



St Peter's

Conservation Area

1. Character Appraisal

2. Management Guidelines

Adopted by Cabinet: 5th march 2008

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

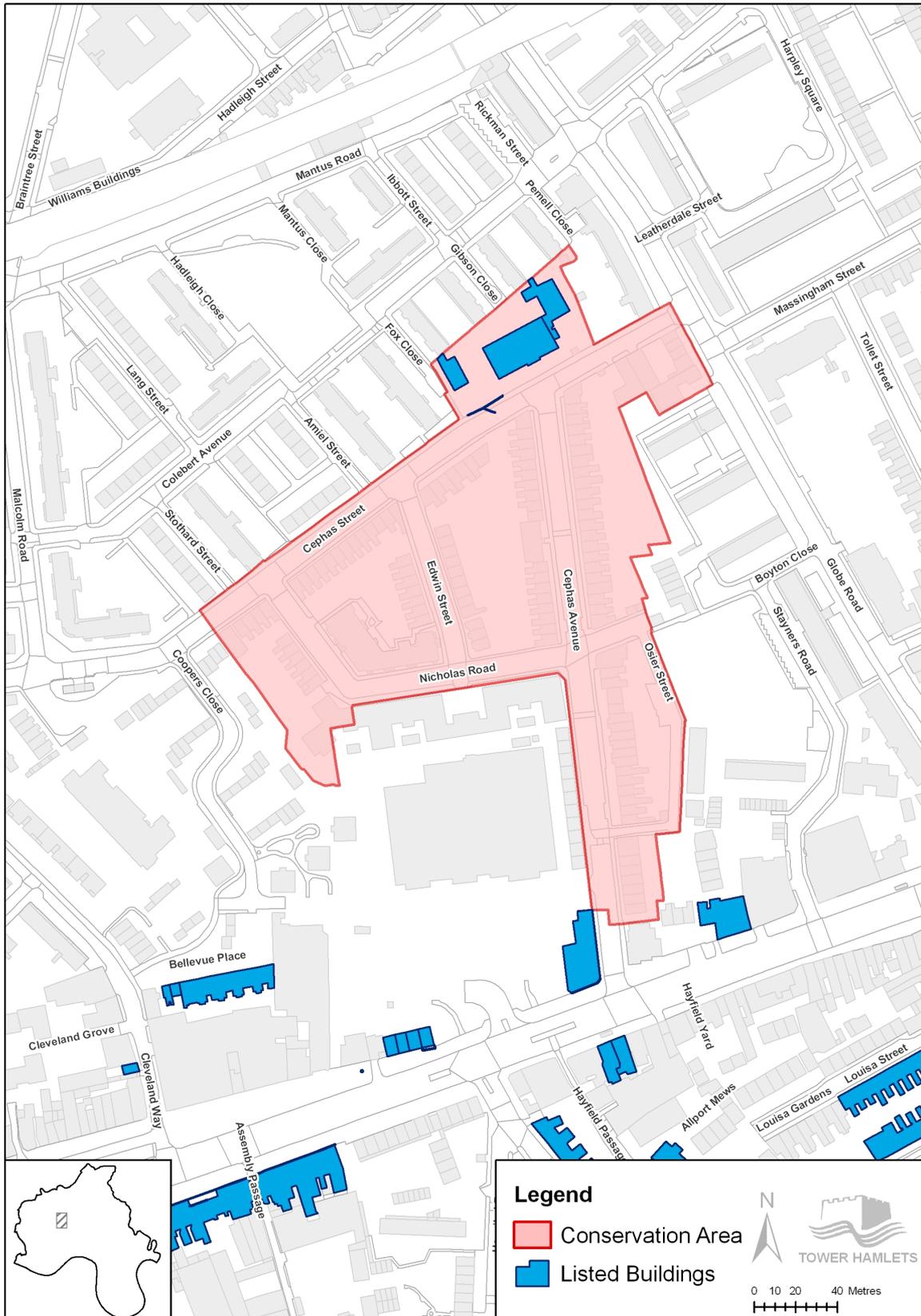
October 2007

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 PETER'S 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 Peters Conservation Area was designated in November 1990. It is located around Nicholas Road, Edwin Street and Cephass Avenue and is centred on the Church of St. Peter on Cephass Street. It is an area of special architectural and historic interest, with a character and appearance worthy of protection and enhancement.

