



# Artillery Passage

## Conservation Area

### 1. Character Appraisal

### 2. Management Guidelines

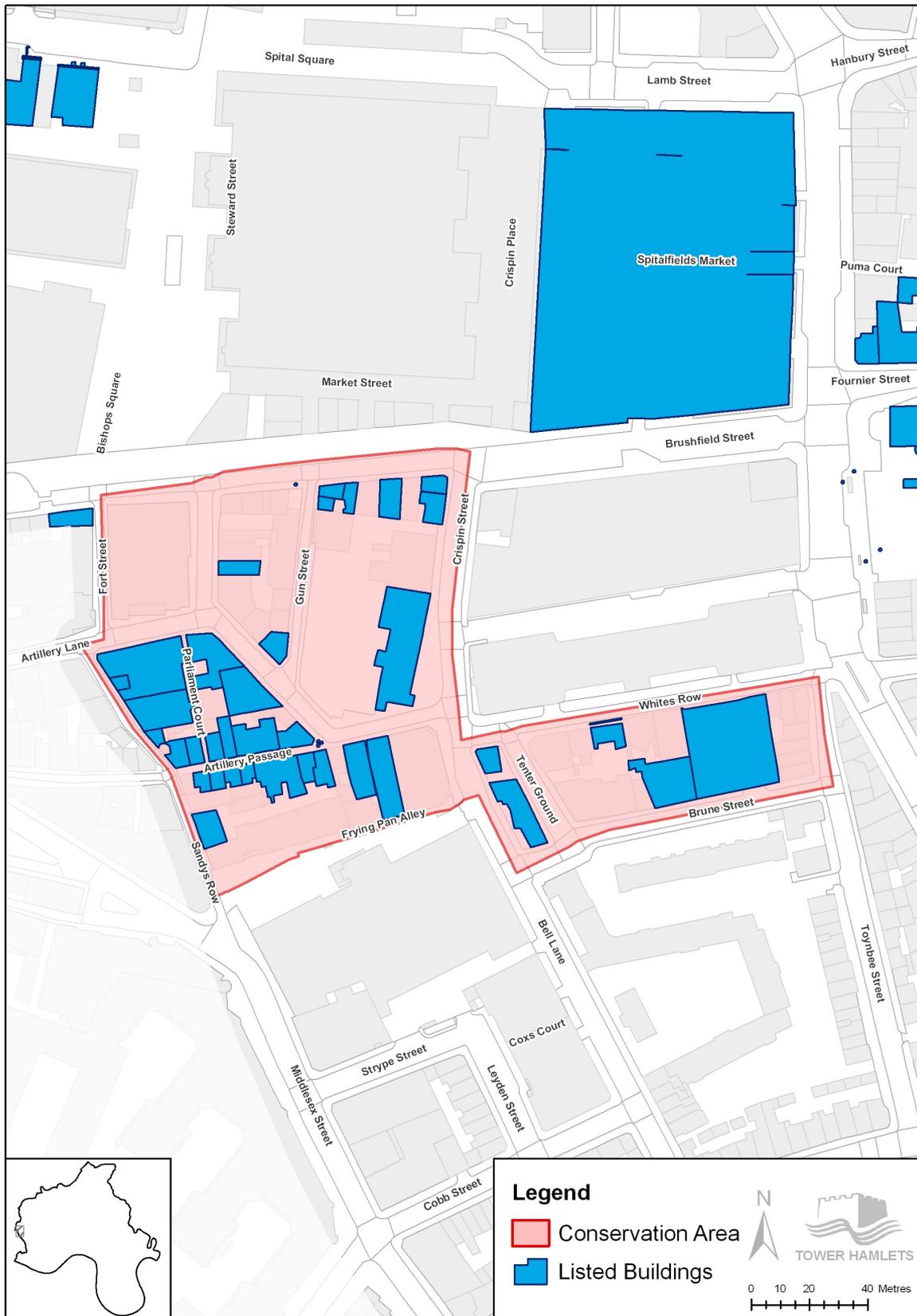
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Adopted by Cabinet: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## Introduction

Conservation Areas are parts of our local environment with special architectural or historic qualities. They are created by the Council, in consultation with the local community, to preserve and enhance the specific character of these areas for everybody.

