

WATLING ESTATE CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL STATEMENT

ADOPTED (JULY 2007)



LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET PLANNING SERVICES

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conservation Areas

The Civic Amenities Act of 1967 provided the original legislation allowing the designation of “*areas of special architectural or historic interest*” as conservation areas, whose character should be preserved or enhanced. It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a potential conservation area.

This concept has developed and is now enshrined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 of the Act provides a local planning authority with powers to designate conservation areas, and to periodically review existing and proposed conservation areas. Section 71 requires local authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement for their conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.2 Purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Conservation Areas are designated by local planning authorities after careful local assessment. This assessment forms the basis for a character appraisal statement. The format and scope of such statements are guided by English Heritage.

Government policy on conservation areas and historic buildings generally is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15). This defines why Character Appraisals are necessary. It states that the purpose of a Character Appraisal is to:

“Clearly identify what it is about the character or appearance of the area which should be preserved or enhanced, and to set out the means by which that objective is to be pursued”.

It is also hoped that:

“The clear assessment and definition of an area’s special interest and the action needed to protect it will help to generate awareness and encourage local property owners to take the right sort of action for themselves”

The aim of this Character Appraisal is to:

- Improve the understanding of the history and historical context of this area of the London Borough of Barnet
- Generate awareness of exactly what it is about the Watling Estate Conservation Area that makes it of “*special interest*”
- Provide residents and owners with a clear idea of what should be cared for and preserved
- Provide residents and owners with a clear idea of what enhancements could be made to the conservation area

- Provide Barnet Council with a valuable tool with which to inform its planning practice and policies for the area
- Provide guidelines to preserve and enhance these special features - the "Management Proposals".

The Council can then ensure that all applications for change within a conservation area comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

Watling Estate was designated as a Conservation Area on 8th April 1998. when approval was also given to the Conservation Character Appraisal Statement.

1.3 The Barnet Unitary Development Plan

The current local policy document covering this area is the Barnet Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006. Of particular relevance is the strategic policy GB Env 4 which aims to protect by preserving and enhancing *inter alia* the special value of the Borough's:

- Conservation areas;
- Listed buildings and their settings;
- Locally listed buildings and their settings;
- Sites of archaeological importance;
Woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

Detailed Policies HC1 to HC4 aim to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas by controlling inappropriate development and demolition. Policies HC9 to HC13 attempt to preserve statutorily and locally listed buildings and their settings whilst Policies HC16 to HC20 aim to protect archaeological remains of national and local importance.

The Watling Avenue shopping centre is identified a District Town Centre in the UDP with Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages. It is subject to policies TCR10 to TCR11, which aim to protect the vitality and viability of shopping areas.

Policy L11 protects public open space whilst policy M3 aims to retain the character and function of roads within the Borough Hierarchy. Deansbrook Road and Watling Avenue are classified as tier 1, whilst Orange Hill Road is tier 2.

This Character Appraisal Statement will help deliver the objectives of The Three Strands Approach (PEG) – Planning, Enhancement, Growth) seeking to deliver successful high quality suburbs now and for the future. A third of the borough is made up of Green Belt land, protected open spaces and parks will be protected under the umbrella of the first strand. Another third of the borough made up of the high quality, low density Victorian and 1930s suburbs will be enhanced under the umbrella of the second strand. Conservation Areas fall under both the first and second strands as they require preservation and enhancement of their character and appearance. Growth is expected to take place in specific Regeneration Areas in the third strand. The PEG approach highlights Barnet as an attractive, desirable place to live, rich in heritage and therefore, the need to provide appropriate planning protection for conservation areas and where appropriate the need to investigate additional or extended Conservation Areas.

2 LOCATION, USES AND ACTIVITIES

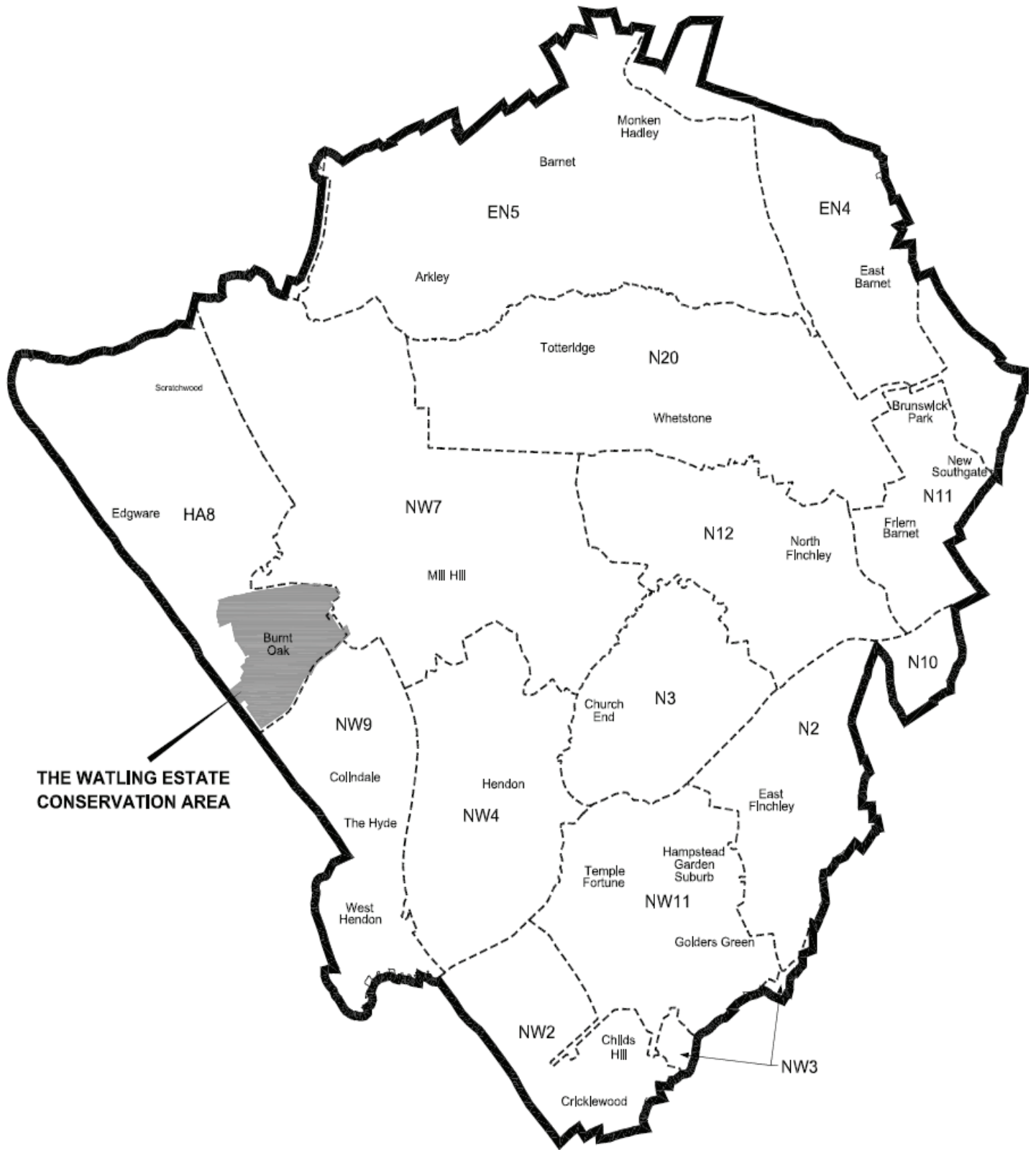
2.1 Location The Watling Estate is located at Burnt Oak between Edgware, Mill Hill and Colindale in the northwest part of the London Borough of Barnet. There are a number of other significant places in the vicinity, including the Hendon RAF museum to the south.

