

# UNDERWOOD STREET CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

HACKNEY COUNCIL  
CONSERVATION  
URBAN DESIGN &  
SUSTAINABILITY  
TEAM



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# INTRODUCTION

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 DESIGNATION BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Underwood Conservation Area was designated in 1990. However, no appraisal for the area currently exists.

## 1.2 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

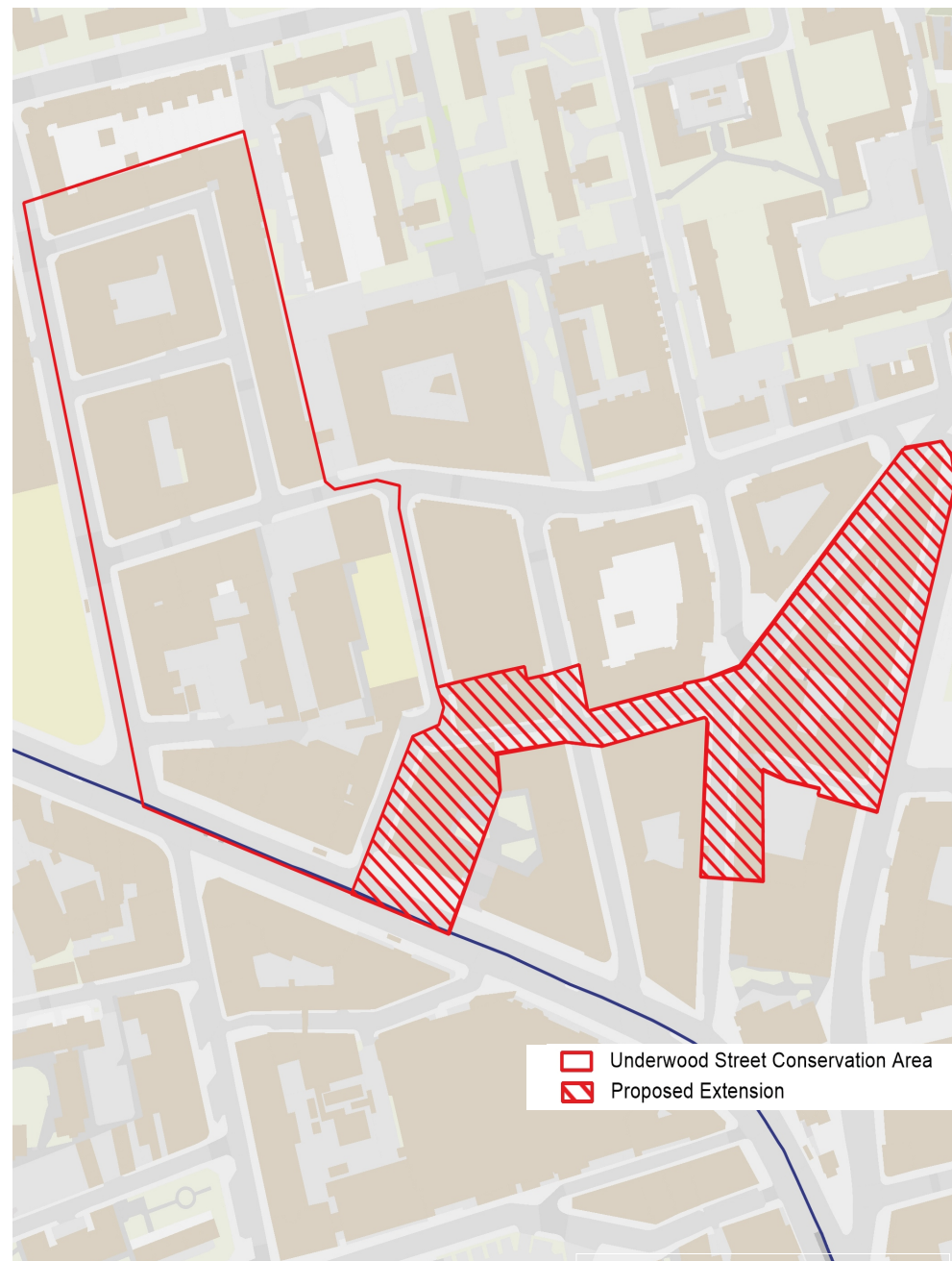
1.2.1 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local Planning Authorities have a duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Council is also under a duty to review existing Conservation Areas from time to time and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.

1.2.2 Conservation Areas are not single buildings, but groups of buildings and areas, which are of special architectural or historic significance. Because the designation is of an area, significance can include the spaces between buildings and natural features, topography, the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries and landscape features such as gardens, parks and greens, trees and street furniture can all add to significance.

## 1.3 IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

1.3.1 Conservation Areas enjoy special protection under legislation and both national and local policy and guidance. Planning applications within a Conservation Area must be shown to “preserve or enhance” the character or appearance of the area. Planning Permission is needed to demolish a building in a Conservation Area, and there is a planning presumption in favour of the retention of buildings which make a positive contribution to a Conservation Area.

1.3.2 Certain types of more minor development, particularly in relation to single family dwellings, are subject to Permitted Development rights



(under the General Permitted Development Order, 2015, as amended). These Permitted Development rights are more limited in Conservation Areas, and may be removed partially or completely through the use of Article 4 Directions. Trees above a specific size are protected in Conservation Areas. Applicants must give the Council six weeks' notice in writing before any work is carried out to lop, top or fell a tree in a Conservation Area. There is also greater control over advertisements in Conservation Areas.

## 1.4 NATIONAL POLICY

1.4.1 The relevant legislation is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Sections 69 to 80. Section 69 defines conservation areas as places of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 72 of the Act imposes a duty on the Council in its role as local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

1.4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 provides national policy. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is a key component of the NPPF's drive to achieve sustainable development. Section 16 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the heritage framework in detail in relation to various 'heritage assets'. Conservation Areas are referred to as designated heritage assets in the NPPF.

1.4.3 Although not statutory guidance, Historic England's Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2019) provides further guidance.

## 1.5 REGIONAL POLICY

1.5.1 The London Plan (2021 and later alterations) is the regional spatial strategy for London. It forms part of the development plan for Hackney. Relevant policies include:

- Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth requires the Council

to "develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment." This evidence will be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment which will in turn inform development plans, strategies and development proposals which requires that development proposals "affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings."

- Policy HC3 Strategic and local views, the Mayor has identified Strategic Views which includes significant buildings, urban landscapes or riverscapes that help to define London at a strategic level and also requires that Boroughs identify local views in their local plans and strategies as demonstrated by the forthcoming Historic Environment SPD.
- Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach and requires development proposals to "respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character."
- Policy D9 Tall buildings requires development proposals for tall buildings to "take account of, and avoid harm to, the significance of London's heritage assets and their settings"

## 1.6 LOCAL POLICY

1.6.1 Local borough-wide planning policy is contained within the Hackney Local Plan 2033. This provides specific policies that help protect the area's special architectural and historic interest including:

- LP1 Design Quality and Local Character requires all new development to be of "the highest architectural and urban design quality. It must also "be compatible with the existing townscape including urban grain and plot division; be compatible with local views and preserve protected views; preserve or enhance the significance of the historic environment and the setting of heritage

assets.” The policy also provides further clarification on Taller Buildings of which the Council will prepare AAPs to identify sites and locations suitable for taller buildings. The policy requires that “All new taller buildings must respect the setting of the Borough’s local character and historic townscapes and landscapes including those in adjoining boroughs” and “preserve or enhance the borough’s heritage assets, their significance, and their settings in line with policies LP3 ‘Designated Heritage Assets’ and LP4 ‘Non Designated Heritage Assets’”.

