



# Fairfield Road

## Conservation Area

### 1. Character Appraisal

### 2. Management Guidelines

Adopted by Cabinet: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

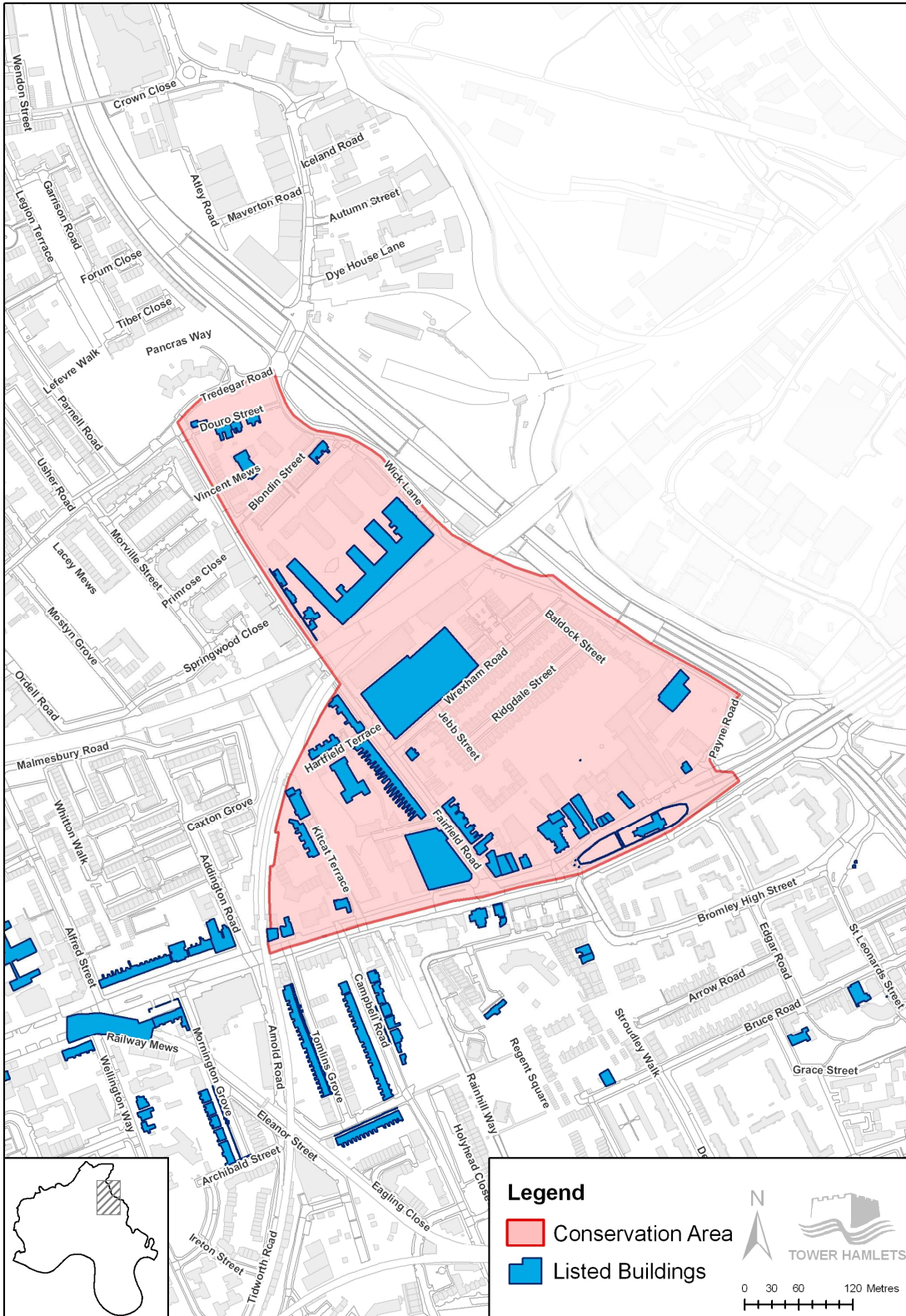
Link to and adoption of Addendum 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016

## 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.



**FAIRFIELD 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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# 1. Character Appraisal

## Overview

The Fairfield Road Conservation Area was designated in September 1989. The Conservation Area is bounded by Fairfield Road and the railway to the west, Tredegar Road to the north, Wick Lane to the east and Bow Road to the south. The area contains locally listed terraces and features the historic and architectural merits of the Grade II listed Bryant and May complex and Bow Garage. The importance of the area was emphasised by the presence of St Mary Bow Church (Ecclesiastical Grade B listed).

## History

The hamlet of Bow was established by the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and named after the 'bow' shaped arches of the first stone bridges built to cross the River Lee. The stone bridge was said to have been ordered by Queen Matilda, the wife of Henry I in 1110. Once while crossing the dangerous ford, she fell into the River Lee and narrowly escaped drowning.

Bow Bridge brought fame and traffic to Bow, at the site of this important river crossing. Bow Road and the area flourished and expanded in population, to the extent that by the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the inhabitants needed a church of their own. The chapel-of-ease was built to save the inhabitants of Stratford and Old Ford from having to traverse roads flooded in winter to attend worship at the parish church, St Dunstan's in Stepney. It was in 1311 that the then Bishop of London, Bishop Baldock granted the erection of a chapel-of-ease at Bow. In 1719, all dependence on Stepney Church ceased, at which Bow Church was consecrated as a parish church. As publicised as St Mary Bow Church, it was rescued from threats of total rebuilding and was repaired under the supervision of C.R Ashbee from 1900. The church endured several rebuildings, including that resulting from severe bomb damage in 1941.

The statue of William Gladstone was erected in front of the church in 1882 and was paid for by William Bryant of the nearby Bryant and May's Match Factory.

