
NONSUCH ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY



OCCASIONAL PAPER

9. CONSERVATION IN CHEAM

CONSERVATION IN CHEAM

(Re-printed from the Society's 1970 Bulletin)

1) Events & Documents 1964-1969

The Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society first became active in relation to conservation in Cheam in 1964. Early in that year the Sutton and Cheam Borough Council purchased Whitehall and the timber framed and boarded cottages adjacent to it (Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 Malden Road) but while they recognised the historic value of Whitehall and proposed to restore it, they decided in April 1964 to demolish the cottages. This decision seemed to many local residents to be an error of judgment since the cottages were interesting old buildings in themselves and, even more important, added to the general character of the village scene in central Cheam around Whitehall. The local archaeological Society - the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society, the Nonsuch Society as the body interested in Ewell and Nonsuch Park amenities and the Sutton and Cheam Society, the local amenity Society in the borough, all protested, and an Oxford Law student, Mr. Hugh Sinclair, started a public "Save the Cottages" campaign involving a petition, street meetings and an exhibition in a cottage in the High Street of local antiquities provided by the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society to raise funds. The upshot of all this was that at a public meeting held on 4th June under the auspices of the Sutton and Cheam

Society a "Cottages Preservation Committee" was set up to negotiate with the Council on the cottages' future, and in late 1965 an agreement was reached on the basis of the advice given by the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society and the architect Mr. Woodhead, nominated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, that the cottages would be leased to suitable tenants on condition they were reconditioned and used as private residences.

On 1st April, 1965, the responsibilities of Sutton and Cheam Council had, under the London Government re-organisation arrangements, been taken over by the new London Borough of Sutton, who somewhat reluctantly came to the agreement recorded above. In the event it proved a very good solution, and indeed some years later at the National Conference on Conservation and Development in Historic Towns in April, 1968, at York, the Deputy Planning Officer of the London Borough of Sutton read a paper on "Conservation in the London Borough of Sutton" which included substantial references to the preservation of the cottages, and acknowledged that the solution adopted had added greatly⁽ⁱ⁾ to the appearance and general amenities of Cheam.

In 1965 when the new local government structure for London which involved Cheam becoming part of the new London Borough of Sutton was set up, ultimate responsibility for conservation of historic buildings came to rest with the Historic Building Board of the Greater London Council although the planning powers of Sutton could substantially affect the end result in Cheam. At the time the G.L.C. was formed the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society put its views on the position in Cheam to the Architect to the Council in a letter of the 23rd July, 1965, signed by Mr. N.H. Nail as Chairman.

(i) See 'Conservation and Development in Historic Towns and Cities', Edited by Pamela Ward, Oriel Press 1968.

The results from this initial approach were meagre. As noted above the cottages Nos.3-9 Malden Road were indeed saved, but Nos.7-13 Park Road and White Lodge, although not in the upshot Bay Cottage or The Cabin were in fact demolished, although it must be admitted that the redevelopment that took place on the site of Nos. 7-13 Park Road was a reasonably urbane one fitting in nicely with the existing townscape. Even more of a loss was the ultimate demolition of 21/23 High Street which was in fact originally a fine coaxial chimney house, timber framed but with one gable end wall covered up to 1st floor height in chalk and flint chequer board work. Nos.7-13 Park Road were recorded before demolition by Miss June Chatfield, White Lodge by Mr. David Cousins, and Nos. 21/23 High Street by Mr. B. Brockwell and myself. The report on White Lodge was published in Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society's Bulletin for 1969 (Vol.3 No.3). The others remain as yet unpublished.

A new impetus to conservation in Sutton Borough was given by a Conference in April 1968 organised by the Sutton & Cheam Society and the Carshalton Society. The Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society was associated with this effort and my paper "Preservation of Buildings and the Antiquities in Cheam" was reproduced in full in the Society's Bulletin for 1969 (Vol.3. No.3). This Conference paper was the basis of discussions with and representations to Sutton Council and the Greater London Council, and the following letter from Mr. Jobling, the Borough Architect and Planning Officer of Sutton, of 17th September, 1968, to Mr. Nail, about the position reached at end of 1968:-

'The Principal Chief Officer has forwarded to me a copy of the letter which you sent to him on 10th September 1968. You will recall that you discussed this matter with Mr. Grimes, Assistant Borough Planning Officer, at the Carshalton Conference in April, when Mr. Grimes indicated his extreme interest and assured you that, before formal proposals are put to the Council for designating Cheam as a Conservation Area, consultations will be carried out with your Society

'As regards the particular buildings to which you make reference, I shall arrange to discuss the merits of these in detail with the Officers of the Historical Buildings Section of the Greater London Council, in order that such steps as may be necessary to secure their preservation are initiated.

