

THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

Chairman: Miss Nadine Beddington, 17 Champion Grove, S E 5

Hon Treasurer: Brian Allsworth, 165 Grove Lane, S E 5 (274 0367)

Hon Secretary: Ronald Watts, 19 Addington Square, S E 5 (703 7026, office 723 7030 ext 2178)

NEWSLETTER NO 12 & NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

May 1973

Annual General Meeting - Monday June 4th 1973

The Annual General Meeting of The Camberwell Society will be held on June 4th 1973 in the Vaughan Room at the United Reformed Church, Love Walk, at 8 o'clock.

AGENDA

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| 1 | Apologies for absence | |
| 2 | Previous minutes | |
| 3 | Matters arising out of the minutes | |
| 4 | Report of the Executive Committee | |
| 5 | Treasurer's report | |
| 6 | Election of officers and committee ** | |
| 7 | Any other business | |
- ** Nominations will be required for Chairman, Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary, and for the committee. Any paid-up member may together with a seconder nominate candidates for the officers and committee. Nominations may be made at the meeting but would be preferred in writing before the meeting to the Secretary, 19 Addington Square, S E 5

Ronald Watts, Hon Secretary, 19 Addington Square, S E 5 (703 7026)

Grove Park Day Training Centre

The Criminal Justice Act 1972 enables day training centres to be provided. These centres are a new venture and so four areas have been chosen to run pilot centres. One of the areas is London. The Inner London Probation and After-Care Service have the responsibility for the London Centre. The Receiver of the Metropolitan Police was asked by the Service to find suitable premises last summer. At that time the police nursing home in Grove Park was (and is) about to be replaced by a new nursing home elsewhere so that the Grove Park premises were likely to be available. The Service thought the premises suitable and so a planning application was lodged with the local planning authority.

The ordinary planning procedures do not apply but the procedures required are set out in a Circular, no 80 of 1971. In general terms the Circular assimilates planning procedures for 'central Authority' applications to the ordinary procedures but there differences, for example, if the applicant refuses an extension of time for further consideration of the application, the planning authority cannot rely on lapse of time to result in a refusal, for under the Circular delay results in a deemed approval of the application.

At the time the Probation Service lodged the application no information of the proposal was circulated either to The Camberwell Society or to the residents. After some weeks some adjoining residents received notices of the application. Concern was aroused because no detailed information about the proposed centre was available. One or two of the residents approached Brian Allsworth, the Society's Treasurer, and some Cliff Potter, a member of the Executive Committee and a Borough Councillor for the ward and a member of the Planning Committee. A petition was suggested and Brian Allsworth and Ron Watts drafted an appropriate form of wording.

In order to get more information available Cliff Potter and Ron Watts made and supported a suggestion that the Planning Department should ask the Receiver to arrange a public meeting at which the Probation Service and the Receiver could describe the proposal, the reasons for it and alternative possibilities for the premises and enable the residents to ask questions. The meeting was held at the Warwick Hall, Kimpton Street. The Chair was taken by Mr Pearce, the Senior Probation Officer for Inner London, and was attended by many local residents from Grove Park and adjoining areas and by Sam Silkin, the MP for Dulwich.

After this meeting residents from Grove Park, including Brian Slack, were unhappy about the position and thought much more information could be made available. Brian Slack and the Secretary, Ron Watts, discussed the position and a meeting was arranged to take place at the Town Hall between the Executive Committee of the Society and local residents. At the meeting the whole question including the Circular 80 procedure was discussed and the principles involved in presenting a reasoned case against the proposal. It was decided that the Secretary should write to the Probation Service seeking more information, to the Receiver requesting that the application be stayed pending the receipt of further information, and to the Home Office expressing the concern of the local residents at the proposal and the way the application had been handled.

At the same time the petition had been circulated and the local residents had decided to convene a meeting to consider establishing a local action committee. The petition was handed in to the Planning Committee by Cliff Potter. The Grove Park Action Group was formed. The Group decided on a variety of courses of action including the preparation of a considered statement against the proposal and to seek a deputation to the Borough Planning Committee. The Secretary received a reply from the Probation Service. The Action Group circulated copies of this letter and reply to all local residents. A case was prepared. The request for a deputation was supported in the Planning Committee by local members and the deputation was received. The case was presented by Mr Found with other members of the Action Group forming the deputation.

The Day Training Centre proposal is an experiment. No similar centre has existed and so no information on how the centres affect their neighbourhood is available. The Action Group make it plain that there is no objection in principle to social work institutions in the area but say that quite enough exist already and that there is a risk inevitably associated with centres of this kind, particularly in areas where there are children and old people. The Borough Council is building a nurse's home in the area and a number of old people's homes have long been established. It is suggested that the Police Nursing Home could be used for a nursing home for the local Social Services or for the National Health Service.

The Probation Service have said that the offenders who are intended to be placed at such centre will not have a record for violence or drugs but will be carefully chosen to ensure that they are very likely to be able to respond to a short period of intensive day training in a centre placed in a residential area. It has been said that at no time will there be more than twenty-five offenders under training at the centre and the buildings to be used will not go outside the nursing home itself. It is envisaged that at a later date the nurses' home will be used for a residential centre if planning permission is obtained for this further proposal.

(A further report of this matter will be made as more information comes to hand)

The Editor apologises for the long interval since the last Newsletter (no 11) and expects that it will not occur again. Newsletter no 13 will include the report of the Executive Committee referred to in the Agenda for the AGM.

Miss Gillian Whaite
30 Love Walk
S E 5

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NEWSLETTER NO 13 & ANNUAL REPORT 1972/73

June 1973

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription to the Society is 50 pence a year, due on June 1st.

If you are on the books of the Society you will find with this Newsletter a separate slip shewing the subscriptions (if any) which are due to the Society: please pay these promptly so that you don't rely on others to keep your Society going!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 4th June 1973 at the United Reformed Church, Love Walk, 8 o'clock

If you have paid for the last year (June 1972 – May 1973) you will also receive a voting slip (in case there are more than 10 proposals for membership of the Executive Committee); if your subscription is in arrears you may pay at the meeting and obtain your voting slip.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1972/73

The last annual meeting was notable for the requests for members to be more widely involved in the affairs of the Society particularly from the point of view of holding public meetings. We have endeavoured to meet these requests and accordingly four meetings of the Society have been held in addition to the eleven meetings of the Executive Committee during the period June 1972 to May 1973.

The October meeting which was called to open public discussion about the apparently decaying situation around Camberwell Green was extremely well attended and enabled local residents to voice their views and concerns about the area (see report of this meeting in Newsletter no 11). We were very grateful to the officers from the Planning and Highways Departments of the Borough Council and the GLC who attended. We held a meeting in November to discuss open space provision; attention was to a great extent concentrated on the North Camberwell Open Space. Again we were grateful to the GLC for providing speakers including the Chief Parks Officer; on this occasion, however, the Borough Council refused to provide us with a speaker.

In February Miss Boast gave us an excellent and fascinating talk on the buildings and history of Camberwell. Our fourth meeting was held in March at the time of the GLC elections: all the candidates for the Peckham and Dulwich constituencies were invited to an open forum to answer questions about the Ringways.

We are most grateful to the United Reformed Church for allowing us to hold these meetings in their excellent premises.

Throughout the meetings on current affairs we have detected a general public disquiet about massive and insensitive redevelopment and highway schemes. Many local communities are being and have been wantonly destroyed by unnecessary scorched-earth approaches to providing better housing conditions. No one denies the need for careful attention to be paid to the problems of housing but the methods so frequently used must ultimately be seen to be contrary to the real interests of the community.

One illustration of this is seen in respect of historic buildings. It seems that the only way in which it is possible to retain any sense of continuity and regard for local community life and values is to shew that historic buildings and other buildings of character are about to be pulled down and then there is the chance that a small area might not be blighted, blasted, and after a period of decay destroyed and rebuilt in modern grandiose manner.

A new statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest in Southwark was issued by the Department of the Environment in September last year; in anticipation of this the Society submitted a list prepared by Stephen Marks and James Elliott of those which we thought should be listed in Camberwell and Peckham. It is some reward for their efforts that several of our suggestions have been accepted, but many more were not and the Society is still not satisfied that the list as it stands is either adequate or consistent or that it offers all the protection it should.

It is monstrous that the demolition of listed buildings can even be contemplated by public bodies with seemingly little serious thought as to whether they can be retained within a development proposal. An illustration of this is the public inquiry about nos 6-12 New Cross Road. These houses which could on any argument be retained in redevelopment proposals for the area had for possibly understandable reasons been allowed to deteriorate and the inevitable came — an application by the London Borough of Southwark to be allowed to demolish these four listed buildings. This Society vigorously opposed the application and was happy to support the Historic Buildings Division of the GLC.

We have also objected to applications by the Borough Council for consent to demolish other listed buildings in Holly Grove and Staffordshire Street and we have lodged objections to a number of the Council's compulsory purchase orders for a variety of reasons: we feel that so often the orders are made to facilitate an undesirable redevelopment policy; sometimes they involve the demolition of listed buildings (Holly Grove), sometimes clearance without any plans for the future (Daneville Road), on other occasions we have no assurances from the Council of their proposals for listed and other buildings of architectural value (Peckham Hill Street and Queens Road).

