

Driffield Road Conservation Area

# Character appraisal and management plan

June 2025

## CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION .....	1
<b>2.0</b>	<b>CHARACTER APPRAISAL .....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Location and setting .....	2
2.2	Historical development.....	1
2.3	Spatial analysis .....	2
2.4	Views .....	2
2.5	Architectural characteristics.....	3
2.6	Landscaping features.....	5
2.7	Problems and pressures .....	5
2.8	Summary of special interest .....	6
<b>3.0</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT PLAN.....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1	Introduction.....	7
3.2	Planning policy and legislation.....	8
3.3	Opportunities for enhancement .....	8
3.4	Potential development.....	9
3.5	Highways and public realm .....	12
3.6	Trees.....	12
3.7	Energy efficiency improvements.....	13
3.8	Making a planning application .....	14
3.9	Enforcement strategy .....	15
<b>4.0</b>	<b>CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## 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 Driffield Road Conservation Area was designated in January 1988 and extended in October 2008 to include Chisenhale Road, previously included within the Victoria Park Conservation Area.

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 guidelines 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 character appraisal and management guidelines adopted for the Driffield Road Conservation Area in November 2009 and June 2017.

## **2.0 CHARACTER APPRAISAL**

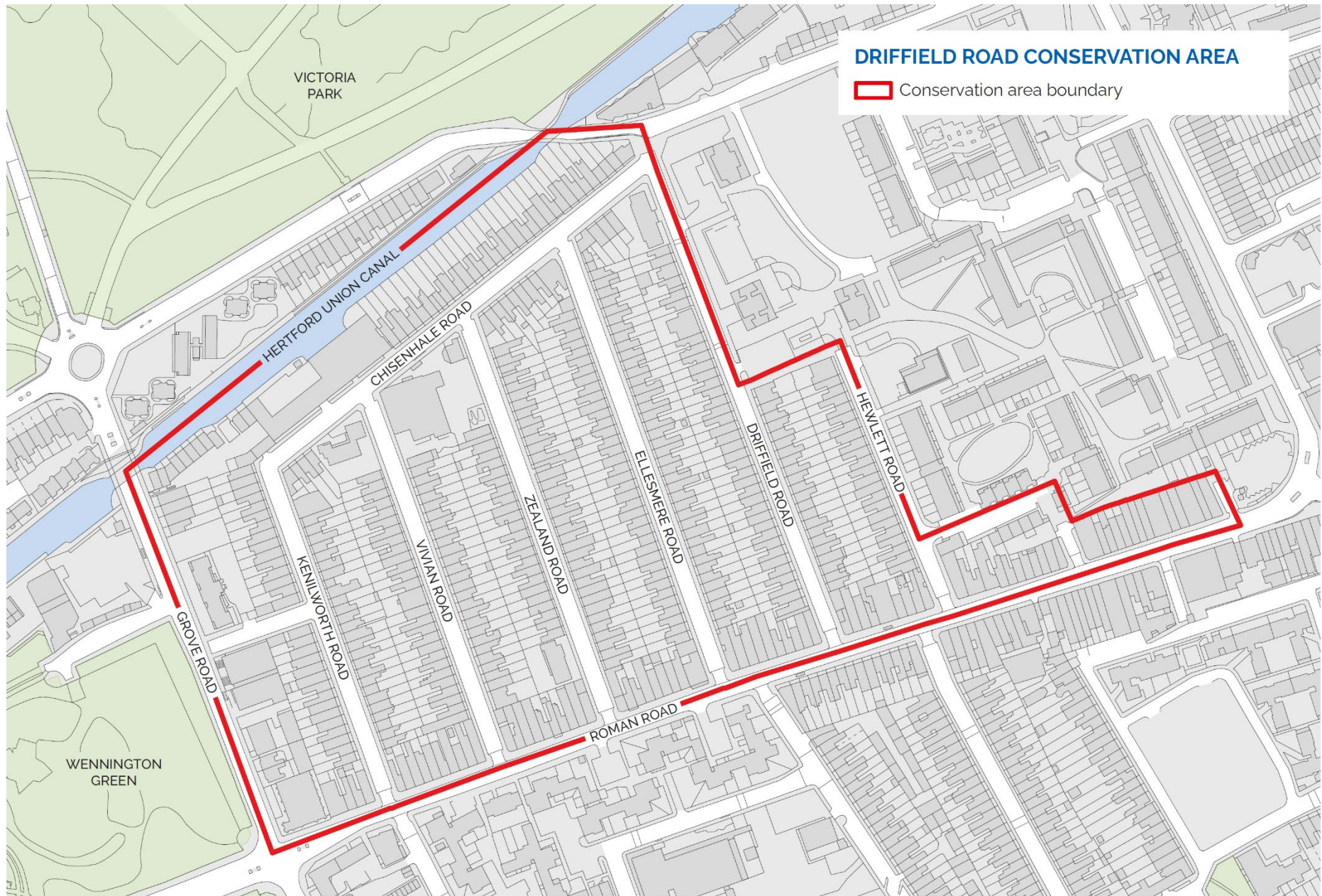
### **2.1 Location and setting**

The Driffield Road Conservation Area is bounded by Roman Road to the south, Grove Road to the west, the Hertford Union Canal to the north and Driffield, Hewlett and Ford Roads to the east.

The largest part of the conservation area is made up of the six straight parallel streets running northwards, namely Kenilworth, Vivian, Zealand, Ellesmere, Driffield and Hewlett Roads together with Chisenhale Road which runs east to west. The southern boundary of the conservation area is defined by the lively Roman Road and the streetscape of small retail shops.

The conservation area does not contain any public open spaces. However, it is bordered by substantial open spaces such as the Hertford Union Canal and Victoria Park to its north, Wennington Green on the opposite side of Grove Road and Mile End Park to its south-west. Within the residential quadrant, private gardens set to the rear of the properties exist behind terraced frontages.

Most of the streets are tree-lined although the age, number, species and location of trees vary with each street. Recently installed Victorian-style street lighting can be seen in many of the streets.





## 2.2 Historical development

The conservation area consisted of woodland before 1285. Between then and the onset of development in the 1840s it was open land used for arable and pastoral farming, dissected by Old Ford Road and a driftway [now Roman Road].

