

Historic development

Map analysis

By the time the 1873 First Edition of the Ordnance Survey was published the situation had changed substantially. A series of large, detached houses are shown stretching all the way to the eastern end of Blackheath Park, albeit with a number of gap sites remaining undeveloped. Much of this development was driven forward by the developer Thomas Ross, who took on a series of large leases along the road in the 1820s and 1830s. Manor Way was laid out in the mid-1860s, connecting to Blackheath Park to the east. However, development was slow in this part of the estate, with much of the area still shown as open fields in the 1873 map.⁰¹ Between 1850 and 1873, Foxes Dale had extended further south, terminating where it met the picturesque lake which Page's mansion had been set on an axis with. Meanwhile, Morden Road and the spur off Blackheath Park leading into Morden Road Mews had been extended to the north, connecting to the mews road that ran to the south of The Paragon. Morden Road had been laid out in the early 1850s, and seemingly followed the earlier farm track or path up towards the heath. The gardens of the new houses that were built along Morden Road at this time backed onto the Blackheath Park spur and Morden Road Mews to the west, both of which remained otherwise undeveloped in this period.⁰² In the 1860s, a number of houses had also been built along Pond Road, between the church of St Michael and All Angels and the railway line, but the northern reaches of the road remained dominated by the gardens of the house on South Row.

The Cator Estate was laid out as a private development, with the Cator family retaining ownership of the roads, pavements and other spaces between the buildings. As a result, the parish or local government played no role in the cleaning, maintenance or creation of the roads and pavements and had no responsibility for lighting and drainage. Instead, these works were paid for privately. To retain an air of exclusivity on the estate, stop nuisance visitors, and avoid the privately paid for roads becoming public thoroughfares, a series of lodges were erected at both ends of The Paragon and at each of the principal entrances to the estate (Blackheath Park, Morden Road, Pond Road, Manor Way). As Neil Rhind notes, these lodges were often staffed by estate servants or policeman, with all visitors to the estate recorded on entry and asked to depart through the set of gates that they had entered.⁰³ All four of these lodges can be identified in the first edition 25 inch to the mile Ordnance Survey maps that were being produced in the 1860s and 1870s.

The maps indicate that of the four 19th century lodges, all but the one on Morden Road were set behind or adjacent to gates that could be used to control the flow of traffic into and out of the estate.⁰⁴



Morden Road Lodge shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, see lodge building directly below the word 'Lodges' (Surveyed 1867, Published 1869) (National Library of Scotland)



Pond Road Lodge shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, see rectangular lodge building directly north of the pond (Surveyed 1867, Published 1869) (National Library of Scotland)



Blackheath Park Lodge shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, see lodge set just below the word 'Letter' (Surveyed 1863 to 1867, Published 1872) (National Library of Scotland)



Manor Way Lodge shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, see lodge set just behind the gate line, below B.M.67.5 (Surveyed 1863 to 1867, Published 1872) (National Library of Scotland)

⁰¹ Neil Rhind, *Blackheath Village and Environs 1790-1970: Volume 2*, pp. 139-50
⁰² *Ibid*, pp. 131-8

⁰³ *Ibid*, pp. 40-1
⁰⁴ See also Neil Rhind, 'Blackheath Estate Treasures' in *Blackheath Cator Estate Newsletter* (Summer 2022), pp. 6-7