Bow was surrounded by fields, marshes and market gardens and was a popular countryside abode for wealthy and successful people over a long period of time. The area became a focus for leisure activities for Londoners, with country walks and feasts especially popular. Fairfield Road itself, originally a mere pathway, derives its name from 'Bow Fair Field', an event in the affairs of the village. It was the scene of an annual Whitsuntide holiday-makers resort. This "Green Goose Fair", as it was also known, was well established by the late 18th century, but was stopped amid protests in 1823 by the Vagrant Act, as it had become the scene of revelry bordering on the disorderly.

The last trace of Bow's countryside remains, although vastly altered, in the open space of Grove Hall Park. Grove Hall itself was a mansion which appears on historic maps of 1703. When the hall fell out of residential use, it was firstly used as an Academy for Boys and then an asylum for the military insane. Its use continued until 1905 and then the estate was put on the market. Its 12 acres of beautiful parkland stood in distinct contrast to the surrounding area which had become built up during the 19th century, namely the terraces at Fairfield Road, Douro and Blondin Streets and Kitcat Terraces.

A committee of gentlemen interested in the welfare of the East End of London was formed in an attempt to inaugurate a fund for purchasing a portion of the estate from the new owner. They appealed to the public and to the London County Council and Poplar Borough Council. Eventually the necessary funds were raised and Grove Hall Park opened in May 1909.

The remainder of Grove Hall Estate was developed as housing, to create the Edwardian terraces of Wrexham Road, Jebb, Ridgdale and Baldock Streets.

Proximity to the River Lee and easy access to the city of London meant that Bow has been the scene of industrial activity throughout its history. One of the most famous of Bow's industries was the Bryant and May Match Works. The site has an equally celebrated place in the history of unionised labour, as the scene of the first major successful industrial action carried out by a non-skilled, female workforce, the Match

Girls' Strike in 1888. The strike was the first of a series of strikes led by Annie Besant in the 1880s in the East End, against bad pay and working conditions and the first stirrings of mass trade unionism.

## **Character**

The prevailing character of the Fairfield Road Conservation Area is defined by its mixed character, with a strongly industrial feel bordering the railway and a more typically residential character to the south, east of Fairfield Road.

Clearly, the Bryant and May Match Works Factory sets the character for the northern half of the Conservation Area. Grade II listed, the massive and imposing buildings date from 1861 and are the most important surviving industrial complex in East London. The works were extended in 1874 for warehousing and offices for senior employees. This includes the picturesque group of red brick cottages that greet the Fairfield Road frontage. The fire precautionary water tower of the new factory built in 1909-11 is reminiscent of an Italian hill town.

To the north of the Conservation Area is Blondin Street, containing a group of 1989 terraces. The terrace is split into two parts aside a gated opening, planned as a principal entrance into the factory site, but was not formalised. At the extreme northern end of Fairfield Road, on the corner with Douro Street sits Pelican Cottage. Grade II listed, the cottage is early 19th century, stock brick with stucco plinth and hipped slate roof.

Just south of the railway line and east of Fairfield Road, is the Bow Bus Garage, which was originally built in 1907-8 as the London County Council's (LCC) tram depot and was further extended on either side in 1910-11. The bus garage has an assertive presence on the streetscape with its symmetrical brick façade, gables at either end and double storey height arched entrances. The Bow Garage was built on the land of the former 17th century Grove Hall, where the largest mansion once stood. The rest of the estate was developed with houses. The residential enclave of Wrexham Road,

Ridgdale Street and Jebb Street consists largely of generous red brick terraces of the 1890s to 1920.

Fairfield Road itself is aligned with the Grade II listed terrace at nos 2-22. They are of yellow stock brick with minimal detailing, including the stucco cornice and two sash windows each with plain reveals and Doric pilastered doorways.

There are also a number of locally listed terraces in this vicinity at 9-49 Fairfield Road, 51-67 Fairfield Road and Hartfield Terrace. With the exception of nos 42, 44 and 51 Fairfield Road which are mid 19th century Victorian buildings, the terraces along Fairfield Road are early 19th century, late Georgian and of stock brick with two windows each. At times they have a partly painted façade, minimally setback behind a low fence. The terraces at 9-16 Hartfield Terrace are early 19th century late Georgian buildings. Constructed of red brick and pitched slate roofs, this short terrace presents a hard edge to the streetscape.

Kitcat Terrace, built around 1850 and renamed after the local Councillor, Reverend Kitcat, retains its cobbled street and mid 19th century Victorian stock brick terrace. The street is terminated by a dignified neo-Georgian façade.

Nos 163, 199 and 223 Bow Road are all Grade II listed properties of the late 17th or early 18th century and are relatively rare survivals of pre-Victorian Bow. Together with several turn of the century commercial buildings and irregular boundary patterns, these create a varied but characterful streetscape. The corner of Bow Road and Fairfield Road is marked by the collection of locally listed buildings, including the Poplar Civic Centre, built in 1937.

The Fairfield Road Conservation Area presents a varied townscape, reflected in the widely differing ages and characteristics of its buildings. It presents a characterful townscape, worthy of preservation.

## **Land Use**

There is a variety of land uses in the Fairfield Road Conservation, which is predominantly residential. This includes commercial uses mostly confined to the Bow Road frontage, St Mary's Bow Church and the Bow Bus Garage. Located on the corner of Wrexham Road and Fairfield Road, the former Trolley Bus depot, built in 1910 is a Grade II listed structure.

The former industrial building, the Bryant and May Match Factory was re-established as a private housing development. It was closed in 1979 and then redeveloped as Bow Quarter, an inward-looking private housing development.

## **Scale**

The scale of buildings within the Fairfield Road Conservation Area varies, particularly along Bow Road, where its commercial buildings range between 1–7 storeys. Beyond the Bow Road frontage, the rest of the Fairfield Road Conservation Area is predominantly low rise, with the exception of taller scales and larger building footprints at the industrial sites. The main building of the Bryant and May Match Factory is 5 storeys tall with low pitched roof and 2 tall square towers of 10 storeys each. A group of 19th century cottages front the Fairfield Road streetscape. These 2-3 storey cottages are red brick with blue banding, with varied roofscapes, decorative chimneys and detailing.

