

| ASLC: Sydenham Ridge | | | |
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| WARD: Sydenham & Forest Hill (cross ward boundary) | | | |
| 1. EXISTING DESIGNATIONS | | | |
| Heritage | Identified as ASLC in 2014 | N | Identified as ASC through GLC Greater London Development Plan (GLDP) policy and Lewisham's 2004 Unitary Development Plan (UDP) |
| | Listed Building | Y | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wood, 16 Sydenham Hill • The stable building, 16 Sydenham Hill • Sunnysdene, 108 Westwood Hill • Pillar Box outside number 169 Sydenham Hill (Hexagonal 'Penfold' design postbox) |
| | Locally Listed Building | Y | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 Longton Avenue (demolished late 2023) • 17 a & b Longton Avenue, paired Walter Segal house • 18 Sydenham Hill |
| | Archaeological Priority Area | Y | Not identified in the existing APAs but the recent (2023) review identified a new APA adjacent to this ASLC boundary, see below. |
| Non-Heritage | eg Asset of Community Value; SINC | Y | SALP SINC 3: Hillcrest Estate Woodlands |
| CONFORMITY WITH SELECTION CRITERIA | | | |
| Theme | Criteria (Required is 1 or 2 plus 1 other category) | Y/N | Particular characteristics |
| 1.ARCHITECTURE | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Quality • Distinctive • Well preserved | | | |
| | a) An group of buildings of notable character, built as | N | The ASLC comprises distinct 2 groups of buildings of notable character and other development of varied character, built at different times. It is therefore considered to best meet Criteria b), see below. |

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| | a single development over a short period of time; or a limited number of phases | | |
| | b) an eclectic and interesting mix of typologies built at different times which create a visually harmonious group; | Y | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent group of villas in Longton Avenue inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement: 59-93 is a group of symmetrical pairs with hung tiles, projecting two storey bays topped by gables, shared large central chimney stacks, recessed side porches under brick arches and oriel windows. They are set in deep soft planted front gardens and staggered to embrace the curve of the road and the topography. • Westwood Hill & Sydenham Hill (12, 14, 16, 18 Sydenham Hill, 28, 94-100, 104, 106 and 108 Westwood Hill) comprises a group of substantial 19th C houses with expansive gardens, some of which are statutorily or locally listed (16 Sydenham Hill and 108 Westwood Hill are listed, 18 Sydenham Hill is locally listed). Several of the oldest buildings on Sydenham Hill were built before the 1863 OS map. Nos. 14, 16 and 18 are substantial, high-status houses set in large gardens, and are all present on early maps of the area. 16 used to be called The Wood, and 14 was called the Firs. 16 is thought to have been built in the mid 19th C, possibly incorporating an early 19th C house in its design. • More diverse buildings comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Locally listed Walter Segal self build houses (17a & b Longton Avenue) ○ 27 Longton Avenue (demolished as of late 2023). ○ The old Upper Sydenham train station, now converted to residential use, at 151 Wells Park road, and the entrance to the old railway tunnel |
| 2. HISTORIC/ SOCIAL & CULTURAL/ ARCHAEOLOGICAL | | | |
| | a) Connection with a notable historic person, event or activity; | Y | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The historical connection to the now defunct Chatham Dover railway which connected the Upper Sydenham station with the High-Level Station at Crystal Palace, both now closed. The station building remains in situ, as does the tunnel (though not accessible to the public) • Walter Segal and the self build movement of the 1980s: 17a & b Longton Avenue were houses designed by the pioneering architect to allow residents to easily build their own dwellings at an affordable cost |

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| | b) Of particular importance to a local social or cultural group; | N | |
| | c) In an area of known archaeological interest | N | The ASLC boundary with Sydenham Wells Park is next to the proposed new APA: 3.3 Historic Commons and Parkland. Within this, APA 3.3a is Former Sydenham Common/ Wells Park. This APA covers modern recreation grounds and parks which are situated on the sites of earlier 18th or 19th century parks or historic common land. These areas have been included as they have a general potential to contain prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains. The APA also has a localised potential to contain archaeological remains associated with 18th and 19th century landscape parks. Wells Park and the adjacent areas also have a localised potential to contain archaeological remains associated with a postmedieval spa. |
| | d) Remnants of older/historic routes, landownership | N | |
| 3.TOWNSCAPE | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Quality • Distinctive • Well preserved | | | |
| | a) A planned layout, including roads, open spaces and buildings (including views, vistas, key focal points, and landscape groups and buildings) | Y | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sydenham Hill – a long linear route which runs along the crest of the Sydenham Hill Ridge, responding to this locally important geological feature and bounded on its west side by Sydenham Hill Wood, • Longton Avenue has a very coherent pattern of buildings of similar scale set behind large front gardens, with deep rear gardens with many mature trees in gardens and on the street. The northern end has an attractive curve around the edge of Sydenham Wells Park (outside the ASLC boundary) and the houses there (nos 59-93 Longton Avenue) are a group with Arts and Crafts characteristics with reference to cottage typologies (roughcast render, multi paned casement windows, tile hanging) and substantial front gardens. The layout benefits from the topology which results in the houses being slightly elevated above their front gardens. |

