

Neasden Village Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Brent Council



Character Appraisal

Contents

The Appraisal	1.1
Planning Policy Context	1.2
Location and Setting	2.0
Location and Context	2.1
General Character and Plan Form	2.2
Landscape Setting	2.3
Historic Development and Archaeology	3.0
Origins and Historic Development	3.1
Archaeological Significance and Potential	3.2
Spatial analysis	4.0
Character and inter-relationship of spaces	4.1
Views and Vistas	4.2
Character Analysis	5.0
Definition of Character Zones	5.1
Activity, Prevailing and Former Uses	5.2
Architectural and Historic Qualities of the Buildings	5.3
Audit of Heritage Assets	6.0
Contribution of Significant Unlisted Buildings	6.1
Prevalent and Traditional Materials and Finishes	6.2
Local Details	6.3
Public Realm Audit	6.4
Contribution of the Natural Environment	6.5
Extent of Loss, Intrusion or Damage	6.6
Capacity for Change	6.7
Community Involvement	7.0
Boundary Changes	8.0
General Condition	9.0
Recommendations	10.0
Technical Terms	11.0
Contact Details	12.0
Appendix One: Management Plan	

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Appraisal

This appraisal of Neasden Village Conservation area will identify, analyse and describe the historic and architectural character. It will identify the factors that led to the declaration of the Conservation Area. As well as highlight the prevailing quality and level of preservation of the details that define the character of the conservation area.

The analysis will consider the merits of the layout, streetscape, buildings and the natural environment. It will identify the principal elements of these factors that define the character and establish how the ongoing alteration of these essential elements and gradual development has either preserved or detracted from the overall quality. Following on from the appraisal a series of recommendations will be produced.

The appraisal will outline a strategy for the future of the area suggesting further protection and controls that will prevent future decline.

Neasden Village Conservation Area was designated in November 1987 and is a village estate of principally two storey brick faced terraced houses built for the workers of the Metropolitan Railway and Power Company. In April 1995 an Article 4 Direction was applied to the Conservation Area as part of a wider application of special control to all of the Borough's historic areas.

List of properties within the Conservation Area:

Aylesbury Street:	1 - 77, 2 – 78
Chesham Street:	1 – 51, 2 - 20
Neasden Lane North	
Brill House, Chalfont House:	391 - 409
Quainton Street Avenue:	1 - 103, 2 - 84
Verney Street:	1 – 77, 2 - 78

1.2 Planning Policy Context

Definition of a Conservation Area

Conservation Areas can be described as areas of special architectural and historic character with an overall quality worthy of preservation and enhancement. The strength of their character is dependent on the way the individual buildings and gardens compliment each other. The Local Planning Authority is responsible for designating Conservation Areas from the law set down in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This enables the Council, with the aid of localised

design criteria and additional controls over Permitted Development, to influence the type of physical changes that would otherwise be detrimental to the area.

Statutory Framework

Local Authorities are obliged by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to undertake periodic reviews and re surveys of their Conservation Areas. The Act requires this to ensure that Conservation Areas retain the character that brought about their designation. If Conservation areas retain their designation but do not retain their essential character, they undermine the credibility of a Conservation Area status. They also dilute the available resources for Conservation Work.

Designations The standards by which historic areas are judged worthy of Conservation Area status have changed significantly, (In particular since the publication of PPG15 in 1994). Conservation Area assessment has become more stringent to prevent the designation of areas that either, have very low levels of building and landscape preservation or, are designated for strategic reasons. The Borough like many other Local Authorities has a number of Conservation Areas that were designated some time ago and which are no longer of a sufficient standard to retain their designation as Conservation Areas.

Policy Context

Conservation Areas are protected by hierarchy of policies at national regional and local levels. The Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal framework for the development and protection of the historic environment. Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 expands upon and develops the policies from the Act which together with London Plan establishes a regional frame work for the development of London's historic environment. The historic areas of the Borough are also subject to local control through the core policies of the Local Development Framework and Supplementary Planning guidance.

Change and Development

As with all Conservation Areas, Neasden Village is at risk from insensitive development. So far there is not much development as the conservation area is in relatively good condition and consistent. Significant maintenance work is required prompting owners to replace doors and windows. However, residents are becoming more aware of the value of an historic house and its location in an area of character and more owners are keen to retain the "original features" that prompted them to buy their home. The Conservation Areas of Brent are all now protected by an Article 4 Direction which should help to stop the decline in character through permitted development and

possible in time reverse the influence of unsympathetic development. The area is well served by public buses which have led to an increase in densities proposed for development adjacent to the Conservation Area.

2.0 Location and Setting

2.1 Location and Context

Bounded by the Railway Depot to the south and Neasden Lane to the north, this conservation area is primarily residential. A public open space lies to the west of the conservation area with a canal feeder running along it. Such physical characteristics add to the diversity and local identity of the area.

2.2 General Character and Plan Form

The townscape quality and street scenes determine the distinctive characteristics of the area. The design of the buildings and that of the open spaces also plays an important role. The estate itself is not without a wider historic interest, being planned in an urban terraced neighbourhood. A school was constructed to cater for residents in addition to shops and green open spaces. Collectively these add to an attractive and distinct Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing estate.

The high quality architectural character of this area is strengthened by relatively long, narrow roads and pavements. The area has developed in a linear/grid like fashion with roads running parallel to the canal feeder, branching off Chesham Street.