Bow Garage is double storey in height, where the low scale residential terraces at Wrexham Road, Jebb Street and Ridgdale Street present uniform 2-3 residential storeys. Fairfield Road is flanked by double storey terraces with occasionally higher scales at street corners.

West of Fairfield Road at Kitcat Terrace, the scale ranges from 2-3 storeys, where also further north in the Conservation Area, Vincent Mews stands at 3 storeys. The locally listed terraces at Douro Street are double storey in height, where Blondin Street ranges between 2-4 storeys.



## **Open Spaces**

Grove Hall Park is the most significant public open space in the area. Located off Jebb Street and south of Ridgdale Street, this small part of the original gardens were preserved as Grove Hall Park. The southern part of the gardens encompasses the Grade II listed Bryant and May War Memorial, a slender white stone shaft topped with a cross.

The gardens are setback behind Grove Hall Court, separating Ridgdale Street's back of terrace from the gardens and is aligned with a judicious planting of trees. The large, mature trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders, as is the area bounded by Wrexham Road, the gardens and this section of Fairfield Road and Wick Lane. The landscaping of Grove Hall Park, coupled with the architectural quality and the surviving detail of the surrounding terrace of Ridgdale Street, define the character of this pocket green open space.

The island site of St Mary's Bow Church is enhanced by the abundant tree planting circling the church site and enclosed within gothic railings. In its presentation, St Mary's Bow Church is a combination of change over time. It dates from the 14th century with stone and brick additions and a tiled roof. Its tower is dated 15th century, with its upper part rebuilt in 1829. Its north vestry (circa 1700) and south aisle was rebuilt in 1794. Many proposals were submitted for the complete rebuilding and enlargement of the church in the early 18th century and again in 1829, 1882 and 1895, however this did not come into fruition due to a lack of funds.

## **Views**

The view north and south of Fairfield Road gives a glimpse of mid 19th century industrial East London, exemplified by the Bryant and May Factory and Bow Garage, which are set amongst a now predominantly residential townscape of intact terraces at Fairfield Road.

The clear definition of the streets and the character of the architecture create many high quality views. Within the residential enclave of Ridgdale Street, Jebb Street and

Wrexham Road, each terrace facade gives a repetitive and rhythmic character to the streetscape. The brick flank wall of the Bow Garage terminates the view from Jebb Street.

Setback behind the main Fairfield Road frontage, as approached from Grove Hall Court, the tree aligned pathway unfolds the parklands which face the rear roofscape of the Ridgdale Street terraces.

With traffic running on either side of the St Mary Bow church site, the Ecclesiastical Grade B church, the associated listed railings and statue of W. E Gladstone form a focal group in the centre of Bow, together with the locally listed Our Lady of St Catherine Roman Catholic Church.

### **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. The character and appearance of the area, as described in this appraisal, define its special qualities. There are minor improvements that could be made to buildings in the Conservation Area, but overall this has little impact on the qualities that led to its designation.

**Please also see associated addendum which was adopted on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

## 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 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy 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 Fairfield Road is described in detail in the Appraisal in the first part of this document.**

In Fairfield 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 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’. This is described in detail in policy CP49 of the Core Strategy of the LDF. In addition, applicants should note policy CP46 to ensure that access issues are properly addressed in work carried out in a Conservation Area.

## Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area

### Ecclesiastical Grade B (II\*)

- St Mary's Church

### Grade II

- 94 Fairfield Road
- 17 Fairfield Road
- 2 Fairfield Road
- 3 & 4 Fairfield Road
- 5 & 6 Fairfield Road
- Bryant and May Factory, Fairfield Road
- Bow Garage
- 2-22 Fairfield Road
- 163 Bow Road
- 199 Bow Road
- 223 Bow Road
- Bryant & May War II Memorial
- St Mary's Church Island Site, including iron railings, gate and piers to the churchyard
- Statue of W E Gladstone, St Mary's Church Island Site

### Locally Listed Building

- 5 – 9 Douro Street
- 7 – 21 Douro Street
- 33 – 37 Douro Street
- 3 Menai Place
- 2 – 50 Blondin Street
- 51 Fairfield Road
- 53 – 67 Fairfield Road
- 2a Fairfield Road
- 9 – 19 Fairfield Road

- 21 – 49 Fairfield Road
- 42 – 44 Fairfield Road
- 9 – 16 Hartfield Terrace
- Bow School, Hartfield Street
- 2 – 9 Kitcat Terrace
- Day Training Centre, Kitcat Terrace
- 121 & 123 Bow Road
- 141 & 143 Bow Road
- 157 Bow Road
- 161 & 161a Bow Road
- 167 Bow Road
- Our Lady of St Catherine Roman Catholic Church
- 179a Bow Road
- 181 Bow Road
- 183 Bow Road
- 185 Bow Road
- 189 Bow Road
- 191 Bow Road
- 19 – 21 Payne 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.

Fairfield Road is a busy traffic route in the Conservation Area, attracting constant vehicular traffic, particularly as the East London Bus Group holds its London buses at the Bow Garage site on Fairfield Road. Due to the evolved nature of the area, now predominantly residential in character, it should be investigated whether any design

strategies can be introduced to meet both residential and commercial parking needs. It is necessary to curtail the amount of on-street carparking, particularly its commercial parking provision in the area, in order to preserve and restore the character of the Fairfield Road Conservation Area.

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**

More detailed guidance should be produced on the management of small scale refurbishment works to individual flats, in order to protect the original fabric. There are minor improvements that could be made to the existing terraces along Fairfield Road including the re-painting, re-rendering, or cleaning of the individual facades, where the paint is flaking off the walls. While the structures themselves are intact, the terrace at 9–49 Fairfield Road requires some front yard fences to be repaired and the yard themselves to be removed of garbage. This will ensure the maintained presentation of the streetscape. The terrace at 2–22 Fairfield Road requires the reinstatement of ironwork and railings to the front of the properties, making a positive contribution to the Grade II listed terrace and the area.

