

The location of Canbury

The character areas of Canbury

4 Canbury



Sopwith sea plane on the Thames (n.d.)



Examples of characteristic premises signs



Origins and General Character

Canbury developed following the extension of the railway line from Twickenham to Kingston, completed in 1863. Until then the area was open fields, with Kings Highway connecting Richmond Road to Queen's Road. The kinked Elm Road (originally Hog Lane) is visible on 1868 maps twisting around hedge lines, while Acre Road was only a lane. The line was extended in 1869 via a new station at Norbiton to terminate at Ludgate Hill. Until then, Acre Road (known as 40 acres) was regarded as the end of town. Developers keen to profit from the opportunity the railway would bring, bought up Lord Liverpool's farm with 103 acres, 33 acres next to Kingston Station, and 44 acres of pasture and arable land on the estate of the Earl of Dysart (fronting Richmond Road and King's Road). The rich variety in house design and detail visible today is a result of the spasmodic sale of land and development.

Canbury Park Road (station end) became an important site of aviation industry when the Sopwith Aviation Company converted the roller-skating rink to an aircraft testing/design works (with a factory on what is now the Sigris Square development of flats). The rink was flat and clear, ideal for chalking out lines on the floor. It was also close to an open stretch of the river from where Thomas Sopwith could launch his Float plane designs, having wheeled them down early in the morning. Here is the birthplace of what was to become the most successful fighter plane of World War I, the Sopwith Camel. By 1920 Sopwith was in financial difficulties and HG Hawker Engineering Co. Ltd took them over, and later merged with other manufacturers to form the Hawker Siddeley Company, yet Canbury Park Road is where the Hawker Hurricane (15,000 made) was designed, and where the designs for the Hawker Siddeley jump-jet were first made, which flew in 1966. In 1977 the company was nationalised, and is today known as BAE Systems.

Land Use

Primarily a residential area, the industrial beginnings are still active today in the quarter closest the station with light industrial office units. There are a dozen pubs, four council primary schools, several small parades of shops and cafés, small workshops interspersed in the Victorian stock or tucked behind, four churches, and a mosque.

There is a missed opportunity to help identify the back street workshops and businesses. This could be addressed through a simple design intervention i.e. a reclaimed telegraph pole and quality business sign in footpaths where this would be sympathetic to the architectural context, much as some inns have posts remote from their location (the inn sign is a surviving example of a symbol used to denote a trade or profession of the occupant of the building, other examples include the pestle and mortar of the chemist and the blood stained wrappings of the barber surgeon denoted by the red and white striped pole).



'Verge' parking



Street tree planting



Movement

This area is enclosed to the west by the busy Richmond Road linking Kingston to Richmond and to the south by the Kingston to Waterloo railway loop. To the eastern edge runs Park Road, a secondary local road, and the primary road A308 Kingston Hill. Queen's Road runs parallel to Park Road and is popular with traffic taking a short-cut to Richmond from Kingston or the A3, travelling through Richmond Park. Latchmere Road is another local cut-through road. The remaining roads serve local access.

Built form

This is predominantly a 2-storey, Victorian grid-iron layout of detached or semi-detached/ terraced houses with rear gardens back-to-back, small front gardens with boundary wall and front gates. Other forms are visible especially towards the station where past industrial use has resulted in a variety of industrial small footprint, low-to medium height buildings, single or 2-storey schools or community buildings. The characteristic built form of the Victorian housing stock has in places been degraded by extensions or conversions. The greatest threat to the fine built form is from roof extensions, particularly dormers to the sides, and hip to gable conversions. Street character threat from the demolition of front boundaries (across the entire width of plot) and from the loss of street trees presents a similar threat to the character of the area. This 'area' should be considered for special protection to its built form from these threats.