The estate sits between the now disused Mill Hill East to Edgware railway to the north, the Edgware Road to the west, Grahame Park Estate to the south and the parallel lines of the M1 and St Pancras to Bedford railway to the east. The Edgware branch of London Underground's Northern Line runs through the south-western part of the area with Burnt Oak station sited within the estate itself. The land is gently undulating leading up and away from the Silk Stream, which runs north south through the middle of the area. The land also rises to the north towards Edgware. See map on page 4. The Watling Estate Conservation Area covers 158 hectares of land.

2.2 Uses and activities Watling Estate Conservation Area has a very diverse cultural mix and large numbers of young families and older people. There are approximately 4,000 homes on the Watling Estate comprising around 3,600 houses and 400 flats. The overall density of the estate when developed was 10.7 homes per acre and there are 41 acres of parks and playing fields. According to the 2001 Census, approximately 3,934 households live within the estate, served by a number of schools, medical centres, churches, two shopping areas and a library. The Census indicated that approximately 40% of the homes are rented out by the Local Authority and 4% of dwellings are rented out by several Housing Associations. Around 1% of residents rent their properties through a shared ownership scheme. 46% of homes are owner occupied with 9% dwellings privately rented .

The vast majority of the conservation area is therefore in residential use, interspersed with schools, churches, a clinic and in the very recent past, a sports centre. It therefore tends to be quiet during both the day and night with patterns of movement and activity relating to those associated with daily personal routines.

Within the conservation area there are two shopping areas, namely Watling Avenue at its junction with Burnt Oak Broadway, which is located on the extreme south-eastern edge, and Deansbrook Road in the north.



Map illustrating the Watling Estate Conservation Area within the borough

Watling Avenue is a large local centre forming a part of the Burnt Oak Broadway shopping area. During the day it is very busy, bustling, vibrant and noisy in places with shoppers and traffic movements. The environment is sometimes unpleasant directly behind the shops as the Silk Stream clogs up with silt and refuse. The shops are mainly family businesses serving all sectors of the community but there is a predominance of shops serving the diverse population. Many are trading in front of the shops on wide forecourts and temporary structures under canopies have been erected to facilitate this.



Watling Avenue shops

Deansbrook Road is a much smaller local secondary centre. It serves local people for convenience goods in the main and therefore pedestrian and traffic turnover and movement are frequent. There are a high number of night time uses such as fast food takeaway shops, an off-licence and some convenience stores.



Deansbrook Road shops

3 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BURNT OAK AND THE WATLING ESTATE

3.1 Burnt Oak Burnt Oak Broadway runs directly to the west of the Watling Estate. It is along the route of the pre-Roman part of Watling Street, which crossed the Thames around Lambeth and by Roman times ran on to St Albans. Such long distance roads did not necessarily generate settlements except where there was some local reason for growth such as a market. This was not the case at Burnt Oak. Little development was attracted to the area until the last century. The Hyde, to the south of Watling Estate, was recorded in 1281 and for about 600 years appears to have been the only settlement along the Edgware Road between Cricklewood and Edgware.



Shops along Burnt Oak Broadway

In 1868, the Great Northern Railway opened a line from Finsbury Park to Edgware but this attracted almost no suburban development in the Burnt Oak area. In 1884, there were a handful of roads crossing the area, particularly around Goldbeaters Farm in the north-eastern corner of the area. Orange Hill Road and Deansbrook Road are shown on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map. St Rose's Convent and Gate House remain at the top of Orange Hill Road and are both grade II listed buildings.

Watling Estate itself did not exist before the 1920s. The land was purely agricultural, with a handful of privately owned farms, the largest of which was Goldbeaters Farm, a few scattered Edwardian villas, fields, hedgerows and trees. It was not until the northern line reached the area in 1924 that significant development really started. Today Edgware and its surrounds could be described as epitomising 1930s suburbia.



Buckland Court (formerly known as St Rose's Convent)

3.2 Watling Estate

In 1890, the Housing of the Working Classes Act was passed by Parliament. This paved the way for a government programme of inner city slum clearance and replacement house building. Following the First World War, with soldiers returning home in need of houses and jobs, and a precarious post war economy, the government made a promise of 'Homes for Heroes'. This resulted in pressure to accelerate and expand the house-building programme. In 1919, a new Housing and Town Planning Bill was presented to Parliament. This established the provision of working class housing as a statutory duty of local authorities.

The house-building programme would be substantially funded by the State and was seen as a way of stimulating the post war economy. When the bill was passed, it was accompanied by a design manual, which emphasised the need for 'good houses, adequate in size, equipment and amenity to afford satisfactory dwellings for the working man's family'. The designs put forward, both for estate layouts and individual buildings, were strongly influenced by the Arts and Craft Movement and early Garden City planning as seen in Letchworth (opened in 1903), the first Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

As part of this programme of house building, the London County Council (LCC) built several large housing estates. The design of these estates relied heavily on ideas included in the earlier design manual and were much influenced and controlled by individuals such as Barry Parker, who worked as a design consultant for local authorities; Raymond Unwin, who was involved in the thinking behind the design manual and was the government official responsible for vetting schemes; and George Forrest, the London County Council's architect. Parker and Unwin had great experience of garden city planning and were famed for the development of Hampstead Garden Suburb, one of the best examples of garden city influenced design.

