

<b>Mayor and Cabinet</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	Local Listing of former Boone's Almshouses, 372 – 374, 378 – 380, Lee High Road	
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	Lee Green	
<b>Contributors</b>	Head of Planning and Head of Law	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 11 April 2012

## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 The former Boone's Almshouses are a Victorian almshouse complex built in 1875 to the design of the Architect Edward L'Anson. No longer almshouses, they have been owned by the Emmanuel Pentecostal Church since 1962. This report considers whether the buildings should be locally listed and concludes that the buildings do merit local listing.

## **2 Purpose**

- 2.1 To provide the information needed to enable Mayor and Cabinet to decide whether to locally list the former Boone's Almshouses.

## **3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Mayor is recommended to approve the addition of the former Boone's Almshouses and associated original front wall and piers to the Local List. Illustrated on the plan in appendix 1.

## **4 Policy Context**

- 4.1 The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the achievements of the Sustainable Community Strategy policy objective 'Clean, green and liveable', and the corresponding clean green and liveable policy priority, notably improving environmental management and promoting a sustainable environment. Consistency with the Council's Local Development Framework is explained below.
- 4.2 The Council's Core Strategy, adopted in 2011, policy 16 states;
- 4.3 "The Council will ensure that the value and significance of the borough's heritage assets and their settings, which include...non-designated assets such as locally listed buildings, will continue to be monitored, reviewed, enhanced and conserved according to the requirements of government planning policy

guidance, the London Plan policies, local policy and English Heritage best practice.”

- 4.4 The Council has a saved policy, URB20, from the Unitary Development Plan (July 2004) that proceeded the Core Strategy, specifically relating to locally listed buildings;
- 4.5 “The Council will seek to ensure and encourage the preservation and enhancement of Locally Listed Buildings of townscape merit and will use its powers, where possible to protect their character and setting”
- 4.6 Government Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) identifies locally listed buildings as non-designated heritage assets. With regards to non-designated heritage assets PPS5 states;
- 4.7 “Regional and local planning authorities should ensure that they have evidence about the historic environment and heritage assets in their area and that this is publicly documented.” (HE2.1)

## **5 Background**

- 5.1 Lewisham’s ‘Local List’ of buildings of architectural or historic interest that contribute towards local distinctiveness was first adopted in 1973 and has been subsequently updated several times. The most recent review being carried out in March 2011. Criteria for local interest buildings was adopted by Mayor and Cabinet in 2009. These criteria are attached as appendix 2.
- 5.2 The local list does not afford any legal protection for buildings, unlike buildings on the statutory list, produced by central government on advice from English Heritage and which grades buildings as Grade II, Grade II\* and Grade 1. These are protected from demolition and other unauthorised works. Whilst the buildings on the local list may not meet the criteria for statutory listing which is based on national importance, they add to the local distinctiveness of Lewisham.
- 5.3 Placing a building on the Local List places no statutory responsibility on the property owner, in terms of maintenance, repair or re-instatement of features.
- 5.4 The former Boone’s Almshouses have been used as part of the Emmanuel Pentecostal Church since 1962. In 1984 there was a successful application for an extension to the front elevation and in 2010 another successful application for two temporary classrooms sited to the rear. Also in 2010, the Emmanuel Pentecostal Church approached Lewisham Council with a pre-application submission to redevelop and create a new church and residential complex. This was followed by a formal application in May 2011 which at time of writing is yet to be determined. The proposals involve the demolition of all buildings on site including the almshouses. As part of the consultation process on the planning application, the Lee Manor Society requested the almshouses and chapel be considered for local listing and the Council carried out a Heritage Assessment. This Heritage Assessment identified the buildings met the criteria for local

listing (see appendix 3) and this was fed back to the applicant as part of the development management process.

