

Proposed extension of the West Norwood Conservation Area (CA 24) (Thurlow Park Ward) **Item**

Executive portfolio:

Authorised for submission by: Councillor Andrew Sawdon **02-03**
 Executive Committee 10 November 2003

Executive Summary

The boundaries of the West Norwood Conservation Area (CA 24) have been reviewed, and a small extension and a small de-designation are proposed. Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to review the extent of designation of conservation areas, and to designate further areas where appropriate.

The proposed extension to the West Norwood Conservation Area contains a range of buildings which are representative of Norwood's mid 19th century development, valuable for their architectural quality as well as their historic and aesthetic contribution to the streetscene. The proposed exclusion of the recent 1990s development adjacent to 1 & 2 Pilgrim Hill would remove an ambiguity from the Conservation Area. The new residential development does not merit conservation area status and there is no longer a physical relationship between these listed buildings and West Norwood Cemetery, which forms the bulk of the West Norwood Conservation Area. 1 & 2 Pilgrim Hill are Grade II listed and are therefore already afforded significant protection. It is considered that the new redefined Conservation Area will more adequately protect the historic character of Norwood and represent a more complete picture of its historical and architectural development.

Recommendations

- (1) That the Committee approves the extension to the West Norwood Conservation Area under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- (2) That the Committee approves the detailed boundary of the area as shown on Plan DES/PP/574.
- (3) That the Committee approves the de-designation of the area as shown on Plan DES/PP/574.

Funding

This proposal forms part of the current work programme of the Conservation & Urban Design Team within the Planning Department – see financial implications in section 3.

Consultation

Name	Department/Organisation	Date Sent/ Received	Date Cleared/ Received	Comments included in report at para:

Internal

Michael Copeman	Conservation – Acting Team Leader	29 September 2003	2 October 2003	No
Peter Flockhart	Legal Services	29 September 2003	3 October 2003	No
Des Farry	Corporate Finance	30 September 2003	30 September 2003	No
Les Brown	Lambeth Planning	30 September 2003	30 September 2003	No
Councillor Andrew Sawdon	Executive Member for the Environment			

External

Sarah Buckingham	English Heritage	27 May 2003	14 July 2003	Para. 5.3
P.J. Goddard	The Norwood Society	29 July 2003	4 June 2003	Para. 5.4
	West Norwood Area Committee	19 June 2003	19 June 2003	Para.5.5
DR R Flanagan	Friends of Norwood Cemetery	27 May 2003	No reply	No

Date consultation entered in Consultation and Events Diary:

Report History

Decision type:

Non-key decision

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Report drafted by and contact for enquiries:

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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 and potential conservation areas are currently being reviewed by the Council in accordance with guidance contained within Planning Policy Guidance (PPG15) issued by the Department of National Heritage and the Department of the Environment in September 1994, Conservation Area Practice (English Heritage, 1995) and Conservation Area Appraisals (English Heritage, 1997). 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 Unitary Development Plan adopted in 1998. Policy CD1 states that the Council will consider whether conservation areas should be extended or new ones designated in areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
- 1.3 The West Norwood Conservation Area was designated on 16th June 1978 covering West Norwood Cemetery and a handful of listed buildings situated in close proximity to the cemetery. In reviewing the boundaries of the Conservation Area it is intended to rectify the exclusion of a number of buildings whose historic interest was not recognised at the time of designation 25 years ago. The proposed extension incorporates a short terrace of buildings at 545-551 Norwood Road and a group of villas in adjacent Chestnut Road, all dating from the period approx. 1840-1880. It is also proposed to include a small enclave of mid-19th century cottages on Dunbar Street and the frontage buildings at 9-21 Norwood High Street. It is also proposed to de-designate the new residential development built in 1999 in the grounds of the Grade II listed Regency villas at 1 & 2 Pilgrim Hill.
- 1.4 Pre-application planning advice has been given in respect of a proposal to redevelop the site at 547-551 Norwood Road. Following the conferring of conservation area status, Conservation Area Consent would need to be sought prior to the demolition of any building.

2. Background and history of the issue

- 2.1 A strategy for the review of existing conservation areas and the designation of new conservation areas was approved by the Environmental Services Committee on the 21st July 1997 (Ref. ES 55/97-98). This report identified three approaches for implementing this review: development pressures, pressure from local

residents and a geographical basis starting with conservation areas in the north of the borough. To date, 14 new conservation Areas have been designated - Lambeth Walk & China Walk, Mitre Road & Ufford Street (Waterloo), Poets Corner (Herne Hill), Clapham High Street, Westow Hill, Rush Common & Brixton Hill, Peabody Estate (Herne Hill) Oaklands Estate (Clapham), Streatham High Road & Streatham Hill, Albert Embankment, Vauxhall Gardens Estate, Sibella Road (Clapham North), Wandsworth Road, and Leigham Court Road North (Streatham). The boundaries of 14 existing conservation areas have also been reviewed for appropriate extensions/partial de-designations.