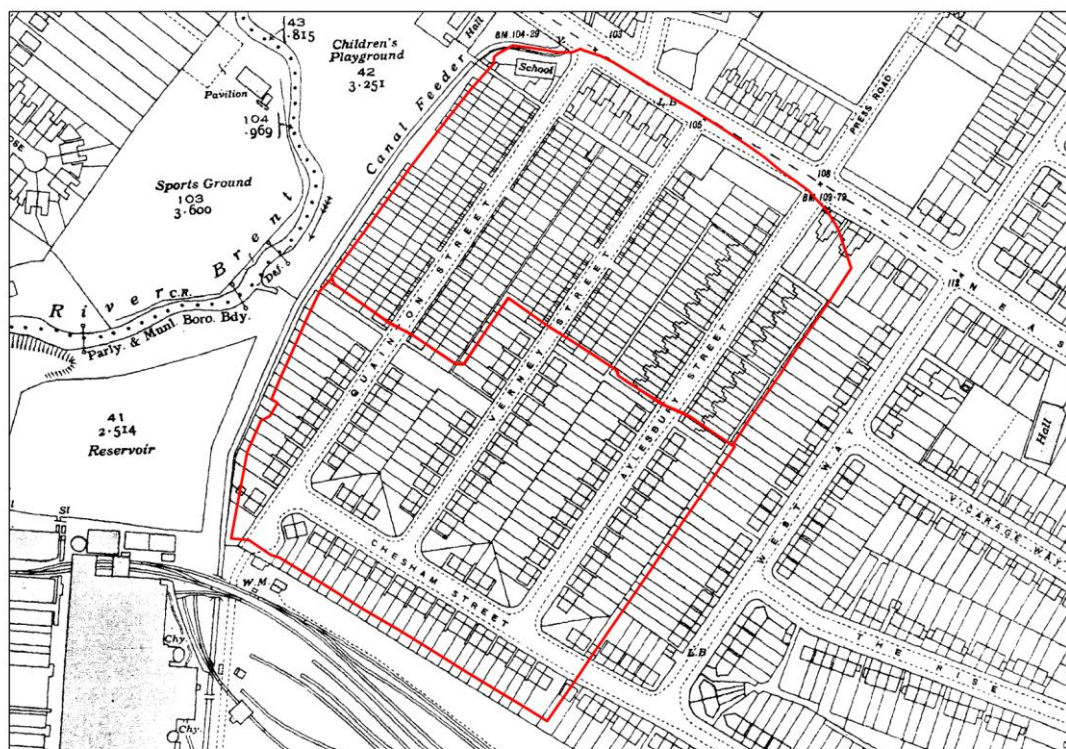
2.3 Landscape Setting

As a result of the nature of the land at the western half of the conservation area, it has been identified as an area liable to flooding. However due to the layout of the area important links have been maintained between the village and its surroundings. Straight streets framed by the two storey semi detached houses that flank the road are typical of this residential conservation area.

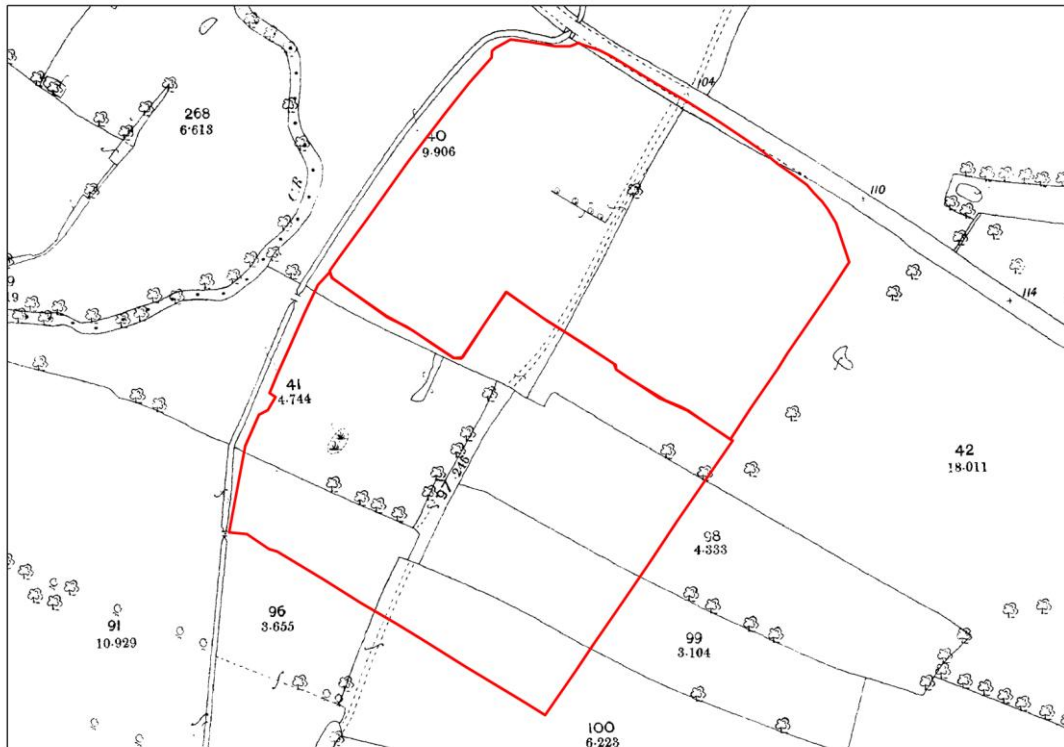
3.0 Historic Development and Archaeology



Neasden Village Conservation Area c. 2006



Neasden Village c. 1940



Neasden Village Conservation Area c. 1870

3.1 Origins and Historic Development

Neasden Village comprises of three stages of development: a Victorian Estate of 1882, an Edwardian Estate of 1904-1905 and semi-detached properties of 1925-1926.

