



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	14 th September 2023
Subject:	Local Areas of Special Character – criteria for designation
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Viv Evans, Chief Planning Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Marilyn Ashton, Deputy Leader of the Council, Planning & Regeneration Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Responses to informal consultation
	Recommendation from the Planning Policy Advisory Panel (13 July 2023)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report outlines the proposal to establish a process of designating Local Areas of Special Character (LASC) within Harrow, including potential criteria for such areas). It documents representations received to informal consultation on the proposal [including the consideration by the Planning Policy Advisory Panel (PPAP)] and minor changes arising from these. It then recommends that the Cabinet agrees to establish a process of

designating Local Areas of Special Character (LASC), including the proposed criteria for designation.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to consider the report and:

- (A) consider the consultation responses on the criteria for the new local heritage designation namely proposed 'Local Areas of Special Character'; and
- (B) agree to establish a process of designating Local Areas of Special Character (LASC), including the proposed criteria for designation (including the minor clarification), as set out in paragraph 7.3 of the report.

Reason:

Harrow benefits from an exceptionally diverse historic environment. It includes conservation areas designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] cautions that 'the concept of conservation not [be] devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest'. At the same time the NPPF and Historic England's national guidance recognise the importance and necessity of identifying and maintaining up to date records of the significance of local heritage assets. There are many local areas in Harrow that might not meet the strict criteria for conservation area status but do have local heritage interest. Accordingly, this report proposes the designation criteria for the new local designation for such Local Areas of Special Character. This proposed local designation, and its associated local criteria for designation, is a parallel to the existing local designations of locally listed buildings and locally listed parks and gardens in Harrow for those buildings and areas that do not meet the strict criteria for national heritage designation. The local consultation undertaken was in accordance with national best practice.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The report incorporates the corporate priority concerning:
 - Putting Residents First

It also reflects the overarching objective of Restoring Pride in Harrow.

- 1.2 Should the new suggested criteria for the designation of Local Areas of Special Character be confirmed, the ability to designate Local Areas of Special Character will provide improved protection to help maintain the unique historical local character of areas or neighbourhoods within Harrow which residents cherish and value.

2.0 Options considered

- 2.1 The option of not establishing a process of designating Local Areas of Special Character was considered and rejected as this would be contrary to the requirements under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for local planning authorities to maintain or have access to a historic environment record (paragraph 192).
- 2.2 The option not to propose criteria for designating Local Areas of Special Character was considered and rejected as this would undermine the transparency and consistency of the process and weaken the purpose of identifying such areas. Options for the criteria themselves were considered and the report below documents these and the recommended criteria.
- 2.3 The option of not consulting on the proposed criteria was dismissed as such a process is considered beneficial with respect to testing the technical merits of the proposed criteria and their clarity.

3.0 Background

What is a conservation area?

- 3.1 Conservation Areas are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states in section 69 that 'every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas'.
- 3.2 Harrow has adopted four Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that cover the borough's existing conservation areas. Those documents include local guidance as to what is considered to represent 'special architectural or historic interest' in the Harrow context. In order for an area to be appropriate for designation as a conservation area, it must fulfil two of the following criteria (as outlined in the SPDs):
- (a) Areas with a high concentration of Listed Buildings, whether statutorily or locally listed;
 - (b) Areas of historical, social, economic and/or architectural merit;
 - (c) Areas with a high proportion of buildings built prior to 1920, which remain largely unaltered;

- (d) Areas built post 1920 that are innovative in planning or architectural detail, and where a large proportion remain unaltered;
- (e) A significant group of buildings with distinct physical identity and cohesiveness;
- (f) 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, topographical features or features of local distinctiveness¹

When not to designate?

3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states in paragraph 191 that:

‘When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest’.

3.4 Historic England are the Government’s advisers on matters of heritage. They have published guidance entitled: ‘Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Historic England Advice Note 1’ [HEAN 1] (Second Edition) – February 2019. They highlight the above requirement of the NPPF twice in their guidance since it was also contained in earlier iterations of the NPPF.

