

Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

Adopted 11 March 2011



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Map 1 Camden Square Conservation Area

Ordnance Survey plan shows Conservation Area Boundaries, streets, plots and property boundaries

Map 2 Camden Square Designated areas

Ordnance Survey plan shows areas and date of designation and extension

Map 3 Townscape Appraisal

Ordnance Survey plan shows listed buildings, positive, neutral and negative buildings and spaces

Map 4 Camden Square Area Topography

This shows the Camden Square Conservation Area indicated approximately between 30 and 45 metre contours

Map 5 John Rocque's map of the environs of London 1745 - **To be included**

Map 6 1873-1877 Ordnance Survey

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Map 9 Camden Square Conservation Area urban grain

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A Street gazetteer

B Streetscape Audit

Street Gazetteer, Camden Square Conservation Area [2003 – TO BE UPDATED BY CAMDEN SQUARE CAAC – WINTER 2011]

Part 1

Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal

Part 1

Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal

1 Introduction

This document comprises a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy for the Camden Square Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. It should be read in conjunction with the various reference documents which are subject to change due to legislation and regulation.

Conservation Area designation carries the responsibility to preserve or enhance the area.

Part 1 Conservation Appraisal is an assessment of the Camden Square Conservation Area's special character which seeks to define that character, and to give consideration to the key issues and pressures that are affecting the area as of 2010. The Gazetteer in the Appendix offers a detailed street-by-street commentary. Both will be updated periodically.

Part 2 Management Strategy sets out positive actions for the particular care required to preserve or enhance the special character, to anticipate change, and ensure future review. It attempts to highlight those features which will be either supported, encouraged, discouraged or positively resisted. This section also gives guidance for sources of further information and maps.

This report is part of on-going review of existing Conservation Area Statements undertaken by the Council. The purpose of the review is the safeguarding of Conservation Areas, and when adopted the report will become a material consideration in planning applications and an agenda for future action and review.

It is important to note that whilst the Appraisal and Gazetteer give a detailed 'snapshot' of the conservation area at the time of writing, it would be impossible to identify every aspect that contributes to the area's special interest. Accordingly, development proposals must thoroughly assess the current character and appearance of the neighbourhood for which they are proposed.

The Management Strategy should be read in relation to general Supplementary Planning Guidance.

This document is based on one prepared by John Thompson & Partners in consultation with the Camden conservation and landscape officers, the Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) and follows English Heritage guidelines.

2 Definition of Special Character

Camden Square Conservation Area is a primarily nineteenth century inner London suburb. It is a planned development, in a gridded street layout running parallel to and perpendicular from Camden Road, and the layout is focused around Camden Square.

Camden Square forms the centrepiece of the planned development; however, the special character of the area is that it is also diverse when looked at in detail. The architecture is not uniform around the Square, phased development is evident in groups of buildings, and some plots have been developed individually. This is reflected in the size of plots, layout and the elevation treatment of the houses. The building of the railway through the area, the impact of wartime damage and later infill development have all contributed to the evolution of the area.

The two mews behind the Square contain inventive building developments that have also evolved over time. This has resulted in a character that is a unique mix of nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first century ideas of the mews concept, from functional service areas to exemplars of urban living.

The green spaces and the private gardens are important as they make this a green and leafy area - an attractive yet urban place with an underlying mature landscape.

The area also contains some 'gap sites'. The most poignant is the site of the lost St Paul's Church, a Victorian gothic church with prominent spire that was demolished in 1956 which was located at the north end of Camden Square at the crossing with Canteloves Road. This has been replaced with low buildings with poor landscape surrounding them. Also, the junction of Agar Grove, St Augustine's Road and Murray Street is a vacant site that fails to define the entrance, and mars the view of the area from the south and east.

This part of the Conservation Area is an area that continues to change and it needs particular care both to conserve it and to allow it to evolve.

3 Planning policy context

3.1 National policy

Camden has a duty under *the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (section 69 and 72)* to designate as conservation areas any “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or historic interest of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” and pay special attention to the preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of those areas.

Designation provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance the special interest of such an area. Designation also, importantly, introduces greater control over the removal of trees and more stringent requirements when judging the acceptability of the demolition of unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of the area.

Government policy on conservation areas is set out in by *Planning Policy Statement 5* (March 2010). This supersedes *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (1995).

English Heritage has produced *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals 2005* and *Management of Conservation Areas 2005* which have been used as a framework for the documents. These documents set out the rationale and criteria for designation and the way in which information should be presented in order to best support the preservation and management of designated areas.

London Borough of Camden’s policy

The Council’s policies and guidance for conservation areas are contained in the adopted Local Development Framework, adopted in 2010.

The government has introduced a new planning system in which the focus is on flexibility, sustainability, strengthened community and stakeholder involvement. Under the new system Camden was required to produce the Local Development Framework (LDF) which replaced the previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and this includes an emphasis on community involvement.

The LDF will incorporate the London Borough of Camden Planning policies:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs): the key document of this type is the *core strategy* which includes a development plan for the whole area and will outline a broad strategy for conservation

- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs): provide further detail and guidance on policies and proposals included in the DPD, and can supplement higher level policy in controlling erosion of the special interest that warrants designation
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy are to be adopted and will support the SPD.

The Council has produced a Streetscape Design Manual for Camden. This is a generic document regarding public realm enhancement work. This document includes sample illustrations of best practice, e.g. for historic street settings, and typical street settings within conservation areas. However, the importance of local conditions will also be taken into consideration along with this appraisal. www.camden.gov.uk/streetscape. Further guidance may be sought in English Heritage's Guidance, *Streets For All*.

3.2 Local policy

The Camden Square Conservation Area was designated in October 1974. (See map 2.) It included Camden Square, and Rochester Square bordered by Camden Road to the north west, the gardens backing the rear of Camden Park Road to the north east, Agar Grove to the south east, and Rochester Square to the south west.

The area has been extended twice:

- first in April 1980, to the north up to the centre-line of Camden Park Road, and to the east up to Agar Grove;
- then in November 2002, to the north east from Camden Park Road to York Way, and to the south east of Agar Grove including St Paul's Mews.

This document reviews and updates the draft conservation area statement of October 2002, which was agreed in principle by the Executive on 19 November 2002. At the time the newly formed CAAC requested time to review the document using their local knowledge and expertise which they did in August 2003, but the revised draft was not subsequently taken out to public consultation or adopted by the Council.

The Conservation Area does not contain an Archaeological Priority Area.

There are two areas designated as Neighbourhood Centres:

- Murray Street at the south west end of the area (towards Agar Grove)
- York Way at the north east end.

These are local groupings of shops and service premises that provide for the day-to-day needs of people living, working or staying nearby, although Murray

Street currently only supports a single shop, a laundrette and a small restaurant.

Camden Square Conservation Area has two open spaces which are designated as London Squares: Rochester Square and Camden Square. These are also designated as Private Open Space and Public Open Space, respectively, in Camden's LDF.

Two strategic views in the Mayor of London's View Management Framework cross the Conservation Area:

1. Strategic View 2, Parliament Hill to St Paul's: the strategic viewing corridor and the wider setting consultation area.
2. Strategic View 3, Kenwood to St Paul's: the strategic viewing corridor and the wider setting consultation area

The Council will seek to ensure development proposals in the conservation area do not obstruct or harm these views.

The railway, including cut and fill tunnelling, is subject to LDF UDP transport policies TP1 (Channel Tunnel) and TP5 (Thameslink).

4 Assessing special interest

4.1 Location and setting – city – borough – local

City

Camden Square Conservation Area is an inner London suburb located north of King's Cross and St Pancras Stations, the Regent's Canal and the North London Overground railway lines, and south of the district of Tufnell Park which falls in the Borough of Islington.

Borough

Camden Square Conservation Area is located on the east side of the Borough of Camden on the boundary with Islington. It lies half a mile north east of St Pancras Old Church and Kentish Town, half a mile north east of the centre of Camden Town and is situated south east of Kentish Town. The area falls within the Cantelowes Ward.

The area is not adjacent to any other conservation areas in Camden and has a self-contained identity centred on Camden Square.

Local

The Camden Square Conservation Area is a blunt triangle shape laid from north east to the apex in the south west closest to Camden Town. The area is defined by Camden Road to the north west, York Way to the north east and Agar Grove to the south east. (See Map 1.)

On York Way the boundary dips along Cliff Road and Camden Park Road triangle; the boundary south of Agar Grove extends up to but excludes the Maiden Lane Estate. The south west edge runs along Rochester Square, but excludes the public housing on its south side.

4.2 Character and plan form

The character of the area is centred upon Camden Square, a long green space running north east to south west parallel to Camden Road and at the heart of the grid of streets running parallel and perpendicular to Camden Road.

The area was laid out over fields as a planned development from the 1840s to completion around 1880. It was originally intended for the Square to be symmetrical around the church site – now at the top of Camden Square – but during construction, high density building was substituted to the north east, as Camden Terrace, North and South Villas.

There is an underlying architectural hierarchy:

- the largest semi-detached houses face the major route of Camden Road, and Camden Square which pivots around two detached houses on its east side;

- narrower plots with mostly semi detached and some terraces on the St Augustine's Road area, around Rochester Square and the streets leading from the Square;
- the mews: Camden Mews and Murray Mews, two long, smaller scale service areas developed incrementally over a hundred and fifty years and packed with ingenuity and variety.

The original houses have small front gardens, with semi-basements and steep steps to their front doors, and rear gardens of varying lengths. The grandest houses have the deepest front gardens and these complement the proportions of Camden Square.

The plot widths are graded: in the centre of the south east side of Camden Square are two large detached houses. Generally, the south east and south west sides of the Square have the widest plots and semi-detached properties: the plot widths then narrow at the north east end of the Square. The same progression is noted along St Augustine's Road where the plot widths narrow as one moves north east away from the Square, towards the more modest houses in Marquis Road, St Paul's Crescent and the eastern end of Agar Grove. The earliest houses in the south-west area, around Rochester Square, have narrower plot widths than Camden Square.

4.3 Landscape and topography

The Topography Map (Map 4) shows the Camden Square Conservation Area indicated approximately between the 30 and 45 metre contours sloping from the highest point on York Way (at the Camden Road end), down to the lowest point at Rochester Place (at the Agar Grove end). The slope rises steadily, steepening at the top end of the Square.

This contributes to the character of the area, as all streets are gently rising and falling across the contours accommodated within subtle adjustments in the gardens, steps and roofscapes. The underlying natural hill is revealed in the long landscaped Square.

4.4 Historic development and archaeology

The history and pattern of development in the Camden Square Conservation Area is part of the massive expansion of suburbs in the nineteenth century into the rural estates and surviving field patterns in north London. The area is linked to the development of Kentish Town and Camden Town. Many local street names originate from historical associations and land ownership. The development of Camden Town dates from the Act of 1788 which allowed Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden and his heirs to lay out streets on his property to the east of what is now Camden High Street.

A brief summary of the history follows; references for further information are given in the bibliography, in particular *The Streets of Camden*.

Ancient routes of Maiden Lane and St Pancras Way/Kentish Town Road run north from the city: the area is within Canteloves medieval manor, situated between these two routes.

1788, Act of Parliament granting the Earl of Camden the right to develop Camden Town

1824, Act of Parliament, Camden Road is part of a turnpike road linking the West End with the Great North Road, originally the 'New Road' to Tottenham

1845, rules are drawn up for managing the Camden Square Gardens (prior to the construction of houses)

1849, St Paul's Church is consecrated at the centre of the emerging Camden New Town

1855, Metropolitan Meat Market is located to the north of York Way. Suburban development in the north of the area is curtailed and densities are increased.

