

REVIEW No. 4 - PROPOSED NEW CLAPHAM HIGH STREET  
CONSERVATION AREA (CA22)

( Clapham Town and Ferndale Wards)

Report by the Director of Environmental Services

Consulted Formally: CEO, B.Sol, EDFCS & EDHS

Authorised for submission by:

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PURPOSE

To designate the Clapham High Street Conservation Area (CA 22) and its boundaries.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

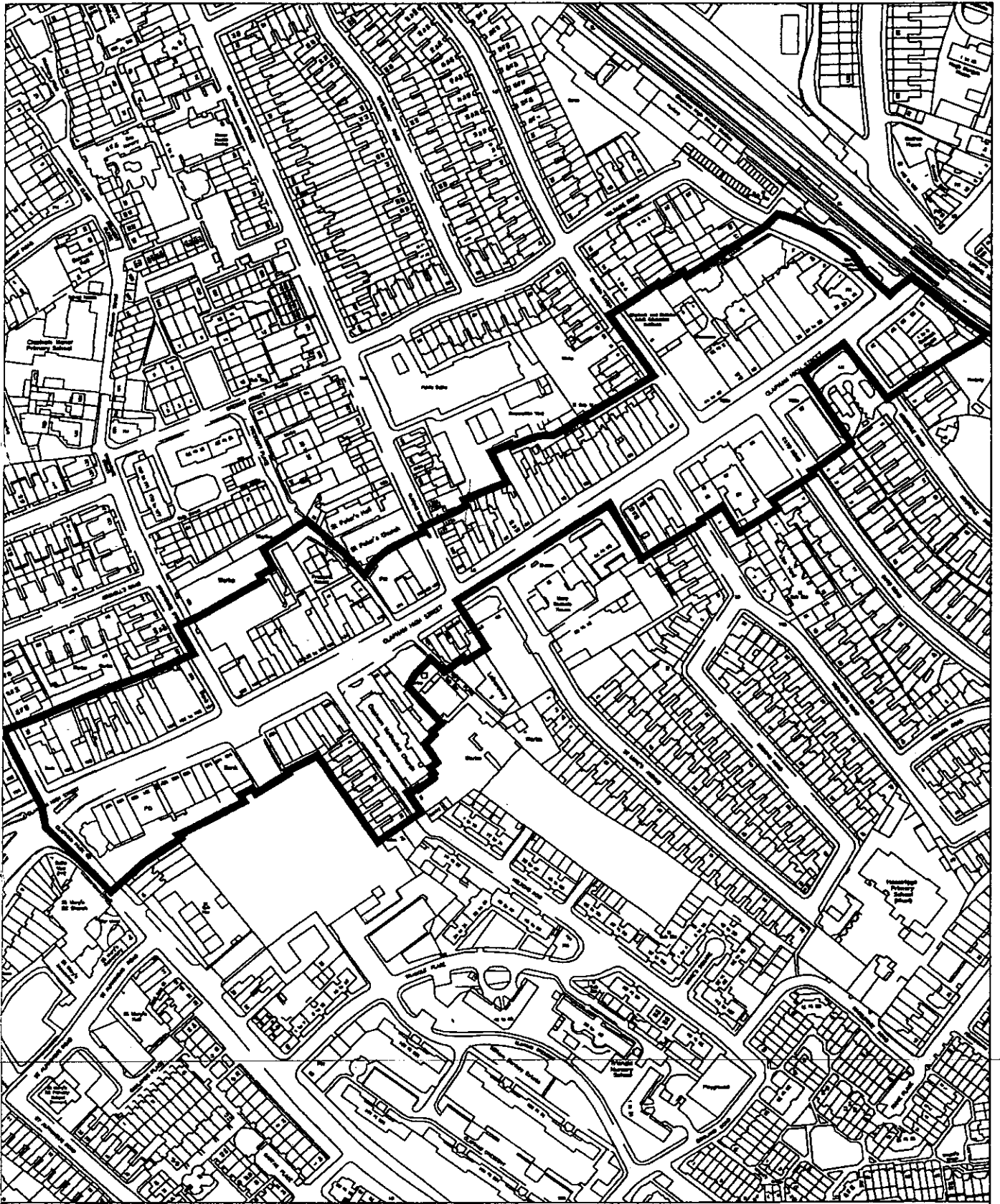
- (1) That the Committee approves the designation of the Clapham High Street Conservation Area, under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as shown on Plan No. DES/PP/ 410
- (2) That the Committee approves the detailed boundary of the area as shown on Plan No. DES/PP/410

For decision

1. Context

1.1 The function of the planning system is to regulate development and use of land in the public interest. The best of the Borough's built and landscaped environment can be valued and protected as part of this regulation through the designation of new conservation areas or the extension of existing ones. The enduring quality of these areas adds to the quality of life of the residents by protecting and enhancing the local scene and sustaining the sense of local distinctiveness and civic pride.