Open space

Open space is limited and of the formal recreation park kind. Elm Park is a park with beautiful trees and good space, dominated by tall flats to one side and a curving Elm Road to the other. Dinton Field provides fine, spacious playing fields, and Latchmere Park has play area as well as open field. Where streets have had trees planted in footways there is a positive uplifting to the character (e.g. Clifton Road/ Bertram Road/ St.George's Road), adding another layer of texture and movement, opportunity to experience subtleties in light and shade, softening of street edge and another rhythm along the street. Signed as 'verge' parking, but in reality this is footpath parking, this solves a parking need but in the narrow Victorian streets does not help the character but swamps the frontages of the plots, and makes the otherwise characteristic townscape difficult to enjoy. A higher quality streetscape could be encouraged that sees the retention of parking yet restores some breathing space to the frontages.

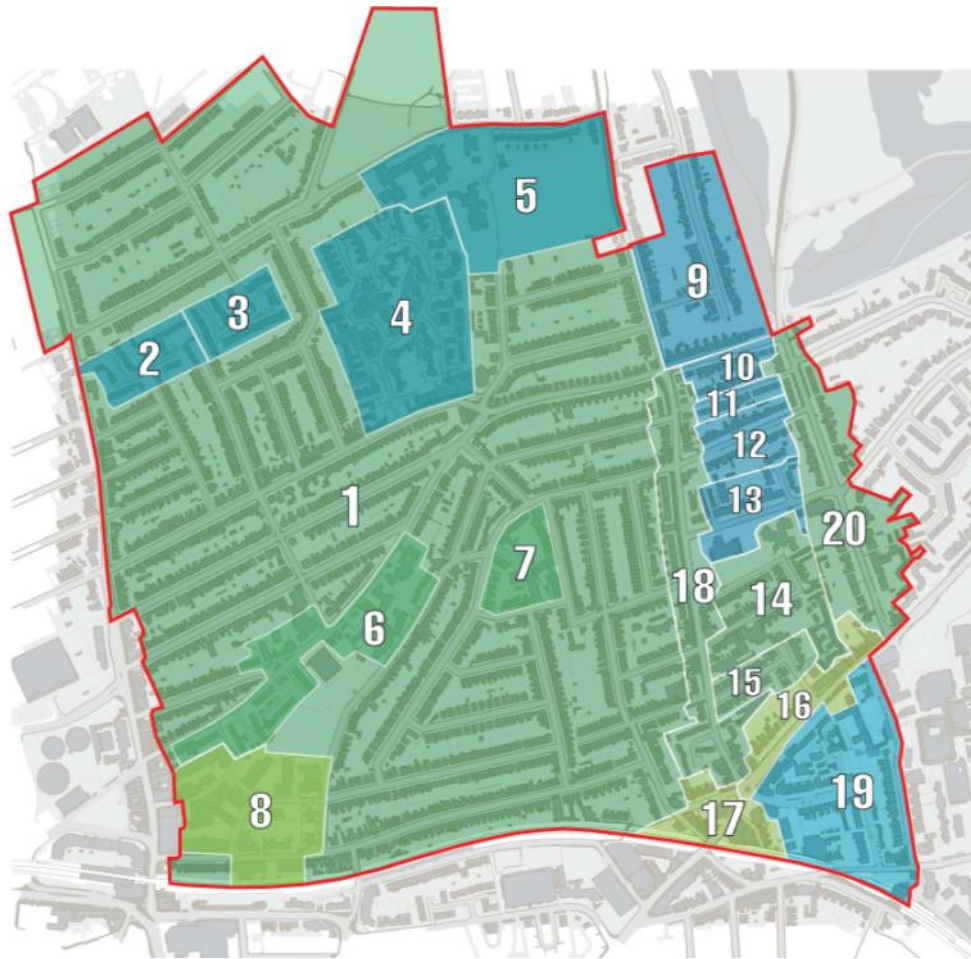


Key Area Characteristics



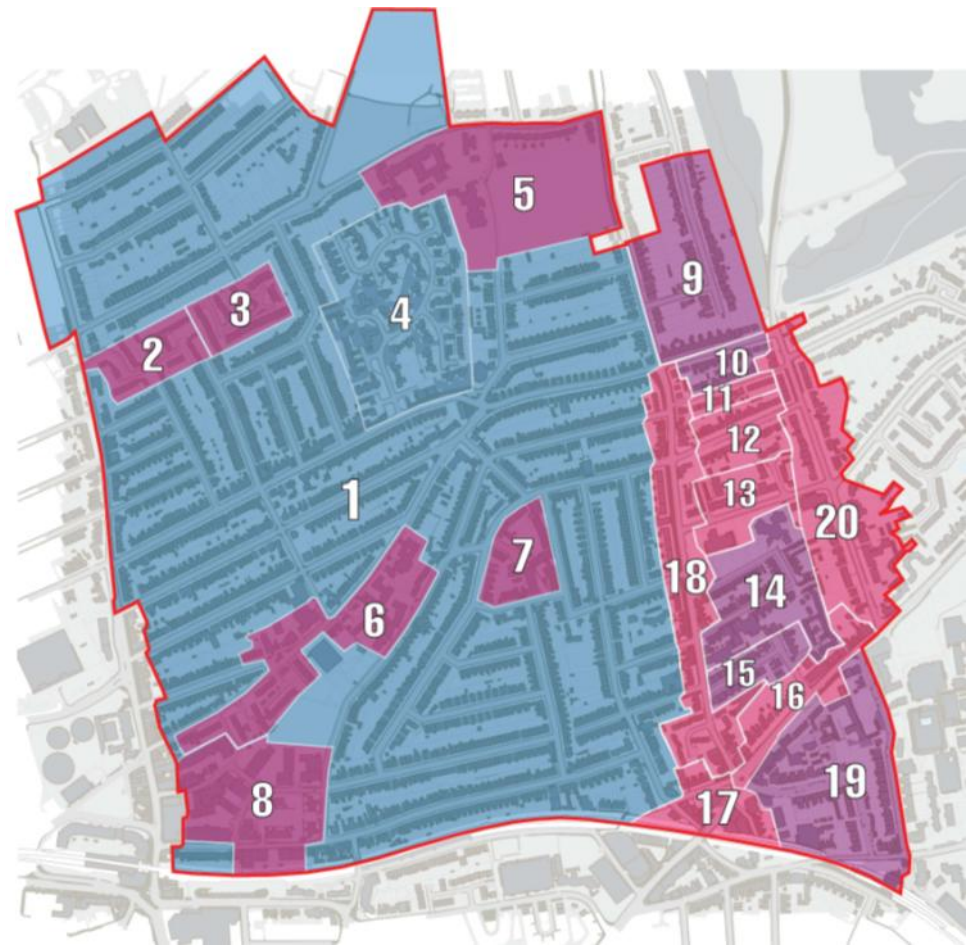
- Major movement corridor
- Minor movement corridor
- Movement corridor needing enhancement
- Area node
- Area node needing enhancement
- Minor Area node
- Major gateway
- Major barrier
- Strategic Landmark
- Local Landmark
- Potential new landmark
- Green open space
- Open space in need of improvement
- Key views to open space
- Potential new view
- Significant view to protect

