ACTON TOWN CENTRE W3 CONSERVATION AREA

Date Designated	1982 (Extended 1994, 2004)							
Last Appraisal	April 2009							
Last Management Plan	April 2009							
Existing Article 4 Direction	X							
Summary and key changes since last appraisal	domina example of a pro The orig had frag going si develop positive The CA England from a f some lo interest A geogr thoroug Church Alfred F over the Since la forward Centre.	st appraisal in 2009 key developments that have come are the Town Hall redevelopment and Oaks Shopping						
Meeting with Conservation Area Panel	 Key issues include shopfronts and loss of original fabric including windows and doors. Would support an application for a grant-aid scheme to improve fabric of town centre. Acknowledge that there is a need for change resulting from growth, but needs to be carefully managed. 							

CA Boundary Changes	The CA Appraisal (2009) had shown no need to revise the extension of it boundary. Significant areas in the surroundings of the CA and part of its setting are already protected by the CA status (i.e. Acton Park CA and Creffield CA). The current strategic review has confirmed that this position remains the case, with one minor exception:
	The current CA boundary cuts across the Burial Ground (along the line of Grove Place) but the southern portion is excluded. This would appear to be an anomaly and it would seem more appropriate to include the whole of the Burial Ground within the CA given its importance to the setting of the area. It is recommended that boundary should be redrawn along the blue line below:
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	Consideration was given to splitting the wider CA into separate elements (sub areas), but there is no tangible benefit from an operational perspective in doing so.
	The potential for adding the 'Poets' Corner' to the north of the CA is considered elsewhere (see Acton Park CA assessment) and it is not recommended that this area be included within a CA.
Key unlisted Buildings	The key unlisted buildings identified in the original Appraisal mostly continue to be positive contributors to the area:
	 Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, 141 High Street (compact late Victorian church building in yellow stock brick, portico entrance and gable frontage, large rose window at front).) Yellow brick and stone dressing – 1902- E. Goldie- Italian Romanesque style. Next to modern infill at 143 High Street

	Those on current Local List are still valid:								
	LLR0490: 290 High Street								
	LLR0490. 290 Fight Street LLR0494: 270-278 Bellvue Building, High Street								
	LLR0499. 264 The Aeronaut High Street								
	LLR0488: 216 Old Fire Station, High Street								
	LLR0488. 210 Old File Station, Figh Street LLR0487: 214 Kings Head, High Street								
	LLR0486: 216, Six Bells, High Street								
	LLR0485: 203 High Street								
	C C								
	LLR0493: 199/201 High Street LLR0492: 184/186 High Street								
	LLR0484: 182 High Street								
	LLR0483: 181 High Street								
	LLR0281: Acton Baptist Church								
	LLR1684: Acton Magistrate Court								
	LLR0499: Captain Cooke PH, High Street								
	LLR0284: 2 Churchfield Road								
	LLR0286: The Station House, Acton Station								
	LLR0190: 2-52 Burlington Gardens								
	Other buildings of note identified through strategic review:								
	• Red Lion & Pineapple PH -281 High St- at junction with								
	Gunnersbury Lane. Building not designated but PH is								
	interesting source of local Acton history. Turn of century late								
	Victorian PH – red brick, distinctive pedimented gables on 3								
	corners and round windows. Local landmark corner building								
	on Gunnersbury Lane. A positive contributor with possibility								
	for adding to local list.								
	• Windmill PH - no. 50 High St. Late Victorian corner 3 storey								
	building with tower and some pargetting- 1889. Identified as								
	being Locally Listed in CA Appraisal but is not on current List.								
	Recommend re-instating on Local List.								
Threats and	The CA appraisal identified a number of issues within the residential								
Negative factors	enclave:								
from last									
appraisal	• The loss of front garden trees and fences, and front boundary								
- -	walls.								
	 Extensions that are disrupting the traditional spatial 								
	relationship between buildings.								
	 Bulky dormer windows at the rear, at the front and at the 								
	side of properties, that disrupts the original proportions and								

