



# Fish Island

## Conservation Area

### 1. Character Appraisal

### 2. Management Guidelines

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

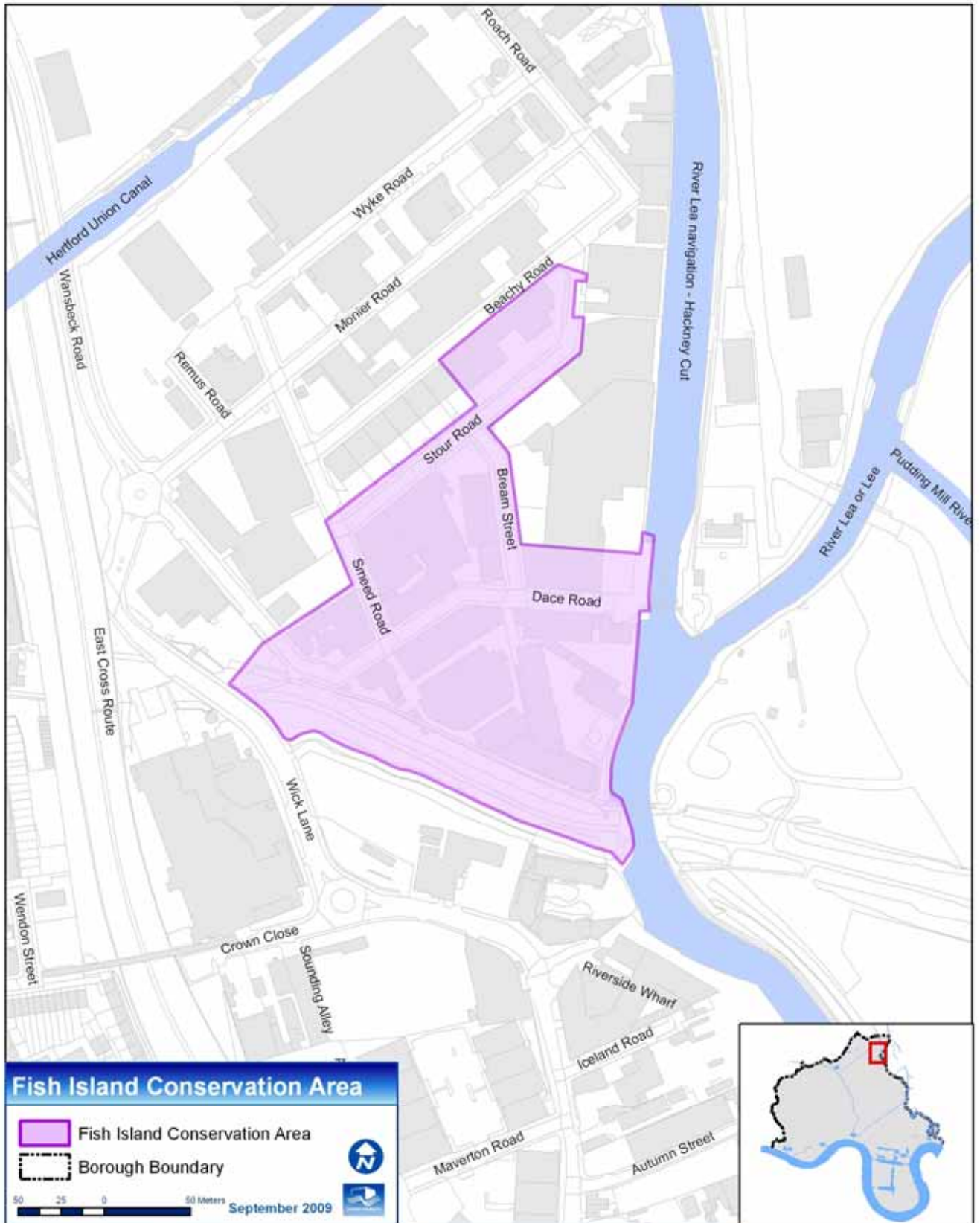
Adopted by Cabinet: 4th November 2009

## Introduction

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

This guide has been prepared for the following purposes:

- To comply with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69(1) states that a conservation area is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”
- **To provide a detailed appraisal of the area’s architectural and historic character. To assist 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.
- To ensure the Conservation Area and buildings of interest are appropriately and effectively knitted into the fabric of this area and that new development respects and responds to the importance of the character of these buildings.