The whole area east of Grove Road and south of Old Ford Road was known as Broomfields from circa 1439 and the land now included in the conservation area was known as the Sixteen Acre Field. The only buildings located here before the 1830s were King's Arms Row in Old Ford Road and a toll house. King's Arms Row was demolished when Old Ford Road was straightened in 1844.

Various infrastructure and public improvement projects took place during the early nineteenth century in response to the rapid population growth and urbanisation in London. These included the Hertford Union Canal (also called the Sir George Duckett's Canal), opened 1830, and Victoria Park (early 1840s). These developments, but particularly the opening of Victoria Park, provided the initial impetus for development in the area.

Broomfields passed through various owners until Thomas Coxhead Marsh inherited the 17 houses and circa 100 acres in 1811. In 1847 it passed to William Coxhead Marsh and his son, Thomas Coxhead Chisenhale Marsh. By 1857 the size of the land had reduced to just 55 acres, after sections were surrendered to construct the canals and Victoria Park. In 1857 the Marsh family decided to sell the remaining land to Reverend George Townshend Driffield [the rector of Bow] and others. However, the prospective purchasers found it difficult to raise the money required [the Marsh family acting as mortgagees] and in 1865 conveyed the land to the London & Suburban Land & Building Co.

Streets were laid out progressively after 1857. Thomas Rogers, a London solicitor, was involved in building in, Kenilworth, Vivian [formerly Woodstock], Auckland [formerly Blenheim, from 1937 Zealand], Ellesmere, and Chisenhale Roads. Chisenhale Road already had factories in the 1850s and is still dominated by the Chisenhale Works [now Chisenhale Gallery] established by Morris Cohen for the manufacture of veneers. It was rebuilt in 1942 to supply veneers for fighters and bombers.

The houses in the areas surrounding Victoria Park were built for 'comfortable artisans and clerks'. The newly constructed houses at Broomfields were for a similarly 'fairly comfortable' population.

By the early-to-mid 1890s all the plots within the conservation area had been filled in. Chisenhale Primary School, situated on Chisenhale Road, was built in 1893 by T.F Bailey. It was remodelled in 1902.

Most of the conservation area suffered minor or no damage during World War Two and the Victorian terraces survive largely intact. In the areas that did suffer severe bomb damage, small, mid-twentieth century housing blocks were constructed. These included Bunsen House [1951], Margaret Bondfield House [1952], Beatrice Webb House [1953] and Susan Lawrence House [1954].

The largest single area that suffered severe damage was the northern halves of Driffield Road and Hewlett Road. The terraces in these areas were demolished and the area is now a separate modern development that lies outside the conservation area.

## 2.3 Spatial analysis

The Driffield Road Conservation Area is characterised by the homogenous layout of small-scale streets, containing uniform mid-nineteenth century terraces. There are also four small post-war housing blocks and some recent local authority infill development.