3.5 In addition, HEAN1 mirrors the requirements of s.69 of the Act that there shall be both ‘special interest’ and ‘desirability to preserve or enhance’ for CA designation as it states in paragraph 11 that there is: ‘likely to be a stage when a decision would need to be taken as to the significance of an area and the likelihood of conservation area designation addressing relevant problems within the area. This is unlikely to be a lengthy process, the purpose being to consider whether an area has:

- a) sufficient architectural or historic interest for the area to be considered ‘special’?
- b) whether this is experienced through its character or appearance? and
- c) whether it is desirable for that character or appearance to be preserved or enhanced, and what problems designation could help to solve’.

3.6 Thus, it indicates that where an area meets the criteria for designation, on occasion designation may not be desirable and prompts consideration as to what problems designation could help solve in order to determine the desirability of designation.

3.7 It is noted that there have been instances in the past (including recently) where areas that residents have sought to be designated as a Conservation

¹ These criteria were originally agreed by the Development Control Committee on 31 August 1998 as the criteria to be adopted in Harrow.

Area have been assessed and determined not to have the special architectural and historic interest required to be designated as a statutory Conservation Area. These areas however do have a degree of historic interest that may warrant identification locally but at present there is no such local mechanism to do this.

4.0 Proposed Local Area of Special Character designation

What is a Proposed Local Area of Special Character?

- 4.1 The proposed local area designation should be seen in contrast to the Conservation Area designation which are a heritage designation governed by national legislation and the principle of what makes such an area 'special' needs to be considered in the national context; it is therefore a high threshold. Conservation area designation also reduces permitted development rights (i.e. what can be done without apply for full planning permission).
- 4.2 At a local level, unlike many Local Planning Authorities, Harrow currently does not have a local form of area designation based on the architectural and / or historic interest / significance of an area (a similar concept to Harrow's 'Local List' of buildings compared to statutory listed buildings, which are designated at a national level). There are areas within Harrow that, whilst they do not meet the grade for Conservation Area status, do have a level of interest / significance that would benefit from formal local recognition, in order to help in the assessment of planning applications.
- 4.3 This report therefore proposes to establish a 'Local Area of Special Character' designation as a mechanism to formally recognise certain areas as local heritage assets. Historic England's national guidance in their document 'Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7' highlights the reasons for Local Planning Authorities to hold an up to date and complete heritage list recognising local heritage assets:
 - a) 'Local heritage listing is a means for a community and a local planning authority to identify heritage assets that are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment.
 - b) It provides clarity on the location of assets and what it is about them that is significant, helping to ensure that strategic local planning properly takes account of the desirability of their conservation.
 - c) Sometimes it may also help identify overlooked assets of high significance, which may warrant consideration for designation at the national level, too.
 - d) The process of preparing a local heritage list not only allows communities to identify local heritage that they would like recognised and protected, but it is also an opportunity for local authorities and communities to work in partnership.
 - e) Creating a local heritage list also helps to improve access to clear, comprehensive and current information about the historic environment

at the local level through resources such as Historic Environment Records (HERs) which can speed up the planning process’.

What would designation mean in practice?

- 4.4 It should be noted that this local designation (unlike Conservation Areas) would not change permitted development rights. There would be no additional requirements for planning permission on residents, nor any additional requirements for permission to undertake works to trees within the area (that aren’t covered by a Tree Preservation Order).
- 4.5 However, the designation would be a material consideration for any planning applications that are received within, or in the setting of that area. It would mean when planning applications are being determined they would need to be assessed in terms of whether what is being proposed preserves what is special about the heritage interest of that area, either via a direct impact on it or via impact on its setting. It would mean relevant heritage policies relating to non-designated heritage assets² in the NPPF and Harrow Local Plan would apply i.e. the Core Strategy policy CS1 and Development Management policy DM7. NPPF paragraph 203 would apply which states:

‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

- 4.6 Additionally, the proposed Local Area of Special Character designation is primarily a design tool that seeks to formally identify areas that ‘are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment’ [see paragraph 4.3(a) above] so that the identified characteristics can be considered when assessing development proposals within the area. Identification of such areas add a further design consideration when assessing planning applications rather than directly influencing the principle of development within the area.

What would the criteria for designation be?

