and use of good quality modern materials in conservation areas can enhance the built environment, and sited well can preserve the built and natural environment. However, over development in a particular architectural style and cumulative change of this nature can begin to erode character; the effect of this being that the overall character of the conservation area is threatened along with its reason for designation in the first place.

In addition there have been a number of unauthorised works in the conservation area including demolition of a curtilage listed structure, the removal of trees and landscape features, and the erecting of unauthorised and inappropriate boundary treatments. Historic buildings, structures and materials are a finite resource and once removed, altered or destroyed cannot be replaced. Owners, landowners and developers must give attention to the requirement for planning permission for certain works in conservation areas and to listed buildings and their curtilage.

The particular issues affecting the Lark Hill Conservation Area at present can be summarised as follows:

- Development and cumulative, piecemeal change impacting on the character of the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings
- The nature of houses within the conservation area means that there are a number of curtilage listed buildings and structures which need to be considered
- Inappropriate materials and designs for replacement boundaries affect the area's character
- Green open spaces, landscape and trees threatened by development proposals, unauthorised works and lack of maintenance
- Views within, into and out of the conservation area identified on the streetscape map on p.15 need to be protected
- Lack of maintenance and repair threatening historic architectural features

In order to manage change in the conservation area individual management proposals which address these issues are identified below. Successful management of the area can only be done through responsible action and individual management proposals which address these issues and it needs to be considered in the context of the area as a whole.



1



Issue

Small but incremental modern developments and on-going development proposals have resulted in over-developed areas which affect the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings.

Action

Any further development proposals in the conservation area may be considered as over-development. This may therefore be resisted by planning officers and fail to gain support at committee.

Responsibility

Planning Officers
Conservation Officers
Owners
Developers

2



Continuing modern development in a contemporary subterranean or 'Eco' house style could potentially threaten the overall established character and setting of the conservation area.

Any further development proposals in the conservation area (or its setting) of this nature would be detrimental to the area's historic character as a whole and may be resisted.

Planning Officers
Conservation Officers
Owners
Developers



3



Issue

A sympathetically-designed new build on the vacant plot to the rear of No.38 Lark Hill would be considered an enhancement to the conservation area and an opportunity to be encouraged. There is a current planning consent in place for this site.

Action

A well designed building which fully respects the architectural scale, form and character of the neighbouring buildings on the east side of Lark Hill will be looked upon favourably by the Council.

Responsibility

Owners/developers
Planning Officers
Conservation Officers

4



The historic planned form of the gardens, orchards and green space is vulnerable to threat from unauthorised works and possible future development pressure.

Planning permission is required for proposals that affect the character and/or appearance of a conservation area and/or the setting of a listed building. The Council will carry out enforcement action for any unauthorised works.

Owners/developers
Enforcement Officers



5



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>A number of historic plot boundaries/ boundary treatments have been lost as a result of development and/or unauthorised works. Some inappropriate boundary treatments have been introduced such as high vertical boarding and paling timber fencing which is out of character with the conservation area.</p>	<p>Where planning permission is required for boundary treatments, the use of styles and materials out of character with the conservation area will be resisted. Removal of inappropriate boundary treatments would certainly enhance the area and should be encouraged. Where such boundaries are unauthorised, enforcement action will be taken. Owners and developers should take guidance from the character appraisal.</p>	<p>Owners/developers Planning Officers Conservation Officers Enforcement Officers</p>



6





Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Loss, damage or alteration to curtilage listed structures. The condition of a structure or feature does not determine its significance. Historic buildings and fabric can often be repaired at a far lesser cost than replacement. In 2015 the unauthorised demolition of the curtilage listed glasshouse in the grounds of Heron Lodge resulted in the Council taking enforcement action and the glasshouse rebuilt to the Council's specifications.</p>	<p>Planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent is required for alterations (including demolition) that affect the special character of listed buildings, including curtilage listed structures. The Council will take enforcement action against all unauthorised works.</p>	<p>Owners/Occupiers/ Developers Enforcement Officers</p>
<p>Loss of trees and groups of trees. Some unauthorised removal of trees has impacted on the character of the conservation area. Trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and other significant trees and groups of trees are identified in the character appraisal.</p>	<p>Permission from the local planning authority is required for work to or removal of trees in a conservation area or those with TPOs. Where appropriate, new TPOs will be made. The Council will actively enforce against any unauthorised work.</p>	<p>Tree Officer Enforcement Officers</p>