'As regards the unusual walling at Warren Avenue, Onslow and High View, I will discuss with the same Officers the question of whether special steps can be taken to secure preservation as the problem here is rather different in so far as these walls are not in a proposed Conservation Area and do not come within the category of buildings in the normally accepted sense.....

'I find your report of extreme interest, which will certainly be most helpful when the Conservation Area proposals are formulated and, at this stage, as I have already indicated, I shall be communicating with you again in order to obtain your views before the matter is formally placed before the Council for their approval.'

In February, 1969, Sutton put their first proposals for demolition of the Cheam village conservation area to interested bodies including the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society, but later in the year the proposals to demolish Nos. 1/2 Church Road were changed and it became clear that Sutton Council, in spite of the opposition of the G.L.C. Historic Buildings Board, intended to agree to the demolition of this building, and we were back in a similar emergency to that in 1964 and for similar reasons - an astonishing failure to understand the possibilities of conservation in the Council Chamber and in Council Committees. The Sutton & Cheam Society and the Nonsuch & Ewell Antiquarian Society put the maximum effort into reversing this decision and the letter Mr. Nail as Chairman of the latter Society wrote to the Principal Officer of Sutton Council on Nos. 1/2 Church Road and on the conservation area boundaries on 9th September, 1969, is set out over:-

'Since I wrote to you on 10th September 1968 about historic buildings in Cheam two developments have occurred which seem to indicate that the Sutton Borough Council Planning Committee does not fully grasp the problems of conservation of the past.

'This is not just a question of preserving but a question of intermeshing the old and the new and preserving the character of an area as well as preserving individual buildings.

'At the Public Works and Municipal Services Congress in November, 1966, Mr. H.A. Walton, B.Arch., Dip.C.D., A.R.I.B.A., M.T.P.I. of the Kent County Council Planning Dept., gave a very interesting paper called Urban Renewal in Historic Towns which reviewed the background to this problem very well. Sutton had delegates at this conference and I would think it a useful thing, if they have not already read it, if all senior officials and all councillors and aldermen of the borough read that paper.

'The two matters which worry my Society are first the rather restricted way in which the borders of the conservation area for Cheam are to be demarcated, and second the attitude being taken by the Town Planning Committee to Nos. 1 & 2 Church Road.

'1. The demarcation of the conservation area:

This should we think be done so as to cover substantially the area of Cheam that was developed up to the late 19th century.

'This is the square bounded by Arundel Road and Peaches Close on the South, Belmont Rise - St. Dunstan Hill on the East, Nonsuch Park and the Greater London boundary on the West and Tudor Close and Fromondes Road on the North. We accept that within that area are a number of substantial groups of post 1920 houses, but in addition to the fact that a less generous boundary would exclude such essential groups as Park Cottages (the fine weather-

'boarded group by the entrance to Nonsuch Park Avenue) it appears to us that unless the area is generously so defined no coherent policy for the area as a whole including preservation of the Street pattern can be developed. What is needed we think are fairly distinct boundaries like the Park boundary on the West and the main road on the East, and as distinct lines along roads as possible on the North and South.

'2. Proposed demolition of 1/2 Church Road.

1 and 2 Church Road is really one quite early timber frame building, perhaps the original Rectory. There is little doubt it could be converted into a very attractive residence. It stands in a key position in the old village centre, the preservation of which is the basic purpose of the conservation area. No modern building however skillfully designed can substitute for it.

