

Bedford Park Conservation Area Management Plan

September 2007



BEDFORD PARK CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

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1. Introduction

This plan sets out the local authority's approach to managing the future of the Bedford Park Conservation Area (CA). It is based on an appraisal of the character of the CA, the statutory planning policies affecting the area, the role of other local authority services in the area, and the requirements and aspirations of local people – both residents and businesses.

It is very much a partnership document, 'owned' by all parties involved in producing it. This partnership approach means that the plan will be respected, and will be guided by the conduct of each partner.

2. Policy

This Management Plan indicates how the policies in the Local Development Framework (LDF), along with other matters, will figure in the on-going management of the Bedford Park CA. It is not a planning policy document itself however, and it does not form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

Ealing's Local Development Framework comprises a series of documents. The following documents have a bearing on the Conservation Management Plan:

- The 'unitary development plan' (UDP), also known as the Plan for the Environment. This contains the statutory policies for development in the CA and elsewhere in the borough. Volume one of the UDP has policies for all types of development. There is a specific policy on conservation in Chapter Four on Design (policy 4.8). Volume two of the UDP shows sites and areas across the borough. The Bedford Park CA is indicated in Table 10.12 and Map 8 in Volume Two. The UDP also has a "Proposals Map" which specifies the definitive boundary of the Bedford Park CA. It should also be noted that the UDP comprises the development plan for the borough along with the Mayor of London's London Plan. For most purposes, the London Plan policies are reflected in the UDP, and there are cross-references to them in the UDP.

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- The series of supplementary planning guidance and supplementary planning documents provide more detailed guidance on how the statutory policies should be applied. These cover topics, sites and area.
- The Local Development Scheme sets out the programme of work on future planning policy. This includes reference to a Supplementary Planning Document on Conservation, which is currently being prepared, and which will be subject to formal consultation in the Spring of 2007. In May of 2007, the Council's preferred options for the planning of the borough will be published.
- The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Council's commitments to community involvement in all aspects of town planning, including matters pertaining to the Bedford Park CA.
- There are also other documents providing background information and monitoring data in the LDF. All published information on the Local Development Framework is on the Council's web site at www.ealing.gov.uk/planpol

3. Conservation Area designation

Bedford Park CA is one of 29 (twenty-nine) of L.B. Ealing's Conservation Areas (CAs) and it is managed, like the others, by the legal regulations of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990*. The Council operates its responsibilities under the Act to "preserve and enhance" the character of the CA. The Council will also undertake regular reviews of the area to monitor the quality of development and the effectiveness of its policies and guidance.

3.1. Character appraisals

The Council has completed a Character Appraisal for Bedford Park CA, of which this Management Plan is a further part. The appraisal has been produced to describe and evaluate the special architectural and historic interest of the CA. The statement of character will provide a basis from which to evolve not only the making of development control decisions, but also for the informed framing of design guidance. The appraisal is the basis for the direction of this Management Plan, identifying the elements of special interest of Bedford Park CA that require attention or improvement. The appraisal also provides a valuable resource upon which to defend Appeals against refusal of planning permission.

3.2. Archives and the importance of the past

The CA contains a good deal of historic fabric and evidence of this has been included in the Appraisal to demonstrate the evolution of the area over the past 250 years or so.

The Appraisal focuses on the period from the 18th century to the present day. In the late 19th century the developer Jonathan Carr acquired the land, and house construction intensified and Bedford Park changed from a rural area into a suburban settlement. Archival material provided by Ealing Local History Centre, by Bedford Park Society and residents as well as material taken from a variety of secondary sources, has been included in the Appraisal to provide historical depth and to illustrate Bedford Park's development.

4. Development control

As a result of the demand for development, the character of the CA is under constant threat posed by unsympathetic, poorly designed and executed new buildings, extensions and alterations. The situation therefore highlights the role of development control in managing the future changes to the CA.