1860s and 1898, railway building and the enlargement of the cut and fill tunnels under Camden Square affect the development, and some buildings are demolished

1940-41, significant wartime bomb damage; 1942 Abercrombie Plan envisages total demolition (un-implemented)

Post-1945, incremental developments on gap sites, and virtual completion of the mews with new housing.

Medieval to early modern

During the early medieval period this area was a patchwork of country estates. An ancient route ran through the area linking St Pancras to Kentish Town and Highgate roughly following the River Fleet valley. There was a cluster of houses around St Pancras Old Church to the south, but by 1593 the church stood isolated. Flooding of this settlement by the river influenced the establishment of late medieval settlement to the north at Kentish Town making an elongated parish that was around four miles in length.

In the medieval period, St Pancras Manor House, later Mr Agar's House, occupied the land near the present Agar Grove to the east of what was then King's Road, now St Pancras Way. Canteloves Manor stood a little to the north and comprised about 210 acres; the Camden Square Conservation Area occupies this land.

The ancient Maiden Lane wound its way from Highgate to St Pancras passing to the east of Kentish Town Road; in the nineteenth century it was metalled

and known as York Road after the London and York Railway which terminated at the southern end of the Road at the old King's Cross station, north of the canal.

18th century

The area remained rural until the 18th century. At the beginning of the century, most land was turned over to grass to feed the animals that provided the growing capital city with milk and meat. At the end of the century the only exceptions to grassland were a few nursery gardens such as Montgomery's Nursery that stood near to the site of Rochester Square.

In the later 18th century much of the Canteloves Manor lands were leased on long term agreements by the first Earl of Camden, who by Act of Parliament laid out the southern part of his estate and divided it into plots and building leases.

19th century

At the beginning of the 19th century, Camden Town was made up of streets immediately to the east of the High Street: Pratt Street and College Street ran into the then Grays Inn Lane (today, St Pancras Way), which in turn ran into Kentish Town Road. Also, some of the Southampton Estate to the west of the High Street had been developed.

In 1824, Camden Road was constructed across the fields, and was originally known as 'the New Road to Holloway and Tottenham'. It was at this time that the streets around Rochester Square began to be laid out. Here the terraces were developed in a slow and somewhat piecemeal fashion by small speculative builders who ventured a few houses at a time. Early maps show that the south east end of Murray Street was the first to be occupied.

The descendants of the Earl, the Camden Estate, laid out the remainder of the streets from the 1840s, as a set piece of town planning. The Camden Estate was determined that the new Camden Square area should be a higher class development, in contrast to the earlier portions of Camden Town which were already deteriorating socially as the metropolis expanded. Their very short leases discouraged quality development.

Wherever possible, the Estate sold leases on a wholesale basis to avoid piecemeal development. As ground landlord it imposed rules about the size and general appearance of the houses to control the development and to attract the middle classes.

In order to be as up-market as possible there was a generous provision of green open space, and St Paul's Church, a neo-gothic structure with a prominent 156 foot spire, was built on the Green at the start of the Camden New Town development, and was consecrated in 1849. A contemporary lithograph by C.J. Greenwood shows the church with cattle in the foreground, and a view stretching along the emerging Canteloves Road towards St Paul's Cathedral. Large houses were concentrated around Camden Square with

more modest buildings leading from the Square, loosely following the example of Covent Garden.

In Camden New Town, a more extensive wave of house-building commenced around 1845. The first examples were large houses built around Camden Square. Soon, development was to spread along Camden Road, characterised by an essentially urban growth typical of mid nineteenth century London. There was much building activity from the mid-1840s. By 1849, the following streets were laid out and named: Camden Road, Camden Square, Canteloves Road, Maiden Lane (later known as York Way), Murray Street, Rochester Square, St Paul's Road (later known as Agar Grove), and Stratford Place (later known as Stratford Villas). The following streets were laid out but unnamed: Camden Mews, Camden Park Road, Marquis Road, Murray Mews, North Villas, St Augustine's Road, and South Villas. Most of these residential streets were built quickly from 1860s and were fully developed by the 1880s.

While the south west part of Camden Square and Camden Road are mostly in a stuccoed Italianate style, plainer brick houses with arched windows and projecting eaves stand at the later high-density north east end of the Square.

The two mews were laid out at the same time as Camden Square. Known in the 19th century as 'Camden Mews North' and 'Camden Mews South', they followed the 17th-century London mews pattern: intended for stables and coach houses to service the grand townhouses of the Square, they were laid out with mains drainage and a roadway of granite setts.

Railway

While City workers were initially attracted by convenient commuting via the new North London Line, this new fashionable area was literally and figuratively undermined by the arrival of the mainline railway following the passing of the Midland Railway (Extension to London) Bill in 1863. The line was constructed in 1864-67 simultaneous to residential development. The railway line was the first out of St Pancras, passing on through to Kentish Town in a cutting. Camden Road Station (1868 to 1916) stood immediately south west of the area. Two cut and fill tunnels which pass diagonally beneath Camden Road and the newly laid-out Camden Square and mews. The tracks emerge from the tunnel via a cutting south of Murray Mews, pass under Agar Grove and lead on towards the vast railway lands which stretched towards St Pancras.

This major intervention, using cut-and-fill techniques, bisected Camden Square, and resulted in a number of properties being demolished, first in the 1860s and secondly after the widening of the railway in 1898 [see Appendix, Map 6, O.S. 1875 and Map 7 O.S. 1894 map 8 1914]. Buildings were demolished in Camden Road, Camden Mews, on the north west and south east sides of Camden Square, Murray Street, St Augustine's Road and Agar Grove. In addition, vibration from the tunnels and sulphurous smoke from the ventilation shafts reduced the desirability of the area.

The developers were obliged to continue to build the houses according to plan, but increased the densities to the north of the central church site. As a result of the effect of the railways, the increasing population of the metropolis and residential densities, there was a greater social mix and subdivision of properties than was envisaged in the original ambition for the area; few buildings were erected in the mews, with scarcely any serving the Camden Square properties.

Victorian residents included artists and professionals: the artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema lived in Camden Square, as did Henry Armstead RA, sculptor of a major part of the Albert Memorial. The meteorologist George James Symons, lived at 62 Camden Square. He was founder of the British Rainfall Association and inspiration for the Camden Square Climatological station which was relocated to the site of the existing play centre in the Square. Oliver Heaviside, the physicist and mathematician, lived at 3 St Augustine's Road (demolished).

20th century

There was little change in the Camden Square area during the first four decades of the twentieth century. The area remained both connected and blighted by the railway; the new suburbs in outer London had become more desirable places to live. Many of the properties were sub-divided for multi-occupancy.

World War II had a major impact; bombs targeted at the railway destroyed large portions of streets and resulted in post-war rebuilding. Much of this was brick built public housing blocks which infilled the bombed sites. The entire district also came under threat of demolition envisaged in the unimplemented 1942 Abercrombie Plan for London. The Plan recommended the construction of a new ring road through Camden Town, together with a 'green lung' between Camden Road and Agar Grove cutting right across Camden Square.

In the second half of the 20th century, extensive restoration work and an unprecedented amount of new building was carried out in London. From the mid-1960s the environs of Camden Square underwent a social and architectural renaissance, reflecting a wider trend in the inner residential districts of London, the withdrawal of the steam trains, the introduction of clean air legislation and a renewed appreciation of Victorian architecture. The area once again became a desirable place to live.

There was an influx of newcomers, many houses returned to single family use, and substantial houses were converted from multiple occupancy into self-contained flats or maisonettes. For many years there had been a lack of maintenance, resulting in a general aspect of decay and this was reversed by a large quantity of enhancement work, including the reinstatement of missing architectural features and the reversal of insensitive alterations.

The most significant instances of new building occurred in both mews, which until the 1950s had remained largely undeveloped. The large number of vacant plots provided new opportunities and many of the 19th- or early 20th century buildings there were converted to residential use. At this time, an increase in permissible planning densities made the mews sites viable for development. Plots were gradually bought up, as land values were relatively low and the secluded location was appreciated. The mews became fashionable residential areas, popular with architects wishing to build innovative houses for themselves.

The effects of bombing led to significant changes:

- Significant damage occurred in the north-west end of Camden Square and in the Camden Mews, replaced by the local authority housing blocks of Abingdon Close which are set in a grassed area behind railings and accessed from the mews
- A plot was cleared on Camden Road south of the railway tracks, which is still empty
- A bomb to the south west of Rochester Square affected the general south west area, and the south west aspect of the Square was lost and some damage occurred to Rochester Square. This was replaced with a local authority estate of tall blocks.
- There was intermittent damage on Agar Grove, including loss of some architectural details
- Loss at the curve on St Paul's Crescent, replaced with flats.
- Loss on the junction of York Way and Agar Grove, replaced with flats.

In the 1950s various alterations were made to Camden Square Gardens.

- The adventure playground was developed by the Council at the south west end, and remodelled in the 1980s. Enclosed and secluded, this installation obscures the Square's overall proportions. Here the first weather station is commemorated, but is not visible to the general public.
- At the north east end the demolition of St Paul's Church followed damage and subsidence after the Second World War; it was replaced with a low church hall (now re- consecrated). The focal point provided by the church and spire at the north end of the Square and the cross-over with Canteloves Road were lost.

In 1955 the London Irish Centre was founded at the corner of Camden Square and Murray Street by two Catholic priests, as a hostel to relieve overcrowding

amongst Irish immigrants. It has since been extended to the side and to the rear reaching to Murray Mews, providing banqueting suites and serving a wider community.

There are three 20th century developments that bridge over the railway tracks

- On the north west side of the Square, over the railway, a four storey terrace in stock brick with front gardens facing the Square with mews houses and access via the Camden Mews to the rear
- On the south east side of the Square, over the railway, Hillier House Housing Association flats occupy the raised south east corner
- On the north east side of Murray Street, towards the south-east end, a recently developed residential block backs onto the railway tracks

The last survivor of plant nurseries in the area was in Rochester Square. This has now closed and the grounds have become overgrown.

5 Appraisal

5.1 Spatial analysis

The area has a clear pattern of wide streets with mews behind. The main streets are lined with houses, set back from the street, on raised basements with three principal floors above. The mews houses are typically of two storeys, some with set-back third storeys, and stand at the back edge of the narrow roadway or slightly set back. This pattern was established in the original plan and has been continued in the twentieth century. Post-war mews developments policy initially required a set back. The late 20th century Cobham Mews and St Paul's Mews (albeit taller and a homogeneous composition) continue this tradition, whereas replacement postwar public housing blocks tended to break this pattern.

Public space is focused around the Camden Square Gardens which forms the public open space for the area. The area has restricted vehicular access. Tiny green spaces have been inserted by the local authority where road routes have been blocked at the perimeter of the area. Private rear gardens range from the very small to the substantial. This is not particularly obvious at street level, except where trees are glimpsed between semi-detached houses and at crossroads where gardens line the side street.

5.2 Key views

Views in this area have distinct characters: the formal composition of the planned street layout and ordered frontages contrast with the contained views of the varied developments within the mews.

Views on the edge of the area are along the busy commercial highways. Views out of the area to the south and east are over the wide urban landscape looking down towards central London and over the railway lands, now being developed with buildings some of which are high-rise.

The planned urban suburb:

The key views are up and down the Square, and the grid of roads that spread from it. Most roads are tree-lined and edged by front gardens. The overall impression of homogeneity is created by distinctive roofscapes and the ordering of the elevations in coherent groups.

