

GRANGE AND WHITE LEDGES CONSERVATION AREA

Date Designated 1995

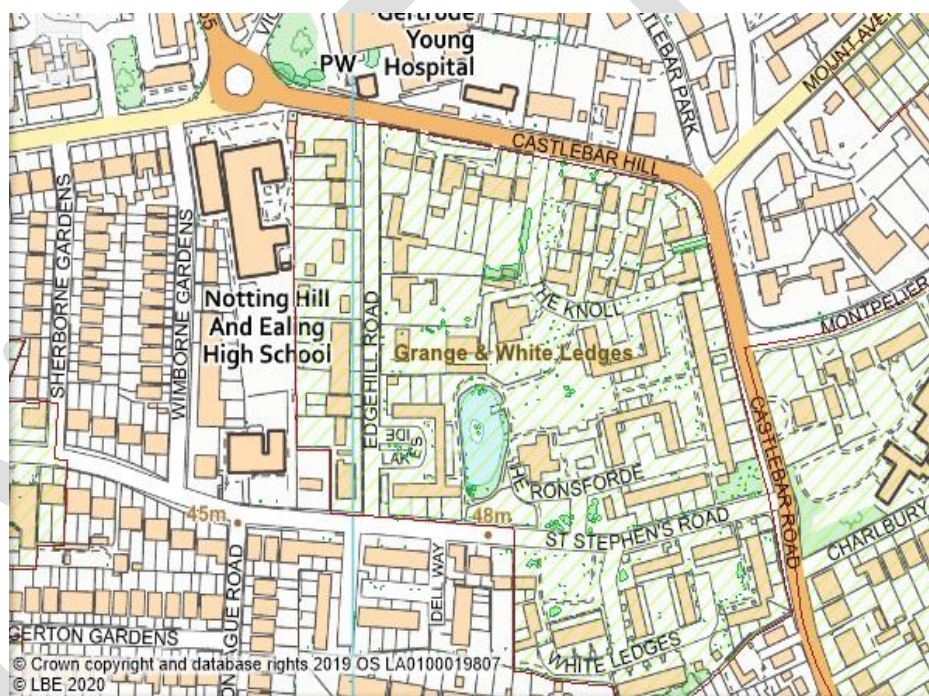
Last Appraisal April 2009

Last Management Plan April 2009

Existing Article 4 Direction ☒



Map



Summary and key changes since last appraisal

There are two distinct character areas:

Sub area 1): Edgehill Road and Castelbar Hill- mainly Edwardian and Victorian character with some older buildings.

Sub area 2): 1960s residential estates strongly influenced by contemporary 'Span' developments in Ham Common (Richmond), New Ash Green (Sevenoaks), Blackheath (LB Greenwich/Lewisham) and elsewhere. This design is said to 'span the gap between suburban

	<p>monotony of the typical spec building and the architecturally designed individually built residence’.</p> <p>The highly landscaped setting is a key part of character of sub area 2. The rhythmic and continuous succession of architectural elements of residential properties is also an intrinsic part of visual element of CA.</p> <p>The CA has been subject to some levels of change, mostly small scale and incremental. Sub areas 1 and 2 are quite different in their origin architecture and this report considers removing sub area 1) from the CA.</p>
Meeting with Conservation Area Panel	<p>The relevant CA Panel is responsible for four CAs: Haven Green, Mount Park, Montpellier and Grange and White Ledges. The points they have made in relation to the residential elements are common to all areas and are considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled tree felling, even though trees in CAs are protected. • Total paving of front gardens - off street parking is now the norm, but it is important for this to include areas of landscaping • Inappropriate boundary treatments. A plague of 2 metre railings is replacing Ealing’s vernacular 2 foot brick walls with laurel above. Large gates and spear topped railings - most egregious are those painted gold - have given too many homes in the CAs a completely inappropriate fortress-like appearance. • Historic street furniture - in particular lampposts - have been replaced by ugly functional ‘hockey stick’ designs. • Proliferation of unnecessary lighting which wastes energy and creates light pollution. <p>There CA Panel consider that there is an uneasy tension in the way change is being managed in the four CAs over recent years. The Victorian residential suburb was characterised by its generous sized houses with large gardens befitting their middle-class purpose. Most homes remain in owner occupation and owners generally try to secure improvements to their homes that accord with the character of the CAs in which they live. In these instances, and where they are able and can afford to do so, some of the negative features that the CA appraisal identifies are replaced. Items like unsightly porches, PVC-U windows and concreted driveways are replaced or reduced. This has a beneficial effect on the CA and needs to be encouraged and applauded.</p> <p>In other instances, however, the area’s spaciousness is a feature that has come to be seen by developers as an opportunity to cash in on rising house prices, hugely stoked up by Crossrail. Pressures for development have intensified on every available site. Sometimes developers seek the</p>