Detailed analysis and reason

- 2.2 A detailed assessment of the proposed extension to the West Norwood Conservation Area has been completed in accordance with the guidance referred to in paragraph 1.2 and this character statement is attached as Appendix A. This character statement provides a sound basis for designation, is important for development control purposes and also acts as an aid to the formulation of proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.3 This area of Norwood remained relatively undeveloped until the mid-19th century, with Norwood Road running across open fields. The properties at 543-551 Norwood Road were built at around the same time that Chestnut Road was laid out with a series of large villas running along its southern side. These properties were built for some of the affluent early residents of the area, reflected in the substantial size of the buildings which were originally set within spacious grounds. Although completed soon after in 1865, the model dwellings for working people in Dunbar Street and fronting Norwood High Street are built to a much more modest scale and are survivors of the simple mid-Victorian dwellings which once characterised the knot of streets straddling the railway tracks to the east of Norwood High Street.
- 2.4 The buildings contained within the proposed extension represent the mid 19th century phase of Norwood's development, pre-dating the area's rapid late 19th century expansion. The collection of buildings at 543-551 Norwood Road are a coherent and attractive grouping which share a strong early Victorian style and character with the large villas at 2, 4 and 8 Chestnut Road. Although slightly later, the pair of villas at 3 and 5 Chestnut Road share basic similarities of size, scale and form, albeit with later Victorian styling and detailing. The group of buildings to the east of St Luke's Church have historical significance as model dwellings built for Norwood's working classes, as well as being modest, yet attractive mid Victorian examples of the area's architectural history.
- 2.5 The reason for the recommended decision is to recognise the special and distinctive character of this small group of buildings and afford it Conservation Area protection, in line with the local planning authority's obligations under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This special

character has been identified as part of an on-going review of the built heritage within Lambeth.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 Approval of the recommendations will result in the expenditure of approx. £150 for advertising the designation in the South London Press and the London Gazette - the requisite budget is held by the Planning Division Business Unit.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 gives the Council power to declare a new conservation area or extend an existing one. 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".
- 4.2 Section 69 (4) states that: "The designation of any area as a conservation area shall be a local land charge".
- 4.3 Section 70 (5) of the Act states that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) 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 LPA.
- 4.4 Section 71(1-3) of the Act identifies future duties on the Council associated with a designation, stating:
“(1) It shall be the duty of a LPA from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation area.
(2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.
(3) The LPA shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.”

Effects of designation

- 4.5 Under the Town and Country (General Permitted 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. These are outlined below:
- (i) Designation would take effect on the date of the Committee's resolution to agree to the recommendations in this report.

- (ii) Conservation Area Consent is required to demolish or partially demolish buildings within a conservation area (Section 74 of the Act).
- (iii) Some permitted development rights are restricted within a conservation area.
- (iv) The Council has the power to make an Article 4 direction withdrawing certain other permitted development rights.
- (v) 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 required.
- (vi) The design quality of all new development in a conservation area is important. Planning Policy Guidance: Planning & the Historic Environment (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 new buildings should respect their context, as part of a larger whole which has a well established character or appearance of its own.

Procedure after designation

- 4.6 Following Executive approval of the report a number of actions would be undertaken:
- (i) All owners of properties within the area designated as a Conservation Area would be informed in writing of the designation, which would also be advertised in the local press and London Gazette.
 - (ii) English Heritage and the Borough Land Charges section would be notified of the decision.

5. Consultation feedback

- 5.1 Letters of consultation asking for the views of owners/occupiers of 1-3 (odd) and 2-8 (evens) Chestnut Road, and 543-551 Norwood Road were sent on 1 May 2003. This letter outlined the type of controls that would apply within the proposed Conservation Area. The consultation period ended on 26 May 2003. Additional letters of consultation were sent to owner/occupiers of the properties at 9-21 Norwood High Street, 1-11 (odd), 6, 8 Dunbar Street and Bethel Hall, Dunbar Street on 15 August 2003. The consultation period in this instance ended on 8 September 2003. Clarke Renner Architects, who submitted a pre-application scheme for the redevelopment of 547-551 Norwood Road in February 2003, were notified of the proposal to extend the Conservation Area.
- 5.2 There were a total of 2 responses to the consultation from owner/occupiers. One respondent objected to the proposal, suggesting that conservation area status may add further constraints to operating as a business in West Norwood and would restrict opportunities to redevelop the site. A further respondent suggested the inclusion of 1 Chestnut Road. The reasons for the exclusion of this building from the proposed extension are outlined in para 5.5 below.