## **6 The case for Local Listing**

- 6.1 **History** - The almshouses were built in 1875 by the Merchants Taylors' Company (MTC) on behalf of the Christopher Boone's Charity. They were built to replace earlier almshouses situated about half a mile west of the site on the northern side of Lee High Road next to the Boone's Chapel.
- 6.2 Christopher Boone (ca. 1615/16 - 1686) was a wealthy London wool merchant, philanthropist and member of the Merchant Taylors Company. In 1668 he bought Lee Place and relocated with his wife Mary to Lee, which at that time was a small rural village in Kent. Around 1680 they bought further land in the parish and in 1682 had four almshouses and a chapel constructed at their own costs. The almshouses were to house six poor elderly people of the parish and a School Mistress for the education of twelve poor children.
- 6.3 To ensure its long-term future, the Christopher Boone's Charity was placed in the trust of the MTC – it laid the foundations for the company's more than 300 years long connection with Lee.
- 6.4 The MTC is one of the Twelve Great City Livery Companies surviving from Medieval times. The Company was at first a guild, an association of Tailors and Linen Armourers, and later traders. By the end of the 17th century, its connection with the tailoring trade had virtually ceased and it became what it is today, a mainly charitable organisation. It administers many charitable trusts created by past Members and benefactors.
- 6.5 When the Boone's estate was sold by the family in 1824, the MTC acquired large parts north of the turnpike road (Lee High Road) and built their own almshouses to the north of the existing Boone's Almshouses. The MTC had managed their own almshouses since the 15<sup>th</sup> century at various locations in the city. In contrast to Boone's almshouses, which were built for the relief of local people, the new MTC almshouses were for the widows of freemen belonging to the company.
- 6.6 The two charities were run independently but the residents shared the Chapel. In 1858 plans commenced to replace Boone's almshouses, by then nearly 200 years old. The new site further east along Lee High Road at the corner with Lampmead Road was bought in 1872 and the new almshouses and chapel built to the designs of the architect Edward B L'Anson. In 1876, the resident's of the old Boone's almshouses were moved to the new houses and the old almshouses were subsequently demolished in 1877.
- 6.7 In 1962, the complex was sold to the Emmanuel Pentecostal Church. The proceedings of the sale were used to built 30 new almshouses in Belmont Park. The 1876 almshouses have since been used as a church and offices for its administration, and housing.

- 6.8 **Architect** - Edward L'Anson (1812-1888) was a renowned Victorian architect practising mainly in London and the South East. His legacy includes the Royal Exchange (1838, internal works only), the Corn Exchange and the Medical School of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, all of which are listed, but also smaller parish churches such as St Luke's in Grayshott (Grade II listed) and Christ Church in South Nutfield, Surrey.
- 6.9 L'Anson was partly educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and for many years was surveyor to the company, for which he also designed the south and east range of the Merchant Taylors' Hall in Threadneedle Street (Grade II\* listed).
- 6.10 He was elected a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1840, and was chosen president in 1886.
- 6.11 **Description** - The almshouses are set in a formal arrangement to both sides of the chapel, which is placed in the centre. Originally, the chapel stood detached with the apse facing the street and the access via the south porch from Lampmead Road. In the late 1970s the apse was demolished and replaced with the present entrance building that features a glass frontage and a peculiar conical-shaped roof.
- 6.12 The two residential ranges are built in a domestic Tudor style with two-light stone-mullioned windows with drip moulds. They have cross wings to the outer ends, one forward projecting gable to the centre and one to the rear to the inner ends (towards the chapel). Although currently somewhat spoilt, each range forms an attractive composition of prominent gables, square bays (to the rear), mullioned and transomed windows and impressive central ridge stacks, of which one has remained complete. The buildings were originally red brick faced with simple but effective brick and stone detailing. The appealing colour contrast is currently lost as a result of the rendering of the brickwork and painting of the stone but can still be appreciated in the front boundary wall which has remained comparatively unchanged. The windows were originally timber casement but have been replaced in uPVC in a pattern that seems to reflect the original. Features that have survived are the roof and ridge tiles, shaped stone copings, canopies above the doors, and one of the chimney stacks.
- 6.13 The chapel is built in an Early English style in red brick with a stone band at sill level, a drip-mould course and dentilled cornice. It has lost its bell turret and the apse, which has been replaced with a modern entrance building, but otherwise the exterior seems relatively unchanged and in a good condition.
- 6.14 The buildings are set back from the street via a large forecourt. Historic pictures show that this once formed the front garden and green setting to the houses with mature planting and trees. It has been tarmaced and is used for car parking, which has created a much more urbanised setting. The attractive surrounding boundary wall with piers and stone copings has survived to the front.