Glimpsed views of gardens:

An aerial photograph of the area shows how green it is when taking the private gardens into view. The gardens are most visible at the corners of streets, where the gardens run parallel to the side street. At this point, trees and shrubs appear and give a green and important break between buildings. These are vulnerable places as development may reduce these green gaps and erode the views across the gardens.

Gardens are also visible between semi-detached villas, providing a glimpse into the gardens beyond. The effect of infilling in some cases can detrimentally change the intended detached villa layout, making it read as a terrace.

Contained mews views:

Under 163 York Way, looking south west, an archway frames the view down Camden Mews, which is particularly fine in the evening when light falls on the cobbles.

Views up and down both Camden and Murray Mews include a rich variety of inventive houses and converted workshops. The scale is low and intimate, punctuated by intermittent trees in the mews, or by trees viewed obliquely over the houses.

Wider urban view out of the area:

At street level the best place to see the wider context of the conservation area is on Agar Grove Railway Bridge looking out over the railway lands; and similarly from the rear of the London Irish Centre. When completed, the new King's Cross development will be visible in long views over the railway lands.

A wider view towards the city is from the higher northern end of York Way.

Designated strategic views:

Two views towards St Paul's Cathedral are noted in the policy section above and affect the southern end of the area.

Missing and marred views:

St Paul's Church spire is now missing as a landmark and focal building at the intersection of the Square and Canteloves Road.

Looking south west from York Way along Cliff Road, the view is marred by the truncated, aerial-topped spire of the former Presbyterian Church

5.3 Character zones

The character zones are described below (see map 10). (Also see the street by street Gazetteer in the Appendix.)

- **Camden Square**, the now truncated and fragmented centrepiece
- **Rochester Square** at the south west end of the conservation area and the earliest development in the area
- **Boundary roads**
 - Camden Road, the new road off which the Camden New Town development was laid out
 - Agar Grove, the edge of the estate
 - York Way, terraces built beside ancient Maiden Lane and formerly facing a market landscape
- **The grid of streets**, the planned estate development

- **The Mews**, not built as intended, a slow start and an innovative outcome

1 Camden Square

Camden Square Gardens is the centrepiece of the design of the area. The line of Camden Road sets out the alignment of the Square and the streets running off it. The landscape was established before the homes were completed. Residents became keyholders; the gardens were tended by a gardener who was also a constable with powers to control any loutish behaviour. The railings were removed in the Second World War as part of a doomed effort by the government to obtain useful metal, and these have been replaced with plain, topless modern municipal railings. The gardens were to have been duplicated north east of the church in the original concept; however this length was reduced, possibly following the relocation of the Metropolitan Meat Market to the north east of York Way (Maiden Lane).

The ends of the gardens have been truncated which has weakened the composition. At the south west end lies the aforementioned adventure playground; the north east end was originally completed by St Paul's Church with its 156 foot tall spire in the centre of the Square. This church was demolished in the 1950s and replaced with low, church hall buildings. This resulted in a key local landmark and focus of the Square being lost along with views of the church along Canteloves Road.

Road layout and traffic calming interventions have resulted in left-over paved spaces, where originally the Square opened out around the church. (See Ordnance Survey Plan 1873-87, map 6.)

The **south west side** has two sets of stuccoed semi-detached houses with Corinthian and Ionic pilasters flanking a pair with a pediment. These and the two large detached houses in the centre of the eastern side are potentially the grandest survivals of the original development. Rising to the north east, a 1974 reclaimed stock brick terrace spans the railway tracks. Some of these houses have raised walls and dense hedges, which detract from the design of the Square. Next, Abingdon Close – a four 4-storey local authority blocks of flats and detached houses accessed from the centre of the development only, sit in the grassed area, with one block set back from the building line established in the Square.

On the **north east side** is the imposing Camden Terrace, in a more mid-Victorian Italianate style. The houses are of dark brick, with round headed windows and doors and wide bracketed eaves. This pattern extends up North and South Villas. The design is adapted from the semi-detached to the terraced housing. The ends of Camden Terrace are marked with distinctive square turrets.

The **south east side's** houses are virtually intact as designed, semi-detached with stucco front elevations, stretching either side of two impressive detached

houses. At the lower end, a large block of flats (Hiller House) bridges the tracks, respecting the general massing but breaking the sloping pattern with its raised ground forecourt and dark brickwork. A house in stucco with a pediment, (No 48 Camden Square) and the London Irish Centre with its Corinthian capitals (Nos 50-52), partially mirror the houses on the opposite side of the Square. The London Irish Centre has been greatly altered and expanded, including a glazed link and an overly-well lit access ramp.

The south east side of the Square is paved in York stone. This has been relaid well, and, like the rest of the Square, the lighting has been upgraded in a low-key contemporary way with black posts.

Signs of ground movement are common, particularly on the south east side. Subsidence has caused movement which is clearly visible in the shallow-footed garden walls. Garden boundaries are incrementally being re-formed. Originally there was a particular cast 'strapwork' pattern along much, if not all, of the long sides of the Square. A few examples survive, such as Nos 37 & 38 on the south east side of the Square. Recently, cast iron railings and some classical balustrades have been installed which is incrementally changing the character towards a random if rather more generic 'Victorian' appearance. Some of the boundary walls here have also been raised with fences or dense hedges.

The **south west side** runs along part of the south west side of Murray Street. These four-storey semi detached houses have wide gaps through which the gardens and trees can be glimpsed, and the oblique views clearly show the painted stucco facades facing the Square on the brick flanking walls.

The character of the Square is a set-piece of design which has been fragmented, resulting in a long, strong space that is interesting for the effect upon it of external factors: the railways, the market, the bombing, demolitions and alterations and the mature landscape.

2 Rochester Square

The usual concept of a square is harder to decipher here; from the beginning a nursery garden was located in the centre of the Square, and houses in Stratford Villas backed onto this nursery on the east side. Plots were leased for small developments as the Estate started tentatively. A feature of this smaller development was that mews were not developed. In the 1920s space in the rear gardens of Camden Road houses was filled by the Spiritualist Temple. (See Map 8, Ordnance Survey maps in 1914 showing the gardens, and Map 1 indicating the temple.)

The south west side of Rochester Square was lost to Second World War bombing and was replaced with a housing estate that replaced the semi detached houses with large blocks set in open shared space. The Square's vegetation has turned wild and the nursery is derelict. It is designated a private open space and is not accessible to the public. This is a major opportunity for landscape enhancement.

3 Boundary Roads

3A Camden Road

Camden Road is a major trunk road. It is a planned straight road rising from Camden Town to York Way, laid out to link the West End to Tottenham following the Act of 1824. The development of the Camden New Town started at the south west, Camden Town end. Originally lined with semi-detached villas on both sides, the north west side has been mainly altered and fragmented, while the south east side remains substantially intact as laid out by the Camden Estate.

From the south west end the boundary of the conservation area is defined by the local authority housing estate that replaced the bomb damaged area of Rochester Square; semi-detached houses in brick and stucco with front gardens line the road up to York Way. At roughly the mid point there is a break where the railway cutting and tracks are surrounded by a supermarket and petrol station. Rising further up the hill houses are taller, of three storeys over semi basements; many are subdivided to flats, and some have commercial uses with forecourt parking.

Post-war flats and a care home have also been inserted into the streetscape. The best example of post-1945 work is the block of flats on the south corner of Camden Park Road.

Some substantial trees in front gardens read as street trees, and they greatly enhance the road. Tree planting has also been carried out at the road closures at Rochester Square and Canteloves Road. Many boundary walls have been heightened with fences or dense hedges, no doubt in an attempt to exclude traffic noise in this location as well as gain privacy.

3B Agar Grove

Agar Grove is the southernmost street in the Camden Estate development. It links the ancient streets of York Way (Maiden Lane) to St Pancras Way, and continues to Royal College Street. The street also physically runs along the lower edge of the sloping area. This was originally lined with semi-detached houses, with the gradation from larger houses to the west leading to terraces at the York Way end.

This pattern is still legible; however the character of the street has been eroded progressively, particularly on the north side. It is a busy thoroughfare; the pattern of buildings was divided by the gap caused by the insertion of the railway, bomb damage and the replacement of houses with flats on the corner of York Way, 33-47 Agar Grove and Gairloch House and the surrounding Council estates. The condition of many properties is also poor - in need of

investment and reinstatement of detail. There is a key development site on the corner of Agar Grove and St Augustine's Road.

3C York Way

Along the north of the area, York Way gently winds downhill to the south east following the line of the ancient Maiden Lane. It is a busy traffic-laden road. The south west side of York Way from Camden Road to Agar Grove lies within the conservation area, with a 'missing' section between Cliff Road and Camden Park Road.

A parade of shops with residential use above runs from Camden Road to Cliff Road. Although no shops have been completely converted to residential use, there has been pressure to permit both residential and office conversions.

The missing section is the Cliff Road to Camden Park Road triangle which formerly contained the reservoir, school and terraced houses, all constructed by 1894. Only the school and a few remnants of the houses remain. A large red brick furniture repository faces Cliff Road.

The terrace from Camden Park Road to Agar Grove contrasts with the rest of the conservation area; it is simple with pared down brick details. The ground floor is only slightly above road level. When built, the houses faced the massive thirty acre Metropolitan Cattle Market, a vast area of cattle pens etc, with associated noxious trades including soap making and bone grinding. Cattle were herded along the road from Kentish Town train depot until the 1930s. Today, the terrace faces light industrial areas and housing estates. There is a dignity in its simplicity, however the houses and their tiny front gardens are in need of repair and refurbishment, along with the removal of satellite dishes and the restoration of joinery.

4 The Grid of Streets

The streets run in a planned grid layout set out from Camden Road which tapers to a point at the meeting of York Way and Agar Grove. Perpendicular from Camden Road from south west to north east are Murray Street, Canteloves Road and Camden Park Road. Parallel are Camden Square, the two mews and the streets extending from it: North and South Villas and Cliff Road to the north east, Stratford Villas to the south west, and St Augustine's Road and St Paul's Crescent further to the south east.

Marquis Road runs parallel to and backs onto the properties lining York Way.

The character of these streets plays on a variation of themes established in the Square: semi-detached houses and terraces and a few single houses. All are raised on semi-basements with three upper storeys, executed in a palette of brick, stucco and slate, timber sash windows, with a mix of classical and Italianate references. Variations to the layout include plot widths, depths of

front and back gardens, variations in details include parapets, cornices, window surrounds and glazing bar arrangements, pediments or eaves, decorative metalwork, and the detailing of the front steps.

Street trees are integral to the character. Many are in private front gardens. All those over 75 millimetre diameter are protected by virtue of their conservation area location.

Post war infill has been described above in the section regarding bomb damage. Of note is Cliff Road which contains Cliff Road Studios, an unexpected expression of early-modernist revival of 1968 and 1972, pristine in its cream-painted concrete with glass block glazing.

Murray Street

The north west end of Murray Street mainly has large semi-detached houses on its south west side with mature trees.

The south east end of Murray Street has a particular character on its south west side as a parade of shops with residential accommodation above; a cornice, first floor metalwork and a wide fascia links the façades. Pressure on local retail and the desire for residential conversion has led to changes. Only two shops and a restaurant remain operational. The shop frontages survive, however many have been converted for residential use at ground and basement level. Harmful alterations include the excavation of front lightwells, removal and piercing of fascias, blocking of windows and reduction in their size; at the upper storeys some sections of cornice have been removed, window configuration has changed and some rebuilding is evident (possibly due to bomb damage). On the corner with Agar Grove, the Murray Arms public house has suffered similar changes. Opposite this parade is The London Irish Centre and a new (2010) block of flats over intended shops - the first with a pseudo retail ground floor treatment - comprising a variety of styles and the latter upper part responding to the terraced house precedent but lacking in inspiration and with an intrusive lack of concern for the roof details. It is currently capped by unsightly roof top development.