7





	Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p data-bbox="199 577 231 611">8</p> 	<p>Some of the lower gardens to the Lark Hill properties and the surviving orchard beyond are suffering from lack of maintenance and are heavily overgrown.</p>	<p>Tidying and/or clearance of the gardens and orchard would restore something of the area's former historic character and enhance the appearance of the conservation area. The Council can enforce the tidying of land and will do so if public amenity is detrimentally affected.</p>	<p>Owners/Occupiers</p>
<p data-bbox="199 1126 231 1160">9</p> 	<p>Lower gardens to Heron Lodge are heavily overgrown obscuring historic landscape and iron railings.</p>	<p>Remedial work to (and subsequent maintenance of) the area would better reveal the historic landscape and enhance views into the conservation area. Removal of historic metalwork would require planning permission and in some cases listed building consent.</p>	<p>Owners/Occupiers</p>



10



Issue

The residential development on Wych Elm Close has an overall neutral effect on the wider appearance of the Conservation Area, however it should not be seen as a precedent or model for further development within the open grounds elsewhere in the conservation area.

Action

Further developments of this type of housing development in the conservation area may be resisted by the Council.

Responsibility

Planning officers

11



Issue

Although well-screened, the residential units around Wych Elm Close do represent over-development within the setting of No.163 London Road, and in the historic context of the area.

Action

Further developments of this scale of housing development may be resisted by the Council.

Responsibility

Planning officers



12



Issue

Iron gates and railings remain extremely vulnerable to the effects of neglect, lack of maintenance, and unauthorised removal, alteration and demolition.

Action

Iron gates, railings and lamp standards are a distinctive feature of the conservation area. Encourage the repair/restoration of iron railings where possible. The Council will resist planning applications for the removal of historic iron railings.

Responsibility

Planning officers
Conservation Officers
Owners/developers

13



Issue

Architectural features such as windows, doors and ironwork are vulnerable to neglect and/or loss

Action

Encourage the repair/restoration of distinctive architectural features as identified in the appraisal where possible.

Responsibility

Planning officers
Conservation Officers
Owners/developers

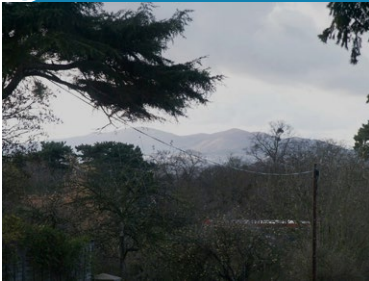


14



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Poor quality road surfaces give a negative appearance to the conservation area.</p>	<p>The removal of the poor condition modern tarmac surface of Lark Hill, and the repair and/or reinstatement of the cobbled surface could be considered an enhancement of the conservation area and be seen as an improvement of the setting of the listed buildings.</p>	<p>Highways Department</p>
<p>Protection of views</p>	<p>Important views, as identified in the character appraisal, are to be protected. Development proposals which have a negative impact on views will be resisted.</p>	<p>Owners/developers Planning officers Conservation Officers</p>

15





16



Issue	Action	Responsibility
Protection of the setting of listed buildings.	The setting of listed buildings will be protected through planning control.	Owners/developers Planning officers Conservation Officers