We have felt obliged when listed buildings are involved to widen our view beyond the Society's area of benefit because the Council's general attitude and overall policy on historic buildings is very much our concern.

The Society very much hopes that the general concern which is being voiced about redevelopment both in our own area and outside it will be heeded and more adequate attention paid not only to methods of redevelopment which will avoid the blight and waste so often caused but also to rehabilitation.

We have kept a careful watch on planning applications. The Society receives from the Borough Council a fortnightly list which is extremely helpful and, supplemented by individual notices of more important applications, gives us a full picture of matters requiring our attention.

There are two trends in recent planning applications which have merited particular study in the past year. The first concern is the conversion of family houses into a large number of flats or flatlets: whilst it is true that many houses are too big for most families it does not follow that it is satisfactory to squeeze as many flats as possible into it. Stephen Marks prepared a memorandum on this question, dealing with architectural character, structural dangers, and the consequential effects in terms of amenity of forming permanently several dwellings in one house. The Society hopes that the planning authorities and, through them, the developers will give greater thought to the full implications of subdivision.

The second field to which we have given special study is mews development. Developments involving two or three storey buildings have been proposed in the mews south of the railway between Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane and elsewhere. The Society is extremely concerned that although the present proposals are likely, if accepted, to establish a pattern of development for their areas there seems to be no overall policy for them.

We are represented by Stephen Marks on the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee of the Borough Council. This committee comprises representatives of several local societies whose area include conservation areas and of other bodies such as the Royal Institute of British Architects and The Victorian Society. Its meetings enable it to discuss with the Borough Council planning applications and future policies relating to conservation areas and to suggest new areas for designation.

Before Christmas the Society published a greetings card which sold extremely well and Stephen Marks published on behalf of the Society a set of fourteen Views of Old Camberwell.

Parks and open spaces - report of meeting on November on November 29th 1972

On November 29th 1972 the Society held an open meeting on the subject of parks and open spaces in Camberwell. Although intended to refer to the general topic of provision of open space in our area almost the whole of the meeting was devoted to the North Camberwell Open Space, which the GLC, after inviting suggestions from the public, has now named St George's Park. The principal speaker was Mr J C Kennedy, Chief Parks Officer of the GLC, who had arranged for the display of a large model and plans of the eventual layout of the park. Mr Kennedy was supported by Mr Jones, the architect in charge of the development scheme, Mr Brackley, a land agent from the Valuer's department, and Mr Sadler, Parks Manager of St George's Park.

The Borough Council, although invited, had declined to send a speaker to the meeting so that we were not given

an opportunity to hear what the Council thought about either the St George's Park proposals or the general issue of providing open space. However, Ron Watts, Hon Secretary of the Society, and Cliff Potter, both Councillors and members of the Planning Committee, stepped into the breach and made some preliminary remarks before Mr Kennedy spoke.

Cliff Potter shewed some slides from the Council's open space report and explained the hierarchy of open spaces, metropolitan, borough, local and small local. The last two categories (over and under 4 acres respectively) could sometimes be created in conjunction with redevelopment proposals. He said that although there was extensive private open space and playing fields in the southern part of the borough, that is in Camberwell and Dulwich, this often did not directly offer facilities to the public, and there were built-up areas which were deficient in their access to public open space, as was shewn on one

of his slides. There is a fifteen year programme to eliminate the deficiencies, one item being the creation of a 4 acre open space in the neighbourhood of Dog Kennel Hill*.

Ron Watts who took the Borough Council to task for failing in its duty to send someone to speak about open space policy, said that he thought that most use was made of small local parks and that this could be a basis for criticism of the creation of large parks such as St George's, but he aimed his principal complaints at the protracted phasing of the park plan and the attendant blight: several people were living in increasingly difficult conditions, unable to get grants for improvements, not knowing how long they might expect to remain. The Society had already, in conjunction with the South London Society of Architects, made several suggestions relating to the preservation of buildings and to the lack of imagination in the layout of the park, but these had fallen on deaf ears†.

Mr Kennedy gave an outline of the proposals, which were approved in principle at the beginning of 1972; these had been much speeded up after an improved programme of acquisition; they had been the subject of consultation with Southwark and other borough councils and of public participation in the form of newspaper, leaflets, and caravan displays. At present 35 acres were laid out in a temporary manner but the ultimate design could not be achieved yet for any part. He said that the eventual scheme of some 135 acres included 29 acres of grass, 6 acres artificially floodlit, modelled except where there were pitches and play areas, a 14 acre lake, 12 for boating and 2 for fishing, a riding centre along Albany Road, open air bathing pool, skating, a car park designed alongside Glengall Terrace but already relocated. They were negotiating with the Church Commissioners for the acquisition of St George's Church in Wells Way. No decision had yet been made about St Mark's Church, designed by Norman Shaw, which stood within the area of the proposed lake; this was an example of the GLC's flexible approach in planning the park. The retention of some other listed buildings was still being considered by the Borough Council and the Department of the Environment. It was intended that the area to the west of Wells Way should be completed by 1980.

Discussion was mainly concerned with two aspects, the actual layout and design, and the uncertainty, lack of improvement grants and acquisition by the GLC.

Those who were critical of the layout had the impression that the designers of the park were satisfied that merely by providing the facilities and amenities required they had done their job. It was felt that much more attention to detail was needed and a greater willingness to discuss alternative ways of achieving the requirements. Mr Kennedy thought that a change of party in power at the GLC might give the Borough Council a better chance to influence the design.

Mr Bradley said that the GLC accepted responsibility for all rehousing in any area which was now or in the future made the subject of a compulsory purchase order; where there were difficulties in selling property he suggested that owners should try to persuade the GLC to purchase houses as blighted property; he thought the Department

of the Environment might be more flexible on the 15-year rule on improvement grants; he warned that the implementation of the park programme was very vulnerable to a recession.

Ron Watts said that he had had a letter from the GLC saying that if no improvement grant was available the GLC would be willing to purchase the property.

Other points raised included the preservation of the Library in Wells Way, on which Mr Kennedy said that the GLC would accept the views of the Borough and the Department of the Environment and that the GLC would consider how to use it if they were asked to, and the use of existing facilities which were over-subscribed and in some cases much heavier than good management practice should allow.

The meeting was attended by some 40 people with a high proportion from the area in and near St George's Park.

Ringway 1 — the final chapter

Newsletter no 11 took the story up to the point at which the report and decision on the Greater London Development Plan inquiry were awaited. In February the massive report of the Panel of Inquiry led by Frank Layfield was published recommending that Ringway 1, slightly modified, should be built and Ringways 2 and 3 dropped. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Rippon, at the same time announced the Government's acceptance of Ringway 1, whilst postponing all other decisions on Layfield's recommendations, not only on roads but on all other aspects of the GLDP.

The London Motorway Action Group, therefore, hotted up its attack with a special 'Scrap Ringway 1' campaign, which obviously had to be non-political to retain the allegiance of all the participating societies but inevitably the matter became powerful electioneering stuff as the GLC elections in April approached.

Meetings were held in Trafalgar Square, Central Hall, and elsewhere to drum up opposition to the Ringway and the Society held its own public meeting on March 27th to which all six candidates (one Communist, one Liberal, two each Conservative and Labour) in the Peckham and Camberwell constituencies, which included the whole of our area, were invited to make a short statement and to answer questions. All came except Mr Berend, Conservative candidate for Dulwich, and those who came declared their opposition to the motorway except Mr Baker, Conservative candidate for Peckham, who like Mr Berend toed the party line and told us that they believed the motorway would be good for us. The collection at our meeting raised a useful contribution of £20.66 for the Scrap Ringway 1 campaign.

As you know the Tory proponents of the motorway were swept from power at County Hall and Reg Goodwin, new leader of the GLC, undertook to scrap Ringway 1. This must surely be the end of Ringway 1, but it is still necessary to press the GLC not merely to formally abandon the proposal but to discard publicly the safeguarding of the route and to put in hand and encourage development along the route to make it even more difficult to resuscitate in the future.

Local history in Camberwell report of meeting on February 22nd 1973

Having had two public meetings on controversial planning matters towards the end of last year, the members of the Society were fortunate to be able to turn their attention to a talk on the history of Camberwell given by Miss Mary Boast, the Council's local history librarian. She illustrated her fascinating talk with a large selection of slides of old views and personalities, engravings and watercolours; most of the slides were taken from material in the local history collection of the Council's library.

*At one time this was to be provided in the area of Ivanhoe Road/Bromar Road, south of Grove Hill Road, but this has now been abandoned. — Ed.

†However, Addington Square had already been excluded as a result of pressure from The Camberwell Society (see Newsletter no 2) and Glengall Terrace and the east side of Glengall Road are to be retained facing the park. Several other buildings have now been put on the Statutory List and may force a change in some of the layout. — Ed.

Daneville Road area — compulsory purchase order by London Borough of Southwark

Last December the Borough Council submitted a compulsory purchase order to the Department of the Environment for the acquisition for clearance of houses in Wren Road and Jephson Street and on the north side of Daneville Road between Orpheus Street and Grove Lane, on the grounds that they were unfit for human habitation.