- LP3 Designated Heritage Assets states “Development proposals affecting Conservation Areas or their settings will be permitted where they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area including, the established local character of individual buildings and groups of buildings (in terms of height, massing, scale, form, design, materials, detailing and use) and the rhythms and historical form of the area (in terms of the spaces between buildings, density, settings, building lines, siting, pattern of development, urban grain and plot coverage).”
- LP4 Non Designated Heritage Asset requires that “development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets should conserve or enhance and reveal the significance of the assets and their settings.”
- LP5 Strategic and Local Views requires the Council to protect Strategic Views identified within the London Plan, in addition to protecting the identified Important Local Views within Hackney. This states “new development must not harm Important Local Views and redevelopment of buildings, which currently adversely impact on Important Local Views, must not further detract from, and shall, where possible, improve the view.”

1.6.2 This document, alongside the London Plan (2021) and LP33 (2020) provides a framework for Taller Buildings and identifies suitable areas for them. This document should be read alongside Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance for example the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD and future iterations.

## 1.7 STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.7 The Conservation Area Appraisal examines the characteristics of the Underwood Street Conservation Area, including its context, historic development, townscape, streetscape and architecture first as a whole and then in individual character areas. It identifies qualities that make the area special and assesses its current condition. The Management Plan sets out proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Underwood Street Conservation Area as required by section 71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## 1.8 BOUNDARY EXTENSIONS

Following an in-depth review of the Underwood Street Conservation Area it is proposed to extend the Conservation Area in order to include buildings of a consistent design, material and massing which are located to the east.

This includes a perimeter block bordered by East Road, Vestry Street and Silbury Street. These blocks also replaced 18th/19th century terraced properties with early 20th century workshops and factories of a near identical character. The windows, taking in doors and architectural features largely survive in-tact and are of a consistent character and appearance. There is a strong visual link from Westland Place towards Vestry Street between the areas.

Buildings along Ebenezer Street are largely excluded from the conservation area as these are not considered to be of sufficient architectural and historic character to warrant inclusion.

Eagle House is also proposed to be included within the Underwood Street Conservation Area. Although of a later date than the majority of the buildings it is of high architectural quality and occupies a prominent spot on City Road and marks a stepping up in height to the edge of the Conservation Area. The building is of a consistent scale and contributes to the character and appearance of Westland Place.

## 1.9 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Underwood Street Conservation Area has a coherent character and typology of industrial/warehouse buildings constructed at the turn of the 20th century.

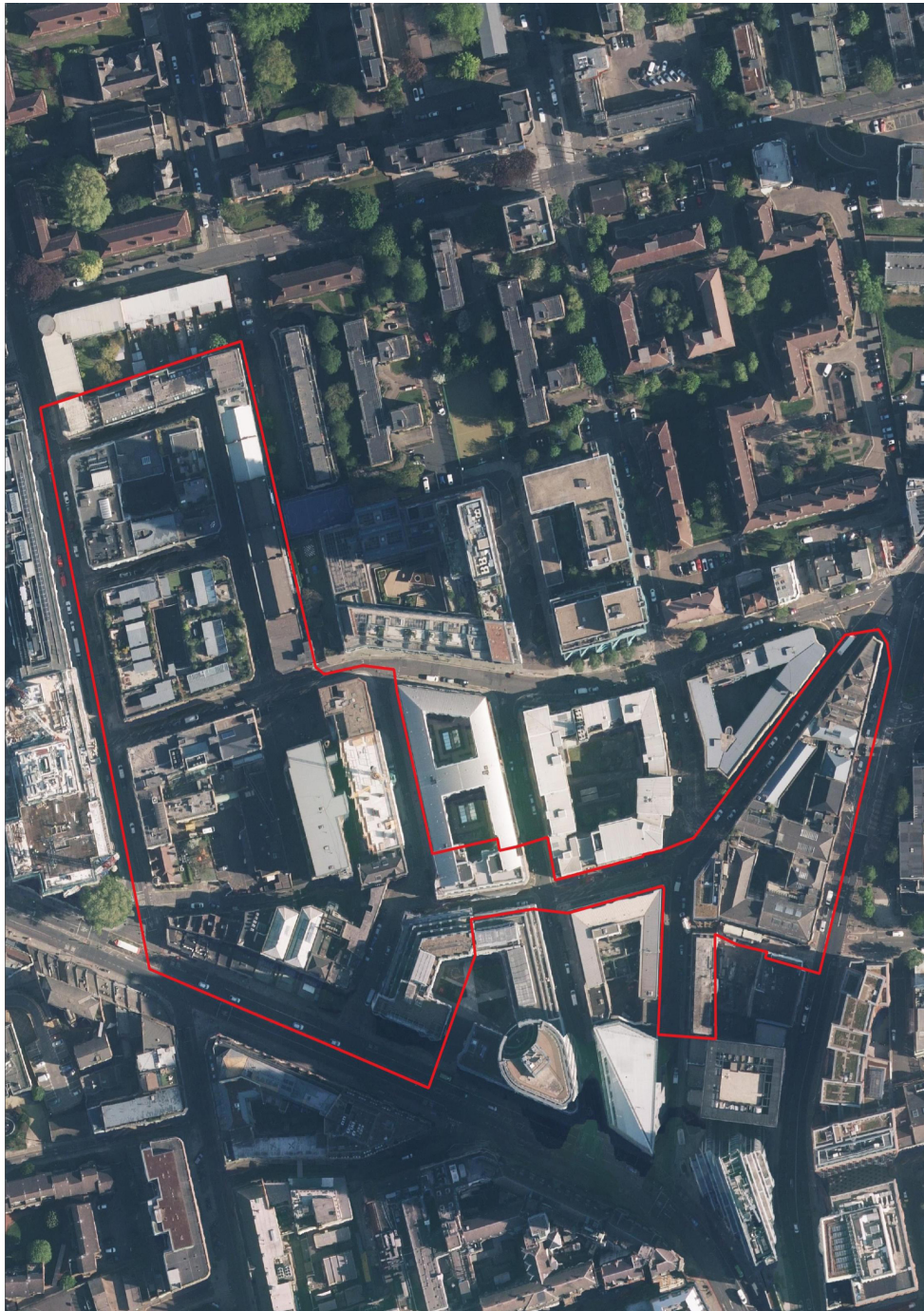
The street layout is largely orthogonal (right angled) grid which derives from the historical pattern of paths as dictated by the formally laid out walled gardens on the site; secondly, the buildings conform to a uniform and unbroken building line and have similar overall heights. The buildings are all unusually tall in relation to the widths of the streets. These characteristics combine to give the area a canyon like appearance which offers a particularly strong feeling of enclosure and overlooking to those passing through. There are no breaks in the street wall, vertical openings are punched into the buildings' interior courtyards through carriageways. The sense of overlooking is enhanced in places by the presence of high level doors and loading bays opening directly on the street wall served by projecting cranes or gantries.