wholesale demolition of sound houses which they can replace with as many flats as they can get away with - so long as this does not exceed 10 which would trigger a demand for a social housing contribution. More commonly, they gut the premises, some of which are locally listed, and extend them to the side and rear, into the roof space and sometimes into the basement. Further opportunities are created by building in back gardens, especially on corner sites. Far too frequently the new development is carried out in a way that pays no respect to the design or the materials of the original homes. The outcome has been a steady erosion of the qualities of the cherished Victorian and Edwardian traditions.

Too often developers have been permitted to undertake these developments by a planning department that appears largely ignorant of the Council's own CA Appraisal and Management Plan documents, even though they form part of the Local Plan. This trend unfortunately appears to be increasing so that where developments may have been resisted 10 years ago on heritage grounds, they are now accepted and justified by the number of new homes that the developer is providing.

Alongside these major concerns, many smaller features that distinguish the four Conservation Areas are also being lost or otherwise eroded as controls that exist to manage them are not being applied sufficiently. While individually these may appear to be of relatively low importance, their cumulative effect over the past 10 years has been to seriously diminish the qualities of the CAs concerned.

The key point to make here is that everyone, not least the CA Panel, needs to recognise that the environment in Ealing is subject to pressure for change. What is required very urgently is some clearer statement of how this change is to be managed. The new London Plan with its hugely ambitious target for developments on small sites, makes this task particularly urgent. The draft policies in the plan are clear that the development of small sites in CAs must protect local heritage. The challenge therefore is for all concerned to agree what this means in the four CAs with which the Panel is concerned.

In terms of any **additional planning controls/guidance needed:**

New planning controls are not the priority for the four CAs. While much informal guidance that officers have applied over the years needs to be recorded and formally adopted, the existing Appraisal and Management documents are generally of a fair quality. The very urgent priority for all four of our CAs is to implement the policies and guidance that exist, and have worked relatively successfully until the last few years.

	<p>The council no longer has dedicated conservation officers to consider planning applications within a conservation area properly, while other experienced planning officers who understood the CAs relatively well have also left. A further recent concern has been the use of pre-application advice given by officers with very little knowledge of their subject. This advice encourages developers - who have paid good money for it - to believe their application will be uncontentious before the Panel, with its much greater experience, has had any chance to say otherwise.</p> <p>This worry is likely only to increase with the introduction of the New London Plan and its implications for developments on small sites. A clearer application of policy and greater transparency around the planning process would help alleviate community concerns considerably.</p> <p>In line with the NPPF, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management plan documents in each of the four areas must be regarded as the starting point for all development proposals in those areas. Planning Officers and the Committee need to refer to them from the pre-application stage all the way through to the decision-making point.</p> <p>In addition, a much better quality of information is required when applications for planning applications are submitted - this is also in line with NPPF requirements. In every case where National guidelines require it, applications must be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. Too often a consultant is paid to produce a glossy document that justifies the scheme the developer is promoting but the NPPF also requires there to be a fair - albeit a proportionate - assessment of the impact that the development will have on the CA which is a designated heritage asset.</p> <p>Comment- these comments are noted, and partly addressed in this report. Other operational and design issues will be addressed in the generic management plan and specific design guidance for each CA. Issues relating to planning staff and resources are addressed in the Key Issues and Recommendations report. On a point of clarification, the existing CA Appraisals and Management Plans do not technically form part of the Local Plan.</p>
CA Boundary Changes	<p>The last CA Appraisal (2009) proposed no boundary changes; significant areas in the surroundings are already protected by CA status (i.e. Montpelier Park CA, Mount Park CA, St Stephen CA and Haven Green CA). The strategic review (2020) has however identified an anomaly:</p> <p>Within the CA itself there are two distinct sub areas:</p>

