

Thursday, 10th February, 1985

BROCKWELL PARK CONSERVATION AREA (NO, 39)
(Herne Hill, St Martins, Thurlows Park, and Tulse Hill Wards)

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the designation of the area shown on plan TJB/CON 229 as the Brockwell Park Conservation Area (Ho. 59) wider Section 277(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971. as amended by Section 1 of the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974, be approved
- (2) That the Director of Administration and Legal Services be authorised to- advertise the above designation and to notify the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of Sections 277(6) and (7) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971; as amended by Section 1 of the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974

For decision

1. Policy Considerations

1.1 In March 1981, the Town Planning Committee approved the "Strategy for the designation of new Conservation Areas". The area described in this report was included in the Strategy and indicated on the map which accompanied that report.

2. Financial, Staffing, Accommodation and Race Relations Considerations

There are no financial, staffing, accommodation or-race relations-implications arising from this report.

3. Legal Considerations

3.1 Section 277(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 as amended by the Town and 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 and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance, and shall designate such areas as Conservation Areas".

3.2 Sub-sections (6), (7) and (9) of the same Act refer to the provisions for notifying the Secretary of State, advertising and registering the designation of such areas respectively.

4.0 location of the proposed Conservation Area

4.1 The proposed Conservation Area encompasses the whole of Brockwell Park together with

neighbouring buildings that add to the character of the area.

4.2 The section of the park that leads to Brixton Water Lane is already included in the Brixton Water Lane Conservation Area (CA No. 1?).

5.0 Historic Background

5.1 'Up until 1558 when it became the property of Henry VIII, the land which is now enclosed within the park was owned by the mediaeval hospital of St. Thomas in Southward.

5.2 The estate was subsequently sub-divided and sold off and by the beginning of the 19th century the greater portion was in the ownership of John Blades, a city glass manufacturer. During the years 1811-15 he built the present Brockwell Ball to the designs of D. R. Roper, the architect of St. Mark's, Kennington.

5.5 The ownership stayed within the family until 1891 when in order to prevent the park being sold off to developers, the Ball and seventy eight adjoining acres were purchased by the County Council. This 'approximately comprised of the southern half of the present park and was laid out to the designs of Lt. Col. J.J. Sexby, Surveyor to the Metropolitan Board of Works. It was described at the time as being *"natural in appearance ... a great expanse of lawn studded with fine trees."*

5.4 In 1895 a further section was purchased at the rear of properties in Tulse Hill giving an additional entrance from Arlingford Road, together with a strip of land adjacent the Herne Hill gates.

5-5 The remaining forty three acres between Brailsford and Dulwich Roads were acquired in 1901. About half was immediately added to the park. Four large houses which were gradually demolished as their leases expired occupied the rest. The last two properties were incorporated into the park in 1923 and part of the site was used for the construction of the Lido in 1937.

6.0 The Proposed Conservation Area

6.1 *"Favoured by its size' and natural resources Brockwell Park is undoubtedly the grandest of Lambeth's open spaces and it is maintained to a high standard".*

Marie P.G. Draper - Lambeth's Open Spaces - An historical account D.A.S. 1979

6.2 This is particularly, true, of -the southern half of the park which is a good example of English landscape, remaining virtually intact from-the day in 1891 when it was" made public.' By contrast, the northern half is a fragmented piece of landscape interrupted, 'by recent buildings and, visually untidy play areas.'

6.3 The outstanding features of the park are its large areas of grass, its shrubs, trees, lakes and buildings. The centrepiece is Brockwell Hall a grade II listed building imposingly situated at the highest point commanding superb views of "the park and beyond towards Dulwich and Norwood. The views to north within the park are not so spectacular but this is compensated by some fine views of central London.

6.4 Adjacent to the Hall is the Tritton Clock Tower (also listed) which was presented, to the park in 1897 by Charles Ernest Tritton, MP for Norwood. It still keeps good, time but is in need of decoration and protection. From here also, there are some pleasant views across the park up to the spire of the Holy Trinity Church and also down to the ornamental lakes. Situated next *"to..the lakes is the old English garden, the walls of which are listed, as is the white stuccoed building and portico."*

6.5 The lake adjacent to the garden; is the first of a series, linked together by a stream, that gradually step down towards the Arlingford Road entrance. Apart from providing a sanctuary for a variety of wild-fowl, the area in and around the lakes is one of the most attractive pieces of landscape within the park.

6.6 The park is also fortunate in that it is enclosed by some fine cast iron railings and gates, especially along Norwood Head. It is also bordered to the east and south by some pleasant buildings whose quality lies in their scale rather than in any individual architectural merits.

6.7 Nos. 105-117 Norwood Road are a pleasant group of houses with fine brickwork, and have been linked together to form a sheltered house. The adjacent site (nos. 119-121) is occupied by the Bonne Bonne Discotheque. Built around 1830 as a pair of houses, the front elevation had an unusual Grecian design. Much of the detail has been lost but the building is now in the process of being rehabilitated and extended with the original elevations being restored. The adjacent coach house is also being retained.

6.8 The terrace of two and three storey late 19th century houses nos. 125-225 Norwood Road are built, in a variety of styles. The most significant is no.155, "the Swiss Cottage"; it appears on an O.S. map in 1662 and, as its name implies, is a 'Swiss-style' Victorian cottage. The owner has requested that the property be protected, by its inclusion within the conservation area.

6.9 Brockwell Park Gardens were built in the early part of this century and although they do not possess any outstanding architectural features, they do give a suburban character to the park.

6.10 The CA also included the site of the redundant St. Jude's Church which was built in the Gothic style in 1868. It is a well-known local landmark and is now used as a wholesale wine and furniture warehouse.

7.0 FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Various reports have been submitted to the Committee during the last five years concerning the provision, of an athletics track and synthetic grass football pitch in Lambeth. Various sites have been considered, Brockwell Park among them.

7.2 The Town Planning Committee on the 6th December 1982 considered a proposal to locate the athletics track in the vicinity of the ball and ornamental lakes involving additional Changing rooms, car parking and an improved access road. This was rejected, by the committee by reason of the detrimental impact it would have on the fine landscape qualities of the area. As an alternative the Committee asked for further investigations to be carried out on the possible location of the track in the vicinity of the Redgra football pitches (report ref TP142/82-83).

7.3 If such a facility is to be provided within the park this location would prove to be the most satisfactory, providing it was carefully landscaped. Not only would it utilise the existing football Changing rooms and car park, it would also contribute to the visual improvement of the area around, the Redgra pitches and lido.

8.0 Tenure

8.1 The whole of the park is in the ownership of the London Borough of Lambeth, as is the sheltered house nos. 105-115 Norwood Road.

8.2 As only a few properties adjoining the park are included in the CA, the information contained in the 1971 census cannot be relied upon as accurate because enumeration districts cover a much wider area.

8.3 Norwood Road is virtually all in private ownership, many of the larger properties being in some form of multi-occupation. Brockwell Park Gardens is nearly all-owner occupied.

9.0 Designation

9.1 The Director of Planning and Economic Development is of the opinion that the area shown on drawing No. TJD/CON/229 should be designated, as a Conservation Area named Brockwell Park No. 39.