The buildings have a common character and are largely constructed of brick with a uniform vertical emphasis provided by the ground to parapet projecting structural columns on every building. Buildings on City Road and no.1 Westland Place are generally older than the warehouses and provide an important indication of the type of buildings that once dominated the entirety of the area.



CONTEXT





## 2.0 CONTEXT

### 2.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

2.1.1 Underwood Street Conservation Area is located to the south-west of the London Borough of Hackney, and adjacent to the border with the London Borough of Islington.

2.1.2 The main roads passing through or adjacent to the Conservation Area are City Road, East Road and Shepherdess Walk.

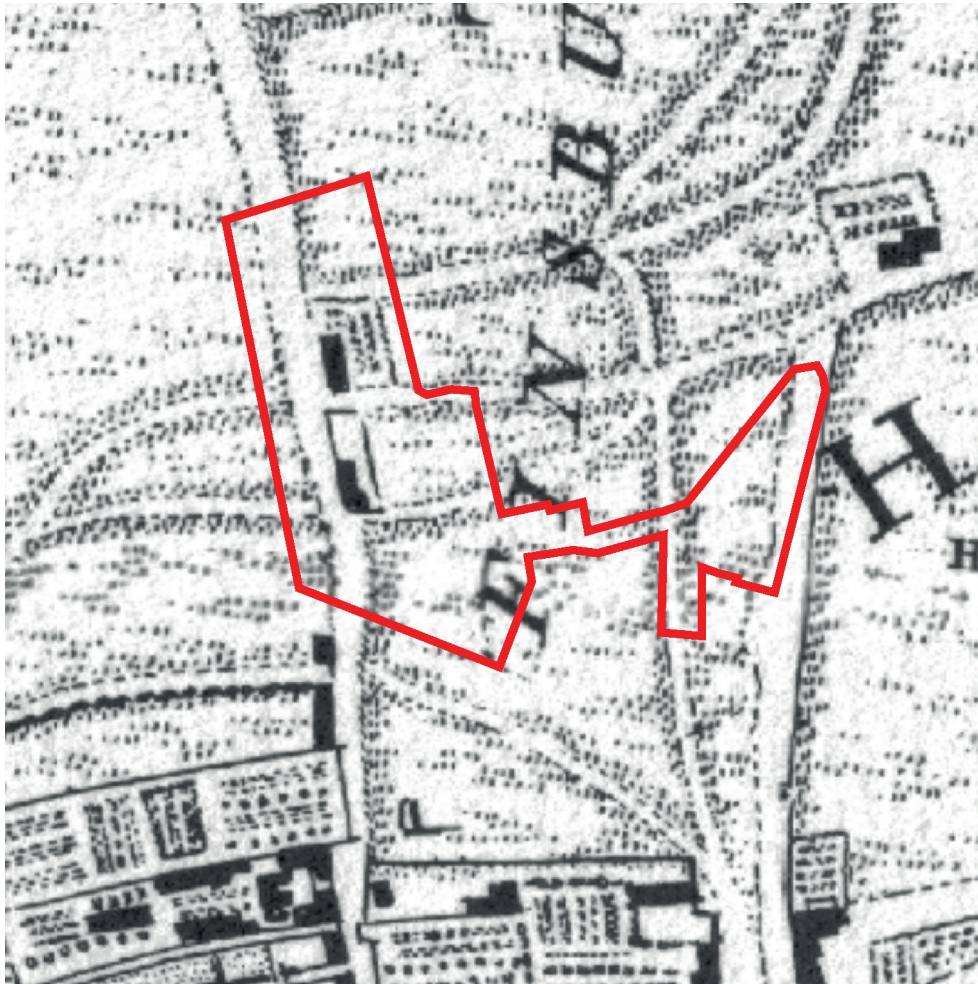
2.1.3 To the south of the Regents Canal Conservation Area and north of the Moorfields Conservation Area in the London Borough of Islington.



Underwood Street looking north

## 2.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 The area today still reflects the mediaeval field and path pattern. Shepherdess Place was an ancient footpath. In the eighteenth century the area was known as “Finsbury Fields” i.e. they were mainly grounds, referred to in 1068. The area as a whole was made over as walking grounds with trees paid for by the public. In Henry VIII’s reign when the fields were enclosed there was a violent successful uprising, which led to the fields being kept open.



1746 John Rocque's Map, showing Nile Street, Shepherdess Walk, Shepherdess Place, East Road and Provost Street



R. Horwood, 1799 showing the laying out of the area

2.2.2 The Lumley Almshouses on the north of the area were built in 1672 but demolished in the nineteenth century. The south-west of the area since at least 1720. The “Shepherd and Shepherdess” A public house has been in Tavern, later the “Eagle” gave rise to Shepherdess Walk.

2.2.3 The layout of the area was already established by 1720. John Rocques map of 1746 shows Nile Street, Shepherdess Walk, Shepherdess

Place, East Road and Provost Street laid out already but with little development. City Road (Turnpike) was also laid out in the eighteenth century. By 1827 there were houses and shops along the road, Shepherdess Walk and Westmoreland Place were laid and development out to the east.

2.2.4 By 1870 the area was intensively developed with houses and shops/workshops. The usage of the area greatly changed between 1901-1914 when many of the industrial buildings and warehouses were constructed.