The metropolitan Railway was extended from Willesden Green to Harrow in August 1880 for which a station, originally 'Kingsbury and Neasden', was built in Neasden Lane. Hitherto, the Metropolitan Railway's engine shed and works had been at the Edgware Road. Consequently, a 290 acre site was purchased adjoining the railway north of the station and construction of the engine works was undertaken in 1881-82. To provide accommodation for its employees at the works the Railway Company built in 1882 a staff colony known as Neasden Village between Kingsbury Road (now Neasden Lane North) and the railway works. There was a works entrance at the end of Quinton Street and ten shops were built in Kingsbury Road. By 1883 a housing estate of brick terraced houses had been built, accommodating 500 people. The roads originally named A and B Streets were later renamed after stations further out on the railway line.

A coal gas plant was built at the end of Quinton Street by the River Brent in 1893 and survived until 1902 when the site was chosen as a power station built 1902-04 for

the electrification of the line. To house the workers 40 additional cottages comprising Aylesbury Street and four properties in Neasden Lane were added to the village in 1904-5, constructed by the builders Bott and Stennett to plans by E P Seaton.

The village community was extended further after the war. In 1919 the Metropolitan Railway Board Metropolitan Country Estates Ltd to develop surplus railway land and 40 acres adjoining the village outside the conservation area where sold to the company. This estate was called Kingsbury Garden Village and was the nearest of their estates to London. It was the only one catering for low incomes and about 40 houses were ready in the early part of 1921. These properties are not considered to possess special interest and lie outside the Conservation Area. The conservation Area however includes an infilling of the original village which was enlarged when Chesham Street was laid out parallel to the Works and the three existing streets extended to meet it. 130 Workmen's Cottages were built here with a Government subsidy in 1925-26 to designs by Charles W Clark ARIBA on Hamish Cross concrete post and panel system which had been approved by the Ministry of Health. Hamish Cross was the Managing Director of the Abdon Clee Stone Quarry Co of Bridgenorth, Shropshire who built the houses.

The Genesis housing Group Formerly known as Paddington Church Housing Association, currently own and manage houses in the Conservation Area.

3.1 Archaeological Significance and Potential

There is a Site of Archaeological Importance in this conservation area. The site is designated within the Unitary Development Plan (2004) as Neasden Lane North and includes the corner of Quainton Street.

4.0 Spatial analysis

4.1 Character and inter-relationship of spaces

Neasden Village Conservation Area is residential area planned in a linear fashion. The network of roads all branch off Chesham Street making it a very well planned residential area. The layout has focused on creating different characters and vistas along the streets which it has done successfully. There is no real defining feature here but that is partly due to the good condition and consistency of the area. Neasden Village as a whole represents a traditional area characterised by various views of Victorian, Edwardian workers cottages and late 20th century villa-like homes.



Aylesbury Street

4.2 Views and Vistas

What is apparent in this area is that there are no significant landmarks and all of the properties create a consistent residential built form. The vertical and horizontal proportions create regular rhythms and strong building lines.

5.0 Character Analysis

5.1 Definition of Character Zones

The conservation area can be divided into two distinct character zones. The northern part of the area is predominantly made up of terraces of 19th Century workers cottages, whilst the southern section of the area consists of larger scale semi-detached dwellings.



5.2 Activity, Prevailing and Former Uses

Early maps suggest that Neasden village was previously used for agricultural purposes with land likely being irrigated by the River Brent near by. However it was not until the 1880's that houses began to be built. Since then it has developed into a residential area and this remains the dominant use, although there are some other uses at ground floor level on properties fronting Neasden Lane. These include takeaways, cafes and an off-licence.



Neasden Lane North

5.3 Architectural and Historic Qualities of the Buildings

The character of Neasden Village Conservation is very much still intact. The architectural significance of the buildings in the area is not necessarily down to the merits of individual buildings, but primarily based on the uniformity and overall consistency of the area. The houses follow a basic design pattern but vary in composition across the conservation area.

The predominately Victorian homes along Quainton Street have chimneys located on both sides of the clay pitched roofs. Some picket fences are still intact with rather large brick gateposts, which have capping stones made of sandstone. A degree of weathering is apparent on these. Upon closer examination of the houses, red brick is used on the sash window lintels as an ornamental feature, most of which have been painted red. What is also apparent is the slight projection of the houses at end of terrace. A course of red bricks wrap around the projecting building. This differentiates them from the mid terrace properties and creates a strong and legible end



Quainton Street



Quainton Street

to the built form. It also draws attention to the side elevation where the main front door is located.

The buildings on Neasden Lane North consist of a row of 3-storey terraced houses which are in reasonable condition. These were most likely to have been built for the administrative workers at the railway station in 1883. Although certain extensions have been added to the frontage of some of the houses, there still exists a level of architectural detail. The sash windows with sandstone lintels give the place a certain historic feel. Although window arches on the first floor of these buildings have been replaced with concrete, there is evidence of the red brick arches still remaining on the second floor windows. With the extensions to the frontages of the houses, timber consol brackets have been inserted with ornamental features at the head. This helps give the elevation more character.



