

Hyde Farm Estate

Conservation Area

Appraisal

The character appraisal below is reproduced from the Council's original designation report of 13 February 1996. It is reproduced here to provide guidance on what the Council believes makes the area worthy of its conservation area status and should be consulted by anyone wishing to undertake development affecting the conservation area.

2. Justification

2.1 The character appraisal of the Hyde Farm area is important in justifying the designation of the area as a conservation area and it also provides a clear definition of the special interest which is a factor taken into consideration by the Secretary of State in considering related appeals. The assessment of the area's character derive from the elements that contribute to its special character, these include:

- (i) The origins and development of the topographical framework
- (ii) The archaeological significance and potential of the area
- (iii) The architectural and historical quality, character, and coherence of the buildings and the contribution they make to the special interest
- (iv) The character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality;
- (v) Prevalent and traditional building materials
- (vi) The contribution made by greens or green spaces, trees hedges and other natural elements to the character of the conservation area
- (vii) The prevailing or former uses within the area and their historic patronage, and the influence of these on the plan form and building types
- (viii) The relationship of the built environment to landscape including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas;
- (ix) The extent of loss, intrusion or damage, i.e. negative factors
- (x) The existence of neutral areas

2.2 (i) The origins and development of the topographical framework

The estate was originally one large medieval field of some sixty acres. The area was known as the Hyde during the Middle Ages, and later as Hydefield. In 1587 the field was purchased by Richard Martyn who then sold it to Emmanuel College Cambridge, which had been founded three years earlier. This transaction began the long association of the college with Balham and the naming of Emmanuel Road and Scholars Road when Hyde Farm estate was built during the late 1890s.

2.2.1 The college leased out the farm to a succession of tenants farmers until the late 19th Century. After a period of declining profits made in farming in the suburbs, the college decided to develop the site for housing, beginning with the building of Hydethorpe Road in 1896 and finishing the estate by 1916.

2.2.2 Many of the properties were built by Ernest Dashwood. Some of the properties were put aside for war disabled from the First World War. To promote the estate the developers proclaimed the virtues of Balham which they said was one of the healthiest places near London, being on high ground and surrounded by open spaces. Furthermore, they stated that *'Balham is well provided with first class shops and stores, allowing a careful housewife to shop more economically than in other parts of London'*. The properties, which were advertised as being high class and exceptionally well built, were in the main occupied by city clerks who were paying a rent of as little as 10/- (50p) per week for a flat and up to 18/- (90p) for a six room house.

2.3 (ii) The archaeological significance and potential of the area

The Hyde Farm area is not specifically identified in the Deposit Draft UDP Archaeological constraints map. However the archaeological constraints map is only based on current state of knowledge of archaeology in Lambeth. The blank areas on the UDP map do not reflect an absence of archaeology, but a lack of knowledge of archaeology in those areas. It should not be assumed that no archaeology occurs in the Hyde Farm area as none is shown on the UDP map.

2.4 (iii) The architecture and historical quality, character, and coherence of the buildings and the contribution they make to the special interest

The character of the proposed conservation area is marked by its coherent Edwardian architectural style which is very consistent throughout the area. Almost all of the properties are either one and two bedroom purpose built flats and two/three bedroom houses, some of the streets are of mixed accommodation and others all of one type. Their architectural form is characterised by consistent two storey two bay buildings with two storey bows, some on Emmanuel Road with bows unusually sitting on square bays. A centre arched entrance porch, some with timber tracery, and a communal entrance hall is also typical with two or four entrance doors from it. Some corner buildings are treated differently to emphasise their position within this well planned overall composition. Simple details such as the use of ball finials on the gables

and on adjoining boundary walls and leaded light oval windows lend a local distinctiveness to the area.

2.4.1 The collection of council owned education buildings between Radbourne Road and Telferscot Road are also carefully considered in their architecture and also contribute to the consistent appearance and character of the area being of the same architectural period. The three buildings are of the London county Council London Board school type and were built at the turn of the century. Telferscot School is of particular architectural merit with its one storey 6 bay sections under high pitched hipped tiled roof with bell tower and copper cupola and van above, dated 1904. The Hyde Farm School is more modest but is directly related to the Telferscot while the Radbourne centre, a neo Georgian two storey building with dormers set in a steeply pitched roof, forms an architectural stop to this collection of community related buildings on Radbourne Road.

2.4.2 None of the buildings in the area are listed however all the unlisted buildings contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. The overall impression is an area of domestic scale and character and of attention to quality architectural detail.