1890 Charles Booth's London Poverty Map



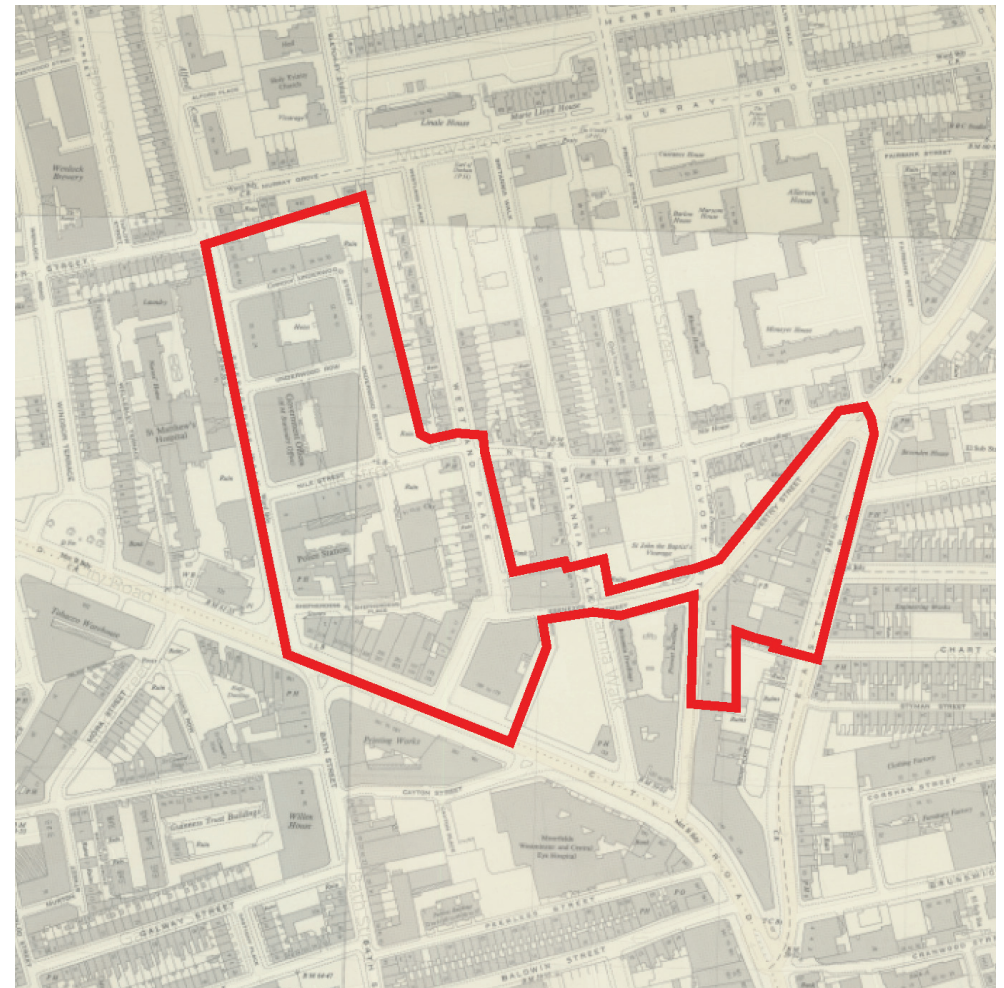
1896 OS Map

2.2.5 Hoxton had one of the worst crime records in London and the buildings had to be very secure, as shown by their construction with courtyards. Transport was good with Wenlock and City Road Basins off the Regent's Canal very nearby. This therefore easily allowed goods for the industrial buildings and warehouses. Many of the buildings constructed within this period are similar to those that were constructed in Shoreditch.

2.2.6 The present Eagle Tavern and grounds are an important part of East End social history. A building was on the site in 1720 as referred to above. In the nineteenth century the Eagle and the Grecian Saloon next to it were one of the most important and popular music halls in London. The building is in the song “Up and down the City Road/In and out the Eagle/That’s the way the money goes/Pop goes the Weasel”. It was there that Marie Lloyd as the daughter of a barman made her singing debut; she was to become the most famous music hall entertainer of the period.



1945 Bomb Map



1960s OS Map

The area received comparatively little bomb damage with only a handful of buildings damaged beyond repair. In these places today post-war buildings of an appropriate scale and massing now stand.

2.2.7 Where bomb damage did occur the shells of these buildings at times survived up until the mid-1970s as demonstrated by the building at the corner of Westland Place. The late 20th century has resulted in a further decline in the number of factories and the conversion of the



# TOWNSCAPE

Townscape is the arrangement and appearance of buildings, spaces and other physical features in the built and natural environments.

# 3.0 Townscape

## 3.1 LAYOUT AND PLANFORM OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

3.1.1 The street layout derives from the historical pattern of paths as dictated by the formally laid out walled gardens on the site and that of modest 19th century terrace houses. This residential scale, particularly in the east-west alignment results in streets that are narrow relative to the scale of the later industrial replacements. The surviving block between Vestry Street and East Road is of a similar design and layout following the historic route of East Road.

3.1.2 The buildings largely form a uniform and unbroken building line with large central courtyards in the centre of each urban block.

## 3.2 DENSITY

3.2.1 In the mid-19th century the area was occupied by modest terraced houses similar to those surviving on Shepherdess Walk but by the OS map of 1893 change to the grain of the streets which now form the Conservation Area had begun and by the OS map of 1913 the existing coarser industrial grain is clearly recognisable. Where post-war replacements have occurred these have generally followed a coarser industrial grain. The exceptions being the Victorian terrace housing on City Road and the sole surviving Georgian building on Westland Place which have a more residential grain.

## 3.3 LAND USES

3.3.1 Historically the buildings were a mixture of warehouses with limited office space. Over the course of the late twentieth century many of these properties were converted into residential and office uses. These conversions often took place comprehensively across the whole buildings and helped ensure uniformity across the facades.



### 3.4 BUILDING HEIGHT AND MASSING

3.4.1 The predominant scale is three to five storeys. There is a coherent frontage to the broad Shepherdess Walk on the western edge with a noticeable step up in heights outwith the Conservation Area. Areas of height include towards East Road and the cluster surrounding the Atlas Building, City Road and in particular the border with the London Borough of Islington also mark a step up in height and massing,

### 3.5 KEY VIEWS

**Distant view:** Distant views of the settlement and those in the approach to it may contribute to lasting impressions of its character.

- City Road: The buildings on City Road provide a juxtaposition in heights to the neighbouring taller developments and clearly marks the entrance into the Underwood Street Conservation Area.

**Linear Views:** Long, straight views within the Conservation Area.

- The narrow streets with unusually tall buildings within the Conservation Area help to frame views and give a canyon like appearance. Moreover, the orientation of the buildings helps to create interesting termination points. Of particular note this includes: Nile Street, Shepherdess Walk, Underwood Street, Underwood Walk

**Local Views:** These tend to be shorter and confined to a specific locality within the Conservation Area. Any landmark structures, such as church towers or prominent public buildings, should be noted.

- Views towards the Eagle, City Road
- Westland Place- contains one of the few curves
- New North Road: The view takes in the wedge shape and continues down New North Road and Vestry Street.



Top left: View north Underwood Street  
Middle left: View north Westland Place  
Bottom left: View east Underwood Street

Top right: View west Nile Street  
Middle right: View north Underwood Street  
Bottom right: View south New North Road and Vestry Street



# STREETSCENE

Streetscape is the outward facing visual appearance and character of a street or locality.



# 4.0 Streetscene

## 4.1 PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE

4.1.1 Owing to the dense urban location there is very little open space within the Conservation Area.

4.1.2 There are a number of historic street surfaces which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. This includes the historic setts on Shepherdess Place, Westland Place and Ebenezer Street. However, the majority of the street surfaces are now formed with asphalt to the road with granite kerbs. The pavements are generally a mixture of asphalt and 400x400 concrete blocks.

4.1.3 Close to buildings modern pavement lights are often found with the historic cast iron examples providing particular interest to the streetscene. Where modern replacements have been inserted these fail to effectively mimic the qualities of the originals.

4.1.4 On Nile Street the original boundary walls, arched gateways and pillars are still found. These are constructed of glazed brick and capped in stone and make a positive contribution to the streetscene.

## 4.2 STREET FURNITURE

4.2.1 The area is notable for the general lack of street furniture and is largely limited to lamp posts, parking signage and bicycle parking.

4.2.2 Of note is the recently introduced Street Trees set into the carriageway on Underwood Street which makes a bookend on street cycle parking.

4.2.3 There are few trees within the Conservation Area as a result of the tight urban grain. However, in recent years trees have been introduced to Shepherdess Walk and Underwood Street. Birch trees are also found outside The Eagle on City Road.



Westland Place historic cobbles and new planters



**ARCHITECTURAL  
CHARACTER**

# 5.0 Architectural Character

## 5.1 GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

5.1.1. Buildings have similar overall heights; and are all unusually tall in relation to the widths of the streets. These characteristics combine to give the area a canyon like appearance which offers a particularly strong feeling of enclosure and overlooking to those passing through. There are no breaks in the street wall, vertical openings are punched into the buildings' interior courtyards through archways. The sense of overlooking is enhanced in places by the presence of high level doors and loading bays opening directly on the street wall served by projecting cranes or gantries.