17



Reinstatement of inappropriately altered features. Many of the listed buildings had lost original windows and other architectural features, particularly to the back lane facades.	Encourage owners to reinstate with features in character with the host buildings. Take every opportunity when listed building consent is being sought for other changes.	Owners/developers Planning officers Conservation Officers
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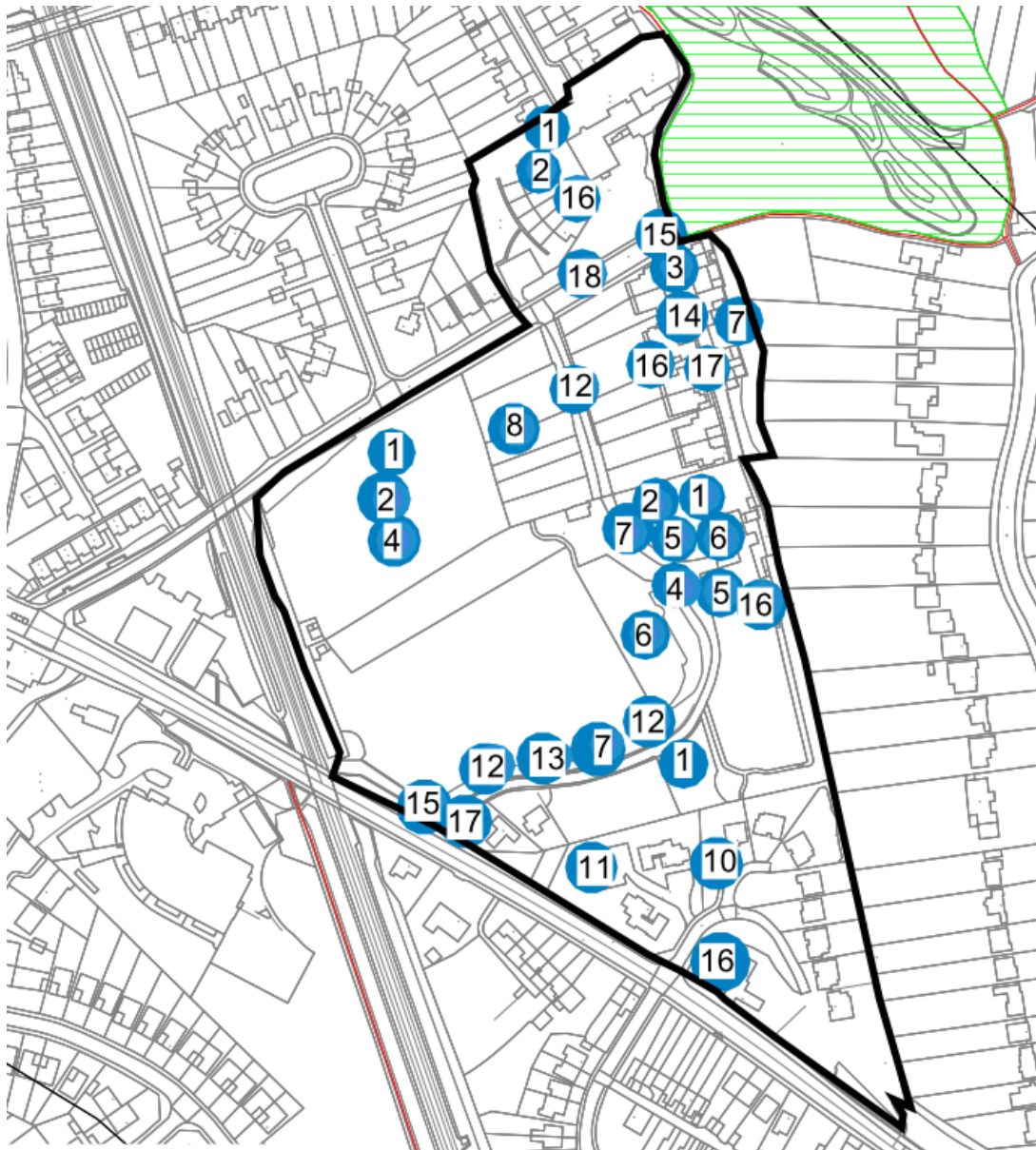
18



Traffic management. A high number of parked cars have been noted along Lark Hill Road. This has a negative impact on the character of the conservation area and can cause access and visibility issues.	Recommend traffic calming/ parking measures be considered by highways department.	Highways
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Management Proposals Map