Neasden Lane North

Houses along Aylesbury Street are a combination of terraced Edwardian homes and late 20th century semi detached homes. With the existing terrace homes, what strikes one are the projecting partitions walls through the roof and these are to a rather high level. Chimneys here unlike the Victorian homes have just one located at the apex of the roof and homes here are more vertical than the Victoria homes. Recessed front porches are another distinct feature and these tend to have rather narrow openings.



Aylesbury Street

Further along Aylesbury Street towards Chesham Street the semi detached homes give the area a more animated feeling. These homes cover most of the southern side of the conservation area. The pan tile covered hipped roofs, thought to be a Mediterranean style of roofing, brings freshness to the area. The combination of a concrete upper half and brick lower half create a distinctive character within the area. What also draws the attention in this part of the conservation area is the arrangement and grouping of dwellings. Every group of five dwellings has the three middle buildings recessed, thereby lessening the impact of the built form on passers by. Arched concrete porches are located over front entrances and windows are arranged in a consistent fashion.



Aylesbury Street

Neasden Village Conservation Area is an area that has been well maintained and managed with much of the architectural qualities remaining in good condition.

6.0 Audit of Heritage Assets

6.1 Contribution of Significant Unlisted Buildings

There are no listed buildings within the Wembley High Street Conservation Area. It is both the arrangement and collective quality that creates the overall character of the area.

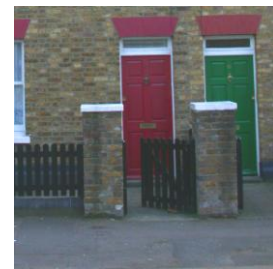
6.2 Prevalent and Traditional Materials and Finishes

Neasden Village is modestly built through the use of simple materials and finishes. It is the simplicity of design which defines the unique historical character of this street.

Traditional materials used here vary from brick to clay tiles and yellow sandstone to timber. Brick is the dominant material for the Victorian and Edwardian homes however with the early 20th century semi detached houses, a combination of brick and concrete is evident. Detailing for the frontages include the use of a modest red brick which forms a band-like feature that wraps around some buildings. This is done in a Flemish bond pattern. Soft timber is also apparent on some ornamental features in the area. Features on many of the houses are the gateposts. These are made from concrete and brick; however caps of the posts vary. The older ones are made from warm goldish-yellow sandstone with a rough texture and more recent ones from concrete and brick.



Verney Street



Verney Street

6.3 Local Details

Neasden was constructed using methods and techniques that were common throughout the country during the Victorian period. Most materials were regionally sourced and can be found in housing schemes of this period throughout London.

6.4 Public Realm Audit

Typically, Neasden has a very straightforward public realm of flagged footpaths flanking tarmac roads. The street furniture is ministry standard concrete kerbs and drainage with standard proprietary metallic lighting and services equipment. The tarmac roads have speed bumps and are lined with deciduous trees.



6.5 Contribution of the Natural Environment

Neasden village has a relatively low green character and garden boundaries are generally not densely planted. Along the roads it is now becoming apparent of some

vegetation growth and plant life particularly on Aylesbury Street in the front gardens of the semi detached homes. Species such as lime trees and Choisya shrubs have been identified. Cherry trees are also scattered along the conservation area.

6.6 Extent of loss Intrusion or Damage

Design of alterations to front elevations

The Character of most houses within the Conservation area is defined by the quality of detail and composition as well as the boundary treatments. The character of elevations has been altered with red paint but dwellings and shop frontages are all fairly consistent.

Design, materials and extent of extensions

Extensions of less than 50 cubic metres (subject to certain provisions) can be built without planning permission (where no other extensions exist) and these, although comparatively small, can be damaging particularly where they close the gaps existing between properties. The impact of such extension is exacerbated further by an inappropriate design, scale, and massing, and use of poor quality materials. Extensions have not been a problem here due to the nature of the small terraced housing.

Changes to fenestration

In some instances, original windows and doors have been replaced by inappropriate modern alternative materials and designs. Replacements with unsympathetic modern materials can be out of keeping with the traditional houses and detract from their original character.

Roof alterations

There has been no real need for roof alterations as a result of the houses being generally well maintained and very consistent. It should be noted as well that no dormers are located in the area. The chimneys of the terraced Victorian and Edwardian houses are very much intact and the same applies to the pan tile roofing of the early 20th century semi detached houses. The consistent roofscape very much enhances the appearance of the area.

Painting

There are examples of features on front elevations of properties been painted red or brick red. These do not generally affect the overall appearance of houses. In many cases, the painting was done to cover damaged brickwork.



Quanton Street

Formation of Drives

Off street parking has not been provided in this conservation area due to the nature of the terraced homes. This has subsequently affected vehicle movement along the narrow streets lined with cars.

Front gardens and boundary walls/hedges

House frontages in the conservation area have been provided with relatively small gardens. Front boundary walls, made up from brick, have been provided for the semi-detached buildings and these are generally accompanied by hedges and other plant life. The Victorian and Edwardian front gardens are lined with picket fences and very little vegetation as a result of the hard surfaced ground. Even though the treatment conditions are clearly different which is evident, this helps to show the different character of the streets and the distinctiveness of the area to others.

