

London Borough of Bromley

Report No.
ELS05091

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Agenda
Item No.

10

Title: **CONSERVATION AREAS: PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREA AT ELM ROAD, BECKENHAM**

Decision Maker: **Development Control Committee** Decision Date: **19 Apr 2005**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Budget/Policy Framework: Within policy but outside budget

Chief Officer: Stuart Macmillan

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Ward: Clock House

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Development Control Committee on 26 October 2004, Members agreed in principle to a new designation of a Conservation Area to include Elm Road and part of Beckenham Road (as shown on Map BCA 45 in Appendix 1) with a recommendation that the residents be consulted. The consultation ran from 4th January 2005 for a minimum of 28 days.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 In the light of the public consultation responses Members are asked to recommend to the Council's Executive the designation of Elm Road, Beckenham as a Conservation Area under Part II Paragraph 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 The Elm Road area is characterised by late Victorian houses and it includes the Baptist Church (1883), The Studio (1899) and Beckenham Library (1939).
- 3.2 The area had been considered for conservation area designation in 1988 (DC 11.10.88). At that time it was not deemed worthy of designation. The G L Hearn (GLH) study of built heritage indicated in May 2004 that the area might be worthy of designation.

Consultation

- 3.3 All of the properties within and adjacent to the proposed Elm Road Conservation Area were sent a consultation pack on 4 January 2005 and were given 28 days in which to return their comments. The consultation pack consisted of a cover letter, fact sheet P13 (information on conservation areas), a copy of Map BCA 45 showing the proposed boundary with explanatory notes on the merits of the area and a response proforma. The views of English Heritage and the Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas (APCA) were also sought.
- 3.4 A press notice was published in the 13 January 2005 edition of the Kentish Times informing the wider public of the proposed conservation area consultation. It advised that a copy of Map BCA 45 was available for public inspection at the Planning and Engineering Reception at the Civic Centre or alternatively it could be requested by contacting the planning division.

Responses

- 3.8 A total of 195 consultation packs were sent and 72 responses were received within the consultation period. They were as follows: -

66 responses	stated that Elm Road was worthy of conservation area designation
6 responses	objected to the proposed designation

- 3.9 All the comments have been considered by the Conservation Officers, who have, where necessary, responded in writing to individual concerns. The majority showed support to the proposed conservation area designation. For example:-

“It is my view that this integrated streetscape should be given the status of a conservation area. These roads represent one of the few remaining parts of Beckenham to retain a flow of characterful buildings in a similar architectural language.”

- 3.10 English Heritage is of the opinion that the area is not worthy of conservation area designation. Their letter dated 02 February 2005 states:-

“It is our view that the proposed area lacks the special interest required to justify conservation area status. There is a danger that a designation here will lead to a devaluing of conservation area across the Borough. We would recommend that the Council should instead seek to develop and use its design guidance as a more appropriate way to control the quality of development.”

3.11 APCA has given its full support for the proposal. However it recommends a wider area to be designated, which would include nos. 13 to 27 and 45 to 63 Cedars Road, 30 to 34 and 19 to 35 Hayne Road and the north part of Queens Road as recommended in the GL Hearn report. This wider area had been considered as being excessive, particularly having regard to the comments of English Heritage. A somewhat reduced area, as shown in Map BCA 45, is therefore recommended in this report. It should be noted that Nos. 5 to 27 Cedars Road are being recommended for inclusion on the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historical Interest.

3.12 The West Beckenham Residents' Association has also shown its strong support for the proposed designation.

The individual responses are available for inspection.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The additional conservation area, together with the ongoing monitoring and development control workload has implications for staff levels. Additional designation as envisaged in the October 2004 report will further increase workload. For the time being these are being met by temporary staff funded from the Planning Delivery Grant.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Section 69 of the 1990 Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities 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'. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council seeks to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas. This is reflected in Policy E7 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1994) and Policy BE9 of the Second Deposit Draft of the UDP (2002).

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial Implications
Background Documents:	DC Report of 26 October 2004.