- 4.7 The proposed criteria for designation must connect back to national heritage policy and guidance on the significance of heritage assets. Harrow’s criteria for conservation area status are outlined above and similarly do so, but also relate back to national heritage legislation, namely the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990’s definition of conservation areas as ‘areas of special character and appearance’ that it is ‘desirable to preserve or enhance’. Wider national and local policy and guidance relating

² The NPPF defines a ‘Designated heritage asset’ as: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation. (Annex 2: Glossary)

to heritage significance includes the NPPF which defines a heritage asset as:

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'. (Annex 2: Glossary)

It defines significance (for heritage policy) as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.' (Annex 2: Glossary)

- 4.8 The Historic England guidance document entitled Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7 provides a list of various criteria likely to indicate the nature of heritage significance/interest including: age, rarity, aesthetic interest, group value, historic association, and social and communal value.
- 4.9 A review of other boroughs' approaches to identifying local areas of special character (the names of the areas vary amongst boroughs) has indicated a number of relevant considerations that have been informed the development of the proposed Harrow criteria. These considerations include:
- (a) The area must be of heritage significance, consistent with the NPPF (i.e. such areas are considered 'undesigned heritage assets' in the NPPF, so must have a 'degree of significance' (see paragraph 4.6 above).
 - (b) Criteria generally relate to three elements of the built and natural environment, namely architectural, townscape and landscape.
 - (c) Key considerations generally relate to the quality of an area and level of preservation (with respect to architecture, townscape and landscape).
 - (d) There is no common approach to drafting criteria. Some are lists of general points / considerations, others are more descriptive regarding the level of quality and preservation required, others take a 'scored' approach linked with the assessment of conservation areas (i.e. scores above a certain number are designated a conservation area, scores between a certain range are identified as local areas of special character and scores below a certain level are not identified as either).
- 4.10 The suggested Harrow criteria for designation for Local Area of Special Character relates back firmly to this national and local guidance on the criteria for local heritage assets, as well as the drafting considerations identified above. Regard has also been given to the local criteria for conservation area status, albeit recognising the lower local bar for designation of local heritage assets.

4.11 The Planning Policy Advisory Panel at their meeting on 6th March 2023, agreed to informal consultation regarding criteria for designation. It was agreed that the criteria must connect back to national heritage policy and guidance on the heritage significance of heritage assets. For example, Harrow's criteria for conservation area status, but also relate back to national heritage legislation, namely the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990's definition of conservation areas as 'areas of special character and appearance' that it is 'desirable to preserve or enhance' and wider national and local policy and guidance relating to heritage significance including the NPPF. Similarly, the Historic England guidance document entitled Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7 which provides a list of various criteria likely to indicate the nature of heritage significance/interest including: age, rarity, aesthetic interest, group value, historic association, and social and communal value.

4.12 The suggested criteria for designation for Local Area of Special Heritage Character subject to consultation was therefore as follows:

1. *The area must be of heritage significance.*
2. *One or more of the following criteria need to be met:*
 - a. *Townscape of locally cohesive, well-preserved quality.*
 - b. *Architecture of locally cohesive, well-preserved quality.*
 - c. *Landscape of locally distinctive and well-preserved quality.*

Overall, an area must have discernibly higher quality and degree of intactness than other parts of the borough (other than designated conservation areas, that have special architectural or historic interest), thereby demonstrating distinctiveness.

5.0 Process and timeframes for consultation undertaken

5.1 There are no statutory requirements to consult on the criteria for LASC, however as best practice and the Historic England recommendation, Harrow consulted with local and national conservation groups namely:

- the Harrow's Conservation Area Advisory Committee.
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
- Victorian Society
- Georgian Group
- Twentieth Century Society
- Gardens Trust
- Council for British Archaeology

5.2 These groups were emailed on 21st April 2023, provided with an explanation of the background (including link to PPAP report) and requirements of the consultation, and provided with a month to respond with any representations.

6.0 Responses to consultation request

6.1 These are listed in full in appendix 1.

6.2 In summary, seven responses were received. Support for the new local heritage designation was overwhelmingly expressed (five respondees) including the Historic England, Victorian Society, and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The remaining two respondees did not comment on the merits of a local designation.