Options for improving the pedestrian and cycle environment along Fairfield Road should be investigated, as at present the roadway is dominated by vehicular traffic, which does not highlight the historic and architectural importance of the area. Traffic movement could be slowed down by the careful introduction of speed humps at regular intervals along Fairfield Road.

Two houses at nos 42 and 44 Fairfield Road have been identified as sites of potential development. The houses are in need of immediate repair as they currently complement the corner store at Fairfield Road and Wrexham Road.



Some individual properties on the locally listed terrace on Fairfield Road are characteristic of late Georgian style. Several of the properties have suffered minor alterations in the form of replacement windows and more disfiguring to the terrace, the application of the pebble-dash over the front elevation brick work. All these alterations took place prior to the declaration of the conservation area.

Terraces such as these are designed to be uniform and regular in appearance, relying on the repetition of simple elements and a consistency of materials and details for an overall effect. Minor alterations, such as replacement doors or windows are unfortunate, where the complete pebble-dashing of a façade completely destroys the careful balance and continuity of the terrace façade. The result has created a discord and fragmentation to the elevation of the terrace to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area. Measures must be made to ensure that further damage to the brickwork is avoided and that further application of the pebble-dash is not allowed.

### **Trees, Parks and Open Spaces**

Grove Hall Park has been well preserved as a small pocket park to complement its residential surrounds. The green open space, Grove Hall Court pathway, the park's mature trees and playground equipment have all been well maintained. The simple character of the parklands should be protected and its ongoing maintenance ensured.

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 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](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk) or by contacting:

Tel: 020 7364 5009

Email: [dr.majorprojects@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto: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:

Mile End Old Town Residents Association

English Heritage

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

The Georgian Group

[www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk)

Victorian Society

[www.victorian-society.org.uk](http://www.victorian-society.org.uk)

20<sup>th</sup> Century Society

[www.c20society.org.uk](http://www.c20society.org.uk)

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

[www.spab.org.uk](http://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.

<check against Register>

**Any other threats to the Conservation Area**

(to be written at public consultation stage)

**Priorities for Action (1-5)**

(to be written at public consultation stage)

**London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

**ADDENDUM to Fairfield Road Conservation  
Area Character Appraisal and Management  
Guidelines Document**

**Adopted July 2016**

The additional guidance contained within this Addendum relates to non-listed houses within this Conservation Area



## **Purpose of this Addendum**

The purpose of this Addendum is to support residents who would like to make a planning application to extend their home in the Fairfield Road Conservation Area. It contains guidance covering extensions to the roof and to the rear of residential properties, in the form of an addendum to the existing guidance for the Conservation Area. Council officers have examined the Conservation Area in detail and have presented their recommendations in the form of this addendum, which should be read in conjunction with the Fairfield Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal which is available on the Council's website.

In order to further assist residents with the planning application process, officers have also prepared a Mansard Roof Guidance Note. This contains information on the most relevant planning policies that the Council must consider when making decision on planning applications; the character of historic roofs in Tower Hamlets; the elements of Mansard Roofs and best practice advice on how you should approach the design of a new mansard roof in a conservation area; and finally, the document includes some helpful tips for you to refer to when making a planning application for a new mansard roof in a Conservation Area.

The document is available on the Council's website at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk). Paper copies are also available in the Planning Reception at the Councils Offices at Mulberry Place.

## **Addendum to the Fairfield Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

Whilst the Council has a duty to ensure that change preserves or enhances a Conservation Area, it is aware of the space pressures facing families and the need to accommodate changing residential needs within its Conservation Areas.

The guidance below is specific to the Fairfield Road Conservation Area. It is intended to help home owners in understanding the character and significance of the Conservation Area and submitting planning applications within this Conservation Area. It is divided into two sections and relates to (i) roof extensions and (ii) rear extensions.

### **(i) Main roofs (i.e. the principle roof – excluding rear projections)**

The Conservation Area is more mixed in terms of land use and also in terms of building typology than many other areas. The terraced houses within this Conservation Area are varied in terms of date and form. They range from the simple, elegant mid nineteenth century terraces along parts of Fairfield Road, with their London roofs to the later nineteenth/early twentieth century terraces of Ridgedale Street and Wrexham Road which have pitched roofs.

Map 1, appended to this Addendum includes a thorough audit of the existing types of main roof (i.e. excluding the rear extension) which are located within the Fairfield Road Conservation Area. The audit includes all roofs in the Conservation Area, including listed buildings, but the guidance is specific to the non-listed buildings.

The Audit clearly illustrates that in most cases, the basic historic forms of the main roofs of the various terraces have survived, even where roof covering materials have been subject to change and/or other small scale changes have occurred. The main roofs of some terraces, Wrexham Road and Ridgedale Street, have been altered by the addition of dormers of various forms on the rear slopes. These alterations leave the front slope of the roof unaltered with the exception of the addition of rooflights in some instances.

Several terraces within the Conservation Area feature London (or Butterfly) roofs. These are an inverted 'V' in form with a central valley and ridges on the party walls between the individual houses of the terrace eg. Fairfield Road. These roofs are of low pitch and are concealed from the street (i.e. the front) behind parapets producing a hard, straight edged appearance, and strong parapet line. This visible lack of roof is an important architectural characteristic. At the rear, the parapet is nearly always omitted and the row of gently pitched gables, with the valley gutters in between is clearly evident. Chimney stacks are located along the party walls between houses (often in pairs). They are important Conservation Area features, forming part of the silhouette of the roofscape.

Some terraces have straightforward pitched main roofs; Ridgedale Street and Wrexham Street, incorporate gables over projecting bays on the street facade.

Hartfield Terrace also has a very low pitched gently sloping roof, hipped at either end of the terrace it is united as a whole composition with a single roof, unlike the individual roofs of Wrexham Road and Ridgedale Street. The hipped sections also feature two chimney stacks.

Roof features such as these and their associated chimney pots and party walls are important Conservation Area characteristics. The design and detail of features such as chimney stacks can vary and were the subject of changing architectural styles.



