

CANALSIDE CONSERVATION AREA Management Plan

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1. Introduction

This plan sets out the local authority's approach to managing the future of the Canalside CA. It is based on an appraisal of the character of the CA, the statutory planning policies affecting the area, the role of other local authority services in the area, and the requirements and aspirations of local people – both residents and businesses.

It is very much a partnership document, 'owned' by all parties involved in producing it. This partnership approach means that the plan will be respected, and will be guiding the conduct of all the partners.

2. Policy

This Management Plan indicates how the policies in the Local Development Framework (LDF), along with other matters, will figure in the on-going management of the Canalside CA. It is not a planning policy document itself however, and it does not form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Ealing's Local Development Framework comprises a series of documents. The following documents have a bearing on the Conservation Management Plan:

- The 'unitary development plan' (UDP), also known as the Plan for the Environment. This contains the statutory policies for development in the conservation area and elsewhere in the borough. Volume one of the UDP has policies for all types of development. There is a specific policy on conservation in Chapter Four on Design (policy 4.8). Volume two of the UDP shows sites and areas across the borough. The Norwood Green CA is indicated in table 10.12 and map 8 in volume two. The UDP also has a Proposals Map which specifies the definitive boundary of the Norwood Green CA. It should also be noted that the UDP comprises the development plan for the borough along with the Mayor of London's London Plan. For most purposes, the London Plan policies are reflected in the UDP, and there are cross-references to them in the UDP.

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- The series of supplementary planning guidance and supplementary planning documents provide more detailed guidance on how the statutory policies should be applied. These cover topics, sites and area.
- The Local Development Scheme sets out the programme of work on future planning policy. This includes reference to a Supplementary Planning Document on Conservation, which is currently being prepared, and which will be subject to formal consultation in the Spring of 2007. In May of 2007, the Council's preferred options for the planning of the borough will be published.
- The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Council's commitments to community involvement in all aspects of town planning, including matters pertaining to the Norwood Green conservation area.
- There are also other documents providing background information and monitoring data in the LDF. All published information on the Local Development Framework is on the Council's web site at www.ealing.gov.uk/planpol

3. Conservation Area designation

The Canalside Conservation Area (CA) is one of 29 (twenty-nine) of L.B. Ealing's Conservation Areas (CAs) and it is managed, like the others, by the legal regulations of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990*. The Council operates its responsibilities under the Act to "preserve and enhance" the character of the CA. The Council will also undertake regular reviews of the area to monitor the quality of development and the effectiveness of its policies and guidance.

3.1. Character appraisals

The Council has completed a Character Appraisal for Canalside CA, of which this Management Plan is a further part. The appraisal has been produced to describe and evaluate the special architectural and historic interest of the CA. The statement of character will provide a basis from which to evolve not only the making of development control decisions, but also for the informed framing of design guidance. The appraisal is the basis for the direction of this Management Plan, identifying the elements of special interest of Canalside CA that require attention or effort. The appraisal also provides a valuable resource upon which to defend Appeals against refusal of planning permission.

3.2. Archives and the importance of the past

The CA contains a good deal of historic fabric and evidence of this has been included in the appraisal to demonstrate the evolution of the area over the past 200 years or so.

The appraisal deals especially with the period from the late 18th century to the present day. During the early 20th century the large parts of the area immediately surrounding the canal and its towpath were developed from agricultural land for industry and residential suburbs and, as a result, sections of the canal took on a strongly urban character, which contrasts strongly with the surviving areas of rural character. At the same time, widening and repair of the canal resulted in the loss of much of the canal's older character provided by characteristic building materials. By the mid twentieth the canals had largely ceased functioning as industrial waterways, although new rules for leisure boating and residential moorings have evolved. Within the redevelopment of industrial sites surrounding the canal the focus of built development has turned from

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addressing the canal as an important part of the transport infrastructure as road transport has become more significant. Elements of the past development of the canals may still be felt and understood, thus posing questions about protection and enhancement as the development of sites and existing properties within and surrounding the CA inevitably unfold.

