



Roman Road Market

Conservation Area

1. Character Appraisal

2. Management Guidelines

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

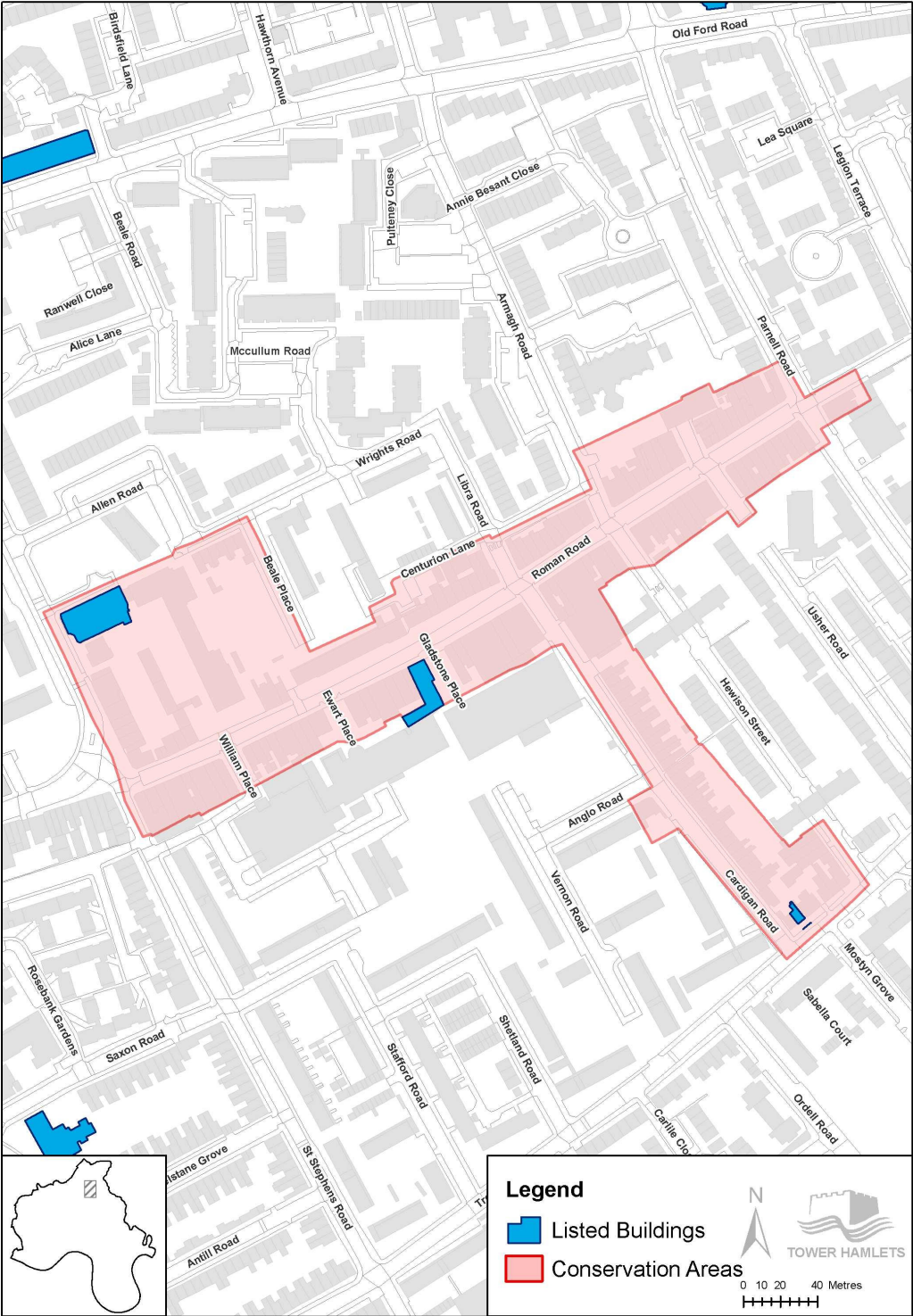
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Introduction

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

This guide has been prepared for the following purposes:

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



ROMAN ROAD MARKET CONSERVATION AREA

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1. Character Appraisal

Overview

The Roman Road Conservation Area was designated in September 1989, and extended in October 2008. Drafted around St Stephen's Road and Cardigan Road, Roman Road sets the main street scene in the Conservation Area. Its designation highlights its historic significance and assures that its special character is retained. At the heart of the market lies the Grade II listed Passmore Edwards Public Library, built in 1900. The other building of note is St Paul and St Stephens Church, dated 1878 (Listed Ecclesiastical Grade C) along St Stephen's Road. The remainder of Roman Road is of collective townscape merit.

History

Roman Road runs more or less parallel to the buried roman road which connected London to Colchester, and was named as such when Roman remains were first discovered. According to map references, the first archaeological discoveries of the roman road were made in 1845. Historical maps of 1703 show the area as a driftway. The Metropolitan Board of Works was originally set up in 1855 with the purpose of providing a sewer system for London, but was also responsible for the improvements to Wapping High Street, East Smithfield, Preston's Road, Bethnal Green Road and Green Street. Hence Roman Road was built along an existing path at a time when several new roads were being established across East London.

Despite the influx of covered shopping centres in the 1970s, street markets such as the Roman Road Market continued to thrive as an East London tradition. Roman Road Market and other open markets such as Whitechapel, Walthamstow, Barking and Romford are located along main roads, and efforts were made to ensure that these markets were separated from traffic and made partly pedestrian. This was a post-war planning initiative, when the importance of the street market was recognised.