**Hartfield Terrace (above):** Gentle double pitched roof (with hipped ends): The roof unifies the terrace. A straightforward type of roof it is relatively rare in large parts of the Borough.





**Blondin Street (above):** The party walls project through the slope of the roof. Earlier and mid nineteenth century houses were built with roofs of gentle pitch; later nineteenth century houses were built with steeper roofs.



**Steeper Double pitch roof with gabled ends and front gable over projecting bay (above):** This type of main roof is very common in many parts of London but is rare in Tower Hamlets because of the age of much of the housing stock within the borough. The party walls project through the slope of the roof. Lots of these roofs on Wrexham Road and Ridgdale Street have been altered by the addition of a large dormer to the rear. This is less visible from the public realm.



**Fairfield Road (above):** London (or Butterfly) roofs concealed from the street behind a continuous parapet. Chimney pots are the only historic element to break the skyline formed by the parapet.

### Sensitivity to change (Significance)

Historic England in their guidance regarding alterations to the London terraced house note the need to retain the structure, character and appearance of a building, and note that proposals should not impair or destroy the overall shape and proportion of a house or detract from its historic character (English Heritage 1996: *London Terrace Houses 1660-1860*). This relates to a number of features but is particularly relevant when considering alterations to the roof form.

Map 1 includes some areas where change to the main roof form could be considered to be less harmful to the significance of the roof, the terrace and the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These locations are shown on the map as properties where roof alterations might be considered acceptable subject to a detailed planning application. This is based on an assessment of sensitivity to change of main house roofs within the Conservation Area undertaken in light of relevant national and regional guidance.

The degree of significance which was ascribed to main roofs took into account:

- *visibility and impact on the public realm;*
- *historic integrity (degree of change);*
- *the historic and architectural interest of the buildings concerned;*
- *the completeness of the group or terrace of houses concerned;*

- *the consistency and uniformity of the existing roofscape and its contribution to the character of the Conservation Area; and*
- *significance in terms of the Conservation Area.*

In areas of less significance it is important to note that there is no 'one size fits all' approach; scale and design in relation to the host building and surrounding buildings, materials etc. are all important considerations.

## **(ii) Rear Extensions**

Many of the houses within the Conservation Area were built with rear extensions (sometimes referred to as 'back additions', 'outriggers' or 'closet wings') as part of the original building. Stefan Muthesius in "*The English Terraced House*" states that "the back extension is the most varied and complicated part of the terraced house" (1982 Yale University Press)

The extension to the Victorian terrace house had its origins in the grander houses of an earlier era, in the structural hierarchy of public and private space and in the greater differentiation of functions developing during the 19th century.

Historically rooms in the home had been used for a variety of purposes but they increasingly evolved to become rooms with distinct uses, and particular public or private characters; public spaces such as the parlour were accommodated at the front of the house, whilst more private and support services such as the kitchen and scullery were located to the rear of the property.

With the need for cheaper more plentiful housing, the costly provision of a basement which was historically the location of the supporting rooms, was abandoned and the more private spaces were accommodated within a back extension.

The form of extensions varies quite a lot, with economics playing a role in the development, as they become paired under one roof, being built in conjunction with the adjacent house, resulting in cost savings and improved lighting levels to the main house. They also vary in width, height and length between terraces, some coming in two parts with a kitchen on the ground floor and bedroom above, and beyond this a scullery in a single storey with perhaps a lean too roof. Whilst generally regular within a terrace, the variety between terraces is noticeable.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the changing plan form within terraced houses begins to lose the back extension altogether, with the plot width increasing and the rooms formerly within the extension being accommodated within the house.

The terraces within this Conservation Area are modest in scale and size and most do not have original basements. There are a variety of types of back extension within the Fairfield Road Conservation Area, and less consistency

than in many areas. The Conservation Area also includes some early twentieth century properties where there are no original back extensions at all.

Map 2, appended to this Addendum includes a thorough audit of the existing types of rear extension which are located within the Fairfield Road Conservation Area. (To gain a full picture, the audit includes all rear extensions in the Conservation Area, including listed buildings).



**Two storey full height original extensions and single storey lean-to roofs (above).**



**Ridgdale Street (above):** Rear Box Dormers added to double pitch roofs

### Sensitivity to change (Significance)

The scope for rear extensions to be altered is often greater than for roof extensions. There are large parts of the Conservation Area where rear elevations are considered to have less significance in terms of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is the lack of a consistent form together with the lack of visibility from the public realm which offers the

opportunity for a slightly more flexible approach towards rear extensions to be supported. Where new extensions are not visible from the public realm their impact on the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area is minimised.

However, the variety of rear extensions means that there is no standard solution and when putting an application together it will be important to consider, the consistency and rhythm of neighbouring properties, the existing rear building line and the character of the house.

When assessing an application for a rear extension the following matters are taken into account:

- *visibility from street and impact on the public realm:*
- *historic integrity (degree of change);*
- *the historic and architectural interest of the buildings concerned;*
- *the consistency and uniformity of the existing group or terrace of houses concerned: and*
- *significance in terms of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.*

The impact of the proposals upon the amenity of neighbouring properties, the design, scale and materials are important considerations when assessing proposals for a rear extension. An extension should always be subordinate to the main building. It is very important to note that all general planning policies apply as elsewhere in the Borough.

Generally a single storey extension to infill the side return will be acceptable. Ideally this should be a lighter weight structure, its features should respect the scale of those features on the existing building and ideally it will be set back from the rear wall of the existing extension so that the prominence of the historic building envelope is preserved.

A common form of extension requested is a wrap around extension. This might also be acceptable, where the garden is of a suitable size, and where it is not visible from the public realm.

Where no back extension was originally intended a full width single storey extension which is sensitively detailed may be appropriate.

