

PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREA NO. 42 (Stockwell Green)

This report is submitted by the Director of Town Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with DALs.

SUMMARY

This report: recommends the designation of Stockwell Green and parts of the surrounding area, as a conservation area.

The aim of the proposal is to preserve the character of this area which in the officers' opinion is of special architectural and historic interest. A number of buildings in the proposed area are in a state of deterioration and others have suffered unsuitable alterations. An immediate benefit of a designation is that the area should qualify for inclusion in the 1986-87 programme of grant-aid from English Heritage under Section 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee approve the designation of the area adjacent to and including Stockwell Green as shown on Map UD78 81 as a conservation area, according to their powers under Section 277(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 as amended by the Town and Country Planning Act 1974.
- (2) That the proposed conservation area be referred to as Conservation Area No. 42 (Stockwell Green).
- (3) 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 Section 277(6) and (7) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1974.

Town Planning Committee

For decision

Housing Committee

Public Services Committee

For information

I. Policy considerations and previous decisions

1.1 The Lambeth Local Plan states (Conservation Areas, objectives, p. 130) that the overall objective relating to conservation in Lambeth is to preserve and enhance the character of parts of the environment which are of special architectural and historic interest. The proposed area contains one of the oldest churches in Lambeth (St. Andrew's, 1767) a late 18th c. chapel (Stockwell Congregational) and a number Victorian and Georgian houses many of which are listed by the DoE as of special architectural and historic interest (see 'Detailed considerations' below).

1.2 The Council's 'Strategy for Future Designation of Conservation Areas', approved by Town Planning Committee in September 1979, includes the proposed area as an 'Area or Conservation Potential'. The vast majority of areas described in the 'Strategy' as of 'Conservation Potential' in the north of the borough have now been designated formally. The proposed Stockwell Green area has not been put forward because it was one of the least threatened areas due to the relatively large number of protected (listed) buildings. Designation of the area is considered necessary now for two main reasons:

(a) Imminent permitted development alterations to non listed buildings.

(b) The potential benefits for the area of Section 10 grant-aid from English Heritage. Policy UL5 of the Lambeth Local Plan states that "The Council will seek further promotion and encourage further beneficial use of the DoE (now English Heritage) Section 10 grant-aid scheme for restoration of properties in Conservation Areas in the Borough."

2. Detailed considerations

The history of Stockwell Green goes back to the 13th century when Stockwell was granted manorial status. Stockwell Green was known for its 'stoc' or woods, which probably disappeared in the 17th century and the plentiful supply of "remarkably fine water" from springs and wells. (Indeed there are still two wells on the site of Stockwell Congregational Church and two on the site of Hammerton's Brewery). Legend connects the Stockwell Manor House with Thomas Cromwell who may indeed have stayed there when it was in the hands of Henry the VIII. The manor changed hands at least twice in the following two centuries. The manor house was demolished shortly before 1756. The area was redeveloped gradually between the late 18th and late 19th century and most of the now existing houses originate from that development. However the crescent-shape of Stockwell Green as it stands today originates probably from well before the 15th century.

Amongst the buildings that exist today there are examples of Georgian houses built from about 1790 to about 1840.

Amongst the residential buildings included in the proposed area. Nos. 21 to 37 (consec) Stockwell Green form definitely the oldest group. Although the 'Survey of London' refers to these properties as "of little architectural interest" it is suggested that this 30 years old view must have been influenced by the very poor condition in which these buildings were in the mid 1950's when the Survey was compiled.

There is no doubt that this view has since the 50's changed radically not least in the opinion of the DoE who have since listed many of the Stockwell Green houses as of special architectural and historic interest. One of the special characteristics of this terrace is the variety of¹ design and detail which reflects its gradual development over more than fifty years.

No. 21, probably of the late 18th century is a two storey cottage with a plain stock brick facade, the upper storey of which was rebuilt after the Second World War. No. 22, built around 1800 is three-and-a-half storeys high with a stucco Roman Doric doorcase. The contrasting height, detail and decoration at Nos. 21 and 22 contribute to the interesting overall composition of the terrace. Nos. 23 and 24 are paired houses with their entrances in wings. Their prevailing characteristic is the wide segmental-headed three-light window in each of their three storeys.