08 Appendix One - Listed Buildings

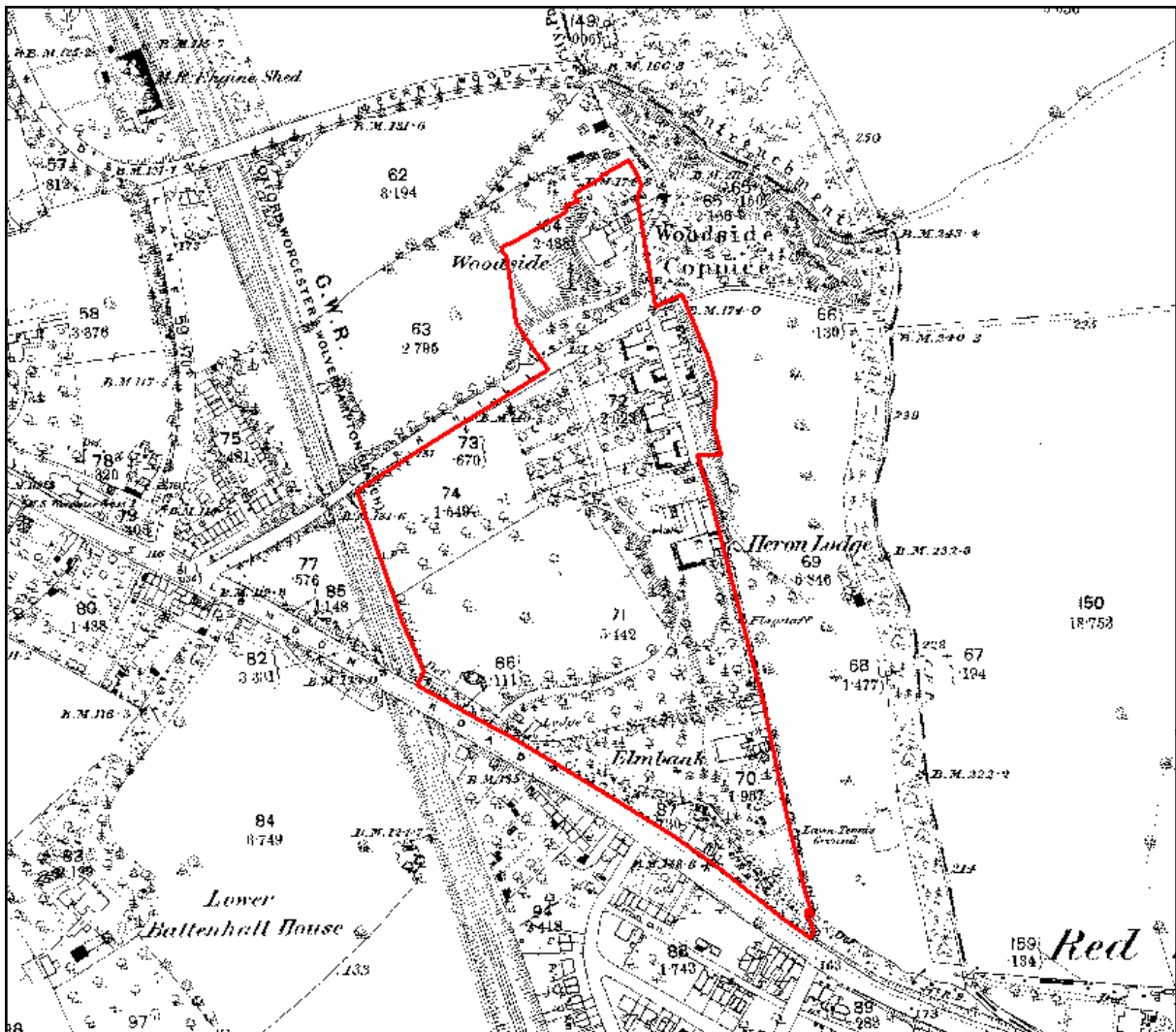
The following buildings in Lark Hill are Grade II listed.
Follow the link to view the list description:

- 1389948 Woodside, Lark Hill Road
- 1389968 Heron Lodge
- 1389944 Nos. 38 and 40 Lark Hill
(with attached boundary walls and piers
and gates and railings to No.38)
- 1389945 No. 42 Lark Hill, Dorset House
- 1389946 Nos. 44 and 46 Lark Hill
- 1389947 Nos. 48 and 50 Lark Hill
- 1389967 No.163 London Road



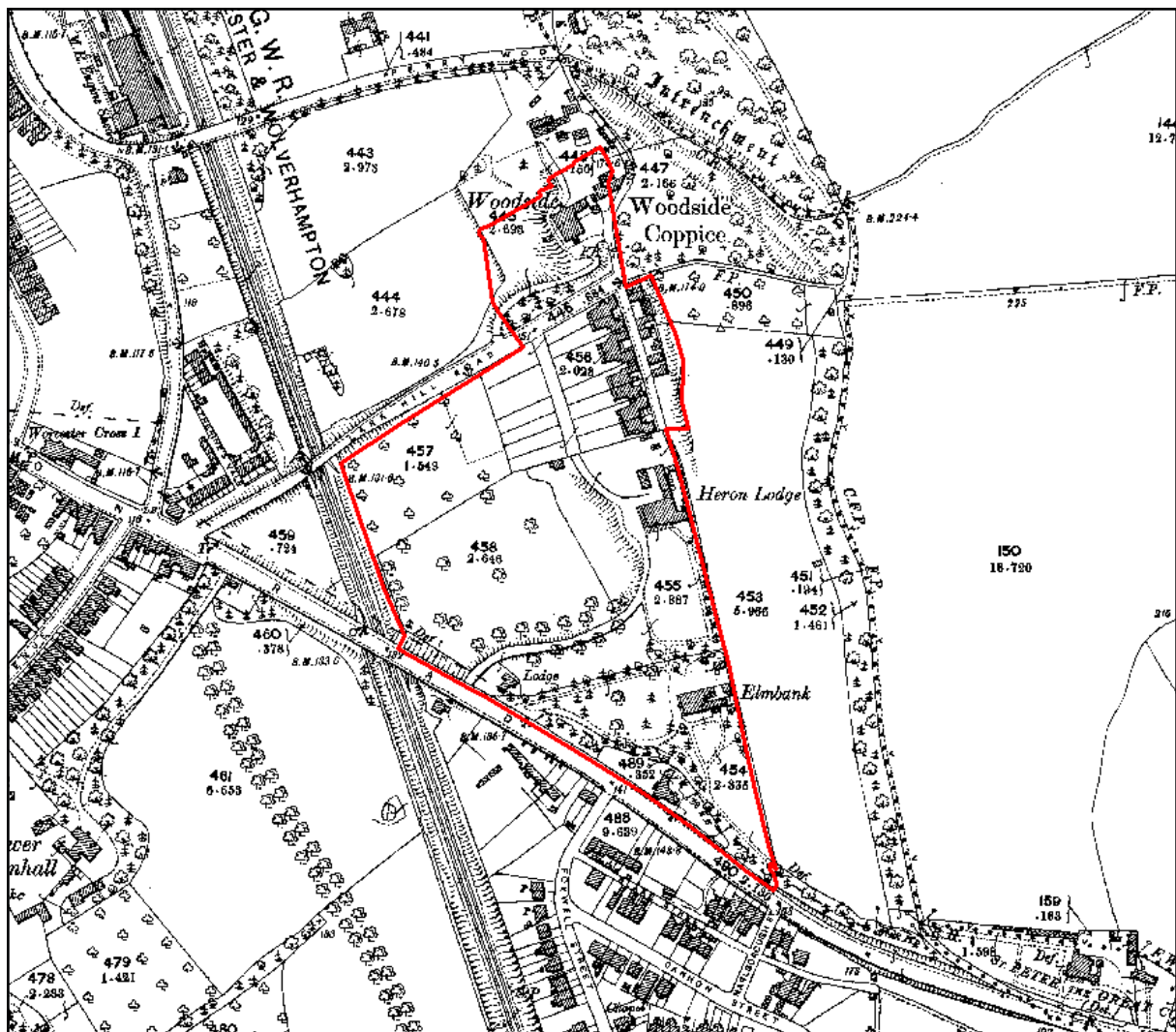
09 Appendix Two - Historic Mapping

1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, circa 1886



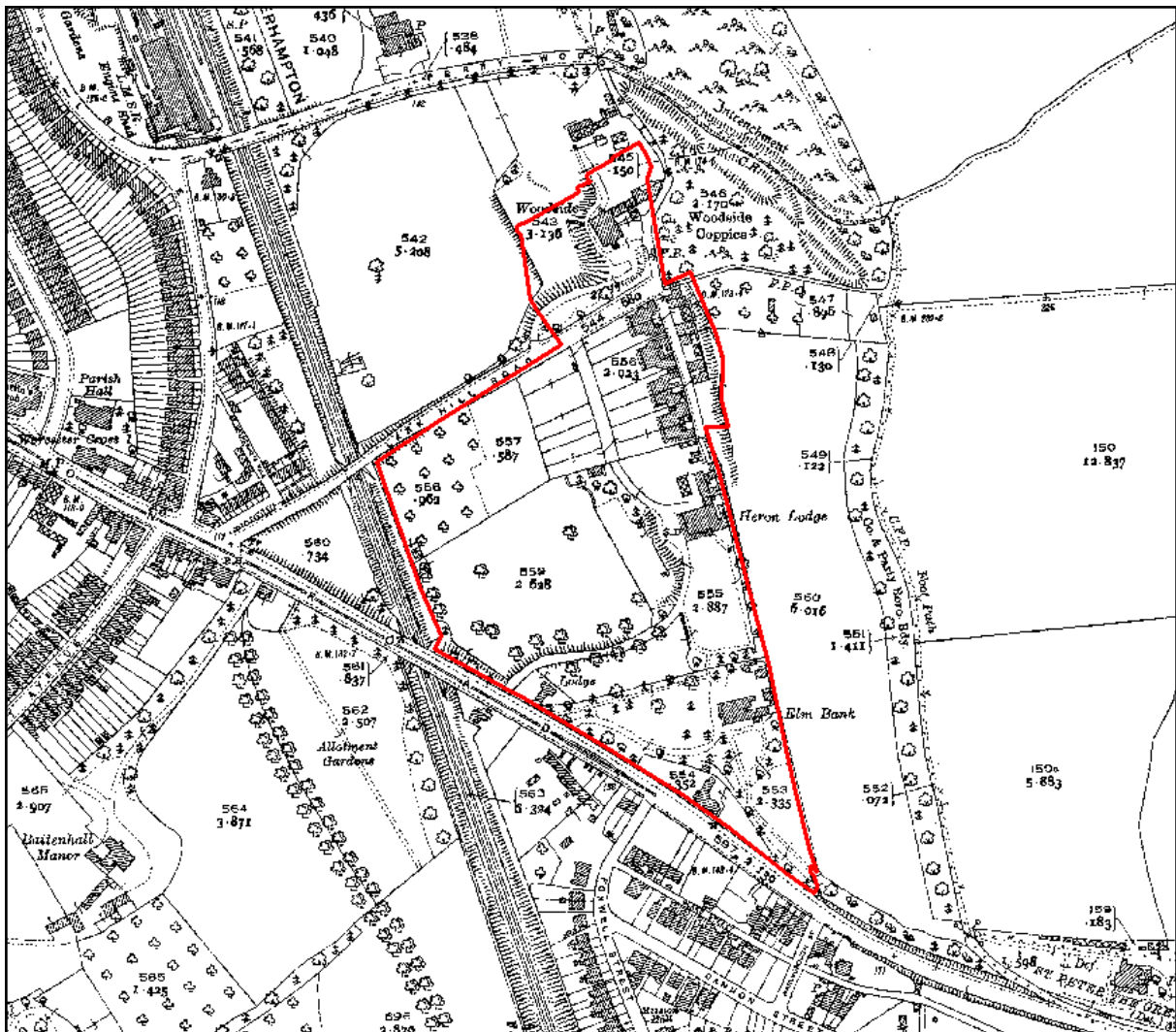


