



Hackney Road

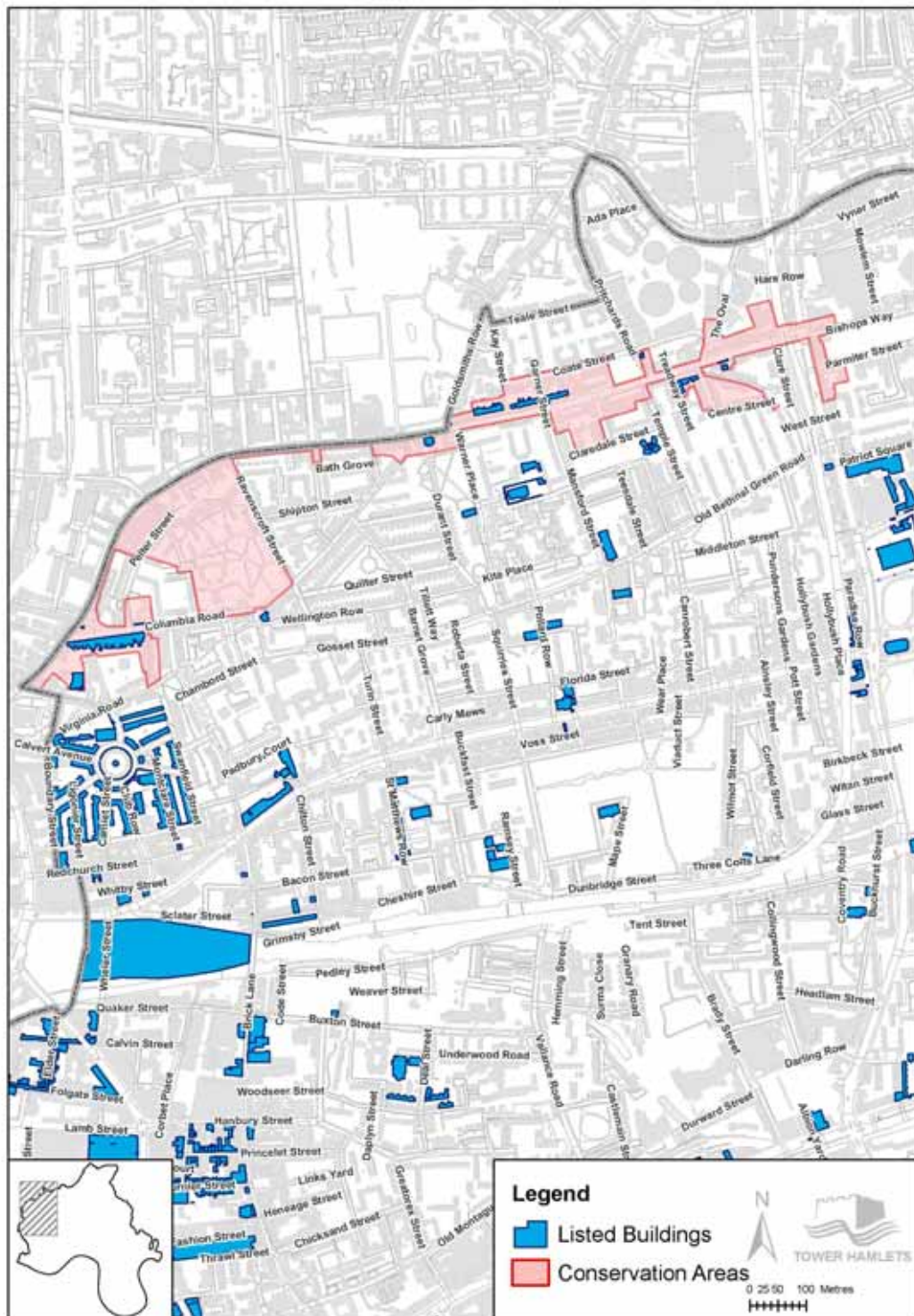
Conservation Area

1. Character Appraisal

2. Management Guidelines

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Adopted by Cabinet: 4th November 2009



HACKNEY ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

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

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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 help those who have an interest in the area to understand the quality of the built environment and how they can protect, contribute to and enhance it.
- 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.

1. Character Appraisal

Overview

Hackney Road runs along the Northern boundary of the Borough with Hackney from Shoreditch church in the west to the junction with Goldsmith's Row and continues eastwards to Cambridge Heath Road. The Conservation Area was designated on the 8th October 2008. It is intended to protect the special architectural and historic character of buildings and areas adjoining this busy route.