4.1. Principles for development control

Bedford Park and its immediate surroundings are under strong development pressure. Sensitive and responsive management is required in order to cope with this pressure and the following principles will be adopted to guide the Council in its control of development:

- 1) The Council will apply the principles, guidance and regulations outlined in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and the broader guidance of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15)* and any subsequent revisions or additions.
- 2) The Council will apply the policies outlined in its *Plan for the Environment, the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)* as adopted in October 2004, until such time as these policies are replaced by policies in the emerging *Local Development Framework*.
- 3) The Council will require all planning applications to be supported by a Design and Access Statement and by a PPG 15 Justification Statement for work on Listed Buildings or for new developments within the Conservation Area. The Design and Access supporting statement should be a brief but thorough explanation of the reasons for the development and how the design fulfils these, together with a statement considering any access issues that may exist. Officers of the Council can provide assistance to applicants with more information and with examples on file of successful Design and Access Statements.
- 4) A major requirement for any development proposal in a CA is quality, covering the design, materials, workmanship and execution.
- 5) The Council will not dictate on the choice of architectural styles of any proposed new buildings, extensions or alterations but the position may be simply put as follows:

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- Contemporary and Modernist styles are entirely acceptable if they are high in quality and provided that they remain sympathetic in the context and towards the host building and/or other neighbouring buildings

OR

- Replicas of good, older buildings may be preferred provided that they are properly researched and high in quality. The design, scale, massing and detailing of such Traditionalist schemes should accurately replicate the contextual, local materials.
- 6) The drawings through which proposals are submitted should clearly and competently demonstrate the intentions of the development, preferably being accompanied by photographs and anything else that can demonstrate the project's aims.
 - 7) The Council will make use of technically experienced and qualified Officers in guiding the assessment and determination of all applications received.
 - 8) Applications for work in CAs must be accompanied by clear indications of the materials to be used in producing the external finish and architectural details of the proposed buildings. Actual samples of the materials should be submitted as part of the preparations of the scheme and/or in the course of beginning on-site building operations.
 - 9) Where possible, the Council recommends pre-application consultation. Planning Services and applicants may thus work jointly to produce schemes that are successful and high in quality. Experience has demonstrated that advance work of this sort is the most effective and efficient way of preparing applications.

5. Preservation and enhancement

5.1. *Understanding the asset*

The Character Appraisal of which this Management Plan forms a part is central to understanding Bedford Park CA and its future needs. As a result of the appraisal process, the aspects of the area that are under the most threat have been identified. The threats include the removal of boundary walls, hedges or fences; the replacement of boundaries by unsympathetic gates and brick and metal enclosures; unsuitable and out-of-scale extensions including dormer windows and front porches; the conversion of green-space front or side gardens to hard-standings; unsuitable window and door replacements or other features that affect the parts of houses fronting a highway.

Bulky extensions to the side and rear of properties erode the traditional spatial relationship between buildings in the CA. Additions to this list are buildings of poor design and/or poor presentation. Negative contributions to the setting of Bedford Park CA are also made by undistinguished development neighbouring the CA, empty sites producing unsightly gaps, and the incremental loss of spaciousness and openness due to relentless development demands.

5.2. *Maintaining quality*

The Council's attention to quality in the Bedford Park CA will be maintained through its contribution to the following elements of development and alteration.

1) Quality of applications

In line with PPG15 the Council will not accept outline applications for proposals in CAs. Full applications will be required to be supported by properly drafted, accurate, scale drawings with plans, sections and elevations. In many cases for large schemes the Council will also expect analytical drawings, showing proposals in context, either through streetscape sections or three-dimensional images.

2) Quality of materials

The Council will, where possible, require that materials proposed are submitted as part of an application and not as a Condition.

3) Details

Where appropriate to aid in the assessment of an application, the Council may require the submission of large-scale construction detail drawings. This enables officers to check the quality of what is proposed and ensure that on site design is not left to the builder.

4) Experienced persons

The Council will always advise that applicants appoint both consultants and builders who have experience in historic building work.

5) Windows and doors

Windows, external doors, balcony railings, cornices and bargeboards are all components that are critical to the character of both the individual buildings and the wider CA.

The Council will strongly resist any applications to depart from original designs, details or paint colour in order to protect the character of the CA. The restoration of lost components to original designs will be encouraged wherever reasonably accurate information about the design is available.

The installation of external security shutters or grilles over windows or external doors will be discouraged as it is contrary to the character of the CA.

The installation of secondary glazing internally to windows is acceptable in principle, although care should be taken to make fixings against original fabric reversible. Glazing bars to secondary glazing should follow the pattern of the principle glazing bars to the window as accurately as possible.