Nos. 25 and 26 are also paired and were built in 1821. Their three-storey high fronts are dressed in stucco. Their arch-headed doorways are contained in side extensions. Nos. 27 and 27A were small two storey cottages of late 18th century, demolished after 1955, leaving a gap in the middle of the south side of the crescent. Any redevelopment might recreate the small scale of the old cottages in character with the adjacent Nos. 28, 29 and 30.

The latter three properties form a composed terrace of cottages with two storeys and semi-basement each two-window wide of stock brick and stucco decoration. The blocking course on parapet level forms a raised gable inscribed "VICTORIA PLACE" and they were built in the late 1830's. Their main contribution to the street scene is their smaller scale and their symmetrical composition.

Nos. 21 and 32, dating from 1815 are larger paired houses of stock brick with arched openings on ground floor and stucco decoration. The first and second floor have rectangular

openings, those on first floor opening to a cast iron balcony of Regency character. The cast iron balustrade of No. 31 has been removed and used as a section of railings on the front boundary wall. A possible section 10 grant following the designation of the area, may contribute to the reinstatement of this important feature. No. 33 is a later building but its front has been designed to match No. 32 with minor differences to the upper floor windows and the "side-wing. No. 34, an 1810 building is a substantial three storey high, three-window wide detached house of Georgian-villa design. The ground floor has been obscured by the addition of a later - probably mid Victorian - shop, but the upper part of the building is unchanged.

Nos. 35 to 37 (consec) are very small cottages, probably of the last part of the 18th century. Nos. 36 and 37 have been altered considerably but their overall character remains. No. 35 however has been preserved almost intact both externally and internally. It is used as the house of the caretaker of the United Reformed Church and it has recently been studied by a group of architectural students, as an example of a typical small 18th century cottage.

3. Legal considerations

3.1 Section 277(1) of the Town and Country Planning Acts 1971-74 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".

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

4. Equal opportunity considerations

No. 41 Stockwell Green is presently occupied by a local organisation, the Brixton Black Women's Centre, which works for equal opportunities for black women. The property is in very poor structural condition. Designation of the conservation area should enable grant aid for the rehabilitation of this property with substantial contribution from the English Heritage under their Section 10 grant-aid scheme. The Brixton Black Women's Centre are understood to be interested in expanding their activities by acquiring use of the Stockwell Depot at the rear of their present accommodation. The Stockwell Depot is currently disused and in very poor state of repair. Section 10 (English Heritage) grant-aid for properties in conservation areas should enable the conversion and rehabilitation of the derelict depot and should enable the Black Women's Centre to expand their accommodation and activities.

5. Financial considerations

5.1 Designation of the proposed area as a conservation area will in principle make possible the grant-aid of rehabilitation and restoration of properties from English Heritage under Section 10 of the Town and Country Planning Amendment Act 1972. English Heritage have accepted the proposed area as a priority area for grant-aid purposes for the financial year 1986-87 provided that it will be formally designated as a conservation area. Both the Council as the owner of a number of properties and private owners can benefit from this grant-aid scheme.

5.2 There is no expenditure for the Council stemming from the proposals in this report.

6. Planning considerations

6.1 The following properties in the proposed area are Council owned according to our records:

No. 25 Stockwell Green

No. 38, 39 and 40 Stockwell Green (Stockwell Depot)

No. 41 Stockwell Green No. 47 Stockwell Green

6.2 The following properties in the proposed area are listed by the DoE as or special architectural and historic interest.

Nos. 21-26 (consec) Stockwell Green

Nos 28-30 (consec) Stockwell Green

Nos. 31 and 32 Stockwell Green including forecourt walls and railings

Stockwell Green United Reformed Church including gates, piers and railings

Nos. 35-37 (consec) Stockwell Green

6.3 Designation of the proposed area as a conservation area will bring demolition of whole or parts of properties under planning control, under Section 277(A) of the 1971-74 Town and Country Planning Acts. It can also facilitate control over minor alterations if the Council decide to propose a Direction for approval to the Secretary of State under Article 4 of the General Development Order 1981.