

REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	14 March 2013
Subject:	Proposed Amendment to the Boundary of the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Keith Ferry, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Map showing extension to the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area Appendix 2 – Consultation responses Appendix 3: Recommendation from LDF Panel held on 4 March – to be circulated

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the results of the public consultation over the proposal to extend the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area.

Recommendations:

It is requested that Cabinet approve the extension to the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area Conservation Area as shown at Appendix 1.

Reason: (For recommendation)

As part of the ongoing programme to review the borough's conservation areas, an area adjacent to the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area has been identified and assessed as worthy of Conservation Area status. The incorporation of this area within the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area will ensure the extended area is covered by the Council's adopted Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (May 2008).

Section 2 – Report

A. Introduction

1. The Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAAMS) was adopted by the Council in May 2008. The CAAMS included a review of the boundaries of the conservation area, based on further research and study of the area, and suggested that the Council should consider an extension to the Conservation Area to include those areas shown on the map in Appendix 1. Also, at the 15th March, 2011 LDF Panel meeting concerns were raised over the lack of protection for locally listed buildings. The extension to the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area would bring 23 locally listed buildings within the Conservation Area introducing more planning controls including controls over demolition. At the 11 October 2012 Cabinet meeting it was agreed that public consultation would be conducted over the proposal to amend the Conservation Area boundary. The results of this consultation are presented within this report.

B. Options considered

2. The option of taking no action was considered as an alternative. However, it was recognised that not acting on the proposed extension to the conservation area could undermine the value of the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy since it would not cover these areas of locally listed buildings and so it could put this heritage at risk.

C. Proposed Extension to the Conservation Area Boundary

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3. It is proposed to extend the boundary to this conservation area to include:

1 (odd) Grove Hill Road,
2-12 (even) Grove Hill Road,
2 to 24 (even) Peterborough Road,
4 Roxborough Avenue,
and 28, 30 47 and 49 Roxborough Park.

4. The extended boundary is illustrated on the map within Appendix 1. These areas immediately adjoin the existing conservation area and meet the criteria for conservation area status as set out in the Harrow Unitary Development Plan for conservation area status.

5. The requirements for Conservation Area Status are set out within the saved UDP policy D14 which states in paragraph 4.48 that to warrant designation as a Conservation Area the area should fulfill two or more of these criteria:

- i) Areas with a high concentration of Listed Buildings whether statutorily or locally listed;
- ii) Areas of historical, social, economic and/or architectural merit;
- iii) Areas with a high proportion of buildings built prior to 1920, which remain largely unaltered;
- iv) Areas built post 1920 that are innovative in planning or architectural detail, and where a large proportion remain unaltered;
- v) A significant group of buildings with distinct physical identity and cohesiveness; and
- vi) Areas which have a special quality, where the site layout and landscaping are of exceptionally high quality and/or contain historic open space, natural landmarks or topographical features;

6. The proposed extension to the Conservation Area warrants designation as it meets two or more of the above criteria. This is because the area is of high architectural quality and historic interest. In all, the proposed extended area would add a high concentration (22 of 24) locally listed buildings. The proposed area would add a high concentration of buildings built prior to 1920 which remain largely unaltered since all are illustrated on a 1914 OS Map. Furthermore, all buildings appear to be in a good condition and to be fairly unaltered, with most retaining original windows. The buildings also form distinct groups of physical identity since they largely form terraced clusters of a continuous design or symmetrical semi-detached properties. Also, the properties link in well to the existing conservation area since they are of a similar bulk, siting, and use of decorative detailing, for instance in the Gothic or Arts and Crafts style. They also use the same style of high quality materials for example, red brick and clay or slate tiles. Furthermore, again there is generally a good level of private greenery around the residential properties adding to the streetscene.

D. Results of Public Consultation

7. Following approval from Cabinet on 11th October, 2012 public consultation was carried out from 20th November to 18th December, 2012 in order to gather more information on how the area meets the criteria for conservation area status. The public consultation entailed letters to all residents of the proposed additional areas, a notice in the local paper and consultation with national and local amenity groups such as the Harrow Heritage Trust, the Harrow Hill Trust, the Victorian Society, the Twentieth Century Society and English Heritage. The consultation responses and how these have been addressed are included as appendix 1 and summarised below.

8. Consultation responses on the proposed extension to the conservation area were two in support and one against. That against stated the buildings were of insufficient character and cohesive quality, relate more to the town centre than the conservation area and if worthy of inclusion would have been included already. However, the buildings are recognised as being of architectural and historic interest as all but two are locally listed and many are listed as pairs or groups indicating their cohesiveness. There is a commercial element to the proposed area linking it to the town centre but this is already present in Lowlands Road in the conservation area. Conservation area boundaries are often reviewed resulting in many extensions over the years most recently Tookes Green Conservation Area, Pinner was extended in 2009 and Roxborough Park and the Grove itself was last extended in 1991.