1.2 Existing conservation areas and their boundaries are currently being reviewed by the Council, in accordance with guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance (PPG15) (sec. 4.3) issued by the Department of National Heritage and the Department of the Environment. The importance of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of areas of historic or architectural interest and setting high standards of design for new development in and around these areas is also a key policy contained within the Deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan. The UDP (1992) included a commitment to consider the designation of various new Conservation Areas



**LAMBETH**  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES

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in areas of historic and architectural interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance (Policy C1). This commitment was confirmed within the Proposed Changes Report in October 1993 which put forward the proposal to designate eight new conservation areas in the borough, of which Clapham High Street was identified as one.

1.3 The assessment of the conservation area's character is based upon the criteria contained within PPG 15 (section 4.2) and within English Heritage guidance - Conservation Area Practice (October 1995). The assessment of the area's character is derived from the different elements that contribute to its special character - this criteria includes:

- (i) the origins and development of the topographical framework,
- (ii) the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of historic buildings and their style and materials, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area,
- (iii) the contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges and other natural elements to the character of the proposed conservation area,
- (iv) The relationship of the built environment to the landscape including significant landmarks, vistas and panoramas,
- (v) The extent of loss, intrusion or damage i.e. the negative factors which have exerted a detrimental impact upon the character and/or appearance of the historic area,
- (vi) The existence of neutral areas.

## 2. Justification

2.1 Comprehensive advice on the designation of conservation areas is contained within Conservation Area Practice which was issued by English Heritage in October 1995. This practice note focuses on the criteria used to select areas suitable for designation as conservation areas. Particular emphasis is placed on the adequacy of current boundaries, noting that many early conservation areas were too narrowly drawn, often excluding important parts of the townscape or important buildings of more recent historic development such as Edwardian or interwar buildings. It urges local authorities to consider carefully the immediate setting of the existing conservation areas, and to include them in the boundary if protection is desirable. The assessment of the character of this proposed extension derives from elements that include the following:

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

2.2 Today Clapham High Street is a busy commercial high street with the A3 heavy traffic passing through from central London to the South Circular and beyond. The natural topography of Clapham High Street has always been on higher ground on a natural escarpment which runs parallel to the River Thames between three and four miles from London. The hillside falls about fifty feet from the terrace which overlooks the Thames to the Battersea Marshes. At one point a tongue of higher ground runs northwards and on this hill St. Paul's Church now stands, which was the site of the medieval village of Clapham.

2.3 The Common itself was not suitable for farming with its thin gravels and clays - it was scrub like Wimbledon Common today.

(ii) The archaeological significance and potential of the area

2.4 Although the name Clapham goes back to the ninth century no building survives from before the late seventeenth century. The medieval village has left its traces on the main street plan in and around Clapham and on the sequence in which the area was built up. The old village streets running to the Common still survive as Rectory Grove, North Street and Old Town. Clapham High Street was also a street of antiquity as, although not part of the village it was a deviation from the direct course of Stane Street, the Roman Military road from London to Chichester. Clapham North Station is believed to be on the original alignment and a continuation of this would have taken the road along a valley bottom, nearly on the line of Abbeyville Road. This direct course is believed to have been abandoned because there was better going on the higher ground. Stane Street was probably constructed by circa 70 A.D.

2.5 When the expansion of the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century took place the new houses were built away from the village centre around Old Town and the Common, where the oldest of the surviving buildings of Clapham are still to be found.

(iii) The architectural and historical quality, character, and coherence of the building and the contribution they make to special interest

2.6 The shape of Clapham's streets and morphological layout today has not changed dramatically and is easily recognisable when viewing Rocque's map of 1745.

2.7 17th Century Clapham had become a popular place of suburban residence. In 1690 the first stage coach service was established, the coach running once a day to and from Gracechurch Street, braving the highwaymen of the then wild Clapham Common. A number of handsome houses in the Queen Anne Style were built, remaining examples of which can be seen at nos. 39, 41 and 43 Old Town. The marshland, now known as Clapham Common was drained in 1760 and thereafter constantly improved. During the 18th century Clapham became a centre of Evangelism and the home of the so called Clapham Sect.