The first LCC estates were within the then existing London metropolis. However land prices and space restrictions soon meant that these areas could not accommodate the low density, relatively self contained estates encouraged by the planning and design ethos of the time. The LCC therefore looked to out of town sites along the new underground lines that had made such areas accessible. Watling Estate was one of the largest of these estates, along with Beacontree, Bellingham and St Helier estates.

The decision to build at Watling Estate, to the designs of the architect George Forrest, was taken in 1924. By April 1927 the first residents moved in. Within 12 months 2,100 families lived on the estate and by 1930 all 4000 dwellings were finished. Although a lot of thought went into the design of the houses and street layouts the estate was not built or designed as a self-contained community. Tenants moved in before schools, roads, churches, shops or any community facilities were provided. To start with, children travelled by train to Golders Green and Hendon to go to school. It seems that most people commuted to their former jobs on the underground. Although a lot of local facilities were eventually provided, the estate was designed as a garden suburb and was never meant to be isolated from the rest of London.

The estate was built for families leaving the overcrowded slums of central London, and Watling Estate was a very alien environment for many of the first residents. One reminiscence of the early years explains how in 1928 "... there was nothing but bricks and mortar and acres of mud. The main thoroughfares . . . were narrow lanes - little more than footpaths and cart tracks in part. The first doctor had to live in a caravan until his house was ready." (*The Watling Estate Resident* 1932). The houses were larger and better equipped than the tenements left behind, there was space for gardens, parks and playing fields, but in comparison people felt isolated and lonely. Early residents complained of the quiet, the lack of facilities and the cost. Although the houses were subsidised by the LCC, rents were often higher than people were used to whilst the cost of travelling to jobs further into London and of acquiring furniture often resulted in real hardship.

The London County Council's allocation policy provided homes only for people living within the existing conurbation of Greater London. This meant that local people, and those growing up on the estate, could not get houses of their own. By 1936 each home housed an average of 4.7 people, but as the first estate children grew up and married, and had to share houses with their parents, overcrowding became a real problem. Over time with older family members passing away, and new housing being built in the area, this problem diminished.

In 1980, with the demise of the Greater London Council (GLC) the entire estate became the responsibility of the London Borough of Barnet. The "Right to Buy" policies of the 1980s meant that tenants could buy their council houses. The 1991 census showed that approximately half the houses (*update census*) had been or were in the process of being bought by residents.

3.3 Archaeological Significance

Watling Estate lies close to the line of Watling Street, a pre-Roman Road. In 1971 excavations on the estate revealed 3rd and 4th century pottery, animal bone, building material and a small bronze coin dated about AD 270-300. It has been suggested that the Roman settlement of Sullonicae, usually presumed to have been at Brockley Hill, was in fact further south on the Watling

Estate. Further information can be found in Oxbow Monograph 58, 1996, *Interpreting Roman London* by Harvey Sheldon and *A Place in Time* edited by Pamela Taylor. Important archaeological finds, whether relating to pre-Roman, Roman or later phases of development in the area, may be unearthed and require assessment and recording.

An area around Watling Avenue enclosed by Fortescue Road, Gunter Grove, Thirleby Road and Gervase Road is an Area of Special Archaeological Significance.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Topography

The topography of the Watling Estate Conservation Area is a key characteristic and has been fundamental to the planned layout and inter-relationship appreciated today between the built form, roads and open spaces. The land is gently undulating leading up and away from the Silk Stream, which runs through the middle of the area from north to south.

4.2 Views and vistas

The undulating topography has been used to deliberately create a distinctive and memorable layout and to capture a number of interesting views, giving the same attention to both long and short-range views. Since the land also rises quite significantly to the north towards Edgware, the elevated position allows southerly long-range views onto the suburban landscape beyond. Amongst the most notable long range views and vistas are:

- Long tunnel views along spinal roads such as Watling Avenue, Deansbrook and Abbots Road created by a strong building line and boundaries. These are relieved by glimpsed views into side streets, cul de sacs and open spaces
- The southerly view of Watling Avenue to the shops

Long range views terminated at various points by gentle curves in roads for example The Meads, Dryfield Road



Long range view into The Meads

Long range views terminated by the deliberate positioning of a building or other feature e.g. Mostyn Road north into Watling Avenue and south to Blundell Road



View from Mostyn Road towards Watling Avenue

- Long range westerly and southerly views along Watling Avenue and Deansbrook towards Burnt Oak Broadway are very distinctive



Views of Deansbrook Road into Burnt Oak Broadway

- Short range views are created by a thoughtful layout based on Garden City principles



Views into Milling Road from Wosley Grove

- Views into narrow streets, courtyards and spaces off principle roads e.g. Wosley Grove into its courtyard and Milling Road



Views into Wosley Grove from Abbots Road

- Glimpsed views between buildings framed by trees and hedges e.g. Fourland Walk



Views into Fourland Walk

There are areas in Watling Estate which illustrate the clever use of undulating relief to create interest and beauty. For example, westerly views to Watling Avenue where the shops can be seen climbing the hill from Watling estate. Here buildings can be seen stepping up and down gentle slopes, and taller buildings such as blocks of flats positioned on slightly higher ground to emphasise their importance.

- Relief and order created by the deliberate positioning of buildings, for example, setting short terraces back from their neighbours in the street
- Tapering views at road junctions where the first building is set back at an angle behind grassed areas e.g. Deans Lane into Edrick Walk, Orange Hill Road into Briar walk and Norwich Walk
- Enclosed views within courtyards e.g. Edwin Road into Islip Gardens



Orange Hill Road into Norwich Walk



Islip Gardens from Edwin Road

Attractive roofscapes with dormer windows and prominent chimneys stacks



4.3 Parks and open spaces

There is a large tract of open space running through the middle of the estate. This follows the meandering lines of the Silk Stream and its tributary from the north of the estate to the south. There are three distinct parts of this tract, The Meads (3.5 hectares) to the north of Deansbrook Road, Watling Park (10 hectares) between Deansbrook Road and Watling Avenue, and Silkstream Park (10 hectares) in the south. Each area has its own character.

The Meads

The Meads is an open, unadorned green space allowing open views between flanking roads. It has a natural feel with little apparent formal landscaping. The southern end is used as allotments and is enclosed by a chain link fence.



Views into the Meads

Watling Park

This is the largest of the three areas, and has been sympathetically landscaped with paths, pedestrian bridges and a variety of mature specimen trees and shrubs. There are attractive brick piers and metal railings around the entrance to the park at Watling Avenue.