'We accept that the backlands between it and Lumley Road could be developed but we understood some time ago a scheme to give access by demolition in Lumley Road was devised. We believe that development of similar type to that recently carried out in Park Road with main access from Lumley Road a foot path access to the village parallel to the churchyard wall would be possible and desirable, but we cannot believe that the loss of 1/2 Church Road and an access road to several dozen houses opening by the Church gate is the sort of development that should take place in Cheam village. To us it seems the very development the conservation area concept is designed to prevent. The use of the Church approach by the cars of residents in a "backlands" estate would very much alter the whole nature of the environs of the Church, as would a throwing open of the area adjacent to the gate as a road entry. From the point of view of preserving the character of Cheam village this is a very bad proposal but it is also very bad from the point of view of preservation of individual buildings. 1/2 Church Road is not a minor historic building whose only claim to be preserved is its general contribution

to the village scene - it is a very interesting 16th century timber building - the old cottage apart possibly the earliest in Cheam - probably the contemporary of Whitehall in its first form, and it is in quite good condition for such an early frame building.....

'It seems to us that the Town Planning Committee of the new borough of Sutton are about to commit the same sort of error of judgement as their predecessors of the Corporation of Sutton and Cheam did in 1964 when they proposed to demolish 3, 5, 7 & 9 Malden Road.

'Wiser councils eventually prevailed then and instead of 16th Century Whitehall and the 17th century Rectory being separated by a yawning car park, we have the beautiful timber framed weatherboarded frontage of the cottages renovated and still in use as dwelling houses.

'It is the earnest hope of my Society that wise councils will prevail now and that Sutton will support the G.L.C. in opposing the developers' appeal against the preservation Order on the cottages. It would be a grave blow to enlightened conservation policies if the appeal is allowed and we feel it ought to fail, but it would we think argue better for the future of reasonable Town Planning in Cheam if Sutton Borough were seen to be on the side of the godly and not numbered among the Philistines on this issue.....'

2) The Environmental Study towards a District Plan for Cheam by J. Trevor Jobling, Dip.Arch., A.R.I.B.A., Borough Architect & Planning Officer of the London Borough of Cheam, January, 1970

At the beginning of 1970 Sutton Council began the production of short surveys of the main districts into which the borough could be divided. These were intended to be the basis of public participation meetings in each district. We reproduce the survey for Cheam so far as it deals with conservation:

The Cheam Village Conservation Area and the General Visual Attractiveness of the District

The District includes a large area which has been de-

defined as a Conservation Area under the provisions of the Civic Amenities Act 1967. It is proposed that this area should ultimately be considered in detail by another type of local plan - a subject plan.

The Conservation Area extends northwards to the northern boundary of the Rectory and St. Dunstan's Churchyard, Springclose Lane, Park Road and the rear of the properties fronting Station Way to the east, Ewell Road and Cheam Park to the west. Not only does this area contain a number of buildings of historical and architectural interest but there is a group of cottages in Park Lane which, with their weatherboarded walls and old tile roofs, have an attractive old-world quaintness. To enhance the environment of these cottages it is proposed to close Park Lane at its junction with The Broadway, to vehicles. Even the relatively modern buildings around the village cross-roads, in spite of their different designs, have a large degree of harmony one with another, and a domestic scale.

These features, against the back drop of forest trees in the parkland beyond, give Cheam an individual character which needs especially sympathetic treatment if it is to be preserved and enhanced.

In the remainder of the district the spacious gardens which are individually landscaped give a variation in character which must be maintained if the locality is to retain its attractiveness.

Conclusion. The Local Planning Authority have endeavoured to pin-point in this study the existing and future difficulties that are likely to arise for those living now and in future in the district of Cheam. By this means it will be possible to visualise the resolution of the main problems now affecting the area. However, because of the nature of the area the problems as shown by the study appear to centre around traffic and conservation. It may be that there are problems just as important and it is for this reason that this document has been published to seek the opinion of people living in the district.

3) Events and Documents 1970

Following the issue of this valuable study the Nonsuch and Ewell Antiquarian Society put forward in detail its views on Cheam including a detailed list of all building in the central area of Edwardian date or earlier. The letter sent by Mr. Nail to Mr. Scott on 26th February is reproduced below:

'I attach to this letter a memorandum on the buildings and other visible remains of pre-1920 Cheam, including a complete list of all the above ground structures of earlier date than 1920 in the central area.⁽¹⁾

'The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a solid foundation of fact for (a) the preservation by listing of such remains and (b) the demarcation of a conservation area for Cheam village which will take into account both the distribution of such structures and the broad historical development of the village and some other more detailed matters which are dealt with at (c) to (g) below.