Character Area Types

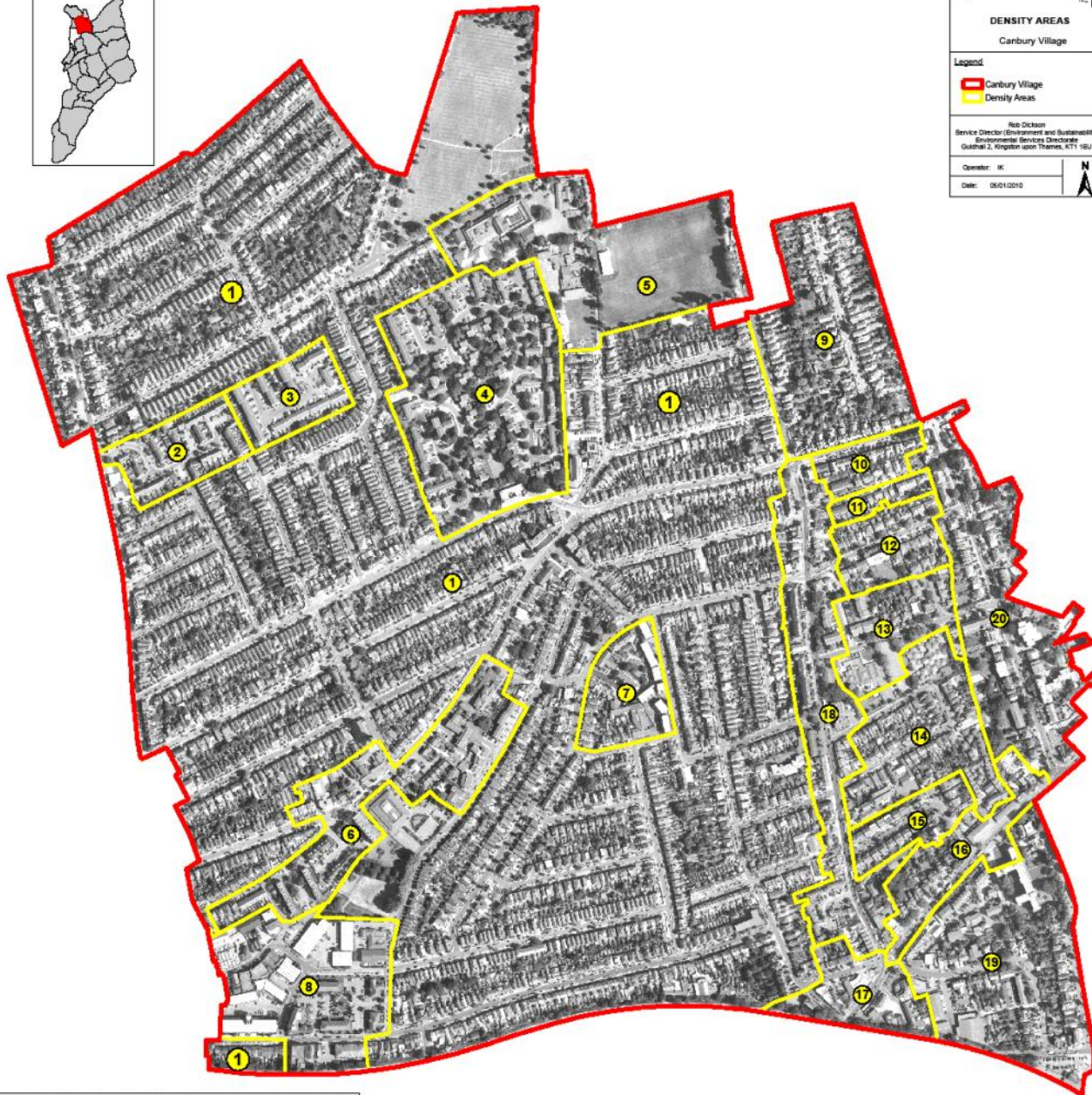


- Urban
- Inner Suburban
- Outer Suburban
- Rural / Open
- Rural / Open

Character Area Assessment



- Area of Established High Quality
- Area with scope to reinforce the existing character
- Area requiring enhancement to reinforce identity