In all cases where the modification or replacement of joinery components is proposed, detailed drawings showing timber moulding profiles should accompany the application.

5.3. *Preserve or enhance*

As outlined in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) proposals for work with the historic environment and, in particular, within CAs must, as a minimum, preserve the character of the CA. The Council supports this standard as a basic requirement but will always encourage applicants and their agents to develop schemes that will actively enhance the character of the CA. In meeting these fundamental requirements the Council will require that proposals are demonstrably a faithful replication of the local historical precedent or a high quality contemporary building as described above.

5.4. *Elements at risk*

As previously described, the quality of any CA can be damaged to a significant degree by the loss of historic details whether 20th century in origin or earlier and the nature of this threat has led to the CA designation of Bedford Park and other parts of the Borough. The Council regards it as important to preserve certain details for the sake of the contribution they make to local architectural character.

Therefore, the protection of the following elements of the historic environment in Bedford Park CA will be of high priority:

1) Alterations and extensions to roofs and their covering materials.

The roofscape is an important element of the character of the CA. Any works whether for new buildings, extensions, alterations or the replacement of existing roof coverings, require planning permission to ensure that special care and attention is paid to the scale, the massing, the design and the materials employed.

- **Dormer windows and rooflights**

The Council will resist applications for the addition of dormers or roof windows where they would be visible from a public highway or open space.

Windows may be permitted in the rear roof slopes of both listed and unlisted houses as long as they are subservient in size and scale to the overall slope in which they are sited, and their details are suitably in keeping with the house. The criteria for acceptance on listed buildings will be tighter than those which apply on unlisted properties.

Where permissible, dormer windows should follow traditional forms to accord with others in the vicinity, such as a hipped roof or flat roof with moulded timber cornice.

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They would normally have lead cheeks and timber fascias either side of the window. There should be no upstand below the window itself, or tiling on the front elevation. French doors with balconies, or inverted dormers with balconies into the roof, will not be permitted as such designs are unsympathetic to the local character, and problems of overlooking become significant. Rooflights on the rear slopes of unlisted buildings should lie flush with the plane of the tiles.

Rooflights on listed houses should be restricted to the rear slopes only, and only conservation-type rooflights should be fitted. In these the glazing bars and perimeter frame are particularly fine, and the plane of the glass lies close to the upper surface of roof tiles. These will, however, be subject to the further proviso that no more than two roof joists should be cut through to make the opening, and that the rooflight itself is not more than twice as high as it is wide.

There is considerable precedent for substantial extensions to the rear roofs of houses in character area 4.3, especially on the west side of Esmond Road, where many have been built out from the ridge line. The Council may allow similar extensions on adjoining properties only, but this will be subject to the use of sympathetic design and detailing. It should be noted that such extensions on the east may affect the settings of listed buildings.

- **Roof extensions**

The addition of loft extensions within unlisted single-family dwellings will generally be acceptable in principle, subject to evidence that the design will not adversely affect the character of the CA. It should be noted, however, that the addition of a loft extension to a listed building is likely to require considerable modification to the internal layout and detailing, which will require consent. The Council will in such instances require evidence that the proposed design respects the PPG 15 principles for the modification of listed buildings.

- **Tiles**

Tiles / slates should match the original in type, material and colour. Interlocking tiles are rarely appropriate.

- **Chimneys**

Chimneys and pots are essential components of the character of Bedford Park, and should in all instances be retained and properly cared for. The Council will encourage the restoration of lost chimneys and pots, providing that reasonably accurate information about their original form and appearance is available.

2) Window frames and doors

The Bedford Park Management Plan will provide guidance for the retention of existing traditional windows and doors and will in particular advise against and aim to avoid pollutants and non-renewable materials as replacements.

3) Brickwork

Brickwork is composed of both bricks and mortar, and failure to adequately match either will be detrimental. Care should be taken during any maintenance work where inadequate matching of even a small area may constitute an alteration. It should, however, be noted that weatherstruck cement pointing is unfortunately the norm over much of the estate, and replication of this will be discouraged by the Council. Portland cement had only just become commercially available in the 1870s, and hydraulic lime binders (particularly NHL2 to EN459) are therefore most appropriate here for both aesthetic and technical reasons. All original moulded and cut brick detailing should be carefully conserved, with only the minimum of essential replacement. The Council will resist any applications which require the removal or modification of any significant detailing.

