



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

# SPACES 2021

News and views about Hackney's built environment

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## 6 Broadway Market Mews



**Broadway Market Mews is largely occupied by local businesses, shops and a strong artists' community that has been in the area for a couple of decades.**

The project at Number 6 comprises the refurbishment of the existing workshop on the ground floor and a first-floor extension to create a new studio flat.

The client, who has worked as an artist in Broadway Market since the early 1990s, wanted to enhance the mixed character of the surrounding area. Designed by Delvendahl Martin Architects, the scheme aims to create a contextual response, moving away from the brick boxes emerging in the

immediate vicinity, whilst staying true to the industrial quality of the mews.

The retained brick structure acts as a plinth to a new lightweight timber-frame extension, with exposed glulam spruce beams to the interior; it is clad in light grey standing seam metal to reflect the changing light. The approach was to generate a shape which would maximise daylight penetration and minimise the sense of enclosure to the surrounding properties.

The roof line of the new building alludes to the working history of the Mews.

The project forms part of a 'family' of interventions that Delvendahl Martin

Architects are currently working on in the area and expands upon ideas explored in the practice's earlier extension to the adjacent 'Fabrications' design studio and shop.

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## 98 Clapton Common By Julia Lafferty



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**Number 98 Clapton Common is a Grade II-listed detached villa dating from the early 19th century which overlooks the remaining portion of medieval Broad Common located at the northern end of Upper Clapton Road.**

Built of stock brick with a stuccoed ground-floor façade and long casement windows in moulded architraves with detached cornices, the two-storey building has a slated mansard roof with three dormer windows and a main entrance featuring a central Doric porch. Until 2011 it stood in close proximity to 96 Clapton Common, a locally-listed detached building of the same age, both buildings standing in their own grounds and surrounded by a low boundary wall.

The Clapton Common Conservation Area had been designated in 1969, but it was not until 2007 that Hackney Council commissioned a detailed Conservation Area Appraisal from architectural historian Dr Ann Robey. Dr Robey's report recommended that the boundary of the Conservation Area be extended to include a number of historically significant buildings surrounding the Common, among which were the two Georgian houses, the last surviving examples of the detached villas developed under building leases from the Lord of the Manor Samuel Tyssen in the late 1820s.

Dr Robey's report noted that: 'Today both villas are part of an Orthodox school. Despite some insensitive alterations, especially to number 96 and some neglect to the historic fabric of both villas, they contribute significantly to the historic and heritage interest of the Clapton Common Conservation Area. The interest is enhanced by their historical association'.

Numbers 96 and 98 Clapton Common were originally known as Stainforth House and The Woodlands, respectively, and were

notable for their association with prominent figures in the Anglican Church. From 1879 to 1923 Stainforth House had the distinction of being the residence of three Anglican Bishops – Bishop William Walsham How, Bishop Robert Billing and Bishop Charles Turner. Richard Foster, who had acquired Stainforth House in the 1850s and whose philanthropy had financed a number of Anglican churches including St Matthias in Stoke Newington, gifted the property to provide a residence for Bishop Walsham How on his appointment in 1879 as suffragan bishop for London's East End.

Bishop Walsham How played a leading role in the establishment of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society which evolved to become The Children's Society, Britain's foremost children's charity. Appointed the Society's first chairman in 1882, he was instrumental in acquiring 98 Clapton Common for the purposes of establishing the Society's first boys' home, providing free residential care for destitute children. Subsequently the house was the home of Bishop Turner's son Arthur Charlewood Turner, founder of the Anglican Fellowship, who tragically died on active service in France during the First World War. In the absence of Arthur Charlewood Turner during this war, his brother Rev Ralph Charlewood Turner lived in number 98, appearing as resident in the 1914 Post Office London Suburban Street Directory. He was curate at St Peter's Tottenham at the time. After a period in residential use, both number 98 and number 96 were acquired by the Belz Foundation in 1973 for

use as a school, undergoing a number of unauthorised alterations in the process.

