



# Tomlins Grove

## Conservation Area

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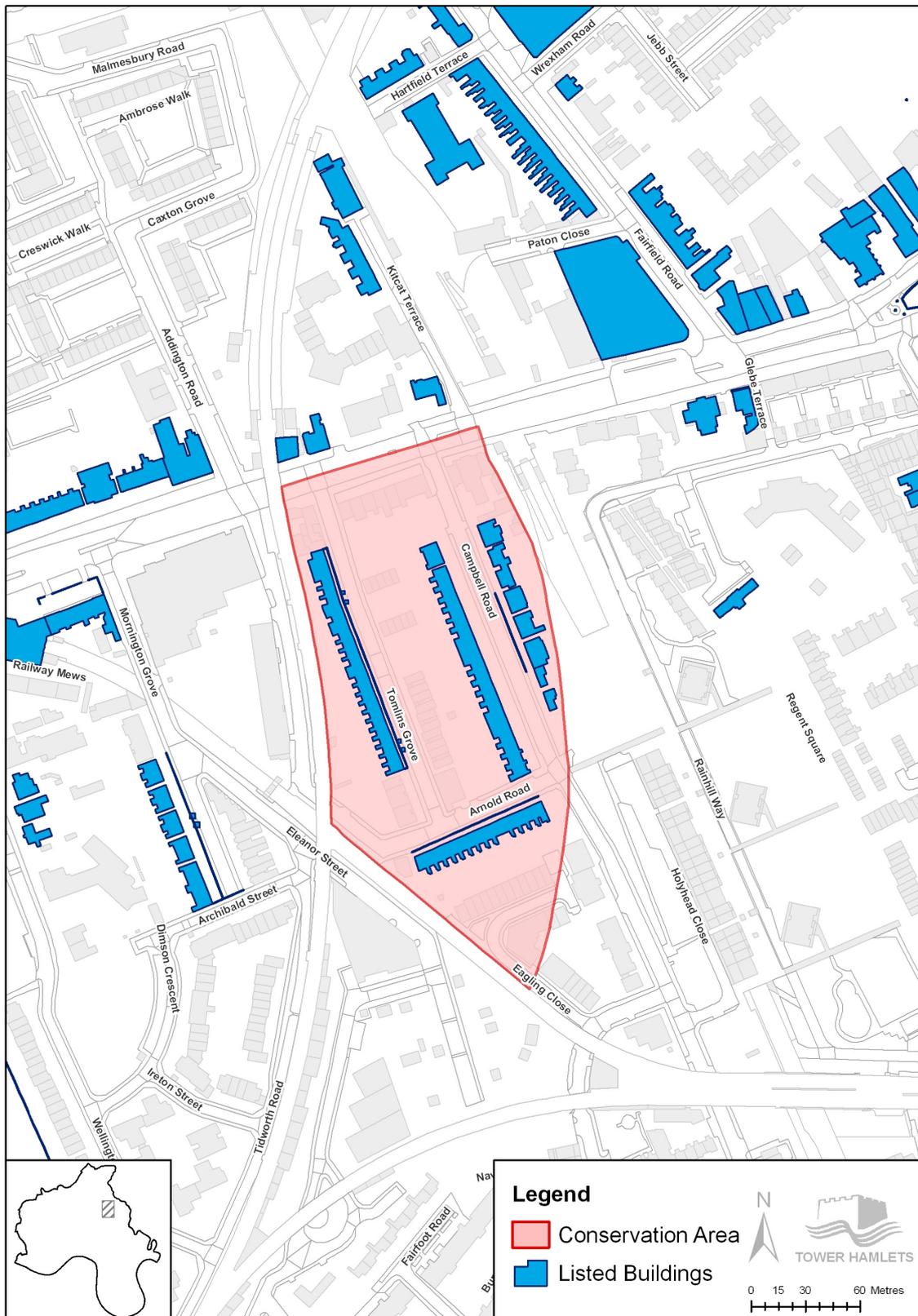
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Adopted by Cabinet: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007

## 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.



### TOMLINS GROVE 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 Tomlins Grove Conservation Area was designated in June 1969. Bounded by Bow Road to the north and the London Transport Board's railway viaduct to the south, the Conservation Area contains a series of Grade II listed terraces along Tomlins Grove, Campbell Road and Arnold Road. The area's tree-lined streets reflect and reinforce its residential character.

## History

In the 17th century, in the greater area of Bow, travellers were enticed towards the rural lifestyle that Bow offered, with many moving from London towards the east. It was only in the 1820s that suburbanisation of the area began. A high standard of development appeared around Bow Road, however the introduction of the railways and associated industries deterred this ongoing high quality development.