This guide has been prepared for the following purposes:

- To comply with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69(1) states that a conservation area is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”
- To provide a detailed appraisal of the area’s architectural and historic character.
- To provide an overview of planning policy and propose management guidelines on how this character should be preserved and enhanced in the context of appropriate ongoing change.



### ARTILLERY PASSAGE CONSERVATION AREA

This map is indicative only and is not a planning document. For further information please contact the Council.

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# 1. Character Appraisal

## Overview

The Artillery Passage Conservation Area was designated in September 1973 and was extended to its present boundaries in 1975. It is defined by Brushfield Street to the north, Fort Street and Sandy's Lane to the west, Frying Pan Alley and Brune Street to the south, and Toynbee Street to the east.

## History

The Conservation Area includes the site of the southern precinct of the Priory of St Mary Spital. The name of 'Spitalfields' comes from the fields outside the 'Hospital of the Blessed Virgin Mary without Bishopsgate', established just north of the Artillery Passage Conservation Area at the turn of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (1247). The southern boundary of the Priory grounds closely followed the present line of Artillery Lane.

During the dissolution of the monasteries, the Priory was closed (1534-8). On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1537 the area was designated as an artillery ground for the "Fraternyte or Guylde of Artyllary of longbowes, Crossbowes and handegonnes". The Ground was described as adjoining the priory and lying within its precinct, the east, south and west sides enclosed by "newe bryk walls". It was called the "Tesell Grounde" because of the teasels growing there, a type of plant used by local cloth manufacturers.

On the dissolution of the Priory, the "Tesell Ground" passed into the possession of the Crown and remained property of the Crown until 1682.

On 13th February 1682, George Bradbury and Edward Noell bought the Artillery Ground for £5,700 with a licence to build new houses. They began to develop the area in association with two city merchants, Nicholas Barbon, a master carpenter, and John Parsons. At this time, it was described as the Old Artillery Ground or Artillery Garden in or near the parish of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate.

The street arrangement of these first residential developments still largely exists today. Artillery Lane became the main thoroughfare from Bishopsgate. Gun Street, Steward Street and Fort Street (Duke Street) were created to run south-north from Artillery Lane. Gun Street is said to run along the line of the gunnery within the Old Artillery Ground. In Artillery Passage a number of Barbon's original houses survive, and No. 14 is relatively untouched.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and 18<sup>th</sup> century, a significant community of Huguenot refugees arrived from France, many of whom brought silk-weaving skills from Nantes and Lyons and other French cities. Many settled in the area of the Old Artillery Ground, and established it as a centre of the London silk weaving industry. A hundred years later, Jews fleeing the pogroms in Eastern Europe founded a thriving community in the area.

The area was home to several small churches and meeting houses which served the minority congregations living there, and these buildings changed hands according to the size of each community living in the area at different points in history. The Sandy's Lane Synagogue was originally the 'L'Eglise de L'Artillerie', a French chapel opened in 1691 that was used by different congregations until it was consecrated as a Synagogue in 1870. Dome House and other houses may also have been used for religious meetings. By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Jewish community had mostly moved on and a significant new community from Bangladesh was beginning to establish itself.

Spitalfields market, and the London Fruit and Wool Exchange, are located just outside the Conservation Area to the north-east. The market itself was established in 1682, and took various forms until the present buildings were built in the 1880s.

## **Character**

Artillery Passage is a surviving fragment of the 17<sup>th</sup> century street pattern, characterized by its network of historic narrow passages, lanes and courtyards. There are often several land uses within each building, including a significant number of

residential dwellings, and this fine-grain mix of domestic-scale units is an essential characteristic of the area.

The buildings are mainly narrow-fronted Georgian 2, 3 and 4 storey houses with mansard roofs and retail uses on the ground floor. They are not set back from the street or lane, and form continuous building lines and a clearly-defined enclosure to the street.