Hackney Council failed to act on Dr Robey's recommendation to include numbers 96 and 98 Clapton Common in the Clapton Common Conservation Area until 2013 – a delay of five years. In the interim the Belz Foundation submitted a planning application in 2009 for the demolition of locally listed 96 Clapton Common and its replacement with a five-storey modern building which it was proposed to conjoin with Grade II-listed 98 Clapton Common by a two-storey extension.

The Clapton Conservation Areas Advisory Committee objected to the application and the Chair Malcolm Smith requested that consideration of the planning application be deferred on the basis that the officer's report to the Planning Sub-Committee had failed to reference the Council's own planning policies relating to the protection of listed buildings and their setting or relevant London Plan policies. The report had also omitted heritage information provided by Dr Robey, and most importantly had wrongly asserted that the 1920s extension to 98 Clapton Common was not included in the Grade II listing protection and ignored the fact that 96 Clapton Common formed part of the setting of the listed building and lay within its curtilage. However, despite these objections, planning permission was granted by the Planning Sub-Committee of 2 December 2009 who were assured that the listed building consent accompanying the planning permission meant that 'no structural alterations are proposed to the listed building' and the original fabric of the building which had undergone alteration would be reinstated.

While the Belz Foundation completed demolition and redevelopment of the adjacent site, they did nothing to carry out the approved reinstatement works to 98 Clapton Common. Instead the Grade II-listed building was subject to long-term neglect over a period of eight years. In 2017 Belz Foundation submitted a new planning application, the result of which would have been to alter the character and proportions of the building and its visual relationship with the Clapton Common Conservation Area. This was refused by Hackney Planning in June 2017. In July 2017 a fire started in the basement of the building.

Following an inspection of 98 Clapton Common, Senior Conservation Officer Timothy Walder reported that: 'The extent of damage to historic fabric (other than localised damage to floors and ceilings and

widespread generalised smoke damage) was less than I had feared'.

Given Timothy Walder's observations, LBH Planning Committee's approval for a subsequent planning application in 2018 to demolish the listed extension on the northern side of no 98 and replace it with a three-storey windowless monolith was greeted with incomprehension by local residents as this was in direct contradiction to the 2017 decision by LBH Planning.

The applicant has followed this up in 2020 with two further applications seeking to make further excavations to the basement. The threat of destabilisation of the 200-year-old listed building and weakening of the structure by the proposed extended excavation is causing great concern. In addition, the risks posed by structural

intrusion and possible damage to surviving historic elements of the building are a real danger. Meanwhile since 2017 there has been no effort by the owners to prevent flocks of pigeons gaining entry to the upper floor of 98 Clapton Common through windows left open to the elements.

Reports in the press in November 2020 about the collapse of a Georgian building in Chelsea during building works on its basement has heightened fears about the threat to 98 Clapton Common which is of a similar age and which has been described as 'a fragile listed building' by Hackney Planning. The public perception that for over a decade the Council's failure to take the necessary action to protect this rare example of Hackney's Georgian heritage is adding to the alarm felt in the community that a much-valued heritage asset is in danger.

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## Phase 3 Woodberry Down By Barbara McFarlane

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**The redevelopment of the Woodberry Down Estate, is a paradigm for one of the creative ways Local Authorities sought to renew their housing stock and tackle the widely acknowledged housing crisis at a time when successive governments restricted their ability to borrow funds for housing.**

By the 1990s the Woodberry Down Estate, whose first blocks were built in 1949, had become physically run down. Hackney sought to form a partnership with private developers to redevelop the estate; private housing would subsidise the construction of housing for rent and shared housing. Of the original flats built, only 1126 were still rented in 2006, reduced by approximately 30% by tenants' right to buy.