4. Development control

As a result of the demand for development, the character of the CA is under constant threat posed by unsympathetic, poorly designed and executed new buildings, extensions and alterations in its setting. The situation therefore highlights the role of development control in managing the future changes to the CA.

4.1. Principles for development control

The immediate surroundings of the Grand Union Canal and Paddington Branch and its immediate environs are under strong development pressure. Sensitive and responsive management is required in order to cope with this pressure and the following principles will be adopted to guide the Council in its control of development:

1. The Council will apply the principles, guidance and regulations outlined in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and the broader guidance of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15)* and any subsequent revisions or additions.
2. The Council will apply the policies outlined in its *Plan for the Environment, the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* as adopted in October 2004, until such time as these policies are replaced by policies in the emerging *Local Development Framework*.
3. The Council will require all planning applications affecting land within or adjacent to the conservation area to be supported by a Design and Access Statement. This should be a brief but thorough guide to the reasons for the development and how the design fulfils these, together with a statement concerning any access issues that may exist. Officers of the Council can provide assistance to applicants with more information and with examples on file of successful Design and Access Statements.

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4. A major requirement for any development proposal in a CA or in its setting is quality, covering the design, materials, workmanship and execution.
5. The Council will not dictate on the choice of architectural styles of any proposed new buildings, extensions or alterations but the position may be simply put as follows:
 - Contemporary and Modernist styles are entirely acceptable if they are high in quality and provided that they remain sympathetic in the context and towards the host building and/or other neighbouring buildings.

OR

- Replicas of good, older buildings may be preferred provided that they are properly researched and high in quality. The design, scale, massing and detailing of such Traditionalist schemes should accurately replicate the contextual, local materials.
1. The drawings through which proposals are submitted should clearly and competently demonstrate the intentions of the development, preferably being accompanied by photographs and anything else that can demonstrate the project's aims.
 2. The Council will make use of technically experienced and qualified Officers in guiding the assessment and determination of all applications received.
 3. Applications for work within or in the setting of in CAs must be accompanied by clear indications of the materials to be used in producing the external finish and architectural details of the proposed buildings. Actual samples of the materials should be submitted as part of the preparations of the scheme and/or in the course of beginning on-site building operations.
 4. Where possible, the Council recommends pre-application consultation. Planning Services and applicants may thus work

jointly to produce schemes that are successful and high in quality. Experience has demonstrated that advance work of this sort is the most effective and efficient way of preparing applications.

5. Preservation and enhancement

5.1. *Understanding the asset*

The Character Appraisal of which this Management Plan forms a part is central to understanding the Canalside CA and its future needs. As a result of the appraisal process, the aspects of the area that are under the most threat have been identified. The threats include the deteriorating condition of the towpath, pressure for redevelopment of industrial land and development of agricultural land in the vicinity of the canal, the appearance of insensitive land uses in the vicinity of the canal, potential requirement for 'upgrading of historic bridges, and overshadowing of the canal by new development. In addition the potential for development in neighbouring boroughs to affect the appearance of the CA is considerable.

New developments have the potential to further break down the historic relationship of the canal with its industrial surroundings. There are a number of underused industrial buildings and some historic Canalside buildings that are derelict and at risk within and in the immediate vicinity of the CA, the loss of which would be a negative impact on its historic character. The loss of much of the nineteenth century canal fabric has made what remains particularly valuable as a result of its rarity.

As relatively secluded space the CA is subject to a number of antisocial activities, including illegal dumping of waste, graffiti and vandalism, which all detract from its appearance.

5.2. Maintaining quality

The Council's attention to quality in the Canalside CA will be maintained through its contribution to the following elements of development and alteration.

1) Quality of applications

In line with PPG15 the Council will not accept outline applications for proposals in CAs. Full applications will be required to be supported by properly drafted, accurate, scale drawings with plans, sections and elevations. In many cases for large schemes the Council will also expect analytical drawings, showing proposals in context, either through streetscape sections or three-dimensional images.