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# 1. Character Appraisal

## Overview

**1.1** Fish Island Conservation Area was designated in October 2008. It is situated in the northern section of the Lower Lea valley and lies in the part of Tower Hamlets that is sandwiched between the boroughs of Hackney in the north and Newham to the east. The Conservation Area has an irregular boundary extending from Beachy Road and Stour Road to the north, through to Greenway to the south. It includes the former Percy Dalton Factory (Peanut Factory) on Dace Road along its western boundary and the Hackney Cut to the east. There are no listed buildings within the Fish Island Conservation Area. However, many of the buildings within this area make an important contribution to Britain's industrial heritage.

## History

**1.2** The Conservation Area falls within the area of Old Ford. Old Ford was a small settlement first recorded in 13<sup>th</sup> Century as Eldeford or Oldeford situated near the west bank of the ford across the River Lea. The ford had been the main crossing place between London and Essex until the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, when a stone bridge was built about half a mile downstream. The bow-shaped bridge was called Bow Bridge and the west bank village of Stratford became Stratford at Bow and subsequently Bow.

**1.3** North of the Old Ford was a marshy flood plain, between the River Lea and its west-bank tributary Hackney Brook, known as Old Ford Marsh. Canals were cut across the marsh in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These were the Hackney Cut (a 2 mile long canal cut in 1768-69 by the Lee Trustees in order to bypass the River Lea between Lea Bridge and Old Ford using two single locks), and the Hertford Union Canal, opened in 1830 between Hackney Cut and Regent's Canal. The Lea and the canals around Old Ford are navigable waterways with associated banks, towpaths, walls, walkways and bridges and some sections are included in the Conservation Area.

**1.4** About twenty years later the Hertford Union Canal was crossed by a railway line which ran on an embankment along the west side of Old Ford Marsh. The 8-mile railway was opened in 1851 and renamed the North London Railway in 1853. In 1866 it was joined by an east-west branch line which crossed the northern part of Old Ford marsh on an embankment. The arrival of the railway probably encouraged the Lee Trustees to improve the Hackney Cut. The single lock at Old Ford was replaced c.1856 by a pair of locks to allow two-way working. The new locks were also 4ft higher and the banks on both sides of the cut were also raised. To encourage developments, wharf walls of Kentish rag stone were constructed along the west bank from Old Ford to Hackney Wick including both banks at the eastern end of the Hertford Union Canal. Noxious chemical process works, such as crude oil and coal tar distilleries were established in White Post Lane; closely followed by works using their products, such as printing ink, rubber processing and dry cleaning works. Most of these works used the waterways for transporting their imported raw materials from the docks and their finished products back to the docks for export. Such works filled the Lower Lea Valley, making it London's largest waterside industrial area.

**1.5** Also included in the Conservation Area is the western part of the Northern Outfall Sewer. This earth embankment, dating from the 1860s, was built by the Metropolitan Board of Works Chief Engineer, Joseph Bazalgette, to take high and middle level sewers from Wick Lane across the low-lying flood plains to treatment works at Barking. The brick sewers cross the River Lea in two cast-iron tubes suspended from the wrought-iron sewer bridge (1862-63) .This was widened on the north side for two extra sewers built 1904-07 by London County Council(LCC) to carry sewage from its middle level sewer running from Paddington to the Wick Lane main drainage depot.

**1.6** The sale of surplus railway land led eventually to the development of a small factory town in the southern part of Old Ford Marsh. About 30 acres of marshland between the railway line to the west, Hackney Cut to the east, Hertford Canal to the north and the western part of the Northern Outfall Sewer to the south were purchased

by the Imperial Gas & Light & Coke Company for a gas works. But the gas works was built near the mouth of the River Lea instead and in 1876 the ownership of the land was passed to the Gas Light & Coke Company who developed the factory town. A network of several new roads was laid out and building leases were granted for terraced houses, factories and a school. The enclosed area was known to local residents as the Island. Later, named Fish Island, in reference to the roads with the names of freshwater fish: Dace, Bream and Roach.

**1.7** By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Old Ford was an area of intense and complex industrial activity. Various works were engaged in processing imported raw materials such as crude oil, rubber and sugar. Crown Wharf on the River Lea below Old Ford Locks is the oldest industrial site in Fish Island. From c.1853, it was occupied by a wallpaper works then part of the wharf was also occupied by an iron works and latterly the entire wharf was occupied by a works making external metal staircases. Its 1904 engineering workshop and forge survives in the north east corner of the site next to the River Lea.

