

Clinton Road Conservation Area

Character appraisal and management plan

June 2025

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10 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. The Clinton Road Conservation Area was designated in September 1989.

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 help those who have an interest in the area to understand the quality of the built environment and how they can protect, contribute to, and enhance it.
- 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.

The character appraisal in section two defines the qualities and features that make the conservation area special. This includes an understanding of the historical development of the place and its buildings, as well as an analysis of its current appearance and character — including description of the architectural characteristics, details and materials. It also records qualities such as important open spaces and views into and within the conservation area. Any damage or pressures to the conservation area is also recorded.

Section 71 of the Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 [as amended] places a duty on local planning authorities to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts. Therefore, the management plan in section three set out ways to conserve the special architectural and historic character of the conservation area, as well as help to manage sensitive new development and refurbishment. It takes into account planning policy context and responds to the problems and pressures identified in section two.

This document replaces earlier the character appraisal and management guidelines adopted for the Clinton Road Conservation Area in March 2007.

2.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

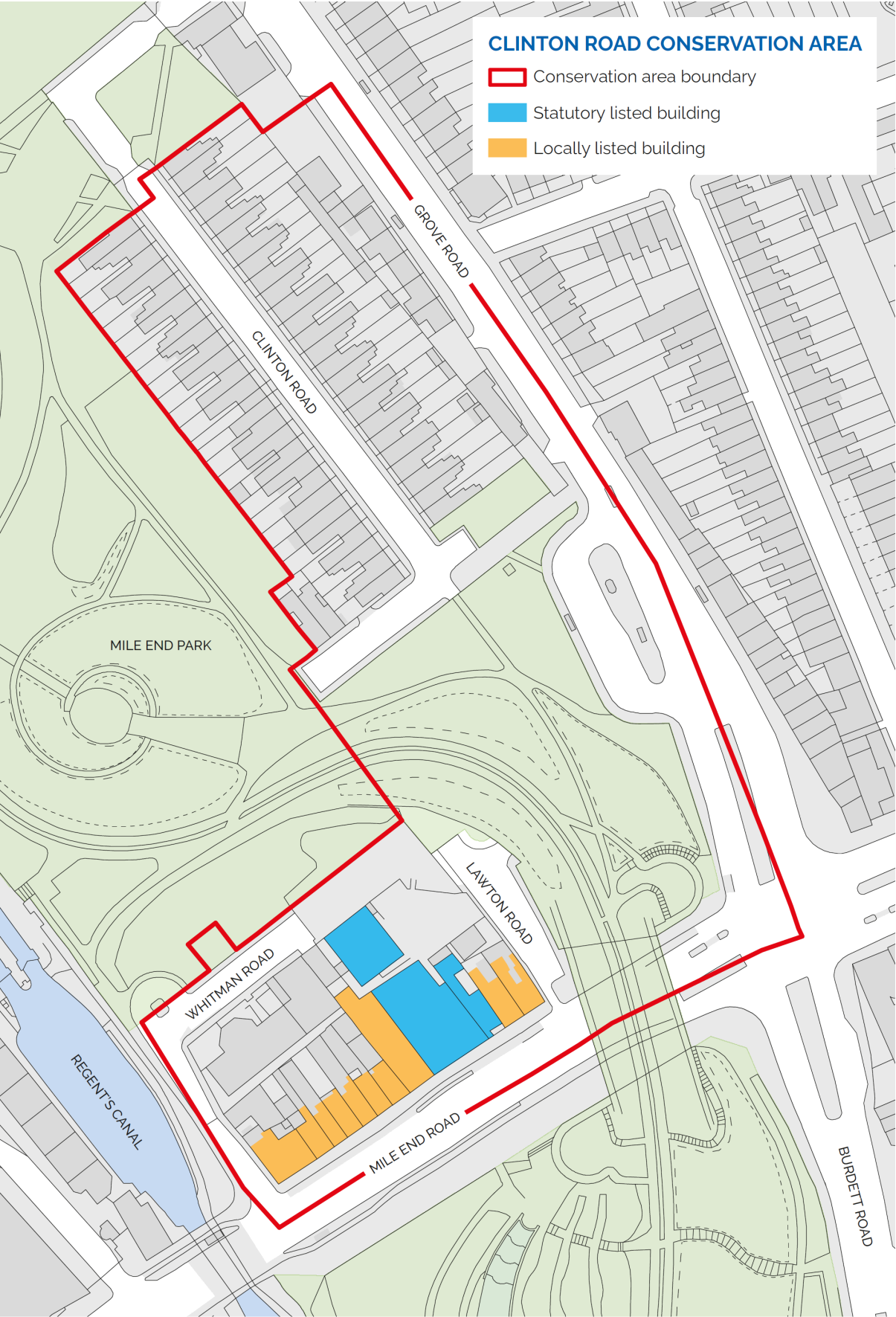
2.1 Location and setting

The Clinton Road Conservation Area straddles Mile End and Bow [two of twenty-four distinct 'places' identified within the Local Plan], in the northeast of the borough. It is located between Grove Road and the Regents Canal, with Mile End Road providing the southern edge of the conservation area boundary. The conservation area incorporates a small section of Mile End Park, including the Green Bridge, which is a landscaped pedestrian bridge connecting the parts of the park to the north and south of Mile End Road.