6.3 Just three responses specifically commented on the proposed criteria for designation. Historic England noted the methodology and justification for the proposal [which includes the criteria] is set out clearly in the 23 March 2023 report to the Planning Policy Advisory Panel and follows Historic England published guidance on 'The Designation of Local Heritage Listing' (Heritage Advice Note No.7). As such 'we consider the proposal to be in conformity with the NPPF requirement to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and to plan positively for the management of the historic environment.' The Victorian Society noted 'we would make no comments on the proposed criteria which seems wide ranging enough to encompass various areas'. The Conservation Area Advisory Committee noted that the proposed criterion regarding 'identification of areas of heritage significance' seems difficult. Clarification on what this would mean was requested. Therefore, it is now recommended that this criterion be amended to define heritage significance as outlined in section 7.

6.4 Two respondents suggested six areas that could potentially be considered for LASC designation, namely:

- 1) West Harrow Village
- 2) West End Avenue (the oldest part) mostly built by World War I.
- 3) Meadow Road, Pinner – classic Metroland
- 4) The Royston Park Estate including the later developments of Rowlands Avenue, Furham Field and Sherington Avenue - low density parts of Hatch End, plentiful historic trees, interlinking footpaths following original field lines.
- 5) St Anselms Road, Wellington Road, Woodridings Avenue, Hillview Road – for the same reason as point 4.
- 6) Grimsdyke ditch from Oxhey Lane through to Woodridings Close (Footpath 129) - for the same reason as point 4.

At this stage there has been no consideration of the merits of these suggestions; they are simply listed here for completeness. If Cabinet agrees to the recommendations in this report, these areas will be considered for designation along with other potential areas in the borough.

6.5 The remaining ten comments/queries received, alongside council responses are provided in the table below:

Consultation response	Council response
1) Request to be updated on the designation as it is implemented and how this will affect planning decisions.	Noted. This will be done.
2) Will local residents be consulted as to whether they wish to be a part of a designated area.	Yes – as per local listing of buildings and introduction of conservation areas. The views of local residents would be sought via public consultation.
3) Will conservation and enforcement personnel be increased accordingly (noted that enforcement have been non-responsive on some cases)?	Currently there are no plans to increase the conservation resource. The enforcement team is separately proposed to be increased by two officers.
4) Will the Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) be asked for comments?	The views of CAAC on planning applications in Local Areas of Special Character will not be sought since their remit is Conservation Areas.
5) The Saunders Report available at https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/27-2021 (page 41) puts the proposal in context as other local authorities have done similar.	Noted that other Local Authorities have similarly introduced a local area designation.
6) Agree that the hierarchical distinction between conservation areas and Local Areas of Special Character is important.	Noted.
7) We already have an Area of Special Character in Harrow. There is a DM policy specially for it, namely DM6. It is mentioned in officer reports more recently. It covers almost all of Harrow on the Hill including 'islands' excluded from conservation areas.	The designation of 'Area of Special Character' differs to that which is the subject of this report. This report concerns the new heritage designation of 'Local Area of Special Character', which is a local heritage designation equivalent to a Conservation Area but at a lower level of significance ie local not national. The other designation is a strategic planning designation with related planning policy to support it ie Local Development Management policy DM6.
8) In order to preserve the special qualities of parts of Hatch End there is a need to maintain the relatively low-density, not convert houses to flats, manage scale of	As outlined fully in paragraph 3.1 above, the designation would be a material consideration for any planning applications in terms of

Consultation response	Council response
buildings (including via additional stories allowed via permitted development), preserve green front gardens, grass verges and street trees, rights of way and open spaces and parks.	whether what is special about the heritage interest of that area is preserved by the proposal, either via a direct impact on it or via impact on its setting. Relevant heritage policies relating to non-designated heritage assets would apply.
9) In order to provide a robust tool for planning decisions we would also recommend that the area-based assessments are subject to a clear summary report process which sets out the reasons for designation the significance of the area and the character of which it is desirable to preserve. These reports should be made publicly accessible on the Council's website and the Heritage Environment Record. Further detailed advice on producing and publishing the list is set out in our Heritage Advice Note No.7.	This is noted and would be undertaken with any designations.
10) It must be noted that this advice does not affect our [Historic England] obligation to advise you on, and potentially object to any specific development proposal which may subsequently arise from this request and which may have adverse effects on the environment.	This is noted and accepted.

