

# **Wembley High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

**Brent Council**



# Character Appraisal

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 The Appraisal

This appraisal will identify, analyse and describe the historic and architectural character of the Wembley High Street Conservation Area. It will identify the factors that led to the declaration of the Conservation Area. It will highlight the prevailing quality, 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.

The Wembley High Street Conservation Area was designated on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1990. In February 2005 an Article 4(2) 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:

<b>Dagmar Avenue:</b>	Green Man Public House
<b>High Street:</b>	3 - 12 & land adjacent 3 & 12
<b>Wembley Hill Road:</b>	119 - 135

### 1.2 Planning Policy Context

#### Definition of a Conservation Area

Conservation Areas are 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, Wembley High Street is at risk from insensitive development. As families grow the need to extend and improve homes becomes more acute. The housing stock is also of an age where more significant maintenance work is required prompting owners to replace doors and windows and roof coverings. There is also the pressure to split larger houses into smaller multi occupancy units which not only has an impact on the houses but the setting of buildings and the number of cars that residents want to park off street. 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 where necessary protected by Article 4 Directions which should help to stop

the decline in character through permitted development, and possibly in time reverse the influence of unsympathetic development.

## 2.0 Location and Setting

### 2.1 Location and Context

The Conservation area lies within the Tokyngton ward of the London Borough of Brent. It is located on Wembley Hill, adjacent to Wembley Stadium and the surrounding regeneration area and a close distance to Wembley Town Centre.

### 2.2 General Character and Plan Form

The special character of the area is based not only on the design of the buildings and that of the open space but also on their street setting and the street scenes. Wembley High Street is a narrow cul-de-sac of quaint cottages in the historic street pattern of old Wembley Village. It is important to maintain this aspect of the Conservation Area because such a plan form evokes a sense of rural character which is not utilised in modern suburban developments. The layout and position of properties creates a housing enclave of particular character that is considered to be worth retaining and enhancing.



Wembley High Street

### 2.3 Landscape Setting

The topography is a vital part of the character of this Conservation Area. Built on Wembley Hill, the Conservation Area slopes up from Wembley High Street to the Green Man Inn at the summit, providing significant views of the surrounding area. A dominant part of these views is now taken up by the new Wembley Stadium. The stadium serves as a direct contrast to such small scale historically significant development and the dichotomy of old and new is something which should be retained and enhanced within the Borough.



Wembley Hill Road

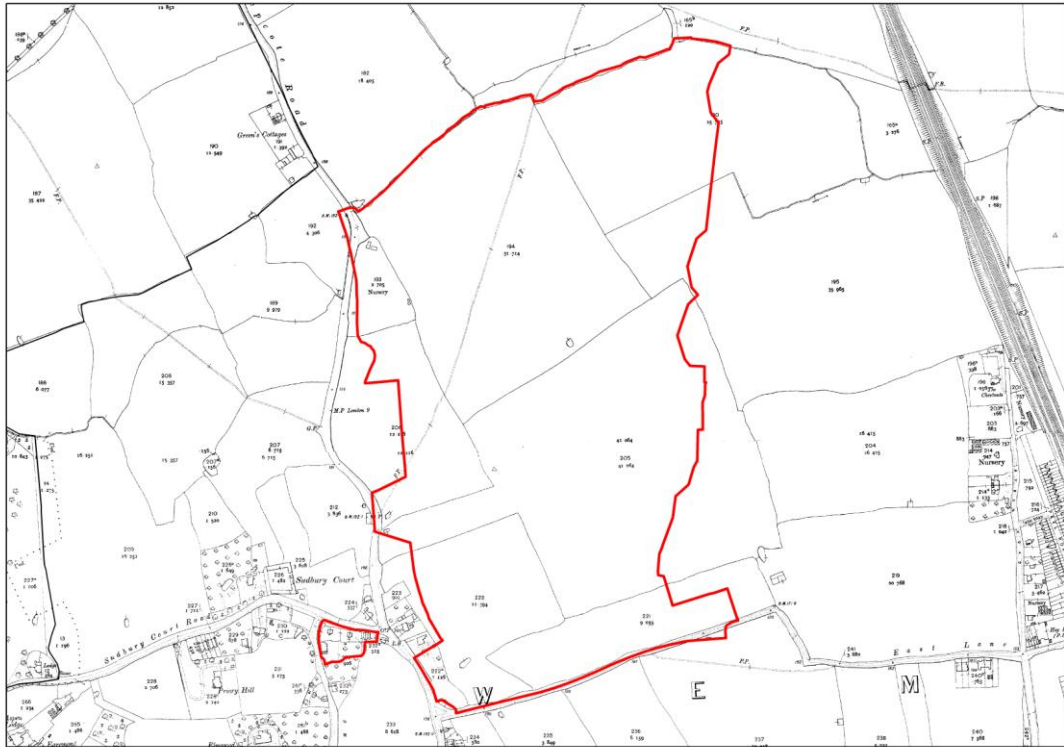
### 3.0 Historic Development and Archaeology



