



Brickfield Gardens

Conservation Area

1. Character Appraisal

2. Management Guidelines

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

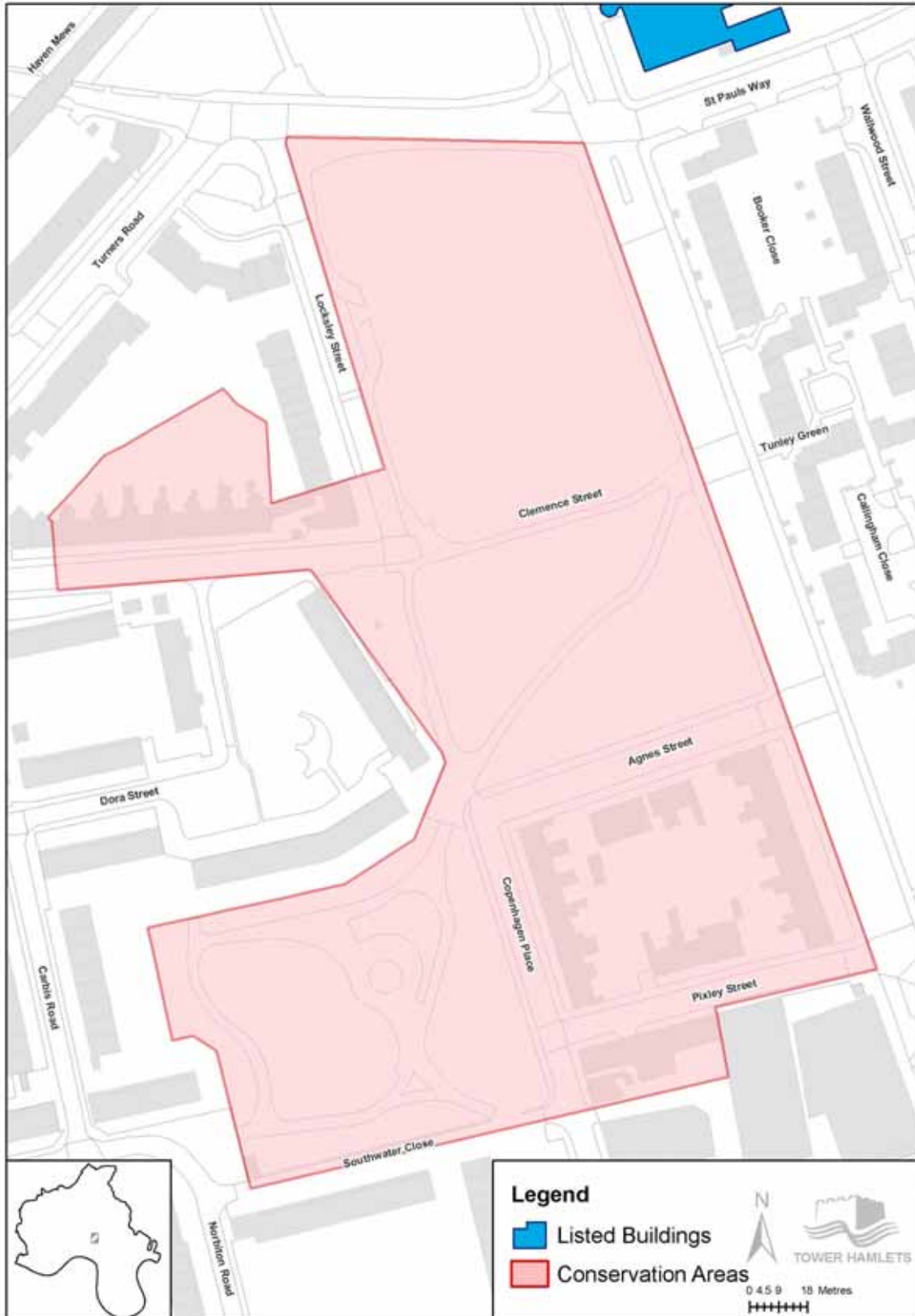
Adopted by Cabinet: 4th November 2009

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.



BRICKFIELD GARDENS CONSERVATION AREA

This map is indicative only and is not a planning document. For further information please contact the Council.