Where works are proposed to listed buildings, the Council would expect to approve samples of the actual materials as a condition for listed building consent.

4) Front and side plots

Due to their impact on the visual amenity of Bedford Park CA, front and side plots are regarded as important for the preservation of the CA. The Council will ensure that the removal of existing traditional boundaries and gardens will be resisted and that proposals to replace or develop boundaries or front or side gardens will be appropriate in their materials and of high quality design that is compatible with the historic character of the CA. This is also consistent with Table 5H of the UDP, which discourages the creation of hardstandings.

The removal of mature trees in order to create hardstandings should not be permitted.

5) Extensions

In order to protect the character of the CA the Council will normally resist any application for the extension of a house on the side that is fronting a public highway or open space. Side extensions may on occasion be appropriate, but will be judged carefully against their overall effect on the character of the CA.

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In all cases house extensions should be discreet and subservient to the main building. Large extensions which take up a substantial proportion of a rear garden will be strongly discouraged.

Extensions to unlisted buildings will normally be expected to have a pitched roof appropriate to that of the main house, without crown flats at the apex. They should not extend right along the rear of a property, or wrap around an external corner. The materials should be carefully matched to the main house, as should doors, fenestration and other details. Two storey extensions are unlikely to be acceptable. Note that any extension which projects more than 3 metres from the rear wall of a property is likely to be in breach of the Council's general planning policies, as it would be likely to seriously affect the daylighting of neighbouring properties.

Where the extension is to be added to a listed building, preference will be given to extensions which require the minimum of alteration to historically significant fabric, and which are likely to be readily reversible. It is unlikely that there will be much scope for extensions to listed buildings within Bedford Park, except perhaps minor side extensions, set well back from the frontage, or on occasion, minor infilling at the rear.

6) Outbuildings

Due to the small size of most gardens, no more than one shed or other garden building will normally be allowed, usually no larger than 10 cubic metres, timber clad and stained, with a pitched roof. The position of the building in the garden will also be important in order to ensure appropriate relationships with the main house, with trees and adjoining properties, as well as any other relevant factors.

The Council will normally resist any application for the construction of a garage or other garden building which will be visible from a public highway or open space at the front of a property.

Any existing ancillary buildings in the garden of listed houses which pre-date 1948 must be treated as listed structures themselves, as must ancillary buildings approved since 1967.

7) Urban density

Although many of the houses within Bedford Park are spaced closely together, the views which are often available between them are valuable components of the particular sense of space and enclosure within the estate. The Council will therefore resist applications which encroach on these views as detrimental to the character of the CA, as well as side extensions which will tend to give a terracing effect to otherwise detached buildings.

8) Front gardens

The Council will resist all applications for the formation of vehicle hardstandings in front gardens. Permission will be required for the formation of footpaths, or other paving. Appropriate materials, in terms of colour, pattern and finish will be required.

9) Shop fronts and signage

The range of shops at Bedford Corner is an important adjunct to the overall estate and is in a position which is critical to the townscape. Not only is the design itself important, but the overall group value must be taken into consideration.

The Council will strongly resist applications for the replacement or modification of the design of original shopfronts, and the installation of new shopfronts to original patterns will be encouraged where they have already been lost. It should be noted that these components, although sharing a strongly consistent language, set precedent for several kinds of variation within the theme, and it is likely that the majority of commercial requirements can be adequately met without any compromise to the character.

10) Satellite Dishes and Telecommunication Installations.

Satellite dishes are a common problem in many CAs. They disfigure the fronts of historic buildings and also cause a loss of historic character when fixed in inappropriate locations. In Bedford Park CA satellite dishes are regarded by the Council as not being in character and therefore will only be acceptable when they cannot easily be seen from the streets or other public parts of the area. Telecommunication installations could potentially harm the historic character of Bedford Park.

11) Public Realm

The character appraisal for Bedford Park CA has identified that there are a number of improvements that could be made to the quality and coherent appearance of the public realm:

- Street signs;
- Street paving in some areas;
- Street lightening;

In particular the street lightening is due for replacement with “heritage” columns and lantern that will improve aesthetic standard and safety.