5.1.2 There is a common architectural approach with solid masonry buildings ranging between four and five storeys in height. The majority feature brick pilasters and multi-pane windows which help to provide uniformity to the area. However, whilst there are similarities each one is unique with subtle differences which are important to preserve.

## 5.2 BUILDING CONTRIBUTION

**Locally Listed Buildings:** These buildings are of local architectural or historic interest and) follow a similar criteria as the national statutory listed process, however significance is judged on their local rather than national importance. These buildings have been identified as having a significant level of local value and are considered to make an especially positive contribution to the special character of the Conservation Area and treated as Non Designated Heritage Assets.

**Positive Buildings:** Buildings that positively contribute to the Conservation Area's overall character and appearance. The full or substantial demolition of buildings or structures identified as making a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area is harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area and will be



regarded as substantial or less than substantial harm according to the circumstances of the case. Special attention should be paid towards preserving characteristic architectural details present on these buildings.

**Neutral Buildings:** These buildings neither contribute nor actively detract from the Conservation Area's special character. This includes buildings that are of sympathetic massing, material palette and articulation. In principle, the loss of these buildings would not be resisted, provided the proposed replacement buildings adhere to the objectives of relevant planning policy and are of a high quality of design commensurate with the Conservations Areas special character.

**Buildings that detract from the Area's Special Character:** Some development detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In principle, the redevelopment of these sites would be encouraged, provided proposals for their replacement are of a high quality architectural design and would make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

## 5.3 KEY ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES AND MATERIALS

5.3.1 The most common building material to be found in the Underwood Street Conservation Area is brick, a mixture of red brown, gaunt bricks and soft yellow stock bricks interspersed with brighter red bricks often used in window arches and as decorative bands between storeys. Brick is particularly used in the older building stock of the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but it is noticeable that later buildings have also kept to this tradition to some degree. The subtle colour variations in the bricks that can be observed on many of the buildings in the area add a very attractive mellow quality to their appearance.

5.3.2 It is not uncommon for the ground floor of buildings to be in a darker red, engineering brick or glazed bricks. Variations to the brickwork include decorative render, stone and plaster detailing such as keystones above windows and plaster corncicing and banding between storeys.



Top left: Glazed Bricks  
Middle left: Red Bricks  
Bottom left: Gaunt Bricks

Top right: Engineering Bricks  
Middle right: Stock Bricks  
Bottom right: Yellow Buff Bricks

## 5.4 ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to expand on the Statement of Significance in Section 2 and to highlight individual buildings and features that particularly contribute towards the area's character.

### Underwood Street

**6-14 Underwood Street:** The buildings date from the early 20th century and are four storeys and constructed of gaunt bricks. The ground floor was likely a showroom with warehouses/furniture works above. There is a good quality shopfront to the ground floor with strong cornice above fascia and glazed brick to base. There are distinctive pilasters featuring rounded corners rising the height of the building with stair cores projecting above helping to provide interest. Windows are timber two over two sash windows with stone cills.

**16-28 Underwood Street:** The buildings largely date from the early 20th century and is three storeys, constructed in a gaunt brick. There is a good quality shopfront the ground floor with a strong cornice above the fascia. There are distinctive pilasters featuring rounded corners rising the height of the building. Windows are a mixture of multi pane steel windows and timber 2 x 2 sashes. No.26-28 was reconstructed post-war.

**34-40 Underwood Street:** The buildings are three storeys and constructed of gaunt brick above a glazed brick base. They contain pilasters with rounded corners rising the height of the building and a mixture of stone, red brick and stock brick detailing. The windows are modern aluminium replacements.

**44-48 Underwood Street:** The building is four storeys with chamfered corner. It is constructed of engineering brick to the ground floor with red brick above and stone detailings to the windows. There is a rendered fascia panel and cornice above the ground floor. Windows are aluminium,

**15-47 Underwood Street, 2-20 Underwood Row:** The building dates from the early 20th century and is constructed of stock brick with minimal red brick detailing and glazed brick to base of columns. Strong brick



Underwood Street looking north

columns run the height of the building with recessed brick spandrels and windows in between. Windows are multi-pane aluminium with timber taking in doors which feature engineering brick to the corners adding interest to the facade. To the centre of the site is an open courtyard allowing an appreciation of the rear elevations.

**1-9 Underwood Street, 1-3 Nile Street and 10-22 Shepherdess Walk:** The building is four storeys to Underwood Street and rising to give storeys on Shepherdess Walk and occupies an entire perimeter block. It is constructed of blue brick to the base, red brick to the first floor and banded red and stock brick above. Multi-pane steel windows are found throughout and feature a curved header to the top storey. To the centre of the site is an open courtyard allowing an appreciation of the rear elevations.

## Nile Street

**4-10 Nile Street:** The building is five storeys and constructed of stock brick with red brick details. It was likely constructed as a showroom to the first two floors with warehouse above and features a distinctive crane and taking in doors. The first two floors feature extensive glazing in the shopfront with solid brick pilasters above. The building features timber two over two sash windows.

## Shepherdess Walk

**The Eagle Public House (Locally Listed):** The buildings dates to 1901 replacing the earlier Eagle Tavern and music hall of c.1821. The current pub commands a corner site and is constructed of red brick with painted decorative plasterwork. It is two storeys with a large gabled attic floor and beautiful corner turret. The turret is topped with an ogee-shaped lead roof, decorative metalwork and an eagle statue. On the ground floor there are three entrances. The main entrance has a projecting porch supported by large brackets; the other two doors have curved pediments elaborately decorated with swags and scrolls. Stucco pilasters with Doric capitals are located between large timber-framed windows on the ground floor. The upper floors have a red brick facade with stucco string courses. The three tall gables have a central window and stucco arch with keystone.

**Shoreditch Police Station:** The building is constructed in portland stone and is five storeys. It replaces an earlier Victorian Police station and likely dates from the post-war period. The window and floor to ceilings heights carefully line up with the adjacent warehouse. The facade is simple and unadorned with the exception of the two police lamps and Metropolitan Police crest. Steel casements are found throughout.

**Paulton House:** The building is five storeys and constructed of stock brick with restrained red brick detailing and glazed brick to base. Substantial brick pilasters are found throughout with inset spandrel panels containing timber two over two sash windows.



Top: Nile Street looking west.

Bottom: Shepherdess Walk and The Eagle Public House



Top: View north on Westland Place

Bottom: Pickwick House, Westland Place

## Shepherdess Place

**7 Shepherdess Place, Chocolate Studios:** The building is five storeys with lower ground floor and single storey roof extension. It dates from the early part of the 20th century and is constructed of stock brick. Windows are large multi-pane crittal style units.

## Westland Place

**1 Westland Place:** Three storey late-18th century property with Victorian windows and shopfront. Stock brick with gauged arches to windows. Large pane sashes with side lights. Dormers behind parapet. Sympathetic replacement timber shopfront with panelled side doors and original corbels and dentil cornice.

**3-11 Westland Place:** Four storey former warehouse. Pale brick with red brick dressings. Seven bays with 'pavilions' to each end incorporating six over six sash windows. Small pane factory windows divided by colonettes. Shopfront reads 'John Redman LTD and British Empire Pipe Co'. Slate roof extension.

**13-15 Westland Place:** Four storey former warehouse. Red brick with sandstone to entrance, banding and cornice. Brown glazed brick to ground floor. Large windows with metal frames painted green, and small panes. Attractive carved pediment. Remains of machinery to south west. Iron railings over basement area.