6.7 Capacity for Change

The Conservation area is under pressure from insidious small scale change through erosion of building detail. – Neasden is a residential area that which is mostly in the ownership of housing associations where it is relatively well maintained. The residential nature of the area means that the restrictions of the Planning Act and the GDPO through the Article 4 Direction will prevent radical change in terms of land use and intensification.

7.0 Community Involvement

The Council will maintain continues consultation with the residents of the Conservation Area. The appraisal will be published electronically to enable the document to be responsive to the changing circumstances and priorities of the residents and the need to preserve the character of the area.

8.0 Boundary Changes

In 2003 The Council undertook a comprehensive review of its conservation areas, at this time all areas were analysed for the rigour of their boundary definition and at this time Neasden Conservation Area is sensibly defined and will not be adjusted until the next major review.

9.0 General Condition

Neasden Conservation Area has suffered like all the Boroughs Conservation Areas with decline in character

through works carried out as permitted development. The Council has in response to this, applied Article 4 Directions to all its areas to prevent insensitive development. The Condition of the Buck Lane Conservation Area has declined most significantly in the following areas:

Windows and Doors

Replacement of windows and doors has been and continues to be the primary cause of character decline. The article 4 Direction and a designated conservation enforcement officer will help to reduce this type of insensitive development.

Front Garden plots

Front boundary walls are being removed and garden plots are being paved over to provide large parking spaces that significantly reduce the residential character of the area.

Extensions

In general poor selection of materials is leading to a serious decline in character through incongruous building materials and detail the Council must control this part of development to improve the impact of new extensions.

10.0 Recommendations

The future of the Neasden Conservation Area was secured with the application of the Article 4 Direction and the situation may improve with the publication of the Character Appraisal. However, in order to develop and enhance the character of the area the following recommendations need to be addressed:

- i) The review and publication of a Conservation Area Design Guide.
- ii) Improved liaison between the community and the Council.
- iii) Regular monitoring of completed developments their accordance with permitted plans and overall design and material.
- iv) Continued review of Conservation Area policy to respond to cultural and ecological change.
- v) Greater input into design development by Conservation trained Council officers.

11.0 Technical Terms

Brick bond -	Arrangement of bricks in a wall, combining bricks laid lengthways (stretchers) and bricks laid widthways (Headers)
Casements -	An opening window frame.
Console bracket -	A decorative wall bracket which supports a bay window, part of a roof or other feature that projects out from the house.
Drip Rails -	A sill like section mounted above the opening casements of windows to shed water
Dentils -	Bricks set at interval to produce a decorative band
Eaves -	The junction of the wall and the lower edge of the roof
Glazing bars -	The bars of wood or metal which separate individual glass panes
Half-timber -	Often called 'timber framing', this means timbers applied vertically or horizontally to the walls of houses as a decorative feature.
Hopper head -	A cast box for collecting rainwater, which feeds into a drainpipe.
Imperial bricks -	The bricks used to build the Barn Hill houses, which are larger than today's bricks.
Jambs -	The side sections of a door or a window frame.
Leaded light -	A window made of small pieces of glass joined by strips of lead.
Parapet -	A section of a wall that projects above the eaves of a flat roof.
Roughcast -	Rendered wall finish with small stones added to the mixture.
Reveal -	The part of a wall that turns back towards the window frame in its opening
Sill -	The bottom section of a window frame that projects out from the wall to allow rain to run away.
Spalled bricks -	Bricks that have lost their front faces through frost damage.
String course -	A projecting band of brickwork,
Terracotta details -	Specially shaped and moulded bricks used as decorative features.

12.0 Contact Details

The Planning Service

Brent House
349 High Road,
Wembley,
Middlesex, HA9 6BZ

Email: tps@brent.gov.uk

Website: www.brent.gov.uk/planning

Conservation advice:

Regeneration Design team
Tel: 0208 937 5018
Fax: 0208 937 5207

Planning Advice:

South Area Planning Team
Tel: 0208 937 5265
Fax: 0208 937 5207

Landscape Design Advice

Landscape design Team
Tel: 0208 937 5248
Fax: 0208 937 5207

Building Regulations Advice

Building control
Tel: 0208 937 5499
Fax: 0208 9375

Appendix 1: Management Plan

Contents

The Management Plan	1.0
The Management Strategy	1.1
Policy	2.0
The Local Development Framework	2.1
Community Involvement	2.2
Conservation Area Designation: Council	2.3
Conservation Area Designation: Residents	2.4
Character Appraisals	2.5
Archives and Information	2.6
Practice	3.0
Development Control	3.1
Review of Conservation Systems	3.2
Planning Guidance	3.3
Planning Policy Guidance Note 15	3.4
Technical Advice	3.5
An Equitable Historic Environment	3.6
Preservation and Enhancement	4.0
Understanding the Asset	4.1
Maintaining Quality	4.2
Preserve or Enhance	4.3
Enhancement Initiatives	4.4
Elements at Risk	4.5
Training and Communication	4.5
Monitoring and Review	5.0
Development control	5.1
Design Guidance	5.2
Community Involvement	5.3
The Future	6.0
A Responsive Plan	6.1

1.0 The Management Plan

1.1 The Management Strategy

This plan is intended to provide a focused and structured approach for the future and management of Neasden Village Conservation Area. The plan will build upon and develop the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities identified by the appraisal process and create a coordinated framework for future development. The Plan will rationalise the statutory and policy requirements with the aspirations of local residents. A thoroughly debated plan will provide a point of reference with agreed and consistent aims for all those concerned with the future of Neasden Village Conservation Area.