It is important to note that the northwest part of Hackney Road is in a separate conservation area managed by the London Borough of Hackney.

The area designated includes a number of listed terraces of the early 19th century and the surrounding context which supports a number of buildings of a similar and later date.

The townscape is composed of a dense concentration of modest sized properties where buildings are 2-4 stories high, where plot sizes are small and there is variety, rhythm and a human scale.

Inevitably Hackney Road and the immediately adjoining areas were subject to some bomb damage during the second world war and this has resulted in more recent developments within the area. One particular example within the Conservation Area is the 1957 Dorset Estate, the work of the renowned Modernist architect, Berthold Lubetkin.

History

Hackney Road probably follows the line of an important prehistoric routeway; and was subsequently used for driving livestock from Essex to Smithfield Market. Flanked largely by fields and market gardens until the end of the 18th century, it was following the establishment of the Hackney Turnpike Trust in 1738 and the rebuilding of St

Leonard's Church in Shoreditch, by George Dance the Elder, in 1736-40, that speculative development along the road began to take place.

Initially this development was residential and some fine houses were built, many of which survive today, for example, 363-373 Hackney Road, dating from 1820. However, as the century progressed the character of the Road altered and became increasingly commercial. Front gardens were built over to provide shops and workshops (good examples are at 475 and 489 Hackney Road) fronting the street and later developments were built on the back edge of the footpath. The character of the area which had been aspirational became more modest as the Victorian age progressed, and the area to the North of Hackney Road towards the Regents canal became increasingly industrial.

Today Hackney Road is a busy arterial road but the impression it gives is of faded grandeur, with elements of disrepair, neglect and vacant buildings such as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Sick Children, evident.

Character

The special character of the area is set out below.

Whilst the architectural and urban character varies along the length of Hackney Road , the buildings are mainly 19th century in origin. Groups of two, three and four storey buildings form coherent blocks. In some instances, these are terraced houses set behind front gardens, in others the front gardens have been built over and single storey shopfronts added. Elsewhere in the later Victorian terraces towards Cambridge Heath the building line becomes the back edge of pavement line.

Where they exist the long front gardens create a feeling of spaciousness and present a green fringe to the road. However, even where the building line is on the back edge of the footpath the wide span of the Road means that a feeling of spaciousness is maintained.

One notable feature of this Conservation Area at its eastern end is its proximity to the Columbia Road flower market, focus of the Jesus Hospital Estate Conservation Area,

which attracts visitors from all over London, and which has helped to regenerate this part of the Borough.

Early Georgian Villas and Terraces

337-355, 359-373 and 375-385 Hackney Road (North Side)

These residential properties date from the early 19th century, are Grade II listed terraced houses and form a group. This is an extensive section of the northern side of the road and whilst the height and architectural details of the buildings vary they none-the less form a cohesive group. They all exhibit a similar Georgian character and details (albeit in a various arrangements) being built of stock brick and being set behind long front gardens, with the exception of 375, which is built on a corner and has a shop unit built in the forecourt.

363-373 and 375-385 Hackney Road are two delightful terraces group of paired two storey Georgian Villas. The western pair are dated 1820. Characterised by their two storey height and set back from the road behind gardens they retain many of their original features, for example, windows, doors, fanlights, plaster mouldings.

444, 446-450, and 456 Hackney Road (South Side)

These early 19th century houses are listed and are set back from the road frontage behind gardens. Like the Georgian terraces on the north side they are built of stock brick, are low in scale and retain many features, for example the round-headed ground-floor windows with gothic glazing bars at nos 444 and 450.

Also, on the stucco flank wall of no 444 an excellent and increasingly rare example of recessed stucco lettering. This served as an advertisement for the now demolished Treadway Street Works of John Tann fire-proof safe and lock manufacturer. Two sympathetically converted small industrial buildings survive in Minerva Street behind no 450.