The mainly 19<sup>th</sup> century shopfronts in Artillery Lane and Artillery Passage make an important contribution to the character of the area, and the Grade I listed 56 Artillery Lane is particularly valuable as one of the most significant surviving Georgian shopfronts in London. Nos 56 and 58 also have remarkable panelled interiors and hall mouldings.

Many properties still retain their original panelled front doors, as well as associated letter boxes, door knockers and other features of interest. Ironwork forms an integral part of the Georgian and Victorian architecture in the area although much was lost in the war. This takes the form of railings, gates, decorative balconies, coal holes and bollards. Most windows in the area are double-hung sash windows with fine glazing bars. Shops normally have exterior hanging signs, and fascias are externally lit.

One Gun Street is converted into residential apartments. The main bulk of the building has been demolished but the façade still remains facing Gun Street. The Convent of Mercy, which backs onto One Gun Street, was also converted as part of the same scheme, but retains most of its original form including its Chapel.

The area between Brune Street and Whites' Row also comprises three and four story Georgian houses and a few modern or rebuilt office blocks. The former Soup Kitchen for the Jewish Poor on Brune Street is a distinctive brick building with a terracotta frontage at ground floor level. Along Tenter Ground the style of the old warehouse buildings is reflected in the style of the new development opposite and similar efforts have been made in other areas of the Conservation Area.

Rooflines within the Artillery Passage Conservation Area tell the story of the area's piecemeal development, and they vary according to each building's individual age, type, width and height.

Bishops Court is a large office development between Artillery Lane and Brushfield Street. Its white metal cladding is out of character with the area, as are recent parts of Frying Pan Alley.

Today, despite the changes to its surroundings, the narrow lanes and passages of this small Conservation Area represent an irreplaceable window into the past – a rare surviving fragment of an ordinary mixed-use residential district of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century inner city.

### **Land Use**

There is a rich mix of land uses in the area, which is an essential quality and characteristic of the area. It is usual for buildings to have several uses, and the land use is mainly retail on the ground floor with office or residential accommodation above.

The ground floors contain a variety of small offices and shops, including services such as travel agents, hairdressers, restaurants, pubs and bars.

### **Scale**

The scale of the buildings is predominantly domestic, with 2, 3, and 4-storey houses, with narrow fronts and varying plot depths.

The scale of the streets varies. Brushfield Street is a wider street running along the north side of the area with 4-storey buildings, including a 'Piazza' extending from Commercial Street to Crispin Street. Other streets and lanes are much narrower and more intimate in scale, especially Parliament Court, and Artillery Passage which is only 2-3m wide.

## Open Space

There are no significant areas of open space in the Conservation Area.

## Views

In general, the views in the area are restricted to very short lengths by the narrow enclosures of the streets.

The following vistas and glimpses are particularly important:

- Along Brushfield Street looking towards Christ Church on Commercial Street
- The view along Artillery Passage from Sandy's Row and Artillery Lane through to Widegate Street – a glimpse of 17<sup>th</sup> century London.
- From the junction of Artillery Lane and the road connecting Artillery Lane and Brushfield Street, looking towards 56 Artillery Lane.
- Along Brushfield Street looking towards Christ Church on Commercial Street
- The length of Parliament Court and the buildings at either end should also be retained to conserve the character of this 17th century narrow alleyway.
- The views and glimpses of Spitalfields Market from Crispin Street and the Convent of Mercy.

## Summary

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history and significant architecture, dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities. There are a few gap sites and some minor inappropriate buildings in the Conservation Area, but overall these have little impact on the qualities that led to its designation.

## 2. Management Guidelines

### Overview

This Management Plan has been prepared in consultation with the community, to set out the Borough's commitment to high quality management of Conservation Areas and their settings. The Development Design and Conservation Team operates within the context of the Development and Renewal Directorate of the Council, alongside Major Projects, Development Control, Strategy and Building Control.