'I now deal with these matters in sequence: (a) The listing of buildings in Cheam. Our view is that the present statutory list of buildings of Grade I or II category is too short and we would wish to see all buildings of pre Victorian date, i.e. 1840 listed as Grade I or II, and a selection of the Victorian and Edwardian buildings should be listed. I am copying this letter to the Minister of State and Housing and Local Government (Lord Kennet) so that he can consider whether this should be done and I have put an X against those buildings on the list which we consider should be listed. Even where they are not listed we think that in view of their small numbers the future of all Victorian and Edwardian buildings in this central area should be carefully considered whenever planning applications come up which might involve their demolition to see whether re-use with the minimum of changes would not be the better alternative. Especially do we think that considera-

(i) Not reproduced here. It forms the subject of Occasional Paper No.8 "Buildings in Cheam".

tion should be given to use of the council's powers to make improvement grants under the Housing Act 1969 in order to keep Victorian and Edwardian as well as earlier dwelling houses in residential use - if necessary, with some of the terrace cottages, remodelling them internally so as to make one modern dwelling out of two original ones.

'(b) Conservation Area in Cheam: We think, as do the Council, that there should be one continuous conservation area for central Cheam but we do not think the boundaries suggested adequately reflect the village area of the pre-suburban era which did not really end until after the 1914 war. Until then the growth of Cheam village had been a slow gradual process and it is not possible to draw lines in it comparable to the 1920 divide.

'We would therefore say that the Cheam conservation area should be set out in the map of 2 April 1969 with the following additions:

(i) A tongue going north along the Malden Road to its junction with Tilehurst Road covering the houses with their rear gardens on the east side and no more, and on the west covering at least the road-side houses and their rear gardens, but preferably extending over the area between the road and the recreation ground and Cheam Park.

The reason for this proposal is obvious on the ground - this length of Malden Road contains an interesting part of the Victorian and Edwardian extension of Cheam, some of it very early, and also a nice late Georgian group of clap boarded cottages.

(ii) An extension eastwards to cover the open land by the by-pass south of its junction with Lumley Road, the block of houses between Spring Close and Love Lane, then, turning westwards, four houses south of the Love Lane junction and continuing over Stamford Close to turn south so as to include the houses and their rear gardens fronting on Park Road, and finally joining the proposed boundary along the north wall of Farnham Court.

' The reason for this proposal is two-fold, first it is to ensure the inclusion of both sides of Church Farm Road and Park Road in the area, since it seems to us that streets must be dealt with as units, and also because the exclusion of one side of these roads has put Cheam Cottage and the Farnham Court north enclosure wall outside the area when they should be in it. Secondly, it includes wholly within the area Spring Close Lane's and Love Lane's opening to the by-pass. You will see in the introduction to the building list we comment on the significance of these Lanes, and we think Spring Close Lane should be walled on the by-pass side and Love Lane reconnected with its eastern limb by an under-road tunnel so that the old walk to Lower cheam is restored as an amenity. It would be very desirable that development on the approaches to the Love Lane connecting tunnel should be given special planning consideration and for this reason we want them put now in the conservation area.

'(iii) An extension to include the houses and other buildings along the south and west side of Ewell Road up to and including the Bell Public House with their rear gardens etc. and including those in Jubilee Road both west and east side up to and including the school and the terrace of houses opposite it.

'Our reason for this extension is very much the same as the Malden Road one. This includes another piece of Victorian and Edwardian Cheam, and it includes two very fine groups of buildings - the late Georgian clap boarded terrace of 4 houses called Park Cottages and the early Victorian stuccoed group of six houses called Nonsuch Place.

'These two groups side by side are among the best of Cheam's smaller buildings and with the line of Henry VIII's enclosure pale opposite it seems unthinkable to us to draw the conservation area boundaries to exclude them.

'(iv) An extension so as to cover both sides of Upper Mulgrave Road to the by-pass over-pass bridge on the

east and both sides of Peaches Close to the grounds of Oakleigh on the south and as much of the recreation and sports ground as lies in the borough.