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1. Character Appraisal

Overview

The Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area is one of the Boroughs central Conservation Areas. It was designated in October 2008. Situated at the southern end of Mile End Park, between Burdett Road and the Regent's Canal to the east, it is bounded by St Paul's Way to the North, Burdett Road to the east, Norbiton Road and Southwater Close to the south and Rhodeswell Road to the east.

It comprises two fragments of the former mid-Victorian streetscape which survived the war, amidst three other areas which were cleared after the war (1955-1965), and are now open space, Brickfield Gardens and Mile End Park south of St Paul's way.

The two most influential perimeter influences are the Regent's Canal to the west and Burdett Road to the east. All the original development was squeezed between these two powerful north –south transport Routes.

The purpose of designation is to safeguard the remaining street patterns and the buildings within it, and the park and gardens around these. There are no listed or locally listed buildings within the Conservation Area. However, close to the north east corner is situated the grade II* St Paul's Church and vicarage complex. To the east is the Regent's Canal Conservation Area, and further to the south is the historic Limehouse Cut and the St Anne's Church Conservation Area.

History

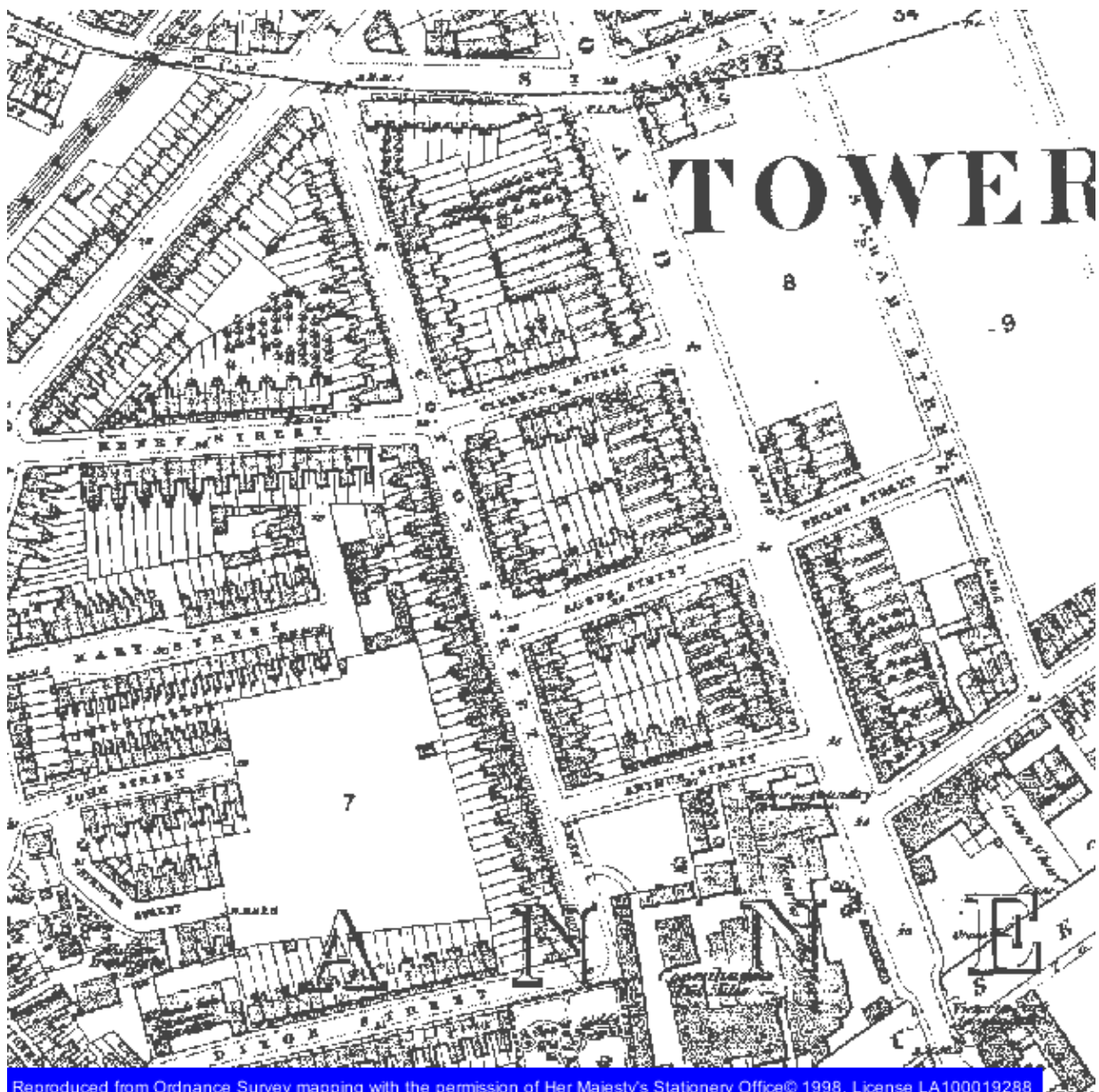
Originally fields within the parish of St Dunstons, which contained most of the Borough, this area has since come under one of its subdivisions, known as the parish of St Anne's Limehouse.