Areas are as much about history, people, activities and places as they are about buildings and spaces. Preserving and enhancing the Borough's architectural and historic built heritage over the next decades is of vital importance in understanding the past and allowing it to inform our present and future.

Conservation Areas also promote sustainability in its widest sense. The Council is committed to this in Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy its Local Development Framework (LDF). The re-use of historic buildings and places is environmentally responsible as it protects the energy and resources embodied in them and combats global warming.

Consideration of appropriate amendments to the boundary of the Conservation Area, and recommendations for additions to the register of listed buildings, either the statutory or local list, will be considered by the Council.

The area is on the border with the City of London and a coordinated approach is required to conservation.

### Who is this document for?

This is an inclusive document which will engage with many different people and organisations. It will depend on the support of the community to achieve its objectives. It is aimed primarily at the residents, businesses, developers and others living and working in the area. The Conservation Area belongs to its residents, as well as the

whole community, and their priorities will be reflected in these documents after the consultation process.

The document has also been prepared to align conservation objectives within different parts of the council, and provide a single point of reference for the management of the area. It represents our shared commitment to conserve the special architectural and historic character, and to help manage sensitive new development and refurbishment where appropriate to successfully preserve and enhance the quality and character of the area.

### **Outline Guidance on Applications**

Before carrying out any work in this area, you will need to apply for consent even for minor work such as replacing railings. These consents include planning, listed building and Conservation Area consent, as well as others for work such as felling trees.

**When planning applications in a Conservation Area are decided, the planning authority will pay special attention to whether the character of the area is preserved or enhanced. The character of Artillery Passage is described in detail in the Appraisal in the first part of this document.**

In Artillery Passage, as in other Conservation Areas, planning controls are more extensive than normal. Consent is required to demolish any building, and a higher standard of detail and information is required for any application. When applying for listed building consent, please note that all parts of the building, including its interior walls, ceilings and all other internal features, are protected. Some buildings are nationally (statutorily) listed, and some are locally listed by the Borough to indicate buildings that the Borough wishes to protect.

The exact information required will vary with each application, but in general applications must include:

- A clear design statement explaining the reasons behind the various architectural, masterplanning or other design decisions.
- Contextual plans, sections and elevations of existing buildings
- Drawings, including construction details, produced at larger scale (eg. 1:50 or 1:20) clearly indicating the nature of the work proposed.
- Additional detail regarding materials and construction.
- Photos of the condition of existing building (including details where appropriate).

More details are available on the Tower Hamlets website. If in any doubt, the Council welcomes and encourages early requests for advice or information.

When alterations are proposed to listed buildings, complying with the building regulations can be particularly complex, and early consideration of building control issues can help identify potential problems early in the process.

### **Policies Relevant to the Conservation Area and how they are Implemented:**

Any new development should have regard to national, regional and local planning policy.

- At the national level, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Tower Hamlets to designate Conservation Areas in “areas of special architectural or historic interest”, and to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas. National policy for planning and the historic environment is set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15).
- At the regional level, policy 4B.1 of the London Spatial Development Strategy (or London Plan) states that ‘The Mayor will seek to ensure that developments ... respect London’s built heritage.’
- At the local level, the new Local Development Framework (LDF) of Tower Hamlets states that ‘the Council will protect and enhance the historic environment of the borough’. This is described in detail in policy CP49 of the

Core Strategy of the LDF. In addition, applicants should note policy CP46 to ensure that access issues are properly addressed in work carried out in a Conservation Area.

- The area lies inside the area covered by the City Fringe Area Action Plan, and within the 'Aldgate and Spitalfields Market' Sub-Area. The Area Action Plan states that 'Regeneration and new development must strive for design excellence which respects and enriches the sensitive townscape and the built heritage of the area. New buildings and public spaces must enhance the historical features of the City Fringe, including the numerous Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, street patterns, and the Tower of London.' Policy CFR1 of the City Fringe spatial strategy states that 'development in the City Fringe should ensure ... the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment of the Borough.'
- The area is identified as an area of archaeological importance.

## Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

### Grade I

- 56 Artillery Lane

### Grade II

- 11 Gun Street
- Lamp Standard in front of No. 38 Brushfield Street
- 40 Brushfield Street
- 42 Brushfield Street
- 52 Brushfield Street
- 41 Artillery Lane
- Sandy's Row Synagogue, Sandy's Row
- 3 bollards on the south side of Artillery Passage
- 9-10 Artillery Passage
- 13 Artillery Passage

- 14 Artillery Passage
- 15 Artillery Passage
- 16 Artillery Passage
- 2 Artillery Passage
- 3 Artillery Passage
- 4 Artillery Passage
- 5 Artillery Passage
- 6 Artillery Passage
- 7 Artillery Passage
- 8 Artillery Passage
- 9a Artillery Passage
- 52 Artillery Lane
- 58 Artillery Lane
- 5 Whites Row and railings
- 17-19 Brune Street

### **Locally Listed Building**

- 48 Brushfield Street
- 45 Crispin Street
- 46 Crispin Street
- 3 Steward Street
- 50 Crispin Street
- 1 Artillery Lane
- 32-40 Artillery Lane
- 42-44 Artillery Lane
- 46-48 Artillery Lane
- 5 Sandy's Row
- 11 Artillery Passage
- 12 Artillery Passage
- 12a Artillery Passage
- 9-13 Sandy's Row
- 66-68 Bell Lane

- 1 Tenter Ground
- 3 Tenter Ground
- 5 Tenter Ground
- 16 Brune Street

### **Highways and Transportation Issues**

The quality of the streetscape, the surface materials, street furniture and other features can all be integral parts of the character of Conservation Areas. Any work carried out should respect this historic character. Anyone involved in development which impacts on public spaces should refer to the Council's Street Design Guide, TfL's own Streetscape Guidance and English Heritage's 'Streets for All' document. The ongoing cost of maintenance should also be considered carefully.

Given the special character of the narrow lanes in this area, the use of standard highways engineering techniques should be avoided, and consideration should be given to restoring historic floor surfaces such as paving and setts.

Works by statutory services (gas, electricity, water etc) have the potential to damage historic ground surfaces or ancient underground structures. Early consultation with the conservation team is encouraged for any works.

### **Opportunities and Potential for Enhancement**

Bishops Court is an office development clad in white metal panels, which does not make a positive contribution to the area. If the opportunity arises, this area would benefit if this building were re-clad or developed in a way more sensitive to the Conservation Area.

Any new development in this area should be of the very highest design standards, and should respect the fine-grain mixed-use character of this area, and important views, as identified in the Character Appraisal. The height of any new building on the Bishops Court site should be restricted to the height of the adjacent buildings.

### Shopfronts

Any repair or maintenance work to historic shopfronts, particularly on Artillery Passage itself, will require sympathetic replacement of the original. Hanging signs are encouraged, and lighting of fascias should be provided by external lights (ie. no luminous signs).

### **Trees, Parks and Open Spaces**

There are currently no parks or open spaces in this Conservation Area.

All trees in Conservation Areas are protected, and some trees are also covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). Notice must be given to the authority before works are carried out to any tree in the Conservation Area, and some works require specific permission. More information can be found in the Council's Guide to Trees, and on the Tower Hamlets website. Carrying out works to trees without the necessary approval can be a criminal offence, and the Council welcomes early requests for advice.

### **Equalities:**

Valuing diversity is one of the Council's core values, and we take pride in being one of the most culturally rich and diverse boroughs in the UK. This core value has driven the preparation of this document and will continue to inform changes to this document in the future. These values will also inform changes to buildings and places where this document provides guidance to ensure inclusivity for all sections of the community.

This Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines will support the Council's aims:

- a strong spirit of community and good race relations in Tower Hamlets.
- to get rid of prejudice, discrimination and victimisation within the communities we serve and our workforce
- to make sure that the borough's communities and our workforce are not discriminated against or bullied for any reason, including reasons associated with their gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religious belief.

Please contact us if you feel that this document could do more to promote equality and further the interests of the whole community.