The northern area of Clinton Road is characterised by Victorian residential terraces. During World War II several bombs dropped in the area [in 1940/41], causing considerable damage to the townscape, the housing in the area now laid out as Mile End Park was devastated. Clinton Road is therefore an important remnant of Victorian Mile End. To the south, the Mile End Road frontage is varied but largely characterised by the Grade II listed Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church, Presbytery and Primary School, and a row of locally listed, early 19th century Georgian style terraces, with ground level shop fronts.

As the only remaining historic townscape within a linear stretch of parkland the confines of the Clinton Road Conservation Area are largely defined by Mile End Park; the edge of Tredegar Square Conservation Area identifies its eastern boundary, and the Mile End Road, which bisects the park, establishes the southern edge.

Outside the conservation area, to the south lies the parkland of Mile End Park, a linear park of some 32 hectares [79 acres] created on industrial land devastated by World War II bombing. Some of the park is within Limehouse and Globe Town, with the park lying on land to the east of the Regent's Canal. In the north, the park is separated from the southern edge of Victoria Park by the Hertford Union Canal.



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2.2 Historical development

Mile End is recorded in 1288 as La Mile ende. It is formed from the Middle English 'mile' and 'ende' and means 'the hamlet a mile away', the mile distance was in relation to Aldgate in the City of London. Historic documents record the area was mainly open field and farmland providing a variety of goods for the City, including crops such as grain and hay, livestock and building materials.

Small settlements appeared along the Mile End Road and the 'Road to Bow' [later known as the Essex Road] forming a small hamlet called Mile End. In around 1691 Mile End became known as Mile End Old Town, because a new unconnected settlement to the west, adjacent to Spitalfields, had become known as Mile End New Town.

In 1673 Capt. James Cook and his widow Dame Alice Row left money for four almshouses which were built on land at 391 Mile End Road [the address recorded in 1861] and leased to the churchwardens by Thomas Grimley in 1673. The hamlet of Mile End Old Town repaired the decayed buildings circa 1815 and put one person into each room, normally a seaman's widow who lived rent free. Although given for the benefit of Stepney as a whole, in 1837 the charity was in practice confined to Mile End Old Town.

The West Ham Reservoir built in 1747 to supply the growing population East London with water from the nearby River Lea, was on land which is now Mile End Park.

In 1784 the Gardner family owned and farmed land at Mile End Old Town, selling hay and straw at Whitechapel Market, William Gardner also held the license for the Cherry Tree public house [on the site where Guardian Angels RC church now stands]. William Gardner later holds the licence for the New Globe Tavern at 359 Mile End Road from 1805, however it is his widow Martha Gardner who is credited with the building or rebuilding of the New Globe Tavern in 1820 after the family farmland is split in two for the building of the Regents Canal. In the event of Martha and her eldest son Williams' death in 1821, Thomas Gardner, the youngest of Martha's nine children, inherited the New Globe, and ran the family hay business [Martha was also responsible for the development of what was later known as Commercial Wharf].

The New Globe operated as a conventional public house until 1838, when Gardner purchased the six-acre field lying immediately behind the pub with view to creating extensive pleasure grounds in imitation of Vauxhall Gardens. This land had been developed in the late 1740s by the West Ham Water Works, and contained a large, raised, lozenge-shaped reservoir, Gardner filled in the hollow core of the disused earthwork to form a bowling green, from the top of which panoramas could be gained of surrounding fields, the neighbouring Regent's Canal, and the Eastern Counties Railway line. The New Globe gardens were typical of what later became

known as district 'tea-gardens' boasting a lavish illuminated arch, to the west of the pub, leading to immaculately landscaped gardens.

Greenwoods' map of London dated 1830 shows that during this period of land ownership by the Gardner family there is the development of small streets labelled Grove Place, Grove Street and Prospect Terrace along with a row of terraced houses adjacent to the New Globe Tavern called Gardner Terrace. Also visible are Cook's almshouses on the north side of Mile End Road opposite York Place. By 1880 they were dilapidated and taken on a 70-year building lease by Abraham Barnett, who built six houses [nos. 1-6 Barnett Market or nos. 391A-F Mile End Road] on the site. These were demolished as part of the post-war clearing of Mile End Park.

By the end of the 1850s the popularity of the New Globe's tea-gardens began to decline, and by 1860 Gardner, shortly before his death, sold the tavern and pleasure grounds. It was here development quickly intensified on Longfellow Street, Whitman Road, Clinton Road, and Ashcroft Road, followed by Jupp's Road soon after.

