

TOTTENHAM CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2009/10 REPORT



Tottenham and Edmonton Dispensary, 746 High Road, Tottenham, one of the historic buildings due for demolition under the Spurs development proposals.

The Dispensary opened on this site in 1864. A precursor of the NHS, it provided the poor with medical advice and medicine. Services were at first provided free but later a small weekly charge was introduced. In 1910, H. Seymour Couchman, a local architect, designed a new building which is now locally listed because of its history and because of its handsome Edwardian design with a fine stone ground-floor entrance and a Doric door case. The Dispensary remained in use until 1938. Photo: Joseph Nicholas.

Foreword

Tottenham CAAC has had a very busy year. Despite the economic slowdown and fewer planning applications being made, the committee has made thorough comments on several major developments and a host of minor ones. With a diverse and increasingly experienced membership, we are a respected voice in planning in the east of the borough.

Matthew Bradby, Chair of Tottenham CAAC

1 Conservation areas

Conservation areas were introduced under legislation passed in 1967. Local planning authorities have a duty to designate as conservation areas any "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

There are 29 conservation areas in Haringey. The first to be designated was Highgate. The second was the North Tottenham section of the High Road which has many fine Georgian houses. Three Haringey conservation areas - Tower Gardens (in Tottenham), Noel Park (in Wood Green) and Rookfield (in Muswell Hill) – have had Article 4 Directions imposed which gives the Council more powers to preserve their heritage features.

Twelve of Haringey's conservation areas are in Tottenham. Six of these are centred on the High Road – the old Roman Ermine Street which was a major thoroughfare over the centuries and which contains a wealth of historic buildings. Bruce Castle conservation area is the heart of historic Tottenham. Tower Gardens is a pioneering working class housing estate built by the London County Council between 1904 and 1928 in a similar style to Hampstead Garden Suburb. The Peabody Cottages on Lordship Lane were built in 1907. Clyde Circus conservation area between Philip Lane and West Green Road consists of Victorian villas and houses built for the middle class. St Ann's conservation area has some Victorian houses and other important buildings.

Tottenham's 12 conservation areas

Tottenham High Road Historic Corridor

North Tottenham (CA 2)

Tottenham Green (CA 9)

Scotland Green (CA 18)

Bruce Grove (CA 22)

Seven Sisters/Pages Green (CA 26)

South Tottenham (CA 27)

Bruce Castle (CA 6)

Tottenham Cemetery (CA 8)

Tower Gardens (CA 11)

St Ann's (CA 17)

Clyde Circus (CA 19)

Peabody Cottages (CA 21)

Tottenham has many buildings nationally listed by English Heritage. Bruce Castle and its Tower are both Grade I listed (out of only six in the borough). Nearly half of the 27 Grade II* listed buildings in Haringey are in Tottenham. 155 of the 427 Grade II listed buildings in Haringey are found in Tottenham and there are over 500 "locally listed buildings of special merit". Tottenham High Road alone has over 300 nationally and locally listed buildings (with many more just off the High Road). Details of all the conservation areas and listed buildings in the borough can be found on Haringey Council website.

2 Conservation area advisory committees

Conservation area advisory committees (CAACs) are non-statutory bodies which were first established in the 1970s and are promoted by the government in planning policy guidance as good practice in securing conservation objectives. There is an emphasis on public consultation and involvement in the planning process, although there is no national guidance on their organisation and operation or on the role of local authorities in their support. CAACs have two main functions: to assist the local authority in formulating policies for their conservation area(s); and to act as a continuing source of advice on planning and other applications which could affect an area. Membership of a CAAC typically includes representatives of residents' associations, local historical, civic and amenity societies, local business groups and chambers of commerce.

There are four CAACs in the west of the borough - Highgate, Muswell Hill, Hornsey and Alexandra Park/ Palace. These cover a single or small number of conservation areas. Tottenham CAAC covers all twelve conservation areas in Tottenham. A new CAAC for Noel Park conservation area was established in 2009 and has been very active.

Following requests from Tottenham CAAC, there is now information about all Haringey CAACs on the Council website. Tottenham CAAC keeps other CAACs informed of its work. A joint meeting of all Haringey CAACs to share experiences and concerns is planned for early 2010.

In 2009 English Heritage carried out its first ever survey of the condition of conservation areas in England (over 9,000 in total). The report, published in June, showed that one in seven is at risk of neglect, decay or damaging change. In fact all the conservation areas in Tottenham suffer from the threats they listed. English Heritage has launched the Conservation Areas at Risk campaign to get residents, local groups and councils working together to improve these special places before it is too late. Noel Park CAAC succeeded in getting its conservation area featured in the EH report and in the subsequent media coverage.