 character of historic properties as well as the roofscape of the CA. The loss of the traditional fenestration patterns together with later doorways where materials, design and decoration patterns are not in keeping with the character of the property are a major concern for the quality of the architecture in the CA. Inappropriate roofing materials. Satellite dishes placed on front elevations create visual disturbance. There is some evidence to show that some of these issues remain with the residential parts of the CA, with the most significant issue being windows; loss of traditional fabric and replacement with inappropriate replacements. This is especially evident in areas such as Burlington Gardens where fenestration has a particularly strong rhythm, uniformity and symmetry and neo-classical stucco detailing within the 3 storey facades. There is no strong evidence to indicate that the other issues have worsened significantly in the last 10 years or so.
The main threats continue to relate to the commercial parts of the Town Centre:
• The long High Street continues to have a fragmented character; a mixed character and styles of buildings, dominated by traffic (there is an inconsistency in the quality of the historic fabric).
• The CA Appraisal (2009) states that Shopfront design and advertising is one of the major problems of the CA. Modern shopfronts and signage in many cases spoil the appearance of many fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings. This is a very significant problem within the TC which has a considerable number of buildings within the shopping thoroughfares that have façade or group value. These Victorian/Edwardian retail facades are amongst the finest in the Borough and wider environs and should be protected from poor shopfronts and signage (see also Management Plan section below). Especially poor examples are found in the High Street; 80 High Street; Junction of Newburgh Rd with Churchfield Rd; 211 High Street.
 Some parts of the Town Centre remain in a poor state of repair (for e.g. Parade centred around Coral -131 High Street. Windows above Coral in poor date of repair. Casements on

either side at 1 st and 2 nd floor level have hade modern casement replacements.)
• The service area at the rear of the bingo hall and at the rear of Beechworth House (40-48 High St- Local Plan Site ACT4) are particularly detrimental (this is now partly addressed by new development in this area).
 Other poor quality developments include Providen House (28-31 King St- now with PP for a replacement building).
Other issues identified as part of the strategic review:
 278 High street- Junction of High St and Chatsworth Gardens. Inappropriate 48 sheet advertising hoarding within CA. Should be removed after expiry of consent. Six Bells PH, 211 High Street. On local list- highly decorative and elaborate corner PH with some original features including stonework, leadwork and wrought iron embellishment. Detrimental windows to first floor. 1-9 Market Place listed as Buildings of Façade or Group Value 2014. Victorian 3 storey part of shop parade – neo classical stucco embellishment to windows. Remains an important part of townscape though some shopfronts could be improved.
Local Plan sites:
Local Plan Allocation ACT2- Acton Gateway – mixed use retail and residential, 2011-2016. Adjacent to Aton Town CA, occupying pivotal location at entrance to town centre. Development will need to respect the heritage to south and east including St Mary's Church (Grade II) and terraces at 243-267 King Street and 183/185 High Street. Offers opportunity for enhancement but site has yet to come forward. The Junction at Steyne Rd and Uxbridge Road is a particular important (western) gateway site into town centre and is also impacted by 'poor and characterless' modern developments within the road dominated wider vicinity including Rufford Tower, the Police Station and Telephone Exchange; these directly face statutory listed parade of Edwardian shops (Kings Parade 241-267 High Street). Local Plan Allocation ACT3 Oaks Shopping Centre and Churchfield car park - mixed use development proposed for this heart of town

centre site. Site lies outside, but adjacent to Acton TC CA with frontages along High Street and Church Road. Within setting of several listed buildings (Grade II – Acton Public Library, Acton Town Hall, Chimney at Swimming Baths and Church of St Mary. Development recently completed (Ref: PP/2012/3154). Commercial and residential (142 units). 65,000 sq. ft retail and 174 flats. Modern design, with no pastiche of neighbouring historic fabric attempted. Massing is broken up into a number of individual blocks of varying heights including a tower element. Surviving historic layout and patterns of development retained to some extent. Views from all around the site will be affected including the High Street, Churchfield Road, Grove Place and especially Derwentwater Road. Also, immediately adjacent to St Mary's Burial Ground open space. Redevelopment seeks to improve connections to and enhance the Burial Ground as a public/open space. On balance a positive enhancement to surrounding CA, including its vitality and viability, compared to previous use.

Local Plan Allocation **ACT4 Beechworth House, 40-48 High St. 2011-16.** Mixed use proposal – retail and residential- empty 4 storey building within Acton Town CA. Within setting of Grade II Gala Social Club and Acton Town Hall and Archaeological Interest Area. Prior Approval: 09/08/2016 for change of use to 17 flats at first, second and third floor levels, under Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (Ref: 162883PAOR). Still vacant and remains an 'alien intrusion in the streetscape'. Needs to make a more positive contribution to CA through refurbishment or demolition.

Local Plan Allocation **ACT5 Acton Central Yard,** 2021-26. Residential or Employment. Within Acton Town CA. Also overlooking Acton Park Currently Jewsons, with access from High Street to south.