Pritchard Road, Coate Street, Sebright Passage and the Sebright Arms

Coate Street runs parallel to Hackney Road. It has an interesting and diverse building stock with a varied roof profile. It is of predominantly low scale on its south side and is of 2-3 storeys in height. The Sebright Arms is a turn of the century red brick public house with a clay tiled roof, which contributes positively to the street scene and which fronts both Coate Street and Sebright Passage, a narrow alleyway leading to Hackney Road. Sebright Passage is an interesting survival and whilst in need of repair is an essential part of the historic character. Nearby, on the corner with Garnet Street is the former Adelphi Chapel School date "1853, enlarged 1868". Lion Mills on the south side of Hackney Road consists of two rebuilt houses at nos. 394 and 396, and two large industrial buildings at the back, seen from Clarendale Street. Lion Mills were the premises of Henry Warden braid and trimmings manufacturer to the local furniture and clothing trades, using silk, cotton and wool. The buildings constitute an important representative of the post-1860 East London silk industry. Its other products included silk handkerchiefs, ties and scarves; and this side of the industry is represented by the former silk factory at the eastern end of Old Nichol Street in the Redchurch Street Conservation Area. On the corner of Clarendale Street and Teesdale Street, the former Teesdale Street School opened by the School Board for London in 1878 and improved in 1909.

The Dorset Estate

Slum clearance and bomb damage from the Second World War paved the way for more modern and sometimes experimental forms of social housing. The Dorset Estate is an example of this. Designed by Skinner, Bailey and the renowned Russian émigré architect, Berthold Lubetkin, who pioneered modernist design in Britain in the 1930s, this was built between 1955-57. In this post war era, this estate used prefabricated floor and wall components. It displays a number of interesting features with abstract facades and exciting staircase towers and incorporates social facilities such as a pub and library for residents.

The Peabody Estate and the Duke of Cambridge Public House

To the eastern end of Hackney Road the boundary extends to incorporate the 5/6 storey residential blocks of the Peabody Estate on Minerva Street. Constructed in red brick with yellow brick string courses and lintels the seven blocks (on the triangular site between Minerva Street and Cambridge Crescent) were built in 1910; with an extension (Block H) added in 1915-16 to the northern of the two blocks in Minerva Street. Built around a central courtyard the flats retain their architectural character and historic details. Adjoining the Peabody Blocks is the Duke of Cambridge Public House, this faces on to Cambridge Crescent. This building is a characterful Victorian Public House and its continued public use should be encouraged.

The junction with Cambridge Heath Road.

The junction of Hackney Road and Cambridge Heath Road is dominated by the two Great Eastern Railway plate girder bridges which cross over the road at this point. Buildings here are late Victorian and are set at the back edge of the pavement.

499-505 Hackney Road is an interesting red brick Victorian building symmetrically designed around an access through the building to a rear yard. To either side of the arched access are shopfronts and a central door to access the upper floors. Terracotta panels are used to decorate the building together with an ornamental cast iron balcony. All the buildings elements are important to its charm and character. The rear yard was formerly occupied by a Brewery, and an important remnant survives in the year where is it well seen from the junction of Emma Street and The Oval. To the east of the bridge the entrance to Bishops Way is flanked by two late Victorian pubs which contribute to the street scene and support the local community. Their continued public use should be encouraged.

Leopold Buildings

These Grade II Listed buildings line the southern edge of the Columbia Road, but have a significant presence on Hackney Road being visible in views across a triangle of green. These philanthropic dwellings were built by the Sydney Waterlow's Improved Industrial Dwellings Company in 1872. They are 4 storeys high and are brick constructed with a Flemish bond and roofs set behind the parapet. They are built

straight onto the street without any significant set-back. Recessed balconies and attics create a rhythm in the elevation and roof line. Although each floor is carefully detailed and articulated, there is an overarching simple and utilitarian style. The elevations are articulated to create vertical divisions to continue the rhythm of the existing fine grain. The recessed balconies, bay windows and ornamental mouldings serve to create the illusion of several buildings in a terrace, whilst the window proportions, type of brick and relationship of the building to the street are similar to the surrounding buildings. These buildings serve to illustrate the difference in approach between philanthropic housing bodies: Leopold Buildings was designed by the Industrial Dwellings Company to fit within the existing context whilst Peabody Estates were developed around a courtyard.

More or less opposite the eastern end of Leopold Buildings (and behind the surviving gothic stone piers and railings of Baroness Burdett-Coutts Columbia Market) are the remarkable single storey timber buildings of the Columbia Market Nursery School, erected 1929-30.

Land Use

Historically Hackney Road connected Essex with Smithfield Market and was a busy thoroughfare, for those taking livestock into the City. Today, although the type of traffic has changed it remains a busy route and the uses which adjoin it are mixed.

Residential uses are interspersed with commercial retail and wholesale uses, and some warehouse /light industrial uses.