12) Trees.

The mature street trees in the CA provide an important part of Bedford Park CA special character. Their maintenance and any necessary replacement works are to be approached with sensitivity to this special character.

13) Basements

The addition of a basement to a listed building will be strongly resisted as the absence of basements was a deliberate decision made by the developer and a feature intended to distinguish and differentiate Bedford Park from other contemporary developments.

The addition of basements to unlisted single-family dwellings may be acceptable in principle, subject to evidence that the design will not adversely affect the character of the CA.

Applications for the construction of external areas or lightwells to provide light and ventilation to basements will be resisted by the Council due to their detrimental effects on the settings of buildings. The addition of basements to allow separate accommodation, not part of the main single-family house, will be considered a breach of the Council's policy on subdivision (see above). Separate external access doors to basements will not be permitted. Conclusive evidence will be required that the proposed works will not compromise the stability of the building, and that the excavation and removal of spoil will not unreasonably disturb neighbours.

Natural light may in certain circumstances be provided by lightwells, not exceeding **600mm** in depth and with neatly detailed horizontal grilles at ground level, but only in situations where they are not visible from the street.

5.5. *Monitoring and Review*

The Council will review its CA Appraisals as part of a five-year programme of regular review and monitoring in compliance with policy reflecting the obligations imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and CAs) Act 1990.

5.6. Conservation Strategy and Practice

Ealing Council is in the process of reviewing its 29 designated CAs, some of which have in place Article 4 Directions (A4D) where these are appropriate. A4D means that some of the usual Permitted Development rights of individual property owners (under the General Permitted Development Order, 1995) are withdrawn. Therefore, further significant changes or developments that would affect the special character of a certain CA would require planning permission.

A4(1)D in Bedford Park was already put in place in 1985 for Listed Buildings within the CA. To complement and enforce the principles of development in the CA set above in section 5.4, the Council will propose A4(2)D for Bedford Park CA. This further control would complement the current Article 4(1) Directions, made in 1985 for Listed Buildings in Bedford Park and still in force, and would complement the restrictions coming from the CA status of Bedford Park designated in 1969 and extended in 2004.

To maintain all aspects of the “special character and appearance” of the 29 CAs, the Council will need to retain technical advisors specializing in the preservation and conservation of historic buildings, landscapes etc. A regular five-year cycle of study and review will need to be maintained to assess and monitor the CAs with the aim of the preservation of the areas in the long term. Overall, Bedford Park must be protected: firstly for its residents but also for the many non-residents who pass through this remarkable urban oasis on a daily basis. Bedford Park is also visited by architectural academics and students.

5.7. A4D Considerations for Bedford Park CA

The CA appraisal of Bedford Park CA has shown the ongoing deterioration of the special character of the area due to a number of threats that include:

- building extensions disrupting the continuity of the streetscape and the original spatial relationship between properties
- dormer windows disrupting the roofscape

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- loss of traditional fenestration patterns and original features together with later doorways that offer material, design and decoration patterns which are not in keeping with the character of the CA
- loss of front garden trees and fences together with loss of garden walls to create parking for cars
- clutter around buildings associated with the subdivision of large houses into flats: gas meters, waste bins, letterboxes and doorbells / intercoms, satellite dishes

The adoption of an Article 4(2) direction would result in the requirement for planning permission to be obtained for all extensions, porches, vehicle access and hardstandings, changes to wall surfaces and roof tiles, removal of chimney stacks and window replacements, also for unlisted buildings within the CA. Such controls would ensure a greater ability to manage changes to these elements that contribute to the character and if eroded will constitute a threat for the significance of the CA and for its setting. For this reason the Council will propose the application of A4(2) directions to the CA. Any proposal would, of course, be subject to public consultation.

6. Consultation

The strength of the Bedford Park CA Appraisal and Management Plan relies on the knowledge and commitment of residents and other key stakeholders. Both documents have been produced in partnership with members of the Bedford Park Society and Bedford Park CA Panel and other interest groups across the wider Borough of Ealing community who have provided the authors of this work with the expert views and knowledge to help positively shape the future of the CA. Wider views will be sought in the lead up to adoption of both the Appraisal and Management Plan, and thereafter in every five-year period of review.

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