- 6.15 It is unlikely that the almshouses and chapel would meet the national criteria for statutory listing due to the unsympathetic alterations that have been made to the buildings and their setting. However, the buildings are of social, architectural and historic interest to the Borough, as described previously, and fulfil the Council's criteria for local listing on the following accounts:
- 6.16 **Historic Interest:** The buildings have historic interest for their association with Christopher Boone and the work of the MTC in Lee. The almshouses were designed by an distinguished architect of its time whose involvement in Lee can only be explained by his associations with the MTC. As almshouses they are of special social historic interest to Lee, giving evidence of social attitudes to the destitute and poor in past centuries. Prior to the creation of a state welfare system, which is essentially a 20<sup>th</sup> century achievement, the care for the aged was largely the preserve of the church, individual parishes and private benefactors. The tradition of private charity ran side by side with the municipal welfare provisions and, by the eighteenth century, almshouses were powerful emblems of corporate status and private munificence and remained so well into the twentieth century.
- 6.17 **Architectural Interest:** The almshouses have special architectural interest as a distinctive building type. Despite the alterations to the buildings, they can be recognised in plan form, architectural detail, and the emphasis on formality as almshouses. The conservative style and domestic proportions are typical for almshouses and are part of their appeal.
- 6.18 **Rarety:** The almshouses are comparatively rare, nationally as well as locally. Within the Borough of Lewisham, there are only two other surviving almshouse complexes, both of which are listed – the above mentioned Merchant Taylors' Almshouses and the Thackerey Almshouses on Lewisham High Street. The almshouses in Deptford were demolished in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 6.19 For the purposes of development management, a locally listed building is a material consideration in the determination of subsequent planning applications involving the building.
- 6.20 The full Heritage Assessment undertaken by Officers is attached as appendix 3.

## 7 Consultation

- 7.1 It is the Council's normal practice to notify the building owners of the officers intention to report to the Mayor on local listing. In response, the owners have submitted a report and a 'Heritage Impact Assessment' that detail their objection to the proposed local listing of the almshouse for the following reasons:
- The historic and aesthetic value of the buildings is low. They do not represent buildings of special social, economic, cultural or architectural interest to Lewisham, and as such they do not fulfil the Council's criteria for local listing.

- The Heritage Assessment is inaccurate - The Almshouses were established for members of the City of London institutions or associated benefactors rather than for the destitute or poor for the parish of Lee, as claimed.
- The buildings are not a well preserved example of almshouses in Lewisham – There are two other Almshouse complexes in Lewisham, which are listed buildings and are better preserved examples.
- Although the Architect, Edward L'Anson is of renown, the almshouses are not representative of his work.
- Local Listing will not stop the deterioration of the buildings as there is no requirement on owners to repair, maintain or re-instate features to a building. Therefore, Local listing will not secure the structural integrity of the buildings which require considerable investment.
- The Council's Local List policy, URB 20 does not preclude demolition of Local List Buildings, subject to the quality of the replacement building.
- Previous applications for two temporary classrooms in 2010 and an extension to the front elevation in 1984 did not identify the building as a heritage asset. These buildings were also not identified as a heritage asset during pre-application discussions for the site in 2010.
- There is ambiguity in the origins and justification for the request for local listing by Lee Manor Society

7.2 The Lee Manor Society supported local listing for the following reasons;

- Important local building with strong historical link to Boone's Chapel (Grade I listed building) which was recently restored with funding from, among others, Lewisham Council.
- The historic significance means the buildings could be included on the Lee Historical Trail.
- It is an attractive building

7.3 The Lee Manor Society also requested the building be the subject of an Article 4 Direction, to remove permitted development rights to demolish the building without the need for planning permission.