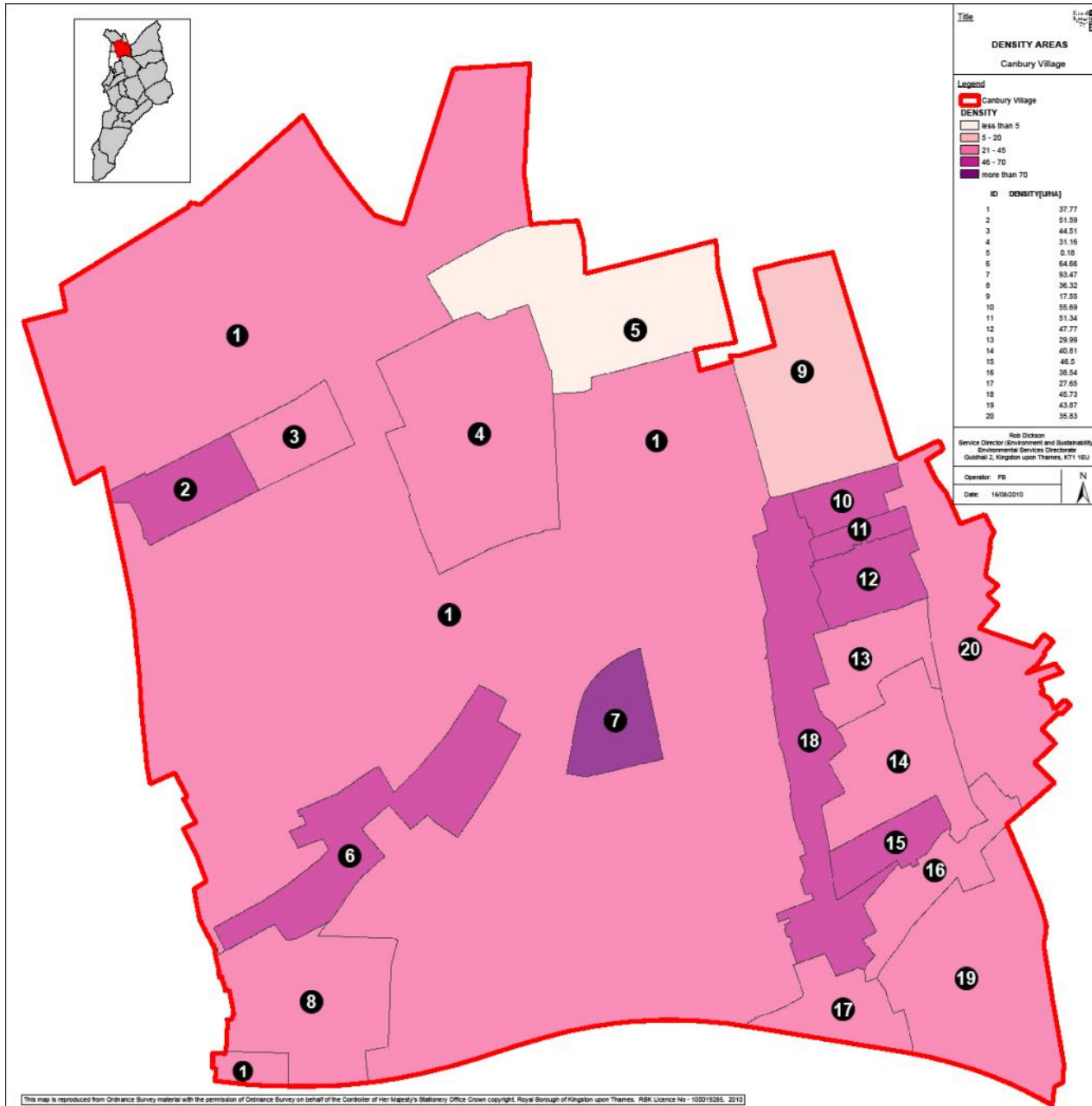
Title
DENSITY AREAS
Canbury Village

Legend
Canbury Village
Density Areas

Rob Dickson
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Operator: IK
Date: 05/01/2010

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150 Richmond Road, today



150 Richmond Road, c 1940

1 Victorian Canbury

The character of Canbury is a Victorian one. Not just in the dominating housing stock and street layout so popular today, but also the activity and diversity of uses giving a unique character with light industry, businesses, pubs, churches, military and education buildings working successfully side by side in the adaptable building forms. Part of the area's character is the snatched glimpses of the rears of the houses - the rooflines give a depth to the grid-iron street form revealing the solidity of the layout - without these views the streets could appear 'stage-set' and flimsy. There are characteristic glimpses of history too, not just the Siddeley building but the palimpsest shop advertising on a flank wall, the Baptist Chapel building and the crooked street line of Elm Road which dates back to its development along old hedge lines. The majority of the area is late Victorian, with some streets extended in early Edwardian times. Both periods of development have been assessed together, as an overall character, with individual streets or sub-areas identified for particular notes where appropriate.

Durlston Road: character from repetitive plot lines building height and from repeated elements when viewed from a distance, but when viewed to front elevation you see a variety of architectural detailing, semi-detached or detached forms, materials change, third floor gable windows appear. Front gardens are planted, but the street lacks public trees. There seems to be two different approaches to roof extensions: there are examples of the conventional side roof dormer extension, which generally disrupts the characteristic rhythm, continuity and order of roofscape gaps between close-set houses, and examples of a craftier, piggy-back design where the gable fronting form is raised and extruded into the plot from a few metres behind the building line, causing less, but equally undesirable roofscape disruption and diminution of the townscape. The emerging Residential Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document) should address this issue.