**1.8** The area was seriously affected by bomb damage in the Second World War. Monier Road and Beachy Road were seriously damaged. A number of large buildings were directly damaged on Dace Road. Most of the rest of the area suffered from 'minor' or 'general' blast damage which affected houses and industrial buildings alike. The social policies and modernist visions of the post-war years dramatically and irreversibly altered the urban landscape of the area. The area transformed from a factory town that included residential areas, schools and other social amenities to an industrial quarter devoid of other uses.

**1.9** The area between the east-west railway line and the Hertford Union Canal was the most damaged by bombing. The houses were cleared and within two decades nearly the entire site was rebuilt as industrial buildings. Around a third of housing to the south of the Hertford Union Canal was cleared immediately after the war and by 1961 completely replaced by warehouses. By 1973 most of these had been

demolished and businesses relocated to the completed Trowbridge estate to the north. To the south and east, a large proportion of the early 20th century industrial buildings survived and continued in use. The damaged properties by the canal side were repaired. Part of the Old North London Railway line was replaced by the A102(M) or East Cross Route effectively cutting off all the north-eastern corner of Tower Hamlets, now called Fish Island (see Fish Island Indicative Map)

### Character

**1.10** Fish Island is dominated by industrial architecture of several periods. The area preserves relatively intact parts of a late Victorian and Edwardian industrial estate. The industrial activities represented were fairly large scale and still include an almost complete former rubber processing works with two waterproof clothing factories, associated warehouses, outbuildings, yards, walls and gates. The former Wick Lane Rubber Works, on the north side of Dace Road and both sides of Smeed Road, contains a total of fourteen buildings dating from 1882 to 1889. It's London's (and possibly England's) sole-surviving, purpose-built, late 19<sup>th</sup> century, steam-powered, steam-process rubber works and waterproof clothing works. Its special interest includes the fact that from 1907 to c.1924, the eastern part of the works was occupied by a printing works which specialised in bank notes and postage stamps etc. Of the three new buildings added to the complex, the most important is the identifiable 1908 printing factory on the corner of Smeed Road and Stour Road. It was designed by architect Henry C Smart and was named Algha Works in 1932. The western part of the former Wick Lane Rubber Works was occupied by wholesale clothing manufacturers. The former waterproof clothing factories in both parts of the former Wick Lane Rubber Works are now the only surviving large 19<sup>th</sup> century clothing factories in Tower Hamlets. Both are also of exceptional architectural interest as rare surviving 'transitional structures' – buildings erected during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century demonstrating the transition from iron-framed buildings to fully steel-framed buildings. Both have internal frames of cast-iron columns and steel floor beams (although the earlier western building may have wrought-iron floor beams) and separate timber and wrought-iron roof trusses. Most early transitional buildings were

industrial buildings and as most have been demolished, these two surviving examples in Dace Road are of national importance.

**1.11** The surviving original 1898-99 parts of the former Britannia cardboard box and printing works on the south side of Dace Road contain a very unusual internal frame with cruciform compound steel stanchions in the lower two storeys. These represent a brief experimental phase where steel stanchions were used in place of cast-iron columns. Such fabricated steel stanchions were rapidly superseded by simple H- or I – section steel stanchions and there are now very few surviving examples in England. Their special interest is enhanced by the fact that the top storey consists of a traditional arrangement of cast-iron columns with timber king post roof trusses. The last stage of the transition is represented in the Conservation Area by Algha Works, which is an excellent example of an internal steel framed building with its steel stanchions and floor beams encased in concrete. Also in the Conservation Area is the 1906-1912 multi-storey stable block at Swan Wharf. Its internal frames of cast-iron columns and steel floor beams illustrate the fact that the 40-year transition was not a simple chronological progression from one type of structure to another. All five industrial buildings in the Conservation Area constitute a small but highly representative group of transitional structures. The group's special interest is enhanced by the proximity of six other industrial buildings with transitional structures in the northern part of Fish Island (see Fish Island Designation Plan) details of which are set out below:

- two 1904-05 dyeing and dry cleaning factories at 92 White Post Lane with internal frames of cast iron, steel and integrated steel and wrought iron roof trusses (11),
- 1904-05 confectionery factory in Kings Yard, Carpenters Road with internal steel frame and integrated timber queen post roof trusses,
- 1911 Everett House in White Post lane with single-storey steel frame and first floor transverse steel beams and second floor transverse steel beams with timber king post roof trusses,



- 1913-14 chocolate factory in Queens yard , White Post lane with internal steel frame,
- 1923-24 dyeing and dry cleaning factory at 92 White Post Lane with a full steel frame but with massive stabilising brick piers.