2.0 Policy

2.1 The Local Development Framework

The Planning Service at Brent Council will produce as part of its Local Development Framework a set of core policies for the control of development within Conservation Areas. In particular the core document will address the fundamental principle of “Preserve or Enhance” from the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15. The core policies will deal with alterations to existing buildings, new development, the built landscape and the natural environment. Policies will also be adopted to respond to the pressures of large scale development in residential historic areas.

From the core policies a series of guidance documents which will be supplementary to the LDF will be produced. These supplementary documents will expand upon the basic policy principles giving specific guidance regarding materials, construction details and techniques for development in the Conservation Area.

In addition to the supplementary development guidance documents the LDF will identify and possibly initiate a number of “Area Action Plans” which may include the Conservation Area within its remit. The special requirements of designated Conservation Areas will be a principal consideration in the development of “Area Action Plans”

2.2 The Community Involvement

As part of the Development of the LDF the Council has produced a “Statement of Community Involvement” which outlines its strategy for consulting people who live, work and play in the London Borough of Brent. All documents

produced as part of the LDF will be consulted upon using the principles and processes described in the document. Hard copies are available from the addresses shown in contact details at the back of this document, or can be viewed on the Council website. The strategies outlined in this document will guide the Councils involvement with the residents of Neasden Village.

2.3 Conservation Area Designation: Council

The management of the Conservation Area will be at all times legally regulated by the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Council will discharge its responsibilities under the act to “Preserve and Enhance” the character of its Conservation Areas. Also the Council will undertake regular reviews of the area to monitor the quality of development and the effectiveness of its policies and guidance. A review has just been completed and as a result the character appraisal and management plan has been produced.

2.4 Conservation Area Designation: Residents

The Designation of the Conservation Area and the subsequent application of an Article 4 Direction have placed a responsibility on all residents to carry out development of their properties and gardens in a way that preserves or enhances the character of the Conservation Area. The Article 4 Direction has also removed the permitted development rights of all residents in regard to the public face of their building. The Council is sympathetic to the extra burden that an Article 4 Direction places upon residents so has waived fees for applications for development that was previously permitted. The involvement of the residents of the conservation area is central to the successful preservation of the character of Neasden Village and the Council is committed to a long term partnership.

2.5 Character Appraisals

The Council has produced a character appraisal for the Neasden Village Conservation Area of which this plan is a part. The appraisal has been produced to provide a basis from which to develop not only development control decision making, but the informed development of design guidance. The appraisal will be the basis for the direction of this management plan, identifying the elements of the conservation area that require special attention or effort. The appraisals will also provide a valuable resource from which to defend appeals against refusal of planning permission.

2.6 Archives and Information

The heritage archive at Brent Council is available for public inspection at any time and provides a valuable resource for the management of the area. Copies of designation reports, schedules for the Article 4 Direction and background histories are available. The archives hold records of the development of the historic environment in Brent.

3.0 Conservation Strategy and Practice

Brent Council has recently carried out a review of its historic areas and now has 22 designated Conservation areas, with Article 4 Directions designated where necessary. This means that the Council has significant level of control of development within Neasden Village Conservation Area. The preservation of the character of the area will require careful management through the application of Best Practice within a number of the Councils activities. The Council will need to retain technical advisors specialising in the preservation and conservation of the historic buildings and landscapes. The principal elements that make up the historic landscape of the area will require review, reassessment and monitoring to enable a high quality conservation service for the residents of Neasden Village. This management plan requires the careful and competent application of its core policies to ensure the long term preservation of the area. Overall, Neasden Village must be protected and preserved for the residents that live within it and indeed its numerous visitors. However, for the area to maintain a sustainable community, the policies that guide its development must be responsive to contemporary as well as historic pressures.

3.1 Development Control

Arguably the most damage to the character of the Conservation Area is caused by unsympathetic development through poorly designed and executed new buildings, extensions and alterations. Therefore, the role of development control is pivotal to the management of sensitive but responsive change in the Area. To help with management the following principles will be adopted to guide Development Control decision making.

- i) The Council will apply the principles, guidance and regulation outlined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the broader guidance of Planning Policy

Guidance Note 15 and any subsequent revision or additions.

- ii) The Council will apply the adopted policies outlined in both the UDP 2004 and the emerging LDF.
- iii) The Council will require that all planning applications will be supported by a brief but thorough design guide that describes the ideas and reasoning behind the submitted design.
- iv) The fundamental requirement of any proposal for development in a Conservation Area is quality. All proposals must be of the highest quality design, proposing high quality materials and be executed to the highest standards of workmanship.
- v) The Council will not dictate the architectural style of any intervention but proposals must be either:

A high quality, contemporary design, that is at the same time sympathetic to the character of its context and neighbours.

Or,

A well researched replication of the high quality historic design, scale massing and detailing with strict replication of local materials.

Unfortunately scheme proposals often fall between these two standards and so compromise the character of the area.

- vi) The Conservation Area design guide will be a primary material consideration in the Councils' assessment of applications for development in the Neasden Village Conservation Area.
- vii) The Council will use technically experienced and qualified officers in guiding the assessment and determination of all applications received.
- viii) The Council will expect that proposals for development in Conservation areas will be clearly and competently demonstrated through the submission of clear accurate drawings, photographs and specifications.

