

Abbotshall Avenue Conservation Area Management Proposals

Approved June 2015



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THE MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN ENFIELD

The Purpose of Conservation Area the 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)¹. 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 2006²) is likely to change substantially.

The London Plan

The Mayor's London Plan (2011, amended 2013) Policy 7.8 seeks to protect the historic environment through the application of appropriate local development management policies which should identify heritage assets (including conservation areas) and ensure that development affecting them should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

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

¹ Available from English Heritage's website, www.helm.org.uk

² English Heritage *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2006).

and as such they will be given considerable weight in the determination of planning applications affecting the conservation areas.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (2014) is a strategic document that identifies a number of infrastructure needs, including those affecting the historic environment. It amplifies guidance on delivery and funding and provides further detail for identified projects, some in 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 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 service³. 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) (2012), 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. The NPPF is supported by the Government's Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014).

In line with the NPPF and Enfield's Policy 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. (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 or conservation area 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 Guidance⁴ 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.

The Council will normally resist the conversion of front gardens to car parking, where the gardens contribute to the special character or appearance of a conservation area. The introduction of new footway cross-overs, the removal of boundary walls and paving will not normally be allowed, in line with Development Management Policy DMD 46 and Core Policy 30.

Satellite dishes

Planning permission is required for the installation of any satellite dish or communications antenna installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope, which faces onto, and is visible from, a road, within a conservation area. Such antennae will

not normally be permitted. Further details are available from the Government's online Planning Portal⁵.

Archaeology

More than one-third of the area of the Borough is designated as an Area of Archaeological Importance⁶. Development proposals should take into account any potential impact they may have on archeological remains. Heritage Statements should include a desk-based assessment of the archaeological interest of the site. Expert assessment may be necessary depending on the significance of both the asset and the proposed works. Advice should be sought from the Council's heritage officers and/or English Heritage regarding the extent of this work.

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, in line with Core Policy 34 and Development Management Policy DMD 71.

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 in line with Core Policy 30 and Development Management Policy DMD 80.

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.

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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.⁷

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.

ABBOTSHALL AVENUE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Summary of special interest

The key factors that give the Abbotshall Avenue Conservation Area its special interest are summarised in **Section 3 (p.25) 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 (July-August 2014), the current boundaries are confirmed.

Summary of issues

The area is in good condition and is not subject to great pressure for change. However, there is evidence of continued pressure for the piecemeal erosion of architectural character. The small size and uniform architectural character of the area means that relatively small changes can have a significant impact.

The particular issues affecting the Conservation Area at present, which need to be addressed, are summarised in **Section 4 (p.25) of the Character Appraisal**, as follows:

- *Loss of original windows, doors and architectural details*
- *Unsympathetic extensions, particularly to roofs*

- *Loss of front gardens to provide hard-standing for cars*
- *Poor quality front boundary treatments.*
- *Erosion of grass verges to the roadway and loss of street trees.*

Priorities for action

Based on the detailed assessment provided by the Abbotshall Avenue 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 2014 Register of Heritage at Risk in London contains no entries within the Abbotshall Avenue Conservation Area.

Development pressures/opportunities

The principal development pressure is for extensions, including roof structures and rear extensions, which can interrupt the visual and architectural coherence of the group, and minor additions such as porches. Such work is now controlled and the Council will continue to resist such proposals where they are detrimental to the character of the area.

The small size of most of the houses means that there has been relatively little pressure to subdivide them. Subdivision will not be allowed if it has a detrimental impact on the appearance of the houses, or their settings, for example by the creation of new doorways or additional parking.

Architectural detail

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. The forthcoming Enfield Design Guide will provide further guidance on appropriate architectural detailing.

Prior to designation, the most visible problem was the loss of original *Crittall* windows and their replacement with uPVC. The Article 4 direction has greatly reduced this problem. The relatively recent date of most of the uPVC windows means that there have not, to date, been any authentic reinstatements. Similarly, original timber garage and house doors have been removed and some mass-produced "low-maintenance" replacements installed. When planning applications are made, in due course, for replacement windows, the Council will ensure that

appropriate designs are used, including the reinstatement of metal windows in place of uPVC. Similarly, when the opportunity arises, the Council will encourage the reinstatement of the “moderne” detailing of the elevations and chimneys.

Boundary treatments

The reinstatement of appropriate front boundaries, such as low brick or stone walls, will be encouraged.

Parking

Externally, increased off-street car parking has led to the replacement of front garden planting with hard-standing: erosion of the verges and the loss of street trees to facilitate widened vehicle cross-overs have damaged the setting of the houses. Many of the front boundary walls are neglected, possibly because the front gardens are increasingly regarded as functional car parking space, rather than gardens to be enjoyed. As a result, possibly, they are poorly maintained.

Trees and planting

Street trees and grass verges make an important contribution to the character of the area, and they will be maintained and protected.

Article 4 direction

In order to protect the special architectural character of houses within the conservation area an Article 4 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