Entrance to Watling Park

Silkstream Park

This is smaller than Watling Park, and is bounded by buildings flanking Burnt Oak Broadway and Northern Line tracks. It is well landscaped and maintained.

In addition to the parks which run along the streams, there are a number of open areas, including playing fields. The most notable of these is Lyndhurst Park (2.9 hectares) in the northeastern corner of the conservation area. This area was shown as a reserved site on the original estate plan, but has since been made into a public park. The area forms a break between Watling Estate and later, more conventional suburban development along Lyndhurst Avenue.

All the parks, playing fields and open spaces are key features and offer an important amenity in the area. The relationship between open spaces and buildings was an important part of Garden Suburb planning. The views afforded both from and to the parks, the way buildings bound the open spaces and the link created by the open space across the area all help to define the estate's character.

4.4 Other green spaces and planting

Private front gardens are set back behind low brick walls or hedges. Specimen trees were often purposely planted as part of the original design on the boundaries or in private front gardens and these frequently open or terminate a view.

A number of large mature street trees, originally growing in historic field boundaries, have been retained. These have been supplemented by the planting of new specimen trees to complete a planted street or collection of specimen trees on greens.



Corner plots situated at Goldbeaters Grove and Wosley Grove

5 TOWN PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

5.1 Planning and design ethos

Informal greens, grass verges, roundabouts, central traffic islands and street corners all work to create a green and open feel to the area, and the wider streets have wide green verges on the back edge of pavements. In the main the public green spaces and street trees are well maintained, although the maintenance of private gardens is patchy.

Much of the design and aesthetic thinking of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was a reaction to the harsh environment of the industrial towns which evolved during the 19th century. Both the Arts and Crafts and Garden City movements tried to retain what they saw as the best elements of the rural styles and ways of life seen as lost in the new age. These ideas were very influential with designers and architects such as William Morris, C F A Voysey and Edwin Lutyens, together with town planners like Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin. They had a great influence on the contemporary ideas evident in the development of 1920s public housing. The architecture and layout of Watling Estate was modelled on these principles, with a vernacular architectural style adapted to suit the needs of a large, low cost housing estate.

The character of Watling Estate is distinctive in terms of its layout, form, scale and building designs. The layout is typical of Garden City planning. Raymond Unwin, described by some as the founder of modern town planning, put forward two fundamental principles; that beauty was indispensable at all levels, and that planning could play a role in the creation of communities and profoundly affect people's lives. Unwin developed many patterns and ideas for estate layouts following these principles and his book *Town Planning in Practice* (1909) includes sketches and layouts which look almost identical to parts of Watling Estate. For example, one of the most notable features of the estate is the treatment of corners. Various layouts were used but, in general, a grassed area was left at the actual corner with buildings turned, angled or staggered around the corner. In places, this opens up views down side streets whilst such layouts also allow glimpsed views behind buildings or deflected views around corners.

The care shown in layout design is mirrored in the buildings themselves. The houses are all similar in scale and form and the main materials and architectural details adopted are based on the specific vernacular architectural style of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Distinctive layout treatments

Roads have defined hierarchy demonstrated in their width, detailing and configuration. Gentle curves in the roads work with the topography and introduce interesting views and layout.

Road junctions are usually marked by enclosed green areas.

Various types include:

- Buildings fronting a central green. Various different configurations are seen on Banstock Road



Central green fronting properties in Banstock Road

- Runs of short terraces of different lengths (from two houses to six) slightly set back one from another e.g. Banstock Road



A row of houses along Banstock Road



A row of houses along The Meads

- Symmetrical blocks of terraces with central block recessed behind a straight grass verge to break long views e.g. Storksmead Road
- Small area of green introduced in straight run of terraces to break up views and create greater sense of community e.g. Abbots Road at junction with Horsecroft Road
- Straight rows of long terraces flanked by shorter terraces on same building line e.g. The Meads
- Buildings in small open courtyard configurations particularly blocks of flats e.g. Watling Avenue at junction with Mostyn Road
- Buildings predominantly set behind modest frontages but a common theme is buildings strategically set behind trees, grass verges, greens and other grassed areas



Terraces along Storksmead Road



Views into Horsecroft Road



Central green fronting properties along Banstock Road

- Public buildings taking a prominent siting perhaps on higher land to emphasis their importance e.g. Watling Avenue shops
- Buildings following gentle curves in the road to create and frame interesting and evolving views e.g. Deansbrook shopping parade, Fortescue Road



Deansbrook shopping parade

- Buildings closing views and corners. Often corner views are terminated by a strategic planting, either hedges or trees



A groups of houses in a courtyard off Mostyn Road

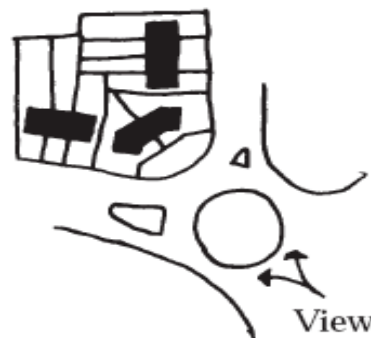
Corner Treatments

Green spaces of various shapes mark the corners of streets or the junction with another street. Buildings enclose these spaces in different ways:

- Angled corner blocks frame the shaped green spaces. The buildings follow the line of an adjacent roundabout allowing for clear views around the corner. This layout allows for optimum use of the land without houses directly overlooking each other or neighbouring gardens e.g. junction of Montrose Avenue with Watling Avenue



An example of a strategically located block



- Houses at right angles behind a grassed corner. This arrangement allows tapering views down the turning and glimpsed views between the two houses e.g. junction of Abbots Road and Goldbeaters Grove
- Turned buildings at a corner to provide interest and balance. This also enables the building fronts to address both streets e.g. the junction of Briar Walk and Colchester Road



Corner treatment of Colchester Road from Abbots Road

5.2 Listed buildings

There are two listed buildings within the conservation area, both listed grade II, namely St. Rose Convent and its gatehouse in Orange Hill Road. They were both listed in 1983 and the descriptions are:

St. Rose's Convent, Orange Hill Road, Edgware

Formerly known as Orange Hill House. Asymmetrically arranged larger house probably of late-19th century date and showing Tudor influence in design. Faced in red brick with stone dressings, with separate red tiled gable and hipped roofs to various elements at different levels. Principal part is four storeyed orieled tower rising to a belvedere which has a swept roof lantern above, finished with ornate finial. Fenestration is generally mullioned and transomed. Ribbing to bold chimney stacks. Claude Graham White the pioneer aviationist lived here from 1912 and 1915, where he entertained, among others, Sarah Bernhardt, Caruso and Marconi.