Canteloves Road

Canteloves Road is a broad street running north west to south east. It crosses the church site in Camden Square. This crossing was originally marked by the focal point of St Paul's Church and spire, but now low buildings and trees on the church site are understated ends to the street views. Canteloves Road is crossed by four streets and Camden Mews. A distinctive feature is the oblique views into the rear gardens. These mature gardens make important green breaks between the buildings that define the streetscape. The road has some of the area's few remaining telegraph poles, which detract from its character.

Camden Park Road

Camden Park Road is a south east continuation of Torriano Avenue (leading from Kentish Town) and links to York Way. Although conforming to the essential pattern of building on the Camden Estate, its houses are terraced

and more modest than Canteloves Road. At the entrance off Camden Road are blocks of flats replaces villas, at the junction with North Villas and Cliff Road the Lord Stanley public house faces the ragstone former church at the junction with North Villas and Cliff Road. The conservation area boundary divides the area from the LCC Camelot House estate to the north east (on the site of the Estate reservoir).

Stratford Villas

Stratford Villas links Rochester Square to Camden Square. This is a narrow street on an important cycle route, but also popular with drivers as a cut-through from Camden Road. Lined by terraces of comparatively modest plot widths, its south east side has a shallow set-back only giving space for basement access rather than front gardens. There has been an unfortunate loss of detail (window surrounds and detail, metalwork, etc) to some houses.

North and South Villas

North and South Villas were built at high density from the mid-1860s when the new cattle market was affecting the saleability of property north east of Camden Square. The houses are of the same style as Camden Terrace which lines the north east end of the Square. The houses are in brown stock brick devoid of render, mildly Italianate with segmental arched windows heads and graded in diminishing scale away from the Square. The character is more dense and urban than the Square; front areas and plot widths are correspondingly narrower.

Cliff Road

Cliff Road, a slightly offset extension of North Villas linking Camden Park Road to York Way, has a particular and varied character. Its north west side pre-dates north Villas, with raised semi-detached buff brick and render villas in typically early-Victorian Classical-Italianate style broken by the remarkably pure modernist revival Cliff Studios. The generous front gardens include mature trees. Opposite (and outside the Area boundary) lie the 1930's LCC Camelot house flats (built on the sides of the disused reservoir and, hard against the pavement , the giant brick depository and a crude little post war commercial building.

St Augustine's Road

This street has an apparently consistent arrangement of set-back grander houses. On closer inspection there is a subtle change in character starting from the south, as it was built chronologically with larger plots, stucco and pediments, progressing to stucco or a mix of brick over stuccoed ground and lower floors, to the smaller terraced houses at the northern end. This is all consistent with the overall pattern and evolution of the Estate, as it grew north east up the hill. (See 1877 Map 6). The south west end of the road has two large vacant sites. Planning approval was granted for flats on the north west plot in 2007, but (in 2010) no construction has yet begun. The difficult and key triangular plot to the south east at the entrance of Murray St and Agar Grove has recently been the subject of numerous, as yet unsuccessful planning applications for flats.

St Paul's Crescent

St Paul's Crescent angles down as an extension from Marquis Road parallel to St Augustine's Road before turning around 45 degrees to the south, crossing Agar Grove and ending at the Camden's 1970's Maiden lane estate (outside the Area). Flats have replaced the section of curved terrace. The virtually uniform houses have two full storeys raised over stucco lower ground floors and are significantly modest compared to St Augustine's Road. North of Agar Grove remain some telegraph poles, carrying an intrusive complex of overhead lines.

Marquis Road

From the north end at Camden Park Road, the terrace drops abruptly from raised three storeys to more modest houses similar to St Paul's Crescent. A significant number have lost details - particularly around window surrounds and several have had their brick elevations rendered. The extent of loss of detail in this part of the conservation area may be in part due to war damage. Two telephone poles with associated wires remain.

5 The Mews

Camden Mews and Murray Mews were originally intended to serve the rear of houses via a cobbled roadway, but the mews in Camden New Town were not implemented as first intended, and were possibly curtailed after the success of the Camden Square development had been compromised by the impacts of the Midland Railway Line and the cattle market. Only a few mews buildings were built to serve the grander houses of the Square; other plots remained empty until recommended planning densities were raised after the Second World War.

Camden Mews and Murray Mews represent areas of artists/architects studio houses which became fashionable from the early 1960s. Parts of the mews remained unfinished, and years later, as traffic on main roads and land values increased, the relative seclusion and cheapness of the land made them popular places for architects to build their houses. This accounts for the inventiveness and variety that is characteristic of these mews.

The majority of plots have been built as independent dwellings and/or workshops at the ends of the gardens of the frontage houses. The original character of the mews as subsidiary to the Square has largely been respected in the modern redevelopments, which are generally of two or two-and-a-half storeys and of a high design standard. They take an imaginative approach to development in the spirit of a mews' scale, form, and variety of styles and materials.

5A Camden Mews

This mews is narrow and perhaps London's longest, stretching from Rochester Square to York Way. The south west end retains a car

maintenance business, a day hospital, a furniture workshop, a pair of anomalous suburban 1930s houses, and mews houses in stock brick and render

At the junction of the mews with Murray Street is an exemplary house at 66 Camden Square, by Rodger Davis, Peter Bell & Partners (built 1984-5), constructed in timber over a brick plinth. This marks the entrance to the middle section of the mews, which has been intersected by the railway cutting and petrol station. Twentieth century local authority housing is present in the form of incongruous houses set back with small gardens, and by blank gable-ended blocks of flats.

The northern section contains Edward Cullinan's innovative house and attached garage, No 62 (1962-65).

Recent development at the top end towards York Way has three storeys, is clearly visible, and is damaging as it overbears the mews.

5B Murray Mews

Murray Mews is about a third of the length of Camden Mews. Only five properties were built by 1894, and the rest has been developed from the 1960s onwards. The elevations step forward and back in both plan and section. There was a phase of post war building/planning when planning permission was granted only to buildings set back from the narrow roadway and designs in reclaimed stock bricks were used. Guidance has changed in favour of reinstating the front edge of pavement detail, and the gaps between boundary walls and buildings are being incrementally filled with innovative single storey extensions.

The trend to intensify residential development means that house heights are incrementally increasing; most third floors are stepped back but care will be needed to ensure that this does not become the norm and that the original mews' scale remains dominant

The roadway of granite setts and the trees in front areas which tower over the houses are also integral to the character of this place.

5C Cobham Mews

This was a small triangular space left undeveloped behind and south west of Murray Street off Agar Grove. An ingeniously designed pair of two storey studio offices by David Chipperfield Architects has occupied the space since 1990.

5D St Paul's Mews

In contrast to Camden and Murray Mews, St Paul's Mews was built all at one time to CZWG's design (1987-91), laid out in a double curve. The composition is similar to a 'parade' of shops. The townhouses are linked by a ground floor plinth consisting of panelled garages and entrances, with two storeys of accommodation above in brick.

5.4 Land use activity and influence of uses

Residential

Residential development is the primary use in the area. The tenure is mixed with local authority, housing association, private rental and private ownership all around the Square and in the side streets. While some buildings are clearly purpose-built, the tenure is often not apparent from the elevation.

Worship

Two churches with spires were once at the north end of the area. St Paul's Church (1849, demolished 1956) was built at the outset of the development to be at the centre of a symmetrical square. A sign of social status and a landmark was its tall spire. It stood at the junction of Canteloves Road and the Square. The religious use continues on the site in low buildings that replaced the church. These are now used as a church, church hall, offices and housing for church officers.

The Scottish Presbyterian Chapel (foundation stone 1869) stands on the corner of Camden Park Road and North Villas. It is a ragstone neo-gothic structure with a sadly truncated tower that is now topped with antennae, and this former church contains hi-tech offices known as Church Studios.

At the rear of Nos 144-150 Camden Road is the Rochester Square Spiritualist Temple, an arts and crafts building designed by T. Yorke with an orange-red brick base and rendered gable. Founded in 1926, its members included Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and journalist Hannen Swaffer.

Shopping and retail

Murray Street and York Way have parades of shops and are designated Neighbourhood Centres. Only two shops and a café survive in Murray Street. Shops are traditional with wide fascias, awnings and console dividing brackets. Signs that mask this pattern are detrimental to the appearance of the area. In both areas a number of shops have recently been converted to residential use. A smaller area of local shops is on Agar Grove.

Civic

In Camden Square, the London Irish Centre is a community venue which is used by the local and wider community, as is the church hall.

A day hospital is situated between Camden Road and Camden Mews.

Employment

Businesses are peppered around the area: workshops, small manufacturing and repair businesses, offices, several architects' studios and a stringed instrument maker. The mews are being progressively taken over by housing but Camden Mews still has an industrial or business character. Some of the building styles and historic uses add to the character and appearance of the area.

Public houses

The area has three public houses:

- The Lord Stanley on the corner of North Villas and Camden Park Road, with a tiled ground floor projection onto the pavement;
- The Murray on the corner of Agar Grove and Murray Street;
- Newmarket Ale House on the corner of York Way and Agar Grove.

5.5 The quality of buildings and their contribution to the area

The area is essentially residential and was from the start an essay in middle class living; Booth's Poverty Map illustrated this in the late nineteenth century and the quality of the detailing, size of houses and gardens all reinforce this hierarchy.

In the post-1945 period, the infill buildings illustrate changed attitudes and procurement of housing. By this time, the strict local design codes were no longer relevant; an economic programme of reconstruction and economy of construction was necessary and greater powers were granted to the development control system. Public housing was provided on the Square that had little regard to the original New Camden Town concept.

The sites in the mews provided an opportunity for architects to exploit undeveloped plots; this concentration of houses and studios has resulted in a unique showcase of architectural one-off designs.

5.6 Local details

In the area the details tend to be within a limited range and in groups that reflect the sequence of developments. The uniformity of these groups is an important characteristic of the area, and where insensitively altered or missing this can have a negative effect on the terrace - for example, the loss of window surrounds or string courses which leaves a façade looking scraped and flattened.

Roofs are predominately slate, hidden behind parapets on the grandest houses, or with eaves (either clipped or wide and bracketed). Twentieth century variants include flat and metal roofs.

Walls are stock brick, stucco or a combination of the two, restrained classical and Italianate in detail in nineteenth century properties, and with variations in this plus timber, metal, new and reclaimed stock brick in the twentieth century.

Windows in the period buildings are generally timber sashes. The development all post-dates the 1845 reduction in window tax coinciding with technical improvements easing production and making both glass and larger panes more economic. Buildings from the 1840s and 1850s commonly have wide centre panes with narrow side panes (marketed as 'picture windows'), whereas those from the 1860s have three part glazing with undivided central sashes. This historical development can easily be seen when walking up from

the earlier south west end of Camden Square to the later north end of the Square and into South or North Villas. Narrow side panes are typical of the south west end of the Square. Although the larger windowpanes are typical, in replacement windows there is a tendency to over-historicise with 6 over 6 glazing patterns which by the start of this development had been relegated to rear elevations where a stylish appearance was deemed insignificant and money could be saved. There is a far greater variety of detail in the mews, with timber, metal and PVC windows of varying types and character.

Doors are similar to the windows: the Victorian examples are timber panelled, painted and with generic details located in groups of houses.

Details are in stone, cast iron, with particular examples to note. (See Appendix A – Street Gazetteer).

Shop front details were traditionally in timber with large awnings and street displays. This pattern has now been eroded by many removals and alterations.