Small-scale services such as shops, restaurants and pubs occupy the ground floors of many buildings, and it is these which help to give the road its vitality. The retention of public access uses at ground floor level is essential to ensure the continued vitality of the Road. Public Houses are of particular value to the community and their change to residential will be discouraged.

Scale

The great width of the street may be attributed to the need to drive cattle to market in an earlier age.

Hackney Road is made up of a mixture of historic terraces. Within this the height varies from the 2 storey Regency villas to the later 3 and 4 storey Victorian terraces. In some instances later single storey shop units have been built over the gardens of earlier houses. The area is predominantly low rise, with the exception of the Dorset Estate.

Where the historic townscape survives it is typically one of narrow frontages and even low level rooftops. These two elements are essential to the special character of this area which the designation of this Conservation Area attempts to protect. In some instances large scale development has already taken place and this fine grain character has been destroyed.

Open Space

This conservation area does not include any large open spaces but the private front gardens to the Georgian terraces and the width of the Hackney Road contribute to give the area a spacious green feel. The Dorset Estate is set within a green open space which forms part of its setting and character and this needs to be protected. Elsewhere views into neighbouring green spaces give the impression of more open space than actually exists.

Views

The views are mainly long views of the townscape, the terraces notable for their Georgian character.

Views of Leopold Buildings from Hackney Road are notable illustrating the way that the buildings sit within their context comfortably respecting the scale and grain of the area.

Views of the Great Eastern Railway bridges can be seen along Hackney Road from the West.

Summary

This is an area of particular special architectural and historic interest. The Hackney Road corridor supports a varied and interesting townscape, which represents a historic whole with a character greater than the sum of its parts. It forms part of the cherished local scene in this northern part of the Borough and is worthy of protection and enhancement.

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.

The area is on the border with the London Borough of Hackney and a coordinated approach is required to conservation.

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 Hackney Road Conservation Area is described in detail in the Appraisal in the first part of this document.

In Hackney Road, 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 and/or conservation plan 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.

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

Grade II

- Shoreditch Tabernacle Baptist Church, 18-20 Hackney Road
- 2-12 Columbia Road
- Leopold Buildings Columbia Road
- Columbia Road School Stone Piers and Railings
- Telephone Coin Box, Island at entrance to Columbia Road
- Telephone Coin Box at junction of Goldsmiths Row and Hackney Road outside the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children
- 337-353 Hackney Road
- 359-373 Hackney Road
- 375-385 Hackney Road
- 2 Pritchards Road
- 444-450 Hackney Road
- 456 Hackney Road and front boundary

Locally Listed Building

- 324 Hackney Road
- 326 Hackney 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.

Hackney Road is an important historic streetscape, and any highways works should seek to preserve or enhance its character.

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 a number of vacant or under-used sites which would benefit from sensitive refurbishment or re-development. Historic structures and buildings should be retained, and new development should respect the urban form, scale and block structure. Main entrances should be provided to the street, and servicing/parking arrangements should be discreet and appropriate to the townscape.

Trees, Parks and Open Spaces

There are no formal parks within the area, however, there are views into parks which are within other Conservation Areas or indeed in the London Borough of Hackney and these have a presence in the Conservation Area itself. They help to emphasise the green leafiness of the Hackney Road created by the long front gardens and contribute to the feeling of space which characterises parts of the road.

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.
- 'Bethnal Green: The North West: Hackney Road', A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 11: Stepney, Bethnal Green (1998), pp. 112-114. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22748>

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 the Conservation Area.

Any other threats to the Conservation Area

- The City Fringe is an area experiencing significant change. Hackney Road is in a transitional area and development will need to be carefully guided to protect the special character of the Conservation Area.
- The inappropriate large scale redevelopment of many neglected and empty sites along Hackney Road could seriously harm the special character of this historic area. Particular attention will need to be given to large residential and commercial developments to ensure the scale and grain of the area is reflected and protected within new developments.
- Constant traffic along the Hackney Road makes the street environment less attractive to pedestrians.
- Continued erosion of the character of the area by small works under permitted development, resulting in the loss of architectural features, ie doors, windows.

Priorities for Action (1-5)

1. Ensure co-ordination with the London Borough of Hackney to provide a unified approach to conservation along the Hackney Road.
2. Produce detailed design guidance regarding shopfront design
3. Undertake an audit of street furniture with a view to rationalising clutter
4. Identify disused and vacant buildings with a view to bringing them back into use.
5. Bring forward proposals for the enhancement of Sebright Passage.