As London land values rose along with house prices, developer profits were to fund much needed infrastructure as well as housing. Berkeley Homes became the chosen developer and drafted the original masterplan in 2008 for 4664 new dwellings, a community centre, a secondary school, youth centre, business centre and new retail premises. Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association (NHGHA) was chosen to buy and manage the rented and shared ownership Housing.

Woodberry Down Community Organisation (WDCO) was formed, with elected members to represent both tenants and leaseholders. They were co-opted into the decision-making as partners and to scrutinise each phase, ensuring that the principles established in a tenants' charter are adhered to.

The 2008 masterplan, which was revised in 2013, established new principles of building heights and locations of courtyard spaces. In 2015 Phase 3 obtained planning consent, but subsequently, the developer sought to increase the scheme's density by 63% creating 584 dwellings and a new planning application was submitted in November 2019. Partly driven by efforts to fund the phase's disproportionate infrastructure costs and the addition of rented units omitted in error from a previous phase, the revisions include an Energy Centre (a combined heat and power plant for 50% of the estate), a new park, retail units along with improvements to Seven Sisters Road. Facilities for the community have been scaled down with the business centre shifted to a much later phase and a new youth centre dropped when the council found funds to refit the existing centre.

The latest plans have recently been approved for Phase 3 of the redevelopment. This is divided into 2 phases: 3A and 3B. 3A includes a 12-storey block on Woodberry Grove dropping down to 9-storey blocks around a private podium garden. Phase 3B includes a 21-storey block on Seven Sisters Road at the eastern edge with further 9-storey blocks overlooking a private podium garden.

The densification of Phase 3 has meant that the podium gardens will not catch much sunlight in winter; similarly, a number of flats fail to meet minimum levels of sunlight within, being north facing and single aspect. With the layout tightly packed there are also knock-on problems of privacy and overlooking.

Walking around the estate you can see how previous phases, took care with the design: building façades are staggered, heights are cascaded and flank walls splayed to open up views. The design for blocks in this phase is monolithic and makes no attempt to vary the elevations. The raised podium gardens are a clunky solution to the overshadowing caused by the extra heights of the blocks.



One victim has been the 150-year-old Happy Man Tree, a street tree that was voted Tree of the Year 2020 by the Woodland Trust. The developer's plans did not highlight that it was to be felled. The tree was categorised as a tree of 'amenity value' in Hackney's latest Local Plan, so WDCO asked Berkeley Homes to redesign the scheme. Residents, local environmentalists and climate activists began a protracted campaign to get the scheme redesigned to save the tree and even developed their own proposals. Their efforts failed and on 5 January 2021 the tree was felled. With this tree gone along with 51 other trees, looking beyond, there is much work to be done to ensure future developer's designs meet the needs of the local community and ensure adequate provision of truly affordable housing without sacrificing environmental concerns.

## Central and South Hackney CAAC

**Central and South Hackney Conservation Areas Committee** (CAAC) urgently needs new members. As statutory consultees, we review all planning applications for new buildings and alterations in the Conservation Areas covering the central part of Hackney (roughly between Mare Street and Queensland Road), and the southern part (roughly from Cassland Road to Victoria Park). We meet monthly, currently online, and discuss about 15-20 applications, having first each reviewed the planning applications and accompanying documents. Our responses are then passed to the planning officer who summarises our views in the planning report to the council. Knowledge of, and love for, Hackney is more important than detailed experience of planning laws and practice.

Anyone interested can contact Mike Hood on [centralandsouthhackneycaac@gmail.com](mailto:centralandsouthhackneycaac@gmail.com)

## Noticeboard

### Mary on the Green



A sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft by Maggie Hambling has been unveiled on Newington Green. The work is the result of a long campaign to create a memorial to the great feminist in the place where she once lived and worked. A more conventional sculpture – a bust of Wollstonecraft by Jenny Littlewood – is on display at the Newington Green Meeting House.