'The reason for this extension is to cover the Victorian and Edwardian growth of Cheam just south of the railway. Oakleigh and Peaches Court are interesting buildings in themselves - the latter a very good early example of an Edwardian style large house built in the mid 90's (Edwardian as a stylistic term extends roughly from 1890-1920) and Upper Mulgrave Road is an interesting example of a predominately Edwardian and just post-Edwardian shopping street.

'(c) Industrial Remains: It will be seen that the list of structures includes two early workshops (No.1 Park Lane and Nos.3/4 Church Road), both these are interesting buildings and should be preserved.

'We have also listed the big Chalk Pit by the station and have referred in the introduction to the large clay pit north of Sears' Park. Both these should be kept as landscape features and not filled in, in our view. The chalk pit could be acquired and opened as an open space to stroll and sit in, although we do not think it should be over elaborately laid out, while the clay pit we suggest should become a nature reserve and wild park with some suitable access for the public so as to reconcile nature conservation and recreation.

'(d) Walls: The list refers to several early walls - that of the graveyard, including the rear chalk block wall of the shed in the central car park, the enclosure wall of Farnham Court, the enclosure wall of Whitehall down Park Lane. The need to preserve the red brick and chalk walls of the village, some of them, like the rear wall of the shed now incorporated in the continuation of the graveyard southern wall of mediaeval date, needs stressing. They are interesting antiquities and give character to the place.

'A further need which we have stressed before is to preserve what remains of the walls of Cheam Hare Warren,

now the front walls of private houses in Warren Avenue, Onslow Avenue and Wilbury Avenue. In places these still show the ground level egress openings for the hares.

'There is another brick walled hare warren in Epsom. Both of these North Downs hare warrens are fairly uncommon antiquities and their remains should be preserved.

'(e) Gravestones: The graveyard contains probably some 800 or so stones including many fine Georgian and Victorian stones which are very interesting examples of the popular sculpture art of their day.

'The need here is we think first to record the stones earlier than say 1900 in drawing and photograph, secondly, to ensure their conservation as far as possible - many are splitting and flaking badly, and thirdly, to maintain the graveyard in the form it has assumed over the last 2 or 3 centuries and resist any plans to re-organise it, clear and grass it and similar ideas of the type which have been carried out in some other places. We think the local authority has a part to play here and we would like to discuss the position of the graveyard with the Parochial Church Council and the Borough Council.

'(f) Roads: The conservation area cannot really be regarded as secure until the traffic problem within it is solved. This is a big problem and we do not wish to go into it in detail here, but it obviously would be just wanton destruction to attempt to widen the Malden Road south of Tilehurst Road and we would think a link to the by-pass should be made here so that north-south traffic was diverted to the by-pass. Perhaps Malden Road should be closed from this point south to wheeled traffic so that all entry to and exits from Cheam village north of the High Street was at The Broadway end and was confined to village traffic.

'(g) Repairs to Historic buildings: We think that a survey to discover what is needed - building by building - to keep historic buildings of Cheam in reasonable repair should be done by the Council.

'We have referred to the Whitehall enclosure wall, other points struck us as we made this survey - e.g. part of the down coming rainwater pipe is missing from the east side of Nos. 1/2 Church Street and for the lack of this simple repair the clap board wall and no doubt the timber frame beneath is becoming saturated and liable to wet rot.

'It is agonising to see pounds and pounds worth of damage being done to an old building when a few pounds spent now could avert it. For a very considerable time before its current renovation a similar missing section of rain pipe led to the spread of wet rot in part of the north wall of Nonsuch cottage.

'In conclusion, in view of the slighting remarks which some councillors and aldermen have made in recent months, either in the press and in Council, about the activities of preservation and amenity societies implying they are ill informed or fanatical, we feel it relevant to quote from Marshall's History of Sutton and Cheam; Marshall was an architect who wrote his History in 1936 after 40 years residence in the borough. In dealing with Sutton High Street he says -

"Sutton High Street used to be very pretty, and the author remembers cycling home to London where he lived, one lovely summer evening about 1890, and running easily downhill from Banstead, was impressed with the picturesqueness of the High Street. On the east side where were the garden walls of some houses with trees overhanging the footpath; some quaint houses; the signs of the "Cock" and the "Greyhound" across the road; and beyond lay the extensive view all over London. When, a few years afterwards, he was looking for some new place in which to live, his thoughts returned to that view, and in 1895 he came to

live in Sutton. When the character of the High Street was changing, several attempts were made, by petitions, etc., to have some of the attractive features retained, one being to make a circus where the Cheam and Carshalton roads cross the High Street; but all attempts were in vain, the prospect of immediate gain over-riding everything, and unfortunately all the beauties of the High Street have gone."