By the end of the 19th century this area was well developed and densely populated with public houses, schools, shops, post-office, and small churches serving the local population. The National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland 1868 described many of the streets in Mile End as being well built, but notes others are only partially paved and lighted with gas, with houses of an inferior class.

Charles Booths' survey [1887] described the Mile End Road as 'well-to-do' and Grove Road as 'upper middle class' with no poverty. His notes indicate Clinton Road was mainly a comfortable class with some poor at the upper end. Ashcroft Road, Whitman Road, Lawton Road, and Murdoch Cottages were described [in order] as 'very nice people in good circumstances', 'decent class with nice houses' 'respectable class' and 'decent people'. Longfellow Road is noted as being 'poor but respectable' however tucked in behind these respectable, decent, and well-to-do streets is Jupp's Road, which is described as being 'poor labouring class of people who move frequently'.

In 1903 The Guardian Angels Church [designed by Frederick Arthur Walters] opened. It was paid for by Henry Fitzalan-Howard, 15th Duke of Norfolk as a memorial to his youngest sister Lady Margaret Howard, who had performed charitable work in the East End.

With the Regent's Canal being joined by the Hertford Union Canal at Mile End and linking it with the River Lea and Limehouse Basin the East-End quickly became more industrialised with

steam mills, small factories, and other small industries such as furniture and clothing shops also having been established in the immediate area.

Spencer's works owned by Edward Spencer had a steam sawmill with a wharf on the canal at 81 Longfellow Road, it was demolished along with Longfellow Road before and during the Great War 1918. Spencer's made packing cases but also reportedly made medical soaps.

John Wright & Sons [Veneer Ltd.] established in 1866, had a veneering factory at Longfellow Road/Avon Wharf from the end of the 19th century until at least the 1950s. They cut veneers to a wide range of specifications and were specialist in aircraft construction and interior decoration, an advertisement dated 1951 shows they had provided veneers for the interiors of the newly constructed Festival Hall.

During the WW2 Regent's Canal became a key route transporting weaponry and ammunition, much of which was made in the factories in the East End, the canals, in particular, became the German Airforce's 'Target A'. The banks of Regent's Canal were devastated, and the area that is now Mile End Park was especially hard hit, with an estimated 54 bombs dropped in Mile End alone.

The County of London Plan, produced in 1943, was the first of two ambitious documents for the post-war improvement of the capital. It and the subsequent Greater London Plan [1944] have become known collectively as the Abercrombie Plan, due to the crucial influence of Patrick Abercrombie, Professor of Town Planning at the University of London. Abercrombie's 'Greater London Plan' of 1944 allocated land for both new housing [mostly concentrated within areas damaged by the air raids] and recreation [which was seen as an essential part of life]. Specific architectural styles were respected throughout all new developments to create aesthetically pleasing streetscapes and all open spaces were to be reserved, with particular significance given to the development of a 'green belt'.

After the wars, modernity meant the canals' industrial use was all but redundant. The winter of 1962-63 saw one of the coldest winters on record [known as the Big Freeze], stopping all industrial passage along the canal for three months. It was the final blow for canals-as-industry. The canals and towpaths, once reserved for workers and horses pulling industry materials, became open for general public use in 1968, marking the beginnings of the Regent's Canal we know today.

Mile End Park, having been earmarked for land clearance by the Greater London Council, later became the responsibility of London Borough of Tower Hamlets, however, Longfellow Road

remained occupied and in poor condition until as late as 1977 when it became the subject of a two-part television documentary called 'Goodbye Longfellow Road'.

Despite a plan for Mile End Park existing for many years it wasn't until 1992 that a masterplan for a continuous park was finally developed by Tibbalds Munro. With an emphasis on sustainability, the plan was finally realised in 1999 when the Green Bridge [designed by CWZG's Piers Gough] was erected providing the connection over the Mile End Road with new commercial shops underneath.

2.3 Spatial analysis

The Clinton Road Conservation Area is characterised by two distinct townscapes: the uniform Victorian terraces of Clinton Road and the more varied Mile End Road frontage featuring ground floor shop fronts and a distinctive grade II listed church.

2.3.1 Land use

The land use character of the Clinton Road Conservation Area is a mixture of residential, commercial, and open space, and this mix of uses is essential to the overall character of this part of Mile End Road. Similarly, the residential use of Clinton Road itself is essential to its character.

Grove Road is predominantly residential. Mile End Road is comprised of a combination of civic/institutional and residential buildings backing onto one another, with the addition of ground level shops which are later additions to the original Georgian terraced houses. The institutional buildings are that of the Guardian Angels Catholic Church and Primary School, the Primary School has the addition of some more modern buildings. There is also a former public house located at 359 Mile End Road which also operates as a small hotel.

2.3.2 Scale

The buildings on Clinton Road are predominantly domestically scaled two story houses. Five houses, numbers 37, 39, 51, 55 and 57 feature single storey mansard roof extensions, which are visible from the street. The twentieth century terraced houses on Grove Road area also two-storeys plus mansard.

