



St Paul's Shadwell

Conservation Area

1. Character Appraisal

2. Management Guidelines

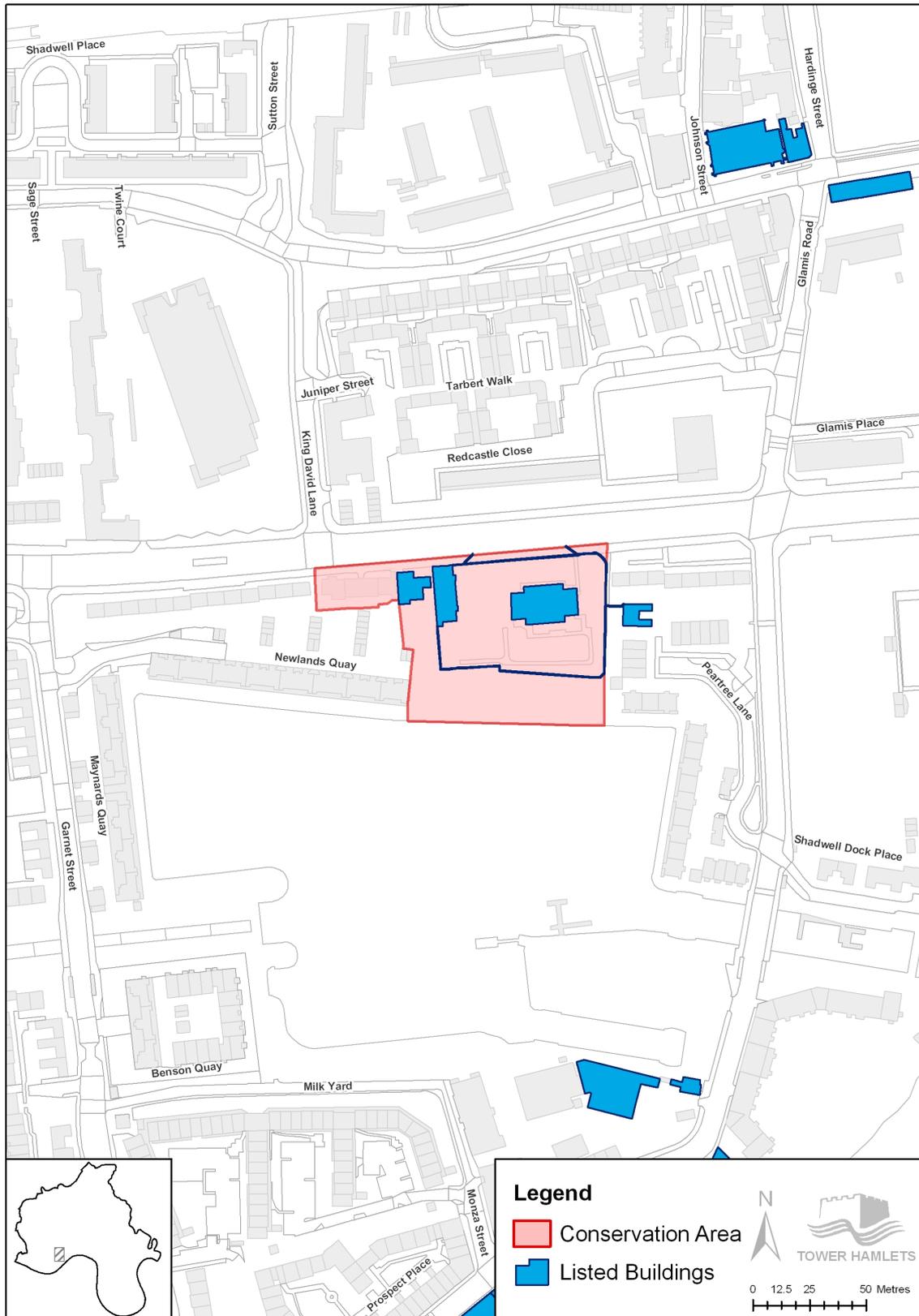
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Adopted by Cabinet: 7th March 2007