2.8 In the early years of the 19th century, the pace of building accelerated and new types of development began. The surviving buildings of that period include some large

mansions along Clapham Road with some large terraced or semi-detached houses and the earliest surviving examples of working class smaller terraces or cottages.

2.9 These new houses reflect the growth of London as a trading metropolis and the improved transport facilities which made it possible for growing numbers of people to travel into London daily. By 1825 frequent short stage coaches were running between Clapham and the city and during the 1830s these were replaced by omnibuses until 1860. The first trams reached Clapham in 1871 and the fares were reduced to allow people on lower incomes to come and live in Clapham.

2.10 In 1890 the first tube railway was opened to Stockwell and it was extended to Clapham in 1900. These facilities brought to Clapham clerks, shopworkers and lower officials who could not previously have afforded travel. In response to the new population, buildings to suit their material needs such as shops and pubs were built, as well as churches and schools. The Clapham High street character and architecture still reflects this new influx at the turn of the century.

2.11 The architectural character of Clapham High Street is reflected by the increasing commercialisation of the buildings over time. The 1827 map of Clapham shows the predominance of terraced houses lining the high street but set back from the road with large front gardens. The only commercial buildings appear to have been clustered around Clapham Cross with an early reference to the Plough and The Two Brewers Pub. By 1847, there appear to be more buildings built to the back edge of pavement. By the 1870's and 1890's the commercial buildings, including the shop extensions over the front garden areas, extend further eastwards towards Clapham North Underground Station with a greater concentration of commercial buildings on the north side.

2.12 The diverse styles of the buildings on Clapham High Street reflect this progression but there is a definite impression of the area changing character radically at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. Many of the projecting shopfronts were constructed from the 1830's but most at the end of the 19th century. Whole new blocks of buildings such as the terrace at nos. 176 to 190, nos. 160-166, and 100-104 were built at this time, which include the robust Edwardian Bank on the corner of Venn Street and the extraordinary turreted Edwardian building with a strong vertical emphasis on the corner of Clapham Manor Street. These four storey buildings with Dutch gables signalled the beginning of a change of scale of buildings on the high street, however, the early to mid 19th century three storey buildings with ground floor projecting shopfronts still portray the dominant character. Some of these earlier buildings have vestiges of late 18th and early 19th century architectural features and may be found, particularly if their interior features have remained intact, to be worthy of statutory listing. The early maps of the area show some of the footprints of these modest buildings, which in three dimension are primarily yellow stock three storey parapet fronted buildings of one bay two windows wide - some with mansard roofs.

### 3. Public Consultation

3.1 A letter was been sent on the 28th August with a two week period for consultation to all the residents within the proposed Conservation Area. The letter outlined the extent of the area to be included, highlighted some of the local landmark buildings and delineated some of the controls that would apply in a conservation area. Occupiers who wanted to learn more about the proposal were invited to contact the Conservation Officer for further details. Two letters of objection have been received. One felt that it would be a 'pointless and money wasting exercise' and the other stated that they wished to extend their Solicitor's practice and felt that 'because of the impending formation of the conservaiton area, I am unlikely to be able to enlarge my offices to meet my needs". In relation to the first objection, there is no evidence that the Council would waste money - on the contrary, in this instance the Council has submitted a Conservaiton Area Partnership bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to grant aid repairs to buildings within the proposed conservation area. In relation to the second objection - conservation area status does not stifle development - rather it allows the council to have strieted quality control over new development to ensure that it preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area - the merits of any proposal to extend the property in question would be considered along with all other planning considerations.

3.2 Letters have also been sent to the local amenity societies and to English Heritage. The Clapham Society, The Clapham Antiquarian Society and English Heritage have all given verbal support to the designation.

#### 4. Effects of Designation

4.1 Under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1995 ( the GPDO) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ( the Act), conservation area designation has a number of practical implications for the area. Designation would take effect on the date of the Committee's resolution to agree the recommendation in this report. These are outlined below:

- (i) Conservation area consent is required to demolish certain buildings within a conservation area (Section 74 of the Act).
- (ii) Some permitted development rights are restricted within a conservation area, e.g. neither stone cladding or roof extensions are allowed without planning permission.
- (iii) Consent for all advertising hoardings, temporary or permanent, is required.
- (iv) The Council must be informed of all works to trees within a conservation area 6 weeks in advance, to give time to issue a Tree Preservation Order if desired.
- (v) The design quality of all new development in a conservation area is important. PPG15 and Section 72 of the Act state that all development is required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. PPG15 goes on to state that what is important is not that new buildings should directly imitate earlier styles, but that they be designed with respect for their

context, as part of a larger whole which has a well established character and appearance of its own. There is a duty on the Council therefore to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation areas.