Gatehouse of St. Rose's Convent, Orange Hill Rd, Edgware

Late-19th century. The gatehouse is two storeyed and faced in red brick with red tiled roof and stone mullioned windows. It is enriched with polychromatic patterned brick banding at first floor.



Gatehouse of St Rose's Convent

5.3 Locally listed buildings

There are currently no locally listed buildings in the Conservation Area. These are buildings that are considered to have local architectural or historic value and worthy of protection. A number of additions to the Local List are recommended in the Management Proposals.

**5.4
Significant unlisted
buildings**

As well as listed buildings, there are many other buildings within the conservation area which make a *positive* contribution to the character and appearance of the area. This is by far the largest category of building in the conservation area. It includes all original buildings, that is those planned and built as part of the overall design together with very good quality infill such as that at Gold Lane built in 2004. These buildings have been identified during the survey process and as recommended in PPG15 are recorded on the Townscape Appraisal Map.

**5.5
Materials, textures,
colours and detailing**

The Conservation Area has a very cohesive character being built mostly at the same time as an integrated development. It contains a variety of materials used in a variety of ways. These give it its distinctive character. Listed below are the principal examples of materials textures and detailing.

Roofs:

Traditional dormer window set in clay tile roof



Steeply pitched and hipped roof



Two styles of original dormer window



Single roll clay pantiles



Walls:

Red clay brick



Houses clad in original steel panels in pale tones



Decorative string course at first floor level



Brick quoins



Black stained timber weatherboarding



Windows:

Traditional timber windows and awnings in Wating Avenue



Some windows have been re-glazed without bars



White painted timber sashes



White painted crittal windows



White painted timber casements



Doors:

Commonly doors are coupled under one recessed entrance or door canopy



Arched entrance with recessed doorway



Other features include:

- Canted bays single or two storey
- Square bays
- Recessed porches
- Lively roofline
- Decorative chimney pots
- Tile hanging
- Clay finials
- Decorative timber porches with turned spandrels
- Timber porches pitched roofs;
- Boundaries - low level brick walls and hedges

Timber doors



Traditional cottage style solid timber door with six glazed lights



Original door canopies



6 CHARACTER AREAS

The Watling Estate Conservation Area divides into three character areas: the main residential areas, shops in Watling Avenue; and shops in Deansbrook Road.

6.1 Main residential areas This includes the whole conservation area except for the two shopping areas. The principal *positive* features are:

- *Designed and built in one building phase as an integrated composition working with the natural topography, including retention of hedgerows and trees to maximise attractiveness
- *Cohesive and deliberate layout and designs that effectively utilise space;
- *Careful groupings of buildings reinforce a sense of community e.g. small cul-de-sacs and small intimate groupings
- *Buildings are all of a similar scale, form and height being approximately as deep as they are high, with shallow pitched roofs (9 metres)
- *Two storey terraces and sometimes semi-detached houses interspersed with blocks of three storey flats and community buildings
- *Houses set back behind private front gardens and hedged boundaries either at back edge of pavement or behind greens and verges
- *Terraces of limited length. These terraces are usually under six units in length, rarely extending to 12. They are always balanced and often symmetrical. They are sometimes deliberately asymmetrical to add interest
- *Deliberate and ingenious variations in layout and detailing to make every house unique and to create interest and beauty

Building type and block design:

- Small terraces of limited length, often symmetrical and balanced. These are seen in groups such as cul-de-sacs, around greens, recessed blocks and turned corners to engender a sense of community and harmonise in the street
- Blocks of flats – typically set around a quadrangle, or grouped within the street e.g. Goldbeaters Grove, Watling Avenue
- Semi detached houses often larger than the terraces. They can be seen angled at corners to frame green space or roundabouts e.g. Goldbeaters
- Community buildings such as churches and schools have been strategically positioned to serve the community and add interest to the streets. Most were built slightly after the main phase of building and date from between 1928 to 1930
- Groups of larger semi detached houses are on Eversfield Gardens. These are two storey with full height curved bays and steeply pitched roofs. Vaguely in the traditions of the 1930s, they are a different idiom to the rest of the estate



Materials and detailing:

- Arts and Crafts detailing, traditional craftsmanship, quality building materials and attention to detail can be appreciated in the house design
- Houses are built from red brick, with traditional clay tiles and single roll clay pantiles. Some have rough cast render and matt black timber weatherboarding. There are also some steel clad buildings most probably due to shortage of materials in 1920's e.g. Banstock Road
- Flats are typically three storeys, rendered with red brick detailing. Tiled mansard roofs accommodate dormers and are punctuated by tall red brick chimneys
- Schools are generally one and two storey with double height windows and gabled roofs. These are traditional school buildings, attractive with traditional and quality finishes and architectural details
- Roofs mostly plain and clutter free. Limited use of dormers, often breaking eaves, single storey and two storey bays, front doors on flanks, recessed doorways, brick detailing, different cladding materials all used to add interest within and between terraces
- Exclusive use of timber sashes, casements and Crittal windows. Timber doors of various designs of the Arts and Crafts tradition. Windows and doors often recessed
- Porches neat and modest ranging from neat timber pentice porches or door canopies, to small pitched porches with tiled roofs

Whilst many houses have been altered removing, replacing or altering traditional features, some houses with much of the original detailing can be found. Amongst the best examples are the terrace at the junction of Abbots Road/Deansbrook Road, (particularly doors); nos. 1 to 31 (odd) Storksmead Road; the terrace at the extreme west of Deansbrook Road; cul-de-sac of flats at Watling Avenue opposite its junction with Mostyn Road and Maple Gardens (porches).



