

Enfield Town Conservation Area Management Proposals

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ENFIELD TOWN CENTRE 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)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.

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

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

² 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 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), 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 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.

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.⁵

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 Enfield Town Centre Conservation Area (hereafter the Conservation Area) its special interest are summarised in Section 3.0 (page 52) 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

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 4.0 (p.54) of the Character Appraisal, as follows:

Despite its considerable heritage merit, as summarised in paragraph 3.0 above, the town centre has struggled to retain its distinctive character in the face of economic, cultural, demographic and transport pressures. Whilst listed buildings are supported by detailed statutory requirements and government guidance on alteration and repair, domestic and commercial properties in a conservation area rely to a large extent on extra protection provided by the local planning authority, detailed design guidance, and conscientious development management

procedures, if their character is to be retained. The management of traffic and parking in the conservation area needs specific solutions that address environmental quality, while still retaining safety and operational standards and recognising the need for incentives, such as convenient parking, in competing with other local centres. Most of the issues affecting Enfield Town appear to arise from the lack of appropriate or effective responses to these challenges. The key issues are:

- *Traffic management*
- *The pedestrian environment*
- *Car parking*
- *Public buildings: maintenance and signage*
- *The appearance of shopping streets*
- *Residential areas: development control issues*

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Based on the detailed assessment provided by the Enfield Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal Review (2013) and the problems and pressures identified by it, the following management actions are proposed in the Conservation Area in order to preserve and/or enhance its special interest:

Heritage Assets at Risk

English Heritage's Register of Heritage Assets at Risk in London contains no entries within the Enfield Town Centre Conservation Area.

Development pressures/opportunities

There has been extensive development of vacant or under-used sites –for example Palace Exchange mall, Silver Street at The Town end, Southbury Road around the Enfield Town rail station – since the original appraisal, but some unattractive small car park sites remain, where landscaping or development could improve the street scene and the setting of adjacent green open spaces, subject to further detailed assessment.

Architectural detail

Development affecting listed and locally listed buildings and heritage assets identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the area, and buildings affecting their setting, should normally use matching 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

- The street furniture (barriers, boundary treatments, and signage) in all the small town centre car parks should be reviewed when the opportunity

arises, and replaced with designs and materials more appropriate to the Conservation Area.

- The siting and design of new and existing CCTV installations, particularly those using tall free-standing columns, such as that outside the Post Office and at Chase Side, should when reviewed avoid intruding on the setting of historic buildings and open spaces.
- Traffic management schemes should consider removing steel barriers at pavement edges in favour of less intrusive ways of managing pedestrian safety.

Signage and advertising

Poor quality shop and other signage is a key concern in relation to the appearance of the shopping streets. New shop-fronts and internally illuminated signs are normally subject to planning controls and where possible this issue should be addressed through the planning and listed building consent system, supported by design guidance. Signs known to be unauthorised should be subject to enforcement action.

Traffic management

Measures to reduce the impact of traffic, to try to make the Conservation Area more cohesive by improving connections with the New Town, and to provide a more attractive pedestrian environment in the town centre should be taken wherever possible. These might include encourage walking by limiting highway width (as at The Town), increasing footway areas and making junctions easier to negotiate for pedestrians, particularly at Church Street and Chase Side, and around Enfield Town railway station.

Cycle paths

The route and detailed design of new routes, such as the "Greenway" cycle path , for example, 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

Some of the late 19th and early 20th century shopping parades in Church Street, Silver Street and London Road have been seriously affected by poor quality alterations and lack of maintenance over a long period; they have the potential to make a much greater contribution to the character of the area than they currently do. Investment in the fabric of a few key groups such as nos. 1-15 (odd) Church Street, and 14-22 (even) London Road, may encourage other owners to improve their buildings. The latter group has suffered very damaging change to its upper floors as well as its shop-fronts. It is opposite the access to the new Palace Exchange mall, and would benefit from becoming more of a focus of attention.

These properties would benefit from a shop-front improvement scheme offering grant aid to help reinstate their historic architectural character, if resources are available.

In the first instance, the low standard of shopfront and fascia design, particularly in Church Street and London Road, should be addressed through design guidance and the provision of examples of good traditional and contemporary designs, and by enforcement action where necessary. Guidance on the design of shopfronts is available from the Council and it is intended that this will be revised and updated as part of the proposed *Enfield Design Guide* supplementary planning document (SPD). The possibility of a specific shop front improvement scheme should be investigated and encouraged.

Boundaries

Where boundaries are subject to planning control (including under the Article 4 Direction) traditional boundaries should be retained wherever possible and new or replacement boundary treatments should employ appropriate traditional local materials and designs. This is a particular concern in residential and commercial property in the New Town and at Cecil Road. Regular, appropriate maintenance of historic boundary walls especially in Character Area D (St Andrew's, Silver Street and the schools) should be encouraged and supported by the Council's forthcoming design guidance.

Parking

If the opportunity arises, the small "temporary" car parks at Sydney Road, Little Park Gardens, and Church Lane should be considered for development in order to recover the historic urban grain and sense of enclosure of these areas. In the short term, if resources permit, they could be improved by landscape treatments. Improved hard and soft landscaping would reduce the impact of parked cars on the important historic buildings at the Market and in front of the Council Offices at Gentleman's Row.

Open spaces

St Andrew's churchyard, the schools' playing fields, Chase Green, the parks and Library Green at the west end of Church Street, and Town Park make important positive contributions to the character and appearance of the area and as such they are heritage assets. In order to help protect their character and quality, features such as signage and street furniture (particularly CCTV columns) should be located so they do not intrude upon views into and across these spaces. Visually intrusive structures, such as the blue-fenced ball park area in Town Park, should be replaced or relocated when opportunity allows.

Trees and planting

Street and garden trees in the New Town area are important in masking views of Tower Point, and trees on the perimeter of the playing fields have an important role in enclosing these spaces. Trees on Library Green and Chase Side form a backdrop to views out of Church Street. When works to trees are proposed, these

and other views out of the town centre should be protected, and the beneficial masking effect of trees on buildings that contribute negatively to the conservation area should be taken into account. Trees form an important part of the character of many parts of Enfield Town, not only in public spaces, but also in private gardens. They should be retained where possible. Any trees lost from the streets and public open spaces should be replaced with appropriate species.

Proposals for listing/local listing

Request that the following buildings by Middlesex County Council should be considered for addition to the statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. (These buildings have also been proposed below as additions to the Local List as a temporary measure):

Central Library, Cecil Road
Enfield County School, Holly Walk
The Court House, Windmill Hill

Add to the Council's Local List the following buildings, as described and recommended in the original appraisal, so that their character is taken into consideration in considering planning applications and other applications for alterations or additions:

1-2 Market Chambers, The Market
32-35 The Town
1-2 Southbury Road (Lloyds Bank)
38 Southbury Road
1-13 (odd) Church Street
Central Library, Cecil Road
Railway Bridge and associated embankment walls at Chase Side Avenue
The Court House, Windmill Hill
Enfield County School, Holly Walk
Gates at Town Park – Cecil Road and Essex Road entrances.

Monitoring change

During the lifetime of the Enfield Town Conservation Area 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
- 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

Article 4 Directions

Since the original Conservation Area Appraisal was produced, Article 4 directions have been made for Enfield Town Conservation Area covering specific properties in Cecil Road, Chase Green Avenue, Chase Side, Conical Corner, Essex Road, Raleigh Road and Sydney Road. It would be desirable, when resources permit, to carry out monitoring of the effectiveness of these directions, i.e. whether planning applications have been properly made for work carried out and, where consents have been granted, how this has affected the character and appearance of the character area concerned.