Sub area 1) Edgehill Road and Castlebar Hill, parts of the Woods estate, includes a number of larger, older houses some of which date back from the late C.19, and others mid C.20. Large detached houses adding to expansive residential character.

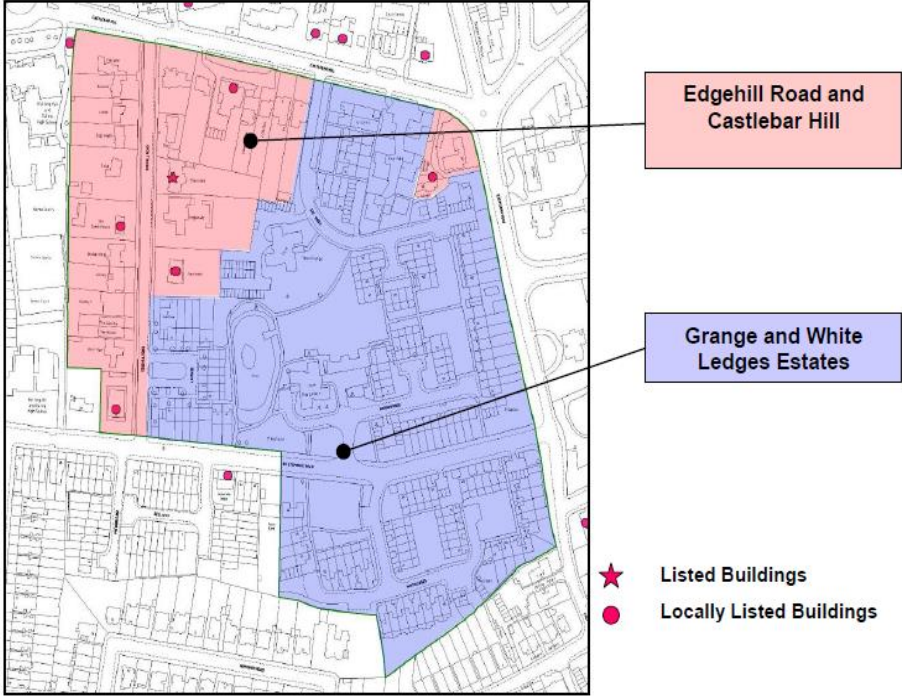
Sub area 2) Grange and White Ledges estates- 1960s/70s SPAN estates composed of simple, short three storey terraces arranged around landscaped courtyards.

The two sub areas are very different in terms of age of buildings, type of buildings, design and layout, materials and architectural philosophy. It is difficult to understand why they form part of a single conservation area.

Of the two sub areas, it is arguably the Grange and White Ledges that is the more locally distinctive from an architectural perspective. Whilst of more modern design, the value of these estates as an ensemble, combined with their representation of the social/architectural SPAN movement, marks out their importance.

Whilst sub area 2, contains some fine examples of surviving Victorian houses including Thorncote (Grade II listed) and some interesting locally listed houses, these are mixed in with several much later and more ordinary houses of the C.20 along Edgehill Road (especially the western side) and Castlebar Hill. When compared with other similar parts of the Borough, that are not included with CAs, it can be questioned whether sub area 1 is of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant CA designation.

It is therefore recommended that the boundary of this CA is redrawn to exclude sub area 1) Edgehill Road and Castlebar Hill.