Numbers 1 to 31 Storksmead Road

Landscape and trees:

- High quality planting and landscape conceived as part of the original design in both public open space, greens, verges and private gardens.
- Good street trees. Many mature specimens mark historic field boundaries. There is evidence of retained trees as foci for cul de sacs and corners
- Paving would have originally been large scale paving slabs with granite kerbs. This combination tends to work well as a neutral backdrop to the buildings and green spaces and can still be seen in selective parts of the conservation area. Tarmac is also used which again works well in this context



Tree displayed as a focal point at junction of Deansbrook Road and Dryfield Road

Recent Sustainable Development

- There is a very good example of a new residential development at Gold Lane built in 2004, using innovative layout, design and materials on a very restricted site. This development has won a Civic Trust Award and is highlighted by CABE in its review of good sustainable design



The principal *negative* features are:

Landscape

- Most of the green areas, verges, green roundabouts and traffic islands are well maintained . However, unauthorised car parking is evident on some greens and pavements
- Littering and fly tipping can be a problem in the area and detracts from it's special character e.g. the entrance to Watling Park and Islip Gardens, although the precise locations are likely to vary over time
- Recycling centres are well used but tend to attract litter and fly tipping
- Public areas, street furniture and private property suffer from graffiti e.g. garages on Eversfield Gardens. The shopping parade at Deansbrook is particularly badly affected



Fly tipping at entrance to Watling Park



Graffiti on garages (located adjacent to the conservation area)

Traffic/car parking and Street scene

- The intrusion of traffic and accommodating the car generally is an issue within the conservation area. On-street car parking is available in most roads and is used heavily near community centres, shopping areas and the tube station. Watling Avenue in particular is heavily parked
- Road markings, such as the white and yellow no parking lines are particularly visible
- A common trend is to extend private hard standing areas with front gardens to provide car parking spaces. This can be very harmful to the setting of the houses and the appearance of the street scene and can detract from the area's special character.



Cars parked along Watling Avenue and Barnfield Road

Unsympathetic alterations to buildings

There are very few examples of unaltered buildings in the Conservation Area. Most of the houses have been altered in some way and this tends to detract from their special character. The most common of these alterations include:

- o Replacement windows and doors
- o Removal and addition of porches
- o Car parking on frontages and hard standings along with vehicle crossovers
- o Inappropriate planting on frontages and removal of boundaries (hedges)
- o Replacement walls, railings and other boundaries
- o Poor quality re-pointing
- o Changes of colour to windows, doors and elevation
- o Cladding/rendering of buildings
- o Addition of satellite dishes
- o Replacement roofs, dormers and roof extensions
- o Additions, extensions, and the addition of fake timber framing

Public realm

There are a variety of features associated with the pavements and streets including:

- Paving materials which differ in places. They include small and large module paving slabs, pavers of different colours and tarmac
- Broken kerbs, cracked or broken paving slabs and isolated patches of tarmac are evident in several places
- Concrete bollards of different designs are placed at the back edge of some pavements to prevent car parking in narrow residential streets
- Modern street lighting tends to blend into the backdrop and is neutral in its impact
- Street furniture including telephone boxes, litter bins, recycling bins, seats, post boxes, electricity boxes, gas and telephone supply housings



New development

There are a number of examples of mediocre modern development in the Conservation Area. These include the following:

- Ellis Close, Deansbrook Road and Crispin Road



Crispin Road



Ellis Close

The new development surrounding St. Rose Convent and its grade II listed gatehouse on Orange Hill Road is well laid out and detailed appropriately but the new buildings give the original building complex a very restricted setting.

6.2 The Watling Avenue shopping area

This is the principal shopping area on the Watling Estate, with shops and other town centre uses flanking Watling Avenue from just beyond its junction with Orange Hill Road, up the hill and around the corner into Burnt Oak Broadway.

The area is very busy, noisy and is dominated by traffic and parking. The buildings are generally two storeys high with steeply pitched roofs with dormers and prominent chimneys. They are mostly built in red brick, with the occasional use of render, clay tile with brick and stone detailing. Timber sashes and casements predominate. Amongst the most noteworthy buildings are:

- Silk Stream Parade at the eastern end of the shopping parade. Two facing terraces of Art Deco-inspired two storey blocks. Red brick and render with upper storey set back behind projecting shop fronts. They have been much altered at ground level, and all of them have modern shop fronts. The top storeys are set back behind projecting shop fronts and are used as flats



Art Deco inspired buildings along Silk Stream Parade

- Burnt Oak Station is a neo-Georgian single storey red brick building with hipped roof and a pair of single storey pavilion wings to the front with ground floor shops. The station is a well-balanced building and retains many attractive original features such as rubbed brick window arches; render mouldings and attractive varnished timber entrance doors. Some of the decorative bands on the front elevation are, however, hidden behind a modern sign. London Underground upgrade and Northern Line track/signal and station improvements may result in alterations by Transport for London.



- The Station Works building opposite the station is a double height single storey structure in red brick with some detailing



- Another interesting building is the Gospel Church at the junction of Watling Avenue and Gervase Road. This is built from red brick with stone dressings and portico with pilasters and entablature under a prominent gable end with unusual oversailing eaves



- There are a number of modern community buildings including the Burnt Oak library (see photo), the clinic on the corner of Watling Avenue and Gervase Road and Orange Hill Road



- Two storey shopping parades gently step down a shallow incline between the station and Barnfield Road. They have slightly recessed central sections, stone quoins, unadorned hipped roofs and multi-paned timber sash windows



be

- Other commercial buildings climb up the hill to Burnt Oak Broadway and are mainly two storey with steeply pitched roofs, prominent chimneys and front dormers. Occasionally a three storey parapetted building is used to punctuate the parades



Views along Watling Avenue towards Burnt Oak Broadway

Alterations to shops and other buildings include the addition of satellite dishes and replacement windows and doors. Almost all of the original shopfronts have been replaced, although one good Art Deco shop front exists at Hassans (no. 33 Watling Avenue). Many shops still use the original canvass blinds. Trading and associated grill and cage structures spill onto the wide pavement in front of the shops. Whilst this adds a certain vibrancy to the area it tends to result in a cluttered messy street scene and blocks views of the buildings. The area is vibrant, vital and very busy during the day. At night it is quiet and somewhat desolate.



A good quality shop front displaying a canvas blind



Cages fronting shops along Watling Avenue

The principle *negative* features are:

- The link way to the Silk Stream is very poor. Whilst some attempts have been made to improve this route by means of low key enhancements, it remains dirty, unpleasant and has no lighting. The water in the Silk Stream is stagnant at this point. There is however great potential to provide a pedestrian link into green spaces to the south and to the rear of the station to the north.