Durlston Road roofscape over 2-storey bays



A refurbished house with new front boundary and garden gate



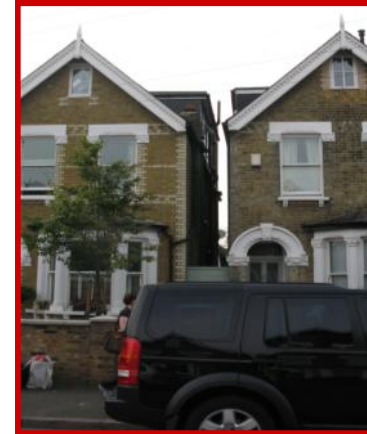
Durlston Road roofscape over 1-storey bays



Insensitive roof enlargement disrupting the distinctive roofscape of the street and the balance of the house



A modest side dormer with character, sympathetic materials and free chimney



The previous approach to roof enlargement by building side dormers



The more recent trend to roof enlargement by building a piggy-back roof



Piggy-back

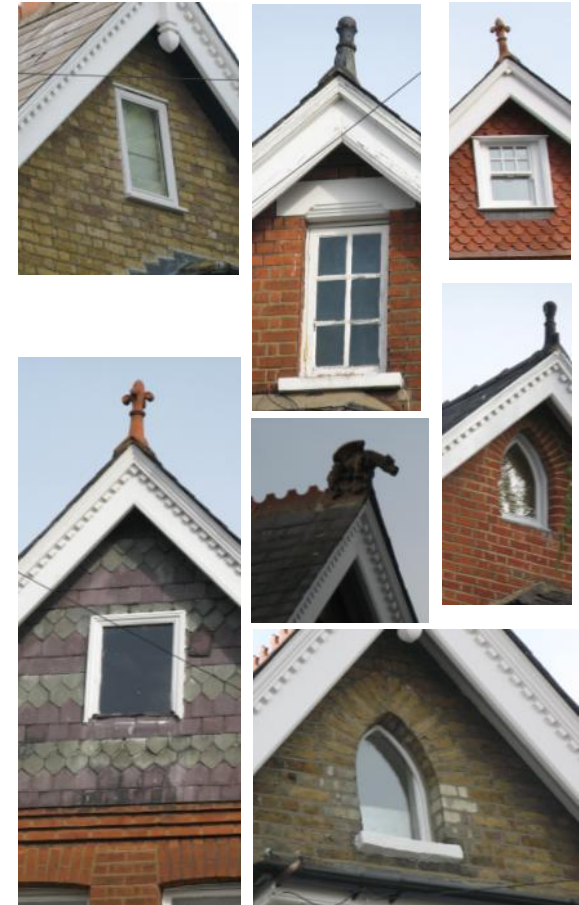


Piggy-back



The choice.....

St. Alban's Road west: Like Durlston Road but more modern language on some plots, a more spacious feeling street (despite similar street width and building lines as Durlston) with taller houses on wider plots with more feature roofs. Front boundaries largely intact, good front gardens and variety in architectural detail, some surviving telegraph poles. The doctors' surgery is an example of how unsympathetic enlargement erodes what was a wonderful street entry device of a pair of distinctive houses with characteristic forms, detailing and planted gardens. The character of entry has gone, the lack of front boundary makes a leaked space which signals a car-park and the extensions dominate the corner.



Characteristic roofscape includes a rich variety of loft window, finial, brick details, and barge board designs



Characteristic front garden boundaries and planting add a layer of privacy to the house and by contrast make the street a living, colourful 'place' rather than a through route



Grand semi-D's with ground floor bays in St.Alban's Road with rich detailing



Detached houses in St.Alban's Road with 2-storey bays and brick/stone detailing



Built as a Victorian feature on a prominent corner, originally with a 'Gothic' mansard roof, now engrossed by enlargement, its modelling swamped, trees, subtle detailing and materials removed and the frontage has become a car-park