The area has been blighted like the rest of Camberwell Green for several years now by the Council's forecast of demolition and the uncertainty of road planning. Road 'improvements' for Camberwell Green are not yet in the quinquennial programme so that redevelopment will be held up till 1978 at the earliest, perhaps considerably longer as the result of recent retrenchment on road expenditure. Meanwhile the Council is seeking to clear the area, leaving another wasteland of hardcore, another vandals' playground to add to the empty useless sites which the Council seems hell-bent on imposing on us.

At present the houses are almost fully occupied by tenants, many of whom are extremely miserable and bewildered. Some would like to stay, some would prefer to move; whether for them or for other tenants improvements could make the houses more useful, whereas demolition can only further reduce the housing stock for no discernible gain in the future. The existing shops in Grove Lane which are also included in the clearance area provide amenities whose loss would be equally deplorable for traders and customers. While the streets vary in quality, there are in particular two groups of houses, in Wren Road and Jephson Street, with a character which would make a positive contribution to any future redevelopment scheme.

The Council at present has no development plan, no road plan, nothing to put in the place of the buildings they want to pull down which have some use and some value, so the Society has lodged objections to the compulsory purchase order.

Peckham Hill Street, Queens Road, etc — compulsory purchase orders by London Borough of Southwark

The Council is seeking powers to purchase compulsorily 'for the purpose of providing housing accommodation under the provisions of Part V of the Housing Act 1957' some 80 houses or pieces of land in or near Peckham Hill Street (Colegrove Road no 2 c p o 1973) and 12 properties in or near Queens Road (Queens Road no 2 c p o 1973). These include several Grade II listed buildings in Queens Road, Peckham Hill Street, Peckham Park Road, and Willowbrook Road as well as a number of other buildings of architectural interest.

No information is given about the Council's intentions and the terms of the compulsory purchase orders would permit either rehabilitation or demolition, although of course listed building consent would have to be obtained to pull down those which are listed. Accordingly the Society has lodged objections to both orders, but has said that it may be willing to withdraw them if it receives satisfactory assurances about the preservation and treatment of certain buildings and information about the Council's proposals for the areas generally.

Nos 6-12 New Cross Road — proposed demolition by London Borough of Southwark

These four Regency houses, standing at the extremity of our borough, date from 1829 and are also known as Carlton Cottages; they are a distinguished example of paired villas of the period and are further enhanced by the use, extremely rare outside Brighton, of the Ammonite capital, a variant of the Composite. They were added to the Statutory List in 1963.

The houses stand at the edge of the Borough Council's Clifton/Pomeroy development area where their retention would have very little effect on a redevelopment scheme. In 1967 they were declared unfit for human habitation and were included in a compulsory purchase order which was confirmed. The Council's grounds for saying the houses were unfit were concerned mainly with defects of condition and amenity which have been remedied as a matter of course in thousands upon thousands of Georgian and early Victorian houses in the past; it happens that these four houses are still in need of attention which could reasonably be expected having regard to their special character.

Before pursuing their acquisition the Borough Council applied for listed building consent to demolish them, and a public inquiry was held on January 9th 1973, at which a statement of objection was presented by Stephen Marks on behalf of The Camberwell Society in support of the GLC's very careful and detailed case for their preservation.

The presentation of its evidence indicated that the Borough Council had made no serious attempt to establish the architectural value of the four houses or to take this into account in deciding their recent course of action.

There were also written objections on the historic buildings issue from The Georgian Group and The Victorian Society and from Brian Morley, a member of our Society who has been very active in pressing the case for preservation of historic buildings in Camberwell. The result of the inquiry is still awaited.

Nos 13-25 Staffordshire Street, Peckham — proposed demolition by London Borough of Southwark

The Borough Council has applied for listed building consent to demolish this short terrace of seven late Georgian two-storey houses, claiming that they are unfit for human habitation. No details of their unfitness have been published, so the Society has objected to their demolition, believing that as a matter of principle listed buildings should not be demolished and that their special character justifies special measures to retain them and put them in good order.

Nos 5-10 Holly Grove, Peckham — proposed demolition by London Borough of Southwark

These six houses are among those which the Society successfully suggested for inclusion on the Statutory List.

They form an integral part of a long range of houses, mainly semi-detached, on the southern side of Holly Grove, facing, as they did when they were originally laid out, the Holly Grove Shrubbery which is now used as a miniature linear park. The area which includes Holly Grove and, to the north, Elm Grove and Highshore Road, was developed as an attractive low-density suburb of Peckham in the 1820's and 1830's; nos 5-10 belong to the earliest stage of this development and are three pairs of semi-detached brick houses. Nos 17-20 are of the same pattern as also were nos 13-14 before their enlargement and alteration; there were therefore six pairs of identical houses, five still substantially in their original state, modest in size, neat in their detail, and extremely attractive.

The Borough Council wishes to demolish nos 5-10 on the grounds that they are unfit for human habitation. The Society considers that their demolition and the effect on the rest of the street would be unacceptable and has therefore lodged objections to the Council's compulsory purchase order for clearance and its application for consent to demolish them. The Society has also suggested that if the houses really are unfit to live in some alternative use might be found such as small offices, so close to Rye Lane.

The conversion and subdivision of larger houses

Several planning applications last year brought out forcibly the need for the Society to look at the manner and consequences of the conversion of certain houses, principally larger houses of architectural character. The specific occasion of the study was an application to convert no 99 Camberwell Grove into five flats after we had noted the conversion, actual or proposed, of several other houses including the division of no 69 Camberwell Grove into eight flats.

The outcome of the study was a memorandum dealing with both architectural and planning aspects and setting out under the headings of architectural character, structural alteration, consequential effects, and demand for subdivision the considerations which we think the Council should take into account when they have applications for conversion before them.

Architectural character

The value of the exterior of houses of architectural character, whether in their own right or in their context in relation to other buildings, is not difficult to recognise and appreciate; generally reasonable care is exercised in the control of work to front elevations which comprise the more obvious element of their character. That character, however, is not skin-deep but is affected to a considerable degree by what happens inside or at the back of a building: conservation areas, which are mainly affected by the present problem, are not stage sets but places where people live in three-dimensional houses, and what they see and use behind the facades affects their value and significance. Occasionally it may be impossible to retain the appropriate accommodation and uses, but the compromise of preserving the facade only is very much second-best.

The integrity of a house depends on retaining not just its facade, but also its plan-form and its internal character; this integrity is diminished when these aspects are significantly altered or destroyed. When this happens they will rarely be restored, even where this is possible, and what has survived a hundred or two hundred years, passed on from owner to owner into our hands will be lost for ever, denying our successors the chance, to which they are entitled, to appreciate it and to enjoy the same integrity.

The reticent and seemingly undistinguished details of the average and unspectacular house and the disposition of its rooms are as vital to its character as ornate and elaborately-worked interiors are to the grand mansion. Often those important features have been regarded with indifference, filled with paint, concealed by grime and hardboard, but they are there to be revealed and cared for by someone.

Some alterations can, of course, be made to a house without diminishing its integrity or destroying its character: additional openings which still respect the original shape of the rooms, careful division of some less important rooms, insertion of new services and facilities. There will often, however, be some compromise, especially when a house is divided into more than one unit.

It may be argued that it does not affect the general character of an area if an individual house loses its integrity, but this has the cumulative effect of steady erosion as each house so treated swells the number which have already undergone drastic changes.

Although the backs of houses are not usually seen from the street, they are seen by a large number of individuals; here too, a lack of regard for appropriateness and scale in making alterations can diminish the collective integrity and can in addition affect the amenity of neighbours. Division of a house which may be considered too large to occupy as it is often involves paradoxically its enlargement with a back addition.

Structural alterations

Many old houses suffer from weaknesses in their structure which derive from their method of construction, the age of materials, or the way they have been treated in the past. Foundations or load-bearing stud partitions which would now be considered inadequate may have been the cause of settlement which has long ceased, leaving the house in a state of equilibrium which is easily upset; brickwork may have been built of inferior bricks or poorly bonded, joists undersized or overloaded by modern standards; but while they are undisturbed usually they will continue to give adequate service.

Disturbance caused by major works or interference with the equilibrium can turn weaknesses into serious defects and in remedying them lead to disturbance further afield, perhaps putting adjoining buildings at risk as well.

It is essential, therefore, that the structural system and condition should be properly understood and its sensitive nature respected: alterations must often be restricted to a modest scale.

Consequential effects

Car parking

Sub-division is likely to lead to an increased need for parking space; this is sometimes found in front gardens, especially where there is already some difficulty in kerbside parking. In the Society's view this is generally unfortunate where, as is the case with terraced houses, the front gardens are collectively a significant element of the townscape form, in which the gardens as a strip provide a natural foreground to the group of houses. Any encroachment by the extension of road-paving or concreting on this buffer strip is undesirable, and therefore it is important to avoid as far as possible the situation which encourages the use of gardens for parking or exacerbates an existing parking problem.

Refuse

The larger number of households created by subdivision requires more dustbins. Space for dustbin storage is limited and where there is a larger number of bins they are often kept untidily in the front garden or, at best, in a specially-built and usually unsightly enclosure.

Maintenance

It is a common observation that the larger the number of people who share a responsibility the smaller their concern to exercise their share. So it is often with the maintenance of a house which is subdivided and its garden where this is not indeed the responsibility of an absentee landlord who may care even less. Not only are the tenants or lessees only partially responsible but their interest is probably for a shorter period which further diminishes their concern. These consequences are greater as the units of subdivision are smaller.