Poor quality environment around the Silk Stream

- Although the public realm has been subject to a town centre enhancement scheme, it is disappointing. The area was resurfaced and modern, uncoordinated street furniture added. The resurfacing was generally carried out using a rather complicated and fussy mixture of materials, modules and colours. For instance, the pavement is in small module paving slabs, using different colours to create a repeating pattern, and the crossovers are laid in Tegula setts. However, improvements are planned in the near future



A crossover laid in tegula setts

- Many buildings have security shutters, many of the solid metal type. These create an oppressive and unattractive street scene at night



Oppressive and unattractive solid metal security shutters

- The backs of shops are badly maintained



The backs of shops suffer badly from graffiti

- The public realm at the back of shops is often poorly managed and environmentally disappointing



- Poster panels on the flanks of buildings are visually unattractive



- There are a number of empty flats above the shops



- Graffiti occurs in various locations



- The market site and car park to the rear is underused for most of the week
- Traffic is continuous, busy and therefore very noisy on certain main roads
- Noise and pollution from the traffic detracts from the character of the area
- Generally shop fronts, advertisements and illumination are poorly designed and often fail to relate to the townscape
- In particular advertisements at first floor level look cluttered and oversized
- Some buildings are poorly maintained and appear neglected at first floor level.

6.3 The Deansbrook Road shopping area

The Deansbrook Road shopping area serves as a local convenience centre, secondary to the Watling Avenue shops. The shops comprise a gently sweeping block of two storey red brick buildings. Designed very much as a set piece, they have steeply pitched clay tiled roofs, prominent chimneys, and front dormers in the Arts and Crafts tradition. Sash windows and traditionally detailed doors predominate. The buildings have been little altered over time. The most notable changes include new shop fronts, advertisements, replacement windows, the addition of satellite dishes and some replacement roofing materials. The area is busy with shoppers although much quieter and compared to Watling Avenue.

The shops are mostly family run businesses with some national chains. All are local convenience-type stores. There is a high presence of fast food takeaways.

The principal *negative* features are:

- Many shops have solid shutters that give a bleak appearance at night
- The backs of the shops and the service roads are very poorly maintained



Ugly metal shutters with graffiti



The service roads are unattractive

- Proliferation of satellite dishes and graffiti are major issues
- Advertisements are often oversized inappropriately designed and sited



Example of a prominent corner building with a cluttered appearance



Inappropriately sited advertisements

- There appears to be a regular turnover of shop uses and high vacancy rates in the residential units above
- Heavy parking is evident on side streets
- Shop fronts, signs and illumination are often poorly designed and fail to relate to the buildings

7 ISSUES

7.1 Shops Following on from the negative aspects of each of the three character areas identified above, the following list gives a summary of the main issues within the conservation area:

- Most of the original shop fronts have been replaced. Many shop fronts are badly designed, use inappropriate materials and are poorly maintained, detracting from the special qualities of the building and street scene
- Advertisements are often poorly designed, of inappropriate materials are too large
- Illumination is often inappropriately designed and excessive in some cases
- Steel shutters look unattractive during the day and night
- At Watling Avenue the temporary structures erected for trading purposes on the wide pavement in front of the shops block views of the buildings and look untidy and unattractive
- Buildings are generally poorly maintained
- Graffiti is evident on both private buildings and in the public realm
- Under use of upper floors
- At Deansbrook Road a lack of evening and night time uses may give rise to security issues from potential which has less surveillance

- 7.2
Public realm**
- Informal greens, verges, central traffic islands, roundabouts need more attentive maintenance in places
 - Pedestrian paths are paved in a mixture of modern materials
 - Street furniture is a mixture of modern designs that are not always co-ordinated in a meaningful way
 - Historic kerbs are broken in places
 - Graffiti, fly tipping and litter are prevalent
- 7.3
Traffic and car parking**
- There is heavy parking in some areas, usually associated with the shops, tube station and community uses such as schools or churches
 - Measures to reduce illegal car parking such as the installation of bollards have sometimes detracted from the qualities of the area
 - In some residential areas, green spaces have been hard surfaced to accommodate car parking, which detracts from the planned layout of the estate
 - Parked cars often find it difficult to use narrow residential streets, which were not designed for modern traffic
 - Traffic calming measures, include road humps and speed cushions and can be visually intrusive
 - Traffic is busy at certain times of the day
- 7.4
Domestic alterations**
- Uncoordinated alterations to the houses have taken place over a prolonged period of time. These works have significantly compromised the special qualities of the buildings, their form and design. Amongst the most common alterations are the following:
- Replacement windows, doors, porches, extensions, roof extensions and dormers
 - The inappropriate use of colour on doors, windows and painted brickwork
 - Hard surfaced front gardens to accommodate cars and the resultant loss of front boundaries such as original hedging
 - New walls and fences in front gardens
 - The loss of chimneys and the addition of satellite dishes.
- 7.5
New development**
- Mediocre modern development, which fails to respect the quality of the original layout of the Estate and the distinctive form and detailing of the earlier buildings can be seen in several locations. Examples include:
- The flats on Crispin Road
 - The Annunciation Roman Catholic Junior School, The Meads.
 - Ellis Close and Cardinal Close

Potential development sites exist within the conservation area but care needs to be taken to ensure that the quality of development reflects the quality within the conservation area. Notable sites include The Watling Market and car park to the rear of the Watling Road shops and the vacant site adjacent to the Annunciation Junior School, The Meads.

A planning brief exists for the Watling Market site and lists retail, leisure, business and community uses as being appropriate. Both of the above sites would benefit from up to date planning briefs outlining the way in which future development could enhance the area.

7.6 Site specific proposals for improvement

- The backs of both groups of shops are generally very poorly maintained and unattractive. To the rear of the Watling Avenue shops the land falls away which increases the prominence of the unattractive rear elevations. The service roads are busy, messy and generally unattractive
- Maintenance of both public and private buildings within the conservation area is an issue particularly at the shopping centres. One example is the Menorah School, Abbots Road
- The route from the Watling Avenue shops through the buildings to the land to the rear should be improved. The route follows the Silk Stream, which is littered and stagnant at this point. Lighting through the walkway is poor, and the pathway dirty and generally very unattractive. The potential exists to link these walks to the rear of the station on the northern side and to the Silk Stream park on the south side

MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PURPOSE OF MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

The designation of a conservation area provides the opportunity to protect and enhance the historic character of Barnet's suburb under the Three Strands (PEG) Strategy but it is not an end in itself. The purpose of these Management Proposals is to identify a series of possible initiatives which can be undertaken to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area, based on the assessment of the area's special character which has been provided in the Character Appraisal.

This document satisfies the statutory requirement of section 71(1) of the Planning and (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 namely:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any part of their area which are conservation areas."