### Abney Park War Memorial

The Civilian War Memorial at Abney Park has been restored. The Grade II-listed monument lists the names of people who lost their lives in Stoke Newington during the Blitz. The victims include those who died in the bombing of Coronation Avenue, a block of social housing that was hit by a parachute mine on 13 October 1940; the building collapsed into the communal shelter beneath, leading to a huge loss of life. The monument was installed in 1948. It is inscribed with the words: 'Death is but crossing the world as friends do the seas. They live on in one another still'.

### Green Flag Awards

Three organisations in Hackney have been announced as winners in the 2020 Green Flag Community Awards. They are St Mary's Secret Garden, the Tree Musketeers' Community Tree Nursery and Core Landscapes, an offshoot of mental health

charity Core Arts. The Green Flag scheme is run by the charity Keep Britain Tidy with backing from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

### Brooke Road Sorting Office

Royal Mail has closed the sorting office in Brooke Road, Clapton. This is despite a petition signed by over 3000 people deploring the loss.

### STIK Maquette

The original maquette of STIK's Holding Hands sculpture (see photo in *Spaces* 70) has raised £250,000 after being auctioned at Christie's. STIK has donated the money to Hackney Council to fund a new wave of sculptures created by diverse artists.

### Hackney Central Station

Plans for a second entrance at Hackney Central Station have received planning approval. An additional entrance and ticket hall built on land at 231-237 Graham Road will help to ease passenger congestion. New cycle parking, drinking fountains and public space will also be created.

## Publications

**Londonia** by Kate A Hardy is a Hackney-inspired novel set in 2072. Tartarus Press, £35.00.

**Darling, it's not only about sex** by Hackney-based writer Alain Brémond-Torrent is an autobiographical novel set over the course of a single Saturday in summer. Self-published, £8.13 (available via Amazon).

**The 392** by Ashley Hickson-Lovence is a novel set entirely on a London bus travelling from Hoxton to Highbury and taking place over just 36 minutes. Own It!, £8.99.

**The Address Book: What Street Addresses Reveal about Identity, Race, Wealth, and Power** by Finsbury Park resident Deirdre Mask considers why something as seemingly mundane as an address can save lives or serve the powerful. Profile Books, £16.99.

**When Secrets Set Sail** by Sita Brahmachari is a children's novel set in a house that had been the Ayahs' Home in

Hackney (a hostel for colonial childcare workers who were abandoned in London). Orion Children's Books, £7.99.

**The Little History of the East End** by Dee Gordon takes a look at the area's history from the Stone Age, through Roman rule and civil wars, to the 20th century. History Press, £12.00.

**Eat Hackney Vegan Cookbook** by Hackney-based Helena Smith is a 60-page booklet celebrating plant-based cuisine. Inside Hackney, £8.00.

**100 Great Black Britons** by former Hackney councillor Patrick Vernon and researcher Angelina Osborne honours the achievements of black British individuals over many centuries. Robinson Press, £20.00.

## Hackney Society Events

As Covid restrictions continue we are hoping to lighten some of your winter evenings with some interesting talks which will be available online. There is no charge for members or guests. You can register on the Hackney Society home page ([hackneysociety.org](http://hackneysociety.org)) and nearer the time we'll send you the link to join.

### 'Down with the Fences!' Popular Protest and Open Space Preservation in Victorian London

Thursday 4 March 2021, 7.00pm

#### Mark Gorman

The extraordinary growth of London in the Victorian age swallowed up huge areas of green space. Fields, commons and woods – the leisure spaces for ordinary Londoners – were built over at an unprecedented rate. Across east London, much loved and heavily used open spaces like Epping Forest and Hackney Downs were under threat, and local campaigns were started to save 'the people's playgrounds'. The story of these struggles usually concentrates on the actions of middle class 'respectable' campaigners, while the key role played by ordinary Londoners has been forgotten. This is their story.

**Spaces** is published by the Hackney Society. Views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

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