	
<p>Key unlisted Buildings</p>	<p>The CA Appraisal (2009) considers that the following buildings are key unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the CA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apart from the two towers (the Grange and the Cedars) all houses in the 1960s and later houses in the Grange and White Ledges Estates [Agreed, the value of these houses is that they are an ensemble and their uniformity of their design. It is recommended that the two towers should also be classified as positive contributors- whilst slightly later than the Wates development (early 1970) they are of the same style and as towers have a certain landmark quality and provide visual orientation. They were referred to as locally listed in the CA Appraisal but they are not on the current list, no is there any record of their removal at time of 2014 local list review). • ‘Ingleside’ along Edgehill Road- This building is much altered but has similar architectural language to the listed Thorncote adjacent. Showing signs of disrepair but continues to be a positive contributor. • 15 Castlebar Hill – a substantial property (1888) on corner of Castebar Hill and Edgehill Road. Remains a positive contributor.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 & 7 Castlebar Hill- should actually be nos. 7 & 9, which are fine detached red brick late Victorian villas. Remain positive contributors. • Gas lamps along Edgehill Road and also 1960s lamp posts original to the Grange and White Ledges Estates. The remain positive contributors. <p>Properties on current local list remain valid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 St. Stephen's Road (former Children's home) (LLR1225) • Newlands, Edgehill Road (LLR0395) • The Coach House, Edgehill Road (LLR0396) • 11 'Wyke', Castlebar Hill (LLR0213) • Wetherall Cottage, Castelbar Hill (LLR0215). <p>No other changes are recommended to the classification of key unlisted buildings.</p>
<p>Threats and Negative factors from last appraisal</p>	<p>Negative factors/threats identified in the CA Appraisal (2009):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of front garden trees, fences and garden walls not identified as much of a problem as in other CAs.[This continues to be case, although evident that some boundary walls have been repaired- generally sympathetically]. • Extensions that disrupt traditional spatial relationship between buildings [There is no evidence of this being a significant issue, particularly within the Grange and White Ledges estates, where the terraced layout of the SPAN estates restricts scope for side extensions. The conversions of garages have also generally been resisted] • Bulky dormers at front, rear and side that disrupt original proportions/character and roofscape. [Very few recent examples found of poor roof extensions and bulky dormers] • Rooflights on front roof slopes [very few recent examples found] • Loss of traditional fenestration patterns and joinery and doorways and inappropriate replacements [Some evidence of this, few of the original metal crittall windows remain in the blocks, however replacement PVC-U has tended to be in very similar glazing patterns to the originals]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timber cladding – some repairs needed to rotten timber [a few examples seen but not a major problem] • Fascia boards and roof-edge detailing on some flat roofed terraces need painting or repair (need matching white planking boards and black metal uprights) [some examples seen but not a major problem] • Landscaping- some of original tree planting could be thinned or crowns lifted to avoid overcrowding [landscaping appears to be extremely well maintained and adding very positively to character. No obvious need for thinning] • Garage block at eastern end of Knoll would benefit from some screening by landscaping [no obvious issue detected with landscaping of garage blocks] • Continuous porches [no recent evidence of this] • Overall condition of fabric in CA was sound [Agreed]. • State of neglect of front yards in some properties along Castelbar Hill. Some pavements in poor condition. [Litter is a problem in a few of garage courts but generally tidy]. <p>Other issues identified as part of the strategic review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Knoll/Heronsforde- some rear outbuildings and lean-to extensions/conservatories are visible from Castelbar Hill. Not a significant issue given the relatively high wall along Castlebar Hill, but it does detract a little from the area.
Gaps sites and capacity for change	<p>There remains little capacity for change in this CA in terms of gap sites. However, there have been a few examples in the Victorian sub-area where houses are being redeveloped into more units - for e.g. 'Duart' Edgehill Rd- demolition of bungalow and replacement with 2x2 storey houses (177744FUL- PP granted Nov 2017).</p> <p>There are no current Local Plan site allocations in or adjacent to the CA.</p>
Public Realm issues	<p>The landscaping and borders of the area, particularly around the SPAN estates is excellent, and a key characteristic of the CA. However, as much of the CA is privately owned (by the Grange Residents Co Ltd), the public are unable to access these areas. There are frequent 'Private Property. NO ADMITTANCE to the public' boards dotted around the</p>