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| <p>4.LANDSCAPE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Quality • Distinctive • Well preserved | | | |
| | <p>a) A notable quality and extent of landscape, both formal and informal, and natural and manmade, including public/private gardens /verges, street trees</p> | <p>Y</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sydenham Ridge is part of a more extensive system of connected geological ridges; to the South, the Northwood Ridge with Crystal Palace, to the North the Greensand Ridge with One Tree Hill. It is part of the ancient landscape of the Great North Wood with remnant ancient woodland in the High Level Drive estate (Hill Crest Estate Ancient Woodland SINC) located on the slope between Sydenham Hill and Longton Avenue. • The wider Sydenham Ridge area supports a well treed and wooded landscape, which includes Sydenham Wells Park and extends more widely to include the Horniman Gardens in Lewisham, but also Low Cross, Dulwich Wood and Sydenham Hill Wood, and the Old and New Camberwell Cemeteries in Southwark, as well as Crystal Palace Park in Bromley. The Sydenham Ridge is part of the Green Chain in SE London and the closely connected Capital Ring at Crystal Palace. The oldest Tree Preservation Order in the Borough is in Sydenham Ridge, TPO n. 2 dated 1957, at St Clements Heights. • The Hillcrest Estate on High Level Drive is a post war residential development (1967), organised in small maisonettes and 5 large tower blocks, in brick. While the architecture itself is not particularly interesting, the arrangement of the estate, set in a very green environment notably formed by the steep inclines up the hill, the many mature trees and large gardens surrounding the tower blocks, especially Cambria House and Targwin House, give the impression of a residential development set inside a forest. This impression is reinforced when taking the small pedestrian paths through the steep and densely wooded site to climb to Sydenham Hill. • Sydenham Hill seems to be the source of several small lost rivers and streams running through Lewisham, and connected to the historic springs in Sydenham Wells Park (more information needed). • Longton Avenue has a very coherent pattern of large street trees, green verges, large front gardens and rear gardens with many mature trees forming part of the SINC. The steepness of the front gardens in Longton Avenue makes these gardens very visible from the street, increasing their contribution to the street scene. |
| | <p>b) Significant local or far reaching views or vistas</p> | <p>Y</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Sydenham Hill, Sydenham Hill Estate has buildings staggered up the hill with long views towards the Southeast, glimpsed in the gaps between buildings. |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similarly, Sydenham Hill towards the top of the ridge has views in the gaps between buildings and trees towards the Southeast, and in some cases, the Crystal Palace Park transmitting station is visible and prominent. • On the Hillcrest Estate, in front of the staggered houses of Talisman Square and Vigilant Close, and on the raised walkway when walking into High Level Drive from Westwood Hill, the difference in levels allows views over Sydenham Wells Park and beyond towards the Northeast. • Sydenham Ridge is also a prominent landscape feature and is visible for miles around • There are also views into Southwark borough from Sydenham Ridge, towards the West. |
| | c) rivers, wells, canals and their verges | ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There might be disappeared rivers, springs and wells on the ridge and in Sydenham Wells Park – more research is needed to establish this |

3. DESCRIPTION OF AREA

Sydenham Ridge is a large ASLC on the upper east facing slope and includes the area between Sydenham Hill and Longton Avenue and Hillcrest Wood. Hillcrest Wood is a remnant of ancient woodland, once part of the Great North Wood, within which the Hillcrest housing estate has been built. Some fine old oak and sweet chestnut trees link back to this time. The ASLC contains several groups of historic buildings of different periods with interesting historic and social connections.

4. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sydenham Ridge is an important natural and historic sub-urban landscape. The ASLC has an elevated position which allows far reaching views across London to the southeast and northeast. Its ancient woodland has been recognised with a SINC designation. The topography has a strong influence on the layout and routes through the area. The presence of very many tall mature trees and other dense vegetation within and just outside the boundary of the ASLC lead to a strong woodland character which is quite unique in the borough. Sydenham Ridge has long been recognised as an important location in the borough, with locally important landscapes and distinct topography, affording long views both of the ridge and from the ridge over London, notably in the GLC Greater London Development Plan (GLDP) policy and Lewisham's 2004 Unitary Development Plan. The ASLC research and nomination recognises and confirms the local importance of Sydenham Ridge.

Sydenham Ridge ASLC contains several distinct groups of large high status buildings of architectural and historic interest dating to the 19th and 20th centuries, notably 3 key groups:

- The large Victorian houses in large gardens on Westwood Hill & Sydenham Hill (12, 14, 16, 18 Sydenham Hill, potentially 28, 94-100, 104, 106 and 108 Westwood Hill) which reflect Sydenham Hill's origins in the mid 19th century;
- 51-93 on Longton Avenue, Arts and Crafts inspired houses set behind large front gardens;
- Hillcrest Estate – a 1967 Lewisham Council Estate on a steep site in an open wooded landscape;

and a number of other buildings of architectural and historic interest.

The architecture is tied together by how it is incorporated into and amongst well treed landscape.

The area has historic significance through its connection to the 1852 relocation of the Crystal Palace to upper Sydenham and the associated railway provision and suburban development, as well as to the architect Walter Segal and self-build housing.

5. ISSUES THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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| ARCHITECTURAL | (e.g. loss of windows, cladding, boundary walls, front garden parking) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development pressure: the locally listed 27 Longton Avenue was demolished in 2023 to enable development of 4 residential units on the site • Recommend 11 Longton Avenue (a Walter Segal house just outside the ASLC, built by the owner, who won a lottery organised by the Council to get a plot of land) for inclusion on the local list • Recommend the old Upper Sydenham train station, now converted to residential use, at 151 Wells Park road, and the entrance to the old railway tunnel, for local listing |
| LANDSCAPE | (e.g. potential for new development to encroach on landscape or block views) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure for development in gardens that remove vegetation and trees: garden outbuildings, annex extensions, office/cabins resulting in loss of space for large canopy trees at the ends of gardens, • Reduction of garden area as a result of houses being enlarged or redeveloped on a larger footprint, • Subdivision of gardens as a result of houses being divided into flats - gradual degradation of tree cover from post- development pressures, • Ageing tree population without adequate replacement planting, • Climate change and new diseases reducing tree health, more susceptible to decay. • Tree removal associated with subsidence claims |

6. RECOMMENDATION

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| Existing ASLC | a) Confirm as ASLC b) Undertake CA appraisal | Y | Confirm as ASLC because it meets criteria 1, 2 ,3 and 4 |
| Proposed ASLC | a) Confirm as ASLC c) Do not Confirm b) Undertake CA appraisal | n/a | |

| 7. MAP | | | |
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| | Boundary | Y | No changes are proposed to 2014 boundary |
| | Audit of heritage features | Y | Listed and locally listed buildings added to boundary map |
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Sources:

Lewisham Heritage – historic maps

[The Story of Sydenham Hill by Ian McInnes \(dulwichsociety.com\)](#)

[Ordnance Survey, Kent VII \(includes: Beckenham; Camberwell; Lewisham; Penge.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 \(nls.uk\)](#)

[The River Willmore – a Penge Stream | Running Past \(wordpress.com\)](#)

[Pissarro's Stream – A Lost Sydenham Watercourse | Running Past \(wordpress.com\)](#)

[Checking In: Simon Elvins and Adele Jeffs at their Walter Segal house \(themodernhouse.com\)](#)

[Walter Segal | The Modern House A to Z of modern design](#)

[Walter's Way, self-build schemes, Lewisham, London by the Segal method - Architectural Review \(architectural-review.com\)](#)

['This isn't at all like London': life in Walter Segal's self-build 'anarchist' estate | Cities | The Guardian](#)

[Walter Segal Self-build Houses \(openhouse.org.uk\)](#)

Lewisham DM Local Plan, Annex 1, Open Spaces and Open Spaces Designations in Lewisham

Historic England listing descriptions for listed buildings

[layersoflondon.org/map/records/sydenham-hill-estate-1961](#)