**12-16 Westland Place, Pickwick House:** The building is four storeys and constructed of stock brick. Ornate stucco surrounds the main entrance and stair core with simple curved heads to the west. Windows are a mixture of timber sash window and later steel replacement.

## East Road

**57 - 69 East Road:** The building is four storeys and constructed of stock brick faced in red brick with stucco detail including stucco keystones to the front elevation. The ground floor features full height window openings to 71-73 East Road. Original windows survive to nos.71-73 with 6 over 6 sash windows throughout and 2 over 2 sash windows to the top storey. Nos. 57-63 contains UPVC windows.

**49-55 East Road:** The building is constructed of stock brick and faced in red brick to the front elevation. It is four storeys with projecting stair cores. Decorative details include stucco keystones above first floor windows, cornice above second floor and diamond motifs to the stair core. Brick pilasters rise the height of the building. Metal gates lead to central courtyard.

## City Road

**213-221 City Road:** The corner of City Road and Shepherdess Walk is defined by a terrace of five, 3 storey, early 19th Century residential buildings in London stock brick with simple decorative plaster details and concealed butterfly roofs. These are the oldest buildings in the conservation area and the lowest in height. This terrace appears to be all that remains of the original residential buildings which once defined the conservation area and the length of City Road. The rear of the terrace backs onto Shepherdess Place with a functional elevation. The single storey front elements are later additions but do contain some 19th century elements such as corbels to fascia panel.

**209 - 211 City Road:** This is a four storey, 1990s office building in red brick. The front elevation is composed of pairs of windows with white lintels reflecting warehouse patterns nearby. The rear elevation is a simple grid of vertical windows. It is set back to the historic building line and has a single storey element between the frontage and City Road pavement.

**197-255 City Road:** Five storey, red brick warehouse, with generous decorative details in white, and good quality, 6 over 2 timber sash



196-221 City Road

windows. The frontage and associated shopfront consists of 3 repeating sections giving the wide frontage a scale similar to the adjoining frontages. The City Road frontage shares the building line with the other buildings on site and with the Renaissance (formerly known as the London Assurance).

**193-195 City Road (formerly known as London Assurance):** Former public house dating from the early/mid 19th century. It is constructed of brick with stucco and ornate window surrounds and cornice. The single storey element to the front also features good quality stucco work.

**Eagle House:** The building was constructed in 1933 as an art deco style office building. It replaced Eagle Tavern, one of the first Victorian music halls. It is faced in marble to the ground floor front elevation with a mixture of grey and white render above. There are two distinctive eagles which dominate the building. It was extended to the rear between 2008 and 2012.



## Vestry Street

**10-18 Vestry Street, International House:** Four storeys and constructed of stock brick with simple detailing in the form of arched headers above windows. 6 x 6 sash windows are found throughout, smaller in scale to top storey.

**6-8 Vestry Street:** Five storeys with taller stair cores and constructed of stock brick with limited detailing above windows and to cornice. Timber sash windows are largely 6 x 6 with 2 x 2 to top storey. To the ground floor is a gateway leading to the central courtyard.

**20-30 Vestry Street and 71-83 East Road:** The building is four storeys and constructed of stock brick with white rendered parapet. It has a distinctive wedge shape which means from East Road both elevations are visible. Brick pilasters rise the height of the building with recessed brick spandrels and windows. East Road is the principal elevation with more ornate detailings to the ground floor and taking in doors located to the rear. Windows are 2 over 2 sash windows in a mixture of singles and pairs.

## Britannia Walk

**109-111 Britannia Walk:** The building is four storeys and constructed largely of stock brick with engineering brick to the base and red brick and concrete detailings to the windows.

## Provost Street

**16-30 Provost Street, Zeus House:** Four storeys and constructed of stock brick with stucco detailing above the ground floor. Brick pilasters run the height of the building with a decorative chamfered corner to the north-west. Window headers are buff coloured with dentil cornice to top of original building. There is a two storey extension with one storeyed in brick and one as a traditional mansard. 2 over 2 sash windows are on the east and north elevation.



Vestry Street looking north

**34-38 Provost Street:** Six storeys, with the first four storeys constructed of stock brick with engineering brick to the base and buff brick detailing to the window arches. The top two storeys are constructed in a lightweight material that picks up on the regular fenestration below. Distinctive taking in doors and crane survive. Timber sash windows are 2 over 2.



# ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION

# 6.0 Assessment of Condition

## 6.1 GENERAL CONDITION

6.1.1 The area is generally in a good condition with buildings largely well maintained and occupied. Where new buildings exist these often replace World War II bomb damage and are of an appropriate scale, materiality and architecture. Advertising is generally limited and appropriate for the buildings.

6.1.2 The public realm is more mixed with a mixture of historic and modern street surfaces. The area is generally free of excessive clutter with the recent addition of street trees with on street cycle parking helping to enliven Underwood Street. The closure of Shepherdess Walk to through traffic has ensured the area is quiet of traffic and acts as transition zone from City Road to the residential properties of Shepherdess Walk.

## 6.2 KEY THREATS AND NEGATIVE ISSUES

6.2.1 Underwood Street Conservation Area has a distinct character, whilst the building typologies are similar to the South Shoreditch Conservation Area it is of a more consistent and unaltered character.

6.2.2 The consistent scale of building and architecture means any future development needs careful consideration. Moreover, the setting of the area and the impact of adjacent development could, if not managed sensitively, impact the Underwood Street Conservation Area. The redevelopment, including the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area could negatively impact the Conservation Area.

6.2.3 Alterations to buildings including the loss and obscuring of historic and traditional architectural details can result in harm to the uniformity of the area. Of particular note is the painting of glazed brick at the base

of buildings. Key architectural features include the taking in doors and cranes.

6.2.4 The key threats to the public realm are the use of low-grade materials for roads and pavement and the loss of historic surface materials such as the historic setts on Shepherdess Place.

7

**MANAGEMENT  
PLAN**

# 7.0 Management Plan

7.0.1 This Management Plan provides area specific guidelines for development, maintenance and enhancement of the Conservation Area. Under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local planning authorities have a statutory duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas in their districts from time to time.

## 7.1 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

7.1.1 All development proposals should preserve or enhance the Conservation Area's character and appearance and conform to local policies as outlined in sections 1.4- 1.6. This requirement applies equally to developments which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area. For advice on whether Planning Permission is required for works please contact the Council.

## 7.2 DEMOLITION

7.2.1 Planning permission from the Council is required for the demolition of buildings larger than 115 cubic metres within the Conservation Area. The full or substantial demolition of buildings or structures identified as making a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area (including Locally Listed Buildings) is harmful to the significance of Conservation Areas and will be regarded as substantial harm or less than substantial harm according to the circumstances of the case. Demolition of buildings identified in this document as making a neutral contribution to, or detracting from, the Conservation Area's special character will only be supported where there are acceptable plans for the site following demolition.

## 7.3 NEW DEVELOPMENT

7.3.1 All new development should respect the established layout, siting, height, scale and massing of buildings within the Conservation Area, it should be of a high design quality, that is sympathetic and responds to the area's special character. New development should preserve or

enhance the special character of the Conservation Area. Materials should be carefully chosen to complement the Conservation Area's existing palette of materials.

