

Meeting:	Local Development Framework Panel
Date:	26 November, 2009
Subject:	Proposed Extension of the Tookes Green Conservation Area
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Trehern - Corporate Director for Place Shaping
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Marilyn Ashton - Portfolio Holder for Planning Development and Enterprise
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	<p>Appendix 1: Map of the Area Surveyed</p> <p>Appendix 2: Map of the Proposed Extension to the Tookes Green Conservation Area.</p> <p>Appendix 3: Summary of Survey Results</p> <p>Appendix 4: Consultation Responses</p> <p>Appendix 5: Photographs</p> <p>Appendix 6: Map of 1913</p> <p>Appendix 7: Map Showing Window Types</p> <p>Appendix 8: Map Showing Door Types</p> <p>Appendix 9: Map Showing Other Alterations</p> <p>Appendix 10: Map of Hardsurfaced Areas</p> <p>Appendix 11: Map Showing Boundary Treatments</p>

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report relates to the proposed extension of the Tookes Green Conservation Area to include: 9-89 (odd) Cecil Park, 10-86 (even) Cecil Park, The School, The Library, Cecil Park, 28-80 (even) Marsh Road, and the following properties along The Chase: Robin Hill, Verona, Spindle Cottage, Thornlea, 1 Park Cottages, 2 Park Cottages, 1 Lemington Cottages, 2 Lemington Cottages, Almacott, The Cottage and Clovelly. It includes

consideration of the responses to public consultation carried out between 28 August, 2009 to 25 September, 2009 and consultation from 29 September, 2009 to 6 October, 2009

### **Recommendations:**

The Panel is requested to:

- i) Note the proposed extension to the Tookes Green Conservation Area.
- ii) Recommend that Cabinet include the extension to the Tookes Green Conservation Area as part of the Pinner Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document.

### **Reason: (For recommendation)**

1. Following an assessment of the character of the area identified as a potential extension to the Tookes Green conservation area the area now outlined for formal designation is considered to meet the policy requirements of the Harrow UDP for designation as a conservation area. Such a designation is, following consultation, supported by the majority of respondents.
2. To enable the extended area to be adopted as part of the Pinner Supplementary Planning Document within the timescale set out in the Local Development Scheme.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Overview**

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 advises Local Planning Authorities to review their conservation areas from time to time. Guidance in PPG 15 and by English Heritage (2006) confirms that such reviews should include consideration of the boundary of the conservation area. Alongside the review of the published guidance for the Pinner conservation areas and in response to representations made at a recent appeal, the review of the Tookes Green conservation area was extended to include consideration of an extension of the boundary to capture the “metroland” development on Cecil Road and Marsh Road.

A survey of the area under consideration was undertaken in May 2009 by officers in the conservation team. The findings of the survey were reported to the LDF panel meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The Local Development Framework Panel endorsed the recommendation that, subject to the results of a public consultation, the Tookes Green Conservation Area be extended to include all, or part of:

- Cecil Park;
- 30-80 (even) Marsh Road;
- Properties along The Chase: Leamington Cottages, Holmwood, Bank Side, Hamilton and Croyland.

Two rounds of consultation were carried out through August and September and again in October 2009 on proposals to extend the Conservation Area to include 9-89 (odd) Cecil Park, 10-86 (even) Cecil Park, The School, The Library, Cecil Park, 28-80 (even) Marsh Road, and the following properties along The Chase: Robin Hill, Verona, Spindle Cottage, Thornlea, 1 Park Cottages, 2 Park Cottages, 1 Lemington Cottages, 2 Lemington Cottages, Almacott, The Cottage, Clovelly, Bank Side, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland.

Based upon the consultation responses and the consideration of the appropriate area for designation, this report recommends the extension of the conservation area to encapsulate two areas. These areas are shown within a map in Appendix 1. A third, smaller area, focused around four specific houses is not proposed to be included. The recommendation reflects UDP policy and national practice guidance and policy plus the objective within the adopted Community Strategy to support high quality neighbourhoods.

## **2.0 Background and Criteria for Conservation Area Designation**

2.1 The areas under consideration for designation were initially referred to in representations made at a recent public inquiry. The representation suggested that the area had a coherence as a distinct area of “metroland” which reflected a historical significance warranting preservation or enhancement. Following an assessment by the Councils conservation team, the areas identified for consideration were: 9-89 (odd) Cecil Park, 10-86 (even) Cecil Park, The School, The Library, Cecil Park, 28-80 (even) Marsh Road, and the following properties along The Chase: Robin Hill, Verona, Spindle Cottage, Thornlea, 1 Park Cottages, 2 Park Cottages, 1 Lemington Cottages, 2 Lemington Cottages, Almacott, The Cottage, Clovelly, Bank Side, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland. These areas are shown in a map within **appendix 2**.