2) Quality of materials

The Council will, where possible, require that materials proposed are submitted as part of an application and not as a condition.

3) Details

Where appropriate to aid in the assessment of an application, the Council may require the submission of large-scale construction detail drawings. This enables officers to check the quality of what is proposed and ensures that on site design is not left to the builder.

4) Experienced persons

The Council will always advise that applicants appoint both consultants and builders who have experience in historic building work.

5) Upvc (plastic) in window frames and other architectural elements

The Council has a well-founded preference for traditional, renewable materials and will therefore exercise its powers to advise and to insist, in cases where appropriate, against the use of architectural elements and fenestration details in Upvc or other manufactured substitutes.

Plastic window frames and doors are not felt to be able to replicate the quality and appearance of original timber windows in CAs. Upvc is non-renewable and contributes to pollution. When used elsewhere on buildings, such as porches, barge-boards and conservatories it can have a negative effect upon visual appearance that should not

be permitted in CAs. Depending on the individual circumstances, aluminium may not be considered an acceptable replacement for steel in window frames.

Generally, the Council believes that it is the attention to detail and the specific concern about quality at all levels that will help to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Canalside CA.

5.3. *Preserve or enhance*

As outlined in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15), proposals for work with the historic environment and, in particular within CAs, must, as a minimum, preserve the character of the CA. The Council supports this standard as a basic requirement but will always encourage applicants and their agents to develop schemes that will actively enhance the character of the CA. In meeting these fundamental requirements the Council will require that proposals are demonstrably a faithful replication of the local historical precedent or a high quality contemporary building as described above in 3.1.

5.4. *Elements at risk*

As previously described, the quality of any CA can be damaged to a significant degree by the loss of historic details whether twentieth century in origin or earlier and the nature of this threat has led to the CA designation of the Canalside and other parts of the Borough. The Council regards it as important to preserve certain details for the sake of the contribution they make to the local architectural character.

Therefore, the protection of the following elements of the historic environment in the Canalside CA will be of high priority:

1) Historic bridges

The CA contains three bridges of late eighteenth or early nineteenth century origin, which relate to the origins of the canals' construction. They are narrow and create bottlenecks for vehicle traffic. Given pressures for upgrading of such structures, these bridges should be protected through statutory listing in recognition of their contribution to the survival of the canals' nineteenth century fabric.

2) Early 20th century industrial buildings

Several early twentieth century industrial buildings, with particularly characteristic design elements, including saw toothed roofs, engine houses with tall brick chimneys and

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use of traditional red brick and London stock brick are located within or in the immediate vicinity of the CA. These buildings make a significant contribution to the character of the CA and provide evidence for the industrial origins of the surrounding residential areas. However, redevelopment of surrounding industrial land has left them as isolated survivors of the past landscape and there is pressure for redevelopment of these sites for more intensive use. New uses that preserve the exterior appearance of these buildings should be considered in preference to demolition and replacement.

3) Industrial waterside

Historically the Canalside within the industrial areas would have been a bustling area of activity. New developments in these areas have focussed on road frontages without consideration for routes through to the Canalside or use of the area to create an attractive buffer to the industrial activity and encourage better use of the area by pedestrians. There is potential for further redevelopment to continue to degrade the character of the CA in this manner. The sensitive use of the Canalside and provision of access to it should be considered when assessing applications for redevelopment of industrial sites adjacent to the CA. The value of using traditional materials, particularly red brick and London stock brick to enhance the character of the CA, as well as sensitively chosen public realm should also be considered when determining such applications.

4) Historic Fabric

The appraisal has identified a number of areas where historic fabric of the canal, including brick wall and traditional stone copings, have survived. The Council will work with British Waterways and councils of neighbouring London Boroughs to ensure that this fabric is preserved wherever possible.