History

Globe Road to the east of the area was originally Globe Lane. In the 1790s, this was still an open route through fields that connected the hamlet of Mile End New Town with Bethnal Green.

Development in the East End began on a large scale following the construction of the enclosed docks from 1800 onwards. By 1830, residential development of the St Peter's area had begun and Silver Street, Rose Place, Green Street and Willow Street were built, extending west from Globe Road for a short distance. Silver Street began approximately at the position of present day Cephass St and Green Street was located at the present day Boyton Close.

St Peter's Church itself was built in 1838 for the Metropolis Churches Fund. It was designed by the architect Edward Blore, who is also known for his work on major buildings such as Buckingham Palace, Government House in Sydney and the Vorontsovsky Palace in present day Ukraine.

St. Peter's Street, which is today known as Cephass Avenue, was laid out in a straight line, running north from Mile End Road and centred on the church. The residential areas were built up in the decades following 1830 and by the 1890s, the area was fully developed.

To the south of the Conservation Area, the Anchor Brewery was established in 1757. This closed in January 1975 and the large site is now occupied by the Anchor Retail

Park built in 2001. The modern housing along the eastern side of the brewery site, called Anchor Terrace, now lines Cephass Avenue.

The former St Peter's Church became a vicarage and school, and today has been converted into a residential building called St Peter's Court.

Character

The predominant character of the area is defined by 19th century residential terraces and by the former church of St Peters, which terminates the view north along Cephass Avenue.

The church is the most significant building in the Conservation Area and acts as a distinct centrepiece for the area, visible along many streets. Its importance lies both in its architectural quality and its historical interest, being designed by Edward Blore. It was built in grey Suffolk brick and characterised by its distinctive pairs of round-arched windows in Norman style. Although it can be seen from the whole length of Cephass Avenue, its presence only becomes significant in the northern half of the street.

The historic residential terraces in the area are concentrated on the south side of Cephass Street, the west side of Edwin Street, at the west end of Nicholas Road and on both sides of the northern half of Cephass Avenue. The buildings are generally 2-3 storeys in scale, of light coloured stock brick, with the ground floor sometimes covered in stucco render and are generally in good condition.

The significance of the surviving historic terraces lies in their unity and group value, as a surviving piece of the historic East End. This is particularly strong in the northern parts of Cephass Avenue, closer to the church. No. 28 Cephass Avenue includes an attractive rounded corner facing the church, helping to create a distinct sense of place at this junction.

On Globe Road to the east, the Conservation Area includes five addresses on the west side of the road. This includes a short terrace of houses (Nos 77-81) which is

one of the only surviving fragments of the 19th century, residential ribbon development along this road. It was built with a half basement and two storeys above. These houses are valuable as evidence of the historical development and former character of the area.

The modern terraces in the southern half of Cephass Avenue do not have the same architectural quality as the historic terraces, but the houses are appropriately scaled for the street, and provide a good frontage to both sides. The trees are an important characteristic of the streetscape.

Within the St Peter's Conservation Area, the recent development of Colin Winter House and Shenen House opposite, do not provide the same quality of frontages as the historic terraces. This is mainly because the front doors are spaced infrequently.

The residential streets all have very similar proportions and characters. Osier Street is a lane behind Cephass Avenue which is an exception to this.

Negative aspects of the area include occasional weeds growing in the pavement, some localized litter problems, and a proliferation of satellite dishes on some houses in Cephass Avenue. Also, some larger 5-storey residential buildings in the Bancroft Estate detract from the quality of the north side of Cephass Street.

Land Use

The area is predominantly residential. There are other uses, including light commercial activities near Globe Road.