**1.12** The five buildings in the Conservation Area and the six buildings in the northern part of Fish Island make up what is probably London's (and possibly England's largest group of surviving industrial buildings with transitional structures. Within the group, each building is unique in its exact combination of materials and type of construction. As such they constitute a fully representative ensemble of transitional structures (and associated roof structures) covering the 40-year period of technological innovation. Furthermore, the diversity of associated roof structures represents the transitions over the same period from the separate or integrated pitched-roof structures of internal-iron-framed buildings to the integrated roof structures of fully steel-framed buildings. Particular group members also represent the continued use of traditional timber roof structures on essentially modern internal – steel-framed buildings. In this respect, their special interest is enhanced by the extraordinary survival of a rare example of a very common 19<sup>th</sup> century single storey structure type consisting of timber King post roof trusses on cast iron columns. The eleven industrial buildings with transitional structures, together with their various ancillary buildings (and several industrial buildings in the London Borough of Hackney) also constitute the largest and least fragmented remnant waterside industrial site in London. Furthermore, many of its surviving buildings belonged to works which used products from the chemical works in Old Ford and elsewhere in the Lower Lea Valley. All the chemical works have disappeared leaving the former works and others as the only built evidence relating to the Lower Lea Valley's nationally important chemical industry.



Britannia Works (Peanut Factory),  
Dace Road

Former 1889 Waterproof Clothing Factory,  
Dace Road



Former Offices of Britannia Works (Peanut  
Factory)

Former 1882 Waterproof Clothing factory,  
Dace Road



Swan Wharf stable block, Dace Road

**1.13** The area's diversity is expressed in scale, form, massing and stylistic treatment of the buildings. Collectively they convey a robust, utilitarian aesthetic, characterized by cliff-like stock brick walls with blue-brick plinths, red brick segmental arches, iron or steel lintels and metal-framed windows. Particular features and motifs were emulated and reproduced by successive building designers such as blue brick plinths, giant arches and small circular windows, with occasional flourishes such as the gables to the former office buildings in Dace Road. In many buildings maximization of natural light was the chief concern and hence large metal framed windows and rolled steel joist lintels give a distinctive look. At 'Algha Works', a former 1908 printing works, a new form of glazing – *the prismatic stall-board light* - enabled light to flood the semi-basement, and throughout the building, a specialized form of floor construction ensured well-lit working spaces on all floors.

**1.14** Although the former steam-powered works in Dace Road have lost their tall chimney shafts the c.1902 square tapering chimney shaft (built for the Broadwood Piano Works) survives as an important landmark between Stour and Beachy Road.

## Land Use

**1.15** The land use character of the area is predominantly industrial. This is in marked contrast to its pre-war history where residential, social and public institutions were an essential part of the area. However in recent years the area has developed into an attractive hub for creative and cultural industries which include the Britannia Works and Bridget Riley Studios on Dace Road and the Old Peanut Factory on Smeed Road. The nature of industrial buildings with large volumes lends themselves to studio spaces and their clustering has created a cultural quarter that survives alongside other industrial and residential uses. Crown Wharf near the eastern end of Dace Road, has been redeveloped in recent years as a modern development with commercial uses on the ground floor and “live work” units on the upper floors.

**1.16** Other industrial uses within the area include a new modern smoked salmon factory on Stour Road, and bed manufacturers in the multi-storey stable block on Dace Road. Although land uses have changed over time in the area industrial use has continued to predominate. Even in today’s context, the industrial buildings that survived the blitz of the Second World War lend themselves to a new breed of creative and cultural industries that protect the areas industrial heritage and whose flexibility adapts to emerging industrial and employment uses.



Algha Works



Iron Works, Dace Road



Former Carbonic Acid Works,  
Bream Street

## Scale

**1.17** The area represents a significant concentration of London's industrial past in the Lower Lea valley and is an important group in London. It has a remarkable concentration of factories and processing works built during 1880-1920, the golden age of London's manufacturing and technological history. The Conservation Area consists of predominantly three to four storied late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. No one building dominates the streetscape by virtue of its height but together they define a quarter where each building sits comfortably with its neighbour and contributes to its context. Overall the consistency of building heights, scale and proportion of streets, storey heights and street widths enable the area to retain a certain sense of scale that accentuates the experience of the place.