The scale along Mile End Road is principally three storeys in height, with the notable Italianate building at 373 Mile End Road being higher at four storeys. Next to it is the Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church, a higher, more prominent building with associated tower and spire.

2.3.3 Green spaces

The Clinton Road Conservation Area includes part of Mile End Park as open space. The much-loved park is of historical and cultural significance. The idea for a park in this area dates to the 1943 County of London Plan. In 2002, a masterplan by Tibbalds Munro was realised which included landscaping, earth-covered buildings, and the Green Bridge, which provides a link over Mile End Road.

Mile End Park has one of the most extensive areas of meadow in Tower Hamlets, the meadows and woodland throughout the park support a fantastic diversity of wildlife, including birds, butterflies, and bees.

The Tower Hamlets Green Grid runs through this part of Mile End Park and all of the conservation area is within the Green Grid Buffer Zone.

2.3.4 Views

Long views exist along both Mile End Road and Burdett Road, with the Green Bridge and associated parklands the notable features.

Vistas down Clinton Road show remnants of the Victorian terrace development, which survived the slum clearance.

Panoramic views from the Green Bridge [which lies on the same linear axis as Clinton Road] highlight views towards the Canary Wharf towers to the southwest and to the Queen Mary University campus to the northwest, as a backdrop to the Mile End Park grounds. The most important visual landmark in the area is the Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church and spire which is visible from numerous viewpoints within the Clinton Road Conservation Area, and extensively from surrounding streets beyond.

2.4 Architectural characteristics

The Clinton Road Conservation Area contains several architectural styles which reflect historic growth and change in the area.

Clinton Road itself is made up of two-storey residential terraces. These are typically Victorian, consistent in size and scale and originally would have had identical features, with very minor variations. There remains an overriding impression of this conservation area is the consistency of the architectural form. There is a consistent rhythm and scale to the terraces with a fairly uniform parapet line to the front elevation, concealing a series of uniform London Roofs.

When built, the houses were considered of a good size, as housing in the area was for the artisan class and are a change from the plain brick, flat fronted terraces of 20 years earlier.

Most of the houses within the conservation area were built with long rear extensions [sometimes referred to as 'back additions', 'outriggers' or 'closet wings'] as part of the original building.

As the Victorian era progressed the need for plentiful cheap housing saw a move away from the provision of a costly basement and the services originally housed here were increasingly accommodated within the back extension at ground level, as is the case in this conservation area. The form of the Victorian terrace house had its origins in the grander houses of an earlier era. Space was ordered according to a structural hierarchy, with the more public spaces such as the parlour located at the front of the house, whilst the more private spaces were located to the rear of the house and in the back extension.

Economy continued to play a role in the evolution of the back extension with the early single storey single unit extensions with three independent walls housing a scullery being replaced by paired extensions under one roof. Over time, what had been the very small single-storey scullery extension increased in size to include a kitchen with a bedroom above, and the scullery was pushed into a smaller lean-to section beyond this.

The properties on Mile End Road are varied in type and architectural style. The group of locally listed terraces [359 to 371 Mile End Road] were originally built as identical residential terraces with ground floor shops added later. They are typically three storey Georgian buildings with sash windows and London roofs. Located at the end of the terrace at 373 Mile End Road is a four storey Italianate building of the mid-late 19th century.

Number 375 Mile End Road is the grade II listed Guardian Angels Roman Catholic Church. Dating from 1901 to 1903, it is built in red brick with a tower and spire. The adjacent grade II listed Guardian Angels Presbytery at number 377 is also in red brick with a battlement parapet and mullioned windows, typical of the neo-Tudor style and unique in both style and scale in this area.

2.4.1 Roofs

The significance of the historic roof-scape within the conservation area is derived from a number of factors including its shape or form, structure, covering materials, and associated features.

The terraces making up Clinton Road and part of the Mile End Road feature London [or butterfly] roofs; these are an inverted 'V' in form with a central valley and ridges on the party walls between the individual houses of the terrace. These roofs are of low pitch and are concealed from the street [at the front] behind parapets producing a hard, straight edged appearance to the house, with a strong silhouette. This lack of visible roof is an important architectural

characteristic. The continuity of the parapet line and moulded cornice line is another significant feature in the conservation area streetscene and ties groups of terraces together. At the rear of these terraces with London roofs, the row of gently pitched gables with the valleys and party walls between is clearly evident. Chimney stacks are located along the party walls between houses [often in pairs]; they are often the only feature visible above the cornice line, forming part of the silhouette of the roofscape. They also form part of the special character of the area.

Five houses, numbers 37, 39, 51, 55 and 57 have been extended with single storey mansard roofs, which are visible from the street. The twentieth century houses on Grove Road also feature mansards roofs, although it is likely that these were part of the original construction and not later additions. Elsewhere in the conservation area there are instances of pitched and hipped roofs.