Up until the mid 1850's the area remained in the northern part of the parish as fields. By then the massive housing infill which had started around West and East India Docks in 1806-1810 had reached Limehouse, and expressed itself as part of the

Cotton Estate. [The Cotton Estate covered seventy four acres in Bow, Limehouse and Mile End and consisted mainly of twenty seven streets of terraced houses].

The 1869 (first edition) Ordnance Survey shows the intensity and the relative orderliness of the infill, and also that an open space was retained as a brickfield (now Brickfield Gardens).

The 1869 map:



This compact layout clearly shows that all houses had gardens behind them, some of them quite deep, especially those on the north side of Henry Street, now Clemence

Street, which have trees in the gardens. The pub beside this terrace is already shown.

Also clearly visible are the industrial buildings immediately to the south of Arthur Street (now called Pixley Street).

This development, soundly built, changed very little over the years, as can be seen in the 1919 map, 50 years later. Only Brickfield Gardens has been modelled and landscaped on the old brickfield.

The Gardens themselves were opened in 1904 by the LCC with a bandstand and a children's playground, and they retain a surviving Edwardian character. The area also includes a Victorian public house, a terrace which adjoins Mile End Park, and a portion of the harmonious built frontages of Clemence Street.

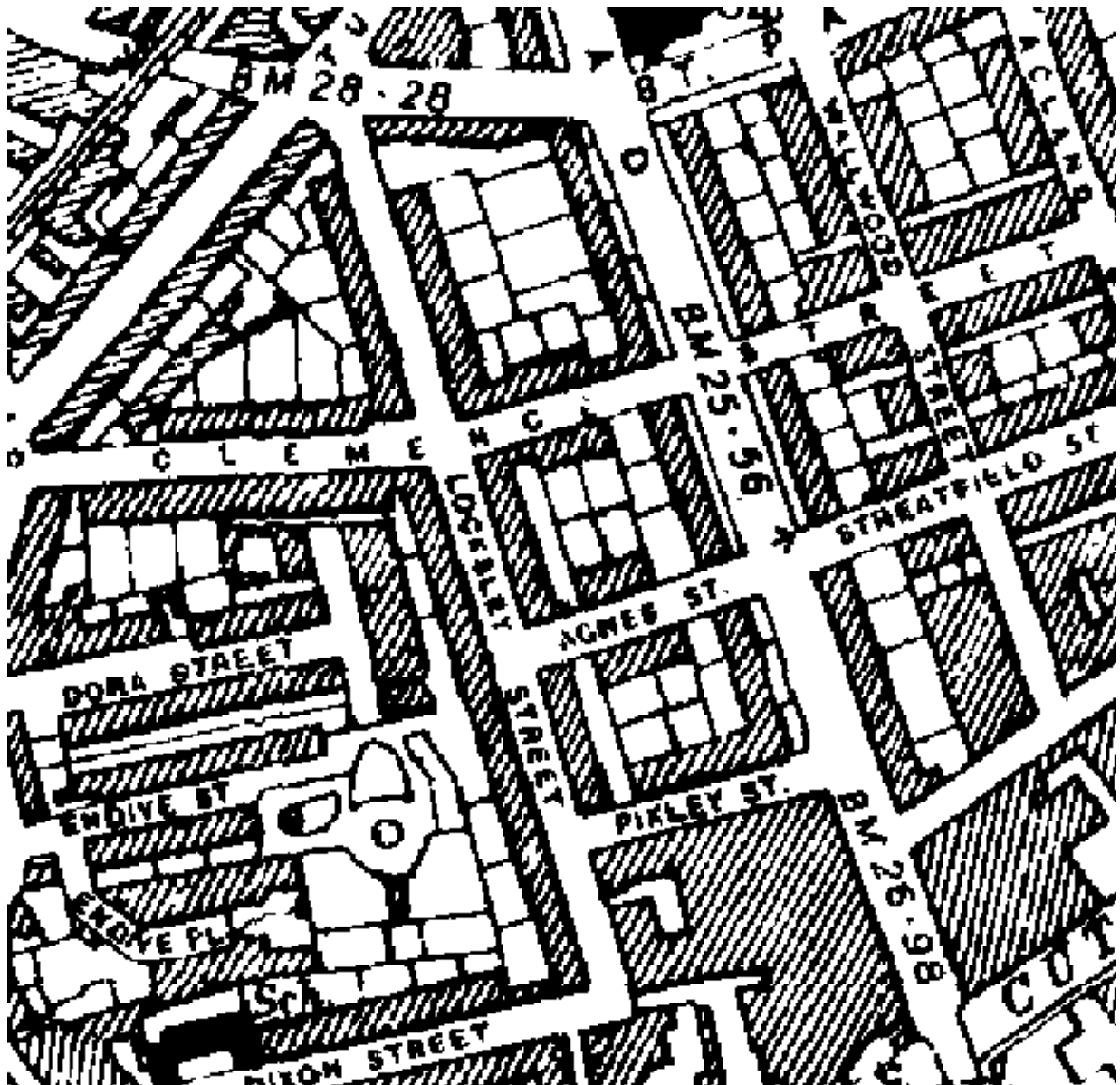
The 1919 Map:



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The terraced housing estate north and west of the original Brickfield Gardens was very badly bombed in the second half of the Second World War. It was cleared by the LCC for a small housing estate with small landscaped spaces and an extended Brickfield Gardens, as shown on the 1965-68 OS map. The Post- War estate was extended in the 1970's and 1980's and is now the Brokesley Estate.

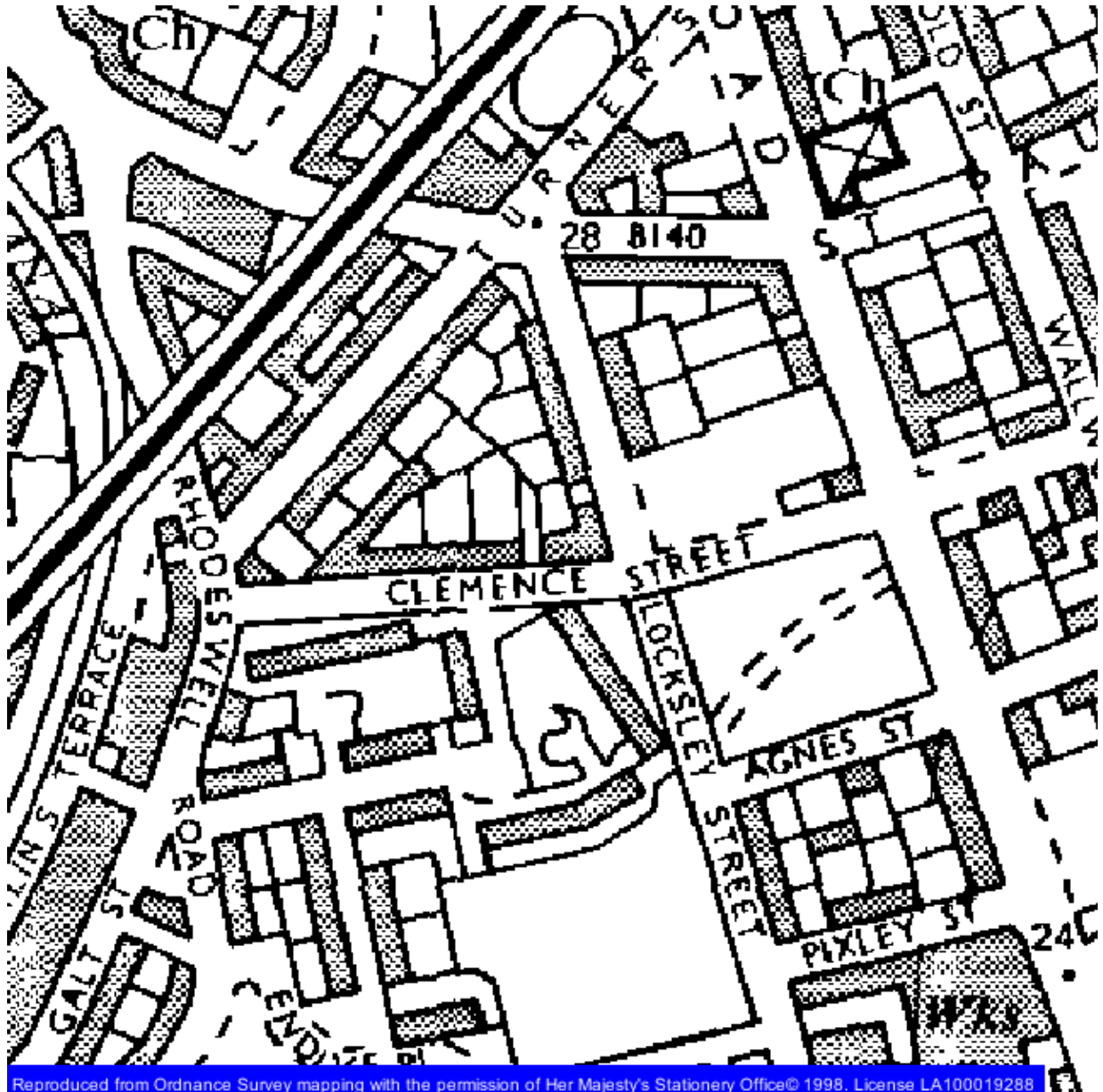
The 1949-54 Map:



The open spaces shown on the 1965-68 map, shown on the following page, between Agnes Street and St Paul's Way is now the southern part of Mile End Park. This linear

park continues northward to the Hertford Union Canal. Planned by the LCCC, it was mostly laid out by the GLC.

The 1965-68 Map:



Despite the bombing and post war developments, the area contains the last two surviving remnants of the Cotton Estate. The block between Burdett Road and Copenhagen Place contains the east of the grand terraces which formerly lined both sides of Burdett Road; and the terrace on the north side of Clemence Street with it's corner pub, the Prince Alfred.

Character

This Conservation Area is a fragment of old Limehouse and has a unique character which forms part of the cherished and familiar local scene.

This designation protects a large stock brick former factory on Pixley Street built in 1911 and known as the Sanitas Disinfectant Factory; it was designed by Arthur T. Bolton, ARIBA. The building was the work of local builders, Messrs Wood of Mile End. The factory is noteworthy for its steel frame encased in concrete, and reinforced concrete interior, and its distinctive and considered elevations.

Land Use

The land use is predominantly parkland with a little residential, mainly that along Clemence Street and that enclosed by Locksley Street, Agnes Street, Burdett Road and Pixley Street; with the factory building to the south of Pixley Street.



To the east of the Clemence Street terrace is the Victorian corner pub the Prince Alfred, shown in the picture below.



Character

The residential buildings all have gardens, and these become deep along Clemence Street.

Of the terraces, the most powerful is that facing onto Burdett Road. This stands on a basement half set into the ground and half above it, giving an elevated ground floor, followed by second and third. Above ground and basement there are three sided bay windows surmounted by a stuccoed cornice with frieze and blocking course. The steps from half basement and to ground floors have stuccoed walls, doorways and upper windows have stuccoed surrounds; and there are stuccoed pilaster strips between individual houses. The terrace has neo-Classical proportions, as shown in the picture on the following page.



The smaller terraces onto Agnes Street and Pixley Street also have lower ground floors half set into the ground (semi basements), with ground floor half a storey above pavement level, and one single storey above, with a well developed cornice above. Part of both of these side terraces have been rebuilt with a more modern equivalent, which matches them well.