- ix) All applications for work in conservation areas must be accompanied with clear indications of proposed materials. Physical examples of materials must be submitted prior to commencement of work.
- x) Where possible the Council recommend pre application consultation with the planning Service to help with the requirements for a high quality application.

3.2 Review of Conservation Systems

The Planning Listed buildings and Conservation Area Act 1990 requires that the Council review its historic environment to maintain an understanding of the pressures and changes within the Borough. However, the Council is committed to continuous review and has recently completed a re-survey of its Conservation Areas after which 10 Areas were de-designated. Neasden Village retained its designation and will require continuous monitoring to ensure that its development is sensitive and responsive. The Council would consider a 5 year cycle a reasonable long term review period.

3.3 Planning Guidance

The Supplementary Planning Documents are critical in guiding development within Neasden Village Conservation Area. It is essential that the guide is easy to use by residents, builders and designers alike. It needs to be clear about its role and give simple straightforward advice to residents. Therefore, the Council in conjunction with residents will periodically review the guide to maintain its continued validity. As previously stated the guide will be a material consideration in the consideration of applications submitted to the Planning Service.

3.4 Planning Policy Guidance Note15

Central Government has a policy role in the management of the country's historic areas and its PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment. However the Council's own Supplementary Planning Documents are critical in guiding development within Neasden Village Conservation Area. It is essential that the guide is as easy to use by residents as builders and designers. It needs to be clear about its role and give simple straightforward advice to residents. Therefore, the Council in conjunction with residents will periodically review the guide to maintain its continued validity. As previously stated the guide will be a material consideration in the assessment of applications submitted to the planning Service.

3.5 Technical Advice

Following the recent Conservation Area review, the Executive recommended the appointment of a Conservation Assistant to increase the specialist advisory service available to the residents of all its Conservation Areas. Strategically the Council will, in conjunction with the residents association, encourage pre application consultation to reduce time wasted in both scheme development and application assessment. The increased technical staff resource will also enable more frequent and comprehensive review.

In order to maintain up to date technical advice the Council will ensure continued professional development for its conservation staff. This will enable the Council to manage the inevitable compromises required between the needs of the historic and natural environments as requirements for energy conservation become more demanding and complex.

In day to day management of the historic environment the Council will liaise and coordinate with English Heritage who can offer further specialist technical advice in support of the planning services work. The Council will endeavour to maintain this close working relationship to secure the long term preservation of Neasden Village Conservation Area.

3.6 An Equitable Historic Environment

The Conservation of the historic environment at Neasden Village will be managed in an equitable and fair manner in line with the Councils regulations on officer conduct and equal opportunities. The Council will undertake its management of the Neasden Village Conservation Area in compliance with the Equality Standard for Local Authorities, The Brent Action Equity Plan and all other equalities legislation. Conservation work within the area will also require the application of the principles and guidance with the Disabilities Discrimination Act 2005, the codes of practice in BS8300 and the general guidance published by English Heritage.

4.0 Preservation and Enhancement

4.1 Understanding the Asset

The Character Appraisal of which this plan forms a part is central to understanding the Neasden Village Conservation Area and its needs for the future. The

results of this assessment will influence the review and development of the Design Guide, concentrating efforts on the elements of the Conservation Area that are under the most threat; including rear extensions, window replacements, roof re-covering and front garden plots. The appraisal has also highlighted the better preserved areas of the Conservation Area and how the lessons of preservation of this element of the historic structure can be learned.

To fully understand the pressures on the character of Neasden Village it is important to understand the pressures and needs of the community. The approach and viewpoint of the residents is important in making the management of the area responsive and sensitive. Management strategy and development guidance must take into account role of the community and the pressures that individuals experience in their home life.

To enable the integration of the needs of the fabric with the human considerations, the Council will endeavour to maintain continued liaison with the community through consultation. In addition to this Character Appraisal, attendance at Area Consultative Forums, and conservation forum meetings is proposed.

4.2 Maintaining Quality

One of the defining elements of Neasden Village Conservation Area is the quality of design composition, construction detailing and the execution of the work. It is this attention to detail that will protect quality at all scales of interventions into the historic environment. To ensure the preservation of character, quality has to be maintained throughout the whole process of any proposed change. The Council will ensure that quality is maintained through its contribution to the following elements of development and alteration.

Quality of applications

- i) In line with PPG15 the Council will not accept outline applications for proposals in Conservation Areas. Full applications will be required to be supported by well drafted accurate scale drawings with plans, sections and elevations. In many cases for large schemes the Council will also expect analytical drawings, showing proposals in context, either through streetscape sections or three dimensional images.

Quality of materials

- ii) The Council will, where possible, require that materials proposed are submitted as part of the application and not as a condition.

Detail

- iii) Where appropriate to aid in the assessment of an application the Council may require the submission of large scale construction detail drawings. This enables officers to check the quality of what is proposed and ensure that on site design is not left to the builder.

Experienced persons

- iv) The Council will always advise that applicants appoint both consultants and builders who have experience of historic buildings work.

Specialist Advice

- v) Whenever possible the Council will provide a specialist advisory service to compliment the skills of consultants and builders.

Article 4 Directions

- vi) In order to reduce the decline in quality through alterations carried out as permitted development the Council has applied Article 4 Directions where appropriate to all its residential Conservation Areas including Neasden Village.