3 Tottenham CAAC

The first Tottenham CAAC, consisting of representatives of local residents' groups and other interested people, was set up in 1977 but over the years found it difficult to recruit enough active members and ceased activity in 2000.

Tottenham CAAC was re-launched in 2007. The Council's conservation staff provided training and support. It has been meeting regularly since then.

Tottenham CAAC membership 2009

Alison Armour	Bruce Grove resident. Member of the Bruce Grove Residents Network and Tottenham Civic Society.
Matthew Bradby (Chair)	Tower Gardens Estate resident and Secretary of Tower Gardens Residents Group. Chair of Tottenham Civic Society.
Catherine Cavanagh (Vice Chair)	Tottenham resident. Heritage Lottery Fund Project Manager at the Epping Forest division of City of London Open Spaces.
Stuart Chapman	Bruce Grove resident. Member of Tottenham Civic Society. Tottenham resident.
David Divers	Archaeology advisor working for English Heritage
Lesley Flynn (Treasurer)	Warden of the Grade II listed Drapers' Almshouses, Edmonson's Close, in Bruce Castle conservation area.
Colin Hobbs	Tottenham Hale resident. For many years active in local politics.
Val Kovalenko	Tower Gardens Estate resident. Member of Tottenham Civic Society and of Tower Gardens Residents Group.
Rowan Kumar	South Tottenham resident. Member of Tottenham Civic Society, Friends of Downhills Park and Friends of Finsbury Park.
Joseph Nicholas	Clyde Circus conservation area resident. Secretary of Tottenham Civic Society and a member of Tottenham and Wood Green Friends of the Earth.
Sue Penny	Clyde Circus conservation area resident and member of Clyde Area Residents Association. Chair of Haringey Living Streets and a member of Friends of the Earth.
John Robson	Treasurer of Tottenham CAAC from the mid-1990s to 2000. Member of Friends of Bruce Castle and was involved in the Tottenham History Workshop.
Joyce Rosser (Secretary)	Heritage and Conservation Officer of Haringey Federation of Residents Associations. Member of Tottenham Civic Society and Friends of Bruce Castle.
Carol Sykes	Secretary of Tottenham CAAC from the mid-1990s to 2000. Independent member of the Council's Standards Committee. Member of Friends of Bruce Castle and was involved in the Tottenham History Workshop.
Noel Treacy	South Tottenham resident.

In addition Chris Lane (Chair of the first Tottenham CAAC for 17 years, Manager of Tottenham Traders Association and Prospect Place resident) and John Thompson (Curator of the Alexandra Palace Television Group and Prospect Place resident) act as advisors to the CAAC.

4 Work undertaken in 2009

Tottenham CAAC meets every two months. Between meetings planning applications are discussed by email (all planning applications can be easily accessed on the Haringey Council website). Due to the number of planning applications and the fact that most CAAC members have full time jobs it is not possible to respond to all of them. Nor is it necessary to do so. The most important planning applications from a conservation point of view are prioritised. Planning applications which raise other issues are sometimes referred to local residents' associations in case they wish to respond.

In 2009 Tottenham CAAC was notified of 133 planning applications in Tottenham conservation areas although this number included 28 planning applications from British Telecom for telecommunications cabinets (see 4.12 below). Of the remaining 105 planning applications, objections were made to 17, favourable or general comments were made on 13 and 75 drew no response.

CAAC members regularly attend Development Control Forums and Planning Committee meetings and have taken part in a number of planning enquiries. Good relations are being developed with council officers, particularly in the Conservation and Design Team, the Planning Control Teams, the Planning Enforcement Team and the Regeneration Unit.

Ismail Mohammed, the Council Group Manager for Strategy and Sites, came to a CAAC meeting to talk about the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options. The CAAC response to the consultation document noted that there was less emphasis on the heritage and conservation features in the east of the borough compared to the west and a number of specific revisions to remedy this were made.

4.1 Spurs development

The Northumberland Development Project is by far the biggest and most important development affecting Tottenham High Road Historic Corridor. In addition to the new stadium, the development includes 450 housing units, a supermarket and a hotel. It involves the demolition of two nationally listed buildings and a number of locally listed buildings including the historic Tottenham and Edmonton Dispensary.

There were two pre-planning application public consultations setting out the proposals. Early in the year CAAC representatives met with MAKE, the Spurs architects, to argue that some of the heritage buildings due to be demolished in the High Road should be retained. English Heritage and SAVE Britain's Heritage also held meetings with the architects. SAVE produced an alternative plan showing how the buildings could be retained in the development. However when the planning applications were submitted in November 2009 it was clear that Spurs intended to go ahead with its plans to demolish all the buildings at the southern end of the development site to create a new open space.