2.5 (iv) The character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality

The most important space adjacent to the proposed conservation area is Tooting Bee Common which Emmanuel Road directly overlooks. The use of the alternating gable fronted bays with the steeply pitched bays adds greater height and a more imposing setting to the open space. The open character and the emphasis of the repeated elements, presenting a distinct rhythm along Emmanuel Road, and is even more pronounced when viewed from a wider angle from across the common.

2.5.1 The three dimensional qualities of the two storey buildings to the street is proportionally quite pleasing. The height of the buildings with their steeply pitched roofs presents a pleasant sense of enclosure on the streets, especially those in Fieldhouse and Glanfield Roads with their slight curves.

2.5.2 The open spaces around the Radbourne centre are important to its setting and present a backdrop to the different typology of these buildings to the surrounding residential buildings.

2.6 (v) Prevalent and traditional building materials

The use of a limited palette of colours and materials reinforces the character of the area. The use of red brick with consistent English Bond throughout the area alternating between bath stone dressings and chequered stone and brick dressings reinforces the consistency of the architecture detail and the character of the area. The type of red brick used is of a hard almost industrial quality brick that lends a durable robust character to the area. The materials used

throughout the Hyde Farm estate are of good quality, down to the special details such as the brass door furniture, the terrazzo floors and timber doors and window frames. The use of natural slate on the highly visible roofs and the fish scale slate hips to the bay also contribute to the quality of the materials in the area.

2.7 (vi) The contribution made by greens or green spaces, trees hedges and other natural elements to the character of the conservation area

The mature trees along the edge of Tooting Common present an important feature in townscape terms as they perform an almost architecture function in containing the space and acting as a counterfoil to the buildings on the opposite side of the road. This perpetuates the characteristic sense of enclosure found in the adjoining streets. The maintenance of the boundary treatment of the properties in the game manner with low hedges set behind solid boundary walls is also an important feature of the area that contributes to the feeling of a well managed and architecturally consistent area.

2.8 (vii) The prevailing or former uses within the area and their historic patronage and the influence of these on the plan form and building types

The estate is said to be the last major housing development undertaken in Balham. The original boundary lines of the farm form the main boundary roads of the estate. /The uses other than the residential use include the Radbourne centre which was originally called the Hyde Farm Cub and used by the 'guest' tenants associated with the war veterans. The schools, and church hall and the purpose built shops on the ground floor of nos. 70-73 Emmanuel Road all form the original community focus of the estate.

In more recent years the Radbourne Centre has been used as a youth club. Education Committee agreed (14.10.95) proposals for Community Education to achieve budget reductions and to make the service more targeted on priority groups and provision. The reductions included the closure of Radbourne Youth Club. It is proposed that the site is sold and the capital receipts are used to fund pressing community education work. Adjacent to the former Radbourne Youth Club is a church hall which is of no particular architectural or townscape merit and is understood to be improved for community use.

Nearby is a primary school called Telferscot School already described in 2.4.1 which is a thriving school. Adjacent to it is Hyde Farm special school which Education Committee agreed to close (3.2.94) as part of the special Education Review. Following Government approval of the closure, it was closed in April 1995. It is proposed that it should be sold and the capital receipts used for pupils with special educational needs.

The proposal to create a conservation area will not affect the proposal to sell the two Council owned education sites, the former Hyde Farm school and the former Radbourne Youth clubs.

2.9 (viii) The relationship of the built environment to landscape including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas

The Radbourne Centre forms an important function as a landmark building within the area, especially, as it is carefully planned at a slight axis on the curve of Radbourne Road closing the long view north/ south. The views to the side of nos. 34b and 34d Radbourne Road are also carefully considered as this corner building is treated quite specially on its flanking gable with a leaded light window and ball finials on the Dutch gable. The views into the area such as those from the New Park Road end of Emmanuel Road and the significant panorama across the common are important to the setting and character of the conservation area.

2.10 (ix) The extent of loss, intrusion or damage, i.e. negative factors

Some of the existing buildings have replaced features such as windows, doors, door furniture and roof slates throughout the estate, however, those in the adjoining street are considered to be worst affected by such changes.

2.11 (x) The existence of neutral areas

There are some infill bomb sites that have been developed with 1950's - 1970's developments which, although incompatible with the overall character, are not considered to detrimentally affect it. The contemporary design of the buildings marks this important historical incident in a way which would have been lost if replica buildings were built.'