2.4.2 Rear extensions

Mid-nineteenth century terraces, such those within the conservation area, were often built with returns, which had their origins in the grander houses of an earlier era. Most of the houses within the conservation area were built with rear returns [sometimes referred to as 'back additions', 'outriggers' or 'closet wings'] as part of the original building. Space was ordered according to a structural hierarchy, with the more public spaces such as the parlour located at the front of the house, whilst the more private spaces were located to the rear of the house in the back extension.

As the Victorian era progressed the need for cheap housing saw a move away from the provision of a costly basement and the services originally housed here were increasingly accommodated within the back extension at ground level.

Economy continued to play a role in the evolution of the back return with the early single-storey single-unit returns with three independent walls housing a scullery being replaced by paired returns under one roof. Returns varied in width, height and length according to the builder but tended to increase in scale as the century progressed. A second storey was increasingly added to accommodate a third bedroom, and it is this form of return which predominates within the Clinton Road Conservation Area. In some cases, the kitchen was not big enough and a small lean-to scullery was added to the rear of the return.

2.4.3 Details and materials

The area is characterised by high-quality materials and richly detailed buildings. There is a prevailing use of yellow stock brick and stucco on the elevations, timber sash windows and slate roofs on the residential properties, although stucco exteriors can also be found on the terraces. The church, presbytery and school are notably faced in red brick.

On Clinton Road, the character of the terraces is enhanced by the original mouldings, and these vary between terraces. The variation in architectural detail is characteristic where terraces are built up of grouped buildings by different builders, but the consistency of approach in each terrace or group of houses provides coherence. The following features are positive attributes of the conservation area:

- Continuous line of parapet wall to conceal London roofs.
- Cornice [decorative moulding on parapet].
- Curved stucco arches over first floor windows.
- Timber sash windows with delicate glazing bars.
- Embellished door surrounds with recessed front doors.
- Decorative mouldings or bay window to ground floor.
- Cast iron railings on stone plinth.
- The London stock brickwork, chimneys and roof forms are characteristic of the conservation area.

On some houses the mouldings have been removed, especially the projecting cornices, and in some cases the render band has also been removed or re-built with a plain brick parapet. These changes detract from the character and integrity of the conservation area. Reinstatement of missing features, if carefully added to match the original, may enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Front boundary walls are not as consistent as other features. These include the traditional iron railings or low brick or concrete walls or timber fences. The metal railings are historically significant boundary treatments and add to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Most of the original railings were removed during the war. Where original railings have been lost, their careful reinstatement [to match the traditional railings] may enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

2.5 Landscaping features

Pavements in the conservation areas are typically surfaced with large format concrete slabs, bounded by granite kerbs. Carriageways are typically covered with asphalt. A small section of Whitman Road is surfaced in cobble stones,

Clinton Road and Grove Road feature Victorian style streetlamps, whereas along Mile End Road there are taller contemporary stepped steel lighting columns. There are no street trees or landscaping along Clinton Road, which contributes to a rather hard urban character. Likewise, the western side of Grove Road, to the front of numbers 33 to 51

The conservation area includes a section of Mile End Park, which slopes up to provide access to the Green Bridge. The open space includes some signage and interpretation relating to the park, along with some benches next to Grove Road. Between the park and Grove Road, a paved area forms a bus stand, the appearance of which is softened by several mature street trees. There is also a small community garden in this part of the conservation area.

2.6 Problems and pressures

Although the character and appearance of the conservation area is appreciably consistent, changes have been made to some properties which chip away at this consistency. Further uncontrolled change could erode the special character of the conservation area.

2.6.1 Façade treatment

Terraces such as those that make up Clinton Road are designed to be uniform and regular in appearance, relying on the repetition of simple elements and a consistency of materials and details for the overall effect. Much of the terracing remains little altered, but some have been unsympathetically embellished with the application of pebble dash and render, which seriously harms the careful balance and consistency across the terrace as a whole. The result has created discord and fragmentation to the entire elevation of the terrace, to the detriment of the character of the conservation area.

The painting of the front elevation creates greater colour divergence throughout the conservation area which can detract from its consistent character and appearance.

The original pointing and mortar would have been lime putty based without cement. Modern cementitious mortars are not appropriate because this mortar is actually harder than the brickwork, whereas mortar should be softer than the brickwork.

2.6.2 Boundary treatments

The properties in this conservation area have lost their original iron railings, and many have been replaced with unsympathetically designed walls or fencing. This can detract from the overall design and consistency of the terrace, especially apparent in long views.

2.6.3 Sensitivity of end of terrace plots

The design of end of terrace houses has more potential to impact the appearance of the conservation area than mid-terrace houses. Rear and roof extensions tend to be highly visible on end of terrace properties, resulting in harm if they are over-scaled or otherwise inappropriately designed.

2.6.4 Roof extensions

Many of the buildings are modest Victorian two storey houses with butterfly roofs hidden behind the parapet. Currently, there are isolated mansard roof extensions on Clinton Road.

2.6.5 Rear extensions

Rear elevations can suffer badly from inappropriate design and large rear extensions. Where visible, these inappropriately designed extensions harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. Over-development of rear extensions has occurred particularly in the deep plots along Mile End Road.