'What we and the other societies who write and talk to council members and officials about conservation and amenity are seeking to do is to prevent the situation Marshall describes being re-enacted to-day. We do not claim a monopoly of knowledge, but we do think that sometimes we have a knowledge and point of view based on it of which council members and officials would not be aware unless we made them aware of it.

'I hope what is said in this letter will be read and considered on that basis.'

The public participation meeting for Cheam took place on the 24th February, 1970, in Nonsuch Girls School Assembly Hall. Some 20 speakers from the audience spoke at this meeting and a resumé of N.E.A.S. views was given by Mr. Nail.

On 6th March, 1970, Mr. Jobling wrote as follows to Mr. Nail:-

..... The Cheam Village Conservation Area has now been designated and comprises an extremely large area which indicates, I suggest, the generous approach which the Council have taken in this matter. The area designated is in fact substantially larger than was considered necessary by the Historic Buildings Group of the Greater London Council.

'The Council are aware of the need to protect old buildings in Cheam and you will be aware of its own efforts in preserving Whitehall and the encouragement given to private persons in preserving Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 Malden Road. As regards 1 & 2, Church Road, certain repairs have been recently carried out to these properties as a result of a notice served by the Council on the owner under the Public Health Acts, and I understand that the Greater London Council are giving serious consideration to the future of these buildings. You may care to write direct to the Architect of the Greater London Council on this aspect.

'Discussions have recently been held with the new tenant of 1, Park Lane, which will ensure that restoration work is carried out in a proper manner, and it is hoped that the statutory procedures necessary to close Park Lane at its junction with Broadway will be commenced in the near future. This will have the effect of preventing the use of Park Lane as a by-pass road. The Council have also secured restoration and return to use of The Old Cottage in the Broadway and have refused to permit its extension.

'New developments at Ewell Road and High Street will be of a sympathetic architectural character as will the redevelopment of the Cheam Baptist Church.

'I have noted your proposals for the upgrading of certain buildings on the supplementary list and the giving of protection to buildings which are not listed at all. I am afraid that certain of these buildings are not of the nature which would warrant listing although I would agree that they are of a nature which would warrant interest.

'Nevertheless, I am arranging for a report to be submitted to the appropriate Committee of this Council at an early date.'

As a result of this letter Mr. Nail discussed the Secretary's views with Mr. Grimes, the deputy Planning officer, and a further letter from Mr. Jobling to Mr. Nail of 20th March, 1970, was the result. This is reported

below:-

'Further to your recent discussion with Mr. Grimes a report on this matter has now been considered by the appropriate Committee of the Council.

'Whilst they have not felt it possible to agree to any extension of the size of the Conservation Area which, as you know, has now been designated, at the present time, they, nevertheless, were in sympathy with your suggestion that further buildings should be given the statutory protection of being listed as of architectural or historical interest and that certain buildings now on the supplementary list should be upgraded.

'In view of this they have agreed to make representation to the Minister of Housing and Local Government suggesting that the following buildings be either listed or, where on the supplementary list, upgraded:-

'Ecclesiastic Buildings: St. Dunstan's Church

Lychgate at entrance to
Churchyard.

Industrial Remains:

1, Park Lane
3/4 Church Road.

Signal Cabin near Railway
Station.

The Broadway:

24/47; 49; 51; 53/55/57

These buildings are at present on the supplementary list.

Ewell Road:

1/2/3/4, Park Cottages.

Malden Road:

85/91

Park Lane

3: 25

Gate Lodge - at present on the
supplementary list.

Park Road:

3: Red Lion Public House.

Springclose Lane:

Church Farm House (Now Nurses'

Home)

At present on supplementary list.