Other sites/updates identified through the strategic review:

Acton Town Hall (Grade II listed, 1910 (Raffles& Grindley & DJ. Ebbetts) - Red brick and Portland stone, symmetrical Baroque palazzo with seven- bay front to Winchester St. PP/2014/5972change of use of Town Hall to provide 71 residential units including the partial demolition of the rear elevation of the Town Hall building, retention of facade fronting the High Street and Winchester Street, roof extension to existing Town Hall, construction of five storey infill extension/attached block (fronting onto Salisbury Street); and associated external alterations. Nearing completion. Linked to PP/2011/5257- demolition of Acton Baths building and part demolition of Kings Rooms to create 3 storey building –replacement pool and leisure centre. Whilst the loss of some historic fabric has occurred, this heritage-led regeneration will on balance result in an enhancement to the civic area of Acton TC and eastern gateway to the CA as envisaged by the CA Appraisal and will secure on-going future maintenance of a key listed building.

Redevelopment of **1C Gunnersbury Lane/275-279 High St** (Ref: PP/2014/6240). Retail/commercial at ground floor with 14 flats above). Triumph House. Another uninspiring replacement building in vicinity of listed Methodist Church. Highlights a need to improve design quality generally in and around the CA.

Prominent corner of High Street and Alfred Road – set to be transformed by two developments- 36 High Street Acton, Ref: 171318FUL- construction of attached 4 storey building to create 4 flats. The adjacent site to the north, Zero Alfred Road, has approval for construction of a four storey building (with basement) to provide nine flats (Ref: PP/2014/4355, PP/2015/3938, 16/00027/VAR)- under construction. The site occupies a prominent position. The adjoining property to the west is a four storey property (Beechworth House) and to the east across Alfred Road is the Grade II listed building, the former Dominion theatre (now Gala Bingo). These are modern buildings/extensions within a traditional late Victorian townscape. Modern styling (especially projecting windows at Zero Alfred Road) look a little alien within a traditional (late Victorian) streetscape.

Redevelopment at **Acton Post office 23-31 King Street**. (173577FUL) Demolition of rear elevation and creation of 10 flats plus commercial spac. Outside CA but within curtilage of Listed St Mary's Church opposite. Interesting modern design considered to sit well in the streetscene which includes listed St Mary's Church. Conditions currently being discharged 2019. Not yet built.

Former **tram/bus depot site**- 283-303 High St- close to corner of High Street and Gunnersbury Lane- Edwardian building- owned by Fitzgroup plc. Now residential- Bronnley and Merryfield and Daltrey Courts. Allowed on appeal Ref: APP/A5270/A/09/211243 (283-303 Uxbridge) in Dec 2009- demolish bus depot, new 3-5 storey building – A1/A2/A3 lower floor with 85 flats above. The CA Appraisal (2009) stated that *The Tram Depot offers a very distinguished front on the Uxbridge Road when arriving to Acton from Ealing. Yet the site is currently redundant and its forecourt derelict. The building would benefit from a program of heritage-led regeneration.* The building