Wembley High Street c. 2006



Wembley High Street c. 1940



Wembley High Street c. 1870

### 3.1 Origins and Historic Development

The earliest references to a village of Wembley imply a settlement on the hill. Although the spelling of the hamlet varied somewhat (Wymbley in 1247 and Wembley in 1547) the village lay on the north side of a large triangular green which separated it from the main road to London. On the summit of the hill, which rises to 234 ft, stood (and still stands) the Green Man Inn. The original building on the site was a late mediaeval timber-framed house, modernised in the eighteenth century and in use as a public house by 1722. In 1751 it was known as the "Barley Mow" and in 1774 as the "Red Lion". It has been the "Green Man" since 1785. The timber-framed pub was destroyed by fire in 1906 and replaced by the present Edwardian building. Below the public house comprising the rest of the village lay a dozen or more cottages in the nineteenth century. Some of these were of brick and some were weatherboarded. A blacksmith's shop had been established at the beginning of the High Street in the eighteenth century and the narrow cul-de-sac led past the cottages to the "Greyhound" beershop, pulled down in 1929 and the site redeveloped.



Green Man

At the end of the last century the landlord of the Green Man was Baptiste Biffa, an Italian restaurateur and building contractor. He also owned much of Wembley village and took the opportunity probably in the 1880s to demolish and rebuild the cottages in the High Street on

their original sites in stock brick with slate roofs.

Even as rebuilt structures the present High Street cottages represent the original village layout of Wembley. Their architectural appearance is modest and domestic but varied in style, employing a range of window designs. Alterations to their appearance in recent years have not detracted from their overall quaint character. A narrow pathway connects the High Street to the grounds of the public house.

### 3.2 Archaeological Significance and Potential

There is a degree of archaeological significance within this conservation area because the current buildings were built on top of the original hamlet of Wembley which is mentioned in descriptions dating from 1274. This would suggest that under the current buildings there may lie a variety of archaeologically important artefacts. 3 – 12 Wembley High Street has been designated as a Site of Archaeological Importance within the Unitary Development Plan.

## 4.0 Spatial analysis

### 4.1 Character and inter-relationship of spaces

The special character of the Conservation Area was and is derived from this historic setting. The small scale and enclosed nature of the buildings and gardens of the High Street give it a distinctively traditional and rural appeal. The character of the buildings on Wembley Hill Road represents a more 20<sup>th</sup> century approach to suburban development, with larger semi-detached properties set back from a much wider through road. The moderne style Manor Court creates variety and a degree of visual interest within the streetscape.

### 4.2 Views and Vistas

The height of Wembley Hill (234ft) gives fantastic views over the surrounding district, best obtained from the garden of the Green Man Public House.

## 5.0 Character Analysis

### 5.1 Definition of Character Zones

The character of Wembley High Street Conservation Area is defined by two distinctive areas of housing based around Wembley High Street and Wembley Hill Road, with the Green Man Public House at the summit of the hill.



Wembley High Street



Wembley Hill Road



Wembley Hill Road



Wembley High Street



## 5.2 Activity, Prevailing and Former Uses

The Conservation Area is based around the historic core of the original village of Wembley, which were formerly cottages for agricultural workers. The only uses within this area are residential and public house/hotel.

## 5.3 Architectural and Historic Qualities of the Buildings

The buildings on Wembley High Street consist of terraced workers cottages with larger buildings at the end of terrace. The Village was rebuilt in the 1880's on the original sites of the dwellings, so the plan form of the settlement remains the same. They were built out of stock brick with slate roofs. Segmental brick arches above windows add a degree of character to the elevations. The High Street is made up of a 2 storey terrace of dwellings with smaller mid-terrace dwellings and larger gable fronted end of terrace buildings. Positioning of the fenestration is usually central to the rooms served, but the size and relative modesty of windows reveals that construction was conducted under a low budget.



Wembley High Street

The dwellings on Wembley Hill Road represent a rather different style of architecture. Built in the 1930's, the larger semi-detached dwellings are stepped back and up from the pavement with front gardens and semicircular bay windows. The Moderne style Manor Court adds a degree of variety along the streetscape of Wembley Hill Road.