7.3.2 Where neutral and negative buildings exist there is an opportunity for new development to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

7.3.3 There are limited areas for new development within the Conservation Area owing to the tight urban grain and regular rhythm of the streets.

## 7.4 DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE SETTING OF THE UNDERWOOD STREET CONSERVATION AREA

7.4.1 All proposed development in close proximity to the Underwood Street Conservation Area should seek to preserve and enhance its setting. All development proposals affecting the setting of the Conservation Area will be assessed against the Historic England guidance document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets.'

## 7.5 EXTENSIONS

7.5.1 In accordance with LP1 Design Quality and Local Character of LP33 (June 2020) "all new development must be of the highest architectural and urban design quality. Innovative contemporary design will be supported where it respects and complements historic character." This is particularly important within the Underwood Street CA when considering extensions as they have the potential to disrupt the appearance of buildings and the character of the Conservation Area.

7.5.2 LP1 Design Quality and Local Character requires new development (including extensions) to be "compatible with the existing townscape" and "preserve or enhance the significance of the historic environment and the setting of heritage assets."

7.5.3 Owing to the built nature of the area there is generally very little

scope for side and rear extension to the main buildings. Where they are considered acceptable it will be important to ensure that they are subservient to the main building and utilise the highest quality materials and exemplary design that complements the area's historic character.

## 7.6 FACADE RETENTION

7.6.1 In line with policy LP3 Designated Heritage Assets, para 5.24 of LP33 2020 "Development proposals in Conservation Areas involving façade retention only (with the demolition of the remainder of the building) will be regarded in the same way as proposals for the full or substantial demolition of a building. Such proposals not only result in loss of the historic interest of the building but can be structurally challenging and often fail, with the loss of the entire building.

7.6.2 The full or substantial demolition of buildings or structures identified as making a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area is harmful to the significance of Conservation Areas and may be regarded as substantial harm or less than substantial harm according to the circumstances of the case."

## 7.7 TALLER BUILDINGS

7.7.1 All new taller buildings must respect the setting of the Borough's local character and historic townscapes and landscapes including those in adjoining boroughs. Moreover, in line with Policy LP1 of LP33 (June 2020) taller buildings must "preserve or enhance the borough's heritage assets, their significance, and their settings". Within the Underwood Street Conservation Area there is a degree of consistency in storey height with buildings, generally having a shoulder height of four to five storeys.

## 7.8 ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

7.8.1 Key architectural features as referenced in Section 5.3 of this document, such as brick chimney stacks, decorative stucco work, bands or contrasting brick detailing should be retained due to the valuable contribution they make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## 7.9 CLADDING, RENDERING OR PAINTING OF WALLS

7.9.1 Originally exposed brick walls, often part of a building's original design, make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and should not be clad, rendered or painted. External rendering or painting can also cause problems with damp and condensation.

7.9.2 External cladding or rendering of buildings in Conservation Areas requires planning permission, which is unlikely to be supported. The careful removal of existing paint to brickwork is encouraged.

## 7.10 DOORS AND PORCHES

7.10.1 Historic timber doors should be retained as they are important features that contribute towards the character of the Conservation Area. All necessary replacements should be of timber and of a design that complements the building within which it is situated.

7.10.2 Open porches are part of the original design of houses and add interest to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Open porches or recessed entrance arches should not be enclosed.

## 7.11 EXTRANEOUS FIXTURES

7.11.1 Modern extraneous fixtures, including satellite dishes, meter boxes and cabling, should not be visible from the street. The removal of existing fixtures cluttering front elevations is encouraged; however care should be taken to ensure that surfaces affected are repaired.

## 7.12 SIGNAGE

7.12.1 Where buildings are in commercial or community use it is accepted that signage may be required. Where signage is located on the front boundary it should be integrated with the boundary and should not have a dominant presence in the streetscene. Where signage is located on building elevations this should complement the composition of the

## 7.13 RETROFITTING

7.13.1 ‘Retrofitting’ is the process of upgrading an existing building to improve its thermal performance and energy efficiency. By adapting existing buildings in a sympathetic manner to respond to climate changes it ensures that these buildings can survive even longer than they already have. Retrofitting will enable buildings to adapt to future weather conditions such as heat waves or sustained periods of cold, and by adapting existing buildings

7.13.2 Retrofitting is most effective when you take a ‘whole-building’ approach is taken. This makes sure all the upgrades work well together and the energy savings are maximised.

## 7.14 RETROFITTING IN CONSERVATION AREAS

7.14.1 Where the building affected is a listed building or within a conservation area the impact of any retrofit measures on the building or area should be assessed and harm to their significance avoided. When considering retrofit options the energy hierarchy should be approached first in order to achieve the sustainability benefits with minimum harm whereby the focus is initially on fabric first improvements. Any retrofit measures must be carefully considered to strike a balance between harm to the existing building and the public benefit of the proposals.

7.14.2 While this guidance sets out many typical retrofit measures and provides general guidance, the complex and sometimes unique nature of historic buildings means that generic guidance has its limitations. Due to the unique nature of heritage assets, the balance of addressing climate change, protecting heritage assets and viability will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7.14.3 Applicants are encouraged to contact the council for pre-application advice. Applicants should take a coordinated or ‘whole building’ approach to planning and delivering all retrofitting projects as opposed to delivering piecemeal measures.

## 7.15 CONDITION OF THE BUILDING

7.15.1 Buildings in Underwood Street Conservation Area are generally in a good condition. However, when considering retrofit it is important to ensure that buildings are well maintained and in a good condition. Dampness and draughts from poor maintenance can be the cause of much higher energy use, longer term structural problems and risks to health. It should be noted that in some cases due to alterations, modernisation and poor maintenance the building fabric may be at the limits of its capacity to handle water vapour or rain ingress, which can lead to failure if retrofit measures such as insulation or draught proofing are not undertaken as part of a whole building approach, or are incorrectly applied it can result to damage to the building and human health.

7.15.2 As such, when considering retrofitting buildings it is important to ensure that the building is in a good state of repair to ensure that the retrofit measures work successfully with the existing building.

## 7.16 RETROFIT PRINCIPLES

7.16.1 In order to retrofit a building to become climate resilient there are three main steps to take:

### **Step 1: Start With A “Fabric-First” Approach.**

7.16.2 “Fabric-first” means prioritising insulation, draught proofing, air tightness, and ventilation, before all other retrofit measures. Specifying improvements to the building fabric should be the first step in order to minimise heat losses and minimise the heat leaking through your building.

7.16.3 These investments will reduce the amount of energy your property consumes. Basic insulation, such as loft insulation, can often pay for itself within a few years. If you are interested in low-carbon heating such as heat pumps, having a well insulated and air tight building is essential.

### **Step 2: Switch To All Electric to Decarbonise Energy Use**

7.16.4 Once the energy use has been reduced, the focus should be on decarbonising buildings which means reducing the carbon footprint by moving away from fossil fuels and embracing full electrification.

7.16.5 Currently for most building, an electric-powered heating alternative will be an electric storage heater or a heat pump. Heat pumps take ambient heat from the ground, air, or water, and convert this into heat for a building. The most commonly used type of heat pump is Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) due to the lack of space for ground collector that is required for Ground Source Heat Pumps.