2.7 Summary of special interest

This is an area of special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history and significant architecture dating from the eighteenth century and earlier, in summary the specific features of special interest are:

- surviving terraces of eighteenth century houses;
- high level of consistency across the terraces;
- uniformity both of form and materials; and
- high rate of survival of architectural features and enrichments which make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the conservation area, these include:
 - chimney pots;
 - continuous line of parapet wall to conceal London roof behind;
 - party walls with brick-on-edge detailing and stepped lead flashings;
 - stucco cornices to the parapet on the front elevation;
 - decorative mouldings or brick borders to first-floor windows;
 - tripartite round-headed windows at first-floor level;
 - canted bay windows with decorative cornice and console;
 - round-headed paired windows with stucco surrounds and foliate embellishments;
 - timber sash windows with delicate glazing bars; and
 - embellished architrave, often featuring vermiculated or reticulated stucco, to recessed front doors.

All the above elements make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN

3.1 Introduction

This management plan sets out the borough's commitment to high quality management of conservation areas and their settings. The management plan provides guidance to residents, businesses, and other stakeholders about the special elements of the areas character and how these can be preserved or enhanced. The management plan also sets out the considerations that should be taken into account at the earliest possible stages of the design process and addressed as part of any planning application.

Conservation 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, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. 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. Demolition and rebuilding of buildings can have a significant impact on the environment and can result in a large amount of waste and associated air pollution.

3.2 Policy and legislation

In conservation areas, planning controls are more extensive. Permitted development rights are more limited, and demolition and works to trees are controlled. 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. Section 72 of the Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 which relates to planning functions within conservation areas, includes that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. You are strongly advised to contact the council to check if works you are proposing need permission.

Any new development should have regard to relevant national, regional, and local planning policy, including the following:

- The Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act [1990].
- the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF].
- the London Plan
- the Tower Hamlets Local Plan
- the Tower Hamlets Conservation Strategy
- Historic England guidance and
- this character appraisal and management plan

Further information can be found on the council's website, on the government website and on the GLA website.

3.3 Opportunities for enhancement

It is the character of the area, rather than individual buildings, which the conservation area designation seeks to preserve and enhance. However, there are minor improvements that could be made to the existing terraces within the residential part of this conservation area. While the structures themselves are intact, the terraces require some attention and renovation. The council supports the retention and reinstatement of architectural features of the area.

This section provides guidance on opportunities for enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area which residents may consider.

3.3.1 Façade and brickwork

Measures should be taken to ensure that further damage to the façade brickwork is avoided and to ensure that further application of the pebble-dash and render is not allowed [see section 2.3.5]. Although cladding and rendering may seem quick solutions to maintenance and structural problems, they can create new problems, disguising what could later emerge to be major building defects. These are all irreversible steps. By hiding original details, such as window arches and string courses, a house can be completely altered, losing its traditional appearance.

The original pointing and mortar would have been lime putty based without cement. Modern cementitious mortars are not appropriate because this mortar is harder than the brickwork, whereas mortar should be softer than the brickwork. Projecting 'weather struck' pointing would not be original and should be avoided; the pointing should be flush with or slightly indented from the brickwork. It is important to use mortar to match the original and not any later replacements.

3.3.2 Railings

During the war metal was in short supply and railings were removed. Some properties have had railings reinstated but they do not all follow the traditional details. Reinstatement of traditional railings is encouraged by the council. Railings should be of cast iron, painted black and leaded into a stone plinth. Low railings are appropriate: higher than two metres would detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.3.3 Cornices

Where parapet level cornices are damaged or have had to be removed, efforts should be made to restore them. This would improve the rhythm and character of the terrace and therefore be considered a positive intervention to the conservation area.

3.3.4 Streets and open spaces

There are opportunities to improve the quality of the streets and open spaces in the conservation area and its setting. Clinton Road has a rather hard urban character and would benefit from tree planting to soften its appearance. There are also opportunities to improve the part of Mile End Park within the conservation area, as well as linkages and wayfinding to the Green Grid, which runs through and adjacent to the conservation area.

Other opportunities for enhancement exist in the rationalisation of the street clutter, the improvement of pavement surfaces and street lighting, as well as possible improvements to the community garden. Care to ensure the appropriate maintenance will need to be considered.

3.4 Potential development

The council recognises that residents may wish to extend their houses to provide more accommodation; this section provides guidance on how best to manage the potential change. It is important that any development is carried out with due regard for preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Historic England in their guidance regarding alterations to the London terraced house 1660–1860 note the need to retain the structure, character and appearance of a building, and that proposals should not impair or destroy the overall shape and proportion of a house or detract from its historic character.

3.4.1 Roof extensions

Historic England's advice summarised above relates to a number of features but is particularly relevant when considering alterations to the roof form.