The demand for subdivision

The motive behind much of the subdivision which is of concern to the Society is primarily commercial speculation: while it is recognised that subdivision with its greater profit may also satisfy a demand for smaller units it must be remembered that there is a demand for larger units as well.

The pressure for subdivision often stems from an excessive price paid by a developer who can only recoup by unsuitable subdivision: the viability of his scheme should not be the criterion for allowing an unacceptable conversion, for he has bought a property as it stands and if he has paid over and above for the development he hopes to be allowed that is his speculation and his risk.

The existence of a heavy demand for small units does not in itself justify the division of large houses where this division is undesirable on other grounds since larger units

are also in demand.

While it may be desirable to achieve an overall balance of dwelling size, it is not necessary to achieve it equally in each particular area. This general aim should be subordinated to the suitability of the buildings and the area; a variation in proportion should be the result in different areas and is positively desirable for its contribution to the distinctive identity of their character.

It is accepted that some houses are too large as they stand for most people, but it is not considered that this in itself justifies extensive subdivision which is harmful to their character and to the amenity of an area or gives reason to ignore the existence of the demand which certainly does exist for larger houses, even on five floors, for single occupation. With the typical terraced house the simplest and most acceptable conversion is the separation of the basement as a flat, leaving three or four floors as a unit above.

Conclusion

It is the Society's view that the consideration of applications involving the subdivision of larger houses should take account of their whole architectural character and of their physical capacity to withstand structural change. Their character depends on their plan-form and their internal as well as their external features; points of structural weakness often give no cause for concern until disturbed. In many cases their integrity and structural stability will be best served by examining their capacity as they stand or with the least alteration and not by seeking their maximum exploitation.

Conversion into larger numbers of units should not ignore other considerations and should only be allowed after it has been shewn that no harm will come from these causes or from the consequences of parking demand and the problems of maintenance and refuse storage.

The application of general standards of dwelling sizes must be flexible enough to recognise special circumstances of character; it may be objected that this could lead to the creation of an area comprising large dwellings only, but in practice there is no risk of such a consequence as there are already many houses which are subdivided.

The Society believes therefore that there is a case for a much greater degree of restraint on the conversion of large houses into small units where these houses are buildings of architectural interest or contribute to the character of their environment.

Mews development

The Society's Executive Committee has had to give considerable thought to the question of mews development. So far there has been very little development of consequence in recent years in the various mews in the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area, so that proposals which are now being made raise matters of principle and the decisions of the planning authority in these first cases will set a pattern for their future: if one mews building is allowed and built it will be a precedent and encouragement for other such buildings until eventually one could expect a complete building-up of the mews.

There are two areas where applications for permission to carry out mews development have been made: in the long mews south of the railway between Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane and in Kerfeld Place behind nos 18-62 Grove Lane.

In the first of these the mews is a private road with access from Canning Cross near its northern end and from Stories Road at the south; it lies between the two lines of houses in Grove Lane and Camberwell Grove; with few exceptions there are only single storey buildings or high garden walls fronting the mews so that the space between the houses on the two roads is visually continuous and

provides one of the important characteristic features of the conservation area. The few higher buildings are principally a cluster of two-storey houses at Canning Cross and the large hall used for food storage nearer Stories Road. Close to the mews there are several fine trees which would be threatened in the long run by further development.

One of the most often quoted drawbacks of the Georgian terraced house is its lack of access from the street to the rear and of car-parking provision: these houses in Grove Lane and Camberwell Grove are fortunate in being provided originally with mews access which in most cases is still available to them. It would be very much to their detriment if this facility was reduced or threatened which would almost certainly be one of the consequences of building a mews cottage: whatever the present intentions of the owner or developer there would be no way of safeguarding the use and access to a mews garage for the main house, which is even more important since so many of the houses are now in divided occupation.

The Society therefore felt that the proposals for mews buildings exceeding one storey behind 151 Grove Lane and 192 Camberwell Grove should not be permitted and wrote to the Council accordingly. It is worth noting in relation to the latter that the GLC in their Harfield Gardens development respected completely the open character of the space between the two rows of houses and confined their buildings to the two road frontages of their site.

Development at the rear of no 121 was felt to be a very different case at the intersection of Canning Cross and the mews: at this point there is a substantial degree of enclosure already by two-storey houses which would be positively enhanced by a new building of similar height.

In the second area of mews development the Society was asked by the Council for its views on proposal to build two two-storey mews cottages at the rear of nos 46 and 48 Grove Lane, adjoining the only structure which at present rises above garage and garden wall level. The points mentioned above applied to these cases as well, but because the gardens are so much shorter there were additional drawbacks which again had to be considered in the light of the eventual completion of a row of cottages: the lower parts of the main houses would be completely cut off from the late afternoon and evening sun; because of the low general profile of the enclosing buildings the sky is a large component of almost any view but would be substantially diminished by a continuous row which would also reduce the space behind the terrace to a narrow, typically urban, canyon of gardens.

The Society considers that any incursion into the spaciousness which stretches behind the terrace to the Love Walk Hostel and to the Cuthill Road houses would be harmful to the special character of the area and therefore it opposed these proposals. The Council subsequently refused planning permission for the developments.

Shirley J. Cook
Chairman Planning Committee
1971

THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

Chairman	Miss Nadine Beddington	17 Champion Grove, S E 5
Hon Treasurer	Brian Allsworth	165 Grove Lane, S E 5 (274 0367)
Joint Acting Secretaries	David Whiting	Flat 3, 184 Camberwell Grove (733 5080)
	Michael Ivan	24 Grove Lane, S E 5 (703 4564)

NEWSLETTER NO 14

July 1973

THE SOCIETY'S COMMITTEE

The new Executive Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting on June 4th (which will be reported in the next Newsletter) has the following membership:

Joshua Brook	1 Champion Grove
Anthony Hall	23 Camberwell Grove (703 7938)
Michael Ivan	24 Grove Lane (703 4564)
Mrs Helen Johnston	15 The Hamlet (274 8241)
Stephen Marks	50 Grove Lane (703 2719)
Mrs Linda Parry	29 Kerfield Place (703 7940)
Oliver Probyn	85 Grove Lane (703 9896)
Mrs Freda Ruthven	30 Langford Green (274 9848)
Mrs Shirley Tanner	107 Camberwell Grove (703 8624)
David Whiting	Flat 3, 184 Camberwell Grove (733 5080)

SECRETARY

Ron Watts, now Chairman of the Council's Planning and Development Committee, cannot continue as Secretary of the Society. We have not yet found a successor, but David Whiting and Michael Ivan have agreed to be Joint Acting Secretaries.

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Linda Parry, a new member of the Executive Committee, has agreed to help with the membership records and the collection of subscriptions: if your subscription is in arrear you can expect a reminder or a call from her sometime during the year!

CAMBERWELL ! CAMBERWELL ! CAMBERWELL GREEN – SECOND PUBLIC MEETING

Has the Council ever asked what YOU want? Homes destroyed? Bigger roads? Local shops closed for ever? Another Elephant and Castle? Be ready to join the campaign we are planning to press for participation, and keep the date free for another big public meeting – September 3rd.

ALBANY ROAD – ATTRACTIVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS THREATENED

Proposed demolition by the Greater London Council

The Greater London Council, intent on clearing its monster park, North Camberwell Open Space, almost regardless of what it destroys in the way, now proposes to demolish a delightful, eminently habitable, row of early nineteenth century two-storey brick houses, nos 349-361 and 365-369. They have elegant round-arched ground floor windows and doorways and retain almost all of their original panelled doors, glazing bars, and fanlights. No 365 has a particularly attractive Doric portico. These houses are on the Statutory List, so they cannot be demolished without specific consent from the Secretary of State for the Environment; the GLC has made the appropriate application for consent.

The Society has made its objection, but PLEASE have a look for yourself and WRITE to the Deputy Town Clerk, Town Hall, Peckham Road, S E 5, with YOUR protest.

Also threatened but only on the Local List* and therefore not in any way protected, are the taller pair of houses, nos 381-383, with the name tablet 'John's Place' inset over the first floor cill band.

When Mr Kennedy, the Chief Parks Officer of the GLC, spoke to us last November he referred to the GLC's 'flexible approach' in planning the park. It seems to us, looking at the layout for this part of the park, that it would make very little difference to its planning if these houses were retained on its very edge; preserving them would be such an easy exercise in flexibility.

**Local List -- see over*

WE SAVED ADDINGTON SQUARE – DON'T LET THESE HOUSES GO! – WRITE NOW

Historic buildings: the Statutory List and the Local List

The thirteenth list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest (the Statutory List) for the London Borough of Southwark was issued in September 1972. This list, unlike previous ones, is a cumulative one and includes buildings already listed as well as the 1100 or more newly listed buildings. It also includes information about the buildings, sometimes at considerable length, so that it is an extremely useful document.

As well as the Statutory List, the Department of the Environment has prepared a 'local list'. This list contains other buildings which are not thought to merit inclusion on the Statutory List but are considered to have sufficient interest to draw to the attention of the local authority.

The local list has no statutory force and is really of very little value except perhaps to a local authority which can say that a building is 'only' on the local list when it has no intention of trying to save it.

The Council has given to the Society a complete copy of the Statutory List and a summary of the Local List, for which we are most grateful.