Conversions to residential and offices have had various detrimental effects.

- Digging basement areas where none existed before is not in the character of the area.
- Flues are obtrusive, particularly when placed in former shopfront fascias.
- A lively aspect from the street is stopped by obscuring barriers – often internal and beyond planning control - to afford privacy to living and working spaces

5.7 Prevalent local and traditional materials and the public realm

Street and pavement surfaces

The highest quality materials are the York stone paving on the east side of the Square which is an impressively long and uninterrupted stretch of historic paving, in North and South Villas and between the Square and Camden Road.

Granite setts survive and are very important to the character of the mews. Originally setts would also have been in the road ways. Now the setts emphasise the smaller scale and robust character of the mews (as well as slowing traffic) and their retention and repair is crucial to the character.

Elsewhere the prevalent paving is ubiquitous concrete slab with areas interspersed with grey or red concrete blocks at crossings and with tarmac roadways. Camden Park Road and York Way have become cluttered with signs and barriers, mostly to do with the one-way through-traffic system.

The street furniture, paving materials and fixtures constitute an important part of the public realm, which forms the setting of the built fabric. Most of this furniture and treatment dates from the 20th and 21st centuries, and reflects the presumed requirements of modern traffic and pedestrians.

As part of the review an street audit of street furniture and boundaries has been carried out. This outlines elements which reinforce the conservation area's distinct hierarchal layout. This is included as Appendix B.

5.8 The contribution to the character and appearance of green spaces

The green character of the area is mature and this adds greatly to the appearance of the area.

The designated Public Open Spaces within the conservation area are:

- Camden Square – land covered by the London Square Preservation Act 1931 including St Paul's which is Private Open Space.
- Camden Square – land covered by the London Square Preservation Act 1931 – the central Public Open Space.
- Rochester Square – land covered by the London Square Preservation Act 1931 – which is Private Open Space.

The most significant public green space is Camden Square, which is the focus for the area. It is a public park whereas Rochester Square, a former nursery garden, is private and currently (2010) derelict and inaccessible.

At the restricted entry points into the area trees have been planted where roads have been blocked to all but cycle and pedestrian traffic. These provide green access points to the area.

Street trees add greatly to the character of the area. Many of these trees are rooted in front gardens and not the pavement. Many front gardens are mature with substantial trees and shrubs enhancing the street.

The private front gardens add colour and biodiversity to the residential street scene. The loss of any of these gardens through parking, ancillary structures, hard-standing or neglect severely erodes the character of the streets. This has happened particularly on Camden Road.

Private rear gardens quietly add to the quality and biodiversity of the area. The gardens are almost all hidden from the street, glimpses to green space hidden behind and between buildings are precious and add to the quality of the area.

At the junctions of streets the gardens of houses facing the main route run parallel to the side street. These side walls and gardens give a green break to the built layout.

5.9 Audit of heritage assets

Please refer to Map 3

Key for map 3

Red is listed building

Green is positive

Orange is neutral

Pink is negative

Listed buildings

Listed Buildings are structures or buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest, maintained by English Heritage.

- K2 Telephone kiosk at junction with Agar Grove and Murray Street
- K2 Telephone kiosk approx 15m from junction with Agar Grove and Canteloves Road
- 62 Camden Mews

Buildings and spaces that make a positive contribution

These buildings relate to the core reason for the conservation area designation and significance which was the original Camden New Town Estate; also there have been significant twentieth century infill buildings particularly in the mews. They have a positive effect on the environment and could be a single building, group or landmark. The general presumption is in favour of retaining all positive buildings and any proposals involving their demolition will require specific justification.

Within groups of buildings, some of the buildings marked as positive are in poor condition or have lost details; it is desirable that these defects are rectified. Some may also have alterations that are now considered inappropriate (for example large dormers).

- All properties are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area unless listed as neutral or negative

Buildings and spaces that make a neutral contribution

These relate to buildings which neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the area. A number of interventions have disrupted the homogeneous nature of the area and have not provided any significant townscape merit. There might be potential for enhancement.

Agar Grove

9-11

Camden Mews

Odd numbers	11-13, 17 (excluding use) 19, 21, 35, 39, 57-63, 71 89-91(vacant site), 93, 95
Even numbers	50
Camden Road	150 154 (backing onto Camden Mews) 228-230 (much altered) 248-250 even numbers 270 front elevation treatment 282a also 181-183 York Way
Camden Square	
Odd	7-17
Even	46 (1-19 Hiller House) Adventure playground St Paul's Chapel and nursery complex Public space adjacent to St Paul's Church
Marquis Road	1-24 Grangefield flats
Murray Mews	
Odd	Rear building of the London Irish Centre, 45, 65
Even	26
Rochester Square	Nursery garden currently in a derelict state (positive as open space and established pattern of development and bio-diversity)
Stratford Villas	1-18 Gairloch House
St Paul's Crescent	24-36 even numbers Rear extension to 32 Canteloves Road
York Way	89

Buildings and spaces that make a negative contribution

These buildings, elements or spaces detract from the special character of the area and offers potential for beneficial change. In other words they 'blight' the area and improvement is expected.

Agar Grove	33-47 odd numbers
Abingdon Close	1-32, 33-40 and 47-50
Camden Road	196-206 Supermarket/petrol station and around the railway cutting 270 forecourt parking 278-280 Camden Road forecourt 238 Garages facing Camden Mews

Cantelowes Road garages on corner with Marquis Road

St Augustine's Road and Agar Grove vacant junction site

St Augustine's Road vacant site to east of railway cutting

Stratford Villas 1-8 (1-18 Gairloch House)

In addition to buildings there are items of street furniture, telegraph poles, paving materials and fixtures which bear on the quality of the Area. Some of these will be seen as variously positive, neutral or negative. These are covered in Appendix B – 'Streetscape Audit'.

5.10 Buildings at Risk

Buildings at Risk are listed buildings known to English Heritage to be under risk from decay or neglect. There are no Buildings at Risk in the area. This is to be kept under review.

See also the Management Strategy for further guidance from English Heritage on Heritage at Risk. English Heritage launched a Conservation Areas at Risk Campaign in 2009 which aims to identify the causes of decay and threat to conservation areas nationally. The first report in 2009 showed that the main risk to conservation areas is incremental loss of original features which cumulatively strips the area of its architectural quality and special characteristics.

Currently the Conservation Area is not identified by English Heritage as being 'At Risk'.

6 Problems and pressures, and capacity for change

The Area faces a range of pressures – aims for harmful changes of use, overdevelopment, inappropriate alterations, and loss of desirable original features. These are raised below, but discussed in detail in Section II – Management Strategy.

Since the writing of the unadopted conservation area statement in 2002/2003, the following trends appear significant:

- The general trend in the area is towards intensification of residential use: this shows in recent shop conversions to residential and pressure on building in gardens
- Increasing pressure to extend residential buildings upwards
- The state of shop fronts and signage continues to decline in general
- Boundary walls, fences and hedges continue to be problematic, with some deteriorating and others being built up inappropriately.
- The general state of the public realm is in reasonable condition but many of the railings are inappropriate. The recovery and maintenance of the York stone around the Square and new lighting are significant enhancements.
- A few key sites have been developed, but with designs which offer only a limited level of enhancement to the area. Only a few remain to be developed.

Pressure on commercial premises

The increased residential desirability of the area has seen a steady rise in conversion of commercial premises into residential dwellings.

The mix of uses and character and appearance of the commercial use is of importance to the area and threatened. This is particularly important in the shop and service premises in the Neighbourhood Centres (refer to section 3) and the commercial uses found in the mews including workshops and car mechanics. This poses a dilemma as the demand for shops is falling, and blank pseudo-shopfronts and empty properties blight the Centres.

Recently there have been a number of conversions from retail to residential use, particularly in Murray Street. Poor conversions have resulted in the loss of many of the original shop fronts and detailed architectural features. Further harm has been caused by loss of pavement to excavate front areas, and the installation of extract grilles at fascia level.

Poorly designed retail signage has also harmed the quality of some shop frontages; this includes oversized crude fascia signs that fail to relate to the architectural character and proportions of the building and its shopfront.

Inappropriate replacement shopfronts should be replaced with traditional shopfronts which respect the scale, proportions, use of materials and

architectural style and of the buildings and its relationship with other surrounding facades.

Pressure for intensifying residential development

Demand for residential development has led to an increase in proposals for infill buildings and extensions. The capacity for further intensification without causing harm to the area is limited.

Erosion of original details and inadequate control over new work

Some recent development has been carried out with poor finishes, pointing and obtrusive services. Works have also been carried out, both under permitted development rights and without planning permission, which do not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area, for example window replacement from timber to uPVC, and changing sash to casement or awning windows, fitting glazing bars in a pattern that predates the original development and the removal of or failure to reinstate desirable original details in window and door surrounds, balconies, surface features and parapets. Many of the front steps to houses have lost detail and/or are poorly maintained.

Pressure for car parking

Despite the good transport links and on-street parking, cross-overs and forecourt parking have replaced some gardens. Front gardens offer benefits to the residents, local ecology, and the character of the area. Camden Road is the most problematic road for on-street parking and the conflict amongst cars, residents, and local ecology merits special attention.

Positive change

Development could enhance the following areas:

- Agar Grove/St Augustine's Road/ Murray Street junctions and adjacent building sites
- Camden Road Petrol Station site
- St Paul's church site
- Redevelopment of garages in Camden Mews (north) and Canteloves Road

In the longer term: rethinking Abingdon Close, Nos 7-17 Camden Square and Hiller House.

Public realm improvement:

- Rochester Square - reversing its current dereliction
- Entrance to Rochester Square from Camden Road.
- Railings around the Abingdon Close estate.
- Railings around Camden Square
- Adventure playground in Camden Square
- At the entrances to the area, particularly Canteloves Road off Camden Road and the junction of Murray Street and Agar Grove
- Removal of remaining telegraph posts and wires
- Resiting or improved designs for recycling stations

There is scope for public realm improvement e.g. improved materials, removal of clutter etc and incremental signage 'creep', reinstatement of high quality residential boundaries and front gardens.

7 Community involvement

In Camden Square there is an established Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC).

The **Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)** is local group recognised by the Council which represents the interests of the conservation area.

Its executive consists of a small number of management professionals and architects who donate their time considering planning proposals and applications. They follow a rigorous, analytical vetting procedure which they designed and published in 2003 as the Camden Square CAAC Judgement Parameters. Their conclusions are sent to Camden Planning and are available to all applicants. In 2004 the CAAC also published a draft document as the basis of development control in the area. Local people who would like to join should contact Camden Planning for links. It will be encouraged to develop these processes as a result of the publication of this document and the expected increase in the level of local participation expected under the new planning legislation. Any revisions will be submitted to the London Borough of Camden for endorsement.

There are also active Neighbourhood Association and Tenants' organisation.

Prior to the preparation of this Appraisal the Camden Square CAAC, the ward councillor, Council conservation and tree officers, and JTP (the draft author) walked around the area. The members of the CAAC pointed out key issues which have been included in this report.

There is also the opportunity for direct community involvement with the management of the conservation area through the activities of the CAAC and through the planning process. This Appraisal and Management Strategy and the CAAC documentation are subject to periodic review, for which contributions, either directly or via the CAAC, are welcomed.

The new planning system will encourage more community involvement in the planning process. Guidance is contained within the LDF and as foreseen in the heritage protection reform that failed to find parliamentary time in 2009.

8 Summary of Issues

Enhancement and development

New development would enhance the following key sites:

- Church site at the north east of Camden Square
- South west end of St Augustine's Road and Murray Street
- Centre of Rochester Square
- The petrol station site in Camden Road

The approaches to Camden Square, Agar Grove and York Way need enhancement and redesign.