## Open Space

**1.18** There are no designated open spaces within the Conservation Area. However Victoria Park to the north west and the Olympic Park (under construction) to the east of the River Lea Navigation - Hackney Cut are in close proximity to the Conservation Area. Sections of Lea Valley Regional Park fall within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. This takes the form of linear route alongside Hackney Cut. There are also important pedestrian and cycle routes that connect the Conservation Areas into the wider Regional Park network of open spaces and leisure facilities.



View towards eastern end of  
Dace Road



View towards eastern end of Dace Road



Old Ford Locks



Hackney Cut



Greenway

**1.19** The River Lea Navigation - Hackney Cut is a 2 mile long canal cut in 1768-69 by the Lee Trustees to by-pass the River Lea between Lea Bridge and Old Ford. The Greenway is a public footpath and cycle way on top of the embankment known as the Northern Outfall Sewer. The Hackney Cut and Greenway are two important elements that link the Conservation Area with the wider network of open space and waterways. To the north of the Conservation Area is the Hertford Union Canal that opened in 1830 between Hackney Cut and Regents' Canal. A footbridge over the River Lea leads to Old Ford Locks at the southern end of Hackney Cut. A tow path runs along the eastern edge of Hackney Cut (not within the Conservation Area).

## Views

**1.20** Views in the area are framed along local routes and streets. The layout of streets within the Conservation Area defines small views as a result of turns and bends in the street. The corners are strengthened by the location of buildings that frame short views which are enriched by the scale, form, colour of the materials and treatments of doors and windows.



Views defined by turn in the street



View from Greenway



Long views along Dace Road

**1.21** Long views exist along the eastern end of Dace Road where it opens out to Hackney Cut and the River Lea. This view is an important one as this links the hard landscape of the Conservation Area with the soft landscape of the canal front. Further, views of the Conservation Area from Wick Lane are important. A flight of steps connect Wick Lane via the Greenway to Dace Road. As one descends the flight of steps there are some fine views of Fish Island.

### **Buildings that form part of the setting of the Conservation Area**

**1.22** The Conservation Area Management Plan has identified the wider Fish Island Masterplan boundary as an area of influence. This wider boundary fundamentally contributes to the character and appearance of the newly designated Conservation Area, which sits within the Fish Island area boundary. The Fish Island area is identified in the Council's Interim Planning Guidance and emerging Core Strategy, as an area in need of further development. The Conservation Area Management Plan has incorporated this wider area to ensure that buildings of interest outside the Conservation Area are appropriately considered within the conservation and heritage context, as these buildings are an important part of the industrial heritage and character of Fish Island.

**1.23** Buildings and structures of importance within the immediate context of the Fish Island Conservation Area include the former Purification House(1) and Screw Stopper Factory (2) at the former Carbonic Acid Works north of Dace Road, former timber yard gatehouse(3) Old Ford Locks(4), Northern Outfall Sewer Bridge(5) and former builders yard chimney shaft(6) (See map on page 18 for key to numbers).



Former Screw Stopper Factory



Former Purification Works



Industrial Building

**1.24** The area between the east-west railway line and the Hertford Union Canal to the north of the Conservation Area is defined by large warehouses, small ancillary buildings, and storage yards. Surviving pre-war buildings are located to the east and along the canal side and form a distinctive group. They are predominantly brick built factories with large windows and details such as arches in coloured brick. Buildings which make a positive contribution to the area include the former Clarnico Confectionery Factory (13), the former Clarnico Chocolate Factory (12), former Achille Serre Dyeing and Dry Cleaning works (11), The Lea Tavern (10), Everett House on White Post Lane (9), The former Lord Napier public house and neighbouring houses (8), outer walls of oil distillery buildings(18), former London and Provincial Dye works buildings(19) and the brick boundary walls of the former Carless, Capel & Leonard's Hope chemical works(7).





Former Chocolate Factory



Former Achille Serre  
Dyeing & Dry Cleaning



Everett House

**1.25** The area south of the Conservation Area between the Northern Outfall Sewer and the A102 (M) is defined by yards or late twentieth century warehouses. Buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area include the former Glass Bending Factory(14), former Christ Church Mission and Sunday School on Crown Close(15), a two storied late Victorian or early Edwardian industrial building off Wick Lane, Iceland Public House on Wick Lane(16) and former Ammonia Works warehouse in Iceland Road(17).



