

PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREA NO 31 LEIGHAM COURT ESTATE  
(STREATHAM HILL WARD).

Lambeth Policies & Programme Ref (1980 Edition) Vol. 1, Section 1.4.1.1. (Conservation Areas).

The following report is submitted by the Director of Town Planning.

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the Leigham Court Estate be designated as Conservation Area No 31. The designation is of an area which was identified under the criteria expressed in the "*Strategy for the designation of new Conservation Areas*" accepted by Town Planning Committee in March 1981.

The proposed conservation area is based on the model housing estate developed by the Artisans', Labourers' and General Dwellings Company in the 1890's.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the area outlined on Plan No U11/COW21B be designated as Conservation Area No 31 (Leigham Court Estate) under Section 277(1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1971—74.
- (2) That the Director of Administration & legal Services be authorised to advertise the above designation and to notify the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of Section 277(6) and (7) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1971—74.

For decision.

1.0 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS.

The designation of Leigham Court Estate as a conservation area is referred to in the Lambeth Policies & Programmes (1980) Vol. 1, ref: 1.4.1.1. and the area was also identified in the report on the 'Strategy for designation of new Conservation Areas' approved by Committee in March 1981.

2.0 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Section 277(1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1971 (as amended by the Town & Country Amenities Act 1974) states that

*"Every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate such areas as conservation areas".*

Subsections (6),(7) and (9) refer to the provision for notifying the Secretary of State, advertising and registering the designation of such areas respectively.

Under the provision B of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 subsection (5) of the 1974 Act ceases to have effect and accordingly London Boroughs are not required to consult the Greater London Council formally prior to designation.

### 3.0 FINANCIAL, STAFFING & RACE RELATIONS CONSIDERATIONS.

There are no financial, staffing or race relations implications associated with this proposal.

### 4.0 THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREA

#### (a) Historical background.

The Leigham Court development occupies a pioneering place in housing history as it is one of the first model housing estate. designed and. built specifically to house the middle classes at the end of the 19th century.

It was built by the Artisans', Labourers' and General Dwellings Company who, along with the Peabody Trust and the Improved Industrial Dwellings Co., played a very important role in the development and improvement of the design and construction of housing in the mid to late Victorian period. The Artisans' Labourers' and General Dwellings Co. concentrated more on two—storey suburban estates, rather than inner—city tenements, with one of their main aims to *"enable workmen and artisans to erect dwellings combining fitness and economy with the latest sanitary improvements and. to become themselves the owners of these dwellings in the course of a stated number of years by the payment of a small additional rent"*. In practice, however, after the first few years (when it was necessary to make a quick return) it became the policy of the company only to rent their houses in order to keep some control over the estates. This may be seen as a typical example of nineteenth-century benign authoritarianism.

After having built three other suburban estates in London for the rising clan of artisans, the company, in the Leigham Court Estate, aimed for the middle class—housing standards generally were rising and the lower class idea of the agency began to disappear.

Leigham Court Estate was one of the first organised estate B which were intended to house a sufficient community in maisonettes, flats and houses along with a large number of shops, a church and with adequate public transport in a carefully designed environment.

The development of the estate was started in 1994 on land purchased in Streatham in 1887. It was not completed until 1905 because of the usual suburban problem, even for middle class tenants, of coaxing the Londoner out of the city.

#### (b) Description of properties.

By 1881 the Artisans', Labourers and General Dwellings Company had appointed an architect *"by whose assistance they hoped to improve the style of their dwelling"* he was Roland Plumbe who later became better known for his local authority housing.

Plumbe managed to provide a variety of house types which as well as giving the choice of accommodation to tenants, also provided a chance for architectural diversity. The houses were still built in long terraces on a grid-iron street pattern but there was an attempt to handle them as architectural compositions with a combination of different units, variations in height and modelling of elevations.

The buildings are remarkable examples in the use of materials and of craftsmanship, with combinations of red, yellow and glazed bricks, clay tiles and terra-cotta features combined to produce a variety of interesting designs. There are also variations of architectural details such as porches, bay windows, gables, dormers, balustrading etc.,

The Church of St. Margaret the Queen is the dominant feature in the estate, being sited on the highest point. Designed by Plumbe and Harvey it is built in red brick and red Corsehill stone in an Early English style that shows some influence of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Leigham Court Estate can be seen as an interesting precedent for the garden suburbs of the first years of this century and therefore occupies a unique place in housing history.

The majority of buildings are in their original form and appear to be in a very good state of repair.

The definition of the area as shown on the displayed plan no UD/CON/21B is based mainly on the distinct architectural entity of character which exists, and its historical association.

## 5.0 TENURE.

The proposed conservation area covers seven enumeration districts with combined statistics as follows :

Enumeration Districts 3085 : 13.17.18.22 and parts of 19.21 and 23.

Total Population	2568
Households —	
owner/occupied	183 (19%)
Council	649 (68%)
Rented (unfurnished)	51 (5%)
Rented (furnished)	75 (8%)
Not stated	3 (0%)

The 1971 Census statistics cannot be considered to give a reliable indication to the nature of the tenure as the data is ten years old and the size of the sample of each sample of each district is proportionately small.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION.

The area outlined on Plan No UD/CON/21B is significant from each aspect, historical, architectural and planning and is therefore recommended for designation, as Leigham Court Estate Conservation Area (No 31).