

# Winchmore Hill & Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Area

## Management Proposals

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# WINCHMORE HILL GREEN AND VICARS MOOR LANE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

## THE MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN ENFIELD

### **The Purpose of Conservation Area Management Proposals**

The management proposals set out a framework for managing change in, and the conservation and enhancement of, Enfield's conservation areas, to ensure that they retain the special qualities that led to their designation. It helps to fulfil the Council's duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. These proposals are particularly relevant where there is pressure for development and where cumulative minor changes may be affecting the character or appearance of the conservation area.

### **English Heritage Guidance on Management Proposals**

English Heritage's guidance on the management of conservation areas is contained in *Understanding Place: Designation, Appraisal and Management of Conservation Areas* (2011)<sup>1</sup>. Although this predates the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), it is the most up-to-date guidance available. There is no reason to think that its advice on conservation area management (which is largely carried over from earlier guidance published in 2006<sup>2</sup>) is likely to change substantially.

### **Enfield's Planning Policies**

The key national and local planning and development management policies affecting conservation areas are set out in section 1.4 of the conservation area character appraisals. The conservation area appraisals and management proposals have been approved by Enfield Council. The appraisals form part of the "evidence base" for the conservation policies in Enfield's Local Plan. They support the planning policy framework of the Core Strategy and the Development Management Document. The management proposals will be incorporated in the Enfield Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in due course and as such they will be given considerable weight in the determination of planning applications affecting the conservation areas.

### **Planning policy delivery**

Since the conservation area character appraisals were published in 2006, the Council's Core Strategy has been adopted (2010), which includes over-arching policies for the protection of the Borough's historic built environment (Core

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<sup>1</sup> Available from English Heritage's website, [www.helm.org.uk](http://www.helm.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> English Heritage *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2006).

Policy 31). A submission draft Development Management Document, containing detailed policies for the determination of planning applications, is awaiting final adoption in November 2014.

Annual monitoring of conservation areas has been undertaken by the Enfield Conservation Advisory Group and local societies and reported to the Council. The outcomes of this monitoring have been incorporated in the revised character appraisals and management proposals as appropriate.

## **Grants**

Subject to available resources, the Council will work with partners to provide carefully targeted grant-aid to historic buildings and conservation areas, including, where appropriate, English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund grants.

## **Design and other Guidance**

The Council's forthcoming Enfield Design Guide will provide advice on alterations to residential properties, including extensions, roof alterations, architectural detailing and appropriate materials. The Design Guide will also include area-specific design advice and it will incorporate these conservation area management proposals. The Council will help owners and their agents to achieve acceptable proposals within conservation areas through the pre-application advice service<sup>3</sup>. In some cases, applicants for major developments will be required to support their applications with a master plan.

## **Planning Decisions**

Planning applications affecting conservation areas will be determined with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Enfield's Local Plan, the approved conservation area management proposals and the emerging Enfield Design Guide, and having regard to advice from the Council's Conservation Advisory Group

In line with the NPPF and Enfield's Policy Draft DMD 44 and supporting Appendix 6 applicants for development affecting a heritage asset or its setting should provide a Heritage Statement, describing the significance of any heritage assets affected by development proposals, and the contribution made by their setting, as part of any application affecting a property within a conservation area. The Council will not validate applications where the extent of the impact of the proposal on the significance of any heritage assets affected cannot adequately be understood from the application and supporting documents. The Heritage Statement should contain the information required to assess the impact of the proposals. Detailed requirements are set out in the Appendix on Heritage Statements. (Draft DMD 6.5.7)

## **Enforcement**

The Council will continue to ensure that the planning system is not abused. Planning enforcement by the Council's Planning Enforcement Team will prioritise unauthorised works to listed buildings, protected trees and within conservation areas. The Council will always seek to persuade owners to restore and put right any offending works, but will, where necessary, take enforcement action to achieve those aims. Where there is a demonstrable public interest in so doing, offenders may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Unauthorised works requiring planning permission undertaken four years or more before discovery by the authorities are deemed approved (there is no such limitation on unauthorised works requiring listed building consent).

Dated photographic records of buildings within conservation areas will be used, where available, to provide evidence for enforcement action.

Where appropriate the Council will also use its powers under S215 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to address properties that adversely affect the amenity of a neighbourhood.