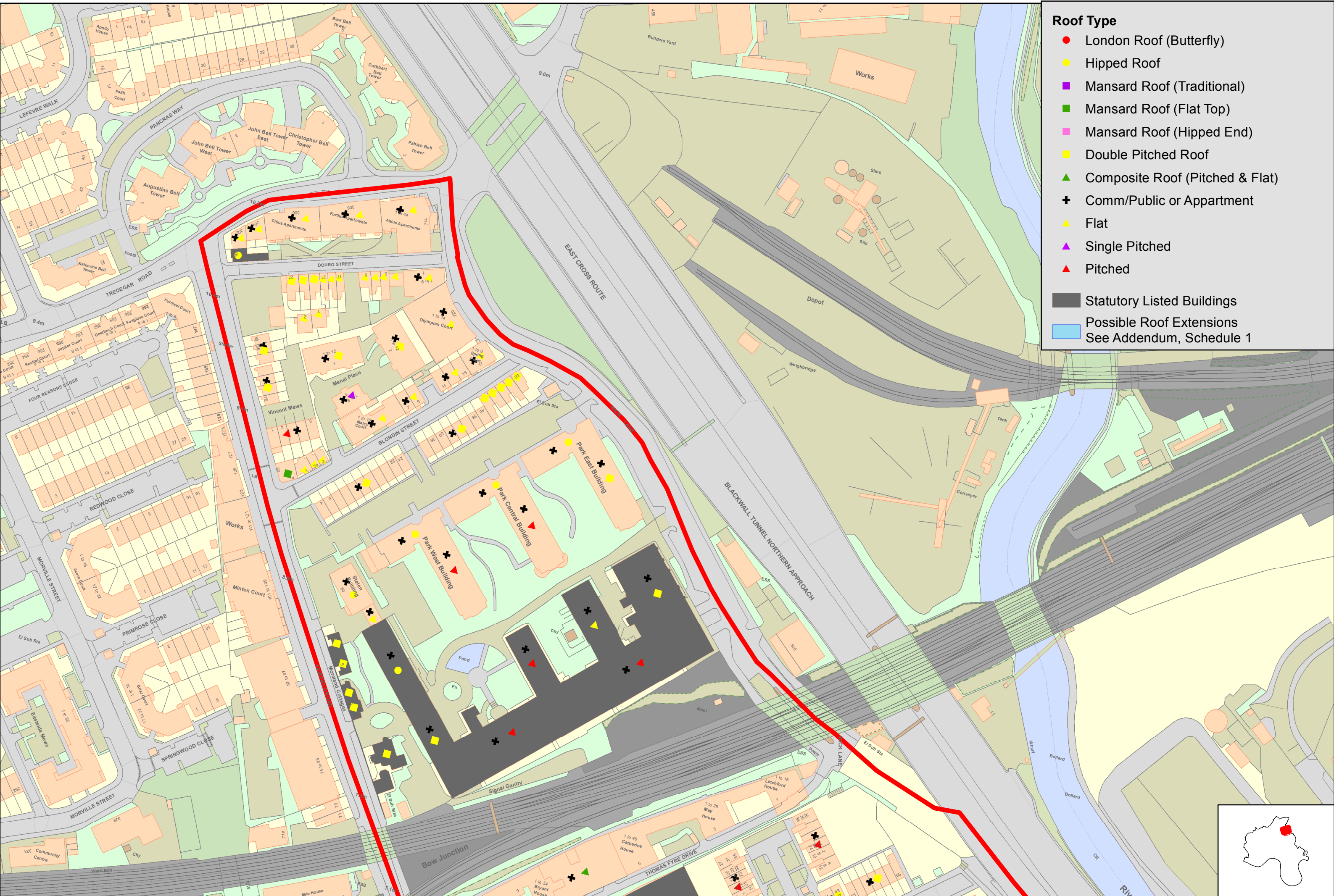
**It is advisable to speak to the Council's Duty Planner before submitting an application. The Council runs a pre-application service which you may wish to use. Details are available on the Council's website.**

## **MAP 1: ROOF AUDIT**

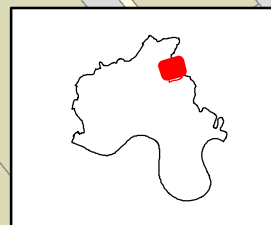
**Study of Main Roof forms of existing residential dwellings, including identification of roofs which are considered less sensitive to change.**

[Please note: this map is in two parts. The key is on the first page.]