## 6.0 Audit of Heritage Assets

### 6.1 Contribution of Significant 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

Wembley High Street is modestly built through the use of simple materials and finishes. The use of Welsh slate and stock brick is typical of buildings from this period and it is the simplicity of design which defines the unique historical character of this street.



Wembley High Street

### 6.3 Local Details

Wembley Hill Road was constructed using methods and techniques that were common throughout the country during the rise of the suburban estate. Most materials

were regionally sourced and can be found in suburban housing schemes of this period throughout London.

#### 6.4 Public Realm Audit

The public realm on Wembley High Street is very narrow with a strong sense of enclosure. This creates perceptions of a small scale rural mews where the proximity of dwellings to one another provides a sense of security. The route between Wembley High Street and the Green Man Public House runs around the back of Gardens on the dwellings of Wembley High Street and is well enclosed by planting and fencing. On Wembley Hill Road the street furniture is ministry standard concrete kerbs and drainage with standard proprietary metallic lighting and services equipment.

#### 6.5 Contribution of the Natural Environment

There is a comparative lack of planting within this Conservation Area. The route from Wembley High Street up to the Green Man is perhaps the most significant landscape element within this area. The winding public footpath, reminiscent of a rural access route leads you round the back of the buildings on the High Street and up to the Green Man.



Public footpath

#### 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. The thoughtful articulation of elevations helps to define the organic vernacular character. Unfortunately, in a number of cases the entrance porches have been altered in an unsympathetic manner damaging both the character and design of the houses, and in turn the street scene. Erection of new front porches to encompass two entrances to dwellings has an adverse affect on the buildings and thus the character of the Conservation Area. There is one example on Wembley High Street where the brickwork on a dwelling has been completely rendered over.



Wembley Hill Road

##### 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. There is an example of such an extension on Wembley Hill Road. The impact of such extension may be exacerbated further by inappropriate design, scale, and massing, and use of poor quality materials.



Wembley Hill Road

### 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 does not appear to be any inappropriate rooflights or dormer windows within this Conservation Area, however, there are instances where side extensions affect the roofscape.

### Painting

There are examples where entire front elevations of properties have been painted, affecting the overall appearance of houses. On Wembley Hill Road, two of the houses have painted the brickwork at ground floor level white, which has completely altered their character.

### Formation of Drives

The formation of vehicular accesses (in some instances more than one) for the purpose of providing off-street parking in front garden areas has caused significant erosion of the character of buildings.

### Front gardens and boundary walls/hedges

Many front gardens in the area have been hard surfaced to provide car parking on the frontage. In some instances this has involved the removal of front boundary walls/hedges, and where boundary walls are replaced they are often of inappropriate design and materials. In some instances, whole front gardens of houses have been hard surfaced to provide off-street parking. The parking of cars on front hardstandings can be unsightly and harmful to the appearance of the property and the suburban character of the Conservation Area.



Wembley High Street



Wembley Hill Road

## 6.7 Capacity for Change

The Conservation area is under pressure from insidious small scale change through erosion of building detail. Wembley High Street a prosperous residential area that benefits from a large proportion of owner occupied houses that are relatively well maintained. The residential nature of the area means that the restrictions of the planning act and the GDPO 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 St Andrews Conservation Area is sensibly defined and will not be adjusted until the next major review.

## **9.0 General Condition**

Wembley High Street 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 where necessary Article 4 Directions to all its residential Conservation Areas to prevent insensitive development. The Condition of the Wembley High Street 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.

## **10.0 Recommendations**

The future of the St Andrews Conservation Area is now more secure with the application of the Article 4 Direction and 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 Explanation of Technical Terms

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

Website: [www.brent.gov.uk/planning](http://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

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## **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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street.

### **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 Wembley High Street and the Council is committed to a long term partnership.

### **2.5 Character Appraisals**

The Council has produced a character appraisal for the Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street. This management plan requires the careful and competent application of its core policies to ensure the long term preservation of the area. Overall, Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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. Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Note 15**

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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street Conservation Area.

### **3.6 An Equitable Historic Environment**

The Conservation of the historic environment at Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street.

**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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street Conservation Area.
- ii) The Council will maintain an up to date understanding of current funding sources and where possible apply for funds for Wembley High Street 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 their 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 Wembley High Street Conservation Area. To maintain a rigorous monitoring system the Council will:

- i) Encourage greater involvement in the guardianship of Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street Conservation Area and submit their findings for inclusion in wider assessments.

## **6.0 The Future**

### **6.1 A Responsive Plan**

The management plan for Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street 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 Wembley High Street.

London Borough of Brent  
Planning Service



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