Scale

Within the St Peter's Conservation Area, with the exception of the church, the predominant building type is the 2-3 storey terraced house of modest size. This contrasts with the areas surrounding the Conservation Area, where larger residential apartment blocks, some with a more institutional feel, rise to 5 storeys and above.

Open Spaces

There are no significant open spaces within the St Peter's Conservation Area. The open space around St Peter's Court is now used as a car park.

Views

The view north along Cephas Avenue towards the former St. Peter's Church is the most important view in the Conservation Area, although the many long informal views along the historic residential terraces are also significant. The long views along Cephas Street towards the former St. Peter's Church are also characteristic of the area.

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. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities. There are minor improvements that could be made to buildings in the Conservation Area, but overall this has little impact on the qualities that led to its designation.

2. Management Guidelines

Overview

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

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

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

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

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

Who is this document for?

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

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

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

Outline Guidance on Applications

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

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

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

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

- A clear design statement explaining the reasons behind the various architectural, masterplanning or other design decisions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ensure that access issues are properly addressed in work carried out in a Conservation Area.

- The area lies inside the area covered by the Central Area Action Plan, which is the subject of a public consultation.

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

| | |
|--|----------|
| 1 – 29 St Peters Court, Cephass Street | Grade II |
| 30 – 37 St Peters Court, Cephass Street | Grade II |
| 95, St Peters Vicarage, Cephass Street | Grade II |
| Garden Wall and Gates, 95 Cephass Street | Grade II |

Highways and Transportation Issues

The quality of the streetscape, the surface materials, street furniture and other features can all be integral parts of the character of Conservation Areas. Any work carried out should respect this historic character. Anyone involved in development which impacts on public spaces should refer to the Manual for Streets, 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.

In general, the highways are in good repair in this area, although there are localised places where the streetscape could be improved by reducing clutter, particularly at the junction of Cephass Avenue and Osier Street. The streetscape could also be improved in time, by the removal of the telegraph poles and wires, particularly around the north end of Cephass Avenue.

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

As with many 19th century residential areas, the quality derives from the unity and cohesion of the architecture, which is easily eroded over time by a combination of many small, inappropriate alterations and developments. When maintaining or replacing 19th century architectural elements, particular care should be taken to choose materials and details appropriate to the historic nature of the buildings.

Any redevelopment of modern buildings should respect the modest domestic scale of the residential terraces and should aim to provide front doors at frequent, regular intervals along the street frontage.

The area was historically a mixed-use area, with non-residential uses in appropriate locations, an important ongoing characteristic of the area.

Trees, Parks and Open Spaces

The trees aligning the streets make a positive contribution to the character of the residential streets. Care should be taken to protect them during any works to adjacent buildings, utilities or highways.

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

Equalities:

Valuing diversity is one of the Council's core values, and we take pride in being one of the most culturally rich and diverse boroughs in the UK. This core value has driven the preparation of this document and will continue to inform changes to this document in

the future. These values will also inform changes to buildings and places where this document provides guidance to ensure inclusivity for all sections of the community.

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

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

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

Publicity

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

Consideration of Resources Needed to Conserve the Historic Environment:

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

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

Ongoing Management and Monitoring Change:

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

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

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

Enforcement Strategy:

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

If listed buildings are not maintained in good repair, then the Council can step in to ensure that relevant repairs are carried out. In some circumstances, the Council itself

may undertake essential repairs and recover the cost from the owner. The Council has powers of compulsory purchase, if necessary to protect Listed Buildings.

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

Further Reading and Contacts

- The Survey of London, volume 27: Spitalfields and Mile End New Town.
- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.
- Manual for Streets. Joint publication by the Department for Transport and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

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:

Mile End Old Town Residents Association

English Heritage

www.english-heritage.org.uk

The Georgian Group

www.georgiangroup.org.uk

Victorian Society

www.victorian-society.org.uk

20th 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.

<check against Register>

Any other threats to the Conservation Area

(to be written at public consultation stage)

Priorities for Action (1-5)

(to be written at public consultation stage)