7.16.6 Switching gas-fired hobs to electric induction hobs and incandescent lightbulb for LED lighting which are modest interventions which help reduce carbon emissions.

### **Step 3: Generate Renewable Energy**

7.16.7 Renewable energy can be generated by installing solar panels on roofs. These will be either photovoltaic panels (which generate electricity) or solar thermal panels (which heat water). These are unlikely to generate enough energy for whole buildings but can supplement the main supply.

7.16.8 Batteries can also be installed which store electricity for delayed use, either from the excess generated by solar photovoltaic panels or directly from the national electricity grid when the tariffs are lower (during night time). This system helps reducing the load on the grid and limits the risk of national or local power black out. Within the Underwood Conservation Area the installation of either photovoltaic panels or solar thermal panels has the potential to be acceptable as the flat or shallow pitch roof profiles largely hide them from view.

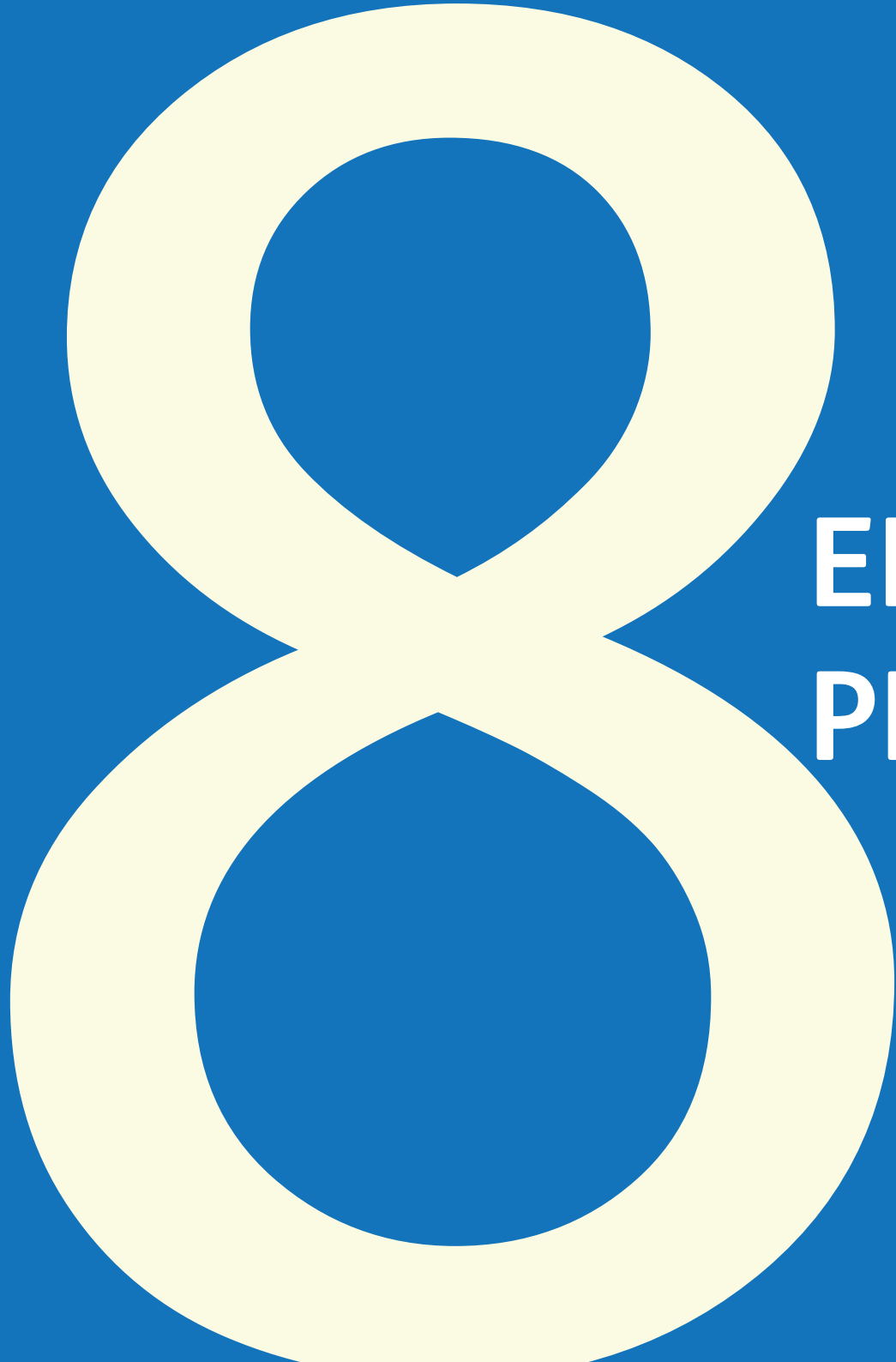
7.16.9 Other forms of renewable energy may become available at a later date and therefore advice should be sought from a suitably qualified professional.

## **7.17 Further Advice**

[The Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide](#) provides guidance on the best practice retrofit and how existing buildings can be adapted. [Historic England](#) also provides detailed information on how to best retrofit 4traditionally constructed buildings.

The Council is currently developing further guidance for Retrofit within Hackney. Further details can be found within the forthcoming Extensions and Alterations SPD.





# ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

# 8.0 ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

## 8.1 MAINTENANCE

Much of the Conservation Area's special character derives from the high number of interesting architectural features present. In order to ensure their long-term survival, regular attention is required to stop them falling into a state of disrepair. The Council therefore recommends that regular maintenance is undertaken to retain the collective value of the attractive features present in the area. If minor repair works are left unattended, it may result in unnecessary decay and damage, which could lead to the need to conduct more complex and expensive repair works that may require planning permission.

Basic maintenance recommendations include:

- The regular clearing of debris in gutters and rainwater pipes
- The pruning of vegetation near to buildings
- The re-fixing of loose roof tiles or slates
- The regular re-painting of timber

## 8.2 REPAIRING, RESTORING AND REINSTATING ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

The Underwood Street Conservation Area could be much enhanced through the repair, restoration or reinstatement of the following damaged or lost architectural features:

- Timber windows
- Timber taking in doors
- Cast iron rainwater goods
- Introduction of appropriate signage
- Cornices where damaged and removed

The use of traditional materials and methods is an important element in preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Re-pointing should be undertaken only when necessary and must be done in an appropriate manner, for example a lime mortar must be used in older buildings for reasons of appearance and performance; cement-based mortars are generally inappropriate for historic buildings. Joints should be flush or slightly recessed (not weather struck or raised) and finished and brushed to expose brick edges.

In addition the following would also result in an enhancement to the area:

- The re-siting of satellite dishes and TV aerials where their location has a negative impact on the Conservation Area
- The careful stripping of inappropriate paint or render using a non damaging method to reveal originally exposed brickwork.
- The removal of architectural elements that are out of keepings with the area's special character
- The use of further high quality materials in the public realm such as stone

## 8.3 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

Historic street furniture and paving should be retained. Where lost, setts should be reintroduced as these positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area. Where street surfaces are being replaced high quality materials should be used for example yorkstone.

There is scope for additional urban greening to be added in a way in which preserves the character and appearance of the area whilst improving the activity at street level.

Whilst the buildings are largely in a good condition the ground floor of properties is of a more mixed character and the area could be enhanced from the introduction of a more consistent ground floor treatment.