2.2 Section 69 of the Planning, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 requires the Council to keep under review its conservation areas. National policy guidance (PPG15) and best practice guidance recognises that such reviews should include a consideration of the boundaries of a conservation area, as well as proposals for management. The Council has recently reviewed and consulted upon its proposed management strategy and guidance for Pinner Conservation Areas. This was considered, along with representations, by the LDF panel at their meeting in May 2009 and is awaiting adoption by the Cabinet in December.

2.3 To give an effect to this legislative obligation officers carried out surveys (a map of the area surveyed is shown in **appendix 2**) and investigations into the potential extension to the Tookes Green Conservation Area (similar to those carried out for the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies which form appendices for the Pinner Conservation Areas SPD). Desk based research involved looking into the history of the streets in question, the consultation of historic maps and review of the Harrow UDP. On-site investigations revealed a number

of alterations to properties which had eroded the original character of the area, such as, extensions visible from the highway, plastic windows and doors and hardsurfacing within front gardens. A series of photographs were taken at this stage to document the areas. The conclusions of the officer's site assessment were reported to the LDF panel at their meeting in May 2009 and is appended as Appendix 3.

2.4 The adopted Development Plan (Harrow UDP 2004) contains criteria for consideration of conservation area designation in paragraph 4.48 of Policy D14:

- 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 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 or topological features

2.5 The assessment undertaken by officers and reported to the LDF panel in May found that the extent to which the areas proposed for extension of the conservation area satisfied these criteria varied. This is considered in more detail below. Nevertheless, given the provisions for proactive management through the conservation area management strategy, officers concluded that the areas identified merited consideration for designation because of their historical and urban design significance and the coherent form and character that was still reflected in the areas. A smaller area of potential designation, covering four houses; Bank Side, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland which was separate from the existing and potential conservation areas and which was originally identified for designation is not now proposed to be included for designation.

### **Consultation responses**

2.6 There is no statutory requirement to consult prior to the designation (or enlargement) of a conservation area. National guidance (PPG15) nevertheless suggests that such consultation is desirable. The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 nevertheless require that an SPD and all its associated documents undergo a minimum 4 week public consultation before adoption. Since the proposed extension would be subject to management in line with the rest of the Pinner's Conservation Areas by way of the Pinner Conservation Areas SPD, the proposed extension was subject to public consultation over four weeks from 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 to 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2009. Further informal consultation was also carried out from 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 to 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2009. All residents, the Reddiford School and the Hatch End Library within the area being considered were consulted. Consultees were informed of officer opinion that the area meets the criteria for conservation area status, and were also given an

explanation of what a conservation area is, and what the designation would mean for their property.

2.7 The two rounds of consultation elicited responses from a total of 41 properties. Twenty (20) responses supported the proposed designation (out of a total of 122 letters sent). Based upon the extent of the areas now proposed for designation in this report, 13 properties objected to designation. A further 4 letters opposing the designations were received from properties which it is now not proposed to include in the designation. A further 4 letters were received making no specific view for or against designation. The comments received are reported in more detail in Appendix 4.

2.8 Those supporting designation saw the proposal as a means of ensuring that the metroland character was safeguarded, including protection of gardens and flora and fauna and a greater respect for alternations. They viewed the conservation area as a positive component of safeguarding the historical character of the area, adding to the quality of the environment and preventing insensitive, large development. Some respondents also suggested further areas to be included within the designation, notably the library and old clinic.

2.9 Those expressing opposition to the designation suggested that the area has already lost much of its historical character and highlighting modern alternations to properties (notably windows) which have served to erode the character already. Further views questioned the merit of fixing the character of the area at a specific point in time, pointing to the evolution of areas as a specific characteristic. Concerns around the impact of the designation on meeting climate change objectives (because of more restrictive rules on materials and energy efficient measures) were also received. Finally, a number of respondents felt that the interference of private property rights, through designation, was not justified and would instead add cost and adversely impact upon the values of properties for householders. They considered the process of designation to be undemocratic.

### **3.0 Assessment of Areas**

3.1 In order to determine whether the areas under consideration should be designation, officers have undertaken a survey of properties, historical analysis of the area and consulted those residing within the areas. Harrow UDP provides a framework for considering potential designation and, as set out above, the Council has sought to reflect both national policy guidance and best practice in its consideration of this specific proposal. Using the Harrow UDP criteria as a framework, the assessment of the area has concluded as follows:

3.2 **UDP Criterion A.** *Areas with a high concentration of Listed Buildings, whether statutorily or locally listed* - This criterion is not met

3.3 **UDP Criterion B.** *Areas of historical, social, economic and/or architectural merit* – Cecil Park, The Chase, and one property on Marsh Road meet this criterion