The following select lists are compiled from these documents and show all the relevant buildings in Camberwell, Peckham, and Walworth, that is in those parts of the postal districts SE5, SE11, SE15, and SE17 which lie within Southwark and also on the western side of Peckham Rye (SE22). All those on the Statutory List are Grade II except Church of England churches whose grade (A, B or C) is indicated in parentheses.

Anyone who would like to see the full lists should get in touch with Stephen Marks who would also be glad to receive any comments that members have on the listing of buildings.

Buildings on the Statutory List

Addington Square: 7, 8, 17-20, 33-37 (consec), 47 & 48 (Talbot Settlement)
Albany Road: 349-361, 365-369 (odd)
Asylum Road (Caroline Gardens): Licensed Victuallers' Benevolent Association nos 1-176 (consec) & Day Centre adjoining including north and south lodges, railings and gates
Bird in Bush Road: Church of Our Lady of Seven Dolours
Browning Street: Browning Hall
Camberwell Church Street: Church of St Giles (B), porch in garden of St Giles' Vicarage, Wilson's Grammar Sch
Camberwell Green: 15
Camberwell Grove: 23-45, 53, 55, 61-71, 75-87, 91-117, 167-183, 197-211 (odd), 34-70, 78-92 (even), Grove Chapel, 158, 158a, 160-166, 180-196, 200-220 (even)
Camberwell New Road: 230-282 (even), 257-281 (odd)
Camberwell Road: 62-88 (even), 86a, 117-155 (odd)
Canal Grove: 2-9 (consec)
Champion Grove: 7-13 (odd), 27, 29
Champion Hill: 23 (Durlestone Manor Hotel), 29 (Champion Lodge) including garden wall to south and west, 47 (Champion Cottage) including wall and gate
Champion Park: William Booth Memorial Training College (central block), and bronze statues of General and Mrs Booth in forecourt
Choumert Road: Girdlers' Almshouses including walls gates and railings
Coburg Road: 29, 31, Church of St Mark
Commercial Way: 210, 232 including gateposts and gate

Buildings on the Statutory List (continued)

Consort Road: 17, Beeston's Gift Almshouses including gates, piers and railings
Cottage Green: 1-3 (consec)
County Grove: 2-4 (consec)
Denmark Hill: 93, 95, 97
Elm Grove: 26, 28, 30, 32, 34
Friary Road: 121, 123, 127-151 (odd)
Furley Road: 80-98 (even) *
Glengall Road: 1-35 (odd), 24-38 (even)
Glengall Terrace: 1-9 (consec)
Gloucester Grove: 18, 20, 55, 57
Grosvenor Park: Church of St Michael and All Angels (C)
Grove Lane: 18-62 (even), 112, 114, 49-55 (odd), 65a (White Cottage), 67 (White Lodge) including former 67a, 83 (Cliftonville) including outbuilding, gate and posts, 197, 199, 201
Grove Park: 8 (Grove Hill House), 13 (Fontenoy House), 124 & 125 (Nurses' Hostel)
Harders Road: 2
Havil Street: 53-57 (odd) (Bethel Asylum) *
Highshore Road: 7, 9, 11, 17, 19, Friends' Meeting House, 16, 18
Holly Grove: 5-24 (consec)
Kennington Park Place: The Bishop's House
Kennington Park Road: 87-95, 97a, b, & c, 99-121, 125-165 (odd)
Linden Grove: entrance gates and piers, 2 entrance lodges and chapel of Nunhead Cemetery
Liverpool Grove: Church of St Peter (A) including gates and gate piers to west, 28-52 (even)
Lomond Grove: 99 (Bryanston House) including street railings and gate, 101, 103
Lorrimore Road: 48-74 (even)
Lyndhurst Square: 1-7 (consec), 10
Lyndhurst Way: 82, 84
New Cross Road: 6-12 (even) (Carlton Cottages)
Nunhead Green: 1-7 (consec) (Beer and Wine Trade Homes)
Nunhead Lane: Church of St Antholin (C)
Old Kent Road: 464, 466, 720 (Kentish Drovers PH)
Orient Street: 1
Peckham Grove: 1-9 (odd), 40-46 (even)
Peckham Hill Street: 34-40, 98-108 (even)
Peckham Road: 29 (Southwark Health Department) including forecourt wall and railings, 33 & 35 (Camberwell House), 61-65 (odd) (Camberwell School of Art and South London Art Gallery) including forecourt wall and railings, 30-34 (even) including lamp standard in courtyard of no 34
Peckham Rye (west side): 152-162 (even), 200, The Elms
Peckham Rye (east side): 141-153 (odd)
Penrose Street: 33
Pitman Street: St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary Sch
Portland Street: Aycliffe House, 1a, 1-23 (odd)
Queens Road: 2, 4, 4a, 6, 8, 10, 30-42, 142-148 (even), 152, 156, 158, 239-243 (odd)
Rodney Road: R C Church of the English Martyrs, English Martyrs R C School
Rye Lane: Baptist Chapel
St Agnes Place: 1-7 (odd)

* The Statutory List as issued also included nos 73-91 Furley Road and nos 59-73 Havil Street but they were demolished by the GLC and by Southwark Council only a few months before the list was issued, in full knowledge of their architectural value.

Buildings on the Statutory List (continued)

St Mary's Road: Pioneer Health Centre, 2-6 (even)
Sedgmoor Place: Aged Pilgrims' Friendly Society's Home
including front and side walls and gates
Southampton Way: 71-77 (odd)
Staffordshire Street: 13-25 (odd)
Summer Road: St Luke's Church of England primary
school (Camden Schools)
Surrey Square: 20-54 (even) including paving in front
Sutherland Square: 20-40 (consec)
Trafalgar Avenue: Lord Nelson PH, 16-64 (even), 1 in-
cluding gateposts, gate and wall, 3 including garden
wall
Wells Way: 113 (St George's Vicarage) including urn in
garden, Church of St George (B), Public Library
(baths and washhouses) including piers and railings
West Square: 6-45 (consec)
Willowbrook Road: 48

Buildings on the Local List

Addington Square: 9-16, 38-42 (consec)
Albany Road: 291 (Lime Kiln), 377-383 (odd)
Benhill Road: 116
Blenheim Grove: 9, 11
Braganza Street: 46-62 (even)
Brunswick Villas: 1-4 (consec)
Camberwell Church Street: 60, 62, 82-86 (even)
Camberwell Green: 14
Camberwell Grove: 187-195 (odd), 144-156 (even), 170,
172, 176, 178
Camberwell New Road: 225-253 (odd), 323
Camberwell Road: 156, 158
Canal Grove: gas lamps, 1 at each end of street
Carter Street: 43-89 (odd), 64-112 (even)
Cator Street: 171-177 (odd)
Champion Grove: 15-25 (odd), 6
Champion Hill: pump in garden of Durlstone Manor
Chumleigh Gardens: almshouses nos 1-11 (consec)
Clifton Crescent: 1-67 (odd)
Comber Grove: Comber Hall
Commercial Way: 103-109 (odd), 142-174 (even), 322,
324
Consort Road: 19-29, 177-181 (odd)
Cottage Green: Baptist Chapel
De Crespigny Park: 1,3
Denmark Hill: 111, 113, 115
Denmark Road: 102-112 (even)
East Surrey Grove: 193, 195
Friary Road: 57-67 (odd)
Grosvenor Park: 1-29 (odd), 2-16 (even)
Grove Lane: 111-113, 139-149, 153-155, 159-161 (odd)
Grove Park: 126 (entrance lodge)
Havil Street: 28-44 (even)
Highshore Road: 13-15, 21-25, 31-41 (odd), 8-14,
28-34 (even)
Holly Grove: 25-33 (consec)
Kennington Park Place: 10, 11, 12
Kennington Park Road: 75-81 (odd)
Knatchbull Road: 41-47 (odd)
Liverpool Grove: 54, 56, 58
Lorrimore Road: 37-49, 53-95 (odd), 84-98 (even)
Lorrimore Square: 1-18 (consec)
Lyndhurst Way: 68, 70, 72
New Church Road: 49-55 (odd)
Nunhead Lane: 89-95 (odd)
Peckham Grove: 29-31, 2-8, 36-46 (even)

Buildings on the Local List (continued)

Peckham Hill Street: 2-8, 14-28, 60-66, 74, 78-88 (even)
Peckham Road: 131
Peckham Rye: 131, 40-48, 142-144, 164-166,
204-212 (even)
Queens Road: 235, 46-52 (even)
Sears Street: 1-25 (odd), 4-26 (even)
Southampton Way: 321, 190-198 (even), drinking trough
and fountain opposite Samuel Jones factory
Sutherland Square: 55-60 (consec)
Trafalgar Avenue: 25-43 (odd), 2-14 (even)
Urlwin Street: 24-30 (consec)
Walworth Road: 140-152 (even), 282
Willowbrook Road: gateway to no 48

The protection of historic buildings and buildings of character

Within the last year a new Statutory List for Southwark has been issued, so the opportunity has been taken to describe here very briefly the legislation for the protection of buildings and their listing.

Normal planning powers have been available for some time to control the more obvious alterations to the exterior of many buildings, but, according to most authorities, demolition of buildings does not need planning permission and many buildings need a much greater control than may be available under normal powers over detailed alterations which affect their character; also, alteration works to interiors do not need planning permission at all unless they affect the exterior.