7.4 The Council also requested an opinion from the Victorian Society, the national body concerned with Victorian architecture, once the architect was established to be Edward L'Anson. They supported the proposal for local listing.

## 8 Response

8.1 The former almshouses have been assessed in detail and are considered to fulfil the Council's criteria for local listing. Officers have clearly outlined in para 6 how the buildings meet the Council's adopted criteria for local listing.

8.2 There was a misunderstanding by the owner about the historical accuracy of the Heritage Assessment (appendix 3). This has been re-worded for clarity in para.6.6 of this document and clearly states that Boone's almshouses were for the relief of local people. The Boone's Charity was established for the relief of the poor of the parish of Lee and its work in the area has continued up to the

present day. The MTC's almshouses were for the widows of the members of the Company.

- 8.3 The significance of the buildings as works of the architect Edward L'Anson is more by associations rather than as outstanding representatives of his work.
- 8.4 The state of repair of a building is not a relevant consideration when deciding whether a building meets the criteria for local listing. This conforms with the principles for the selection of statutory listed buildings. The buildings are internally in a good condition and provide four comfortable homes, a reception area and an office to the Church.
- 8.5 Local Listing status cannot make the owner undo any unsympathetic alterations and to invest in the repair of these properties. However, this does not invalidate the heritage significance of the buildings nor would it justify their loss. If locally listed their preservation and enhancement would be a material consideration in the determination of any planning application.
- 8.6 The heritage significance of the almshouses has been identified through a detailed heritage assessment, requested at a time when the prospect of total demolition and loss called for greater scrutiny of the heritage value embodied in these buildings. PPS 5 (HE7.1) allows for the identification of heritage assets, such as this, to take place as late as during the decision-making process. The possibility of last-minute identification exists and is even enshrined in the heritage designation system which allows for the spot-listing of threatened buildings.
- 8.7 With regard to the possible reasons for the Lee Manor Society's request for local listing, the Council specifically invites members of the public to put forward candidates for local listing. Their reasons for doing so are not a consideration in the Heritage Assessment and do not influence the assessment as to whether a building or structure fulfils the criteria for local listing. In this particular case, the Society's request proved valid.
- 8.8 It is considered that only the almshouses and the associated boundary wall and pier to the front would satisfy the Council's criteria for local listing. Although the chapel forms part of the original design, in terms of its size it was not built as a house chapel to the benefactors of the Boone's Charity, but served a wider congregation. It is as such not a rare example of its type, nor distinctive or of any outstanding architectural treatment that would merit its local listing. The integrity and plan form of the buildings has also been affected by the loss of the apse and the addition of the 1970s entrance building.
- 8.9 While the purpose of this report is not to consider the request for an Article 4 Direction in detail, as requested by the Lee Manor Society, officers are firmly of the view that an Article 4 direction to withdraw permitted development rights for demolition is not appropriate at this time. This is because the building is not under imminent threat of demolition and is occupied. There could potentially be significant financial implications for the Council in the application of an Article 4

direction and these have not been assessed in detail at this time. Therefore, an Article 4 direction is not being proposed.

## **9 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. The local list is non statutory and does not provide any legal protection for buildings. The list is intended to recognise and highlight buildings that are not statutorily protected. The costs of carrying out the Heritage Assessment were covered from the Planning Service revenue budget.
- 9.2 Should an article 4 direction be required at a later date then this could result in significant financial implications and would be the subject of a further report to M&C.