	has now been demolished. Whist much needed housing and an active frontage has now been provided, a very mediocre building has put in its place (allowed on appeal).						
	The CA Appraisal makes reference to UDP sites , which in some cases are superseded by events:						
	Site no 7 – (A1) Churchfield Road, Hoopers Mews (includes 133-137 Churchfield Road & CarPark, Hoopers Mews & 9-9a Market Place (this site is on corner of Market Place and Churchfield Road). The car park would appear to have been redeveloped as part of the Oaks Shopping Centre. The 3 storey Victorian buildings form a strong corner here and attractive townscape and should be retained as part of any redevelopment.						
	Site no 9 - (A3) 10-20 Horn Lane (this has in part been redeveloped with Avingdor Court.						
	Site no 10 – 264-278 High Street- includes Victorian parade of shops (run down) and Aeronaut PH which is locally listed. Close to Police Station. Not clear what was planned here, but area could be enhanced as part of any western gateway improvements.						
	Provident House – Post Office building now has PP for redevelopment.						
Public Realm	The CA Appraisal (209) noted:						
issues	• The impact of traffic is highly detrimental to the character of the CA.						
	• Pedestrian connects needs to be improved. Connection with Acton Town Station, and Acton Central Station and connections with green spaces are also difficult due to poor legibility.						
	• Pavements are in the standard concrete slabs and not always well maintained.						
	 Bus stops are crowded and on narrow pavements where bus shelters do not provide little protection from rain. 						
	• The street furniture is not in character and creates clutter.						
	• The overall condition of most of the fabric in the CA is mediocre.						
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	Most buildings along the High Street would benefit from
	 Most buildings along the High Street would benefit from some maintenance, repair and refurbishment works. In some places pavements and kerbs are in poor condition and could be improved.
	Some of these issues remain relevant, however since the last appraisal significant investment was made by the Council to address these issues. See Management Plan section below.
	Views - high rise buildings are becoming more prominent and affecting views into and out of the CA- towers on Steyne Rd, Avenue Road, the Oaks Shopping development, and the Arc Soane College redevelopment. These are higher than the traditional 3-4 storey development across much of the CA. Whilst well designed tall buildings of landmark quality can make a positive contribution to an area, any future tall buildings should have regard to the key views identified in the original CA Appraisal which remain valid.
	There is an overall need to raise design quality across all town centres in the Borough. A comprehensive town centre strategy for Acton and Ealing Town Centre, with a focus on heritage inspired regeneration of the highest quality, would help address this better in future.
Management Plan	The Management Plan (2009) referred to:
	Concrete pavements and street furniture in the High Street area could be improved. Acton was in line for a £2 million package of investment over next 3 years (from 2009), including grants for traders for shop investments and traffic calming measures by 2012.
	A number of measures were actually agreed in the Council's s106 and Capital Growth Expenditure in 2008/9 for next five years including:
	 Town Centre Streetscape Improvements and Safety Scheme (new paving, signage removal, street clutter removal, new litter bins)- Total £850,000 Acton shopfront and visual merchandising grant scheme- total of £500,000.
	As a consequence, there has been some improvement in the public realm over the past few years, however investment is still needed particularly to improve shopfronts:
	The Management Plan (2009) advocates adherence to principles within the Shopfront Design Guidance Leaflet – which existed at the

	time of the last appraisal but its design principles had not been implemented. It is recommended that this guidance is revived in some shape or form to provide direction on traditional materials and design (see revised Generic Management Plan). The Management Plan (2009) also advocated firm development control to ensure design quality and enforcement in relation to unauthorised developments. Grant aid was also identified as a means to encourage shopowners to change and improve shopfronts on a more regular and incremental basis. Again, this is critical and could link in with existing Ealing regeneration initiatives, TC Bid and grant aid from HE/Lottery. Once it can be demonstrated that good sympathetic design can be achieved, this will set the standard and encourage others to follow suit. It could also be applied to other improvements to buildings along the shopping facades to replace inappropriate PVC-U, roofing materials, architectural detailing such as cornicing, eaves and verges. It is recommended that a partnership bid is made to Historic England on this basis. It is proposed that further guidance will be provided by way of a new generic management plan that will provide further updated guidance on the range of planning and design issue referred to in this report. New specific design guidance will also deal with the issues associated with the local vernacular and architecture of the Acton Town Centre CA. There needs to be a comprehensive long-term strategy to address visual improvements to the townscape in Acton TC and especially the
	creation of active frontages and improved pedestrian linkages to link the town square and High Street with Steyne Road. Future redevelopment of sites such as the Morrisons site and Moreton/Rufford towers housing estate will be instrumental in achieving improvements to the Western Gateway area.
Article 4 Directions	Within the residential enclave the CA Appraisal (2009) and Management Plan (2009) identified a number of elements at risk or under threat and negative factors including loss of front garden trees, fences and walls, unsympathetic extensions including bulky rear dormers, loss of traditional windows and inappropriate replacements. A particular need for an Article 4 Direction in the residential areas has not been established as part of the strategic review though this needs to be kept under review.
	Much of area is commercial/retail in function and so an Article 4 Direction (residential) would not be appropriate. However, there may be scope to look at introducing an Article 4 Direction to control changes of use from office to residential. This is being looked as part

