

Telford Park

Conservation Area

Appraisal

The character appraisal below is reproduced from the Council's original designation report of 9 September 1994. It is reproduced here to provide guidance on what the Council believes makes the area worthy of its conservation area status and should be consulted by anyone wishing to undertake development affecting the conservation area.

History

2.2 In the Middle Ages, there were four original manor estates in Streatham and its environs. The part of Streatham on which the Telford Park Estate now stands came under Tooting Bee, the derivation of which was St. Mary de Bec after lands owned by John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France. He was given the Bec Manor by Henry V in the 15th Century, with the land passing through the Bedfords' during the ages until the last Duke died in 1802, without issue, and the Bee Manor passed to his brother, John, who broke the estate up into several parts and sold it to a number of families. The area including Telford Park was sold to a Mr Maximilian Richard Kymer. His sister, Sarah, married Charles Telford, a stockbroker in the city of London, and as a dowry she brought the part of the estate under question into the marriage - hence the name.

2.3 With the death of Charles Telford in 1876, or possibly prior to this date, the lands reverted to the Kymer-Stewart estate. In 1877, Martin Stewart and his wife Marianne granted building rights to two developers, Eliot Hanney and his solicitor, Vivian Ellis. It was they who employed a large and active building firm, Sutton & Dudley, to build residences. The development, which began in 1878 (probably at Kirkstall Lodge, although possibly in Thorn-ton Avenue) was completed in 1882. In return for this, Sutton & Dudley became 99-year leaseholders on all the properties in 1880.

2.4 Ordnance survey maps in 1877 and 1900 show clearly how "Telford Road," surrounded by fields, became Telford Avenue with Criffel, Killieser and Kirkstall all around it, with Thornton at the bottom of the hill. All the roads are named after lands on the Sternholt's Scottish estates, with the exception of Thornton, which is dedicated to the Clapham philanthropist and friend of Wilberforce, Henry Thornton.

Character description

2.5 In 1877, the contractors Sutton & Dudley approached the eminent Victorian architect E J Tarver to undertake a commission involving in excess of 120 individual designs. At this time, the Queen Anne Revivalist movement was in full swing in its reaction to the Victorian Gothic style of design. Along with people like C A Voysey, Tarver was a leading light in this movement.

2.6 The houses that remain in Telford Park (over 90 per cent of the total) are a stunning memorial to Tarver's success in creating a uniquely harmonious development in every sense of the term. Completely at variance with the traditional style of Victorian architecture, the houses all have generous ground floor areas, plus in many cases an effective use of wide staircases and split-level to achieve variety and light.

2.7 No two houses in the estate are exactly the same: there are Dutch gables, turrets, double and single fronted versions with an astonishing range of external decoration. However, all these houses with original windows demonstrate that the linking feature of the estate is its distinctively Queen Anne

fenestration. Thus, although the estate stretches over a considerable area, taking in Telford, Criffel,) Killieser, Thornton, and Sternhold Avenues and Kirkstall Road in Streatham Bill, Tarver's window layouts are always clearly recognisable.

2.8 The first houses were constructed in 1878, at first mainly the double-fronted and turret versions aimed right at the top of the market. Sutton & Dudley's initials are clearly visible in the external decorations, and the progress of the estate can be traced via the dates which are displayed over the front doors.

2.9 Tarver's decision to make a complex of tennis courts the central feature of the estate ensured Telford Park's social success in late Victorian and Edwardian society. The Telford Park Lawn Tennis Club opened in June 1880, and is the second oldest club in England after Wimbledon.

Purpose of designation

2.10 The purpose of designating Telford Park as a Conservation Area is twofold. Firstly to enable the Council to bring greater development control powers to bear on insensitive and inappropriate development in the area, in an effort to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of this area of special architectural or historical interest. Secondly, to enable the Council to take positive steps towards preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the area. For example, issuing guidance to property owners explaining the effects of designation and/or publishing a preservation and enhancement plan for the area.

Reasons for designation

2.11 Over recent years, local groups in Streatham, particularly the Telford Park Association, have sought the designation of Telford Park as a conservation area. They believe and have argued that it will have a beneficial effect upon the amenity of the area, and result in residents taking greater care of the appearance of their properties and of their environment.

2.12 The Telford Park area - as shown on Plan Ho. DES/PP/162 is considered to be an area of special historic interest (as described in sections 2.2 - 2.9) with an identifiable character which is desirable to preserve and enhance. Essentially, the character of this area lies in the appearance, style and setting of the architecturally special houses. None of these buildings is listed but they possess quality and merits as a group. The major concern of local residents is that the buildings in the Telford Park area may suffer aesthetically from unsympathetic alterations and hence degrade their merit individually and as a group. Conservation Area designation for Telford Park would allow the council to use controls available under Conservation Area legislation and to place an emphasis on design criteria and their application to buildings/sites if they are subsequently redeveloped or extended (as encouraged in paragraph 4.19 of Draft PPG15; Historic Buildings and conservation Areas).'