Introduction

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

This guide has been prepared for the following purposes:

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



ST PAUL'S CHURCH CONSERVATION AREA

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

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1. Character Appraisal

Overview

The St Paul's Church Conservation Area was designated in January 1983 by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC). It focuses on the 1820s Grade II* Listed church and grounds, which form a dramatic backdrop to the Shadwell Basin. St Paul's Church, the Church House and the associated railings, boundary walls and gates form a group with adjacent buildings on the southern edge of The Highway.

History

Formerly known as 'Chadwelle', the riverside settlement took its name from a mineral spring dedicated to St. Chad in the Sun Tavern fields. It remained virtually uninhabited until the 17th century, when it then became the centre for marine-related activities. The rapid growth of Shadwell between 1630-50, brought with it a need for its own place of worship. In 1656, a Chapel-of-Ease was constructed to service its 8,000 inhabitants, many of whom were mariners, watermen and lightermen. In 1664, the building was altered when the progressive speculator Thomas Neale inherited an interest in Shadwell. This was later reconstructed as St Paul's Church in 1669, as a result of a community petition to Parliament calling for the creation of a new parish. When established the following year, Shadwell became the first parish to be created from St Dunstan's Stepney since Whitechapel in 1338. Named after St Paul's Cathedral, the church was consecrated on the 12th March 1671.

During the 18th century, St Paul's became known as the 'mariner's church', with some 75 sea captains and their wives buried in the grounds between 1725-95. Other notable people associated with the church include Captain James Cook, whose eldest son was baptised there in 1763. Also Jane Rudolph, mother of Thomas Jefferson was baptised at the church in 1718. Between 1770-1895, John Wesley preached at St Paul's on occasion.

The construction of the second of London's enclosed docks in 1805 transformed Shadwell and its adjacent riverside communities. Reclamation of large areas of developed land displaced the local population, over-crowding the surviving inhabitants

into the remaining houses. At the same time, St Paul's was in need of urgent works. Its implementation was hindered by legislation requiring an Act of Parliament to enable new Anglican churches to raise rates for this purpose.

Shadwell was no longer the home of sea captains, and a new church was required to accommodate the growing population labouring in the docks and on the river. In 1810, a local campaign began to rebuild the church, however this was opposed by local rate payers, including the East India Dock Company. The church was eventually closed to parishioners in 1811. A special Act was eventually passed in 1817 and the construction of the church (extensively re-styled with a Baroque tower added), schools and rectory followed in 1820-2. These were to the designs of John Walters, in celebration of the country's victory at Waterloo.

The school, founded in 1811 for the religious and moral education of the parish was constructed in the style of a late-Victorian terrace. It survives as the earliest example of its type, marking a turning-point in educational design.

In the 1840s, the London Dock Company acquired half of the churchyard by compulsory purchase for the construction of Shadwell New Basin. During construction in 1858, the structural stability of the church was compromised by the adjacent excavations, requiring heavy buttressing of the Churchyard's retaining wall. The Shadwell New Basin, constructed in 1854-8 by J.M Rendel was amalgamated with the Old Basin (built in 1828-32 by J.R Palmer), adopting larger locks and an innovative quay wall design. Further land reclamation associated with the construction of the new docks saw the local population of Shadwell in 1851 reduced from 12,000 to 9000. Existing housing rapidly deteriorated into slums, until 1926, when clearance schemes saw everything levelled between Wapping High Street and the London Docks.

St Paul's Church survived the Blitz with only minor damage, but all parish records were destroyed.

Improvements to a number of churches lining the main thoroughfare into the docklands were implemented by the LDDC in the 1980s. St Paul's church was

restored and its churchyard was landscaped, with public access to the terraced quayside of Shadwell Basin provided through a new opening in the dock wall. The brick crypt and burial vaults were converted into a community centre in 1983-4.

