

# Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Management Proposals

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# **BUSH HILL PARK 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 Bush Hill Park Conservation Area its special interest are summarised in **Section 3 (p.38) 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.39) of the Character Appraisal**, as follows:

- *Loss of original boundary walls*
- *Loss of original details (see Appraisal, map 4: building survival)*
- *Increased car parking*
- *Loss of original shopfronts*
- *Some vacant upper floors*
- *Need for the care and management of street greenery*
- *The need for appropriate highway maintenance*
- *Inappropriate alterations and poor condition of the Bush Hill Park Hotel*
- *Detrimental impact of developments immediately outside the conservation area boundary*

### **Priorities for action**

**Based on the detailed assessment provided by the Bush Hill Park Conservation Area 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 Bush Hill Park Conservation Area.

### **Building repair and maintenance**

The area is generally well-maintained with the exception of the detached commercial area to the east of the station, and the Bush Hill Park Hotel has suffered from inappropriate alterations (such as the inserted shop-front) and is in poor condition, especially the rear function-room wing. The hotel is the key building in this part of the conservation area and its improvement would have a positive impact on the surrounding spaces. It should be a priority for action.

### **Development pressures/opportunities**

There are currently no major development proposals or opportunity sites within the conservation area. However, recent developments just outside the boundary (to the north end of Wellington Road, to the west of Private Road and in the short undesignated section on the east side of Abbey Road) suggest that in the wider area there is some pressure for residential development at a larger scale that has been the case, historically, within the conservation area. It is important that the potential impact of new developments on the setting of the conservation area be taken into account when such applications are assessed.

### **Architectural detail**

Most properties retain a large proportion of their original features and remain attractive buildings. However, there are many examples of properties losing at least one important feature, commonly the replacement of timber windows with uPVC, or the replacement of slate or clay tile roofs with concrete tiles. While this does not negate these buildings' contribution to the area, to an extent it damages the appearance of the property and is evidence of a gradual erosion of character. There are also a few examples of a property losing all of its original features and, with them, much of its appeal. This is now largely an historic issue and over the medium term the Article 4 direction should provide the means to reinstate such features.

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, signage and advertising**

Recently installed internally illuminated signage in Wellington Road is intrusive, and additional signage of this type should be resisted.

### **Highways/footways**

At present, the area benefits from appropriate surfacing on highways and footpaths, sympathetic signage and a lack of street clutter. This combination of factors makes an important contribution to the appearance of the area and it is important therefore that the future management and maintenance of the public realm takes into account its special character.

### **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.

### **Shops and shopfronts**

In the area around the station, most of the original shop-fronts have been replaced by crude modern designs, to the detriment of the appearance of both the buildings and the area in general. As the opportunity arises, the planning system should be used to secure the reinstatement of appropriate shop-fronts.

Several upper floors over shops in the station area appear to be unoccupied and are poorly maintained.

### **Boundary treatments**

Although the creation of pavement cross-overs and the replacement of garden boundary walls and fences is subject to planning control some recently approved boundary treatments have been heavy-handed and out of keeping. Replacement boundary treatments should be detailed to reflect historic precedents within the area.

### **Parking**

The pressure for off-street car parking has already led to a number of front gardens being converted into hard standing for cars, resulting in the loss of the characteristic garden boundaries and street greenery. However, this is largely an historic problem, now managed through planning controls including the Article 4 Direction.

### **Trees and planting**

As the distinctive character of the Conservation Area depends so greatly on the presence of street greenery, this needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the lifespan of existing trees and hedges is maximised and that planned replacement takes place when specimens reach the end of their lives. The use of species that

are unusual as street greenery, such as laurel and yew, adds local distinctiveness and is an important practice to continue. The Council has a borough-wide tree management strategy, which should ensure that the trees are replaced with appropriate species when necessary.

### **Proposals for listing/local listing**

For its architectural interest and its prominence in the townscape west of the station, it is proposed that the Bush Hill Park Hotel should be added to the local list, in due course, when local policy allows.

### **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 with 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