	<p>estate. The need for privacy is understood but it somehow detracts from the enjoyment of the CA by the general public.</p> <p>The artwork – in playground area in front of The Cedars, and the play area created under the canopy of willow tree add to the character and interest of the area.</p> <p>Some houses have detached garage blocks. Litter is a minor problem in some of these areas.</p> <p>There are modern lamp standards throughout estate including ‘hockey stick’ style lamp. The CA appraisal (2009) mentions (page 21) that the gas lamps along Egdehill Rd and the 1960s lamppost in Grange Estate were removed for refurbishment, but do not appear to have been returned.</p> <p>There are a few remaining cast iron post boxes and these are in good condition.</p> <p>Increasing number of alarms and CCTV cameras are apparent and these detract a little.</p>
Management Plan	<p>The Management Plan (2009) contains the usual generic guidance in relation to roof extensions, rooflights, tiles, chimneys, dormer windows and doors, brickwork, front and side plots, open space, extensions, outbuildings, urban density, traffic, satellite dishes, trees, public realm.</p> <p>This remains adequate but needs to be updated and linked with new design guidance particularly in relation to the 1960s/1970s estates where common standards of maintenance and use of materials is critical to the uniform appearance of the long terraced blocks, and the distinctive character of the estate. This includes guidance on replacement of windows and door in PVC-U (see below).</p> <p>Whilst not a planning matter, there is an existing legal covenant which restricts external alterations without approval of The White Ledges Management Company. This needs to tie in with revisions to the management plan.</p> <p>Further guidance on design and other issues referred to above will be set out in a new generic management plan and specific design guidance for the Grange and White Ledges CA.</p>
Article 4 Directions	<p>The Management Plan (2009) noted that the CA was well maintained and had only deteriorated only moderately. That positions remains the case.</p>

	<p>The CA Management Plan made no specific recommendations for Article 4 Directions in this area- in fact, it considered that such a drastic measure would not be necessary as the normal planning controls are considered enough to assure the preservation of the special Interest. That remains the case, although the guidance on design and other issues that will be set out in a new generic management plan and specific design guidance for the Grange and White Ledges CA, will assist in controlling the issues identified in this report.</p>
Other Controls/ Guidance	<p>It is recommended that further design guidance is produced. This should include both specific guidance relating to the local vernacular of The Grange and White Ledges together with generic principles of good design. Guidance on the use of PVC-U windows and doors to provide clearer guidance on appropriate replacements will also assist – this is especially important for the 1960s/70s. blocks where it is critical for the uniformity of the estates that replacements follow the glazing pattern and designs of the original windows.</p>
Planning Data	<p>Between 2007 and 2019, there were relatively low levels of planning applications, averaging of 17 per annum (Rank 22). 76% of applications approved, just above average across CAs (75%). Only one appeal was recorded, which was dismissed. Enforcement activity was also low with 20 cases investigated over this period, with most cases relating to changes of use and tree contraventions.</p>

RM 22.7.20

Grange and White Ledges CA

By type:

Grange and White Ledges	2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
ALL TYPES	27	6	25	32	20	20	16	15	1	6	20	29	217
ADVERT					3								3
TEL				2									2
CND	4		4	4	8						1	6	27
CPE/CPL/PRA			1			1					1		3
FULL	7		8	5		7	2	5		1	3	2	40
HH											2	2	4
VAR/NMA/COU				1				2		1	2	2	8
TPO/TPC/PTC	16	6	12	20	9	12	14	7	1	4	11	17	129

By Decision:

[illegible]

Enforcement Cases:

Grange and White Ledges	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
ALL CASES	1	5		2	1	2	1	2	3	1		1	1	20
Change of Use		1						1	1			1		4
Enquiry										1				1
Not in acc. w/p	1													1
Op. Dev.		2		2	1	1		1	2				1	10
Tree Cont.		2			1	1								4

KEY:

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:

PD/PA:	Prior Approval/ Permitted Development/ Deemed Consent
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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