## **Section 106 Agreements**

The Council will continue to use Section 106 Agreements to assist in conserving and enhancing its conservation areas. These are agreements between the Council and a developer, whereby the developer undertakes works or makes a contribution (financial or in kind), to the Council to offset or mitigate any adverse impact of the development on the surrounding social or physical infrastructure. Where a development has an impact on a conservation area, the Council will require the developer to enter into a s.106 Agreement where, on balance, adverse impacts cannot be completely mitigated through the development itself. Receipts from such agreements may be used, as appropriate, to help deliver the management proposals set down in this document

In the future, once adopted (anticipated 2014) where appropriate the Council will also make use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to help fund the provision of infrastructure necessary as a result of development. CIL can contribute to the provision of community infrastructure, including cultural facilities, which could be developed within an historic building or other heritage asset.

## **Highways and the Public Realm**

The Council will respect the special character of conservation areas when undertaking environment improvements to highways and the public realm,

including new facilities such as cycle paths, having regard to conservation area character appraisals and these management proposals. Excessive street furniture and standard traffic management features such as railings, coloured surfaces and carriageway markings can be particularly harmful in conservation areas. Wherever possible, the Council will remove unnecessary street clutter in conservation areas. Street patterns that contribute to the special character of conservation areas and historic street and footway surfacing will be retained where possible.

The Council will, wherever possible, use its planning powers and agreements with developers (such as s106, s207 and s.38 Agreements) to secure additional funding to ensure a high standard of works to the public realm within conservation areas. The Council has approved Streetscape Policy and Guidance<sup>4</sup> for the management and maintenance of the public realm, including that within conservation areas.

Street lighting throughout the Borough has been renewed since 2006 under a PFI contract. Where street lighting in a conservation area has been replaced to a non-standard specification, reflecting the special character or appearance of the area, this standard will be maintained in any future replacement scheme.

## **Open Spaces**

In line with the Core Strategy, the Council will protect and enhance existing open spaces in the Borough. Open spaces play a key role in the character of many conservation areas and where they are heritage assets (such as many open spaces in conservation areas), they will be preserved and enhanced.

## **Trees in Conservation Areas**

The Council will continue to recognise the importance of and protect trees in conservation areas, whether in streets and parks, or on private land.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires owners to give six weeks notification of any intended works to trees on private land within conservation areas. This is to allow councils to make an assessment of whether the tree in question has sufficient amenity value to be worthy of protection through the serving of a Tree Preservation Order. The Council will ensure that all such trees reported will be carefully assessed and any that are deemed worthy will be so protected.

The Council will ensure that any future necessary replanting will be with species that accord with the prevailing character of the street or area. The Council will continue to manage the growth potential of certain pollarded species.

In conservation areas, trees will be replaced on a like-for-like basis wherever possible, particularly where the replacement is one of a group or avenue of identical species. If possible, modern improved varieties of the species will be

chosen where that will reduce the risk to adjacent properties. However, where replanting with the same species is impractical for sound arboricultural reasons, appropriate alternative species will be chosen.

The Council has adopted a Corporate Tree Management Strategy, which provide the basis for works to trees in streets, public parks and elsewhere in the public realm, including those within conservation areas.<sup>5</sup>

### **Monitoring Change**

The Council will monitor change in the Borough's conservation areas, with reference to the conservation area character appraisals and management proposals and in partnership with the Conservation Advisory Group

### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of this Document**

The Council will aim to ensure that the management proposals are kept up-to-date and relevant through five-yearly reviews of the conservation area character appraisals and management proposals.

### **Summary of special interest**

The key factors that give the Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas their special interest are summarised in **Section 3 (p.37) of the Character Appraisal**. These are the things that make up the character and appearance of the area which it is desirable to "preserve or enhance" through management action.

### **Conservation Area boundaries**

Following the recent review (May 2013), the current boundaries are confirmed.

### **Summary of issues**

The particular issues affecting the Conservation Area at present, which need to be addressed, are summarised in **Section 4 (p.38) of the Character Appraisal**, as follows:

The conservation area is generally in good condition and well-maintained. The loss of architectural details is largely historic, and it is far less common than it was prior to the Article 4 Direction, although there still appear to be occasional breaches of planning control. There are no major issues affecting the area, but at a lower level there is continued pressure for unsympathetic change in several areas:

- *Loss of original details*
- *Increased car parking*

- *Loss of original shopfronts*
- *Need for the care and management of street greenery*
- *The need for appropriate highway maintenance*

### **Priorities for action**

**Based on the detailed assessment provided by the Winchmore Hill Green or Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas Character Appraisal and the problems and pressures identified by it, the following management actions are proposed over the next 5 years in the Conservation Area in order to preserve and/or enhance its special interest:**

### **Buildings at Risk**

English Heritage's 2012 Register of Heritage at Risk in London contains no entries within the Winchmore Hill Green or Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas.