- 5.3 English Heritage support the extension commenting that “543-551 Norwood Road are indeed an attractive and coherent group, with a strong townscape presence and added interest created by the setted forecourt to the public house, used by stallholders. They are a clear remnant of an important early phase in the development of the area, and provide a strong beneficial complement to the setting of St Luke’s Church and to the entrance of West Norwood Cemetery. The large villas to Chestnut Road again, are a remnant of early phases in the development of Norwood, in this case of solidly middle class houses graciously disposed in a rural setting in the vicinity of the South Metropolitan Cemetery. They create a pocket of townscape and visual interest which relates historically to other parts of the conservation area and which is worthy of protection.”
- 5.4 The Norwood Society indicate that they are in favour of the proposed extension. They also suggested the inclusion of the warehouse at 1 Chestnut Road and also the villas at 7-43 (odd) Chestnut Road. However, whilst 1 Chestnut Road does have a strong and interesting façade, it dates from 1901 and does not share either an historical or architectural relationship with the other buildings within the proposed extension. Whilst the late Victorian villas along the remainder of Chestnut Road are attractive, they are of an architectural type which is prevalent across south London and therefore are not considered to be sufficiently distinctive within their local context to be included within the extended Conservation Area.
- 5.5 The West Norwood Area Committee considered the proposal to extend the conservation area. Councillor McConnell considered that the houses across from St Luke’s Church should also be incorporated in the conservation area to ensure an appropriate backdrop to the church. A member of the public considered that conservation officers should consider whether Bloom Grove should also be incorporated into the extended conservation area. It is now proposed to include the buildings on Dunbar Street and Norwood High Street which form an interesting backdrop to St Luke’s Church. However, whilst Bloom Grove contains a group of attractive Victorian villas, it is considered that these buildings do not form part of the setting, nor share a close physical relationship with the nucleus of the West Norwood Conservation Area, which is focused upon the cemetery and St Luke’s Church.

6. Other implications

- 6.1 CPA recovery plan – not applicable.
- 6.2 Risk Management – none.
- 6.3 Equalities – There are no implications for equal opportunities as a direct result of this report, however any improvement to the urban environment gained as a result of this designation should benefit all groups in society. Any improvements will of course take into account the needs of people with mobility problems.
- 6.4 Crime and Disorder implications – none

- 6.5 Environmental implications – The proposed extension of the West Norwood Conservation Area provides the Council with additional development control powers to protect and enhance the appearance and urban environment of this small area.
- 6.6 Staffing and Accommodation implications - The designation of this new conservation area is likely to generate some additional workload for Development Control and Conservation officers. The duty to prepare public design guidance and enhancement schemes will be a part of the conservation team's future work programme.
- 6.7 Impact on Front Line services – none
- 6.8 Area implications – see sections 6.3 and 6.5 above.

7. Timetable for Implementation and Success Criteria

- 7.1 The designation would have immediate effect. Following the designation, all occupiers of the properties included within the Conservation Area will be notified of the designation.

8. Appendices

Appendix A West Norwood extension Character Statement (compiled by Hannah Walker)

9. List of background documents

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Department of the Environment & Department of National Heritage: Planning Policy Guidance (PPG15): Planning & the Historic Environment (September 1994)

English Heritage. Conservation Area Practice (October 1995)

English Heritage. Conservation Appraisals (March 1997)

Map of Norwood Common – following the Lambeth Inclosure Act 1806

Ordnance Survey Map 1870

Ordnance Survey Map 1894-96

The Story of Norwood: J.B.Wilson & H.A.Wilson ((1973)

Crystal Palace – Norwood Heights: A Pictorial Record: Audrey Hammond & Brian Dann (1988)

Letter of support received from Ms Sarah Buckingham, Historic Areas Adviser, English Heritage

Letter of support from P.J.Goddard representing the Norwood Society, Hope Cottage, 133 Church Road, London SE19 2PR

Letter commenting on the proposal received from Mary Bisset, 5 Goodwood Court, 6 Chestnut Road, London SE27

Letter of objection received from James Taylor, South London Decorators Merchants, 547-549 Norwood Road, London SE27 9DL