### 2.3.1 Land use

The land use character of the conservation area is predominantly residential, but other land uses include retail premises on the ground floor along the Roman Road frontage [with residential flats above] and a number of public buildings such as the three church buildings along Grove Road; Victoria Park Baptist Church, Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness and St Barnabas' Church. Also contained within the conservation area is the Victorian Chisenhale Primary School.

### 2.3.2 Scale

The houses are characteristically small scale, two storey plus basement, which traditionally may have had single storey, one room extensions. The houses on Chisenhale Road are generally taller with three storeys and a basement. On the western edge of the Conservation Area, along the north-south running Grove Road are two to four storey buildings, including the Victoria Park Baptist Church, St Barnabas Church and newly renovated residential flats at 182 Grove Road. Roman Road is flanked by buildings of generally two storeys, with a taller three storey scale on corner sites. Beyond the Roman Road frontage, the existing building scale of the area is predominantly low, with terrace housing along the residential streets at two storeys plus basement level.

## 2.4 Views

The clear definition of the streets and the character of the nineteenth-century terrace create many high-quality views:

- Long views along street axes include those through Grove Road and Roman Road. The long views of uniform terraces are a distinctive characteristic of the conservation area.
- Within the residential streets of Kenilworth, Vivian, Zealand, Ellesmere, Driffield and Hewlett Roads, each terrace facade contributes to the repetitive and rhythmic character of the streetscape.
- Important views of the area are also gained from the Regent's Canal Towpath. The gardens and backs of properties in Chisenhale Road are viewed from the towpath and it is important that any proposals for development respect the existing scale and rhythm of the rear of these properties.

## 2.5 Architectural characteristics

The conservation area is largely composed of a series of mid-to-late nineteenth century residential terraces and the overriding impression is the consistency in architectural form.

Houses within the conservation area were constructed a few at a time, in a number of styles and by different builders, resulting in a considerable variety in their ornamental detail. The types of doors, windows, decorative plasterwork and iron railings vary, giving each street and indeed, each side of the road a different quality.

Some houses on parts of Zealand Road appear never to have had railings, whereas original cast iron railings on Chisenhale Road are typical of nineteenth century Victorian boundary treatments, juxtaposed to the more recent brick walls with the front areas.

While usually flanked by yellow stock brick and flat-fronted terraces on either side, some rows contain canted bay windows or steps above semi-basements, or at times, a combination of both.

Some of the terrace houses are named and dated with plaques set under their eaves; examples can be found on Kenilworth, Chisenhale, Driffield, Grove and Zealand Roads. Although the design and details of these features change with architectural fashions, their rhythm and consistency contribute significantly to the special interest of a terrace. The continuity of the parapet line and moulded cornice line in particular tie together the groups of houses into apparently uniform terraces.

### 2.5.1 Roofs



Virtually all the terraces within the conservation area have 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 [i.e. the front] behind parapets producing a hard, straight edged appearance to the houses and a strong silhouette. This lack of visible roof is an important architectural characteristic. At the rear, the parapet is nearly always omitted and the row of gently pitched gables is clearly evident.

Chimney stacks are located along the party walls between houses [often in pairs]; visible and silhouetted on the skyline they are important conservation area features, and together with chimney pots and party walls that project above roof line, form a significant part of the conservation area's character and appearance.

### 2.5.2 Rear extensions

Mid-nineteenth century terraces, such those within the conservation area, were often built with rear extensions, which had their 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 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 extension with the early single storey single unit extensions with three independent walls housing a scullery being replaced by paired extensions under one roof. Extensions 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 extension which predominates within the Driffield 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 extension.

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

### 2.5.3 Details and materials

The houses in this conservation area are variants on the basic terrace house design brought about by differing permutations and the presence or absence of architectural features.

Architectural features that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and deserve retention are:

- Rope mouldings surrounding windows and doors;
- Ironwork window guards;
- Cast iron railings (particularly those with boot scrapers set between houses);
- Vermiculated stucco, cornice and consoles to front door openings; and
- Stucco cornices to the parapet on the front elevations.

There is a limited range of materials used throughout the conservation area, reinforcing its consistent appearance. Principally the materials are: stock brick, stucco, and slate roofs.

Cast iron railings are a common feature of the conservation area although not all houses or streets [or sides of streets] included them as part of their original design. They are found in parts of Chisenhale, Driffield, Ellesmere, Grove, Hewlett, Kenilworth, Vivian and Zealand Roads.

## 2.6 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.

The streets in the conservation area feature Victorian style streetlamps, these are taller along Roman Road compared to the minor residential streets. Many of the streets have trees planted along the pavement, which provide an important softening of what would otherwise be a rather hard urban environment. The trees make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Between 2022 and 2023 the council used financial contributions collected from planning applications for mansard roof extensions to plant additional street trees in the conservation area, further improving its character and appearance.