## **10 Legal Implications**

- 10.1 The local list is a non-statutory list of buildings compiled by the Council. The local list is intended to recognise buildings which are not statutorily protected so that they can be properly considered when development proposals are submitted to the Council for determination. The Local List reinforces the Council's efforts to preserve the character and appearance of the buildings that are included on it. In adding a building to the list the Council is able to rely upon its well being powers.
- 10.2 As at the date of writing this report Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (amendments are pending as a result of the Localism Act 2011 at a date yet to be appointed) provides that every local authority has the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects:
- the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area,
  - the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and
  - the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area
- 10.3 In determining whether or how to exercise the power set out above the Council is required by Section 2(3) to have regard to the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy. Such considerations are included in the body of this report.
- 10.4 There are no significant human rights implications associated with local listing given the limited effect of local listing and that it does not confer legal protection for buildings so listed.

### **Equalities**

- 10.5 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) brings together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty), replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011.



The new duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

As was the case for the original separate duties, the new duty continues to be a “have regard duty”, and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission issued guides in January 2011 providing an overview of the new equality duty, including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. The guides cover what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guides were based on the then draft specific duties so are no longer fully up-to-date, although regard may still be had to them until the revised guides are produced. The guides do not have legal standing unlike the statutory Code of Practice on the public sector equality duty, However, that Code is not due to be published until later in 2011. The guides can be found at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/new-public-sector-equality-duty-guidance/>

## **11 Crime and Disorder Implications**

11.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications.

## **12 Equalities Implications**

12.1 The environmental benefits arising from this report are of equal benefit to all, otherwise there are no direct equalities implications.

## **13 Environmental Implications**

13.1 The principle implicit in conservation management is to repair and maintain existing building elements rather than requiring the replacement and disposal of serviceable items to landfill. This reduces environmental impacts by retaining items and their embodied energy and not causing carbon dioxide emissions necessary for the manufacture and transportation of new items.

## **14 Conclusion**

14.1 The case for local listing has been made in para 6 and appendix 3. The landowners have objected to the local listing status and their objections, addressed in section 8, are not considered to outweigh the case for local listing. In conclusion, officers therefore consider that the former Boone's Almshouses meet the criteria for local listing and recommend their addition to Lewisham's Local List.

### Background documents and originator

Short Document	Title	Date	File Location	File Reference	Contact Officer	Exempt
PPS5 and Guidance		2010	Laurence House	Urban Design and Conservation	Phil Ashford	No
The London Plan		2004	Laurence House	Urban Design and Conservation	Phil Ashford	No
The Core Strategy		2011	Laurence House	Planning Policy	Brian Regan	No
UDP		2004	Laurence House	Planning Policy	Brian Regan	No
Applicant's 'Response to proposed local listing' and 'Heritage Impact Assessment'		2011 and 2012	Laurence House	Urban Design and Conservation	Phil Ashford	No
Letters from Lee Manor Society		2011 and 2012	Laurence House	Urban Design and Conservation	Phil Ashford	No
Email from Victorian Society		2011	Laurence House	Urban Design and Conservation	Phil Ashford	No

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Phil Ashford, 5<sup>th</sup> floor Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, Catford SE6 4RU – telephone 020 8314 8533

# Appendix 1 – Site Plan



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Scale 1:1250

**This plan forms no part of a planning application**

## Appendix 2 - Criteria for local listing, as adopted January 2009

**Historic Interest:** buildings that are of special social, economic or cultural interest to Lewisham, and/or have proven affiliation with locally important people and events, or other community associations (particularly important local architects);

**Architectural Interest:** buildings that are of special architectural interest to Lewisham for reasons of their vernacular, aesthetic, type (*i.e. form and function*), style, plan, technology, townscape, unity, or association with important local architects;

**Age or Rarity:** buildings that are:

- a) Legibly pre-1700 in interest
- b) Of appreciable interest from between 1700 to 1840
- c) Of a high level of interest following 1840
- d) Of an outstanding interest and less than 30 years old

## **Appendix 3 – Heritage Assessment**

### **Former Boone's Almshouses, 372-376 Lee High Road, Lee Heritage Assessment**

#### **Summary**

The following report assesses the heritage value of the former Boone's Almshouses in Lee High Road, following a request by the Lee Manor Society to the Council to locally list these buildings.

The former Boone's Almshouses are a Victorian almshouse complex built in 1875 to the design of the architect Edward L'Anson to replace an earlier complex located half a mile further west in Lee High Road.