2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map, circa 1901



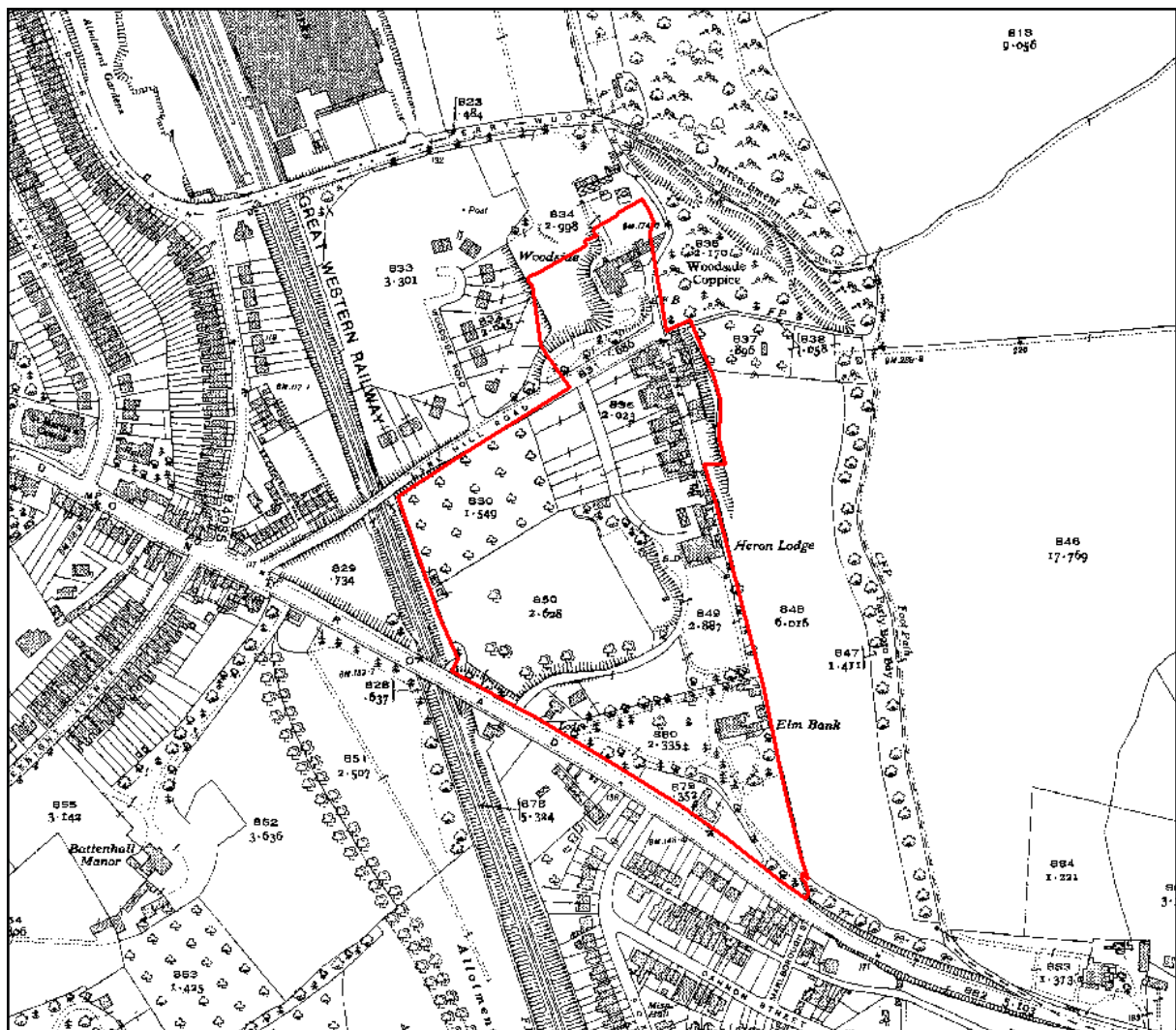


3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map, circa 1928





4th Edition Ordnance Survey Map, circa 1940





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