

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

Newsletter



No. 3 May 1992.

THE LOCAL LIST.

Since the Group was launched nearly five years ago our major work has been in compiling the Borough Local List of buildings of Historic, Architectural and Townscape Value which we believe should be protected. We divided the borough into some 20 areas and each was surveyed by our own members with help from the Hammersmith Society and other local amenity bodies.

The List, comprising more than 1,000 buildings has now been included in the Council's Unitary Development Plan, the blueprint for future borough development. It includes the old Grade III listed buildings and those on the former GIC's historic buildings schedule.

Our next task is to further research many of these buildings, photograph them and lodge with the Council what will then be a substantial body of research for public reference.

This work will inevitably take several years and the Group would welcome any help from interested individuals or groups.

CONSERVATION AREAS.

In the past three years the Council has created many new Conservation Areas until they now total more than 40, covering a large area of the borough, substantially increasing protection and enhancing the value of our List.

Not only is Council consent required to demolish any building in a CA but any alteration to a property must take into account the requirement to "preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a CA." Many of the terraces and parades for which the Group has sought protection as an extension of the List initiative are now covered in CAs.

RIVERSIDE DEVELOPMENTS.

The Group has expressed concern in the past that the Council appeared to have no specific policy covering riverside developments and, given the importance of this area to the borough, called for a section to be devoted to it in the UDP.

We welcome the decision to designate the area one of "special character." Most of the area on the Hammersmith side of the Bridge has long been included in CAs and this protection and special consideration has now been extended along the Fulham side.

OUR SUCCESSES.

'Imperial Arms' Kings Road, SW6.



The Group is concerned about the growing tendency today to alter pubs. Thus, we strongly resisted the building of an extra mansard floor on this 1869 pub and fought it successfully to appeal. The Department of the Environment Inspector agreed that the mansard would "spoil the character and appearance of the building" and damage its unity of form. Pubs are often predominantly sited on corners and it is important that their frequently flamboyant style is retained and not diminished by unacceptable additions.

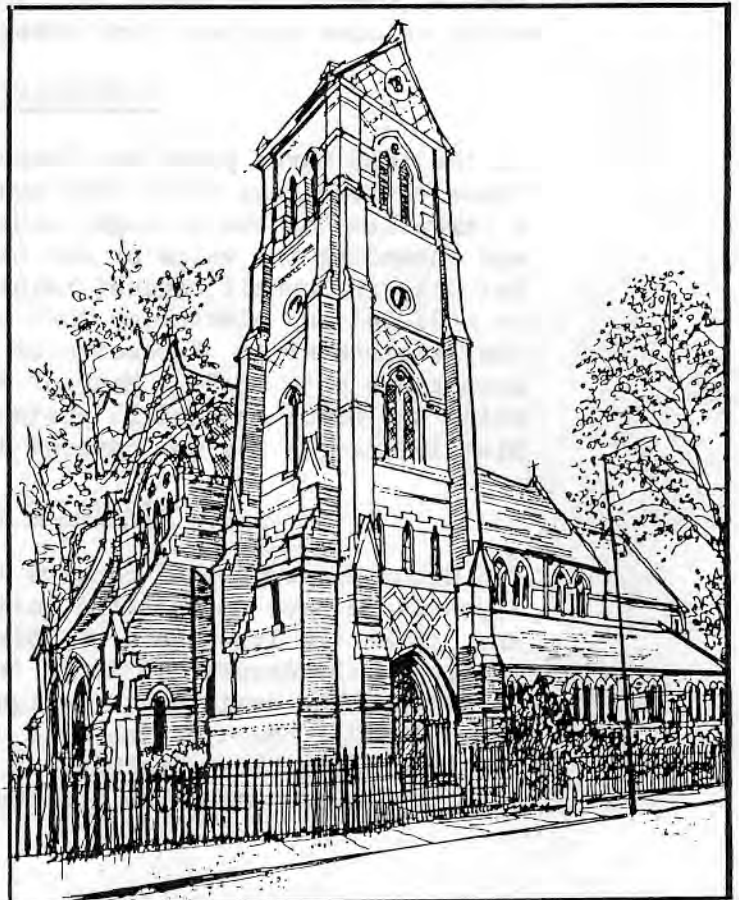
Fulham Fire Station (1895/6).

As a result of the Group's representations, it was made a condition of approval of the Fire Brigade's generally sensitive modernisation scheme for this Grade II listed building that original fire-places in the wing which is to be demolished should be installed in the fire openings in the main part of the station and the new main station doors should match early photographs of the originals, as far as was practical.

St. John's Church, Glenthorne Road, W6.

The Church of England authorities proposed to build a new vicarage on the side of this important Grade II listed church (1857-9) St. John's was designed by the noted Victorian church architect William Butterfield, whose other work includes All Saints in Margaret Street, Westminster. It is the only example of his work in the area.