Character

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, the construction of housing, schools, churches and market gardens increased in parallel with the growth of shipping and shipbuilding along the Thames. This reflected the subsequent rise in the population of the riverside hamlets east of the city. Little of this remains, and the St Paul's Conservation Area protects a small pocket of historic townscape which has survived the land reclamation, slum clearance and post-war reconstruction schemes that has since transformed the character of the Shadwell area.

During the heyday of the London Dock system, the church grounds were bounded on each side by warehouses which lined the Shadwell Basin. The docklands environment was transformed by the construction of new speculative housing development (1985-7), part of the docklands regeneration managed by the LDDC. The Conservation Area is centred on the St Paul's churchyard, its associated buildings, boundary walls and railings. The listed buildings in the area form a group, with a small row of single-bay cottages (just east of the Conservation Area), originally accessed from an alley off the Shadwell Basin. Bounded by the Shadwell Dock to the south, the Conservation Area extends west along the Highway to include the Grade-II listed Georgian rectory, which concludes an architecturally interesting historic streetscape. The former church schools, located at the western end of the church yard, are also listed.

St Paul's Conservation Area lies in an area of 'archaeological importance or potential'. Evidence of Roman settlement in Shadwell has been found along the line of the old roman road (later known as Ratcliffe Highway). This road followed the river bluff from just north of the Tower of London to the Roman outport of Ratcliffe.

Open Space

The churchyard and gardens were established in 1656 as part of the Chapel of Ease and is shaded by notable plane trees. The churchyard was improved by the Metropolitan Public Garden Association when it was laid out as a garden for recreation in 1886. Many of the headstones, chest tombs and monuments were retained and enclosed with railings at the time. The 19th century railings to The Highway were restored by English Heritage in the 1980s.

Shadwell Basin was redeveloped for recreational use as part of the Docklands regeneration in the 1980s. A broad gravelled terrace along the northern edge of the Basin was created to reveal the dock wall. This provides access through a gateway to the churchyard of the Shadwell parish church and beyond to The Highway.

The Shadwell and Hermitage Basins and the channel that once linked them still exists despite the London Docks water system closing down in 1969. The Eastern Basin was filled in and planted out as 'Wapping Wood' in the 1980s, as part of the regeneration of the Docklands implemented by the LDDC. It retains a visual link with Shadwell Basin along Benson Quay. King Edward Memorial Park to the east was developed on the site of the former Shadwell Fish Market Estate, and extends the connection between the Conservation Area and the River Thames.

Scale

The prevailing character of the area is defined by the various modestly-scaled residential developments. These have replaced the historic maritime buildings of the London Docks, which used to form the context for the church and its rectory. The Conservation Area occupies a prominent location above Shadwell Basin, dominated by the spire of St Paul's Church.

Views

Panoramic views towards the Conservation Area from Shadwell Basin exist along locks that once separated Shadwell from the Eastern Basin to the west and the river to

the east. Projecting above the tree canopy of the churchyard, the Baroque spire of St Paul's Church provides an enduring local and historical landmark. This focal point is now surrounded by 20th century housing development and the church itself forms a dramatic backdrop to the redeveloped Shadwell Basin.

Summary

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history and significant architecture, dating from the 19th century and earlier. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities.

2. Management Guidelines

Overview

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

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

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

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

Who is this document for?

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

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

Outline Guidance on Applications

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

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

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

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

- A clear design statement explaining the reasons behind the various architectural, masterplanning or other design decisions.
- Contextual plans, sections and elevations of existing buildings

- Drawings, including construction details, produced at larger scale (eg. 1:50 or 1:20) clearly indicating the nature of the work proposed.
- Additional detail regarding materials and construction.
- Photos of the condition of existing building (including details where appropriate).