Specific legislation has therefore been passed for the protection of selected buildings and it is now contained in two acts, the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 and the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972.

Listed buildings

The 1971 Act which consolidates previous Acts including one of 1968 in which the present system was first provided is concerned with the protection of buildings which are on the lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest compiled by the Secretary of State for the Environment. These lists are commonly referred to as the 'statutory list' and buildings on them are 'listed buildings'.

The Statutory List is primarily concerned with the interest of an individual building or a readily identifiable group of buildings, and the principles of selection, as set out in the Government's pamphlet *Protecting our Historic Buildings* published in 1969, are as follows:

All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed.

Most buildings of 1700-1840 are listed, though selection is necessary.

Between 1840 and 1914 only buildings of definite quality and character are listed, and the selection is designed to include the principal works of the principal architects.

A start is now being made on listing selected buildings of 1914 to 1939.

In choosing buildings, particular attention is paid to: special value within certain types, either for architectural or planning reasons or as illustrating social and economic history; technological innovation or virtuosity; association with well-known characters or events; group value, especially as examples of town planning (for instance, squares, terraces, model villages).

While the Secretary of State has to compile the lists with whatever advice he chooses to obtain, it is open to any individual or body such as a Society or local authority to make suggestions for additions to the lists; local authorities also have powers to protect buildings by serving Building Preservation Notices while the Secretary of State makes up his mind whether to list or not.

Anyone who wishes to demolish or alter a listed building must first obtain 'listed building consent'; although in most cases the exterior is more important, the interior of any listed building is subject to this control and alterations may require consent. In London applications for listed building consent are made to the Borough Council, but that authority may not approve the application unless the GLC is also satisfied; in an application to be allowed to demolish the Secretary of State is also involved.

Buildings in conservation areas

Before the 1972 Act there was a loophole which could have very serious consequences in conservation areas: since demolition did not require planning permission and the protection afforded by the Statutory Lists was restricted to a rather limited range of buildings, many of the unusual or more modest buildings which contribute to the character of a conservation area could be demolished doing great harm to the area.

This loophole has now been closed in conservation areas: Section 8 of the 1972 Act enables a Borough Council or the GLC to obtain control over the demolition of all or any specific buildings in a conservation area. The Secretary of State has to confirm the 'direction' by which the control is obtained, but it is clear that this power can be very widely used to protect any building which makes a contribution, however small, to the conservation area. Like a Building Preservation Notice, a Direction made under the 1972 Act can be immediately effective if there is a threat to a building.

Control under the 1972 Act applies only to demolition and not to alterations, which have to come under normal planning powers, but it will be realised that local authorities now have very wide powers to see that at least the buildings of which a conservation is made are retained.

This power of control would have been very effective when there was a threat to no 13 Camberwell Grove during discussions in 1971 and 1972 over redevelopment of nos 64-68 Camberwell Church Street. We expect to be able soon to report that the Council is obtaining this control in a number of cases.

Queens Road & York Grove - compulsory purchase order by London Borough of Southwark

A public inquiry was held on July 3rd, but the Society was able to withdraw its objection as the Council had notified us a few days before the inquiry that all the houses about which the Society had been concerned had been taken out of the order, leaving only no 150 Pomeroy Street and parts of the rear gardens of nos 6, 8, 10, and 20 York Grove in the order. In any case, we were in due course informed, it was the Council's intention to retain and improve or convert nos 235 and 239-243 Queens Road and the houses in York Grove and possibly others in Queens Road as well.

It is unfortunate that the Society sometimes finds itself faced with having to enter provisional objections since it might not be able to find out the necessary information about the proposals within the statutory time-limit

allowed for objections. We are very glad when our fears are shown, as here, to be unfounded.

Grove Park Day Training Centre

The Council has decided to give planning permission for the Police to use their nursing home as an experimental Day Training Centre (see Newsletter no 12). There are considerable fears, especially among many residents of Grove Park, about the impact which the new users may have on the neighbourhood, but the consent has been hedged about with conditions which will make it possible to stop the use if in the next three years these fears are shown to have been justified.

Lettsom development area & Lyndhurst Grove extension New road

The extension of Lyndhurst Grove to Camberwell Grove has been open some months now and the Society is very perturbed that in getting a better site for its Lettsom development the Council should have also built a road which is so much wider than the streets it replaces and, at the Camberwell Grove end, so much easier to enter and leave with the exaggerated sweeps of its kerbs. At a time when all emphasis should be on discouraging through traffic, residents in the upper part of Camberwell Grove and near Stories Road have noticed how much more traffic is now roaring past their houses.

Trees

When the line of the Lyndhurst Grove extension was first proposed the Society tried to persuade the Council to adjust it to avoid taking down a particularly good plane tree and to use a sliver of neglected railway land. The Council decided that they could not adjust the line, so the tree came down but it was agreed that mature trees would be planted on each side of the road junction. We have recently been informed that two or three trees are to be planted this autumn on the strip of land adjacent to the railway on the south side of the new road, as close as practicable to Camberwell Grove, but that replanting on the north side would be best left until the building works in the vicinity have been completed. These proposals, welcome as they are, will nevertheless leave a long and conspicuous break in the avenue which is such an important feature of Camberwell Grove.

Well

Excavations on the Lettsom site in March and April this year revealed the top courses of a well built of red bricks laid dry and about 32 inches across. Its position was very carefully measured and it was found to correspond exactly with a small circular feature shown on the *Plan of Grove Hill* of 1792 in the north-east corner of the enclosure around Fountain Cottage and the pool which disappeared when the railway was built.

Miss Gillian Whaithe
30 Love Walk
S E 5

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NEWSLETTER NO 15

September 1973

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Once again, following the success of previous years, the Society is preparing a greetings card using a reproduction of a view of the old St Giles Church published in 1792 and with only the single word 'Greetings' inside so that it can be used for other occasions as well as for Christmas.

The cards are expected to be available at the end of October (when further announcement will be made) and will cost 4½ pence each or 40 pence for a packet of 10, envelopes included. There are still plenty of the previous cards showing Fountain Cottage (1797) and Camberwell from the Green (1776) at the same prices.

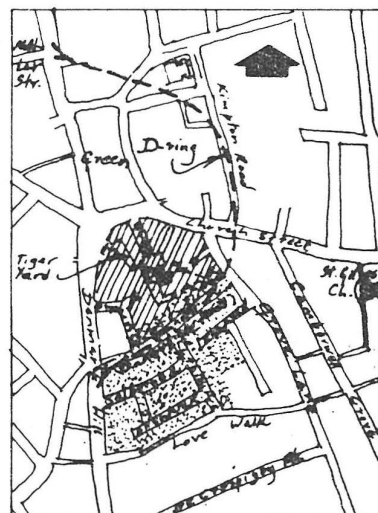
Camberwell! Camberwell! Camberwell Green

No-one had asked the local people what they want in and around Camberwell Green, a crowded meeting was told by the Society's Chairman, Nadine Beddington, on September 3rd; all planning so far had been done in accordance with concepts now out-dated and without reference it would seem to the wishes of those who would be most affected. The meeting was called to decide what we should do because last year we were promised a road plan in a few months and were told that other planning decisions depended on this, but still we had nothing and were tired of asking for information and being little wiser about the future of the area.

Some weeks before the public meeting the Chairman and some of the Society's Committee had friendly and useful meetings with Southwark's planners and Planning Chairman Ron Watts and with senior GLC Traffic engineers. From the former we discovered that EPIC* had recently submitted a land use map for the whole of the so-called EPIC Site (see map); although this must be assumed to be the best result so far from fourteen years discussion we understood that Southwark was not satisfied with it as a proposal and it certainly seemed to us to be very elementary and crude; fortunately Southwark are not legally committed to any involvement with EPIC. As on previous occasions Southwark emphasised their dependence on decisions by the GLC with whom they were negotiating to lessen the impact of road works. Clearly Southwark are as concerned as ourselves about the effect of roads but have felt that there are limits to the extent to which they can press the GLC before perhaps losing all.

In the meeting with the GLC however, it was obvious that their officers did not know what their new political masters would require: whereas last year they thought they were within a few months of a decision now it was evident that there could be quite a different balance between the various transport proposals. We were assured by the GLC that they really were willing to accommodate to a very large extent the Borough's planning requirements and they very much rejected the Borough's view that no other planning decisions could be made till the roads were settled.

In these preliminary meetings with both Councils it certainly seemed that they would be more willing to listen than we could have hoped previously, if we could make a good case.



EPIC site



Selborne Road
development area



scale 6 inches to 1 mile

*Estates Property Investment Company Limited, Epic House, 81 East Street, Epsom, Surrey

Councillors and officers from Southwark and the GLC were invited to come, but had not been asked to speak at the public meeting unless they wished to, as the main purpose of the meeting was to decide what we, as the local community, should do. As a background to the general discussion Stephen Marks gave a résumé of the past history of the planning of the area, its present state, and the opportunity we now have for shaping its future, illustrated with a specially-prepared sketch map; then Michael Ivan gave a very vivid account of the feelings of the many people he had spoken to in the area.

The three main aspects of planning at Camberwell Green are roads, EPIC, and housing.