Character

The character of the Roman Road Market Conservation Area is defined by the lively street market along Roman Road, and the streetscape of small retail shops and modest houses which enclose it. Established in 1888, the market combines everyday goods with food, clothing, crafts, books and antiques. Partly pedestrianised, Roman Road is effectively closed to vehicular traffic for the market to take place. The mixed uses are housed in varying forms between 2-4 storeys with ground floor shopfronts providing a colourful backdrop to the vibrant market scene, and carefully defining the domestic street scale. Two archways mark each end of the Roman Road Market. Erected in 1986, the archways are inscribed in Latin, alluding to the area's Roman past. The area includes a number of characterful period public houses on its periphery that provide focal points for the community.

Land Use

The land use character of the Roman Road Conservation Area is a mixture of commercial and retail on ground floor with residential premises above. This mix of uses is an essential part of the character of the area. Alternative land uses would not be considered, so as to conserve intact the tradition of the street markets with their backdrop and associated commercial uses that support the local community.

Scale

The existing building scale of the area is predominantly low, with Roman Road being flanked by buildings of 2-4 stories, providing a comfortable street scene for pedestrian activity. 2 storey terrace housing exists along Cardigan Road.

Open Spaces

The Roman Road Market Conservation Area is defined by the pedestrian and market activity along its streetscape, but does not contain any significant open space.

Views

Views in the area include long views along street axes, including views along Roman Road, St Stephen's Road and Cardigan Road. There are no visual landmarks along Roman Road, other than the red brick and stone banded Passmore Edwards Public Library which is a prominent and easily recognisable community facility.

Summary

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

2. Management Guidelines

Overview

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

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

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

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

Who is this document for?

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

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

Outline Guidance on Applications

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- At the national level, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Tower Hamlets to designate Conservation Areas in “areas of special architectural or historic interest”, and to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas. National policy for planning and the historic environment is set out in Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15).
- At the regional level, policy 4B.1 of the London Spatial Development Strategy (or London Plan) states that ‘The Mayor will seek to ensure that developments ... respect London’s built heritage.’
- At the local level, the new Local Development Framework (LDF) of Tower Hamlets states that ‘the Council will protect and enhance the historic environment of the borough’. The Core Strategy states as an objective that we will ‘Protect and celebrate our history and heritage by placing these at the heart of reinventing the Hamlets to enhance local distinctiveness, character and townscape.

- The Roman Road Market area lies within an area of archaeological significance.
- Is designated as the primary frontage in the District Centre.
- There are three development sites identified in the LDF.

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

Ecclesiastical Grade C (II)

- St Paul With St Marks Church, St Stephens Road

Grade II

- 564 Roman Road

Locally Listed Building

- 129 Tredegar Road

Highways and Transportation Issues

The quality of the streetscape, the surface materials, street furniture and other features can all be integral parts of the character of Conservation Areas. Any work carried out should respect this historic character. Anyone involved in development which impacts on public spaces should refer to the Council's Street Design Guide, TfL's own Streetscape Guidance and English Heritage's 'Streets for All' document. The ongoing cost of maintenance should also be considered carefully.

Roman Road is a busy one-way street and is an essential thoroughfare for both commercial users and customers. Deliveries and customer parking need to be managed in a way that respects and maintains the character of the street.

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

Opportunities and Potential for Enhancement

Despite recent improvements, there is still potential for the general quality of the landscaping in the street to be improved, and the area could benefit from a public realm strategy to coordinate physical features with management procedures. The fragile character of Roman Road has been eroded in the past by unsympathetic alterations and re-building, and further attrition of this character must be prevented.

The quality of the frontage to the Old Ford Infant School could be improved.

In keeping with the character of the market place, a study could be undertaken into alternative arrangements of market stalls so that the shopfronts on either side of Roman Road can still be seen. This would create an incentive to refurbish the shopfronts.

Appropriate street signage and the reduction of unnecessary signage, bollards and parking clutter should be explored.

Trees, Parks and Open Spaces

There are no major parks or open spaces in this Conservation Area. The main public space is the street itself, defined by a continuous building line on both sides.

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

Equalities:

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

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

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

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

Publicity

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

Consideration of Resources Needed to Conserve the Historic Environment:

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

alteration of a building in a Conservation Area. The Council will consider grant aid to historic buildings and places.

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

Ongoing Management and Monitoring Change:

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

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

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

Enforcement Strategy:

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

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

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

Further Reading and Contacts

- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.
- The Archaeology of Tower Hamlets. Black, Inner London Archaeology Unit.

The Council encourages and welcomes discussions with the community about the historic environment and the contents of this document. Further guidance on all aspects of this document can be obtained on our website at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk or by contacting:

Tel: 020 7364 5009

Email: dr.majorprojects@towerhamlets.gov.uk

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

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

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

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

Listed Buildings at Risk:

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

Any other threats to the Conservation Area

- Rising land values are fuelling applications to extend these low-rise properties. The Council will protect the existing character of this East End Street.

Priorities for Action (1-5)

1. Prepare detailed guidance about the Roman Road Market.
2. Re-introduce appropriate historic street surfaces.
3. Prepare Stakeholder's Guide.
4. Remove street clutter.
5. Liaise with Better Tower Hamlets Team (BTHT).