When assessing an application for a roof extension the following matters are taken into account:

- visibility and impact on the public realm;
- historic integrity (degree of change);
- the historic and architectural interest of the buildings concerned;
- the completeness of the group or terrace of houses concerned;
- the consistency and uniformity of the existing roofscape and its contribution to the character of the conservation area; and

- significance in terms of the conservation area.

[Mansard roofs](#) are recognised as a traditional way of extending Georgian and Victorian houses. They can be used to replace existing London roofs with a new roof structure comprised of a steep pitched roof, with a shallower secondary pitch above, creating an additional storey of accommodation.

The council has prepared [design guidance document](#) to assist residents apply for planning permission for mansard roof extensions. The guidance only applies to properties on Clinton Road, and not to other parts of the conservation area. As noted in the character appraisal above, Clinton Road has a consistency of architectural form, with a consistent rhythm and scale to the terraces. The uniform parapet line to the front elevation, concealing a series of uniform London roofs, creates a strong silhouette and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The introduction of mansard roof extensions can disrupt and cause harm to this element of the areas special interest. To help mitigate this potential harm to the conservation area, the guidance requires proposals for mansard roof extensions to be accompanied by façade enhancement works. The document sets out the types of enhancement work that are appropriate for the Clinton Road Conservation Area.

3.4.2 Rear extensions

The scope for rear extensions to be altered is often greater than for roof extensions. There are large parts of the conservation area where rear elevations have less impact to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Where new extensions are not visible from the public realm their impact on the overall character and appearance of the conservation area is reduced.

However, the variety of rear extensions means that there is no standard solution and when putting an application together it will be important to consider the consistency and rhythm of neighbouring properties, the existing rear building line, and the particular character of the house.

When assessing an application for a rear extension the following matters are taken into account:

- visibility from street and impact on the public realm;
- historic integrity (degree of change);
- the historic and architectural interest of the buildings concerned;
- the consistency and uniformity of the existing group or terrace of houses concerned;
- significance in terms of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The impact of the proposals upon the amenity of neighbouring properties, the design, scale and materials are always important considerations when assessing proposals for a rear extension. An extension should always be subordinate to the main building.

Generally, an extension to infill the side return will be acceptable. Ideally this should be a lighter weight structure, its features should respect the scale of those features on the existing building and ideally it will be set back from the rear wall of the existing extension so that the prominence of the historic building envelope is preserved.

A common form of extension requested is a wraparound extension. This might also be acceptable, where the garden is of a suitable size, and where it is not visible from the public realm.

It is very important to note that all general planning policies apply as elsewhere in the borough.

3.4.3 Shopfronts

The commercial properties on Mile End Road are an important component of the conservation area and there is an opportunity to refurbish and upgrade their shopfronts. Insensitively designed shopfronts can harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. Whereas a well-designed shopfront has the potential to increase the attractiveness of the building to which it is attached and the area, and potentially increase the commercial success of the shop and the area by increasing the appeal to shoppers. Alterations to original shopfronts should respect the design, detailing, material and architectural features of the existing, and also the building itself.

3.5 Highways and public realm

The quality of the highway and public realm, including surface materials, street furniture and other features, makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Any work carried out should respect this historic character, and this will include retaining and restoring any historic surfaces or features. Any new surfaces should be sympathetic to the historic character of the area. It will also include the removal of any superfluous or redundant street furniture, and ensuring a co-ordinated approach to the introduction of new features using equipment that is simple, elegant and appropriate to context.

3.6 Trees

All trees in conservation areas are protected by the provisions of section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These provisions require people to notify the council before carrying out certain works to trees. This is known as a 'section 211 notice', and it must be made six weeks before the work. The work may go ahead before the end of the six-week period if council gives consent. The notice period gives the council the opportunity to consider whether to make a Tree Preservation Order [TPO].

Details of how to make a section 211 notice can be found on the council's website. People are not required to submit a section 211 notice to the local planning authority for:

- the cutting down, topping or lopping or uprooting of a tree whose diameter does not exceed 75 millimetres; or
- the cutting down or uprooting of a tree, whose diameter does not exceed 100 millimetres, for the sole purpose of improving the growth of other trees (eg thinning as part of forestry operations).
- In either case, the diameter of the tree is to be measured over the bark of the tree at 1.5 metres above ground level. These exemptions do not apply in circumstances where a tree has more than one stem at a point 1.5 metres above the natural ground level if any stem when measured over its bark at that point exceeds the relevant minimum.

Further details can be found on the council's website: [tree management and preservation orders \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/tree-management-and-preservation-orders).

3.7 Energy efficiency improvements

3.7.1 Window replacement and alteration

Window replacement and alterations to existing windows are often successful ways of improving the energy efficiency of a building. A careful study of the existing building should be carried out to identify the original window design and materials. This should form a good template for the kind of windows that will be acceptable in terms of materials, design, glazing bar details, window opening patterns and type of glass. In most cases historic or original windows should be retained and repaired, draught proofing added and if necessary internal secondary glazing installed. Where it is acceptable to replace the existing windows with double glazing care must be taken to ensure that the double glazing is of an appropriate design, that it is possible to replicate the dimensions and opening arrangements of the existing historic windows, that the double glazing is of a slim profile and that spacer bars are white and are unperforated, rather than perforated metal. Top-hung or outward opening windows will not be supported on historic buildings unless this reflects the original glazing pattern.