5) Overshadowing

The attractiveness of the Canalside as publicly accessible open space, as well as its importance as a wildlife corridor, could be considerably affected by large areas of overshadowing adjacent developments. The desirability of preserving natural lighting of the CA should be considered when determining applications for new development in its immediate vicinity.

6) Window frames and doors

Guidance will be given as part of the Canalside Conservation Management Plan for the retention of existing traditional windows and doors and will be specifically concerned to avoid and to advise against pollutants and non-renewable materials as replacements.

7) Brickwork

The management of brickwork and the pointing of walls is a critical issue in preserving details of the Canalside CA.

8) Open spaces

The open spaces surrounding the Canalside are highly important to its character. Where possible the interconnections between the Canalside and these open spaces should be improved to encourage better use of the Canalside and to enhance its setting.

9) Satellite Dishes and Telecommunication Installations.

Satellite dishes are a common problem in many CAs. They disfigure the fronts of historic buildings and also cause a loss of historic character when fixed in locations that may be seen from within the streets and open spaces.

In the Canalside CA satellite dishes are regarded by the Council as not being in character and therefore will only be acceptable when they cannot be easily seen from the streets or other public parts of the area.

Telecommunication installations are regarded as causing great potential harm to the historic character of the Canalside. They would be unacceptable near the Listed Buildings for their detrimental effect on the setting of the Listed Buildings and they will also be resisted in any other part of the designated area where their presence is deemed to cause harm to the historic character.

5.5. *Monitoring and Review*

The Council will review its CA Appraisals as part of a five-year programme of regular review and monitoring in compliance with policy reflecting the obligations imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5.6. Conservation Strategy and Practice

Ealing Council is in the process of reviewing its 29 designated CAs, some of which have in place Article 4 Directions (A4D) where these are appropriate. A4D mean that the usual rights of individual property owners to make Permitted Developments are suspended and therefore all significant changes or developments would require planning permission. Although the Canalside is not currently being proposed for widespread A4D measures, the Council will consider if it is appropriate to propose the application of A4D in parts of the CA.

To maintain all aspects of the “special character and appearance” of the 29 CAs, the Council will need to retain technical advisors specializing in the preservation and conservation of historic buildings, landscapes etc. A regular five-year cycle of study and review will need to be maintained to assess and monitor the CAs with the aim of the preservation of the areas in the long term. Overall, the Canalside CA must be protected: firstly for its residents but also for the many non-residents who pass through this remarkable urban oasis on a daily basis.

5.7. Threats to the CA

The CA appraisal of the Canalside has shown the ongoing deterioration of the special character of the area due to a number of threats that include:

- Poor surfacing and deterioration of the canal towpath and lack of appropriate public realm including benches and litter bins
- Creation of monotonous and inaccessible frontage in industrial districts and generally poor accessibility to/from the Canalside
- Potential loss of traditional Canalside buildings in Ealing and neighbouring London Boroughs
- Use of poor quality boundary treatments along the canal towpath
- Use of the Canalside for illegal dumping of waste
- A small number of family houses are included in the proposed extensions to the CA. Many of these retain traditional timber framed windows and doors, which add greatly to their historic character. However, neighbouring buildings have had such features replaced with unsympathetic

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uPVC units resulting in erosion of their historic character.

Whilst it is considered inappropriate to adopt an Article 4 direction in this instance, the Council will provide residents within the CA with guidance on the advantages of retaining historic features and making use of renewable materials.

In particular the areas considered to be at greater risk are:

- Industrious Cottages, The Common.
- Nos 1 – 23 Bankside

6. Consultation

The strength of the Canalside CA Appraisal and Management Plan relies on the knowledge and commitment of residents and other key stakeholders. Both documents have been produced in partnership with members of the community and other Stakeholders (including British Waterways Heritage Advisors) who have provided the authors of this work with their expert views and knowledge to help positively shape the future of the CA. Wider views will be sought for both the Appraisal and Management Plan, during the next five-year period of review.