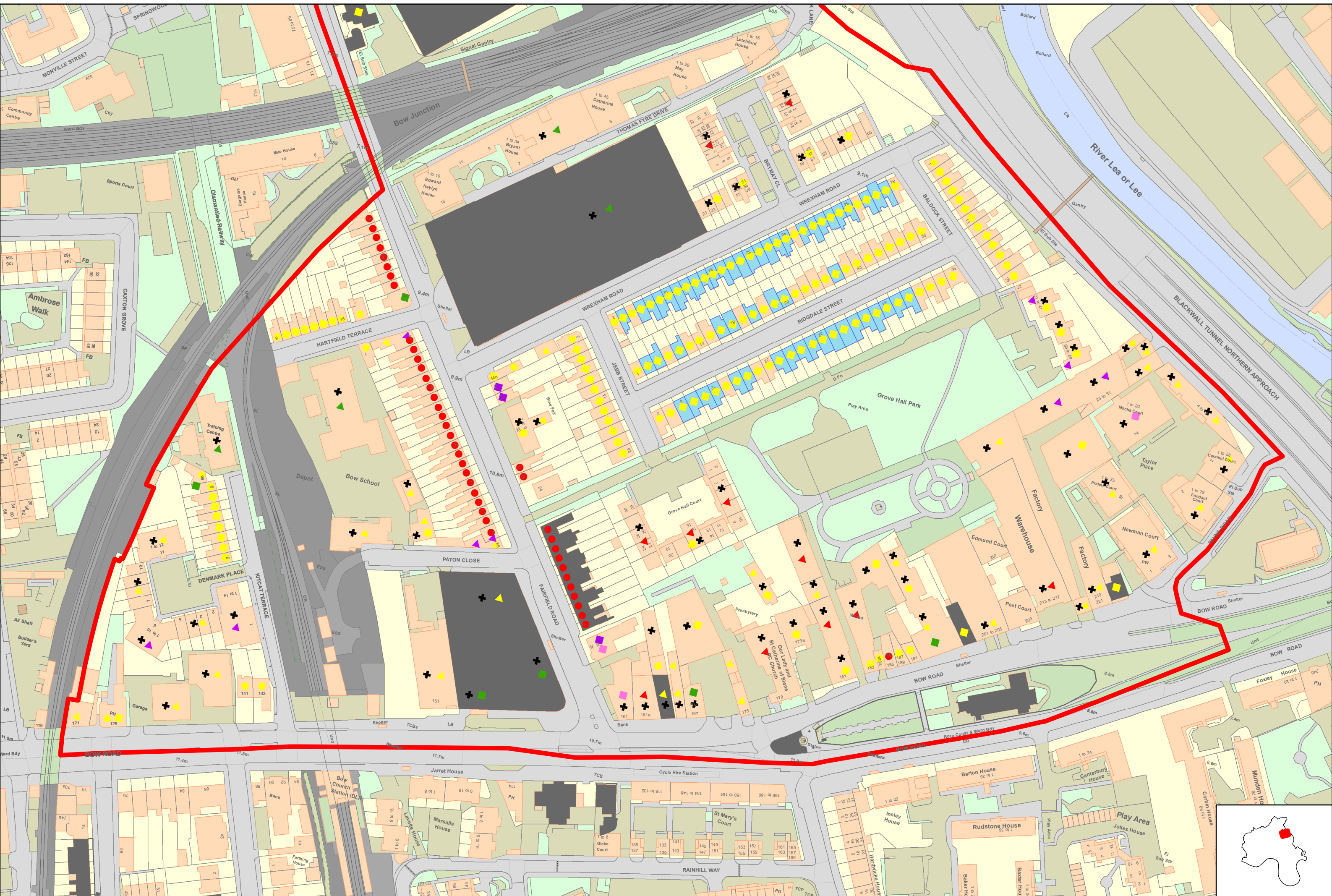
# Conservation Area : Fairfield Road (North) - Roof Audit



- Roof Type**
- London Roof (Butterfly)
  - Hipped Roof
  - Mansard Roof (Traditional)
  - Mansard Roof (Flat Top)
  - Mansard Roof (Hipped End)
  - Double Pitched Roof
  - ▲ Composite Roof (Pitched & Flat)
  - ✚ Comm/Public or Apartment
  - ▲ Flat
  - ▲ Single Pitched
  - ▲ Pitched
- Statutory Listed Buildings
- Possible Roof Extensions  
See Addendum, Schedule 1