It may be necessary to apply for planning permission to fit new windows [such as double-glazing] in a flat or maisonette. Planning permission will not be required to add internal secondary glazing. It is also unlikely to be necessary where you are fitting windows which are identical to those which are being removed, for example like-for-like replacements. However, if the new windows differ in appearance or size to those you are replacing [for instance, different glazing patterns or opening methods] you may need to apply for planning permission. The detailed design, materials, dimensions, glazing bar pattern, glazing thickness, and opening methods are all important considerations when new or replacement windows are proposed.

The replacement of historic windows to listed buildings will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that they are beyond reasonable repair. If this can be demonstrated, then any replacement of windows should be on a like-for-like basis, matching the original design exactly. This will require listed building consent and, if any changes are proposed in terms of design, materials, or thickness, planning permission may also be required. Energy efficiency can be improved through draught proofing windows or through the installation of internal secondary glazing. These works will not require listed building consent unless they obscure important historic features or cause harm to the historic fabric.

3.7.2 Cladding, rendering, or painting of external walls.

Original façade treatments of buildings which contribute positively to the special character or appearance of the conservation area should be retained or reinstated. Unless it can be demonstrated that existing exposed brickwork had originally been rendered or painted, the rendering or painting over of brickwork will not be supported.

External insulation through rendering or other methods will not be supported. Any additional insulation should be installed internally where appropriate so as not to inappropriately alter the external appearance of the building. In a listed building, internal insulation would need listed building consent. In most cases it is unlikely to be acceptable.

3.8 Making a planning application

In Clinton Road Conservation Area, as in other conservation areas, planning controls are more extensive than normal. Before carrying out any work in this area, you may need to apply for planning permission even for minor work such as replacing railings. Consent is required to demolish any building larger than 115m², and a higher standard of detail and information is required for any application.

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. To assist with

this, more detailed information is often required to support a planning application. The exact information required will vary with each application, but in general applications must include:

- A clear design and access statement explaining the reasons behind the design decisions.
- A heritage statement that sets out the significance of relevant heritage assets and what the impact of the development will be on them,
- 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 proposed work.
- Where mansard roof extensions are proposed, detailed drawings showing accompanying façade enhancement works.
- Additional detail regarding materials and construction.
- Photos of the condition of existing building (including details where appropriate).
- Where relevant, existing and proposed townscape views.

More information about making a planning application can be found on the councils website: [making a planning application \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/making-a-planning-application). Applicants are encouraged to make use of the council's pre-application advice service to help improve the quality of planning applications and their likelihood of success.

Planning applications that do not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area will normally be recommended for refusal.

3.9 Enforcement strategy

The council has power to act where there has been a breach of planning regulations. This includes carrying out development without consent, or not in accordance with conditions attached to a consent. It also includes displaying a sign or an advert without, advertisement consent, making a material and unlawful change to the use of a property, carrying out works to a listed building without consent, demolishing a building within a conservation area without consent, felling or carrying out works to a tree in a conservation area or a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order [TPO].

If we find that there is a breach of planning regulations, we may request that a retrospective application be made for the works. If a retrospective application is not submitted, or if permission is refused, we may ask for the structure to be changed or removed or for the use to cease. In some cases, we may issue a planning enforcement notice to ensure compliance.

An enforcement notice is served on all freeholders, lessees, mortgagees and other persons having a material interest in the property. Failure to comply with an enforcement notice is an

offence that may result in an unlimited fine if convicted. Continued non-compliance can result in further prosecutions for further offences, incurring additional fines. An enforcement notice is also entered on the local land charges records which could make the future sale or financing of the property more difficult.

Further details about planning enforcement can be found on the council's website: [breaches of planning regulations \(towerhamlets.gov.uk\)](https://towerhamlets.gov.uk/breaches-of-planning-regulations)

4.0 CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Tower Hamlets Planning & Building Control Service

Tower Hamlets Town Hall
160 Whitechapel Road
London
E1 1BJ

Tel: 020 7364 5009

planning@towerhamlets.gov.uk

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/planning_and_building_control/

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

277 Bancroft Road
London
E1 4DQ

Tel: 020 7364 1290

localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk

www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history

Historic England

A public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's historic environment.

www.historicengland.org.uk/

Georgian Group

A national charity for the preservation and promotion of Georgian architecture and planning.

www.georgiangroup.org.uk

Victorian Society

A national charity championing Victorian and Edwardian buildings.

www.victoriansociety.org.uk

Twentieth Century Society

A national charity helping to protect and celebrate outstanding buildings from the 20th and 21st centuries.

www.c20society.org.uk

Planning Portal

A website that helps people to apply for planning permission and building control in the UK.

www.planningportal.co.uk