7.0 Recommendations following consultation

- 7.1 The overwhelming support for the principle of designation is noted, as well as the support that the Victorian Society expressed for the proposed criteria for designation. There were no objections to the proposed criteria for designation and they therefore remain the same.
- 7.2 However, since one respondent requested the first criterion requiring 'identification of areas of heritage significance' be clarified. Accordingly, significance in this criterion is now provided with the current definition provided in the glossary of terms in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), or any subsequent replacement national planning policy or guidance. The current definition is: 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'. In Harrow, for example, this may include certain more intact / locally cohesive areas of Metroland.

7.3 Therefore the criteria for designation of Local Areas of Special Character are now recommended to be as follows:

- 1) *The area must be of heritage significance (as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) or any subsequent replacement).*
- 2) *One or more of the following criteria need to be met:*
 - a. *Townscape of locally cohesive, well-preserved quality.*
 - b. *Architecture of locally cohesive, well-preserved quality.*
 - c. *Landscape of locally distinctive and well-preserved quality.*

Overall, an area must have discernibly higher quality and degree of intactness than other parts of the borough (other than designated conservation areas, that have special architectural or historic interest), thereby demonstrating distinctiveness.

8.0 Implications of recommendations

8.1 The consultation responses, along with resultant amended recommended criteria (to include the definition of heritage significance), were presented to the Planning Policy Advisory Panel on 13th July, and minutes from the Panel are enclosed. The Panel unanimously recommended the criteria for adoption.

8.2 The criteria if adopted will form the basis of the consideration of any areas for potential designation, The New Local Plan will include reference to Local Areas of Special Character within the any heritage policies. In the meantime, formal identification of LASCs will assist in the application of Policy DM7: Heritage Assets to any proposals within these areas. Policy DM7, despite not specifically referring LASCs, is sufficiently broad to be a relevant policy 'hook' as it refers to 'heritage assets' (which LASCs will be a new category) and the level of significance of the assets (which as noted above, will be less than that of statutory Conservation Areas).

8.3 In terms of future identification of LASCs, at the 30th November 2022 Planning Policy Advisory Panel meeting, two areas: Butler Avenue (West Harrow) and Suffolk Road (North Harrow) were concluded to not meet the Harrow criteria for conservation area designation. It was noted though that for Butler Avenue, the West Harrow Community Forum should be contacted and if, as a result of this, there was a stronger case for designation, Officers should advise the Panel of this. Also, for Butler Avenue it was noted that a wider area could be considered for any future Local Area of Special Character (LASC) assessment. Accordingly, once the criteria for designation are confirmed, the Local Planning Authority will contact the West Harrow Community Forum to identify whether there is further information that indicates the area is worthy of conservation area status and otherwise review this area for possible Local Area of Special Character status. Suffolk Road will also be included in any future work programme of assessments for potential LASC designation.

- 8.4 It is noted that this consultation process has resulted in a number of further suggestions for possible Local Areas of Special Character as outlined in paragraph 6.4 above. In the context of limited resources, the Local Planning Authority cannot commit to a programme for reviewing these areas at this time. However, the suggestions are welcomed and noted. They will be kept on file, along with any future recommendations, with a view towards assessing them in future.
- 8.5 In terms of the proposed procedure for identifying and designating Local Areas of Special Character, once an area is identified as potentially being suitable for designation, this would be subject to consultation after consideration by the Planning Policy Advisory Panel. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for consultation, it is considered good practice. Consultation would include the rationale for proposed designations and the implications of this. It would be for at least six weeks and anticipated to include letters to all properties in the area, as well as notices on lamp posts. The outcomes of the consultation and recommendations would be reported to the Planning Policy Advisory Panel and Cabinet. The rationale for undertaking formal consultation and seeking adoption by Cabinet is that this should allow any decision maker to give greater weight to the designation as a material consideration in determining any planning application within a LASC. A similar process is followed when it is proposed to designate locally listed buildings, for example.

9.0 Performance Issues

- 9.1 The new designation will assist in protection of Harrow's local heritage.

10.0 Procurement Implications

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications in the new local heritage designation.