- 3.4 Cecil Park - Along with Wembley Park, Cecil Park formed the first of England's Metroland as houses were developed by the Metropolitan Railway from 1902 (e.g. 69 to 85, 18-24 and 40-84). It can therefore be considered as the prototype for later Metroland. This is significant as once the Metropolitan Railway began to acquire and develop land adjacent to its lines for housing development from the early 1900s to the 1930s such development helped to form much of the suburbs of London. Photographs are provided in **appendix 5**.
- 3.5 On the south side of Cecil Park (20 to 24 and 34 to 62) properties have delicate and detailed architectural decoration. They are of two and three storeys in orange-red brick and in an Arts & Crafts style with an array of gables, high chimneys, dentil courses, porches, and white wooden-framed windows, including Venetian framing (see photographs).
- 3.6 Houses on the north side of Cecil Park (73 to 89) are also Arts and Crafts in style and can be described as two-storey semi-detached cottages. A number are double-fronted and tend to be characterised by gables, rendered upper floors, white wooden-framed windows, and attractive doors containing many panes of coloured and decorative glass (see photographs).
- 3.7 Otherwise, the properties of Cecil Park tend to be less exceptional mock-Tudor dwellings typical of much of Harrow's suburban residential development (see photographs). They do not however detract from the area and could potentially be included within the conservation area without harm to the character of the area.
- 3.8 Metroland was intended to create a better lifestyle away from the noise and pollution of the city. The intended character has of course been eroded over time but the area of Cecil Park, with its greenery and cohesive built form, is an important reminder of this intention and is deserving of conservation area protection.
- 3.9 There is additional economic and social merit to the area as the Reddiford School occupies number 8 Cecil Park and 36-38 Cecil Park catering for pupils up to the age of eleven.
- 3.10 Marsh Road – The intended Metroland lifestyle has been completely eroded on Marsh Road as a result of heavy traffic and alterations to architecture. There is one property, however, that is of architectural interest and does meet the above criteria. This property is Darnley Lodge, 68 Marsh Road. Photographs are provided in **appendix 5**.
- 3.11 The Chase - Houses within The Chase cannot be described as Metroland development but rather are turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century small scale artisan cottages. These have attractive simple detailing with brick banding and gable ends constructed in simple Flemish bond. Photographs are provided in **appendix 5**.
- 3.12 **UDP Criterion C**. *Areas with a high proportion of buildings built prior to 1920, which remain largely unaltered* – This criterion is partly met.

- 3.13 Only 33 of the 113 properties are known to have been built before 1920. Historic OS maps to support this are provided in **appendix 6**. Most of the area's buildings were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s.
- 3.14 The survey, which only includes what is visible from the highway, revealed that the architectural merit of buildings has been diluted somewhat due to alterations. Photographs within **appendix 5** illustrate these alterations, the extent of which are provided below:
- 66 of 112 (59%) of properties surveyed have some form of replacement windows visible from the highway.
  - 52 of 112 (46%) of these have changed front windows to plastic (see **appendix 7**).
  - 11 of 112 (10%) of properties surveyed have a mixture of both timber and plastic windows.
  - 8 of 112 (7%) of properties surveyed have replacement timber front doors
  - 19 of 112 (17%) of properties surveyed have changed front doors to plastic (see **appendix 8**).
  - 55 of 112 (49%) of properties surveyed have other alterations, such as side extensions or roof dormers (see **appendix 9**).
  - 60% of properties have more than 2/3rds of front gardens hardsurfaced.
  - 68% of properties surveyed have at least 1/2 their front gardens hardsurfaced (see **appendix 10**).
- 3.15 Conservation area status would assist in preserving the best of Cecil Park and The Chase, whilst encouraging subsequent high quality alterations.
- 3.16 **UDP Criterion D.** *Areas post 1920, that are innovative in planning or architectural detail, and where a large proportion remain unaltered – Cecil Park meets this criterion*
- 3.17 Metroland development can be considered to be an innovative approach to planning since it instigated the development of suburbia and as such much of the area meets this criteria. The additional requirement that properties remain largely unaltered however is only met in part as demonstrated above.
- 3.18 The road layout of Cecil Park simply follows the line of the railway and Marsh Road curves to the south. The Chase is a looped offshoot adjoining Nower Hill and therefore the streetscape patterns cannot be considered innovative.
- 3.19 **UDP Criterion E.** *A significant group of buildings with distinct physical identity, and cohesiveness – The Chase and Cecil Park meet this criterion*
- 3.20 Where there is Metroland development the buildings show distinct physical identity and cohesiveness and sit well within the context of Nower Hill, which is part of the Tookes Green Conservation Area. However, criterion B shows that there are pockets of buildings within the area that are of higher architectural merit than the rest. Pinner Station

relates to these buildings since it was the station at the heart of the Metroland development.