The CAAC response stated that whilst it supported the scheme in principle, it believed that the scale of loss to the historic streetscape would be both unacceptable and unnecessary for the construction and successful future of the new stadium. It argued that adequate efforts had not been made to find alternative uses for the heritage assets or to work those assets into the proposals; and that the proposals for the open space were not good enough to warrant the loss of the heritage buildings. The response went on to look at the case for demolishing Warmington House and Fletcher House (both nationally listed), the Tottenham and Edmonton Dispensary, the Red House and the former White Hart Public House (all locally listed). It concluded that the computer-aided design views in the Spurs proposals showing retention of Warmington House, the Dispensary, and other buildings at the southern end, rather than supporting the argument for their demolition, showed that they would provide dramatic contrast to the new stadium and associated buildings.

The CAAC argued that the alternative vision put forward by SAVE presented a far more coherent, sustainable and achievable proposal for the southern end of the site. SAVE's model would create a public square that would retain existing valuable heritage assets and use these as a shield to separate the High Road traffic from the public square, its users, and hotel and other guests. Furthermore it would maintain

coherence between the two sides of the High Road, so that Bill Nicholson Way would continue to exist as a key axis facing St Francis de Sales Church on the opposite side.

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) is critical of the development saying that it is disappointed that important, previously raised, concerns about the nature of the buildings to the north and south of the stadium remain unresolved. It states that the secondary buildings do not relate well to the stadium or respond successfully to their context and the various elements of the design do not appear to be working together coherently. CABE also has reservations about the scale and massing of the supermarket and residential block, the quantum and potential residential quality of the housing, and the design of the new square in the south-west corner of the site. For these reasons, although CABE supports the design of the stadium, it states that it cannot support the planning application as a whole.

4.2 Ward's Corner

The CAAC supports the Ward's Corner Community Coalition (WCCC) campaign against the proposed development. WCCC took the Council's granting of planning permission to judicial review. Although this failed, WCCC have now been given leave to appeal.

4.3 Tower Gardens

The CAAC has welcomed a number of planning applications from Homes for Haringey to replace existing windows with double glazed timber windows of the same appearance. Unfortunately private owners, often absentee landlords, have over the years been allowed to remove original features and make other changes in spite of the Article Four Direction. The CAAC is glad to see that the Council Planning Enforcement Team has been more active in Tower Gardens this year. Concerns have been reported to Planning Enforcement and objections made to various planning applications (which sometimes seek retrospective planning permission for changes made without planning consent).

4.4 Public houses

The CAAC opposed a development for 28 residential units on land to the rear (taking up half the pub garden) and side of the Fountain pub in West Green Road (Clyde Circus conservation area). It was refused planning permission but the developers appealed. The CAAC was pleased to hear that the appeal was dismissed. The reasons for refusal include: height of proposed blocks would overwhelm Fountain pub; rear block would loom over rear pub garden and would reduce value of this small area of open space; small size of amenity space so difficult to replace trees; proposed design mediocre; and development would detract from character and appearance of conservation area.

The CAAC welcomed an application to restore the historic Swan public house (on the corner of Philip Lane) and build a rear extension of housing units that would match the historic style of nearby Victorian buildings. Rebuilding and restoration of the handsome Edwardian Prince of Wales pub (612 High Road), left almost derelict by various fires, is going ahead. The CAAC was delighted to hear that the Beehive pub, just off the High Road, had been listed by English Heritage but is concerned to note that it is now up for sale.

4.5 316 High Road

In 2008 the CAAC objected to a proposal to knock down the "Cookestates" building at 316 High Road and build a bland four storey building in its place. It was refused planning permission by the Planning Committee but the developer then appealed. The result of the appeal is currently awaited.

4.6 700/702 High Road and land to rear (Argyle Passage and Bromley Road)

A second proposal was submitted for this site. The CAAC objected on the grounds that too much was crammed into this awkwardly shaped and partially inaccessible site. It was argued that the southern and northern parts should have been treated separately and that there should have been an application for Conservation Area Consent to demolish 702 High Road. The Planning Committee granted planning

permission with various conditions but only an "informative" saying that a Conservation Area Consent application should be made.

4.7 Scotland Green House

The CAAC considered this proposal to build 43 residential units and one commercial unit retaining and extending the structural frame of the existing 1960 building. The CAAC made comments about design materials, density and height of the development. The absence of "retail units" on the ground floor of the development was welcomed because these often remain empty (or occupied by bookmakers). In addition it asked whether it was appropriate for this to be an almost "car-free development", that is, with minimal car parking provision. The Planning Department and Planning Committee seem to ignore the UDP guidelines for car-free developments. The development was granted planning permission but like other developments there is no guarantee that it will go ahead.