Section 69(2) states:

"It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions ... and determine whether any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas"

This document also follows Government guidance as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 '*Planning and the Historic Environment*', PPG 16 '*Archeology and Planning*', English Heritage guidance '*Guidance on the management of conservation areas*', Best Practice guidelines, policies within the Barnet's UDP 2006 and any other policies which supersede this together with published planning guidance such as Barnet's suite of design guidance notes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 STATUTORY CONTROLS

Designation of a conservation area brings a number of specific statutory provisions aimed at assisting the '*preservation and enhancement*' of the area. These controls include requiring Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of any unlisted building, fewer permitted development rights for alterations and extensions, restrictions on advertisements and requiring notice for proposed works to trees.

Recommendation 1:

The Council will seek to ensure that new development within the conservation area preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the area in accordance with policies in Barnet's UDP 2006 and other guidance.

2.2 LISTED BUILDINGS

Listed Buildings are protected by law as set out in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990*. The listing covers both the inside and outside of the building, and any structure or building within its curtilage which was built before 1948. "Listed Building Consent" is required from the Council for any work which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed buildings. There are presently just two listed buildings in the conservation area, namely St. Rose Convent and Gatehouse, Orange Hill Road. Extensions and alterations to listed buildings should conform to policies relevant policies in the Barnet UDP 2006. Generally works to listed buildings should:

- Take account of the prevailing forms and development
- Complement the form and character of the original building
- Be secondary in bulk and form to the principal building
- Use high quality materials and detailing
- Pay particular attention to roof lines, roof shape, eaves details, verge details and chimneys.

Recommendation 2:

The Council will seek to ensure that all works to a listed building preserve the building together with its setting and any features of architectural or historic interest which it may possess in accordance with UDP policies HC9 to HC13 and other guidance.

2.3 BUILDINGS OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIC INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS

In addition to the listed buildings, there are many buildings which are considered to be significant within the overall context of the Watling Estate. Most of these are the original residential properties which cumulatively contribute so much to the "special" interest of the Estate, but there are also a number of buildings, mainly but not exclusively in community or religious uses, which are considered to be of additional merit. These should be added to Barnet Council's Local List of important buildings. There are presently no locally listed buildings within the conservation area.

Buildings on the Council's Local List enjoy special protection and the Council will seek to retain these buildings and ensure that new development does not harm the character, appearance or setting of the building. The Council will determine applications which affect locally listed buildings in accordance with policies HC14 and HC15 of the Barnet UDP 2006. The buildings which are suggested for "Local" listing are:

Numbers 1 to 19 Silkstream Parade, Watling Avenue
International Gospel Church, number 102A Watling Avenue

Recommendation 3:

The Council will consider the buildings set out above for inclusion in the Local List. In addition the Council will seek to ensure that all significant unlisted buildings (as marked on the Townscape Appraisal map) are protected from inappropriate forms of development or inappropriate demolition.

2.4 SHOPFRONTS

The Council has produced general shop front and advertisement guidance (*Design Guidance Notes* nos.1 and 10) in addition to specific shop front guidance for Watling Avenue shops in association with the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) at Burnt Oak (2000). This deals specifically with the design of traditional shop fronts. Consideration should be given to the production of guidance that specifically advises on the use of modern materials and design. This should include advice on the appropriate design of advertisements, illumination and security measures such as shutters.

Recommendation 4:

The Council will seek to consider the production of shop front design advice that advises on the use of modern materials and designs.

2.5 TREES AND PLANTING

Hedges, trees and planting in general are a very important aspect of the original design and planning of the area. In addition there are a number of mature trees that appear to originate from historic field boundaries.

Trees are protected to some extent within all conservation areas already. Anyone intending lopping or felling a tree with a diameter greater than 100mm at 1.5 metres above ground level must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting work. This provides the Council with an opportunity to assess the quality of the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served, after which there is a presumption in favour of its retention.

Recommendation 5:

It has been identified that some street trees require management.

2.6 PUBLIC REALM

Throughout the conservation area there is a mixture of different paving materials which could sometimes be better coordinated. There are also historic features such as original street signs, railings, historic granite kerbs that should be retained. The Council will seek to investigate carrying out a public realm survey to identify historic features worthy of retention, negative features that might be changed and to draw up a rolling programme of works to enhance the public realm. Informed by this audit, working together with partners, the Council could adopt a limited palette of low key materials and a suitable mix of street furniture. Any future works should be carried out in line with best practice and English Heritage guidance.

Recommendation 6:

The Council together with its partners, such as statutory undertakers, will seek to carry out a public realm audit to identify positive and negative features and draw up a Management Plan to ensure protection of the best features. A programme of future works should be drawn up in accordance with English Heritage guidance and best practice generally.

2.7 TRAFFIC, CAR PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

Over a number of years traffic calming and management schemes have been implemented, which have often failed to respect the character of the estate. These include the installation of traffic humps, bollards, signalled crossings, signalled junctions, and limited parking schemes together with associated signs, railings, white and yellow lines.

Car parking in residential areas is a challenge. The estate was built at a time when car ownership was much lower and little provision was made in the original design to accommodate the car. Whilst the situation is helped somewhat by the low density of the estate which does help to provide spaces on the street, grass verges and front gardens have been converted to parking spaces on an ad hoc basis often using a mixture of materials and designs. The results in a loss of greenery and a cluttered appearance, which adversely affects the street scene. The Council will seek to resolve parking issues by addressing the problem in a strategic manner throughout the estate and will encourage residents to think more carefully when replacing front gardens with hard standing.

Recommendation 7:

The Council will seek to consider options which may assist in relieving car parking problems and street/highway visual impacts. Where the Council undertakes works on the public highway, consideration will be given to the impact on the Conservation Area. It has been recognised that the route from the Watling Avenue shops through the buildings to the land to the rear should be improved. Therefore, the Council will consider improvements of the pedestrian walkway provided sufficient budget and resources permit.

2.8 NEW DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSIONS

There are few opportunities for large scale redevelopment except for the Watling Market site and site adjacent to the Annunciation Catholic Primary School. The Council may wish to consider the production of a development brief for the latter and an update of the existing planning brief for the Watling Market site giving very clear design advice. The Council will encourage good quality schemes that conform to existing design advice for any new redevelopment sites.

Recommendation: 8

The Council may consider the preparation of planning briefs for the two potential redevelopment sites as identified above, i.e. the Annunciation Primary School, The Meads and the Watling Market site and determine all other applications in line with the Council adopted design guidance and relevant policies contained in Barnet's UDP 2006.

3 DOCUMENT REVIEW

This document should be reviewed every five years in light of emerging government policy and Barnet's UDP. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area and its boundaries
- An assessment of whether the management proposals detailed in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and proposed actions and amendments
- Public consultation on the review findings, any proposed changes and input into the final review

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