The Group objected to this encroachment on the open setting of this listed building. The weight of protest prompted the Secretary of State for the Environment to 'call in' the application for his own decision. He upheld our objection and agreed that "for the western front to be properly appreciated, an open area is necessary." St. John's already has a vicarage (listed Grade II) on the site and the diocese declined to say what was to become of it except that it was to be used for "ecclesiastical purposes."



OUR CONCERNS.Churches.

The St. John's case exemplifies our concern about the fate of several churches in Hammersmith and Fulham beset by static or falling congregations and rising maintenance costs. The church authorities have indicated that a number could become redundant in the next few years. The Group is now involved in extensive research and proposes to produce a study paper on 'Vanishing Spires.'

Fulham Schools.

Changes in the educational system, with responsibility for school buildings devolved to the boroughs since the abolition of the ILEA have provoked concern about the future of a number of schools which have been made redundant or are about to become so.

The Council has announced its intention to convert them to "affordable housing," demolishing where necessary.

The Grade II listed Munster Road School would, it says, need a feasibility study to make sure conversion is physically and financially achievable.

If unsuitable for housing, alternative uses would be considered.

The Council recognises that Sherbrooke School, Sherbrooke Road is a "building of local interest." Despite this, if refurbishment is impractical, providing affordable housing "will be seen to be paramount and adequate justification for demolition."

Hawksmoor Sixth in Lillie Road is recognised as another building of local interest. This too would be demolished if refurbishment was impractical or if the building were shown to "hinder unduly the development potential of the site as a whole."

These proposals appeared as a surprise late addition to the UDP although when challenged were withdrawn and a decision taken to appraise each building in its own right.

The Group is extremely worried that these proposals appeared without any prior notice or consultation, pre-empting discussion on the merits of the buildings. As yet none of these proposals has appeared in planning applications.

Fulham Palace.

In previous newsletters we have detailed our concerns and those of English Heritage about damage to the building and the grounds. The Palace, former residence of the Bishops of London, is the borough's only Grade I listed building, dating from 1480. There are Saxon remains and the grounds are a scheduled ancient monument.

We have criticised the Council's custodianship of the Palace and expressed concern that its historic pre-eminence was being given secondary consideration to the uses to which it has been put in Council-sponsored leisure events. Lorries have damaged the gate piers and been driven over lawns, with possible damage to the architectural remains.

Thus we have taken a close interest in the programme of restoration of that part of the building to be occupied by the Fulham Palace Museum. While welcoming the work, we were disappointed that only a limited amount of that originally specified will be done because of restrictions on funds.

In view of the past history of inadequate and unauthorised works, we questioned the wisdom of granting consent ahead of any likely implementation of work.

We also asked for assurances that any work is carried out under strict supervision and monitoring to make sure it complies with the consents granted.

We also welcome discussions with the Georgian Group towards the re-decoration in authentic colours and finishes.

121-131, Glenthorne Road, W6. 'Clifton Cottages.'

The Group has objected strongly to proposals by the Notting Hill Housing Trust to demolish this run-down but potentially attractive row of 1860s cottages.

Demolition was first mooted in 1989 and has resurfaced with a new scheme to rebuild on the same alignment as the present houses. They are now all owned by the Council, which recently considered their future in a closed session of the planning committee. The terrace is in the Bradmore Conservation Area and numbers 121-125 are included in the Council's Local List of buildings of architectural and historic worth which should be retained. We have argued that demolition would detract from the character of the CA, while restoration would preserve and enhance the area. We have viewed the cottages and have been professionally advised that they are capable of restoration at reasonable cost.



The development could be continued across the vacant part of the frontage and built out at the rear of this large site. A total of 34 people lives on the site and squatters who have occupied some of the houses for eight years have carried out work to make them habitable. Demolition, in our view would be nothing short of official vandalism.

English Heritage List of Buildings at Risk.

The Group has been concerned to see that many of the Grade II listed buildings which appeared in the EH list for 1991 featured again in the 1992 list, with the addition of the now vacant BBC TV Theatre on Shepherds Bush Green. Among those detailed as being in poor condition and a cause for concern are the walls of the old garden of Fulham Palace, the Fulham Baths entrance block, the facade of Bradmore House (now being included in the Hammersmith Broadway redevelopment) two houses at 9 and 11, Stamford Brook Road and Fulham Football Club's Stevenage Road grandstand. We are concerned about the proposal to demolish this listed stand to clear the site for a new housing development. EH publishes this list to rouse public awareness to the problem of disused historic buildings and to stimulate their re-use. Local authorities have a legal responsibility to ensure that threatened historic buildings in their area are kept secure, wind and watertight to prevent deterioration.

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP	
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