## 2.7 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.

### 2.7.1 Front boundary walls

Distinctive front area railings or cast-iron window boxes have disappeared or may have been removed during the war [because of iron shortage].

### 2.7.2 Façade treatment

Terraces such as these 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 those of which that have been unsympathetically altered, are embellished with the application of pebble dash and stone cladding. The complete pebble-dashing of a façade destroys the careful balance and continuity of the terrace façade. The result has created discord and fragmentation to the entire elevation of the terrace, to the detriment of the character of the conservation area.

### 2.7.3 Parapet cornices

Parapet level cornices have often decayed or cracked and have had to be removed. This has resulted in gaps in the cornice lines of terraces. Residents should consider opportunities to reinstate these cornices.

### 2.7.4 Existing roof extensions

Whilst on many of the side roads the roof types are consistent, some properties along the Roman Road boundary to the conservation area, particularly at its eastern end, have been subject to alteration and the strong parapet line has been lost with the introduction of mansards, pitched roofs and flat roofs, diluting the historic uniformity and character of these terraces. These additions can make a property appear top heavy and disrupts the uniformity and horizontal emphasis of the terrace.

### 2.7.5 Rear extensions

Rear elevations on Driffield Road terrace have suffered 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 extension has occurred particularly in the deep plots along Roman Road.

## 2.8 Summary of special interest

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history, cohesive character and domestic architecture dating from the mid-nineteenth century. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities:

- Surviving nineteenth-century artisans' houses;

- High level of consistency across the streets and their terraces;
- Uniformity both of form and materials;
- High rate of survival of architectural features and enrichments which make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, these include:
  - canted bay windows with decorative cornice and console;
  - rope mouldings to windows and door surrounds;
  - ironwork window guard;
  - ironing railing (including boot scrapers between houses);
  - vermiculated stucco cornice and consoles to front door openings; and
  - stucco cornices to the parapet on front elevations.

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

Whilst there are no listed buildings within the area, the conservation area was designated to protect the overall character of the Victorian terraces, which are of collective townscape merit. And it is the cohesive character of the area rather than individual buildings which the conservation area status seeks to preserve and enhance.

## **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 Planning 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

Terraces such as those within the conservation area 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.

The overall character of the streets of Victorian terraces has already been eroded by over-unsympathetic alteration of houses. The designation of the conservation area is an opportunity to resist any further erosion of the character of the buildings.

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 must be made to ensure that further damage to the façade brickwork is avoided and to ensure that further application of the pebble-dash is not allowed. 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.

### 3.3.2 Railings

Since construction, many of the houses have lost their original cast iron railings along their front boundaries. Where original railings are missing, it is worth considering reinstating them, even if only for improved security. Railings should be of cast iron, painted black and leaded into a stone or concrete plinth. Some houses appear never to have had railings (e.g. Zeeland Road) and in these cases, it may not be appropriate to introduce them.

### 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.

### 3.3.4 Streets

There are opportunities to improve quality of the street environment in the conservation area and its setting. The existing street trees make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and there may be scope for further planting of trees or the improvement of existing tree pits. There may also be opportunities for other types of greening to support and improve the character of the streetscene, 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. 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.

### 3.4.1 Roof extensions

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. This relates to a number of features but is particularly relevant when considering alterations to the roof form.

The degree of significance which can be ascribed to main roofs should take 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 relevant properties in the Driffield Road Conservation Area. As noted in the character appraisal above, much of the conservation area 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 Driffield Road Conservation Area.

### 3.4.2 Rear extensions

Despite the variety of extensions that exist within the conservation area there is generally a degree of consistency within a terrace. However, the original picture has become somewhat blurred in some parts of the conservation area by later alterations.

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, size of the garden etc.

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.

It is very important to note that all general planning policies apply as elsewhere in the borough. The impact of the proposals upon the amenity of neighbouring properties, the design, scale and materials are 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.

### 3.4.3 Shopfronts

Roman Road is lined with shop fronts; this street is a lively component of the conservation area and there exists the opportunity to refurbish and upgrade the shopfronts along this thoroughfare. 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 as a whole, 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.

### 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 Driffield 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 115m<sup>2</sup>, 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://www.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](mailto:planning@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/](https://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](mailto:localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://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/](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/)

### **Georgian Group**

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

[www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk)

### **Victorian Society**

A national charity championing Victorian and Edwardian buildings.

[www.victoriansociety.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.planningportal.co.uk)