	of a Borough-wide review and the emerging Local Plan. There have been relatively few of these prior approval applications within Acton TC (e.g. Beechwood House) and is not yet a significant problem here but it needs to be monitored.
Other Controls/ Guidance	It is recommended that:
	 A generic policy is developed for all conservation areas with area wide detail to capture the specific nature of individual CA fenestration types and joinery. This will be achieved through a Generic Management Plan and Specific Design Guidance for each CA.
	 A shopfront design guide is developed to counter loss of historic fabric, overly deep fascias, garish colours, signage etc. This should go hand in hand with a re-invigorated grant-aid scheme to encourage owners to improve design (carrot) together with stricter enforcement measures (stick).
	Acton Town Centre is currently listed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register, with its Condition being classed as 'Poor', Vulnerability as 'Medium' and Trend as 'Deteriorating'. On the basis of the current strategic review. On the basis of the current strategic review, it is recommended that HE is advised that the Trend is now 'Stable'.
	The introduction of a new generic management plan and specific design guidance for the area together with a coordinated approach through a town centre strategy will assist in removing the area from the Heritage at Risk Register in future.
Planning Data	As can be seen from the table below, the area received a relatively high level of applications equating to around 60 per annum on average (Rank 7), with 8% of these for advertisements. 75% of applications were approved, which equates to the average level for all CAs. A low level of appeals (17) were recorded with around half being allowed and half dismissed. The rate of enforcement cases has been steady with around 16 cases per annum on average and a peak
	in 2010, The majority of cases related to operational development (where works began before planning permission was drafted or after the expiry of the planning permission), rather than any particular CA issues.



Acton Town Centre CA

By type:

Acton Town Centre	2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
ALL TYPES	57	7	74	86	80	83	85	100	2	24	106	74	778
ADVERT	2	1	15	12	3	4	10	8		1	6	4	66
TEL				10	2		1						13
CND	5		15	17	23	21	28	31	2	3	50	20	215
CPE/CPL/PRA	2	1	3	1	4	2	4	12		3	3	7	42
FULL	38	4	31	30	31	32	26	36		7	31	30	296
SCO/EIA/RM				1									1
LBC/LBD	2		1	1		1	3	2			3		13
CAC	2			2	3	2							9
VAR/NMA/COU	1		6	12	10	11	12	11		6	10	9	88
TPO/TPC/PTC	3	1	3	1	2	10	1	1		4	2	2	30
By Decision:													

By Decision:

TPO/TPC/PTC	3	1	3	1	. 2	10	1	1		4	2	2	30
By Decision:													
Acton Town Centre	2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
APPROVED/ NO OBJ	9	1	26	20	26	28	24	29	2	9	48	18	240
APP with COND	24	4	29	32	29	33	39	44		8	40	40	322
PD/PA	2	1	2		4	2	1	6		1	2	2	23
REFUSED	8	1	8	21	10	9	15	14		4	2	7	99
WITHDRAWN	12		7	10	10	7	4	6		2	13	5	76
APPEAL DISMISSED	1		2	1	1	1		2			1		9
APPEAL ALLOWED	2		1	3			1			1			8

Enforcement Cases:

Acton Park	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
ALL CASES	14	17	6	32	15	15	19	15	24	22	14	5	10	208
Advert														
Contr.		1												1
Amenity														
Issue											1		1	2
Breach of														
Cs.			1					2	2	1	1	1		8
Change of														
Use	3	6	1	1	2	4	4	3	1	2	3	2	5	37
Constr.Det.														
Dw.					1									1
Dem. In CA		1												1
Enquiry										8	4	1	1	14
Listed B.														
Contr.		1	1		1				1		1			5
Not in acc.					_									
w/p	2				6	3	1	1						13
Op. Dev.	9	8	3	29	5	7	5	9	13	10	4	1	3	106
Tree Cont.				1										1
Unknown				1		1	9		7	1				19

<u>KEY:</u>

PD/PA:

Application types:

ADVERT:	Advertisement Consent
TEL:	Telecommunications Notification
CND:	Discharge of Conditions
CPE/CPL/PRA:	Certificate of proposed/ Lawful use/ Prior Approval
FULL:	Full Planning Permission
SCO/EIA/RMS:	Scoping Opinion/ EIA Application/ Reserved Matters
HH:	Householder Planning Permission
LBC/LBD:	Listed Building Consent/ Demolition
CAC:	Conservation Area Consent
VAR/NMA/COU:	Variation/ Non-Material Amendment/ Change of Use
TPO/TPC/PTC:	Works to a tree/ Tree Preservation Order

Decision types:

Prior Approval/ Permitted Development/ Deemed Consent

Enforcement breaches:

Advert Cont.:	Advert Contravention
Breach of Cs.:	Breach of Conditions
Constr. Det. Dw.:	Construction of detached residential dwelling
Dem. In CA:	Demolition in Conservation Area
Listed B. Contr.:	Listed Building Contravention
Not in acc. w/p:	Not in accordance with planning permission
Op. Dev.:	Operational Development
Use anc. out.:	Use of Ancillary outbuilding as separate dwelling
Tree Cont.:	Tree Contravention