The longer terrace along Locksley Street (now Copenhagen Place) connecting the two smaller terraces above has a spaciousness about it that sets it above the side terraces. It is built of London stocks, has curved segmental fanlights above the doors, which have modelled stucco surrounds, and plain upper windows, save for painted stucco lintels over. The central pair of its twelve houses is set forward and the southern five houses retain their original stucco surrounds to their round headed doorways. The terrace is elegant, orderly and graceful in its generous proportions.

There is one pub in the area, the Prince Alfred, which sits on the corner of Clemence Street and Locksley Street. This has two of its elevations, one onto each street, linked by a splay corner. It is constructed of yellow stocks, is of two tall floors, the lower stuccoed with dropped segmental arches on stuccoed piers and a strong modillion cornice over it; the upper of brick with elaborate stuccoed window surrounds, surmounted by a deep and well modelled cornice over it, as counterbalance which gives these frontages distinctiveness, drama and strength. This is a nicely composed building which plays an important part in the townscape of this part of the conservation area, and is visible from much of it including the park-like green to the east and south east of it.

Beside the pub onto Clemence Street is the other long terrace, shown in the picture below. This also sits on a semi-basement, half inset into the ground so that ground floor itself is raised above pavement. Over this is one single floor. Lower ground and ground are faced with rusticated stucco, as are parts of some of the upper storeys in the best preserved western part of the terrace; with a well formed cornice above the first floor windows and a parapet above that. This was a well designed terrace originally. If carefully restored it would look distinguished. Also attached to some of these frontages are parts of the lovely decorative ironwork that they once carried. This too could be restored.



The other remarkable building is the old factory onto Pixley Street, constructed of London stock bricks. This is the largest building in the locality, facing onto Pixley Street and Copenhagen Walk, with Brickfield Gardens in front of it.



It is built of yellow stock bricks raised above another semi basement, faced in glazed brown bricks, protecting the building at pavement level, as can be seen in the picture above. There are three floors above the lower ground, with a fourth over the impressively proportioned central section (onto Pixley Street). This central section extends behind the remainder of the building (on the south face). The wide windows of the Pixley Street elevation are raised one above another, and arranged as a giant arcade of three storey window bays inset under round arches. This elevation has real architectural quality in the way it has been arranged.

The end elevation onto Brickfield gardens is also well proportioned, and can be seen in the picture on the following page. It has three lights at second floor, with a steep

gothic gable built over the central window, giving interest and distinctiveness to this elevation. The building as a whole can, like the pub, be seen from many parts of the conservation area, including across Brickfield Gardens, and also Burdett Road, and makes a major impact on the locality.



Beside it onto Copenhagen Place is a two storey cottage in Queen Anne Style, of the same date as the Factory building beside it. The northern part was the caretaker's house. The southern frontage is in two parts, one with a remarkable Venetian styled window with a large red brick arch over it. Windows and doors have red brick lintels. The roof above has a steep pitch with tall chimneys above. This too is a building of some significant architectural interest.

Scale

The scale in this Conservation Area varies, and this is most clearly demonstrated looking into Pixley Street from Burdett Road.

The compact formality of Pixley Street, between brick wall on one side with the taller factory building at its end, and the small two and a half storey terrace on the other, suddenly gives way to the spaciousness of the open parkland of Brickfield Gardens extending into the distance beyond. It is a dramatically contrasting visual experience.

Throughout the conservation area it is this counterpoint between the formal mid-nineteenth century streets and the open parks and gardens they lead into which gives the conservation area its distinct character.

Examples are looking eastward from Clemence Street, looking westward from the junction of Burdett Road and Agnes Street and looking north from Copenhagen Place towards the Prince Alfred Pub.

Conversely, the opposite counterpoint can be found when standing in the lovely Parkland close to the junction of Clemence Street and Burdett Road, looking westward towards the Prince Alfred and on into the low narrow Clemence Street, or again, standing in the western end of Brickfield Gardens looking under the magnificent mature London Plane trees across the grass into Pixley Street. All of these are also memorable views, worthy of protection.

Trees, parks and open spaces

There are three principal public open spaces. These are; the park-like garden space (between Clemence Street, Burdett Road, Agnes Street and Copenhagen Place), the play area immediately to the north of it, and the Brickfield Gardens.

The former is planted with real parkland trees, possibly from the gardens of the former houses. It has a private parkland character.