### **Publicity**

The existence of the Conservation Area will be promoted locally to raise awareness of current conservation issues and to invite contributions from the community.

### **Consideration of Resources Needed to Conserve the Historic Environment:**

The most effective way to secure the historic environment is to ensure that buildings can continue to contribute to the life of the local community, preferably funding their own maintenance and refurbishment. Commercial value can be generated directly from the building, through its use as a dwelling or office, or through its role in increasing the attractiveness of the area to tourists and visitors. However, it should be noted that economic reasons alone will not in themselves justify the demolition or alteration of a building in a Conservation Area. The Council will consider grant aid to historic buildings and places.

In order to meet today's needs without damaging the historic or architectural value of a building, a degree of flexibility, innovation and creative estate management may be required.

### **Ongoing Management and Monitoring Change:**

To keep a record of changes within the area, dated photographic surveys of street frontages and significant buildings and views will be made every 5 years. Also, public meetings will be held every 5 years to maintain communications between all stakeholders and identify new opportunities and threats to the Conservation Area as they arise.

The Council recognises the contribution of the local community in managing Conservation Areas, and will welcome proposals to work collaboratively to monitor and manage the area.

In addition, the Borough's Annual Monitoring Report, prepared with the new LDF, will assess progress on the implementation of the whole Local Development Scheme, including policies relevant to conservation.

### **Enforcement Strategy:**

Appropriate enforcement, with the support of the community, is essential to protect the area's character. The Council will take prompt action against those who carry out unauthorised works to listed buildings, or substantial or complete demolition of buildings within a Conservation Area. Unauthorised work to a listed building is a criminal offence and could result in a fine and/or imprisonment. Likewise, unauthorised substantial or complete demolition of a building within a Conservation Area is also illegal. It is therefore essential to obtain Conservation Area or Listed Building Consent before works begin.

If listed buildings are not maintained in good repair, then the Council can step in to ensure that relevant repairs are carried out. In some circumstances, the Council itself may undertake essential repairs and recover the cost from the owner. The Council has powers of compulsory purchase, if necessary to protect Listed Buildings.

The Council will enforce conservation law wherever necessary, and will consider the introduction of Article 4 Directions to remove Permitted Development Rights where appropriate.

### **Further Reading and Contacts**

- The Survey of London, volume 27: Spitalfields and Mile End New Town.
- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.

- The Saving of Spitalfields. Girouard, Cruickshank and Samuel (the Spitalfields Historic Buildings Trust).

The Council encourages and welcomes discussions with the community about the historic environment and the contents of this document. Further guidance on all aspects of this document can be obtained on our website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk) or by contacting:

Tel: 020 7364 5009

Email: [dr.majorprojects@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:dr.majorprojects@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

This document is also available in Libraries, Council Offices and Idea Stores in the Borough.

For a translation, or large print, audio or braille version of this document, please telephone 0800 376 5454. Also, if you require any further help with this document, please telephone 020 7364 5372.

Also, you may wish to contact the following organizations for further information:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| English Heritage                                | <a href="http://www.english-heritage.org.uk">www.english-heritage.org.uk</a>   |
| The Georgian Group                              | <a href="http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk">www.georgiangroup.org.uk</a>         |
| Victorian Society                               | <a href="http://www.victorian-society.org.uk">www.victorian-society.org.uk</a> |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Society                | <a href="http://www.c20society.org.uk">www.c20society.org.uk</a>               |
| Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings | <a href="http://www.spab.org.uk">www.spab.org.uk</a>                           |

### **Listed Buildings at Risk:**

At this time we are not aware of any listed buildings at risk in the Conservation Area.

### **Any other threats to the Conservation Area**

- Increased values in the City Fringe area have created increased pressure for large scale office development, which is contrary to the historic character of the area.

**Priorities for Action (1-5)**

1. Produce Stakeholder's Guide.
2. Improve street furniture and surfaces.
3. Improve and repair façade of buildings with grant aid.
4. Prepare and install visitor interpretation at key locations.
5. Produce detailed view management guidelines for the Conservation Area.