11.0 Environmental Implications

- 11.1 The designation would not have a direct environmental implication since it would be a heritage designation. But it may result in the preservation of landscape of locally distinctive and well-preserved quality which may have a positive environmental implication.

Ward Councillors' comments – Not applicable as impacts all wards

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **n/a**

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
If the report's recommendations were not agreed, there would be no specific local mechanism in place to identify and conserve areas of special character in Harrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreement of the report's proposed recommendations will mitigate this risk 	GREEN
Consultation was not undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are no statutory consultation requirements. ▪ Appropriate requirements were reviewed (i.e. Harrow's Statement of Community Involvement) and followed where relevant. ▪ Any 'minimum' standards were exceeded (i.e. emails to 6 national amenity societies and to the Conservation Area Advisory Committee). 	GREEN
The agreement of the criteria for Local Areas of Special Character is later challenged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The criteria connect back to national heritage policy and guidance on the heritage significance of heritage assets including the NPPF and Historic England the guidance document entitled Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7 which provides a list of various criteria likely to indicate the nature of heritage significance/interest. ▪ Consultation was undertaken and responses informed the final criteria. 	GREEN
The submission of numerous proposals for Areas of Special Character with insufficient conservation resources to assess them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whilst a programme for assessment cannot be committed to at this stage the matter will be kept under review, and areas assessed where possible. ▪ Awareness by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) of potential areas for consideration for LASCs is helpful. Should a planning application be received that would effect an area considered to be of heritage significance by the LPA but has no formal heritage designation, it may still be assessed in the context of NPPF paragraph 203 which states: 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken 	GREEN

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	into account in determining the application' and requires 'a balanced judgement ...having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.	

Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty and is required under section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to carry out reviews 'from time to time' to determine whether any parts or further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and if it so determines, that part(s) shall be so designated. It follows that those not worthy, but still of heritage value, are recognised in accordance with the NPPF paragraph 192's requirement that: 'Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to: a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment'.

Financial Implications

The costs of developing the draft criteria and undertaking the informal consultation have been met from within the existing revenue budgets of the Council's Planning Policy team. If any further action is required (such as undertaking the process to designate a Local Area of Special Character), any costs will also be met from existing revenue budgets.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

EqlA is not considered necessary in respect of the designation of a Local Area of Special Character. Such a proposal is based on the architectural and historic merit of an area. Furthermore, the higher order Local Plan policy that contains the criteria against which development within Local Areas of Special Character is assessed was subject to an equalities impact assessment prior to its adoption.

Council Priorities

The decision sought will help the Council meet the priority of improving the environment by helping ensure the attractiveness of the borough as a place to live and demonstrating that the Council seeks and listens to the views of its residents (by Putting Residents First).

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Jessie Man

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 31 August 2023

Statutory Officer: Jimmy Walsh

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 1 September 2023

Chief Officer: Viv Evans

Signed by Chief Planning Officer

Date: 31 August 2023

Divisional Director: Emma Talbot

Signed by Director for Regeneration and Sustainable Development

Date: 31 August 2023

Corporate Director: Dipti Patel

Signed by Corporate Director

Date: 4 September 2023

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 15 August 2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Interim Head of Internal Audit

Date: 15 August 2023

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO – impacts all wards

EqlA carried out: NO - see above

If 'NO' state why an EqlA is not required for Cabinet to take a decision

EqlA cleared by: N/A

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lucy Haile, Principal Conservation Officer,
lucy.haile@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Historic England: 'Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7' (2nd edition) - <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/>

Harrow Conservation Areas and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/biodiversity-conservation>

Report to Planning Policy Advisory Panel – 3rd March 2023 - [Agenda for Planning Policy Advisory Panel on Monday 6 March 2023, 6.30 pm – Harrow Council](#)

Report to Planning Policy Advisory Panel – 13th July 2023 - [Agenda for Planning Policy Advisory Panel on Thursday 13 July 2023, 6.30 pm – London Borough of Harrow](#)