The assessment establishes that the almshouses would fulfil the Council's criteria for local listing on grounds of their architectural, historic and social interest. Their significance as a work of a renowned Victorian architect needs further investigation and may establish significance in a national context.

It is recommended to locally list these buildings.

#### **History**

The almshouses were built in 1875 by the Merchants Taylors Company on behalf of the Boone's Charity. They were built to replace earlier almshouses situated about half a mile west of the site on the northern side of Lee High Road next to the Boone's Chapel.

Christopher Boone (ca. 1615/16 - 1686) was a wealthy London wool merchant, philanthropist and member of the Merchant Taylors Company. In 1668 he bought Lee Place and relocated with his wife Mary to Lee, which at that time was a small rural village in Kent. Around 1680 they bought further land in the parish and in 1682 had four almshouses and a chapel constructed at their own costs. The almshouses were to house six poor elderly people of the parish and a School Mistress for the education of twelve poor children.

To ensure its long-term future, the Boone's Charity was placed in the trust of the MTC – it laid the foundations for the company's more than 300 years long connection with Lee.

The MTC (MTC) is one of the Twelve Great City Livery Companies surviving from Medieval times. The Company was at first a guild, an association of tailors and Linen Armourers, and later traders. By the end of the 17th century, its connection with the tailoring trade had virtually ceased and it became what it is today, a mainly charitable organisation. It administers many charitable trusts created by past Members and benefactors.

When the Boone's estate was sold by the family in 1824, the MTC acquired large parts north of the turnpike road (Lee High Road) and built their own almshouses to the north of the existing Boone's Almshouses. The MTC had managed their own almshouses since the 15<sup>th</sup> century at various locations in the city. In contrast to the Boone's almshouses, the new almshouses were not built for the relief of local people but for the widows of freemen belonging to the company.

The two charities were run independently but the residents shared the Chapel. In 1858 plans commenced to replace the Boone's almshouses, by then nearly 200 years old. The new site further east along Lee High Road at the corner with Lampmead Road was bought in 1872 and the new almshouses and chapel built to the designs of the architect Edward B L'Anson. In 1876, the resident's of the Boone's almshouses were moved to the new houses and the old almshouses were subsequently demolished in 1877.

In 1962, the complex was sold to the Emmanuel Pentecostal Church. The proceedings of the sale were used to built 30 new almshouses in Belmont Park. The 1876 almshouses have since been used as a church and offices for its administration, and housing.

### **The Architect**

Edward L'Anson (1812-1888) was a renowned Victorian architect practising mainly in London and the South East. His legacy includes the Royal Exchange (1838, internal works only), the Corn Exchange and the Medical School of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, all of which are listed, but also smaller parish churches such as St Luke's in Grayshott (Grade II listed) and Christ Church in South Nutfield, Surrey.

L'Anson was partly educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and for many years was surveyor to the company, for which he also designed the south and east range of the Merchant Taylors' Hall in Threadneedle Street (Grade II\* listed).

He was elected a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1840, and was chosen president in 1886.

### **Description**

The almshouses are set in a formal arrangement to both sides of the chapel, which is placed in the centre. Originally, the chapel stood detached with the apse facing the street and the access via the south porch from Lampmead Road. In the late 1970s the apse was demolished and replaced with the present entrance building that features a glass frontage and a peculiar conical-shaped roof.

The two residential ranges are built in a domestic Tudor style with two-light stone-mullioned windows with drip moulds. They have cross wings to the outer ends, one forward projecting gable to the centre and one to the rear to the inner ends (towards the chapel). Although currently somewhat spoilt, each range forms an attractive composition of prominent gables, square bays (to the rear), mullioned and transomed windows and impressive central ridge stacks, of which one has remained complete. The buildings were originally red brick faced with simple but effective brick and stone detailing. The appealing colour contrast is currently lost as a result of the rendering of the brickwork and painting of the stone but can still be appreciated in the front boundary wall which has remained comparatively unchanged. The windows were originally timber casement but have been replaced in uPVC in a pattern that seems to reflect the original. Features that have survived are the roof and ridge tiles, shaped stone copings, canopies above the doors, and one of the chimney stacks.