Detail

Incremental repair and reinstatement of original or creation of enhancing elevation and boundary details would benefit the area and should be actively encouraged.

Green spaces

The green spaces and trees are critical to the quality of the area. Many trees are mature; planning for maintenance and reinstatement is an important and on-going concern.

Public realm

The street trees and established front gardens enhance the public spaces. The existing stone paving and setts are high quality and these should be extended wherever possible. However, street clutter, and poor materials of pavements and public realm are eroding the character of the Area. Enhancement of Rochester Square and the north east and south west ends of Camden Square is a priority.

Part 2

Camden Square Management Strategy

Camden Square Management Strategy

1 Introduction

English Heritage *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* advises that following an appraisal of the conservation area, a strategy for its management in the mid to long term should be developed to address issues identified through the appraisal.

The purpose of the Management Strategy is to provide a clear and structured advice to anyone planning to modify or develop the built environment in the Conservation Area. It provides a basis for the assessment of proposals and identifies an approach to addressing issues that have the potential to impact on the special interest of Camden Square Conservation Area. This includes actions and a review framework to address the issues raised in the Appraisal Part 1 of this document). This section also gives sources of further information and maps.

The Management Strategy must be read in relation to general Supplementary Planning Guidance, which it purposely aims to avoid duplicating. Users must always consult relevant supplementary planning documents (SPD)

2. Policy and Legislation

The government has introduced a new planning system in which the focus is on flexibility, sustainability, strengthened community and stakeholder involvement. Under the new system Camden has adopted a Local Development Framework (LDF) which replaces the previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and this includes a high level of monitoring and community involvement.

The LDF will comprise the London Borough of Camden Planning policies:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs): the key document of this type is the *core strategy* which will outline broad strategy for conservation
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that provide further detail and guidance on policies and proposals included in the DPD, and can supplement higher level policy in controlling erosion of the special interest that warrants designation
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy are to be adopted and will support the SPD. They will be a material consideration in planning and conservation area consent applications.

3 Monitoring and Review

The planning authority is advised by current English Heritage guidance to review its conservation areas on a regular basis. This may involve the designation of new conservation areas, the de-designation of areas that have lost their special character or the extension of existing conservation areas. The special character of the Camden Square Conservation Area has been re-evaluated within the character appraisal and this forms part of the Council's overall review programme.

As part of the conservation area appraisal, the following have been reviewed: current issues, conservation area boundaries, positive contributors to the conservation area, negative elements, buildings of merit and elements of streetscape interest.

As part of the review process the Council is seeking to complete an up to date photographic survey of the area. This could be undertaken as a community project, possibly within a format provided by the Council. It would identify key features, buildings considered of positive, neutral and negative value

The Camden Square CAAC has undertaken to update the detailed 2003 Street Gazetteer which records the character of the streets in the areas. This will be appended as an annex to the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategy and updated at suitable intervals.

4 General approach to maintaining character

The general approach will aim to maintain the special interest and the particular character of the Camden Square Conservation Area in a sensitive and responsive way and to ensure the highest quality developments, the planning authority will:

- periodically review the appraisal and management strategy to ensure that these documents remain sufficiently current to enable effective management and decision-making on new development within the area;
- kept under review the list of buildings and other features which, in addition to those already included on the statutory list, positively contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;
- require all applications to include appropriate forms, legible, accurate and up to date fully annotated scaled drawings (See Section 7.1 below regarding quality of applications);
- produce where relevant and possible supplementary planning documents including design guidance and planning briefs –

www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/our-plans-and-policies/supplementary-planning-guidance/

- in undertaking its development control function the Council will ensure that the historic details which are an essential part of the special architectural character of Camden Square Conservation Area are enhanced, preserved, repaired or reinstated where appropriate;
- the Council will seek to ensure that the departments responsible for the environment (highways/landscape/enforcement/planning/conservation and urban design) work in an effective, co-ordinated and consultative manner to ensure that historic interest within the public realm is maintained and enhanced where appropriate; and,
- the Council will continue to consult the CAAC and local amenity societies on applications which may impact on the special interest of the Camden Square Conservation Area and seek their input in relation to ongoing management issues.

5 Recommendations for action

5.1 The Council will promote good practice by:

- Encouraging public interest and involvement in conservation area preservation and the planning process
- Improving local knowledge of the conservation area status amongst commercial operators to promote quality design so that the loss of traditional shop fronts and poor quality alterations are prevented.
- Promoting the retention and reinstatement of front gardens and boundaries, promoting repair of original features and high quality new design, and resisting inappropriate replacement of original window, door, stucco, balcony and other characteristic details

5.2 Updating design guidance SPD

The Council will seek to ensure design guidance, particularly for shops, alterations to roofs and mews development are provided.

5.3 New development and design briefs

Design briefs would assist in securing appropriate redevelopment of the following specific areas:

- the Agar Grove/Murray Street corner over the tracks
- the junction of St Augustine's and Agar Grove
- enhancement around Canteloves Road and the junction with Camden Road
- the area at the north end of Camden Square around St Paul's Church.

5.4 Investment and maintenance

Enhancement schemes for the public realm

The quality of the public realm and particularly the pedestrian spaces can make an important contribution to the vitality of town centres, and could help support higher levels of, and more appropriate, investment in the commercial part of Camden Square Conservation Area.

The Council will seek to ensure that its own ongoing investment in the public realm in the conservation area respects and enhances its special character and will look for opportunities to make specific enhancements to the public realm and particularly to the pedestrian environment as a way of supporting the preservation of the area's distinctive character.

In the residential part of the conservation area investment in the public realm will help support investment in the building fabric of that area and help protect its residential qualities and environment.

Public realm enhancement:

Improving and enhancing the public realm to address the issues of traffic control, cluttered pavements and poor surfaces (see also section 6.3)

Enhancing public landscape including some replacement street trees and tree maintenance of a mature landscape and the style of railings and boundaries.

Particular consideration of proposals to enhance the following sites:

- Petrol station site on Camden Road
- Agar Grove/ St Augustine's Road/ Murray Street junction
- St Paul's Church site and the area south west of it
- Adventure playground, Camden Square
- Rochester Square, central landscaped area
- Enhancement of landscaping at controlled entrances to the area.

Traffic management

Action will be taken to de-clutter the street scene through rationalisation of traffic signage to benefit the character of the conservation area.

Enhancement Initiatives

English Heritage has undertaken research – *the Heritage Dividend* - that shows that public and private investment into conservation areas brings financial rewards as well as environmental and social benefits. More information is available on its web site.

The Council will encourage initiatives which will enhance the Camden Square Conservation Area and will provide information on possible funding sources and if appropriate apply for funding through special schemes, such as English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund run grant schemes for historic areas in partnership with local authorities. There are currently no such schemes proposed for or running in Camden Square Conservation Area..

5.5 Article 4 Directions

There are tighter controls over development in conservation areas due to the removal of certain permitted development rights, but this is not always sufficient to prevent the gradual erosion of character through loss of historic features. Article 4 directions further restrict alterations to the area by requiring planning applications to be made for additional areas of work.

English Heritage defined the usefulness of Article 4 directions in its *Heritage at Risk Report 2009*:

Article 4 directions are well-established tools that enable local planning authorities to manage change in conservation areas that otherwise would be harmful to their special character. They are particularly effective when used as part of a well-considered management plan supported by guidance to local owners.

Article 4 directions are justified where there is firm evidence that permitted development is damaging the character or appearance of a conservation area, or is likely to. An Article 4 direction is therefore a targeted response to specific types of alterations and changes that cumulatively can undermine local character. When used in conjunction with design guidance they can provide clarity and certainty for owners when they are considering proposals for change.

It is recommended that Article 4 directions are implemented to control the following works to the fronts of properties, and the sides of properties which face the road:

1. Any works to enlarge, alter or improve property including replacing part or all of any window or door, and any works which alter the appearance of decorative features, including their removal.
2. Alterations to porches – this includes enclosing the porch or altering the way it looks.
3. Painting the front of a property if it will differ from the traditional surface treatment.
4. Additions or alterations to the roof or chimney, including the installation of a roof-light or solar panel
5. Installation of a flue or soil and vent pipe at the front of a property
6. Erecting, altering or demolishing a gate, wall or fence at the front of a property
7. Making, enlarging, improving or altering a hard surface at the front of a property

Further advice on permitted development is available from on the Planning pages of Camden website www.camden.gov.uk or the Planning Portal www.planningportal.gov.uk

5.6 Erosion of original details

Some recent development has been carried out with poor finishes, pointing and obtrusive services. Works have also been carried out both under permitted development rights and without planning permission which do not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area, for example: window replacement from timber to uPVC, changing sash to awning windows, fitting glazing bars in a pattern that predates the original development, and the removal of or failure to reinstate desirable original details.

Applications for planning permission must contain sufficient detail to allow a proper assessment of the detail of finished proposals and show how original features will be treated. Details of the required levels of supporting information for planning applications is set out on the Council's website and applications will not be validated unless this is provided.

The Council will take action to recover details which have been damaged, modified or removed without planning permission.

6 Boundary Changes

As part of the appraisal survey the existing conservation area boundary was reviewed. No boundary changes are proposed at this time.

7 The Management of Change

7.1 Summary of issues

The area is a mixture of original, replacement and modern buildings, well established, for the most part prosperous, and attractive. There is variety in scale, particularly between the main streets and the mews. There are some significant new buildings from the 1960s onwards. There are also key sites that mar the overall appearance and character of the area. The Camden Square Conservation Area also suffers from erosion of detail in residential and commercial properties.

The aim of this part of the Management Strategy is to provide guidelines to address these issues, preserving or enhancing the area by encouraging good quality design that respects and responds to its context; the repair of original details and reinstatement of missing features.

7.2 Listed Buildings

Listed Building Consent will be necessary for the majority of works of alterations to listed buildings. To see the location of listed buildings within the conservation area please refer to Map 3. To view their list descriptions and for advice on listed building matters, visit www.camden.gov.uk/listedbuildings or www.english-heritage.org.uk.

7.3 Heritage at Risk

English Heritage maintains a register of listed buildings and structural scheduled monuments which are 'known to English Heritage to be at risk, though neglect or decay or are vulnerable to becoming so'. There are no buildings at risk in the Camden Square Conservation Area. This is kept under review.

The Heritage at Risk Report 2009 also covers Conservation Areas. This states that 1 in 7 areas are classified at risk from 'neglect, decay or unsympathetic change'. English Heritage identified two areas in Camden; this did not include Camden Square. English Heritage gives useful guidance for the care of Conservation Areas and calls for action from both Councils and the community.

7.4 New Development

There is scope for new buildings in the area; particularly the remaining gap sites in the mews and the areas identified for new development in section 5 above.

- **Development in Gap Sites and Rear Gardens**

Gaps between buildings represent an important established feature of relief in an otherwise densely developed environment, where the buildings are generally arranged in terraces 3 storeys in height. The Council will resist development in gaps where they are formed;

- between semi-detached and detached properties,
- back garden development, where it can be seen from the public realm, will be resisted, in order to preserve green gaps within streetscapes and views along rear vistas.

High quality design and high quality execution will be required of all new development at all scales, and opportunities for enhancement and further revealing the significance of the conservation area should be taken. The design statements supporting such applications will be expected specifically to address the particular characteristics identified in the appraisal. Successful modern design can be of the 21st century and enhance the conservation area, by carefully assessing and responding to the form and qualities of surrounding buildings and spaces.

