

Normansfield Conservation Area 59

Designation

Conservation Area designated:
29.01.1991

Location

OS Sheets: 1770

The conservation area is bounded by Kingston Road, Normansfield Avenue and Broom Road, with the rear of properties in Holmesdale Road forming the northern boundary.

History and Development

The site of a private hospital built from 1868 by Dr. John Langdon-Down, after whom Down's Syndrome, which he identified, was named. The hospital site was taken over by the National Health Service in 1951 but has now been sold and partially redeveloped. Other residential buildings of similar date (Trematon, Conifers) within the site have been demolished.

Special Interest

The extensive grounds of nearly 20 acres (the remains of the original 38 acre estate, formerly a flourishing farm and garden providing produce for the kitchens and occupation for the patients), has been partially redeveloped for housing. The boundary wall with Kingston Road retains the original cast-iron railings; a Theatre, added in 1877, is listed Grade 11*, and with part of the adjacent hospital has been converted for use by the Langdon-Down Trust.

The site is within a densely built up area of Edwardian suburban development, and is the only area of visible open space between Ferry Road to the north and Kingston Bridge to the south; its views and groups of trees are important for this reason. The space links with Broom Road playing fields and the river to the east, and the views into the site from Kingston Road and Broom Road are particularly important elements of its character. The mature chestnut trees lining Normansfield Avenue reinforce the heavily treed aspect of the west side of the site, with glimpses into the site through the entrances, and a visual link across to the open land on the south side of Normansfield Avenue.

The substantial main hospital buildings with their gate piers and railings form a dignified focus to the site on the Kingston Road frontage. The buildings are in a Victorian eclectic style, with curved vaulted roof clad in fish-scale slate, cresting to the ridge, bracketed eaves, and corbelling to the stacks. Other important details are the brick quoins, and stucco enrichment. The clock tower and conservatory are distinctive features of the principal elevations. The smaller scale outbuildings (former workshops) at the rear of the hospital have simple brick detailing and their character derives from their function. They form a link with the grounds, and are a reminder of the fact that this was a working community, although they have now been converted for other uses.

Within the grounds, there are distinct areas of landscape character. The southern part, adjoining Normansfield Avenue, has the main concentration of mature tree groups and specimen trees and is most closely associated with the house. It is delineated by the brick wall running east to west which is continuous with the line of the workshop building. The northern part of the site has a more open character, partly interrupted by the now overgrown shrubbery of the former Conifer garden, and with an undulating profile on the western side. The Trematon site, mainly blocks of flats within landscaped grassland, maintains some of the parkland character, and its wide entrance allows views into the site. Boundary trees reinforce the sense of enclosure of most of the site.

Problems and Pressures

- Development pressure which may harm the balance of the remainder of the landscape setting, and the obstruction or spoiling of views, skylines and landmarks
- Poor condition of historic buildings and the loss of traditional architectural features and materials due to unsympathetic alterations

Opportunity for Enhancement

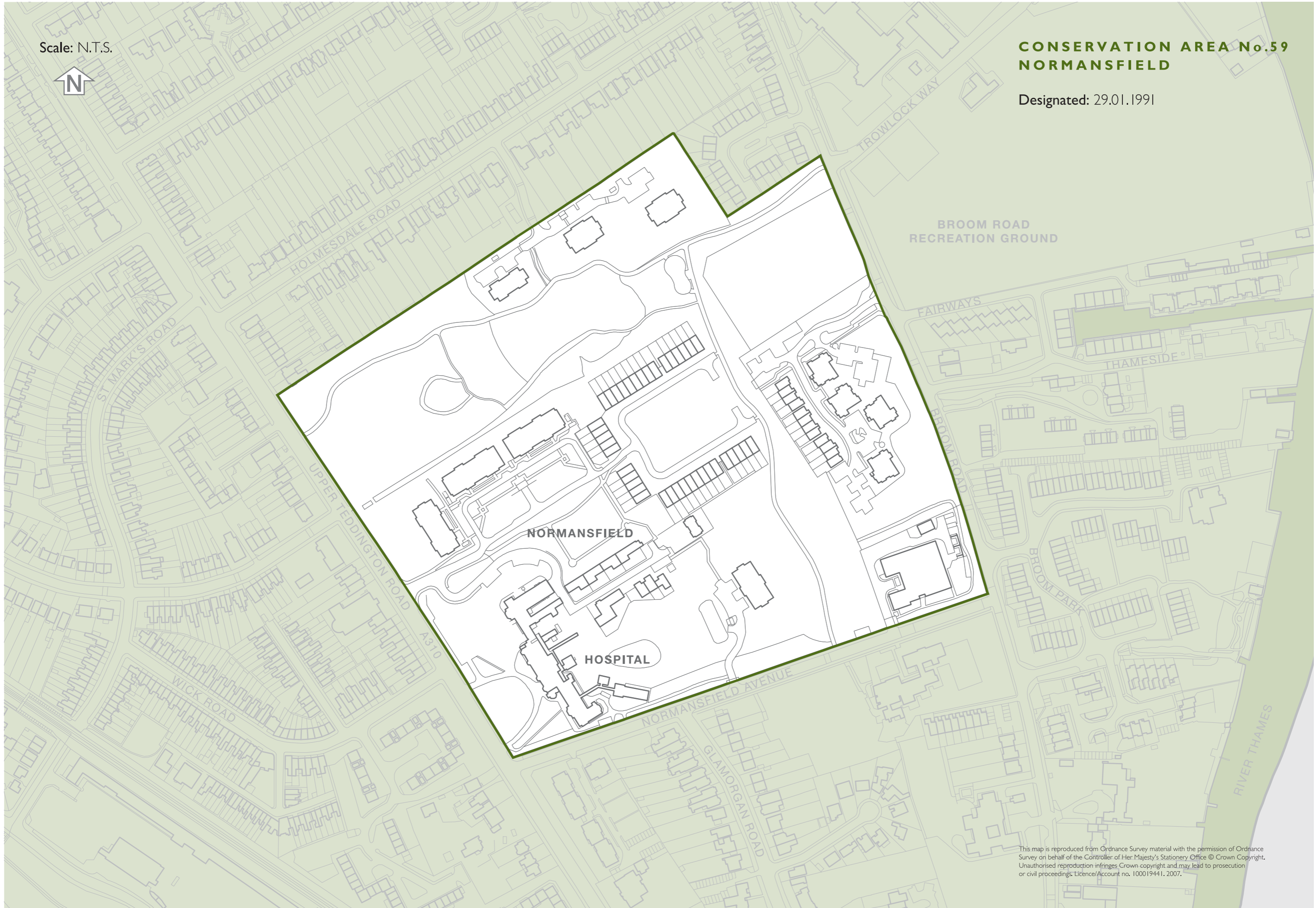
- Improvement and protection of landscape setting
- Preservation, enhancement and reinstatement of historic buildings, architectural quality and unity

Scale: N.T.S.



**CONSERVATION AREA No.59
NORMANSFIELD**

Designated: 29.01.1991



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