Former Christ Church Mission &  
Sunday School



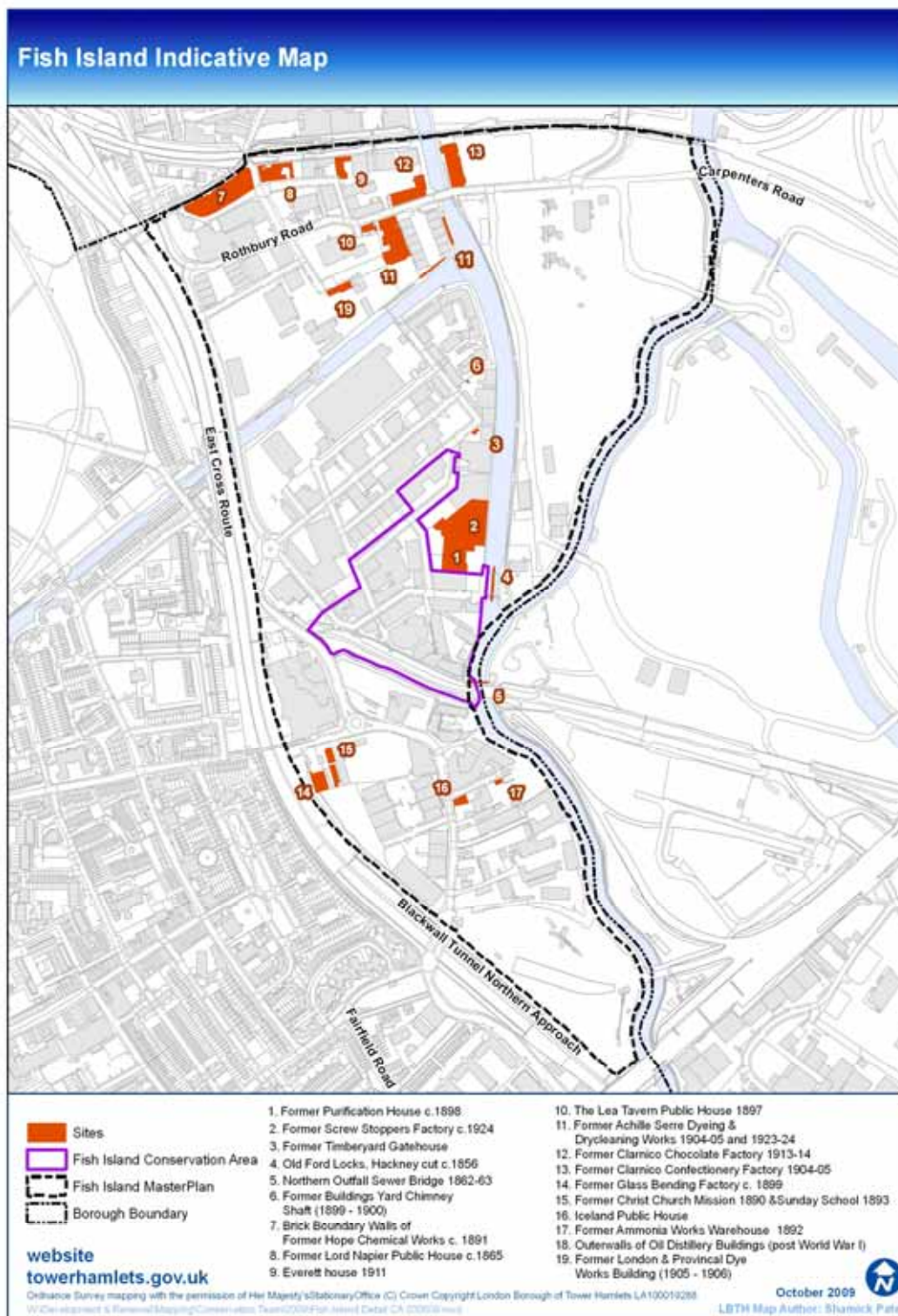
Former Ammonia Works  
Warehouse



Iceland Public House

## Summary

**1.26** This is an area of special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history and significant industrial architecture dating from late 19th century and early 20th century. The robust industrial character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal define its special qualities. Whilst there are minor improvements that could be made to buildings in the Conservation Area in terms of their repair and maintenance, overall this has little impact on the qualities that have led to the designation of this area. It is important that any future development within the area preserves or enhances the areas special industrial character.