The trend to intensify residential development means that building heights are under pressure to increase in the mews; care will be needed to ensure that

this does not become the norm and that the original mews' scale remains dominant.

7.5 Demolition

Within the conservation area demolition of an unlisted building requires conservation area consent. Any proposals for the demolition of an unlisted building that would harm the character of the conservation area would require clear and convincing justification. The PPS 5 requires all applicants to provide a level of information that is proportionate to the significance of the asset and the potential impact upon that significance of the proposals. (Policy HE6 clause 68). The loss of buildings which make a positive contribution will be resisted unless there are exception circumstances which would outweigh the case for retention.

Where buildings are not identified to make positive contribution consent for demolition will not be granted unless a scheme for redevelopment scheme is submitted which enhances the conservation area.

Demolition of garden walls also requires conservation area consent and this will usually be resisted.

All applications for works of demolition within the Conservation Area should show clearly the extent of demolition proposed including partial demolition and garden walls.

7.6 Basements

Camden Square Conservation Area is characterised by residential properties set in large gardens with an abundance of trees. In recent years conservation areas in Camden have seen an increase in new basement development and extensions to existing basement accommodation, together with excavation of associated lightwells. The Council is concerned to ensure that such development does not harm the architectural character of buildings and their garden settings, or harm nearby trees, and that the conservation area's character is preserved or enhanced.

The creation of new lightwells can harm the relationship between the building and the street, and may result in the loss of garden space. Railings or walls around lightwells can cause a cluttered appearance to the front of the property. The inclusion of rooflights designed within the landscaping of a front garden can result in illumination and light spill from the subterranean rooms and harm the appearance of a garden setting.

Where there are trees on or adjacent to the site, including any street trees, an arboricultural report will be required with the submission of a planning application showing how they will be affected and protected.

When considering applications for basement extensions within the conservation area, the Council will need to be satisfied that effective measures will be taken during demolition and construction works to ensure that damage is not caused to the building and any buildings it directly adjoins.

The Council will normally resist basement development fronting the highway due to its impact on the appearance of the conservation area.

- The introduction of basement lightwells to properties along Murray Street and York Way which are likely to have been originally designed as shop units, can lead to an uncomfortable relationship between the street, railings, lightwells and shopfront, and can erode the uniformity of the building line and pavement width. They are therefore likely to be resisted by the Council.

To check whether you need planning permission for basement works applicants should visit the Council's website at www.camden.gov.uk/planning and refer to the Council's *New Basement Development and Extensions to Basement Accommodation* Guidance Note (February 2009). Alternatively, please contact the Council's Duty Planner on tel 020 7974 1911.

7.7 Alterations and Repair

The Council encourages the routine and regular maintenance of all historic buildings to help ensure the preservation of the special character and appearance of the conservation area. For more information visit www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk

- **Quality, erosion and loss of architectural detail**

The appearance of characterful buildings within the conservation area is harmed by the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials. For example, the loss of original joinery, sash windows, front doors, front steps and natural slate roofs, can have considerable negative impact on the appearance of a historic building and the area.

Insensitive re-pointing, painting or inappropriate render will harm the appearance and the long-term durability of historic brickwork.

In all cases the Council will expect original architectural features and detailing to be retained, protected, refurbished in the appropriate manner, and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair.

What does 'like-for-like' mean?

If existing features are beyond cost-effective repair you may wish to replace them with like-for-like replacements. Like-for-like replacement and repair does not need planning permission.

Like-for-like approaches are those that:

- match in materials, colour and surface finish (e.g. bricks and mortar)
- have the same dimensions and
- have the same pattern and detailed profile

- replicate original details such as window catches, handles, pulleys, etc
(these can sometimes be transferred from the old feature to the new).

For example if you are rebuilding sections of boundary wall to match the existing, using matching bricks, matching mortar and matching the profile of the mortar pointing, this will not need planning permission.

Replacement windows should match the glazing bar / frame / window sill dimensions and way of openings - for example vertically sliding sash windows or side- or top-hinged casements can be replaced like-for-like without planning permission.

7.7.1 Windows and doors

Historic windows and doors can last indefinitely if they are properly maintained by the homeowner with the occasional assistance of a joiner. It is also cheaper in the long run to repair timber features than to replace them because the replacements will have a shorter life span than well maintained historic joinery. Untraditional replacement windows and doors are the biggest threat to property values in conservation areas (source: English Heritage).

7.7.2 Double Glazing

The replacement of historic Victorian or Edwardian windows with untraditional modern alternatives is likely to detract from the appearance (and reduce the value of residential properties) so the Council would always encourage repair before replacement of historic windows. Large paned sash or casement windows may be possible to double glaze, either in the existing frame, or in new joinery, in a way that replicates the appearance of the original 'like for like'. This now needs planning permission. There are a number of specialist companies who can undertake this.

7.7.3 Installation of a flue, chimney or soil and vent pipe

Services such as flues (including for biomass boilers), soil and vent pipes and new chimneys should always be located on the side or rear elevation, so that the smart, public face of the building remains untouched. New flues, chimneys or soil vent pipes now need planning permission on the front elevation (and sides where these front the street) and will be resisted.

7.7.4 Paths and boundary walls/hedges

Unbroken runs of boundary walls to gardens are a key characteristic of the area. The traditional treatment of the boundary varies according to the date and style of property.

Paths, boundary walls and other details characteristic of the street should be retained or reinstated unless new solutions can be presented which enhance the area. Where boundary walls or railings have been lost or replaced in non-original materials or to a different design we encourage residents to restore

them to their original form. This is particularly important in Camden Square, where cast 'strapwork' pattern adds to the character of the area. Cast iron railings and classical balustrades will be resisted here.

Applications to raise their height, including with fences or dense hedges will be resisted where boundaries have a consistent height or afford views of the gardens/properties beyond.

Removal of boundary walls and gardens for parking is not permitted (see enforcement action (see section enforcement below).

7.7.5 **Stone, brick and stucco** details should be restored

- **Stucco or render-fronted properties**

Stucco is a type of render used to give brickwork the appearance of dressed stonework. Stucco was in vogue in the 1850s, and gives properties a grand appearance to compete with respectable up-market West London suburbs like Belgravia and Kensington.

Stucco needs regular painting with traditional permeable paints unless it has never been painted in the past, in which case it should be left unpainted. Paint colours should match the other buildings in a group and should ideally conform to a traditional palette.

- **Brick**

Unpainted brickwork should never be painted over.

Weatherstruck or bucket-handle pointing is unlikely to be original and is rarely appropriate. Cement mortar for pointing is also likely to be a later addition and can harm historic brickwork so we would encourage a lime based mortar for pointing.

Decorative details often occur around the windows and doors of historic properties. They may include mouldings and rubbed brickwork and render decoration particularly to porches or windows and ornate brick. Decorative details are very important to the character of the Camden Square Conservation Area and should be preserved and reinstated where lost or damaged.

7.7.8 **Upgrading for energy efficiency**

Pressure for upgrading for energy efficiency must be balanced against effect upon or loss of historic and architectural character.

- **Reducing heat loss through historic windows and doors**

Simple measures such as heavy curtains and blinds will retain heat, while mending cracks and eliminating gaps in your windows and doors and fitting draught-strips and brushes (available from any DIY store), can reduce air loss by as much as 86%. Secondary glazing used with well-fitting shutters can cut heat loss by 60%. When fitting secondary glazing you should ensure that the

meeting rails on the secondary glazing units match the location of the glazing bar / meeting.

Other measures to reduce energy use such roof insulation, and turning the central heating down by one degree, will also help make savings, as will the installation of a high efficiency condensing boiler with individual thermostatic controls on each radiator.

- **Solar panels and micro-generation equipment** such as wind turbines will need planning permission if they are to be installed on the front of a property or the side of a property which faces the road, and so less visible locations should be considered first. Passive energy efficiency measures should always be prioritised over the installation of renewable energy plant - hot water cylinders and pipework should be insulated with smart metering and thermostatic controls introduced to cut energy use. Energy efficient lighting and household appliances can also play a significant part in reducing household carbon emissions.

7.8 Alterations to roofs and dormers

Roof materials are typically Welsh slate, and artificial slates should be avoided. The regular composition of the roof lines is an important element in the appearance of the conservation area.

Proposals for alterations to roofs within the conservation area will be considered on their own merit but particular care is needed to ensure sensitive and unobtrusive design to visible roof slopes or where roofs are prominent in long distance views.

Roof lights may be considered acceptable if fitted flush with the roof and significantly subordinate to the roof itself (conservation rooflights)

Alterations such a raising the roof ridge and the steepening of the roof pitch to the front, side or rear slopes is unlikely to be acceptable. Dormer windows and inset roof terraces may be allowed to the rear roof slope.

7.9 Car parking cross-overs

Planning Permission will be required for an area of hard-standing above the area permitted for sustainable development (5m²). In addition, conservation area consent may be required for demolition of garden walls, and approval is required from the Council's Highways Department to form a cross over.

Parking in front gardens, particularly in Camden Road, will be resisted by the Council because of the harmful impact it has on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reinstatement of front gardens and typical local boundaries (for example hedges or walls) is an important way of enhancing the streetscape and incrementally improving the quality of the area. This will be encouraged where lost to parking in the past.

7.10 Development in front garden spaces

Where refuse bin stores are considered necessary, these should be located within rear garden spaces if at all possible. If location within the front garden area is the only possible solution, great care should be taken to ensure that the store is located sensitively. This would include concealment by existing boundary walls and planting, the use of sensitive materials and siting away from the main frontage of the building.

7.11 Rear garden spaces

Development which results in the loss of private open spaces is unlikely to be acceptable if it is considered to harm the contribution of these spaces to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Particular care should be taken when considering development within rear gardens in prominent positions, for example those on corner sites, where the visual impact of a proposal may be greater.

7.12 Sub-division of houses

Over sub-division of houses constructed for single family occupation can have detrimental impact on the appearance of the conservation area through external alterations, extensions and possible demand for additional car parking spaces.

The creation of additional units in the roof space or through excavation of a basement area will not therefore normally be acceptable where it is demonstrated that such works would cause harm to the character or appearance of the area.

7.13 Shopfront design, canopies and shutters

The appearances of shopfronts are an important element in the character of the two Neighbourhood Centres: Murray Street and York Way.

The retention of traditional shopfronts, and introduction of new ones of a high quality design is actively encouraged in the conservation area. It is important that shopfronts maintain the visual character and appearance of the street through respect for the proportions, rhythm and form of the original frontages. The loss of original or historic shopfronts will be resisted.

Conversion of retail units to residential use should always retain the shopfront. The excavation of new basement lightwells in front of shopfronts will generally be resisted.

Inappropriate and poorly designed shopfronts detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area. Inappropriate security shutters and canopies which break the line and continuity of the parades and pattern of fascia and window should be avoided.

The installation of a new shopfronts, shutters and grilles and most alterations will need planning permission. Detailed advice can be found within the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Shopfront Design

7.14 Fascias, signs and advertisements

Shop signage should be appropriate for the conservation area, respecting the proportions of shop frontages, and maintaining the characteristic divisions between units. Signage should be non-illuminated or externally illuminated and will usually consist of one fascia sign and one projecting sign and should not project above the traditional stringcourse or soffit of the shop front.

7.15 Estate agents' boards

A profusion of boards can have a detrimental impact upon the conservation area in terms of visual clutter. Only one advertisement, of specified dimensions and height, per property to be sold or let has deemed consent under the Regulations. Applications for consent to exceed the deemed consent level will usually be refused. The Council will, where appropriate, use its powers to prosecute agents who display boards illegally.