Appendix 1 – Responses to informal consultation

Date of response	Name of respondent	Response
1) 22/04/2023	Trevor Gray	<p>This proposal sounds worthy of support and I will raise it with The Stanmore Society committee. I am sure we have a number of areas in Stanmore we would wish to put forward for such a designation.</p> <p>Hopefully, we will be able to get comments to you in support ahead of 19 May.</p>
2) 26/04/2023	Victorian Society	<p>Thank you for making the Victorian Society aware of Harrow Borough Council's intention to designate 'Areas of Special Character'. This is a salutary way of extending the principle of local listing and it is encouraging sign of the value placed on heritage by your department. We would make no comments on the proposed criteria which seems wide ranging enough to encompass various areas. However, we would appreciate to be updated as the designation is implemented and how this will affect planning decisions.</p>
3) 27/04/2023	Alan Flint	<p>I have read the proposal of adding Areas of Special Character to the Planning portfolio. I have just completed 20 years as a member of the CAAC, representing the Pinnerwood Park Area. Whilst I believe this to be a laudable addition I do foresee a few problems, and these are a few thoughts you may wish to consider.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the residents of the areas/roads/properties be consulted and have a vote as to whether they wish to be part of this? The Council did organize a meeting for Pinnerwood Park in 1989, and having heard all the pros and cons from the Planning Officers the residents voted in favour. 2. Will this new scheme come under the office of the Conservation Officer? If so there are 29 Conservation Areas in Harrow so I believe this additional workload would mean extra personnel being required in that department. 3. There will no doubt be demands made on the Enforcement Department. I and others have found it very difficult to get responses from this department. For example, on the 11th November last year I drew attention to all new windows on the front elevation of a property in this area which were incorrect. I received an Enforcement number. On 21st March this year, as nothing appeared to be happening and I

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		<p>had had no response, I requested and update. Still no response, so on 21st April I sent another request for a response. I still have not had a reply. This appears to another department in need of extra personnel even without this extra responsibility.</p> <p>4. Will this in any way involve the CAAC for comments?</p> <p>I would appreciate these points being taken into consideration when any decision is made.</p>
4) 2/05/2023	Historic England	<p>Thank you for consulting Historic England on the London Borough of Harrow's proposal to designate "areas of special character.</p> <p>Accordingly, we have reviewed the consultation documents in light of the <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> (NPPF, 2019) which requires, as one of its core objectives, that heritage assets be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.</p> <p>The proposal will, in effect, formally identify areas of local heritage character as "non-heritage assets" and therefore align these to the relevant considerations set out in NPPF (specifically policy 203). The methodology and justification for the proposal is set out clearly in the accompanying <i>Report to the Planning Policy Advisory Panel</i>, dated 23 March 2023. We are pleased to note that the report has been prepared with reference to our published guidance on <i>The Designation of Local Heritage Listing</i> (Heritage Advice Note No.7) and in our view the proposal will provide a positive tool for the managing of local heritage assets. As such we consider the proposal to be in conformity with the NPPF requirement to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and to plan positively for the management of the historic environment.</p> <p>In order to provide a robust tool for planning decisions we would also recommend that the area-based assessments are subject to a clear summary report process which sets out the reasons for designation the significance of the area and the character of which it is desirable to preserve. These reports should be made publicly accessible on the Council's website and the Heritage Environment Record. Further</p>

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		<p>detailed advice on producing and publishing the list is set out in our Heritage Advice Note No.7.</p> <p>We hope you find the above observations helpful. If you wish to discuss the above comments. please do not hesitate to contact me.</p> <p>It must be noted that this advice does not affect our obligation to advise you on, and potentially object to any specific development proposal which may subsequently arise from this request and which may have adverse effects on the environment.</p>
5) 16/05/2023	John Cobb Planning representative on behalf of the Hatch End Association	<p>The email appended below was forwarded by the Hatch End Association representatives on the Conservation Area within Hatch End and Pinner. I am writing to provide comments specific to Hatch End as a “village” within Harrow. Hatch End became a suburban area in the 1870’s onwards (Victorian/Edwardian) well before most of Metropolitan Harrow as developed after the first world war.</p> <p>Hatch End already has a conservation area and listed buildings (such as Hatch End Station, Letchford House and the Harrow Arts Centre).</p> <p>However, areas of Hatch End are often used to portray the best of green suburbia within Harrow and although built up over many years retains its charm and representative of high-quality suburban life. Given they comprise mixed residential housing from the Victorian era to the present day they have never qualified as conservation areas. However, they do represent the special character of Hatch End.</p> <p>The points below represent feedback from the Committee of the Hatch End Association. They apply to the whole of Hatch End (apart from the existing conservation areas). However, areas of particular note are those originating in Edwardian times as original streets were developed. Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Royston Park Estate including the later developments of Rowlands Avenue, Furham Field and Sherington Avenue. • St Anselms Road, Wellington Road, Woodridings Avenue, Hillview Road. • Grimsdyle ditch from Oxhey Lane through to Woodridings Close (Footpath 129) • <p>These areas represent mature low density living in mainly tree lined avenues with interlinking footpaths following the original field lines. Many original field</p>