The roads, as we have been told before, are a GLC responsibility; Southwark who are responsible for other aspects of planning have tried hard to mitigate the effects of GLC plans, but ultimately they cannot prevent the GLC from proceeding and the GLC being primarily interested in roads have seen solutions to the problems at Camberwell Green almost exclusively in traffic terms. The favoured scheme at present is the 'D-ring' (see plan) as a first step to take southbound traffic thus allowing the northern part of Denmark Hill and the west side of Camberwell Green to be for northbound traffic only, but this, not likely to start for some time, is many years away from completion. A later stage is the enlargement of Medlar Street so that east-bound traffic avoids Camberwell Green itself where west-bound traffic only would use the south side.

EPIC is an investment company with a host of property companies as subsidiaries; its latest annual report shows a book value of some £17 million with an estimated market value of about £28 million, so it is not in the big league. They have owned land for some time in the area, and have been negotiating with Southwark and the former LCC for some fourteen years. At present they own about a quarter or a third of the EPIC site, including the former Congregational Church, the Samuel Jones warehouse, and most, but not all, of the shops and land between Orpheus Street and Tiger Yard. All thought about the development not only of EPIC's holding but of the whole site has been based on the assumption that it should be a town centre redevelopment typical of the kind which was popular in the late 50's and in the 60's; such redevelopment involves complete upheaval over a long period and a total loss of local identity. Some years ago EPIC had a brief from the Council which assumed total redevelopment and describing the accommodation and amenities required; the plan which Michael Lyell and Associates, architects for EPIC, have recently produced is apparently not acceptable, but the assumption of redevelopment has not altered.

Almost all the houses between Camberwell Green and Love Walk except the Georgian terrace in Grove Lane are considered by the Council as fit only for clearance and it is now pursuing this objective with compulsory purchase orders, the first of which has been made on houses in Jephson Street, Wren Road, and Daneville Road. The blight which has descended on the area has stopped any improvements or maintenance of gardens or fabric and has brought with it the wicked uncertainty of frequent delays in rehousing. Of course some of the houses are in a bad state, others are kept in reasonable order: some people want to leave, some are very keen to stay, but the Council has not found out what people actually want here. There are no known or approved plans for the area which, if acquired, will be cleared and lie empty for ages while the admittedly difficult tasks of planning and starting to build are in hand.

Now is the moment to challenge the assumptions of the past on these three topics, new roads, town centre redevelopment, and complete housing clearance. The present climate of opinion on all three presents an opportunity for a complete reappraisal.

On roads there is an almost universal disenchantment with the efforts to cope with increasing traffic; Ringway 1 has been abandoned; the GLC itself is uncertain of future policies; there is a shift of emphasis towards provision of public transport; in the longer term anyway we will not have the petrol to make use of bigger roads. Now we must find out if bigger roads with more traffic are wanted, or if more effort should go into public transport and protecting the community.

Town centre redevelopments which would suit a company like EPIC are now recognised as the destroyers of local identity and character, bringing the universal multiple stores and anonymity. Not far away Deptford High Street has had a face lift with the support of the local Council, after there had been plans for years to redevelop. There is a choice ranging from total redevelopment to major renovation; piecemeal replacement causing least disturbance is a possibility.

It is now realised that the wholesale clearance and the mass shifting of people destroy communities which take years to re-establish themselves; empty sites follow and years of disfigurement of the area. Repair and improvement or small-scale replacement with minimum disruption are now recognised as being greatly preferable, even if it means short-term improvement until the time for replacement. Many people wish to go on living in the houses they own or have them improved.

Now is the time, therefore, to find out what people want and to persuade the Council to find out with us. There seems so little to show for years of planning that there would be very little to scrap, and there could be very little delay in making a genuine attempt to find out now.

In three weeks Michael Ivan had spent sixty or seventy hours talking to people living in the area and to the shopkeepers and got a very strong impression of their demoralised state for which the Council, rightly or wrongly, usually got the blame. Nevertheless, there were, for example in Selborne Road, houses which had been well kept up in spite of the threat of compulsory purchase next to others where nothing had been done by an absentee landlord and there were no amenities. In Wren Road nearly all the occupiers said that they wanted to stay in their houses improved and six out of the seven people he spoke to who had been moved to new flats wished they were back. Many shopkeepers now on short leases were extremely worried by the departure of people, wanted the uncertainty removed, and felt there was no future in another Elephant and Castle. What he found was the terrible extent of unhappiness: with nothing begun, we could start to think again and improve what was there.

We were pleased to see a number of Councillors and several of the Council's officers at the meeting; the latter included Mr Ceri Griffiths, Borough Development Officer, Mr Ian Lacey, Borough Planner, Mr Howard Thomas, Borough Valuer and Property Surveyor, all from the Borough Development Department, and Mr John O'Brien, Borough Housing Officer.

Cliff Potter, Councillor and Vice-Chairman of the Council's Planning and Development Committee, reminded us that he and Ron Watts had been vigorous in their criticism at last

year's meeting of the Council's approach to its housing problems and of wholesale development, and assured us that they cared very much what happened at the Green. The Society is well aware that this is so and hopes that their influence prevails over past attitudes.

Mr O'Brien, responsible for the re-housing programme, was greeted with feeling when he announced himself; he complained that we were being emotional and ignoring the facts and rightly warned us of the ease with which questionnaires could give different answers according to the way in which the questions were phrased.

Mr Lacey urged us to remember that our demands must be considered in relation to what is possible. He too referred to the changing opinions of GLC road planners. Most heartening was his assertion that it was possible for the EPIC site to be partially redeveloped and that there was no case for comprehensive redevelopment as such. This is a point which the Society has pressed for some time but has never before been reflected, as far as we know, in official thinking.

These views were part of an extremely lively discussion with a demand for action to follow up our meeting; it was decided to carry out a survey to find out local opinion and some twenty people gave their names and arranged to meet again on the following Monday in a room already booked.

David Whiting, Joint Acting Secretary of the Society, in concluding the meeting said that above all what we wanted was a humane scale in any redevelopment; and that we should aim to push the Council in a positive direction with such help as we could give in useful suggestions; EPIC, he said, could be handled and did not present such a problem as we seemed to think. Action now is required by us to work out ways of getting the information we need and to press the GLC on roads as the key to solving our problems.

Camberwell Grove Conservation Area - suggested extensions to include Grove Park and Champion Grove

Through the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee of Southwark Council the Society has suggested that there should be two extensions of the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area.

One of these areas is Grove Park to the east of Camberwell Grove. It occupies a large part of the grounds of the estate of Dr Lettsom, a noted physician of the late eighteenth century. The estate was passed on, although in separate pieces, as a recognisable entity for more than half a century after he had sold it in 1810, so that, apart from a small number of houses put up in the intervening period mainly on the south side of the area, its development was carried out consistently at the end of the nineteenth century. It was in its earlier years maintained as a private residential estate with gated entrances from Camberwell Grove and Chadwick Road. It retains today almost all of the houses originally built which form the majority and they display a nice variety within the limits of the late Victorian red brick villa. The general appearance of the area has been relatively little altered by new development, and it would make a valuable addition to the earlier and more classical streets of the existing conservation area.

The other area suggested is to the west of Camberwell Grove and includes the upper part of Grove Lane which in spite of considerable losses still retains on its east side a long original range above Canning Cross and three excellent houses of the early 19th century, nos 197-201, near the top, and further west Champion Grove with a particularly attractive range of stuccoed villas of the 1830's and 1840's.

The areas already designated and the suggested extensions are shown on the sketch map.

Camberwell Grove Conservation Area

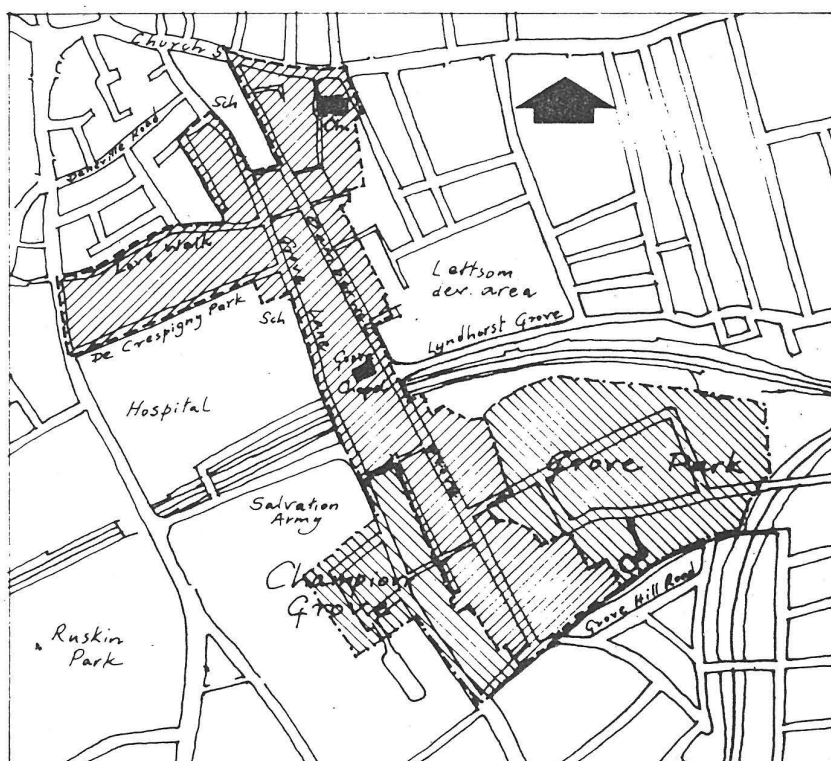
existing conservation area



suggested extensions



scale
6 inches to 1 mile



Buildings on the Statutory List - corrections

Unfortunately three errors, two of substance, occurred in the Statutory List given in the last Newsletter. Apologies.