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

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

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

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

- At the national level, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Tower Hamlets to designate Conservation Areas in “areas of special architectural or historic interest”, and to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas. National policy for planning and the historic environment is set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15).
- At the regional level, policy 4B.1 of the London Spatial Development Strategy (or London Plan) states that ‘The Mayor will seek to ensure that developments ... respect London’s built heritage.’
- At the local level, the new Local Development Framework (LDF) of Tower Hamlets states that ‘the Council will protect and enhance the historic environment of the borough’. This is described in detail in policy CP49 of the Core Strategy of the LDF. In addition, applicants should note policy CP46 to ensure that access issues are properly addressed in work carried out in a Conservation Area.

- St Pauls itself is identified as a local landmark, and views of it from publicly accessible places will be protected.
- At the local level, it is designated as an area of importance for archaeology and nature conservation. It is part of the Blue Ribbon network.
- A proposed cycle route runs along the southern boundary of the Conservation Area.
- The Highway is designated as a strategic road.

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

Ecclesiastical Grade B (II*)

- St Pauls Church, The Highway

Grade II

- St Pauls Institute, 302 The Highway
- 298 The Highway
- Iron Railings, Wall and Iron Gates of St Paul's Church.

Highways and Transportation Issues

The Highway is the dominant road in the area, running just outside the Conservation Area to the north. Options could be investigated for calming the speed of this road in deference to the historic importance of the church, and for improving the quality of the street environment.

Within the churchyard and the rest of the Conservation Area, the quality of the public realm, the surface materials, street furniture and other features are all integral parts of the character of Conservation Areas. Any work carried out should respect this historic character. Anyone involved in development which impacts on public spaces should refer to the Council's Street Design Guide, TfL's own Streetscape Guidance and

English Heritage's 'Streets for All' document. The ongoing cost of maintenance should also be considered carefully.

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

Opportunities and Potential for Enhancement

Maintenance of the surviving urban maritime character of the area is of principal concern, and demolition of buildings within the Conservation Area will not be permitted. There is little scope for new development within the Conservation Area and any redevelopment of adjacent sites will be assessed according to its impact on the setting of the listed buildings.

Any proposals for change to the Conservation Area should be informed by the Conservation Plan for St Paul's, commissioned and adopted by the Parochial Church Council (PCC).

A main thoroughfare running past the north of the churchyard has been part of the character of the church for over two hundred years. However, as mentioned above, the quality of the street environment of the Highway affects the character of the Conservation Area, and it would be an improvement if traffic could be slowed down in deference to the historic value of the Conservation Area.

The most visible part of the Conservation Area is the church spire, arguably one of the most elegant in the Borough. Views to this spire enhance places at a considerable distance from the Conservation Area, and should be protected where appropriate.

Trees, Parks and Open Spaces

The churchyard is the most important area of open space in this Conservation Area, and includes several significant trees. There are no other parks or open spaces in this area.

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

Equalities:

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

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

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

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

Publicity

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

Consideration of Resources Needed to Conserve the Historic Environment:

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

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

Ongoing Management and Monitoring Change:

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

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

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

Enforcement Strategy:

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

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

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

Further Reading and Contacts

- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.
- Docklands Heritage. LDDC 1989.

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 or by contacting:

Tel: 020 7364 5009

Email: dr.majorprojects@towerhamlets.gov.uk

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

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

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

English Heritage	www.english-heritage.org.uk
The Georgian Group	www.georgiangroup.org.uk
Victorian Society	www.victorian-society.org.uk
20 th Century Society	www.c20society.org.uk
Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings	www.spab.org.uk

Listed Buildings at Risk:

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

Any other threats to the Conservation Area

- The incessant noise of the traffic on the Highway is detrimental to the character of the area.

Priorities for Action (1-5)

1. Instigate study of views and make proposals for protection of views to spire.
2. Reinstate historic street surfaces and improve street furniture.
3. Liaise with Church to roll out Conservation plan.
4. Prepare and install historic information board for visitors to the area.
5. Improve links between St Paul's Church and Shadwell Basin.