

10. THE LITERARY STREETS OF ADDINGTON: STREET BEAUTIFICATIONS

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of investigations into beautifications for Addington streets, and to seek approval that, when the Kipling Street kerb and channel renewal works go out for public consultation, it will include details of these enhancements (see Lee Kelly's report regarding Kipling Street).

BACKGROUND

Addington is a Neighbourhood Plan area. Broadly speaking, the purpose of Neighbourhood Plans is to enhance residential zones by improving their appearance/character through the development of streets and public open spaces. In turn, this helps restore the confidence of private owners in their neighbourhood, encouraging them to maintain their own properties, leading to the whole area receiving a 'lift'.

Maintaining a coherent theme for street enhancements in the Addington area will help define/unify the neighbourhood by reinforcing its visual identity as a residential area. There is a need to reinforce this visual identity as Addington is bounded by industrial uses and major roads, which are eroding the residential feel of the neighbourhood. This can lead to a loss of confidence in the neighbourhood amongst private owners.

Streetscape improvements in Addington are also important as the area is zoned Living 3, so the streets provide areas of significant public open space and need streetscapes which encourage people into them, as private gardens are lost to higher densities over time.

For these reasons it is proposed to further enhance the kerb and channel works in Addington. The idea currently being investigated is the 'Literary Streets' theme. This idea stems from the fact that many of the streets in the Addington Neighbourhood Plan area are named after writers: Collins, Dickens, Disraeli, Emerson, Macaulay, Barrie, Fielding, Kipling, Meredith, Ruskin and Burke.

Initially it was thought that a feature in the relevant street, with some uplifting words of the writer (e.g. the words of John Ruskin in Ruskin Street) would reflect the efforts being put into Addington to uplift the neighbourhood. However research has found some quotes that are not strictly 'uplifting', but would still add value to the streets through their wit, charm or contemplative qualities. It is intended to use quotes that will appeal to both adults and children.

The triggers for the proposal for 'Literary Streets' beautifications were:

1. The wishes of the Board

In April 2003, Spreydon-Heathcote Community Board resolved that a number of opportunities be investigated for the Artworks in Public Places list, including:

"Some of the less affluent areas need something to give the area a lift (in a park or somewhere central)"

2. Addington Cemetery redevelopment

At this stage (September 2003) plans at concept level are to include "quotable quotes, scripture and verse" in the cemetery on stone or cast plaques. It is intended to co-ordinate the style of the Literary Streets features with the Cemetery redevelopment.

3. Kerb and Channel Renewal

The proposed kerb and channel works and subsequent reconstruction of footpaths offers an opportunity to introduce enhancements to Addington Streets (as do future Park and Waterways projects).

CURRENT STAGE OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

At the request of the Board (Addington Cluster seminar on 21 August 2003) the Library's Insite Team are currently researching the quotes of past prominent Addington residents and/or those buried at the Cemetery (e.g. Kate Sheppard). The Board will be updated when this research is complete.

The research into the quotes of the 'street name authors' is now complete. Kipling Street is the first 'Literary Street' to receive kerb and channel renewal (2003/04) followed, soon after, by Barrie Street 2004/05 and Ruskin Street 2005/06.

The proposal is to represent the writer with a feature(s) in the street: enhancements with a small-scale, integrated, arts component. The range of features are brass plaques (with text), mosaics and brass images, from which children could take brass rubbings (in keeping with Addington's age, strong clerical influence and links with the tradition of taking brass rubbings from cemeteries).

These features would help improve the appearance of Addington's residential streets, enhance people's enjoyment of the area and promote local cultural pride. The features will be integrated into the plans for the proposed new streetscape (see Lee Kelly's report): near kerb build-outs, in the landscaped area between the turning head and Brougham Street and so on.

RECOMMENDED QUOTES FOR KIPLING STREET

The Writer

Rudyard Kipling (1865 - 1936) was born in Bombay, India. As a young man he began writing stories and poems whilst working as a journalist. His poems caught the public imagination and when he went to England as a writer at the age of 23 he was already famous. In 1907 he accepted his greatest award, the Nobel Prize for Literature. He was a modest and likeable man whose stories for children, particularly *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *Just So Stories* (1902) were as well-loved and admired as his poems.

Quotes

The Camel's hump is an ugly lump.
Which well you may see at the zoo;
But uglier yet is the hump we get
From having too little to do.
From "Just so Stories (1902)"

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
Rudyard Kipling, "If -" (1910)

The silliest woman can manage a clever man; but it takes a very clever woman to manage a fool.
Rudyard Kipling, "Three and-an Extra" . (1888)

It's clever, but is it Art?
Rudyard Kipling, "The Conundrum of the Workshops" (1892)

Staff

Recommendation: That the Board approve inclusion of the Literary Street proposals with the consultation material for the Kipling Street kerb and channel renewal project.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: As part of the Addington Cluster project, I support the staff recommendation for Kipling Street.