Specialist trees and fine open grass areas give a slightly more intimate relationship with the surrounding terraces and the pub.

To the north of this is the recently completed formal play area, cleverly integrating a number of play components into the trees and grass around it, creating a variety of play opportunities for the children. This is arranged in a broad sweeping bank, from the south east, extending diagonally across this part of the park, to the northwest corner. Within this sweep are the play components and a variety of ground surfaces to suit. Planting and trees are recent, and need a few years to mature.

Brickfield Gardens is successful in a different way. The trees are if anything older, certainly taller, but are predominantly London plane trees. They probably survive from the original Brickfield Gardens. These are planted close to the four perimeters creating a fine sense of a classical public park in the green open space within.

From this green area there is a real sense of space and distance, particularly looking towards the factory from the western side. Some of the trees are real specimen trees, with magnificent forms, great giants with their branches rising up to hold the great green canopies above them. Again the relationship with the buildings, terraces, factory and garden walls that line the boundary is very successful.

All of the houses had their own rear gardens; though those small terraces onto Agnes Street and Pixley Street have had theirs curtailed to create a central parking space.

The long terrace onto Clemence Street has deep gardens, some 38 metres deep. These together make up an extensive private green area.

Views

There are a range of views within this Conservation Area. Perhaps most notable are the view towards the factory from across Brickfield Gardens from the west, the view from the factory looking west across Brickfield Gardens, and the view from the parkland close to the junction of Clemence Street and Burdett Road looking towards the Prince Alfred and into Clemence Street.

Also important is the physical form of Prince Alfred and its forecourt, looking east to the park and looking south to the factory, across the park. Lastly, there is a good view from the western end of Clemence Street past the long terrace and the pub into the parkland beyond.

Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area is one of the most significant in the Borough for the extent and quality of its green areas, both public and private. Both are equally important.

Summary

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest, illustrated by its history and significant architecture dating from the mid 19th century, but also for the quality of its green public and private areas, which are exceptional.

The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities.

There are major opportunities within this Conservation Area, to secure a good use for the Pixley Street Factory and the cottage beside it, the repair and restoration of the terrace onto Clement Street, and to replace the missing end of terrace building at the southern end of the terrace onto Burdett Road. All these improvements will make a significant difference to the already tangible 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 operate 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 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 are reflected in these documents following 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, 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 the Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area is described in detail in the Appraisal in the first part of this document.

In the Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area, 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, master planning 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

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

Grade II

There are no Listed Buildings in the Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area.

Locally Listed Buildings

There are no locally listed buildings within the Brickfield Gardens.

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.

Within the Conservation Area, the quality of the public realm, the surface materials, street furniture and other features are all integral parts of the character of the Conservation Area. 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.

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

There are major opportunities within this Conservation Area to:

- Provide good use to the Pixley Street Factory and to repair and restore the cottage beside it.

- Restore and repair the terrace onto Clement Street including its beautiful ironwork.
- Replace the missing southern end of the terrace located onto Burdette Road.

All these improvements will have a significant positive impact on the already tangible qualities that led to its designation.

Trees, Parks and Open Spaces

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 inclusion for all sections of the community.

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

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

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

Publicity

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

Consideration of Resources Needed to Conserve the Historic Environment:

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

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

Ongoing Management and Monitoring Change

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

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

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

Enforcement Strategy

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

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

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

Further Reading and Contacts

- The Buildings of England (London 5: East). Cherry, O'Brien and Pevsner.

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

Any other threats to the Conservation Area

- There are no current large scale threats to the Conservation Area, or to the parkland and Brickfield Gardens, but the dilapidated state of the former factory's two storey cottage is a source of concern.
- There are no proposals for major development in the locality around the Conservation Area other than those being considered on the south side of the Limehouse Cut, in and close to the St Anne's Conservation Area. It is important that this development takes careful consideration of its immediate context.

Priorities for Action (1-5)

1. Prepare detailed study of the Clemence Street and the Copenhagen Place terraces to enable preparation of repair/restoration advice.
2. Prepare a detailed capacity study of any vacant and undeveloped sites in the area.

3. Undertake a public realm study and implement improvements to historic streetscape.
4. Undertake further research into the history of the area to inform future development.
5. Prepare stakeholder guide with detailed guidance available for the Brickfield Gardens Conservation Area.