# Conservation Area : Fairfield Road (South) - Roof Audit



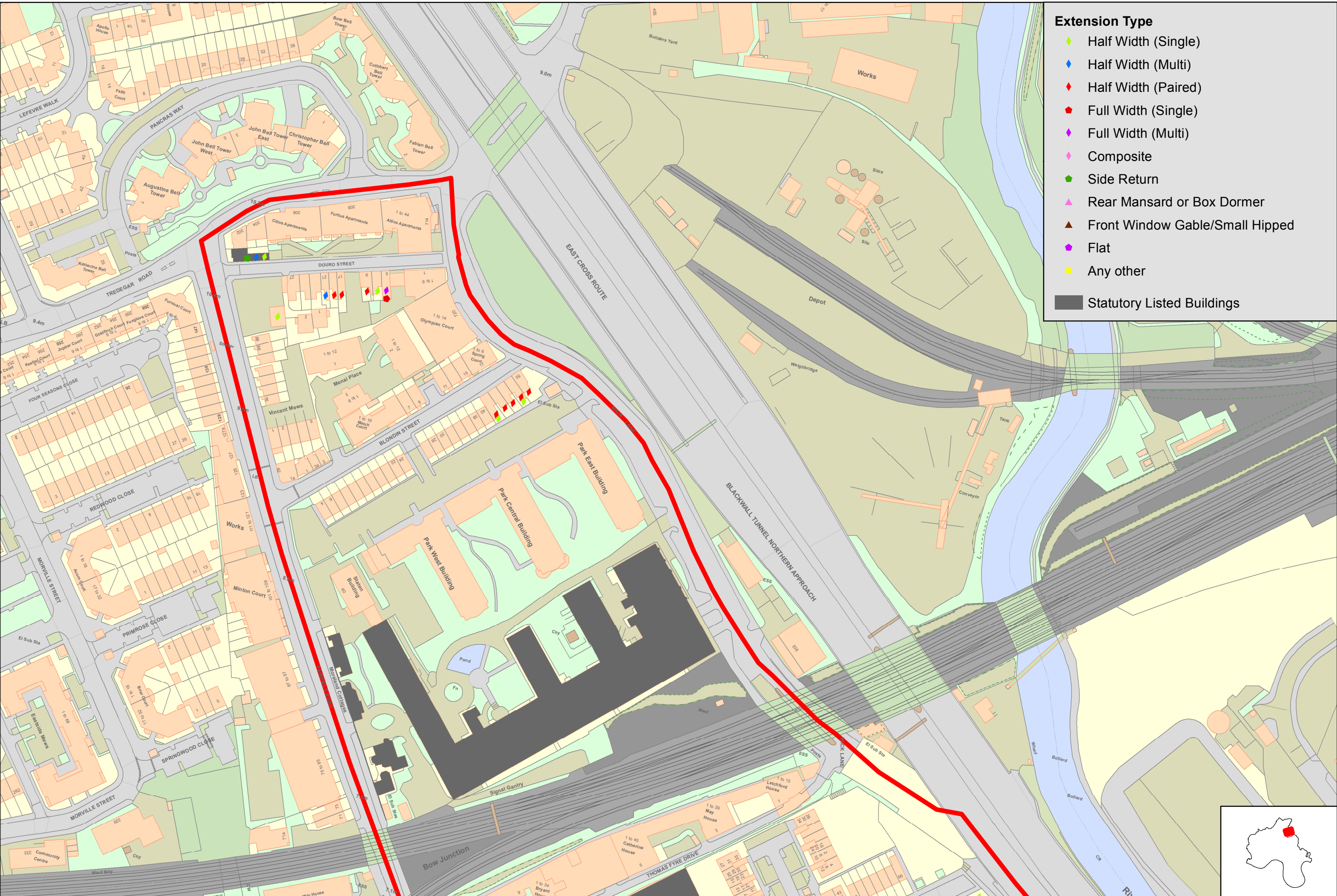


## **MAP 2: EXTENSIONS AUDIT**

**Study of existing rear projections and extensions.**

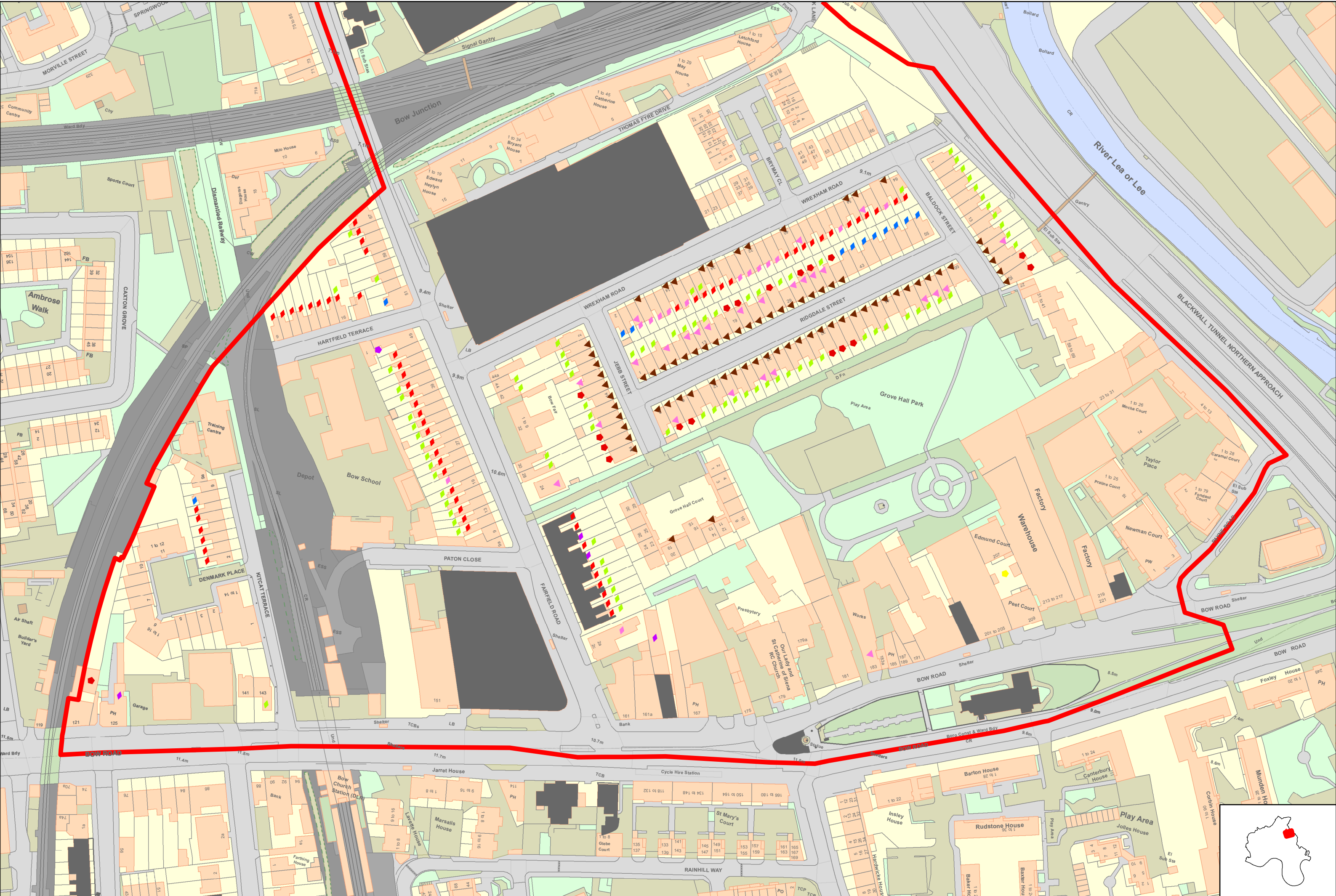
[Please note: this map is in two parts. The key in on the first page.]

# Conservation Area : Fairfield Road (North) - Rear Extensions Audit



- Extension Type**
- ◆ Half Width (Single)
  - ◆ Half Width (Multi)
  - ◆ Half Width (Paired)
  - ◆ Full Width (Single)
  - ◆ Full Width (Multi)
  - ◆ Composite
  - ◆ Side Return
  - ▲ Rear Mansard or Box Dormer
  - ▲ Front Window Gable/Small Hipped
  - ◆ Flat
  - ◆ Any other
  - Statutory Listed Buildings

# Conservation Area : Fairfield Road (South) - Rear Extensions Audit



## **SCHEDULE 1: FAIRFIELD CONSERVATION AREA**

**Properties where roof extension / alterations might be considered acceptable, (subject to a detailed planning application)\***

### **ADDRESS**

3 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
5 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
6 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
8 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
9 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
10 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
12 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
16 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
17 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
18 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
19 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
23 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
24 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
26 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
27 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
28 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
29 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
30 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
32 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
34 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
36 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
38 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW

39 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TN  
40 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
42 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
44 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
46 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
48 Ridgdale Street, London. E3 2TW  
4 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
8 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
10 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
12 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
14 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
16 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
18 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
20 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ  
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58 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ

60 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ

62 Wrexham Road, London. E3 2TJ

**\*. Inclusion on the list does not mean that a full mansard is acceptable.  
Where appropriate, alterations may simply be a small traditional dormer.**