## 2. Management Guidelines

## **Overview**

**2.1** This Management Plan has been prepared following initial consultation through the Core Strategy and is the subject of further consultation with the community at the current time. It sets out the Borough's commitment to high quality management of Conservation Areas and their settings. The Development Design and Conservation Team operate within the context of the Development and Renewal Directorate of the Council, alongside Major Projects, Development Control, Strategy and Building Control.

**2.2** 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.

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

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

## **Who is this document for?**

**2.5** This document is intended to help shape the Conservation Area and neighbouring buildings to maximise the potential of an area and retain its important heritage character. It is an inclusive document which will engage with many different people and organisations. It will depend on the support of the community to achieve its

objectives. It is aimed primarily at the residents, businesses, developers and others living and working in the area. The Conservation Area belongs to its residents, as well as the whole community, and their priorities will be reflected in these documents after the consultation process.

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

### **Outline Guidance on Applications**

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

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

**2.9** In Fish Island, as in other Conservation Areas, planning controls are more extensive than normal. Consent is required to demolish any building, and a higher standard of detail and information is required for any application.

**2.10** Planning applications should also consider the wider Fish Island planning boundary as an area of influence. This is to ensure that new developments contribute to the wider conservation and heritage context of the area as a whole.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- At the local level, the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy of Tower Hamlets states that ‘the Council will protect and enhance the historic environment of the borough’. The Core Strategy states as an objective that we will ‘Protect and celebrate our history and heritage by placing these at the heart of reinventing the Hamlets to enhance local distinctiveness, character and townscape’.

### **Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area**

**2.14** The area contains no statutory or locally listed buildings. However all of the late Victorian /Edwardian industrial buildings make a positive contribution to the industrial character of the area.

**2.15** The site contains no scheduled ancient monuments but is almost entirely within an Archaeological Priority Zone as specified within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan. Therefore any ground works will have to be preceded by studies to ensure accurate recording and protection.

**2.16** Only one archaeological excavation has been carried out within the area so far, on the site of Crown Wharf, Dace Road. This excavation revealed a number of timber piles and base plates of Roman date which have been interpreted as the remains of a bridge. It is probable that this structure was associated with the main Roman road from London to Colchester (constructed by AD 50) which was probably carried across the marsh by a combination of fords, bridges and causeways. The road has been excavated to the south west of the area at Old Ford where, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, it formed a 30-metre wide thoroughfare surrounded by a substantial settlement. It is probable that this settlement used river transport and survived into the modern period, and it is possible that structures associated with trade such as wharves, jetties and even boats covering a period of 2000 years could lie preserved within the alluvial remains that lie beneath the area.

## **Highways and Transportation Issues**

**2.17** The quality of the streetscape, the surface materials and street furniture are integral parts of the character of Conservation Areas. Any work carried out should respect this historic character. Anyone involved in development which impacts on public spaces should refer to the Council's Street Design Guide, Transport for London's Streetscape Guidance and English Heritage's 'Streets for All' document. The ongoing cost of maintenance should also be considered carefully. In particular cobbles exist in some locations and these need to be protected.

**2.18** As the area has been mostly industrial, it has been dominated by cars and traffic associated with industrial uses. As the uses in the area are undergoing transformation to include residential and cultural uses measures for improving the pedestrian and cycle environment should be investigated.

**2.19** Links to Dace Road from Old Ford Locks on Hackney Cut will benefit from a better integration between pedestrian and cycle access and existing buildings. This will need to take into account access for the existing warehouse that is currently located at the eastern end of Dace Road along the canal. Further, the Greenway (atop the Northern Outfall Sewer) will benefit from public realm improvement and a strengthened relationship between Dace Road and Wick Lane.

**2.20** Works by statutory services (gas, electricity, water etc) have the potential to damage historic ground surfaces or ancient underground structures. This is particularly of concern as the Conservation Area is almost entirely within an Archaeological priority Zone. Early consultation with the Development Design and Conservation team is encouraged for any works.

## **Opportunities and Potential for Enhancement**

**2.21** The character of the industrial buildings, as described in the appraisal and particularly their coherence expressed in the consistent height, storey height, streetscape pattern, detailing and materials create an interesting quarter of historic



industrial buildings. Any development proposed in the area should seek to preserve and enhance its existing character. Moreover, new, large buildings should relate to the scale, local style and building materials, as well as the industrial architecture of the late Victorian/Edwardian buildings.