3.21 The cohesiveness is limited as the Metroland development of Cecil Park contrasts with the small vernacular artisan cottages of The Chase. However Tookes Green Conservation Area does include Victorian properties and therefore the area would be consistent with the existing and proposed designation.

3.22 However, the area of the Chase that contains Bankside, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland is separated from the other eleven properties within the Chase that are considered to merit inclusion within the extended Tookes Green Conservation Area. The cohesiveness of this area is therefore missing. So, it is not proposed to include Bankside, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland within the extended conservation area.

3.23 ***UDP Criterion 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 or topological features - This criterion is not met***

3.24 The area does not contain historic open space, natural landmarks or topological features. The survey concludes that the landscaping is not of exceptionally high quality. The landscaping that exists is restricted to that within front gardens and the majority of these have been hardsurfaced. In addition, although boundary treatments together create a pleasing soft character, the variety of treatments from low walls to fences, trees and hedges are in no way exceptional (see **appendix 11**).

### 3.25 Summary of assessment

The proposed extensions to the Tookes Green Conservation Area therefore meet criteria outlined in Policy D4 associated with designation of conservation areas. Following the consideration of comments and the re-assessment of the areas, the buildings suggested for inclusion in responses have not been included. The George Public House was not included as it does not relate architecturally to the Tookes Green Conservation Area and Pinner Station was not included as this building was not included in the public consultation carried out from 28 August 2009 to 25 September 2009. As a result, legal have advised that it should not be added on at this late stage so as not to run foul of Regulations 17 and 18 of the Local Development Regulations.

3.26 Following more detailed consideration of the proposed extensions it is also not proposed to include four properties (Bankside, Holmwood, Hamilton and Croyland) previously identified in the LDF panel report in May as a specific, freestanding extension area. Whilst the architectural merits of the four properties satisfied the criteria, the creation of a small and remote area, covering just 4 houses was considered inconsistent with the area based approach to preservation an enhancement envisaged by the management strategy. The character of these four modest properties is informed by the “undesigned” area surrounding the properties. Given the statutory tests for considering such applications and notwithstanding the merit of the buildings, (alterations to which



would still be required to meet UDP policy tests to respect the character of the building) it is therefore proposed to exclude these properties.

### **3.27 Recommendation**

The investigation into the merits of the proposed extension of the conservation area has found that the proposed areas under consideration satisfy the criteria for designation within the Harrow UDP related to such considerations and have the support of some, but not all, of the properties affected. Those opposed to the designation of the conservation area draw attention to the changes that have taken place to the area and the potential consequences upon the freedom of individuals to alter and extend properties to meet modern requirements for living and address climate change.

3.28 The purpose of designation of a conservation area is not however to prevent change. Instead, it is 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. In this case, it is not however considered that “article 4” directions, requiring for example, explicit approval for changes to windows, would be justified.

3.29 The potential to preserve and enhance the character of a distinct and historically significant community, through the designation of an extension to the conservation area is considered, for the above reasons, to be justified in this case and to outweigh the impact upon individual property rights raised in the representations received. It is therefore proposed that the Tookes Green conservation area be extended to capture following streets/properties: 9-89 (odd) Cecil Park, 10-86 (even) Cecil Park, The School, The Library, Cecil Park, 28-80 (even) Marsh Road, and the following properties along The Chase: Robin Hill, Verona, Spindle Cottage, Thornlea, 1 Park Cottages, 2 Park Cottages, 1 Lemington Cottages, 2 Lemington Cottages, Almacott, The Cottage, Clovelly.

## **4.0 Implications**

### **4.1 Financial**

If the Panel accept that the areas should become part of the Tookes Green Conservation Area then 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.

## **4.2 Resource**

For homeowners 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.

4.3 The inclusion of these 113 properties would increase the workload of Place Shaping departments. 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 dwellings, the installation of any roof extension, satellite dish installation facing and visible from the highway, and cladding.
- Administration officers would process an increased number of planning applications and Conservation Area Advisory Committee comments.
- There may be an increase in enforcement investigations and action although this risk could be mitigated through improved communication with property owners around the tighter permitted development rights.
- The Council's tree protection officer would need to be consulted each time 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.
- Given the extent of the proposed area, the resource implication is considered to be capable of accommodation within existing resources.

## **Performance Issues**

4.4 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to publish proposals for the enhancement of their conservation areas. Communities value their conservation areas and the historic characteristics that make them special places. This contributes to their satisfaction with the local area and to the delivery of LAA target NI 5. Community involvement in developing Conservation Area Management Strategies can help to deliver LAA target NI3 for civic participation.

## Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Narinderpal Heer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 18/11/2009		
Name: Abiodun Kolawole	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 17/11/09		

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lucy Haile, Assistant Conservation Officer, x6101

Background Papers: None.