- (vi) The council could also make a direction under Article 4(1) of the GPDO, further restricting permitted development rights within the conservation area. This would need to be approved by the Secretary of State.
- (vii) Once a conservation area is designated there is a duty on the Council to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area. This could include design guidance to owners which would set the policy framework for the type of development that would be acceptable within the conservation area. It would also mean that the Council's implementation programme for traffic management would take the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area into consideration.
- (viii) Conservation Area Status can also mean that a number of possible funding sources for the repair of buildings in the area can be sought.

## 5. Procedure after Designation

5.1 Following Committee approval of the report a number of actions would be undertaken:

- (i) All owner/ occupiers of properties in the conservation area would be written to informing them of the designation, notice would also be published in the local press and the London Gazette.
- (ii) English Heritage would be notified of the designation.
- (iii) The production of character statements and design guidance would be reported to Committee for approval as resources permit.
- (iv) All properties within the conservation area will be subject to land charges.

## 6. Legal Powers and Advice

6.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 gives the Council power to declare a conservation area. Section 69(2) states that:

*" It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly."*

6.2 Section 69(4) states that:

*"The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge."*

6.3 Section 70(8) of the Act states that the Local Planning Authority should publish notice of any designation, variation or cancellation, with particulars of its effect, in the London Gazette, and in at least one newspaper circulating in the area of the local planning authority.

6.4 Section 71 (1), (2) and (3) of the Act identifies future duties on the Council associated with a designation, stating:

"(1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.

(3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting."

## 7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications as a direct result of this report. None of the sites are owned by the London Borough of Lambeth.

7.2 There may be additional indirect financial implications as a result of staff time dealing with the quality of development and the threat of demolition in conservation.

## 8. Environmental Implications

8.1 The designation of a conservation area provides the Council with additional development control powers to protect and enhance the area. It also places a duty on the Council to prepare and publish a preservation and enhancement plan for the area.

8.2 All trees within the conservation area are given protection in so far as notification of any works to a tree must be given six weeks in advance to the Council to enable it to issue a Tree Preservation Order if desirable.

## 9. Staffing and Accommodation Implications

9.1 There are no staffing implications as a direct result of this report. However, the declaration of a conservation area involves Development Control staff in more complex procedures when handling planning applications within the designated area.



9.2 The duty to prepare and publish design guidance and enhancement schemes will require the conservation staff to undertake detailed design work and careful monitoring of schemes for implementation.

10. Equal Opportunities

- (a) Race relations
- (b) Women's Rights
- (c) People with Disabilities

The designation of the conservation area will bring improvements to the building stock which will improve conditions for these disadvantaged groups. Improvements will take into account the needs of disabled people, especially through enhancement schemes such as traffic calming initiatives.

<b>Committee deadline: 29.9.97</b>					
<b>Author: Aine Mc Donagh, Conservation Officer</b>					
<b>Date drafted: 4/9/97</b>					
<b>Consultation with other Officers/Directorates</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Date Cleared</b>	<b>Date Returned</b>
12/9/97	P. Davies	EDFCS	15/9/97	22/9/97	22/9/97
12/9/97	Chris Lee	B SOL	15/9/97	16/9/97	16/9/97
12/9/97	S. Whitaker	CEO	12/9/97	16/9/97	16/9/97
12/9/97	P. Davies	EDHS	17/9/97	23/9/97	23/9/97
<b>Date sent to Committee Secretariat: 24/9/97</b>					
<b>Date received by Committee Secretariat:</b>					
<b>Date sent to Councillors:</b>					

8. List of Background Documents

Sources

- The Buildings of Clapham, A report by the Clapham Society 1979
- The London Borough of Lambeth, Archaeological Constraints Map, English Heritage 1993
- London, South, Bridget Cherry and Nicholas Pevsner 1983
- Report to Development Committee 22 September 1969
- Report to Planning and Development Committee 15th December 1979
- Report to the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee September 1986
- Report to Environmental Services 11/2/93: Establishment of Conservation Officer in
- Report to Special Environmental Services Committee October 1993
- DES Town Planning Division (ref. no. ES/115/92-93).

Report to Environmental Services Committee 15.6.95: Objectives for Committee and Work Programme (Ref. ES 20/ 95-96).

Report to Environmental Services Committee 22.9.94: Conservation Area Work Programme (Ref. ES /94-95)