### **Building repair and maintenance**

Buildings within the area are generally in very good order.

### **Development pressures/opportunities**

A new development of seven houses at the former King Eastern Garden Centre site adjacent to the railway to the south-east of Hoopers Road has had relatively little impact on the character or appearance of the area. The former Ewan Lewis builders yard in Wilson Street is a potential site for residential development. The existing buildings on the site make a negative contribution to the area. Any development here should respect the massing, scale, grain and architectural character of the modest and attractive Victorian cottages that surround it. The triangle of land adjoining the Salisbury Arms PH is on the Council's disposal list and is proposed for development with a single dwelling house.

### **Architectural detail**

Most properties retain a large proportion of their original architectural details and remain attractive buildings. However, several have suffered inappropriate alterations, commonly the replacement of timber windows in uPVC, the replacement of slates or clay tiles on roofs with concrete tiles, the addition of false shutters, or the painting of brick façades. Whilst this does not negate these buildings' contribution to the area, to an extent it damages their appearance and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character through cumulative change. Such changes are now controlled through the planning system, and now more often represent an opportunity for enhancement (by reinstatement of original details) than a threat to the character of the area as a result of unsympathetic changes. Where unauthorised works have been brought to the attention of the Council.

Development affecting listed and locally listed buildings and buildings identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the area, and buildings

affecting their setting, should normally use appropriate traditional historic materials and detailing. Mass produced modern materials such as uPVC and concrete roof tiles will not normally be appropriate within the conservation area.

### **Street furniture and highways management**

The two Conservation Areas benefit from appropriate surfacing on highways and footpaths, sympathetic signage and a relative lack of street clutter. This combination of factors makes an important contribution to the appearance of the area and it is vital, therefore, that the future management and maintenance of the public realm takes into account its special character. However there is constant pressure for additional street furniture and signage, and since 2008 there has been a gradual increase in street furniture and signage especially associated with on-street parking. Any increase in such clutter should be resisted and redundant material should be removed.

### **Cycle paths**

The route and detailed design of new routes such as the "Greenway" cycle path should have particular regard for the conservation of heritage assets including listed buildings, their settings, and registered parks and gardens; and for the protection of landscapes and views of heritage merit. Surfacing materials and colours should be in keeping with the character and appearance of the conservation area, and new signage and street furniture kept to a minimum

### **Shopfronts**

Around The Green, many of the original shopfronts have been replaced by crude modern units, to the detriment of the appearance of both the buildings and the area in general. Whenever the opportunity arises, shopfronts should be reinstated to a more appropriate design. Shop-owners will be supported to do so by the upcoming Enfield Design Guide.

### **Parking**

On Wades Hill, the pressure for off-street car parking has already led to some front gardens being converted into hard-standing for cars. This generally results in the loss of the characteristic boundary walls and the creation of cramped forecourts that allow parked vehicles to dominate the buildings behind.

### **Open spaces**

The Green is an important open space, along with the green areas in Hoppers Road, which should be regarded as heritage assets in their own right.

### **Trees and planting**

Trees make an important contribution to the character of the area and care should be taken to ensure that appropriate species are selected where trees need replacement. In particular, the distinctive character of The Green and the western end of Church Hill depends greatly on the presence of significant street greenery, which needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the lifespan of existing trees is

maximised and that planned replacement takes place when specimens reach the end of their lives, in line with the Council's tree management strategy.

#### **Article 4(2) Direction**

In order to protect the special architectural character of houses within the conservation area an Article 4(2) Direction has been made to cover the properties shown on the map below. This requires that planning permission must be sought to change windows, doors, roof coverings, to paint or render brick facades and to erect, alter or demolish a boundary fence or wall on frontages of dwelling houses that face a highway, footpath or public open space.

#### **Monitoring change**

During the lifetime of the appraisal, the Council will work in partnership the Conservation Advisory Group to monitor and record the management of the Conservation Area (within available resources), to:

- Survey, review and monitor works and development, with regard to the heritage significance of the area as set out in the appraisal (a programme for undertaking these tasks will be agreed annually with the Council's Heritage Officer.)
- Review and monitor the design quality of proposals for which planning permission is sought
- Review appeal decisions
- Review the maintenance and safeguarding of highways, trees and greenery