PVCu Window frames

- vii) After many years of investigation and experimentation the Council has finally accepted that PVCu will not allow manufacturers to replicate the quality of original timber windows in Conservation areas - PVCu is also a significant pollutant. Therefore, the Council will not approve PVCu window frames in the Conservation Area.

Generally, the Council is convinced that it is the attention to detail and specific concern about quality at all levels that will help preserve and enhance the character of Neasden Village Conservation Area.

4.3 Preserve or Enhance

As outlined in "Planning Policy Guidance Note 15" (Planning and the Historic Environment). Any proposals for work with the historic environment and in particular in Conservation Areas must as a minimum preserve the character of the Conservation Area. The Council supports this standard as a basic requirement but will always encourage applicants and their agents to develop

schemes that will actively enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In meeting these fundamental requirements the Council will require that proposals are demonstrably a faithful replication of the local historic precedent or a high quality contemporary building as described in Section 3.1 (v) above.

4.4 Enhancement Initiatives

As with the most Local Authorities, the London Borough of Brent has a restricted general budget so has no specific allocation for Conservation Areas. However, the Council has been successful in securing external funding for enhancement initiatives for its Conservation Areas, Therefore:

- i) The Council will, where appropriate, continue to seek external funding to support its work in Neasden Village Conservation Area.
- ii) The Council will maintain an up to date understanding of current funding sources and where possible apply for funds for Neasden Village Conservation Area through Townscape Heritage Initiatives and other special schemes.
- iii) Not all enhancement requires financial input. The Council will ensure that there is a regularly updated Design Guide for the Conservation Area to help residents with alterations and extensions to their homes.

4.5 Elements at Risk

As previously described the quality of the Conservation Area can be significantly damaged by the loss of historic detail and the loss of this type of detail has led to the de-designation of a number of the Borough's Conservation Areas. Therefore, the Council is convinced that it is the preservation of detail that will subsequently make the biggest contribution to the preservation of character. The protection of the following elements of the historic environment will be a high priority:

Roof Covering

- i) The plan requires that the special care will be taken in the management of roof recovering and replacement.

Chimneys

- ii) Chimneys are a particularly important element of Conservation areas and the plan requires

that they should be one of the most significant management issues.

Window Frames and Doors

- iii) The Plan requires that Design guidance will be specifically concerned with replacement windows, the prevention of pollutants and sustainability.

Roof Covering

- iv) The plan requires that the special care will be taken in the management of roof recovering and replacement.

Brickwork

- v) Management of brickwork treatment is a critical issue in preserving character.

Front Plots

- vi) The preservation of front gardens and their boundary walls, fences and hedges is critical in preserving the character of streetscape. The careful management of these elements will be a significant issue in responsive design guidance and development control.

Extensions

- vii) Extension and alteration will be managed through broader specific design guidance for rear extensions.

Satellite Dishes

- viii) The proliferation of satellite dishes has had significant impact on all Conservation areas and will need to be addressed in Design guidance.

4.6 Training and Communication

Where appropriate the Council will ensure that its Conservation Service is up to date and fully conversant with current practice. To achieve this, the Council will ensure that its officers follow a structured training plan. From this the Council will endeavour to attend Forums and resident group meetings to disseminate good practice to resident and there agents.

5.0 Monitoring and Review

The Planning Service is obliged by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review its

Conservation Areas from “time to time”. Brent Council has regularly carried out reviews of its historic areas and in 2003 completed a thorough re evaluation; culminating in the de-designation of some conservation areas that had lost the character that led to their special status. The review enabled the Council to then concentrate its limited resources on the remaining Conservation Areas enabling the production of this Character Appraisal for Neasden Village Conservation Area. To maintain a rigorous monitoring system the Council will:

- i) Encourage greater involvement in the guardianship of Neasden Village by the residents group.
- ii) Establish a regular visual survey of the area by conservation or enforcement officers.
- iii) Depending upon resources re-evaluate the character of Neasden Village Conservation Area every 5 – 8 years.

5.1 Development Control

The Development control process is controlled by the Unitary Development Plan and the supplementary guidance that is developed from it. In order to maintain a high standard of decision-making the Council will ensure regular training and review of policies that control the decision making process.

5.2 Design Guidance

The Council will produce a responsive design guide for Neasden Village that can be reviewed as part of the broader re-evaluation process outlined in section 5.0 iii).

5.3 Community Involvement

The Council will encourage residents to carry out their own review of the management of Neasden Village Conservation Area and submit their findings for inclusion in wider assessments.

6.0 The Future

6.1 A Responsive Plan

The management plan for Neasden Village Conservation Area is intended to be a development framework for anyone involved or concerned about the future of the area. It outlines the issues that need consideration and

action if we are to preserve and enhance the character of the Neasden Village Conservation Area.

Most importantly, this plan will be responsive and reactive to the changing needs of its residents. It is purposely strategic, not specific, to enable it to accommodate changes in society and changes in society's expectations. At the same time it will maintain the balance with the need to preserve character.

This plan is also flexible enough to be adjusted to respond to the frequent changes in legislation and regulation that influence the built environment - In particular the Council's eventual change from a Unitary Development Plan to a Local Development Framework.

Overall, it is in everyone's interest to preserve and enhance the character of Neasden Village Conservation Area. This plan is intended to build upon the Character Appraisal, coordinate and focus the various needs and requirements of everyone involved in the protection and enhancement of the landscape of the Conservation Area.

London Borough of Brent
Planning Service



March 2006