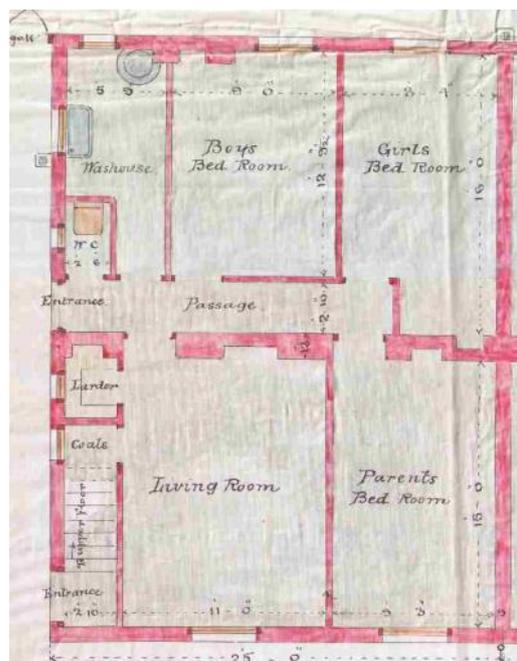


Resources for Research

Historic Planning Applications

Anyone wanting to build a house or other property must apply to the local authority, submitting a plan of the new development. Historic planning applications are an invaluable research resource. Richmond Local Studies holds some 22,000 plans from applications dating from 1880 to the 1960s, including many relating to our area. A project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, allowed plans to be digitised and made available online.

Some of the plans are for impressive developments which dominate our townscape: Byfeld Hall, the congregational chapel in Vernon Road and the Mortlake Brewery's maltings building. There are plans for buildings which are no longer standing such as the Sheen Picturedrome of 1910 and the Omes Works in Willow Avenue, Barnes. Often, however, plans for domestic housing are the most fascinating. The building of Castelnau is well documented as is the early 20th century suburbanisation of East Sheen. But one can also find plans for more modest housing. In 1898 plans drawn by architects Sanders and Finch were submitted for ten detached buildings in a new road of working class housing off Ship Lane, Mortlake. This would become West Road, surviving until its demolition in 1970. Each building was divided into four flats. The illustration above is the plan for one of the ground floor flats showing details of rooms.



To access these plans, go to the Richmond Local Studies website at <https://www.richmond.gov.uk/local-studies-collection> and select the Online Catalogue. You can at this stage just enter a place name, but the Advance Search is likely to be more fruitful, as it allows one to specify plans only rather than everything in the collection which includes a lot of photographs. Do this by entering “PLA*” in the Reference Number box.

Sometimes one has to try alternative ways of describing what is wanted. For instance a search for “West Road” will not yield the above plan. The street had not been named at the time of the planning application. However, “Ship Lane, Mortlake” with a “PLA*” filter will yield 14 plans, one of which is the above.

Anyone who searched these plans a few years ago will find that the “Calmview” site no longer works. This has been replaced by the “Spydus” collection described above.