With utilities such as the Tower Hamlets Cemetery, gasworks and workhouses appearing in Bow in the 19th century, the series of railway lines carved the parish into disparate sections. This included the railway viaduct to the south running alongside Eleanor Street and the North London Railway line, which was only recently revived as the Bow Church DLR line in 1987. The remaining land was filled with more modest streets of terrace housing. The Bow area was predominantly populated with Irish inhabitants, reaching its peak in 1891.

## Character

The prevailing character of the Tomlins Grove Conservation Area is defined by its uniform group of terraces, dating back to the 19th century. Generally, the streets consist of pairs of houses, largely arranged in flat fronted terraces. Whilst the residential character and three storey scale is consistent throughout the Conservation Area, the streetscapes differ slightly in appearance. The area, in particular the Campbell Road streetscape, is historically significant. From circa 1973, the street was

infilled with a stock brick group of terrace houses, amongst its older housing. At the time, this was considered an advancement in development, where previously, entire townscapes were subject to redevelopment. Campbell Road presents early 19th century pairs of houses built of stock brick, with either the roof hidden by a corniced parapet or with a hipped roof and large projecting eaves to its rear. Tomlins Grove presents later 19th century terraced houses of stock brick and is predominantly 2 storeys plus basement with slate mansard roofs and dormer windows. In the past, the eastern side of Tomlins Grove did not consist of houses, as the gardens of the houses along Campbell Road extended right through. Arnold Road consists of early 19th century houses, constructed of stock brick with slate roofs and attic dormers. Of particular note is the flat back of this terrace with no rear extensions. These rows of terrace housing are Grade II listed and are of collective townscape merit. The uniformity of the elevations contributes to the character of these terraces.

### **Land Use**

The land use character of the area is entirely residential in nature, with commercial shopfronts (residential above) facing Bow Road. Alternative land uses would be particularly detrimental in the three primarily residential roads.

### **Scale**

The three major streetscapes in the Tomlins Grove Conservation Area present a uniform scale of 3 storeys, differentiated by its roof profiles and features. The consistent parapet line is essential to this character.

### **Open Spaces**

The Conservation Area is flanked by low scale terraces and tree-lined streetscapes, but does not contain any significant open space component.

## **Views**

Long views run along street axes, highlighting the repetition and rhythm of the continuous terrace housing, in particular along Tomlins Grove, Campbell Road and Arnold Road. Obscured views also exist towards the rear of the Campbell Road terraces, and the London butterfly roofs and chimney stacks.

## **Summary**

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its rich history and significant architecture, dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities. There are a few gap sites and some minor inappropriate buildings in the Conservation Area, but overall these have 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.

### 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 Tomlins Grove is described in detail in the Appraisal in the first part of this document.**

In Tomlins Grove, 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 western boundary of the Leaside Area Action Plan runs north-south down Campbell Road, and so the Conservation Area overlaps slightly with the action area.
- A strategic cycle route runs down Arnold Road.

## Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

### Grade II

- 1-25 Tomlins Grove
- 35-49 Arnold Road
- 6-44 Campbell Road (even, west side)
- 13-27 Campbell Road (odd, east side)

### Locally Listed Building

- 2-4 Campbell Road (even, west side)
- 1-11 Campbell Road (odd, east side)

## 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 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.

The pavement and Victorian coal-hole covers along Tomlins Grove are in poor condition and require repair. Additionally, Campbell Road could benefit from pavement resurfacing.

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**

Options should be considered for general improvements to the streetscape – particularly along Campbell Road which is a busy traffic thoroughfare. There is potential for improved lighting (possibly traditional lighting styles) street markings, paving and other features to be upgraded to respect the coherence and value of the Conservation Area.

Necessary repairs and maintenance should be carried out to buildings to address problems such as cracked stucco, damaged railings and weeds.

The consistent building heights create a coherent sense of enclosure on these three roads, and therefore mansard roofs or taller extensions should not be permitted.

There is a vacant building on Campbell Road at the south end of the Conservation Area. This detracts from the quality of the area and if possible, this building should be refurbished and brought back into use as soon as possible.

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

There are no significant parks or open spaces in the Tomlins Grove Conservation Area, although there are many mature trees and green curtilages.

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.

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 organizations 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>

### **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**

- Campbell Road is a busy thoroughfare with traffic noise detracting from the character of the Conservation Area.

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

1. Carry out study of paving and trees to inform appropriate improvement.
2. Investigate additional traffic calming in the area.
3. Introduce Article 4 directions to remove Permitted Development rights.
4. Produce Stakeholder's Guide.
5. Carry out improvements to building frontages with possible assistance of grant aid.