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Planning and Development Committee
Monday, 3rd November, 1975

P & D 82/75-76

Public Services Committee
Tuesday, 11th November, 1975

PS 40(a)/75-76

ALBERT SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA: PROPOSED EXTENSION (Stockwell Ward)

Community Plan Ref: 1.4.1.1. page 41 - Conservation areas

The following Report is submitted by the Chief Executive and Board of Directors:-

Introduction

1. On 10th July, 1968, the Council approved the designation of Albert Square and Nos. 1-11 (odd) Aldebert Terrace as a Conservation Area, as shown on drawing No. UD/CON/107A.
2. On the 6th November 1973, in a letter to Mr. John Medway (who was then a Councillor) the Vauxhall Society suggested that the Conservation Area should be extended to include Wilkinson Street, St. Stephens Terrace, the rest of Aldebert Terrace and Nos. 167-185 (odd) South Lambeth Road, (drawing No. UD/CON/107A).
3. This report considers whether or not the proposed extension meets satisfactorily the principal criterion for conservation, which is that the development is in some way special either architecturally or historically.

Historical Significance

4. The suggested extension together with the existing Conservation Area is located within a part of the Borough which comprises the Wilkinson Estate built in the nineteenth century.
5. The historical interest of the estate is that it was developed after 1843, when the Trustees of fourteen acres of land in the Manor of Vauxhall now occupied by Albert Square, Aldebert Terrace, Wilkinson Street and St. Stephens Terrace obtained an Act of Parliament permitting them to grant building leases. In 1846, the Trustees leased the land now occupied by Albert Square to John Glenn, a builder of Liverpool Terrace, Islington. Development proceeded swiftly, starting on the south side of the square, and was completed in 1848. By September 1849, all but eleven houses were occupied. The other streets on the Wilkinson Estate were developed in the late 1840's and 1850's by different builders.
6. From a historical viewpoint, therefore, the extension is located within an area forming an important part of the Borough's heritage. However, the main point of interest is considered to be the development of the Albert Square area.

Architectural Importance

7. The estate provides a wide variety of examples of mid-nineteenth century middle class housing. Although in a very general way the architectural style is homogeneous throughout the estate, the detailed treatment differs considerably from street to street, and even within streets. The quality of this treatment declines gradually from east to west (from Clapham Road to South Lambeth Road) so that wherever one places the Conservation Area boundary there can only be a marginal distinction between buildings within the Conservation Area and those outside.

8. In the light of this, the additions suggested by the Vauxhall Society have been considered, and recommendations made as to whether they are either suitable in architectural terms for inclusion, or alternatively, do not merit such action.

Suitable for Inclusion in Architectural Terms

9. The following streets, terraces and buildings are considered to be of some architectural importance to the Borough and would enhance the Conservation Area:-

- (i) 2-42 (even) Wilkinson Street: three storey terrace with stucco mouldings. The west end (30-42 (even)) have a stuccoed ground floor with a bay window.
- (ii) 1-15 (odd) Wilkinson Street: which are similar to 30-42 (even) opposite.
- (iii) 2-6 (even) Aldebert Terrace and 2-14 (even) St. Stephen's Terrace: which is a three storey terrace with semi-basement. It has elaborate and unusual stucco decoration applied in festoons to ground floor bay window lintols and in cartouches to the first floor lintols. The ground floor is rusticated and there is a dentilled cornice.
- (iv) 11-15 (odd) Aldebert Terrace: which are similar to 2-6 (even) above.
- (v) Aldebert Terrace 13-49 (odd), 10-36 (even) and St. Stephen's Terrace 1-39 (odd) and 18-22 (even): which are terraces generally similar to those in Wilkinson Street mentioned above.
- (vi) The Royal Albert Public House: a simple mid-nineteenth century public house.
- (vii) 8 Aldebert Terrace: known as Albion Villa, a late nineteenth century house.

10. In addition if the Council decides that the areas listed in paragraph 9 should be added to the Conservation Area, then it would be necessary to include two further buildings; these, although not of any architectural merit, are located within other streets and terraces which are of some significance. The two buildings are:-

- (i) 2a Aldebert Terrace: a printing works located in backland between St. Stephen's Terrace and Albert Square. The building is not visible from the street and would not detract from the amenities of the Conservation Area.

- (ii) St. Stephen's Church, Vicarage, Crozier House and Mytton House: a modern development of 1971 harmonizing poorly with the surrounding area, which because of its location in the heart of the Conservation Area could not logically be excluded.

Not Suitable for Inclusion in Architectural Terms

11. The two terraces in South Lambeth Road are not considered to be suitable additions to the Conservation Area as several have had shops added as front additions and the remainder have been altered and are generally undistinguished.

Conclusions

12. Members will appreciate from the comments made in paragraph 7 concerning the gradual decline in quality in the area from east to west, that the decision whether or not to extend the conservation area, and if so by how much, is not a simple one to take. However in the light of the historical and architectural comments made in this report, it is recommended that, with the exception of the South Lambeth Road Terraces, all the areas suggested by the Vauxhall Society be added to the existing Conservation Area. Before reaching any decision on this the Council is required to consult the Greater London Council on the proposals.

Planning and Development Committee

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) That the designation of the additional areas shown on drawing No. UD/CON/107A as an extension to Conservation Area 25 be approved in principle as a basis for consultations with the Greater London Council and other appropriate bodies.

(2) That the Director of Administration and Legal Services be authorised to carry out the necessary action to effect the above.

For decision

Public Services Committee

For information