4.8 Listed buildings in Bruce Grove

The Georgian buildings in Bruce Grove are of great importance. Some have been restored and converted into flats but others are in a dilapidated state and at great risk. No. 7, the former home of Luke Howard, "the namer of clouds" (with blue plaque) is boarded up and for sale. It is possible that the Council might issue a CPO for the building. There was a second planning application for No. 8, the Tottenham Trades Club, which involved refurbishment of the building (keeping the pub on the ground floor with housing units above) and building five houses to the rear of the site. The CAAC objected on the grounds that the proposed access arch would spoil the appearance of the building.

4.9 High Road Heritage Project (Bruce Grove conservation area)

The Council Regeneration Unit has continued the restoration work on buildings in this section of the High Road. The CAAC has welcomed planning applications for installation of new shop fronts and awnings, reinstatement of architectural features, brick/masonry repairs, reinstatement of sash windows and roof and chimney repairs on some Victorian and Edwardian shopping terraces. The CAAC's concern is whether the owners will safeguard these features and maintain their premises.

4.10 End of the gyratory system

Tottenham CAAC was pleased to see Transport for London's long awaited proposals to do away with the gyratory traffic system which has blighted a section of the High Road and other parts of Tottenham. CAAC members took part in a walk-about from Seven Sisters Road to Philip Lane with TfL officers to hear about the proposals for this section of the High Road. The CAAC response to the consultation whilst welcoming the proposals in general, asked that the planters be retained and properly maintained (they have been very neglected); more plane trees be planted; the CAAC should see the plans for the new setting for the High Cross monument and there should be a pedestrian crossing near Philip Lane.

4.11 97/99 Philip Lane

The CAAC is pleased to see that the Council has issued a compulsory purchase order for this handsome pair of locally listed Victorian villas in Clyde Circus conservation area which have been allowed to deteriorate by their absentee owner so that they are now semi-derelict.

4.12 Telephone kiosks and cabinets

The CAAC objected to a number of planning applications for large ugly BT payphone kiosks (ostensibly providing disabled access) in the High Road. The fact that these planning applications were made in the name of J C Decaux rather than BT made it clear that their main function would be advertising not provision of a public phone service. The back of the kiosks would have had large colour moving adverts. The CAAC objected on the grounds that they were unacceptable advertising and useless street clutter which would damage the appearance of the conservation area (and anywhere else for that matter). They

were refused planning permission. The CAAC also was notified of a large number of applications for large telecommunications cabinets (to provide broadband) and objections were made to some which were located near listed buildings or in other sensitive locations.

4.13 Crossovers

Tottenham CAAC has continued to liaise with members of other CAACS in seeking to persuade the Council to take a tougher line over allowing crossovers and parking in front gardens which damage the appearance of local areas. Unfortunately in the past crossovers were often allowed which makes it more difficult to enforce restrictions now.

5 The future – heritage, regeneration, development and the recession

Tottenham needs regeneration: restoration of its heritage buildings can play an important part in this. The CAAC understands the importance of the Spurs development for the regeneration of north Tottenham and while welcoming the club's commitment to support restoration of the northern heritage buildings, the CAAC regrets its decision not to retain some of the southern heritage buildings. The CAAC is delighted to see that the Tottenham Town Hall/Clyde Depot site development is underway as this will restore the listed Town Hall building and bring it back into use. The CAAC welcomed new proposals for 315 The Roundway (near Bruce Castle) but nothing further has been heard of these. There is no sign of work starting on various developments in the High Road which were granted planning permission such as Nos. 16-52 (by Rostrevor Avenue), Nos. 375-379 (near the Palace Theatre) and Nos. 658/660 (by Hampden Lane).

Appendix One: Terms of reference, membership and protocol for the operation of Tottenham Conservation Areas Advisory Committee

The role of a CAAC is to help the local planning authority to consider applications that may affect the character or appearance of a conservation area and to assist in the formulation of conservation and design policies.

Membership of Tottenham CAAC could include representatives of residents' associations, local historical, civic and amenity societies, local business groups and chambers of commerce. Members initially serve a period of two years but can serve further terms. Membership should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is representative of local areas and groups. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the CAAC are elected annually.

The CAAC Secretary is sent details of all planning applications affecting the twelve Tottenham conservation areas. The CAAC meets at least six times a year to consider planning applications and other matters relating to conservation area policy. Between meetings information about planning applications is circulated to all members by email and CAAC responses are agreed by email. Where appropriate site visits are undertaken by CAAC members. CAAC members attend Development Control Forums relating to planning applications in conservation areas.

CAAC members take part in training provided locally and attend events organised by national bodies.

If you would like more information about Tottenham CAAC contact CAAC Secretary, 46 Redston Road, Hornsey, N8 7HJ; Tel 020 8347 7684; email jrosser@lineone.net

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