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		<p>trees (large oaks) remain plus parkland trees such as Sequoias and other specimen trees.</p> <p>We would request that you consider the following key points for Hatch End as a whole community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The maintenance of relatively low-density housing with good spacing between buildings. This would restrict new extensions being built boundary to boundary converting detached houses into what becomes terraced roads with only a few centimetres between them. 2. A predisposition against houses being converted into flats in residential roads. 3. Management of the scale of the existing buildings and careful assessment and qualification of applications for additional storeys under permitted development that would not match the existing street scene. 4. Adherence to new housing or extensions that reasonably match the existing styles and materials (particularly gables and roof tiles) within the roads. 5. Preservation of off-street parking but balanced by giving an emphasis on “green” front gardens rather than fully paved front drives, plus pedestrian friendly front boundaries and access arrangements. 6. Preservation and maintenance of the existing Avenues of mature trees and the green verges. 7. Preservation and maintenance of rights of way and particularly the footpaths within Hatch End. 8. Preservation and maintenance of the existing open spaces and parks within Hatch End. <p>I would be most grateful if you could take these points forwards as part of your ‘Areas of Special Character’ policy for Hatch End.</p>
6) 16/05/2023	Matthew Saunders	<p>The email below has reached me via the Joint Committee casework hub.</p> <p>I am replying in a personal capacity as author of The Saunders Report now available online at</p> <p>https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/27-2021</p> <p>As my principal object there was the study of listing, I only deal with Conservation Areas peripherally but you may find the brief mention (page 41) puts your proposal in context.</p>

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		<p>I didn't mean to be dismissive of other forms of area protection by the phrase "Conservation Area Lite" but I was very struck by the number of subsets that I found. I only mentioned 3 ("Heritage Area", "Area of Traditional Character" and "Identity Areas") but could easily have quadrupled that list with a multiplicity of headings.</p> <p>I welcome the clear differentiation in your excellent paper between the proposed new category and the Conservation Area, the latter being recognised as the stronger means of exercising control (particularly with an Article 4). I do think that that hierarchy is vital.</p>
7) 22/05/2023	Conservation Area Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine Wallace commented on the consultation regarding Local Areas of Special Character: • Noted that the proposed criterion regarding 'identification of areas of heritage significance' seems difficult. What would this mean? • John Orchard: What area would be an area of special character in Harrow? They are all designated as conservation areas. • John Orchard: West Harrow Village perhaps? This area was turned down for designation as a conservation area. • Pat Clarke: Pat Clarke The oldest part of West End Avenue is very cohesive and mostly built by World War I. They have interesting porches window-heads etc. Some porches have gone, many windows have been changed, many original front walls have come down. • Meadow Road, Pinner too perhaps. • Both are areas of classic Metroland and you know the architect ie Henderson • Is Cuckoo Hill Road by the same architect? • Paul Catherall via email: We already have an Area of Special Character in Harrow. Historically it was very often not mentioned in officer's reports and also not mentioned in planning permission refusals which was frustrating as there is a DM policy specially for it, namely DM6. We always seek

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		<p>to mention it in our HHT letters and matters have improved with it now being mentioned in officer reports in recent years. It basically covers the conservation areas, but it covers almost all of the Hill including the 'islands' excluded from conservation areas. Hence it is useful to try to stop those non-conservation areas from becoming even worse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall CAAC noted the LASCs would be a useful designation.