'You will appreciate that if the Minister agrees to the Committee's recommendation this will be a material step forward in the protection of the historic buildings of Cheam and will provide a basis for further preservation activities.'

Mr. Nail, on behalf of the Society, wrote to Mr. Jobling on 1st May, 1970, as follows:-

'I am replying to your letters of 6th and 30th March.

'First I am delighted to record the approval which my Society's Committee accorded to the steps Sutton Borough has taken in relation to conservation in Cheam Village both in the designation of the conservation area and the steps to list further buildings. We noted from an answer given in the Lords on 24th March that Sutton was among those authorities to which had been sent a congratulatory letter on the progress made in setting up conservation areas, and we are glad to see that you have earned this national recognition.

'In our view the measures which have now been taken do give a firm basis for the development of an enlightened conservation policy in Cheam and in what follows we wish it to be clearly understood that we are making suggestions about the development of that policy and not seeking a radical alteration in the Council's approach.

'We think there are at present three matters on which further thought and discussion is needed.

'First the question of ensuring the preservation of the distinctive enclosure walls noted at (d) in my letter of 26th January.

'Secondly the proposal made in b(ii) of my letter of 26th January to re-articulate Love Lane. There we suggested a tunnel. Suitably designed, a bridge might be accept-

able as an alternative. We would like to discuss this question and the related questions of the open land round Seeers' Park, the need for preserving Love Lane as a country style path and of listing the group of 17th/18th century cottages in Bourne Way at its lower end. Love Lane originally linked Cheam and its hamlet dependency of Nether Cheam which lay at the Gander Green Lane, Bourne Way/Love Lane, Tate Road junction. Of old Nether Cheam only the Bourne Way group now survives.

'Thirdly we should like to discuss the question of conservation of Victorian and Edwardian buildings in Cheam. It is really this point which lay at the heart of our differing views about the most suitable boundaries for the conservation area.

'Briefly we think some of the smaller middle class houses such as the Nonsuch Place group should be listed and some of the interesting terraces of artisan houses too - the latter perhaps after conversions under the 1969 Housing Act.

'I attach a copy of my letter of 26th January with the passages referred to above sidlined for convenience of reference.'

Mr. Jobling replied on the 6th May, 1970, as follows:-

'I thank you for your letter dated 1st May, 1970, and note your further comments on this matter.

'As regards the distinctive enclosure walls which formerly enclosed the hare warren, I would suggest that this is a matter which you could possibly take up direct with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to see whether they would be prepared to give consideration to their listing as being of historic interest. For my part I fully appreciate that they are an interesting relic of Old Cheam but I am rather doubtful whether the Ministry would agree that they are of sufficient character to justify list-

ing. The Committee have already made representations, as you are aware, regarding certain buildings in Cheam which were within the list suggested by you, and I understand informally that the Ministry's Inspector is favourably inclined to their listing. I would not wish to press matters too far on other buildings or subjects where the case is not quite so sound, and I think that these particular walls are an instance of where the approach to the Ministry from your Society, which has a definite specialised interest, would be better.

'As regards the possibility of rearticulating Love Lane, whilst I have sympathy with your objective, it would be quite impracticable at the present time either to construct a tunnel or a bridge in relation to the Sutton By-Pass to achieve this because of the very considerable expenditure which would be involved.

'I will consider whether action can be taken regarding the cottages which you mention in Bourne Way to see whether anything can be done regarding them. My approach to the general problem of listing buildings in the Borough is, however, to concentrate initially on the buildings in the designated Conservation Areas, since these are the areas which from the strategic planning aspect of the Borough are the most important.

'As regards your third point regarding Victorian and Edwardian buildings, I think that my previous observations apply here also, that we must concentrate on listing firstly most important buildings as we are in fact now doing. Following this it may be possible to extend the scope of protection but I am rather dubious of the wisdom of pressing this matter further at the present time.'

It will be seen that there is still much to do in Cheam and that as everywhere ensuring good conservation requires constant vigilance. The Society is still considering some of the problems arising out of the correspondence set out above. It does seem, however, that a firm basis has been laid for conservation in Cheam and the real problem is to keep up the standards now set and develop the position in the directions administered in the various proposals of the Society made in the first part of 1970.