**2.22** There are a number of areas for public realm improvement within the Conservation Area. It's most likely that there are setts underneath the existing road surface (which is post war). If studies show that they are largely undamaged then re-establishment of a sett surface in the streets in which they are found will be pursued. Further, improvements to the public realm by integrating pedestrian and cycle links with wider measures like landscaping and provision of high quality street furniture that enhances the character of the area will be pursued. Consideration will be given to whether there are any opportunities for appropriate pedestrianisation.

**2.23** The open space along the waterway adjacent to Old Ford Locks offers a specific opportunity for public realm improvement and the potential enhancement of this space should be explored.

**2.24** More detailed guidance should be produced on the management of small scale refurbishment works to individual properties, in order to protect the original fabric. There are minor and major improvements that could be made to the existing buildings in the Conservation Area including structural repairs and the cleaning, re-painting and re-rendering of the individual facades.

**2.25** While the buildings present opportunities for conversions for emerging employment uses, any alterations, additions and renovations to the buildings must be considered in relation to their appropriateness to the group of buildings as well as to the overall setting of the Conservation Area. Any work done to the Victorian and Edwardian industrial buildings must respect their status as rare industrial representatives of London's former importance as the world's largest industrial city and greatest port. It must also respect the fact that many of them also constitute

London's largest and most representative group of industrial buildings with transitional structures. Any work must also enhance the characteristics which contribute to the industrial heritage of the area. The quality of the street environment will indeed impact the character and setting of the Conservation Area, which the Council seeks to preserve and enhance.

**2.26** Fish Island has adapted in recent years and is now the centre of an emerging cultural quarter, supporting a variety of creative industries. The retention of these cultural activities will be encouraged and is an important element of the current character which can be built upon.

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

**2.27** The Hackney Cut and Northern Outfall Sewer form definitive boundaries along the east and south respectively and are key open spaces within the Conservation Area. The Northern Outfall Sewer is naturally vegetated forming a backdrop to the industrial uses along Dace Road. There are mature plane trees within the Conservation Area that soften the industrial landscape and at the eastern end of Dace Road, along the Hackney Cut, they provide a pleasant transition to the waterways.

**2.28** Fish Island Conservation Area comes under the Waterbody - Lee (Woolens Brook down to Tideway) - Waterbody ID - GB 106038 077850. The Draft River Basin Management Plan states that this waterbody is a candidate Heavily Modified Waterbody and therefore has to meet Good Ecological Potential (as apposed to Good Ecological Status). Furthermore, the plan also states that this water body is likely to fail to meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. The best and perhaps only method to improve the status of this area is through the 'naturalisation' of the banks. This naturalisation can be achieved in many ways, for example, creating a buffer zone and enhancing the river corridor. The character of the canal side should be protected and its ongoing maintenance ensured, in particular the maintenance of original wharf walls.

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

**Equalities:**

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

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

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

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

## **Publicity**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Enforcement Strategy:**

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

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

### **2.40 Further Reading and Contacts**

- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.
- Hackney Wick and Old Ford Area: Characterisation Study and Assessment of Key Buildings Compiled for EDAW Ltd by Architectural History practise
- Industrial Buildings of Historic and Architectural Interest in Old Ford and part of Hackney Wick by Tom Ridge

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

Tel: 020 7364 5009

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

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

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

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

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

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

None

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

- Tall buildings in the Conservation Area may damage and will alter the character and quality of the streetscape
- Use of excessive glass and palette of materials alien to the Conservation Area may harm its special character

- Unsympathetic alteration and extension that do not respect the character of the Conservation Area

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

1. Add the following to the Local List of protected buildings,

- c.1899 factory in Crown Close
- Wick Lane Rubber Works
- Algha Works
- Britannia Works and Offices
- Multi-storey Stable Block on Dace Road
- Broadwood Chimney Factory
- 1904-05 Factories at 92 White Post Lane
- 1913-14 Factory in Queen's Yard
- 1904-05 Factory in Kings Yard

2. A detail Urban Design Framework will be produced for the wider area in consultation with wider stakeholders

3. Public realm improvement works that preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area including re-establishment of sett surfaces.

4. Management of waterways and green space in association with Lea Valley Regional Park and Environment Agency and other bodies

5. Improved cycle and pedestrian links