The chapel is built in an Early English style in red brick with a stone band at sill level, a drip-mould course and dentilled cornice. It has lost its bell turret and the apse, which has been replaced with a modern entrance building, but otherwise the exterior seems relatively unchanged and in a good condition.

The buildings are set back from the street via a large forecourt. Historic pictures show that this once formed the front garden and green setting to the houses with mature planting and

trees. It has been tarmaced and is used for car parking, which has created a much more urbanised setting.

The attractive surrounding boundary wall with piers and stone copings has survived to the front.

### **Significance**

It is unlikely that the almshouses and chapel would meet the national criteria for statutory listing due to the unsympathetic alterations that have been made to the buildings and their setting. However, the buildings are of social, architectural and historic interest to the borough and fulfil the criteria for local listing on several accounts.

### **Historic Interest:**

The almshouses have historic interest for their association with Christopher Boone and the work of the MTC in Lee.

### **Social Interest:**

Prior to the creation of a state welfare system, which is essentially a 20<sup>th</sup> century achievement, the care for the aged was largely the preserve of the church, individual parishes and private benefactors. The tradition of private charity ran side by side with the municipal welfare provisions and, by the eighteenth century, almshouses were powerful emblems of corporate status and private munificence and remained so well into the twentieth century. As such, the almshouses have significance as evidence of social attitudes to the destitute and poor in past centuries.

### **Architectural Interest:**

Despite the alterations to the buildings, they are distinctive in plan form and architectural detail as almshouses and emphasis on formality. The conservative style and domestic proportions are typical for almshouses and part of their appeal.

As a building type, almshouses are comparatively rare, nationally as well as locally. Within the Borough of Lewisham, there are only two other surviving almshouse complexes, both of which are listed – the above mentioned Merchant Taylors' Almshouses and the Thackerey Almshouses on Lewisham High Street. The almshouses in Deptford were demolished in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The appearance of the houses has been spoilt by later alterations which has affected their townscape merit. However, their form and integrity has remained intact and their historic character could relatively easily be revealed by removing the paint from the stone detailing and the re-instatement of the timber windows and chimneys.

The almshouses were designed by an distinguished architect of its time which adds to their architectural interest. Further research is needed to establish their significance within the overall work of L'Anson. The Victorian Society has been informed.

### **Recommendation**

The almshouses fulfil the Council's criteria for local listing on grounds of their architectural and social interest as a rare building type, their historic interest deriving from the association with the Boone's family and the MTC, and the renowned Victorian architect L'Anson.

It is recommended to put them forward to Mayor and Cabinet for adoption as a Building of Local Interest to be added on the Council's Local List.

**Sources:**

Boone's Chapel: History in the making, by Madeleine Adams and Charlie MacKeith, 2010.

Edward L'Anson: Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Vol. 28, by [Lionel Henry Cust](#), [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1%27Anson,\\_Edward\\_\(DNB00\)](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1%27Anson,_Edward_(DNB00))

Health and welfare buildings: Designation listing selection guide, by English Heritage (2011).

Merchant Taylors' Company: About the company, [http://www.merchant-taylors.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=blogcategory&id=2&Itemid=2](http://www.merchant-taylors.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=2&Itemid=2)

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## Pictures



The Boone's Almshouses in a historic drawing of 1876 (source: Boone's Chapel: History in the making, by Madeleine Adams and Charlie MacKeith, 2010).



The former Boone's Almshouses, October 2011



The Boone's Almshouses in a photograph of 1908



The almshouse complex seen from Lee High Road, undated (early 20<sup>th</sup> century)



Chapel to the almshouses at Lampmead Road, October 2011



Boone's Almshouses, south range, seen from Lee High Road, October 2011



Boone's Almshouses, south range rear elevation, seen from Lampmead Road, October 2011