Asylum Road: 'Association' should read 'Institution'

Peckham Hill Street: entry should include no 96

and add:

Peckham Park Road: 108-124 (even) including wall and gateposts to no 116

Annual General Meeting, June 4th 1973 - report

The Annual General Meeting of The Camberwell Society was held in the Vaughan Room of the United Reformed Church on June 4th 1973.

The Secretary, Ron Watts, presented the annual report (printed in Newsletter no 13) which after lively discussion was accepted. The accounts, printed below, were presented by the Treasurer and also accepted, showing that the Society's finances were healthy, not from subscriptions which were in too many cases in arrear, but from the substantial profit on the sale of Christmas cards.

Ron Watts was unable to continue as Secretary of the Society as he had been elected (much to his surprise, he claimed) Chairman of Southwark Council's Planning and Development Committee; Cliff Potter, as the new Vice-Chairman of the same Committee, was likewise unable to continue on the Society's Executive Committee. They were both warmly thanked for their work for the Society and congratulated on their new positions, which they will find extremely arduous.

Meanwhile the Society needed a new Secretary but no nominations were received and this important post is now vacant. Miss Nadine Beddington and Brian Allsworth were re-elected as Chairman and Hon Treasurer. The new Executive Committee is composed of five previous members, including Oliver Probyn who took the place of James Elliott during the past year, and five new members, David Whiting, Mrs Freda Ruthven, Mrs Linda Parry, Mrs Helen Johnston, and Anthony Hall. The new Committee is set out on page 1 of Newsletter no 14.

The meeting, attended by forty-three people, filled the room and was very lively and gratifying. We did not have a speaker as we felt that we would not have had time for him as well as the many urgent topics before us, a view justified in the event as the meeting closed only just before ten o'clock.

Accounts for year ending May 31st 1973

Expenditure		Income	
General expenses	68.98	Membership subscriptions	50.50
(including postage, Newsletters, printing)		Sales of cards etc	
Hire of hall	13.30		137.19
London Motorway		less costs	58.92
Action Group	10.00		78.27
Excess of income over expenditure	36.49		
	<u>128.77</u>		<u>128.77</u>

Balance sheet at May 31st 1973

Assets			
Balance at 1.6.72	95.59	bank balance	
Excess of income		at 31.5.73	140.73
1972/3 (see above)	36.49	less creditor	8.65
	<u>132.08</u>		<u>132.08</u>

Some recent cases

38a Camberwell Grove - new house

Avery ingenious scheme has been prepared for the long, narrow, wedge-shaped site which lies behind the arched screen north of no 38 Camberwell Grove. It is a patio house which covers most of the garden and in any other position between gardens it would be most unfortunate, but here next to the passageway it fits well. It is mainly single-storey but has an extra floor at the front where it is masked by the archway which is to be restored. The Society has written to the Council expressing approval.

Police Station, 292 Walworth Road - car parking

The Police want to use their front garden for parking, which means covering almost the whole of it with asphalt. This quiet and peaceful, if somewhat neglected, garden is a very noticeable breach in the street enclosure of Walworth Road and it provides a valuable patch of greenery as a welcome relief from the business and hurly-burly of the street. The Society objected most strongly to the proposal and the Council has since refused permission.

30-32 Peckham Road - car parking

The Society heard that the Council was considering using part of the broad and grassy forecourt for parking, but we were relieved to hear, after writing in protest and pointing out what a bad example it would be, that the idea had been dropped.

172, 182, 192 Camberwell Grove - mews development

Following the views set out in Newsletter no 13 on mews development, the Society has lodged objections to new proposals for mews buildings at the rear of nos 172 and 182 Camberwell Grove and to revised plans at no 192. In view of the spate of applications the planning department has been asked to prepare an overall study of these and similar developments in the mews.

25-29 De Crespigny Park - redevelopment

The Council has refused permission for a redevelopment on this site which would have involved the demolition of two large houses, nos 27 and 29, which contribute to the character of the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area. The Society had urged the Council to refuse consent and to protect the buildings; so had the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee. An outline planning permission was given last December for a four-storey block of flats on the empty site of no 25; the design still has to be submitted to the Council.

139 Friary Road - redevelopment

This house is one of a long row of attractive and unusual double-fronted two-storey houses built in the 1820's. It was added to the Statutory List after the Society had recommended its inclusion. The Society has accordingly objected to its demolition and replacement by two small houses with garages.

Miss Gillian Whaithe
30 Love Walk
S E 5

THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY

Chairman	Miss Nadine Beddington	17 Champion Grove, S E 5
Hon Treasurer	Brian Allsworth	165 Grove Lane, S E 5 (274 0367)
Joint Acting Secretaries	David Whiting	Flat 3, 184 Camberwell Grove (733 5080)
	Michael Ivan	24 Grove Lane, S E 5 (703 4564)

NEWSLETTER NO 16

November 1973

MEETINGS FOR MEMBERS

Two general meetings have been arranged for members in the Vaughan Room of the United Reformed Church (at the corner of Grove Lane and Love Walk). Enter by the basement door under the ramp.

Thursday December 6th 1973 at 8 pm

BERMONDSEY & ROTHERHITHE AND ITS SOCIETY

NIGEL HAIGH, Hon Secretary of the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Society, will tell us with slides what are the features and problems of the area and what his Society does.

Tuesday January 22nd 1974 at 8 pm

PIECES OF OLD CAMBERWELL

STEPHEN MARKS will show slides and talk about some recent historical investigations and discoveries in Camberwell.

Please make a note of these two dates as there may be no other announcement. Another members' meeting is being arranged for early March.

Coffee and biscuits will be available after the meetings.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

As promised in the last Newsletter, a new greetings card showing the old St Giles Church in 1792 has been printed and is available from:

The Passage Bookshop, Canning Cross
Michael Ivan, 24 Grove Lane (703 2719) 4564
Valerie Kent, 38 Camberwell Grove (701 4758)
Brian Allsworth, 165 Grove Lane (274 0367)
Elizabeth Betts, 126 Grove Park (274 6532)
Freda Ruthven, 30 Langford Green (274 9848)

Our previous cards showing Camberwell from the Grove (1776) and Lettsom's Fountain Cottage (1797) are also still available.

Only the word 'Greetings' is printed inside so they can be used for any occasion.

Price including envelopes: 4½ pence each, 40 pence for packet of 10.

OLD VIEWS AND MAPS MAKE GOOD PRESENTS

Publications of the Society are available as follows:

A set of fourteen Views of Old Camberwell, printed in collotype, with leaflet (also available separately at 10 and 20 pence each)	£2.00
A Plan of Grove Hill, Camberwell, Surrey, belonging to J C Lettsom M D, engraved from a Survey taken in 1792	30 pence
A Map of the Parish of St Giles, Camberwell, 1842 (36" x 24")	£1.10

These reproductions can be obtained from:

Stephen Marks, 50 Grove Lane (703 2719)
The Passage Bookshop, Canning Cross

CAMBERWELL GREEN AREA

Survey, compulsory purchase orders, and public inquiry

We have now started to find out what people think should happen at Camberwell Green and what should be done with the houses in and around Daneville Road. With a questionnaire covering roads, housing, shopping and other activities, and the central site (EPIC) between Camberwell Green and Daneville Road we have begun in Daneville Road itself and in Jephson Street and Wren Road. A first assessment will be made in time for the public inquiry on November 27th into a compulsory purchase order (London Borough of Southwark (Daneville Road)(No 1) compulsory purchase order 1972) covering houses not already owned by the Council to the north of Daneville Road. The Society is also preparing a case for opposing the order which we consider to be, at the least, ill-considered and certainly with changing attitudes to house improvement and road construction there seems to be a case for the Council to reconsider its clean-sweep attitudes.

The survey will continue for some time covering other areas as we can, and we need HELP from as many people as possible: if you can spare some time to help with this most important piece of work, which could change the present course of things, please get in touch with Michael Ivan (703 4564) who is organising the survey.

The Council has recently made another compulsory purchase order (London Borough of Southwark (Selborne Road)(No 1) compulsory purchase order 1973) covering properties in Allendale Road, Cuthill Road, Daneville Road (south side), Kerfield Crescent, Kerfield Place, and Selborne Road. The Society is opposing this order as well and has been helping some residents who may have some difficulty in knowing how to deal with this complex business. We expect another public inquiry some time next year, which might well be affected by the outcome of the inquiry on November 27th.

At our last public meeting we were asked to have a meeting with the GLC about roads, so we approached Mrs Evelyn Denington (Chairman, Transportation Committee) and Mr Percy Bell (Chairman, Planning Committee) for a meeting; we understand that this has been passed to Mr David Chalkley (Chairman, South Area Board) to whom we have since written. At the time of going to press we are still waiting for a meeting to be arranged.

Once again: an appeal for help with the survey: please ring Michael Ivan (703 ⁴⁵⁶⁴~~2719~~).

Miss Gillian Whaite
50 Love Walk
S E 5