9. Consultation responses in support gave the following reasons: the proposal has merit; would benefit from inclusion; has distinct physical identity and cohesiveness; excludes the modern commercial building; there is good detailing and the office building stable building is good development; and houses are in keeping with others in the conservation area. These responses illustrate further how the proposal would meet ii and v of the criteria for conservation area status. The consultation response in support also states proximity to the town centre increases the need for care.

10. One consultee stated consideration should be given to including 51 and 53 Roxborough Park and an empty plot within the conservation area as they would link up with the conservation area; are prominently positioned and additional conservation control would ensure an attractive 'gateway' to the conservation area is maintained. Following a survey it was found the criteria for conservation area status was not met and sufficient conservation controls exist. The buildings are of no particular architectural or historic merit and whilst these plots mark a gateway to the conservation area and existing conservation controls ensure development here would need to preserve the setting of the adjacent conservation area.

E. Why a change is needed

11. Since this area is worthy of designation as a conservation area it is important that it receives the same protection that conservation area status brings as the existing parts of the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area. The purpose of designation of a conservation area is not to prevent change but to ensure that where changes take place they preserve

or enhance the character of the area. Preservation of an area is a recognised role for conservation areas. Less explicit however is the objective of enhancement, through management plans, implied by such designations. Addressing the challenges of climate change, meeting modern living requirements and ensuring that alterations to properties secure wider improvement to the character of an area will have a positive impact upon an area and upon property values. In general such designations have been found to enhance property values rather than erode them. The extent of permitted development within conservation areas is more limited than outside of such areas but “article 4” directions, requiring for example, explicit approval for changes to windows, are not being considered at present.

F. Legal Comments

12. The Council has a duty under section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Act”) to review its conservation areas and to determine whether any further parts of the areas should be designated as conservation areas.

The extension to the Roxborough Park and Conservation Area boundary accords with the duty under section 69(2) of the Act.

G. Environmental Screening

13. This matter is not subject to requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment nor Sustainability Appraisal.

H. Financial Implications

14. It is unlikely that there would be any financial implications, especially as an article 4 direction is not proposed for these areas. There are no additional financial costs, other than the requirement for additional staffing time. Staffing time would be similar as the buildings concerned are already locally listed and therefore conservation officers already comment on applications affecting these buildings. The costs (printing and distributing of letters to residents confirming the extension to the conservation area) will be contained within the existing LDF service budget.

15. For owners and occupiers within the conservation area, the cost of bringing forward changes to their homes, where this required planning permission as a consequence of designation may increase. These costs can however be significantly mitigated by careful, intelligent design and early consultation with the Local Planning Authority.

16. The inclusion of these properties would increase the workload of Planning department. The likely impact is outlined below:

- In respect of impact on Development Management officers, the extended conservation area would increase the number of developments requiring planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, amended in 2008. For example, permission would now be required

for extensions to the side of houses, the installation of any roof extension, satellite dish installations facing and visible from the highway, and cladding. However, all the buildings along Grove Hill Road and Peterborough Road are flats or commercial properties so would not be affected by these changes.

- Administration officers would process an increased number of planning applications and Conservation Area Advisory Committee comments.
- There may be a limited increase in enforcement investigations and action, although this risk could be mitigated through improved communication with property owners around the more restrictive permitted development rights.
- The Council's Tree Protection Officer would need to be consulted when tree works (to private trees) were proposed to be carried out.
- In respect of the impact on conservation officers, the extended conservation area workload would increase as they would be consulted on an increased number of planning applications and enforcement cases, a revised draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy for Tookes Green would need to be written; there would also be increased CAAC consultation and advice to residents.

17. Given the relatively small extent of the proposed area, the resource implication is considered to be capable of being met within existing resources.

I. Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

18. There are considered to be no risks associated with the proposed extension to the Conservation Area.

J. Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out?

19. EqIA screening was undertaken in the course of introducing the existing Conservation Area that raised no matters of equalities impact of significance that would warrant a full EqIA. It is considered that the findings of the EqIA screening remain applicable to the current proposal to extend the existing Conservation Area designation.

K. Corporate Priorities

20. The proposal to extend the Conservation Area will help deliver the corporate priority to build stronger communities by affording protection to an area of historic built quality that adds to the richness of Harrow's urban fabric and to local character and sense of place that residents in the local and wider community value.

L. Performance Issues

21. Local Authorities have a statutory duty to publish proposals for the enhancement of their conservation areas under the National Planning Policy Framework. Communities value their conservation areas and the historic characteristics that make them special places. The extension of the Roxborough Park and the Grove Conservation Area will ensure that the new area identified as being worthy of conservation status is covered by an up to date Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 15 February 2013		
Name: Abiodun Kolawole	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 11 February 2013		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Martin Randall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Strategic Commissioning
Date: 5 February 2013		

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 4 February 2013		

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lucy Haile, Principal Conservation Officer, 0208 736 6101

Background Papers: LDF Panel: 4th October 2012

<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=61135>;

and

Cabinet: 11th October 2012

[http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=249&MId=61072
&Ver=4](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=249&MId=61072&Ver=4)

**Call-In Waived by the
Chairman of Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

[Call-in applies]