

**Response of the Herne Hill Society to the draft Brockwell Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and proposed Conservation Area boundary changes**



1. The Herne Hill Society strongly supports the proposal in the draft Brockwell Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal to extend the present Conservation Area boundaries as detailed in the Appraisal. An extension to include the area around Herne Hill Station is something that the Society has urged for some time and it is therefore especially welcome. The Society sees the extension as contributing constructively to the ongoing broader regeneration of the centre of Herne Hill.
2. While welcoming the extension the Society draws attention to what it considers a striking omission. The Cressingham Gardens Estate is an example of public housing from the Hollamby era of real distinction. Its qualities are described in Edmund Bird's *Lambeth Architecture 1965-99* (p. 103). The Estate's setting and design – intrinsically informed by its close proximity to Brockwell Park – make it, in our view, a worthy and wholly appropriate addition to the Conservation Area (CA) and consistent with the additions proposed in the draft Appraisal. We would also submit that including the Estate in the CA would provide the park itself with important additional protection, in particular by discouraging redevelopment inimical to the park's character and setting.

We note para 3.50 in the draft Appraisal: "One of the greatest risks to the setting of the conservation area comes from potential larger-scale development around its perimeter because the current low-rise character contributes much to the suburban character of the locality and allows excellent distant views." That is accurate and pertinent and only goes to emphasise why Cressingham Gardens should be included.

We have also seen the detailed comments submitted by the Brixton Society on this issue and wholly agree with them. We would only add that it seems to us perverse that Lambeth, having itself built an estate that puts into practice such admirable social and architectural ideals, should now seek to destroy what it created.

3. On one particular point of detail, it is not clear from the map in the draft Appraisal where exactly the boundary runs at the point where the railway viaduct borders Milkwood Road. The railway arches and shop fronts are within the Herne Hill CA 61 up to a point opposite No. 381 Milkwood Road. There should not be an overlap of two different CAs and we suggest the best arrangement would be for the boundary between the two CAs to run down the middle of

Milkwood Road. In this way the railway viaduct would act at this point as an appropriate gateway to the enlarged CA.

The viaduct represents an important aspect of Herne Hill's Victorian railway heritage. It is distinctive for being curved in plan, for the quality of its brickwork (note, for example, the dentil cornice) and for the powerful combination of architectural with engineering skill. It is not, we submit, logical for a CA to include some of the brick-built components of the viaduct but omit others. We therefore suggest that the Brockwell Park enlarged CA should not merely include what is currently in Herne Hill CA61 but should extend along the railway viaduct to a point opposite the houses of Osborne Close. Alternatively, it should extend to a point opposite No. 371 Milkwood Road, the point where the plainer treatment of the viaduct begins.

4. Submitted as an Addendum to this response is a document detailing matters where we suggest the text of the draft Appraisal could be improved.

9 January 2021