8.0 Trees, green spaces and biodiversity strategy

Gardens and front boundary treatment

Front and rear gardens within the residential streets make an important contribution to the streetscape and character of the residential area. The Council will resist the loss of soft landscaping and original boundary walls and railings, as well as loss of gardens through basement developments. Increasing the height and density of front boundaries will be resisted. Planting on front garden boundaries should be visually transparent.

Hedges should be retained and replanted where they are a feature of the streetscape. Where refuse bin stores are considered necessary, these should be located within rear garden spaces if at all possible. If location within the front garden area is the only possible solution, great care should be taken to ensure that the store is located sensitively. This would include concealment by existing boundary walls and planting, the use of sensitive materials and siting away from the main frontage of the building.

Green front gardens are vital not only in preserving the attractive, tranquil qualities of the conservation area, but also in providing wildlife corridors, enhancing biodiversity and reducing flood risk. Planting more soft landscaping – grass, flowers, shrubs and small trees – in front gardens, and reinstating it where lost, helps to ensure that Camden Square remains a healthy, natural and beautiful place to live.

Trees and open spaces

The street trees in the residential areas are a valuable part of the streetscape and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the

Camden Square Conservation Area. Advice on street trees can be found at www.camden.gov.uk/streetscape.

Many trees within the conservation area have statutory protection through tree preservation orders (TPOs). Additionally any tree within the conservation area over 75mm diameter that is not covered by a TPO is still protected and anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree is required to give six weeks notice to the Council.

Camden's Tree Officers can advise on all aspects of trees on public or private property within the Camden Square Conservation Area.

The Council's free publication 'A Guide to Trees in Camden' contains information on the benefits of trees and the law relating to trees in conservation areas. email ppp@camden.gov.uk

If building or excavation works are proposed to a property in the conservation area, consideration should also be given to the existence of trees on or adjacent to a site, including street trees and the required root protection zones of these trees. Where there are trees on or adjacent to the site, including any street trees, an arboriculture report will be required with the submission of a planning application. This should provide a statement in relation to the measures to be adopted during construction works to protect any trees on or adjoining the site and justification for any trees to be felled. Further guidance is provided in BS5837:2005 'A guide for trees in relation to construction'.

The street trees of Camden Square Conservation Area add greatly to the character of the area. Damage to pavements is sometimes caused by root growth, and the canopies need periodically to be pollarded. This is a matter of on-going monitoring and maintenance in order to preserve the leafy character of the side streets.

As trees die, replacement with varieties that encourage biodiversity and less root damage is to be encouraged while maintaining the overall character.

9.0 Quality of Applications

All planning and conservation area consent applications must contain sufficient information to fully describe the effect on the character of the conservation area including the effect on the local context and setting of the proposal. The Council will not register inadequate applications and will require further information where necessary.

In accordance with the relevant legislation most applications for development within the conservation area are required to include a Design and Access Statement. This will be required to adequately explain the design approach and context of the proposals and be accompanied by sufficient, accurate drawings of the existing site and its context as well as of the proposed development.

The level of required information is set out on the Council's Planning web pages under 'local validation requirements'.

10.0 Procedures to ensure consistent decision making

The Council requires high quality applications for works in the conservation area therefore applicants need to:

1. ascertain where planning permission or conservation area consent is required for alteration and demolition
2. ascertain what is significant about the space/feature/building
3. understand the relevant policies and guidance
4. show what effect the proposal will have on the space/feature/building – this may require an historic environment impact assessment
5. illustrate the effect of the proposals on the local context – this may entail perspectives or visually verifiable montages

The Council has strict procedures to ensure that applications will only be registered when there is sufficient information to understand the scheme. These are described in paragraph 3 of section 9 above.

It is recommended that applicants consult the conservation officer and duty planner prior to application.

Planning applications will be determined in accordance with local guidance (Camden's Planning Guidance and the Conservation Area Appraisal) local policy (London Borough of Camden's Unitary Development Plan, to be superseded by the Local Development Framework), and national policy (The London Plan).

- Other guidance for instance that published by English Heritage on listed buildings and conservation areas will also be taken into account.

11.0 Enforcement Strategy

The Council has adopted an Enforcement Policy for handling complaints of unauthorised development and will investigate and where necessary take enforcement action against unauthorised works and changes of use. In operating that policy special attention will be given to preserving or enhancing the special qualities of the conservation area.

Guidance regarding enforcement issues can be found in PPG18: *Enforcing Planning Control* and Circular 10/97: *Enforcing Planning Control: Legislative Provision and Procedural Requirements* (published by DETR).

Enforcement action is costly and time consuming to both the council and to the property owner and is best avoided through applying good practice and seeking advice from the Council about necessary permissions prior to carrying out work.

Certain small works and alterations are normally permissible without planning consent but in a conservation area these works are restricted. (Article 4 directions would further restrict this range of permitted development – see section 5.5.)

Since March 2010 the following works are **not** permitted in a conservation area for enlargement, improvement or other alteration to a dwelling house (which includes flats) of residential properties including:

- two storey rear extensions
- single storey side extensions
- cladding to the existing dwelling or extension including stone, pebbledash, render, timber, plastic or tiles
- additions or alterations to a roof of a dwelling house
- buildings, enclosures, pools or containers are permitted at the side of properties
- flue chimney or soil and vent pipe may be installed on a wall or roof slope that fronts a highway and forms the principal or side elevation of the house (including biomass or heat and power system)
- antenna or satellite dish may be installed on a chimney, wall, roof slope which faces onto and is visible from the highway
- solar power generation visible from the highway

(Other rules apply for non residential properties).

Within the curtilage of a listed building any outbuilding will require planning permission.

If there are any queries, the Planning Enforcement Team can be contacted through the website: www.camden.gov.uk/planning

12.0 Consideration of resources to sustain the historic environment

London Borough of Camden has a team of conservation officers and landscape officers that support the aims of the designation of the area and give advice and assistance to the public.

English Heritage has an initiative to promote the good management of conservation areas

Local Authorities are encouraged to identify a Heritage Champion from amongst their elected members to promote heritage issues across the Council's functions. At the time of writing the role is up for re-election.

The Conservation Area Advisory Committee is run on a voluntary basis and currently receives no funding from the Council. It publishes and maintains an approved set of criteria against which new developments are assessed. These may be expanded and submitted for endorsement to the Council as a result of the publication of this document and the projected increase in local involvement in the planning process. It conducts assessments using local knowledge and expertise and gives its views to the Council on the likely impact of proposed development on the local environment largely through consultation on planning and conservation area consent applications.

13.0 Community involvement

Community involvement is encouraged in order to:

- promote 'ownership' of the Character Appraisal and Management Strategy by both the local community and the Council in order to achieve incremental improvements
- support the Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements within the LDF to promote satisfaction with the local area and increased civic participation in the decisions affecting conservation areas

'Conservation Area designation is about recognising the significance of an area and what gives it its special character. Designation is not intended to prevent change but to make sure that the effects on what people value about a place are properly considered.'

English Heritage.

Camden has a statutory duty to publish proposals for the enhancement of the conservation area.

Local residents are already involved in the Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee. This group considers planning and conservation area consent applications and brings issues affecting the conservation area to the Council's attention.

Anyone wishing to become involved or to find out about the local CAAC should contact the CAAC directly c/o the London Borough of Camden's Conservation and Urban Design Team, or should consult the Council's website www.camden.gov.uk/planning.

14 Guidance

Information

PPS5 Policy Planning Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment 2010.

(Planning Policy Guidance PPG15 and 16 are superseded).

A range of information is available on the Council's website to assist businesses, occupiers and developers in making applications that will meet the objective of preserving or enhancing the special interest of the area. This includes but is not restricted to:

London Borough of Camden Core Strategy

London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework

London Borough of Camden Supplementary relevant Planning Guidance,

London Borough of Camden 'A Guide to Trees in Camden' contains information on the benefits of trees and the law relating to trees in conservation areas.

London Borough of Camden 'Your Camden' is an internet magazine for the borough.

English Heritage has many useful publications, all available on their web site including:

Heritage at Risk

- Register and guidance
- Campaign for Conservation Areas

Streets For All

There is a wealth of further information provided by English Heritage, the Victorian Society, Twentieth Century Society, SPAB, and other conservation organisations.

The Planning portal is also useful for general planning issues. Contacts are listed below.

Specialist Conservation Advice:

You can search for companies and read articles about repair in:

- Directory of Building Conservation - telephone: 01747 871717 to order or visit: <http://www.buildingconservation.com>

- Adapting Historic Buildings for Climate Change
<http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk>

- A Stitch in Time: Maintaining Your Property Makes Good Sense and Saves Money, Institute of Historic Building Conservation
http://www.ihbc.co.uk/stitch_in_time.htm

- Advice on introducing draughtproofing and secondary glazing in historic windows (follow the link on English Heritage's home page to 'Publications', then 'Free Publications' where you can search for and download a range of guidance notes) (telephone: 020 7973 3000)
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1630>

- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings Technical Pamphlet 13: Repair of Wood Windows – detailed guidance on identifying and treating decay, with illustrated methods of repair; available from the SPAB. Tel: 020 7377 1644 to order or visit: <http://www.spab.org.uk>

- Heritage gateway – one stop shop for heritage guidance and policy
<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/>

- The Victorian Society - Pamphlet Series on Caring for Victorian Houses.
Tel: 020 8994 1019 to order or visit: www.victorian-society.org.uk

Contacts

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CSqCAAC)
As detailed on the Camden Council Cindex Information Web Site

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

The **Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee** (CSqCAAC) is the statutory body of interested local people, residents and experts, which represents local people and businesses in considering planning applications in the area. It can be contacted as detailed on the Camden Council Cindex Information Web Site.

More information about it can be found in Part 1 Section 7 – Community Involvement.

London Borough of Camden Planning and Public Protection

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tel 020 7278 5613

www.camden.gov.uk

email ppp@camden.gov.uk

English Heritage

London office
1 Waterhouse Square
138-142 Holborn
London
EC1N 2ST

tel 020 7973 3000

web www.english-heritage.org.uk

email london@english-heritage.org.uk

Victorian Society

1 Priory Gardens
LONDON
W4 1TT

tel 020 8994 1019

web www.victoriansociety.org.uk

email Admin@victoriansociety.org.uk

Twentieth Century Society

79 Cowcross Street
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tel 020 7250 3857
web www.c20society.org.uk
email caseworker@c20society.org.uk

CABE
1 Kemble Street
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tel 020 7070 6700
web www.cabe.org.uk
email info@cabe.org.uk

The Planning Portal
Web www.planningportal.gov.uk

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The Buildings of England, London 4: North. Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner. Penguin 1998

A History of CAMDEN, Hampstead, Holborn and St Pancras, John Richardson. Historical Publications Limited 1999

The Streets of Camden Town, ed. Sheila Ayres, David Hayes, Ruth Hayes and Steve Denford. Camden History Society 2003

Maps

Map 1 Camden Square Conservation Area

Ordnance Survey plan shows Conservation Area boundaries, streets, plots and property boundaries

Map 2 Camden Square Designated areas

Ordnance Survey plan shows areas and dates of designation

Map 3 Townscape Appraisal

Ordnance Survey plan shows listed buildings, positive buildings

Map 4 Camden Square Area Topography

Map 5 Roque's map 1746

Map 6 1873-1877 Ordnance Survey

This map shows the development along Camden Square Road

Map 7 1894 Ordnance Survey

Map 8 1914 Ordnance Survey

Map 9 Camden Square Conservation Area Urban Grain

This plan is based on the 2009 Ordnance Survey plan.

Map 10 Character area map

Also referred to: Booth's Poverty map 1888-9